

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-004395/25
to the Commission**

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(6 November 2025)

Subject: Risk of diverting Erasmus+ from its European vocation

On 16 October 2025, the Commission presented the ‘Mediterranean Pact’, which provides for the extension of Erasmus+ to several Mediterranean countries, including Algeria, Syria and the Palestinian territories.

Opening Erasmus+ to countries marked by authoritarianism and serious human rights violations would distort its very nature.

According to the Commissioner for the Mediterranean, one of the objectives of the pact is to ‘facilitate the issuing of visas’ and to ‘open legal pathways’, thereby acknowledging the transformation of Erasmus+ into a migration instrument.

Algeria is currently holding two European citizens arbitrarily, and warnings have already been issued regarding the use of Erasmus+ funds, notably following the case of Gaziantep University (Turkey).

1. How does the Commission justify betraying the fundamental values of the EU by cooperating with regimes that violate human rights, without consulting Parliament?
2. How can the Commission guarantee that Erasmus+ will remain a European and educational programme, while respecting the will of Member States to control immigration?
3. Has the Commission taken note of Parliament’s vote on the 2026 budget prohibiting any funding of entities linked to Islamism, terrorism or antisemitism, and how does it intend to take this into account in this matter?

Submitted: 6.11.2025

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Minzatu on behalf of the European Commission

(7 January 2026)

The Pact for the Mediterranean ⁽¹⁾ sets out a new ambitious strategy. By investing in people, the initiative will reinforce the cultural, academic, social and economic ties that will make Europe stronger and more resilient.

It does not result in expanding Erasmus+. The possibility for short term learning exchanges from any region in the world, including the Southern Mediterranean, towards the EU already exists under the international strand of the programme, financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument ⁽²⁾.

Under Erasmus+, students study for a limited period (2 to 12 months) at an institution in the EU as part of their studies in their home country, returning to the home country after the mobility period.

Overall, Erasmus+ promotes brain circulation, exchange and knowledge mobility and sharing of skills, not migration. Studies show concrete benefits of such mobilities for the EU, including by promoting the EU values.

Moreover, the Commission is politically committed and legally bound to ensuring that organisations and individuals that do not respect EU values, such as the rule of law, respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities, do not receive EU financial support.

A 2024 recast of the Financial Regulation ⁽³⁾ includes an exclusion ground under the Early Detection and Exclusion System for entities engaged in activities contrary to the EU values, where this negatively affects or risks affecting the performance of legal commitments taken under the EU funded programmes.

⁽¹⁾ https://north-africa-middle-east-gulf.ec.europa.eu/joint-communication-pact-mediterranean_en.

⁽²⁾ https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/document/download/1d7e2bec-d688-49a1-bcfb-a67ba667514d_en?filename=ad-mip-2024-c2024-7509-erasmus-annex_en.pdf.

⁽³⁾ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (recast).

Should the Commission become aware of evidence of such activities, it may take appropriate action by excluding the entities concerned from EU financing.
