

# **Vision & Strategic Priorities 2025–2031**

Erasmus Student Network



# 1. What is the Erasmus Student Network

The Erasmus Student Network (ESN) is a non-profit international student organisation with its headquarters in Brussels and over 500 local associations in 45 countries across Europe and beyond. ESN has over 15,000 active members who support 40,000 young people, providing assistance to approximately 350,000 international students each year.

As the leading volunteer organisation in international student mobility and the largest international mobility alumni network, ESN supports not only the Erasmus+ programme but also other key mobility opportunities. ESN is dedicated to promoting greater reach, high quality, and easier access to international student mobility. The principles of more mobility, better mobility, and more accessible mobility are at the core of every ESN action.

By combining practical experience with knowledge, ESN is recognised as one of the leading expert organisations in the field of mobility and higher education.









## 1.1. Mission

Aligned with our goals and objectives, the Mission of ESN is:

*Enrichment of society through international students.*

## 1.2. Values

-  **Unity in diversity, diversity in the unity** (we all have different backgrounds but share one common aim and goal).
-  **Students helping students** (we commit ourselves to volunteering for the benefit of international mobility).
-  **Fun in friendship and respect** (we believe in the importance of making the most of the international mobility experience while respecting others).
-  **International dimension of life** (we believe international experiences enrich personal growth, foster mutual understanding, and strengthen collaboration beyond borders).
-  **Love for Europe and beyond as an area of peace and cultural exchange** (we cherish the world as a space of peace, diversity, and cultural exchange that embraces the richness of a more interconnected world).
-  **Openness with tolerance** (we embrace diversity by understanding, accepting, and learning from others).
-  **Cooperation in the integration** (we share a holistic view towards internationalisation in higher education).

## 1.3. The 6 Thematic Areas That Support ESN's Mission and Vision

To bring our Vision and Mission to life, ESN has structured its actions into six thematic areas that serve as a guide to support its daily activities.

The Causes of ESN represent the different fields where ESN believes it can make a positive impact on society by engaging with international students and enhancing international mobility. These fields are **Culture, Education and Youth, Environmental Sustainability, Health and Well-being, Skills and Employability** and **Social Inclusion**.

As the framework was developed to better define how ESN can shape international student mobility to contribute to society, ESN's activities can align with multiple Causes depending on its objectives and, therefore, allow for flexibility, simply providing a frame of reference to explain our actions to our members and our stakeholders.



## 2. Vision for 2025–2031

### 2.1. Introduction

In this document, the Erasmus Student Network outlines its Vision and Strategic Priorities for the period 2025-2031. This Long-Term Strategy document is the foundation for ESN's goals and objectives, guiding our efforts to achieve the Mission of "enriching society through international students" over the next six years.

This new Vision for 2025-2031 was developed through an extensive consultation process within the ESN Network between 2024 and 2025. It builds upon the previous Long-Term Strategy 2019-2025, considers the evolving internal and external context, and aligns with strategic documents from other organisations working in similar fields.

The strategy was officially approved during the Spring General Assembly 2025 in Dubrovnik, Croatia.

### 2.2. Vision

*By 2031, the Erasmus Student Network will be the leading organisation supporting international mobility, providing space for competence development and student engagement to three million members of the Erasmus Generation, empowering them to become change-makers in society.*





## THE WHAT? (THE SCOPE OF THE VISION)

*the Erasmus Student Network will be the leading organisation supporting international mobility*

The most important element of our Vision is ESN's continuous commitment to supporting international mobility. By strengthening our role as the leading organisation in this field, we strive to enhance the quality of mobility experiences, increase opportunities for mobility, and ensure greater accessibility for all students and young people.

## THE WHEN?

*By 2031*

The implementation of this vision is planned to be completed by the year 2031, providing ESN with a six-year timeframe to turn its strategic ambitions into reality. Over this period, the organisation will work collaboratively across all levels of the network to ensure that the goals outlined in the Vision and Strategic Priorities are effectively achieved.

## THE HOW?

*providing space for competence development and student engagement*

How will we become the leading organisation supporting international mobility? We will achieve this by providing opportunities for competence development not only for international students abroad but also for our dedicated volunteers who work every day to support them. By creating space for skill development, we foster not only the acquisition of competencies that define the Erasmus Generation but also a deeper understanding of the skills international students gain during their time abroad and volunteer in their ESN journey. To accomplish this, we must ensure the continuous engagement of students throughout all phases of their mobility and volunteer experience, making sure that international mobility has a lasting impact on society through the active involvement of students in their communities.

## THE WHO?

*to 3 million members of the Erasmus Generation*

According to the 2024 Section Questionnaire, ESN currently comprises over 15,000 volunteers who collectively support around 330,000 students. While Erasmus+ remains the programme in which the majority of learners experience mobility opportunities, we believe that ESN should continue to include all international mobility students, regardless of their mobility programme, ultimately striving to reach all young people.



Additionally, we must continue advocating for new mobility opportunities while deepening our understanding of the connections between higher education and other sectors. The stated figure represents the combined number of international students and ESN volunteers and serves as a total target for the entire strategic cycle, to be achieved by 2031.

## THE WHY?

### *empowering them to become change-makers in society*

Why should we become the leading organisation supporting international mobility, providing opportunities for capacity development and student engagement for 3 million young people? We believe that by achieving these goals, ESN will fulfil its Mission by empowering students and volunteers to become change-makers in society. Through their actions, they will help shape a world that embraces both unity and diversity, fostering a more inclusive and interconnected community.



## 2.3. Strategic Priorities

Strategic priorities are overarching statements that define the key areas of work required to bridge the gap between the current state and the organisation's desired future. These priorities align with the timeframe of the Vision and play a critical role in achieving it while also outlining the specific focus areas for the next six years.

### 1) INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY AND STUDENT SUPPORT

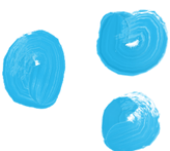
*ESN will empower the Erasmus Generation to support international mobility actively. ESN will facilitate all phases of mobility, ensuring that mobility is an enriching experience not only for students but for society as a whole. ESN is committed to promoting high-quality mobility and education by continuously promoting opportunities and exploring different mobility formats. Moreover, ESN will provide comprehensive support to all international students alike, ensuring inclusivity and accessibility for all.*

#### Goals by 2031:

- Support quality mobility by ensuring that students will have access to an enriching experience with adequate funding, equal opportunities, proper accommodation, and full recognition of learning outcomes abroad.
- Promote different types of mobility and support Erasmus+ programme participants, international students, and full-degree international students.
- Support all phases of mobility by maintaining continuous engagement during the mobility period and strengthening efforts before and after, ensuring that ESN will remain a Network of ambassadors of international mobility.
- Guarantee that mobility opportunities are sustainable and accessible while advocating for equal access for all students and promoting diverse mobility formats tailored to students' preferences.
- Ensure that the knowledge and skills gained during mobility will be effectively utilised post-mobility and aligned with job market demands.

### 2) VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

*ESN volunteers will be ambassadors of mobility and international students, reflecting the Network's Values in their work. To support the growth of its volunteers, ESN will foster competence development through structured learning paths, ensuring that volunteers acquire valuable skills that are recognised both within the organisation and on the job market. ESN will create a sustainable and rewarding volunteering experience on all levels that benefits both individuals and the Network as a whole.*



### Goals by 2031:

- Implement a unified and structured HR strategy to strengthen volunteer engagement, support long-term involvement, and maintain consistency across the Network, with volunteers representing the Values and Mission of ESN.
- Develop effective knowledge transfer frameworks to secure continuity, growth, and sustainability within the organisation.
- Establish clear learning paths for competence development, supporting personal growth within the organisation while equipping volunteers with transferable and valued skills for the job market and beyond.
- Develop recognition systems that acknowledge volunteer contributions, keeping them engaged in ESN while formally recognising their competence and validating their skills for professional and educational settings.
- Create a sustainable, inclusive, and meaningful volunteering experience that prioritises well-being and engages both current volunteers and alumni.

## 3) GOVERNANCE AND MEMBERSHIP

*ESN will focus on strengthening its governance structure and ensuring clear, efficient and democratic decision-making processes with a strong and united membership. The Network will maintain its identity while unifying internal procedures and promoting transparency, fostering collaboration and cohesion across all levels. ESN will aim for quality, sustainable growth and development across all member countries, supporting local and National Organisations to enhance their capacity and effectiveness. The ESN Headquarters, with its sustainable structure aligned with ESN's goals, will support the work of the board and the Network to enhance the overall impact of ESN.*

### Goals by 2031:

- Standardise governance and membership practices across all levels of ESN to ensure aligned and democratic decision-making, improve communication flow, and maintain a cohesive identity within the Network.
- Develop and implement targeted strategies to support member organisations, ensuring sustainable growth and development and reducing disparities in quality and capacity across the Network.
- Optimise the structure of ESN's governance to ensure all National Organisations have equal representation and opportunities, promoting unity through diversity while adapting governance practices and structures to national contexts.
- Ensure the sustainability of ESN International's structure and Headquarters, aligning its operations with the broader goals of ESN while providing support to facilitate the work of member organisations, and enhancing the Network's overall impact and support for students.



## 4) VISIBILITY, OUTREACH AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS

*ESN will be a unified and widely recognised brand of the Erasmus Generation, serving as the voice of international students and the leading advocate for mobility programmes within and beyond Erasmus+. By actively promoting participation in opportunities for intercultural dialogue, internationalisation at home, and the impact of volunteering, ESN will increase its outreach, strengthen its partnerships, and enhance its recognition. Through strategic communication and collaboration with relevant stakeholders, ESN will reinforce its position as the key organisation supporting international mobility, ensuring its presence in decision-making spaces.*

### Goals by 2031:

- Maintain a cohesive and recognisable brand identity across all levels of ESN, communicating a strong and consistent image of the organisation.
- Enhance ESN's visibility in both traditional and digital media by highlighting impactful initiatives and the power of volunteering.
- Actively promote mobility opportunities, ensuring that students have greater access to information about available programmes and initiatives.
- Ensure ESN's ongoing advocacy efforts for the recognition of the role international student mobility plays in education, increasing awareness among stakeholders about its importance and safeguarding the credibility of our actions.
- Strengthen collaboration with diverse stakeholders to advance internationalisation, ensuring that the student voices are heard and their recommendations for improving mobility are considered and implemented.

## 5) DIGITALISATION OF MOBILITY AND IT INFRASTRUCTURE

*ESN will enhance its digital ecosystem with centralised platforms, ensuring a seamless, branded experience for students and volunteers alike. ESN will set clear IT standards, align with the digitalisation priorities in different mobility programmes, and guide IT development within the Network. Investment and innovation in IT must come from within. Thus, volunteers will be empowered and supported by a strategic IT Vision to gain the digital skills and competencies needed to effectively employ the tools and support students.*

### Goals by 2031:

- Integrate students and volunteers into a tailored digital ecosystem to facilitate and enhance the mobility experience.
- Implement the digitalisation priorities of mobility programmes to strengthen capacity building, promote knowledge sharing, and foster the development of digital competencies and skills within the Network and for students alike.
- Execute a robust and unified digitalisation strategy to ensure consistency, efficiency, and effectiveness across the organisation.
- Align existing tools and standards in the higher education sector to streamline the student experience and provide high-quality online and offline support.

## 6) IMPACT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

*ESN will work on creating a lasting impact on society by positioning international mobility at the heart of local communities, bridging the gap between international students and their new environments. ESN will prioritise the quality of student experience, ensuring that initiatives and activities align with ESN's Mission and meet the needs of the Erasmus Generation. By offering better services and activities, collaborating with other civil society organisations, and effectively measuring our impact, ESN will empower students to become true changemakers in society.*

### Goals by 2031:

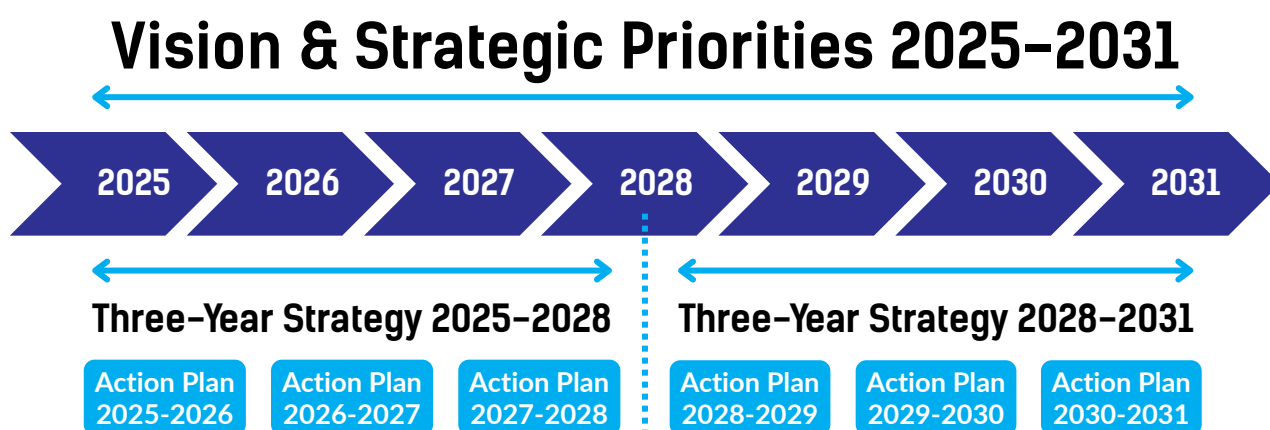
- Provide quality activities to international students and improve initiatives to better establish ESN as a central piece of the local communities.
- Improve internal tools and mechanisms to measure ESN's impact effectively.
- Enhance the impact of mobility participation by increasing international students' engagement in civil society activities during and after their mobility experience, fostering active citizenship among society.
- Increase the reach of ESN by decentralising the way of work of Sections and cooperating more with other civil society organisations.



### 3. Timeline of Implementation

The "Erasmus Student Network Strategic Priorities 2025-2031" implementation timeline will begin on the 1st of August 2025 and conclude in 2031. In addition to the six-year strategy, ESN will develop two three-year strategies and one annual action plan.

The progress of these actions will be reported annually and consistently by the International Board through digital communication tools and during the respective General Assembly Meetings, ensuring accountability and providing opportunities for ESN volunteers to contribute and engage.







Co-funded by  
the European Union

