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Sofia Corradi is known by all as “Mother Erasmus”, a gentle nickname that honors her commitment to creating the Erasmus Project.



She was born in Rome in 1934. In 1957, when she was studying Law at the University of Rome “La Sapienza”, missing a few exams and a thesis, she went to study in the United States thanks to a prestigious scholarship. She earned a Masters in Comparative University Law in New York.

On her return to Rome in 1958, she experienced anger and humiliation as the university did not recognize her Master obtained abroad and asked her to complete the course of study in Italy.

Anger and humiliation were the genesis of Erasmus because she promised herself that no other student would have to suffer an offense like the one she had suffered. In 1969 she prepared a memorandum, which contained the first idea of the Erasmus project.



In the seventies she became a professor of Educational Sciences, and also scientific advisor to the Association of Rectors of Italian Universities and this role allowed her to make her idea known in the academic and international fields.

She fought for eighteen years before winning her battle, but in 1987 her idea finally came true. It was the birth of The Erasmus Program, an acronym for “European Action for the Mobility of University Students”

In 1987 the European Union did not exist yet, the Berlin Wall was still standing and the single currency represented a distant mirage. Yet students from all over Europe were free to attend university in another country, enjoying the customs and traditions of a culture different from their own, motivating them to be the citizens of the Europe of the future.



Over the years, as an extraordinary tool for promoting European citizenship, Erasmus has brought young people closer to the concept of Europe, seen as an intercultural space of sharing and debate.



The dedication with which “Mamma Erasmus” led her battle for years was rewarded in May 2016, when Sofia Corradi was awarded the prestigious “Carlo V” prize.

A few months later, she receives from the President of the Republic the honor of Commander of Merit of the Republic.

<https://www.etnmagazine.eu/erasmus/erasmus-was-born-out-of-a-disappointment-sofia-corradi-from-student-to-mother-erasmus/>

https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sofia_Corradi

<https://www.sofiacorradi.eu/index.html#>