



Tackling radicalisation through education and youth action

In the wake of the terrorist attacks in France and Denmark at the start of 2015, European Commissioner Tibor Navracsics and Ministers for Education committed in Paris on 17 March to ensure that education safeguards and promotes Europe's civic values: "We remain united in our efforts to promote freedom of thought and expression, social inclusion and respect for others, as well as to combat discrimination in all its forms."

The Paris meeting:

What the EU has committed to do

At the European level, Member States and the Commission agreed to cooperate closely, exchanging ideas and experiences. In particular, they intend to make stronger use of the Framework for cooperation in education and training (ET2020) to develop fresh activities designed to promote European values in education, inside and outside the classroom.

The Commission plans to use funds from the Erasmus+ programme in a more targeted way to support cross-national exchanges and partnerships in this field. And it will work to ensure that education – together with youth work, inter-cultural dialogue and grass-root sports – is taken into account in related policy areas such as external relations or security. Member States will place a stronger emphasis on civic values in their respective education systems.

Shared Values

Respect for shared European values such as human dignity, freedom of expression, democracy, equality and the rule of law has always underpinned EU actions in education and youth.

Member States are fully responsible for their education systems. The Commission supports their education and youth policies through programmes such as Erasmus+ and by bringing Member States together to share approaches, ideas and progress made on improving education systems around Europe.

Examples of EU-funded projects promoting civic values and mutual understanding

Youth for human rights and cooperation across borders

The EU Youth in Action programme, Project "Check Point X" gathered 45 members of local organisations from Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland after the killing of 69 youngsters in Utøya, Norway, in 2011. The aim was to analyse radical tendencies in society and to discuss for example **how and where to draw the line between freedom of speech and incitement to hatred**. Together, participants came up with new ideas on how to fight violence through cooperation across borders. They created an educational platform which allows young people to take part in discussions, workshops or case studies. The project received €22,915 from the EU Youth in Action programme, and ran from May until July 2012. The actual activities took place early July 2012.

Faith Over Fear: The role and evolution of religion in Europe and current issues facing European society

The project brought together 40 people representing or working with disadvantaged groups from several countries for a 9-day training course in November 2013 in England. Trainees participated in workshops, multicultural evenings, and visited places of worship of minority groups. The aim was to **raise awareness of the negative stereotypes faced by religious minorities and to challenge these**, with a particular emphasis on issues surrounding Islamophobia. The project ran from July 2013 until February 2014. It received €31,285 from the Youth in Action programme.

How strongly do young people engage in social activities?

Around half of respondents

49%

say they have participated in the activities of at least one organisation over the last 12 months

► 56% did so in 2013

The most popular activities were being involved in:



Source: Eurobarometer 375

Overcoming Borders

Over thirty years, a great tool to help them understand different cultures better, the Erasmus programme has helped three million students to study or train abroad. Student exchanges are a valuable addition to people's education and a great tool to understand different cultures better. Additionally, the new programme for 2014-2020, Erasmus+, greatly expands these opportunities and now offers more openings for volunteering, youth exchanges and other actions for young people who might not be able to take advantage of university-based mobility. In total, 4 million people will benefit from an Erasmus+ stay abroad.

Erasmus+ also offers more funding to help education institutions and other partners involved in education from across the EU join forces. For example, eTwinning, a European platform for teachers, supports cooperative projects involving some 40% of all schools in Europe, bringing together almost 300,000 teachers. It has already supported more than 13200 projects about education for tolerance and inter-cultural understanding.

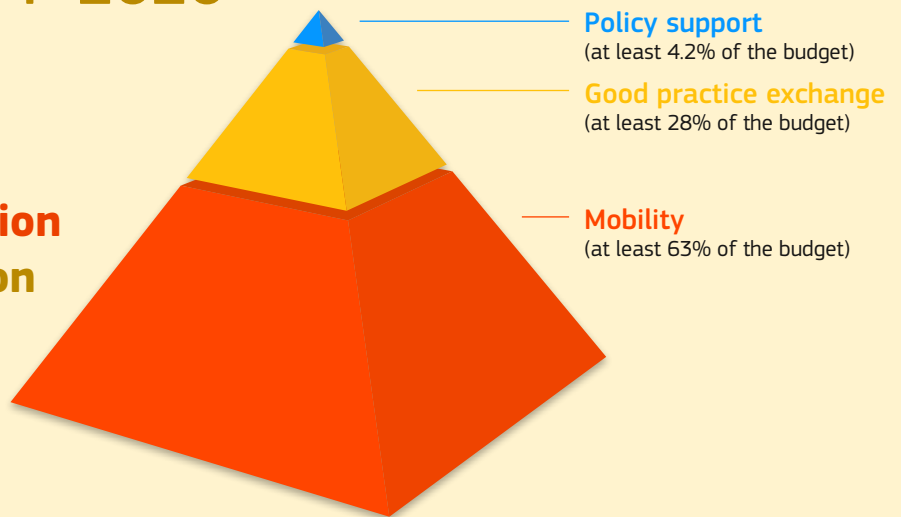
SIRIUS – European policy network on the education of children and young people with a migrant background

This platform has 35 members from 19 countries: specialised institutions in migrant education issues, research centres, universities, associations and civil organisations. They look into the quality of education systems (from pre-school to university), diversity in schools, and targeted measures for migrant pupils. They produced the "Agenda for migrant education in Europe", which provides policy recommendations for European institutions and Member States authorities on how to make education systems inclusive and help to ensure that pupils with migrant backgrounds can be equally successful as others. These recommendations looked, for instance, to reduce the heightened risk that they will leave school early. The platform ran from late 2011 until late 2014, with a total of €1.3 million of EU funding. It remains an active network, helping setting up partnerships between schools under Erasmus+ to improve the education of migrant youth and contribute to further studies in this field.

Erasmus+ 2014-2020

Key figures

Overall budget: **€ 14.7 billion**
+ an extra € 1.68 billion
for actions with
non EU- countries
(partner countries)



Erasmus+ Beneficiaries

- around 2 million higher education students
- around 650,000 vocational education and training students
- 800,000 lecturers, teachers, trainers, education staff and youth workers
- more than 500,000 young people in volunteer and youth exchange schemes
- Master's degree loan scheme for around 200,000 students
- Joint Master degrees for more than 25,000 students
- around 25,000 strategic partnerships linking together 125,000 schools, vocational education and training institutions, higher and adult education institutions, youth organisations and enterprises