

## **Travel trends within Erasmus mobility programs**

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### **Abstract:**

*Nowadays, the terms of travel have become something basic and people are more open to travel, not only in the border limits of Romania, but further. Erasmus+ program is a program that opens the opportunity for students and staff to travel for mostly educational purposes and supported financially with a grant. Being part of this program, I observed that people who choose to participate in such programs are more open to travel and it seems they get the taste of it. This paper presents a study how it influences and what is the impact of the thinking of the people who take part in such programs and how participation in Erasmus programs affects the travel trends of young students.*

**Keywords:** *Erasmus+ Program; youth; travel, tendency impact.*

**JEL Classification:** *L83, P3*

### **Introduction**

This article analyses the impact of the perception of travel after taking part in the Erasmus+ mobility. In general Erasmus+ is a program that gives you the opportunity to travel in other countries with cultural and educational purpose but besides that you get to know the city and the country you get in. Traveling is an important indicator in economy in every country, but unfortunately in Romania youth travel is not taken seriously. One form of perception of the impact is interviewing some student and to see what the perception of travel was, and the effects were on their view after Erasmus+ program. Besides the study I did, I took in consideration statistics that describe Erasmus+ programs and how we see improvement or worsening in diverse things. Erasmus+ program is one of the most important educational programs from European Union that have a big impact on student that choose to study in another university from another country.

### **Literature review**

In general, when we talk about Erasmus+ program there is a lot of study about how it influences the foreign language and how beneficiary of the program like it in general. All the time when finish a program, you should complete a questionnaire, where you describe your experience about how the sending institute and your receiving institute

treat you. As well they are searching for difficulties that beneficiary meet during the program. As I look for information about the impact of the Erasmus+ program on the tendency of traveling of the youth, Teichler<sup>1</sup> analyzed how Erasmus+ fosters long-term travel habits and a global outlook, revealing that alumni often continue engaging in international travel and cultural exchanges after their study period. Per general it is mention that one motivation to participate in such programs is that you can travel so you can see the world and how it is improving globalization and the European union perception. As well I observed that in the Romania statistics about youth travel It is less articles, mostly I think this is because this field is hard to predict so it is harder to read. A tourist is about the thinking, how open it is to the world and how open is it to try something new or to discover new places.

### **Erasmus+ program and statistics in Romania**

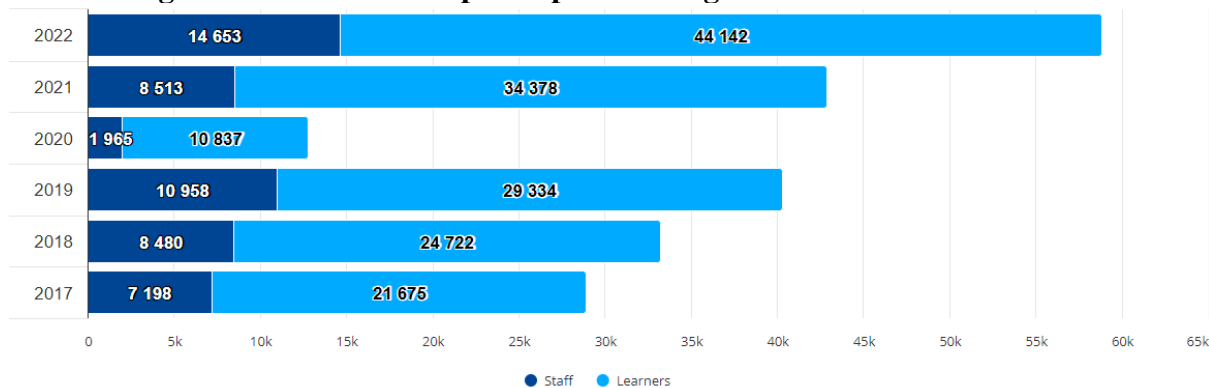
The concept of Erasmus was originally established by the European Union in 1987. In addition to being the acronym for the European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students, the word Erasmus refers to the famous theologian and humanist Erasmus of Rotterdam, born in Holland in 1467. Having spent years in France, splitting his time between Orléans and Paris, the Dutch scholar relocated to England in 1499. The fame that quickly followed propelled him to explore Italy, where he visited many of the stunning cities on the Peninsula, including Bologna, Venice, and Naples, to mention a few. It was likely these invaluable experiences that motivated him, upon his return to England, to compose his masterpiece, "In Praise of Folly," a humorous yet stinging critique of human arrogance, which became a key work in the global philosophical and literary canon. Considering these reflections, there couldn't be a more fitting starting point to name the Lifelong Learning Program, which was established in 1987 due to Sofia Corradi's initiative, now referred to as "Mother Erasmus." His existence was therefore a continuous series of journeys and explorations, which provided him the chance to broaden his perspective, ultimately becoming the genuine pioneer of the cultural revival. From the official statistics about Erasmus+ program we can observe a lot of things. Firstly, we can see how each year the number of people who choose to take part in this program is bigger, the only year where we can see lower number is the Covid -19 pandemic year that was restrictive from all round the world and had a great impact on the numbers of participants and on the program direct. As well I want to quote "Travel decisions are often implicitly made by making a holistic, intuitive assessment in

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<sup>1</sup>Teichler (2004), in "The Changing Role of Student Mobility" published in the European Journal of Education

which the various assessments of individual aspects are cognitively integrated”<sup>2</sup>, I can say that this intuitive approach explains how Erasmus+ participants choose their destinations, based on a combination of personal factors and external information, rather than strictly rational analysis.

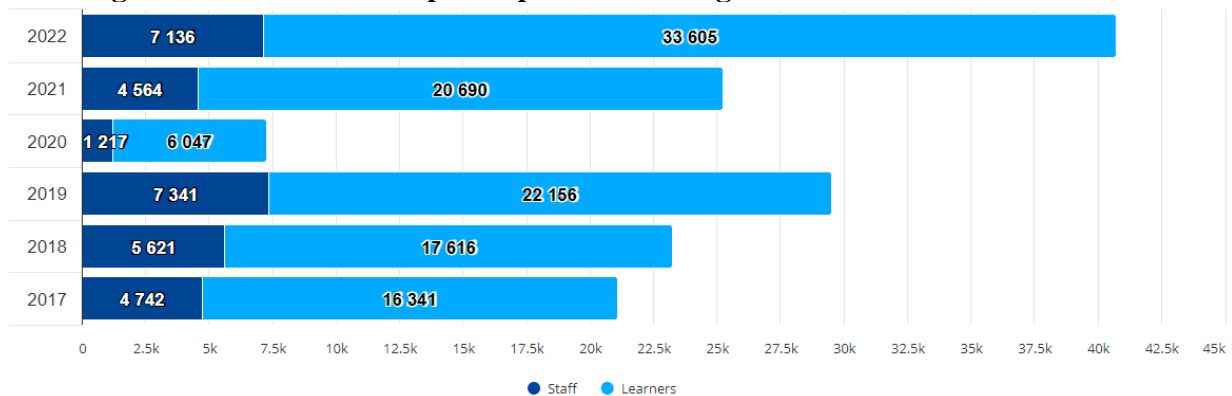
**Figure no. 1- Erasmus+ participant leaving Romania in 2017-2022**



Source: [Erasmus+ Romania in 2022 1.pdf](#)

In 2022 we can see that the numbers of the people who choose to travel with Erasmus+ program leaving Romania reaches the number of 14.653 staff people and 44.142 students. In comparison with 2017 where the number was 7.198 staff people and 21.676 students which almost describe half of it.

**Figure no. 2 – Erasmus+ participants travelling to Romania in 2017-2022**



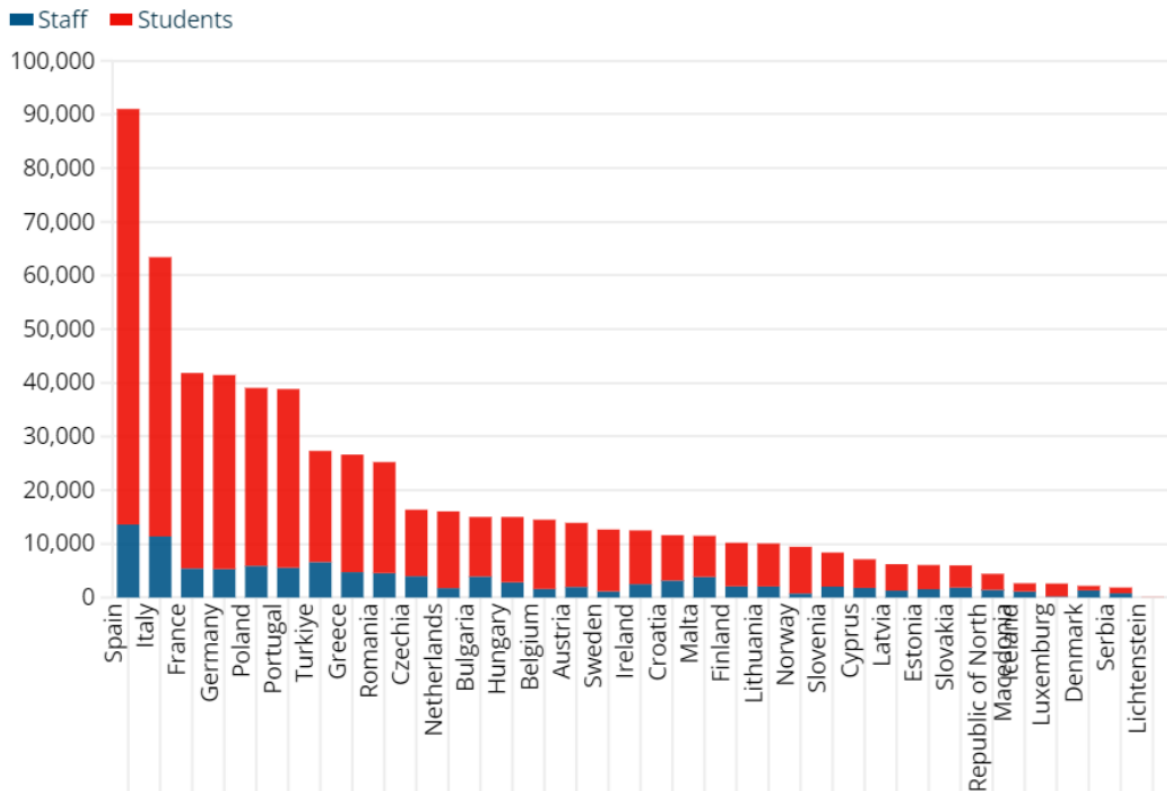
Source: [Erasmus+ Romania in 2022 1.pdf](#)

On the other side statistics that describe people that choose to travel to Romania with this program is smaller but still present. In 2022 it reached the number of 7.136

<sup>2</sup> Bărbuc, R. (2022). *The impact of social networks on tourism marketing*. *Social Economic Debates*, 11(2).

staff people and 33.605 students. Unfortunately, performing the calculations of the difference between the two statistics, we observe a negative indicator where people choose to leave the country than choosing a place to come in. In 2022 there is a difference of 10.537 students and 7.517 participants staff more to choose to leave Romania to study in another country.

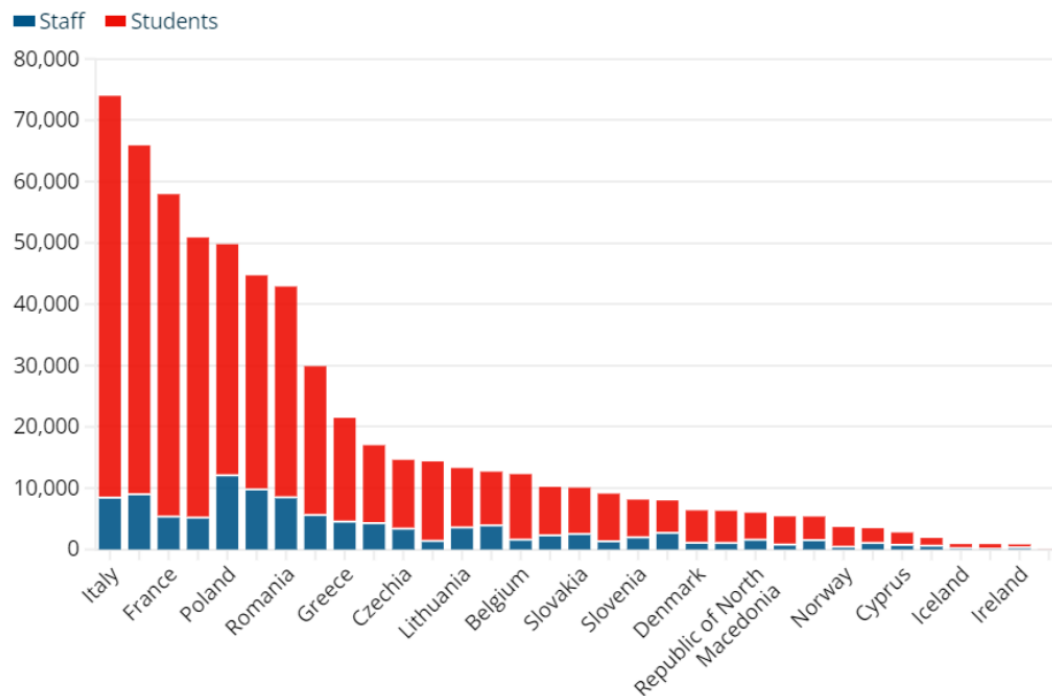
**Figure no. 3 –Countries where participants of Erasmus+ program choose to go  
2021**



Source: <https://www.umcs.pl/en/news,13550,erasmus-decoded-where-do-europes-students-go-when-they-study-abroad,129050.chtm>

We can observe what are the mostly selected countries for the Erasmus+ program like Spain, Italy, France or Germany where the number of student are higher than 40.000 student in 2023. At the same time first two inregistre a number higher than 60.000 student in 2023,this is Spain and Italy.

**Figure no. 4-Countries from where are participants of Erasmus+ program 2021**



Source: <https://www.umcs.pl/en/news,13550,erasmus-decoded-where-do-europes-students-go-when-they-study-abroad,129050.chtm>

According to Agnieszka Gryglicka <sup>3</sup>, statistics from European Comision are showing us that participants mostly choose to go in Mediterranean countries which is Spain and Italy. On the other side the lower point on both lists is Liechtenstein where only 88 students apply to study there in 2021 and only 53 participants from Liechtenstein choose to leave to study in another country. In comparison with Spain who received 77 406 students from other countries and who sent 56 896 students to study abroad.

<sup>3</sup> Agnieszka Gryglicka, Erasmus decoded: Where do Europe's students go when they study abroad?" published on 13 March 2023, <https://www.umcs.pl/en/news,13550,erasmus-decoded-where-do-europes-students-go-when-they-study-abroad,129050.chtm>

**Figure no.5- Groups of finance differentiated funding within the Erasmus program  
2022/2023**

	Countries
Group 1	Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden, *1
Group 2	Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, *2
Group 3	Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, North Macedonia, Turkey

Source: [European Commission](#) • \*1 - Third countries not associated to the Programme from Region 14  
\*2 - Third countries not associated to the Programme from Region 13

euronews.

Source: <https://www.umcs.pl/en/news,13550,erasmus-decoded-where-do-europes-students-go-when-they-study-abroad,129050.chtm>

In 2022/2023 the grant offered for the first groups of student is 600 euro per month, for second group represent 540 euro, and for the third group the financial support represent 490 euro per month. From the statistics that show us the most chosen country we can observe that not only the measure of the grant influence which country to choose, there are more criteria and I think one of them is the traveling zone and the touristic interest.

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization <sup>4</sup>(UNWTO), young tourists spend between 1000 and 6000 USD per trip, stay longer (up to 50 days) and spend an average of 1450 USD per tourist, but at the same time statistics that describe youth tourist in Romania is not properly calculating better to say are mostly ignored. Being a youth tourist you are having diverse motivation firstly we are talking about improving your own confident, to create new connections and friendships, to develop a new perspective. Besides this getting out of your comfort zone you get to know yourself and to discover your powers that maybe you didn't know. Youth is a category of people who choose to travel even if something bad is happening round the world. It is less affected by different circumstances economic problems, political unrest or health epidemics. A WYSE Travel Confederation survey of young travelers' views on the 2014 Ebola outbreak indicated that this global health scare had little impact on their travel plans. The general situation is that youth markets usually exhibit lower volatility compared to the tourism market overall. Data from the 2009 and 2010 WYSE Youth Travel Industry Monitor revealed that while the youth tourism sector experienced impacts from the global financial crisis, it experienced a smaller decline, and a faster recovery compared to mainstream tourism.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations World Tourism Organization, <https://www.wysetc.org/research/the-power-of-youth-travel/>

### **Interview with students that have been with Erasmus+**

To see how student thinks I decided to interview and to ask some of them about Erasmus+ program. Students are from different years, specialization from the university “1 Decembrie 1918 ” from Alba Iulia. I tried to choose student as women as men and to select people with a lot of Erasmus+ experience as well students with very low experience. At the questions answered 12 students, some of them with longer answer, some with shorter and bellow I am gone describe the conclusion from the interview.

*Below I will bring some important details about those who were interviewed:*

1. Avram Larisa, gender: F, Republic of Moldova, Informatics 2nd year, participated in 4 Erasmus+ BIP type programs
2. Jorovlea Dumitru, gender: M, Republic of Moldova, ECTS 2nd year, participated in 2 Erasmus+ programs, among which are long-term and BIP type education programs
3. Bzovii Elena, gender: F, Republic of Moldova, PABD 2nd year, participated in 8 Erasmus+ programs, among which are placement, long-term and BIP type education programs
4. Drăgan Andrei, gender: M, Romania, PABD 2nd year, participated in an Erasmus+ BIP type program.
5. Goreanu Maria, gender F, Republic of Moldova, AACTS year 1, participated in 5 Erasmus+ programs, including placement, long-term education and BIP programs
6. Todorova Margarita, gender:F, Republic of Moldova, Informatics year 2, participated in one Erasmus+ BIP program
7. Scutelnic Sergiu, gender:M, Republic of Moldova, Informatics year 2, participated in 4 Erasmus+ BIP programs
8. Neagu Alexandru, gender: M, Republic of Moldova, Marketing year 2, participated in 6 Erasmus+ programs, including long-term education and BIP programs
9. Neagu Gheorghe, gender: M, Republic of Moldova, Applied Electronics year 4, participated in one placement mobility.
10. Rusu Alexandru, gender: M, Republic of Moldova, Informatics year 2, participated in one placement mobility.
11. Bârlog Raul-Claudiu, gender: M, Romania, AACTS year 2, participated in one BIP type educational mobility.
12. Faur Vlad-Alexandru, gender: M, Romania, ECTS year 3, participated in one placement program and 9 BIP type educational programs, of which he was a volunteer in 2 of them.

At the interview I can saw that people choose this program to travel because this give them answers to themselves. One commune opinion is that this type of activity helps you to accept the diversity. People choose to travel further in other countries to get



opportunities because being at home there are not such activities or there a less. Being always with a lot of people you get used and you become more responsible and it rise your empathized and tolerance grade. Getting out of the zone of comfort is not always easy, but this helps you to understand yourself better and to see your professional aspects as well. With Erasmus+ program you get international experience where you mostly should use foreign languages. Besides languages skill you improve your analytic thinking and critic thinking and how you can see situation from different perspectives.

At the interview students answer about tourism faze that Erasmus+ is the first taste of travel if you hadn't travel abroad yet. Grants are great financial support for all students even for those who are in more vulnerable situation. Unfortunately, with years prices for living and services got bigger, but grant is still the same. As well from the answers we can observe that student get more impact of Erasmus+ program as they implicate more and take part more at this type of experience. In general, your touristic competence increases not only cultural level but how you orient in space and how you manage difference situation that spontaneous appear. At the most essential question where I asked how important was the impact of Erasmus+ program on yourself I received answers where I concluded that more implicated in program was the student more essential it was. This is because if the student has more program where he or she participated the bigger impact it has.

### **Conclusion**

In the end I can say that Erasmus+ program has a great impact on students because mostly they want to find their self and to get out from comfort zone. The beauty of being a tourist you can understand only by being at least once in this position. With this program students that never had this opportunity or maybe get financial problems can apply for such a program where they can improve not only professional skills but as well can get the taste of traveling. The experience you can get there helps you to accumulate diverse competence and to get the ability to work in international teams. Students are the next generation, and they are our future. If they understand the importance of travelling, they will begin to appreciate their own culture and they will be more open to the world and the idea of globalization. Traveling is not only about changing your place it is a way of relaxing, of developing, of formatting yourself and way of helping you to meditate to recovery yourself. Travelling is not just a word it is a way of living and Erasmus+ is an instrument that gives student this opportunity. Even from the beginning the inspiration came from Erasmus from Rotterdam from XV century where he chooses to travel and where he has continuous series of journeys and explorations where he was able to open his mind.



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Beneficiary of the scientific performance scholarship in the University “1 Decembrie 1918” from Alba Iulia for the period July-December 2024.