

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001738/25
to the Commission
Danuše Nerudová (PPE)
(30 April 2025)**

Subject: Potential fraudulent exploitation of Erasmus+ funds

Media reports have highlighted that certain organisations, including the Turkish organisation Zift, may be potentially misusing the Erasmus+ programme. A recurring scheme reportedly involves the recruitment of individuals — often students — to establish non-governmental organisations or so-called informal youth groups in their names. Such entities are then allegedly used to apply for grants, while actual control and financial management remain with the recruiting organisations. Reports suggest that these actors have submitted inflated budgets, misrepresented expenses and diverted funds through affiliated companies, often without providing the intended educational or cultural activities. When these projects collapse, the students — who are listed as legal representatives — are said to be left financially and legally liable.

1. What measures is the Commission taking to strengthen financial oversight and prevent the potential exploitation of Erasmus+ funds by fraudulent organisations?
2. Is the Commission considering reforms to enhance auditing, accountability and enforcement mechanisms within Erasmus+, particularly to address the risks posed by intermediary actors involved in such schemes?

Submitted: 30.4.2025

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

In accordance with the Financial Regulation⁽¹⁾, the Commission ensures that recipients of EU funds comply with legal provisions on the protection of EU financial interests.

In case of breach of these obligations, the Commission may take several measures, as outlined in the grant agreement signed by the beneficiaries with the responsible National Agency (NA). These measures include grant reduction to payment suspension, suspension or termination of the grant agreement, and recovery of the paid grant amount.

In the event of suspicion of an exclusion situation, the Commission flags the relevant entity in the Early Detection and Exclusion System. When the Commission becomes aware of any suspected cases of fraud, corruption or any other illegal activity affecting the EU budget, it informs the European Anti-Fraud Office and, where applicable, the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO).

Since the introduction of simplified cost options, the risk of irregularity has been reduced to under 2% of the overall annual amount implemented. Accreditation of grant beneficiaries and the reduction in the maximum number of applications per beneficiary have also help lower the overall error risk.

NAs monitor Erasmus+ projects under the supervision of the Commission, which then analyses data from NAs to reinforce such monitoring mechanisms. Finally, the Commission also assists NAs in addressing recipients where there is greater financial or reputational risk, including via supervisory visits and audits.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj/eng>.