

ERASMUS+ FOR VET AND APPRENTICESHIPS MUST REMAIN A PRIORITY IN THE NEXT EU BUDGET



Recent social, demographic and geopolitical developments have added further urgency to the need to enhance the EU's competitiveness. Skills development is generally considered a powerful means to foster an inclusive and resilient European economy. The Erasmus+ programme strongly supports the development of professional and transversal skills. Mobile learners not only develop practical competencies but also valuable soft skills. This facilitates their integration in the labour market. What is more, Erasmus+ mobility strengthens the learners' sense of European citizenship, which is of great importance in a period when EU values are being challenged.

This holds especially true for Vocational Education and Training (VET) - and even more so for apprenticeships. Like all other VET learners, apprentices are more likely to come from backgrounds with fewer opportunities than their peers in other forms of education. While their participation in Erasmus+ has increased over the last years, it remains lower than in higher education. Tellingly, only a few national or European statistics bodies do provide precise information on apprentice mobility. Even in countries where apprenticeships have a longstanding tradition, such as Austria, only about 3% of all apprentices participated in a learning mobility in 2024. It is thus safe to assume that their participation rate is far lower than the objective of 12% of all VET learners with a learning experience abroad by 2030 set by the Council Recommendation "Europe on the Move" (C/2024 3364).

The European Coalition for Apprentice Mobility strongly believes that VET and apprenticeships should be a cornerstone of the Union of Skills, as they contribute to addressing widespread labour shortages. It is also convinced that the internationalisation of apprenticeships can further increase their attractiveness and bolster overall skills development and EU values. The financial support through the Erasmus+ programme is instrumental to achieving these objectives. The Coalition therefore calls for safeguarding the Erasmus+ funds for VET in the EU's multi-annual financial framework 2028-2034. Earmarked and protected funds for VET mobility would send a clear political signal of the EU's willingness to attain the objectives set by the Recommendation "Europe on the Move" and to make learning mobility widely accessible and inclusive. While the budget negotiations will undoubtedly require difficult decisions, this should not be to the disadvantage of a programme that can play an essential role in strengthening the EU's stance in the face of current challenges.

EAM website



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EUROPEAN COALITION FOR APPRENTICE MOBILITY

The European Coalition for Apprentice Mobility brings together eleven organisations in Vocational Education and Training (VET) from eight EU member states. The members of the coalition and associated partners represent 2,000 VET providers, which trained 1,000,000 apprentices and organised more than 20,000 apprentice mobilities in 2024, notably through the Erasmus+. Their shared objective is to provide apprentices with the same opportunities for learning mobility as students in higher education and to make apprenticeships become an integral part of the European Education Area.

PARTNERS



ROC Midden Nederland: Large VET provider in the centre of the Netherlands offering over 200 vocational qualifications in most sectors to more than 19,000 students in 16 different locations.



Generalitat de Catalunya - Departament d'Educació: Regional Ministry of Education of the Government of Catalonia.



International Young Workers Exchange: Service association in the field of apprenticeship mobility, supported by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Economy and Labour, the Austrian Economic Chambers and the Federation of the Austrian Industry.



Euro App Mobility: VET network organisation supported by the French Ministry of Labour and cooperating with the main French VET providers.



Institute for School Quality and Education Research: Branch of the Bavarian Education Ministry coordinating the network of VET providers in the state.



EU-Geschäftsstelle Wirtschaft und Berufsbildung der Bezirksregierung Arnsberg: EU Affairs Office of the District Government of Arnsberg, regional public authority with a network of VET providers and representing the working group on VET of the German- Polish Intergovernmental Commission.



Łukasiewicz Research Network - Institute for Sustainable Technologies: Public research institute focused on technology transfer and continuing vocational education that develops systems, models and tools supporting and integrating education with innovative economy and labour market.



Scuola Centrale Formazione: VET association recognized by the Italian Ministry of Labour supporting a network of VET providers.

ASSOCIATED PARTNERS



NUFFIC: Dutch organisation for Internationalisation in Education, working for the Ministry of Education and the European Commission.



Czech National Agency for International Education and Research: Publicly funded organisation under the competence of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.



Agence Erasmus+ France Education et Formation: French public body in charge of implementing the Erasmus+ programme in the areas of education and training.