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IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Accompanying the document

Proposal for a

Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing 'Erasmus': the Union programme for education, training, youth and sport and repealing Regulation (EU) 1288/2013

{COM(2018) 367 final} - {SEC(2018) 265 final} - {SWD(2018) 276 final}

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Glossary

Term or acronym	*Meaning or definition*
EACEA	Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
EC	European Commission
ECVET	European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training
EFTA/EEA	European Free Trade Association/European Economic Area
EIPA	European Institute of Public Administration
EIT	European Institute of Technology
ENIC/NARIC	European Network of Information Centres in the European Region National Academic Recognition Information Centres in the European Union
EPALE	Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe
EQAR	European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education
EQAVET	European Quality assurance for VET systems
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ESIF	European Structural and Investment Funds
ET Monitor	Education and Training Monitor
ETF	European Training Foundation
ETY Forum	Education, Training and Youth Forum
EU	European Union
EUs	European Universities
Horizon Europe	Research and Innovation Framework Programme
IA	Impact Assessment
IDOC	Investigation and Disciplinary Office
IT tools/systems	Information Technology tools/systems

KICs	Knowledge and Innovation Communities
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
LEADER	Links between actions for the development of the rural economy
MFF	Multi-annual Financial Framework
MSCA	Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions
NAs	National Agencies
NGOs	Non-governmental Organisations
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OLAF	European Anti Fraud Office (Office européen de lutte antifraude)
OPC	Open Public Consultation
PIAAC	Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment (OECD Survey)
SALTO Resource Centres	Support, Advanced Learning, and Training Opportunities
STE(A)M	Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics
SWD	Staff Working Document
TALIS	Teaching and Learning International Survey
TCAs	Training and Cooperation Activities
UN SDGs	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
VET	Vocational Education and Training

1. INTRODUCTION: POLITICAL AND LEGAL CONTEXT

1.1. Political context

"Every euro that we invest in Erasmus+ *is an investment in the future of a young person and of our European idea. I cannot imagine anything more worthy of our investment than these leaders of tomorrow. As we celebrate the 9 millionth person to take part, let's make sure we are 9 times more ambitious with the future of our Erasmus+ programme".*
President Juncker, Strasbourg, 13 June 2017

Education, training and youth have recently come to the forefront of EU Leaders' attention. In the Bratislava Declaration of 16 September 2016, the leaders of 27 Member States underscored their determination to provide "*better opportunities for youth*". In the Rome Declaration, of 25 March 2017, the leaders of 27 Member States and of the European Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission" pledged to work towards "*a Union where young people receive the best education and training and can study and find jobs across the continent.*" Furthermore, the 1st principle of the European Pillar of Social Rights solemnly proclaimed and signed on 17 November 2017 by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission, holds that: "*Everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and life-long learning in order to maintain and acquire skills that enable them to participate fully in society and manage successfully transitions in the labour market*."

The importance of education, training and youth for Europe's future has also been reflected in the Commission's Communication of 14 February 2018 on A new, modern Multiannual Financial Framework for a EU that delivers efficiently on its priorities post-2020" for a European Union that delivers efficiently on its priorities post-2020. It highlights that the Union budget will need to deliver on the promises made by Leaders, *"including through the full implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, and supporting young people and the mobility of European citizens."* Specifically on the future Erasmus programme, the Communication underlined that *"There is a strong consensus for the need to step up mobility and exchanges, including through a substantially strengthened, inclusive and extended Erasmus+ programme".*

On 2 May 2018, the European Commission adopted its proposals for a new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2021-2027 "A Modern Budget for a Union that Protects, Empowers and Defends[1]", calling for a stronger "youth" focus in the next financial framework. Building on its successful 30-year history, the Commission thus proposes a substantially strengthened, inclusive and extended Erasmus programme, further promoting opportunities for more young people across the EU to study, train and work abroad. Under these proposals, the budget for the Erasmus programme will be doubled in size to reach €30 billion Euros (in current prices) over this period. The focus of the new Programme will be on inclusiveness and on reaching more young people with fewer opportunities.
This impact assessment reflects the decisions of the MFF proposals and focuses on the changes and policy choices which are specific to this programme.

The ambition for the next Erasmus programme goes hand in hand with the Commission's vision for a **European Education Area by 2025**. As announced in the Communication on Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture of 14 November

[1] COM(2018) 321 final https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-modern-budget may_2018_en.pdf

2017, the European Education Area stands for *"a Europe in which learning, studying and doing research would not be hampered by borders. A continent, where spending time in another Member state – to study, to learn, or to work – has become the standard and where, in addition to one's mother tongue, speaking two other languages has become the norm; a continent in which people have a strong sense of their identity as Europeans, of Europe's cultural heritage and its diversity"*. One of the prominent work strands under the European Education Area is "*to **boost the tried-and-tested Erasmus+ programme** in all categories of learners that it already covers (pupils, students, trainees, apprentices) and teachers with the aim of doubling the number of participants*[2]*and reaching out to learners coming from disadvantaged backgrounds by 2025*", while equipping Europeans with competences[3] and skills needed in a society that is mobile, multicultural and increasingly digital.

At the **European Council of 14 December 2017**, EU heads of state or government confirmed this ambition and called *"on Member States, the Council and the Commission, in line with their respective competences, to take work forward with a view to stepping up mobility and exchanges, including through a **substantially strengthened, inclusive and extended Erasmus+** programme"*.

In its **Resolution of 14 September 2017** on the future of the Erasmus programme, the European Parliament emphasized "*that Erasmus+ should ultimately be targeted towards all young people and that these higher sights for the next programming period should be reflected in an increased budget so as to unlock the full potential of the programme*."

While a key component on the road towards the creation of the European Education Area, the future Erasmus programme must also be equipped to provide an optimal contribution to the realisation of the Skills Agenda for Europe with a shared commitment to the strategic importance of skills for sustaining jobs, growth and competitiveness, the EU agenda to support young people through 'Investing in Europe's youth' and to the Paris Declaration on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education.

Mobility, intercultural exchange and language learning will strongly contribute the promotion of common values and European identity. In addition, the next Erasmus programme should be prepared to serve the future overarching and **sectoral policy agendas in education, training, youth and sport**, in particular (a) **school** development and excellent teaching; (b) the Copenhagen process[4] on **vocational education and training**; (c) the renewed EU agenda for **higher education** and the Bologna process[5]; (d) the EU agenda for **adult learning;** (e) the renewed EU **Youth Strategy**[6]; (f) the EU work plan for **sport**.

The EU **Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy** of June 2016 and the European Consensus for Development adopted by Council on 19 May 2017 underline the importance of education and human development as instruments to address concerns linked to demographic trends outside the EU, and to migration, radicalisation and security challenges.

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2 Without prejudice to the outcomes of the next MFF discussions

3 Council Recommendation on Key Competences https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/recommendation-key-competences-lifelong-learning.pdf

4 https://www.eqavet.eu/What-We-Do/European-Policy/Copenhagen-Process

5 http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/higher-education/bologna-process_en

6 https://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth-strategy_en

These agendas must continue to rely on the support from the **integrated nature of the Erasmus programme** that covers lifelong learning in all contexts – whether formal, non-formal or informal (including through youth and sport activities) – and at all levels: from early childhood education, schools and vocational education and training, to higher education and adult learning. A coherent lifelong learning approach is central to managing the different transitions that people will face over the course of their life cycle. In taking this approach forward, the next Erasmus programme will maintain a close relationship with the overall strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training for the period after 2020, as well as reinforcing and developing new synergies with other related EU programmes (e.g. the future European Structural and Inverstment Funds and the Research and Innovation Framework Programme post 2020 (Horizon Europe) and other policy areas.

1.2. Scope of the impact assessment

In compliance with Article 30.4 of the EU Financial Regulation, this impact assessment accompanies the Commission's legislative proposal for the establishment of the EU spending programme in the field of education, training, youth and sport, for the period after 2020. This initiative is being prepared in the context of the post-2020 Multi-Annual Financial Framework and builds on the results of the mid-term evaluation of the current Erasmus+ programme and its predecessor programmes. It aims specifically to:

1. propose a clear and coherent **intervention logic** for an EU programme promoting learning mobility, cooperation and policy development in the education, training, youth and sport fields;

2. assess a possible set of **improvements** compared to the Erasmus+ programme currently implemented, bearing in mind in particular the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality – and taking into account the lessons learned from the implementation of predecessor programmes;

3. analyse the outcomes of the **open public consultation** and other stakeholders' consultation activities organised by the Commission in the context of the impact assessment exercise.

1.3. Lessons learned from previous programmes

1.3.1 Mid-term evaluation

The recently completed mid-term evaluation of Erasmus+[7] builds on **National Reports** submitted by all 33 Programme Countries, an evaluation report by an external independent contractor, reviewed studies, stakeholders' experience in managing the programme, and **1 million responses** from all interested parties regarding retrospective achievements and offering views on future evolution of the programme. Its key findings are the following:

Relevance: the mid-term evaluation of the Erasmus+ demonstrated that the programme is highly relevant towards its objectives. Overall, the programme is greatly valued by a broad variety of stakeholders[8] as well as by the general public, benefiting from a strong brand name, recognised well beyond the group of direct beneficiaries. The single brand

[7] https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents.evaluations_en

[8] education, training, youth and sport organisations, representatives of the labour market as well as of civil society

name has contributed to the programme's increased visibility and a progressively strong adherence by the sectors covered.

The mid-term evaluation also found evidence that the programme is contributing to a more cohesive Union. However, while acknowledging that the current programme is reaching out to disadvantaged young people more than its predecessors (11.5% of the total number of participants in the current Erasmus+), the evaluation pointed out the need to widen the access to the programme, reach out to people with fewer opportunities and to facilitate the participation of smaller-sized organisations. The evaluation also identified insufficient or lack of foreign language skills as important factors that limit the access of hard-to-reach groups to transnational activities.
The actions in the youth field have been the most successful in this regard, reaching out to young people with fewer opportunities (31% of beneficiaries), by applying inclusive, non-formal learning approaches.

The mid-term evaluation found that the programme is effective in triggering innovation among organisations that participate in the programme. Nevertheless, such effects generally do not seem to go beyond the beneficiaries of the Erasmus+ grant. A limited level of innovation[9] is achieved in particular in those sectors that do not benefit from dedicated actions such as knowledge alliances and sector skills alliances. The evaluation also found that the programme provided multiple opportunities for policy innovation and policy learning, but that the take-up of these innovations at national level remained inadequate.

Erasmus+ has also proved important for the EU's global outreach, notably by facilitating the cooperation between Europe and Partner Countries[10]. The opening of Erasmus+ to Partner Countries around the world has contributed to the internationalisation of the EU's universities, opened up new opportunities - especially for participants and organisations from enlargement, neighbouring and developing countries - and contributed to disseminating EU values.

The evaluation noted that there is potential to introduce better-targeted actions to maximise the relevance of Jean Monnet, sport and adult learning activities. There is a need for greater understanding of European integration and a greater sense of belonging to Europe among the youngest generations, in the aftermath of economic and political crises of the last ten years.

Effectiveness: robust evidence has been produced about the effectiveness of the programme at various levels i.e. strong and clear positive effects on individual young people and staff benefiting from the programme, as well as valuable impact on organisations and systems. The restructuring of the seven predecessor programmes into one single programme, with an integrated and simpler architecture, has strengthened its coherence in terms of alignment between types of actions funded and the programme's intervention logic. The programme has shown its capacity to expand and to adapt to new target groups as well as to continuously improve its delivery mechanisms. The evaluation also highlighted the increase of cooperation between actors from different education and

[9] The mid-term evaluation indicates that 42% of the projects are moderately innovative, while 15% and respectively 2% were considered as highly or very highly innovative projects.

[10] A 'partner country' means a third country which does not participate fully in the Programme but whose organisations and individuals may benefit from the Programme depending on the nature of the action.

training sectors, youth and sport; the improved geographical balance with small countries and countries from Central and Eastern Europe being better integrated.

The evaluation recommended inter alia for the future programme to rationalise policy and thematic priorities as well as to reinforce the volume of activities in those sectors – notably school education, VET and youth - where the impact of the programmes was proven although not yet as widespread as in higher education due to smaller budget allocations. It also noted that the Master Loan Guarantee Facility has not lived up to volume expectations due to delays to its launch, low take-up among financial institutions and a lack of awareness among students.

Efficiency: Erasmus+ has partially reduced the administrative burden for stakeholders and beneficiaries – e.g. enhancing digitalisation and introducing fast-track grant selection procedures. The mid-term evaluation found that the streamlined use of simplified grants improved all stages of the financial project management, especially by simplifying the processes of budget planning, reporting and accounting, while increasing flexibility. Reduced administrative burden enhanced the non-financial performance of the supported projects as beneficiaries were able to focus more on their projects' content. The mid-term evaluation called for even more simplified administrative procedures e.g. the amount of information required from the beneficiaries during the grants lifecycle, while the use of IT management tools should be lightened and made more proportionate with the grants levels**.**
The evaluation acknowledged that the monitoring of programme implementation is more comprehensive and clearer than in predecessor programmes, but there is scope for a smarter collection and a better exploitation of data, enhancing transparency and accountability, and minimising reporting burdens.
The hybrid combination of different programme management modes (direct and indirect) is fit for purpose with a good overall coordination, while the costs of programme management appear reasonable (6% of Erasmus+ administrative and operational budget) and lower than for similar programmes at national level (14% in average). Through decentralised actions (managed by the National Agencies), the programme gets close to their target audience and offers the possibility to align with national priorities, while the centralised actions support EU level priorities.
The mid-term evaluation also recommends simplifying the application forms, reviewing the award criteria to better reflect key success factors for effectiveness and strengthening the review at mid-term in particular for bigger projects.
However, the implementation of international actions in higher education increases the complexity of the programme.

EU added value: the EU added value of the programme is uncontested. No other programmes funding mobility and cross-border cooperation in the sectors covered offer comparable scale and scope, efficiency, sectors and countries as Erasmus+. The evaluation found that in absence of the programme, the learners and staff mobility, as well as European cooperation in the sectors covered by the programme, would be substantially reduced. The mid-term evaluation also showed that the programme is actively building positive attitudes towards the EU[11] and is contributing to the development of European identity, transversally across all activities funded. The evaluation also outlined the benefits of expanding activities specifically focused at

[11] The positive association between participation in the programme and feeling of belonging to the EU is found across all sectors and all forms of participations. Learners benefiting directly from Erasmus+ were 19% more likely to feel as being EU citizens and 6% more likely to have positive feelings towards the EU – Source Staff Working Document of Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation

improving knowledge and understanding of the EU through the Jean Monnet strand to cover other target groups, in particular school pupils and VET learners.

Coherence and synergies: The evaluation found a high level of complementarity between Erasmus+ and other relevant EU policies and programmes (e.g. the Structural Funds and Horizon 2020) although the level of synergy varies and could be significantly enhanced.

Table 1: Areas of improvement according to Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation

1. Relevance	a) Inclusiveness: widen access to the programme (both for individuals and organisations). Better reach out to individuals with fewer opportunities
	b) European awareness: reinforce measures to foster understanding of European integration and sense of belonging to Europe
	c) Innovation: optimise the actions aimed at stimulating innovation, contributing to bridge the skills and competences gap
	d) Global outreach: increase international opportunities
	e) Maximise relevance and impact of adult learning, Jean Monnet and Sport actions
2. Effectiveness	f) Rationalise policy priorities support to strategic thematic areas
	g) Reinforce the volume of activities in sectors which could expand their impact (VET, Schools and Youth)
	h) Review the Master Loan Guarantee Facility
	i) Better involve policy-makers in the design and implementation of policy calls
3. Efficiency	j) Further simplify programme rules and administrative procedures, including on international actions
	k) Further optimise IT tools
	l) Reduce amount of information required from participants and beneficiaries
4. Synergies	m) Reinforce and develop new synergies with other EU legal instruments and funds.

The mid-term evaluation findings have been duly analysed by the Commission and correlated with the stakeholders' positions, as well as with the experience gained in the implementation of the programme. The Commission is addressing the mid-term recommendations in order to improve the programme implementation by accounting for actions that were critically evaluated, to reinforce the programme's efficiency and EU added value, and to mitigate any associated risks. Not all the problems identified in the mid-term evaluation will be necessarily tackled by new actions, nor would they require additional budget, but they could be addressed by better focus and rationalisation to increase efficiency.

In line with the EC Report, **two time horizons** are proposed:

a) **Within the current programming period**. Certain recommendations can be addressed already in the on-going programme, as they entail streamlining and better focusing the running actions:

- the mid-term evaluation shows that the programme does reach out to people with fewer opportunities - 11.5% of the total number of participants in Erasmus+, but that further efforts can be made towards a more inclusive programme. Thus additional measures have been introduced in the 2018 calls for proposals: Top-up of financial support for mobility in Higher Education, providing additional financial support for students with fewer opportunities; coverage of exceptional costs under VET
- further reduction of the administrative burden and bureaucracy through mainstreamed use of online web forms that simplify the application process, simplified formats of actions targeting small-scale actors such as the School Exchange Partnerships that organise mobility activities for pupils.

b) **Post 2020**. The future programme is an opportunity to address the mid-term evaluation recommendations by improving the existing actions directly in their design and implementation methods, while envisaging the programme within the broader logic for the education, training, youth and sport policy objectives (as detailed in section 3).

1.3.2 Stakeholder consultation during the Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation

Without prejudice to the next Multiannual Financial Framework, Member States expressed support for a more ambitious and more inclusive next generation Erasmus+ and for a substantial increase in its budget.

When launched in 2014, Erasmus+ merged seven existing programmes into one single programme with a streamlined architecture based on three key actions as well as three specific strands for Youth, Jean Monnet and Sport activities. This integrated approach was a radical change from the past and caused a considerable amount of upheaval at the beginning of the implementation of the programme, but is now fully supported by Member States and stakeholders.

The data collected during the consultations carried out by the Commission within the framework of the Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation, showed unanimous support from Member States, learning institutions and participants for further strengthening of the programme while maintaining stability of the programme's basic architecture and structures: ***evolution, not revolution***. Main areas of future improvement identified concerned further simplification and inclusiveness, and reviewing the balance between funding allocated and the subsequent volume of activities across the sectors.

Stakeholders also underlined that the future Erasmus+ programme should remain integrated and underpinned by the lifelong learning concept. In their views, a modern programme must boost flexible learning paths and permeability between learning sectors, while combatting "dead ends" in education and training. Any attempt to unravel this integrated approach would be strongly resisted by stakeholders as it would be seen as a return to the previous century's outdated separation of the education and training sectors.

On the management side, stakeholders called for further decreasing the administrative burden, simplifying procedures and processes – also through the optimisation of IT tools as well as increasing budget flexibility. As regards the international actions of the programme in the field of higher education, which include a geographical matrix, they would benefit from further simplification in the implementing structures.

The key messages from stakeholders are summarized in Annex 2 Stakeholders' consultation of the present Impact Assessment document.

Table 2: Areas of improvements according to Erasmus+ consultation activities

1. Intervention logic	a) Stability and continuity (in terms of scope, architecture and delivery mechanisms).
	b) More inclusive programme (reinforcing mobility of school pupils and targeting more participants with disadvantaged backgrounds).
	c) Build on the success of higher education and further expand other sectors.
2. Efficiency	d) Simplify programme rules and reduce administrative burden, notably on decentralised international higher education actions.
4. Synergies	e) Reinforce and develop new synergies with European Structural and Investment Funds and Research and Innovation framework programme.

1.3.3 Stakeholder consultation on the EU funding in the areas of values and mobility

In addition to the consultations that were part of the Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation, a separate open public consultation[12] was carried out to seek inputs into the design of the future Erasmus programme post 2020. Erasmus is perceived as one of the EU's most successful and highly relevant programmes. The stakeholders strongly underlined the EU added value of Erasmus as compared to similar national programmes (80% of respondents stated the programme adds value to a large or fairly good extent).

Its main positive achievements and effects outlined by the results of the public consultation encompass: the unique combination of actions targeted at the individual, organisation and system levels in education and training, youth and sport; support for key competences, basic and transversal skills development, active citizenship, increased employability or career development, but also increased networking and mutual learning for organisations involved. The programme is perceived as sufficiently flexible to allow for adaptation to emerging policy challenges, while its integrated architecture and management modes are considered appropriate and fit for purpose.

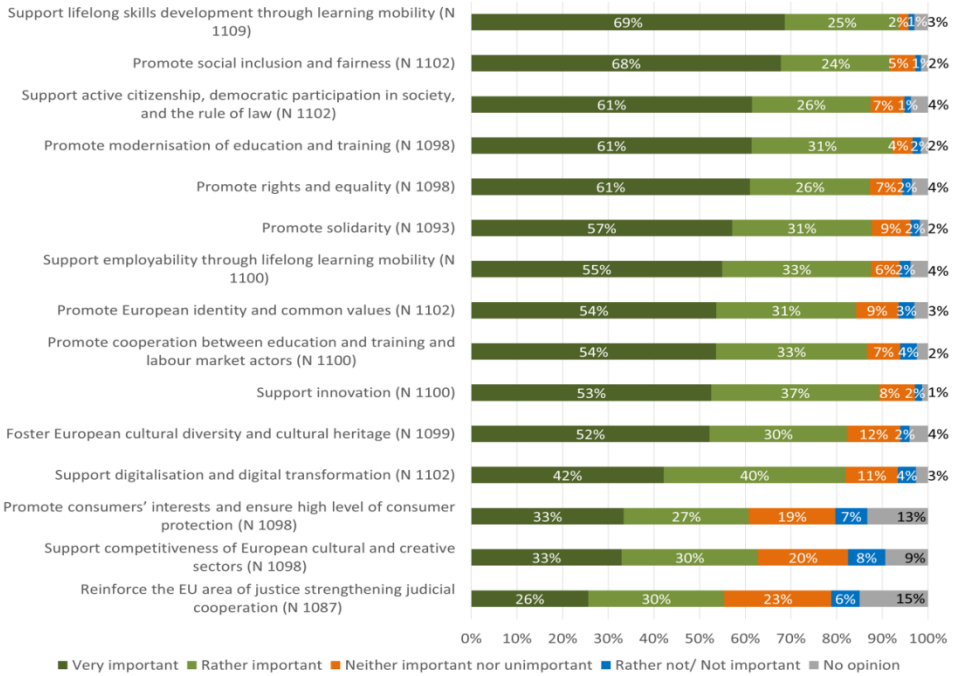
The main challenges of the future programme as underlined by the stakeholders cover competences and skills development, limited capacity of the programme to effectively reach out to most disadvantaged target groups; difficulties for grassroots organisations and newcomers to access the funding; limited possibilities for cross-sectoral cooperation. Current funding levels are perceived as a barrier for the programme to reach its full potential – i.e. unmet demand for funding as well as insufficient levels of individual mobility grants. Simplification was strongly advocated by the stakeholders - the main areas for improvement identified are the application and the reporting processes, as well as the financial rules, currently perceived as too complex. The Student Loan Guarantee Facility has proven limited efficiency thus the stakeholders recommend its phasing-out.

With regard to the **future programme objectives**, the stakeholders emphasised the need to re-focus priorities towards more social inclusion and fairness, modernization of education and training, as well as more emphasis on European identity, active citizenship and participation to the democratic life. In this regard, Jean Monnet activities could be opened up to sectors other than higher education, in line with the recommendations of the Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation. Stakeholders' key messages referred to (*not in order*) enhanced short-term mobility options, opportunities for pupil mobility and enhanced adult mobility, mutual recognition of diplomas, more virtual tools, more small scale

[12] The Consultation was led by the European Commission Secretariat General and covered a cluster of programmes in fields of education/ training, culture, citizenship and justice. The OPC received 1127 responses which were directly relevant to the Erasmus + programme. Open public consultation on EU funds in the area of values and mobility

projects, increased budget for the programme, build stronger links with neighbouring countries and widen the geographical scope for the cooperation with the rest of the world, increased flexibility, extended opportunities of cross-sectoral co-operation. Stakeholders also called for greater synergies with European Social Fund and the Research and Innovation Framework Programme, as well as improvement of the dissemination and effective exploitation of project results.

Table 3 Most important challenges to be addressed by the future programme



The most important challenges to be addressed by the future programme are, according to the respondents to the OPC:

- Support lifelong skills development through learning mobility (69% of respondents see this challenge as very important and 25% as rather important);
- Promote social inclusion and fairness (68% and 24%);
- Support active citizenship, democratic participation in the society and the rule of law (61% and 26%);
- Promote modernisation of education and training (61% and 31%)
- Promote rights and equality (61% and 26%)

The main obstacles to effectiveness identified by OPC respondents are:

- Lack of programme budget to satisfy the demand (44% think this is an obstacle to a large extent, 25% to a fairly large extent and 19% to some extent);
- Insufficient support for small scale stakeholders (30% large extent, 28% fairly large extent and 19% some extent)
- Limited support for funding cross-sectoral actions (27% large extent, 27% fairly large extent and 23% some extent)
- Low value of individual grants (26% large extent, 25% fairly large extent and 27% some extent)
- Lack of support for first time participants (25% large extent, 29% fairly large extent and 24% some extent)

The preferred areas for simplification as seen by OPC respondents are:

- Simplify application forms, reports and grant selection processes (71% believe this would be helpful to a large extent and 19% believe it would be helpful to a fairly large extent and 7% to some extent)

- Simpler access for newcomers and grassroots organisations (54% large extent, 25% fairly large extent, 13% some extent)
- Incentives for people with fewer opportunities (48% large extent, 27 fairly large extent, 14% some extent)
- Better coordination between different programmes and grants (42% large extent, 30% fairly large extent and 18% some extent).

2. THE OBJECTIVES

2.1. Challenges for the programmes of the next MFF

2.1.1 Current Erasmus+: key features (baseline scenario)

Erasmus+ is one of the European Union's most successful and iconic programmes. Its well-known brand name projects a positive image of the Union: the programme is perceived as the third best EU achievement by the European citizens after peace and free movement[13]. Over the past 30 years of existence, Erasmus+ has given 9 million people the chance to expand their horizons and acquire new knowledge and skills, including language competences, through study, traineeships, apprenticeships, youth exchanges, teaching and sport activities all over Europe and beyond.

With an indicative financial envelope of €14.7[14] billion for the period 2014-2020, Erasmus+ also supports European countries to modernise and improve their education and training systems as well as their youth and sport policies, reinforcing their role as drivers for growth, competitiveness, innovation and social cohesion.

The programme has the following architecture:

Education and Training*	Youth	Sport
Key Action 1 (mobility) Key Action 2 (cooperation) Key Action 3 (policy reform) Jean Monnet activities	Key Action 1 (mobility) Key Action 2 (cooperation) Key Action 3 (policy reform)	Sport activities

* covering higher education, school education, vocational education and training, adult education

The mid-term evaluation shows that the current integrated programme architecture in three key actions covering all sectors of the programme - has delivered positive results, notably in terms of improved quality and relevance of education and training systems, youth and sport; global outreach; internal coherence; efficiency gains and simplification; as well as cross-sectoral fertilisation and increased synergies across education, training, youth and sport sectors.
Key Action 1 Mobility for young people, students, learners, and practitioners continues to be the backbone of the programme (ca. 65% of the budget for education, training and youth) and is well on track to meet its target of supporting 4 million people to undertake learning, training and personal development activities abroad, in Europe and beyond, by 2020.

Under Key Action 2, the programme supports a significant number of transnational and cross-sectorial partnership activities (representing ca. 25% of the budget for education, training and youth) involving education and training institutions, business and labour

[13] Standard Eurobarometer, autumn 2017
[14] In the current programming period, the international dimension of Erasmus+ has also been reinforced (1.68 Bn€ for 7 years) through funds allocated via external cooperation instruments (IPA, DCI, ENI, PI) and EDF.

market players, youth and sport organisations, public bodies, civil society organisations across Europe and in other parts of the world[15].

Key Action 3 of the programme provides support to the EU level framework of policy cooperation (ca. 5% of the budget for education, training and youth), thereby contributing to the development of new policies triggering modernisation and reforms, at EU and system level, in the fields of education, training youth and sport.

The programme develops awareness about the European Union through the Jean Monnet activities (2% of the Erasmus+ budget), designed to promote excellence in teaching and research in the field of European Union studies worldwide.

Erasmus+ also promotes the European dimension of Sport (2% of the total Erasmus+ budget), aimed to increase the level of participation and to develop innovative practices in sport and physical activity. Sport is recognised as an economic driver for jobs and growth and an important source of non-formal learning, including for disadvantaged groups.

Erasmus+ has developed a successful and almost unique "indirect management" model whereby around 85% of the budget is implemented by National Agencies established in each of the Erasmus+ Programme Countries[16]. The remaining 15% of the programme budget is implemented by the Commission (direct management), mainly through its Education and Audio-Visual Executive Agency (*see section 4. Management modes*). The programme makes a large use of simplified cost-options (lump sums, scales of unit costs) covering almost all grant-actions of the programme.

The programme fully absorbs its budget appropriations (ca. €2.25 billion in average per year) regularly delivers its targets, supporting ca 725 000 mobility activities, reaching out to nearly 80 000 organisations and funding more than 20 000 projects across its different fields of action every year[17].

The programme has a demonstrated impact upon **individual learners** - young people, pupils, students, trainees, VET learners and apprentices, as well as **practitioners and professionals** from education, training, adult learning, youth and sport organisations. It also has an impact upon **organisations** participating and **systems** that support them.
The programme delivers on more than one level i.e. producing positive spill-over effects, for example individual staff mobility having impact on sending organisations.

The **baseline scenario** consists of maintaining the status quo of the current programme as described above. Some efficiency gains could be introduced but without significant evolutions. This scenario represents the minimum critical mass investment in the field of education, training, youth and sport at EU level to continue to have a positive outcome. Areas such as sport, adult education and Jean Monnet, where findings of the Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation indicated scope for improvement, will be reviewed to provide more targeted support to a streamlined set of priorities responding to beneficiaries needs.

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[15] Notably enlargement, neighbouring and development cooperation countries

[16] The term used to define these countries is subject to change in the future programme. In Erasmus+ programme, a 'programme country' means a Member State or a third country which is party to an agreement with the Union allowing for its participation in the Programme and which fulfils all the obligations laid down in this Regulation in relation to Member States i.e. EU Member States, EFTA/EEA countries, FYROM and Turkey

[17] Erasmus+ Annual Activity Report 2016
https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmusplus/sites/erasmusplus2/files/erasmus_annual_report_2016.pdf

This baseline scenario would also take into account the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union on 30 March 2019.

While keeping stability and continuity with respect to the current programme, this impact assessment proposes a **number of improvements** (*see section 3.1 Improvements proposed for the post 2020 Erasmus programme*) that would allow the programme to better address the challenges outlined in the section below.

2.1.2 Future Erasmus: main challenges

In the light of the findings of the mid-term evaluation and of the recent policy developments (*see section 1.1. Scope and context*), the following challenges need to be addressed in the future programme:

A) Closing the knowledge, skills and competences gap

In a fast-changing world – with rapid demographic, societal and technological changes - there is a clear need to provide individuals with the right set of knowledge, skills and competences, including language learning, in a lifelong learning perspective, to make them more resilient and sustain current standards of living, support high rates of employment and foster social cohesion[18]. Moreover, evidence shows that investments in digital skills - as well as in those fields that are strategic for smart economic and social development (such as climate change, clean energy, STE(A)Ms[19], artificial intelligence, robotics, data analysis, design, etc.) - are determining factors for Europe's sustainable growth and cohesion. In today's highly competitive global environment, the challenges outlined above must also be seen in their international context. International activities within Erasmus would benefit from more intensity, volume and scope, allowing them to increase their potential to support excellence and competitiveness.

B) Making Erasmus more inclusive (inclusion gap)

In general terms, **social exclusion** - driven by family, social, and physical environment that can be conducive of discrimination and vulnerabilities - hinders access to quality education and the chances to successfully complete education and training.

Social exclusion is at the same time the result and the cause for education poverty, a vicious circle perpetuated from one generation to the next. Learners with fewer opportunities and institutions from underperforming EU regions remain over-represented among the low achievers on basic skills (PISA results show that the risk of becoming a low-achiever is four times higher for pupils from a weak socio-economic background than from a strong one) show high rates of early schools leaving and insufficient higher education attainment and in general score low on other social indicators. First and second generation migrant children in schools are under-performing, partly as a result of inadequate support in the language of schooling.

Constraints are particularly high for a segment of the population which is at risk of exclusion due to a number of causes: educational difficulties[20], economic, social[21] or geographical[22] obstacles, cultural differences and migrant background[23], disabilities or health problems.

[18] European Commission (2017) Reflection Paper on the Social Dimension of Europe, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/reflection-paper-social-dimension-europe_en.pdf

[19] Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics

[20] early school-leavers; low qualified adults; young people with poor school performance

[21] people facing discrimination because of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, etc.; people with limited social skills; young and/or single parents; orphans

[22] people from remote or rural areas; people living in small islands or in peripheral regions

The lack of learning opportunities starts already at early age. Learning and development gaps[24] among **children** from disadvantaged backgrounds are observed, leading to higher risks of school failure or early school leaving and consequently lowering success prospects later on in life. Early childhood education constitutes a key educational step that can deliver positive outcomes for society as early years are critical for shaping attitudes and behaviours of civic participation.

Young people are among the most vulnerable groups when it comes to the risk of poverty and exclusion. Those already in difficulty lack sufficient support to avoid marginalisation. Re-motivating people and re-engaging them in their learning pathways requires extra efforts: exchanges but also cooperation with relevant organisations and support to education and training staff and youth workers, who act as a bridge with society, can be part of the solution, along with focus on learning outcomes.

The situation is similar for the **adults** with disadvantaged socio-economic background[25] that have the highest risk to stay inactive or to take up any kind of education or training.

Persistent and growing social divisions also affect **higher education**: the dominant pattern of current participation in higher education is not as inclusive and diverse as it could be: people with fewer opportunities are under-represented and less likely to complete higher education; migrant groups have difficulties due to language barrier and obstacles in the recognition of qualifications.

In line with the challenges outlined above, and while acknowledging the limits of the programme's intervention logic and scope, the inclusiveness dimension of the multi-faced Erasmus programme reflects the complexity of the sector and encompasses:

- on one hand, the **support for people with fewer opportunities**[26] **and disadvantaged socio-economic background**,
- while on the other hand a more inclusive programme also means **simplifying the access to the programme and broadening the societal participation.**

At programme level, current Erasmus mobility activities have proven to be valuable experiences for people to gaining the knowledge, skills and competences needed for personal, educational, professional development, as well as civic engagement and social inclusion. However, only 12% of young people in the EU (aged 16-30) have travelled to another country for learning or for work, while a large majority (61%) of young Europeans do not perceive mobility as an attractive option. The current programme is unable to meet the high demand: only a minority of young people can currently benefit from an Erasmus experience - less than 4% of young people living in Europe today. The success rates of applications for several actions of the programme are significantly low and almost all sectors of the programme are not able to reach their full potential due to budget limitations. The current programme offers only limited mobility possibilities for school pupils, which is the most inclusive level of education in which all students, independently of social background, participate. Equally important, the programme is still insufficiently accessible for newcomers with little or no experience, or for

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[23] immigrants or refugees or descendants from immigrant or refugee families; people belonging to a national or ethnic minority; people with linguistic adaptation and cultural inclusion difficulties

[24] The current EU benchmark set by the Education and Training 2020 Strategy calls for at least 95 % of children between 4 years old and the age for starting compulsory primary education to participate in early childhood education. This goal has been virtually met in the majority of EU Member States; however, younger children and children with disadvantaged background still participate at a much lower rate.

[25] Non-native people and young people in rural areas show higher early school leaving rates (19.7 % among foreign-born, compared to 10.7% in EU) and have limited access to education and training allowing them to avoid social exclusion.

[26] People with fewer opportunities is understood in the sense of persons facing certain obstacles that prevent them from having effective access to opportunities under the Programme for economic, social, cultural, geographical or health reasons or for reasons such as disability and educational difficulties.

organisations with smaller capacity, but also for new type of organisations such as regions, rural or deprived areas, or people with disabilities.

C) Limited participation in democratic life and sense of European identity

Although 70% of Europeans feel they are citizens of the EU today, with the percentage even higher among the younger generations, there is a widespread lack of awareness and understanding of the EU's basic functioning, objectives, 'raison d'être', as well as of the EU's added value for its citizens. This can lead to misinformation and can hinder the development of informed opinions on EU actions. In this regard it is also important to recognise the impact of adults (whether parents, teachers, trainers, media personalities or politicians) on the views and attitudes of the younger generations: the programme will also need to target these significant 'influencer' groups in order to encourage them to better understand and share European values; here, the progress made on inter-generational learning by earlier programmes can play a significant role.

There is a need to bring the EU to the school. Almost nine in ten young people in the EU believe that there should be stronger school education about rights and responsibilities as an EU citizen[27]. Schools have a key role to play in the development of civic education and knowledge[28]. When looking at young Europeans understanding of the EU, beyond basic facts, their knowledge of more advanced matters is low[29]. At the same time, the coverage of teaching about the EU in national curricula is very fragmented and the citizenship dimension is mostly missing[30].

There is also a need for bringing Europe together - East and West, North and South - to strengthen awareness of European identity in all its diversity and reinforce the sense of being part of a cultural community. Moreover, many citizens are reluctant to, or face difficulties, in actively engaging and participating in their communities or in the EU's political and social life (e.g. only 28% of the 18-24 years old voted during 2014 European Parliament elections).

Language learning, including the language of the neighbouring country, supports the creation of European identity, the interest in exchange and cooperation across borders and the mutual understanding of people at all ages[31]. By promoting transnational mobility and by providing participants with tools (notably the Online Linguistic Support) and funding to learn any of the official EU languages, the programme will contribute to the ambitious goal of promoting the learning of at least two foreign languages.

In general, there is a need to empower all people to become more active citizens willing and capable to participate fully in society. This requires renewed efforts from an early age across all educational levels and sectors. There is a need to foster youth work practices and better exploit synergies between formal and non-formal learning to allow young people experience participation and democratic values in practice.

However, opportunities for young people and people with fewer opportunities to be involved in policy development and participate in democratic decision-making processes are currently limited. This is also the case for the development and use of innovative

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[27] TNS for the European Commission (2017) European Youth Eurobarometer https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/1fa75943-a978-11e7-837e-01aa75ed71a1/language-en

[28] Blasko, Zs., Costa, P., Vera-Toscano, E. Civic attitudes and behavioural intentions among 14- year-olds. How can education make a difference towards a more democratic and cohesive Europe?

[29] For example just one third of students aged 14 (35%) correctly know who votes to elect members of the European Parliament; IEA (2010) ICCS 2009 European Report Civic knowledge, attitudes, and engagement among lower-secondary students in 24 European countries http://www.iea.nl/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/Electronic_versions/ICCS_2009_European_Report.pdf

[30] Learning Europe at School Study https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/83be95a3-b77f-4195-bd08-ad92c24c3a3c

[31] Commission Communication on Boosting jobs and cohesion in EU border regions, COM (2017)534

youth work and adult learning methods and practices to raise levels of civic participation in society.

D) Limited opportunities for and access to cooperation between organisations from different countries

Institutions and organisations active in formal and non-formal education play a fundamental role in equipping individuals with forward-looking knowledge, skills and competences needed to absorb the technological and economic mutations and to adequately fulfil the potential for innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship, in particular within the digital economy[32]. Transnational or international cooperation is a catalyst for innovative or value-added ways to support learners in their personal, educational and professional development, while it also facilitates circulation of ideas and the transmission of practices and expertise, thus contributing to high quality education.

The intensity and capacity of cooperation activities spawned by Erasmus, both at European and international level, remain insufficient, especially among small scale or grass-root organisations. The degree of cooperation is not equally intense i) **across sectors** e.g. schools, adult learning or youth associations are not cooperating as extensively as they could outside their country, ii) nor **across countries and regions**. This situation hampers institutional reforms and the modernisation of education, training and youth systems at national and at European level (e.g. implementing the Bologna reforms for qualifications recognition), but also limits the development of a positive attitude towards the EU.

The cooperation activities undertaken within Erasmus have led to the development of the organisations' international outlook, attractiveness and visibility at global level, in particular in the higher education sector. Obstacles to transnational and international cooperation act as a brake on the transmission of innovation, knowledge and excellence. Therefore, amplified efforts and a long-term vision for education and training institutions are still needed to enable the next generation of creative Europeans to solve the big societal challenges, as well as to empower education providers to act as real drivers for educational and research innovation, generating benefits for the European economy and its citizens.

Equally important, insufficient European cooperation also hinders the convergence towards open and inclusive European societies: e.g. current migration waves increase the need for actions in the field of education, training, youth and sport to facilitate migrants' integration in society. For example, first and second generation migrant children in schools are under-performing also due to language barriers.
Further efforts are needed to equip stakeholders in the front line - such as schools and grassroots organisations that work directly with disadvantaged learners - with the right tools to face these challenges, thus enhancing educational equity and equal opportunities, and building more cohesive societies.

There is also a need to support further the functioning of the European framework for policy cooperation, enabling Member States to exchange, experiment and mutually learn from their respective policies and practices. In addition, the exploitation of innovative processes and methods arising from Erasmus+ projects results remains limited and is not always properly scaled-up in national policies.

[32] COM(2017) 247 final, "A renewed EU agenda for higher education"

E) Insufficient scope and volume of international (non-EU) mobility and cooperation

Although considered as a positive novelty of the programme and as a proven instrument to support the achievement of EU internal and external policies such as Enlargement, Neighbourhood, Cooperation and Industrialised Countries or Development policies, the international (non-EU) mobility opportunities offered under Erasmus are currently limited, both in scope (only available for higher education and youth, but not for areas like VET and sport) and in volume. There is also a need to intensify international cooperation with Industrialised and Emerging Countries to support European institutions and organisations to face the challenges of a globalised world. EU cooperation with partner countries contributes to human development and engagement of young people which is core to building more resilient societies to enhance trust between cultures and improve the image of the EU abroad.

2.1.3 Cross-cutting issues

F) Simplification

One of the challenges of the future programme is to strike the right balance between simplification and administrative requirements, i.e. between the need to:

- ensure the programme's accessibility to the widest possible range of stakeholders, avoiding that administrative tasks are unnecessarily complicated and/or take excessive time of educators and project managers, thus negatively impacting on the inclusiveness and the quality of the activities funded under the programme and its image among the target groups while;
- ensuring a qualitative and transparent selection of projects, a correct grant-management cycle with minimised financial risks for the Union, a qualitative standard of the activities financed to safeguard the interests of the individuals taking part in them and ensure the reputation of the programme, a proportionate collection of outputs and results that would allow the Commission to be accountable on programme's performance.

Another challenge in terms of efficiency and simplification is to lower the level of complexity in the implementation of the decentralised higher education international actions of the programme. Currently, some parts of these actions are funded from four different EU external cooperation instruments[33] financed under external cooperation Heading 4 of the EU budget and from the European Development Fund.

G) Coherence

Maintaining the coherence between the various EU programmes is a major challenge for the future Multiannual Financial Framework. Other mobility schemes exist under the remit of different policy areas. Those mobility schemes with a strong learning dimension would benefit from additional coherence. The future Erasmus programme could be used as a vehicle for their streamlined implementation. This solution would offer mainstreamed support for these schemes and a streamlined implementation of mobility formats (single-rule book) for beneficiaries and participants (e.g. digital traineeship mobility), enhanced implementation coherence, further simplification and efficiency gains, as well as flexibility for the programme to adapt to new emerging priorities.

[33] Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA); European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI); Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI); Partnership Instrument for cooperation with third countries (PI)

H) Synergies

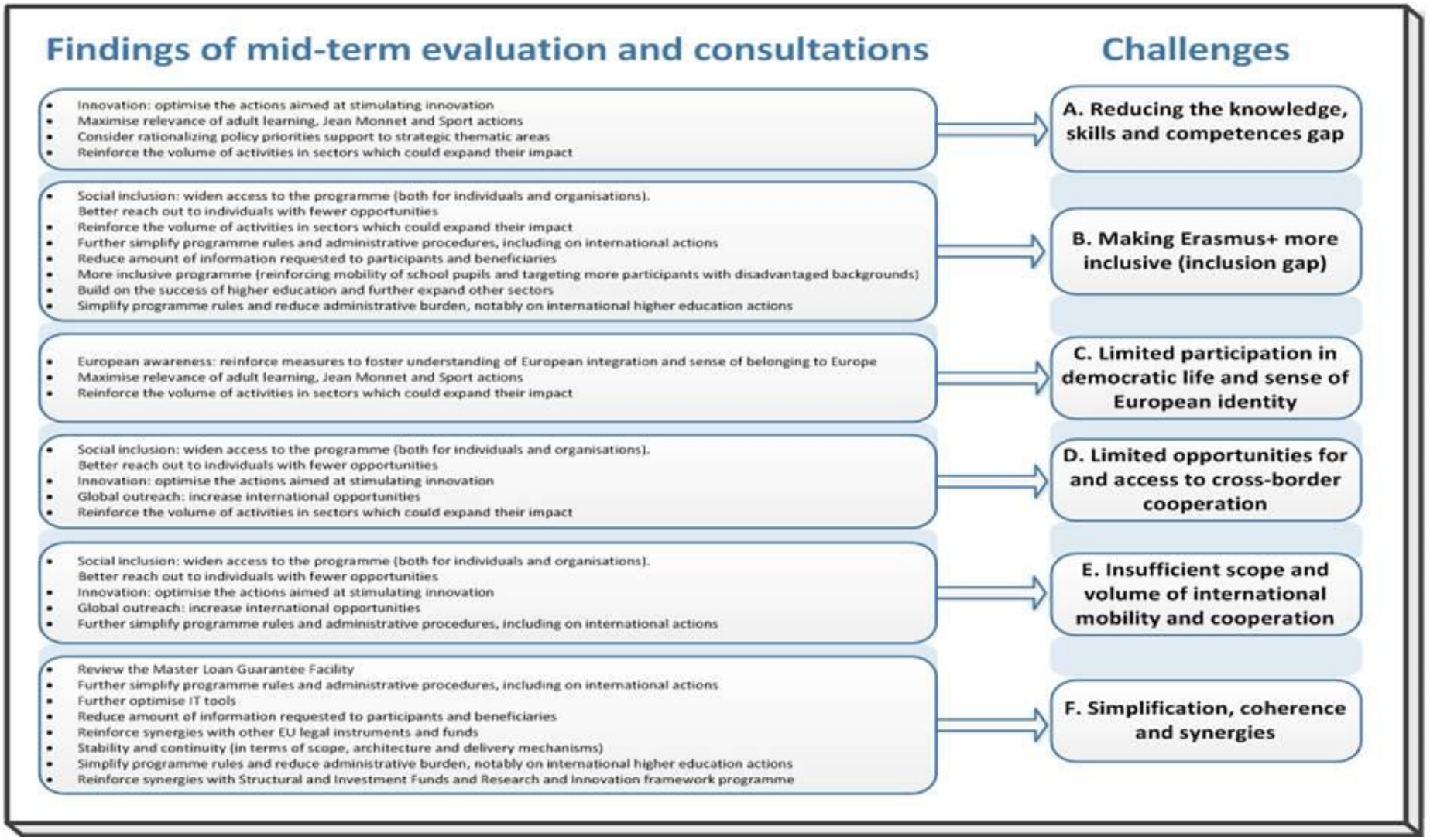
There is a need to better exploit the significant potential for complementarities and synergies between Erasmus and other EU funding instruments. In particular, synergies between Erasmus and the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), the Research and Innovation Framework Programme (Horizon Europe), etc., remain untapped under the current programming period.

Notably due to the differences in the respective intervention logics, management modes and the architecture of the instruments concerned, synergies have effectively taken place only in very limited cases. Yet, since Erasmus and the ESIF both support the qualitative development of lifelong learning, education, training and youth systems in the EU, there is a great potential and a real need to better exploit the high level of complementarities between Erasmus and the structural funds. For the future MFF period, the challenge is to reinforce these synergies and accompany them with appropriate delivery mechanisms to ensure their concrete implementation.

Regarding the next Research and Innovation Framework Programme (Horizon Europe), new synergies between Horizon Europe and Erasmus could be developed to foster opportunities to support the development of the knowledge triangle – education, research and business – to nurture the creation of European-scale innovation ecosystems and to support innovative practices and deliverables in forward-looking sectors. Erasmus could play an instrumental role in helping mainstreaming certain innovative developments piloted by the European Institute of Technology (EIT) and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA).

At the same time, there is a need to establish a framework for cooperation and coordinated implementation of Erasmus and other EU programmes, for instance the European Solidarity Corps which has common governance and delivery mechanisms,

Table 3. Challenges tree and the findings of the mid-terms evaluation and stakeholders' consultation



2.2. Objectives of the programmes of the next MFF

2.2.1 General objective

The general objective of the Programme is to support the educational, professional and personal development of people in education, training, youth and sport, in Europe and beyond, thereby contributing to sustainable growth, jobs and social cohesion and to strengthening European identity. As such, the Programme shall be a key instrument for building a European education area, supporting the implementation of the European strategic cooperation in the field of education and training, with its underlying sectoral agendas, advancing youth policy cooperation under the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 and developing the European dimension in sport.

2.2.2. Specific objectives

To achieve the general objective described above the following specific objectives will be pursued:

- Promote learning mobility of individuals, as well as cooperation, inclusion, excellence, creativity and innovation at the level of organisations and policies in the field of education and training;
- Promote non-formal learning mobility and active participation among young people, as well as cooperation, inclusion, creativity and innovation at the level of organisations and policies in the field of youth;
- Promote learning mobility of sport coaches and staff, as well as cooperation, inclusion, creativity and innovation at the level of sport organisations and sport policies.

2.2.3. Operational objectives

The specific objectives will be pursued through the following operational objectives.

<u>Key Action 1 – Learning mobility:</u>

- Support learning mobility opportunities within Europe and beyond
- Support youth participation activities
- Support DiscoverEU activities
- Support mobility of sports coaches and staff
- Provide language learning opportunities

<u>Key Action 2 - Cooperation among organisations and institutions:</u>

- Foster excellence and innovation, including through the establishment of networks of organisations and institutions, at various levels
- Ensure better outreach to local level
- Promote cooperation and exchanges of practices, including through digital tools within Europe and beyond

<u>Key Action 3 - Support to policy development and cooperation:</u>

- Support the preparation and implementation of the European policy cooperation frameworks
- Support bodies, Union tools and measures that foster quality, transparency and recognition of competences, skills and qualifications

- Foster dialogue and cooperation with key stakeholders, including EU-wide networks, European NGO's, and international organisations.

- Support bodies and activities that contribute to the implementation of the (post 2020) Erasmus Programme
- Raise awareness about European policy outcomes and priorities, as well as on the (post 2020) Erasmus programme

The objectives shall also be pursued through Jean Monnet Actions

- Support a Jean Monnet action in the field of higher education;
- Support a Jean Monnet action in other fields of education and training;
- Support institutions pursuing an aim of European interest [34].

3. PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND PRIORITIES

The **optimal scenario** proposed in this Impact Assessment is characterised by **improvements** implemented without affecting the general **stability** of the programme (in terms of structure and scope), building up on Erasmus current actions, and ensuring **continuity** with the current programme. This approach is a vehicle to increasing its impact.

Stability and continuity with the current programme is maintained in terms of structure, in line with the views expressed by Member States and stakeholders- **evolution not revolution for Erasmus post 2020.**

The draft legislative proposal will be structured around three chapters, as follows:

Education and Training*	Youth	Sport
Key Action 1 (mobility)	Key Action 1 (mobility)	Key Action 1 (mobility)
Key Action 2 (cooperation)	Key Action 2 (cooperation)	Key Action 2 (cooperation)
Key Action 3 (policy)	Key Action 3 (policy)	Key Action 3 (policy)
Jean Monnet		

* covering higher education, school education, vocational education and training, adult education

In terms of **scope,** the programme will continue to cover all education and training sectors - schools, vocational education and training, higher education and adult learning - youth and sport, but in a more streamlined manner with better focused and aligned priorities. In addition, the programme could be **enlarged to cater for the new priority**

[34] -the European University Institute of Florence; including the School of Transnational Governance
-the College of Europe (Bruges and Natolin campuses);
-the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA), Maastricht;
-the Academy of European Law, Trier;
-the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, Odense;
-the International Centre for European Training (CIFE), Nice;

areas. The **improvements** proposed will be **integrated in the current programme architecture** and will use the existing delivery mechanisms.

To maintain a sufficient level of performance and impact for the three key actions, the programme will need to preserve a critical mass for the intervention to be meaningful at EU level.

3.1. Improvements proposed for the post 2020 Erasmus programme

In line with the mid-term recommendations and stakeholders opinions, the approach for the future programme post 2020 will be twofold:

3.1.1. Maintain stability, with **enhanced focus of the existing actions, clarity of the objectives and increased efficiency** – the actions will be streamlined and reorganised to correct their deficiencies and enhance their efficiency and added value. This rationale is linked to a pertinence analysis based on the renewed support from the Member States and stakeholders, on the political relevance of these actions, as well as on the call to maintain stability for the programme actions and architecture.

For smaller scale actions - such as Jean Monnet and Sport, an analysis has been undertaken to assess their financial impact in light of their added value and relevance for the stakeholders, in particular, the role of sport as a catalyser for social inclusion and the role of Jean Monnet for raising awareness on EU integration in Europe and world-wide. Maintaining support for these actions under the Erasmus programme remains relevant as there are clear benefits for participating organisations, in particular the small scale grass-root ones.

Consequently, it is proposed to mitigate the shortcomings identified by the mid-term through scaling up and better focus of these actions:

- For **Sport,** it will be ensured at strategic programming level that no overlaps occur with actions under the youth strand, and that the sport actions reach a sufficient critical mass and scale. Efficiency gains will be achieved by a new format for the sport actions, reinforcing synergies and avoiding overlaps – i.e. sport actions embedded under key actions 1, 2 and 3.
- Similar scrutiny has been undertaken for **Jean Monnet** actions. The analysis - corroborated with the mid-term findings and the stakeholders' consultations – pointed towards the need to: a) purely discontinue_certain actions that have proven inefficient and that are not bringing sufficient added value (*as detailed here after*), and b) maintain a limited number of actions in the programme with improved design and focused target groups.
- For the **Adults** sector, the mid-term evaluation noted that there is potential to increase the EU added value by better targeted actions. The evaluation also underlined "that the impact on the adult learning sector, which currently targets a wide population, is diluted due to the fragmented and diverse nature of the sector". Along these lines, further simplification measures are proposed, while the target group for the mobility actions that is proposed to be maintained in the future programme has been refocused to only cover group mobility for adults with low basic skills, as it has been found highly cost efficient.

In terms of **efficiency**, the mid-term evaluation found that Erasmus mobility actions are clearly cost-effective, especially learners' mobility (with an average cost for the EU of 15€ per day/learner[35]). Furthermore, the programme will continue its efforts to improve its overall efficiency. For example, economies of scale could be achieved through enhanced simplification resulting in reduced management costs for the participating organisations and thus efficiency gains at stable or regressive fixed costs for implementing the programme.

3.1.2. **Discontinuing** certain underperforming actions, in line with the lack of efficiency delineated by the evaluation:

- The **Student Loan Guarantee Facility** introduced within Erasmus, was deemed by the mid-term evaluation and by the stakeholders' opinions to have been unsuccessful in attracting financial intermediaries in sufficient numbers, in particular for the incoming student segment, and to be insufficiently tailored to address the needs of the disadvantaged.
As a consequence, since it has not lived up to volume expectations, the Master Loan Guarantee Facility would be discontinued under the future Erasmus.

- Jean Monnet support for associations to carry out statutory activities of associations dealing with EU studies and EU issues – these actions will be phased out on the grounds of efficiency, in line with the mid-term evaluation.
Discontinuing certain actions will liberate resources within the budget envelope and will allow better focus on activities that have proven their added value.

3.1.3. A limited set of **new measures** are proposed in line with the broader ambition for the new programme (*further detailed under the following section*):
- European Universities
- Centres of vocational excellence.

Within this context, in line with the mid-term evaluation findings and the stakeholders' views, Erasmus aims to maintain its current architecture and activities that have proven their added value and make the best use of current infrastructure and delivery mechanisms. For the purposes of this Impact Assessment, the following possible rationalised and improved actions have been outlined:

1) Forward-looking knowledge, skills and competence development, new alliances with the relevant stakeholders

OECD studies indicate that "relatively small improvements in the skills of a nation's labour force can have very large impacts on future well-being[36]." Therefore, maintaining high-quality public investment to boost knowledge-intensive and sustainable growth in Europe, making the link between the cognitive skills and the economic growth, is key in reaching this goal and in ensuring a more equal income distribution. The next Erasmus programme is expected to benefit individuals through its knowledge, competences and skills building support, thus making people more dynamic and allowing them to get more personal return on education through improved access to fair and better jobs and living

[35] Source: Staff Working Document of Erasmus+ Mid-term Evaluation, Section 5.4 'Efficiency and simplification', page 63
[36] "The Long-Run Economic Impact of Improving Pisa Outcomes"

conditions. A better educated society contributes to economic growth and advances the innovative capacity, referred to as the social return to education.
President Juncker has made "the case for the economic value of every Euro invested in education and training, youth and sport", for tapping the potential of private investment through strategic partnerships and for unlocking the potential of education and training for the EU competitiveness.

Mobility and cooperation with a forward-looking dimension. Within the next programme, certain existing actions would be partially steered towards activities that foster the development of competences in forward looking fields or disciplines - such as STE(A)Ms, digital skills, climate change, environmental protection, sustainable development, clean energy, artificial intelligence, robotics, data analysis, design, etc. which have a high potential to address the skills shortage and stimulate excellence.
Impact: This measure would aim to increase the volume of students that find interest in these fields[37], with an expected long-term impact on Europe's knowledge, research, innovation and entrepreneurial capacity and on its social sustainability. The measure is expected to stimulate brain gain in forward looking fields, attracting excellent students to EU universities or sending EU top students abroad. These exchanges would also reinforce the links between education and the private sector within the knowledge triangle.
EU added value: raising the profile of these fields of study and stimulating Europe's expertise in these areas is strategic in order to strengthen EU competitiveness and innovation capacity in key sectors of the future. The transnational and international dimension of the supported activities would nurture talents and develop connections in sectors that require a high degree of internationalisation. This measure would contribute to enlarged volume of skilled professionals, whom have benefited from an international experience and have acquired the technical as well as the associated transversal skills in demand for these specific sectors.

Relevance with main challenges and priorities:	A) C) F)
Impact on Erasmus structure	Low*
Impact on EU budget	Low

*Implemented as a priority in existing actions under Key Action 1 (mobility) and Key Action 2 (e.g. partnerships for innovation and international partnerships)

European Universities. A more ambitious level of cooperation and integration within networks of European Universities would aim to support the development of a shared, integrated, long term strategic vision for education, research and innovation, offering joint/integrated programmes and degrees with embedded mobility windows to amplify transnational mobility within a number of higher education institutions from different countries, allowing European universities to seamlessly cooperate across borders. These European Universities would act as drivers of educational innovation and cross-disciplinary cooperation, promoting exchanges between research teams and academic staff and bringing a new generation of creative Europeans together, able to cooperate seamlessly across borders and across disciplines, using different languages, in particular on forward-looking study fields that address important societal challenges and skills shortages that Europe faces. In terms of relevance, the consulted stakeholders see a great need and potential for this type of cooperation platforms that will allow for better

[37] Currently, ICT for example represents only 4% of Erasmus+ beneficiaries in the higher education sector

integration of the studies Europe-wide, in order to be more responsive to the modern societal challenges. Furthermore, this activity is coherent and is contributing to the broader EU level policy objective of building a European Education Area by 2025. A relatively limited number[38] of European Universities are projected for the seven years duration of the programme. To preserve effectiveness, it is proposed that the networks be embedded in the centralised management mode.
Impact: European Universities would act as a real game changer in Europe by opening up study programmes with embedded mobility at Bachelor, Master and Doctoral levels; creating new joint curricula based on forward looking-skills and cross-disciplinary/multi-disciplinary approaches; and fostering the creation of multidisciplinary and competitive education and research teams where students, lecturers, researchers and local ecosystems co-create/co-share knowledge and innovation.
EU added value: The expected impact is to shape the next generation of creative and innovative European citizens and help establish a true European mind-set. These networks would attract students, researchers, businesses and investment and enhance the performance and competitive advantage of European higher education institutions thus contributing to building the European Education Area. European Universities would drive educational and research innovation at European level by making best use of innovative pedagogical instruments and digital technologies.

Relevance with main challenges and priorities:	A) C) D) E)
Impact on Erasmus structure	Medium/High*
Impact on EU budget	High

*Implemented as a new action under Key Action 2, in synergy with other actions of Key Action 1 and Key Action 2, as well as with the successor programme of Horizon2020 and Structural Funds.

Centres of vocational excellence
This initiative will support the development of trans-national platforms of centres of vocational excellence closely integrated in local and regional strategies for growth, innovation and competitiveness, while supporting overall structural changes and economic policies in the EU. The Centres would strive to develop high quality VET curricula and qualifications focused on meeting current and emerging sectoral skills needs and would offer transnational joint VET programmes / qualifications with a strong element of work-based learning, digital content and mobility experience. They would act as drivers of excellence and innovation in VET, promoting a proactive role of VET in economic development and innovation strategies.
Impact: Centres of vocational excellence would act as catalyst of substantial innovation in the way VET provision is developed and provided through the design of joint VET curricula which respond to EU-wide sectoral developments with a strong focus on digital training content. The Centres would be established partnerships with innovation ecosystems within regions in which they will operate.
EU added value: The Centres will create synergies in addressing emerging sectoral skills needs, need for mobility and reforms in VET supporting excellence and innovation (including the digital training content). The networks would address the missing element of a proactive role of VET in innovation systems.

[38] European Council Conclusions 14 December 2017 "strengthening strategic partnerships across the EU between higher education institutions and encouraging the emergence by 2024 of some twenty 'European Universities"

Relevance with main challenges and priorities:	A) D) E)
Impact on Erasmus structure	Medium
Impact on EU budget	Medium

*Implemented as a new action under Key Action 2, in synergy with other actions of Key Action 1, as well as with Structural Funds.

Partnerships for innovation[39] Rationalise the existing tried and tested Erasmus actions aimed at fostering innovation in education, training, youth and sport. This action would build on results achieved through different actions of the current Erasmus programme, and notably: the Knowledge Alliances, the Sector Skills Alliances, the Forward Looking Cooperation projects and a segment of ambitious result-oriented Strategic Partnerships. Through the angle of education, training, youth and sport, the goal would be to support innovation for economic growth (in particular the synergies between higher education, VET and business/industry) as well as to foster social innovation with the ambition to create long-lasting changes to solve societal problems[40].
Impact: Innovation is essential for sustainable growth, social cohesion and economic development. Stimulating innovation is crucial for the creation of modern educational systems that provide the right set of competences to future generations of Europeans. People today are increasingly faced with uncertainties about their future, as a result of rapid technological change, major sustainable development challenges, demographic trends, migration. In this context, providing modern and innovative learning environments would allow young people and adults to become resilient and learn how to cope in a rapidly changing world.
EU added value: The transnational dimension of the supported activities would develop connections in sectors that require a high degree of internationalisation. The support of innovation at EU level would also foster cross-fertilisation between countries, helping Members States to progress at a similar pace in the modernisation and innovation of their systems and policies.

Relevance with main challenges and priorities:	A) C) D) F)
Impact on Erasmus structure	Low*
Impact on EU budget	Medium

*Implemented as a new action under Key Action 2; Rationalisation of existing Key Action 2 and Key Action 3 actions; Synergies with the successor programme of Horizon2020

2) "Erasmus - a reality for all": a more inclusive programme, reaching out to those from disadvantaged backgrounds

The future programme aims to reinforce its inclusive dimension by reinforcing and adapting the current tried and tested measures with a view to:

[39] [*the Erasmus foreseen Innovation Partnerships are distinct instrument not related to the European Innovation Partnerships funded under the European Institute of Innovation and Technology*]
[40] See for example Social Innovation, a decade of change (BEPA, 2014)

a) step up efforts to make the programme more inclusive for **people with fewer opportunities, including people with disabilities and minorities**
b) **widen the access to a larger target group of individuals and organisations in Europe and beyond.**

This objective will be achieved by a series of measures such as:

- fostering participation of smaller-sized organisations, in particular small and community-based grassroots organisations, that work directly with disadvantaged learners of all ages, to reach out to "non-elite" groups of learners. The proposed small-scale partnerships aim to foster capacity building, social commitment and entrepreneurial spirit, benefiting local communities. These partnerships are also expected to produce improved methods and practices that enable active involvement of young people and allow to better targeting of disadvantaged groups.
- adapting the level of financial support for the mobility of individuals to fit the needs of people with fewer opportunities, in line with the living and subsistence costs of the host country. Providing increased financial support for individual mobility will have the effect of broadening the segment of participants covered by the programme and allow for mobility to become a regular pattern in every person education and training pathway.
- blended and virtual mobility and learning, making full use of digital innovations, will enable the programme to reach out to larger target groups using a limited set of resources, for example non-mobile students, thus increasing the integration of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in education and training, youth and sport activities
- boosting school, VET and youth mobility to extend opportunities, widen the programme's accessibility, and reinforce the lifelong learning dimension stimulating up- and re-skilling.
- introducing more flexible learning mobility formats - such as short term, group or virtual mobility – which would be more relevant to the needs and possibilities of certain target groups;
- supporting learning mobility of low-skilled adults, often from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Erasmus actions have inspired new ways of working with people with fewer opportunities, across sectors, with significant spill over effects even where the main objective of the activities is not to target these groups (i.e. impacts beyond results)[41].
The main improvements that could be proposed under the next Multiannual Financial Framework period are described below.

Mobility of school pupils. Supporting short and long term individual/group mobility of pupils (general primary and secondary education) during their key formative years enable school pupils from different countries to have a first-hand transnational European learning experience, to develop their understanding of the diversity of European cultures and languages, and to acquire social, civic and intercultural competences. In line with the mid-term evaluation findings that outlined difficulties regarding the access to pupils' mobility via the cooperation projects under the current programme (key action 2), it is

[41] During the Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation, this type of impact was reported by 44% of practitioner respondents, although only 19% stated that the activity they took part focused on integration of disadvantaged groups.

proposed to transfer existing mobility of school pupils under the mobility strand of the programme (key action 1) to further simplify the access. Projects will be approved based on schools' needs analysis, a plan for development of European cooperation and presentation of the quality assurance mechanisms for the proposed activities.
Impact: this initiative would de facto extend mobility opportunities for young people in Europe and widen the access to the programme to people from different backgrounds, including with fewer opportunities, with a direct impact on reaching critical mass for the programme and boosting the inclusion dimension of the programme. In addition, the initiative would enable an enhanced contribution of the programme to the development of knowledge, skills and competences for young people, promote language leaning from an early age, as well as foster European awareness and sense of belonging to the EU.

EU added value: The transnational dimension of this action would bring a clear EU added value, considering that there are no other national or European schemes that offer a comparable scale of activities, also in terms of geographical scope.

Relevance with main challenges and priorities:	A) B) F)
Impact on Erasmus structure	Medium/Low*
Impact on EU budget	High

*Implemented as a new action under Key Action 1, largely based on existing mobility formats. Phase out of mobility under Key Action 2 to ensure better coherence and simplification.

Boost VET learners' mobility. Increase the number of short and long term individual/group mobility opportunities offered to VET learners and apprentices.
VET tends to host the higher share of students in situations of disadvantage e.g. more young people at risk of early school leaving tend to be concentrated in VET than in general education[42]. Therefore, increasing the number of mobility activities in VET should result in diversifying the profiles of participants, while attracting more VET learners with fewer opportunities.
Impact: this initiative would de facto extend mobility opportunities for young people in Europe and widen the access to the programme with a direct impact on reaching critical mass for the programme. In addition, the initiative would enable an enhanced contribution of the programme to the development of knowledge, skills and competences for young people, including the learning of languages, as well as foster European awareness and sense of belonging to the EU.
EU added value: The transnational and international dimension of this action would bring a clear EU added value, considering that there are no other national or European schemes that offer a comparable scale of activities, also in terms of geographical scope.

Relevance with main challenges and priorities:	A) B)
Impact on Erasmus structure	Low*
Impact on EU budget	High

*Reinforcement of an existing action under Key Action 1.

[42] See for example Cedefop (2016) *Leaving education early: putting vocational education and training centre stage. Volume I: investigating causes and extent*

Boost and diversify youth mobility. Increase the number of mobility and activities offered to young people and youth workers to acquire competences, develop awareness of values and discover Europe through non-formal learning activities and promote quality and innovation in youth work. New formats and the virtual dimension of mobility will be explored to reach a wider and more diverse audience and make them enthusiastic to learn about, experience and discover Europe, its people and cultures, This would entail supporting large-scale activities (building on European Youth Together) involving young people from different countries from different parts of Europe – East/West – North/South, enabling young Europeans to engage in networks to learn about each other's countries and cultures, see diversity as an enrichment and discover a sense of belonging to the EU.

Reinforce youth participation

Support a series of measures that aim to foster youth participation in democratic life, in line with the EU Youth Strategy. Enlarge further the outreach of the Structured Dialogue[43] beyond youth organisations active in EU matters, including at the local level and embrace a more diverse audience, in particular young people with fewer opportunities. In addition to the appreciated EU Youth conferences and meetings, the EU Youth Dialogue will **embrace new and alternative forms of participation, including online campaigns,** consultations via digital platforms connected to the European Youth Portal. The programme will also encourage the use of innovative and alternative forms of democratic participation and debate about the EU for example based on the toolkit developed under the 'New Narrative for Europe', initiatives aimed at promoting dialogue with policy makers, as well as 'learning to participate' activities, for example through youth work, youth parliaments or simulations, actions around civic education and media literacy.

Impact: these two initiatives above would de facto extend mobility opportunities for young people in Europe and widen the access to the programme including to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, with a direct impact on reaching critical mass for the programme. In addition, the initiative would enable an enhanced contribution of the programme to the development of knowledge, skills and competences for young people, promote language leaning as well as foster European awareness and sense of belonging to the EU. As shown by the mid-term evaluation, Youth sector actions have high performance and impact in terms of social inclusion, especially in learning to learn, developing cultural awareness and building self-confidence.

EU added value: The transnational and international dimension of this action would bring a clear EU added value, considering that there are no other national or European schemes that offer a comparable scale of activities, also in terms of geographical scope. For in-country activities, the European added value would be determined by the fact that supported activities would be clearly linked to European policy priorities in the field of youth (e.g. EU Youth Dialogue).

Relevance with main challenges and priorities:	A) B) C)
Impact on Erasmus structure	Medium/Low*
Impact on EU budget	High

[43] Structured dialogue is the consultative process for youth under the 2010-2018 Youth Strategy. Through the support of Erasmus and the predecessor Youth in Action programme, it has reached over 200,000 young people since 2010.

*Reinforcement of an existing action under Key Action 1. Decentralised actions promoting dialogue between young people and decision-makers moved from Key Action 3 to Key Action 1. New youth participation activities and activities to experience Europe developed under Key Action 1.

Maximise the relevance of adult learning actions.
Learning is a must for all nowadays. Adults should engage in various learning activities throughout their life-cycle, irrespective of their previous levels of education and training. Current efforts deployed by the Member States in the adult education and training sector reached heterogeneous critical mass levels and operating scale to face the challenges of a continuously transforming labour market. There is a need for the education and training provisions at European level to better address the adults sector, through innovative approaches for cooperation and methods of teaching and learning.
The current context indicates a need for addressing the learning needs of the whole population, with a specific focus on inclusion of low-skilled people. The goal for the future programme would be to strengthen links to the EU policy priorities in the field of adult learning by supporting actions that focus on upskilling low-skilled and poorly educated adults, as well as actions that foster active citizenship, democratic participation, and a sense of European identity. Low level of basic skills for adults hinder personal, social and professional fulfilment, while reducing personal independence and self-confidence, ability to deal with changes, as well as participation in a democratic society. Current migration waves increase the need for basic skills learning to facilitate migrants' integration in society.
For the Adults sector, the mid-term evaluation noted that there is potential to increase the EU added value by better targeted actions. The number of priorities under the Strategic Partnerships under Key Action 2 could be radically reduced – e.g. from currently 12 to up to 2 or 3 - to further enhance simplification and clarity of the actions and to facilitate access to the programme.
In addition, the group mobility of adult learners, as one element of a larger pedagogical project, would continue to be supported – framed within the context of Key Action 2 cooperation partnerships - as it has been found very cost efficient and its relevance was outlined during the stakeholders' consultations. Continue supporting group mobility of adult learners, while focussing only on the low-skilled, with a limited number of priorities, will allow to reinforce both the inclusive dimension of the programme and to focus better the use of to maximise EU-funding impact on the Adult sector.

Impact: This initiative would de facto create mobility opportunities for a specific spectrum of adults in Europe and widen the access to the programme to more people with fewer opportunities. It would also improve the acquisition of basic skills (literacy, numeracy and digital skills) for people with fewer opportunities, thus extending the inclusiveness of the programme. It would support activities promoting active citizenship and common European values for the EU population as well as for newly arrived migrants. The initiative would enable an enhanced contribution of the programme to the development of knowledge, skills and competences, promote language learning as well as foster European awareness and sense of belonging to the EU.
EU added value: The transnational dimension of this action would bring a clear EU added value, considering that there are no other national or European schemes that offer a comparable scale of activities, also in terms of geographical scope. Enhanced European cooperation in the field of adult education supports the convergence towards open and inclusive European societies.

Relevance with main challenges and priorities:	A) B) C) F)
Impact on Erasmus structure	Medium*
Impact on EU budget	High

* Partially implemented under existing Key Action 1 actions, and partially implemented as a new horizontal action under Key Action 1. Phase out of mobility under Key Action 2 to ensure better coherence and simplification.

Maximise the relevance of sport actions.

This measure would also extend mobility opportunities in the field of sport for transnational/international training courses, contact-making events, study visits, job shadowing, observation periods, etc. The target group would be staff of sport organisations namely coaches, managers, instructors, dual careers providers, etc. Sport staff members have a key role in sport and by leading and guiding participants have an impact on participants' knowledge, skills, health, wellbeing and attitudes. They have a unique position in advancing social inclusion and gender equality, teaching respect for EU common values, diversity and promoting physical activity in all social groups. With a view to refocussing the actions in the field of sport, activities that promote non-formal learning through sport or outdoor activities which are currently financed under the Erasmus youth strand, in the future would be supported, where relevant, under the Erasmus sport actions.

Relevance with main challenges and priorities:	A) C) F)
Impact on Erasmus structure	Medium*
Impact on EU budget	Medium

* Implemented under Key Action 1

Support digital opportunities and increased virtual cooperation.

Increased blended mobility and virtual exchanges: making full use of digital innovation to increase the number of opportunities for **virtual learning** (i.e. virtual exchanges or distance courses) or **blended mobility** (i.e. activities combining physical and virtual mobility) with the aim to improve learning outcomes of participating individuals, as well as to reach out, in particular, to disadvantaged and non-mobile participants offering them access to the programme in cases where physical mobility is not an option. In addition, the proposed actions will contribute to addressing advanced digital skills development.

Increased virtual cooperation: the new programme would also aim to provide a regular framework for increased virtual cooperation activities, namely through a more systematic use of the e-platforms such as eTwinning, the School Education Gateway, the Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe (EPALE) and the European Youth Portal. The platforms offer virtual collaboration spaces, communities of practice and on-line services for teachers, trainers, policy makers and other practitioners across Europe and beyond. Continued and enhanced support is proposed for those existing on-line tools that have proven their effectiveness and added value. The on-line tools have a high cost-effectiveness ratio as their running costs are relatively limited whereas their capacity to reach to a significant number of people is very high.

Impact: In addition to widening the access to the opportunities provided by the programme, the initiative is expected to have positive effects on the development of digital skills and enhance the use of digital resources. The initiative would foster digital literacy by increasing the use of innovative learning and teaching pedagogies, enabling a

sufficient master of all dimensions of digital competence[44] - including media literacy and critical thinking - needed to use technology in a confident and secure way. The initiative would enable learners, teachers and researchers to re-train and to acquire cutting edge professional knowledge and use new technologies, aiming to facilitate innovative and open-minded process of learning and teaching.
EU added value: Support at European level for the development of digital skills and competence and the use of digital technologies and services in providing forward looking, inclusive and quality education is essential. Digital technologies would extend the field of opportunities for school pupils' mobility, contribute to integration of people with fewer opportunities in education and training, youth and sport activities; reaching out to non-mobile students; and increase intercultural awareness and tolerance. Furthermore, advanced digital skills would enable the growth of digital economy in Europe.

Relevance with main challenges and priorities:	A) B) D)
Impact on Erasmus structure	Low*
Impact on EU budget	Low

Small-scale partnerships. The future Erasmus would implement an action that is specifically designed to widen the access of the programme to small-scale actors, grass-root organisations and newcomers that are typically hard to reach. The administrative criteria and requirements would be lowered, compared to traditional cooperation projects thus reducing the entry barriers to the programme for organisations with lower organisational capacity. This action would also support flexible formats – both with transnational and national character but with a European dimension – allowing organisations to have more means to reach out to people with fewer opportunities.
Impact: In addition to widening the access to the programme, the initiative is expected to raise its inclusive dimension.
EU added value: This action would be a first-time experience for many organisations and participants to access EU funds and gain knowledge on planning, project-life-cycle management, use of seed-funds to develop their own ideas. At grant request level, applicants would have to justify the EU added value of their initiatives. For example, this EU added value could consist in the transnational character of the proposed activities, on a specific European thematic or policy priority which the project would contribute to implement.

Relevance with main challenges and priorities:	A) B) C) D) F)
Impact on Erasmus structure	Medium*
Impact on EU budget	Medium/low

*Implemented as a new action with small-size grants under Key Action 2.

3) Promoting awareness and learning on EU matters

Maximise the relevance of Jean Monnet Actions
The proposal to maintain a certain number of existing Jean Monnet actions for the programming period post 2020 is anchored in their proven added value. In line with the mid-term findings, their relevance will be further enhanced by the proposed specific objective under the new programme i.e. Foster knowledge and awareness about the European Union, in line with the stakeholders' and the Council and the European Parliament calls for enhanced support for learning and teaching about EU matters.

[44] European Digital Competence Framework for Citizens https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/digcomp

There is a need to raise the knowledge and awareness of the next generations of Europeans much earlier in life. Building on the opportunities offered to other education and training institutions under the current three Erasmus Key Actions, the future programme would develop a strategic framework to promote teaching, learning and debating on EU subjects in other sectors of education and training, thus strengthening knowledge about the EU and promoting European awareness.
The proposed action would only target the so-called 'multipliers' such as teachers, trainers or other educational staff. Outreach towards new target groups other than academia would also ensure a more democratic and inclusive grasp for the programme.

In addition, the cooperation with Jean Monnet designated institutions could be reinforced in strategic areas such as inclusive education and promotion of EU awareness. The possibility of Jean Monnet institutions providing scholarships to students with fewer opportunities, through the financial support of the programme, should be explored.
Moreover, the Transnational School of Governance, hosted by the European Institute of Florence, could become an international reference and a hub in the research, teaching and high level training in transnational governance, understood in a broad and multidisciplinary sense. The School, in cooperation with a broad European network of top-ranked institutions, would work with international teams of academics and researchers offering masters, executive trainings and fellowship programmes as well as other opportunities to develop knowledge and competences in transnational governance.
Impact: reinforced strategic cooperation with institutions pursuing an EU interest; enhanced role of education and training institutions to act as a vehicle to transmit knowledge about European matters and sense of belonging to the EU; support the learning of languages; strengthened cooperation among education and training institutions, as well as between the latter and specialised civil society organisations; reinforced citizenship dimension in learning and teaching and awareness-raising about EU matters.
EU added value: In the case of in-country activities (e.g. the Jean Monnet-type activities targeting education and training institutions), the EU added value would be brought by the fact that the treated subjects are EU-related.

Relevance with main challenges and priorities:	A) C)
Impact on Erasmus structure	Medium*
Impact on EU budget	Medium

* Introducing new Jean Monnet activity for schools and other education and training institutions. Maximising impact of operating grants for Jean Monnet institutions.

Erasmus alumni network. Further develop (to cover all sectors[45]) the network of former Erasmus participants who will act as ambassadors and raise awareness about the benefits of the programme. Erasmus alumni are the best advocates for the programme - the conviction with which they can speak about the programme and their experience offer a remarkable awareness raising tool. The benefits of the network go beyond the awareness raising – the alumni could contribute to the inclusiveness objectives and social dimension of the programme by coaching and offering peer learning to young people with fewer opportunities (e.g. conferences, workshops in universities, schools and VET centres about why going abroad helped their career/ personal development). Peer examples are one of the most influential methods to diversify participation in programmes or activities.

[45] The currently existing Erasmus+ alumni network is limited to beneficiaries of higher education mobility

Impact: engage with local communities and further diffused key messages on the EU and the E+ programme at local level (e.g. schools, associations, VET institutions, youth organisations). Expanded alumni network contributes to promoting a more diverse and inclusive programme and therefore could contribute to raise its attractiveness for other target groups. It would also foster learning about the EU through voluntary engagement of alumni in cooperation activities with local schools.
EU added value: In the case of in-country activities the EU added value would be brought by the fact that the treated subjects are EU-related and Erasmus-related.

Relevance with main challenges and priorities:	B) C)
Impact on Erasmus structure	Low*
Impact on EU budget	Low

*Introducing a partially new activity under Key Action 3

4) Ambitious international dimension

Boost the international dimension of Erasmus.
For the future programming period, the programme would aim to be a more balanced instrument for implementing both the EU's external action policy as well as its internal policy objectives. In this regard, the international dimension of the future programme would both aim at: i) increasing opportunities for mobility and cooperation for individuals and organisations from less developed countries of the world - supporting capacity-building in partner countries, skills' development, people-to-people exchanges; *while at the same time* ii) offering a greater number of opportunities for cooperation and mobility with developed and emerging countries to allow young Europeans and the European education systems to better face the challenges of today's and tomorrow's world (global and digital economy, innovation, new sets of skills and competences required, etc.), thus contributing to EU growth and competitiveness..
Moreover, the international dimension of Erasmus could be extended in scope - beyond higher education and youth - to types of activities such as mobility of VET learners and staff, as well as international cooperation projects in the fields of VET and sport. These types of activities would be particularly relevant in those partner countries where the share of population enrolled in higher education is low. In the case of sport, the opening of the programme to partner countries could help tackle in a more effective way a number of traditional sport policy fields such as good governance, social inclusion and fight against doping[46]. Sport creates a stronger sense of belonging to society among its vulnerable members and encourages active citizenship and positive social attitudes. It can be used to help preventing radicalisation, combat social exclusion or increase solidarity between generations, as well as contribute to gender equality. Cooperation between EU and non EU countries can effectively enhance international relations at people's level and positively influence societal changes such as reconciliation in post conflict areas.
Impact: this would de facto extend international mobility and cooperation opportunities and widen the access to the programme; this would also enable an enhanced contribution of the programme to the development of knowledge, skills and competences both in programme and in partner countries; it would increase the reach out to people with more

[46] European Commission study Sport Diplomacy: Identifying good practices has highlighted particular areas where the skills, knowledge and expertise of Member States' sport federations and NGOs could been applied successfully in countries outside of the EU, including work with disadvantaged young people disability, gender, health and refugees; evidence shows the positive impact international sport projects have on the relationships between the countries involved.

disadvantaged backgrounds and raise its inclusive dimension as well as foster awareness about EU values among partner countries.
EU added value: the international dimension would bring a clear EU added value, considering that there are no other national or European schemes that offer a comparable scale of activities, also in terms of geographical scope.

Relevance with main challenges and priorities:	A) B) C) D) F)
Impact on Erasmus structure	Low/High*
Impact on EU budget	High

*Reinforcement and extension in scope of existing actions under Key Action 1; Partially revised action (international partnerships) under Key Action 2; Degree of complexity depends on the possibility to introduce simplification measures (see below).

5) Simplification, coherence and synergies

Increased simplification
In line with the mid-term evaluation findings and the stakeholders' views, efforts to increase simplification and make the access easier will be multiplied. Building on the currently implemented measures, simplification will take place at two levels:

a) **Decreased administrative burden for all** at implementation level: reduced and **simplified award criteria**, subsequently **reducing the length of application forms** and reports; reduced **reporting** and information obligations, **improved on-line tools** more inter-operable and user-friendly making full use of the digital progress, **simplified procedures for small-scale actors**, better standardising the implementation of the programme across National Agencies.
The rules and delivery mechanisms for the implementation of international actions will be simplified and streamlined to reduce administrative burden, while remaining coherent with the external action and Erasmus policy objectives.

b) **Simplification of actions by design:** this will entail simpler rules and procedures for certain actions in order to allow easier access for small scale actors with limited operational capacity and newcomers to the programme - such as schools, adult learning and youth organisations - thus broadening the access to the programme. Such simplification by design will cover inter alia the Small Scale Partnerships; the mobility of school pupils will be moved under Key Action 1, bringing a radical simplification for several thousand schools participating in the programme; streamlining the formats of existing actions and using them in all the sectors of the programme, thus achieving economies of scale and simplification.

Coherence
During the next programming period, the programme will strive to ensure coherence both internally, for example by reducing the identified overlaps between actions, but also externally, by seeking for synergies and complementarities with other EU spending programmes.
In line with the mid-term evaluation recommendations, the programme will be rationalised to avoid overlaps between types of projects funded for instance under Sport and Youth, through merging some of the current actions which may have produced similar results i.e. bringing forward looking cooperation projects together with part of the most ambitious Strategic Partnerships, or bringing knowledge and sector skills alliances

together for a better complementarity within the knowledge triangle (education, research and business).

Synergies (*More details about possible synergies between the different instruments are described in Annex 4 of this Impact Assessment*).
Develop effective synergies between Erasmus and other future EU programmes and instruments could entail:

- The use of European Investment and Structural Funds (ESIF) to scale-up successful Erasmus projects and vice versa, the use of Erasmus to support the scaling up of innovation and transnational cooperation actions developed under ESIF, in line with Erasmus eligibility rules;
- Pooling resources to invest in the European Universities through Erasmus, ESIF and the Research and Innovation framework programme (Horizon Europe) funds;
- Topping-up funds - from ESIF - to provide additional support to specific target groups carrying out Erasmus mobility and in view of achieving the objectives of actions supported respectively by Erasmus and ESIF;
- Implementing ESIF projects via Erasmus National Agencies, if appropriate to their scope and structure and in line with ESIF eligibility rules;
- Using Horizon Europe funds to scale-up innovative Erasmus projects.
- Develop synergies with the Rights and Values programme with regard to citizenship issues.
- Develop synergies with the Creative Europe programme with regard to art, culture and creativity issues.
- Reinforce coherence with the EU External Action Programme
- Reinforce coherence with InvestEU Fund.

As a concrete tool to enhance the implementation of synergies, it is proposed to integrate other mobility schemes with a strong learning dimension under Erasmus, thereby using the Erasmus programme infrastructure and delivery mechanisms as a "vehicle", and following the Erasmus intervention logic. This Erasmus "vehicle" option for other mobility schemes will be offered through Key Action 3 as a centralised action, for its limited critical mass (at least in its initial phase), as well as its cross-sectoral component.
Some of the envisaged schemes such as the Digital Opportunities, will be fully integrated in the programme, whereas other schemes, such as the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs or mobility of farmers and rural actors, could be implemented as a new action while applying rules, criteria and procedures that are common or similar to existing Erasmus actions. The concrete operational modalities are to be decided during the strategic programming phase, while the exploratory discussions during the impact assessment phase allowed for macro level agreement on avenues for further cooperation, increasing the coherence of the EU funding programmes under the next Multiannual Financial Programme.
In addition, to facilitate the concrete implementation of synergies, the Erasmus National Agencies could act as "incubators" and facilitators of Erasmus projects which could potentially be scaled-up through other EU instruments. The accompanying measures carried out by National Agencies would be aimed to provide guidance and support to Erasmus beneficiaries to develop those characteristics that would enable their project to meet the qualitative and administrative requirements to apply for grants under the European Structural and Investment Funds managed at national and regional level, as well as to the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, and the financial instruments relating to justice and citizenship, health and culture.

Relevance with main challenges and	B) F) D)

priorities:	
Impact on Erasmus structure	Low*
Impact on EU budget	Low

*Other EU mobility schemes are integrated in a streamlined architecture, with standardised formats of activities and common rules.

3.2. Summary

The table below summarizes the relevance of the proposed improvements against the challenges identified in section 2.1.2 of this Impact Assessment. It also provides an assessment of the investments needed to implement each improvement in a meaningful way (Impact on budget), as well as the impact on the degree of complexity of the current programme architecture

Table 4 - Overview of proposed improvements, relevance, costs, complexity of implementation

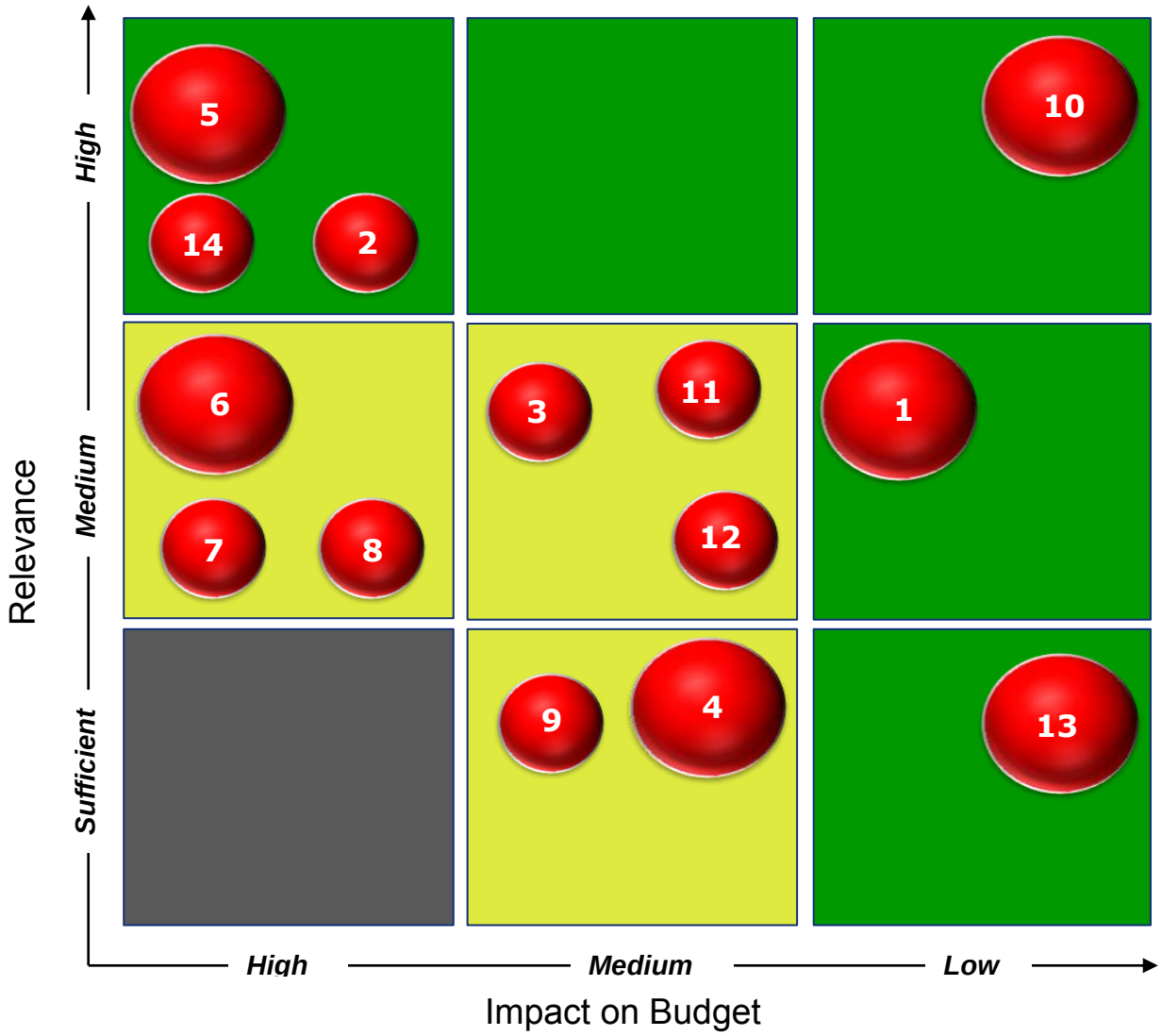
Challenges / Improvements		A) Closing the knowledge, skills and competences gap	B) Making Erasmus more inclusive (inclusion gap)	C) Limited participation in democratic life and sense of European identity	D) Limited opportunities for and access to cooperation between organisations from different countries	E) Insufficient scope and volume of international mobility and cooperation	F) Simplification, Coherence, Synergies	Overall relevance	Impact on Budget	Impact on programme architecture
1. Forward-looking knowledge, skills and competence development, new alliances with the relevant stakeholders backgrounds	Mobility and cooperation in forward-looking fields	++		++		++	+	++	low	low
	European Universities	+++		+	+	+		+++	high	medium
	Centres of vocational excellence	++			+	+		++	medium	medium
	Innovation Partnerships	++	+				+	+	medium	low
2. "Erasmus a reality for all": a more inclusive	Mobility of school pupils	++	+++	++	+		++	+++	high	low
	Boost VET learners'	++	+++	++				++	high	low

programme reaching to those from disadvantaged backgrounds	mobility									
	Boost and diversify youth mobility / reinforce youth participation	++	+++	++				++	high	medium
	Maximise adult learning actions	++	++	++	+		+	++	high	medium
	Maximise relevance of sport actions	++	+	++			+	+	medium	medium
	Support digital opportunities and increased virtual cooperation	+++	++	+	+	+	++	+++	low	low
	Small scale partnerships	++	+++	+	+++		++	++	medium	medium
3) Promoting awareness and learning on EU matters	Maximise relevance of Jean Monnet actions	++	+	+++	+			++	medium	medium
	Erasmus alumni network		++	+++				+	low	low
4) Ambitious international dimension	Boost the international dimension of Erasmus	++	+++	+	+	+++	++	+++	high	medium

3.3. Improvements according to budget scenarios

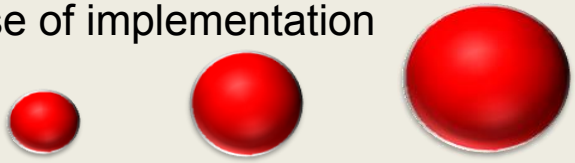
The **Table 5** below provides an indicative priority ranking based on the possible budget scenarios. The improvements falling in the green quadrants could be implemented in the context of a baseline scenario with a moderate budgetary increase, while the yellow quadrants show the improvements that could be implemented only on the condition of a high increase of the overall budget for the programme under the next Multiannual Financial Framework period.

AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT



1. Mobility and cooperation in forward-looking fields
2. European Universities
3. Centres of vocational excellence
4. Innovation Partnerships
5. Mobility of school pupils
6. Boost VET learners' mobility
7. Boost and diversify youth mobility / reinforce youth participation
8. Maximise the relevance of adult learning actions
9. Maximise the relevance of sport actions
10. Support digital opportunities and increased virtual cooperation
11. Small scale partnerships
12. Maximise the relevance of Jean Monnet activities
13. Erasmus alumni network
14. Boost the international dimension of Erasmus

Ease of implementation



Low *Medium* *High*

Table 5 above condenses the cost intensity and the relevance with respect to the policy objectives of the different new measures proposed. Various combinations of the proposed measures could be envisaged, depending on the final envelope, but also depending on the level of intensity and scope to be achieved in agreement with the priorities fixed at political level. The current graphic presentation does reflect the priority ranking arising from the policy context delineated in the first section of the present Impact Assessment, as well as the key messages from the mid-term evaluation and the various stakeholders' consultations.

In any scenario, the set of improvements will be constructed around a stable structure based on the three key-actions architecture of the current Erasmus programme. The repartition per key action and the intensity of the funded actions could:

i. remain stable with a similar envelope, with improvements in terms of efficiency and simplification, allowing for the programme to work effectively in an equivalent manner as compared to the 2014-2020 programming period; or

ii. should the programme's envelope be increased, the scope and volume of the various actions could be increased and the identified activities (including the cost intensive ones) could be implemented to a full extent, with broad EU scope and added value.

3.4. Conclusions

The pivotal role of education in shaping the future of Europe has been put very high in the European political agenda. The Commission intends to pursue the goals described in section 1.1 'Political context', by building on the positive results achieved by the current Erasmus programme and its predecessors over the past 30 years.

Stability and continuity will be ensured, in line with the Member States and stakeholders' requirements for *'evolution not revolution'* for Erasmus post 2020 in terms of programme's architecture and delivery mechanisms, integrated nature of the programme. The programme will have clearer intervention logic, fewer and better focused priorities, while the programme's scope will be enlarged to cater for a limited number of new priority areas.

Improved streamlined actions and a limited number of new actions are proposed to be introduced in the new programme, enshrined in the existing architecture and using current instruments, taking into consideration the main lessons from the mid-term evaluation and the stakeholders' consultations, in line with the recent EU policy developments and objectives. The proposed actions were clustered for the purposes of the present Impact Assessment around five focus areas:

- Forward-looking knowledge, skills and competence development, new alliances with the relevant stakeholders
- Erasmus a reality for all: a more inclusive programme, reaching out to those from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Promoting awareness and learning on EU matters
- Ambitious international dimension
- Simplification, coherence and synergies

The clustering presented for the purposes of the impact assessment corresponds to the major challenges and policy objectives outlined, nevertheless the programme's scope is broader that the list of actions presented. The **Staff Working Document (SWD) 'Main**

actions implementing the Erasmus Programme for the period 2021-2027' accompanying the future legislative proposal further details all the programme actions covered - some of these actions are already covered by the current programme, thus they were not detailed in the impact assessment where only the main novelties are being outlined. The above mentioned SWD also describes in general terms the format of the activities and the key actors implementing and benefiting from these actions.

An indicative proposal for the **structure of the programme** in the perspective of a scenario of a "strengthened, more inclusive and extended Erasmus" - covering all the above mentioned focus areas - is presented here below (table 6) as it is proposed within the legislative proposal. Table 6 offers an idea of the projects, beneficiaries and participants which are needed in order to ensure that the programme achieves a reasonable impact. This table offers an indication of the actions and measures to be implemented, as well as on their possible delivery mechanisms. The scope and key features of these actions are further described in the above mentioned SWD.

The legislative proposal establishing the programme should foresee a certain level of flexibility to adapt to new priorities and needs emerging in the course of the programming period e.g. a specific action regarding an on-going crisis – as it was the case for the migration crisis – or an emerging political priority. The delivery mechanisms also need to maintain a certain degree of flexibility (for example, in case of new actions, which could be tested at centralised level in the first years and subsequently decentralised when they reach a level of maturity) to enable the coherent implementation of the MFF funding programmes and allow for synergies and complementarities for certain specific actions.

A set of risks have been associated to the delivery of the programme; the most significant would cover (*not in order*):

- insufficient critical mass of the funded actions; insufficient EU level impact;
- insufficient take-up and low responsiveness across the target population; lack of cooperation appetite among involved actors;
- insufficient quality of the outputs; insufficient scale-up through dissemination and exploitation of the successful projects results; insufficient capacity to multiply the effects of existing actions;
- lack of convergence and synergies between the EU and other funding programmes; insufficient willingness from the involved actors to cooperate; overlaps with activities under other programmes; administrative, legal and financial barriers to achieve synergies (e.g. divergent programming timing, different evaluation criteria)
- the demand exceeds the financial envelope of the programme; low success rates
- insufficient operational capacity of implementing bodies; high administrative burden;
- insufficient involvement of hard-to-reach groups (e.g. disengaged people or at risk of marginalisation); insufficient reach at local level & geographical coverage

The risk management and mitigation strategies will be developed at programming level. A certain degree of flexibility at the level of the programme and of the delivery mechanisms will allow to respond and to adapt the programme in order to minimise risks and maximise returns.
Programme monitoring (as presented in section 5 i.e. continuous monitoring and programme evaluation) will provide the data and the necessary robust assessment to

determine the performance of the implemented actions. Regular implementation assessment, coupled with the necessary programme flexibility, will allow to timely identify the risks and to adapt the programme when necessary, while maintaining overall stability.

Table 6 - Programme indicative structure for the scenario "Strengthened, more inclusive and extended Erasmus"

Actions	Already implemented under current Erasmus (Yes, No, Partially)	Managed by
Key Action 1 - Learning mobility		
Mobility of higher education students and staff	Y	NAs
Mobility of VET learners and staff	Y	NAs
Mobility of school pupils and staff	P	NAs
Mobility of adult education staff	P	NAs; EACEA
Language learning opportunities, including those supporting mobility activities	P	EACEA
Mobility of young people and youth workers	Y	NAs
Mobility of sport coaches and staff	N	NAs
Youth participation in projects	N	NAs
Key Action 2 - Cooperation among organisations and institutions		
Partnerships for cooperation, including small-scale partnerships	Y	NAs; EACEA*
Partnerships for excellence: European Universities, Centres for vocational excellence, Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees	P	NAs; EACEA
Partnerships for innovation: Alliances, Forward-looking projects	P	EACEA
On-line platforms and tools for virtual cooperation (eTwinning; School Education Gateway; Youth Portal /Youthwork Development Centre; EPALE; Higher education HUB, including support services for eTwinning and EPALE Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe.)	Y	COM; EACEA; SALTO
Non-for-profit European sport events	Y	EACEA
Key Action 3 – Support to policy development and cooperation		
EU presidency events, conferences and high-level meetings	Y	COM
Peer learning, peer review, country-specific expertise, expert groups and academic	Y	COM

networks		
Policy experimentation	Y	EACEA
Specific actions to implement priorities of the European policy agenda	P	COM, EACEA
Studies and surveys (including PISA, TALIS, PIAAC)	Y	COM
Eurydice, Youth Wiki, ET Monitor	Y	COM, EACEA
Processes of recognition of studies, qualifications and diplomas (including Bologna)	P	COM
Europass and Youthpass	Y	COM
EQF, ECVET, EQAVET, Euroguidance, ENIC-NARIC, EQAR	Y	EACEA; COM; NAs
Agreements with OECD, CoE and other international organisations	Y	COM
EU Youth Dialogue	Y	EACEA
Civil society dialogue (operating grants) and support to the European Youth Forum	N	EACEA
Policy dialogue events and conferences	Y	COM; EACEA
TCAs (training and cooperation activities)	Y	NAs
SALTO Resource Centres	Y	NAs
Incubators and seals of excellence (synergies with other instruments)	N	NAs
Mobility of individuals in other policy areas	Y	NAs; EACEA
Eurodesk network	Y	COM; EACEA
Alumni networks, ambassadors, Europeers, role models	P	EACEA; COM; NAs
Youth Week, VET Skills Week, Erasmus Days, ETY Forum	Y	COM, NAs
Dissemination activities (conferences, seminars, events, campaigns)	Y	COM, EACEA
Jean Monnet activities for universities and other education and training institutions	P	EACEA
Jean Monnet activities for other education and training institutions	Y	EACEA
Designated institutions (bodies receiving operating grants under the current Jean Monnet, transnational school of governance) and	Y	COM; EACEA

** Cooperation partnerships in the sport field*

4. DELIVERY MECHANISMS OF THE INTENDED FUNDING

Regarding **the delivery mechanisms – the instruments (mainly grants) and the management modes** - direct by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency and indirect by the National Agencies - will be preserved as no structural change is needed in the programme's modus operandi according to the mid-term evaluation, which found them fit for purpose "with a good overall coordination and no major inefficiencies identified". The use of the current programme infrastructure will ensure efficient and effective implementation focused on delivery and performance, safeguard proven efficiency gains, while the administrative burden will be decreased compared to the levels in the current programme.

4.1. Management modes

To ensure efficient and effective implementation, the programme should make maximum use of existing tried and tested management arrangements already in place: i.e. existing structures - the Commission, the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency and the National Agencies. The proposed continued combination of programme management modes is based on the positive experience of the implementation of Erasmus, as evaluated at mid-term. It builds on the existing structures of previous programmes, in compliance with the principles of subsidiarity proportionality and efficiency. The preservation of tested modalities will allow focusing on delivery and performance while minimising administrative burden (such as what was experienced during the transition from the 2007-2013 to the 2014-2020 program generation). The general principle would be maintained: no direct support will be given to individual beneficiaries; all support will continue to be channelled through participating organisations, which will distribute it to individual learners or practitioners. This approach ensures the cooperation between the home and host organisations as a precondition for the quality of mobility. Overall the costs of management for the EU of the current programme are reasonable (6% of the Erasmus administrative and operational budget)[47]. This is particularly clear when compared to smaller national actions, which appear more costly (on average, 14% of their respective budget).

4.1.1. *Indirect management*

Erasmus has developed a unique model whereby around 85% of the budget is implemented by designated **National Agencies** established in each of the EU Member States and third countries associated to the programme countries participating to Erasmus, to promote the decentralised actions of the programme. The decentralised actions account for the highest volume of Erasmus (73% in 2015). National Agencies are equipped to manage a large volume of actions of relatively low amounts that require proximity to the beneficiaries, adapts to the diversity of national education, training and youth systems, and aligns with national priorities. The mid-term evaluation reported highly positive feedback regarding the implementation by the NAs, and outlined the system's efficiency. The NAs model has a proven record of sound financial management, high budget absorption with a high level of assurance (low error rate).

[47] This includes the operating grant for National Agencies as well as the administrative expenditure of the Commission and EACEA.

4.1.2. ***Direct management*** for centralised actions at European level, managed by:

a) **Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency** (EACEA) which will still account for a small share of the total budget (22% in 2015) for specific actions that 1) do not have acritical mass of budget to be decentralised, 2) require a European-wide or World-wide intervention, 3) are still embryonic at conceptual level and need a "pilot" phase of before being decentralised, or 4) require competition based on excellence at European level. The management cost by the Executive Agency (around 10%) is twice as lower than the management cost by the Commission (around 20%) due to the difference in nature of activities funded.
b) **European Commission** (EC), which will continue only to manage directly a few support actions or actions supporting the implementation of the European frameworks for policy cooperation (5% of the total budget in 2015). The Commission will also bear the overall responsibility for the supervision (see section below) and coordination of the agencies in charge of implementing the Programme.

4.1.3. ***Control Systems***
A solid control system is in place to control the use of Union funds for the actions managed by National Agencies and EACEA.
Legality and regularity of the transactions (the unintentional errors)
Executive Agencies and all entrusted entities are always responsible for the primary level of controls in order to ensure the protection of the Union's financial interest, while the Commission is responsible for supervisory controls. Such system will be extended to the post2020 programme. The Commission will continue to apply the control measures required for executive agencies in accordance with the Financial Regulation and the Council Regulation (EC) No 58/2003 on executive agencies. While National Agencies will be in charge of primary controls of beneficiaries, their system of internal control and compliance will continue to be monitored and supervised by the Member States/National Authorities and audited by an Independent Audit Body. To ensure coherence and reliability of controls at country level, the Commission will continue to issue yearly control guidance.
Measures to prevent fraud and irregularities
Each year the Commission will continue to review all reporting from National Agencies on possible fraud or irregularities. These cases are mainly followed up at national level where the National Agencies have direct access to means of legal redress and referral of fraud cases. As concluded in the mid-term evaluation, given the fact that the scale of fraud within the programme is extremely limited and is largely restricted to cases of multiple project application submissions or project leaders failing to honour their obligations, the measures in place are considered both appropriate and proportionate.
The Commission services will continue contributing to OLAF investigations. Financial prejudice to the EU budget resulting from fraud established in final OLAF case reports concerning programmes with similar funding rules and stakeholders is low. Cases are referred to OLAF and to IDOC as appropriate.

5. HOW WILL PERFORMANCE BE MONITORED AND EVALUATED?

5.1. Monitoring arrangements of the future programme

In line with the mid-term evaluation findings, the next Erasmus programme aims to

improve the monitoring system with regard to:

- clarity and relevance of output indicators, as well as of the quality of the data
- robustness of the self-reported results indicators
- proportionality between the related burden on beneficiaries and the actual use of the data for monitoring and dissemination purposes
- balance of monitoring efforts according to types of action,
- user-friendliness and further inter-operability of IT tools[48].

The future Erasmus monitoring and evaluation framework will follow an approach based on two main building blocks:

- continuous monitoring, for purposes of management, reporting and accountability, communication, visibility and exploitation of results. Monitoring activities will aim to assess the progress towards achieving the output and results targets of the programme, and to track the performance indicators in the short, medium and longer-term based on predefined targets and benchmarks;
- complementary independant evaluations and studies/surveys to identify long-term impact of the programme.

Continuous monitoring[49] should be based on the following approaches:

- a set of **key performance indicators** will be defined in the **legislative proposal**
- a set of **specific indicators** will further detail and elaborate the legal basis indicators; these specific indicators will be fully aligned with the intervention logic, and will measure all the inherent dimensions and cumulative effects of the programme's objectives
- a set of comprehensive data plans will be developed in order to detail the specific data needs, the data sources as well as the measurement modalities (e.g. frequency, size of samples, target audience, etc.) for each indicator
- regular assessment of qualitative results will be pursued through the means of online surveys with closed questions, addressed to various target groups (participants in mobility, project coordinators and representatives of beneficiary organisations, decision-makers, etc.)
- the timing of the surveys will be flexible, allowing to capture the impact post Erasmus participation
- continuous collection of information on progress in relation to the quantitative outputs will be collected and exploited on ongoing basis via the dedicated IT systems, such as the Mobility Tool.
- the administrative burden generated by the reporting obligations will be reduced while maintaining the by several measures: a) the simplification of certain award criteria will reduce reporting efforts; b) 100% monitoring will be maintained for certain actions such as for individual mobility; for other actions, the monitoring sample will be reduced and made more proportionate; c) the current survey settings will be analysed to rationalise the data collection needs and remove what is not considered essential.

The above mentioned data plans per indicator will delineate the scope and content, as well as the timing and the tools used for the measurement. For example, the inclusiveness dimension could be measured by analysing the diversified participation in the programme

[48] As a legacy of the past, several IT tools co-exist within Erasmus supporting various monitoring functions, such as control and detection of irregularities, accountability and transparency, as well as programme management.

[49] Main statistical data will be reported in the publicly available Erasmus Annual Report.

(e.g. people with fewer opportunities, staff or organisations working with people with diadvantages); tackling social inclusion through Erasmus funded activities (e.g. spcific topics relevant for social inclusion; social inclusion as a programme result e.g. wider access to the programme; staff or organisations that use strategies to tackle disadvantage following an Erasmus experience, etc.).

The IT tools currently in place as well as the reporting obligations of the beneficiaries provide a wealth of information and data (e.g. large volume of self-reported feedback collected through systematic beneficiary surveys) and certain are planned to be maintained for the future programme. In line with the mid-term conclusions as well as following-up on the implementation experience, some indicators need to be fine-tuned: less data could be collected from participants, while being better used. Therefore, the cumulative mass of data collected on outputs could also be reduced and made more proportionate to the benefit of a more strategic assessment of the results for the beneficiaries, coupled with an analysis supporting decision making. The concrete details will be established during the programming phase.

5.2. **Formal evaluation framework of the future programme**

The more complex and ambitious and long-term impact indicators will be measured only few times over the programming cycle, either in the context of the formal mid-term and ex-post evaluation exercises of the future programme, or through dedicated independent studies and surveys to be undertaken by external experts. Some surveys (e.g. the European Graduate Tracking survey) could be used to measure the causal impact of certain Erasmus actions. In order to develop further an adequate and detailed evaluation design measuring the effects of the programme, ad hoc evaluations (e.g case studies, ex-post evaluations, etc) would be foreseen. Those evaluations will be developed with the relevant data collection at the appropriate level of granularity.

For the next programming period, most of the current evaluation provisions will be maintained, notably the evaluation criteria of relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness (related to qualitative results and expected impact) and EU added value.

One of the possibilities explored would be to merge subsequent evaluation steps – i.e. mid-term evaluation of post 2020 Erasmus and the ex-post evaluation of Erasmus 2014-2020. The mid-term evaluation - based on a comprehensive assessment of the state of implementation of the programme as well as of the results of the ex-post evaluation of the programme 2014-2020 - would allow to account for the impact of the improvements introduced and to provide coordinated recommendations for the continuation of the programme.

Member States would contribute to the monitoring and evaluation process through National Reports on the implementation of the programme in their country. When providing guidance on how to carry out National Reports, the Commission will underline the opportunity for Member States to merge Erasmus data with national administrative data sources covering information relevant for Erasmus actions.

The mid-term evaluation identified scope for the **simplification** of the future monitoring and evaluation arrangements, namely the proportionality issues. The data collection and monitoring obligations were critically reviewed during the evaluation exercise and considered to add unnecessary burden on the beneficiaries of the programme and the implementation bodies. These findings will be taken duly into account when defining the proportional modalities of data collection (number and frequency of surveys, samples of

respondents, amount and level of complexity of data collected, etc.), while preserving accountability and critical mass required.

5.3. Legal basis indicators

Indicator	What to measure	How to measure	When to measure
High-quality learning mobility for people from diverse backgrounds	Number of individuals taking part in mobility activities under Erasmus+ [Number of learners (Higher education students, VET learners, School pupils, young people, adult learners) by the end of the programme Number of staff and participants in lifelong learning activities by the end of the programme]	1. Through IT systems (application forms, report forms, other tools)	1. Data collected systematically. Yearly monitoring of the indicator.
	Number of people with fewer opportunities taking part in learning mobility activities under Erasmus+	1. Through IT systems (application forms, report forms, other tools) 2. Ad hoc survey	1. Data collected systematically. Yearly monitoring of the indicator. 2. Deeper assessment of the inclusion dimension in the context of mid-term and final evaluation
	Share of participants that consider to have had benefits from their participation in Erasmus+ learning mobility (competences, EU awareness, citizenship)	1. Surveys among participants in mobility activities 2. Longitudinal study in the context of mid-term and final evaluation	1. Participants fill in a survey at the end of her/his experience. Yearly monitoring of the indicator. 2. In the context of the mid-term and final evaluation exercises.
Europeanisation and Internationalisation of organisations and institutions	Number of organisations and institutions supported by the programme under key action 1 (learning mobility) and key action 2 (cooperation)	1. Through IT systems (application forms, report forms, other tools)	1. Data collected systematically. Yearly monitoring of the indicator.
	Number of newcomer organisations and institutions supported by the programme under key action 1 (learning mobility) and key action 2 (cooperation)	1. Through IT systems (application forms, report forms, other tools)	1. Data collected systematically. Yearly monitoring of the indicator.
	Share of organisations and institutions supported by the programme who have developed high quality practices as a result of their participation in Erasmus+	1. Surveys among beneficiaries of cooperation projects 2. Study in the context of mid-term and final evaluation	1. Beneficiaries fill in a survey at final report stage. Yearly monitoring of the indicator. 2. In the context of the mid-term and final evaluation exercises.

ANNEX 1: PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

LEAD DG(S), DECIDE PLANNING/CWP REFERENCES

- **DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture** (DG EAC) is the lead DG for the Erasmus post 2020 initiative.

ORGANISATION AND TIMING

The reflections for this Impact Assessment have been steered by DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture since February 2017.
The Impact Assessment has been under the scrutiny of an **inter-service steering group (ISSG)** comprising representatives of SJ, SG, DGs BUDG, JUST, HOME, NEAR, REGIO, AGRI, CNECT, DIGIT, DEVCO, ECHO, EMPL, EPSC, GROW, JRC.
The ISSG on the upcoming MFF proposals in the area of learning mobility has been chaired by the SG.

The ISSG reviewed the draft Impact Assessment Staff Working Document as well as the next generation Erasmus+ programme Legal Basis.

ISSG meetings took place on:

- 28 February 2018 (Kick-off – Inception Impact Assessment),
- 19 March 2018 (Draft Impact Assessment)
- 17 April 2018 (Draft Legal Basis).

DG EAC informed the ISSG on the Regulatory Scrutiny Board's positive opinion as received on 13 April 2018.

CONSULTATION OF THE REGULATORY SCRUTINY BOARD

The **Regulatory Scrutiny Board**, responsible for the independent quality control of this Impact assessment, was consulted two times for the purposes of the preparation of the Impact Assessment as follows:

a) Informal upstream meeting
An informal upstream meeting was held on 30 January 2018 with RSB representatives and the participation of SG, DG BUDG and the JRC. During this discussion Board members and representatives of the horizontal Services provided early feedback and advice on the basis of the Inception Impact Assessment Board members' feedback did not prejudge in any way the subsequent formal deliberations of the RSB.

b) Meeting on the Impact Assessment
The Board was consulted on 21 March and met on 11 April 2018. The Board provided a **positive opinion** with reservations on 13 April 2018.
Clear and useful comments were provided by the Board aiming to reinforce the Erasmus programme proposal. The Regulatory Scrutiny Board acknowledged in its positive opinion with reservations the efforts to document the findings from the mid-term evaluation and to outline the challenges for the next period.

As a follow-up, all Board's comments have been duly addressed in the revised IA. The following changes have been made to this Staff Working Document, in response to the Board's main considerations.

Regulatory Scrutiny Board's recommendations	**Changes to the IA Staff Working Document**
(1) The report does not provide sufficient justification for the continuation and possible extension of activities with acknowledged limited relevance or EU value added (Jean Monnet, sport and adult learning).	Several sections of the impact assessment, notably section 3, have been complemented and revised to outline more clearly the rationale, efficiency gains and added value for the proposed improved actions. Accounting for the weaknesses pointed out in the Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation has been reinforced, clarified and made more visible, notably for the Jean Monnet, sport and adult learning actions (sections 1.3.1 and 3.1). Additional clarity has been brought on the various means pursuing further simplification, both in the implementation methods i.e. reduced administrative burden, but also in the design of the proposed actions. Two time horizons are envisaged: improvements already implemented during the current programme, and continued efforts for the post 2020 period (section 3, point 5).
(2) The report lacks a balanced analysis of effectiveness and relevance of new initiatives (e.g. European University Networks). It does not justify the re-introduction of measures that were discontinued in the past on performance grounds (e.g. individual mobility of school pupils and adults).	European Universities - In terms of relevance, the consulted stakeholders see a great need and potential for this type of cooperation platforms that will allow for better integration of the studies Europe-wide, in order to be more responsive to the modern societal challenges. Furthermore, this activity is coherent and is contributing to the broader EU level policy objective of building a European Education Area by 2025. A relatively limited number of networks are projected for the seven years duration of the programme. To preserve effectiveness, it is proposed for the networks to be embedded through centralised management mode. The proposed actions regarding school pupils' mobility have been clarified under section 3. Pupils' mobility is currently possible under the on-going Erasmus programme, embedded in the cooperation projects in key action 2. In line with the mid-term evaluation findings that outlined difficulties regarding the access to pupils' mobility via these cooperation projects, it is proposed to transfer this action under the mobility strand of the programme (key action 1) to further simplify the access. A set of risks has been identified along with their mitigation means (section 3.4). The prioritisation of the proposed actions has been reinforced. Several of the improved actions that are

	proposed will be very cost-efficient (for example virtual and blended mobility), while certain solutions addressing mid-term evaluation findings will not require additional financial efforts. They majority of the proposed actions entail a streamline and rationalisation of their scope, target audience and delivery mechanisms to make them more effective and increase their impact.
(3) The potential synergies with other future EU programmes and instruments are not sufficiently elaborated.	An extended description, as well as concrete examples of potential synergies with other EU funding programmes has been included under section 3 and under Annex IV. The integration of other mobility schemes with a strong learning dimension under Erasmus is envisaged as a concrete tool to enhance the implementation of synergies (section 3, point 5 have been updated accordingly). It is proposed to use the Erasmus programme infrastructure and delivery mechanisms as a "vehicle", and following the Erasmus intervention logic. Certain of the envisaged schemes such as the Digital Opportunities, will be fully integrated in the programme, whereas other schemes, such as the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs, could be implemented as a new action although applying rules, criteria and procedures that are common or similar to existing Erasmus actions. The concept of inclusion has been clarified with respect to education and training in general, as well as its implications specifically for the Erasmus programme under section 2.1.2, point B) and section 3, point 2. The inclusion dimension of the programme is deemed to step up efforts to target people with fewer opportunities and disadvantaged socio-economic background, as well to simplify and widen the access to a larger target group of individuals and organisation in Europe and beyond. The pursuit of more inclusion will by no means hamper the effectiveness and focus for the programme. The proposed measures will be a continuation of the efforts undertaken under the current programming period. In addition, the inclusive component of the programme is catered for by specific measures, with sufficient scale and defined target groups, as reflected in the specific objectives. The social inclusion dimension and subsequent actions will not be 'in competition' with the other objectives of the programme, but they will be complementary to it.

EVIDENCE, SOURCES AND QUALITY

The data sources from which the evidence was drawn for the purposes of this Impact Assessment covered

- the Erasmus+ and its predecessor programmes mid-term evaluation[50]
- the input received following the Open Public Consultation in the area of Values and Mobility[51]
- A series of Position Papers and National Reports received from various stakeholders (see details regarding the stakeholders' consultation activities in Annex 2 of the present Impact Assessment)
- External consultant expertise. The external evaluator (ICF) contracted for the Erasmus+ and its predecessor programmes mid-term evaluation[52] has provided, within the framework of the same contract, since November 2017, inputs for the Impact Assessment of the Erasmus+ programme post 2020, under the steer of DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture.

A detailed description of the stakeholder consultation activities is provided in Annex 2.

[50] Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents.evaluations_en
[51] OPC Values and Mobility https://ec.europa.eu/info/consultations/public-consultation-eu-funds-area-values-and-mobility_en
[52] ICF Consulting Services Ltd under specific contract – EAC-2016-0219 implementing Framework contract EAC/22/2013

ANNEX 2: STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

Stakeholder consultation synopsis report

This impact assessment builds on direct consultation activities with various stakeholder groups who have a stake in the successor of Erasmus programme post 2020.
In line with the European Commission's Better Regulation Guidelines, this annex:

- offers an overview of the consultation of stakeholders and interested parties, presenting the main steps and findings
- This report supports the assessment of the robustness of the evidence base used for this impact assessment.

The two open public consultations (OPCs) that served the purposes of this Impact Assessment were carried out primarily in two contexts:

1. The **Open Public Consultation** within the framework of the **Erasmus+ and its predecessor programmes mid-term evaluation** (open from 28 February to 31 May 2017)
2. The **Open Public Consultation in the area of Values and Mobility**[53], conducted for 8 weeks (open from 10 January to 09 March 2018).

Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation consultation activities

The mid-term evaluation consultations focused primarily on past performance of the programme. In addition, it included a separate forward-looking component aiming to identify areas for improvement and future priorities. The consultation activities on Erasmus + carried out within the framework of the mid-term evaluation covered:

- *open public consultation*[54] The Open Public Consultation covered objectives for the future Erasmus programme, importance of types of actions, views on the share of funding per sector and improvement of effectiveness and efficiency of the programme. A number of 1788 valid responses were received.
- *direct consultations with various stakeholder* groups involved in the implementation of the Erasmus+ and predecessor programmes, as detailed within the Annex II of the SWD(2018)40final[55]. The Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation consultation activities covered primarily:
- *24 position papers* from relevant stakeholders were received regarding retrospective and forward looking opinions about the programme
- *National authorities' reports* offering views on future evolution of the programme
- Surveys of beneficiary and non-beneficiary staff, as well as the survey of socio-economic actors, provided insights on the barriers to participation in the programme
- *Interviews with decision makers* (who were not direct programme beneficiaries) in 15 selected countries as well as 59 stakeholders at EU level covered future thematic priorities

[53] Open Public Consultation on EU funds in the area of values and mobility https://ec.europa.eu/info/consultations/public-consultation-eu-funds-area-values-and-mobility_en
[54] Open Public Consultation Mid-term evaluation Erasmus+ and its predecessors programmes http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/consultations/erasmus-plus-mid-term-evaluation-2017_en
[55] SWD Erasmus+ Mid-term Evaluation https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/erasmus-plus/eval/swd-e-plus-mte.pdf

All the mentioned consultation activities have been duly documented in the mid-term evaluation published reports that are publicly available.

Consulted stakeholders - The range of stakeholder input informing this impact assessment was broad, encompassing non-beneficiaries as well as direct and indirect beneficiaries of the programmes at the individual (learners and practitioners), organisation and system level covering:

- key stakeholders active in education and training, youth and sport with different levels of knowledge and experience with Erasmus+ and/or predecessor programmes: addressed through the two Open Public Consultations
- all current programme target groups, both for Key Action 1 (mobility) and Key Action 2 (organisational cooperation): addressed though the surveys of beneficiary learners and staff and related control groups
- socio-economic actors (i.e. companies, public authorities, civic organisations, sectoral bodies, etc.): addressed through the socio-economic actors survey
- project assessors (i.e. experts contracted by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency and/or the National Agencies to assess project applications and reports): addressed through the experts survey
- National Agencies and Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency staff members: addressed through the programme agencies survey
- Selected EU and national level[56] key informants involved with programme(s) implementation (EU level) or benefitting from it and/or its predecessors: key stakeholders/ key stakeholder organisations representatives, European Commission officials (EC and agencies (Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency and European Training Foundation), ministries' representatives. Those were addressed through the Key informant interviews (KIIs)
- Selected national level[57] informants benefitting from the programme(s) in the three fields above comprising: beneficiary organisations' leadership, practitioners and learners, targeted funded project leaders, other key stakeholders (where applicable). Those were addressed through the case studies.

Profile of mid-term evaluation OPC respondents:

- 47% represent organisations: i.e. 57% in higher education, 21% in school education, 19% in vocational education and training, 14% in adult education, 13% in youth and 3% in sport – 7% other – multiple choice question)
- 53% respond in private capacity: i.e. 59% practitioners in one of the sectors – higher education staff, school staff and a variety of other profiles, 19% learners, 12% other.

Open Public Consultation on EU funds in the area of values and mobility

In view of the preparation by the European Commission of the next generation of EU spending programmes post 2020, an open public consultation has been launched by the European Commission as of 10 January running up until 09 March 2018. The objective was to collect the views of all interested parties on current programmes' performance and future challenges for Europe, as well on how to make the most of every euro of the EU budget.

[56] Focusing on 15 Programme countries: BG, CY, CZ, DK, ES, FR, DE, HU, IE, IT, LV, PL, SE, TR, UK
[57] Focusing on 15 Programme countries: BG, CY, CZ, DK, ES, FR, DE, HU, IE, IT, LV, PL, SE, TR, UK

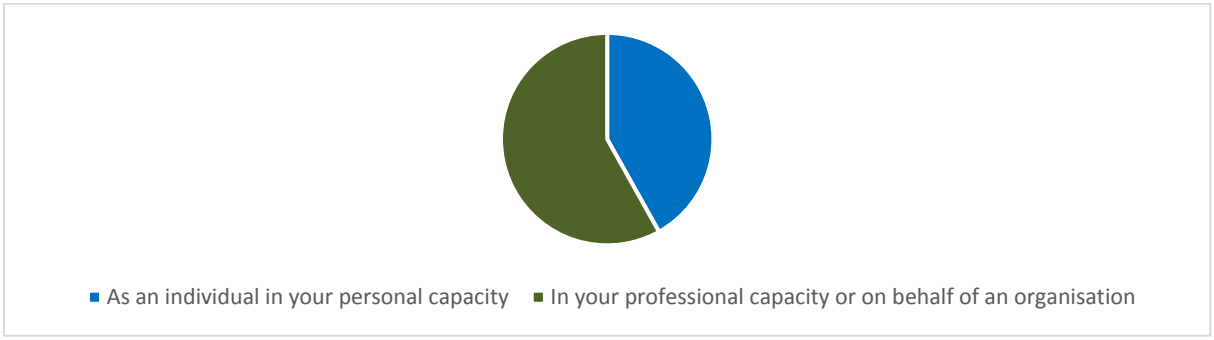
The open consultation was focused on a cluster of EU funding programmes; the present analysis only covers the Erasmus relevant replies and does not offer a comprehensive overview of results for all programmes. A consolidated synopsis report for each of the clusters, including for the one on values and mobility will be published by the Commission.[*reference*]

Summary of the received replies:

- Out of the total 1839 replies received, a total of **1,127 responses were considered of relevance for Erasmus** (i.e. mobility, education and training, youth work or volunteering).
- In addition to the online questionnaire, the public consultation also offered respondents the possibility to upload position papers. In total, over 200 position papers were submitted, out of which around **80 were of relevance for Erasmus programme**.

Profile of Public Consultation values and mobility respondents

- 42% respondents were individuals
- 58% represented organisations: 38% non-governmental organisations, platforms or networks, 18% research and academia, 11% regional or local authority, private enterprises 6%.



Other consultations

DG EAC has conducted extended consultation of stakeholders in various fora such as the Erasmus Programme Committee, the Erasmus National Agencies were consulted during the bi-annual meetings with the Commission, but also the conclusions of the European Council Education Committee, as well as of the European Parliament Committee on Culture and Education.

Conclusions

Overall, the mix of consultation activities described above enabled to effectively address a relevant breadth of stakeholders. As a result, insights were gained from a range of relevant key players on different yet complementary dimensions towards the future programming period.

The number of responses received and processed has been sufficiently significant to ensure the robustness of the analysis. Overall the number of respondents per sector is proportionate to the participation and the size of these sectors within the programme e.g. the share of respondents from higher education is higher than those from other sectors, while the share of respondents in adult education and sport is comparatively relatively low.

Type of stakeholders consulted	Consultation approach/ topics	Method	Nbr of respondents/cases/records
General public including key stakeholders active in education and training, youth and sport	**Consulted as part of the Open Public Consultation on EU funds in the area of values and mobility** Main topics covered were importance of challenges future programmes could be addressing, effectiveness of current programmes to tackle these challenges, barriers to programme effectiveness and steps to improve existing programmes.	Open Public Consultation	1127 respondents provided answers about at least one of the topics concerning Erasmus + (mobility, education and training, youth work or volunteering) 80 Position Papers
National authorities in charge of the programme and key stakeholders in each of the countries	**Consulted as part of Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation** National authorities provided a report covering all evaluation criteria. While the questions focused on past performance, suggestions for future developments were provided by many countries. A separate synthesis report was prepared as part of the mid-term evaluation.	National authority reports	Each country submitted a report (34 reports). The evidence base for these reports varied but many countries organised surveys, interviews and focus groups
Beneficiaries (learners and practitioners) of mobility actions and cooperation actions as well as control groups	**Consulted as part of Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation** Main topics covered concerned the results of participation in the programme Staff were asked among other things about barriers to participation which informed the impact assessment	Beneficiary and control group surveys	Learners: 24,037 beneficiaries and 2,695 from control group Staff: 20,155 beneficiaries and 928 from control group
Organisations other than the primary target group, i.e. companies, public authorities, civil society (other than youth organisations)	**Consulted as part of Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation** Main topics covered concerned the results of participation in the programme as well as motivations to participate Barriers to participation were also addressed	Socioeconomic actors survey	947 valid responses
Assessors supporting project selection and those supporting evaluation of final reports	**Consulted as part of Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation** Main topics covered different features of the quality of applications and projects funded and their relevance. Questions were also asked about the efficiency of the application process.	Experts survey	1,122 valid responses
Agencies in charge of programme implementation One respondent per sector	**Consulted as part of Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation** Main questions concerned efficiency of programme disbursement as well as relevance of different types of actions to EU and national priorities	Programme agencies survey	130 valid responses
Key stakeholders in education and training, youth and sport (EU/national level)	**Consulted as part of Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation** Main questions concerned relevance as well as system level effects.	Key informant interviews	59 at EU level 131 in 15 countries
Staff, learners, leadership, project leaders and other stakeholders if relevant	**Consulted as part of Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation** Main questions concerned relevance to the needs of these organisations as well as learners, effectiveness and efficiency	Case studies	233 respondents 38 case studies
General public including key stakeholders active in education and training, youth and sport	**Open Public Consultation carried out as part of Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation** All evaluation criteria were covered as well as specific questions about the future programme focusing on types of actions to retain/ modify, the continued relevance of priorities and the share of funding allocation per sector.	Open Public Consultation	1,788 valid responses Of which 1315 respondents answered questions about future programme

ANNEX 3: EVALUATION RESULTS

A.1. Evaluation exercises

The present Annex outlines the evaluation exercise undertaken for the Erasmus+ programmes on-going for the current programming period 2014-2020 as well as for its predecessor programmes as of 2007.

On January 31st 2018, the European Commission completed the mid-term evaluation exercise and published:

- A **European Commission Report**[58] (available in 23 languages) on the evaluation findings and the ways to address its recommendations within the next programming period.
- An accompanying **Staff Working Document**[59] providing additional references and facts.

All information referring to mid-term evaluation is available on a **dedicated website**[60].

A.1.1. Relevant Consultations of the Regulatory Scrutiny Board

DG EAC has consulted the Regulatory Scrutiny Board on 16 October 2017 and submitted the Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation to the attention of the Board on 15 November 2017. The Board provided a positive opinion with comments[61] and acknowledged the significant efforts of data and evidence collection, as well as the good methodology used. The Board's comments to improve the Staff Working Document have been fully addressed. A table outlining the Board's recommendations and the way in which they have been reflected is presented here below and has been published in the Annex 1, section 4 of the Mid-term Evaluation Staff Working Document.

Regulatory Scrutiny Board's recommendation	Changes made to the Staff Working Document
(1) The conclusions are not sufficiently balanced and precise. They do not accurately reflect some of the programme	Both the Executive summary and the conclusions have been revised to outline more clearly the weaknesses pointed out by the external evaluator in its conclusions and across the Staff Working Document. Any evaluation Staff Working Document has to remain backward-looking according to Better Regulation guidelines. For that reason, the recommendations are addressed in the Commission report to Council and Parliament, without anticipating the conclusions of a future Impact assessment.

[58] COM(2018) 50 final http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/FR/TXT/?uri=COM:2018:50:FIN
[59] SWD(2018) 40 final https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/erasmus-plus/eval/swd-e-plus-mte.pdf
[60] Erasmus+ Mid-term Evaluation website http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmusplus/resources/documents.evaluations_en
[61] Ares(2017)5629740 - 17/11/2017

strengths and weaknesses that the evaluation and its supporting study identified. They also do not provide enough guidance for future decisions about the programme.	The Commission can accept all 11 recommendations received from the external evaluator (section 9 of ICF's final report) to a smaller or larger extent. - 5 recommendations are cross-cutting (innovation; inclusiveness; strategic investment in the best place sectors; systemic impact of projects; policy prioritisation at selection stage) - 4 recommendations concern a specific sector (SLGF; Jean Monnet actions; Adult education; Sport) - 2 recommendations deal with process (simplification; monitoring)
(2) The report does not clearly define the scope of the evaluation and the baseline/benchmarks against which it assesses the programme.	The baseline for this evaluation is the period 2007-2013 unless otherwise specified. This is now stated explicitly in the introduction and in the section about the evaluation method (4.1 and 4.2). In addition, it has been specified more systematically, especially across the section on effectiveness (5.1), where the scope of a given finding concern all evaluated programmes (e.g. findings from evaluation surveys of beneficiaries cover 10 years) or Erasmus+ only (e.g. findings from monitoring surveys concern by definition only the current programme). The choice of an intervention logic (2.2) covering the two programming periods has been further justified (4.1) To better support the claim that Erasmus+ has achieved or exceeded most of its targets, a new annex (5e) has been produced reporting on all indicators from the legal basis against targets set in DG EAC's Strategic Plan
(3) The report does not adequately address simplification and efficiency improvement.	The Staff Working Document (5.1, 5.4.1, 5.4.4, 5.4.5) has been completed with more information about measures taken since 2014 to improve monitoring, efficiency and to simplify the programme implementation. It is also explained now why the Impact assessment regarding efficiency gains cannot be regarded as a reference (5.4.4). The Commission has not waited for the mid-term evaluation to start working on simplification (e.g. application forms). The level of complaints about the administrative burden has decreased as of 2016 after a steep learning curve on the new programme.

A.1.2. Main Evaluation Outcomes

The main evaluation outcomes have been summarized within the above mentioned European Commission Report and also outlined within **Section 1.3. Lessons learned from previous programmes** of the present Impact Assessment document.

Overall, the programmes evaluated have proved to be **highly effective**. Erasmus+ appears **more coherent, relevant** and only **partly more efficient** than its predecessors.

The recommendations mainly concern:

- **cross-cutting issues** such as boosting inclusiveness for more vulnerable groups; strategic investment in the sectors with highest potential performance (schools, vocational education and training, youth); better policy prioritisation; enhance the

innovation potential at sector level; ensure systemic impact of projects through further involvement of policy makers;

- **specific areas** - aiming at addressing the relative weaknesses of the Student Loan Guarantee Facility; Jean Monnet activities; adult education; sport;
- **The process** looking at possibilities to include more simplification and better monitoring of the programme.

The criteria used for the evaluation were the programme's effectiveness at individual, organisational and at system level; its coherence, both internally and externally. The mid-term evaluation also assessed the relevance of the programme.

Source - European Commission Report and SWD

Effectiveness

The current programme and its predecessors deliver a **unique package of outcomes** in the field of education, training, youth and sport. Beneficiaries report above 90% satisfaction rates for learners and even higher for staff. In the period 2007–2016, all programmes reviewed have supported together more than 4.3 million learners and 880,000 practitioners as well as 940,000 organisations.

The evaluation identified a broad range of results and impacts at the level of learners (with particularly outstanding effects of mobility), practitioners, organisations (in particular their internationalisation, including beyond the EU) and also, to a certain extent, systems and policies (fostering the recognition of learning outcomes across borders).

At individual level

For most individuals, including when compared with the situation of non-beneficiaries, their experience abroad has contributed not only to their **skills'** development and future career prospects but also to deep changes to their **personal development**. The programme stimulated networking among both learners and staff and contributed to the development of openness to other cultures and **positive attitude towards the European project**. Yet the evaluation points to the **need to do more to reach out to the more vulnerable** in society and to facilitate the participation of smaller-size organisations.

At organisational level

The programmes reviewed have demonstrated a range of effects on organisations, particularly internationalisation, within and outside the EU. The **changes at organisational level are however progressing slowly** and continued participation is needed for deeper transformations.

At system level

In the long term, the programmes have led to **a cultural shift in Europe in the way learning mobility abroad is perceived and its learning outcomes are validated and recognised**. The programmes evaluated have also been **important for increasing the EU's global outreach**.

The evaluation also confirmed that the **programmes reviewed have had a direct impact on education, training, youth and sport policie**s where the related budget was large enough or

had an indirect effect by funding policy cooperation between authorities. The system level changes through critical mass are much clearer in the higher education sector than in other sectors which receive comparatively much less funding.

Systemic effectiveness is less in evidence for Jean Monnet, adult learning and sport, where funded EU actions lack the critical mass and/or a sufficiently relevant focus.

The evaluation underlines in particular that the impact in the adult learning sector is diluted due to the fragmented and diverse nature of the sector.

The resources for mainstreaming project results are spread across too many topics at EU level and are insufficient at national level. Although local innovation with direct impact for participating organisations is achieved by the programme, this **innovation doesn't go beyond the state of the art** developments in a given sector. The evidence of the **exploitation of project results by policy makers is not always clear**, especially when the latter are not engaged in the project from the beginning.

Coherence

The evaluation found a **high external coherence** between Erasmus+ and other relevant EU policies and programmes (e.g. European Social Fund, Horizon 2020). Although the level of synergies differs, it is notable that the evaluation detected **very few overlaps**.

The **internal coherence of the programme resulting from the lifelong learning coverage** and integration of fields often kept separate at national level into a single EU programme is increasingly perceived as facilitating complementarities and international outlook. This **consistent scope** supports the idea that learning opportunities offered are equally important for the development of people, be it through formal or non-formal and informal learning.

There is a **strong degree of cross-sectoral cooperation** within Erasmus+, which has increased sharply compared to predecessor programmes. The majority of cooperation projects in all sectors include at least one organisation which can be considered as coming from another sector. There is an overall consensus that **an integrated programme boosted the promotion of the actions** and the visibility of the different sectors.

Coherence **can still be improved in relation to sport** in reducing overlaps with non-formal education activities.

Relevance

The evaluation showed that Erasmus+ is **better aligned with EU policies** than its predecessor programmes and entails sufficient flexibility to adapt to EU-level emerging needs. However, to maximise the programme's impact, the evaluation recommends that **priorities at selection stage be reduced and better focused**.

The **contribution of Erasmus+ to a more cohesive Union** is also clearly evidenced. The programme reaches out to disadvantaged people more than previous EU programmes or comparable national schemes, although more still needs to be done to reach out to the more vulnerable in society as outlined above. The geographical balance has also improved with small countries and countries from Central and Eastern Europe being better integrated than in the predecessor programmes.

The evaluation noted that there is potential for introducing better targeted actions to **maximise the relevance of Jean Monnet activities**. Teaching and research on EU matters is now relatively wide-spread in higher education. In contrast, there is a need to strengthen the understanding of European integration and sense of belonging to Europe amongst the youngest generations.

Efficiency

The **costs of programme management appear reasonable** (6% of Erasmus+ administrative and operational budget) and lower than for similar programmes at national level (14% in average). The hybrid combination of different **programme management modes** and bodies is **fit for purpose** with a good overall coordination and no major inefficiencies identified. Through **decentralised actions**, the programmes get close to their target audience and offer the possibility to align with national priorities. Very positive feedback was received on the support provided by and to National Agencies. **Centralised actions** align more with EU level priorities and help to respond to urgent political priorities.

Simplification

Aside the separate chapters for Jean Monnet and sport, the **integration has led to greater simplicity of programme architecture** benefiting beneficiaries and managers. The integration also makes programme monitoring more comprehensive and clearer, although there is **room for a smarter collection and a better exploitation of data**, enhancing transparency and accountability.

The **procedural burden on beneficiaries** (application, reporting, etc.) is the main recurrent issue. Many agree that Erasmus+ has considerably simplified a number of processes (simplified grants, digitalisation, VET Charter, on-line linguistic support, etc.). However, procedures and IT management tools impose a burden on beneficiaries which is not always proportionate to the grant they receive.

Applicants for small strategic partnerships are too often expected to meet the same requirements as applicants for large ones. Furthermore, it is hard to clearly assess the cost-effectiveness of these actions considering their **relatively average level of innovation.** There is not enough differentiation made in the way of handling smaller (mainly collaborative) and larger (innovative) projects. The evaluation recommends simplifying the application forms, reviewing the award criteria to better reflect key success factors for effectiveness and strengthening the review at mid-term in particular for bigger projects.

Another **challenge hampering efficiency is linked to the funding for international higher education**, which remains managed separately for each global region in a too rigid manner.

European added value

30 years after its beginnings in the field of higher education, **Erasmus+ has become a flagship programme of the EU**. The programme is highly valued by the general public as well as by all stakeholders. It is consistently identified by citizens as **one of the three most positive results of European integration.**

Erasmus+ remains unique. Whereas there are other schemes funding comparable actions at national level, these are much smaller both in volume and scope. It is unlikely that alternative

measures would be able to compensate for Erasmus+ funding, demonstrating its **strong European added value**.

For the future, without prejudice to negotiations on the next Multi Financial Framework, the evaluation concludes that it would be relevant to reconsider the **overall budget.** It also suggests **modifying the share-out between the programme sectors,** whereby potential increases could be directed to sectors showing the highest performance, but which have, until now, received relatively less funding. **School education and vocational education and training** (VET), where the impact is not yet as widespread as in higher education, were identified as **having the most promising potential** for an expanded participation in Erasmus activities in the coming years. The unmet demand and the potential for maximising effectiveness call for a stronger investment for the future development of the programme.

ANNEX 4: SYNERGIES WITH OTHER MFF FUNDING INSTRUMENTS

As reminded in the MFF Communication of 02 May 2018, the in-built flexibility of the MFF is of paramount importance. This Impact Assessment explored potential 'avenues' for implementing the synergies between the Erasmus and other EU funding programmes. The present Annex provides an indicative overview of some important synergies from the perspective of Erasmus, nevertheless, it does not constitute and exhaustive list.

A. Synergies between the future Erasmus programme and the future European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)

Significant potential for complementarities and synergies between Erasmus and the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) has been identified as a number of these programmes support education and learning mobility actions, the qualitative development of education, training and youth systems in the EU.
Education and cohesion policies are supported by distinct instruments, with independent *modi operandi*, different intervention logics, management modes and architecture, but their interaction can generate converging effects. Therefore, synergies should be looked for where they are possible and bring further added value.

A.1.Instruments within the current MFF 2014-2020

The legislative architecture for the cohesion policy comprises an overarching regulation setting out common rules for all the structural funds. The main principle is shared management between the managing authorities in the Member States and regions and the European Commission.

The funds directly support investment in education and training, youth and sport activities:

- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through investments in infrastructure;
- European Social Fund (ESF) - Europe's main instrument for supporting jobs, upskilling and re-skilling people and helping them get better jobs and ensuring fairer job opportunities, including through mobility measures;
- European Agricultural Fund for Rural development (EAFRD) - Instrument that support young farmers' establishment, farmers and foresters mobility schemes, farmers' and foresters' knowledge development and possibly (e.g. through LEADER) activities related to sport, education, training, youth in rural areas.

The current Regulations establishing ESIF[62] and Erasmus+[63] already provide the framework for synergies and complementarities between the instruments. The following measures are currently implemented:

[62] Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

[63] Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 of 11 December 2013 establishing 'Erasmus+': the Union programme for education, training, youth and sport and repealing Decisions No 1719/2006/EC, No 1720/2006/EC and No 1298/2008/EC http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32013R1288

- *Top-up* - In the past, a solution to cater for the sometimes insufficient grant levels under Erasmus compared to the demand has been utilised by certain Member States by supplementing mobility funding through additional EU support, typically from the European Social Fund, covering additional expenditure to complement the Erasmus grant, thus allowing for an increased number of learners (in particular from a socially disadvantaged background) to access a study period abroad.
- *Co-fund* ESIF funds are used to complement Erasmus mobility funding by providing additional grants to mobility applicants that scored above thresholds but were rejected due to insufficient funding available, based on the evaluation undertaken by the Erasmus National Agencies. This system has proven to increase the volume of individual mobility grants.

A.2. Main limitations

European countries and regions currently under-exploit the potential for synergies thus limiting the cumulative impact these policies could have to overcome challenges of structural nature. Despite the drivers within the current regulatory framework, the fact remains that the occurrence of synergies was limited and only in rare cases effective coordination has taken place.
The main barriers to the synergies identified concern:

- limited coordination, communication and interaction between responsible authorities and implementing structures at Member State level of the different programmes and instruments, actors and networks involved in the programming, planning and implementation of actions as well as in projects' selection and follow up.
- lack of established and regular information-sharing processes and existing bureaucratic burdens prevent collective efforts of operational authorities.
- complex financial rules and delivery mechanisms hampering the access to various sources of funding.
- under-exploitation of successful projects' results funded with convergent objectives, thus limiting the system-level effects and impact on policy.

A.3. Proposed measures to promote synergies in the post 2020 MFF

For the future Multiannual Financial Framework period, education, training and youth remain one of the main priorities of the Cohesion Policy. The existing social disparities at national and regional level could be tackled with the support of the EU instruments investing in the field of education and training. This opportunity must be facilitated by an increased flexibility of both programmes and must be implemented in a framework of coherent programming, common prioritisation and strategic policy coordination at Member State level.

With a view to contributing effectively to the general and specific objectives of the respective instruments, **practical measures** are proposed to concretely implement synergies in the future MFF period.

Areas of possible cooperation and synergies

At national level, ESF resources could be used, as already done in a few countries, where appropriate, to either **increase the number of individual mobility grants** or to **top up Erasmus grants** to make them more easily accessible to specific target groups. In some cases

ESF operational programmes already enable funding to reinforce Erasmus measures by focusing on the coverage of specific target groups. This is not currently a widespread approach across Member States and could be strengthened in future. Simplified Cost Options (either EU or national level) would enable Member States to easily top-up on Erasmus measures. For example, in order to make Erasmus mobility more inclusive and accessible to students coming from low income families, Member States could program a top-up of Erasmus mobility by an additional defined amount/rate applicable to a specific country.

ESF could also provide support for **scaling up successful Erasmus projects**. Appropriate mechanisms could be recommended by the Commission to the respective national authorities implementing Erasmus and the ESIF to ensure an effective implementation of these processes. This would aim to ensure that Erasmus projects having a scaling-up potential are jointly identified by the relevant authorities in the Member States and adapted for the purpose of upscaling their positive results through ESIF interventions.

An enhanced **coordination between Erasmus National Agencies and ESIF bodies** would also be beneficial. National Agencies and Managing Authorities would be invited to cooperate at various levels in the area of programming, calls design, as well as evaluation (e.g. it could be envisaged for Erasmus national agencies to participate in ESIF programmes monitoring committees) and follow-up of projects.

Where relevant, the two respective legal bases could include provisions to this purpose, to be set out more in detail in implementing documents.

In addition, the network of **Erasmus National Agencies could become an asset** to implement the education, training and youth activities in the context of transnational cooperation actions under the ESF. National Agencies have a sound expertise and strategic vision in the fields of education, training and youth. They could be valuable players (as grant beneficiaries) in the effective implementation of the transnational cooperation dimension of the European Social Fund.

Where relevant and with a view to enhancing the added value of the different EU instruments, the ERDF and the ESF could be used to provide **additional support** to universities which are partners of **European Universities** or **Centres of vocational excellence** financed under Erasmus. ESIF could potentially be used to fund preparatory, complementary or directly related activities within partner institutions in order to build capacity, to enlarge the geographical coverage of the networks, to improve dissemination and scaling-up of results.

Finally, Managing Authorities and Erasmus National Agencies would identify **measures carried out at national level with ESIF** support that have **a potential to inspire** transnational cooperation policy experimentation projects.

B. Synergies between the future Erasmus programme and the future Research and Innovation Framework Programme - Horizon Europe

B.1 Policy context

The recent policy agenda defined the synergies between the education and the research and innovation sectors as a key area where synergies should be further enabled. The Communication on a Renewed EU agenda for higher education[64] from May 2017 pledged for well-designed higher education programmes and curricula that allow to better exploit research results into teaching and learning, and increase students' research skills.

Along the same lines, the Communication on a Digital Education Action Plan[65] from January 2018 highlights the crucial importance of developing relevant digital skills and competences for the digital transformation of our economies and societies: "*Developing high-skilled ICT professionals is critical for competitiveness. Advanced digital skills are important for supporting the next generation of analysts, researchers and innovators. (…) Citizen-centred research and innovation focused on solving societal challenges should make more use of open data and collaborative digital technology tools and methods."*

Synergies between research and innovation and education, notably the links between the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the European Research Area (ERA), have been a demonstrated driver and enabled progress for the academic cooperation within the Bologna process regarding joint teaching and research programmes that "*provide educational opportunities the competences and skills required for European citizenship, innovation and employment"*[66].

At the European Council of 1st December 2017[67] regarding the Interim Evaluation of Horizon 2020 research and innovation framework programme, EU leaders confirmed that research and education link is a key component underlying skills development and that "*stronger links and coherence between European Research Area and European Higher Education Area* [should be established] *by exploring how the successor programmes to Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020 can better link shared objectives and priorities".* These conclusions have been corroborated by the Lamy High Level Group Report[68] recommendations for the next generation research and innovation framework programme that identifies a set of necessary actions to "*educate for the future and invest in people who will make the change*: *modernise, reward and resource the education and training of people for a creative and innovative Europe*."

B.2 Common features of the two programmes

The common overarching objective of the actions supported by both programmes is to strengthen the Europe's capacity to innovate through the development of human capital and improvement of the innovation and entrepreneurial skills and competences of individuals as well as through the support to the modernisation of educational and training systems in Europe.

The two programmes have common stakeholders and beneficiaries at the (1) system and organisation level, in particular the higher education institutions, research centres and companies as well as at the (2) individual level, i.e. students, junior researchers, learners and

64 COM (2017) 247final http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52017DC0247
65 COM (2018) 12 final https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/digital-education-action-plan.pdf
66 http://www.ehea.info/cid101764/ministerial-conference-yerevan-2015.html
67 http://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/31888/st15320en17.pdf
68 LAB – FAB – APP: Investing in the European future we want' https://ec.europa.eu/research/evaluations/index_en.cfm?pg=hlg

practitioners. The typology of supported actions in both programmes varies from individual learners and practitioners mobility to various strategic partnerships.

The educational potential of the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation and the innovation potential of the Erasmus programme do currently materialize through several mutually reinforcing activities:

- The development and improvement of innovation and entrepreneurial skills and competences of individual learners and practitioners through transnational, cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary mobility
- The development and support of the innovation and entrepreneurship capabilities of the higher education sector by innovative cross-cutting higher educational programmes and curricula where sector specific knowledge is combined with entrepreneurial oriented skills
- European Research Area development is supported by the modernisation of universities in their critical role of providing researchers with the environment, skills and competences needed to succeed in the modern knowledge economy
- Strategic partnerships among higher educational institutions, research organisations and businesses aiming to build capacity, develop new, innovative and multidisciplinary approaches to teaching and learning, develop entrepreneurial skills, exchange knowledge and stimulate co-creation; strengthening the role of higher education institutions and research organisations in their local and regional environments; supporting the transfer of latest research outputs back into education as input for teaching.

B.3 Main limitations

- While much teaching in higher education takes place in research-performing institutions, research is not sufficiently exploited as an input for teaching and learning.
- Students are often not involved in research activities, thus limiting the opportunities to develop their research skills.
- Lack of established and regular information-sharing processes and existing bureaucratic burdens
- complex financial rules and delivery mechanisms hampering the access to various sources of funding and adding administrative burden on the beneficiaries and the implementing bodies

B.4. Synergies and Complementarities

EU programmes on research and innovation as well as on education and training are crucial for a more competitive, resilient, and future-proof Europe. Improved synergies between these programmes can provide incentives for further integration of education and research responding to the changing skills needs, can facilitate knowledge transfer and enable effective cooperation within the knowledge triangle. *New or reinforced synergies could be established at several levels*:

1. At strategic level, enhanced coherence between the European Research Area and the European Higher Education Area through better alignment of shared policy objectives
2. At programming level, enhanced coherence of priorities and compatible implementation frameworks
3. At project level, strategic pooling of funding from several sources.

Areas of possible cooperation and synergies

1. Scaling-up of innovative projects

Erasmus projects such as partnerships for innovation and policy experimentation projects, when successful, have great scaling-up potential. Appropriate mechanisms could be defined to ensure that projects having a scaling-up potential are jointly identified by the two programmes. The selection and implementation of these processes would be undertaken on the basis of equivalent qualitative standards and criteria.

Corresponding mechanisms could be envisaged for the scaling up of successful relevant Horizon Europe projects.

2. Pooling resources to invest in the European Universities

In this scenario, Horizon Europe could be used to support universities which are partners of such networks financed under Erasmus. To boost the investment in the European Universities, Erasmus beneficiary universities would also receive funds under dedicated actions of Horizon Europe. The eligible investments would encompass innovation and research activities. Issues related to cumulative funding will be avoided by using the same delivery mechanisms for different calls for proposals financed both under Erasmus and Horizon Europe.

2. Reinforcing synergies with the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)

Actions aiming at fostering the Europe's innovation capacity and the innovation in higher education and business should allow the European Institute of Innovation and Technology Community to test and share the outcome of their experimental educational activities beyond their direct beneficiaries. Erasmus structures could help to make lessons learned and good practises from the European Institute of Innovation and Technology and the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) activities accessible and disseminated in a targeted manner. The European Institute of Innovation and Technology and the Knowledge and Innovation Communities will continue developing innovative curricula and offer students, entrepreneurs and professionals across Europe and beyond cross-cutting programmes where specialist and sector specific knowledge is combined with entrepreneurial and innovation oriented skills.

The EIT also contributes to the development of entrepreneurial and innovation-oriented skills that could be further mainstreamed through Erasmus support, for example, within the European Universities. Aiming at equipping the next generation of innovators with the relevant technical and transversal skills to thrive in a fast-changing economic environment, the EIT’s education programmes include physical and cross-sectoral mobility of students. These activities could be offered to participants already selected under Erasmus projects.

Similarly, at the level of postgraduate training, programmes like the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions funded by the research and innovation framework programme, would mainstream new skills and competences for researchers developed within the Erasmus context, including transversal skills (e.g. creative mind-sets, entrepreneurial outlook). Opening up MSCA projects' activities, in particular network-wide training, where relevant, to Erasmus students or staff and vice versa, will concretize synergies between research and education programmes and enable transfer of research results into teaching.

C. Synergies between the future Erasmus programme and the future European Solidarity Corps and the Rights and Values Programme

Regarding the future Rights and Values programme, synergies should be sought with initiatives empowering citizens. This includes promotion and increased awareness of citizens about common history and enhanced democratic and civic participation at Union level.
There are several areas of complementarity and potential synergies between the objectives and interventions of Erasmus and of the Rights and Values programme, in particular with the strand aiming at creating opportunities for citizens' engagement and participation (previously covered by the Europe for Citizens Programme).

At the same time, there is a necessity to establish a framework for cooperation and coordinated implementation of Erasmus and the European Solidarity Corps, which have common governance and delivery mechanisms. Erasmus has a clear link with the Corps through its implementing bodies (the Erasmus National Agencies and the EACEA) which provide a coherent delivery mechanism for European opportunities in the areas of transnational learning mobility and solidarity.

With regards to the content of both Programmes, there are also important complementarities when it comes to the target groups of the opportunities (mainly young people) and the key stakeholders. Both the Erasmus Programme and the European Solidarity Corps share strong links with beneficiaries typically active in the area of non-formal education, such as local, regional, national and European NGOs, social enterprises and youth workers.

D. Coherence between the future Erasmus programme and the Creative Europe

In November 2017 the Commission presented its Communication on "Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture" to the Leaders' Summit in Gothenburg. Along with Commission's vision for a European Education Area by 2025, the Communication also included a proposal to make Europe "*a continent in which people have a strong sense of their identity as Europeans, of Europe's cultural heritage, its diversity and values*".

Nurturing, valorising and exposing talent, and celebrating creativity and cultural diversity foster the European identity and reinforce its values, enhance social cohesion and inclusiveness, as well as strengthen the social fabric of the Union.

In the implementation of Erasmus, overall consistency and complementarity as well as synergies with the future Creative Europe programme, including its media component, will be reinforced. Complementarities are already a reality under the current Erasmus programme, with a considerable number of projects including a creative component in their education and training or cooperation mechanisms, in particular in the youth and schools sectors.

E. Coherence between the future Erasmus programme and the future EU External Action Programme

Supporting education is crucial for the development of a country and for building a strong human capital base as recognised in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs).

Access to Erasmus programme was opened for countries globally for the first time in 2014, with the objective of contributing to poverty reduction and inclusive growth, and to building

capacity in Partner Countries. Actions concerned cover modernisation of curricula, improvement of teaching and learning quality, making governance more transparent, stimulate university-enterprise cooperation. Erasmus actions contribute to the EU external policy objective of enhancing widespread understanding and visibility of the EU and promoting its values and interests via public diplomacy actions, notably vis-à-vis middle-income countries and strategic partners.

The international actions of Erasmus will continue to contribute primarily to two major objectives:
1) the EU internal policy priorities relating to excellence, attracting talent and public diplomacy; and
2) the EU external projection of internal policies relating to solidarity, enlargement, neighbourhood policy, human development, capacity building, migration, support to refugees and intercultural dialogue, particularly in support of the Sustainable Development Goal 4 Quality Education.

In operational terms, part of the international strand of Erasmus is currently implemented under the External Action Programme (Heading 4 of the current EU budget). This contribution will be maintained for the future programming period, with simplified delivery mechanisms and rules in order to reduce administrative burden during implementation. The concrete implementation modalities will be further developed during the programming phase, in close cooperation with the Member States and Partner countries.

F. Coherence between the future Erasmus programme and the future InvestEU

The InvestEU will be the core European investment instrument aimed at addressing market gaps and mobilising private financing for strategic investments within the EU and for supporting internal policies. It focuses on additional investments which would not be possible with public intervention and it clusters them around four thematic policy windows: i.e. sustainable infrastructures; research and innovation; social skills and human capital; small and medium-sized enterprises. InvestEU Fund would also provide advisory support and accompanying measures throughout the investment cycle to foster the development of projects.

The InvestEU, and in particular its window on social skills and human capital investment is of particular relevance to the Erasmus programme, as it will support – through EU guarantees, equity investments or cheaper loans – mobilising private financing for strategic investments in education and training for all levels of education. Furthermore, specifically for the field of higher education, targeted support might be provided under the Fund's research and innovation 'window'. InvestEU will thus enable the continuation of the activities initiated under the Erasmus Student Loan Guarantee Facility, but will also target broader investments supporting the EU and Member States education and training policies (e.g. the development of European Universities). It will also support investments in social infrastructure (e.g. construction, expansion or refurbishment of schools) and social services (e.g. development of childcare facilities or digital course material).