



## **ERASMUS+: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES SHOULD BE USED TO STRENGTHEN VET AND APPRENTICE MOBILITY**

**The European Coalition for Apprentice Mobility welcomes the Commission's proposal to increase the budget for Erasmus+ and calls for the funds to be notably employed for VET and apprentice learning mobility. By increasing the budget for this type of activities, the EU institutions can pave the way for 12% participation in VET learning mobility by 2030. This would be a major contribution to developing strategic skills and to reinforcing the foundations of EU values.**

Erasmus+ is a key driver for skills development and the sense of European citizenship. While both the overall budget and the total number of beneficiaries have increased over recent years, the funds granted to the programme have remained insufficient to meet demand. In 2022, 44% of the applications for Erasmus+ funding for VET mobility were rejected due to a lack of resources.

According to the 2022 Erasmus+ report and statistics provided by Eurostat, only 1,78% of all European VET learners went on a mobility abroad in the same year, for a total budget of 464 million euros. This is far less than the 12%, which the Council of the European Union recently set as an objective to be achieved by 2030. It would have required more than a twofold increase to reach the objective in 2022: 4% of mobile VET learners and a budget 1 billion euros (1).

Based on this analysis, the 50% budget increase for Erasmus+, which was suggested by the European Commission on 16 July, is a positive signal. Although the exact details remain to be determined, the proposal may, however, fall short on the twofold increase required to reach the objective of 12% mobile VET learners. The European Coalition for Apprentice Mobility calls on the Member States and the European Parliament to seize this opportunity and to make sure that the additional funds support VET learners and apprentices.

According to a recent report by Mario Draghi, 54% of all European companies have difficulties in finding skilled workforce. These shortages concern professions available through higher education as well as skilled jobs accessible primarily through VET. Demographic trends will further increase these needs as 2 million employees will have to be replaced every year by 2050. At the same time, Europe has seen a stark rise in populism, Euroscepticism and nationalism. For instance, only 36% of under 25-year-olds participated in the 2024 European elections – a 6% decrease compared with 2019.

It is widely recognised that VET and apprenticeships including learning periods abroad can help address these challenges. In its "Union of Skills" initiative, the European Commission highlighted the importance of VET as "first choice" to tackle skills shortages. A recent report by Enrico Letta called for a "fifth freedom", the free movement of research, innovation, knowledge, and education, to unlock the EU's full potential. Apprenticeship pathways can play an essential role in this as they offer high employment prospects to learners, who are often from less advantaged social-economic backgrounds. The Erasmus+ programme has largely contributed to the inclusive dimension of VET over the last years. Considering the positive impact of VET and apprenticeship pathways with a European component on both EU competitiveness and values, the 2024 "Europe on the Move" recommendation by the Council of the European Union, called for learning mobility for everyone.

The European Coalition for Apprentice Mobility urges the Commission, the Parliament and the Member States to take into account the importance of VET learner and apprentice mobility as a driver for skills development, economic competitiveness and democratic values during the upcoming budget negotiations.

(1) The 12% target refers to amount of mobile VET learners with a mobility experience during their learning pathway. Given that most VET programmes last about 3 years, it would require 4% of mobile VET learners per year to reach the 12% objective.





## The 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.



**UMIH Hauts-de-France:** the Federation of the Hospitality Industry and Associated Professions in the Hauts-de-France region, a professional organisation representing 5000 companies.



**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.



**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.



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

### ASSOCIATED PARTNERS



**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.



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