



Y.E.S. Forum Position
to the Commission's Proposal on
ERASMUS FOR ALL: The EU Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport

The Y.E.S. Forum takes notice of the new proposal drafted by the European Commission on a new integrated programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport named "Erasmus for ALL".

As the European network working with and for vulnerable young people across Europe, we very much welcome:

- the significant budget increase proposed for the future programme,
- the cross-cutting approach fostering the cooperation between policy fields impacting on youth reflected in the proposal,
- a simpler, streamlined architecture of the programme, which makes it easier to apply for grants

But we still think that certain elements of the "Erasmus for All" proposal as they affect young people need to be reconsidered. Based on our rich and manifold experience in working with and for vulnerable young people in Europe, we are first and foremost concerned about the following:

- **The title "Erasmus for all".** According to our perception, this 'brand' is widely recognised among the wider public as a synonym for activities in higher education, the mobility of young academics and the formal education context in general. It is simply not connected with vocational training, non-formal learning opportunities and the experience of social excluded young people.
- **The uncertain future of youth organisations focusing on European partnerships.** The European Youth Forum is the only organisation mentioned as an institution receiving operating support. The Youth in Action programme and its predecessors explicitly supported youth organisations to enable participation and to empower young people to become active citizens in Europe.
- **The uncertainty with regards to funding.** The current budget of the Youth in Action programme can in no way be compared to the future budget for the "Erasmus Youth" programme. The new proposal simply promises an increase with regard to funding of actions in the sector "Erasmus Youth Participation", but it refrains from giving concrete figures and numbers.
- **The unclear role of the EU youth strategy.** In the proposal we miss the direct link to the EU Youth strategy 2010-2018. We are wondering how the new programme intends to guarantee sustainability in European cooperation in the youth field and specifically how it reaches socially excluded young people.

The new integrated EU programme should better reflect the results of the public consultation on the future European youth programme as well as the interim report of the Youth in Action programme which underlined the importance of a programme emphasising non-formal learning activities.

Our experience in working with and for young people at risk of social exclusion shows that it is challenging for them to take part in European programmes. Hence special attention needs to be given to these young people in order for them to be included in the new programme.

Therefore the Y.E.S. Forum suggests and puts forward the following points to be considered in the future integrated programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport:

- To recognise the value of youth work and non-formal learning activities for developing young people's right and competence to decide about their lives and become active Europeans.
- To support youth organisations in a sustainable way, which are active in European cooperation activities in the youth field.
- To ensure open and easy access to the benefits of the programme for all young people regardless of their educational, social and cultural background and to guarantee that youth led initiatives and activities are included in the programme.
- To ensure that the streamlined architecture of the programme and application forms are flexible enough to match to the different sectors funded by the new programme. The administrative investment connected to filling in application forms need to be in a good balance in relation to the project budgets available. Application procedures should not be a barrier for young people to get actively involved in developing and implementing a project.
- To support sustainability in European Youth policy with a clear reference to the future EU Youth strategy 2010-2018.

Y.E.S. Forum

December, 2011