



EURO-NET

The Youth European Network



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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. Statement by the President: Vaccines Strategy

The COVID-19 pandemic remains a severe threat to people's health and livelihoods. We are in a race against time. The faster we reach our target of having 70% of adults in the European Union vaccinated, the better chances we have of containing the virus. And the good news is: Vaccination is picking up speed across Europe! Member States have received over 126 million doses of vaccines as of yesterday. And I am happy to say that today we have reached 100 million vaccinations in the EU. This is a milestone that we can be proud of. Of these



100 million vaccinations, more than a quarter are second doses – which means that we have now more than 27 million people fully vaccinated. This is good news. But as we can see with the announcement by Johnson & Johnson yesterday, there are still many factors that can disrupt the planned delivery schedule of vaccines. It is therefore important to act swiftly, anticipate and adjust whenever possible. We are doing everything in our power to support Europe's vaccination roll-out,

also by increasing the supply of vaccines in the coming weeks and months. This is why I am pleased to announce that we have reached an agreement with BioNTech-Pfizer to, once again, speed up the delivery of vaccines. 50 million additional doses of BioNTech-Pfizer vaccines will be delivered in quarter 2 of this year, starting in April. Those 50 million doses were initially foreseen for delivery in the fourth quarter of 2021. Now, they are available in quarter 2. This will bring the total doses delivered by BioNTech-Pfizer to 250 million doses in the second quarter. These doses will be distributed pro-rata to the population, among all the Member States. This will substantially help consolidate the roll-out of our vaccination campaigns. I want to thank BioNTech-Pfizer. It has proven to be a reliable partner. It has delivered on its commitments, and it is responsive to our needs. This is to the immediate benefit of EU citizens. But let me also focus on the medium term. To prepare for the future, we are drawing the lessons from the first phase of our answer to the pandemic. It is clear that to defeat the virus decisively, we will need to be prepared for the following: At a certain point in time, we might need booster jabs to reinforce and prolong immunity; and if escape-variants occur, we will need to develop vaccines that are adapted to new variants; and we will need them early and in sufficient quantities. Having this in mind we need to focus on technologies that have proven their worth. mRNA vaccines are a clear case in point. Based on all this, we are now entering into a negotiation with BioNTech-Pfizer for a third contract. This contract will foresee the delivery of 1.8 billion doses of vaccine over the period of 2021 to 2023. And it will entail that not only the production of the vaccines, but also all essential components, will be based in the EU. The negotiations we are launching today – and hope to conclude very rapidly – are a further important step in Europe's response to the pandemic. Other contracts, with other companies, may follow. We are in this together. And we will win this fight against the pandemic together.

2. Commission ready to raise up to €800 billion for recovery

The Commission has taken steps to ensure that borrowing under the temporary recovery instrument NextGenerationEU will be financed on the most advantageous terms for EU Member States and their citizens.

The Commission will use a diversified funding strategy to raise up to around €800 billion in current prices until 2026. This approach, which will be in line with the best practices of sovereign issuers, will enable the Commission to raise the needed volumes in a smooth and efficient way. This will also attract investors to Europe and strengthen the international role of the euro. Johannes Hahn, Commissioner in charge of Budget and Administration, said: *"NextGenerationEU is a game changer for European capital markets. We are unveiling the engine that will pump the fuel to power NextGenerationEU. The funding strategy will operationalise the NextGenerationEU borrowing, so we will have all necessary tools in place to kick-start the social and economic recovery and promote our green, digital and resilient growth."*

The message is clear: as soon as the Commission has been legally enabled to borrow, we are ready to get going!"

Borrowing to finance the recovery

NextGenerationEU – at the heart of the EU's response to the coronavirus pandemic – will be funded by borrowing on the capital markets. We will raise up to around €800 billion between now and end-2026. This will translate into borrowing volumes of on average roughly €150 billion per year, which will make the EU one of the largest issuers in euro. All borrowing will be repaid by 2058. While the Commission has been borrowing before – to support EU Member States and third countries – the volumes, frequency and complexity of the NextGenerationEU borrowing have called for a fundamental change in the approach to capital markets. A diversified funding strategy will respond to these new funding needs. It will enable the Commission to mobilise all funds when required on the most advantageous terms for the EU Member States and their citizens.

Diversified funding strategy: a snapshot

A diversified funding strategy combines the use of different funding instruments and funding techniques with an open and transparent communication to the market participants. The Commission's diversified funding strategy would combine: annual decision on borrowing volumes and 6-monthly communication on the funding plan's key parameters, to offer transparency and predictability to investors and other stakeholders; structured and transparent

relationships with banks supporting the issuance programme (via a Primary Dealer Network); multiple funding instruments (medium and long-term bonds, some of which will be issued as NextGenerationEU green bonds, and EU-Bills) to maintain flexibility in terms of market access and to manage liquidity needs and the maturity profile; a combination of auctions and syndications, to ensure cost efficient access to the necessary funding on advantageous terms. The borrowing operations will be embedded in a robust governance framework, which will ensure coherent and consistent execution. In its work, the Commission will continue to coordinate with other issuers, including the EU Member States and supranationals.



The added value of a diversified funding strategy

The diversified funding strategy will help the Commission to achieve two main objectives: address the large funding needs of NextGenerationEU and obtain the desired low cost and low execution risk in the interest of all Member States and their citizens: by using a wide range of maturities and instruments and by making funding operations more predictable, the Commission will ensure a larger market absorption capacity. The ability to auction debt will make the funding operations even more efficient. This will help address the large funding needs; by allowing flexibility to decide when to execute funding operations and which funding techniques or instruments to use, the Commission will obtain the desired low cost and low execution risk in the interest of all Member States.

Next steps

Following this package, the Commission will proceed with a series of steps to operationalise the diversified funding strategy. Among them: **setting up a Primary Dealer Network.** In line with practices of comparable issuers, the Commission will set up a Primary Dealer Network to facilitate the efficient execution of auctions and syndicated transactions, support liquidity in the secondary markets, and ensure the placement of our debt with the widest possible investor base. The application form and the General Terms and Conditions for participation will be published shortly; **publish the first annual Borrowing Decision (and accompanying Financing Decision) and first NextGenerationEU funding plan.** To ensure transparent communication with the markets, the Commission will adopt its first annual borrowing decision and communicate the information related to its first funding plan before the start of the NextGenerationEU borrowing, expected this summer (timing being dependent on the approval of the Own Resources Decision by all Member States which will empower the Commission to borrow for NextGenerationEU). The borrowing operations can then start as soon as the Own Resources Decision will enter into force. Funding plans will then be updated semi-annually.

Background

NextGenerationEU

NextGenerationEU is at the heart of the EU response to the coronavirus crisis and aims to support the economic recovery and build a greener, more digital and more resilient future. The EU agreed this instrument as part of an over €2 trillion (in current prices) or €1.8 trillion (in 2018 prices) stimulus package, which also comprises the 2021-2027 long-term budget. The centrepiece of NextGenerationEU is the Recovery and Resilience Facility - an instrument to offer



grants and loans to support reforms and investments in the EU Member States with a total value of €723.8 billion in current prices. In addition, NextGenerationEU will reinforce several EU programmes. To finance NextGenerationEU, the EU will borrow on the capital markets. Repayment will take place over a long-time horizon, until 2058. This will avoid immediate pressure on Member States' national finances and enable EU Member States to focus their efforts on the recovery. To help repay the

borrowing, the EU will look into introducing new own resources (or sources of revenue) to the EU budget, on top of the already existing ones.

The EU as a borrower

The European Commission, on behalf of the EU, is a well-established participant in the capital markets. Over a period of 40 years, the European Commission has run several lending programmes to support EU Member States and third countries. Last year, the Commission also started borrowing for SURE – the up to €100 billion instrument – to help protect jobs and keep people in employment. So far, 3/4ths of the EU SURE funds have been raised in six very successful issuances, which has made it possible to finance loans to Member States on very advantageous terms. All of these lending operations were financed on a back-to-back basis, mainly through syndicated bond issuances.

3. European Solidarity Corps 2021-2027: youth volunteering

The Commission has launched the first call for proposals under the new European Solidarity Corps 2021-2027.

The European Solidarity Corps supports young people wishing to engage in volunteering activities in a variety of areas ranging from helping people in need to supporting health and environmental action, across the EU and beyond. This year's priority will be health and will mobilise volunteers to work on projects addressing health challenges, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and recovery. With a dedicated budget of over €1 billion for 2021-2027, the new programme offers opportunities to some 275,000 young people to help address societal and humanitarian challenges through volunteering or by setting up their own solidarity projects. For the first year of action, more than €138 million are available. As of next year, the programme will also allow young people to volunteer in humanitarian aid activities worldwide, thus helping to tackle humanitarian challenges in safe third countries, supporting EU aid activities there. Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, Margaritis Schinas, said: *"Solidarity is at the core of the European project, both within our Union and with our partners around the world. Our European way of life is one that shows our younger generations that we are stronger together. This is what they have experienced, and what they can share through the opportunities offered by the European Solidarity Corps. With volunteering at its heart, this*



programme engages and empowers young people to be active in society, faithful to our values and become true change-makers.” Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, Mariya **Gabriel**, said: “Young people have a lot to give to society. At an age when everything seems possible, we want to encourage them to be active, to show solidarity and share their time, commitment and passion for the causes they care about. Being part of European Solidarity Corps is also an invaluable occasion to gain experience and develop new skills. This year, with a special focus on activities and projects in the area of health prevention and support, we hope to also mobilise volunteers in our joint efforts to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.” The new European Solidarity Corps supports overarching EU political priorities, facilitating organisations and young people to address them. Four strands are particularly highlighted: promoting of **inclusion and diversity**; making projects ‘**greener**’ and encouraging environmentally sustainable and responsible behaviour among participants and participating organisations; supporting the **digital transition** through projects and activities that boost digital skills, foster digital literacy and develop understanding of the risks and opportunities of digital technology; promoting **participation** of young people in democratic processes and civic engagement. In addition to these four areas of engagement, the programme will have the flexibility to add annual priorities, to address pressing issues – such as health, this year. In order to take part in the European Solidarity Corps, organisations need to obtain a quality label, which certifies that they carry out high quality solidarity activities in compliance with the principles, objectives and requirements of the programme. Any public or private body may apply for funding, with the help of the European Solidarity Corps National Agencies based in all EU Member States and non-EU countries associated to the programme - Iceland, Liechtenstein, Turkey and the Republic of North Macedonia. In addition, groups of young people registered in the European Solidarity Corps Portal may directly apply for funding for solidarity projects developed and led by them. The application period for both calls under the new 2021-2027 programme opens on 15 April, and ends on 5 October 2021. Applications for the quality label for solidarity volunteering can be submitted anytime. The deadline to apply for the quality label for humanitarian aid volunteering is 22 September 2021.

Background

Launched in December 2016, the European Solidarity Corps exists as an EU-funded programme



since October 2018, with an operating budget of €375.6 million for 2018-2020. Volunteering gives young people from 18 to 30 years old (up to 35 for humanitarian activities), the opportunity to contribute to the daily work of organisations that specialise in activities benefiting communities. So far, 275,000 young people have joined the European Solidarity Corps, and some 50,000 participants have started their activities. Based on the success of the initiative, the European Solidarity Corps continues its activities for 2021-2027 and extends them to volunteering in the field of EU humanitarian aid. **Volunteering projects** offer opportunities for young people to take part in solidarity activities and help to address identified needs within local communities. Volunteering may take place in a country other than the country of residence of the participant (cross-border) or in the country of residence of the participant (in-country). Young people can volunteer individually or in teams, and activities can last up to 12 months. The **quality label** is a process that certifies that an organisation is willing and able to carry out high quality solidarity activities in compliance with

the principles, objectives and quality standards of the European Solidarity Corps. Obtaining a quality label is a precondition for participation in volunteering activities. A **solidarity project** is a non-profit solidarity activity initiated, developed and implemented by young people themselves for a period from 2 to 12 months. Solidarity projects should address key challenges within the communities.

4. Fight against organised crime: a new 5-year strategy

The Commission is presenting a new EU Strategy to tackle Organised Crime, focusing on boosting law enforcement and judicial cooperation, tackling organised crime structures and high priority crimes, removing criminal profits and ensuring a modern response to technological developments.

Organised crime groups continue to develop and evolve, as shown by their rapid adaptation to the coronavirus pandemic, for example through the increase in counterfeit medical products and online crime. Organised crime groups active in Europe are involved in a variety of criminal activities, with drugs trafficking, organised property crime, fraud, migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings being prevalent. In 2019, criminal revenues in the main criminal markets amounted to 1% of the EU's GDP, i.e. €139 billion. The Strategy sets out the tools and measures to be taken over the next 5 years to disrupt the business models and structures of criminal organisations across



borders, both online and offline. Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, Margaritis **Schinias**, said: *"Criminal syndicates increasingly use new technologies and seize any opportunity to expand their illegal activities, online or offline. The recent emblematic cases like EncroChat have exposed how sophisticated these organised crime networks are. This shows how important our efforts to tackle organised crime across borders are. This Strategy will help hit these criminals where it hurts the most, by undermining their business model which thrives on a lack of coordination between states."* Commissioner for Home Affairs, Ylva **Johansson**, said: *"We clearly need to step up to fight organised crime groups. They are among the biggest threats to our security. They are highly professional and transnational: 70% of criminal groups are active in more than 3 Member States. They quickly adapted to the pandemic, moving online and selling fake or non-existent cures. We have already detected attempted scam sales of over 1 billion vaccine doses. Our strategy is a 5-year programme to strengthen European law enforcement in the physical and the digital world. With the measures we're proposing, we'll be moving from occasional police cooperation to permanent police partnerships, and we'll follow the money to catch criminals in financial investigations."* The Strategy aims to:

- **Boost law enforcement and judicial cooperation:** With 65% of the criminal groups active in the EU composed of multiple nationalities, effective exchange of information among law enforcement and judicial authorities across the EU is key to effectively tackle organised crime. The Commission will expand, modernise and reinforce funding for the European multidisciplinary platform against criminal threats (EMPACT), the structure that since 2010 brings together all relevant European and national authorities to identify priority crime threats and address them collectively. The Commission will propose to upgrade the 'Prüm' framework for exchanging information on DNA, fingerprints and vehicle registration. To make sure that law enforcement across the EU can work together better under a modern rulebook, the Commission will propose an EU Police Cooperation Code which will streamline the current patchwork of various EU tools and multi-lateral cooperation agreements. Achieving the 2023 objective to make information systems for security, border and migration management interoperable will help law enforcement better detect and combat identity fraud often used by criminals. Finally, to better tackle criminal networks operating internationally, the Commission is also proposing to start negotiating a cooperation agreement with Interpol.
- **Support more effective investigations to disrupt organised crime structures and focusing on high and specific priority crimes:** There is a need to step up cooperation at EU level to dismantle organised crime structures. To ensure an effective response to specific forms of crime, the Commission will propose to revise the EU rules against environmental crime and will establish an EU toolbox against counterfeiting, notably of medical products. It will present measures to address the illicit trade in cultural goods. The Commission is also presenting a Strategy dedicated to combatting trafficking in human beings.

- **Make sure crime does not pay:** Over 60% of criminal networks active in the EU engage in corruption and more than 80% use legitimate businesses as a front for their activities, while only 1% of criminal assets is confiscated. Tackling criminal finances is key to uncover, punish and deter crime. The Commission will propose to revise the EU rules on confiscating criminal profits, develop the EU anti-money laundering rules, promote the early launch of financial investigations and assess the existing EU anti-corruption rules. This will also help prevent infiltration into the legal economy.
- **Make law enforcement and the judiciary fit for the digital age:** Criminals communicate and commit crimes online and leave digital traces online. With 80% of crimes having a digital component, law enforcement and the judiciary need swift access to digital leads and evidence. They also need to use modern technology and be equipped with tools and skills to keep up with modern crime *modi operandi*. The Commission will analyse and outline possible approaches to data retention as well as propose a way forward to address a lawful and targeted access to encrypted information in the context of criminal investigations and prosecutions that would also protect security and the confidentiality of communications. The Commission will also work with relevant EU Agencies to provide national authorities with the tools, knowledge and operational expertise needed to conduct digital investigations.

Background

This Strategy is part of the EU's work towards fostering security for all those living in Europe, as outlined in the EU Security Union Strategy. The Strategy to tackle Organised Crime builds on Europol's latest 4-yearly assessment of serious and organised crime threats released on 12 April 2021.

5. Coronavirus Response: exemption from VAT

The European Commission has proposed to exempt from Value Added Tax (VAT) goods and services made available by the European Commission, EU bodies and agencies to Member States and citizens during times of crisis.

This responds to the experience gained during the course of the Coronavirus pandemic. Among other things, it has shown that the VAT charged on some transactions ends up being a cost



factor in procurement operations that strains limited budgets. Therefore, initiative will maximise the efficiency of EU funds used in the public interest to respond to crises, such as natural disasters and public health emergencies. It will also strengthen EU-level disaster and crisis management bodies, such as those falling under the EU's Health Union and the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. Once in place, the new measures will allow the Commission and other EU agencies and bodies to import and purchase goods and services VAT-free when those purchases are being distributed during an emergency response in the EU. The recipients might be Member States or third parties, such as national authorities or institutions (for example, a hospital, a national health or disaster response

authority). Goods and services covered under the proposed exemption include, for instance: diagnostic tests and testing materials, and laboratory equipment; personal protective equipment (PPE) like gloves, respirators, masks, gowns, disinfection products and equipment; tents, camp beds, clothing and food; search and rescue equipment, sandbags, life jackets and inflatable boats; antimicrobials and antibiotics, chemical threat antidotes, treatments for radiation injury, antitoxins, iodine tablets; blood products or antibodies; radiation measuring devices; development, production and procurement of necessary products, research and innovation activities, strategic stockpiling of products; pharmaceutical licences, quarantine facilities, clinical trials, disinfection of premises, etc. Commissioner for the Economy, Paolo **Gentiloni** said: *"The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us that these kinds of crises are multifaceted and have a wide-ranging impact on our societies. A rapid and efficient response is essential, and we need to provide the best response now in order to prepare for the future. This proposal supports the EU's*

goal to react to crises and emergencies in the EU. It will also ensure that the financial impact of EU-level relief efforts to fight the pandemic and support the recovery is maximised.”

Next steps

The legislative proposal, which will amend the VAT directive, will now be submitted to the European Parliament for its opinion, and to the Council for adoption. Member States shall adopt and publish, by 30 April 2021 the laws regulations and administrative provisions necessary to comply with this Directive. They shall apply those measures from 1 January 2021.

Background

The Coronavirus pandemic has thrown into sharp light the importance of coherent, decisive and centralised EU-level preparation and response in times of crisis. In the context of the Coronavirus pandemic, the von der Leyen Commission has already outlined plans to strengthen EU preparedness and management for cross-border health threats, and presented the building blocks of a stronger European Health Union. At the same time, the Commission has proposed to strengthen cooperation between EU Member States through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism with the aim of improving responses to future natural or man-made disasters. For instance, in the context of the new European Health Union, the Commission announced the creation of the Health Emergency Response Authority (HERA) to deploy rapidly the most advanced medical and other measures in the event of a health emergency, by covering the whole value chain from conception to distribution and use. The EU has already taken action in the field of taxation and customs to support the fight against and the recovery from the Coronavirus pandemic. In April 2020, the EU agreed to waive customs and VAT charges for imports of masks and other protective equipment needed to fight the pandemic. This waiver remains in place and plans are underway for its extension. In December 2020, EU Member States agreed on new measures proposed by the Commission to allow a temporary VAT exemption for vaccines and testing kits being sold to hospitals, doctors and individuals, as well as closely related services. Under the amended Directive, Member States can apply either reduced or zero rates to both vaccines and testing kits if they so choose.

6. Fighting trafficking in human beings: a new strategy

The Commission is presenting a new Strategy on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings (2021-2025), focusing on preventing the crime, bringing traffickers to justice and protecting and empowering victims.

Between 2017 and 2018, there were more than 14,000 registered victims within the European Union. Globally, traffickers make estimated profits of €29.4 billion in a single year. With demand for exploitation expected to continue, traffickers moving their acts online and the pandemic likely to create the conditions for increased exploitation, this strategy sets out the measures that will allow the EU and its Member States to continue strengthening their response. Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, Margaritis **Schinias**, said: *“Fighting trafficking in human beings is part of our work towards building a Europe that protects. Traffickers prey on people's vulnerabilities. With this Strategy, we are taking a three-pronged approach, using legislation, policy and operational support and funding in tandem to reduce demand, break criminal business, and empower victims of this abominable crime.”* Commissioner for Home Affairs, Ylva **Johansson**, said: *“Trafficking in human beings is a crime that should have no place in our societies. Yet, criminals continue to traffic victims, mainly women and children, and mostly for sexual exploitation. We owe the victims protection, and we need to bring to justice the perpetrators who treat human beings as a commodity. We will look at the rules in place to check if they are still fit for purpose and we will assess the possibility of criminalising the use of exploited services from trafficking victims”*. The strategy builds on the EU's comprehensive legal and policy framework in place to address trafficking in human beings, rooted in the Anti-trafficking



Directive. The Commission will continue to support Member States in the implementation of the Directive and, if necessary, will propose revisions to make sure it is fit for purpose. The EU anti-trafficking coordinator will continue to play a key role in the implementation of this strategy. In addition, the Strategy focuses on: **reducing demand that fosters trafficking**: The Commission will assess the possibility of establishing minimum EU rules criminalising the use of exploited services of trafficking victims and will organise - together with national authorities and civil society organisations - a prevention campaign targeting high-risk sectors. The Commission will also consider strengthening Employers' Sanctions Directive and will propose legislation on corporate governance to clarify the responsibilities of companies and will provide guidance on due diligence to help prevent forced labour; **breaking the business model of traffickers**, online and offline: The Commission will conduct a dialogue with internet and technology companies to reduce the use of online platforms for the recruitment and exploitation of victims. The Commission will encourage systematic training of law enforcement and judicial practitioners on detecting and addressing trafficking in human beings; **protecting, supporting and empowering the victims with a specific focus on women and children**: The Strategy seeks to improve the early identification of victims and their referral for further assistance and protection, strengthen victim empowerment programmes and facilitate re-integration. The Commission will also fund gender-specific and child-sensitive training to help police, social workers, border guards or healthcare staff detect victims; **promoting international cooperation**: With half of the victims identified in the EU being non-EU citizens, cooperation with international partners is key to address trafficking. The EU will use a range of foreign policy instruments and operational cooperation to help combat trafficking in countries of origin and transit including through dedicated human rights and security dialogues, enhanced cooperation with the Council of Europe and regular and targeted communication, action and exchange of information with EU delegations in partner countries. The upcoming Action Plan against Migrant Smuggling will also help disrupt traffickers' business in moving victims for exploitation to Europe.

Background

Trafficking in human beings remains a serious threat in the EU despite progress achieved in the past years. Victims are mainly women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation. The third report on the progress made in the fight against trafficking in human beings, published in October 2020, provides a factual overview on the progress made, presents patterns and challenges and key issues in addressing trafficking in human beings in the EU. As trafficking in human beings is often perpetuated by organised crime groups, the Strategy on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings is closely linked to the EU Strategy to Tackle Organised Crime. Protecting society from organised crime, including tackling trafficking in human beings, is a priority under the EU Security Union Strategy. The new Pact on Migration and Asylum also highlighted the importance of the early identification of potential non-EU victims of trafficking in human beings.

7. Coronavirus: Commission mobilises €123 million for research

The Commission is mobilising €123 million from Horizon Europe, the new EU research and innovation programme, for urgent research into coronavirus variants.

This first emergency funding under Horizon Europe adds to a range of EU-funded research and



innovation actions to fight the coronavirus and contributes to the Commission's overall action to prevent, mitigate and respond to the impact of coronavirus variants, in line with the new European bio-defence preparedness plan HERA Incubator. Mariya **Gabriel**, Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, said: *"We continue to mobilise all means at our disposal to fight this pandemic and the challenges presented by coronavirus variants. We must use our combined strength to be prepared for the future, starting from the*

early detection of the variants to the organisation and coordination of clinical trials for new vaccines and treatments, while ensuring correct data collection and sharing at all stages."

New calls for urgent research into coronavirus variants

The Commission launched new calls that complement earlier actions to develop treatments and vaccines by organising and conducting clinical trials to advance the development of promising therapeutics and vaccines against SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19. They will support the development of large scale, COVID-19 cohorts and networks beyond Europe's borders, forging links with European initiatives, as well as reinforce the infrastructures needed to share data, expertise, research resources and expert services among researchers and research organisations. The projects funded are expected to: establish new and/or build on existing large-scale, multi-centre and regional or multinational cohorts, including beyond Europe's borders, which should rapidly advance the knowledge on SARS-CoV-2 and its emerging variants; further develop promising therapeutic or vaccine candidates against SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19, having already completed preclinical development in clinical studies; support research infrastructures to speed up data sharing and deliver fast research support and expertise, to confront the coronavirus variants and to be ready for future epidemics. The successful consortia are expected to collaborate with other relevant initiatives and projects at national, regional, and international level to maximise synergies and complementarity and avoid duplication of the research efforts. These emergency calls will tackle the short to medium-term threat and simultaneously prepare for the future. They will contribute to building the European Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA), which will enable the EU to anticipate and better tackle future pandemics. The calls will open for submissions on 13 April and the deadline for submission is 6 May 2021. The new solutions need to be available and affordable for all, in line with the principles of the Coronavirus Global Response.

Background

In February 2021, Commission President Ursula **von der Leyen** announced the start of a European bio-defence preparedness plan HERA Incubator aimed at preparing Europe for an increased threat of coronavirus variants. The HERA Incubator will bring together science, industry and public authorities, and leverage all available resources to enable Europe to respond to this challenge. Since the beginning of the crisis, but also since much earlier, the Commission has been at the forefront of supporting research and innovation and coordinating European and global research efforts, including preparedness for pandemics. It has pledged €1.4 billion to the Coronavirus Global Response, of which €1 billion comes from Horizon 2020, the previous EU research and innovation programme. The new special calls announced under Horizon Europe, the successor of Horizon 2020, complement these earlier actions to fight the coronavirus: support for 18 projects with €48.2 million to develop diagnostics, treatments, vaccines and preparedness for epidemics; 8 projects with €117 million invested on the development of diagnostics and treatments through the Innovative Medicines Initiative; 24 projects with €133.4 million granted to addressing pressing needs and the socio-economic impact of the pandemic; and other measures to support innovative ideas through the European Innovation Council. The calls implemented action 3 of the ERAvsCorona Action Plan, a working document resulting from dialogues between the Commission services and national institutions.

8. Erasmus+: over €28 billion to support mobility and learning

The Commission adopted the first annual work programme of Erasmus+ 2021-2027.

With a budget of €26.2 billion, (compared to €14.7 billion for 2014-2020), complemented with about €2.2 billion from EU's external instruments, the new and revamped programme will fund learning mobility and cross-border cooperation projects for 10 million Europeans of all ages and all backgrounds. It will seek to be even more inclusive and to support the green and digital transitions, as set out in the European Education Area. Erasmus+ will also support the resilience of education and training systems in the face of the pandemic. Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, Margaritis **Schinias**, said: *"I welcome the launch of the new Erasmus+ programme, which has affirmed itself as one of the great achievements of the European Union. It will continue to offer learning opportunities to hundreds of thousands of Europeans and beneficiaries*



from associated countries. While providing a life-changing experience of mobility and common understanding amongst fellow Europeans, the programme will also help us to deliver on our ambitions for a more fair and greener Europe.” Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, Mariya **Gabriel**, said: “The fact that the Erasmus+ budget for the next seven years has almost doubled shows the importance given to education, lifelong learning and youth in Europe. Erasmus+ remains a unique programme in terms of its size, scope and global recognition, covering 33 countries, and accessible to the rest of the world through its international activities. I invite all public and private organisations active in the fields of education, training, youth and sport to look at the newly published calls for proposals and apply for funding. Thanks to Erasmus+, we will make the European education area a reality.” This adoption of the annual work programme paves the way for the first calls for proposals under the new Erasmus+. Any public or private body active in the fields of education, training, youth and sport can apply for funding, with the help of Erasmus+ national agencies based in all EU Member States and third countries associated to the programme. The new Erasmus+



programme provides opportunities for study periods abroad, traineeships, apprenticeships, and staff exchanges in all fields of education, training, youth and sport. It is open to school pupils, higher education and vocational education and training students, adult learners, youth exchanges, youth workers and sport coaches. In addition to mobility, which counts for 70% of the budget, the new Erasmus+ also invests in cross-border cooperation projects.

These can be between higher education institutions (e.g. the European Universities initiative); schools; teacher education and training colleges (e.g. Erasmus+ Teacher Academies); adult learning centres; youth and sport organisations; providers of vocational education and training (e.g. Vocational Centres of Excellence); and other actors in the learning sphere. The main features of the Erasmus+ 2021-2027 programme are:

- **Inclusive Erasmus+:** providing enhanced opportunities to people with fewer opportunities, including people with diverse cultural, social and economic backgrounds, and people living in rural and remote areas. Novelties include individual and class exchanges for school pupils and mobility for adult learners. It will be easier for smaller organisations, such as schools, youth associations and sports clubs to apply, thanks to small-scale partnerships and the use of simplified grants. The programme will also be **more international, to cooperate with third countries**, building on the successes of the previous programme with exchanges and cooperation projects around the world, now also expanding to sport and the vocational education and training sectors.
- **Digital Erasmus+:** The pandemic highlighted the need to accelerate the digital transition of education and training systems. Erasmus+ will support the development of digital skills, in line with the Digital Education Action Plan. It will provide high-quality **digital training and exchanges** via platforms such as eTwinning, School Education Gateway and the European Youth Portal, and it will encourage **traineeships in the digital** sector. New formats, such as blended intensive programmes, will allow short-term physical mobility abroad to be complemented with online learning and teamwork. The implementation of the programme will be further digitalised and simplified with the full roll-out of the **European Student Card**.
- **Green Erasmus+:** In line with the European Green Deal, the programme will offer financial incentives to participants using **sustainable modes of transport**. It will also invest in projects promoting **awareness of environmental issues** and facilitate exchanges related to mitigating the climate crisis.
- **Erasmus+ for young people:** DiscoverEU now becomes an integral part of Erasmus+ and gives 18 year-olds the possibility to get a rail pass to travel across Europe, learn from other cultures and meet fellow Europeans. Erasmus+ will also support **exchange and cooperation opportunities** through new youth participation activities, to help young people engage and learn to participate in democratic life, raising awareness about shared European values and fundamental rights; and bringing young people and decision-makers together at local, national and European level.

The Erasmus+ resilience effort in the context of the pandemic will mobilise hundreds of thousands of schools, higher education institutions, vocational training institutes, teachers,

young people, youth and sport organisations, civil society and other stakeholders. The programme will help accelerate new practices that improve the quality and relevance of education, training and youth systems across Europe, at national, regional and local level.

Background

Known as Erasmus+ since 2014, when it enlarged its scope of activities, this emblematic programme is ranked by Europeans as the EU's third most positive result, just after free movement and peace. Over the last three decades, more than 10 million people have participated in the programme, in 33 countries (EU plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia and Turkey). The international arm of Erasmus+ will offer mobility and cooperation in education, training, youth and sport around the world.

9. European Green Deal: presents actions to boost organic production

The Commission presented an Action Plan for the development of organic production. Its overall aim is to boost the production and consumption of organic products, to reach 25% of agricultural land under organic farming by 2030, as well as to increase organic aquaculture significantly.

Organic production comes with a number of important benefits: organic fields have around 30% more biodiversity, organically farmed animals enjoy a higher degree of animal welfare and take less antibiotics, organic farmers have higher incomes and are more resilient, and consumers know exactly what they are getting thanks to the EU organic logo. The Action Plan is in line with the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies. The Action Plan is



designed to provide the already fast growing organic sector the right tools to achieve the 25% target. It puts forward 23 actions structured around 3 axes – **boosting consumption, increasing production, and further improving the sustainability of the sector** – to ensure a balanced growth of the sector. The Commission encourages Member States to develop national organic action plans to increase their national share of organic farming. There are significant differences between Member States regarding the share of agricultural land currently under organic farming, ranging from 0.5% to over 25%. The national organic action plans will complement the national CAP strategic plans, by setting out measures that go beyond agriculture and what is offered under the CAP.

Promote consumption

Growing consumption of organic products will be crucial to encourage farmers to convert to organic farming and thus increase their profitability and resilience. To this end, the Action Plan puts forward several concrete actions aimed at boosting demand, maintaining consumer trust and bringing

organic food closer to citizens. This includes: informing and communicating about organic production, promoting the consumption of organic products, stimulating a greater use of organics in public canteens through public procurement and increasing the distribution of organic products under the EU school scheme. Actions also aim, for example, at preventing fraud, increasing consumers' trust and improving traceability of organic products. The private sector can also play a significant role by, for example, rewarding employees with 'bio-cheques' they can use to purchase organic food.

Increase production

Presently, about 8.5% of EU's agricultural area is farmed organically, and the trends show that with the present growth rate, the EU will reach 15-18% by 2030. This Action Plan provides the toolkit to make an extra push and reach 25%. While the Action Plan largely focuses on the "pull effect" of the demand side, the Common Agricultural Policy will remain a key tool for supporting the conversion. Currently, around 1.8% (€7.5 billion) of CAP is used to support organic farming. The future CAP will include eco-schemes which will be backed by a budget of €38 – 58 billion, for

the period 2023 – 2027, depending on the outcome of the CAP negotiations. The eco-schemes can be deployed to boost organic farming. Beyond the CAP, key tools include **organisation of information events** and **networking** for sharing best practices, **certification** for groups of farmers rather than for individuals, **research and innovation**, use of **blockchain** and other technologies to improve traceability increasing market transparency, reinforcing **local and small-scale processing**, supporting the **organisation of the food chain** and **improving animal nutrition**. To raise awareness on organic production, the Commission will organise an annual EU **'Organic day'** as well as **awards** in the organic food chain, to recognise excellence at all steps of the organic food chain. The Commission will also encourage the development of organic tourism networks through **"biodistricts"**. "Biodistricts" are areas where farmers, citizens, tourist operators, associations and public authorities work together towards the sustainable management of local resources, based on organic principles and practices. The Action Plan also notes that organic aquaculture production remains a relatively new sector but has a significant potential for growth. The upcoming new EU guidelines on the sustainable development of EU aquaculture, will encourage Member States and stakeholders to support the increase in organic production in this sector.

Improve sustainability

Finally, it also aims to further improve organic farming's performance in terms of sustainability. To achieve this, actions will focus on **improving animal welfare**, **ensuring the availability of organic seeds**, **reducing the sector's carbon footprint**, and **minimising the use of plastics, water and energy**. The Commission also intends to increase the share of research and innovation (R&I) and dedicate at least 30% of the budget for research and innovation actions in the field of agriculture, forestry and rural areas to topics specific to or relevant for the organic sector. The Commission will closely monitor progress through a yearly follow-up with representatives of the European Parliament, Member States and stakeholders, through bi-annual progress reports and a mid-term review.

Members of the College said

Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal, Frans **Timmermans**, said: *"Agriculture is one of the main drivers of biodiversity loss, and biodiversity loss is a major threat to agriculture. We urgently need to restore balance in our relationship with nature. This is not something farmers face alone, it involves the whole food chain. With this Action Plan, we aim to boost demand for organic farming, help consumers make informed choices, and support European farmers in their transition. The more land we dedicate to organic farming, the better the protection of biodiversity in that land and in surrounding areas."* Agriculture Commissioner, Janusz **Wojciechowski**, said: *"The organic sector is recognised for its sustainable practices and use of resources, giving its central role in achieving the Green Deal objectives. To achieve the 25% of organic farming target, we need to ensure that demand drives the growth of the sector while taking into account the significant differences between each Member State's organic sectors. The organic Action Plan provides tools and ideas to accompany a balanced growth of the sector. The development will be supported by the Common Agricultural Policy, research and innovation as well as close cooperation with key actors at EU, national and local level."* Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, Virginijus **Sinkevičius**, said: *"Organic farming provides many benefits to the environment, contributing to healthy soils, reducing pollution of air and water, and improving biodiversity. At the same time, with demand growing faster than production over the last decade, the organic sector brings economic benefits to its players. The new Organic farming Action Plan will be a crucial instrument to set the path to achieve the targets of 25% of agricultural area under organic farming and of significant increase of organic aquaculture enshrined in the Biodiversity and the Farm to Fork Strategies. In addition to that, the new Strategic Guidelines for the sustainable development of EU aquaculture to be adopted by the Commission soon, will promote organic aquaculture further."*



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Background

The Action Plan takes into account the results of the public consultation held between September and November 2020, which attracted a total of 840 replies from stakeholders and citizens. It is an initiative announced in the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies, published in May 2020. These two strategies were presented in the context of the European Green Deal to enable the

transition to sustainable food systems and to tackle the key drivers of biodiversity loss. In the recommendations to Member States on their CAP strategic plans published in December 2020, the Commission included the target of a 25% organic area in the EU by 2030. Member States are invited to set national values for this target in their CAP plans. Based on their local conditions and needs, Member States will then explain how they plan to achieve this target using CAP instruments. The Commission presented its proposals for the CAP reform in 2018, introducing a more flexible, performance and results-based approach that takes into account local conditions and needs, while increasing EU level ambitions in terms of sustainability. The new CAP is built around nine objectives, which is also the basis upon which EU countries design their CAP strategic plans.

10. Commission's action to uphold child rights

The Commission has adopted the first comprehensive EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child, as well as a proposal for a Council Recommendation establishing a European Child Guarantee, to promote equal opportunities for children at risk of poverty or social exclusion.

In preparation of both initiatives, the Commission, in association with leading global child rights organisations, collected the views of over 10,000 children. **EU Strategy: six thematic areas & proposed action: children as agents of change in democratic life:** The Commission is proposing a range of actions – from producing child-friendly legal texts to holding consultations with children in the context of the Conference on the Future of Europe and the implementation of



the Climate Pact and Green Deal. Member States should also enable the participation of children in civic and democratic life. **The right of children to realise their full potential no matter their social background:** The Commission is seeking to establish a European Child Guarantee to combat child poverty and social exclusion. The Commission will also for example, address children's mental health and help support healthy and sustainable food in EU schools. The Commission will strive for better EU-wide early education and care standards and build inclusive,

quality education. **The right of children to be free from violence:** The Commission will propose legislation to combat gender-based and domestic violence and table recommendations to prevent harmful practices against women and girls. Member States are invited to build integrated child protection systems and improve their functioning, as well as to strengthen response to violence in schools, and to adopt national legislation to put an end to corporal punishment in all settings. **The right of children to child-friendly justice,** as victims, witnesses, suspects, accused of having committed a crime, or party to any legal proceeding. The Commission will, for example, contribute to specialised judicial training and work with the Council of Europe to implement the 2010 Guidelines on Child Friendly Justice, Member States are invited to support training for example, and to develop robust alternatives to judicial action such as alternatives to detention or mediation in civil cases. **The right of children to safely navigate the digital environment and harness its opportunities:** The Commission will update the European Strategy for a Better Internet for Children and the proposed Digital Services Act aims to provide a safe online experience. The Commission is calling on Member States to effectively implement the rules on protection of children contained in the revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive and to support the development of children's basic digital skills. The Commission also urges ICT companies to address harmful behaviour online and remove illegal content. **The rights of children across the globe:** Children's rights are universal and the EU reinforces its commitment to protect, promote and fulfil these rights globally and in the multilateral sphere. This will be achieved for example by allocating 10% of humanitarian aid funding for education in emergencies and protracted crises. The Commission will prepare a Youth Action Plan by 2022 to promote youth and child

participation globally, and to strengthen child protection capacities within EU Delegations. The Commission also maintains a zero tolerance policy on child labour.

The new European Child Guarantee

In 2019, almost 18 million children in the EU (22.2% of the child population) lived in households at risk of poverty or social exclusion. This leads to an intergenerational cycle of disadvantage, with profound and long-term effects on children. The European Child Guarantee aims to break this cycle and promote equal opportunities by guaranteeing access to a set of key services for children in need (under 18 year olds at risk of poverty or social exclusion). Under the European Child Guarantee, it is recommended to Member States to provide **free and effective access** for children in need to: **early childhood education and care** – for example, avoid segregated classes; **education and school-based activities** – for example, adequate equipment for distance learning, and school trips; **at least one healthy meal each school day**; and **healthcare** – for example, facilitating access to medical examinations and health screening programmes. These services should be free of charge and readily available to children in need. The Commission also recommends that Member States provide children in need with **effective access to healthy nutrition and adequate housing**: For example, children should receive healthy meals also outside of school days, and homeless children and their families should have access to adequate accommodation. When identifying children in need and designing their national measures, Member States should take into account the specific needs of children from disadvantaged backgrounds, such as those experiencing homelessness, disabilities, those with precarious family situations, a migrant background, a minority racial or ethnic background or those in alternative care. EU funding to support these actions is available under the European Social Fund Plus (EFS+), which finances projects that promote social inclusion, fight poverty and invest in people, as well as the European Regional Development Fund, InvestEU, and the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

Members of the College said:

Vice-President for Democracy and Demography, Dubravka Šuica, said: *“This new EU comprehensive Strategy on the Rights of the Child is a milestone in our work for and with children. We thank each and every child for their contribution to this important initiative. It sends a message of hope and it is a call to action throughout the EU and beyond. With this Strategy, we renew our commitment to build healthier, resilient and equal societies for all, where every child is included, protected and empowered. The politics of today and tomorrow are made both for and together with our children. This is how we strengthen our democracies.”*

Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, Nicolas Schmit, said: *“Even before the pandemic, 22% of children in the EU were at risk of poverty or social exclusion. This should be unthinkable in Europe. Over the past year, these pre-existing inequalities have become even greater. We need to break this dangerous cycle and make sure that children in need have access to a healthy meal, education, healthcare and adequate housing, no matter their background. The Commission stands ready to support Member States in any way it can to make a real difference to children's lives.”*



Commissioner for Justice, Didier Reynders, said: *“Every child in the EU is entitled to the same protection and access to key services, regardless of their background. Yet 1 in 3 children in the EU have experienced some form of differential treatment. From unequal access to digital technology or socio-economic support, to a lack of protection from abuse at home, far too many children need additional help. The new strategy we are presenting is a plan to provide this.”*

Next steps

The implementation of the EU Strategy will be monitored at EU and national levels, and the Commission will report back on progress at the annual EU Forum on the Rights of the Child. An evaluation of the strategy will be conducted at the end of 2024, with the participation of children.

The Commission calls on Member States to swiftly adopt the proposal for the Council Recommendation establishing a European Child Guarantee. Within six months after its adoption, governments are encouraged to submit to the Commission national action plans on how to implement it. The Commission will monitor progress through the European Semester and issue, where necessary, country-specific recommendations.

Background

As underlined by more than 10,000 children in their contribution to the preparation of this package, children in and outside of the EU continue to suffer from socio-economic exclusion and discrimination because of their origin, status, gender or sexual orientation – or that of their parents. Children's voices are not always heard and their views not always taken on board in matters that concern them. These challenges have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Commission is responding with an overarching Strategy for the next four years that aims to build on all EU action to protect and promote children's rights, with clear actions for improvement. It should also support Member States in making the best use of EU funds. President **von der Leyen** announced the European Child Guarantee in her Political Guidelines for 2019-2024. The European Child Guarantee complements the second pillar of the Strategy on the Rights of the Child. It is also a key deliverable of the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan, adopted on 4 March 2021, and answers directly to Principle 11 of the Pillar: Childcare and support to children. The Action Plan proposes a target for the EU to reduce by at least 15 million the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion by 2030, including at least 5 million children.

11. Youth4Regions – the programme for aspiring journalists

Youth4Regions is a European Commission programme to help journalism students and young journalists find out what the EU does in their region. To participate, you need to apply with your



own original article or video about an EU-funded project. From the applications received, a group of winners will be selected and invited to Brussels during the European Week of Regions and Cities in October, where they will be able to attend training courses, have established journalists as mentors and work with them in the press room and visit EU institutions and media organisations. Young aspiring journalists from EU Member States, neighbouring

countries and candidate countries can apply for the programme. Requirements: be aged between 18 and 30; have journalistic experience (in studies or up to 2 years experience); show interest in what EU regional policy is doing in your region; be available from 10 to 15 October 2021. Participants will be offered travel to Brussels, plus accommodation and food during the period they are involved. **Deadline: 12 July 2021 at 17.00.** For further information please consult the following [link](#).

12. PLURAL+ 2021 Youth Video Festival

The PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival (hereinafter referred to as “PLURAL+”) is open to young people of all nationalities with a keen interest in the pressing social issues of migration, diversity, social inclusion, and the prevention of xenophobia.

Entrants to PLURAL+ must be at most 25 years old at the time of the production of their videos. PLURAL+ is organized into three age categories: up to 12 years old; 13 to 17 years old and 18 to 25 years old. While the people appearing in the video do not have to be young, it is imperative that the video reflects the thoughts and opinions of the young filmmaker about migration, diversity, social inclusion, and xenophobia. The person submitting the video (“the entrant”) must be actively involved in its making; e.g. either as a director, writer, camera person, editor, actor, coordinator, etc. Immediate family members of staff members of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and members of the PLURAL+ International Jury are not eligible to enter the competition. PLURAL+ video entries must be: between one and five minutes in length, including title(s) and



opening/closing credits (the PLURAL+ team will automatically disqualify any submission falling outside of this time restraint); in English or include English subtitles; produced after 31 December 2018. In addition, PLURAL+ video entries can be of any genre (animation, documentary, music video, comedy, etc.) as long as they have the potential to make the audience think in constructive ways about the PLURAL+ themes – migration, diversity, social inclusion, and the prevention of xenophobia. If selected, entrants must be prepared to submit a digital copy of their video in either of the following formats: MOV (preferred), MP4, AVI, QT, MKV, or FLV. HD is preferred (1920x1080), but not required. PLURAL+ recognizes young people as powerful agents of social change and video entries should therefore serve as an instrument for them to express their thoughts and opinions on one or several of the main themes of PLURAL+: migration, diversity, social inclusion, and the prevention of xenophobia. PLURAL+ video entries can be of any genre (animation, documentary, music video, comedy, etc.) as long as they have the potential to make the audience think in constructive ways about those pressing social issues in constructive ways. To get a better idea, interested candidates should browse [past PLURAL+ winning videos here](#). PLURAL+ video entries should not contain profanities or material that some audiences may find inappropriate or offensive. The PLURAL+ International Jury Award is given to one video per age category (three prizes in total). UNAOC and IOM will also award three special prizes: the first one, the **Special Award for the Prevention of Xenophobia**, will recognize a film that best illustrates the issue of xenophobia and fosters respect for all. The second one, the **Award #forSafeWorship**, will recognize a film that best explores the theme of religious diversity and coexistence between religions and faiths in our modern world. Finally, and for the first time this year, the **Award for Solidarity amid COVID-19** will recognize a film that best explores the impact of COVID-19 and related stigma on minority groups, and the need for unity and solidarity to ensure that no one is left behind in terms of equitable access to treatment and vaccines. **Deadline: Friday, 18 June 2021.** For more information and applications please consult the following [link](#).

13. European Social Innovation Competition 2021

Since 2013, the competition has been a beacon for social innovators across Europe, employing a proven methodology for supporting early-stage ideas and facilitating a network of radical innovators shaping our society for the better.



The European Commission's Directorate-General for Entrepreneurship & SMEs runs the European Social Innovation Competition (EUSIC) across all EU countries and Horizon Europe associated countries, with the support of the European Innovation Council (EIC). The competition was launched in memory of social innovation pioneer Diogo Vasconcelos. Each year the competition addresses a different issue facing Europe. Three €50,000 prizes are awarded for the best socially innovative

projects designed to change our society for the better. See the [EUSIC website](#) for more information. **2021 theme: Skills for tomorrow - Shaping a green and digital future** The European economy is changing. The coming years will see a shift towards a green and digital future. These twin transitions present individuals, businesses and industries with exciting opportunities. Understanding the skills that will be needed and how best to develop them will be key to unlocking these opportunities for individuals and organisations alike. The "Skills for tomorrow" 2021 edition of the competition is looking for scalable social innovations that will contribute to job creation, growth and European competitiveness by helping people, businesses and industries identify, develop and strengthen the skills that will power the European economy's green and digital future. The competition is open to early-stage ideas that tackle challenges relating to the transition to either or both futures. These include but are not limited to identifying and mapping skills gaps as well as approaches to development and training that will support people to reskill or upskill. All solutions must work towards sustainability, taking into consideration their own environmental impact. **The deadline for submissions is 12.00 CEST Wednesday 12 May 2021.** For more information please consult the following [link](#).

14. EU Prize for Women Innovators

The opportunities created by novel technologies and disruptive innovations promise to deliver the fair and sustainable recovery Europe needs. But Europe risks missing out on these opportunities if half its population is overlooked as a source of innovation and creative talent. The EU Prize for Women Innovators celebrates the women entrepreneurs behind game-changing innovations. In doing so, the EU seeks to raise awareness of the need for more female innovators, and create role models for women and girls everywhere. The prize is awarded to the most talented women entrepreneurs from across the EU and countries associated to, who have founded a successful company and brought innovation to the market. The prize is managed by the European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency, and the winners are chosen by an independent expert jury. Three prizes of €100,000 each are awarded in the main category. A fourth prize of €50,000 is awarded to a promising 'Rising Innovator' aged 30 or younger. Applications to the 2021 edition of the EU Prize for Women Innovators are now open. The deadline for submissions is **17:00 (CET) on 30 June 2021**. All applications must be submitted via the [Funding and Tenders Portal](#). Please read the Rules of Contest before applying. To apply, you must be: a woman; established in an EU Member State (including overseas countries and territories) or a country associated to Horizon Europe; founder or co-founder of an active innovative company registered at least two years before the submission deadline. In addition, those applying for the Rising Innovator category must be aged 30 or younger at the start of the call year. For more information and applications please consult the following [link](#).



15. The European Committee of the Regions offers traineeships

The OSCE PA Research Assistant Programme is open to graduate students and recent graduates of political science, law, international relations or other related fields from OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation. Research Assistants develop their knowledge of international politico-military, economic and environmental, and human rights affairs and build their professional skills in areas connected to the work of the Parliamentary Assembly.

Research Assistants conduct background research on topics relevant for the activities of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. They draft a variety of documents, such as briefing reports,



speeches, statements, talking points, minutes of meetings and background papers, to support the work of the Assembly, including in the context of election observation missions, various official visits, meetings and special projects carried out by the International Secretariat. Moreover, Assistants in Vienna attend official meetings of the OSCE decision-making bodies and other

informal meetings of the OSCE participating States and write concise reports thereof to keep the Assembly abreast of key security developments and negotiations taking place. Assistants are also asked to complete administrative tasks, such as day-to-day practical work in the office, translation and proofreading of official documents, filing and other necessary tasks. On an ad hoc basis, Assistants may attend the events of the Assembly conducted in the field, such as election observations, statutory meetings, field visits, etc. Research Assistant positions demand a six-month time commitment, and all Assistants are expected to abide by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Code of Conduct. Research Assistant positions are granted for a six-month period. The Assembly provides Research Assistants in Copenhagen with an allowance of 656 euros per month plus free housing. For Assistants in Vienna, the Assembly provides an allowance of 1,000 euros per month to cover for basic expenses and accommodation. **The main requirements for a candidate are:** citizenship in one of the OSCE participating States, or Partners for Co-operation,

up to 28 years of age; master's degree (or equivalent) in Political Science, International Relations, Law or a related field. Candidates may apply prior to obtaining their degree if all requirements for their MA have been fully completed; excellent written and spoken English is mandatory. Knowledge of other official OSCE languages (Russian, French, German, Italian and Spanish) is a strong asset; strong analytical and writing skills; keen interest in international security affairs and parliamentary diplomacy; previous experience of working in an international organization or in a parliament is desirable; familiarity with issues related to elections, human rights, arms control, transnational threats, migration, countering terrorism, good governance, climate change, media affairs, conference management, finance and administration is an asset; Computer literacy, including of word processing and research tools. Applications for the OSCE PA Research Assistant Programme are accepted at any time of year, with the main intake of Assistants for the year occurring in February/March. The deadline for applying for the February/March intake is 1 October.

Applications must include:

- Completed application form;
- Concise cover letter;
- Curriculum Vitae;
- Transcript of grades from the applicant's master's degree;
- Two letters of recommendation; one recent photograph.

Modalities of participation

Please note that due to the large amount of applications received, **only applicants who are short-listed for a telephone interview will be contacted.** Please submit completed applications by email researchassistant@oscepa.dk to attention of: Ms. DANA BJERREGAARD, indicating in the title of the email your name/surname, country of citizenship and preferred date for starting the Assistantship For more information please consult the following [link](#).

16. Approved the project “Arts, museums, outdoor activities and learning”



We are pleased to inform you approved of our creativity projects in Bulgaria has just been approved. It is a KA227 School entitled "Arts, museums, outdoor activities and learning" (action n.2020-1-BG01-KA227-SCH-094995). More information about the projects will be available soon in our next newsletters.

17. Multiplier Event of the “DESK” project

In date 02/03/2021 took place the second Multiplier Event of the project "An Adult Digital education Skills Kit to Foster Employability" (acronym DESK), an initiative approved as action n. 2018-1-EL01-KA204-047819 by the Greek National Agency Erasmus Plus in the framework of the program Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for adult education. The aim of the project, now almost concluded, was to increase digital literacy in Europe as it is clear that this plays a crucial role in their selection when an individual is applying for a job opportunity. The aim was to improve the education of adults mainly through knowledge of innovative tools such as augmented reality technology and encouraging them to use it. The dissemination and valorisation phase developed with multiplication events served to publicise the project and its results, the impact on individuals, institutions and communities and to encourage the transfer of products and their use by a wider audience. During the Multiplier Event the results of the project and all the Outputs realised during the 2 years of activity were presented. More details on this European project can be found on the website <http://deskims.e-sl.gr/> or on the official Facebook page of the initiative at <https://www.facebook.com/DESK362474434309114/>.



18. Online meeting and new newsletter of the “ROBOT@3DP” project

In date 05/03/2021 took place the third virtual meeting of the project "New Training Resources for the Change of the Industrial Paradigm" (acronym "ROBOT@3DP"), approved, as action n. 2019-1-ES01-KA202- 065905, in the framework of the program Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education. The project aims to integrate additive manufacturing and 3D printers with mechatronics as the perfect complement for students to acquire knowledge that places them in the emerging concepts of Industry 4.0. The project partnership is made up of: AIJU (Spain); Start Smart Srl (Italy); Berzosa Injection Molds, S.L (Spain); Talleres Tibi S.L. (Spain); Spot Design Srl (Romania); Solski Center Krsko Sevnica (Slovenia); EURO-NET (Italy); CIFP Don Bosco Lhii (Spain). During the project meeting the partners discussed the activities to be developed and defined the project steps to be implemented in the coming months. In addition, the new English newsletter (No. 2) planned within the project was produced and published. More information on the project can be found on the project web site (www.robot3dp.eu) or on the official Facebook page: (https://www.facebook.com/robot3dp/?modal=admin_todo_tour).



19. Short online meeting of the “EASYNEWS” project

In date 09/03/2021 took place a short online meeting of the project "Periodismo Digital Accesible y Educación Mediática para Personas con Discapacidad Intelectual" (in English "Accessible Digital Journalism and Media Education for People with Intellectual Disabilities") - acronym EASYNEWS. The project was approved in Spain in the framework of Erasmus Plus KA2 Adult Education as Action 2020-1-ES01-KA204-082417. The project aims to encourage the interest of people with intellectual disabilities (DI) for journalism and reading media and communication; through the creation of a methodology supported by an ICT tool to adapt and read newspaper articles, magazines and other digital information for easy reading, trying, therefore, to give concrete help. During the meeting, the partners discussed how to develop intellectual products and how to adapt them to easy reading. The partnership is composed by: Asociación para la atención de las personas con discapacidad intelectual de Villena y comarca (Spain); EURO-NET (Italy); Asociacion De Investigacion de la Industria del Juguete Conexas Y Afines (Spain); Austrian Association of Inclusive Society (Austria); Social Enterprise Puzzle (Greece); FUB Stockholm (Sweden). For more information, please visit the project's official Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Easynews108569271011998> or on the official website under the link <https://easynewserasmusproject.es/>.



20. Video by our association to support the fight against the pandemic



We are pleased to inform you that a new video of ours has been made. The video was developed by the team of experts (Gianluca Lagrotta, Tonia Bruno and Antonino Imbesi) of EURO-NET association and it was produced as Europe Direct Basilicata centre: it was aimed at supporting the action of the European Commission in the fight against pandemic and vaccination. You can watch the video on our YouTube channel at the following link in internet:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5YccLWkazL8>.

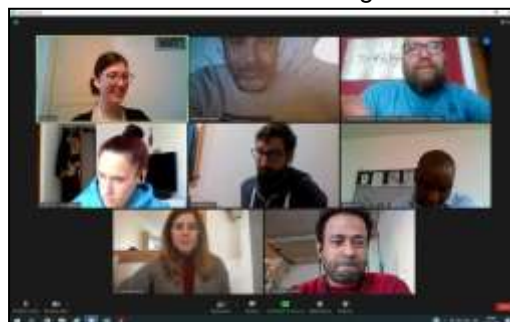
21. Kick-off meeting of the “Queer Migrants” project

In date 10/03/2021 took place the first transnational meeting (official TPM) of the project "Queer Migrants: Addressing gaps in adult education and social cohesion", an initiative aimed at improving social cohesion and enabling the inclusion of LGBT migrants. The project was approved in the framework of the Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education programme by the Erasmus+ National Agency in UK as action n.2020-1-UK01-KA204-079101. During the indicated TPM, were presented the project, its development and the activities to be carried out in the next two years, as well as mobility planning and activity management. The partnership consists of: Independent Academic Research Studies International Institute (UK) coordinator, EURO-NET (Italy); Symplexis (Greece); Astiki MH Kerdoskopiki Etaireia Helping Hand (Greece); CSI Center For Social Innovation LTD (Cyprus). Our association, in charge of the whole dissemination part has also already created the project logo, that you can see next to the article. More information on the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/queermigrants>



22. Kick-off meeting of the “CASE” project

In date 12/03/2021 took place a virtual kick-off meeting of the project "CASE" approved under the Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education programme by the Erasmus Plus National Agency in Luxembourg as action no. 2020-1-LU01-KA204-063247. During the meeting the partners decided on the strategies of the mobility actions to be implemented. Each partner has 18 mobilities available for project meetings and a further 12 blended mobilities for young people in 2 training courses. The project "Civically Active for Social Engagement" (acronym CASE) follows a cross-sectoral approach in order to collect, review and publish new and innovative approaches in active citizenship education as a way to break down boundaries between education sectors and to facilitate more open and innovative training and teaching. The partnership composed of: Alliance for Global Development (Luxembourg); EURO-NET (Italy); Initiative for Sustainable Education and Development (Germany); Action Synergy SA (Greece); Swideas AB (Sweden); Asociacion Juvenil Intercambia (Spain).



23. Presentation of the platform of the Conference on the Future of Europe

An interesting online meeting was held on 17 March by the European Commission to present the first draft of the platform that will host all the activities of the Conference on the Future of Europe. About 400 Europe Directs from all over Europe took part in the meeting, which was held online on zoom. Our Europe Direct Basilicata centre was represented by its director Antonino Imbesi. The main and fundamental objective of the conference is to ensure the effective involvement of citizens, in order to succeed in redesigning a modern, current and feasible European integration that is able to respond to the current and future internal and global challenges facing Europe.



24. First TPM and logo of the “iCircIEU” project

In date 19/03/2021 took place a first virtual meeting of the project “iCircIEU: Cross Border Circular Economy towards Sustainable Development in the EU” (acronym “iCircIEU”) approved in Luxembourg by the competent Erasmus Plus National Agency as action no. 2020-1-LU01-KA204-063241 in the framework of the programme Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for the Exchange of Good Practice in Adult Education. The following 5 organisations are partners in the project, which aims to promote sustainable development goals: Innovation And Sustainable Development Institute - NGO A.s.b.l. (Luxembourg), EURO-NET (Italy), Stando LTD (Cyprus), Association FenêtreS (France) and Biedriba European Center for Research and Regional Development (Latvia). During the meeting, the partners introduced themselves and also familiarised themselves with the actions envisaged in the project. In addition, the logo of the “iCircIEU” project has also been designed. More information on the official Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/iCircIEU-108541348000119>.



25. Online meeting of "Dis-Act" project

In date 19/03/2021 took place a online meeting of the project “Dis-Act” (acronym DA). The project aims to increase the inclusive potential of the theatre as a tool to open up opportunities and dispel prejudices against people with disabilities by producing a quality educational offer for operators and disabled adults themselves in the so-called “Devised Theatre”. The project was approved in the framework of the Erasmus Plus program KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education by the Erasmus Plus National Agency in Germany. During the project meeting the partners reviewed all the products produced so far and discussed the activities still to be developed, defining also the new project steps to be implemented in the coming months. The partners of the project are: NGO Nest Berlin (Germany); Comparative Research Network Ev (Germany); Champions Factory (Bulgaria); EURO-NET (Italy); Sihtasutus Noored Teaduses Ja Ettevotluses (Estonia); Centrul Pentru Educatie Consulting Structural Instrument (Romania). More information about the project can be found on the official Facebook page at the following link: <https://www.facebook.com/KA2AdultProjectDisAct>.



26. Short meeting of the “HOPE” project

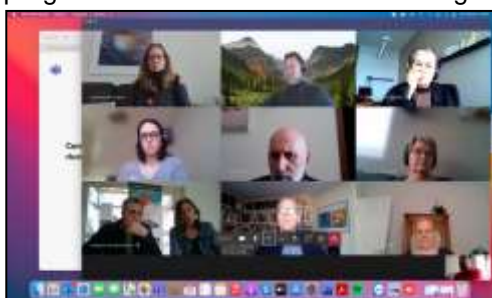
In date 23/03/2021 took place a short meeting of the project “Supply of High Quality Learning Opportunities for Migrant People and Enhance Social Inclusion” (acronym “HOPE”), an initiative approved in the framework of the programme Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education - Exchange of Good Practices by the National Agency Erasmus Plus in Germany (action n. 2019-1-DE02- KA204-006479). During the short meeting the partners discussed the possibility of applying for an extension of the project. The project aims to provide new and better learning opportunities for migrants and organisations working with them. The exchange of good practices between migration and social inclusion providers will offer professionals and decision makers the opportunity to explore innovative ideas.



HOPE will open the stakeholder discussion to exchange views, concerns and questions in order to develop innovative practices, procedures and skills in the area of welcoming migrants. The partners of the project are: Centrum Fur Innovation Und Technologie Gmbh (Germany) coordinator of the project; IMH C.S.C Limited (Cyprus); Mitropolitiko College Anoyimi Ekpaideytiki Etairia (Greece); EURO-NET (Italy); Foundation for Shelter And Support To Migrants (Malta); BSC, Poslovno Podporni Center, Doo (Slovenia). More information can be found on the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/erasmusplusHOPE>.

27. Online meeting of the “ECHOO PLAY” project

In the last week of march took place a virtual meeting of the project "European Career Help and Occupational Orientation Play" (acronym "ECHOO PLAY"), an initiative approved as action n.2020-1-IS01-KA202-065802 by the Icelandic National Agency in the framework of the programme Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships in VET. The main objectives of the project



are therefore to develop the following products: a report on the current needs for improved employability at a time when young people are faced with a rapidly changing and highly contracted labour market due to the COVID-19 pandemic; a toolkit and a methodological guide to facilitate the career approach through the use of Lego bricks; a board *game* for career guidance and, finally, a research on the methodological and pedagogical approach used in the European initiative. The partnership engaged in

this hard task consists of the following 5 organisations from 4 European countries: Midstod Simenntunar a Sudurnesjum (Iceland), project coordinator; EURO-NET and Studiodomino SRL (Italy); Turun Yliopisto (Finland) and Kelje Production (France). During the meeting, the partners discussed the development of intellectual outputs and defined some guiding strategies for their development. You can find more information on the following Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Echoo-Play-project>.

28. Virtual meeting in “TAT” project

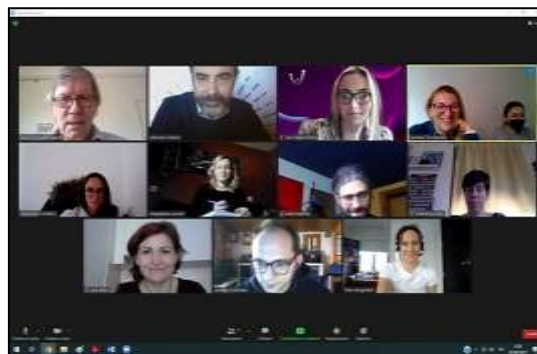
In date 26 March took place the virtual meeting of the project "TheArThee" (acronym “TAT”). The project is exploring the inclusive potential of theatre and the performing arts as a methodology to create opportunities, acquire new skills, improve communication and dispel prejudices towards young people who face social exclusion. This has to be achieved through the sharing of best practices and the exchange of skills among intersectoral organizations working in the field of youth empowerment and alternative learning. The project is exploring how theatre can be used as a tool to bring together



elements of society to empower young people regardless of perceived class, race, gender and disability and ability. The project complements the attention on the exclusion of young people with an additional attention to physical and cognitive disorders. TAT implements an intervention on the emotional and skills-related dimension of the condition of excluded young people through the exploration of the educational, integrative and creative dimension of the so-called "Devised Theater". The project was approved in the framework of the programme Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Youth by the National Erasmus Plus Agency in the UK. The partners of the project are: Chicken Shed Theater Trust LTD (England); MV International (Italy); Champions Factory (Bulgaria); EURO-NET (Italy); Lyda E.V. (Germany); Pro Ifall AB (Sweden); County Limerick Youth Theater (England). During the project meeting, in which participated for EURO-NET the trainer Raffaele Messina, the partners took stock of the activities already developed and of the further steps to be realized in the next month. For more information on the Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/Thearthee114642043269776/?modal=admin_todo_tour.

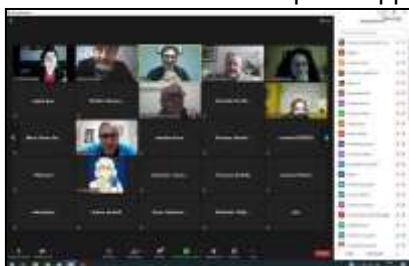
29. Online meeting of “The A Class” project

In date 26/03/2021 took place a new virtual meeting of the project “The “A” class: integrating and supporting students with autism in the mainstream classroom” (acronym “The A Class”) approved by the Erasmus Plus National Agency in Denmark in the framework of programme Erasmus Plus as action 2020-1-DK01-KA201-075054. The project develops a strategic partnership in the field of school education. “The A Class” is aimed at combating the problems that autism creates for students at school, that each child with ASD is unique, which means that they have different learning styles. The project will therefore seek to develop products to help schools, teachers and children with autism. Partners of the project, besides the EURO-NET association, are the following organisations: Sosu Ostjylland (Denmark), Inercia Digital SI (Spain), Masaryk University (Czech Republic), Centar za autizam (Croatia), Stando Ltd (Cyprus) and Zdruzhenie za unapreduvanje na kvalitetot na zhivot na licata so autistichen spektar na narushuvanje “Sina Svetulka” (Macedonia). During the meeting, the partners discussed the development of the intellectual outputs envisaged within the project. You can follow the development of this initiative on the Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/TheAclass/s> or on the official website <https://theaclass.eu/>.



30. Online activities between Europe Direct centre and CSV Basilicata

A new seminar on European opportunities and perspectives available to young people and the world of volunteering took place on last 26/03/2021 from 18:00 to about 20:00. The activity, due to the persistent pandemic, took place, of course, all online on the zoom platform. As always, the work was led by the director of Europe Direct Basilicata, Antonino Imbesi, who, after the introduction and greetings by the Director of the Volunteer Support Centre of Basilicata, Gianleo Iosca, presented the present and the future opportunities offered by the European scene. We had more than 80 participants registered for the event and an average of 54 people connected during the whole activity.



31. Last meeting of "My Community 2020" project

In date 29/03/2021 took place the last meeting of the project “My Community 2020”, which will end on 30/04/2021, during which the project partners discussed the final report and the multiplier events to be organised in the last month of activities in all partner countries. The project “My Community 2020” is an initiative approved by the UK National Agency Erasmus Plus in the framework of the programme Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for adult education. The project intends, through the development of three different intellectual products, to improve the digital skills, self-esteem and employability of adult learners with low digital skills, encouraging them to play an active role in their community as citizens. The intellectual outputs already developed are: a training course on digital skills for the creation of local history, which once created will be the subject of a pilot testing action, and a manual for the effective implementation of the training activities. You can find more information on the following Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/My-Community-2020/>.



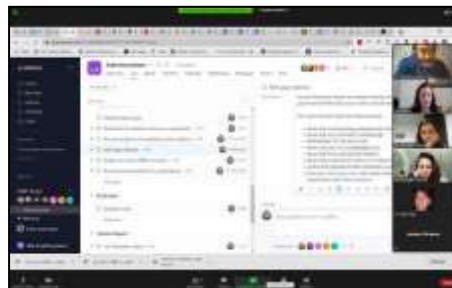
32. Virtual meeting of the “F.A.M.E.T.” project

In date 29/03/2021, it was realised an online meeting of the project “F.A.M.E.T.” during which the partners discussed the development of new intellectual outputs to work on for 2021 and defined new deadlines and further project steps to be implemented in the coming months. The project "Fostering Adult Migrant Entrepreneurial Training and Qualification" (acronym F.A.M.E.T. - action n.2019-1-DK01-KA204-060186) focuses on adult education and lifelong learning. The project is aimed at developing entrepreneurial skills and is aimed at migrants and refugees who wish to start a business. The project was approved in the framework of the Erasmus Plus program KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education by the Erasmus Plus National Agency in Denmark. The project' partners are: Aalborg Universitet (Denmark); Markeut Skills Sociedad Limitada (Spain); Kainotomia & SIA EE (Greece); Danmar Computers SP ZOO (Poland); EURO-NET (Italy); Crossing Borders (Denmark). More information on on the web site <https://famet.erasmus.site/> or on the Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/FAMET-117061303388382/>.



33. Online meeting of the "CARES" project

In date 29/03/2021 took place a new online meeting of the project "Career Accessibility for Resilient Employment in STEMM" (acronym "CARES") an initiative approved in England as action n.2020-1-UK01-KA201-078909 by the National Erasmus Plus Agency in the UK. During the meeting, the partners discussed the development of the intellectual outputs to be realised within the project. The partnership consists of: Academy for International Science and Research (UK) coordinator; EURO-NET (Italy); Hilal Dogu Akademi Egitim Hizmetleri Ve Uluslararası Proje Yönetim Danışmanlığı Ticaret Ve Sanayi Limited Şirketi (Turkey); Fablab Messina (Italy); Liceul Tehnologic "Valeriu Braniste" (Romania); "Horizont ProConsult" EOOD (Bulgaria); Samsun İl Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü (Turkey).



34. Virtual meeting of the “PRIMAE ” project

In date 07/04/2021 took place an online meeting of the project "Participation and Recreation through Inclusive Martial Arts Education and E-Learning" (acronym PRIMAE). During the virtual meeting, the project partners talked about the state of the art of the activities developed and what is still to be realised. The project aims to develop an international recognition of certification and to promote martial arts education through the industry's first online platform to also facilitate inclusion of people with disabilities. The project was approved in the framework of the programme Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education by the Erasmus Plus National Agency in the UK. The partners of the project are: Ikkaido LTD (England); Areadne OE (Greece); Digital Future (Italy); EURO-NET (Italy); Ikkaido Inclusive Martial Arts (Ireland); Stockholm Västtra Idrottsförning För Funktionsnedsatta (Sweden); University of Cyprus (Cyprus); Aux Couleurs Du Deba (France). During the meeting the partners talked about the development of the platform foreseen in the project. More information about the initiative can be found on the project's Facebook page at the following link: <https://www.facebook.com/IkkaidoPrimaef/>.



35. Our Europe Direct Basilicata centre has been reconfirmed

We are pleased to inform you that our Europe Direct Basilicata centre has just been confirmed by the European Commission, with an excellent rating, as the official information centre for the next



five years. So until 2025 you can continue to count on our help, support and information on European issues. By choice of the Commission itself, the official logo of the network will also change: here is a preview of our new logo, which will replace the

historical pink. We would also like to remind you that the new generation of Europe Direct centres will start on 1 May.

36. Training and multiplier event of the "EU-ACT" projects

Since a few days the partners of the project "Europe City Teller - cultural mediation and



storytelling for tourism, between theatre, multimedia and narration" - acronym "EU-ACT" - approved, as action n.2018-1-IT02-KA204-048011, within the Erasmus Plus KA2 adult education programme by the Italian National Agency INDIRE, are developing the local training activities and planning those of the multiplier events to be completed by next June. In Italy, the theatrical training activities, developed unfortunately only on the web due to the pandemic, are carried out in

cooperation with the trainers of Teatrolab in Pisticci, while the dissemination activities to the public, organised on specific zoom platforms, make use of the cooperation of CSV (Centro Servizi Volontariato) and ASNOR (Associazione Nazionale Orientatori). The EU-ACT project, coordinated by EURO-NET, sees engaged from 01/10/2018 to 30/06/2021 (thanks to 6 months of extension obtained by INDIRE to respond to the problems caused by covid-19) a partnership composed also by the following 4 organisations: Comparative Research Network Ev (Germany), Euro-Idea Fundacja Społeczno-Kulturalna (Poland), Integralt Kifejezes- es Tancterapias Egyesulet (Hungary) and Interacting UK Limited (England). "The project - explained Antonino Imbesi, project manager of the Italian association and director of the Europe Direct Basilicata

centre - had the fundamental objective of giving value to the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018, enhancing and valorising the potential of cultural tourism in particular cities: Matera, Berlin, Krakow, Budapest and Billingham/Stockton-on-Tees. In fact, through local culture and traditions, with a mix of theatre and new digital technologies, it has been possible to develop and promote an innovative tourist offer with possible effective effects on jobs, as soon as the pandemic is over."

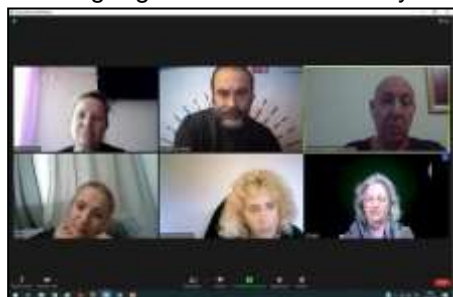


The European strategic partnership initiative has in fact developed various tourist routes in the cities indicated, enhancing the cultural and natural heritage and the legends of the territories concerned. "The project - underlined Luigi Vitelli, researcher and trainer of the EURO-NET staff - is currently offering, in each of the countries involved, a group of people the opportunity to become European Story-Tellers who, by combining history and traditions with augmented reality and 2D animations. Once the training phase is completed, we will proceed to develop the Multiplier Events in the 5 partner countries, most of them planned in virtual mode to reduce to zero the possibility of contagion". Specifically, EU-ACT has

seen the development of 3 different intellectual products: a route of theatrical visits with "guide-actors", who, in historical clothes, tell the legends of their cities; an online platform containing insights and news about these stories and locations and an augmented reality APP, for mobile devices, connected to a paper guide/game, to make use of the content created in real time and to lead tourists to discover the planned historical routes with interactive video animations. "In this

39. Brief meeting of the “yEURSTAGE” project

In date 13/04/2021 took place a short online meeting of the project "The stage is yEURs: Learning the language of the 'host' country through contemporary theatre approaches for adult educators towards the social inclusion of minority groups in Europe of leaving no one behind" (action n.2020-1-PT01-KA204-078361). The project foresees an exchange of good practices in the field of theatre and will try to use theatre to develop a better inclusion of minority groups. During the meeting, the partners discussed the next mobility and when to implement it. The European partnership is composed of the following countries: Portugal (project coordinator), Greece, Spain, Italy (with EURO-NET) and Cyprus. More information on the project is available on the official Facebook page of the project at: <https://www.facebook.com/yeurstage>.



40. “REUERHC” project draws to a close by organising multiplier events

The project "Reinforce EU Economies, Reinforcing Human Capital" (acronym REUERHC), approved in the framework of the programme Erasmus Plus KA2 VET by the Erasmus Plus National Agency INAPP as action 2018-1-IT01-KA202-006739, is heading towards its conclusion after more than 2 and a half years of activities. The partners of the strategic partnership initiative, aimed at offering the possibility to migrants and refugees to develop self-employment opportunities, are now planning the very last activities foreseen and in particular they are planning for the next weeks the multiplier events to be developed by the end of next June. In Potenza, the multiplier events will be developed partly online, on specific zoom platforms and in cooperation with CVS Basilicata and ASNOR (National Association of Guidance Providers), and partly in presence (if national and regional regulations and anticovid provisions will allow it). The REUERHC project, coordinated by the prestigious University of Venice Ca' Foscari as leader of the activities, sees engaged from 01/10/2018 to 30/06/2021 (thanks to 6 months of extension granted by INAPP to respond to the problems caused by covid-19) a partnership composed also by the following 5 European organisations: EURO-NET (Italy), S.C. Predict CSD Consulting S.R.L. (Romania), Crossing Borders (Denmark), Mobilising Expertise (Sweden) and Kirsehir Valiligi (Turkey). *"The project - explained Antonino Imbesi, project manager of EURO-NET - had the fundamental objective of helping the integration of migrants and refugees by giving them the opportunity to build a working future in the entrepreneurial sector, thus also supporting the national economies of the hosting countries."* In fact, the target group can represent a very useful workforce in different economic sectors in the various European countries, responding, moreover, to the strategic objectives of international cooperation established in the Copenhagen process in the field of education and vocational training and also to the directives of the EU strategy "Europe 2020".



"Human migration - explained Antonino Imbesi - is an age-old phenomenon dating back to the earliest periods of human history and is a complex event that touches on a multitude of economic, social and security aspects. In this context, however, it should not be forgotten that human capital from skilled migrants can be an important source of innovation in host countries and can become, if well directed, a source of development." Following these objectives, the project tried to promote useful products to support this development process by offering concrete opportunities to the most qualified migrants, encouraging them to build new business paths by creating autonomous companies and guiding this target group to a cultural growth through a research on needs, a guide for self-employment, a manual for integration and inclusion and an online training course for migrant-entrepreneurs. The European initiative, now almost concluded, can be followed on the project website <https://reuerhc.eu> or on the Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/reuerhc/>.

41. How did the idea of the “PISH” project

The project "Problem-Based Learning, Intercultural Communications and STEM in Higher Education" (acronym "PISH") is a European strategic partnership co-funded by the Erasmus Plus programme which aims to address the needs of intercultural communication in the peer-to-peer learning environment of STEM students in Higher Education Institutions. The word STEM is an acronym derived from the English "Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics" used to refer to the scientific-technological disciplines (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and related courses of study. PISH seeks to provide useful tools such as working methodologies, exercises, games, activities and other "tools" to teachers at universities to help them assist and support so-called "mixed" classes in which there are local and foreign students. The European



partnership working on the PISH project (approved by the Danish Erasmus Plus National Agency as action n.2020-1-DK01-KA203-075109) consists of Aalborg University (Denmark), EURO-NET (Italy), University of Thessaly (Greece), Crossing Borders (Denmark), Comparative Research Network (Germany), Center for Education and Innovation (Greece) and ITA Suomen Ylipisto (Finland). All interested parties can follow the project at the moment on the official Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/PISHproject/>.

42. Second and third multiplier event of the "My Community 2020"

In date 14/04/2021 and 17/04/2021 took place the second and third multiplier event of the project



"My Community 2020" (an initiative approved, as action n.2018-1- UK01-KA204-048000, by the UK Erasmus Plus National Agency within the framework of the programme Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education), Both Multiplier Events took place in presence and in full respect of the anti-covid rules (distances, masks, disinfectants, etc.). on both sides of this



articles you can see some photos taken during their development. More information on the project and on its many activities are available on the website of the initiative at <http://mycommunity2020.co.uk/> or on the official Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/My-Community-2020-893155357540688>.

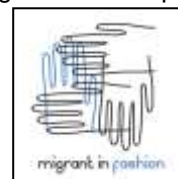
43. First TPM of the “TELEGROW” project

Today is taking the kick-off meeting of the project «Telegrow: "Enhancing the Teleworking Digital Skills for the Middle aged employees» (acronym "Telegrow") approved, as action n.2020-1-ES01-KA204-082417, by the National Agency in Spain in the framework of the programme Erasmus Plus within the special call of October 2020 dedicated to KA226 VET projects in the field of creativity and innovation. The project formally started on the 1st March 2021 and will end on 28th February 2023 after 24 months of activity, involving the following European partnership: Florida Centre De Formació, COOP. V (Spain), project coordinator; Stowarzyszenie Centrum Wspierania Edukacji I Przedsiębiorczosci (Poland); Kainotomia & SIA EE (Greece); E-Seniors: Initiation Des Seniors Aux Ntic Association (France); Markeut Skills Sociedad Limitada (Spain) and EURO-NET (Italy). The European initiative aims to provide trainers and vocational training providers with the necessary knowledge and tools to (re)train and improve the skills of employees aged over 50 and help them work efficiently from home, using teleworking consciously and effectively. More information about the meeting and the project will be available in the next issues of our newsletter.

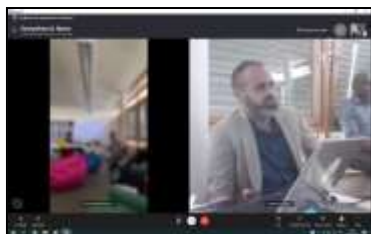


47. Multiplier Event of the “Migrant in Fashion” project in Potenza

In date 26/02/2021 took place in Potenza the multiplier event of the project “Migrant in Fashion” approved in Germany by the competent National Agency as action 2018-1-DE02-KA202-005148 and developed within the framework of the programme Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Vocational Training. During the dissemination event, aims, activities and products developed by the EU partnership, of which Godesk srl of Potenza is a member, were presented. The aim of the “Migrant in Fashion” (MF) project was to develop entrepreneurial skills in the fashion industry among migrant women aged 18-35 (first and second generation) affected by social exclusion. The project was developed by the following partnership: NGO Nest Berlin (Germany), Mine Vaganti NGO (Italy), GODESK S.R.L. (Italy), The Nest Social Cooperative Enterprise (Greece), Amities Liuxembourg (Luxembourg), SwIdeas AB (Sweden), Champions Factory Sports Club (Bulgaria). More information on the website <http://migrantinfashion.eu/> or on Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/MigrantinFashion>.



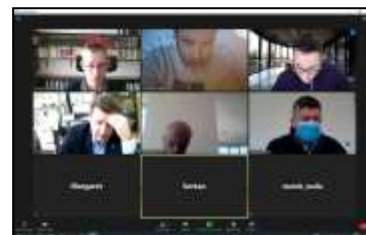
48. Kick-off meeting of the “Everywhere is home” project



In the days 02 and 03/03/2021 took place the first transnational meeting (official TPM) of the project “Everywhere is home” a project approved by the Erasmus Plus National Agency in France as action n.2020-1-FR01-KA204-080291 and aimed at sharing good practice in adult education. During the meeting (part of the partners participating in presence and part connected remotely due to the pandemic) the project, in which the Italian partner is GODESK srl, was presented. You can find more information on the official Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/everywhereishomeeu>.

49. Online meeting of the “CDRP” project

In date 08/03/2021 took place a virtual meeting of the project “Curriculum Development for Rapid Prototyping in Engineering Education” (acronym “CDRP-EN”) approved in the framework of the programme Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for higher education as action n.2018-1-TR01-KA203-059739. The partnership is composed by: Gazi University (Turkey), Danmar Computers sp z.o.o. (Poland), Universitatea Politehnica Din Bucuresti (Romania) Macdac Engineering Consultancy Bureau Ltd (Malta), GODESK SRL (Italy), Association of Academicians (Turkey), Evropska rozvojeva agentura s.r.o. (Czech Republic), SC Ludor Engineering SRL (Romania) and Gerade Yazilim Anonim Sirketi (Turkey). The project aims to transfer developments in the field of rapid prototyping. During the meeting the partners discussed the possibility of budget changes. More information on the official Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/CDRPEUPProject/>.



50. Brief online meeting of the “Sustainable Agripreneurship” project



In date 08/03/2021 took place an brief online meeting of the project “Sustainable Agripreneurship” (acronym “SustainAgri”), an initiative approved in the Czech Republic in the framework of the programme Erasmus Plus KA2 VET as action no. 2020-1-CZ01-KA202-078268. During the short meeting the project partners discussed how to develop the toolkit foreseen in the project. The project involves the following

organisations: Ceska Zemedelska Univerzita V Praze (Czech Republic), Youth Europe Service, (Italy), Dekaplus Business Services LTD (Cyprus), Exponential Training & Assessment Limited (UK), Center For Education And Innovation (Greece), 8D Games BV (Netherlands) and Trebag (Hungary). More information on the website www.sustainagri-project.eu or on the official Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/sustainableagripreneurship>.

51. Fourth meeting of the project “Foster Social Inclusion”

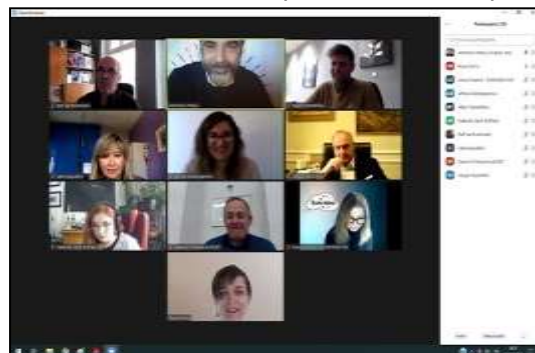
In date 16/03/2021 took place a fourth virtual meeting of the project "Foster Social Inclusion: volunteering, social entrepreneurship and art for social inclusion" (acronym Foster Social Inclusion), an initiative approved by the Polish National Agency as action n. 2019- 1-PL01-KA204-065375 as part of the Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education - Exchange of Good Practices. During the meeting, the Icelandic partner, SEEDS Iceland, presented the training module on environmental volunteering, which aims to promote intercultural understanding, environmental protection and awareness through work on environmental, social and cultural projects. It was an interesting opportunity to get to know the activities that are done with the volunteers in order to empower them, inform them and make them



aware of the world we live in so that they can take an active role in developing their own future. Moreover, the partners took stock of the activities already developed and defined the steps of the activities to be developed in the next months. More information on the project on the official Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Foster-Social-Inclusion-109112230563838/>.

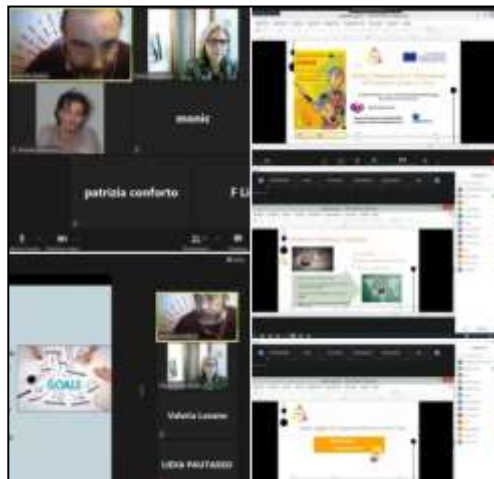
52. Meeting online of the “EUCYCLE” project

In date 06/04/2021 took place a second online meeting of the project “Upcycling Europe - Condivisione di buone pratiche sull'Economia Circolare nell'ambito di un partenariato europeo” (acronym “EUCYCLE”) - action n. 2020-1-IT01-KA202-008379 - approved by the Erasmus Plus National Agency INAPP in Italy in the framework of KA2 actions related to Exchange of good practices in Strategic Partnerships for VET and coordinated at European level by the startup company from Potenza, GODESK SRL. The project aims to promote and make known to a wider public the principles of circular economy contributing, also through the exchange of good methodological practices at international level, to create a greater awareness of the need to recycle materials as much as possible for our own good and the survival of our planet. In addition to the company from Potenza, the European partnership is composed by: Euro-Idea Fundacja Społeczno-Kulturalna (Poland), Kainotomia (Greece), the Chamber of Commerce of Basilicata (Italy), the University of Bari Aldo Moro (Italy), FA-Magdeburg GmbH (Germany) and MiTale (Finland). During the meeting, the partners reviewed the status of the communication products developed so far. The circular economy has come back to the attention of citizens and governments in recent months, both because of the pandemic and because of the European Commission's decision to launch the so-called "Green Deal", in which the project partners obviously want to actively participate, also by joining as organisations the European Climate Pact. More information on the project is currently available to the general public on the project's official Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Eucycle-project-101446965239402> or on the web site <https://eucycle.wordpress.com/>.



53. First multiplier event of the “PAESIC” project

In the date 08/04/2021, the association



Youth Europe Service in cooperation with the world-famous organisation EUROCULTURA organised the first multiplier event of the PAESIC project. The event entitled "Pedagogical Approaches for Enhanced Social Inclusion in the Classroom - PAESIC" was unfortunately held online due to the ongoing pandemic: the connection tool chosen to allow those interested to follow the event was the zoom platform. The project "PAESIC" has been approved in Denmark as action n.2018-1-DK01-KA201-047100 in the framework of the programme Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for School Education. The partnership of the initiative consists of University College Of Northern Denmark (Denmark, project coordinator), Crossing Borders (Denmark), Youth Europe Service (Italy), University Of Thessaly (Greece) and Comparative Research Network Ev

(Germany). You can find more information on the website <https://paesic.eu> or on the official Facebook page of the initiative at <https://www.facebook.com/paesic/>.

54. Online meeting of the “SPEAK” project

In date 15/04/2021 took place an online meeting of the Erasmus Plus KA2 project "Speaking skill Performance Enhancement in entrepreneurial customs for social workers" (acronym SPEAK), approved in Sweden as an innovative strategic partnership for adult education (action n.2020-1-SE01-KA204-077885). In the months during which the project will be implemented, always with a high level international partnership, the association Youth Europe Service and its European partners will experiment new ways and new innovative competences to help and professionalise more and more this category of operators. During the virtual meeting, the project website (available in all languages of the partnership) was also officially presented: you can see it at the following link: <https://www.speakproject.eu>. Of course, you can also follow the development of this interesting initiative on the project's official Facebook page at the following link: <https://www.facebook.com/SPEAK-103210721662026/>.



55. New project approved to Y.E.S. under the Erasmus Plus programme

We are pleased to inform you that the



European Commission has published the 12 projects approved in the centralised call Erasmus Plus KA3 - Support For Policy Reform - European Youth Together - Call: EACEA/10/2020. Among the approved proposals there is also the project "CONTINUE" - action 24723-EPP-1-2020-1-DE-EPPKA3-EU-YTH-TOG, coordinated by the friends of Comparative Research Network EV and in whose partnership there is also the association Youth Europe Service from Potenza. The aim of the project is

to support young people suffering from social exclusion to face the specific challenges of the postcovid period in terms of connection and integration in European communities. More information about the projects will be available soon in our next newsletters.

56. "The third way" soon on the website of the National Agency INDIRE

The Youth Europe Service association from Potenza has recently received official confirmation from the National Agency Erasmus Plus INDIRE that the animation entitled "THE THIRD WAY", which the same organisation from Potenza developed in the project "LET'S WORK FOR A REAL MIGRANTS INCLUSION!" (acronym is "LWRMI") will be published on the website of the National Agency together with an article that will tell about the work and the results achieved by this EDA partnership. This was confirmed by Dr. Valentina Riboldi, one of the communication managers of



the same National Agency, who, after watching the animated video produced by the organization from Potenza, said she was moved, defining it, moreover, "really touching and significant". *"We are pleased - underlined Dr. Riboldi of INDIRE - that the Youth Europe Service association has decided to point out its animation to the National Agency Erasmus Plus and we will be happy to publish it on the website <http://www.erasmusplus.it/> and also to relaunch it on the various social channels, also in collaboration with Epale".* The

project and all its products can be seen on the website <http://migrantinclusion.eu/> and on the official Facebook page of the initiative <https://www.facebook.com/LWRMI> while the 2D animation can also be viewed directly on the YouTube link <https://youtu.be/500xZarpCts> and, shortly, also on the website of the Erasmus Plus National Agency.

57. Second multiplier event of the "PAESIC" project

Today, 20/04/2021, at 6 p.m., takes place online. the second Multiplier Event of the project



"PAESIC" in collaboration with ASNOR. During the event the novelties of the new Erasmus+ programme will be discussed and then all the activities and products developed within PAESIC (a KA2 Strategic Partnership addressed to School Education) will be analysed, focusing on the objectives pursued and the results obtained by the



European partnership that developed it. Several qualified speakers are scheduled for the event: Annie Pontrandolfo and Peppino Franco will intervene on behalf of ASNOR giving an overview of the new European programme for the school sector, while Antonino Imbesi and Giulia Maria Provenzale will speak on behalf of Youth Europe Service about the experience developed in the mentioned Erasmus Plus project. For those who are interested, we remind you that in order to participate in the webinar, which is completely free of charge, it is necessary to register at the following link https://asnor.it/it-schede-582-erasmus_novita_2021_caso_pratico_progetto_paesic_di_youth_europe_service.