



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
IMPACT ASSESSMENT BOARD

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Opinion

Title

DG EAC – IA accompanying the Council Recommendation on Youth on the Move: Increasing opportunities for learning mobility

(Resubmitted draft: version of 21 April 2010)

(A) Context

The Youth on the Move (YoM) is a flagship EU initiative which is part of the Europe 2020 Strategy. The potential contribution of mobility to the development of their learning and skills of young people has been discussed in several Council conclusions and in the work of the High Level Expert Forum on Mobility in 2008. Mobility goals are also part of the Bologna Process (inter-governmental co-operation in higher education). In 2001 the Council adopted a Recommendation on mobility within the Community for students, persons undergoing training, volunteers, teachers and trainers, which needs to be updated.

In 2010 the Commission intends to adopt a package of initiatives on youth mobility. It will include an overarching 'Youth on the move' Communication and a proposal for a new Council Recommendation. This impact assessment provides the analysis to support the Recommendation. An integrated YoM Programme will be prepared for 2014-20 and will be subject to a separate impact assessment.

(B) Overall assessment

The report has been improved along the lines of the Board's first opinion, and now contains most of the elements necessary to make a case for further EU action. It should nevertheless discuss in more detail the importance of effective monitoring arrangements in order to support the uptake of the recommendation by the Member States. In terms of presentation, the analysis in the report is still occasionally fragmented and contains some repetition. Further efforts should be made to improve the focus and structure of the report, especially in the sections on problem definition, description of options and their assessment.

(C) Main recommendations for improvements

(1) Focus the problem definition better. The problem definition of the revised report includes many new elements as suggested by the Board first opinion; however occasionally these elements should be better integrated into the text. For example, the introductory part of the problem definition (p.11) needs a better focus, given that it

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currently contains an unclear mixture of political background (e.g. benefits of learning mobility), baseline measures (EU programmes) and conclusions on ‘obstacles to learning mobility’ (the latter being not yet analysed). Also, the new quantitative information from the Eurobarometer Survey, as presented on p.10, should be used more effectively to underpin the specific problems and their underlying drivers. Finally, the report should provide evidence on low participation rates of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

(2) Outline better the focus of the action. The revised report demonstrates better the logic of the renewed EU action. All identified problems are reflected in the objectives and the description of Option 2 *Recommendation* now includes examples of the actions which are foreseen. The new Annex 5 links elements of problem definition explicitly to the objectives and to the concrete measures. However, in order to provide a better overview, the description of actions in this annex should be as succinct and focussed as possible, and it should avoid rewriting the provisions of the Recommendation. The report should also indicate whether all the elements of the Option 2 are equally important or whether some areas should be prioritized. In relation to Option 3 *Open Method of Co-ordination (OMC)*, the report should clarify how a new OMC for the learning mobility of young people would articulate with the existing Education and Training OMC.

(3) Provide more detailed analysis of the problems related to the uptake of the 2001 Recommendation by the Member States, in particular that of the ineffectiveness of monitoring arrangements. Although the revised report includes a new objective on better comparison of progress and reinforced peer learning, the problem definition still merely mentions these issues. Given that in the areas of the 2001 Recommendation where the monitoring was effective (e.g. recognition of qualifications), the Member States’ uptake has been significantly better, it is important to analyse in more detail why the monitoring and assessment arrangements in other areas have been less successful.

(D) Procedure and presentation

The report would benefit from further editing and proofreading. Firstly, in terms of structure, it should (a) bring out clearly the different elements of the problem definition (e.g. by using sub-headings) and make clear that Section 2.1 *EU instruments in support of learning mobility* is a description of the baseline; (b) shift the assessment of ‘costs’ from the Section 4 *Policy options* to Section 5 *Analysis of Impacts*, given that ‘costs’ are part of the economic impacts. Secondly, the report should eliminate the remaining repetitions. For example, administrative burdens are currently discussed in the different sub-sections; information in Sections 5.5 and 6.1 is largely overlapping, and similar information is also provided in Section 4. Thirdly, there are some inconsistencies in the text, e.g. p.4 refers to a table in Section 2.3, which does not exist, and p.20 refers to five main lines of action followed by four bullets (same in the executive summary). Fourthly, the formatting of the report needs to be verified (e.g. automatic numbering in Annex 5).

Finally, in the problem definition, the report should always mention the source of the evidence which is presented (e.g. in footnotes).

(E) IAB scrutiny process	
Reference number	2010/EAC/003
External expertise used	No
Date of Board Meeting	Written procedure The present opinion concerns a resubmitted draft IA report. The first opinion was issued on 19 April 2010.