| **Images** | **Sound** | **Text English** | **Deutsch/Francais/Espanol** |
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| TITLES | TITLES |  |  |
|  | Chris off | Of the European Union´s half billion citizens, more than a third are young people. Unemployment is still high among youth in many EU Member States, and the European Parliament has fought hard for more support to open more doors for Europe´s young to a better future.  |  |
|  | Chris off | One important step to open those doors has been a free-Interrail programme, at first a pilot project spearheaded by EPP Group Chairman Manfred Weber. Despite tight budgets, Parliament agreed to fund free one-month tickets for Europeans who turn 18, to discover the vast and beautiful mosaic called Europe. Like Weber did himself. |  |
|  | Manfred Weber, EPP Group Chairman | *As a young student, and I was in England. I met in a pub an old English man and we discussed about the history. And it was really fascinating for me as a young to have this experience. I also travelled to Sicily, the beauty of Italy, of the Continent. And that, I want, this experience should have every young person in the European Union.* |  |
|  | Chris off | More than 100,000 European youth applied for the free Interrail, with 15,000 passing the quiz and getting the tickets. The programme has evolved into DiscoverEU activities, part of the Erasmus+ package of programmes promoting educational exchange across Europe. |  |
|  | Weber on  | *For me, it’s important to underline that such an InterRail idea, is nothing which is in competition with other ideas. For example, when we invest in the Youth Guarantee, to create jobs for the young generation, that is what we have to do. That is not an alternative to this or the other one. We have to do both. And then we are contributing to the younger generation.* |  |
|  | Chris off | The EPP Group´s Milan Zver has authored legislation expanding Erasmus+. As a member of the Culture and Education Committee, he has rallied MEPs to support a tripling of the Erasmus budget for 2021-27, to about 45 billion euros.  |  |
| Interview | Milan Zver, Slovenian MEP on | *Zver1**:03**Erasmus is one of the most successful projects of the European Union. Since the very start of Erasmus+ in the 80s, in the last century, millions and millions of Europeans have visited other countries, met other cultures, learned foreign languages, and equipped themselves with some skills and competences that improve their competitiveness in the labour market.* |  |
| Interview | Chris off | The additional funding would go to major new initiatives like the European Universities network, and the Centres of Vocational Excellence |  |
| Interview | Zver on | 1:41*One euro invested by the European Commission is much more effective than a euro invested at the national level. And that’s true also for the investment into education and culture.* *3:11**In fact, investment into the education is in fact investment into the future of the European Union, and this is especially for Erasmus+.* |  |
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| Headline |  | **Boosting funding for Erasmus+ and free Interrail for youth** |  |
| Description |  | The EPP Group has been a major force behind expanding the Erasmus+ program to include more kinds of students in universities as well as trade schools and sports programs. It is pushing for a tripling of the Erasmus budget and expanding a pilot programme offering free Interrail passes to youth on their 18th birthday to discover Europe. |  |
| Tags |  | Youth, Erasmus, Interrail, EPP Group, European Parliament, Manfred Weber, Milan Zver |  |