

Staff mobility: Central questions for discussion

The BFuG tasked the working group on mobility and internationalisation with **proposing recommendations on how to enhance staff mobility**. For this purpose, there must be clarity on the **reasons for and the aim of staff mobility**. In order to fulfil this task, the working group should approach the matter as follows: propose a **definition** of “staff mobility” and analyse current **barriers to staff mobility** and come up with a set of potential **measures to overcome** them (cf. Terms of reference of the working group).

The Communiqués of the **Bologna Process encourage mobility of (academic) staff** in higher education institutions by overcoming existing obstacles. Repeatedly, the **lack of comparable data on staff mobility** has been emphasised. Since 2009, more aspects have been put forward: attractive working conditions and career paths, open international recruitment as well as framework conditions which should ensure appropriate access to social security and facilitate the portability of pensions and supplementary pension rights for mobile staff. The **Bucharest Communiqué and the Mobility Strategy 2020** call for data collection on mobility of early stage researchers, teachers and non-academic staff in higher education as well as for measures to overcome existing mobility obstacles (e.g. pension systems, lack of recognition at home institution). The influence of **higher education institutions** is emphasised: they are encouraged to pay attention to the mobility and international competence of their staff, in particular to give fair and formal recognition for competences gained abroad and to offer attractive incentives for their greater participation in internationalisation.

At the moment, a number of **definitions of “staff mobility”** exist with different scopes (multiple forms of staff and of mobility, different reference basis, etc.). There is a need to become clear on what we mean concerning the terms “staff” and “mobility” and to agree on **one definition** which fits best the working group’s task concerning staff mobility to ensure common understanding and expectations of staff mobility. For this purpose, the working group must be clear on the **reasons for and the aims of staff mobility**. As the **quality of mobility** is very important, the working group needs to get an overview on the different forms of mobility, analyse them and decide on those types which correspond best to the aims of staff mobility defined beforehand.

In addition, it is very important to assure that **comparable information in accordance with the chosen definition on staff mobility** can be collected for all Bologna member countries. Until now, the numbers of mobile academic and administrative staff taking part in EU programmes (ERASMUS, Marie-Curie, Nordplus...) are known and in some countries additional information on mobile staff in higher education is available. Short-term staff mobility outside mobility programmes – which is likely to take place frequently – often is not registered as such and therefore cannot be specified.

A short overview on some of the available data sources shows the current diversity:

1. Europe and international:

- **UNESCO statistics:** absolute number of teaching staff, percentage of women
- **OECD (Education at a glance):** data on the number of advanced students and doctoral awards, proportion of foreign and international students among them
- **EUROSTAT:** data on students and academic staff in general, no data on citizenship and mobility for academic staff (available information is not sufficiently complete in order to justify its publication); European Labour Force Survey: data on the number and the citizenship of higher education teaching professionals

- **ERASMUS:** statistics on mobile staff, sub-divided into teaching and non-teaching staff and by country of origin and country of destination, home and host institution, level of seniority of staff, aim of stay, grant level, duration of the stay abroad, field and level of teaching
- **Marie Curie Programme for mobility of young researchers:** data on nationality, country of home and host institutions, duration of research stay as well as field of research

2. National:

- **UK:** Higher Education Statistics Agency annual collection: nationality of academic staff, international movements of the academic staff since the previous year (number and proportion of non-UK staff, immigration and emigration of academic staff, distinction into UK and foreign immigrants and emigrants)
- **Germany:** Wissenschaft weltoffen, annual publication: absolute number of academic staff with a foreign nationality, absolute number of foreign academic staff staying temporarily in Germany with the support of fellowships provided by about 35 sponsoring German public or private agencies, number of German academic staff staying abroad temporarily with the support of fellowships provided by the sponsoring agencies mentioned above
- **Nordplus programme for eight countries (Denmark, Estonia, Sweden, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Latvia, Lithuania):** extensive dataset available

The initial discussions should focus on the following questions. Please provide short written answers to questions 1 and 2 until **8 April 2013** to fleischmann@daad.de.

1. Reasons for and aim of enhancing staff mobility:

- What are the aim of and the reasons for staff mobility?
- Why is staff mobility important?
- Who benefits from staff mobility and how?

2. Stocktaking:

- Which definitions of staff mobility are in use in your country/do you know?
- Which groups of staff can be distinguished?
- Which forms of staff mobility can be distinguished?
- Which data on staff mobility is available?

In a step later on, the working group should tackle the following questions. Those questions will be discussed in later meetings of the working group.

3. Obstacles:

- What are the obstacles concerning staff mobility in practice/at higher education institutions (from different points of view)?

4. Measures:

- Which measures are in place to overcome obstacles to staff mobility?
- On which level are those measures taken?
- Do higher education institutions reward staff mobility? If yes, in which ways?
- Is staff mobility part of the internationalisations strategies of higher education institutions?