



YOUTH CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION
AND COMMUNICATION

Results from the workshop on "learning mobility" in Stare Jabłonki 2009-11-05

GREEN PAPER

Promoting the learning mobility of young people

In January 2008, the European Commission established a High Level Expert Forum with the mandate to explore how to expand mobility, not only within the university sector, but among young people more generally. The Forum presented its report in June 2008 which called for learning mobility to become the rule, not the exception among Europe's young people. In July 2008, the "Renewed social agenda: Opportunities, access and solidarity in 21st century Europe" affirmed that the Commission would continue to develop a "fifth freedom" by removing barriers to the free movement of knowledge and promoting the mobility of specific groups like young people. It signalled that a Green Paper was planned for 2009 on the latter issue.

The Council concluded in November 2008 that "every young person should have the opportunity to take part in some form of mobility, whether this is during their studies or training, in the form of a work placement, or in the context of voluntary activities." It invited the Member States and the European Commission in particular to further develop the concept of mobility for all young people, during their studies or training, in the form of a work placement, or in the context of voluntary activities

In short, there has been much reflection in political and expert circles on the benefits of learning mobility and how it could be expanded. A clear consensus exists in support of the objective of expanding mobility opportunities and extending them more broadly to young people. What is now needed is to build on this consensus and define strategies to achieve these ambitions. The purpose of this Green Paper is to open up the debate to stakeholders and the wider public, seeking their views on how best to boost substantially the opportunities for young people to have a mobility experience.

The Green Paper is structured in three sections. Section 1 deals with issues regarding the preparation of a mobility period, i.e. information, motivation, linguistic preparation etc. Section 2 deals with the actual period spent abroad (including housing and mentoring issues) and examine the follow-up to a mobility period, such

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as validation and recognition of the experience. Section 3 presents proposals for a new partnership on youth mobility.

Responses to this Green Paper will be collected at two levels.

First, the Commission invites stakeholders to provide responses to the open questions raised in the text, as well as further reflections and examples of good practice.

You can send your contributions via e-mail to

EAC-GREEN-PAPER-MOBILITY@ec.europa.eu

or via mail to:

EAC GREEN PAPER MOBILITY

DG EAC/B3

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The public consultation period for consultations at both levels ends on 15 December 2009.

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Workshop on learning mobility

During the seminar arranged by Yc³ in Stare Jablonki, Poland 2009-11-05, one part was the workshop on "learning mobility". The participants from different NGOs in Warmia Mazury were asked to give their thoughts, ideas and opinions to the questions raised in the public consultation by the EU Commission, in the green paper on learning mobility.

This workshop was divided into three parts dealing with the three different sectors in the green paper. The three parts dealt with preparation, to go away and improvements. Note that the comments might be very different and contradict each other because the participants came from different countries; Poland, Sweden, Russia and Denmark.

Preparation: "Walk the line"

In this workshop the participants were asked to take stand regarding questions about preparation on learning mobility. They chose where to stand on a scale from one to five, put on the floor, and motivate why they have chosen that position.

1 represents bad/no and 5 represent good/yes

1. Do you think there is enough useful information concerning youth mobility in your regions?

1 –

2 – There is information but it is bad access to it. You can find it if you know you want it but if you don't know anything about these opportunities you won't get the information.

3 – There is not enough information. If you want to know you will know, however, it is really hard to know in Russia. In Sweden there is a lot of information but it is difficult to get it, everyone does not know about it. In Poland we need more information on going abroad and we think it should be better cooperation between many countries.

4 – In Denmark it is ok, there is information available you just need to work a little to get it.

5 –

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2. Do you think there is an interest among young people to travel more to other countries in the area?

1 –

2 – There is a language barrier that makes it more difficult to go abroad. In Denmark you don't want to go to countries in the south Baltic area, you want to go far away to for example Australia.

3 – People from Russia need to get better in speaking English, but also people from Poland and Rumania.

4 – There is an interest to travel but the promotion needs to start earlier. You could have youth exchanges in high schools but also in universities. People who went on an exchange should do the promotion. But unfortunately the interest in going far away is bigger than going to our neighbouring countries. People wants to travel everywhere and people want to study. We need the possibility to know more about each other to get rid of prejudice, you need to go there.

5 –

3. Are there a lot of obstacles to be mobile?

1 –

2 – It is more difficult to get to for example Arabia than to Poland. The money issue is not a problem in Poland.

3 – Culture is not a big problem; it is the point of going abroad.

4 – There are a lot of obstacles, for example languages, money and culture. Erasmus money is not that much.

5 – People hesitate to go alone; you should be able to go with a friend.

To go away: "the ball"

In this part the participants were divided into two groups and stood in a ring. Each group had a ball which they threw to each other and the person who had the ball also had the word. They gave quick answers and then threw the ball to the next person.

1. Have you ever taken part in an exchange?

If yes, where and when?

If no, where would you like to go and why?

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No, but would like to go to Turkey, New Zealand, Sweden, Spain, USA, England, Finland and Norway.

Yes, have been to USA, Germany, France and Rumania.

2. How can the regions become good hosts?

There should be more unofficial meetings to integrate with the hosts. An open person gets better communication and good accommodation. You should get a special guide that presents the place, involves you and spends spare time with. You should have a mentor that you can call if you need help. If you stay with a family they should speak English. You should put much effort in learning the language. The organisation needs to be good concerning basic things as where to sleep and eat.

You want to have much free time to go and do nice things as sailing etc. You don't want to study all the time but the level of the schools needs to be good as well. You want to know what is unique with this place to meet something different. Some people thinks it is important with learning about history, culture and environment, others thinks it is more important to leave with and getting to know people from that place.

3. What kind of experience are you looking for in an exchange?

- Meet new people, keeping in touch after the exchange is important. It is easier today with Facebook etc.
- Learn the country's specialities, for example learn how to cook.
- Learn more language.
- Get to know to know day to day life in the new country.
- Everything I can get is useful for me in my personal development.
- It is important to stay a long period of time.
- Smaller periods of times help us to see more countries and get more friends.
- Unofficial meetings are important.
- Organised trips.

4. What would you need to dare to go away as an exchange student?

- Information and friends.
- Perhaps go away for one week to see what it's like and then go on a longer trip.
- You need to go alone.

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- You need to WANT to go.
- EU funding.
- People do have the language but they need the confidence to use it. You could host volunteers to practice your language.
- Mentoring could be on the internet, for example on facebook.
- Someone who would share the host-city, behaviour etc.
- Money support.
- Some information from someone who has been away.
- Contact with hosting family from home before going.
- More trips should be available with the Erasmus programme.
- Friends!

Improvement: Postits

The participants were divided into six groups and had small sessions of brainstorming and then told in full class what they had discussed and put it down on post its.

How can all actors and resources be better used to get young people to travel?

Universities should promote more exchange programmes. School governments should advertise them as well. Actors and other resources could say more about advantages of taking part in exchanges and travelling to other countries. There should be controls of the standard of the exchanges.

You could invite EVS volunteers to your towns so we can meet them in youth centre. Find an ultimate way for informing youngsters about exchanges. There should be more information about the resources, because when people know about them they will use them better. There should be help with filling out the documents.

A representative from media should take part in exchanges and then talk about in newspapers and TV. We need to encourage young people in their schools and places they visit often, such as the pub or cinema. You could arrange with weekend exchanges to get to know what it is about. More possibilities for workers and youth organisations to also get knowledge exchange. They also need an Erasmus programme. You need to work on attitudes about travelling and exchanges.

It should be obligatory in school to get this kind of information during class. All actors and resources should use less formal language, which is better understood by young people. Spread the information personally, not only give out leaflets but spend time

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with the persons and explain to them. It should be obligatory when you come back from an exchange to share your experience with for example 20 people.

How can you use social communities/media to increase mobility?

We can participate in their work. There is a possibility for more informal language than the difficult "EU-language". Social media are helpful when people want to contact. Facebook for example is perfect when we want to stay in touch. Social media should show good examples of student exchanges, more interviews for example. You could meet with other young people, for example in Facebook-groups which are connected to NGOs dealing with exchanges. It is easy to stay in touch after the exchange with people.

It would be great to have video presentations from exchanges. It should be sent invitations to people in different groups for example Facebook. People should get help with choosing a country. They should give money to talented young people to get an opportunity to organise meetings with young people in other countries, to stress how important it is to meet other cultures. We can use media by showing people's reports from being abroad. This would encourage others.

What measures can be taken to ensure that the mobility period is of high quality?

- You should have good language skills.
- You should have good social skills.
- When I know something about the country, culture, history and people's customs, it sounds good.
- Hosting universities should take good care of exchange students and involve them in every day work.
- Measure is very personal; make sure those exams and ECTS is counted for something when you get back, so that not the mobility is causing problems.
- Give the opportunity to get Erasmus money twice.
- Good organisation during arrival. Offer good activities to learn about culture and the country. Important with being taken care of when you arrive.
- When I go back from exchange and I have a contact with people that I met, it means the mobility had a high level.
- When I know something about the country; culture, history and people's customs, then it is of high quality.
- You could count how many exchange students which stay in touch, then you get a number on the quality.

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