

Newsletter

February 2026



22ND ERASMUS CONGRESS AND EXHIBITION

Under the Auspices of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the EU 2026



Dates: 22–26 June 2026

Venue: Aliathon Resort, Paphos, Cyprus

The European Association of Erasmus Coordinators (EAEC) is pleased to announce the 22nd annual Erasmus Congress and Exhibition – ERACon 2026. This flagship event will bring together Erasmus Coordinators, Placement and Internship Managers, researchers, and professionals from academia and industry to exchange experiences and best practices.

The Congress will feature:

- Workshops & Sessions on Erasmus+ 2021–2027, quality of ERASMUS+ activities, staff mobility, funding, and policy.
- Erasmus Staff Week with training and collaboration opportunities.
- Meeting with representatives of European ERASMUS+ National Agencies
- Networking for future KA2 projects
- University-to-University Meetings to initiate or strengthen partnerships
- Go-Exchange Fair for networking and mobility opportunities

Proposals for sessions, workshops, and paper presentations are welcome, giving participants the chance to actively shape the future of Erasmus.

More information: eracon.info

Registration: ERACon 2026 Registration

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Erasmus+ Programme Countries – Updated Status

The Erasmus+ programme continues to expand opportunities for learning, mobility and cooperation across Europe and beyond. Full participation in all Erasmus+ actions is currently available to the 27 EU Member States, as well as to the non-EU associated countries North Macedonia, Serbia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Türkiye. Together, these countries form the group of Erasmus+ Programme Countries, with full access to mobility, partnerships and funding opportunities.

An important upcoming development is the return of the United Kingdom to Erasmus+. Following an agreement between the UK and the European Union, the UK will re-join the programme from January 2027, allowing students, apprentices, educators and youth workers to participate again under the Erasmus+ framework. This will restore mobility grants for study, traineeships and staff exchanges and strengthen educational cooperation across Europe.

In addition to programme countries, Erasmus+ also includes partner countries from regions such as the Western Balkans, the Eastern Neighbourhood, the Southern Mediterranean, Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, Asia and beyond. Partner country organisations may participate in selected Erasmus+ actions, particularly in international mobility and cooperation projects, reinforcing the programme's strong global dimension.

Erasmus+ Funding & Calls of 2026

The 2026 Erasmus+ funding calls are now officially open with an overall budget of around €5.2 billion. Key highlights include:

- New action for schools: European Partnerships for School Development to support innovative teaching and skills development in school education.
- Continued funding for mobility, partnerships, cooperation projects, and Jean Monnet activities to integrate EU topics into curricula.
- This call strengthens Erasmus+ support for digital skills, green skills and civic engagement.

This means schools, HEIs, VET organisations and youth groups can prepare proposals now for activities starting in 2026.

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European Universities Initiative – 2026 Call Open

The **Erasmus+ European Universities call** for 2026 has opened, with **€145.6 million** available to support:

- Alliances of higher education institutions that are already cooperating transnationally.
- Continuation and scaling of long-term institutional strategies.
- Participation by eligible HEIs from the **Western Balkans** as part of European Universities alliances.
- A “Seal of Excellence” will recognise high-quality proposals not funded due to budget limits.

This reinforces the Erasmus+ focus on *deep institutional cooperation and integration*.

EU-UK Youth Mobility Initiative

Alongside Erasmus+ association talks, the EU and UK agreed to work toward a **new youth mobility scheme** covering short-term activities like work, volunteering, au-pairing, training and travel. This initiative aims for a **dedicated visa pathway** and **mutually agreed participant numbers**, improving opportunities for young people on both sides.

EU PROJECT - News

SMILE Project Officially Launched

The SMILE project (Supporting Mobility and Internationalization for Learning and Engagement in Somali HEIs) **officially kicked off on 20 January 2026 with its first online consortium meeting, bringing together partner organizations from Somalia and Europe**.

SMILE is a 36-month initiative aiming to strengthen the internationalization capacity of Somali Higher Education Institutions by **promoting academic mobility, institutional cooperation, and digital education**. During the meeting, partners aligned on project objectives, management structures, and initial deliverables, and discussed the core implementation pillars focusing on capacity building, strategic development, and dissemination.

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The consortium also confirmed its **first in-person meeting and mobility activity, scheduled for April 2026 in Ankara, hosted by Middle East Technical University (METU)**.

As a project partner, we are pleased to contribute to this collaborative effort, which seeks to enhance institutional tools, strategies, and sustainable international engagement for Somali universities.



GREEN ROOFS - Final TPM & Conference in Cyprus

The GREEN ROOFS project successfully concluded with two key events in **Nicosia, Cyprus** this summer. The **Final Transnational Project Meeting (3-4 July 2025)**, hosted by the European Association of Erasmus Coordinators (EAEC), brought partners together to review achievements, showcase the final training course, the dedicated **Moodle platform**, and innovative “learning snacks” for Green Roof technicians, as well as finalize dissemination and pilot results.

On **3 July 2025**, the **Final Conference** gathered experts, stakeholders, and citizens for an evening of dialogue on sustainability and greener cities. Inspiring contributions came from **Gregory Makrides (EAEC)**, **Szymon Dawczyński (Politechnika Śląska)**, **Stephanie Frangou (EAEC)**, and **Cristina Calheiros**, who highlighted the project’s results, challenges, and future opportunities in sustainable architecture.

Although the project officially ends in **August 2025**, its legacy will continue through openly available resources on the **project website** [[link](#)] and the **Moodle platform** [[link](#)], offering **tools for students, teachers, and professionals to promote green skills and sustainable innovation across Europe**.



U.BI.TEACH - Focus Groups, Competence Model & Upcoming Events

The U.BI.TEACH project, which promotes innovative teaching on **urban biodiversity** in higher education, has recently published two key results: the **Focus Groups Report** and the **Competence Model**. Conducted across partner countries, the focus groups gathered valuable input from teachers, academics, and training experts to shape the U.BI.TEACHing Pack. Building on this, the Competence Model identifies the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to integrate innovative methods into urban biodiversity classrooms.

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Looking ahead, the consortium will meet again in **Piraeus, Greece, on 24–25 November 2025** for the next project meeting and a Learning, Teaching, and Training Activity (LTTA). Stay tuned for more results and resources, all available on the [project website](#).



GREENENTRE4DEAF - Building Inclusive Green Entrepreneurship Pathways

Launched in **December 2024**, the GREENENTRE4DEAF project is paving the way for inclusive and innovative education in **green entrepreneurship** for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) learners across Europe. The consortium is currently developing **VR-based scenarios** that will allow learners to explore green professions and entrepreneurial practices in immersive environments.

To ensure the tools truly reflect real needs, partners have been conducting **interviews with green companies** to capture their sustainable practices and assess their willingness to employ or collaborate with DHH professionals. At the same time, the **EAEC, in collaboration with Emphasys Centre**, has engaged directly with the DHH community and education professionals through targeted meetings, bringing together DHH adults, higher education experts, and green industry representatives. These exchanges are vital for shaping the project's outputs and ensuring accessibility, relevance, and impact.

The work ahead will focus on expanding these insights into the **GREENENTRE4DEAF Living Hub** and preparing the validation and training tools that will empower DHH learners and green entrepreneurs alike. Stay tuned for more results and opportunities to engage!

GREENENTRE4DEAF website: <https://greenentre4deaf.eu/>



D.E.F - Digital Entrepreneurship for the Future

The **D.E.F project** is all about helping students and young professionals gain the **digital and entrepreneurial skills** they need to succeed in today's fast-changing economy. Partners are now working on the first tools and resources, which will include a **skills framework** and **training materials** to support both universities and young entrepreneurs.

These results will soon be tested and shared with educators, learners, and businesses across Europe - creating new opportunities for innovation, collaboration, and growth.

[Website](#)

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DATA-READY - Advancing Data Literacy in European Schools

The **DATA-READY project** is making important strides in promoting **data literacy in compulsory education** across Europe. Recent research in Greece, Poland, Germany, Portugal, and Cyprus revealed that data literacy remains **fragmented in curricula**, with minimal teacher training and few dedicated resources. These findings underscore the urgency for national and EU-level strategies so all students can critically engage with data.

In Cyprus, we held **focus groups with educators** to explore current practices and co-design future actions to support data literacy. The project is also building partnerships: we've met virtually with the **EVIDALI** and **InclusiveFuture** projects to explore collaborative synergies.

As the dissemination leader, EAEC is committed to sharing these insights widely. Read the full report here: [DATA-READY D2.1 Report \(August 2025\)](#)

[Website](#)



CREATIVEinGREEN - Towards a Sustainable UX Future

The CREATIVEinGREEN project is shaping the next generation of **e-User Experience Designers** who can bridge creativity, technology, and sustainability. Together with partners from Portugal, Italy, Turkey, Bulgaria, Cyprus, France, and Greece, we are developing a curriculum that combines **digital skills** (design, IT, XR) with **soft skills** (entrepreneurship, communication, innovation).

Alongside this, we are co-creating an **interactive learning tool and serious game** where students explore green and digital practices in immersive ways. The game challenges learners to make creative design choices with real environmental impact — building awareness, skills, and critical thinking in a fun format.

Teacher and student interviews are also helping us shape tools that truly respond to real needs. Stay tuned for the piloting of our game and the release of first results!

[Website](#)

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STEAME ACADEMIES CONFERENCE 2026 - Paphos!

12-16 March 2026 - Paphos, Cyprus: Open for application to participate in the **European STEAME Academies Conference 2026** at Aliathon Resort. Join educators, researchers, policy makers, and industry partners in shaping the schools of tomorrow. Registration is free (subsistence fee applies) and co-funding support is available.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more information

Together, we're building a strong community of STEAME Teacher Facilitators - innovators ready to transform European education.

More info: <https://steame-academy.eu/>, www.federation-steame-academies.eu



SignVET - Inclusive VET Through Sign Language

The **SignVET project** is making vocational education and training (VET) more inclusive for **Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) learners** across Europe. Its main goals are to:

- Equip VET teachers to create materials in national sign languages.
- Improve access to VET for DHH students.
- Promote sign language learning among hearing students.

So far, the consortium has held an **online Kick-off (Feb 2025)** and two meetings in **Porto (Mar 2025)** and **Bilbao (May 2025)** and the next in **Nicosia (March 2026)** building a strong base for collaboration. As **QA and Dissemination leaders**, EAEC is ensuring quality and visibility as work now shifts toward the project's first tools for teachers and learners.

[Website](#)



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This newsletter highlights how our projects bring innovation, sustainability, and inclusion into European education. The journey continues and we invite you to stay connected, share our news, and join us in shaping the future of learning across Europe.

GET IN TOUCH

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