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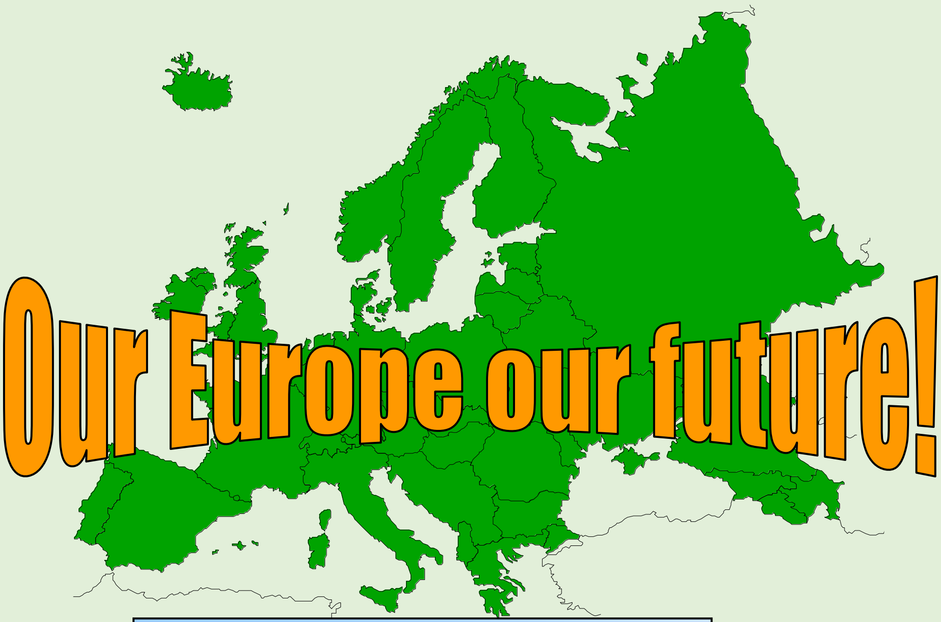

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ENGLISH NEWSLETTER

Bimonthly newsletter:

- *to spread European opportunities and initiatives,*
- *to disseminate the respect of human rights and the awareness about the development of Europe's cultural identity and diversity,*
- *to fight discrimination against minorities, xenophobia, intolerance and racism,*
- *to help, with youth activities, the democratic stability and social inclusion in Europe,*
- *develop active European citizenship and civil society by giving impetus to the training of youth leaders and youth workers working within a European dimension;*
- *to promote European youth activities, such as exchanges, seminars, conferences, debates and training courses,*
- *to encourage exchange of ideas, proposals, experiences and good practises at international level.*

NEWSLETTER REALISED BY
THE ASSOCIATION EURO-NET
AS EUROPE DIRECT BASILICATA CENTRE

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1. Political agreement on the European Defence Industry Programme

The European Commission welcomes the political agreement reached today between the European Parliament and the Council on the European Defence Industry Programme (EDIP), a key instrument to support common procurement and industrial ramp-up, as well as to implement the Defence Readiness Roadmap 2030 and the proposed Defence Readiness Flagships.European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said: *"I welcome the agreement on the European Defence Industry Programme. €1.5 billion to strengthen Europe's defence industry, support Ukraine and ensure we are defence-ready by 2030, in line with our 'Preserving Peace' roadmap. Because when we invest in readiness, we invest in peace. Congratulations to the Danish Presidency for seeing this crucial programme through."* With a budget of €1.5 billion for 2025–2027, EDIP introduces targeted measures to address the main challenges faced by Europe's defence industry, including industrialisation of defence products, industrial ramp-up, support to European supply chains and SMEs, and the development of Ukraine's defence technological and industrial base. The co-legislators also provisionally agreed on key principles, including an "EU-made content" rule requiring at least 65% of components in funded projects to originate from the EU or associated countries. This will ensure EDIP first and foremost support the Union's defence industry. The co-legislators also provisionally endorsed the creation of a Ukraine Support Instrument, aimed at modernising Ukraine's defence industry, fostering partnerships between EU and Ukrainian defence actors, and accelerating the integration of the Ukraine defence industry with the EDTIB. Furthermore, EDIP introduces new mechanisms such the European Defence Projects of Common Interest, that will provide collaborative frameworks to implement the Defence Readiness Flagships, the voluntary Structure for European Armament Programme (SEAP), which will facilitate cooperative projects among Member States and may grant VAT exemptions for jointly owned equipment. Additionally, a first ever EU Security of Supply Regime will ensure access to critical defence products and enhance the Union's capacity to respond to future supply chain crises.

Next steps

As soon as EDIP enters into force, the Commission will work on the programming with a view to finance the most pressing priorities in line with the Defence Readiness Roadmap 2030.

Background

Tabled by the Commission in March 2024, EDIP constitutes the first comprehensive EU framework designed for strengthening Europe's defence technological and industrial base (EDTIB). The new programme aims to bridge the gap between short-term emergency instruments, including the Act in Support of Ammunition Production (ASAP), the European Defence Industry Reinforcement through Common Procurement Act (EDIRPA), and the EU's long-term objective of ensuring sustained defence industrial readiness. It also complements the European Defence Fund. In March 2025 the Commission proposed the White Paper for European Defence – Readiness 2030 and its ReArm Europe Plan/Readiness 2030 as an ambitious defence package providing financial levers to EU Member States to drive an investment surge in defence capabilities. The activation of the national escape clause of the Stability and Growth Pact for defence purposes together with the Security Action for Europe (SAFE) loan form the backbone of the ReArm Europe Plan / Readiness 2030, enabling Member States to substantially and rapidly scale up their investments in European defence. Today, the Commission and the High Representative have also adopted the 'Preserving Peace - Defence Readiness Roadmap 2030', a comprehensive plan to strengthen European defence capabilities.

2. Roadmap for Women's Rights

On 7th March 2025, the Commission adopted the Roadmap for Women's Rights, which includes a Declaration of principles for a gender-equal society. This Declaration has the ambition to become a guiding compass for policymakers and a reference point for stakeholders. Commissioner for Equality Hadja Lahbib invited interested parties, including other EU institutions, Member States, civil society organisations and other relevant actors to endorse the Declaration. The Roadmap's endorsement ceremony, organised by the Commission on 16th October 2025 in Brussels, brings together different parties that have expressed support for the objectives of the Roadmap. It creates an opportunity to express commitment to concrete actions and collaboration to reach tangible impact.

3. Revised Waste Framework Directive enters into force

The EU's textile and clothing sector is a significant economic force, but textile production and consumption also have significant environmental impacts.

The targeted revision of the Waste Framework Directive enters into force today (16 Oct), introducing common rules for extended producer responsibility (EPR) for textiles and setting binding food waste reduction targets for Member States.It will help reduce waste, mitigate environmental damage, and enhance the EU's economic security and resilience by driving innovation in sustainable practices and reducing dependency on raw materials, in line with the EU's Competitiveness Compass and Strategic Agenda for 2024-29.

Sustainable management of textile waste

The EU's textile and clothing sector is a significant economic force, generating a turnover of €170 billion in 2023 and employing 1.3 million people across 197,000 companies. However, textile production and consumption also have significant environmental impacts. In 2020, in the EU, the textile sector was the consumption area with the third highest impact on water and land use, and the fifth highest in terms of raw material use and greenhouse gas emissions. Moreover, textile waste is a pressing issue, with about 12.6 million tonnes generated in 2019, of which only one-fifth was separately collected for reuse or recycling. The revised Waste Framework Directive introduces two main sets of measures to tackle these impacts, while boosting the competitiveness and circularity of the sector:

- **Mandatory EPR schemes for textile and footwear products**: All Member States are required to establish their own EPR scheme for textiles and footwear, following common rules applicable across the EU. Under such schemes, textile and footwear producers will pay a fee for each product they place on the market. This fee will finance collection schemes and the management of the collected textiles, providing for their re-use, preparing for re-use, recycling and disposal.EPR fees will be adjusted based on sustainability criteria, such as the ones developed under the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR), considering factors such as durability and recyclability. This approach, known as eco-modulation, links the cost producers pay for EPR to the sustainability of their textiles, thus encouraging them to design more circular and environmentally-friendly products.The EPR fees will also be used to inform consumers on sustainable textiles and footwear, and support research and development to improve product design, waste prevention and management operations.
- **New rules for the management of used textiles and textile waste**: All separately collected textiles will be considered as waste, ensuring a uniform interpretation across Member States of what constitutes "waste" versus "used" textiles. This means Member States will have to ensure that separately collected textiles undergo sorting operations before their possible shipment, preventing waste from being falsely labelled and exported as reusable. If not sorted, textile waste will be subject to the Waste Shipment Regulation.

Binding food waste reduction targets

The revised Waste Framework Directive introduces binding food waste reduction targets for Member States to achieve, marking a significant step towards reducing the environmental, social, and economic impacts of food waste in the EU. Member States must reduce food waste by 10% in processing and manufacturing, and by 30% per capita at retail and consumption by 2030, which includes restaurants, food services, and households. To meet these targets, Member States will need to evaluate and adapt their food waste prevention programmes. This involves measures to support behavioural change interventions, raise awareness about food waste prevention, and promote innovation and technological solutions. Measures that address inefficiencies in the food supply chain and support cooperation amongst actors are also included. Furthermore, the revised Directive introduces strengthened measures to facilitate food donation, requiring relevant food businesses to propose donation agreements to food banks and other food redistribution organisations. To monitor progress, the Commission will conduct a comprehensive review by 2027. This will include a study to better understand the root causes of food loss and food waste in primary production.The review will also consider the possibility of modifying the 2030 targets and setting new targets beyond 2030, potentially extending to 2035. The revised Directive requires the Commission to adopt implementing rules to account for variations in tourism flows in food waste reduction achieved by Member States.

Next steps

Member States will have **20 months** to transpose the revised Directive into national laws and **30 months** to establish EPR schemes for textile and footwear products. They must designate the competent authorities responsible for coordinating the measures to prevent the generation of food waste by 17 January 2026 and adapt their food waste prevention programmes in line with the necessary measures by **17 October 2027**.

Background

In July 2023, the Commission proposed a targeted amendment of the Waste Framework Directive, with a focus on textile and food waste. The revised Directive delivers on the Commission's commitment under the EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles to bring about a more circular and sustainable management of textile waste. Under the new rules, social economy enterprises engaged in second-hand textile collection and management will be exempt from EPR obligations, allowed to operate their own collection systems, and have their textile waste managed at no cost by Producer Responsibility Organisations. The revised Directive aims to further strengthen the EU's contribution to Sustainable Development Goal target 12.3, in line with the EU's Circular Economy Action Plan. Data reported by Member States and published by ESTAT since 2020 and up to 2023 has shown significant levels of food waste and no clear downward trend so far. Therefore, the revised Directive represents a major step forward in addressing this issue and provides a crucial opportunity for the EU to get back on track towards achieving its goals.

4. Key actions launched to advance the circular economy

The Commission launched several initiatives to accelerate the EU's transition to a circular economy and prepare the ground for the Circular Economy Act, expected in 2026.

Circular economy enhances competitiveness and economic growth by promoting the reuse, recycling and remanufacturing of materials. The forthcoming Act will support the EU's goals under the Competitiveness Compass and the Clean Industrial Deal to double the share of recycled material in EU's economy and become a global leader in circular economy by 2030. The initiatives adopted include the rules on waste shipments and an evaluation of electronic waste legislation. In addition, new rules to improve recycling efficiency and material recovery from waste batteries will be published in the next days. The dialogue will also kick off a public consultation with stakeholders and call for evidence to be launched soon. These new actions touch on different dimensions of the circular economy and will help to boost the transition and strengthen implementation of existing legislation.

Digitalisation and classification of waste shipments

The Commission will implement a Digital Waste Shipment System. This will enable companies to move from paper to digital procedures for shipping waste across the EU single market, reducing administrative burden and contributing to competitiveness. This will streamline cross-border shipments of waste within the EU, while protecting human health and the environment. From 21 May 2026, digital systems will fully replace paper procedures, simplifying operations, improving traceability, and curbing illegal shipments. By digitalising these procedures, waste will be recycled at the most efficient facilities across Member States. In parallel, the Commission launched a public consultation on harmonising the classification of certain waste types (so-called "green-listed" waste) to facilitate their shipments across borders. The consultation is accessible through the 'Have Your Say' portal until 31 October 2025.

Evaluation of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive

The Commission published an evaluation of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive. The WEEE is critical to address the growing challenges in e-waste management and to better align EU rules with the objectives of a competitive circular economy. Key gaps were identified, such as the fact that nearly 50% of all e-waste remains uncollected, and recycling falls short of collection targets in EU Member States. Electronic waste is one of Europe's fastest-growing waste streams, increasing by about 2% annually. There is a lot of potential to better make use of e-waste, for example by recovering and recycling critical raw materials and strengthening the circular economy. The evaluation moreover highlights the need for a new approach to improve collection, treatment, and market incentives, and will help prepare the Commission's proposal to revise the WEEE Directive. This revision will be a central component of the future Circular Economy Act.

Next steps

Feedback from this dialogue, the consultations, and the WEEE Directive evaluation will guide the development of the Circular Economy Act and advance the EU's shift toward a circular economy. In addition, later this week, the Commission intends to adopt new rules to improve recycling efficiency and the recovery of materials from batteries. Further consultation with stakeholders will be undertaken through a public consultation process.

Background

EU manufacturing companies typically spend more than twice as much on materials as on labour or energy. Many EU businesses also rely on imports of critical materials from third countries, making them vulnerable to price volatility and supply shortages. Circular practices that promote resource efficiency, design, and recycling can reduce these risks while lowering costs. Moreover, circular solutions are vital to achieving climate neutrality by 2050, as they can deliver 20-25% of the necessary greenhouse gas emissions reductions.

5. Commission and High Representative present new Defence Roadmap

On 16/10/2025, the Commission and the High Representative have proposed to EU Member States the 'Preserving Peace - Defence Readiness Roadmap 2030', a comprehensive plan to strengthen European defence capabilities. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said: *"The recent threats have shown that Europe is at risk. We have to protect every citizen and square centimetre of our territory. And Europe must respond with unity, solidarity and determination. Today's Defence Roadmap presents a clear plan with shared goals and concrete milestones on our path to 2030. Because only what gets measured gets done. Moving from plans to action, the Roadmap proposes four European Flagships: the European Drone Defence Initiative, the Eastern Flank Watch, the European Air Shield, and the European Space Shield. This will strengthen our defence industries, accelerate production and maintain our long-standing support to Ukraine."* As requested by the European Council in June, the Defence Roadmap outlines clear objectives and milestones to close capability gaps, accelerate defence investments across Member States, and guide the EU's progress towards full defence readiness by 2030. Strengthening Europe's defence also means standing firmly with Ukraine.

European Readiness Flagships

To act swiftly where a joint approach is most effective, the Defence Roadmap proposes four initial European Readiness Flagships: The European Drone Defence Initiative, the Eastern Flank Watch, the European Air Shield, and the European Space Shield. These will reinforce Europe's ability to deter and defend across land, air, sea, cyber, and space while contributing directly to NATO capability targets.

Readiness through Capability Coalitions

Achieving full defence readiness means ensuring that Member States' armed forces can anticipate, prepare for, and respond to any crisis, including high-intensity conflict. The roadmap calls on Member States to complete the formation of Capability Coalitions in nine key areas — to close critical capability gaps through joint development and procurement. These are air & missile defence; strategic enablers; military mobility; artillery systems; cyber, AI, electronic warfare; missile & ammunition; drones & counter-drones; ground combat; and maritime.

A strong, resilient and technologically innovative EU defence industrial base

Closing gaps requires an EU defence industry that can deliver the capabilities that Member States need at the necessary scale and speed. The full potential of innovation for defence, including Ukrainian solutions, should be tapped. The resilience of defence supply chains should be secured, including by reducing critical dependencies in raw materials and other critical inputs.

Boosting defence investment

A simplified and integrated European defence equipment market is key for scaling up production, achieving economies of scale, and driving innovation. By 2030, the goal is to establish a genuine EU-wide market with harmonised rules that enable industry to deliver at speed and volume. The Commission will track industrial capacity — starting with air and missile defence, drones, and space systems — to ensure Europe can meet its most urgent needs. The roadmap follows the ReArm Europe Plan/Readiness 2030, a major boost in public and private investment, which gives Member States greater financial flexibility to strengthen production and readiness. The European Commission and the High Representative will present this roadmap to the European Council, including the proposals for pan-European flagship projects that will guide Europe to full defence readiness by 2030. The roadmap also sets out plans to establish an EU-wide military mobility area by 2027, with harmonised rules and a network of land, air, and sea routes to move troops and equipment swiftly across Europe. Developed in close coordination with NATO, this will strengthen Europe's ability to respond rapidly to crises.

Background

In March 2025, the Commission and the High Representative put forward the joint White Paper for European Defence – Readiness 2030 complemented by the Commission's ReArm Europe Plan/Readiness 2030, an ambitious defence package providing financial levers to EU Member States to drive an investment surge in defence capabilities. The activation of the national escape clause of the Stability and Growth Pact for defence purposes together with the Security Action for Europe (SAFE) loan form the backbone of the ReArm Europe Plan / Readiness 2030, enabling Member States to substantially and rapidly scale up their investments in European defence. In June 2025, the European Council invited the Commission and the High Representative to present a roadmap to review progress on the White Paper and discuss the next steps in the implementation of its defence readiness objective.

6. Pact for the Mediterranean – One Sea, One Pact, One Future

On 16/10/2025, the European Commission and the High Representative set out a new ambitious strategy to strengthen EU relations with its Southern Mediterranean partners. Building on our historical and cultural ties, the Pact for the Mediterranean will focus on areas of mutual interest where we share challenges and aspirations. The Pact for the Mediterranean will step up cooperation and economic ties between the shores of the Mediterranean Sea and beyond. It will contribute to building a Common Mediterranean Space that is connected, prosperous, resilient and secure. The Pact is built on the principles of co-ownership, co-creation and joint responsibility. It takes a practical approach, centred around concrete initiatives that will bring added value for people and economies on all shores of the Mediterranean. The goal is to create mutual benefits – from producing clean energy, to unlocking private investment. This will be achieved by mobilising regional projects that create opportunities for people and businesses alike, with a particular focus on youth, women, and small businesses. In addition, the Pact also provides an opportunity to further advance our cooperation on security, preparedness and migration management. Areas of common interest such as maritime security, the resilience of our critical infrastructure and foreign interference are among the actions identified for stronger regional peace and security cooperation.

Three pillars

- **People as a driving force for change, connections and innovation** – This includes actions related to the promotion of higher education, vocational training, skills and jobs, youth and civil society empowerment, mobility, culture, tourism and sport, with a strong focus on youth. A Mediterranean University will be a flagship project under this pillar and will connect students from every shore of the Mediterranean. Existing technical and vocational education and training ecosystems will be also scaled up, while under a Heritage mechanism, the EU will promote cultural heritage, support artists, and revive tourism sustainably.
- **Stronger, more sustainable and integrated economies** – This includes actions related to the modernisation of trade and investment relations, boosting energy and clean technologies, water resilience, blue economy and agriculture, digital and transport connectivity, as well as job creation. In this context, a Trans-Mediterranean Renewable Energy and Clean Tech initiative (T-MED) and StartUp4Med will be among flagship projects of this pillar. Partners will also work on integration of supply chains, including in the health and agriculture sectors, as well as on critical raw materials. An efficient, secure and trusted interconnection of digital infrastructures will bring economies and citizens closer while a more sustainable, and regenerative blue economy of the Mediterranean basin will be fostered.
- **Security, preparedness and migration management** – This includes actions on tackling common security challenges, increasing regional preparedness, and cooperating on a comprehensive approach to migration. Priority initiatives will include Mediterranean disaster preparedness and resilience. A whole-of-route approach to migration management will be promoted as well as a common approach to integrated border management and security, which will include operational partnerships to counter migrant smuggling. A regional forum for the EU and Southern Mediterranean countries on peace and security will be established.

The Pact is also open for engagement with partners beyond the Southern Mediterranean, including the Gulf, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Western Balkans as well as Türkiye. Stepping up cooperation between the EU, the Middle East and North Africa, and the Gulf region is a key objective of the Pact.

Next steps

The Pact is proposed for political endorsement by the EU and southern Mediterranean partners in November 2025 on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Barcelona process. The initiatives proposed under the Pact will be transposed into a dedicated Action Plan, which will specify the participating countries and stakeholders for each initiative. The initial Action Plan is scheduled for the first quarter of 2026. The Action Plan will be a living document to which new initiatives can be added over time. Regional organisations, civil society, and youth organisations will be invited to support its implementation while EU institutions will be regularly kept informed about its roll-out.

Background

The Pact is the result of an extensive and inclusive consultation process that engaged a broad range of stakeholders, including southern Mediterranean partners, EU Member States and institutions, neighbouring countries in the wider region, as well as representatives from civil society, the private sector, academia, think tanks, and cultural and economic organisations. In 1995 the Barcelona Process was launched following the signature of the Barcelona Declaration, for multilateral cooperation with the Mediterranean. In 2021 the Agenda for the Mediterranean, further deepened cooperation in areas of mutual interest such as human development, governance, resilience, climate action, and inclusive economic growth. The related Economic and Investment Plan provided a starting point for how the EU can propose and follow up on concrete initiatives. Today's Pact aims at continuing the work done in a more coordinated and systematic manner, establishing links to the overall policy framework with a stronger governance, concrete actions and co-ownership.

7. Evaluation of State aid rules for public service broadcasting

The European Commission has launched a call for evidence and a public consultation to seek input on the evaluation of the 2009 Broadcasting Communication. This Communication sets out State aid rules for public service broadcasting. The goal of the initiative is to collect views and experiences from stakeholders on how the Broadcasting Communication has worked since its last revision in 2009 and whether it continues to meet its objectives. The Commission is also seeking to identify any challenges stakeholders may have encountered in the application or interpretation of the rules. The Commission encourages broad participation from all stakeholders and the general public. Any interested citizen, business, or organisation can contribute by replying to the general public consultation questionnaire, available here. Alongside the general public consultation, the Commission is also launching an expert consultation. The expert consultation is mostly addressed to stakeholders with specific expertise and experience in the public service broadcasting sector, such as market participants, public authorities and academics. The expert consultation questionnaire is available here. The deadline to reply to both questionnaires is 14 January 2026.

Next steps

Once the consultation period concludes, the Commission will analyse the responses and publish a summary on the Commission's 'Have Your Say' portal. The Commission will also publish the contributions in the language in which they were submitted. Based on the consultations' results and internal analysis, the Commission will publish a Staff Working Document summarising the evaluation's main findings.

Background

The Broadcasting Communication sets out the legal framework governing public funding of public service broadcasting under EU State aid rules. To comply with State aid rules, it requires that the financing of public service broadcasting is transparent, proportionate and subject to effective supervision mechanisms. The Broadcasting Communication was last reviewed in 2009. Since then, there have been important technological and market developments, as well as changes in EU regulation and case law of the Union Courts. Moreover, the Commission has handled several cases and adopted several decisions concerning public service broadcasting. These developments have prompted the Commission to launch an evaluation of the Broadcasting Communication.

8. Europe celebrates 2025 heritage award winners in Brussels

Grand Prix and Public Choice Award winners of the European Heritage Awards/Europa Nostra Awards announced during the European Heritage Summit in Brussels.

On 13 October, over 700 guests and many more viewers online followed the 2025 European Heritage Awards Ceremony in Brussels to celebrate the 30 winners of the European Heritage

Awards/Europa Nostra Awards. During the ceremony, co-hosted by European Commissioner Glenn Micallef, the laureates of the five Grand Prix and the Public Choice Award were revealed, chosen from the 30 winners.

The 5 Grand Prix winners

1) Conservation & Adaptive Reuse category: Antwerp City Hall, Belgium

This unique renovation project saved one of Northern Europe's earliest Renaissance civic buildings and reinforced its function as the political and administrative heart of the city. It enhanced public access and sustainability while safeguarding a UNESCO-listed landmark for both present and future generations.

2) Research category: Glacier Archaeology Programme, Norway

A groundbreaking research and outreach programme in Norway's Innlandet County, documenting over 4 500 artefacts – half of the world's glacial archaeological findings. By uniting scientific innovation, methodology, education and public engagement, it highlights the urgent impact of climate change in high-altitude archaeology.

3) Education, Training & Skills category: Pro Monumenta - Preventive Maintenance of Monuments, Slovakia

Pro Monumenta is a national initiative supporting the sustainable upkeep of built heritage. Through inspections, craft training and public engagement, it demonstrates how early intervention and skilled maintenance can reduce costs and improve conservation results.

4) Citizens' Engagement & Awareness-raising category: Hedgehog's Home - Inventing a Better World, Serbia

This project reimagined a beloved children's poem – Branko Ćopić's poem Hedgehog's Home – through co-creation with young children and students, promoting intergenerational dialogue and inclusivity. It has sparked reflection on home, community and shared memory across Serbia and beyond.

5) Heritage Champions category: Inge Bisgaard, Greenland / Denmark

Inge Bisgaard has dedicated her career to preserving Greenland's built heritage. Through pioneering fieldwork, policy development and community dialogue, she has worked to preserve both traditional wooden architecture and 20th-century heritage – helping to define a national conservation strategy that unites science, craftsmanship and cultural identity. Her work bridges academic knowledge and everyday practice, while staying rooted in community dialogue.

Public Choice winner

6) Conservation and adaptive reuse: Puerta de Alcalá, Spain

The 2025 Public Choice Award went to the restoration of the Puerta de Alcalá in Madrid, Spain, which received the largest number of votes cast during an online poll with the participation of some 10,000 heritage enthusiasts from all over Europe. The project will receive a monetary award of 10,000 euros.

About the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards

The European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards are co-funded by the Creative Europe Programme and since 2002 managed by Europa Nostra on behalf of the European Union. The event was the highlight of European Heritage Summit 2025 organised by Europa Nostra, with the support of the European Union.

9. The Commission fined fashion brands Gucci, Chloé and Loewe

The European Commission has fined fashion companies Gucci, Chloé and Loewe for fixing resale prices, in breach of EU competition rules. The Commission's investigation revealed that the three companies restricted the ability of the independent third-party retailers they work with to set their own online and offline retail prices for products designed and sold by Gucci, Chloé and Loewe under their respective brand names. This kind of anticompetitive behaviour increases prices and reduces choice for consumers. The fines, which were reduced in all three cases due to the companies' cooperation with the Commission, amounted to over €157 million in total.

The infringement

Gucci, Chloé and Loewe are fashion companies headquartered in Italy, France and Spain respectively. They are all active in the design, production, and distribution of high-end fashion products, including apparel, leather goods and various accessories. The Commission's investigation revealed that these three fashion companies engaged in a practice called resale price maintenance ('RPM'). They restricted the ability of both their online and brick-and-mortar retailers, which are independent resellers, to set their own retail prices for almost the entire range of products designed and sold by Gucci, Chloé and Loewe under their respective brand names, including apparel, leather goods, shoes and fashion accessories. The infringements covered the whole territory of the European Economic Area (‘EEA'). In particular, the three fashion companies interfered with their retailers' commercial strategies by imposing restrictions on them, such as requiring them to not deviate from: (i) recommended retail prices; (ii) maximum discounts rates; and (iii) specific periods for sales. In certain cases, and at least temporarily, they also prohibited retailers from offering any discounts. Gucci, Chloé and Loewe strived to have their retailers apply the same prices and sales conditions they applied in their own direct sales channels.

10. Commission scrutinised safeguards for minors on Snapchat, YouTube, Apple App Store and Google Play under the Digital Services Act

On 10/10/2025, the European Commission initiated the first investigative actions following the Guidelines on Protection of Minors under the Digital Services Act (DSA). The Commission is requesting Snapchat, YouTube, Apple and Google to provide information on their age verification systems, as well as on how they prevent minors from accessing illegal products, including drugs or vapes, or harmful material, such as content promoting eating disorders. Executive Vice-President for Tech Sovereignty, Henna Virkkunen, said: “*We will do what it takes to ensure the physical and mental well-being of children and teens online. It starts with online platforms. Platforms have the obligation to ensure minors are safe on their services – be it through measures included in the guidelines on protection of minors, or equally efficient measures of their own choosing. Today, alongside national authorities in the Member States, we are assessing whether the measures taken so far by the platforms are indeed protecting children.*” The Commission is requesting Snapchat to provide information about how it prevents children under 13 years of age from accessing its services, as prohibited by the platform's own terms of service. The Commission is also requesting Snapchat to provide information on the features it has in place to prevent the sale of illegal goods for children, such as vapes or drugs. With regards to YouTube, in addition to information on its age assurance system, the Commission is seeking more details on its recommender system, following reporting of harmful content being disseminated to minors. For Apple App Store and Google Play, the Commission is seeking information on how they manage the risk of users, including minors, being able to download illegal or otherwise harmful apps, including gambling apps and tools to create non-consensual sexualised content, the so-called ‘nudify apps'. The Commission is also seeking to understand how the two app stores apply apps' age ratings. To ensure effective enforcement of the Guidelines on protection of minors across all platforms, large and small, the Commission is taking further actions with the national authorities to identify platforms posing the greatest risk for children.

11. Next Generation EU drives sustainable growth across the EU

As the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) approaches its 2026 deadline, it continues to drive positive reforms and investments across the EU. As a cornerstone of NextGenerationEU, the RRF has already disbursed €367 billion across Member States**,** contributing to key objectives such as economic and social resilience, and the green and digital transitions. Today, the Commission presents its fourth annual report, underscoring the Facility's progress and calling for action to maximize its benefits.

Building a resilient future

The report published today shows that the RRF has enhanced public investment – expected to rise to 3.8% of GDP in 2025, up from 3.2% in 2019 – for instance by supporting the decarbonisation and digitalisation of industrial production and services, or deploying over 900,000 clean vehicle recharging stations and connecting 16 million households to high-speed internet. The Facility has also supported a wide range of structural reforms, also aimed at boosting long-term growth and economic and social resilience. They include speeding up planning and permitting, digitalising public services, addressing labour market vulnerabilities or enhancing quality of education across Member States. The combination of reforms and investments has helped to maximise their impact and has led to improvements in public services and the business environment, as well as the quality of life for citizens in areas such as healthcare, education or infrastructure.

A win for all EU Member States

In addition to its positive impact on production and employment in each Member State, the RRF generates strong spillover effects across borders. When demand rises in one Member State, it fuels demand for imports from other Member States, supporting growth and employment throughout the EU. All Member States benefit, and for some, the overall economic impact is more than double the size of their national RRF envelope thanks to these cross-border spillovers. This reflects the deep economic integration within the EU.

Protecting EU financial interests

Protecting the financial interests of the Union remains central in the RRF implementation. The Commission continued to constructively engage with the European Court of Auditors (ECA) over the last year, swiftly acting on its recommendations. While conducting its own audits, the Commission supported the ECA's scrutiny on all grant payments and several RRF-related performance audits. Drawing on its audit findings, the Commission has strengthened audits and reinforced controls to ensure transparency and accountability.

Accelerated implementation remains a priority

The pace of implementation differs among Member States. With the RRF coming to an end in 2026 (a total financial envelope of €650 billion), the Commission urges them to accelerate the implementation of their Recovery and Resilience Plans (RRPs). Member States must meet all milestones and targets by 31 August 2026, with the Commission making the final payments by 31 December 2026. In its June Communication NextGenerationEU – The Road to 2026, the Commission provided guidance to support Member States in planning ahead for the submission of the last payment requests in 2026, emphasising the importance of streamlining and simplifying RRPs. By ensuring that the measures in the plans are clear and implementable, Member States can deliver on the agreed objectives without compromising on the plans' ambition. In this context, the Commission is currently reviewing a number of payment requests and revised RRPs submitted by several Member States.

Background

This report is the fourth in a series of annual publications on the implementation of the RRF, in line with the requirements of Article 31 of the RRF Regulation. The cut-off date for all data and information included in this report is 31 August 2025, unless otherwise specified. Progress in the implementation of recovery and resilience plans can be followed on the Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard. You can explore the list of the 100 largest RRF funds recipients online. More general information on the RRF, including an interactive map of projects financed by the RRF can be equally found online.

12. Targeted changes to reduce administrative burden

On 02/10/2025, the European Commission has adopted proposals for targeted changes to some of the EU economic governance rules. The changes are aimed at ensuring their consistency with the outcome of the comprehensive reform undertaken in April 2024, while reducing reporting and administrative burdens, and streamlining funding arrangements for assisting non-euro area Member States facing balance of payments difficulties. These proposals will simplify EU law, remove redundant administrative requirements, and make financial assistance more efficient. They will directly benefit national administrations by easing their administrative workload, making it easier to implement EU law, and enabling them to refocus resources on other tasks.

Streamlining EU economic governance rules

The Commission proposes to streamline certain elements of the EU economic governance framework related to fiscal surveillance. In particular, it proposes to amend the sanctions regulation (Regulation (EU) No 1173/2011), and the Draft Budgetary Plan (DBP) regulation (Regulation (EU) No 473/2013). These amendments will:

- Align the rules for the imposition of financial sanctions with the reformed Stability and Growth Pact by updating or removing obsolete provisions and by ensuring a graduated approach compatible with the amended corrective arm regulation;
- Fully align the Draft Budgetary Plan regulation with the reformed EU economic governance framework, addressing and eliminating inconsistencies and simplifying procedures and reporting obligations to improve the efficiency of fiscal surveillance;
- Reduce the reporting burden on Member States, generating savings in administrative costs while maintaining effective fiscal oversight.

Enhancing surveillance to boost financial stability

The proposals also amend the regulation on enhanced and post-programme surveillance for euro area Member States facing, or at risk of, serious financial difficulties (Regulation (EU) No 472/2013). Under this amendment, the Regulation will:

- Clarify that enhanced surveillance applies when precautionary financial assistance requires new measures, ensuring a more targeted use of this surveillance;
- Refine post-programme surveillance so that its intensity can be better adjusted to the level of repayment risk and the need for corrective measures.

These changes will ensure that post-programme surveillance becomes better aligned with the Union economic governance framework, avoiding the overlap with other surveillance processes while maintaining its effectiveness in assessing repayment risks.

Making funding operations more efficient

For non-euro area Member States, the Commission proposes to simplify the funding arrangements of the balance of payments facility (Council Regulation (EC) No 332/2002). This applies when non-euro area Member States encounter significant challenges in managing their international transactions, or are at risk of encountering such challenges, and the EU's support mechanism are used to assist them.

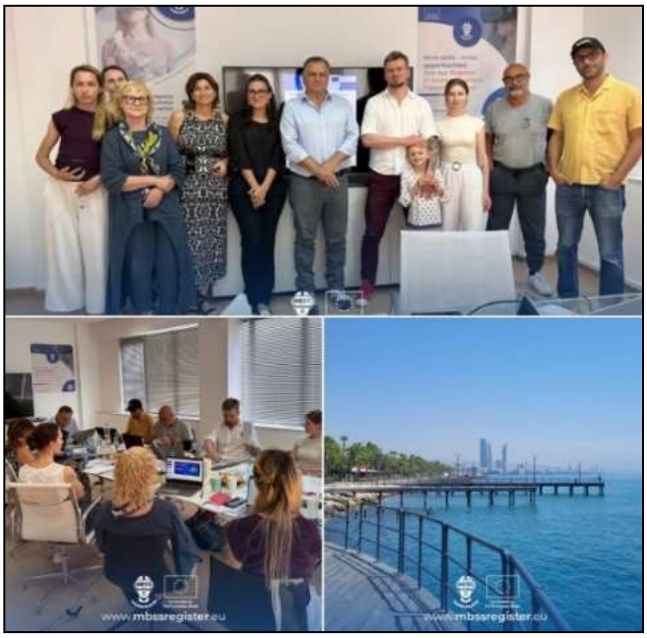
The current 'back-to-back' funding method – where each borrowing by the Commission is directly linked to a corresponding disbursement – will be replaced by a 'diversified' funding strategy, which is a more cost-effective and efficient way of supporting Member States. This approach is already being used successfully in other EU funding programmes, such as the Macro-Financial Assistance (MFA)+ for Ukraine, and NextGenerationEU.

Background

These proposed amendments also contribute to the Commission's simplification agenda, as set out in its February 2025 Communication on Implementation and Simplification, 'A Simpler and Faster Europe'.

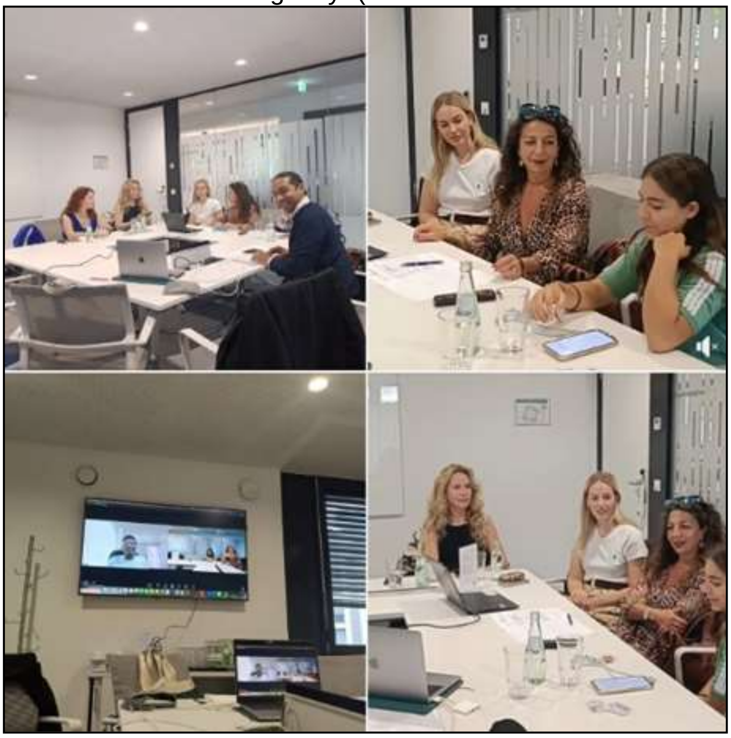
13. The "Register BSS sector" project meeting in Cyprus was a success

The meeting held in Limassol on August 26 and 27 as part of the "Register BSS sector" project proved to be a success: during the transnational meeting (a photo from the first day of activity is attached), the project partners – Syntea Spolka Akcyjna (Poland – project coordinator), Dekaplus Business Services LTD (Cyprus), EURO-NET (Italy), Malopolska Agencja Rozwoju Regionalnego (Poland), and Agenzia per lo Sviluppo dell'Empolese Valdelsa (Italy) – exchanged ideas and discussed at length the results of the various workshops held in the various countries belonging to the European consortium, which, as we recall, received funding from the EACEA (European Education and Culture Executive Agency) under the ERASMUS-EDU-2023-PI-FORWARD-LOT3 call (i.e., within the Partnerships for Innovation – Forward). Looking Projects) in the ERASMUS Lump Sum Grants Actions. The partners will now work on developing an activity exploitation plan and a functional short-, medium-, and long-term promotion program, in order to meet again in person in mid-November in Florence. Further information on the project is available on the website (https://mbssregister.eu/en/), on the official Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/MBSS.FB), and photos and videos are available on the European initiative's Instagram account (https://www.instagram.com/mbss_trainingregistry/). Finally, we remind you that the project is "funded by the European Union. However, the views and opinions expressed are those of the author alone and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the EACEA. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them."



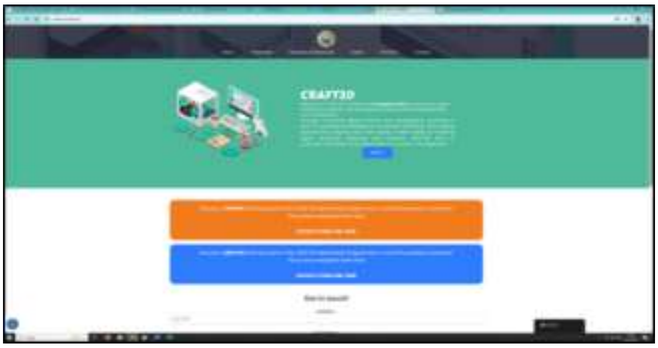
14. Final meeting in Bonn for the “WARRIOR” project

On the 18th of September, it took place the last transnational meeting of the project “Warrior's Values: Effective Defence against Fakes and Frauds” – acronym “WARRIOR” – an initiative approved under the Erasmus Plus KA220-YOU programme – Cooperation partnerships in youth by the National Youth Agency (ref. no. 2023-1-IT03-KA220-YOU-000153640) and promoted and coordinated by the EURO-NET association (Europe Direct Basilicata centre). The international meeting was hosted by the German partner Erasmus ME Academy gGmbH, and served as an opportunity for the partners to showcase the results of the training activities developed with youth workers in the various countries and the impact and evaluation results received from them. The project partners, which, in addition to EURO-NET and Erasmus ME, include the Ukrainian Centre of the Future (Ukraine), InnoVed (Greece) and Foundation International Centre of Dialogue, Innovations and Future (Poland), also used the meeting to plan the last two months of activities (the project will end in late October 2025) and define the development of multiplier events planned in each country participating in the European consortium. More information about the project is available on the official website of the initiative at https://warriorproject.eu/it/home-it/ or on the Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61554717032106.



15. The “CRAFT3D” project continues until the end of October

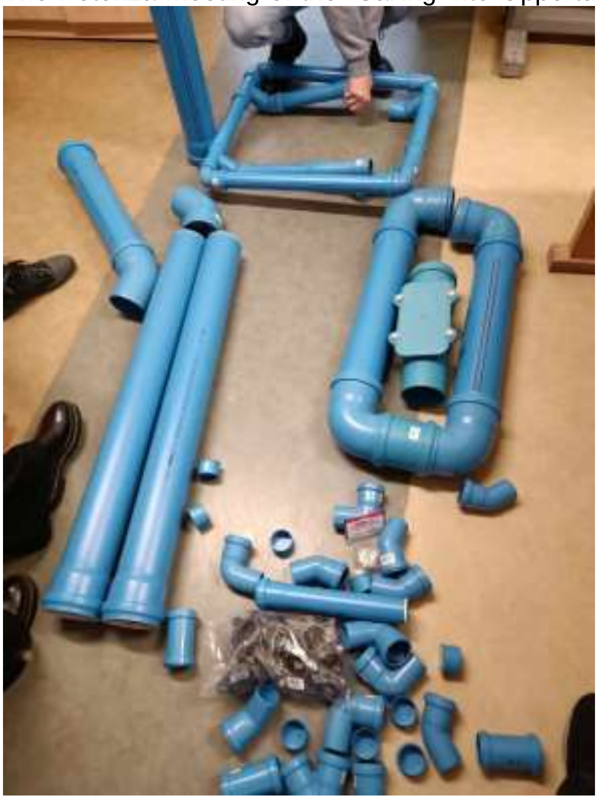
Following the phase that involved all members of the European consortium in collecting data from the various workshops organised by local partners who had signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), the CRAFT3D project is now focusing on organising the next meeting in Luxembourg, which will take place in early October (organizzazione del prossimo meeting in Lussemburgo che si realizzerà ad inizio ottobre.). In fact, the next transnational meeting of the project ‘Enhancing traditional craft practices through 3D printing and technology innovation’ (an initiative approved by the Erasmus Plus INAPP Agency in Italy, with reference no. 2023-1-IT01-KA220-VET-000154806, as part of the programme of the same name within the KA220-VET actions aimed at cooperation partnerships in vocational education and training) will be fundamental for developing the latest planned activities and, in particular, the development of multiplier events to be carried out at national level by 31 October. The transnational meeting will enable the project partners – namely the Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Crafts and Agriculture of Basilicata (Italy – project coordinator), NGO Nest Berlin EV (Germany), EURO-NET (Italy), Centre De Difusio Tecnologica De La Fusta I Del Moble De Catalunya (Spain), Business Innovation Centre Innobridge (Bulgaria) and Luxembourg Creative LAB A.S.B.L. (Luxembourg) – to discuss the results obtained during the workshop phase and plan the final report. For those who would like more information on the



activities and products of this fascinating project, please visit the website https://craft3d-project.eu/ or the Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61555978157868.

16. The TPM of the Sailtunities project concluded successfully.

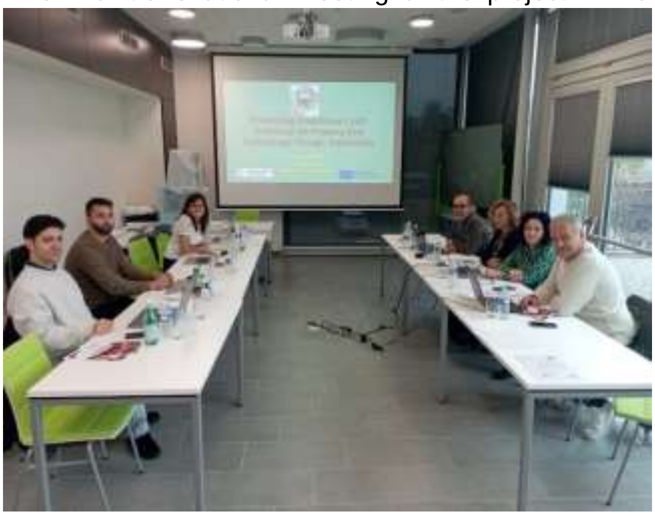
The Potenza meeting of the "Sailing Into Opportunities" project (acronym "Sailtunities") concluded



on October 9th. This initiative was approved (as ref. no. 2023-1-LT01-KA220-SCH-000161306) by the Erasmus+ National Agency of Lithuania as part of the KA220-SCH - Cooperation partnerships in school education actions. The meeting was very fruitful, as it allowed all partners to review the progress of the activities carried out and the excellent results achieved, as well as planning the local promotion seminars scheduled for the end of November, when the project will finally conclude. The transnational meeting was hosted by the EURO-NET association (Europe Direct Basilicata center) and was attended by a large group of Italian and international participants, including the aforementioned Potenza association, as well as various project partners: VsI Robotikos Mokykla (Lithuanian coordinator of the initiative), Vilnius Joachim Lelevel Engineering Gymnasium (Lithuania), Kuressaare Nooruse Kool School (Estonia), and Gheorghe Asachi Botosani Technical College (Romania). Among the excellently achieved objectives, the creation of various remote-controlled boats by young students from the various partner countries undoubtedly stands out, assembling both the technical and mechanical and/or construction parts in dedicated workshops. More information about the project is available on the following website: https://sailtunities.gaminu.eu/.

17. The final CRAFT3D meeting in Luxembourg has concluded

The final transnational meeting of the project "Enhancing traditional craft practices through 3D



printing and technology innovation" (CRAFT3D) was held on October 10 in Schifflange, Luxembourg. This initiative, approved by the Erasmus Plus Agency INAPP in Italy (ref. no. 2023-1-IT01-KA220-VET-000154806), is an initiative approved by the Erasmus Plus Agency INAPP in Italy (ref. no. 2023-1-IT01-KA220-VET-000154806). The CRAFT3D meeting (developed as part of the European actions aimed at Cooperation Partnerships in Vocational Education and Training and co-financed by a contribution from the European Union) was crucial for taking stock of all the activities developed over the two years of activity, as well as for discussing and planning the development of multiplier events to be held at the national level by the end of October 2025 (when the entire project will be definitively concluded). The transnational meeting also allowed the project partners—CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, INDUSTRY, CRAFTS AND AGRICULTURE OF BASILICATA (Italy - project coordinator), NGO NEST BERLIN EV (Germany), EURO-NET (Italy), CENTRE DE DIFUSIO TECNOLOGICA DE LA FUSTA I DEL MOBLE DE CATALUNYA (Spain), BUSINESS INNOVATION CENTER INNOBRIDGE (Bulgaria), and LUXEMBOURG CREATIVE LAB A.S.B.L. (Luxembourg)—to plan the final reporting and monitor the numerous contacts and downloads obtained with the developed training platform. More information on this project and the meeting held in Luxembourg is available on the website https://craft3d-project.eu/ and on the official Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61555978157868.

18. The final TPM of MBSS will be held in Florence in mid-November.

The final transnational meeting of the "Register BSS sector" project will be held on November 17 and 18 in Florence, Italy, at the "Il Fuligno" headquarters (located at Via Faenza 48). This initiative was approved by the EACEA (European Education and Culture Executive Agency) as project no. 101132877 under the ERASMUS-EDU-2023-PI-FORWARD-LOT3 call (i.e., within the Partnerships for Innovation - Forward Looking Projects) in the ERASMUS Lump Sum Grants Actions. All project partners, namely SYNTEA SPOLKA AKCYJNA (Poland – project coordinator), DEKAPLUS BUSINESS SERVICES LTD (Cyprus), EURO-NET (Italy), MALOPOLSKA AGENCJA ROZWOJU REGIONALNEGO (Poland), and AGENZIA PER LO SVILUPPO DELL'EMPOLESE VALDELSA (Italy), will meet to share and disseminate the project's impressive results and showcase the achievements of dissemination events held in each partner country. The meeting will also be dedicated to discussing the reporting activities for the development of the final report, which the partners will be working on starting next December. Further information about the project is available on the European initiative's website (https://mbssregister.eu/en/), Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/MBSS.FB), and Instagram account (https://www.instagram.com/mbss_trainingregistry/). Finally, we remind you that the project is "funded by the European Union. However, the views and opinions expressed are those of the author alone and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the EACEA. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them."

19. Multiplier Event in Italy for the WARRIOR Project Coming Soon

The Italian multiplier event for the "Warrior's Values: Effective Defense against Fakes and Frauds" (acronym "WARRIOR") project, ref. No. 2023-1-IT03-KA220-YOU-000153640, will soon take place. Organized by EURO-NET, coordinator of the entire cooperative partnership initiative for young people, the event will be held in Potenza. Delegates from the project's various European partners—Erasmus ME (Germany), the Ukrainian Center of the Future (Ukraine), InnoVed (Greece), and the Foundation International Center of Dialogue, Innovations and Future (Poland)—will also participate online. They will offer greetings and share their positive two-year experience with this initiative, aimed at increasing the ability of young people and youth workers to identify fake news and manipulation online. The project, co-financed by the European Union, has been approved by the National Youth Agency and involves the development of dissemination events, by the end of October, in all partner countries with a large number of participants (at least 50 for Italy and at least 30 in the other countries belonging to the European consortium). More information on the entire initiative is available on the official Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61554717032106 and on the project website at https://warriorproject.eu.

20. The “FALLYNEETS” project, GODESK is a partner, has been approved

The project “Fostering Awareness of Lifelong Learning in Young NEETs” (acronym FALLYNEETS) has started in September. It is an initiative approved by the National Youth Agency in Portugal as action no. 2025-1-PT02-KA210-YOU-000361656. The primary objective of the project is to increase NEETs' understanding of the importance of lifelong learning and its benefits for personal and professional growth. It also aims to improve access to learning opportunities in order to ensure that NEETs have access to a range of learning options, including formal, non-formal and informal education, vocational training, apprenticeships, online courses and workshops, to improve their employability. To this aim, the project will produce a comprehensive guide and various innovative tools covering key aspects of creating a Personal Learning Environment (PLE), including: Emotional control and resilience; Designing a PLE tailored to NEETs; Relevant digital tools; Managing personal digital image and social media; Career guidance and entrepreneurial skills. According to the three project partners, namely JEAD - Associação Digi-Cultural e Recreativa Jovens na Europa (Portugal, coordinator of the entire activity), Kayros Digital Innovation, S.L. (Spain) and GODESK SRL (Italy), will enable NEETs to acquire skills in lifelong learning and professional development.

21. The “EmpowerHERment” project has been approved

The project “EmpowerHERment – Equipping Migrant Women with Skills for Social Business, Leadership, and Sustainability, Empowered by Problem-Based Learning, Digital Innovation, and AI Tools” (acronym “EmpowerHERment”) will start in November. It is an initiative approved by the Erasmus+ National Agency in Spain as part of cooperation partnerships related to adult education. The primary objective of the project is to equip over 100 migrant women with entrepreneurial, digital and employability skills through learning based on artificial intelligence and problem solving. The initiative, co-funded by the European Union, will seek to develop accessible and personalised education, in line with the priorities of Erasmus+, by creating a framework of micro-credentials for the validation of skills. The project will also train 50 adult educators in inclusive, digital and experiential methodologies, promoting professional and social inclusion through mentoring and networking. The project partners are the Association de Cooperation al Desarollo Abarka (Spain – partnership coordinator), Dimitra Education & Consulting SA (Greece), GODESK S.R.L. (Italy), Avrupa Sosyal Gelisim Akademisi Ozel Egitim Yayincilik Ve Organizasyon Limited Sirketi (Turkey) and Biedrība We-Mean – Veidosim Labāku Nākotni Jaunākām Paaudzēm (Latvia). The partners will work together for 30 months to address the needs and barriers that hinder the employment of migrant women (e.g. language barriers, problems with recognition of qualifications and discrimination, obstacles in terms of funding, lack of basic digital skills, poor childcare provision, etc.), developing five work packages and innovative and useful products for their integration into the world of work.

22. The “NEURO-YOUTH” youth training project has been approved

The youth training programme approved as part of the project “Neuroscience & Youth Work – Enhancing Emotional Intelligence in Digital Spaces” (acronym “NEURO-YOUTH”) will be hosted in Potenza, presumably from 17 to 21 November. This initiative has been approved by the National Erasmus+ Agency in Turkey as part of the KA153-YOU projects relating to the mobility of youth workers. The project, which includes the Potenza-based association Youth Europe Service (which will also host all international activities) among its partners, aims to provide youth workers with advanced digital skills, artificial intelligence-based methodologies and media literacy skills to improve their ability to engage, educate and empower young people, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. By integrating innovative digital strategies into youth work practices, the project will contribute to increasing digital inclusion, strengthening critical thinking and promoting new approaches to engaging young people online. Before the training, which will bring together around twenty youth workers from Turkey, Italy, the Netherlands, Finland and Spain, there will also be a preparatory visit with the participation of two representatives from each partner organisation (10 participants in total).

23. Meeting for the project “Ecological and sustainable food educators”

From September 30th to1st October took place in Cracovia a new transnational meeting of the “Green and Sustainable Food Educators” project (ref. no. 2022-1-FI01-KA220-VET-000085304), an initiative approved under the Erasmus Plus KA220-VET - Cooperation partnerships in VET programme by the Finnish National Agency. During the meeting, hosted by the Polish partner, among other things, discussions focused on how to adequately promote (through multiplier events planned at the level of each country participating in the international partnership) the various products developed within the project by the members of the European consortium, namely the University of Turku (Finland – coordinator of the entire initiative), Euro-Idea Fundacja Spoleczno-Kulturalna (Poland), Raision Seudun Koulutuskuntayhtymä (Finland), Horeca Academie BV (Netherlands), M.M.C Management Center Limited (Cyprus) and Youth Europe Service (Italy). Among the various activities, there were also evening entertainment events featuring excellent “green” cuisine.

24. APV of the youth training project "NEURO-YOUTH" coming soon

The partners of the project "Neuroscience & Youth Work - Enhancing Emotional Intelligence in Digital Spaces" (acronym "NEURO-YOUTH"), an initiative approved under ref. no. 2025-1-TR01-A153-OU-000300062 by the Erasmus+ NA in Turkey and funded under the KA153-YOU projects related to youth worker mobility, decided, during an online meeting held in the previous weeks, to meet for a preliminary visit on November 12th and 13th in Potenza. The preliminary visit will be hosted by the Youth Europe Service association at the Europe Direct Basilicata center, located in the historic center of Potenza, the capital of the Basilicata region, at Vicolo Luigi Lavista, no. 3. In the same Zoom meeting, the partners also decided that the actual dates for the European training to be developed will be set only after the APV. However, the initial projected dates will certainly not be met, and the training course will be held in early 2026.