**Mobility for Better Learning**

**Mobility strategy 2020 for the European Higher Education Area**

**I. Mobility aims and targets**

Promoting the mobility of students, teachers and other staff in higher education in the EHEA has been a central concern of the Bologna process from the very beginning. Further to our declarations hitherto and building up on our mobility goal for 2020 that was formulated in the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué, we reaffirm that we will, through our collective efforts within the EHEA as well as in our national policies:

* expand the mobility of students in all EHEA countries, in all three cycles and in various forms;
* promote greater opportunities for diverse student groups to participate in mobility;
* ensure a high quality of mobility;
* promote the mobility of teachers, early stage researchers and other staff in higher education;
* improve the recognition of learning activities undertaken abroad and the recognition of international qualifications
* strengthen and develop further the higher education institutions in the EHEA as places for international academic exchange and as providers of internationally skilled graduates;
* achieve by 2020 that at least 20 percent of graduates in the EHEA have undertaken a study or training period abroad;

In addition, we agree

* in the long term, to strive for more balanced mobility within the EHEA and with countries outside Europe;
* to encourage incoming student mobility from outside the EHEA;

**II. Measures for the implementation of the mobility aims and targets**

In order to achieve our mobility aims and targets for the EHEA, we resolve to undertake the following measures which shall be implemented at institutional, national or European level:

1. **We agree that all member states develop and implement internationalisation and mobility strategies with concrete aims and measurable mobility targets.**

The strategies should include mobility aims for the exchange with partners inside and outside the EHEA, concrete measures for the expansion of mobility and the removal of obstacles to mobility. Furthermore, measures should be defined with regard to improving the recognition of studies performed abroad, foreign language proficiency of mobile students as well as regarding financial support for periods spent abroad. The member-state-strategies should include measurable mobility targets and monitoring tools.

1. **We reaffirm and elaborate our mobility target formulated at Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve and lay down additional targets.**

1. We define our mobility target from the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve communiqué more precisely as follows:

(a) We measure physical mobility in all three cycles of the Bologna process.

(b) We include in our mobility target the periods spent abroad within a study cycle (credit mobility) as well as stays in which a final degree is obtained abroad (degree mobility).

2. In Leuven/Louvain-La-Neuve we decided to include only outward mobility in our mobility target. In addition to our quantitative target for the outward mobility of graduates in the EHEA, we now also lay down a target for mobility into the EHEA. By 2020 5 percent of all students matriculated in the EHEA shall have obtained their prior qualification outside the EHEA. We request that Eurostat, Eurostudent and Eurydice develop a corresponding database so that we can judge the progress in achieving the targets.

3. Over and above the specified indicators, we request that Eurostat and Eurostudent develop and provide data:

(a) On degree and on credit mobility to countries outside the EHEA.

(b) On the development of the various mobility types (credit and degree mobility).

(c) On mobility of teachers, early stage researchers and staff in higher education.

(d) On the social dimension of mobility.

1. **We strive for open higher education systems and better balanced mobility in the EHEA.**

Our demand for more balanced mobility is directed particularly at degree mobility since it can have a sustained effect on the host and home countries and may lead to brain gain and brain drain. We believe that a better balance of these intra-EHEA mobility flows must be supported by improving the attractiveness of the higher education institutions in regions where outgoing degree mobility exceeds by far incoming degree mobility and a prudent policy by governments of countries where incoming degree mobility exceeds by far outgoing degree mobility.

Joint study programmes, multilateral summer schools and regional forms of higher education collaboration are promising instruments in this respect. The return of graduates to their home countries can be supported through the creation of attractive working conditions and specific incentive systems (e.g. return grants).

Exceeding incoming degree and credit mobility can also be assessed as burdensome by a government and deserves our attention.

In order to be able to better evaluate the development of degree mobility in the EHEA and react in good time to possible negative consequences for certain countries and regions, we intend in future to record and analyse the mobility flows systematically, regularly and in accordance with comparable principles.

If the findings show greater imbalances over longer periods of time, the governments concerned should jointly investigate the causes, consider carefully the advantages and disadvantages of the specific imbalance and seek solutions if deemed necessary. If required, dealing with the matter at a European level under the Bologna ministerial conferences might also be considered.

1. **We encourage the member states to strive for more and better balanced mobility of the EHEA with countries outside the EHEA.**

We encourage the EHEA countries to intensify the structural collaboration with developing and emerging countries and use appropriate measures to motivate more Europeans in particular to study, teach and research in these countries. At the same time, in order to become more attractive for people from non-EHEA industrialised nations, we call on the EHEA countries to develop and better promote suitable programmes for stays in the EHEA.

1. **We shall take measures to dismantle existing obstacles to mobility.**

While increasing the motivation of students and staff to be mobile is of paramount importance for the success of any mobility measures, there are still a series of obstacles which impact on the substantial expansion of mobility inside and outside the EHEA.

1. We intend within the limits of our capabilities to expand mobility funding through portable grants and loans.
2. We undertake to enable a wide-reaching portability of grants, loans and scholarships provided by our countries and further to improve the exchange of information regarding the portability of national grants and loans across the EHEA.
3. [We request that the European Commission secure adequate mobility funding with appropriate grants through its programmes focusing on mobility (LLP, Erasmus Mundus, Research Framework Programme). Co-funding by countries is strongly encouraged. *Update required*]
4. [We request that the European Commission, in addition to national and regional funding instruments, continue to pursue the introduction of an EU mobility loan. *Update required – feasibility study ongoing* ]
5. Regarding recognition, we will ensure that the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention are taken up in national legislation and encourage a more positive attitude towards qualifications or credits obtained elsewhere.
6. [We will identify in our countries administrative problems, e.g. in relation to issuing residence and work permits for foreigners in the higher education field and where necessary will take measures accordingly to make mobility easier.]
7. We welcome the work of the European Commission on proposals as to how access to social benefits and the portability of pension entitlements for mobile staff might be secured. We request that the European Commission inform the BFUG regularly on the status of the discussions and to consider possibilities for the inclusion of the whole of the EHEA.
8. As a prerequisite for mobility and internationality, we support the teaching of language skills at all levels, starting from primary and secondary education.
9. **We will use quality assurance for promoting mobility inside and outside the EHEA.**

Transparency of structures and instruments and mutual trust in the higher education systems of all EHEA countries are at the core of the Bologna process and a necessary prerequisite for mobility. We further encourage the application of the qualifications framework for the EHEA, of the ECTS and of the Diploma Supplement and intend to strengthen the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR) by using the register even better as a reference instrument especially by deploying the quality assurance agencies listed in it consistently in the respective member states.

Furthermore, in accrediting or recognising study courses we must pay even greater attention to ensuring that the professional perspectives opened up by a study course are clearly set out. In this connection we also request that the BFUG, together with the European Commission, should check whether confirmation of professional qualifications in regulated professions or of the conformity with the EU Directives of the qualification obtained can also be undertaken by agencies registered in the EQAR.

We also seek dialogue with other parts of the world and suggest more intensive collaboration in the field of quality assurance with regions outside Europe. We call on the networks active in this field to investigate the possibility of establishing greater transparency and better reciprocal understanding of already existing quality assurance procedures with countries or regions outside Europe. Worldwide collaboration in quality assurance can also be intensified by more quality assurance agencies from outside Europe being included in the EQAR.

1. **In the spirit of mobility we advocate that countries pass on the flexibilities of the Bologna framework to the higher education institutions and restrict the state regulation of study courses to a minimum**

We want to leave our higher education institutions the greatest possible room for manoeuvre within the framework which we have created with the Bologna process so that they can set up co-operations and joint programmes more easily. National rules should not be a barrier for individual mobility and university cooperation. Therefore we will allow more flexibility. Quality assurance and especially accreditation procedures of joint programmes should also be restricted to a necessary minimum, in particular by agreeing on one single procedure for both partners.

1. **[We want to increase mobility through improved information about study programmes and a common internet-based admission system.[[1]](#footnote-1)**

We propose that each member state should set up a national website providing information about the study programmes of its higher education institutions. Furthermore we encourage the BFUG to investigate the possibility of developing an EHEA-wide internet-based application system.]

1. **We will in future improve the communication of the individual, institutional and social benefits of periods spent abroad to the citizens of Europe and campaign for even stronger participation in mobility measures.**

We therefore want to carry out a comprehensive information and advertising campaign regarding learning mobility in our countries and to include relevant representatives from the academic field, business and politics.

In order to systematically record the private and social returns of learning mobility, also with regard to the employability of higher education graduates, we suggest regular accompanying research and particularly the preparation of graduate surveys.

1. **We call on higher education institutions**
* to adopt and implement their own strategy for their internationalisation and for the promotion of mobility in accordance with their respective profile;
* to pay attention to the mobility and international competence of their staff, in particular to give fair and formal recognition for competences gained abroad, to offer attractive incentives for their greater participation in internationalisation and mobility measures as well as to ensure good working conditions for mobile staff;
* to create mobility-friendly structures and framework conditions for mobility abroad;
* to enable non-mobile students to have an "international experience at home";

**In order to give us an overview regarding the implementation of our mobility strategy and the measures it contains, we request that the BFUG present us with a comprehensive report at the next ministerial conference in 2015.**

As a basis for this, the member states will in their national reports for the next ministerial conference provide information about the development and implementation of the national strategies and the achievement of their mobility targets and on their progress on the removal of obstacles to mobility.

1. In order to further explore this idea, a workshop will be organised in the autumn of 2011. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)