

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002214/24
to the Commission
João Oliveira (The Left)
(22 October 2024)**

Subject: Erasmus+ programme, speculation-driven rent hikes and the need to increase the number of student halls of residence

At a time of rampant speculation in the housing market, we have been alerted to a possible connection between the Erasmus+ programme and speculation-driven hikes in rent prices.

In countries such as Portugal, which traditionally host more Erasmus+ students than they send, the scant supply of student halls of residence and dearth of affordable accommodation have, alongside speculation, sent rent prices sky-rocketing in recent years.

The EUR 7.5 million in support for students announced by the Portuguese Government does nothing to address the underlying problem and may even have the undesirable effect of using public money to fuel speculation.

Instead, resources should go towards investing in increasing the supply of publicly owned student accommodation, which should also be available to Erasmus+ students.

In light of the above:

1. Has the Commission carried out an assessment of the impact of the Erasmus+ programme on rent prices?
2. Is the Commission considering measures to lessen the impact by providing specific support to the hardest hit countries?
3. What resources have been provided by the Portuguese State under the 2021-2027 MFF or the RRF to build affordable student halls of residence and what resources are still available and could be used?

Submitted: 22.10.2024

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Mînzatu on behalf of the European Commission
(6 January 2025)**

The Commission is fully aware of Member States' challenges in providing affordable, decent, and sustainable housing for all. While mobile students tend to reside in urban areas with higher rent prices, the share of mobile students tends to be relatively low compared to the overall student and local populations.

The Commission carries out systematic reviews of Erasmus+ ⁽¹⁾ individual support rates to make sure that programme participants receive adequate funding to meet living costs in their host countries.

The last comprehensive review was carried out in 2023 and led to the increased individual support for Erasmus+ participants and the differentiation of support amounts according to the living costs in various destinations.

Moreover, by complying to the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education ⁽²⁾, whose award is a prerequisite to participate in the Programme, all higher education institutions commit to providing active support to incoming participants in finding accommodation.

Furthermore, the Commission supports investment in student housing as a priority under the InvestEU ⁽³⁾ Fund and provides substantial support through the NextGeneration EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility ⁽⁴⁾, which allocates EUR 447 million in loans for the construction or rehabilitation of buildings and the modernisation and expansion of existing residences for higher education students, notably in areas where housing pressure is most acute.

This is complementary to the Portuguese national plan for housing in higher education ⁽⁵⁾ adopted in 2019. From 2021 to 2026, a 78% increase in capacity of housing for higher education students is expected in Portugal.

⁽¹⁾ <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/>

⁽²⁾ <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/resources-and-tools/erasmus-charter-for-higher-education>

⁽³⁾ https://investeu.europa.eu/index_en

⁽⁴⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/business-economy-euro/economic-recovery/recovery-and-resilience-facility/country-pages/portugals-recovery-and-resilience-plan_en

⁽⁵⁾ <https://pnaes.pt/>