



**European Committee
of the Regions**

SEDEC-VI/043

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OPINION

Erasmus programme for education, training, youth and sport

THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

- welcomes the general aim of supporting the personal, training and professional development of people in the areas of education, including non-formal education, and training and higher education in Europe and beyond, in order to contribute to sustainable growth, employment and social cohesion and a stronger European identity; this important task begins on the ground at the local and regional level and therefore needs to be closely linked to the European level;
- welcomes the fact that the Commission proposes doubling the Programme's budget, but considers that the target of tripling the number of participants in the programme given the current conditions and the aim of increased social inclusiveness, will be difficult to achieve. In future, it would also be desirable for the growing administrative burden of the Programme to be eliminated;
- calls for a transparent, equitable distribution of resources over the entire seven-year period so that – in particular at the beginning of the programming period – funds can be increased and expectations of the Programme can be met;
- regrets that the Programme will be called "Erasmus" rather than "Erasmus+". The CoR points out that appropriate measures must be taken to ensure the visibility of the various areas of education or funding, in order to guarantee that the "Erasmus" brand becomes associated with all areas of education and training, as well as with the area of youth and sport;
- suggests giving consideration to a "European firm" award, in order to increase firms' and businesses' motivation to make their apprentices and their training more open to "Europe" by using the opportunities offered by Erasmus; also suggests to this effect that the Commission create a register of firms taking part in the Erasmus programme, which could be given the label of "Erasmus firm";
- welcomes that the new "DiscoverEU" programme will give young people aged 18 and over the chance to discover EU countries by train for a limited time period; points out, however, that, although the programme in question should have a strong learning component, this should not come at the expense of opportunities for learning mobility, which should remain the core business of the Erasmus programme; stresses that it would be desirable for all young people in the EU to have this opportunity to encounter and discover its diversity, culture, nature and people, regardless of their parents' financial position; suggests giving consideration to financing via public-private partnerships, particularly with partners from the mobility and tourism sector.

Rapporteur

Ulrike Hiller (DE/PES), Member of the Senate, Representative of the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen to the Federal Government, with responsibility for European Affairs

Reference 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) No 1288/2013
COM(2018) 367 final

**Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions – Erasmus programme for education,
training, youth and sport**

I. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AMENDMENTS

**Amendment 1
Preamble, Recital 1**

<i>Text proposed by the European Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
In a context of rapid and profound changes induced by technological revolution and globalisation, investing in learning mobility, cooperation and innovative policy development in the fields of education, training, youth and sport is key to building inclusive, cohesive and resilient societies and sustaining the competitiveness of the Union, while contributing to strengthening European identity and to a more democratic Union.	In a context of rapid and profound changes induced by technological revolution and globalisation, investing in <i>the dissemination of knowledge and culture</i> , learning mobility, cooperation and innovative policy development in the fields of education, training, youth and sport is key to building inclusive, cohesive and resilient societies and sustaining the competitiveness of the Union, while contributing to strengthening European identity and to a more democratic Union.

**Amendment 2
Preamble, Recital 4**

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
The European Pillar of Social Rights, solemnly proclaimed and signed on 17 November 2017 by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission, lays down, as its first key principle, that everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and lifelong 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 European Pillar of Social Rights, solemnly proclaimed and signed on 17 November 2017 by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission, lays down, as its first key principle, that everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and lifelong learning in order to maintain and acquire skills that enable them to participate fully in society and manage successfully transitions in the labour market. <i>This is particularly relevant for all young people in Europe who are currently unemployed. Equal access to education should be ensured regardless of gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, sexual orientation, or geographical location and with due consideration given to the rights of linguistic minorities.</i>

<i>Reason</i>
The European Pillar of Social Rights does not acknowledge the education-related challenges facing people who live in remote areas or belong to a linguistic minority.

Amendment 3
Preamble, Recital 8

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
<p>In its Communication on 'A modern budget for a Union that protects, empowers and defends - the multiannual financial framework for 2021-2027' adopted on 2 May 2018, the Commission called for a stronger "youth" focus in the next financial framework, notably by more than doubling the size of the 2014-2020 Erasmus+ Programme, one of the Union's most visible success stories. The focus of the new Programme should be on inclusiveness, and to reach more young people with fewer opportunities. This should allow more young people to move to another country to learn or work.</p>	<p>In its Communication on 'A modern budget for a Union that protects, empowers and defends - the multiannual financial framework for 2021-2027' adopted on 2 May 2018, the Commission called for a stronger "youth" focus in the next financial framework, notably by more than doubling the size of the 2014-2020 Erasmus+ Programme, one of the Union's most visible success stories. The focus of the new Programme should be on inclusiveness, and to reach more young people with fewer opportunities. This should allow more young people to move to another country to learn or work. <i>In order to ensure that the principle of "no school or training certificate without participating in a European project" can be implemented as soon as possible, the Programme should also take into account the targeted engagement, motivation and training of staff providing education, including non-formal education, and training, so that they can motivate as many young people as possible.</i></p>

<i>Reason</i>
<p>Since staff providing non-formal, general and vocational education serve as "gatekeepers" for people with fewer opportunities, it is also vital to invest in their skills. At the same time, due consideration must be given to the brain drain phenomenon.</p>

Amendment 4
Preamble, Recital 9

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
<p>In this context, it is necessary to establish the successor programme for education, training, youth and sport (the 'Programme') of the 2014-2020 Erasmus + programme established by Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 of the European Parliament and the Council. The integrated nature of the 2014-2020 programme covering learning in all contexts - formal, non-formal and informal, and at all stages of life - should be</p>	<p>In this context, it is necessary to establish the successor programme for education, training, youth and sport (the 'Programme') of the 2014-2020 Erasmus + programme established by Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 of the European Parliament and the Council. The integrated nature of the 2014-2020 programme covering learning in all contexts - formal, non-formal and informal, and at all stages of life - should be</p>

maintained to boost flexible learning paths allowing individuals to develop those competences that are necessary to face the challenges of the twenty-first century.	maintained to boost flexible learning paths allowing individuals <i>to have a learning experience that strengthens their European identity and understanding of European cultural diversity, and thereby</i> to develop those competences that are necessary to face the challenges of the twenty-first century.
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<i>Reason</i>
It should be clearly indicated that a learning experience in another European country significantly boosts the development of future-oriented vocational skills and is closely associated with the development of a European identity.

Amendment 5
Preamble, Recital 10

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
The Programme should be equipped to become an even greater contributor to the implementation of the Union's policy objectives and priorities in the field of education, training, youth and sport. 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 Programme should maintain a close relationship with the overall strategic framework for Union policy cooperation in the field of education, training and youth, including the policy agendas for schools, higher education, vocational education and training and adult learning, while reinforcing and developing new synergies with other related Union programmes and policy areas.	The Programme should be equipped to become an even greater contributor to the implementation of the Union's policy objectives and priorities in the field of education, training, youth and sport. <i>With this in mind, the Programme should reinforce the teaching and acceptance of fundamental values that lie at the heart of the European Union: respect for human dignity, freedom (including freedom of expression), democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights. These values are common to the Member States in a European society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men should prevail. Moreover,</i> 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 Programme should maintain a close relationship with the overall strategic framework for Union policy cooperation in the field of education, training and youth, including the policy agendas for schools, higher education, vocational education and training and adult learning, while reinforcing and developing new synergies with other related Union programmes and policy areas.

Reason

The proposed insertion highlights – in the spirit of the Paris Declaration of education ministers on "Promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education" – the urgency of, and clarifies the goal of, the "Union's policy objectives and priorities".

**Amendment 6
Preamble, Recital 11**

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
The Programme is a key component of building a European Education Area. It should be equipped to contribute to the successor of the strategic framework for cooperation in education and training and the Skills Agenda for Europe with a shared commitment to the strategic importance of skills and competences for sustaining jobs, growth and competitiveness. It should support Member States in reaching the goals of the Paris Declaration on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education.	The Programme is a key component of building a European Education Area. It should be equipped to contribute to the successor of the strategic framework for cooperation in education and training and the Skills Agenda for Europe with a shared commitment to the strategic importance of skills and competences for sustaining jobs, growth and competitiveness. It should support the Member States in reaching the goals of the Paris Declaration on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education, <i>so that young people also become active EU citizens who are aware of European values, know how to stand up for these values, and can exercise their rights. In doing so, the Programme highlights the strategic importance of skills and competences for ensuring jobs, growth and competitiveness.</i>

Reason

It should be clearly indicated that a learning experience in another European country significantly boosts the development of future-oriented vocational skills and is closely associated with the development of a European identity.

**Amendment 7
Preamble, Recital 12**

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
The Programme should be coherent with the new European Union youth strategy, the framework for European cooperation in the youth field for 2019-2027, based on the Commission's Communication of 22 May 2018 on 'Engaging, connecting and empowering young people: a new EU Youth Strategy'.	The Programme should be coherent with the new European Union youth strategy, the framework for European cooperation in the youth field for 2019-2027, based on the Commission's Communication of 22 May 2018 on 'Engaging, connecting and empowering young people: a new EU Youth Strategy', <i>and</i>

	<i>should take account of the EU Work Plan for Youth.</i>
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Reason
The EU Work Plan for Youth should be taken into account, in order to improve policy coherence.

Amendment 8
Preamble, Recital 14

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
The Programme should contribute to strengthening the Union's innovation capacity notably by supporting mobility and cooperation activities that foster the development of competences in forward-looking study fields or disciplines such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics, climate change, the environment, clean energy, artificial intelligence, robotics, data analysis <i>and arts/design</i> , to help people develop knowledge, skills and competences needed for the future.	The Programme should contribute to strengthening the Union's innovation capacity notably by supporting mobility and cooperation activities that foster the development of competences in forward-looking study fields or disciplines such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics, climate change, the environment, clean energy, artificial intelligence, robotics, data analysis, design, <i>as well as in the arts and humanities,</i> to help people develop knowledge, skills and competences needed for the future. <i>This comprehensive education will promote a deeper understanding of democracy, boost critical analysis of contemporary realities and their interculturality and encourage the development of social skills such as intercultural teamwork, empathy, tolerance and the ability to learn through independent work, all of which are critically important.</i>

Reason
As the EU's innovation capacity depends not only on expertise in the relevant areas and disciplines, but also on competences pertaining to the arts and humanities, as well as on the development of the social skills of (future) staff and managers mentioned above, all these aspects should be duly taken into account in this Programme.

Amendment 9
Preamble, Recital 15

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
Synergies with Horizon Europe should ensure that combined resources from the Programme and the Horizon Europe Programme ¹ are used to support activities dedicated to strengthening and	Synergies with Horizon Europe should ensure that combined resources from the Programme and the Horizon Europe Programme are used to support activities dedicated to strengthening and

<p>modernising European higher education institutions. Horizon Europe will, where appropriate, complement the Programme's support for the European Universities initiative, in particular its research dimension as part of developing new joint and integrated long term and sustainable strategies on education, research and innovation. Synergies with Horizon Europe will help to foster the integration of education and research in higher education institutions.</p> <hr/> <p>[1] COM(2018) [].</p>	<p>modernising European higher education institutions, <i>with due consideration given to the challenges facing rural areas, the outermost regions of the Union, regions with serious and permanent natural or demographic handicaps, such as island, cross-border and mountain regions, and areas affected by natural disasters in the Member States.</i> Horizon Europe will, where appropriate, complement the Programme's support for the European Universities initiative, in particular its research dimension as part of developing new joint and integrated long term and sustainable strategies on education, research and innovation. Synergies with Horizon Europe will help to foster the integration of education and research in higher education institutions, <i>also to encourage convergence in this sector for lagging behind regions.</i></p>
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Reason
<p>Education and research are decisive drivers of socio-economic development and employability, therefore due attention must be paid also to peripheral and lagging behind regions of the EU.</p>

Amendment 10
Preamble, Recital 16

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
<p>The Programme should be more inclusive by improving its outreach to those with fewer opportunities, including through more flexible learning mobility formats, and by fostering participation of small organisations, in particular newcomers and community-based grassroots organisations that work directly with disadvantaged learners of all ages. Virtual formats, such as virtual cooperation, blended and virtual mobility, should be promoted to reach more participants, in particular those with fewer opportunities and those for whom moving physically to a country other than their country of residence would be an obstacle.</p>	<p>The Programme should be more inclusive by improving its outreach to those with fewer opportunities, including through more flexible learning mobility formats, and by fostering participation of small organisations, in particular newcomers and community-based grassroots organisations – <i>including at local and regional level</i> – that work directly with disadvantaged learners of all ages.</p> <p><i>Facilities for education, including non-formal education, and training that focus on disadvantaged learners and that have never worked with the European programmes, or have not done so for a long time, should have greater opportunities to work together with an expert non-formal education facility at local and regional level when preparing a project.</i></p>

	<p>Virtual formats, such as virtual cooperation, blended and virtual mobility, should be promoted to reach more participants, in particular those with fewer opportunities and those for whom moving physically to a country other than their country of residence would be an obstacle. <i>The promotion of these virtual formats should take into account the need for high speed internet access for everybody throughout Europe and the necessity to respect common European rules on data protection.</i></p> <p><i>Every effort should be made to facilitate physical mobility for disadvantaged people, especially people with disabilities that are physical, sensory and cognitive.</i></p>
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<i>Reason</i>
<p>The active participation of grassroots organisations at local and regional level should be encouraged. Given that, according to recent studies, there is often considerable reluctance to embark on European projects, which are perceived as being too complicated, opportunities should be created to give staff concerned the chance to have "on the job" training and to work together with a pedagogical institution.</p> <p>While virtual mobility can be a useful complement to physical mobility without, however, being an equivalent substitute, access to broadband throughout the EU and full compliance with data protection rules are a necessary prerequisite. Moreover, it must be ensured that all forms of mobility can be used by all, including by learners with disabilities both physical and cognitive, who often require targeted support.</p>

Amendment 11
Preamble, Recital 17

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
<p>In its Communication on Strengthening European identity through education and culture, the Commission highlighted the pivotal role of education, culture and sport in promoting active citizenship and common values amongst the youngest generations. Strengthening European identity and fostering the active participation of individuals in the democratic processes is crucial for the future of Europe and our democratic societies. Going abroad to study, learn, train and work or to participate in youth and sport activities contributes to strengthening this</p>	<p>In its Communication on Strengthening European identity through education and culture, the Commission highlighted the pivotal role of education, culture and sport in promoting active citizenship and common values amongst the youngest generations. Strengthening European identity and fostering the active participation of individuals in the democratic processes is crucial for the future of Europe and our democratic societies. Going abroad to study, learn, train and work, <i>to undertake a short-, medium- or long-term placement as a pupil in a training or</i></p>

<p>European identity in all its diversity and the sense of being part of a cultural community as well as to fostering such active citizenship, among people of all ages. Those taking part in mobility activities should get involved in their local communities as well as engage in their host country local communities to share their experience. Activities linked to reinforcing all aspects of creativity in education, training and youth and enhancing individual key competencies should be supported.</p>	<p><i>educational establishment</i> or to participate in youth and sport activities contributes to strengthening this European identity in all its diversity and the sense of being part of a cultural community as well as to fostering such active citizenship, among people of all ages. Those taking part in mobility activities should get involved in their local communities as well as engage in their host country local communities to share their experience. <i>Organisations that establish and support contact between students and facilities for education, including non-formal education, and training, in particular those working with young people with fewer opportunities, should be aided in their work and supported within their local and European networks.</i> Activities linked to reinforcing all aspects of creativity in education, training and youth and enhancing individual key competencies should be supported.</p>
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<i>Reason</i>
<p>Given that placements in the area of vocational schools are already promoted under the current Erasmus+ programme and have since become very important, this option should be pursued and should be extended to the area of career guidance in schools.</p> <p>The work of organisations that support contact between students and education and training facilities has shown that such intermediation is appropriate because it lends Erasmus students a deeper insight into the education system of the host country and gives pupils easy peer-to-peer access to Europe, which is likely to be especially important for young people with fewer opportunities.</p>

Amendment 12
Preamble, Recital 18

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
<p>The international dimension of the Programme should be boosted aiming at offering a greater number of opportunities for mobility, cooperation and policy dialogue with third countries not associated to the Programme. Building on the successful implementation of international higher education and youth activities under the predecessor programmes in the fields of education, training and youth, the international mobility activities should be extended to other sectors, such as in vocational education and training.</p>	<p>The international dimension of the Programme should be boosted aiming at offering a greater number of opportunities for mobility, cooperation and policy dialogue with third countries not associated to the Programme. Building on the successful implementation of international higher education and youth activities under the predecessor programmes in the fields of education, training and youth, the international mobility activities should be extended to other sectors, such as in vocational education and training, <i>while taking account of</i></p>

	<i>the socio-economic and geographical characteristics of the countries involved, which influence job creation and therefore entrepreneurship and the employability of young people and adults.</i>
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Reason
The amendment aims to establish a stronger link between education and training on the one hand, and the specific economic and social situation of a region on the other, particularly with regard to peripheral, disadvantaged areas.

**Amendment 13
Preamble, Recital 19**

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
The basic architecture of the 2014-2020 programme in three chapters - education and training, youth and sport – structured around three key actions has proved successful and should be maintained. Improvements to streamline and rationalise the actions supported by the Programme should be introduced.	The basic architecture of the 2014-2020 programme in three chapters - education and training, youth and sport – structured around three key actions has proved successful and should be maintained. Improvements to streamline and rationalise the actions supported by the Programme should be introduced. <i>Sector-specific, extremely simplified application procedures should therefore be introduced, in order to achieve the desired rise in participant numbers as well as to increase the willingness of staff to submit applications. This requires intensive advice, assistance and support at local and regional level, where the needs on the ground are best known, as well as support to small-scale partnerships involving small, local organizations and with simple and light administrative formalities.</i>

Reason
The length of time required to submit an application – including by experienced practitioners – is estimated at 40 to 80 hours, depending on the type of project. Previous programmes did not entail a burden of this scale and it would therefore be helpful to aim towards similar standards. The issue concerns in particular the area of education, including non-formal education, and training, as, unlike universities, they usually do not have international offices; instead, this work has to be done in addition to regular work.

Amendment 14
Preamble, Recital 20

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
<p>The Programme should reinforce existing learning mobility opportunities, notably <i>in those sectors where the Programme could have the biggest efficiency gains, to broaden its reach and meet the high unmet demand. This should be done notably</i> by increasing and facilitating mobility activities for higher education students, school pupils and learners in vocational education and training. Mobility of low-skilled adult learners should be embedded in partnerships for cooperation. Mobility opportunities for youth participating in non-formal learning activities should also be extended to reach more young people. Mobility of staff in education, training, youth and sport should also be reinforced, considering its leverage effect. In line with the vision of a true European Education Area, the Programme should also boost mobility and exchanges and promote student participation in educational and cultural activities by supporting digitalisation of processes, such as the European Student Card. This initiative can be an important step in making mobility for all a reality first by enabling higher education institutions to send and receive more exchange students while still enhancing quality in student mobility and also by facilitating students' access to various services (library, transport, accommodation) before arriving at the institution abroad.</p>	<p>The Programme should reinforce existing learning mobility opportunities, notably by increasing and facilitating mobility activities for higher education students, school pupils and learners in vocational education and training. Mobility of low-skilled adult learners should be embedded in partnerships for cooperation. Mobility opportunities for youth participating in non-formal learning activities should also be extended to reach more young people. Mobility of staff in education, training, youth and sport should also be reinforced, considering its leverage effect. In line with the vision of a true European Education Area, the Programme should also boost mobility and exchanges and promote student participation in educational and cultural activities by <i>supporting organisations that establish contact, in the host country, between students and youth organisations as well as facilities for education, including non-formal education, and training, in particular those working with young people with fewer opportunities, and by</i> supporting digitalisation of processes, such as the European Student Card. This initiative can be an important step in making mobility for all a reality first by enabling higher education institutions to send and receive more exchange students while still enhancing quality in student mobility and also by facilitating students' access to various services (library, transport, accommodation) before arriving at the institution abroad. <i>In order to encourage student mobility overall, relevant information should be provided systematically to help students prepare. Moreover, the systematic collection of good practices that are useful to students should also be supported.</i></p>

<i>Reason</i>
<p>The work of organisations that support contact between students and education and training facilities has shown that they can help to give pupils in the host country easy peer-to-peer access to Europe, which is likely to be especially important for young people with fewer opportunities.</p>

Amendment 15
Preamble, Recital 21

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
The Programme should encourage youth participation in Europe's democratic life, including by supporting participation projects for young people to engage and learn to participate in civic society, raising awareness about European common values including fundamental rights, bringing together young people and decision makers at local, national and Union level, as well as contributing to the European integration process.	The Programme should encourage youth participation in Europe's democratic life, including by supporting participation projects, <i>and by consolidating and expanding existing best practice and measures within the Erasmus programme</i> , for young people to engage and learn to participate in civic society, raising awareness about European common values including fundamental rights, bringing together young people and decision makers at local, <i>regional</i> , national and Union level, as well as contributing to the European integration process.

<i>Reason</i>
Both the local and regional specificities need to be considered.

Amendment 16
Preamble, Recital 22

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
The Programme should offer young people more opportunities to discover Europe through learning experiences abroad. Eighteen year olds, in particular those with fewer opportunities, should be given the chance to have <i>a</i> first-time, short-term individual or group experience travelling throughout Europe in the frame of an informal educational activity aimed at fostering their sense of belonging to the European Union and discovering its cultural diversity. The Programme should identify bodies in charge of <i>reaching out and selecting the participants</i> and support activities to foster the learning dimension of the experience.	The Programme should offer young people more opportunities to discover Europe through learning experiences abroad. Eighteen year olds, in particular those with fewer opportunities, should be given the chance to have <i>their own</i> first-time, short-term individual or group experience travelling throughout Europe in the frame of an informal educational activity aimed at fostering their sense of belonging to the European Union and discovering its cultural diversity. <i>Participation in the Programme should be possible for all young people under the same conditions, regardless of where they live - including for those from the outermost regions and from less developed regions - and for learning experiences everywhere in Europe, so as to facilitate encounters between people from different backgrounds and from all parts of Europe. In addition to travel expenses it could be considered for young people with</i>

	<p><i>fewer opportunities to also receive bursaries for meals and accommodation and, where necessary, accompaniment. This Programme could also be a public-private-partnership project, for example with partners from the mobility and tourism sector, in order to achieve more, faster, in financial terms. Actively involving civil society groups in the above-mentioned partnerships and in innovative forms of cooperation, could also enable them to play a dynamic role, always with a view to making the Erasmus Programme more effective and broadening its scope. The Programme should identify bodies at local and regional level in charge of reaching out to the participants by disseminating information via suitable media and through relevant formal and non-formal education facilities, and support activities to foster the learning dimension of the experience.</i></p>
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Reason
<p>In order to genuinely reach, <i>inter alia</i>, unemployed young people or those with a physical disability with this offer of informal learning, it will not be enough to use the normal channels for disseminating information. It will also be helpful not only to finance the travel expenses themselves, but also to provide bursaries to cover additional costs arising in such cases. At the same time, less developed regions should also be considered as a destination for learning experiences abroad, so it is important to arouse young people's interest and enthusiasm towards these regions as well.</p>

Amendment 17
Preamble, Recital 23

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
<p>The Programme should also enhance the learning of languages, in particular through widened use of online tools, as e-learning offers additional advantages for language learning in terms of access and flexibility.</p>	<p>The Programme should also enhance the learning of languages, in particular through widened use of online tools, as e-learning offers additional advantages for language learning in terms of access and flexibility. <i>In this regard, the programme should pay due attention to regional and minority languages, pursuant to Article 22 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, concerning cultural, religious and linguistic diversity.</i></p>

Reason

The legislator should promote the cultural and identity aspect of regional and minority languages, in accordance with Article 22 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the Council of Europe's European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1992), signed by 16 EU Member States.

**Amendment 18
Preamble, Recital 24**

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
The Programme should support measures that enhance the cooperation between institutions and organisations active in education, training, <i>youth</i> and sport, recognising their fundamental role in equipping individuals with the knowledge, skills and competences needed in a changing world as well as to adequately fulfil the potential for innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship, <i>in particular within the digital economy.</i>	The Programme should support measures that enhance the cooperation between institutions and organisations active in education, <i>including non-formal education,</i> training and sport, <i>within these education sectors as well as, under transparent conditions, across sectors at a grassroots level,</i> recognising their fundamental role in equipping individuals with the knowledge, skills and competences needed in a changing world as well as to adequately fulfil the potential for innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship.

Reason

As there are also creative and innovative education facilities outside the digital economy, the envisaged focus would lead to unjustified exclusion.

**Amendment 19
Preamble, Recital 32**

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
Reflecting the importance of tackling climate change in line with the Union's commitments to implement the Paris Agreement and achieve the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, this Programme will contribute to mainstream climate action in the Union's policies and to the achievement of an overall target of 25% of the Union budget expenditures supporting climate objectives. Relevant actions will be identified during the Programme's preparation and implementation and reassessed in the context of the relevant evaluations and review process.	Reflecting the importance of tackling climate change in line with the Union's commitments to implement the Paris Agreement and achieve the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, this Programme will contribute to mainstream climate action in the Union's policies and to the achievement of an overall target of 25% of the Union budget expenditures supporting climate objectives. Relevant actions, <i>considering also climate change-related training and transfer of skills for young Europeans,</i> will be identified during the Programme's preparation and implementation and reassessed in the context of the relevant evaluations and review process.

Reason

It is important to train young people in the field of prevention, mitigation and risk reduction related to climate change, including subsequent natural disasters.

**Amendment 20
Preamble, Recital 37**

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
<p>Third countries which are members of the European Economic Area (EEA) may participate in the Programme in the framework of the cooperation established under the European Economic Area (EEA) agreement, which provides for the implementation of Union programmes by a decision under that agreement. Third countries may also participate on the basis of other legal instruments. This Regulation should grant the necessary rights for and access to the authorising officer responsible, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) as well as the European Court of Auditors to comprehensively exert their respective competences. The full participation of third countries in the Programme should be subject to the conditions laid down in specific agreements covering the participation of the third country concerned to the Programme. Full participation entails, moreover, the obligation to set up a national agency and managing some of the actions of the Programme at decentralised level. Individuals and entities from third countries that are not associated to the Programme should be able to participate in some of the actions of the Programme, as defined in the work programme and the calls for proposals published by the Commission. When implementing the Programme, specific arrangements could be taken into account with regard to individuals and entities from European microstates.</p>	<p>Third countries which are members of the European Economic Area (EEA) may participate in the Programme in the framework of the cooperation established under the European Economic Area (EEA) agreement, which provides for the implementation of Union programmes by a decision under that agreement. Third countries may also participate on the basis of other legal instruments <i>and through structured frameworks for cooperation such as the European Union's macro-regional strategies</i>. This Regulation should grant the necessary rights for and access to the authorising officer responsible, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) as well as the European Court of Auditors to comprehensively exert their respective competences. The full participation of third countries in the Programme should be subject to the conditions laid down in specific agreements covering the participation of the third country concerned to the Programme. Full participation entails, moreover, the obligation to set up a national agency and managing some of the actions of the Programme at decentralised level. Individuals and entities from third countries that are not associated to the Programme should be able to participate in some of the actions of the Programme, as defined in the work programme and the calls for proposals published by the Commission. When implementing the Programme, specific arrangements could be taken into account with regard to individuals and entities from European microstates.</p>

Reason

The added text aims to highlight the macro-regional dimension of European policies, including the participation in the Erasmus programme of the third countries involved in the four existing macro-regional strategies.

**Amendment 21
Preamble, Recital 38**

<i>Text proposed by the European Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
In line with the Commission's communication on 'A stronger and renewed strategic partnership with the Union's outermost regions', the Programme should take into account the specific situation of these regions. Measures will be taken to increase the outermost regions' participation in all actions. Mobility exchanges and cooperation between people and organisations from these regions and third countries, in particular their neighbours, should be fostered. Such measures will be monitored and evaluated regularly.	<i>"In line with Article 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the Commission's communication on 'A stronger and renewed strategic partnership with the Union's outermost regions', the Programme should take into account the specific situation of these regions. Measures will be taken to increase the outermost regions' participation in all actions. Mobility exchanges and cooperation between people and organisations from these regions and third countries, in particular their neighbours, should be fostered. Such measures will be monitored and evaluated regularly"</i>

Reason

The recital should include the legal basis, Article 349 TFEU, which is the real linchpin setting out the specificities of the outermost regions. We therefore propose this new wording.

**Amendment 22
Preamble, Recital 38**

<i>Text proposed by the European Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
	<i>In any action it takes, the programme should also take into account the need to increase the involvement of regions with severe and permanent natural or demographic handicaps, such as island, cross-border and mountain regions as referred to in the third paragraph of Article 174 TFEU.</i>

Reason

Self-explanatory.

Amendment 23
Preamble, Recital 42

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
Appropriate outreach, publicity and dissemination of the opportunities and results of the actions supported by the Programme should be ensured at European, national and local level. The outreach, publicity and dissemination activities should rely on all the implementing bodies of the Programme, including, when relevant, with the support of other key stakeholders.	Appropriate outreach, publicity and dissemination of the opportunities and results of the actions supported by the Programme should be ensured at European, national, regional and local level. The outreach, publicity and dissemination activities should rely on all the implementing bodies of the Programme, including, when relevant, with the support of other key stakeholders.

<i>Reason</i>
Both the local and regional specificities need to be considered.

Amendment 24
Preamble, Recital 44

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
In order to ensure efficient and effective implementation of this Regulation, the Programme should make maximum use of delivery mechanisms already in place. The implementation of the Programme should therefore be entrusted to the Commission, and to national agencies. Where feasible, and in order to maximise efficiency, the national agencies should be the same as the one designated for the management of the predecessor programme. The scope of the ex-ante compliance assessment should be limited to the requirements that are new and specific to the Programme, unless justified, such as in case of serious shortcomings or underperformance on the part of the national agency concerned.	In order to ensure efficient and effective implementation of this Regulation, the Programme should make maximum use of delivery mechanisms already in place and be expanded more intensively at the regional level. The implementation of the Programme should therefore be entrusted to the Commission, and to national agencies that cooperate more intensively at the regional level. Where feasible, and in order to maximise efficiency, the national agencies, working more closely with the regional level, should be the same as the one designated for the management of the predecessor programme. In order to further enhance the effectiveness and acceptance of the measures adopted by national agencies, the latter should, in cooperation with relevant stakeholders, set up advisory councils and ombudsmen at the local or regional level to help improve administrative procedures and decisions, and resolve any appeals and disputes between national agencies and users in a transparent, factual and neutral way. The scope of the ex-ante compliance assessment should be

	limited to the requirements that are new and specific to the Programme, unless justified, such as in case of serious shortcomings or underperformance on the part of the national agency concerned.
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<i>Reason</i>
<p>The positive experiences that the German Federal Institute for Vocational Training (BIBB) has had with setting up a user advisory council should also be used by the other national agencies in order to enable those concerned to participate even more closely in the Programme, particularly its implementation.</p> <p>Since in the past there have repeatedly been appeals against decisions by national agencies and it does not make sense for national agencies to decide on appeals against their own decisions, it is proposed, as is already the case in Austria, to set up relevant ombudsmen to boost transparency in the decision-making process and contribute to neutral, expert solutions.</p>

Amendment 25
Preamble, Recital 46

<i>Text proposed by the European Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
<p>Member States should <i>endeavour to</i> adopt all appropriate measures to remove legal and administrative obstacles to the proper functioning of the Programme. This includes resolving, where possible, and without prejudice to Union law on the entry and residence of third-country nationals issues that create difficulties in obtaining visas and residence permits. In line with Directive (EU) 2016/801 of the European Parliament and of the Council[1], Member States are encouraged to establish fast-track admission procedures.</p> <p>[1] Directive (EU) 2016/801 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2016 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, training, voluntary service, pupil exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing (OJ L 132, 21.5.2016, p. 21).</p>	<p>Member States should adopt all appropriate measures to remove legal and administrative obstacles to the proper functioning of the Programme. This includes <i>exempting study grants from taxation, as well as</i> resolving, where possible, and without prejudice to Union law on the entry and residence of third-country nationals issues that create difficulties in obtaining visas and residence permits. In line with Directive (EU) 2016/801 of the European Parliament and of the Council[1], Member States are encouraged to establish fast-track admission procedures.</p> <p>[1] Directive (EU) 2016/801 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2016 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, training, voluntary service, pupil exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing (OJ L 132, 21.5.2016, p. 21).</p>

<i>Reason</i>
This is consistent with Recital 49.

Amendment 26
Preamble, Recital 49

<i>Text proposed by the European Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
<p>In order to simplify requirements for beneficiaries, simplified grants in the form of lump-sums, unit-costs and flat-rate funding should be used to the maximum possible extent. The simplified grants to support the mobility actions of the Programme, as defined by the Commission, should take into account the living and subsistence costs of the host country. The Commission and national agencies of the sending countries should have the possibility to adjust these simplified grants on the basis of objective criteria, in particular to ensure access to people with fewer opportunities. In accordance with national law, Member States should also be encouraged to exempt those grants from any taxes and social levies. The same exemption should apply to public or private entities awarding such financial support to the individuals concerned.</p>	<p>In order to simplify requirements for beneficiaries, simplified grants in the form of lump-sums, unit-costs and flat-rate funding should be used to the maximum possible extent. The simplified grants to support the mobility actions of the Programme, as defined by the Commission, should be regularly reviewed and adjusted to the living and subsistence costs of the host country and region. The Commission and national agencies of the sending countries should have the possibility to adjust these simplified grants on the basis of objective criteria, in particular to ensure access to people with fewer opportunities, whose total cost of participation should be covered by such grants. In accordance with national law, Member States should also exempt those grants from any taxes and social levies. The same exemption should apply to public or private entities awarding such financial support to the individuals concerned.</p>

<i>Reason</i>
Self-explanatory.

Amendment 27
Preamble, Recital 51

<i>Text proposed by the European Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
<p>It is necessary to ensure the complementarity of the actions carried out within the Programme with activities undertaken by the Member States and with other Union activities, in particular those in the fields of education, culture and the media, youth and solidarity, employment and social inclusion, research and innovation, industry and enterprise, agriculture and rural development with a focus on young farmers, cohesion, regional policy and international cooperation and development.</p>	<p>It is necessary to ensure the complementarity of the actions carried out within the Programme with activities undertaken by the Member States and regions and with other Union activities, in particular those in the fields of education, culture and the media, youth and solidarity, employment and social inclusion, research and innovation, industry and enterprise, agriculture and rural development with a focus on young farmers, cohesion, regional policy and international cooperation and development.</p>

<i>Reason</i>
It is also important to take into account the complementary nature of measures carried out under the programme and activities by the regions.

Amendment 28
Preamble, Recital 52

<i>Text proposed by the European Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
While the regulatory framework already allowed Member States and regions to establish synergies in the previous programming period between Erasmus+ and other Union instruments, such as the European structural and investment funds, which also support the qualitative development of education, training and youth systems in the Union, this potential has so far been underexploited, thus limiting the systemic effects of projects and impact on policy. Effective communication and cooperation should take place at national level between the national bodies in charge of managing these various instruments to maximise their respective impact. The programme should allow for active cooperation with these instruments.	While the regulatory framework already allowed Member States and regions to establish synergies in the previous programming period between Erasmus+ and other Union instruments, such as the European structural and investment funds, which also support the qualitative development of education, training and youth systems in the Union, this potential has so far been underexploited, thus limiting the systemic effects of projects and impact on policy. Effective communication and cooperation should take place at national and regional level between the national bodies in charge of managing these various instruments to maximise their respective impact. The programme should allow for active cooperation with these instruments.

<i>Reason</i>
It is also important to include cooperation with regional bodies, since at regional level there are authorities which manage other EU instruments, such as the European Structural and Investment Funds.

Amendment 29
Chapter I, Article 2, number 6 (Definitions)

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
'grassroots sport' means organised sport practised at local level by amateur sports people, and sport for all;	'grassroots sport' means organised sport practised at local or regional level by amateur sports people, and sport for all;

<i>Reason</i>
Self-explanatory.

Amendment 30
Chapter I, Article 2, number 14 (Definitions)

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
'partnership' means an agreement between a group of institutions and/or organisations to carry out joint activities and projects;	'partnership' means an agreement between a group of institutions and/or organisations to carry out joint activities and projects <i>as part of the Programme;</i>

<i>Reason</i>
It should be ensured that not every form of cooperation is declared to be a "partnership" within the meaning of the Regulation.

Amendment 31
Chapter I, Article 2, number 25 (Definitions)

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
'people with fewer opportunities' means people facing <i>obstacles</i> that prevent them from having effective access to opportunities under the Programme for economic, social, cultural, geographical or health reasons, a migrant background or for reasons such as <i>disability and educational difficulties;</i>	'people with fewer opportunities' means people facing <i>barriers</i> that prevent them from having effective access to opportunities under the Programme for economic, social, cultural, <i>linguistic,</i> geographical or health reasons, a migrant background or for reasons such as <i>physical, sensory and cognitive disabilities; creating accessibility is one of the Programme's primary goals and should take precedence over quantitative or financial aspects;</i>

<i>Reason</i>
Equal access to opportunities requires addressing obstacles such as language barriers or learning disabilities.

Amendment 32
Chapter I, Article 2, new number 28 (Definitions)

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
	<i>'language' means any language other than the first language of the learner;</i>

<i>Reason</i>
The learning of new languages supported by this Programme should not be limited to the official languages of the EU.

Amendment 33
Chapter I, Article 2, new number 29 (Definitions)

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
	<i>'persons with disabilities' means persons who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others;</i>

<i>Reason</i>
Definition of the term in line with Article 1, sentence 2 of the UN CRPD.

Amendment 34
Chapter II, Article 4, Key action 1 Learning mobility

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
<p>In the field of <i>education and training</i>, the Programme shall support the following actions under key action 1:</p> <p>(a) the mobility of higher education students and staff;</p> <p>(b) the mobility of vocational education and training learners and staff;</p> <p>(c) the mobility of school pupils and staff;</p> <p>(d) the mobility of adult education staff;</p> <p>(e) language learning opportunities, including those supporting mobility activities.</p>	<p>In the field of <i>training and education</i>, the Programme shall support the following actions under key action 1, <i>which may also be carried out in combination with virtual exchange projects</i>:</p> <p>(a) the <i>short-, medium- and long-term</i> mobility of higher education students and staff;</p> <p>(b) the <i>short-, medium- and long-term</i> mobility of vocational education and training learners and staff, <i>particularly apprentices, employees and trainers in SMEs. Training courses tailored to preparing apprentices for linguistic and intercultural challenges, which can also be requested on several dates throughout the year, should be developed</i>;</p> <p>(c) the <i>short-, medium- and long-term</i> mobility of school pupils and staff, <i>including for work experience in the area of education</i>;</p> <p>(d) the <i>short-, medium- and long-term</i> mobility of adult education staff;</p> <p>(e) language learning opportunities, including those supporting mobility activities, <i>which should be geared towards the specific needs of different target groups</i>;</p> <p>(f) <i>the mobility of adults and older persons who are enrolled in the University of the Third Age</i></p>

	<p><i>or other lifelong learning initiatives;</i></p> <p><i>(g) the mobility of young people and youth workers for learning purposes in the area of non-formal education.</i></p>
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<i>Reason</i>
<p><i>(a-e)</i> Learning mobility should be made accessible, in particular for this group and area of education, and should allow for relevant preparation, in order to ensure high quality.</p> <p><i>(f)</i> To encourage and support lifelong learning and training initiatives for adults and older persons, with a view to improving their knowledge and skills, increasing their quality of life, encouraging inclusion and promoting European identity among all age groups.</p> <p><i>(g) The amendment only mentions the area of more academic, formal education. It would be useful to include a point on the mobility of young people and youth workers under key action 1.</i></p>

Amendment 35

Chapter II, Article 5, Key Action 2 Cooperation among organisations and institutions

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
<p>In the field of education and training, the Programme shall support the following actions under key action 2:</p> <p>(a) partnerships for cooperation and exchanges of practices, including small-scale partnerships to foster a wider and more inclusive access to the Programme;</p> <p>partnerships for excellence, in particular European universities, Centres of vocational excellence and joint master degrees;</p> <p>(c) partnerships for innovation to strengthen Europe's innovation capacity;</p> <p>(d) online platforms and tools for virtual cooperation, including the support services for eTwinning and for the electronic platform for adult learning in Europe.</p>	<p>In the field of education and training, the Programme shall support the following actions under key action 2:</p> <p>(a) partnerships for cooperation and exchanges of practices, including small-scale partnerships <i>at a regional level</i> to foster a wider and more inclusive access to the Programme;</p> <p>(b) partnerships for excellence, in particular European universities, Centres of vocational excellence, <i>which should not only be located in European metropolises, should, with the involvement of the regional level, support stakeholders in their operational cooperation and develop</i> joint master degrees;</p> <p>(c) partnerships for innovation to strengthen Europe's innovation capacity <i>and awards for "European firms and businesses" that undertake special efforts concerning their apprentices' European qualifications;</i></p> <p>(d) online platforms and tools for virtual cooperation, including the support services for eTwinning and for the electronic platform for adult learning in Europe.</p>

Reason

Centres of vocational excellence can only achieve their objective if they are based on existing structures and work with and not against stakeholders.

Amendment 36

Chapter II, Article 6, Key action 3 Support to policy development and cooperation

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
<p>Key action 3</p> <p>Support to policy development and cooperation In the field of education and training, the Programme shall support the following actions under key action 3:</p> <p>(a) the preparation and implementation of the Union general and sectoral policy agendas in education and training, including with the support of the Eurydice network or activities of other relevant organisations;</p> <p>(b) the support to Union tools and measures that foster the quality, transparency and recognition of competences, skills and qualifications[1];</p> <p>(c) policy dialogue and cooperation with key stakeholders, including Union-wide networks, European non-governmental organisations and international organisations in the field of education and training;</p> <p>(d) measures that contribute to the qualitative and inclusive implementation of the Programme;</p> <p>(e) cooperation with other Union instruments and support to other Union policies;</p> <p>(f) dissemination and awareness-raising activities about European policy outcomes and priorities as well as on the Programme.</p> <p>[1] In particular the single Union framework for the transparency of qualifications and competences; the European Qualifications Framework; the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training; the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training; the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System; the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education; the European Association for Quality</p>	<p>Key action 3</p> <p>Support to policy development and cooperation In the field of education and training, the Programme shall support the following actions under key action 3:</p> <p>(a) the preparation and implementation of the Union general and sectoral policy agendas in education and training, including with the support of the Eurydice network or activities of other relevant organisations;</p> <p>(b) the support to Union tools and measures that foster the quality, transparency and recognition of competences, skills and qualifications[1];</p> <p>(c) policy dialogue and cooperation with key stakeholders, including Union-wide networks, European non-governmental organisations and international organisations in the field of education and training;</p> <p>(d) measures that contribute to the qualitative and inclusive implementation of the Programme;</p> <p>(e) cooperation with other Union instruments and support to other Union policies;</p> <p>(f) dissemination and awareness-raising activities about European policy outcomes and priorities as well as on the Programme;</p> <p><i>(g) support for the implementation of EU macro-regional strategies.</i></p> <p>[1] In particular the single Union framework for the transparency of qualifications and competences; the European Qualifications Framework; the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training; the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training; the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System; the</p>

Assurance in Higher Education; the European Network of Information Centres in the European Region and National Academic Recognition Information Centres in the European Union; and the Euroguidance networks.	European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education; the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education; the European Network of Information Centres in the European Region and National Academic Recognition Information Centres in the European Union; and the Euroguidance networks.
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<i>Reason</i>
The Erasmus programme should also be implemented at macro-regional level in order to support the related economic, social and territorial cooperation strategies between Member States and between Member States and third countries.

Amendment 37
Chapter II, Article 7 Jean Monnet actions

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
<p>Jean Monnet actions</p> <p>The Programme shall support teaching, learning, research and debates on European integration matters through the following actions:</p> <p>(a) Jean Monnet action in the field of higher education;</p> <p>(b) Jean Monnet action in other fields of education and training;</p> <p>(c) support to the following institutions pursuing an aim of European interest: the European University Institute, Florence, including its School of Transnational Governance; the College of Europe (Bruges and Natolin campuses); the European Institute of Public Administration, Maastricht; the Academy of European Law, Trier; the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, Odense and the International Centre for European Training, Nice.</p>	<p>Jean Monnet actions</p> <p>The Programme shall support teaching, learning, research and debates on European integration matters through the following actions:</p> <p>(a) Jean Monnet action in the field of higher education;</p> <p>(b) Jean Monnet action in other fields of education and training;</p> <p>(c) support to the following institutions pursuing an aim of European interest: the European University Institute, Florence, including its School of Transnational Governance; the College of Europe (Bruges and Natolin campuses); the European Institute of Public Administration, Maastricht; the Academy of European Law, Trier; the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, Odense and the International Centre for European Training, Nice;</p> <p><i>(d) Jean Monnet action in the field of training and research in environmental protection, the European sustainable development strategy and broader environment and climate change policy, including in the area of natural disasters, with particular regard to the prevention, mitigation and reduction of damage.</i></p>

<i>Reason</i>
The proposed addition to the text aims to boost the Jean Monnet actions provided for in the Programme.

Amendment 38
Chapter IV, Article 11

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
	<i>The mobility of amateur sportsmen and -women participating in competitions, especially those from remote, island or outermost regions, will also be supported.</i>

<i>Reason</i>
It is essential to support the mobility of athletes who, due to their place of origin, have greater difficulties moving around for competitions. All athletes should have access to mobility on equal terms.

Amendment 39
Chapter IV, Article 12

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
(a) partnerships for cooperation and exchanges of practices, including small-scale partnerships to foster a wider and more inclusive access to the Programme;	(a) partnerships for cooperation and exchanges of practices, including small-scale partnerships to foster a wider and more inclusive access to the Programme; <i>to enable smaller local and regional operators to take part in this Programme as well, the minimum number of countries required to take part in a measure should be reduced to six;</i>

<i>Reason</i>
As many activities are organised by small local or regional operators, this reduction should be facilitated in order to ensure broader and more inclusive access.

Amendment 40
Chapter IV, Article 14

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
6. [...]	6. [...] <i>7. The funds for the learning mobility of individuals referred to in Article 4 shall be adjusted to the regularly reviewed real cost of living in the host region.</i>

<i>Reason</i>
It is necessary to adjust the reimbursement of the cost of living in a host country in the light of updated real costs in the specific host region as national averages may be deceptive.

Amendment 41
Chapter VIII, Article 22, number 1

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
National agencies referred to in Article 24 shall develop a consistent strategy with regard to the effective outreach as well as dissemination and exploitation of results of activities supported under the actions they manage within the Programme, shall assist the Commission in its general task of disseminating information concerning the Programme, including information in respect of actions and activities managed at national and Union level, and its results, and shall inform relevant target groups about the actions and activities undertaken in their country.	National agencies referred to in Article 24 shall develop a consistent strategy with regard to the effective outreach, <i>making the individual areas of the Programme visible</i> , as well as dissemination and exploitation of results of activities supported under the actions they manage within the Programme, shall assist the Commission in its general task of disseminating information concerning the Programme, including information in respect of actions and activities managed at national and Union level, and its results, and shall inform relevant target groups – <i>from pre-school to higher education and vocational education, via all relevant media and in agreement with stakeholders</i> – about the actions and activities undertaken in their country.

<i>Reason</i>
In order to achieve the targeted tripling of the number of potential participants, it will be necessary for both external and internal communication to duly take the Programme areas into account, so as to also generate multiplier effects.

Amendment 42
Chapter IX, Article 23, number 2

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
The Member States shall take all necessary and appropriate measures to remove any legal and administrative obstacles to the proper functioning of the Programme, including, where possible, <i>measures aimed at</i> resolving issues that give rise to difficulties in obtaining visas.	The Member States shall take all necessary and appropriate measures to remove any legal and administrative obstacles to the proper functioning of the Programme, including <i>measures aimed at avoiding grants taxation, ensuring portability of rights among EU social systems, and</i> where possible, resolving issues that give rise to difficulties in obtaining visas.

<i>Reason</i>
Wording ensures coherence with previous recitals.

Amendment 43
Chapter IX, Article 25, new number 8

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
	<i>The European Commission will establish an advisory council, in which the key stakeholders – including local and regional stakeholders – advise the Commission on an ongoing basis regarding the implementation of the Programme and thereby improve the achievement of its objectives;</i>

<i>Reason</i>
The positive experiences that the German Federal Institute for Vocational Training (BIBB) has had with setting up a user advisory council should also be used by the European Commission in order to enable those concerned to participate even more closely in the Programme, particularly its implementation.

Amendment 44
Chapter XI, Article 29, number 4

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
Actions eligible under the Programme which have been assessed in a call for proposals under the Programme and which comply with the minimum quality requirements of that call for proposals, but which are not financed due to budgetary constraints, may be <i>selected</i> for funding <i>by</i> the European Structural and Investment (ESI) funds. In this case the co-financing rates and the eligibility rules based on this Regulation shall apply. These actions shall be implemented by the managing authority referred to in Article [65] of Regulation (EU)XX [CPR] in accordance with the rules set out in that Regulation and fund specific regulations, including rules on financial corrections.	Actions eligible under the Programme which have been assessed in a call for proposals under the Programme and which comply with the minimum quality requirements of that call for proposals, but which are not financed due to budgetary constraints, may be <i>provided with a Seal of Excellence to acknowledge their high quality. This might facilitate their application and eventual selection</i> for funding <i>from other sources, including</i> the European Structural and Investment (ESI) funds. In this case the co-financing rates and the eligibility rules based on this Regulation shall apply. These actions shall be implemented by the managing authority referred to in Article [65] of Regulation (EU)XX [CPR] in accordance with the rules set out in that Regulation and fund specific regulations, including rules on financial corrections.

<i>Reason</i>
The Seal of Excellence is successfully applied to R&I projects. Therefore, expanding the scheme to Erasmus projects could be considered.

Amendment 45
Chapter XII, Article 31(2)

<i>Text proposed by the Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
The committee may meet in specific configurations to deal with sectoral issues. Where appropriate, in accordance with its rules of procedure and on an ad hoc basis, external experts, including representatives of the social partners, may be invited to participate in its meetings as observers.	The committee may meet in specific configurations to deal with sectoral issues. Where appropriate, in accordance with its rules of procedure and on an ad hoc basis, external experts, including representatives of the social partners <i>or relevant regional stakeholders</i> , may be invited to participate in its meetings as observers.
<i>Reason</i>	
Self-explanatory.	

II. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

General comments

1. welcomes the general aim of supporting the personal, training and professional development of people in the areas of education, including non-formal education, and training and higher education in Europe and beyond, in order to contribute to sustainable growth, employment and social cohesion and a stronger European identity; this important task begins on the ground at the local and regional level and therefore needs to be closely linked to the European level;
2. welcomes the fact that the Commission proposes doubling the Programme's budget, but considers that the target of tripling the number of participants in the programme given the current conditions, and the aim of increased social inclusiveness, will be difficult to achieve. In future, it would also be desirable for the growing administrative burden of the Programme to be eliminated; recognises at the same time as good practice the role of the many local and regional authorities that contribute financially to boosting the grants for young people taking part in the Erasmus+ programme;
3. calls for a transparent, equitable distribution of resources over the entire seven-year period so that – in particular at the beginning of the programming period – funds can be increased and expectations of the Programme can be met. The budget should not only be allocated between the various educational sectors, including universities, but should also be broken down between the key actions, so that it is possible to pinpoint what share is managed centrally by the Commission and what share is managed in the Member States and the regions on a decentralised basis;

4. considers that, in order to boost participation in the Programme, study grants should be exempt from taxation, while the participation of those with fewer opportunities should be fully covered by grants;
5. strongly advocates that the application process, project management and documentation requirements be significantly simplified for all areas of the Programme; calls for the reintroduction of support for "preparatory missions" for application planning; calls for the online work platform to be integrated and to share the features available on the platforms of other European programmes, such as Horizon 2020, so as to offer beneficiaries maximum effectiveness and transparency, both when drawing up and presenting proposals and when managing projects; moreover, the Seal of Excellence, which is successfully applied to R&I projects, could be awarded also to high quality actions eligible under the Programme but not financed due to budgetary constraints, in order to facilitate their application and eventual selection for funding from other EU financial instruments;
6. points out the significance of lifelong learning: therefore, all age groups and both formal and non-formal education should be supported equally by the Programme; underlines that education is not only about improving employability but should also have the broader goal of developing people, skills and competences as a whole;
7. endorses the Commission's proposal to make the Programme accessible to organisations that have little or no relevant experience of applying or with smaller operational capacity; therefore welcomes the introduction of "small scale partnerships";
8. agrees with the Commission that the proposed Erasmus programme is based on the objectives laid down in Articles 165 and 166 TFEU and should be implemented in line with the principle of subsidiarity. It is extremely important to involve municipal and regional authorities, and local and regional administrations and decision-makers, in designing, implementing and steering the measures presented here, as they are closer to the people concerned, have key competences in education and training policy, and play an important role in terms of youth and labour market policies. Acknowledges in this regard that the Commission's proposal complies with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality;
9. welcomes the fact that mobility activities, in particular, are being increased and facilitated and that young people taking part in non-formal learning, sporting, cultural and research activities are to be given more opportunities to participate; also welcomes the fact that volunteer staff are specifically mentioned in this regard;
10. welcomes the fact that the European Commission has taken on board the results of the mid-term evaluation of the current Erasmus+ programme and has maintained the structure of the preceding programme;
11. notes that the draft Regulation is very general and leaves the implementation quite flexible; in this context, points out the importance of implementing rules and calls on the Commission to closely involve the Member States, the national agencies, the regional authorities and the stakeholders in drawing these up;

12. regrets that the Programme will be called "Erasmus" rather than "Erasmus+". As the acronym "Erasmus" stands for "European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students", the CoR points out that appropriate measures must be taken to ensure the visibility of the various areas of education or funding, in order to guarantee that the "Erasmus" brand becomes associated with all areas of education and training, as well as with the area of youth and sport;
13. welcomes the fact that most of the mobility measures, including all forms of learning and research mobility, in particular pupil mobility, will in future be brought together under Key Action 1 ("learning mobility for individuals");
14. calls for the United Kingdom, after leaving the European Union, and subject to pre-defined conditions, to be permitted to continue to participate in the Programme and welcomes the fact that this possibility has been created through Article 16(1)(d) ("Third countries associated to the Programme");
15. calls for consideration to be given to gradually opening up the possibilities for virtual cooperation provided by this Programme to educational and training projects with institutions in the Mediterranean countries and in Africa;
16. recommends creating effective incentives for all types of learning mobility so that environmentally friendly modes of transport are used, with a view to meeting the target for 25% of EU spending to contribute to achieving climate goals;
17. insists that the funds and specific grants for learning mobility should be adjusted to the regularly reviewed real cost of living in the host region;
18. calls, in the area of training and education, for "strategic partnerships", which are under decentralised management, to be retained and strengthened, since this form of cooperation has proven itself, and the newly introduced concept of "partnerships for cooperation" appears to be less ambitious;
19. stresses its strong interest in the continuation of the technical dialogue with the Commission on this issue and, in this connection, underlines the importance of the impact assessment report that the Commission will submit in due course, on the basis of its cooperation agreement with the CoR;

Training and education

20. regrets that the willingness of firms to send apprentices abroad to other programme countries remains low. Incentives should be created for this and it should be more widely advertised among institutional economic players, e.g. chambers of industry and commerce, as well as firms and their organisations and associations providing training, particularly at local and regional level;

21. suggests giving consideration to a "European firm" award, in order to increase firms' and businesses' motivation to make their apprentices and their training more open to "Europe" by using the opportunities offered by Erasmus; also suggests to this effect that the Commission create a register of firms taking part in the Erasmus programme, which could be given the label of "Erasmus firm";
22. calls for the promotion of both short and longer stays abroad in the field of vocational training, in order to meet the operational needs of SMEs and do justice to participants' individual possibilities. The Programme should also support linguistic and intercultural preparatory measures with systematic learning support for apprentices;
23. points out that the target group for adult education is adults of all ages and social backgrounds, not just those with limited (formal) qualifications;
24. also points out that "adult education" may be promoted in the sense of a comprehensive form of education and not limited to "professional development". Freelance and voluntary employees should be taken into account in adult education;
25. welcomes the extension of learning mobility in the area of school education, in particular the possibility of individual mobility; calls, however, for strategic solutions to be developed in parallel that can support pupil/student mobility but also make it easier for them to return to their home region;
26. welcomes the introduction of networks of European universities, but is conscious of the increased budget expenditure for this; stresses that the European networks must be initiated, run and dominated by universities, in order to strengthen the university landscape in Europe in a sustainable way through the knowledge triangle (education, research and innovation), with funding from public administrations that support them and including private funding;
27. advocates the development, particularly in the area of vocational education, of "European Schools", in the spirit of "European Universities", which would foster lasting cooperation between institutions from several Member States in the area of youth and staff exchanges, coordination of curricula, and virtual collaboration;
28. welcomes the extension of the Jean Monnet actions from higher education to other areas of education and training, as well as the transfer of knowledge of EU integration issues to a broader audience;

Youth

29. recommends taking greater account of existing local and regional youth work bodies as potential beneficiaries;
30. welcomes that the new "DiscoverEU" programme will give young people aged 18 and over the chance to discover EU countries by train for a limited time period; points out, however, that, although the programme in question should have a strong learning component, this should not

come at the expense of opportunities for learning mobility, which should remain the core business of the Erasmus programme; stresses that it would be desirable for all young people in the EU to have this opportunity to encounter and discover its diversity, culture, nature and people, regardless of their parents' financial position; suggests giving consideration to financing via public-private partnerships, particularly with partners from the mobility and tourism sector;

31. welcomes the consistency with the new EU Youth Strategy and other initiatives in the area of young people such as the European Solidarity Corps;

Sport

32. points to the importance of non-profit sporting events, and deems it appropriate to remove the previous cap of 10% of the sport budget that can be used for sporting events; is in favour of also funding smaller events with fewer than 10 participating programme countries in the future;
33. calls for the number of programme countries to be significantly increased, particularly for grassroots sports, since European sport has traditionally extended far beyond the borders of the European Union.

Brussels, 6 February 2019

The President
of the European Committee of the Regions

Karl-Heinz Lambertz

The Secretary-General
of the European Committee of the Regions

Jiří Buriánek

III. PROCEDURE

Title	Erasmus programme for education, training, youth and sport
Reference(s)	COM(2018) 367 final
Legal basis	Article 165 and 166 TFEU
Procedural basis	Mandatory referral (Rule 41(a) of RoP)
Date of Commission letter	30 May 2018
Date of Bureau/President's decision	
Commission responsible	Commission for Social Policy, Education, Employment, Research and Culture (SEDEC)
Rapporteur	Ulrike Hiller (DE/PES)
Analysis	16 July 2018
Discussed in commission	18 October 2018
Date adopted by commission	18 October 2018
Result of the vote in commission (majority, unanimity)	Majority
Date adopted in plenary	6 February 2019
Previous Committee opinions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Erasmus for All¹ – Mainstreaming sport into the EU agenda post-2020² – Strengthening European identity through education and culture³ – Modernising school and higher education⁴ – Investing in Europe's youth and the European Solidarity Corps⁵ – A new skills agenda for Europe⁶ – Implementation of the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field⁷ – Recognition of skills and competences acquired through non-formal and informal learning⁸ – Opening up education⁹ – European higher education in the world¹⁰

1 CdR 2011/400.

2 Draft opinion: CdR 2018/1664.

3 CdR 2017/6048.

4 CdR 2017/3139.

5 CdR 2017/851.

6 CdR 2016/4094.

7 CdR 2015/4872.

8 CdR 3921/2014.

9 CdR 6183/2013.

10 CdR 5961/2013.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Rethinking Education¹¹- Promoting the active citizenship of young people through education¹²
Date of subsidiarity monitoring consultation	N/A

¹¹ CdR 2392/2012.

¹² CdR 173/2007.