

HOW THE MFF 2028-2034 CAN SUPPORT SPORT ORGANISATIONS' ESSENTIAL ROLE

ERASMUS+

Erasmus+ is the European Union's flagship programme for education, youth and sport and one of its most visible success stories. Demand for Erasmus+ Sport has grown steadily in recent years, demonstrating both the increasing capacity of organised sport to contribute to EU priorities and the need for greater investment.

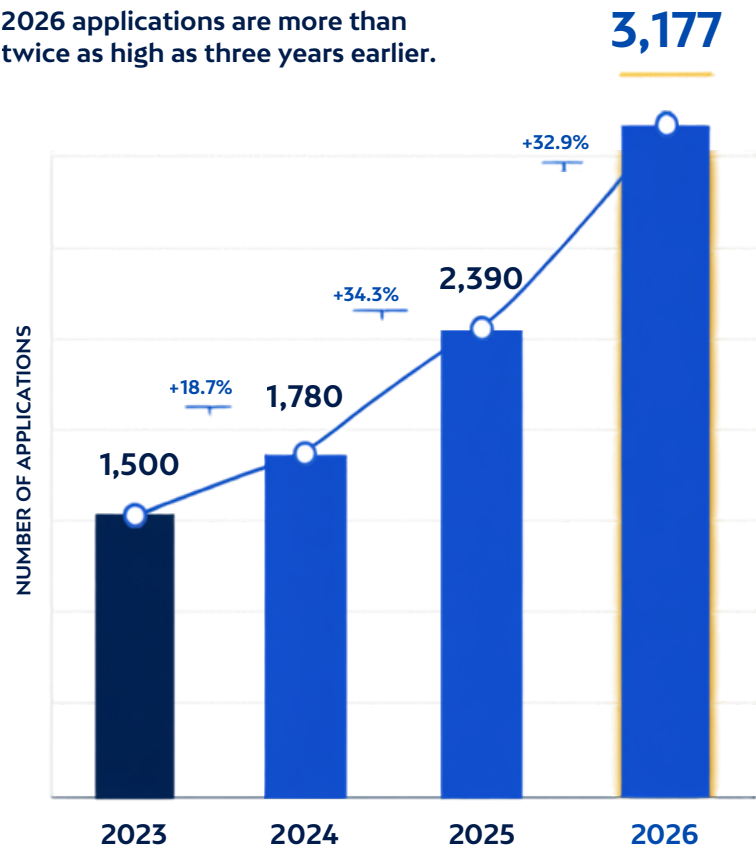
Over the past four years, Erasmus+ Sport has seen a sustained and significant increase in demand, with application numbers reaching a new record high every year. Applications rose from 1,500 in 2023 to 1,780 in 2024 (+18.7%), before increasing more sharply to 2,390 in 2025 (+34.3%) and reaching a further record of 3,177 in 2026 (+32.9%). Taken together, this sustained growth means that demand for Erasmus+ Sport has increased by almost 112% since 2023, with the number of applications in 2026 now more than twice as high as just three years earlier.

This widening gap between demand and the programme's capacity to support projects underlines the need to strengthen Erasmus+ Sport in the context of the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), ensuring that the programme can meet the needs of the sport sector and fully deliver on its potential.

The future programme should provide sufficient resources, legal certainty and flexibility to maximise sport's contribution to health, education, social inclusion, volunteering, sustainability and European cohesion.

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2026 applications are more than twice as high as three years earlier.



THE EOC EU OFFICE CALLS FOR THE FOLLOWING PRIORITIES TO SHAPE THE FUTURE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME

- provide an ambitious and sustainable Erasmus+ budget
- ensure financial stability through annual earmarking
- allocate at least 5% of Erasmus+ to sport
- maintain support for Large-Scale European Sport Events
- expand learning mobility in sport
- strengthen volunteering through Erasmus+
- preserve a balanced delivery model
- simplify access to Erasmus+
- better exploit Erasmus+ Sport results

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ERASMUS+

Provide an ambitious and sustainable Erasmus+ budget

The proposed Erasmus+ budget does not sufficiently reflect inflation, the integration of the European Solidarity Corps or the sustained growth in demand across all sectors. A stronger financial framework is essential to ensure that the programme can continue delivering its objectives while responding to emerging priorities.

THE EOC EU OFFICE THEREFORE CALLS FOR

- a minimum Erasmus+ budget of **€47.5 billion**;
- annual budget adjustments reflecting inflation; and
- sufficient flexibility to address emerging priorities without reducing existing opportunities.

Ensure financial stability through annual earmarking

Predictable annual allocations provide legal certainty for beneficiaries and National Agencies while ensuring balanced development across all sectors of the programme.

THE EOC EU OFFICE THEREFORE CALLS FOR

- annual earmarking for education, youth and sport;
- transparent publication of annual allocations and success rates; and
- predictable funding enabling long-term planning.

Allocate at least 5% of Erasmus+ to sport

Demand for Erasmus+ Sport continues to grow significantly faster than available funding. In 2025, more than **2,390 applications** were submitted, while only around **330 projects** could be supported. Future allocations should better reflect demonstrated demand and the growing contribution of sport organisations to EU policy objectives.

THE EOC EU OFFICE THEREFORE CALLS FOR

- allocating at least **5% of the Erasmus+ budget** to sport;
- future allocations based on demonstrated demand; and
- adequate funding for both grassroots and European-level sport organisations.

Maintain support for Large-Scale European Sport Events

Large-scale European sport events promote European values, volunteering, sustainability, social inclusion and regional development while generating lasting social and economic benefits. Continued support will strengthen their legacy and long-term contribution to communities across Europe.

THE EOC EU OFFICE THEREFORE CALLS FOR

- maintaining a dedicated annual Erasmus+ call;
- encouraging projects with measurable legacy and grassroots impact; and
- enabling multi-annual planning for recurring European events.

Expand learning mobility in sport

Learning mobility should reflect the diversity of the European sport movement and support knowledge exchange across all functions within sport. Expanding mobility opportunities would strengthen skills development, innovation and peer learning throughout the sector.

THE EOC EU OFFICE THEREFORE CALLS FOR MOBILITY OPPORTUNITIES FOR

- athletes;
- coaches and technical officials;
- volunteers;
- administrative staff (paid or volunteer) and personnel (paid or volunteer) supporting strategic activities (e.g. governance; safeguarding, integrity, sustainability, inclusion, etc.)
- stronger peer learning between National Olympic Committees, federations and grassroots organisations.

Strengthen volunteering through Erasmus+

The integration of the European Solidarity Corps into Erasmus+ provides an opportunity to better recognise the role of volunteers, who represent the backbone of organised sport across Europe.

THE EOC EU OFFICE THEREFORE CALLS FOR

- removing or significantly broadening existing age limits, recognising that most sport volunteers are over the age of 25;
- recognising sport organisations as both hosting and sending organisations; and
- supporting volunteering as a pathway to lifelong learning and active citizenship.

Preserve a balanced delivery model

National Agencies play a vital role in ensuring that Erasmus+ remains accessible to grassroots organisations, while centralised actions remain essential for strategic European cooperation. Preserving both approaches will maximise the programme's impact.

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- maintaining centralised and decentralised management models, ensuring coherence and complementarity between them and reflecting the different needs and scope of sport stakeholders operating at national and European levels;
- ensuring consistent interpretation of programme rules; and
- providing clear guidance on the most appropriate funding route.

Simplify access to Erasmus+

Administrative requirements should remain proportionate to project size and organisational capacity. Simplification would improve accessibility, particularly for smaller grassroots organisations and first-time applicants.

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- wider use of simplified cost options;
- harmonised application and reporting procedures;
- clearer guidance and digital tools; and
- proportionate audit requirements.

Better exploit Erasmus+ Sport results

Hundreds of Erasmus+ Sport projects have generated valuable knowledge, innovative practices and practical tools. Greater dissemination, peer-to-peer learning and uptake would maximise the long-term impact of EU investment and strengthen the link between funded projects and future sport policy, while avoiding the duplication of efforts.

THE EOC EU OFFICE THEREFORE CALLS FOR

- systematic dissemination of project results;
- european communities of practice and peer learning;
- scaling up successful project outcomes; and
- stronger links between Erasmus+ Sport projects and EU sport policy.