

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-004221/25
to the Commission
Jordan Bardella (PfE)
(27 October 2025)**

Subject: Plan to extend the Erasmus programme to countries in the Maghreb and Middle East

The Commission has announced plans to include several countries in the Maghreb and Middle East in the Erasmus programme.

Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia already account for 60 000 of the 450 000 foreign students in France. Student visas have become a channel for immigration that places a heavy burden on our university infrastructure, student housing and public finances; their cost is estimated by the Court of Auditors at EUR 1 billion per year.

Does the Commission intend to reconsider this controversial expansion of the Erasmus programme, given the out-of-control migration situation and the unreasonable costs that such an expansion would entail for Member States already facing budgetary constraints?

Submitted: 27.10.2025

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Mînzatu on behalf of the European Commission
(20 March 2026)**

The recently presented Pact for the Mediterranean ⁽¹⁾ sets out a new ambitious strategy to strengthen EU relations with its southern Mediterranean partners.

Investing in people, in growth and mobility, will reinforce the cultural, academic, social, and economic relationships between the two sides of the Mediterranean that will make Europe and the region stronger and more resilient. The Pact also focuses on security and preparedness and promotes a comprehensive approach to migration management.

There is no expansion of the Erasmus+ programme. The possibility for short term student exchanges from any region in the world towards the EU, including from the Southern Mediterranean, already exists under the international dimension of Erasmus+.

This is financed through funding stemming from the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI — Global Europe), which currently enables the mobility of around 6 000 students per year.

Erasmus+ promotes exchange and mobility of knowledge, skills, and talent across borders, contributing to brain circulation, not migration, whereby students study for a limited amount of time (from two months to one academic year) at an institution in the EU as part of their studies in their home country. Students return to their home country to finalise their studies, bringing back new skills and perspectives.

Several international studies point towards the positive impact of international student mobility in terms of enhancing teaching and research quality, fostering intercultural learning, driving innovation, and strengthening universities' global engagement. At the same time, international students contribute also significantly to local economies.

⁽¹⁾ JOIN(2025) 26 final <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025JC0026>.