



Education International
Internationale de l'Éducation
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ETUCE – European Trade Union Committee for Education
Education International - European Region

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Brussels, 27 June 2025

To: Ms. Roxana Minzatu

European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth

Subject: *Concerns regarding plans to shift Key Actions 2 and 3 of the Erasmus+ Programme under the new Competitiveness Fund*

Dear Commissioner Minzatu,

On behalf of the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE), representing 131 trade unions of teachers and education personnel in Europe, we wish to express our serious concerns regarding your plan to shift Key Action 2 (cooperation among institutions and organisations) and Key Action 3 (support for policy development and cooperation) from the Erasmus+ Programme to the new Competitiveness Fund of the next Multiannual Financial Framework (2028–2035).

We fully acknowledge how critical it is for Europe to remain competitive and for workers to acquire transversal and labour market-relevant skills for the just transition of industries. However, we strongly believe that competitiveness cannot be the exclusive focus of EU education and training funding. Education serves a much broader societal function than meeting labour market needs: it fosters inclusion, personal development, democratic citizenship and social cohesion, and the Erasmus+ Programme plays an essential role in supporting these objectives. Shifting Key Actions 2 and 3 to a fund primarily oriented toward competitiveness risks narrowing the purpose of education and training and downplaying these fundamental roles.

Education and training must continue to be seen and supported from a holistic perspective. This will not be achieved – indeed, it will be impeded – if only Key Action 1 (individual mobility opportunities) is retained under the Erasmus+ Programme, as currently planned, with other parts of the programme being moved and dedicated to competitiveness. The preparation and implementation of EU education and training policies (Key Action 3) and cooperation projects among educational institutions (Key Action 2), address topics that are central to the quality and intrinsic value of education, such as the attractiveness and accessibility of education and training for all, the teaching and learning of key competences and basic skills, support for underachieving



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and disadvantaged learners, social, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural diversity, digitalisation, the professional development of educators (including EU Teacher Academies) and the modernisation of higher education.

We are deeply concerned that transferring Key Actions 2 and 3 into the Competitiveness Fund will shift the focus from inclusive, long-term societal objectives to short-term, labour market relevance, compromising the transformational potential of education and training at the level of the Member States. We also believe that shifting these key areas from the Erasmus+ Programme into the Competitiveness fund will reduce focus on key competence development, most importantly those competences related to democratic values and dispositions, informed active citizenship, EU citizenship and EU integration, all of which should be strengthened rather than weakened, especially in higher education, vocational education, and adult learning.

While ETUCE could consider that certain actions strictly related to labour market skills development might be linked to the Competitiveness Fund, we strongly request that the proposed changes in relation to Key Actions 2 and 3 not proceed and that any changes to the budgetary framework related to holistic education and teacher support be comprehensively discussed with the ETUCE (the trade union organisation of educators and recognised social partner) before such decisions are made.

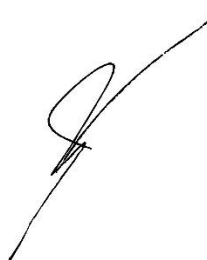
We therefore urge you to reconsider this proposal and to retain a unified, inclusive EU education and training funding structure that supports individual mobility, institutional cooperation, policy cooperation, social inclusion, sustainable growth, democratic values and a resilient economy, without compromising societal or educational quality and equity.

We are ready, as always, to engage in constructive dialogue and would welcome the opportunity for a dedicated meeting to discuss these concerns further.

Yours sincerely,



John MacGabhann
ETUCE President



Jelmer Evers
ETUCE Director