

## ROADMAP

Title of the initiative: **Council Recommendation Youth on the Move - promoting the learning mobility of young people**

Type of initiative (CWP/Catalogue/Comitology): CWP 2010, Major Initiative

Lead DG/contact person/details: DG EAC/B3

Expected date of adoption of the initiative (month/year): 23 June 2010

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### Initial IA screening & planning of further work

#### **A. Context and problem definition**

(i) What is the political context of the initiative? (ii) How does this initiative relate to past and possible future initiatives, and to other EU policies?

(i) Learning Mobility, i.e. transnational mobility for the purpose of acquiring new skills, has an important impact. As part of the freedom of movement of persons, it is a means of promoting employment, reducing poverty, and promoting active European citizenship by improving mutual and intercultural understanding in the EU, and boosting economic, social and regional cohesion. Learning mobility is one of the fundamental ways in which individuals, particularly young people, can strengthen their future employability as well as their personal development.

In his September 2009 Political Guidelines, President Barroso announced: "*Europe is a reality in everyday life also through exchange initiatives. At a time of economic and social crisis, I feel very strongly that it is of particular importance to further the access of the young generation to the European dimension. To this end, I propose to expand existing instruments like Erasmus into a new EU youth and mobility initiative, as part of the EU 2020 strategy. By 2020 all young people in Europe must have the possibility to spend a part of their educational pathway in other Member States. Such a "Youth on the Move" initiative would be a decisive contribution to the promotion of cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and multilingual learning.*"

In presenting the portfolio for Education, Multilingualism and Youth to Mrs Vassiliou, the President underlined that "*More mobility for all and in all learning experiences should become the norm. I would like you to launch a "Youth on the Move" initiative in the course of 2010, highlighting the general needs of our young people with a particular focus on mobility.*"

Youth on the Move is a flagship EU initiative announced in the Europe 2020 Strategy. The aim is to "*enhance the performance and international attractiveness of Europe's higher education institutions and raise the overall quality of all levels of education and training in the EU, combining both excellence and equity, by promoting student mobility and trainees' mobility, and improve the employment situation of young people*".<sup>1</sup>

(ii) The Community has a long and highly-regarded record in promoting and supporting learning mobility; a domain of direct and tangible benefit to the European citizen. Initiatives such as the Erasmus programme have made it possible for more than 2 million people to study in another country and to have those studies formally recognised. Practical tools, including the European Credit and Accumulation System (ECTS) have been put in place to facilitate this.

The mobility of young people for learning purposes is linked to other EU policies:

- Freedom of movement of persons, one of the four fundamental freedoms upon which the EU is built.

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<sup>1</sup> "A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth". COM (2010) 2020

- The 'fifth freedom': free circulation of knowledge, in particular mobility of young and early stage researchers to establish collaborative projects and networks essential to their professional development.
- Youth on the Move is specifically referenced in the Europe 2020 Strategy as a possible flagship initiative to deliver Growth based on knowledge and innovation.
- Bologna process (intergovernmental co-operation in Higher Education between 47 countries) which sets a target that: *'In 2020, at least 20% of those graduating in the European Higher Education Area should have had a study or training period abroad'*
- Copenhagen Process in the area of vocational education and training
- European Year of Volunteering (2011)
- Programmes of the European Community in support of learning mobility: Lifelong Learning Programme (in particular Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, and Comenius strands); Erasmus Mundus for international learning mobility and Marie Curie for the mobility of young researchers.

What are the main problems identified?

Studies confirm that learning mobility adds to human capital, as students access new knowledge and develop new linguistic skills and intercultural competences. Furthermore, employers recognise and value these benefits. Evidence shows that Europeans who are mobile as young learners are more likely to be mobile as workers later in life and also more likely to enjoy higher salaries and more rewarding careers.

EU action, in particular through flagship programmes such as Erasmus in higher education and Youth in Action for volunteers, has done much to increase mobility and to provide financial support to individuals to make this happen. Tools such as ECTS and ECVET for Credit Transfer and Accumulation and Europass to make an individual's skills and qualifications more clearly and easily understood throughout Europe, act as powerful levers to facilitate mobility.

However, **for too many of Europe's young people learning mobility is still not a realistic opportunity**. Still relatively few young people reap the benefits of a learning experience abroad and some groups, such as young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are particularly underrepresented. Linguistic, cultural, financial, legal and administrative obstacles persist, in particular outside the structured EU mobility programmes. Whilst additional resources at both national and European levels (via existing programmes) can boost mobility, more money will not be sufficient alone to realise the vision of mobility as a realistic opportunity for all. Member States must do more to remove obstacles which persist at national and regional levels.

Who is affected?

EU Member States/EEA countries (national and regional authorities, learning providers)

**Young people (aged 15-35)**, and in particular students and learners who have chosen (or who wish) to pursue a part of their learning pathway in another Member State.

(i) Is EU action justified on grounds of subsidiarity? (ii) Why can the objectives of the proposed action not be achieved sufficiently by Member States (necessity test)? (iii) As a result of this, can objectives be better achieved by action by the Community (test of EU Value Added)?

Education, Youth and Training Policy is an area where the subsidiarity principle applies and the EU has supporting competence as defined by the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (Lisbon Treaty). The Treaty (articles 165 and 166) provides that *'The Community shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, by supporting and supplementing their action'* and in particular, foresees that Community action shall be aimed at *'encouraging mobility of students and teachers, by encouraging inter alia, the academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study'*.

Action in this field conforms to the principle of subsidiarity referred to in Article 5 of the Treaty insofar as Community action, complementing action by the Member States, is necessary for the obstacles to mobility to be removed. It is important to that end, to emphasise that mobility requires Community intervention because by its nature it entails transnational aspects.

## **B. Objectives of EU initiative**

What are the main policy objectives?

The main policy objectives to be achieved are to make learning mobility an opportunity for all, via:

- - The elimination of barriers to learning mobility at national/regional levels;
- - The promotion of learning mobility.

Do the objectives imply developing EU policy in new areas or in areas of strategic importance?

Yes, it is part of Europe 2020 strategy

## **C. Options**

(i) What are the policy options? (ii) What legislative or 'soft law' instruments could be considered? (iii) Would any legislative initiatives go beyond routine up-date of existing legislation?

(i) (ii)

Option 1: No EU Action/Status Quo

Option 2: A Council Recommendation: Youth on the Move: Increasing opportunities for learning mobility

Option 3: A new Open Method of Co-ordination (OMC) for the learning mobility of young people

(iii) No, the Recommendation would mainly provide an update of existing legislation.

Does the action proposed in the options cut across several policy areas or impact on action taken/planned by other Commission departments?

As one of the four strategic objectives of the Education and Training 2020 work programme, mobility contributes to the creation of the European Area of Education and Training and plays an essential part in supporting 'smart growth' as set out in the Europe 2020 Strategy proposals. Promoting mobility of young people is also underlined in the EU Youth Strategy: Investing and Empowering as a means to achieve the overall objectives of European youth cooperation.

There are links to activities carried out by other DGs, for example DG Research (researchers' mobility), DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal opportunities (labour mobility), DG Internal Market and services (recognition of professional qualifications, Services Directive), DG External relations (mobility programmes outside the EU).

Explain how the options respect the proportionality principle

Proportionality of different options will be assessed in the impact assessment.

## **D. Initial assessment of impacts**

What are the significant impacts likely to result from each policy option (cf. list of impacts in the Impact Assessment Guidelines pages 32-37), even if these impacts would materialise only after subsequent Commission initiatives?

For the option on Status Quo (option 1), based upon past experience, it can be expected that the current pace of progress in removing obstacles to mobility will not deliver a change consistent with the political aspiration of mobility as an opportunity for all and will be insufficient to raise mobility levels in line with agreed or planned benchmarks.

It is estimated that a new updated Council Recommendation will have a positive impact towards actions undertaken at national and regional level to tackle obstacles to mobility, due to the need for a cross-sectoral approach and with reference to new issues which have emerged in the last 10 years. (option 2)

The Recommendation will build upon, consolidate and update an earlier text on this theme: A 2001 Recommendation on mobility within the Community for students, persons undergoing training, volunteers, teachers and trainers. The Recommendation will also build on a 2006 Recommendation on transnational mobility within the Community for education and training purposes: European Quality Charter for Mobility and a 2008 Council Recommendation on mobility of young volunteers across Europe, which seeks to boost cooperation between organisers of voluntary activities in the Member States of the European Union.

In June 2010 it is expected that the Commission approves a 'Youth on the Move' package to include an overarching 'Youth on the move' strategy (Commission Communication), to be accompanied by this draft Council Recommendation on actions necessary to expand and promote learning mobility by removing obstacles.

The option of a new OMC (option 3) can have a positive impact in line with realising the declared objectives of reducing obstacles to learning mobility. A fresh impetus and an increased visibility, combined with the potential for clear comparison of progress between countries could be expected to act as a stimulus to driving forward progress in this area. However, this option carries high administrative costs.

Could the options have impacts on the EU-Budget (above 5 Mio €) and/or should the IA also serve as the ex-ante evaluation, required by the Financial Regulation?

No

Could the options have significant impacts on (i) simplification, (ii) administrative burden or on (iii) relations with third countries?

No

## **E. Planning of further impact assessment work**

When will the impact assessment work start?

Work has already begun: The 2009 Green Paper on Learning Mobility (July 2009) launched a wide-scale consultation. The impact assessment report has been drafted and sent to the Impact Assessment Board (IAB) on 19 March. The IAB meeting is scheduled for 14 April.

(i) What information and data are already available? (ii) Will this impact assessment build on already existing impact assessment work or evaluations carried out? (iii) What further information needs to be gathered? (iv) How will this be done (e.g. internally or by an external contractor) and by when? (v) What type and level of analysis will be carried out (cf. principle of proportionate analysis)?

Several instruments already exist at the European level in the context of removing obstacles to such mobility. In particular, three separate Recommendations in the areas of Education and Training and Youth: - A 2001 Council Recommendation on mobility within the Community for students, persons undergoing training, volunteers, teachers, - A complementary 2006 Council Recommendation on the European Quality Charter for Mobility, and a 2008 Council Recommendation on mobility of young volunteers across Europe, which seeks to boost cooperation between organisers of voluntary activities in the Member States of the European Union.

In addition, EU programmes seek to provide direct financial support for mobility. Most notably the Lifelong Learning Programme (€ 7bn), Erasmus Mundus (€ 953m), Youth in Action (€ 885 m), and Marie Curie (€ 4.75 bn).

Reports available on the implementation of existing Recommendations and studies and evaluations related to existing EU programmes will be used as sources for already available information (e.g. the external evaluation of the Europass initiative (2008)).

Which stakeholders & experts have been/will be consulted, how and at what stage?

The Impact Assessment has been informed by a wide-scale public and stakeholder consultation which took place July–December 2009 on the Green Paper 'Promoting the Learning Mobility of Young People'. More than 3,000 responses were received to this consultation, (2,798 via an on-line IPM questionnaire and 258 written responses from national, regional or local authorities, associations and other stakeholders). The majority of the individual responses (1,758 = 62.8%) were received from young people who are the focus of this initiative.

The questions posed in the consultation specifically focussed on a presentation of the potential key obstacles to learning mobility and as such has direct relevance for the formulation of the Recommendation's themes.