

*Raising Quantity  
and Quality  
of Work Placements  
in Europe*



# EUROPE MOBILITY NETWORK

## GUIDEBOOK ON FUNDING SCHEMES FOR INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY

A PRACTICAL GUIDEBOOK ON  
FUNDING SCHEMES IN ORDER TO  
IDENTIFY NATIONAL, EUROPEAN AND  
INTERNATIONAL POTENTIAL FUNDS  
FOR MOBILITY

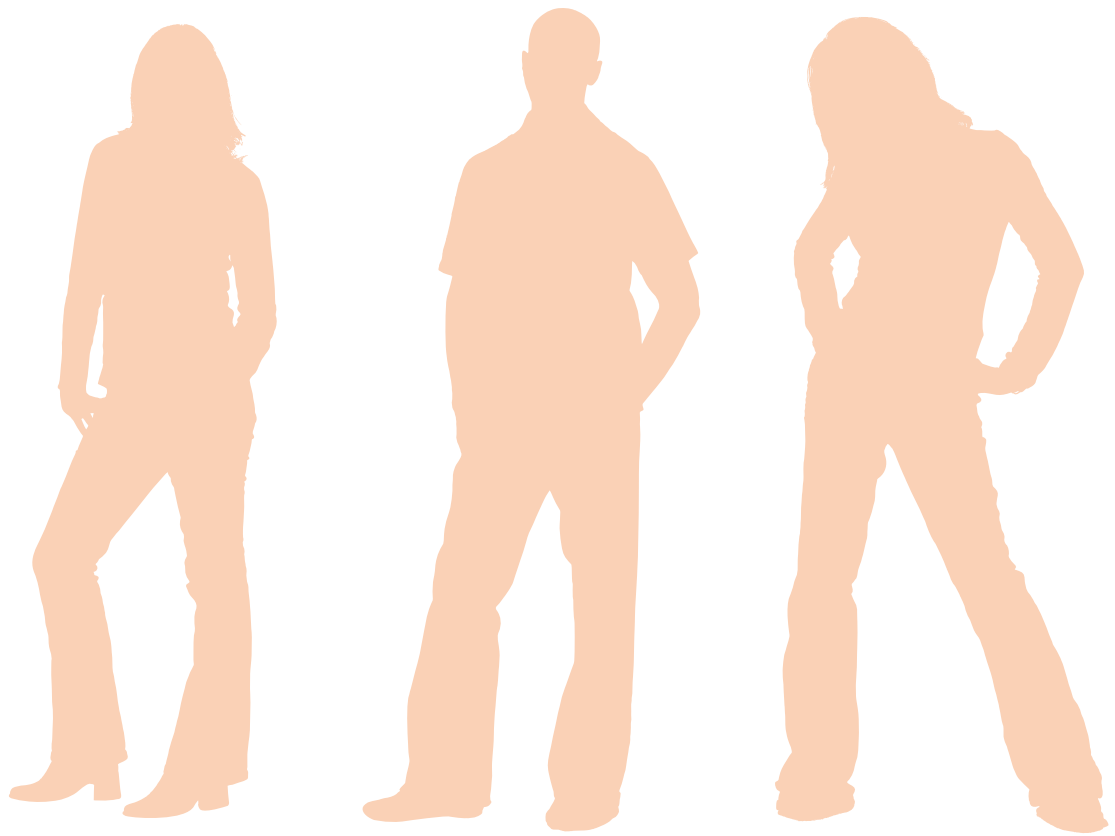
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## GUIDEBOOK ON FUNDING SCHEMES FOR INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY

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This Guidebook has been produced by European Minds in collaboration with Coopération Bancaire pour l'Europe - GEIE (CBE), as the Thematic Commission on Funding Schemes in the framework of the Europemobility Network project.

**Europemobility** is an European network that aims at stimulating both the quality and quantity of work placement abroad by establishing a pan European network of professionals, experts and mobility coordinators responsible for planning and accomplishing learning mobility initiatives. Europemobility Network supports mobility in VET, by promoting awareness on the obstacles as well as on the tools, methodologies and solutions available. For further information, visit <http://www.europemobility.eu>.

**European Minds** is the largest independent EU consulting company in Sweden with more than fifteen years' experience from working in the EU arena. European Minds Sweden is firmly rooted in a transnational context, thus helping enterprises, organisations and authorities to recognise the opportunities of a European and indeed international co-operative approach. Emphasis is laid upon knowledge and competence, network and contacts, project development and management, business ideas and financing. For further information, visit <http://www.europeanminds.com>.

**Coopération Bancaire pour l'Europe - GEIE (CBE)** was born as an initiative of some banks willing to develop information services and consulting on European programmes and assist their clients in different fields related to internationalization, such as, for example, participation in public procurement and the research for business partners. Since 1992, CBE has carried out intensive information and assistance activities for member banks and their business customers, with a multitude of interventions on the most various topics regarding the EU. For further information, visit <http://www.cbe.be>.



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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Unemployment, economic immigration and high innovation are key challenges for the European Union. Learning mobility, i.e the possibility to improve human and professional skills visiting new countries, could be an effective tool to address those phenomena and a valuable opportunity to be shared by all people in Europe. The previous economic and social models have become outdated, so it is necessary to give a new input to mobility among European citizens, as an affordable chance for their human and professional empowerment. Raising and improving learning mobility requires high financial resources that have been substantially reduced especially in the last 10 years because of the deep economic crisis. In this tricky scenario, the identification of a plural disposability of funding schemes is mandatory.

This guidebook tries to collect the most effective, used and attainable funding opportunities available at national, trans-national and international levels. The study examined three important aspects of funding schemes – functionality, impact, innovations - as they arise in the case studies provided by different mobility coordinators. More specifically, the guide deepened the following issues:

- What available funding schemes support learning mobility projects?
- What activities and projects can be carried out thanks to those funding schemes?
- What weaknesses and strengths they show and what strategies may be used to address limits and produce innovations?

The guidebook drew on an extensive set of data on public institutions, companies and associations' funding experience. The Thematic Commission on Funding Schemes carried out 35 surveys with entities from the European Countries, South America and Middle East, interviewing directly 15 of them. The data were used both to provide descriptive information on the different types of funding schemes and to verify specifically the awareness of the European programmes and funds among the learning mobility coordinators.

The guidebook wants to be a tool for starting a plural and effective dialogue on the possible innovations to improve quality of learning mobility through a wider and more effective range of advantageous funds.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

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The subject of analysis is the mobility funding schemes provided by the EU institutions, EU member States and Third countries. The research team has resorted desk researches, surveys and interviews to deepen this issue.

More precisely, the following five phases have characterised the research:

- **Data collection:** research of available information, reports and documents on mobility funding schemes, with a deep study of the projects already carried out by other networks in the field of mobility. The data come primarily from the websites of the European and national institutions, organisations, network platforms and companies providing or using mobility funding schemes. The main aim has been to capitalize on earlier work, what kind of funding issues and problems are commonly addressed by the mobility coordinators.
- **Template:** draft of a template to collect information on funding schemes and case studies related to specific mobility projects. The template presented 10 questions mainly focused on the funding means, analysis of beneficiaries/target groups, geographical coverage, partnerships, weaknesses and strengths. The template has been sent to the project partners and external entities and it can also be found on the partnership platform of EuropeMobility.
- **Editing and selection:** collection of case studies and deep analysis of the information provided. Some issues needed to be deepened together with the partners through an effective and steady communication. Since the total amount of available case studies was too high to be included in the guidebook, the geographical criteria were identified as the most appropriate selection tool, providing a plural vision on the mobility funding schemes. Some of the funds do not support mobility as main aim, but resort to mobility as a valuable mean for the achievement of their objectives. All case studies have been summarized and included in the guide book together with the contact information of the entity that used or provided the mobility funds.
- **List of funding schemes:** accurate desk research was carried out on the funding opportunities available at National/Local, European and International levels. Different colours highlight three different types of funding schemes belonging to those macro-areas. The output is a long list of funds provided by public institutions, companies, organizations, banks and private funds.
- **Conclusions:** identification of funding schemes' weaknesses and strengths through a broad desk research and the analysis of the case studies provided by the partners. Most of the issues arisen are common to the different types of funding schemes, so it has been chosen to place them in a joint paragraph. This phase was particularly important, since it was crucial for the identification of limits in the access and the concrete use of funds. Thanks to project partners' suggestions and recommendations some solutions and proposals have been indicated to improve the mobility funding opportunities available at National, European and International levels.

The information contained in this Guidebook has been compiled between September 2012 and June 2013. However, it should be noted that funding schemes are regularly subject to change, and this may make some of information outdated.

## 3. CASE STUDIES

Below we selected a number of relevant examples of funding schemes which appeared as innovative in connection with the stakeholders involved, the funding mechanism of learning mobility schemes, the complementarity with EU funded programmes, or a combination of these elements.

Additional examples of alternative funding schemes are published on project web site: [www.europemobility.eu](http://www.europemobility.eu).

### 3.1 "VIE" - Volontariat en entreprise

**Promoter:** The National Institute of Geographic and Forest Information (IGN) with UBIFRANCE, the French agency for international business development, France

**Recipients:** Young professionals between 18 and 28 years from a member State of the European Union

**Funding Scheme:** National placement programme

**Objective:** To promote highly-rewarding professional experience

**Description:** The VIE (Volontariat en Entreprise) is a French international corporate placement programme for young professionals between the age of 18 and 28 who are European Union nationals. Becoming an International Intern means going abroad to carry out a remunerated professional assignment for 6 to 24 months whilst benefiting from protective public law coverage. The National Institute of Geographic and Forest Information (IGN) promotes the VIE and UBIFRANCE, the French agency for international business development, is in charge of all the administrative procedures of your assignment. Mainly intended for students, recent graduates or those looking for a job, the French International Internship Programme offers a highly-rewarding professional experience, a real springboard for an international career. The VIE is dedicated to all professions: financial, marketing, international business and trade, corporate auditing, accounting, mechanics, electronics, telecommunications, I.T., construction and civil engineering, agronomy, tourism, law, human resources, and many others. Leading international groups and SMEs advertise their assignment offers on the CIVIWEB website. International Internship is not voluntary work. VIE are paid an all-inclusive monthly expenses allowance, which varies depending on the assignment country, but regardless of the level of qualification.

- A concrete example of this project is the experience of a French guy, from the south of France, who moved to Brussels, working for the Group PSA Peugeot Citroën – "PSA Finance". This project involved him in some tasks as marketing analysis, using Excel and discovering new functions in the program. His job is primarily focused on the calculation of the tax interests in the sale of cars, benchmark, reporting to the boss the provisions done in the past months about that. In addition, he studies the market in Benelux, making comparisons about the Peugeot cars and the other products sold in the same country. With this basis, he has to understand how much the product will cost to the enterprise next month: if the manager accepts the price, the enterprise buys the stocks according with the intern suggestions.

**Information:** IGN France International - Maison Mozart - 8 rue du Sentier - Paris 75002  
Tel. +33 (0)1 42 34 56 56, Email: [info@ignfi.fr](mailto:info@ignfi.fr)



### 3.2 "Move your mind": A private loan for learning mobility

**Promoter:** Coopération Bancaire pour l'Europe (CBE-GEIE) and Piacenza's Bank, Italy

**Recipients:** Young people from 18 to 28 years living in Emilia Romagna region

**Funding Scheme:** National Bank Loan

**Objective:** To help students going abroad and facing the economic difficulties linked to the low amount of funds available for mobility activities

**Description:** The Project "MOVE YOUR MIND" is promoted by Coopération Bancaire pour l'Europe (CBE-GEIE) and Piacenza's Bank, with the aim to address a significant lack of private financial products to sustain mobility. It resulted in a special loan for mobility that has been re-adapted in Italian with the name of "CULTURA TRASFRONTALIERA". Piacenza's Bank has given rise to a best practice, as the financial product offered to the clients is the first financial loan totally dedicated to mobility, with no collateral required and, above all, with no interest rate. Move your mind is addressed to different kinds of mobility giving young people the chance to study or travel abroad. In addition, this new private loan created by Piacenza's Bank and CBE does not substitute the European national or regional grants, it integrates the grants with a maximum amount for the loan of 3.000 euros. The direct beneficiaries are young people from 18 to 28 years living in Emilia Romagna region (Italy) and willing to study or to have a job experience abroad. The main objective of the project is to help students going abroad and facing the economic difficulties linked to the low amount of funds available for mobility activities. More specifically, it is addressed to undergraduate/graduate students starting an ERASMUS, a LEONARDO DA VINCI project and all kinds of TRAINEESHIP (integration to an aid grant). The related aim is to transfer the outcome of Piacenza's Bank to other banks in Europe, convincing them to adopt the same loan to sustain mobility.

**Information:** CBE-GEIE, Avenue Louise, 125/1 B, 1050 Bruxelles Belgio, Evita Marchiori 003225410995



### 3.3 "IdA" - Transnational mobility and exchange projects

**Promoter:** Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Germany

**Recipients:** disadvantaged young people, unemployed young adults and young lone mothers as well as persons with disabilities

**Funding Scheme:** European Social Fund (ESF)

**Objective:** To support the vocational integration of groups of individuals with difficulties in entering the labour market

**Description:** The "IdA - Integration through Exchange" programme fosters transnational mobility and exchange projects with the support of European Social Fund (ESF), supporting the vocational integration of groups of individuals with difficulties in entering the labour market by means of practical occupational experience in other EU countries. Support is only provided to project networks that work together with at least one transnational partner from at least one EU member state. The involvement of the local bodies responsible for basic income support is of central importance. Each project cooperates with the local and regional employment agencies, the job centres, joint agencies or optional communities in order to find tailored solutions for each individual jobseeker. IdA is targeted in particular at the following groups of persons who have difficulties in gaining access to the job and training market: disadvantaged young people, unemployed young adults and young lone mothers as well as persons with disabilities. The project is composed by two initiatives: the first call that is IdA I aimed to increasing the employment opportunities of disadvantaged young persons and unemployed young adults through promoting transnational exchange and mobility projects and the second call named IdA II to enhance employment opportunities for people with disabilities by supporting transnational mobility projects and exchanges of experts. The programme lasts from October 2008 to 2015.

**Information:** Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Group European Funds for Employment, Division EF 2 - Implementation of the European Social Fund, Mechthild Jürgens, Tel.:+49 (0)228 99 527-2065, Email mechthild.juergens@bmas.bund.de





### 3.4 "Regional operational programme (ROP)" - Tuscany region

**Promoter:** Tuscany Region, Italy

**Recipients:** Pupils, apprentices, graduates, employed and unemployed people, entrepreneurs

**Funding Scheme:** European Social Fund (ESF)

**Objective:** To address the unemployment in Tuscany

**Description:** Tuscany Region through the Tuscan Regional Operational Programme (ROP) 2007-2013 as part of the European Social Fund, promotes both individual/group mobility for specific targets (pupils, apprentices, graduates, employed and unemployed people, entrepreneurs, etc.) and sector mobility, related to a specific economic sector or production field with transnational vocation. The transnational mobility carried out through different actions aimed at extending: the number of bodies involved in the initiatives for the mobility of citizens and operators of the training and work system for the exchange of good practices, processes of innovation transfer and cooperation with other players of other countries of the European Union, actions for the creation of networks and partnerships of Social partners and businesses. In 2010 for example 36 projects have been submitted, 22 have been financed involving about 550 recipients (apprentices, unemployed, diploma holders, graduates, entrepreneurs, representatives of trade unions, civil servants). The available resources were 2,200,000 euro, all of them allocated. The ROP supports different kinds of actions addressed to various target groups: cooperation among businesses (meetings, visits, seminars) such as benchmarking, exchange of information, posts for work experience; cooperation among social partners (meetings, visits, seminars) such as exchange of best practices concerning economic development policies and trade union relationships management; mobility of apprentices, students, graduates, i.e work experiences abroad.

**Information:** Tuscany Region, Via V.Emanuele II 62/64-50134 FI-Villa Fabbricotti, Italy. Maria Dina Tozzi, Tel. 00390554382902, Email mariadina.tozzi@regione.toscana.it



### 3.5 "The UK - India graduate work experience programme"

**Promoter:** The UK India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI), India & United Kingdom

**Recipients:** University students from India and UK

**Funding Scheme:** Multi Stakeholder Programme

**Objective:** To improve and enhance the relations between India and UK in the field of education

**Description:** The UK-India Graduate Work Experience Programme, funded under UKIERI is one of the many pivotal programmes that was initiated to provide recently qualified, further and Higher Education graduates from India, with the opportunity to live and work in the UK between three months and one year. The UK currently has a window of opportunity to develop productive links with the Indian economy in order to grasp the opportunities provided by globalisation. Indian graduates on this scheme on the other hand had the potential to bring fresh skills and knowledge to the UK, which can provide significant benefits to their UK host companies in terms of positioning their businesses in relation to one of the world's fastest growing major economies. The graduates who were selected for internship comprised the brightest from India's leading institutions of higher learning, such as Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), Anna University, University of Mumbai, and University of Delhi. Apart from offering their UK recruiters an understanding of Indian culture, language and business practices, the internship provided the UK companies an opportunity to create a pipeline of talent, address skills shortages and gaps, and in many cases, promote their business interests in India. The interns, in return, gained first-hand experience in areas such as Supply Chain, Engineering, Retail, Administration, Project Management, Marketing, Sales, Law, Media, Architecture, Finance, Telecoms, HR, and IT, with some of the best organisations in the UK, enabling a greater understanding of business realities and opportunities in a developed nation, and accumulated a working knowledge that would benefit India, the UK and, in general, the world itself. One of the interns AV Arun who is currently working at Enterprise Managed Service writes about his experience so far, "My main aim to participate in this interesting initiative was to gain a global exposure in Health and Safety functions from one of the best countries in the field and to kick start my ambition of becoming a chartered Health and Safety professional in Institute



of Occupational Health and Safety (IOSH). It has been a good experience to understand how similar issues are addressed differently in India and the UK".

• **Information:** UKIERI Secretariat – India, British Council Division 17 Kasturba Gandhi Marg, New Delhi 110001 Tel. +91 (0) 11 41497453/361/336/441/325/126; UKIERI Secretariat – UK, British Council Division 10 Spring Gardens, London SW1A 2BN, Tel. +44 (0) 20 7389 4639, <http://www.ukieri.org/>

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

Learning mobility is a fundamental tool for boosting individuals' professional skills and supporting their personal development. The interviews made with participants in mobility projects show that linguistic, intercultural and sectoral abilities benefited from an experience abroad, making at the same time them more confident and conscious of their competencies. Some people, especially youngsters, realized the importance of studying and improved their skills to enhance their chances to get involved in the labour market that today is suffering from the high level of unemployment all over Europe. The necessity to face this serious problem led the European Council to launch the Lisbon Strategy in the 2000 with the goal "to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion"<sup>1</sup>. Innovation and entrepreneurship, welfare reform and social inclusion, human capital and upgrading of the work, equal opportunities for women's employment, liberalization of labour markets and products, sustainable development are the key points fixed in order to make the European economy more competitive and dynamic by 2010. Today the low productivity and stagnation of economic growth in the EU demand new policy initiatives to be taken by all EU Member States. The Commission itself has stressed the importance of investment in education and training<sup>2</sup>. Its statements seem to avoid the common risk to divert resources away from such activities in times of economic crisis. According to the results of our study, learning mobility provide consistent economic and social benefits for people, companies and institutions involved. That is the reason why this guidebook supports the Commission's orientation towards a safeguard of investment in knowledge and skills. European economy needs to be supported not only through the creation of new skills, but also through a better orientation of the abilities the EU already has. There are for example some sectors, especially science, medicine and engineering that lack experts as the huge vacancies in some countries show. At the same time all over Europe discriminatory forces seem to rise day by day following the economic flows an enhancing the social unease. Learning mobility is in this sense an effective and sustainable mean to combat the risks of isolationism, protectionism and xenophobia, giving people to meet each other and looking at problems and issues from different and broader points of view. The feeling to be closer each other is the core point to is to foster a deepened sense of European identity and citizenship among people, building the sense of European citizenship asked by Maastricht Treaty<sup>3</sup>. According to the aim to reinforce learning mobility in, between, from and towards all member States, this guidebook has the main aim to identify weaknesses and strengths related to the funding schemes for learning mobility, trying to provide valuable recommendations to increase their impact.

<sup>1</sup> The Lisbon Strategy 2000-2010- European Council, Lisbon 24-25 March 2000. [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/lis1\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/lis1_en.htm)

<sup>2</sup> Green Paper, Promoting the learning mobility of young people- European Commission, Brussels 8 July 2009, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0329:FIN:EN:PDF>

<sup>3</sup> Maastricht Treaty-European Communities, Maastricht, 7 February 1992, <http://www.eurotreaties.com/maastrichtec.pdf>

## 4.1 Weaknesses

**4.1.1** Some of the national and European funds seem to be not sufficient for the living costs even though they should be set according to the country life standards. The interviews with participants highlight a gap between the living costs and the amount of the scholarship. This mismatch affects the quality of learning mobility projects avoiding for example the chance to attend a good language course that should be part of the learning path. This fact also contributes to exclude different groups from being part of mobility initiatives. Excluded groups can many times be the groups in most "need" of education as a tool for breaking exclusion. Also some of the internships carried out in the field of learning mobility promoted by the members States or international organisations are not paid and it implies an unfair balance not only between the human capital and the workload, but also between the skills already available and the abilities improved after the internship. According with the aim of the European Commission to make the learning mobility an effective tool for strengthening Europe's competitiveness, building its knowledge-intensive economy, more resources and funds are needed. A bigger investment in quality instead of quantity is required in order to make the mobility initiative more valuable, effective, trans-national, attractive and efficient.

**4.1.2** Most of the organizations handling European programmes complain the lack of sufficient funds to cover their management costs. It implies that often their priority becomes presenting as many as possible projects, without focusing on quality, sustainability and impact at the local level. Because of the lack of resources, the project management is often attributed to different employees with various competences to optimize time and resources. It would be more valuable a specific person or a team work that handles European projects with the aim to provide continuity, coherence and quality to the project planning. The gap of resources for the management avoids the possibility to hire people in charge of dealing with European initiative especially for NGOs.

**4.1.3** Most of the bank loans financing mobility are not interests free, making hard the possibility for a student to forgive the debt, especially if he or she comes from a country with a high level of unemployment that avoids the chance to find out a job to pay the expenses faced. The only tax free loan has been found is the one of Piancenza's Bank, but it is addressed only to youngsters from Emilia Romagna Region. It might be useful that other European banks adopt this financial product to support mobility projects.

**4.1.4** In some hosting organizations, such as private companies, there is a lack of a proper preparation to handle potential problems, e.g inadequate financial means and language/cultural skills. Some participants complained for an ineffective mentoring whilst being abroad and inadequate assistance on the learning processes at the work place. Disappointments with the way "de-briefings" are done upon return were showed, underling also a lack of enough opportunities to discuss their experiences in order to let them incorporate these learning experiences into their development careers.

**4.1.5** Even though European programmes are a valuable opportunity to promote mobility projects, often some organizations give up to use them, because of the significant bureaucracy that dilutes times and procedures, making the whole process complicated to manage and too much expensive considering the human capital and the low reimbursement for it in certain cases. At the same time the hosting organisations sometimes do not see so much benefits coming from hosting a foreign intern, complaining also for adequate and concise information on the various potential networking opportunities and on funding opportunities.

<sup>3</sup> Maastricht Treaty-European Communities, Maastricht, 7 February 1992, <http://www.eurotreaties.com/maastrichtec.pdf>

## 4.2 Strengths

**4.2.1** Funding schemes for learning mobility are first of all a democratic and equal tool to allow people to improve their skills through an experience abroad. It allows people to get new knowledge, learn from different educators, testing themselves, their ideas and competences in new situations. Especially youngsters or people with few opportunities are recognized to have the chance to develop their human, vocational and linguistic abilities in the framework often of high standards initiatives as in the case of Erasmus programme that provides students the chance to study in other universities around Europe. It serves to illustrate how mobility can be funded often in a proper way and produce benefits to the human capital of participants, creating personal links across borders, language skills and breaking down institutional barriers.

**4.2.2** The national and European recognition tools are considered very positive and valuable as the label means, providing added value to the funding schemes available. The Europass as a European Curriculum Vitae document of a standardised form where one can record the skills and other qualifications possessed; the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System for higher education, (ECTS); the Diploma Supplement, (a Document which describes the nature, level, context, content and status of the Higher Education courses studied); the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) are useful to prove and validate the experiences made abroad, even though some companies find hard to recognize a real "labour value" to the recognition tools.

**4.2.3** At national level there are many of funds addressed to specific fields of education such as science and medicine. However there is a many times lack of funding opportunities in areas as social science, art and non formal learning that should be considered valuable as well for the educational growth. For example the use of art can be strategic for European Union as it boosts the sense of identity based on common traditional cultures as stated by the European Commission itself<sup>4</sup>. Non formal learning is important as well being complementary to the formal education and training system and promoting a participative and learner-centred approach closely linked to young people's needs, aspirations and interests<sup>5</sup>. European Union and member as well should work together to enhance the available funds for learning mobility in the field of art and non formal education.

**4.2.4** Hosting organizations don't have any extra costs, except the management that is not budgeted in some programmes, such as Youth in Action, despite the great amount of work actions they require.

## 4.3 Recommendations

**4.3.1** As it has been already said, all European States have an urgent need to strengthen policies to address and overtake the serious problem of unemployment, giving young Europeans opportunities to learn and to develop their capacities. The European Union needs a new European generation well trained and competitive to cope with the new global challenges that threaten the project of a common and shared economic, social and political development. Learning mobility should become in this sense an opportunity for all people in Europe and for the European Union itself, since it rises up the level of competitiveness and deepen the sense of European identity and citizenship as underlined also by a High Level Expert Forum on Mobility established by the Commissioner Jan Figel<sup>6</sup>. High standards, improvement of quality and an enhance competitiveness need more economic support to be achieved and produce their effects. The most important effect that a funding methodology will have on equity of access stems from the extent to which students are required to contribute, either at the time or subsequently, to the tuition costs of their higher education. The provision of financial support to students, whether via subsidised loan or grant, can contribute to ensuring equity of access.

**4.3.2** It is still very big differences in the way and the quality of support provide by State to learning

<sup>4</sup> Report "Making learning mobility an opportunity for all" - The High Level Expert Forum On Mobility established by the Commissioner Jan Figel, Brussels December 2007, [http://ec.europa.eu/education/doc/2008/mobilityreport\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/doc/2008/mobilityreport_en.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> White Paper- European Commission, Brussels 21 November 2001, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52001DC0681:EN:NOT>

<sup>6</sup> Ibidem

mobility. The economic situation, labour market, economic and social features differ from a country to another country, but it is need that all member State recognize the role of learning mobility as a valuable mean to support their economy especially in this historical period of crisis. A geographical "equity of access" should be guaranteed according with country possibilities aware that more funds for learning mobility are a valuable tool to boost competences and make national economies more competitive. The European funding schemes should be as well adjusted according to the economic crisis, providing to students, teachers, professionals and youth workers more opportunities to improve their skills and find a job.

**4.3.2** It is important that there are many funding opportunities for cross border mobility. Mobility breaks down barriers between people and groups, supporting the creation of a sense of EU citizenship. One central element of this strategy is to expand the opportunity for people to travel, meet, discover new cultures and learn a second European language. As the Green paper stated "learning mobility helps to combat the risks of isolationism, protectionism and xenophobia which arise in times of economic crisis"<sup>7</sup>. More and specific funds for cross mobility can provide the chance for people to build an effective dialogue and try to find a solution together for common and shared problems.

**4.3.3** The new loan for master degree introduced by the new programme 2014-2020 is a positive step towards a better quality and equality of learning mobility. At the same time it is necessary to find out a similar financial mean to finance other European learning mobility initiatives. The idea is a product interests and tax free that allows especially young people with few opportunities or students to forgive their debit in a short space of time and without further economic obligations for their families. This financial product may coherent also with the need to better support organizations, public and private entities, NGOs that apply for European funds. An agreement between the European Union and the national banks that provide the "free tax loan" for participants in mobility projects can be a suitable solution in this sense, providing to those entities loans based on special interests that help them to address their costs, invest more resources in their project and stimulate new entities to use European projects obtaining special loans for them.

**4.3.4** It is not always possible and easy for some people to move to other countries because of social, health, political and economic reasons. Some countries have also difficulties in providing an effective financial support to learning mobility projects. Last but not least as the European institutions always highlight, the learning path should be thought in the framework of a lifelong process, involving adult people or individuals who have already finish their studies and are in the labour market. For them it is not always easy to move as well. Virtual forms of mobility – networking, webinars and twinning between schools, institutions, groups- should reinforce and complement the physical mobility in all areas. It may also support ongoing educational process, providing continuity and stability even though partners are in different countries.

**4.3.5** Some national entities still are not aware about the offer of different national, trans-national and international funds for mobility. It could useful a better and steady consultancy support, especially at local and regional levels. The aim is to support organizations, public institutions and companies in their access to the funds for learning mobility. Some learning activities that are "self-funded" by the participants could be also financed through European programmes since their missions, aims and vision are similar, but also through private foundations (ex. as parte of their case-related marketing strategy) and public institutions. In this sense a better coordination between national funding entities and the European institution would be needed and effective. A valuable tool could be choosing the most experienced and active organizations as "European Local Unites (ELU)". They could apply to a European call to get this status that may last three-seven years. This action will be coherent with the Council's statements that invited States in November 2008 to further develop the concept of

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<sup>7</sup> Ibidem

mobility for all people, during their studies or training, in the form of a work placement, or in the context of voluntary activities<sup>8</sup>.

**4.3.5** The Thematic Commission on Funding Schemes suggests also the creation of a public database for each country that shows the names of participants involved in European projects, including the recommendation letter of the hosting organizations if available. It would be not only a kind of guarantee tool, but also an incentive for participants as their experiences get more visible and for organizations as they benefit from the added value to hire someone who took part in European projects. This database might also provide a research system that enables match-making between demand and supply. The idea is also to strength the ties between education and business, enhancing national entities and European institution link.

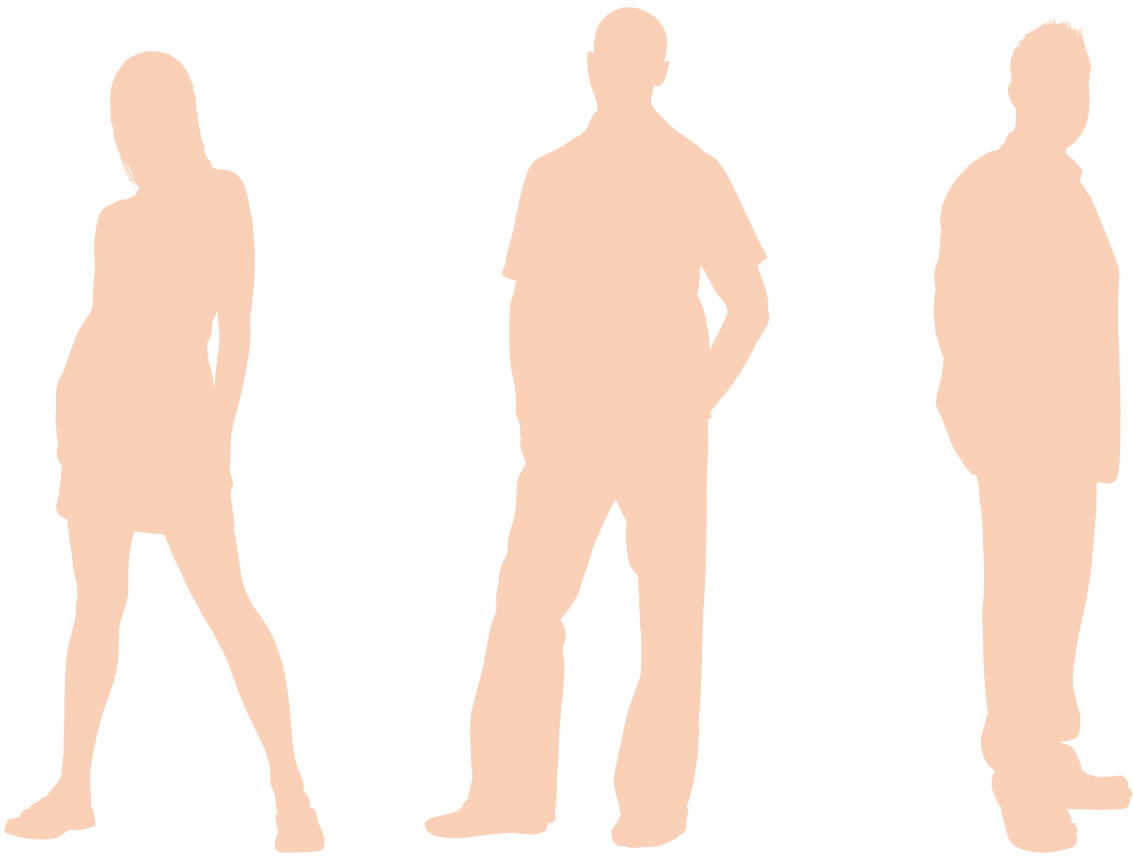
**4.3.6** Potential participants in European project often give up the idea to get involved in them, because of the bureaucratic procedures and it is frequent especially among youngsters. Therefore simplification of administrative procedures is needed to increase the quantity and quality of the various mobility initiatives.

**4.3.7** The Thematic Commission on Funding Schemes supports the idea of the Expert Group on Mobility supported by EU to devise a mobility scoreboard to provide a comparative picture of how Member States are progressing in dismantling barriers to mobility<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Conclusions of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States on youth mobility, Brussels 20-21 November 2008, [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/educ/104249.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/educ/104249.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Study Report on Mobility- Expert Coordinator, Dr George D. Christodoulides, (Cyprus), in close cooperation with the three Experts of the Working Group on Mobility: Mr Hans Steimle, (Germany), Mr Paolo Federighi, (Italy), and Mr Oscar Svensson, (Sweden) with support from the European Union- Brussels September 2010, [www.transnationality.eu/get-public-document-PDF](http://www.transnationality.eu/get-public-document-PDF)





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