



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 03.08.2018
C(2018) 5359 final*

Dear Chair,

The Commission would like to thank the Assembleia da República for its Opinion on the results of the mid-term evaluation of the Erasmus+ programme {COM(2018)50 final}.

The Commission is pleased that the Assembleia da República shares its assessment that the Erasmus+ programme is an impressive success story and one of the most visible and valued achievements of the European Union.

The results of the mid-term evaluation have been taken into consideration when preparing the proposal for the future Erasmus programme post-2020 {COM(2018) 367 final}, which was adopted by the Commission on 30 May 2018. The proposal builds on the success of the current programme, while seeking to improve and develop it further.

In the context of the Union's next long-term budget for the period 2021-2027, the Commission proposes to double the financial envelope for the new Erasmus programme, bringing it to EUR 30 billion. This proposed increase shows the importance the Commission attaches to this programme for its proven positive effects on education systems, individuals, our societies and the European project.

With this increase the Commission aims to boost significantly the mobility opportunities offered for students, young people, school pupils, vocational education and training students, staff, trainers – raising the number of potential beneficiaries to 12 million people, which is three times more than under the current programme.

In light of the conclusions of the mid-term evaluation and various stakeholder consultations, the Commission proposes a number of measures to make the programme even better. Many of those new measures are in line with the specific points raised by the Assembleia da República.

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For example, the Commission seeks to make the future programme more inclusive and more accessible, especially for people with fewer opportunities and coming from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds (for example, by promoting short-term learning periods or group mobility) and for small-sized local organisations or newcomers (by offering the possibility of small-scale partnerships).

The Commission also proposes to increase blended and virtual mobility opportunities, making full use of digital innovations. This will enable the programme to reach larger target groups using a limited set of resources, in particular those with fewer opportunities and those for whom moving physically would be an obstacle. It is important to stress, however, that the blended and virtual mobility activities will complement, not replace physical mobility. Indeed, the Commission intends to make physical mobility more accessible for people with fewer opportunities.

Regarding the sector of adult learning, the Commission proposes a budget of EUR 1.19 billion. The Commission considers that this twofold budget increase compared to the current programme will give a strong boost to the sector.

The Commission has taken good note of the suggestions made by the Assembleia da República regarding programme simplification. It will indeed continue its efforts to make administrative procedures and forms more user-friendly when implementing the next programme.

As regard synergies with other Union programmes and funds, the Commission would like to stress that possibilities to combine resources to support the activities of Erasmus+ already exist today but there is a great untapped potential. In the next programming period, the Commission envisages making synergies standard practice by encouraging the use of funds from different sources to scale up successful projects or provide additional support to specific target groups.

The Commission hopes that these comments address the issues raised by the Assembleia da República and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue.

Yours faithfully,

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Member of the Commission*