

‘Erasmus for All’ or for some?

*“Chambers still don’t believe that sufficient importance is attached to Vocational Education and Training. European academic institutes continue to receive funds, but we don’t see the equivalent in the VET environment. And where are the structures that are required by companies to increase the Europe-wide mobility of apprentices? Such structures might work nationally, but we need them at European level. **Otherwise, Erasmus will remain for some and not for all**”, said Arnaldo Abruzzini, Secretary General of EUROCHAMBRES, commenting on today’s proposals by the European Commission for the 2014-2020 education programme ‘Erasmus for All’.*

Per contra, EUROCHAMBRES welcomed the simplification effect which unifies all former programmes under one umbrella and alleviate administration through the involvement of a single agency per country.

Mr. Abruzzini added, “All measures to cut red tape and trim administrative costs are appreciated in the current climate, so we welcome the rationalization of the many previous education initiatives that this new programme delivers. We should avoid, however, that this exercise remains just an administrative burden reduction without a strategy focused on preparing the entrance in the labour market”.

‘Erasmus for All’ is of course just one piece in the large and hugely complex Multiannual Financial Framework proposal of the Commission for the post 2014 EU Budget. Nonetheless, education is universally recognized as a vital element for Europe’s recovery and growth. EUROCHAMBRES therefore urges the European Parliament and the member states to resist any temptation to trim the overall €15.2 billion education budget and instead focus on ensuring that the elements and balance of the programme reflect the needs of key stakeholders, notably the business community.

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