

1. CONTEXT OF THE PROPOSAL

- **Reasons and objectives**

Policy context

Education and training as well as youth and sport are the EU's strongest investment in human capital, nurturing skills, building bonds across Europe, thereby laying the foundation for a resilient European Union, with citizens equipped with the right skills and competences, and who embrace a shared European identity in all its diversity. They also are drivers for social fairness and competitiveness and key contributors to many of the EU's overall political priorities such as preparedness and the twin transitions.

The importance of education, training, youth and sport for Europe's future has been reflected in the recent political agendas and strategic reports of the European Union.

The EU leaders' Strategic Agenda for the Europe 2024 – 2029 makes investment in skills, training and education a priority, recognising that in an era where global competition, political and social divergences are intensifying, education stands as a unifying force is the bedrock upon which Europe must build its strategic autonomy, economic strength, democracy and cohesion.

President Von der Leyen, in the political guidelines 2024-2029, highlights the need to take a “radical step change in ambition and action – for all skill levels and for all types of training and education. This is as important for people's careers and prospects as it is for our competitiveness.” Moreover, the President pledged to “establish a Union of Skills – focusing on investment, adult and lifelong learning, skill retention and the recognition of different types of training to enable people to work across our Union”, and to “strengthen Erasmus+ including for vocational training so that more people can benefit. This is key for people to develop skills and create shared experiences and a better understanding of each other. This will be part of a wider commitment to giving young people greater freedom and responsibility within our societies and democracies.” She pledged to “continue to work towards a European Degree”. The President further underscored she wants to make sure that ‘young people can use their voice – their own voice – to help shape our future.’

In its Resolution of 16 January 2024 on the implementation of the Erasmus+ programme, the European Parliament emphasized that “the programme has been a driving force for the European Education Area and should continue to respond to future trends in education to keep up with societal and technological change” and that the “programme is crucial in fostering a European sense of belonging”. It also declared “its determination to ensure a substantial increase in the Erasmus+ budget in the 2028-2034 programming period”.

The two key reports providing thorough analysis and insights on the future of the European Union, the Letta report¹ and the Draghi report², underline the importance of investing in education and skills, the key role of Erasmus+ and the need to increase its budget in the next programming period to deliver an “Erasmus for all”. In addition, the report by Sauli Niinistö³ concludes that the resilience of the EU's economy and societies, especially in sectors critical for keeping societal and economic stability, such as education, is paramount in face of potential large-scale crises, such as military conflicts and disasters.

¹ Much more than a market, Enrico Letta, April 2024

² The future of European competitiveness: Report by Mario Draghi, September 2024

³ Safer Together – Strengthening Europe's Civilian and Military Preparedness and Readiness, Sauli Niinistö, 2024.

The Erasmus+ programme goes hand in hand with the European's Commission ambition of the Union of Skills Communication⁴ of 5 March 2025, to develop quality, inclusive and adaptable education, training and skills systems to increase EU's competitiveness, and the European Education Area (EEA), a key enabler of the Union of Skills, laying the foundation to skills formation throughout life and providing a genuine common space for quality education and lifelong learning across borders.

European support to challenges affecting skills, education, training, youth, volunteering and sport has been provided through different funding programmes over the years. In the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), support was provided by Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity corps. As regards the next MFF, the College adopted on 11 February 2025 the Communication '*The road to the next multiannual financial framework*', in which it acknowledged 'complexities, weaknesses and rigidities' currently present in the EU's overall funding instruments and stated that the next long-term budget would have to address them, by being more focused, simpler, with fewer programmes and more impactful.

Challenges/problems drivers

The EU faces serious challenges in the areas of education and training as well as youth and sport. Europe needs people with the necessary skills and competences, for life and for jobs, for personal growth as well as a more sustainable, resilient and digital economy and society. Investing in the development of these skills is pivotal to ensure a prosperous and competitive Europe. Today, education and training systems face significant challenges to provide people with a minimum proficiency level of basic skills and to foster the advanced competencies and soft skills needed, across all stages of life. The acquisition of transversal skills and competences such as flexibility, resilience, empathy, confidence, open-mindedness, critical thinking, teamwork will be equally important to empower individuals to drive change, thrive in a rapidly changing world and contribute to better mental health and wellbeing. These skills also increase employability and help as well to strengthen societal resilience and build a strong Europe, better equipped to face crisis. Europe is lagging behind in basic skills⁵ with a substantial decrease in mathematics (-18 points), reading (-12) and science (-3.4) compared to the previous PISA results. Europe does not generate either enough skilled graduates from higher education and vocational education and nearly four out of five employers report difficulties finding workers with the right skills⁶. Overall, labour and skills shortages have been increasing in all Member States, with an impact on EU's ability to embrace the green and digital transitions, and thus on competitiveness. Disparities in the level and the access to quality formal and non-formal education across the EU persist, accentuating economic and social disparities. In addition, there are still gender gaps, with almost twice as many men than women studying STEM.

There is a clear need to address these skills related issues and create an enabling environment fostering better learning outcomes for all and from an early age and setting learners up for success in the long term.

The EU's strategic autonomy and competitiveness also relies on its ability to nurture, attract, and retain talent, particularly in the face of global competition and it must also prioritise the development of education with a view to develop advanced skills, including digital, technical, and transversal skills.

⁴ COM(2025)90 Final

⁵ [Report of PISA 2022 study outlines worsening educational performance and deeper inequality | European Education Area](#)

⁶ Eurobarometer survey, November 2023, data.europa.eu

The skills challenge exceeds mere economic considerations and addresses the need as well for a healthy, resilient, engaged, united and prepared society. It will be crucial to equip individuals from an early age onwards with skills and competences for life, enabling them to navigate the complex and rapidly changing world we live in, engage, take an active role in society. Young people's belief in equal opportunities has sharply declined, with a 16-percentage point drop in the last decade, according to the 2022 Eurobarometer⁷. Many feel marginalised due to their socio-economic status, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or political views, particularly those with fewer opportunities or those living in rural or remote areas, with 24% (close to 18 million) of young people at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU; and still 11% of young people aged 15 to 29 neither in employment nor in education or training. Young people participate less in institutional politics than other age groups and less than many young people in the past⁸. They can be confronted with obstacles in their participation in democracy, such as insufficient knowledge of their democratic rights, difficult access to information and limited involvement in decision-making processes. These challenges, including multiple skills requirements cannot be satisfied through formal education only. Non-formal and informal learning, involvement in activities such as volunteering, or sport bring complementary value. They can offer valuable opportunities for people to develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours to grow and become active citizens. However, opportunities for such actions are limited, thus negatively impacting social capital development, particularly among young people.

Programme contribution and objectives

The future Programme can contribute to address these challenges, through learning opportunities for all and capacity building achieved through cooperation and policy support.

Learning mobility starting from an early age is at the core of Erasmus+; it exposes learners to different and diverse learning environments, new teaching and training methods, institutional settings and different social context. These experiences allow individuals not only to expand disciplinary knowledge but also develop critical thinking, problem-solving and communication skills, as well as to improve resilience, adaptability, autonomy, communication skills and self-confidence. These skills are highly transferable to the professional world, increasing employability and contributing to a skilled and competitive workforce. For staff, learning mobility enhances professional development, networking, and collaboration opportunities and leads to improved quality teaching practices. This is particularly crucial in today's educational landscape where teaching careers at all levels need to be made more attractive and continuous professional development must be fostered.

The goal is to make learning mobility a reality for all, as early as possible, ensuring that opportunities are accessible across all sectors of education and training as well as in youth and sport and in line with the Council Recommendation 'Europe on the Move - Learning opportunities for everyone'. EU action will help address the obstacles to mobility, providing as well sufficient funding and support measures to promote diversity and ensure equal access for individuals regardless of their cultural, social, economic, or geographical background, or any special needs they may have.

⁷ Eurobarometer survey FL502 on Youth and Democracy on the European Year of Youth, <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2282>

⁸ European Parliament Study, 'Young people's participation in European democratic processes - How to improve and facilitate youth involvement', 2023

Through boosting mobility and accompanying support measures, the future Erasmus+ must enhance its contribution to the 5th basic skill of democratic citizenship and to the development of a sense of European identity and commitment to EU values. It is a cornerstone programme for promoting democratic and societal participation, by embedding citizenship in all fields, in particular school education, better aligning with new priorities like preparedness, and unlocking the full potential of the sport field notably through expanding mobility activities in the field of sport to involve athletes alongside coaches.

By offering volunteering opportunities and activities to engage and express solidarity, the Programme will further promote the development of a culture of solidarity, care and understanding among citizens, especially the youngest generations and will contribute to advancing social inclusion and cohesion.

The Programme should also support students in engaging in critical sectors and continue to boost innovation and excellence in education and training systems, including on skills and competences development in strategic areas, addressing Europe's skills and talent shortages, and making the EU a more attractive destination for global talent.

Supporting and facilitating the transnational and international cooperation between organisations in the fields of education, training, youth and sport is instrumental to address the challenges described above, enabling organisations to pool expertise and to combine complementary strengths not available at any single institution. Cross-border cooperation between education and training, youth and sport organisations fosters the required mutual learning, exchanges of good practices, and facilitates networking, enabling them and their staff to experience new approaches and methodologies and increase their own capacity to deliver high quality teaching, training and learning. To increase the effectiveness of its action in this area, the Programme should refine the focus of its cooperation activities, including by reviewing funding models, raising the relevance of target groups involved and better focus on increasing capacity building and raising quality. The Programme should reinforce its support to cooperation in the school sector through supporting school alliances, addressing obstacles to cooperation and mobility and continue to offer opportunities enabling the rollout of the European degree label to support the increase in the number of transnational joint study programmes.

The Programme will further enable long-term strategic transnational cooperation at institutional level under key flagship initiatives, serving as testbeds for innovative instruments deepening links with the private sector and driving sustainable impact and transformation. Through provision of sustainable support and clear strategic steer, partnerships for excellence and innovation will directly address new policy priorities stemming from the Union of Skills, the Competitiveness Compass⁹, the Clean Industrial Deal¹⁰, and the Preparedness Strategy¹¹.

The programme will support policy development at European level, thereby contributing to shaping policies which can trigger modernisation and reforms, at European and systems' level, in the fields of education and training, as well as youth and sport. The Programme can contribute to the development and circulation of skills, including by setting up basic skills support scheme and fostering quality assurance, transparency, the recognition of skills, competences and qualifications, their digitalisation, and the validation of non-formal and informal learning, skills management and guidance. The Programme should also increase impact, scale, accessibility and sustainability notably by reinforcing synergies with other

⁹ Communication 'A competitiveness compass for the EU', COM(2025) 30

¹⁰ Communication 'The Clean Industrial Deal: A joint roadmap for competitiveness and decarbonisation', COM(2025) 85

¹¹ Joint Communication 'on the European Preparedness Union Strategy', JOIN(2025) 130

funding programmes and sources such as the next EU framework programme for research and innovation, the future European Competitiveness Fund, the successor programmes of Digital Europe, as well as the international, national and regional envelopes under the next Multiannual Financial Framework.

The international dimension of the Programme is a fundamental and cross-cutting element which is relevant for learning, cooperation as well as for policy dialogue activities. There is, in particular, a need to bring candidate countries and potential candidates closer to their goal of becoming EU Member State through the Programme.

The Programme will have to be simplified and made more accessible to a broader audience including smaller and less experienced organisations, notably by removing some challenges through the change of management mode of some actions, bringing them closer to the field. The Programme will become more relevant, attractive, and inclusive, with a focus on reaching learners with fewer opportunities with further measures to facilitate their participation and activities better fit to their needs.

- **Consistency with existing policy provisions**

The proposal is fully aligned with the **Union of Skills**, an overarching strategy that focuses on investment, adult and lifelong learning, vocational education and training, skill retention and recognition, and enhancing skills intelligence. It sets the framework for EU cooperation in education and skills policies, supporting the development of the EU's human capital to strengthen its competitiveness. The proposal supports the Union of Skills by delivering on its objectives, including the Action Plan on Basic Skills and the STEM Education Strategic Plan, which aim to improve basic skills, provide lifelong learning opportunities, and attract and retain the skills and talents needed in the European economy. In addition, the programme will support the implementation of the overall **European strategic cooperation in education and training**, including its **underlying sectoral agendas** in the fields of school education, adult education, vocational education and training and higher education training.

The proposal is consistent with the objectives of the **European Education Area (EEA)**, which lays the foundation for skills formation throughout life and supports cooperation and peer learning between countries. The EEA promotes high-quality education and training for all, facilitates the mutual recognition of learning outcomes across borders, and supports the mobility of learners of all ages. The **Digital Education Action Plan**, part of the EEA, further supports the development of digital education across EU Member States equipping people with the digital skills and competences necessary for the digital transformation. The proposal aligns as well with the Council Recommendation '**Europe on the Move**', a building block of the EEA, aiming to enable learning mobility for everyone.

The proposal is also in line with the **EU Youth Strategy**, the policy framework in the field of youth for 2019–2027, structured around the pillars of Engage, Connect, and Empower, aiming to foster youth participation in democratic life, social and civic engagement and ensuring that all young people have the necessary resources to take part in society.

In the field of sport, the proposal is aligned on the objectives of the **EU Work Plan for Sport (2024-2027)** outlining a strategic approach that recognizes the role of sports in social cohesion, promoting well-being, building inclusive communities, strengthening cultural ties, and enhancing solidarity among people. The work plan prioritises integrity, sustainability, and social inclusion within sporting contexts, encouraging cross-border cooperation and the sharing of best practices.

The Programme will also contribute to the 2030 Agenda for **Sustainable Development Goals**, in particular to the Sustainable Development Goal number 4 to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

- **Consistency with other Union policies**

The initiative is aligned with the overarching Commission's 2024-2029 policy priorities¹², namely in terms of 1) Supporting people, strengthening our societies and our social model; 2) Protecting our democracy, upholding our values; 3) Europe's sustainable prosperity and competitiveness; 4) a new era for European Defence and Security and 5) a global Europe.

Synergies with policies supporting people, strengthening our societies and our social model

The Programme will contribute to put in practice the principles of the **European Pillar of Social Rights**¹³, and to implement the flagship initiatives of the **European Skills Agenda**¹⁴, to help individuals and businesses develop more and better skills and to put them to use, including the Pact for Skills which aims to mobilise and incentivise relevant private and public stakeholders to partner up and take action for lifelong skills development. The programme will be also in line with the future **European Strategy on vocational education and training** aiming to increase the attractiveness, excellence and inclusiveness of VET. Particular attention will be given in the Programme to promoting **gender equality**, for example the participation of girls and women in STEM, including through the STEAM approach, and addressing differences in relation to the access and use by underrepresented groups, as part of a **Union of equality**.

Synergies with actions supporting democracy and promoting EU values

The programme and in particular its focus on learning mobility, also at a younger age will further contribute to the development of a sense of European identity, commitment to EU values and to the promotion of democratic and societal participation, in line with the upcoming **European Democracy Shield**. The programme will provide education and training, as well as youth and sport with resources to better embed citizenship education and develop all skills needed (e.g. critical thinking, media literacy, digital skills), across lifelong learning, to participate actively and responsibly in our societies. The Programme will also support the creation of opportunities and mechanisms for meaningful youth participation.

Synergies with actions for competitiveness

The programme will support the development of quality, inclusive and adaptable education, training and skills systems as a contribution to the Union's competitiveness, in line with the Commission Communication '**A Competitiveness Compass for the EU**'¹⁵. The programme will also be fully in line with the 2023 **Green Deal Industrial Plan**'s pillar on green and digital skills¹⁶ and the **Clean Industrial Deal**¹⁷ put forward in 2025.

¹² https://commission.europa.eu/priorities-2024-2029_en

¹³ In particular the first principle (everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and lifelong learning) and the fourth principle (everyone has the right to timely and tailor-made assistance to improve employment or self-employment prospects, including to receive support for training and re-qualification).

¹⁴ European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience, COM(2020) 274

¹⁵ COM(2025) 30

¹⁶ A Green Deal Industrial Plan for the Net-Zero Age COM(2023) 62

¹⁷ COM(2025) 85

Synergies with actions related to defence and security

In line with the **European Preparedness Union Strategy**, Erasmus+ will promote preparedness, resilience, participation in democratic life and civic engagement through a bottom-up approach, encouraging organisations and institutions to apply for funding and foster digital and media literacy, critical thinking, engagement, democratic citizenship learning. Volunteering is also essential in fostering a culture of inclusive preparedness and societal resilience.

Synergies with policies for a global Europe

The future Programme will complement actions financed through the Union external actions. It will contribute to attract global talent, enhance the EU's influence and attractiveness on the world stage. The future intervention will include participation of third countries in the Programme and support for international partnerships, allowing for synergies with EU's policies on external action.

2. LEGAL BASIS, SUBSIDIARITY AND PROPORTIONALITY

• Legal basis

The Erasmus+ programme in the fields of education, training, youth and sport is justified on the grounds of the objectives laid down in Articles 165 and 166 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) which give the Union a supporting competence with the aim to contribute to the development of quality education, the implementation of a vocational training policy, development of youth exchanges and encouraging youth participation in democratic life in Europe as well as the promotion of European sporting issues. By extending its scope to provide support to humanitarian aid operations in third countries, the proposal is also based on Article 214(5) of the TFEU requiring the establishment of "a framework for joint contributions from young Europeans to the humanitarian aid operations of the Union.

• Subsidiarity (for non-exclusive competence)

While Member States remain responsible for the content and organisation of their policies in the fields concerned, the challenges identified are common to all Member States and/or have a significant transnational dimension, requiring EU-level solutions, coordination, and support to be effectively addressed. EU actions can facilitate cooperation, capacity building, and mutual learning as well as cross-border activities, ultimately optimising the potential of the concerned sectors.

The Programme aims to enhance transnational mobility and capacity building through cooperation and support policy developments with a European dimension. However, due to the transnational nature, high volume, and broad geographical scope of the activities supported, as well as their strong international dimension, these objectives cannot be adequately achieved by Member States acting alone. For instance, cross-border learning mobility or volunteering is more complex to organise on a bilateral basis, and difficult for individual Member States to make it accessible to all. The Erasmus+ mid-term evaluation has demonstrated that single initiatives by education and training, youth and sport organisations or Member States, although effective at the national level, lack the necessary scale and volume to achieve a European-wide impact. Furthermore, the cumulative coverage of individual country and cross-sectoral initiatives remains limited compared to the current Erasmus+ programme. Similarly, the European Solidarity Corps evaluation confirms that the European

Solidarity Corps plays an essential role and, in some countries, is the only alternative for youth volunteering and solidarity.

Furthermore, by extending the scope of the Programme to cover volunteering activities, including volunteering in support of humanitarian aid operations, Erasmus+ will offer a single-entry point to EU opportunities for young people across the EU and abroad. Currently these are only accessible via distinct schemes. Erasmus+ will therefore ensure that all interested young people across the EU have equal opportunities to a broader variety of activities, and that they have easier access to them. Bringing the European Solidarity Corps' opportunities under Erasmus+ will help as well improve awareness of the opportunities available to young people and organisations working with them and give them greater visibility.

The added value of EU funding in the policy areas covered by the Programme was widely acknowledged by respondents to the open public consultation conducted by the Commission for the new Multi-annual Financial Framework, with a vast majority highlighting its importance.

- **Proportionality**

This proposal will cover all education and training sectors – school education, vocational education and training, higher education and adult education – as well as youth, volunteering and sport in a focused and streamlined way. It will reinforce the tried-and-tested actions, the impact of which has been evidenced by the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps mid-term evaluations. Existing actions will be streamlined, including between Erasmus+ actions and those integrated from the European Solidarity Corps, reducing duplications and refocused considering the results of the evaluations and stakeholder consultations. The use of flexible formats will be continuously promoted to broaden the reach of the Programme.

A limited number of new actions will be introduced to address new challenges and political priorities (such as the European School Alliances and Erasmus+ scholarships in strategic fields). These measures are also considered to be the most suitable for making the Programme more inclusive and more effective.

The changes proposed build on the existing programme architecture, and aim at improving and streamlining the Programme rollout, and use the existing effective delivery mechanisms of the predecessor programme. Hence, this initiative does not go beyond what is necessary in order to achieve the objectives pursued.

- **Choice of the instrument**

The proposed instrument is a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

3. RESULTS OF RETROSPECTIVE EVALUATIONS, STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- **Retrospective evaluations/fitness checks of existing legislation**

Erasmus+

The final evaluation of the 2014-2020 Programme and the interim evaluation of the 2021-2027 Programme found that Erasmus+ performs strongly across key evaluation criteria and fulfils its objectives effectively. Both Programme generations have proven successful in delivering a strong European added value, playing a key role in the fields of education and training, as well as youth and sport.

Despite the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, Erasmus+ supported learning mobility abroad of over 6.2 million participants in the 2014-2020 period and around 1.6 million in 2021-2023 helping to increase their skills and competences. Erasmus+ also funded over 136 000 distinct organisations in the 2014-2020 Programme and more than 77 000 from 2021 to 2023, supporting their cooperation and improving their practices.

Erasmus+ significantly surpasses what could be achieved by individual countries at national or international levels. Its benefits stem from the opportunities it provides to personal, educational and professional development of learners and staff, to cross-border cooperation of organisations and to policy development in the fields of education and training, youth and sport, providing significant benefits to those to take part in the programme compared to those who do not. Without Erasmus+, the benefits deriving from the Programme for individuals and organisations would be drastically reduced. Internationalisation of education, training, youth and sport sectors would be reduced to close to zero in several countries, especially in the youth and sport sectors. Erasmus+ funds over half of credit mobilities in the Member States, and in half of the EU countries over 90% of short mobility.

Furthermore, the programme is responding to emerging needs related to new challenges posed by technological developments, in particular the emergence of generative artificial intelligence and the provision of skills to support EU competitiveness. Erasmus+ is investing in supporting the development of skills needed to provide the EU single market and industrial sectors with the future-proof skills needed to tackle the challenges of competitiveness, as highlighted in Draghi and Letta reports. The funding of learning mobility – which is at the heart of the programme – appears key to ensure that the younger generations are equipped with the right skills to face the challenges posed in a rapidly evolving context. The Programme has also become more inclusive and has increased the share of people with fewer opportunities amongst its participants, going from around 10% in the 2014-2020 period to 15% in 2023.

Despite the clear progress, the evaluation has identified some still existing barriers to the participation of people with fewer opportunities. Erasmus+ should thus keep addressing accessibility challenges, continuing to expand its reach to participants with fewer opportunities. Further clarifying definitions of people with fewer opportunities and providing clearer guidance on the measures available to support their participation would also enhance inclusivity.

Reviewing funding rules, simpler reporting procedures and streamlining across the various actions and fields should be assessed to simplify access for small and newcomer organisations. The evaluation also identified needs for simplifying alternative funding, facilitating transfer of funds between instruments and breaking down barriers between different operational modes and funding rules to build more synergies between Erasmus+ and other instruments and foster projects' upscaling. That should also be done via better dissemination of projects outcomes.

The evaluation shows the international added value of the programme, essential for promoting EU values, intercultural learning, raising awareness of civic and active participation but also for facilitating peer learning and bringing European expertise in the fields of education, training, youth and sport to other regions.

The Erasmus+ evaluation identified opportunities to improve coherence with the European Solidarity Corps and to identify ways to address potential overlaps, improving overall efficiency and increasing clarity for stakeholders.

European Solidarity Corps

The final evaluation of the 2018-2020 Programme and interim evaluation of the 2021-2027 Programme¹⁸ have found that the European Solidarity Corps performs well across the five evaluation criteria (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, coherence, EU added value). The European Solidarity Corps addresses European society's crucial needs, in fostering civic participation and promoting inclusion and diversity. The programme fosters a sense of community, revitalising local initiatives and promoting a broader global perspective. Participation contributes to improved personal, professional and study skills and social and civic awareness. The programme has also consistently met its targets on participants with fewer opportunities (30% in 2022 and 2023). The evaluation's outcomes confirm that the European Solidarity Corps plays an essential role and, in some countries, is the only alternative for youth volunteering and solidarity. A number of areas for improvement have been identified. Key recommendations suggest improving the identification of people with fewer opportunities to facilitate their further inclusion in the programme, aligning programme objectives and funding, addressing differences in the geographical distribution of results and impacts, improving visa arrangements for non-EU nationals and improving IT and monitoring tools, and clarifying the purpose of the humanitarian aid strand. Funding has generally proven very limited given the programme's ambitions and objectives. The programme complements EU programmes like Erasmus+, but actual synergies are somewhat limited, suggesting a need for more structured efforts.

A **potential area of duplication** highlighted by the evaluation concerns Erasmus+ Youth Participation activities and Solidarity projects funded under the European Solidarity Corps, both supporting youth-led initiatives run by informal groups of young people, fostering active citizenship and sense of initiative. Solidarity projects have a stronger solidarity component, supporting mostly bottom-up local solidarity activities with a view to addressing key challenges within the communities the young people carrying the project live in. Nevertheless, the many common areas of action suggest the need to reflect on potential overlaps and improve communication on the differences to potential applicants. The support activities aiming at increasing the quality implementation of the two programmes also emerge as examples for possible overlaps. Both activities are run by the same National Agencies, active in the youth field, and fund very similar activities, reaching out to target groups that are often the same. These activities represent opportunities for synergies between the programmes, they could also be looked at to seek for some economy of scale and improve efficiency.

In conclusion, the European Solidarity Corps complements Erasmus+ by offering volunteering and solidarity experiences to young people outside of formal education and training frameworks. The evaluations of both Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps confirm the success of the programmes and highlight their effectiveness. While no major structural or implementation issue is identified, it is recommended to continue pursuing simplification, inclusion and to enhance the international dimension, and to address overlaps and synergies between the two programmes.

Therefore, the future instrument will build on these successes and strengths and will better address the EU's challenges related to competitiveness, social inclusion, democracy and EU values but also the needed enhanced inclusion dimension, increased impact and simplification.

¹⁸ COM(2025) 144 final, SWD(2025) 75, 1.4.2025

- **Stakeholder consultations**

Consultation activities took place between March 2024 and May 2025 and were designed to gather input from a wide range of stakeholders. These activities consisted of an open public consultation, two workshops with national authorities and national agencies, a large-scale stakeholders conference (with national authorities, national agencies, umbrella organisations, Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programme beneficiaries and participants as well as representatives of EU institutions) and incidental consultations.

The **open public consultation** was conducted between 12 February and 7 May 2025, and gathered 5.845 replies. The open public consultation informed the impact assessment for EU programmes in the domains of cross-border education, youth, culture, media, values and civil society under the post-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework.

The responses revealed a clear affirmation of the EU's continued role in fostering cross-border cooperation and supporting democratic and social objectives. Among answers, "support for study/training abroad" was ranked as "very important" by 81% of citizens and 70% of organisations. This priority was frequently tied to the broader theme of long-term investment in skills, employability, and European identity. Respondents linked learning mobility not only with educational benefit but with social integration, civic engagement, and labour market readiness. Many referenced the role of EU funding in supporting student exchanges, vocational training, language learning, and cross-border partnerships as levers for developing a more inclusive and competitive society. Similarly, "protect democracy, promote democratic standards" received 80% support among citizens and 72% among organisations, showing high convergence between individual and institutional stakeholders.

Youth engagement stood out as a strong feature of the consultation. Almost 50% of citizen respondents were under the age of 30, and this age group consistently expressed strong support for funding initiatives that promote democratic engagement, equality, mobility, and civic cooperation. Their feedback aligned well with the Commission's strategic focus areas for youth, including those highlighted under the Youth Check initiative. Their engagement also demonstrated a high level of awareness and investment in the values-based and cross-border elements of EU programming.

The responses to the open public consultation also confirmed that EU funding provided added value compared to funding at national, local or regional level in the areas it covered. For example, 79% of respondents considered that 'Protecting democracy and promoting democratic standards' is an area where EU funding largely provides added value.

Asked to evaluate the obstacles preventing the EU budget from fully delivering on its objectives in the policy areas, respondents generally welcomed the Commission's focus on greater efficiency in funding, but not at the cost of "identity" and "trust", preserving thematic clarity and stakeholder ownership. Quantitative results show that the most frequently cited obstacles across all groups were administrative burden (identified by 52% of citizens and 58% of organisations) and complex, fund-specific compliance rules (50% of citizens and 53% of organisations). These issues reflect concerns not only with regulatory complexity but also with fragmentation between instruments and inefficiencies in delivery. Additional barriers included lack of flexibility to reallocate resources in response to emerging needs (32% of citizens and 32% of organisations), delays in programme implementation and funding disbursement, and insufficient communication or clarity about funding opportunities. Public authorities and NGOs in particular emphasised delays as a source of reduced impact and local credibility.

The **other consultations** revealed as well unanimous support for continuing and enhancing Erasmus+ and the opportunities offered under the European Solidarity Corps emphasizing their vital role in promoting EU values, supporting skills development and competitiveness. Stakeholders underlined the need for stability of the programme in terms of overall architecture and delivery mechanisms and maintaining mobility at the core of the Programme. The feedback also stresses the value of the flagship actions, such as the European Universities Alliances, the Centres of Vocational Excellence, and the Erasmus+ Teacher Academies and the importance of investing in those.

In terms of main challenges of the future programme, data collected shows that while stakeholders welcomed the simplification measures introduced in the current programming period, there is room for more improvements in that area such as streamlining the programme rules and further reducing the administrative burden. The consultations highlighted the increased commitment from stakeholders to meeting the needs of individuals with fewer opportunities and the necessity to further enhance the strong inclusion dimension of the programme by effectively reaching out to the most disadvantaged target groups and by facilitating the participation of grassroots organisations and newcomers. There were also calls by some stakeholders to simplify access and alleviate administrative burden through a change of management mode, from direct to indirect management, of certain actions such as Jean Monnet in other fields than higher education and KA2 actions in the field of sport.

Additionally, stakeholders highlighted the importance of synergies between the different EU instruments which could be facilitated including by improved coordination by the European Commission at European level. There was a call for a strong international dimension, increased and improved communication and information, impact assessment as well as data collection and use.

Overall, stakeholders provided valuable input on how to build on the progress made and address remaining challenges to ensure the long-term success of Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps opportunities.

- **External expertise**

The Commission based itself on the findings and recommendations of the mid-term evaluations of Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps that relied on the expertise of external contractors, as well as on other reviewed studies and external reports.

- **Impact assessment**

An impact assessment was carried out in the frame of the preparations for the next MFF, covering EU funds supporting cross-border education, training and solidarity, young people, media, culture, and creative sectors, values, and civil society.

In the impact assessment, Commission services have explored several alternative policy options to address the challenges of the sectors covered by the cluster and determined which option served better the policy areas and the priorities of the Commission. The various options were mutually exclusive. One option was to continue the existing Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes as stand-alone programmes, while introducing some incremental improvements. A second option consisted of bringing together Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, two programmes sharing a common main objective to contribute to high quality lifelong learning, enhance skills and key competences for all, for life and for jobs, while promoting societal engagement and civic education, solidarity and social inclusion. A third option was a full integration of policies covered today by Erasmus+ and the

European Solidarity Corps, and those covered by CERV and Creative Europe under a single instrument.

Other alternatives were also considered yet discarded at an early stage. One was the discontinuation of the EU funding in the fields currently covered by Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, but it was rejected given the importance of the problems affecting the sectors concerned, the prominence given to these policies in the Political Guidelines and the added value of the EU intervention, underpinned by the respective mid-term evaluations.

The main potential impact of the three shortlisted options (continuity, full integration, and objective-based merger) were analysed across various social, economic and environmental dimensions. Where relevant, the analysis also covered costs and benefits, impacts on competitiveness and SMEs and on digitalisation, as well as contribution to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). In addition, the options were assessed based on their effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and proportionality, applying the Social Multi-Criteria Evaluation (SMCE).

The evaluation of the options and their impacts highlighted that an integration based on policy objectives (objective-based merger) would offer better potential compared to the two alternatives. It would allow for reinforced coordination, targeted flexibility, and a more impactful use of the EU budget – without sacrificing policy focus or accessibility.

This funding instrument will offer a more comprehensive approach and a coherent landscape of formal, non-formal and informal opportunities for young people, aiming to boost skills development, engagement, preparedness and social cohesion. Europe needs to ensure that young people are equipped with a minimum proficiency level of basic and digital skills and foster the advanced competencies and soft skills needed, across all stages of life. This is valid for the professional development but also their personal development. With close to 18 million young people in the EU are at risk of social exclusion¹⁹ and, in 2024, almost half of them reported recent emotional or psychosocial problems²⁰, this is crucial. Europe also has to address the insufficient knowledge of young people particularly of their democratic rights, the difficult access to information and the limited involvement in decision-making processes. Addressing all those challenges is pivotal to ensure a prosperous, prepared and cohesive Europe but cannot be satisfied through formal education only. Volunteering and other forms of non-formal and informal learning bring complementary value to formal education. In terms of implementation, by unifying the intervention logic for these areas (mainly covered by Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps), the EU funding would be significantly streamlined and simplified, leading to greater efficiency, economies of scale and reduced administrative burden.

The new instrument will build on the success of the current programmes, best practices of the current MFF, as evidenced by evaluations, better addressing transnational and common challenges, filling funding gaps at Member States level, and enhancing coherence between internal and external policies, while enhancing synergies, efficiency and effectiveness, and reducing overlaps. It will pay due visibility to each of the policy areas included in the merged programme and maintain recognition of well-established brands under the merge.

¹⁹ In 2024, 24,2% of all children less than 18 years old (19,5 million children) in the EU were at risk of poverty and social exclusion. Source: Eurostat online data base (code: ilc_peps01n) [ilc_peps01n] Persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion by age and sex.

²⁰ [Eurobarometer survey FL545](#), May 2024, Youth and democracy.

- **Simplification**

The proposal introduces several simplifications.

For individuals

By extending the scope and including volunteering and solidarity-projects, the initiative will bring all EU opportunities for young people under one same programme. The proposal will thus offer a single-entry point to EU opportunities for young people across the EU and abroad, providing easier access to them.

For applicants and beneficiaries

The proposal aims to increase coherence and rationalise the architecture of the programme by combining the cooperation and policy support actions, reshuffling actions (for instance by bringing all cooperation opportunities for organisations together or moving the support to platforms together with the other tools and measures to support policy development and programme implementation) and removing the unnecessary chapters per field. Actions sharing similar objectives and presenting overlaps will be merged. (e.g. learning mobility for higher education learners and staff). These will bring clarity in the EU funding opportunities offered, making it easier for potential applicants to find their way and identify the relevant opportunities for them.

Furthermore, the initiative will address the obstacles faced by grassroot, small- or first-time applicant organisations and increase its reach by changing the management mode of some actions (e.g. current Jean Monnet actions in other fields than higher education or cooperation partnerships for sport). It will also introduce very low value grant partnerships with strongly reduced administrative burden for applicants.

The use of accreditation systems will continue to provide organisations with a structured framework for continuous improvement and simplified access to funding, ultimately facilitating long-term planning, increasing the quality of activities and enhancing transnational collaboration. The use of simplified grants in the form of lump sums, unit costs and flat rates will be used to the maximum possible extent.

Finally, efforts will be made towards simplifying overall application and reporting procedures as well as harmonising rules, while ensuring proportionality between the grant level and the requirements.

For stakeholders implementing the programme (national authorities, national agencies, European Commission)

By bringing under one framework, two programmes that operate with similar processes duplicating each other in several areas (e.g. comitology, work programme, monitoring, communication), the proposal will offer significant simplification, leading to greater efficiency, reduced administrative burden and implementation costs, allowing for a more efficient use of resources, both for the European Commission, the Member States and third countries that will apply to be associated to the programme (i.e. implementing bodies).

- **Fundamental rights**

The proposal is in line and respects the Union values enshrined with Article 2 of the Treaty on the European Union. The objectives of the proposed initiative are closely linked to the promotion of fundamental rights and are thus in line with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. In particular, this proposal will contribute to the promotion and protection of rights enshrined in Article 8 (protection of personal data), 11 (freedom of

expression and information), 14 (right to education), 15 (freedom to choose an occupation and right to engage in work), 20 and 21 (equality and non-discrimination), 22 (cultural, religious and linguistic diversity), 23 (equality between women and men), 24 (rights of the child), 26 (rights of persons with disabilities), 31 (fair and just working conditions), 33 (family and professional life), 39 to 46 (citizens' rights) of the Charter.

4. BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

See Annex

5. OTHER ELEMENTS

- **Implementation plans and monitoring, evaluation and reporting arrangements**

This initiative will be monitored through the common performance framework for the post-2027 budget. The performance framework provides for an implementation report during the implementation phase of the Programme, as well as a retrospective evaluation to be carried out in accordance with Article 34(3) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509. The evaluation shall be conducted in accordance with the Commission's Better Regulation Guidelines and will be based on indicators relevant to the objectives of the programme.

The Commission will report to the European Parliament, Council and all other relevant EU institutions regularly.

A significant part of the programme will be implemented in indirect management, mainly through national agencies. The remaining parts of the programme will be implemented in direct management, mostly by the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) under the supervision of the Commission services responsible for the programme.

- **Detailed explanation of the specific provisions of the proposal**

The Regulation sets out the provisions for an Erasmus+ Programme covering education and training, youth and sport and integrating the opportunities offered by the European Solidarity Corps under the 2021-2027 MFF, offering a comprehensive EU instrument to contribute to high quality lifelong learning, enhance skills and key competences for all, for life and for jobs, while promoting societal engagement and civic education, solidarity and social inclusion. The Programme is a key instrument to support the implementation of the Union's policies in the field of education, training, youth and sport. The specific objectives are intervention based.

Chapter I – ‘General provisions of the proposed Regulation set out its subject-matter, the definitions of certain terms for the purposes of this Regulation, as well as the general and specific objectives of the Programme.

The Programme is structured around one pillar on learning opportunities for all and a second on capacity building combining cooperation among organisations and institutions and support to policy development, covering all fields of education and training, youth and sport.

Chapter II – ‘Actions supported’ identifies the activities envisaged in order to achieve the objectives of the proposed Regulation. Under learning opportunities for all, the Programme will support learning mobility in all fields and volunteering opportunities in the field of youth on one side and talent and excellence development opportunities on the other side. This strand includes a new vision of extending mobilities to ensure that all young Europeans get the possibility to have an Erasmus+ experience at an earlier age when values and attitudes are formed, as well as new opportunities (Erasmus+ scholarships) introduced to enable students

to undertake studies in strategic educational fields and existing opportunities moved under this strand for coherence and clarity, including Erasmus Mundus and Jean Monnet actions in the field of Higher Education.

Chapter III – ‘Inclusion and diversity’ identifies the focus the programme shall have on inclusion and diversity and measures and tools to reach out to more participants with fewer opportunities.

Chapter IV – ‘Financial provisions’ sets out the budgetary envelope of the Programme for the programming period and the envisaged forms of Union funding. It also provides that an additional financial contribution shall be allocated under other instruments. The Chapter identifies the forms and functioning of synergies as well with other funds and resources. Finally, this Chapter also specifies some specific rules applicable to direct and indirect management such as for the allocation of funds under indirect management.

Chapter V – ‘Participation in the Programme’ specifies criteria for the participating countries. The Chapter specifies which third countries can be associated to the Programme, either fully or partially and the conditions under which they can take part in it, together with the Member States. The Chapter also identifies which entities are eligible to receive funding.

Chapter VI – ‘Programming’ specifies the requirements related to work programmes.

Chapter VII – ‘Information, communication and dissemination’ sets out the requirements for all the actors concerned in terms of dissemination of information, publicity and follow-up with regard to all actions supported by the Programme.

Chapter VIII – ‘Management and audit system’ establishes the provision for the establishment and functioning of the implementing bodies of the Programme. In management terms, the proposed delivery mechanism is a combination of indirect management and direct management. The combination of management modes builds on the existing structures of the current programme. National agencies will be in charge of managing the large majority of the funds of the Programme. The Chapter also lays down the necessary supervisory system to ensure that the protection of the financial interests of the Union is duly taken into account when actions financed under this Regulation are implemented.

Chapter IX – “Transitional and final provisions” sets out the necessary provisions for the Committee procedure and to the Commission and to ensure the transition between programmes. The final provisions set out the date of entry into force of the proposed Regulation which shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

establishing the Erasmus+ programme for the period 2028-2034, and repealing Regulation (EU) No 2021/817 and Regulation (EU) No 2021/888

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Articles 165(4), 166(4) and 214(5) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

After transmission of the draft legislative act to the national parliaments,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee²¹,

Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions²²,

Acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure,

Whereas:

- (1) The foundation of Europe's competitiveness is its people. To sustain competitiveness and be prepared for the future, the EU needs to support and prepare its people, starting from an early age, with the education and knowledge needed for success in learning, work, and life. All individuals should be able to contribute to and benefit from greater competitiveness.
- (2) The EU needs performing, agile, innovative and inclusive education and training systems, able to nurture, attract and retain talent across Europe and also globally, to keep up with the pace and scope of the ongoing societal, digital, environmental and economic transformations, respond to the society's and economy's skills needs, bridge skills gaps and satisfy industry needs in critical sectors.
- (3) The Union is a community of values ingrained in Europe's history and identity and anchored in the EU Treaty. The EU fundamental values encompass democracy, fundamental rights, non-discrimination, equality, inclusion, tolerance, solidarity and cultural diversity. These shared values define the Union's project and ensure social cohesion. They offer a guiding direction to Union's younger generations in their aspirations for a better future. A stable society, functioning democracy and rule of law are also at the basis of a well-functioning European economy. Education and training, youth and sport equip citizens with the skills and competences to thrive, actively and meaningfully participate in democratic life and in the society overall, and help people connect around and defend shared values.

²¹ OJ C [...], [...], p. [...].

²² OJ C [...], [...], p. [...].

- (4) The Union is built on solidarity, both among its citizens and among the Member States. That universal and common value guides the actions of the Union and provides the unity necessary to cope with current and future societal challenges, which individuals are willing to help address in practice, notably through volunteering.
- (5) The first principle of the European Pillar of Social Rights provides 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.
- (6) The Union of Skills²³ aims to step up the efforts to achieve high quality education, training, and lifelong learning through delivering higher levels of basic and advanced skills, providing opportunities for people to regularly update and learn new skills, facilitating recruitment by businesses across the EU, and attracting, developing and retaining top talent in Europe.
- (7) It is essential to guarantee that all people, irrespective of their personal, social, economic or cultural background, have the opportunity to participate in a mobility experience abroad from an early age, when values and attitudes are formed and when individuals are most receptive to new experiences and influences. Early exposure to different environments, cultures, languages and ways of life can help to break down stereotypes, promote intercultural understanding, and instil values of respect, tolerance and solidarity, thereby contributing to a more united and harmonious Europe.
- (8) Building inclusive, cohesive and resilient societies, and sustaining the competitiveness of the Union requires investing in learning mobility for all, regardless of socio-economic background and means, in cooperation between Member States and organisations active in the field, and in innovative policy development in the fields of education and training, youth and sport. Such an investment also contributes to strengthening European identity, the EU fundamental values and a more democratic Union.
- (9) Fostering a European sense of belonging and active participation of individuals and civil society in democratic processes and society is crucial for the future of Europe. Going abroad to study, learn, train, volunteer or participate in youth and sport activities contributes to strengthening European identity in all its diversity. It reinforces solidarity, the sense of being part of a community and fosters intercultural learning and understanding, and active citizenship among people of all ages.
- (10) In line with the EU Preparedness Union Strategy²⁴, preparedness, resilience, participation in democratic life and civic engagement should be fostered through a bottom-up approach, encouraging organisations and institutions to play a key role in fostering digital and media literacy, critical thinking, promoting civic engagement, and learning about democratic

²³ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions the Union of Skills (COM/2025/90 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025DC0090>)

²⁴ Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the European Preparedness Union Strategy (Join/2025/130 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025JC0130>)

citizenship. People and communities across the EU must engage actively to prevent crises and to be sufficiently prepared to respond to them.

- (11) The final evaluation of the 2014-2020 Erasmus+ programme and the interim evaluation of the 2021-2027 programme found that Erasmus+ performs strongly across key evaluation criteria and fulfils its objectives effectively. Erasmus+ significantly surpasses what could be achieved by individual countries at national or international levels. Its benefits stem from the opportunities it provides to personal, educational and professional development of learners and staff, to cross-border cooperation of organisations and to innovative policy development in the fields of education and training, youth and sport. It provides significant benefits to those who take part in the programme compared to those who do not. Without Erasmus+, the opportunities for individuals and organisations in all these areas would be drastically reduced.
- (12) The final evaluation of the 2018-2020 European Solidarity Corps programme and interim evaluation of the 2021-2027 programme have found that the opportunities offered by the European Solidarity Corps address European society's crucial needs, especially in fostering civic participation and promoting inclusion and diversity. The programme fosters a sense of community and revitalises local initiatives and encourages young people to engage with broader global issues. Participation in volunteering and solidarity activities contributes to improved personal and professional skills as well as to social and civic awareness.
- (13) Common areas of action and objectives between the 2021-2027 European Solidarity Corps and Erasmus+ programmes highlight the potential for enhanced synergy and coherence. Bringing all learning mobility, volunteering, cooperation and active citizenship opportunities together provides a single-entry point to all opportunities offered by the EU for young people and organisations active in the field of youth, allowing for a more coordinated and effective approach, and easier access for potential participants and beneficiaries.
- (14) In this context, it is necessary to establish Erasmus+ 2028-2034, the Union Programme for education and training (the 'Programme'), as the successor to the 2021-2027 Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programmes, which encompasses actions in the field of youth and sport. The integrated nature of the 2028-2034 Erasmus+ Programme covering learning mobility, volunteering and study opportunities, in different learning contexts, whether formal, non-formal or informal, and at all stages of life will further reinforce its potential to boost skills and competences for life and jobs, support competitiveness and enhance EU values, including solidarity, active citizenship and sense of belonging.
- (15) The Programme should be established for a period of seven years to align its duration with that of the multiannual financial framework for the years 2028 to 2034 laid down in Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2025/XXXX (7) (the '2028-2034 MFF').
- (16) The Programme should continue to make a strong contribution to the implementation of the Union's policy objectives and priorities in the fields of education and training, youth and sport. The Programme should support the implementation of the Union of Skills and the overall strategic framework for Union policy cooperation in the fields of education and training, youth and sport, 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.

- (17) In line with the EU Youth Strategy²⁵, the European Youth Work Agenda²⁶ and the 2024 Communication on the legacy of the European Year of Youth 2022²⁷, the Programme should support meaningful participation of young people and youth organisations in decision and policy making, youth mainstreaming across policy fields, the validation of non-formal and informal learning, high-quality youth work and education and training of youth workers. Erasmus+ will continue to support all young people to participate in learning mobility and non-formal learning mobility, including youth exchanges and youth participation activities, with the objective to engage and empower young people to acquire and develop competences for life and their professional future, to become active citizens and participate in economic, social, cultural, democratic and political life, and to connect them to the European project and contribute to building an inclusive, competitive and resilient Union. The Programme should take into account the relevant European Union Work Plan for Sport, which is the cooperation framework at Union level in the field of sport. Consistency and complementarity should be ensured between the relevant European Union Work Plan for Sport and actions supported under the Programme in the field of sport. There is a need to focus, in particular, on grassroots sport, taking into account the important role that sports play in promoting physical activity and a healthy lifestyle, interpersonal relations, social inclusion and equality as well as building cohesive communities. The Programme should contribute to promoting common European values through sport, volunteering, good governance and integrity and safeguarding in sport, sustainable development, sport diplomacy and education, training and skills in and through sport. Besides education and training, Erasmus+ will continue to promote participation in sport, physical activity, and voluntary activities, and support sport grassroots organisations in Europe, as well as offering young people across Europe the (unique) opportunity to participate in international sports projects, fostering personal growth, cultural exchange, solidarity and community engagement.
- (18) Digital transformation has changed society and the economy with an ever-deepening impact on everyday life and demonstrated the need for higher levels of digital readiness and capacity of education and training as well as the pressing need for digital skills development for all. In line with the Council Recommendation on the key enabling factors for successful digital education and training²⁸ and the Council Recommendation on improving the provision of digital skills and competences in education and training²⁹, this includes for example supporting the integration of AI and other emerging technologies in education and training, addressing online safety, digital well-being, tackling disinformation and misinformation, while at the same time promoting innovation in

²⁵ Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on a framework for European cooperation in the youth field: The European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027 (OJ C 456, 18.12.2018, ELI: [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:42018Y1218\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:42018Y1218(01)))

²⁶ Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on the Framework for establishing a European Youth Work Agenda 2020/C 415/01 (OJ C 415, 1.12.2020, ELI: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=oj:JOC_2020_415_R_0001)

²⁷ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the European Year of Youth 2022 (COM/2024/1 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/txt/?uri=celex:52024dc0001>)

²⁸ Council Recommendation of 23 November 2023 on the key enabling factors for successful digital education and training (OJ C, C/2024/1115, 24.1.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2024/1115/oj>)

²⁹ Council Recommendation of 23 November 2023 on improving the provision of digital skills and competences in education and training (OJ C, C/2024/1030, 23.1.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2024/1030/oj>)

education and training and developing digital skills for all. The focus is on enhancing the digital readiness of education and training systems and enhancing digital skills development, rather than the use of digital technologies for their own sake.

- (19) The international dimension of the Programme should aim to offer opportunities for learning mobility, cooperation and policy dialogue with third countries not associated to the Programme, building on the experience of predecessor programmes, including to contribute to EU's competitiveness. To increase the impact of those activities, it is important to enhance synergies between the Programme and the Union instruments for external action, aligned with the Union of Skills and the EU enlargement and Global Gateway Strategy. The Union instruments for external action should aim to increase opportunities, in particular for individuals and organisations from third countries not associated to the Programme, supporting cooperation, policy reforms and people-to-people exchanges.
- (20) The Programme should respect the principles set out in the 2017 EU Guidelines for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child and in Article 9 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the 2020-2025 EU Gender Equality Strategy and the 2021-2030 EU Strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities.
- (21) The Programme should offer accessible, inclusive and safe opportunities for young people and organisations to show solidarity, helping them support communities and address societal challenges, while gaining valuable experience and skills for their personal growth and employability.
- (22) With a view to enhancing the promotion of solidarity and the visibility of humanitarian aid and development cooperation among European citizens, there is a need to develop solidarity of Member States and third countries associated to the programme with third countries not associated affected by disasters from natural hazards and human-induced risks. Humanitarian aid volunteering actions should contribute to a needs-based response.
- (23) Learning mobility has proven to be a highly valuable experience for people in gaining knowledge and skills needed for personal, educational, and professional development, for civic engagement and social inclusion. Everyone should have the chance to benefit from a learning mobility experience as from an early age, in line with the Council Recommendation 'Europe on the Move'³⁰. Organising learning mobility is also a strong driver for education and training institutions and non-formal and informal learning providers to enhance the quality of learning and training they offer. Learning mobility contributes to tackling skills gaps, accelerates skills development and builds a strong sense of citizenship and understanding of common values across Europe and beyond.
- (24) The Programme should encourage participation, in particular of young people, in Europe's democratic life, including by supporting activities that contribute to citizenship education, nurture skills needed for civic engagement and enable to engage and learn to participate in civic society, thereby raising awareness of European common values, including

³⁰ Council Recommendation of 13 May 2024 'Europe on the Move' — learning mobility opportunities for everyone (OJ C, C/2024/3364, 14.6.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2024/3364/oj>)

fundamental rights, facilitating interaction with decision-makers at local, national and European levels and contributing to the process of European integration. The Programme should also support the creation of opportunities and mechanisms for meaningful youth participation.

- (25) Volunteering, both within and beyond the Union, constitutes a rich experience in a non-formal and informal learning context, enabling young people to show solidarity and engage in activities contributing to address societal challenges while enhancing their personal, socio-educational and professional development, active citizenship, civic participation and employability. The Programme should thus also support “European Solidarity Corps” volunteering actions.
- (26) Young people, in particular those with fewer opportunities, should continue to be given the chance to have a first-time, experience travelling throughout Europe as part of an informal and non-formal educational activity that aims to foster their sense of belonging to the Union and to enable them to discover its cultural and linguistic diversity.
- (27) The Programme is a key component of building a Union of Skills and the European Education Area, laying the foundation to skills and competences formation throughout life and providing a genuine common space for quality education and lifelong learning across borders. The Programme actions should support the four strands of the Union of Skills, including the development of basic skills, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields, crucial for growing strategic sectors like clean and circular technologies, digital technologies, aerospace, and defence.
- (28) It is important to stimulate and widen access to learning, teaching and research on EU, including European integration, fundamental values and citizenship. Fostering a European sense of belonging and commitment is particularly important given the challenges to the common values on which the Union is founded and which form part of a common European identity.
- (29) New and emerging technologies offer significant opportunities for learning and exchange. In addition to physical learning mobility, which remains the core action of the Programme, virtual formats should be promoted to complement or support physical learning mobility, to offer meaningful learning opportunities to those who are unable to move physically to a country other than their country of residence or to foster exchanges through innovative learning formats.
- (30) The learning of languages contributes to mutual understanding between people and cultures, and fosters mobility within and outside the Union, as language competences are essential life and job skills. Therefore, the Programme should enhance the learning of languages, including, where relevant, national sign languages. At the same time, to ensure broad and inclusive access to the Programme, it is important that multilingualism be a key principle in the implementation of the Programme.
- (31) Europe faces a growing challenge in meeting the demand for skilled talent in strategic sectors like clean and circular technologies, digital technologies, aerospace, and defence. To address this key need, it is essential to develop, attract and retain talented individuals in these fields. The Programme should among other support EU students to pursue studies in such critical sectors and attract as well top talent to Europe by enhancing the

attractiveness of European Higher Education and offering scholarships to students, including through Erasmus Mundus. This would contribute to address the skills needs for the labour market.

- (32) The Programme should continue to contribute to research on European Integration matters, including the Union's future challenges and opportunities, to promote debate on those matters and the development of excellence in European integration studies.
- (33) Cooperation enables exchange of practices and capacity building, and thereby lead to better outcomes and performance as well as efficiency gains by pooling resources and knowledge. The Programme should therefore support capacity building measures that enhance cooperation at different levels between institutions and organisations that are active in the fields of education and training, youth and sport. This recognises the fundamental role of institutions and organisations in equipping individuals with the knowledge, skills and competences needed in a changing world and helping institutions and organisations active in the field to adequately fulfil their potential for innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship, in particular within the digital economy.
- (34) The Programme should support long-term strategic cooperation at institutional level to build excellence, competitiveness and attractiveness and generate sustainable and systemic transformation of education and training, youth and sport organisations and institutions, in line with the EU's priorities, including by acting as testbeds for innovative instruments and promoting EU values. The Programme should continue to support the work of education and training institutions and Member States towards removing remaining barriers to transnational cooperation and multiplying the offer of transnational joint study programmes, contributing towards a joint European Degree.
- (35) The Programme should continue to support the core education mission of the flagship action, by setting up new European Universities Alliances as a first step to enable systemic impact achieved more efficiently through long-term EU level action, notably to reinforce excellence, reduce fragmentation and increase the attractiveness and inclusiveness of EU higher education systems, develop innovative instruments to increase quality of learning and teaching, develop future oriented skills and competences (such as AI, sustainability, STEM, etc) through transformed curricula, pedagogical innovation, and lifelong learning, nurture and attract talent and facilitate transnational cooperation in education.
- (36) In line with relevant Union frameworks and tools, the Programme should contribute to the development and circulation of skills, including by setting up basic skills support scheme and fostering quality assurance, transparency, the recognition of skills, competences and qualifications, their digitalisation, and the validation of non-formal and informal learning, skills management and guidance. In that regard, the Programme should also provide support to contact points and networks at national and European level that facilitate cross-European exchanges, and beyond, and the development of flexible learning pathways between different fields of education and training and youth and across formal and non-formal settings, including through the support of micro-credentials' eco-systems, in line with the Union of Skills and the Council Recommendation on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability.
- (37) To maximise the impact of the Programme, emphasis should be put on building scale and focus.

- (38) User-friendly online platforms and tools for virtual cooperation can play an important role in supporting the delivery of education and training and youth policy in Europe. To increase the use of virtual cooperation activities, the Programme should support more systematic and coherent use of online platforms. It should as well facilitate and support mobility processes through digitalisation.
- (39) The Programme should be designed to promote inclusion and equal opportunities by widening access to mobility, volunteering and learning across the Union and beyond, thereby enabling all people to fully benefit from a transformative experience.
- (40) The Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programmes for 2021-2027 put a strong emphasis on inclusion, highlighting the need to reach and involve more people with fewer opportunities. The Programmes mid-term evaluations for the 2021-2027 period showed progress on this matter, and efforts should be stepped up to overcome the barriers encountered by participants. In fulfilling its objectives, the Programme should continue to enhance its inclusion and diversity dimension and boost the measures that could help to increase the participation of people with fewer opportunities.
- (41) The implementation of the programme should address those cases where people with fewer opportunities are less likely to participate in the Programme for financial reasons, whether because of their economic situation or because of the higher participation costs that their specific situation generates, or other obstacles to participation through the provision of inclusive measures.
- (42) The Programme should count on a set of mechanisms to facilitate and increase the access for people with fewer opportunities, to remove the obstacles that may prevent such access, and to serve as a basis for further implementation guidance. These measures take the form of, among other, targeted financial support, accessible learning formats, preparatory activities and support for participants with fewer opportunities before, during and after their participation within the Programmes, user-friendly and accessible documents available in different languages, support activities for staff dealing specifically with inclusion and diversity in organisations and raising awareness activities among potential participants with fewer opportunities. In addition, the Programme should allow to give priority in the grant awarding process to quality projects that actively address the inclusion and involvement of participants with fewer opportunities.
- (43) In order to make the Programme more accessible for newcomer organisations and for organisations with smaller administrative capacity and to make the Programme more manageable for beneficiaries, the Programme should reinforce the measures to simplify procedures at all stages.
- (44) The implementation of the Programme should be guided by the principles of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, solidarity, equality, and the rule of law, as enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union, it is thus essential that all parties involved in the Programme respect and promote those principles and values.
- (45) This Regulation lays down an indicative financial envelope for the Programme.

- (46) In view of the diversity of the fields covered by the Programme, the ambition for youth and sport to contribute meaningfully to the Programme's objectives and to reach its target groups, should be maintained.
- (47) Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council³¹ applies to this Programme. It lays down the rules on the establishment and the implementation of the general budget of the Union, including the rules on grants, prizes, non-financial donations, procurement, indirect management, financial assistance, financial instruments and budgetary guarantees.
- (48) In accordance with Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 883/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council³², Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95, Council Regulation (Euratom, EC) No 2185/96 and Council Regulation (EU) 2017/1939, the financial interests of the Union are to be protected through proportionate measures, including the prevention, detection, correction and investigation of irregularities and fraud, the recovery of funds lost, wrongly paid or incorrectly used and, where appropriate, the imposition of administrative sanctions. In particular, in accordance with Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 883/2013 and (EC, Euratom) No 2185/96 the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) may carry out investigations, including on-the-spot checks and inspections, with a view to establishing whether there has been fraud, corruption or any other illegal activity affecting the financial interests of the Union. In accordance with Regulation (EU) 2017/1939, the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) may investigate and prosecute fraud and other illegal activities affecting the financial interests of the Union as provided for in Directive (EU) 2017/1371 of the European Parliament and of the Council³³. In accordance with Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, any person or entity receiving Union funds is to fully cooperate in the protection of the Union's financial interests, to grant the necessary rights and access to the Commission, OLAF, EPPO and the European Court of Auditors and to ensure that any third parties involved in the implementation of Union funds grant equivalent rights. Third countries associated to the Programme are to grant the necessary rights and access required for the authorising officer responsible, OLAF and the Court of Auditors to comprehensively exercise their respective competences.
- (49) In order to simplify requirements for beneficiaries, simplified grants in the form of lump sums, unit costs and flat rates should be used to the maximum possible extent. Simplified grants to support learning mobility under the Programme should take into account the living and subsistence costs in the host country. In accordance with national law, Member States should also be encouraged to exempt those grants from any taxes and social levies; grants awarded to individuals by public or private legal entities should be treated in the same manner.

³¹ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj>).

³² Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 883/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 September 2013 concerning investigations conducted by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1073/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Regulation (Euratom) No 1074/1999 (OJ L 248, 18.9.2013, p. 1., ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2013/883/oj>)

³³ Directive (EU) 2017/1371 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2017 on the fight against fraud to the Union's financial interests by means of criminal law (OJ L 198, 28.7.2017, p. 29, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2017/1371/oj>).

- (50) Accreditation systems will also provide organisations with a structured framework for continuous improvement and simplified access to funding, ultimately facilitating long-term planning, increasing the quality of activities and enhancing transnational collaboration.
- (51) It is appropriate to ensure that the 2021-2027 Programmes are closed correctly, in particular as regards the continuation of multiannual arrangements for their management, such as the financing of technical and administrative assistance. As from 1 January 2028, the technical and administrative assistance should ensure, where necessary, the management of actions that have not been finalised under the 2021-2027 Programmes by 31 December 2027.
- (52) The Programme should allow for full and partial association of third countries. The Programme should also support the participation of third countries that are not associated to the Programme where their participation contributes to achieve the objectives of the programme and is important to the implementation of the action.
- (53) The Programme should bring candidate countries and potential candidates closer to their goal of becoming EU Member States. In the wider neighbourhood, the Programme should promote stability, partnerships and skills development, with countries in the wider neighbourhood including by enhancing ties with the Mediterranean region. Through cooperation with other countries across the globe, the Programme should as well attract talents worldwide, and shape partnerships notably to promote EU's competitiveness. The Programme should support countries in modernising their institutions and, more generally, enhancing the quality and inclusiveness of education, training, youth and sport, through international partnerships.
- (54) In line with Article 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), the Programme should take into account the specific situation of the outermost regions referred to in that Article, including measures to facilitate their participation to the Programme.
- (55) Pursuant to Article 85 (1) of Council Decision (EU) 2021/1764³⁴, persons and entities established in overseas countries and territories are eligible for funding subject to the rules and objectives of the Programme and possible arrangements applicable to the Member State to which the relevant overseas country or territory is linked.
- (56) The Programme is to be implemented in accordance with Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 which establishes the rules for the expenditure tracking and the performance framework for the budget, including rules for ensuring a uniform application of the principles of 'do no significant harm' and gender equality referred to in Article 33(2), points (d), (e) and (f), of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 respectively, rules for monitoring and reporting on the performance of Union programmes and activities, rules for establishing a Union funding portal, rules for the evaluation of the programmes, as well as other horizontal provisions applicable to all Union programmes such as those on information, communication and visibility.
- (57) In view to optimise the added value, increase scale and impact of investments, synergies should be sought in particular between the Programme and other Union funding

³⁴

Council Decision (EU) 2021/1764 of 5 October 2021 on the association of the Overseas Countries and Territories with the European Union including relations between the European Union on the one hand, and Greenland and the Kingdom of Denmark on the other (Decision on the Overseas Association, including Greenland) (OJ L 355, 7.10.2021, p. 6–134).

instruments, including through enabling mechanisms. The Programme should seek as well synergies that strengthen collaboration between education and the private sector.

- (58) Appropriate and inclusive outreach, publicity of the opportunities supported by the Programme should be ensured at local, national and European level and should take into account the main target groups of the Programme and, where relevant, a wide variety of other target groups. Furthermore, the Commission and the implementing bodies should facilitate the sharing of good practices and project results and gather feedback on the Programme.
- (59) The Programme should mobilise the potential of former participants in the Erasmus+ Programme and support related activities by encouraging them to promote the Programme with a view to increasing participation.
- (60) Measures should be taken to streamline the management of the Programme and achieve economies of scale including by limiting and reducing the number of national agencies.
- (61) [Placeholder for recital on a future Interinstitutional Agreement]
- (62) Regulations (EU) No 2021/817 and (EU) No 2021/888 should therefore be repealed with effect from 1 January 2028.
- (63) In order to ensure continuity in providing support in the relevant policy area and to allow implementation to start from the beginning of the 2028-2034 MFF, this Regulation should enter into force on and apply from 1 January 2028.

HAVE ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

CHAPTER I - GENERAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 1

Subject matter

This Regulation establishes Erasmus+, the Union programme for action in the fields of education and training (the ‘Programme’) and lays down the objectives of the Programme, its budget for the period 2028-2034, the forms of Union funding and the rules for providing such funding. The Programme also encompasses actions in the fields of youth and sport.

ARTICLE 2

Definitions

For the purposes of this Regulation, the following definitions apply:

- (1) ‘adult learner’ means a person who has left or finished initial education and training

- and engages in formal, non-formal or informal learning, including NEET;
- (2) ‘adult learning’ means any form of formal, non-formal or informal learning for adults, encompassing opportunities for skills development, upskilling and reskilling for competitiveness, enhancing social cohesion and supporting active participation in society;
 - (3) ‘EU Youth Dialogue’ means the dialogue between young people and youth organisations and policy and decision- makers, as well as experts, researchers and other civil society actors, as appropriate; it serves as a forum for continuous joint reflection and consultation on the priorities of, and all fields of relevance to, young people;
 - (4) ‘full association of a third country’ means participating in all Programme actions and requires the set up of a national agency in this third country;
 - (5) ‘grassroots sport’ means physical leisure activities practiced regularly at non-professional level by people of all ages for health, educational or social purposes;
 - (6) ‘higher education institution’ means an institution which, in accordance with regional, national, or international law or practice, offers quality assured degrees or other recognised tertiary level qualifications, regardless of what such an establishment is called, or a comparable institution at tertiary level which is considered by the national/regional authorities or the European Commission as eligible to participate in the Programme in the respective territories;
 - (7) ‘higher education student’ means a person enrolled at a higher education institution, including at short-cycle, bachelor’s, master’s or doctoral level or equivalent or a person who recently completed a degree from such an institution;
 - (8) ‘humanitarian aid volunteering’ means a volunteering activity that supports post-crisis long-term humanitarian aid and development cooperation operations in third countries not associated to the Programme, that is intended to provide needs-based assistance aimed at preventing and alleviating human suffering, and maintaining durable human dignity in the face of crises, and that includes actions that aim to reinforce disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction, link relief, rehabilitation and development and contribute towards strengthening the resilience and capacity of vulnerable or disaster-affected communities to cope with and recover from crises;
 - (9) ‘informal learning’ means learning resulting from daily activities and experiences which is not organised or structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support; it may be unintentional from the learner’s perspective;
 - (10) ‘international’ means cooperation involving third countries not associated to the Programme, as well as countries partially associated to the Programme for actions which are not covered by the partial association;
 - (11) ‘joint study programme’ means a programme coordinated and offered jointly by different higher education institutions from two or more countries and leading to the award of a joint degree;
 - (12) ‘lifelong learning’ means learning in all its forms, whether formal, non-formal or informal, taking place at all stages in life and resulting in an improvement or update in knowledge, skills, competences and attitudes, including through micro credentials or participation in society from a personal, civic, cultural, social or employment-related

perspective, such as the provision of counselling and guidance services; it includes early childhood education and care, general education, vocational education and training, higher education, adult learning, youth work and other learning settings outside formal education and training and it typically promotes cross-sectoral cooperation and flexible learning pathways;

- (13) 'learning mobility' means moving physically to a country other than the country of residence, in order to undertake study, training, teaching, or non-formal or informal learning;
- (14) 'non-formal learning' means learning which takes place outside formal education and training through planned activities in terms of learning objectives and learning time and where some form of learning support is present;
- (15) 'partial association of a third country' means participating in some Programme actions and does not require the set up of a national agency in this third country;
- (16) 'people with fewer opportunities' means people who, for economic, social, cultural, geographical or health reasons or due to their migrant background, or for reasons such as disability or educational difficulties or for any other reason, including a reason that could constitute discrimination under Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, face obstacles that prevent them from having effective access to opportunities under the Programme;
- (17) 'school pupil' means a person enrolled in a learning capacity at an institution providing general education at any level from early childhood education and care to upper secondary education or a person schooled outside an institutional setting considered by the competent authorities as eligible to participate in the Programme as a school pupil in their respective territories;
- (18) 'staff' means a person who, on either a professional or a voluntary basis, is involved in education, training or non-formal and informal learning at all levels, including sports; it includes academic staff, teachers, trainers, school leaders, youth workers, sport staff, early childhood education and care staff, non-educational staff and other practitioners involved on a regular basis in promoting learning;
- (19) 'third country' means a country that is not an EU Member State;
- (20) 'virtual learning' means the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences occurring online ;
- (21) 'vocational education and training learner' means a person enrolled in an initial or continuous vocational education and training programme at any level from secondary to post-secondary level or a person who has recently graduated or obtained a qualification from such a programme;
- (22) 'volunteering' means an unpaid activity that addresses societal challenges and has a strong learning component;
- (23) 'transnational' means cooperation mainly among Member States and/or countries associated to the Programme;
- (24) 'young people' means individuals aged between 13 and 30;
- (25) 'youth worker' means a person who, on either a professional or a voluntary basis, is involved in non-formal learning and supports young people in their personal socio-educational and professional development and the development of their competences; it includes persons who plan, steer, coordinate and implement activities in the field of youth.

ARTICLE 3

Programme objectives

1. The general objective of the Programme is to contribute to a resilient, competitive, and cohesive Europe by fostering high quality lifelong learning, enhancing skills and competences for life and for jobs for all, while promoting EU values, democratic and societal participation, solidarity, social inclusion and equal opportunities, in the EU and beyond. The programme shall be a key instrument for building the Union of Skills, developing the European Education Area and supporting the implementation of European strategic cooperation in the fields of education and training, including its underlying sectoral agendas, advancing youth policy cooperation and developing the European dimension in sport.
2. The Programme has the following specific objectives:
 - (a) support the improvement of education, skills and competences with particular regard to their relevance for the labour market as well as to the professional development and personal growth of the individual and to their contribution to a cohesive, competitive and resilient society;
 - (b) foster a sense of European identity and active citizenship, solidarity and active participation in society and democracy, inducing a positive societal impact and better preparedness to anticipate, prevent and respond to risks of different nature;
 - (c) foster quality, inclusion, equity, sustainability, creativity, innovation, excellence and internationalisation across all fields of education and training, youth and sport;
 - (d) engage and empower young people to acquire and develop professional and personal competences, to participate actively in society and democracy and connect them to the European project;
 - (e) support policy development, including for circulation of skills, accelerating reforms and modernisation at systems' level, across all fields of education and training, youth and sport, ensuring that they are more effective, resilient and inclusive;
 - (f) develop the dimension of sport and promote participation in sport and physical activity across Europe, fostering personal growth, cultural exchange, solidarity and community engagement.
3. The Programme objectives shall be pursued through the following pillars:
 - (a) Learning opportunities for all;
 - (b) Capacity building support.

CHAPTER II – ACTIONS SUPPORTED

Section 1 – Learning opportunities for all

ARTICLE 4

Learning mobility and volunteering opportunities

1. In the field of education and training, the Programme shall support the following actions:
 - (a) Learning mobility of higher education students and staff;
 - (b) Learning mobility of vocational education and training learners and staff;
 - (c) Learning mobility of school pupils and staff, including staff in early childhood education and care;
 - (d) Learning mobility of adult learners and staff in adult learning.
2. In the field of youth, the Programme shall support
 - (a) Learning mobility of young people, including DiscoverEU, and learning mobility of youth workers;
 - (b) “European Solidarity Corps” volunteering, including humanitarian aid volunteering.
3. In the field of sport, the Programme shall support learning mobility of athletes and people active in grassroot sport and learning mobility of sport staff.
4. Learning mobility under this Article may be accompanied by
 - (a) support to teaching and learning about the EU, including European integration, fundamental values and citizenship;
 - (b) measures such as language support, preparatory visits, training and virtual cooperation.

ARTICLE 5

Talent and excellence development opportunities

In the field of education and training, the Programme shall support the following actions:

- (a) Erasmus+ scholarships in strategic educational fields, including in joint study programmes;
- (b) Erasmus Mundus scholarships;
- (c) Jean Monnet actions in the field of higher education;

(d) Support to the following Jean Monnet 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.

Section 2 –Capacity building support

ARTICLE 6

Cooperation among organisations and institutions

The Programme shall support the following actions:

- (a) Partnerships for cooperation, including small-scale partnerships to foster wider and more inclusive access to the Programme;
- (b) Partnerships for excellence and innovation, building on European Universities Initiative, Centres of Vocational Excellence, European Teacher Academies, European School Alliances, Joint study programmes, European Youth Together and Sport Collaborative Alliances.

ARTICLE 7

Support to policy development

The Programme shall support the following actions³⁵:

- (a) Support to experimentation, preparation and implementation of the Union's policy agendas and tools covering skills, education and training, youth and sport;
- (b) Support to programme implementation including synergies with, and support to other Union policies and programmes, online platforms, tools for virtual cooperation and tools to facilitate learning mobility;
- (c) Dissemination and communication.

³⁵ including support to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF); the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET); the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR); the ENIC (European Network of Information Centres in the European Region) and NARIC (National Academic Recognition Information Centres in the European Union) Networks, the Euroguidance network, the common framework and tools for the provision of better services for skills and qualifications (Europass), the Eurydice Network, National Coordinators for Adult Learning, the Central and National Support Services for online platforms, the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the National Reference Points on graduate tracking, Youth wiki network, the Eurodesk network, the European Youth Forum, Youthpass, the National Working Groups implementing the EU Youth Dialogue and the National Coordinating Bodies implementing the European Week of Sport at national level.

CHAPTER III – INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

ARTICLE 8

Support measures for inclusion and diversity

1. When implementing this Regulation, the Commission, Member States and third countries associated to the programme shall, as a principle, ensure an inclusive approach across all activities.
2. The Commission, Member States and third countries associated to the programme shall take effective measures to promote inclusion, diversity and fairness, solidarity, equal opportunities and access, in particular to ensure participation of people with fewer opportunities in the programme.
3. The Commission shall support access to the programme from an early age and independent of socio-economic background. To achieve that, it shall ensure the provision of measures to facilitate the participation of people with fewer opportunities, including financial support mechanisms, where relevant.
4. The Commission may adjust or may authorise the national agencies referred to in Article 28 of this Regulation to adjust, on the basis of objective criteria, the financial support mechanisms to improve access to people with fewer opportunities.
5. The costs of measures to facilitate or support the participation of people with fewer opportunities shall not justify the rejection of an application under the programme.
6. The national agencies referred to in Article 19 of this Regulation shall develop or update where relevant, national inclusion and diversity action plans, based on the framework, and with particular attention to the specific challenges to access the programme within the national contexts. The national inclusion and diversity plans shall form an integral part of the national agencies' planning documents as referred to in Article 19(2). The Commission shall monitor on a regular basis the implementation of the inclusion and diversity measures, including the national inclusion and diversity plans.

CHAPTER IV - FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 9

Budget

1. The indicative financial envelope for the implementation of the Programme for the period [] is set at EUR [] in current prices.
2. In addition to the amounts set out in paragraphs 1 of this Article, and in order to promote the international dimension of the Programme, an additional financial contribution shall be made available from (EU) [] Global Europe Fund to support actions implemented and managed in accordance with this Regulation.

3. Appropriations may be entered in the Union budget beyond 2034 to cover the expenses necessary and to enable the management of actions not completed by the end of the Programme.
4. The financial envelope referred to in paragraph 1 and 2 of this Article and the amounts of additional resources referred to in Article 10 may also be used for technical and administrative assistance for the implementation of the Programme, such as preparatory, monitoring, control, audit and evaluation activities, specific and corporate information technology systems and platforms, information and communication activities, including corporate communication on the political priorities of the Union, and all other technical and administrative assistance or staff-related expenses incurred by the Commission for the management of the Programme.

ARTICLE 10

Additional resources

1. Member States, Union institutions, bodies and agencies, third countries, international organisations, international financial institutions, or other third parties, may make additional financial or non-financial contributions to the Programme. Additional financial contributions shall constitute external assigned revenue within the meaning of Article 21(2), points (a), (d), or (e) or Article 21(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509.
2. Resources allocated to Member States under shared management may, at their request, be made available to the Programme. The Commission shall implement those resources directly or indirectly in accordance with Article 62(1), point (a) or (c) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509. They shall be additional to the amount referred to in Article 9(1) of this Regulation. Those resources shall be used for the benefit of the Member State concerned. Where the Commission has not entered into a legal commitment under direct or indirect management for additional amounts thus made available to the Programme, the corresponding uncommitted amounts may, at the request of the Member State concerned, be transferred back to one or more respective source programmes or their successors.

ARTICLE 11

Alternative, combined and cumulative funding

1. The Programme shall be implemented in synergy with other Union programmes. An action that has received a Union contribution from another programme may also receive a contribution under the Programme. The rules of the relevant Union programme shall apply to the corresponding contribution or a single set of rules may be applied to all contributions and a single legal commitment may be concluded. If the Union contribution is based on eligible costs, the cumulative support from the Union budget shall not exceed the total eligible costs of the action and may be calculated on a pro-rata basis in accordance with the documents setting out the conditions for support.
2. Award procedures under the Programme may be jointly conducted under direct or indirect management with Member States, Union institutions, bodies and agencies, third countries, international organisations, international financial institutions, or other

third parties, provided the protection of the financial interests of the Union is ensured. Such procedures shall be subject to a single set of rules and lead to the conclusion of single legal commitments. For that purpose, the partners to the joint award procedure may make resources available to the Programme in accordance with Article 11 of this Regulation, or the partners may be entrusted with the implementation of the award procedure, where applicable in accordance with Article 62(1), point (c), of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509. For the purposes of Article 153(3) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, in joint award procedures the evaluation committee may be partially composed by members that are representatives of the partners in that procedure.

ARTICLE 12

Implementation and forms of Union funding

1. The Programme shall be implemented in accordance with Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, under direct management or under indirect management with entities referred to in Article 62(1), point (c) of that Regulation.
2. The funds implemented under indirect management in a Member State shall be allocated on the basis of:
 - (a) the population of and cost of living in the Member State concerned;
 - (b) the distance between capitals of Member States;
 - (c) performance, calculated based on the most recent data available.

The Commission shall further specify those criteria and their underlying formulae in the work programmes referred to in Article 23 of this Regulation.

3. Union funding may be provided in any form in accordance with Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, in particular grants, prizes, procurement, and non-financial donations
4. Where Union funding is provided in the form of a grant, funding shall be provided as financing not linked to costs or, where necessary, simplified cost options, in accordance with Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509. Funding may be provided in the form of actual eligible cost reimbursement only where the objectives of an action cannot be achieved otherwise.
5. For the purpose of Article 153(3) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, the evaluation committee may be composed partially or fully of independent external experts.
6. Public legal entities, and institutions and organisations in the fields of education and training, youth and sport that have received over 50 % of their annual revenue from public sources over the last two years, shall be considered as having the necessary financial and operational capacity to carry out activities under the Programme. They shall not be required to present further documentation to demonstrate that capacity.

CHAPTER V - PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAMME

ARTICLE 13

Third countries associated to the Programme

1. The Programme may be opened to the participation of the following third countries, in accordance with the objectives laid down in Article 3, and with the relevant international agreements or any decisions adopted under the framework of those agreements and applicable to:
 - (a) members of the European Free Trade Association which are members of the European Economic Area, as well as European micro-states;
 - (b) acceding countries, candidate countries and potential **candidates**;
 - (c) European Neighbourhood Policy countries;
 - (d) other third countries.
2. The Programme may be opened to full association of countries referred to in point (a) and (b) of paragraph 1, Switzerland and the United Kingdom .
3. The Programme may be opened to partial association of countries referred to in point (b), (c) and (d) of paragraph 1.
4. The association agreements for participation in the Programme shall:
 - (a) ensure a fair balance as regards the contributions and benefits of the third country participating in the Programme;
 - (b) lay down the conditions of participation in the programmes, including the calculation of financial contributions, consisting of an operational contribution and a participation fee, to a programme and its general administrative costs;
 - (c) not confer on the third country any decision-making power in the Programme;
 - (d) guarantee the rights of the Union to ensure sound financial management and to protect its financial interests.;
 - (e) where relevant, ensure the protection of security and public order interests of the Union.
5. For the purposes of point 4 (d), the third country shall grant the necessary rights and access required under Regulations (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 and (EU, Euratom) No 883/2013, and guarantee that enforcement decisions imposing a pecuniary obligation on the basis of Article 299 TFEU, as well as judgements and orders of the Court of Justice of the European Union, are enforceable.
6. The Commission may set up specific or transition arrangements, including for full association of European micro-states and countries referred to in point (b) of paragraph 1.

ARTICLE 14

Eligibility

1. Eligibility criteria shall be set to support achievement of the objectives laid down in Article 3, in accordance with Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509.
2. In award procedures under direct and indirect management the following legal entities may be eligible to receive Union funding:
 - (a) entities established in a Member State or an associated third country;
 - (b) international organisations;
 - (c) other entities established in non-associated third countries where the funding of such entities is essential for implementing the action and contributes to the objectives laid down in Article 3.
3. In addition to Article 168(2) and (3) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, associated third countries referred to in Article 7(1) of this Regulation may, where relevant, participate in and benefit from any procurement mechanisms set Article 168(2) and (3) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509. Rules applicable to Member States shall be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to participating associated third countries.
4. Award procedures affecting security or public order, in particular concerning strategic assets and interests of the Union or its Member States, shall be restricted in accordance with Article 136 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509.
5. The work programme referred to in Article 110 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 or the documents related to the award procedure may further specify the eligibility criteria set out in this Regulation or set additional eligibility criteria for specific actions.

CHAPTER VI - PROGRAMMING '

ARTICLE 15

Work programme

The Programme shall be implemented by work programmes referred to in Article 110 Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509.

CHAPTER VII – COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION

ARTICLE 16

Information, communication and dissemination

1. In cooperation with the Commission, the national agencies referred to in Article 19 of this Regulation shall develop a consistent strategy with regard to effective outreach and to the dissemination and exploitation of the results of activities supported under the actions they manage within the Programme. The national authorities referred to in Article 18 of this Regulation shall support the national agencies in exploiting the results of projects with high potential for impact.
2. The national agencies 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. National agencies shall inform relevant target groups about the actions and activities undertaken in their respective countries.

CHAPTER VIII - MANAGEMENT AND AUDIT SYSTEM

ARTICLE 17

Arrangements for indirect management at national level

1. In accordance with the third subparagraph of Article 157(1) of the Financial Regulation, the implementation of the Programme under indirect management requires the designation of a national authority and a national agency, as specified in Articles 27 and 28 of this Regulation.
2. The national authority and the national agency shall both be considered as implementing bodies under point (c) of Article 62(1) of the Financial Regulation to the extent of their responsibility for budget implementation tasks as agreed with the Commission, with the national authority retaining principal responsibility towards the Commission for the overall implementation of EU funds by the national agency it designates and supervises as referred to in Article 27(10).

ARTICLE 18

National authority

1. The Member States and the third countries fully associated to the Programme shall notify the Commission, through their Permanent Representation or Mission to the European Union, of the public law body designated as the national authority for the purposes of this Regulation, and the person or persons legally authorised to act on its behalf.

2. The national authority shall designate a national agency for the duration of the Programme and notify the Commission thereof. The national authority shall not designate a ministry as a national agency and the national agency shall be organisationally separate from the national authority.
3. The national authority shall designate an independent audit body as referred to in Article 30 of this Regulation.
4. The national authority shall provide the Commission with an appropriate ex ante assessment that the national agency satisfies the minimum requirements for the protection of the financial interests of the Union, namely by reference to the national agency's compliance with Article 157(1) to (5) of the Financial Regulation and with the Union requirements for internal control standards for national agencies and rules for the management of Programme funds. The following arrangements shall apply:
 - the procedures specifically required by the Commission, including its own and those specified in this Regulation or where the rules and procedures are aligned with those required by the Commission, as referred to in point (b) of Article 157(7) of the Financial Regulation, shall be exempt from the ex ante assessment;
 - the national authority shall base its ex ante assessment of the national agency on its own controls and audits or on controls and audits undertaken by the independent audit body;
 - where the national agency designated for the Programme is the same as the national agency designated for the 2021-2027 Programme, the scope of the ex ante assessment shall be limited to the requirements that are new and specific to the Programme, unless otherwise justified;
5. where the national authority itself carries out budget implementation tasks in accordance with this Regulation and relevant agreements thereunder, it shall be exempt from ex ante assessment. In the event that the Commission rejects the designation of the national agency based on its evaluation of the ex ante assessment, or if the national agency does not comply with the minimum requirements set by the Commission, the national authority shall ensure that the necessary remedial steps are taken to ensure compliance, subject to approval by the Commission, or shall designate another body as national agency.
6. The national authority shall provide adequate co-financing, at least equivalent to the contribution referred to in point (b) of Article 29(5) of this Regulation, for the operations of its national agency to ensure that the Programme is managed in accordance with the applicable Union rules.
7. The national authority shall ensure that appointments of persons responsible for the management of the national agency are justified by the nature of the action, follow fair and transparent rules and procedures and do not give rise to a conflict of interest. In case of serious concerns about compliance with these principles, the Commission may reject the proposed appointment and request the national authority to ensure that the selection procedure is repeated in accordance with Article 157 of the Financial Regulation.
8. The national authority shall monitor and supervise the budget implementation tasks entrusted to its national agency. It shall inform and consult the Commission in due time

prior to taking any decision that may have a significant impact on the management of the Programme and the Programme funds.

9. The national authority shall, each year, provide the Commission with a report on its monitoring and supervision activities and, where appropriate, a statement on its follow-up to any observations issued by the Commission in response to such report.
10. The national authority shall take and retain responsibility for the proper management of the Union funds transferred by the Commission to the national agency in the framework of the Programme.
11. In the event of any irregularity, negligence or fraud attributable to the national agency, or of serious shortcomings, liabilities or underperformance on the part of the national agency, where any of these instances gives rise to claims by the Commission against the national agency, the national authority shall reimburse and indemnify the Commission for such claims.
12. In the circumstances referred to in paragraph 11, the national authority may, on its own initiative or at the request of the Commission, revoke the mandate of the national agency. Where the national authority wishes to revoke that mandate for any other justified reason, it shall notify the Commission within a reasonable time before the envisaged date of termination of the mandate. In such cases, the national authority and the Commission shall formally agree on specific and time-limited transition measures.
13. In the event of revocation as referred to in paragraph 12, the national authority shall carry out the necessary controls regarding the Union funds entrusted to the national agency whose mandate has been revoked and shall ensure that those funds and all documents and management tools required for the management of the Programme are transferred to the new national agency in an unimpeded manner. The national authority shall provide the national agency whose mandate has been revoked with the necessary financial support to continue to meet its contractual obligations vis-à-vis the beneficiaries of the Programme and the Commission pending the transfer of those obligations to a new national agency. Should there be a transitional period between the revocation of this mandate and the designation of a new national agency as accepted by the Commission, the national authority shall, during such period, be responsible for all the obligations of the national agency as laid out in this Regulation and for all of its outstanding contractual obligations vis-à-vis the beneficiaries of the Programme and the Commission.
14. Where a national agency ceases to operate or to exist and no new national agency is designated as a result of the withdrawal of a third country from the Programme, the national authority shall be principally responsible for all the obligations of the national agency as laid out in this Regulation and for the fulfilment and closure of all the outstanding contractual obligations vis-à-vis the beneficiaries of the Programme and the Commission.
15. At the request of the Commission, the national authority shall designate the institutions or organisations, or the types of such institutions and organisations, to be considered eligible to participate in specific actions of the Programme in its territory.
16. The national authority shall promote and facilitate effective synergies and complementarities with other Union, national or regional funds or programmes.
17. The national authority shall ensure that all necessary and appropriate measures are taken to remove any legal and administrative obstacles to the proper functioning of the Programme, including measures aimed at aligning the status of participants in the

Programme with that of other nationals in the same situation or at addressing difficulties in obtaining visas or residence permits.

ARTICLE 19

National agency

1. The national agency shall:
 - (a) be a body within the meaning of point (c)(v) or (vi) of Article 62(1) of the Financial Regulation and be governed by the law of the Member State or of the third country fully associated to the Programme concerned;
 - (b) have the adequate management capacity, staff and infrastructure to fulfil its tasks satisfactorily, ensuring efficient and effective management of the Programme and sound financial management of Union funds;
 - (c) have the operational and legal means to apply the administrative, contractual and financial management rules laid down at Union level;
 - (d) have the requisite expertise to implement effectively the actions in all the sectors of the Programme for which it receives an EU contribution;
 - (e) offer, if required by the Commission, adequate financial guarantees, issued preferably by a public authority, corresponding to the level of Union funds it is called upon to manage.
2. The national agency shall adequately plan its tasks for the implementation of the relevant actions as set out in the work programme referred to in Article 23 and the relevant agreements with the Commission, as well as for the information, communication and dissemination activities referred to in Article 25(3) of this Regulation.
3. The national agency shall manage all the stages of the project lifecycle of the Programme actions under its responsibility in accordance with point (c) of Article 62(1) of the Financial Regulation and the relevant agreements with the Commission.
4. The national agency shall issue grant support to beneficiaries within the meaning of point (5) of Article 2 of the Financial Regulation by way of grant agreements as specified by the Commission for the Programme action concerned.
5. The national agency shall not, without prior written authorisation from the national authority and from the Commission, delegate to a third party any task related to the Programme or budget implementation conferred on it. The national agency shall retain sole responsibility for any tasks delegated to a third party.
6. The national agency shall, each year, provide its national authority and the Commission with a management declaration, a report and any other documents as required in accordance with Article 158 of the Financial Regulation.
7. The national agency shall implement in due time the observations issued by the Commission following its analysis of the yearly management declaration and report and of the independent audit opinion thereon.

ARTICLE 20

European Commission

1. On the basis of the compliance requirements for national agencies referred to in Article 27(4) of this Regulation, the Commission shall review the national management and control systems, using in particular the ex ante assessment provided by the national authority, the national agency's yearly management declaration and the opinion of the independent audit body thereon, and the national authority's yearly report referred to in Article 27(9) of this Regulation.
2. On the basis of the ex ante assessment referred to in Article 27(4) of this Regulation, the Commission shall accept, conditionally accept or reject the designation of the national agency. The Commission shall not enter into a contractual relationship with the national agency until it has accepted the ex ante assessment as satisfactory or taken appropriate supervisory measures in accordance with Article 157(5) of the Financial Regulation. In the event of conditional acceptance, the Commission may apply proportionate precautionary measures to its contractual relationship with the national agency. Where the national agency no longer complies with the minimum requirements, the Commission may suspend its contractual relationship with the national agency until remedial action has been taken to ensure compliance, failing which it may request the national authority to revoke the mandate of the national agency and designate a new one, subject to a positive ex ante assessment.
3. The Commission shall provide the national authorities and the national agencies with appropriate information and guidance in order to ensure consistent and high quality implementation and management of the Programme. In particular, it shall define planning, project management and reporting arrangements and ensure that they follow simple procedures.
4. The Commission shall not make Programme funds available to the national agency until it has approved its planning documents in accordance with Article 28(2) of this Regulation.
5. The Commission shall make the following Programme funds available to the national agency:
 - (a) a contribution for grant support for the Programme actions the management of which is entrusted to the national agency;
 - (b) a contribution in support of the national agency's Programme management tasks;
 - (c) if relevant, an additional contribution for actions under point (b) of Article 6, point (b) of Article 10 and point (b) of Article 13.
6. The Commission shall communicate to the national authority and the national agency the outcome of its analysis and observations on the yearly report and management declaration as referred to in Articles 27(9) and 28(6) and on the audit opinion as referred to in Article 30(2) of this Regulation.
7. In the event that the Commission cannot accept the yearly management declaration or the independent audit opinion thereon, or in the event of unsatisfactory implementation by the national agency of the Commission's observations, the Commission may implement any precautionary and corrective measures necessary to safeguard the Union's financial interests in accordance with Article 132 of the Financial Regulation.

8. The Commission shall encourage and maintain an active dialogue and cooperation with and between the national agencies and the national authorities, including the exchange and transfer of good practice, with a view to improving and ensuring the consistent implementation and management of the Programme. It shall also ensure that appropriate conditions are in place for an effective exchange of information between the Union institutions, national agencies or other bodies and entities implementing the Programme .

ARTICLE 21

Independent audit body

1. The independent audit body shall:
 - (a) have the necessary professional competence to carry out public sector audits;
 - (b) ensure that its audits take account of internationally accepted audit standards;
 - (c) not be in a position of conflict of interest with regard to the legal entity of which the national agency forms part; in particular, the independent audit body shall be independent, in terms of its functions, of the legal entity of which the national agency forms part.
2. The independent audit body shall issue an audit opinion on the yearly management declaration as referred to in Article 158(1) of the Financial Regulation. It shall form the basis of the overall assurance pursuant to Article 127 of the Financial Regulation.
3. The independent audit body shall give the Commission and its representatives and the Court of Auditors full access to all documents and reports in support of the audit opinion that it issues on the national agency's yearly management declaration.

ARTICLE 22

Information technology systems

1. To support the implementation of the Programme objectives laid down in Article 3, the Commission shall deliver, particularly under indirect management, the necessary information technology systems in a timely and appropriate manner.
2. Such systems shall facilitate user-friendly and easy access and be designed to support the simplified procedures referred to in Article 29(3) of this Regulation.

ARTICLE 23

Processing of personal data

Personal data collected for the purpose of achieving programme objectives shall be processed in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽³⁶⁾.

ARTICLE 24

Principles of the control system

1. The Commission shall be responsible for the supervisory controls with regard to the Programme actions and activities managed by the national agencies. It shall set the minimum requirements for the controls by the national agency and the independent audit body.
2. The national agency shall be responsible for the primary controls of grant beneficiaries for the actions it manages as set out in the work programmes referred to in Article 23 of this Regulation. Those controls shall give reasonable assurance that the grants awarded are used as intended and in compliance with the applicable Union rules.
3. With regard to the Programme funds transferred to the national agencies, the Commission shall ensure proper coordination of its controls with the national authorities and the national agencies, on the basis of the single audit principle and following a risk-based analysis. This paragraph shall not apply to investigations carried out by OLAF.

CHAPTER IX - TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 25

Repeal

Regulation (EU) No 2021/817 and Regulation (EU) No 2021/888 are repealed with effect from 1 January 2028.

ARTICLE 26

Transitional provisions

1. This Regulation shall not affect the continuation or modification of the actions concerned, until their closure, under Regulation (EU) No 2021/817 and Regulation (EU) No 2021/888 establishing the Erasmus+ programme and the European Solidarity Corps programme 2021-2027, which shall continue to apply to the actions concerned until their closure.

³⁶ Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC (OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 39).

1. The financial envelope for the Programme may also cover technical and administrative assistance expenses necessary to ensure the transition between the Programme and the measures adopted under their predecessors, the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps 2021-2027 programmes.
2. If necessary, appropriations may be entered in the budget beyond 2034 to cover the expenses provided for in Article 14(5), to enable the management of actions and activities not completed by 31 December 2034.
3. Member States shall ensure at national level the unimpeded transition between the actions carried out in the context of the Erasmus+ programme and European Solidarity Corps 2021-2027 and those to be implemented under this Programme.

ARTICLE 27

Entry into force and application

This Regulation shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

It shall apply from [1 January 2028].

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

Done at Brussels, [date]

For the European Parliament

The President

For the Council

The President