



Erasmus+

MANIFESTO

The Erasmus+ Generation for the Earth

A Vision for 2050




*Four Themes
Eighteen Dreams
a Call to Action for
One Future*


A Vision for 2050





We dream of a world where people, planet,
and participation stand together.


This is our vision for 2050


 We dream of a world where every child grows as a guardian of the Earth, and learning becomes a planetary mission.


 We dream of a work that fulfils and education that liberates, where fairness, transparency and human connection replace stress and inequality.

 We dream of a Europe at peace with itself and with nature: walkable, clean, connected and open to the world.

 We dream of a generation without borders: free to move, learn and build across continents.

 We dream of cities that breathe, economies that regenerate and technologies that serve democracy.

 We dream of accountability with teeth, where climate promises turn into law and equality becomes constitutional.

 We dream of a future built together, by the Erasmus+ Generation, for everyone who comes next.

Introduction

This work was carried out in Rome, on April 16th and 17th 2026, by almost 150 Erasmus+ international higher education students gathered for the transnational cooperation initiative *The Erasmus+ Generation for the Earth*. The event took place at the Pincio, in the Villa Borghese park.

Students came from 20 European Programme Countries and from Italian universities.

They were all extremely committed to environmental sustainability. In fact, sustainability was part of their academic courses, or they had opted for the Erasmus+ green travels during their international mobility scheme, or they were actively involved in civic society organizations related to fighting the climate and ecological crisis.

The goal of the event was to involve students in a productive discussion over environmental sustainability and consequently to trace the concrete role of younger generations in addressing the climate emergency and implementing the ecological transition.

The main output of the event was the creation of the Manifesto of the Erasmus+ Generation.

Methodology

Before working in groups, participants received structured perspectives on the climate and ecological crisis by internationally recognized keynote speakers who provided the right inputs in order to make students cooperating to find mutual solutions for the analyzed problems. The Climate Fresk was offered to participants. Climate Fresk is a collaborative workshop based on the IPCC reports. It is a powerful tool for providing a quality climate education. It teaches the fundamental science behind climate change so to empower people to take action and build solutions. Afterwards, students worked in small groups on the content of the Manifesto.

Sinergies

The Erasmus+ Generation for the Earth initiative is a transnational cooperation initiative of the Erasmus+ programme promoted by the Erasmus+ National Agency INDIRE in collaboration with Earth Day Italy. The event was supported by the European Commission, the Italian Ministry of University and Research, the Italian Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security, the SALTO Green.

Output

The Manifesto offers a comprehensive vision for 2050:

4 themes, broken down into 18 dreams for 1 future: the one of a Generation who deserves to live its life on the beloved Planet Earth. It also includes a clear call to action for policymakers capable of listening, embracing and acting now, with courage and determination.

The four main areas are: active participation, education and work, Europe's role in the global context and building the future. Key themes include integrating environmental education into school curricula, promoting sustainable cities and circular economic models, strengthening binding climate responsibility mechanisms for businesses and expanding opportunities for international mobility and exchange through the use of green, low-impact transportation.

Considerable attention is also given to the relationship between education and skills, with proposals for more inclusive educational models geared toward critical thinking, as well as for the world of work, with a focus on fairer, more transparent, and more sustainable conditions. Within the European framework, the document emphasizes the need for common policies on energy, mobility, and social cohesion, as well as strengthening the democratic dimension and cooperation between Member States.

The Manifesto aims to be the Erasmus+ Generation's contribution to the international climate debate and to the future European political agendas, with particular reference to upcoming global events, particularly the road to COP31 scheduled for November 2026 in Antalya, Turkey. It aims to give voice to the skills, creativity, and civic responsibility of European students in the fight against climate change.





THEME 01 Active Participation

Identity and relevance of the voice of participants in inclusive participation

PEOPLE & PLANET

1 EDUCATION AS A PLANETARY MISSION

No child left unaware of their role in the planet's future.



Build — A European-wide law embedding climate into every subject from preschool; a 12-year track (6 years on the crisis, 6 on the solutions); schools as living ecosystems with outdoor classrooms and local canteens.



Run — Standardised tests abolished: students graduate by designing real-world impact projects, supported by a unified online Digital Commons for lifelong learning.



2050 — Every student becomes a guardian of the Earth; classroom theory and real-world impact are no longer separated.

2 LIVING, CIRCULAR CITIES

Concrete cities transformed into living ecosystems, where citizens lead the circular revolution.



Build — A European Urban Green Programme funding 100 projects per country every year; 6,000 green havens by 2050; universal deposit-refund systems and mandatory CO₂eq human-impact labels on every product.



Run — Corporate-grassroots synergy through pre-vetted NGOs; a mandatory International Green Week with repair hubs, zero-waste canteens and swap markets; every euro tracked on a public platform.



2050 — Plastic pollution, bottle contamination and overconsumption eradicated; every citizen an architect of their environment.

ACCOUNTABILITY & EXCHANGE

3 CLIMATE ACCOUNTABILITY WITH TEETH

No more empty promises: strict collaboration becomes the baseline of human enterprise.



Build — A global framework of incentives and penalties: tax breaks and subsidies for those who hit climate targets, real consequences for those who fail.



Run — An uncompromising global watchdog, backed by an alliance of citizens and institutions, holding both nations and businesses to their commitments.



2050 — Planetary limits protected by a fierce interconnected system; climate accountability is no longer optional.

4 A BORDERLESS ERASMUS+ GENERATION

Every young person with the legal right to cross borders, learn and become a global ambassador.



Build — Direct bilateral agreements with universities worldwide based on merit and cultural value; a 10% global inclusion quota reserved for non-European participants, with focus on youth and NGOs.



Run — Dedicated funding for vocational schools and students with disabilities; a Certificate of Reliability for extra-European NGOs to ensure honest, effective partnerships.



2050 — Socioeconomic and geopolitical barriers to exchange dismantled; knowledge transcends borders regardless of wealth or background.



THEME 02 Education & Work

Educational processes, active participation and competences in a present and future perspective

EDUCATION

1 HUMAN-CENTRED CLASSROOMS
Schools where human connection and critical thinking shape learning from an early age.

Build — Digital-free, interactive classrooms with core values and critical thinking taught from an early age, and more classes outside the classroom.

Run — Through new teacher training and the ethical, regulated use of AI.

2050 — Learning becomes fun, propaganda fades, and students grow more aware of the world.

2 ACCOUNTABLE TEACHING
Qualified teachers, evaluated transparently, held to shared international standards.

Build — Public student feedback, independent inspectors, pedagogical certification, and psychological evaluation of educators.

Run — Run by ministry-appointed, multi-generational, multicultural experts, with transparent use of public funds.

2050 — Higher-quality, adaptive and truly inclusive schools for everyone.

3 BORDERLESS EDUCATION
Education as a global right: every student can learn and move across borders.

Build — A worldwide Erasmus+ network, student visas, global funding, and weeks of learning with invited sectors and activists.

Run — A European-based framework expanded internationally, supported by student associations and cooperation with embassies.

2050 — No more exclusion or discrimination in study programmes; global cooperation becomes the norm.

WORK

4 FULFILLING & HEALTHY WORK
Work that is meaningful, safe, and balanced, where people feel fulfilled.

Build — Creative, comfortable workspaces; a healthier work-life balance; outside-work activities and community hubs every 200 metres.

Run — Employer-run but accountable, with unions involved and incentives for coexistence spaces.

2050 — Less stress and loneliness, better mental health, stronger community, and better childcare.

5 FAIR & TRANSPARENT WORKPLACES
Fairness, accountability and shared ownership replace corporate opacity.

Build — Pay caps, salary transparency, a revised GDP based on communal and environmental impact and democratised corporate bodies.

Run — Commissions of governments and citizens, empowered oversight organs and fines for mistreatment

2050 — Pay gaps disappear, trust grows, and employees share ownership of the companies they build.

6 ECONOMIC SECURITY FOR ALL
Basic needs guaranteed; work becomes a choice, not an obligation.

Build — Universal Basic Income as a global human right, backed by tax reforms and ethical cross-border work.

Run — An unconditional monthly wage distributed by governments, funded by taxing the top 0.001%.

2050 — No more wage slavery: everyone is housed, fed, and cared for; jobs become a true choice.



THEME 03 Europe

Europe in the World: global exchanges and competences

Europe

1 PEACE & DEMOCRACY

A Europe that prevents conflicts before they escalate, protecting both people and the environment.

Build — Structured mechanisms for peaceful resolution, neutral non-censored communication and a European body monitoring the environmental impact of conflicts.

Run — Shared governance between governments, NGOs and local authorities, with trained moderators and inclusive representation of youth, minorities and women.

2050 — Less environmental damage from conflicts, stronger enforcement of protections, and a society with less fear and greater collective responsibility.

2 GREEN & WALKABLE CITIES

Cities redesigned around people: walkable, car-free at the centre, and green.

Build — Legislative frameworks expanding car-free areas, green spaces, benches and fountains; circular-economy systems and deposit-return schemes embedded in daily life.

Run — Municipalities leading the change through civic polls, community assemblies and co-design, supported by European funding and city alliances.

2050 — Less congestion and pollution, safer streets, stronger social interaction, and a higher quality of life in circular cities.

Europe

3 CLEAN ENERGY FOR ALL

A Europe powered by safe, peaceful, and shared renewable energy.

Build — Standardised European regulations and clear guidelines, a skilled workforce for renewables, with nuclear included in the transition mix.

Run — European-level coordination with incentives for compliant countries and penalties for non-compliance, backed by knowledge-sharing between Member States.

2050 — Lower energy costs, cleaner air, fewer conflicts linked to scarcity, and independence from fossil fuels.

4 CONNECTED EUROPE — TRAINS & EDUCATION

A Europe where people, ideas, and opportunities move freely across borders.

Build — A fast, affordable European railway network with a unified digital mobility platform; a common framework for free and equal education, expanding Erasmus+.

Run — A central European railway authority and coordinated European funding mechanisms ensuring fairness across regions; subsidised passes and shared learning infrastructure.

2050 — Sustainable mobility as a European right, equal educational opportunities, and stronger territorial and social cohesion.



THEME 04 Building the Future

The Erasmus+ Generation in the world 2050: our projection and vision of the future

MOBILITY & INCLUSION

1 ERASMUS+ FOR EVERYONE

An Erasmus+ truly accessible to all where inclusion is a practice, not a principle.

Build — A centralised digital application system, a dedicated Erasmus+ visa, customised pathways for non-European participants and stronger, more stable funding.

Run — Universities interface directly with national authorities; services are designed with psychology and design-thinking, with youth accountability embedded at every level.

2050 — Administrative barriers dissolve, well-being and belonging become central, and no young person is excluded by wealth or paperwork.

2 CONNECTED EUROPEAN MOBILITY

A single European transport system: seamless, affordable, and fair to all generations.

Build — A unified European navigation app and one national ticket per country; a 24-hour Interrail system; affordable pricing with subsidies for green travel and free mobility for the elderly.

Run — Strategic European-private partnerships delivering high-speed technology, with clear connectivity metrics triggering upgrades where standards aren't met.

2050 — Cooperation replaces national protectionism; mobility becomes a shared European right that rewards sustainable choices.

SOVEREIGNTY & EQUALITY

3 EUROPEAN DIGITAL SOVEREIGNTY

A Europe with its own voice online: secure, ethical, and rooted in democratic values.

Build — European-hosted social platforms, data centres, and a large language model guided by clear ethical standards; software architecture that cuts water use and carbon footprint.

Run — Strong regulation against hate speech, fake news and digital abuse; university-led innovation pipelines and public campaigns on digital footprints.

2050 — Europe achieves full digital autonomy, protected from external threats, with citizens actively co-creating democratic digital spaces.

4 GENDER EQUALITY BY CONSTITUTION

True sustainability is impossible without social equity, enshrined in law, lived every day.

Build — Enforceable constitutional standards across all Member States; public gender equality audits by external experts; a European Gender Education Programme with a Train-the-Trainer model.

Run — Financial support paired with strict sanctions: low scores mean loss of public funding; tax benefits for companies with high equality ratings and internal awareness programmes.

2050 — The gender gap is no longer a systemic hurdle; a generation is raised with deep intersectional understanding of equality.

CLOSING STATEMENT

A Call to Action

Seven demands for those who hold the power to act

TO OUR POLICYMAKERS

This Manifesto is not a wish list. It is a mandate drawn from the voices of a generation. We ask European and national leaders to act: now, with urgency, and with courage.

LEGISLATE THE FUTURE OF LEARNING

Embed climate, critical thinking, and core values into every curriculum by law — from preschool onward — and abolish standardised tests in favour of real-world impact projects.

GUARANTEE ECONOMIC DIGNITY

Advance a framework for Universal Basic Income, pay transparency and pay caps, and treat mental health and work-life balance as enforceable rights, not perks.

MAKE CLIMATE ACCOUNTABILITY BINDING

Replace empty pledges with enforceable targets: tax breaks for those who deliver, real penalties for those who fail, under the supervision of an independent global watchdog.

CONCRETE DEMANDS

We do not ask for promises. We ask for laws, budgets, and timelines.

BUILD A TRULY BORDERLESS EUROPE

Invest in a unified, affordable European railway; deliver one national ticket per country and a single European mobility app; guarantee free or subsidised travel for the young, the elderly, and the marginalised.

EXPAND ERASMUS+ TO THE WORLD

Create a dedicated Erasmus+ visa, centralise applications, reserve 10% of places for non-European youth and ring-fence funding for vocational schools and students with disabilities.

SECURE EUROPEAN DIGITAL SOVEREIGNTY

Fund European-hosted platforms, a European large language model with clear ethical standards, and sustainable data infrastructures that protect citizens from hate speech, fake news and digital abuse.

MAKE EQUALITY CONSTITUTIONAL

Enshrine gender equality in enforceable Member-State standards, pair public funding with equality audits, and deliver a Europe-wide inclusive gender education curriculum.



*The year is 2026.
The deadline is 2050.
The time to act is now.*



