



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 4.2.2003
SEC(2003) 146

COMMISSION STAFF WORKING PAPER

First Implementation Report on

“A Mobility Strategy for the European Research Area”

1. SUMMARY OF THE OBJECTIVES
2. ACTIONS AND PRIORITIES
3. CO-OPERATION FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY
4. ACHIEVEMENTS/RÉSULTS
 - 4.1 Improvement of the legislative, regulatory and administrative environment of researchers' mobility
 - 4.1.1 *Improvements in the conditions of entry of third country researchers to Europe*
 - 4.1.2 *Co-ordination of social security schemes*
 - 4.2 Improvement of information and practical assistance to mobile researchers
 - 4.2.1 *The Researchers' Mobility Web Portal*
 - 4.2.2 *The European Network of Mobility Centres*
 - 4.3 Examining issues pertinent for the development of future actions
 - 4.3.1 *Benchmarking of Human Resources in RTD*
 - 4.3.2 *Measuring the international mobility of researchers*
 - 4.3.3 *The social visibility of the researcher and the researcher's career*
 - 4.4 Providing appropriate financial support
5. CONCLUSIONS

ANNEXES:

- Key dates
- List of Bridgehead organisations for the European Network of Mobility Centres

In December 2001, the Council of Ministers invited the Commission to provide an annual progress report on the implementation of the Strategy in favour of the Mobility of Researchers¹. The present report covers the period between the adoption in June 2001 of the Communication “A Mobility Strategy for the European Research Area”², and December 2002.

1 SUMMARY OF THE OBJECTIVES

Since the Lisbon Summit in March 2000, reactions to the Commission’s proposal of setting up a European Research Area³ emphasised the importance of Human Resources and Mobility for the Creation of a Knowledge-based Europe. The latter implies to mobilise abundant and adequate Human Resources for the fulfilment of Europe’s ambitions in the scientific area. Mobility represents one of the essential factors of this mobilisation, by facilitating the acquisition of the necessary skills and their adjustment to the needs of research. At the same time, the Heads of State and Governments expressed concern in Lisbon about the persistence of obstacles to the mobility of researchers and asked that steps be taken for their removal. This mandate led to the adoption, in June 2001, of the Communication ‘A Mobility Strategy for the European Research Area’

A series of key dates⁴ have marked the designing and implementation of this Mobility Strategy, as well as its impact on the ongoing increased co-operation with Member States as regards the co-ordination of research policies. This commitment was particularly emphasised in the Council’s Resolution of 10 December 2001⁵, which reaffirms the importance of mobility in making ERA a reality and reiterates the Council’s intention to eliminate persistent obstacles to the mobility of researchers.

The Council Resolution also welcomes the general approach of the Commission set out in the above mentioned communication and emphasises the need to consider actions to achieve the objectives of the Mobility Strategy.

2 ACTIONS AND PRIORITIES

2.1 Actions identified in the Commission’s Communication “A Mobility Strategy for the European Research Area”

The Commission’s Communication of June 2001 aims at enhancing the living and working environments of researchers in Europe in order to attract and maintain a high level of Human Resources in research, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Two main actions were identified for this purpose:

1. The first aims at establishing the dynamics required to set up and develop a favourable environment for mobile researchers throughout their career. Four main tasks were identified to foster the overall environment of researchers, namely:
 - legal improvements, concerning particularly admission conditions, access to employment, social security and taxation

¹ Hereafter referred to as ‘the Mobility Strategy’

² COM(2001)331 final of 20.06.2001.

³ COM(2000)6 final of 18 January 2000, hereafter referred to as the ‘ERA’

⁴ See Annex 1

⁵ JO C367 of 21.12.2001

- improvements regarding information on mobility: new developments in the information provision to researchers and better dissemination of vacancies; and improvements in the production of statistics on mobility flows
 - improvements in the provision of practical assistance to researchers, such as the creation of a Network of Mobility Centres, the setting up of a network of national ombudsmen dealing with mobility issues, and the search for practical improvements in recruitment methods for researchers in Europe
 - improvements of a qualitative nature, through the organisation of inter-ministerial meetings on mobility; the exchange of best practice; the developments of benchmarking practices ; and the designing, in a longer perspective, of a quality charter for the reception of foreign researchers in Europe.
2. The second action refers to the financial measures required in order to reach a critical mass of mobile researchers within the European Research Area. The Communication called for a system of financial incentives at local, regional, national and Community level, adapted to the different stages and forms of mobility and the characteristics of the countries and researchers concerned.

2.2 Priorities set out in the Council’s Resolution concerning the reinforcement of the mobility strategy within the ERA

In its resolution, the Council reiterates the importance of eliminating persistent obstacles to the mobility of researchers, identifying them as “multifaceted in nature, including those of a cultural, social, administrative, legal and regulatory nature”.

The Council also endorses efforts to improve information on the mobility of researchers, in particular through the creation of a dedicated Internet Portal and a Network of Mobility Centres.

These statements form the basis for the identification of priorities for the implementation of the Mobility Strategy, namely:

- to improve the administrative, legal and regulatory environment of mobility
- to improve the provision of information and services to mobile researchers
- to examine issues pertinent for the development of future actions

3 CO-OPERATION FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MOBILITY STRATEGY

In its Resolution, the Council welcomed the co-operation established between the Member States and the Commission in the preliminary phase, which lead to a first thorough analysis of the major obstacles to mobility⁶. It also invited the Commission to make sure that the Candidate Countries would be fully associated with the designing and implementation of the Mobility Strategy.

The Mobility Strategy, therefore, is based on a close co-ordination process between the Commission, the Member States, and the Candidate Countries, for the designing of actions aiming, on the one hand, at the elimination of obstacles to the mobility of researchers, and, on the other, at the implementation of other actions necessary to encourage mobility at large. This latter objective is of particular importance since many issues need to be dealt within a broader context, namely the developments taking place at

⁶ High Level Expert Group on Improving Mobility of Researchers, composed of national experts appointed by the Member States; it presented a report to the Commission in April 2001.

European level regarding immigration policy, taxation, education and labour market conditions, in particular of highly qualified and highly skilled persons.

The above-mentioned co-ordination process is implemented through a Steering Group for the Implementation of the Mobility Strategy⁷, composed of representative of the Member States and Candidate Countries. The mandate of the Group is twofold: on the one hand, to monitor in close co-operation with the Commission the implementation of the initiatives foreseen by the Mobility Strategy; on the other hand, to enhance co-ordination, whenever applicable, at national level with relevant ministries.

Six meetings of the Mobility Steering Group were convened in 2002. In addition to the presentation and discussion of actions designed to implement the Mobility Strategy, the Commission informed the Group of any relevant initiative taken by the Commission, the European Parliament or the Council of Ministers. This exchange of information is expected to play a role in the co-ordination that Research ministries are currently setting up between them.

As from January 2003, other Associated Countries to the 6th Framework Programme will also participate in this co-ordination process.

4 ACHIEVEMENTS/RESULTS

4.1 Improvement of the legislative, regulatory, and administrative environment of researchers' mobility

4.1.1. Improvement in the conditions of entry of third country researchers to Europe

In its Resolution of 15 June 2000 on establishing the ERA, the Council invited the Member States and the Commission “to take the appropriate action to make the European Area of Research and Innovation attractive to non-Member States” (point 10) and “welcomed ...the Commission’s intention to present further contributions on the opening of the European Research Area to the rest of the world” (point 12).

For its part, the High Level Expert Group on Improving Mobility of Researchers⁸ stressed that legal rule or administrative practices were still raising obstacles to the entry and stay of third country researchers and their families. These findings were further evidenced in a study⁹ carried out by the Catholic University of Leuven (KUL) at the request of the Commission, which reveals major differences between Member States in this area, as well as the complexity of the means implemented at national level in order to take into account the situation of researchers entering the ERA.

Within this perspective, the Commission services organised a seminar on 4 and 5 December 2001 on *the conditions of entry for researchers undertaking international mobility*. The direct objective was to identify, on the basis of experiences of the Member States and Candidate Countries, possibilities to improve the admission modalities and the access to employment for mobile researchers and their families. It appeared that some Member States have developed particular rules to facilitate the admission of third-country

⁷ Hereafter referred to as ‘the Mobility Steering Group’

⁸ See footnote 6 above

⁹ "Foreign Researchers: A practical guide into administrative, material and financial conditions", December 2001, Danny.Pieters@law.kuleuven.ac.be

researchers¹⁰. On this basis, and due to the close inter-service co-operation between DG RDT and DG JAI¹¹, the topic of conditions of entry for foreign researchers was included among the items on the agenda of three meetings (7 March, 23 September and 10 December 2002) of the Migration and Asylum Committee, which was set up after the Laeken European Council in December 2001. A questionnaire was submitted for the consideration of both the Migration and Asylum Committee and the Mobility Steering Group in order to complete the inventory of national practices relating to conditions of entry and to see how other Member States could benefit from national examples of good practice.

Generally speaking, Member States¹² and Candidate Countries could be classified in two categories:

- The first category covered nine Member States¹³ and two Candidate Countries¹⁴, in which specific rules govern the admission of third country researchers. In five of them, rules have been established, which exempt third country researchers from the obligation to obtain a work permit; in four cases, they need to have a work permit, but the latter is delivered in a simplified procedure, not involving any checking of the state of the labour market. Within this first category, only the United Kingdom and France recognise third country researchers as a specific category of immigrants and provide for a specific residence permit¹⁵. The following *benefits* were offered by other Member States to third country researchers: shortening of the procedure for granting a residence permit in Germany; multi-annual validity of the residence permit in Austria (2 years) and Denmark; exemption from the quota system in Austria; priority granted in practice to the treatment of requests for residence permits in Belgium; and faster procedure for the delivery of permits in the Netherlands and, under certain circumstances, in Belgium. In general, third country researchers benefit from the right to *family reunification* and the members of their family enjoy the right to work.
- The second category covered five Member States¹⁶ and nine Candidate Countries¹⁷, where according to the collected information, researchers do not seem to have been the subject of particular attention within the framework of their immigration policy, with the exception of cases where researchers are not counted within the immigration quotas.

It was pointed out, however, that some member States were in the process of modifying their legislation or practices in order to make them more favourable for the entry and stay of third country researchers. This is the case of Portugal who just adopted in December 2002 a new legislation on the matter.

As modifications are done on a non-co-ordinated manner, the advisability of undertaking action in due course at European level is envisaged. A first step in this direction was achieved with the adoption by the Commission, on 16 October 2002, of a Communication

¹⁰ Conditions of Entry for Researchers Undertaking International Mobility – European Commission, 2002

¹¹ Directorate General for Research and Directorate General for Justice and Home Affairs

¹² No information was available from Luxembourg

¹³ Austria, France, Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom, as well as, but to a lesser extent, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands and Finland

¹⁴ Lithuania and Poland

¹⁵ The “Academic Visitor” and the new “Highly Skilled Migrant Programme” launched in January 2002 in the UK, and a “scientific” residence permit set up by a law of 11 May 1998 in France

¹⁶ Greece, Italy, Ireland, Portugal, Sweden

¹⁷ Bulgaria, Estonia, Czech republic, Hungary, Latvia, Malta, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia

entitled "The European Research Area: providing new momentum, strengthening, reorienting, opening up new perspectives"¹⁸. The Council welcomed the Communication and invited, in its conclusions of 26 November 2002 "the Member States, in collaboration with the Commission, to strengthen the actions being undertaken to develop the European Research Area, in particular by: facilitating or continuing to facilitate entry and residence for researchers from third countries" (item11).

The Commission legislative and work programme for 2003¹⁹ announces for its part the adoption of a Communication on the measures to be taken with regard to conditions of entry and of residence of third-country researchers. These measures could take the form of a legislative initiative associated with an action plan.

Other relevant Community activities in the field of immigration

Several proposals for directives are currently under discussion in the immigration area, which could be beneficial for researchers. These legal initiatives may enhance the conditions for mobility in general, provided that researchers are included in general categories such as employees, self-employed persons, trainees, family members, students etc....

- The situation of PhD students, for example, is duly taken into account in the *Proposal for a Directive on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of studies*²⁰.
- The particular case of researchers is taken into consideration in article 3, par. 4 of the *Proposal for a Directive on the conditions of entry and residence of third country nationals for the purpose of paid employment and self-employed economic activities*²¹ in which a specific provision allows Member States «in absence of specific provisions of Community law » to « maintain or introduce more favourable provisions regarding (...) researchers and academic specialists ».

4.1.2. Co-ordination of social security schemes

Among the legal and administrative obstacles, those linked to current differences in the social security systems are particularly relevant for EU citizens as well as for third country nationals entering or moving to the EU. National social security systems differ widely among the countries belonging to the European Union and the European Economic Area, as a result of different traditions, national cultures, preferences and standards of living. Community provisions establish common rules and principles aimed at ensuring that, under the co-ordination system, a person who has exercised the right to move to another Member State has the same rights and obligations as nationals of that country²². The Community provisions on social security apply to national legislation concerning sickness and maternity, accidents at work, occupational diseases, invalidity benefits, old-age pensions, survivors' benefits, death grants, unemployment benefits and family benefits. In some Member States, social security is based on residence, whilst in others, only persons with an occupational activity are covered. In addition, the amount of conditions and contributions, under which the benefits are granted, vary considerably from one country to another.

¹⁸ COM (2002)565 final of 16.10.2002

¹⁹ COM(2002)590 final of 30.10.2002

²⁰ COM(2002)548 final of 07.10.2002

²¹ COM(2001)386 final of 11.07.2001

²² "The community provisions on Social Security – Your rights when moving within the European Union" http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/fundamri/movement/guide_en.htm

The Commission Services organised a seminar on this theme on 25 October 2002, with the objective of:

- discussing possible means to enable mobile researchers to better exercise their social security rights
- creating awareness, within Research Ministries as well as among Employment and Social Affairs representatives from Member States and Candidate Countries, on the existing interactions between social security regulations and the mobility of researchers.

Participants, referring to the conclusions of a preliminary report conducted among a large range of PhD students, underlined that, especially for young researchers, specific attention needs to be paid to healthcare. It was also mentioned that in some countries, mobile researchers encounter difficulties in transferring pension rights or benefiting from unemployment schemes, particularly if they come from third countries. A researcher could however, benefit from the specific solution under the terms of the Directive on safeguarding the supplementary pension rights of employed and self-employed persons moving within the Community²³, but this is limited to the case of a researcher posted and remaining a member of his/her home country institution.

The seminar highlighted that several difficulties affecting mobility are linked to the status of researchers who, from the point of view of social security treatment, are usually divided into two categories: students (who include Master and PhD students) and employees (who include post-doc research fellows and senior researchers). It was concluded that the registration into one or the other category could vary significantly from country to country.

Under the Greek Presidency, a concrete proposal is now under examination in order to review the application of Regulation 1408/71 by extending Recommendation 16²⁴ of the Administrative Commission on Social Security for Migrant Workers to include researchers.

Other relevant Community activities in the field of social security schemes

- The *Proposal for a Council Regulation on the co-ordination of social security systems*²⁵, which aims at reforming and simplifying Regulation (EEC) 1408/71 on the co-ordination of EU social security systems (in order to contribute to the removal of the obstacles to free movement of persons whatever their status), will be of utmost importance for mobile researchers. The text is currently under discussion and the need to intensify the efforts aiming at its adoption by 2003 was underlined during the Barcelona European Council of 15 and 16 March 2002.
- The *Proposal for a Council regulation extending the provisions of Regulation (EEC) 1408/71 to nationals of third countries who are not already covered by these provisions solely on the ground of their nationality*²⁶, has been adopted in December 2002.
- Measures to remove barriers to occupational and geographic mobility within the European labour market by 2005 are contained in the Commission's *Action Plan for*

²³ 98/49/EC, JOCE L209 of 29.06.1998

²⁴ JOCE C 273 of 24.10.1985

²⁵ COM(1998)779 final of 21.12.1998

²⁶ COM (2002)59 final of 6.2.2002

*Skills and Mobility*²⁷, which foresees i.a. the presentation of proposals for the modernisation and simplification of social security provisions (by 2003) and the introduction of an EU-wide health insurance card (in 2003, for an expected agreement by 2004). The Commission also aims at improving the portability of the supplementary pension rights of migrant workers, in particular with the adoption of the *Proposal for a Directive on the activities of institutions for occupational retirement provision*²⁸, currently under discussion.

- Finally, the aspects related to tax treatment of the occupational pensions addressed in the Commission's communication on "*The elimination of tax obstacles to the cross-border provision of occupational pensions*"²⁹ might also contribute significantly to enhance cross border mobility of researchers. In this context, the *judgement of the European Court of Justice* of 3 October 2002, in case C-136/00, *Rolf Dieter Danner*, Article 49 of the EC Treaty on freedom to provide services is important. This judgement precludes a Member State's tax legislation from restricting or disallowing the deductibility for income tax purposes of contributions to voluntary pension schemes paid to pension providers in other Member States while allowing such contributions to be deducted when they are paid to institutions in the first-mentioned Member State, if that legislation does not at the same time preclude taxation of the pensions paid by the above-mentioned pension providers. This judgement should facilitate researchers moving to a new Member State by removing certain discriminations in the tax treatment of their contributions to their pension arrangements in their Member State of origin.

4.2 Improvement of information and practical assistance to mobile researchers

4.2.1. The Researchers' Mobility Web Portal

Information access is a priority issue for researchers and administrators dealing with mobile researchers. This concerns both information about rules and regulations at local, national and European level, and information about opportunities for funding and vacancies.

The co-operation with Member States and Candidate Countries contributed largely to the definition of the foreseen contents and necessary technicalities for the launch, in 2003, of the pan-European *Researcher's Mobility Web Portal*. The Portal will offer the following contents and services: general information about *research grants* at EU, international, national or regional level; available opportunities and *job offers* published by the different actors of the European Research Community (Universities, Industry, Foundations, etc); information about *administrative and legal issues* (conditions of entry, social security and tax schemes etc) as well as about cultural/intercultural and family related aspects; tailored and *customised help desk*-function through the European Network of Mobility Centres³⁰; general information about *research policy issues* relevant for the career development of a researcher; and, finally, a *forum* and other services of particular interest for mobile researchers.

Different actions have been initiated in this respect since 2001, such as an inventory of major Internet sites and contacts with various public and private institutions in order to

²⁷ COM(2002)72 final of 13.2.2002

²⁸ COM(2000)507 final of 11.10.2000

²⁹ COM(2001)214 final of 19.04.2001

³⁰ See point 4.2.2 below

find out what opportunities already exist and how they could be best used for the Researcher's Mobility Portal. Contacts have also been made with other Commission Services where portals are being developed. A feasibility study was launched in February 2002, which looked into the conceptual (structure, content, interface, navigation, design, co-ordination) and technical conditions and constraints of the development of the portal. The outcomes draw up recommendations and minimal common standards and/or requirements in order to achieve a true interoperability of national and, where appropriate, regional web sites and databases.

In parallel, different international, national and sectoral sources were mobilised towards the interconnection at European level of national and sectoral databases, web sites or portals. This has been done through experts meetings in Brussels or visits to their organisations. In order to link to the Portal, all sites providers will have to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This will ensure that they commit themselves to work together in public and private partnerships³¹, in order to inform about the largest possible number of fellowships and grants from public and private organisations in a commonly agreed form and to guarantee access to research vacancies from a variety of terminals and different access systems. They will also have to contribute to an effective promotion strategy of the Portal.

In parallel, members of the Mobility Steering Group were asked to carry out an inventory of relevant national Web sources. In particular, 19 countries have sent back replies to a questionnaire providing the Commission with a very diversified and rich overview about existing sources. The spin-off effect of this exercise was the decision taken by ten countries to develop their own national Mobility Portal, which reflects the good co-operation established with them on this topic. Close co-operation with all participating countries is still needed in order to achieve a true interoperability of the different systems.

A prototype of the Portal³² was presented at the launch Conference of the 6th Framework Programme in Brussels from 11 to 13 November 2002. The launch of the Portal is foreseen for May 2003.

Other relevant Community activities in the field of Information and assistance to mobility

Several Internet portals or Web sites have been or being set up in other Commission services with the purpose of giving European citizens practical information on their rights and opportunities as to living, working, studying and travelling in the European Union. Where appropriate links will be established between the Researchers' Mobility Web Portal and:

- One Stop Job and Mobility' Portal (due to come online in mid-2003)
- EURES (European Employment Services)
- Portal for Learning Opportunities (Photeus)
- EU Administration Portal
- The "Dialogue with Citizens" initiative
- The Youth Portal
- Pilot site for job opportunities for civil servants in Europe

³¹ At European, international, national, regional or local level, including the European Commission, international organisations, government and non-government organisations, academia, institutes of higher Education, research centres, foundations, IT and media organisations, industry including SMEs, ...

³² The prototype can be found on the following address:
http://194.185.30.69/rmp/wireframe/20021104/index_en.html

4.2.2. *The European Network of Mobility Centres*

In parallel to the *Portal*, the European Commission has proposed within its Mobility Strategy to create a *European Network of Mobility Centres*, whose primary task, in addition to the provision of comprehensive and updated information, would be the provision of customised assistance to researchers and their families.

The need for personalised information and guidance is crucial in making Europe a more attractive research environment. This applies to both outgoing and incoming researchers, as well as to researchers moving from academia to industry (the so-called ‘inter-sectoral mobility’). Although many good practices already exist throughout Europe, a lot of streamlining, co-ordination and exchange of information still needs to be done. In most cases, the responsibility lies within the individual research institutions, some of which have international offices. Their efficiency however depends on the level of expertise among the administrators in charge. In most cases, there are no specific nation-wide structures. Not only are these sources highly heterogeneous in character, scope and impact, but there is also a lack of real structural links between them. A lack of communication is especially experienced between those who produce the rules (Ministries, national and regional authorities) and those who implement them.

In order to improve the provision of information and assistance at European level, the Commission set up in October 2001 a pilot group of 15 experts representing the diversity of existing assistance and advice schemes to mobile researchers (universities, foundations, national networks, etc.). The pilot group was asked to identify a core range of services to be provided by the Network, and to submit concrete proposals concerning the structure of the Network, task assignments, partnerships, modalities of functioning and resources to be mobilised. The following services to be provided were identified, namely: information on legal, regulatory and administrative matters, such as work contracts and entry conditions, salaries, taxation, pension rights, health care and social security; but also practical assistance in the field of housing, job opportunities for the accompanying partner, day care systems, education, language courses, introduction to the culture of the host country, etc.

Based on the work of the expert group and on several discussions within the Mobility Steering Group, a working plan entitled “Towards a Network of Mobility Centres” was adopted in April 2002. A number of meetings took place at national level, at the initiative of the National Research Ministries, in order to mobilise a large number of active providers of information about the designation of the members of the European Network of Mobility Centres and the identification of bridgehead organisations. Based on a questionnaire sent in May 2002, Member States and Candidate Countries completed in September 2002 the designation of 40 bridgehead organisations³³ with the aim of networking them at European level. Their main function will be to assist the Commission and the participating countries in identifying and organising mobility centres at national level. They will also act as relays between researchers and individual mobility centres operating on the ground, on the one hand, and organisations that, due to their size or expertise, have acquired particular sectoral experience at national or international level, on the other. This exercise gave rise in most participating countries to a thorough mapping of existing schemes and services, in order to enhance their structuring at national level and determine additional needs.

³³

Annexe 2

The possibility of financing the structuring of the Network, during its initial stages, both at European and national level, is foreseen by the 6th Framework Programme.

The first meeting of the bridgehead organisations took place on 6 November 2002; the official launch of the Network is planned for mid 2003.

4.3 Examining issues pertinent for the development of future actions

4.3.1. Benchmarking of Human Resources in RTD

In the context of the ERA and the conclusions of the Lisbon Summit of March 2000, a series of expert groups has been set up to examine and benchmark key aspects of research policy. One of the groups has been charged with looking specifically at Human Resources in RTD and issued its final report in June 2002³⁴. Using, where available, established indicators at national, regional and European level, the report examines and compares key issues such as: career development trends, population of researchers within various career stages, aspects of geographical and inter-sectoral mobility, salary comparisons between sectors, and the dispersal of scientists in society. The development of five indicators is closely associated with this exercise, only two of which being now available for EU Member States: i.e. the number of researchers in relation to the total workforce and the number of new science and technology PhDs.

As a follow up of this work, a series of workshops have been organised focussing on specific areas, such as the effects of brain drain and counteracting measures³⁵, and how to prepare Human Resources for the private sector, while reforming research systems towards more competitive R&D³⁶.

A second cycle of the Benchmarking R&D Policy exercise will be launched in January 2003. Human resources in R&D and mobility issues will be two of the major topics of this second cycle.

4.3.2. Measuring the international mobility of researchers

The lack of reliable comparable statistics on the flow of mobile researchers has been underlined by the High Level Expert Group on Improving the Mobility of Researchers and the Mobility Steering Group. Several parallel actions in this area have been initiated in 2002.

As part of the Benchmarking exercise mentioned in point 4.3.1 above, one specific indicator to be developed addresses the international mobility of researchers, namely the identification of the proportion of foreign researchers amongst researchers in EU universities and public research centres. Based on available information, experts of the benchmarking group also attempted to look at flows of researchers within the EU, but reliable data is currently available only for a limited number of countries, being based largely on distinct survey data, and are not directly comparable between countries.

A study on the emigration flows of qualified scientists has been committed to the Maastricht University as part of the Common Basis for Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators (CBSTII) initiative. The main objective is to measure the flow of

³⁴ Benchmarking R&D Policies - STRATA-ETAN expert working group - Human Resources in RTD (including attractiveness of S&T professions), final report 21 August 2001

³⁵ 17-18 October, 2002; Leipzig, Germany

³⁶ 2 December, 2002; Bled, Slovenia

qualified scientists leaving their country of origin in order to spend long periods abroad. This study draws on sources of statistics, at both national and international levels, showing the countries of origin and destination of qualified scientists and whether or not they are continuing their activities. Results are expected for early 2003.

Finally, considering the methodological difficulties in this area, the Commission organised in Brussels in July 2002 a workshop on “Measuring the International Mobility of Researchers”. Its objectives were to review existing data sources and methods, together with the measurement of international researcher mobility, and to assess the possibilities for establishing a system to monitor “brain circulation” on a regular and reproducible basis. In order to achieve this, the workshop set out to examine a number of key issues, such as the nature of measurement to be implemented, the sources of data and the possible methodology associated with the analysis.

Further developments in this area could benefit from the study “Statistics on Student Mobility within the European Union (SSME)”³⁷, carried out by the European Parliament in co-operation with Eurostat, in order to develop recommendations on how to overcome the shortcomings of the European mobility statistics described in prior studies.

4.3.3. The social visibility of the researcher and the researcher's career

Recent discussions within the Mobility Steering Group and a number of meetings and conferences, demonstrated that encouraging mobility will not have any long-term effect if it is not combined with actions aimed at attracting and maintaining a larger number of researchers in scientific careers, both at public and private level. This can only be achieved if the visibility and attractiveness of the researcher's profession and career are significantly improved.

So far, this issue was approached on a preliminary basis under two aspects.

The impact of international mobility on the development of individual careers was discussed in a preliminary meeting, which took place in Brussels in September 2001, with a group of 20 researchers. The round table, organized under the Belgian Presidency, highlighted among other points the role of professors and research tutors in the choice of destination. A difference was perceived between mobility in the context of a structured career development (i.e. organized by the institution where the researcher is employed) and mobility undertaken at the initiative of an individual researcher independently of a stable employment relationship. This difference was considered as having an impact both on the attractiveness of mobility and the long-term prospect of the career, especially if return is envisaged.

Similar developments were presented in a report³⁸, of the IPTS (Institute for Prospective Technological Studies) of the Community at the request of the European parliament, which sets out major issues associated with academic researcher mobility, on the basis of a series of interviews with researchers active in two specific sectors, namely Information and Communication Technology and Biotechnology.

Mobility between Academia and Industry is a second aspect of the career profile that requires full consideration. A preliminary workshop took place on this matter in July 2002. The filling of temporarily vacant posts when a researcher moves to the other sector

³⁷ European Parliament, DG4, Working paper, Educ 112 (Study no IV/2001/13/01)

³⁸ Mobility of Academic Researchers: Academic Careers and Recruitment in ICT and Biotechnology, a joint JRC/IPTS-ESTO Study, JRC/IPTS, June 2001

and the lack of mutual recognition of periods spent in the other sector was strongly emphasised.

Other stages of the researcher's career, such as methods for recruiting researchers, evaluating performances, improving career perspectives, and enhancing social recognition or employment conditions in the profession will be dealt with in 2003.

A specific Communication on the issue of Researcher's Careers is scheduled for June 2003³⁹.

4.4 Providing appropriate financial support

2002 was marked by the adoption of the Sixth Community Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development, which constitutes the Union's main financial instrument for implementing the ERA. Its overall budget covering the period 2002–2006 amounts to 17.5 billion €.

Actions of the Specific Programme "Structuring the European Research Area for Human Resources and Mobility", henceforth known as the "Marie Curie actions"⁴⁰, have been allocated a budget of 1.58 billion € (2002-2006) – a near 70 % increase in comparison to the previous Framework Programme. They consist in a coherent set of actions, largely based on the financing of structured international mobility schemes for researchers, and are essentially geared towards the development and transfer of research competencies, the consolidation and widening of researchers' career prospects, and the promotion of excellence in European Research. With a view to further reinforcing the Human Potential for European Research, this activity also aims at attracting the best and most promising researchers from third countries, at promoting the training of European researchers abroad and at stimulating the return of European scientists established outside Europe.

5 CONCLUSIONS

The eighteen months, which have followed the launch of the Mobility Strategy, have been characterized by a series complementary project, namely:

- The designing, on the one hand, of a set of concrete instruments with the objective of improving the environment in which mobility is carried out. The Researcher's Mobility Portal will improve the availability and quality of information at the disposal of researchers and host institutions. For its part, the European Network of Mobility Centers will ensure proximity assistance and advice to mobile researchers and their families. Both initiatives should help making mobility a natural and effective component of the researchers' careers.
- On the other hand, the Commission, in close co-operation with the Member States and Candidate Countries, has initiated a significant coordination process, which will be gradually extended to all Associated Countries to the ERA. This process, which relies heavily on the joint implementation of the concrete initiatives mentioned above, endeavors to find solutions to remedy the broader obstacles of administrative, legal, regulatory or cultural nature, which largely exceed the specific research area, but have prevented nevertheless any overall progress in the mobility of researchers hitherto.

By doing so, the Commission and the Steering Group contributed, during the period under consideration, to supply solutions to the objectives, which had been assigned to them.

³⁹ COM(2002)590 final of 30.10.2002

⁴⁰ <http://europa.eu.int/mariecurie-actions>

Annex 1

Key dates

- January 2000

In its Communication "Towards a European Research Area", the Commission draws attention to the importance of developing abundant and qualified Human Resources in European Research and stresses that the mobility is one of the essential means for the adjustment of Human Resources to the needs of the ERA

- March 2000

The European Summit of Lisbon assigns to the Union the objective of becoming the most competitive knowledge-based economy and society, and identifies mobility of researchers as one of the means to fulfill this objective. It instructs the Commission and the Member States to work closely together in order to take the necessary steps for the removal of persisting obstacles to mobility of researchers.

- July 2000-Avril 2001

The Commission sets up a High-Level Expert Group on Improving the Mobility of Researchers, composed of representatives of the Member States, and designated by the Research Ministries.

On the basis of a questionnaire sent to the Member States, the High-Level Group identified four main groups of obstacles (legal and administrative; socio-cultural; obstacles linked to researcher's career; obstacles to inter-sectorial mobility) and identified a number of good practices. The group also gave indications regarding the priorities to be fixed for actions in these areas. Its work was completed in April 2001 and a report was presented to the Commission.

- June 2001

On the basis of the work of the High-Level Expert Group, the Commission adopts a Communication entitled "A Mobility Strategy for the European Research Area" which focuses on a series of priority actions and defines instruments to answer them. This strategy also identifies cooperation areas with other fields of intervention, such as employment policies, social security and taxation, education and immigration, for which coordination has to be established at Community and national level.

- December 2001

The EU Council of Ministers adopts a Resolution, which endorses the general approach proposed by the Commission in the above-mentioned communication. The Council asked for the pursuit of the cooperation established between the Member States and the Commission in this context, and to extend it to the applicant countries to the Union.

- February 2002

The Commission adopts an Action Plan for Skills and Mobility, calling i.a. for better links between industry and academia in the research area to overcome barriers to mobility.

The Commission sets up a Steering Group for the implementation of the Researchers' Mobility Strategy, composed of representatives of the Member States and the Candidate Countries, designated by the Research Ministries. Through this Group, the Commission sets up a continuous coordination process with these countries in fields of interest for the

mobility of researchers. It also ensured that relevant information and specific national practices are disseminated between the participating countries.

- March 2002

The European Summit of Barcelona welcomes the open cooperation method with the Member States as a means of carrying out the ERA. In order to measure the progress achieved in the creation of a Knowledge-based Europe, it also urges the Union to aim at devoting by 2010, 3% of its GDP to investments in R&D.

- June 2002

The Council adopts a Resolution on the Implementation of the Commission's Action Plan for Skills and Mobility in the Union, which takes into account the Mobility Strategy for the ERA and proposes general actions likely to encourage it.

- September 2002

The Commission identifies⁴¹ the outline conditions for the carrying out of the "3%" Objective including the importance of adjusting Human Resources to the needs resulting from the increase in the investment levels, and of encouraging the researchers' mobility in order to facilitate the adaptation of the qualifications and to contribute to this adjustment.

- October 2002

The Commission proposes⁴² to give a new impetus to the aim of carrying out the ERA by strengthening the open coordination between the Member States, including in the mobility area, and by announcing legislative measures if necessary to accelerate the coordination of national policies.

- November 2002

The Council of Ministers adopts conclusions in which it draws attention to the need to further strengthen co-operation, in particular in the field of researchers' mobility, especially when obstacles persist due to the lack of or slow developments in political fields other than research.

⁴¹ "More research for Europe-Towards the 3% objective" COM(2002)499 final and SEC(2002)929 of 11.09.2002

⁴² "The European Research Area: providing new momentum, strengthening, reorienting, opening up new perspectives" COM(2002)565 final of 16.10.2002

Annex 2

European Network of Mobility Centres - List of Bridgehead organisation (December 2002)

- **Austria** Austrian Federal Ministry of Education,, Science and Culture
Bureau for International Research and Technology Co-operation (BIT)
Austrian Exchange Service – Bureau for Academic Mobility (ÖAD)
- **Belgium** Brussels Mobility Centre
Government of Flanders – Science and Innovation Administration
Ministère de la Communauté française–Direction de la Recherche scientifique
Federal Office for Scientific, Technical and Cultural Affairs (OSTC)
- **Bulgaria** Sofia University
Ministry of Education and Science
- **Cyprus** Research Promotion Foundation*
- **Czech Rep** Centre for Higher Education Studies*
- **Denmark** Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation*
- **Estonia** Archimedes Foundation
Estonian Academy of Sciences
- **Finland** Academy of Finland
- **France** Association Bernard Gregory
Fondation Nationale Alfred Kastler
Point de contact national Mobilité
- **Germany** Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung*
- **Greece** Centre for Research and Technology Hellas (CERTH)
- **Hungary** Hungarian Science and Technology Foundation (TÉT)
Tempus Public Foundation
- **Ireland** Conference of Heads of Irish Universities (CHIU)
- **Italy** Fondazione CRUI per le Università Italiane
- **Latvia** Institute of Biology of the University of Latvia
- **Lithuania** Lithuanian Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education
- **Luxembourg** Ministère de la Culture, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche
- **Malta** Malta Council for Science and Technology (MCST)

*=Provisional appointment

- **Netherlands** Netherlands Organisation for International Co-operation in Higher Education (NUFFIC)
Senter/EG-Liaison
VSNU
 - **Poland** Institute of Fundamental Technological research
 - **Portugal** Gabinete de Relações Internacionais da Ciência e Ensino Superior (GRICES)
 - **Romania** Ministry of Education and Research
 - **Slovakia** Ministry of Education–Department of International Science and Technology Co-operation*
 - **Slovenia** Ministry of Education, Science and Sport*
 - **Spain** Ministerio de Ciencia y Tecnología*
 - **Sweden** The Swedish EU-R&D Council
 - **United Kingdom** The British Council*
-

*=Provisional appointment