

# INTERNATIONAL ERASMUS+ CONFERENCE

16 & 17 NOVEMBER 2017

## SUMMARY



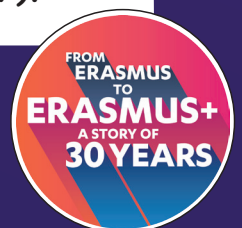
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**ERASMUS +,  
COOPERATION &  
INNOVATION IN  
EUROPE:**

**Results and  
prospects for the  
next programme  
(2021-2027).**





THURSDAY  
16 NOVEMBER



## INTRODUCTION

In the opening of this international conference, which took place on 16 and 17 November 2017 at the Île-de-France (IDF) Regional Council, **Stephanie von Euw, Regional Vice-President in charge of European Affairs**, recalled the region's commitment to the European construction, particularly to the Erasmus+ programme, which embodies 'the humane Europe looking to the future'. The vice-president said that three years ago, hers became the leading French region by the number of beneficiaries (50,000) of the Erasmus+ programme, which is also the 'spinal column of the cooperation agreements led by IDF with other European regions'.



Stéphanie von Euw noted that three axes of development for the future were identified at the time of the mid-term evaluation of the Erasmus+ programme, carried out in 2017:

1. facilitate access to mobility for all publics;
2. develop mobilities in all fields of education and training;
3. continue to open the programme to those outside the European Union.

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**Téa Varrak, Secretary General of the Ministry of Education and Research in the Republic of Estonia**, emphasised the very important place of IT in her country: «50% of students aged 7 to 9 years use the Internet», she said, describing Estonia as «a computerised country».

The Estonian representative explained that computers facilitate access to education. She emphasised the need to ensure children's access to IT, from primary school onwards, and to prepare them to use the Internet. «Our slates have become tablets,» was Téa Varrak's comparison. According to her, Erasmus+ plays an important part in supporting innovation in this area in the different countries involved in the programme, based on the good practices of each.

**Jorge Sainz Gonzalez, Secretary General of Universities in the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport of the Government of Spain, and Chairman of the Sepie Agency**, considers that «the Erasmus+ programme is one of the most important elements of European integration, allowing people to build a common future». He was delighted at the very strong collaboration between Spain and France around the Erasmus+ programme and recalled that Spain is Erasmus students' favourite country.

«The Erasmus effects are indispensable. No-one should be excluded from the programme. Spain has worked hard on this aspect of social inclusion,» insisted Jorge Sainz Gonzales.

**Patrick Bet, Honorary Inspector of National Education, ECVET-France expert**, stressed the importance accorded by Erasmus+ to vocational training. He referred to the role of ECVET in the recognition of professional abilities, and

its importance in spreading good practices, especially in terms of the design and development of qualifications. These must meet the needs of businesses and civil society in general, insisted the expert. Another element in which ECVET-France plays a major role is its support for long term partnership projects (Key Action 2).

Patrick Bet ended on the positive effects of mobility in Europe for young people on training courses: students, whether scholastic or professional:

- ▶ discovery and working together allow for changes in the point of view;
- ▶ clarification of what professional development from one country to another may offer;
- ▶ border residents being able to work on either side of the border.





## ROUND TABLE



According to **Mart Laanpere, Researcher in Educational Science at the University of Tallinn (Estonia)**, the smartphone is an educational tool. «All young people have a smartphone. They use it for fun; we would like to use it for something else. We are encouraging schools to use the equipment which students already have in their pockets,» explained the researcher.

In the context of Erasmus+ projects, the University of Tallinn is working with education professionals in other countries to develop innovative educational practices and share them by training teachers, «more than 1,000 in the context of Erasmus+,» said Mart Laanpere.

**Director of Erasmus+ France, Laure Coudret-Laut** stressed the fact that the work of these two days will go back to the European authorities via Estonia, which holds the Presidency of the Council of the Union, and thanks to the Erasmus+ Spanish and French agencies, who are European leaders in mobility: the recommendations will affect decisions on the programme's technical developments in 2021. «The Erasmus+ programme is certainly an emblematic one, but it must continue to improve», insisted the director of the French agency. «2018 is a very important year for reflection on the 2021-2027 programme.»

She emphasised that the Erasmus+ partnerships (Key Action 2) constitute one of the dimensions of the programme which is still not much explored in France: an interesting dimension, however, in which the business world as well as other very different, yet complementary, stakeholders take part. These partnerships not only provide spaces for experiment and the exchange of good practices, but are also areas for innovation, for the benefit of methods and educational products. Laure Coudret-Laut also pointed out that the most disadvantaged publics are also the most carefully considered in these partnerships. Inclusion is an essential dimension of the programme.

**Pablo Martin, Director of the SEPIE Agency (Spain)**, shared this point of view. He also called for a more inclusive Erasmus+ programme. He also stressed that the programme's international dimension should be developed «to cooperate beyond the Union, with the rest of the world».

Speaking for the Estonians, **Rait Tompeere, Director of the Archimedes Agency**, was delighted at the openings for young students at international level, via Erasmus+, explaining that: «There are hardly any schools in Estonia which do not have partnerships in Europe». For him,

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these two days were an opportunity to create new shared values, and to strengthen everyone's expertise in what they could do, at their own level, to improve the quality of education.

Finally, **Fabrice Lenglard, Deputy Commissioner General of France Stratégie's** contribution began with a reminder of the challenges that Europe will have to face in the next ten years, in a climate of uncertainty as to its level of growth and against the background of Euro-scepticism, the digital revolution and the ecological transition. To cope, he considers it essential to invest in human capital and the improvement of the level of skills. «Investment in education is not an expense but an

investment», he said, before praising Erasmus+, «This is a perfect example of the type of policy which France and Europe need, when we think in terms of ten years».

Fabrice Lenglard then presented a France Stratégie proposal to «give an overall boost to skills, people with disabilities, employees wishing to change direction, refugees who need language skills». It aims to create a fund for the issue of conditional loans to people who want to undertake self-training and to acquire skills. The repayment of the loan would be conditional upon becoming a full-time employee with a minimum wage.



## WORKSHOP 1

### THE ADDED VALUE OF INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

According to the study on the Erasmus+ partnerships (Key Action 2) commissioned by Erasmus+ France / Education and Training, there are five factors of success in Erasmus+ partnerships. The most useful projects are those which:

- ▶ include an experimental phase which takes place in conjunction with the publics;
- ▶ involve the economic stakeholders;
- ▶ respond specifically to regional needs and issues;
- ▶ include a European stake arising from national problems;
- ▶ mobilise organisations more generally, beyond the hard core of personnel designated for project management.

Participants' recommendations:

1. Do not be afraid to include disabled people in projects, because the impact on them can be considerable;
2. Start to introduce normative/legal requirements when evaluating the establishments and teachers who take part in / undertake Erasmus+ projects;
3. Consider more opportunities to work with third countries outside Europe;
4. Identify former participants in Erasmus+ projects who now make lucrative use of Erasmus+.

## WORKSHOP 2

### OPENING THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME TO THE WORLD

What are the points in common between a project to train road hauliers in Europe and the Balkans, a training project for Vietnamese doctoral students, and the development of a master's degree in psychology and organisation of work bringing 71 nationalities together?

Through these three very different projects, an opening of the Erasmus+ programme to the world is a source of innovation in training methods and content, and in the intercultural dimension which is developed for trainees and their teachers.

The partnership project initiated by Promotrans (France) and IRU (Belgium) with the Balkan countries has been launched to meet the European directive to train heavy goods drivers. The safety of road transport is a major challenge: 75% of goods travelling through Europe use roads. This project has allowed for a move to a vocational qualification bringing road hauliers into line by offering new and attractive training courses to drivers and their instructors.

The University of Tartu project, with other European universities and in cooperation with Vietnam has allowed the development of the very first training course for Vietnamese doctoral students of biomedicine, a major issue in a country of 100 million inhabitants where the shortage of physicians is significant.





The joint Erasmus Mundus master's degree in organisational psychology and labour, entitled WOP-P and led by the University of Valencia, is training future professionals from all over the world (450 students, of 71 nationalities), thanks to a partnership between European universities and universities in the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico.

How can we go even further? Following the discussions, several possibilities emerged:

- ▶ to enable small organisations to become involved in actions outside Europe, it seems essential to simplify the financial and administrative rules and regulations;
- ▶ the possibilities of cooperation between European countries and the rest of the world should be open to stakeholders in the field of vocational training;
- ▶ the Erasmus brand is probably the best that Europe has produced. It is recognised in Europe and throughout the world, and constitutes 'an exportable model' which is the envy of many countries. However, funding for these forms of cooperation between the European Union and the rest of the world remains limited. To make better use of these arrangements with partner countries outside Europe, they could become financial contributors to those actions, which bring them a great deal in terms of innovation and the quality of training;
- ▶ extend the timeframe of projects, to give better integration and coherence to the institutions' strategies;
- ▶ develop the synergy with the Horizon2020 research programme.



## WORKSHOP 3

### YOUTH AT THE HEART OF THE DIGITAL ERA: THE SCHOOL OF THE FUTURE

Educational innovation must take digital tools into account: today, these have been redesigned to serve the development of skills and employability, and to train responsible citizens in Europe and throughout the world. Accordingly, it is necessary to mobilise all stakeholders, trainees and staff, and to support them in a context of cooperation between the regions. The Erasmus+ programme is working towards this revolution of practices. In general terms, we can see a disparity of access to digital tools, as much at national as at European level. At the same time, in the face of technological and digital progress, the current education systems are more and more out of step and many young people do not enjoy adequate digital skills.

Discussions also focused on the consequences of the progress of artificial intelligence on our society, and on the profound changes caused by IT in the world of work. Digital skills should be regarded as a knowledge set which allows precise teaching of how to learn, through digital tools such as encyclopaedias, or on-line educational games.

The development of the use of IT does not mean that the teacher's fundamental role of interpreting knowledge and know-how disappears: quite the reverse. Information is potentially available everywhere, at any time, and free of charge: the important part is knowing how to access it, and what to do with the knowledge gained. The key question is not so much how we use the new technologies as why; what is its educational objective? (the logical resolution of problems, modelling, narratives, the realisation of objectives, programming, etc.). From this perspective, the training of teachers in the use of digital tools, not in themselves, but so as to attain their educational goals, is essential. The added value of digital tools for use by young



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people with specific needs or with difficulties has been emphasised (young autistics, school dropouts, etc.).

Three Erasmus+ school projects, coordinated respectively by Spain, Estonia and France, have presented their solid experiences of European cooperation in the IT field (the interdisciplinary development of students' and teachers' digital skills; robotics; innovative methods of learning languages and sciences).

For the 2021-2028 programme, there is a proposal to strengthen the priority given to the development of digital skills and, for those European countries who have not yet done so, to include a new national priority within the European priorities with regard to the development of skills for Erasmus+ projects.



## WORKSHOP 4

### ERASMUS+ OPPORTUNITIES: A WINNING COMBINATION

Erasmus+ 2014-2020 has initiated a new, integrated, approach to the various actions proposed: mobility (Key Action 1), partnerships (Key Action 2) and tools to support public policies (Key Action 3) are initiatives whose establishment is being undertaken to develop a global strategy of internationalisation and to gain efficiency on a regional scale.

Beyond the mobilities of trainees, Erasmus+ is a full programme which acts as a lever for the advancement of education and training policies at European level.

How can we take advantage of all the tools offered by the Erasmus+ programme?

What is the coherence between these different actions?

Experts' testimony and a work of reflection with participants has shed light on these different issues.

Some stakeholders in vocational training (GIP Emploi Roissy), the academic (Académie de Montpellier) and higher education sectors (Universities of Barcelona and León), have presented their progress within the programme, and have pointed to expected and unexpected benefits, including:

- ▶ very high attendance rates for vocational training students as compared with those following classic courses, without mobility (GIP Roissy);
- ▶ national and international recognition from the University of León (a small establishment) to Erasmus+, which has been invited to participate in a capacity building project (Key Action 3) by the Spanish government;

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- ▶ more skills and more willingness to undertake new projects, thanks to the mobility of administrative staff.

They gave concrete examples to facilitate the establishment of projects in other Erasmus+ programme actions:

- ▶ creating the position of a tutor or attendant to help first responders to the programme;
- ▶ organising summer schools in the scholastic sector for the professionalisation of project promoters;
- ▶ communicating the fact that language skills are not a priority when participating in Erasmus+, that mobilities mobilise and reinforce themselves, especially in transverse skills;
- ▶ mobilising stakeholders from various sectors to set up a KA2.

Finally, they raised the issue of the strategy to internationalise and structure their institutions through the Erasmus+ programme: the University of León has reoriented its internationalisation strategy towards a more structured policy, towards new, more innovative themes. Access to a KA3 project creates an un hoped-for international visibility. Erasmus+ allows participants to work in project mode, in a network, and to consolidate international partnerships.

In general terms, they made recommendations on the need for administrative simplification.

Participants also made suggestions about the future programme:

- ▶ training and support prior to candidature, especially for first-time applicants and smaller structures (training by peers, collaborative

workshops, distance learning, easier access to the Erasmus+ results platform, appointment of a tutor and support from Erasmus+ developers);

- ▶ information on possible alternatives (Centre Europe Direct, existing sites and platforms such as e-twinning and EPALE, links with existing consortia);
- ▶ in international mobility, the possibility of recurrent projects to establish stable and sustainable partnerships with third countries;
- ▶ administrative simplification (Erasmus without papers for students, and files with a small number of scholarships for the school sector);
- ▶ the recognition and professionalisation of staff involved in the programme (number of dedicated hours in institutions and referents' mobility training for apprenticeships from Regional Councils)
- ▶ promotion to business (rather than by sector and on the issue of apprentices), for the setting up of projects between different stakeholders, to the heads of establishments and with remote publics (eg the Youtube channel EnvolPro);
- ▶ synergy with other European programmes (such as SVE, the LEADER programme with funding for mobility in rural areas, etc).



FRIDAY

17 NOVEMBER

## INTRODUCTION

### PROSPECTS AROUND AN EXTENDED ERASMUS

«Europe is emerging after ten years of crisis, the most painful since the Second World War. Unemployment is still high but the European economy has begun to create employment,» summed up **Pierre Moscovici**. The **European Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs** then outlined a 'not fully attained' European political landscape: if France has avoided the National Front, an extreme right-wing party has returned to the Bundestag, Germany; the extreme right is going to return to the Austrian government; and another form of populism is developing in the Czech Republic. According to the European Commissioner, the idea of Europe is in the process of surging ahead. He referred to the urgent need to make Europe advance and to achieve a European breakthrough in the coming months, by organising, inter alia, large, democratic consultations in the different EU countries, before the 2019 European elections.

Pierre Moscovici spoke about the Erasmus+ programme, which has changed the lives of nine million Europeans and a million French men and women. «This programme is essential for all the young people of Europe. It is not only an asset for their employability, but also a way of progressing European awareness. Erasmus is a tool to build a Europe with human capital. It allows the European economy to put young people who are more mobile, and more open to the world, into the market» he summed up.

The current Erasmus+ programme ends in 2020. For the programme's 2021-2027 period, the coming months will be decisive. A major evaluation

of the programme - with the Union's Member States and more than a million beneficiaries - is in the course of analysis. The results will be known in the middle of next year.

Pierre Moscovici listed the developments of the programme, which will be the subject of the 2018 proposals:

- ▶ better prepare young people for the jobs of tomorrow and strengthen the links between education, research and the private sector;
- ▶ strengthen the sense of Europe and the values common to citizens of the European Union;
- ▶ be more inclusive (cf. the European Summit in Gothenburg, Sweden);
- ▶ increase the mobility of students in scholastic education;
- ▶ become a more inclusive programme, giving more places to the disadvantaged, migrants, and disabled people.



The European Commissioner noted that ambition has a price. He recalled that President Juncker said he wanted to be 'nine times more ambitious', before adding: «This is not to say that the budget must be nine times larger, but that it must increase to enable at least one in three young people to take advantage of it. The European Parliament has requested a more ambitious programme. It must give the means to create the Europe of the future.» Skills in education and training could also be considered at European Union level to guarantee more funds than those granted by the States, and to allow a better harmonisation of public policies.

## CLOSING CONFERENCE

«Any political leader who wants to show a European ambition offers to triple or quadruple the Erasmus+ programme's budget», **stated Pervenche Berès, Member of the European Parliament, Member of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Commission.** According to her, this programme constitutes «the best antidote to the evil which is eating away at the European Union», namely «ignorance and the stigmatisation of others, which undermines the very foundations on which Europe rests».

Pervenche Berès raised a problem: the Member States are ambitious for the programme but not for the means to be provided. «The Budget programme will be daunting, because the British departure will necessitate the search for new resources», she pointed out. Concerning this increase of funds, the Member of the



European Parliament pointed to the risk - already observed over the 2014-2020 period - of debates around the transformation of Erasmus+ bursaries into loans, entitled «Financial Instruments». This had been tried recently but did not work. The Member of the European Parliament judged these loans as being «incompatible with our social model and the objective of a programme open to all».

At the time when this conference was held, the strategy for the formation of a European space for education was being discussed by European leaders in Sweden, in Gothenburg, as was pointed out by **Vanessa Debiais-Sainton, Deputy Head of the Higher Education Unit at the European Commission's Directorate General of Education, Youth, Sport and Culture.**

She explained the major axes of development desirable for Erasmus+:

- ▶ better support for strategic skills relating to IT;
- ▶ the creation of a European university, ensuring that mobility should be mandatory and integrated in its programmes;
- ▶ the strengthening of links with research;

- ▶ the development of opportunities for both physical and virtual mobilities, in order to respond to the needs expressed by the publics;
- ▶ the development of a European identity through education and training, with accounts of their experiences from beneficiaries given in schools, universities and institutions;
- ▶ an enlargement of the international dimension of exchanges.

**Vanessa Debiais-Santon** announced the quantified objectives for participation in the Erasmus+ programme for 2020:

- ▶ 500,000 student mobilities;
- ▶ 500,000 apprentice mobilities;
- ▶ 1 million teachers, thanks notably to the eTwinning platform ;
- ▶ 1 class in 20 involved in scholastic exchanges.

**Vice-president of the University of Granada, in charge of Internationalisation, Dorothy Kelly** believes that no-one expected such an enormous individual, institutional and social impact at the start of the Erasmus programme in 1987. She pointed out that today, Erasmus is «the prime mover in the internationalisation of universities». Before the new name Erasmus+ was chosen, the vice-president of the Spanish university had pleaded for «Erasmus for all», so as to emphasise the programme's inclusive approach concerning people in social difficulties and who are disabled. Among the axes of the programme's development set out during the two days of discussions, Dorothy Kelly noted the significant consensus on the simplification, flexibility (shorter as well as virtual mobilities), and the financial resources to meet demand.

According to this professional translator, the language barrier, very little referred to here, is important: «Multilingualism is an essential value of our European identity. We must strengthen the beneficiaries' language skills, because not everyone can go around with an interpreter». Finally, she insisted on the necessary rapprochement between three spaces which must feed one another: the European Research Area; the European Space



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of Higher Education; and the European Space of Education.

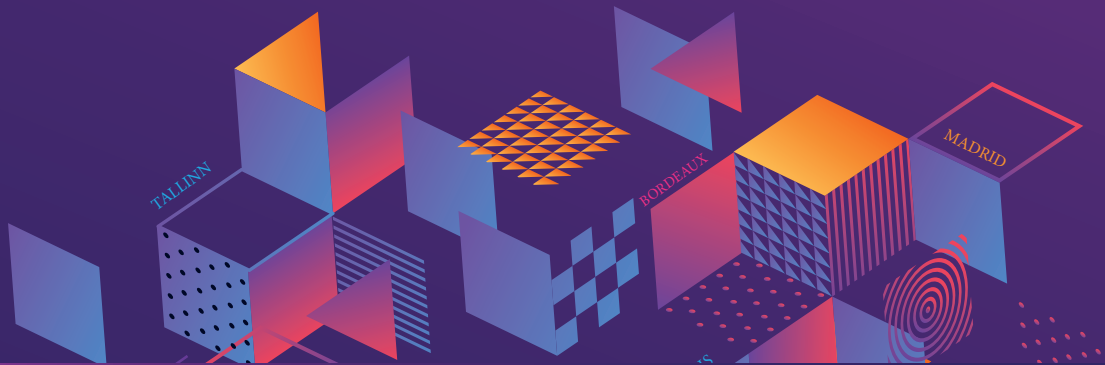
**Philippe Vinçon, Director General of Education and Research at the Ministry of Agriculture and Supply**, recalled the long-held vocation of opening agricultural education internationally, and the important part played by Erasmus mobilities for young people from rural and suburban areas, mainly from disadvantaged social classes. He pointed out that most training is now focused on the environment and on services to the person. «Rural areas are those where our mission is to make them love and share the European ideal. There is a link between the size of the community and its support for this ideal. Hence the importance of our involvement in this programme - which must involve all the young - in rural areas», he added.

Concerning the future of the programme, he considers the budgetary efforts to be necessary, but believes that it is essential to ensure that the instruments put in place allow small establishments in rural area to

remain beneficiaries of the programme. He argues for «shorter, better supervised, more collaborative» mobilities and for support for the mobility of both apprentices and adults on vocational training courses. Finally, Philippe Vinçon expects the French Government to incorporate the international dimension in its reflection on apprenticeships.

**The Director of Erasmus+ France / Education and Training, Laure Coudret-Laut**, stressed the necessary complementarity of territorial, national and European funding. The close work being carried out with the regions is a strong axis of the Agency's orientations. She also welcomed the work in conjunction with members of Daréic (academic delegates to European and International Relations), advisers to the rectors on international affairs.





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