

‘Europe on the Move’ – learning mobility opportunities for everyone¹

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Policy document summary

The proposed recommendation revises the 2011 Council Recommendation titled "Youth on the Move," which aimed to encourage the learning mobility of young individuals. This updated framework broadens its focus to include learners of all ages, as well as educators and staff. Additionally, it responds to emerging learning trends, such as the increased use of digital learning tools, blended learning approaches, and the promotion of more sustainable mobility practices.

Disclaimer

This brief overview is intended to summarize the essential points from the EU institutions' policy document that are relevant for research performing and innovation institutions, without providing the full extent of information available in the original document. The focus of the overview is put on initiatives regarding circulation of highly qualified staff, especially researchers, relevant to the European Research Area. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Commission.

- Learning mobility is increasingly recognized as a vital strategy for addressing skills gaps, fostering skills development, and promoting a sense of citizenship and shared values across Europe. According to this proposal, learning mobility refers to the physical relocation to a country other than one's home country for the purpose of studying, training, or engaging in non-formal or informal learning. This concept encompasses a wide range of learning mobility activities for learners and staff across all sectors of lifelong learning, including schools, higher education, vocational education and training, adult education, as well as the mobility of young people, youth workers, and staff involved in early childhood education and care, as well as in sports. It includes both intra-EU and international mobility to and from the EU. The proposed recommendation also serves as a fundamental component of the European Education Area, where learning opportunities are not restricted by national borders, allowing everyone the chance to study or learn abroad. It aims to strengthen the necessary conditions for facilitating learning mobility for all, thereby enabling more individuals to take advantage of the Erasmus+ program and other cross-border learning mobility initiatives.
- The proposed EU learning mobility framework aims to:

Promote Seamless Movement and Skills Development

- Enable the smooth movement of learners, educators and staff within the European Education Area
- Support the development of essential skills for green and digital transitions
- Build trust and understanding between education, training, youth and sport systems
- Promote active citizenship

Enhance Inclusivity and Sustainability

¹ You can access the original document here: [European Commission. \(2023, November 15\). Proposal for a Council recommendation: ‘Europe on the Move’ – learning mobility opportunities for everyone \(COM\(2023\) 719 final, 2023/0405 \(NLE\)\).](#)

- Work towards inclusive learning mobility schemes that benefit from digital technologies
- Promote common EU values
- Ensure environmental sustainability of mobility programs

Set New EU-Level Mobility Targets for 2030

- At least 25% of higher education graduates should have a learning mobility experience
- At least 15% of vocational learners should benefit from learning mobility abroad
- At least 20% of all learners benefiting from mobility should be from disadvantaged backgrounds

Establish Stakeholder Cooperation

- Set up structural cooperation with stakeholders to implement the recommendation
- Improve monitoring through a revamped European Mobility Scoreboard
- Ensure automatic recognition of qualifications and learning periods abroad

By pursuing these objectives, the framework aims to make learning mobility the norm rather than the exception, embedded in educational pathways across all sectors and levels in Europe.

- The proposed EU learning mobility framework also aims to provide systemic learning mobility opportunities by:

Embedding Mobility in Education Systems

- Making learning mobility abroad an integral part of school education, VET, apprenticeships, higher education and adult education
- Embedding mobility periods in all education and training curricula through flexible mobility windows, elective courses and other opportunities

Supporting Cross-Border Initiatives

- Encouraging education and training providers to develop and deliver more cross-border joint activities
- Leveraging European initiatives like European Universities alliances, Centres of Vocational Excellence, etc.
- Building on European Universities alliances' target of 50% student mobility rate with physical, virtual and blended options

Promoting Non-Formal and Informal Learning Mobility

- Embedding inwards and outwards learning mobility in non-formal and informal learning, youth work and volunteering settings
- Raising awareness and providing support to providers of non-formal and informal learning, local and regional authorities, youth centres and civil society organisations

By pursuing these systemic approaches, the framework aims to make learning mobility a standard part of educational pathways across Europe, accessible to learners of all backgrounds and in all sectors.

- The proposal aims to enhance language learning by:

Strengthening Language Education: This involves reinforcing language learning at all educational stages and in youth and sport systems, including offering parts of curricula in various EU languages to increase learning mobility options.

Facilitating Access to Language Learning: It seeks to improve access to language education for all, including adults, to enhance multilingual competencies. This will enable citizens to fully benefit from learning mobility, the European Education Area, and employment opportunities.

- The proposal aims to support engagement in learning mobility activities by:

Building a Lifelong Learning Mobility Culture: This involves fostering a mobility culture across all education stages, developing diverse mobility formats, supporting organizations in their internationalization efforts, enhancing the attractiveness of educational institutions for mobile learners, and promoting alumni networks to share experiences locally.

Fostering Cooperation: It encourages collaboration among regional and local authorities, education providers, civil society, NGOs, and private entities to promote outgoing mobility, particularly for individuals with fewer opportunities, and to create a welcoming environment for incoming participants.

Reducing Administrative Burdens: Authorities managing mobility schemes are urged to simplify processes and provide clear guidance to ease the application experience for organizations and participants.

Supporting Flexible Mobility Formats: The framework promotes various flexible mobility options, such as group activities, short-term mobility, and blended programs, which can serve as pathways to longer mobility experiences and lead to micro-credentials.

Valuing Staff Contributions: It emphasizes recognizing the efforts of staff involved in learning mobility projects by integrating this work into their professional roles, including considerations for career advancement and working hours.

- The proposal also aims to enhance access to information about learning mobility opportunities by:

Establishing Local Promoters: Creating roles such as coordinators, contact points, and ambassadors at regional or local levels to share expertise with education providers and civil society, support engagement in mobility activities, and encourage networking at national and EU levels.

Targeted Information for Learners: Providing learners with specific information on mobility opportunities throughout their educational journey, including in schools, vocational training, and higher education, by integrating this information into guidance services.

Promoting Mobility Benefits: Highlighting the advantages of studying abroad and offering advice, tips, and mentoring, particularly for learners with fewer opportunities, utilizing tools like the Erasmus+ App.

Supporting Hosting Organizations: Encouraging organizations that host incoming learners to facilitate a smooth transition by providing necessary information and resources.

Linking Learning and Labour Mobility: Connecting learning mobility promoters with the European employment services network (EURES) to bridge the gap between learning and job mobility.

Providing Living Conditions Information: Utilizing the EURES portal to inform about living and working conditions in host countries, along with resources available on the EU Learning Corner.

- The proposal seeks to improve access to information about learning mobility opportunities through several key strategies:

Setting Inclusion Targets: Establishing national and regional goals for the participation of underrepresented groups and creating tailored support measures.

Ensuring Accessibility: Removing barriers for individuals with disabilities and addressing their needs from the outset of learning activity design.

Providing Necessary Support: Offering adequate funding and support to make learning mobility accessible for people with fewer opportunities, while fostering collaboration among various funding sources.

Providing Clear Information: Ensuring learners receive timely and precise information about available funding and support options.

Encouraging Grant Portability: Promoting the prepayment of grants, allowing their portability, and exempting them from taxes and social levies.

Facilitating Student Housing: Working with authorities to resolve housing shortages for mobile learners.

Ensuring Appropriate Protection: Protecting the rights of mobile participants, especially minors, regarding insurance, labor standards, health and safety, and social security.

- The proposal aims to support the transition from learning mobility to work mobility by:

Facilitating the Transition: Helping mobile learners, teachers, trainers, and youth workers access job-seeking support from public employment services and the EURES network.

Enabling Traineeships Abroad: Assisting learners, including recent Erasmus+ graduates, in undertaking traineeships abroad to develop entrepreneurial, innovative, creative, and intercultural skills.

Encouraging Host Organizations: Encouraging relevant organizations to host trainees from abroad through investments, awareness-building, and providing accessible information.

- The proposal aims to make learning mobility more inclusive and accessible by:

Setting Inclusion Targets: Establishing national or regional inclusion targets for learning mobility to contribute to the EU-level target and developing dedicated measures to support mobility for people with fewer opportunities.

Ensuring Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities: Removing barriers and addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities from the early stages of designing learning activities.

Providing Necessary Support: Offering the level of support needed to make learning mobility accessible to people with fewer opportunities, including appropriate funding and fostering synergies among various funding instruments.

Providing Precise Information on Funding: Offering clear and timely information on available funding, payment timelines, and other support for learners.

Encouraging Grant Portability and Tax Exemptions: Promoting full or partial prepayments of grants, allowing grant portability, and exempting grants from taxes and social levies.

Facilitating Student Housing: Working with national and local authorities to address student housing shortages for mobile learners.

Ensuring Appropriate Protection: Safeguarding the rights of mobile participants, including apprentices, trainees, young researchers, and youth workers, particularly minors, in terms of insurance, labor standards, health and safety, tax, social security, and pension entitlements.

- The proposal aims to enhance the environmental sustainability of learning mobility through several key actions:

Promoting Sustainable Travel: Encouraging the use of more sustainable transportation options for travel to and from learning mobility destinations, and providing funding and guidance for sustainable travel practices.

Integrating Sustainability Practices: Assisting education and training providers and civil society organizations in incorporating sustainability into their operations through training, guidelines, and sharing best practices.

Setting Emission Reduction Targets: Supporting education and training providers in establishing targets and monitoring systems to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with learning mobility travel.

- The proposal aims to enhance learning mobility through the effective use of digital technologies by:

Developing Interoperable IT Systems: Supporting the creation of IT systems that comply with European standards and data protection laws to manage learning mobility experiences, provide information, facilitate automatic recognition, and reduce administrative burdens, leveraging tools like the European Student Card and Europass.

Supporting Researcher Mobility Initiatives: Contributing to programs that assist researchers in their mobility and provide necessary information and support services, such as EURAXESS and the upcoming ERA Talent Platform.

Providing Resources to Education Providers: Offering financial and human resources to education and training providers and civil society organizations to help them implement and utilize digital tools effectively.

Encouraging Blended and Virtual Mobility Formats: Supporting the development of innovative blended and virtual mobility formats by adapting existing national frameworks to better integrate digital technologies.

- The proposal aims to promote EU values through learning mobility by:

Encouraging Community Participation: Motivating learners, educators, and staff to engage in host communities, including participating in volunteering activities during their mobility period.

Enhancing Learning Experiences: Enriching mobility experiences with training in intercultural awareness, civic engagement, digital and media literacy, as well as EU values and fundamental rights.

Providing Local Context Information: Offering incoming learners and staff relevant information about the local context and fostering a welcoming culture through mentorship and administrative support.

Ensuring Academic Freedom: Guaranteeing that mobile students and staff experience a high level of academic freedom, while encouraging educational institutions to uphold academic integrity and quality assurance during mobility periods.

- The proposal aims to promote the EU as a learning destination through several key strategies:

Cooperation in Team Europe: Collaborating to enhance the EU's attractiveness as a learning destination by utilizing existing initiatives like the Study in Europe project in higher education.

Facilitating Global Learning Mobility: Strengthening cooperation with countries that have an enlargement perspective, particularly through Talent Partnerships, to address skills gaps and improve employability for learners in both the EU and partner countries.

Supporting Visa Processes: Ensuring timely issuance of long-stay visas and residence permits for third-country nationals selected for learning opportunities in EU Member States.