

POLICY PAPER

Earlall supporting mobility

September 2011



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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to stress the importance of mobility within Earlall and to define concrete actions that Earlall should carry out to support its members in the implementation of mobility actions.

Starting from the results of the Symposium “Increasing Interregional Mobility in vocational education and training” held in Esslingen in March/April 2011 and organized by Baden-Wuerttemberg, it is important to promote further occasions of reflection and exchange of ideas in the matter of mobility. The Symposium gathered together both representatives of regional governments (policy-makers) and representatives of agencies/organizations implementing mobility, giving them the chance to share points of interests and difficulties met while implementing mobility actions. Most participants stressed the importance of three main aspects: creating mobility platforms and partnerships, connecting mobility with business and getting companies involved, and the necessity of political support and regional funding. The outcomes of the Symposium should constitute the basis for further investigation.

IMPACT AND BENEFITS OF MOBILITY

Mobility has been recognised in the last years by EU Institutions as core action in lifelong learning and employment policies. The EC Communication on Youth on the Move¹ gives mobility great importance not only in education and higher education, but also in VET and the labour market.

The benefits of mobility for beneficiaries are many:

- Mobility directly contributes to acquiring the 8 key competences²: particularly for communication in foreign languages, digital competence, social and civic competences, sense of initiative and entrepreneurship.
- Mobility increases the employability of the beneficiaries;
- Mobility for training or working purposes increases the technical competences linked to a particular profession.

However there are also broader consequences and benefits since mobility involves not only the concerned person but also a range of different actors, like the host educational institution or the host company.

¹ COM(2010) 477 final http://ec.europa.eu/education/yom/com_en.pdf

² 8 Key Competences: 1) Communication in the mother tongue; 2) Communication in foreign languages; 3) Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology; 4) Digital competence; 5) Learning to learn; 6) Social and civic competences; 7) Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship; 8) Cultural awareness and expression. COM(2009)640 final <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0640:FIN:EN:PDF>

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Indeed mobility actions have an impact on the local context of the regions involved: the transnational partnerships built for mobility help regions in acquiring and exchanging technical competences; that has positive effects on the human capital and on the concerned business. It is then evident how that has an indirect but relevant impact on the local development in general of all regions involved in the actions.

In this sense it is important to link mobility with the economic interests of each region, because it can represent a way to support the internationalization of regional economies.

Finally, it can be told that transnational partnerships develop synergies and links that increase the comprehension, the social cohesion and the economic links in the European Union.

ROLE OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS

The role and contribution of Local and Regional Governments (LRAs) in mobility are particularly important, as stated in the Barcelona Declaration³. LRAs manage European and national programmes but also design, finance and implement their own mobility projects through other funds like ESF in the framework of their Regional Operational Programmes, or even ERDF as in the case of the Interreg Programme. Their contribution is aiming at ensuring the quality of the experience and the recognition of the learning of the participants to mobility actions. Furthermore they act as intermediary body among all involved stakeholders, including the economic world. LRAs organise mobility programmes according to their local needs and priorities with a strong link with the economic structure. In this framework, sectoral mobility plays an important role: it can be considered the second generation of mobility measures based on the exchange of trainees, apprentices, young graduates, workers and entrepreneurs belonging to the same specific economic sector.

This type of mobility is based on specific aspects of the role of LRAs, characterised by:

1. The capability of concentrating interventions on specific channels of the information system and on technical and professional training, most exposed to tasks of internationalising competences;
2. The capability to include apprentices, young researchers and trainees, businessmen and social partners, as well as school and university students;
3. The ability to concentrate on specific economic sectors, linking mobility to the regional policies of economic development as well as to the training programmes of an institute.

The consistency between mobility policies and regional programming allows the achievement of notable impact, through focusing intervention on the economic sectors in which mobility can produce greater benefits and therefore can be more appreciated. This mobility measure should encourage new forms of economic cooperation.

Some regions, like Tuscany Region, have already experienced sectoral mobility relating to the fields of tourism, renewable energies, maritime.

EARLALL POSITION

³ http://www20.gencat.cat/docs/Educacio/Documents/ARXIUS/declaracio_angles.pdf

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Earlall supports mobility and welcomes the recognition by the European Institutions of the role of mobility.

Earlall is engaged to concretely support members in mobility projects and provide them with a platform for building partnerships, exchanging experiences, developing new tools.

Earlall believes mobility is a means for building strong partnerships among LRAs and trans-regional cooperation.

Earlall supports the development of new types of mobility actions – sectoral mobility – and seeks for cooperation in the field of mobility with other networks active in relevant domains. In particular Earlall emphasises sectoral mobility as a form of regional cooperation.

Earlall undertakes to lobby the European Commission to insert mobility, and giving it the proper weight, in the various Programmes under DG EAC, DG Regio, etc.

PROPOSAL FOR IMPROVING MOBILITY WITHIN EARLALL

Taking into account that all members of Earlall give strong importance to mobility and that all of them, even though at different levels and in different forms, are implementing mobility actions, the following proposals should be considered in order to improve mobility exchanges among regions and to give the Association a concrete and strategic role in this field:

- Creating a mobility archive showing programmes and policies of each region
- Monitoring priorities targets and sectors in mobility in each region
- Providing support to mobility placements, by giving contacts
- Supporting the mobility seminars/meetings deriving from the Esslingen Symposium
- Drawing up a brochure dedicated to mobility
- Supporting projects by helping in partner search
- Monitoring calls for proposals at EU level
- Monitoring related websites, events, news at EU level
- Dedicating a special section to mobility in the Newsletter: presentation of good practices

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