**MOVE – Mapping mobility – pathways, institutions and structural effects of youth mobility in Europe**
**PRECONFERENCE FINAL REPORT**
**7 March 2018, 10:30-16:00**
**Duration of project :01 May 2015 - 30 April 2018 (36 months)**

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## Summary

This report covers the MOVE pre-conference, an event which preceded the MOVE final conference. The pre-conference was organised by the **European Youth Information and Counselling Agency** (ERYICA) and brought together almost **80** participants, a diverse mix of stakeholders and policy-makers in the field of youth, education, employment and research.

The programme included an introduction from ERYICA and project coordinator Kerstin WILDE (project manager at the Research Executive Agency) and a **presentation of the final results of the MOVE project** by project coordinator Birte NIENABER. This was followed by a **panel discussion with policy-makers and experts**, and the afternoon offered participants the possibility to discuss in more detail with the researchers of the project, depending on their area of interest within youth mobility: employment, voluntary work, entrepreneurship, higher education, pupil's exchange, and vocational training. From these discussions, participants came up with **recommendations** targeted at a range of stakeholders (businesses, policy-makers, universities, schools, associations etc.). The results of these discussions can be found in the Recommendations part of this report.

## Introduction

The MOVE pre-conference began with an introduction from moderator Imre Simon, Members' Service Manager at ERYICA. The first invited speaker was **Kerstin WILDE,** who opened the pre-conference through video conference.

Ms. Wilde highlighted that **geographic mobility fosters flexibility in thinking** and the adaptation to different environments, and that once people are geographically mobile, they are more likely to be mobile in their careers and in different sectors throughout their lifetime. This is beneficial both for the employee and employer. Ms. Wilde also highlighted that mobility **helps vulnerable young people gain access to the labour market**.

She then presented the **Research Executive Agency (REA),** which is ultimately the interface for feeding Horizon 2020 project results into **policies of the European Commission**.

Ms. Wilde then discussed EU policies regarding employment and mobility. As every EU member State has very diverse living and working conditions, the EU initiatives and programmes have to **serve very different needs**, which is why most employment and mobility related policies are primarily the responsibility of EU members states.

She then highlighted the concrete programmes that exist at EU level in relation to the EU 2020 Growth Strategy concerning employment and mobility of young people, such as:

- The Youth Guarantee;
- The Youth Employment Initiative;
- The European Alliance for Apprenticeships, which now has a focus on mobility;
- The European Solidarity Corps, which between 2018 – 2020 will receive **341.5 million euros**, and for 2021-2027 **6 billion euros**; and
- Erasmus+, for which the Key Action on the learning mobility of individuals and transnational mobility activities received **54% of total budget.**

Plans for the future:
- Install **border focal points,** which will improve access to jobs and services, such as public transport and health, and facilitate business across borders (there are currently **2 million people commuting daily or weekly across borders**).
- Proposal for the **European Labour Authority** (published 13 March).

Ms. Wilde concluded her introduction with a current call for proposals, which aims to flank policies to tackle barriers and obstacles to short-term mobility and longer-term integration.

**Claire CONLON,** Governing Board member of ERYICA and European and International Affairs Manager at the Centre d'information et de documentation jeunesse (CIDJ), France, then welcomed the participants on behalf of ERYICA, highlighting the importance of the project research results for the youth sector, as well as the important role of **youth information** in young people's mobility experience, and the impact that mobility can have on a young person. Ms. Conlon also highlighted the **information needs of young people at different stages of their mobility experience,** and the **tools and resources** that are necessary for this.

## Research results

**Birte NIENABER,** coordinator of the MOVE project, University of Luxembourg, then presented the MOVE project and some of the results. She highlighted the research methodology, which can be found on the MOVE website: http://move-project.eu/



Initial question:

**How can the mobility of young people be "good" both for socio-economic development and for individual development of young people, and what are the factors that foster/hinder such beneficial mobility?**

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Patterns of mobility
- Peers as mobility incubators;
- Learning something through mobility;
- Institutionalised work and education;
- Organisational membership;
- Wish to become independent and 'go out'; and
- Leaving home with the wish to 'break out.'

The major obstacles were **lack of sufficient language skills**, **lack of support or information** and **lack of financial resources to move abroad**.

The research showed that each mobility type comes with its own dilemma, and that there are both positive and negative sides to mobility.

**Positive effects** included:
- Positive evaluation of personal agency;
- Mobility and professional success;
- Language acquisition;
- Transnational activities (transnational space);
- Civic and political participation (cultural);
- Movement precipitating more movement; and
- Identity affinity (European Identity)
  - Young women: identification with the world
  - Spanish and Romanian had shown higher cosmopolitan identity.

**Negative effects** include:
- National differences are still there;
  - Self-evaluation: 74.7 percent evaluate their mobility experience positively but…
  - Countries reveal differences:
    - Luxembourg shows high national identification
    - Hungary and Romania – face **Brain drain**
    - German respondents were mostly negative, but more positive on vocational education and training mobility programmes
  - Employment prospects: entrepreneurship and university education clash; and
  - **Socio-economic status** still matters a lot despite funds from the EU.

## Panel discussion

The following speakers partook in a panel discussion regarding the research results of the project:

**Marc KUSTER:** Head of sector "Youth Communities Management and Support", Directorate General for Education and Culture, European Commission

**Reinhard SCHWALBACH**: President Eurodesk and MOVE Advisory Board member

**João PINTO**: President of Erasmus Student Network

**Davide CAPECCHI**: Research and Youth Policy Officer, Partnership between the EC and the CoE in the field of youth
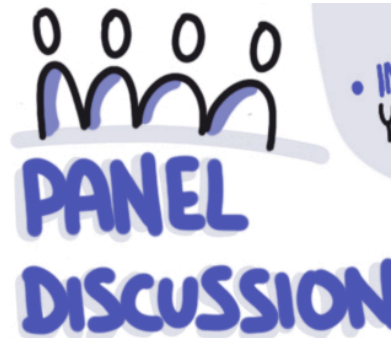


*Youth mobility in times of economic crisis and beyond: has youth mobility changed post-economic crisis in Europe?*

João PINTO highlighted that there are different regions of the EU and that different populations have behaved differently in the times of crisis. After the economic crisis, there was a **big investment in youth mobility** – it was used by several entities to **combat societal issues**. In terms of higher education, numbers show that it did not suffer; there are more students, but not necessarily diverse students.

Marc KUSTER stressed that youth mobility does have a positive impact for young people in the labour market; **language skills** improve, young people become **more independent** and **better team players** (in terms of EVS), and they become aware of **cultural differences**. Erasmus+ has not been cut financially, and this is not foreseen.

Reinhard SCHWALBACH stated that in Germany, very few young people have mobility experiences. Mobility programmes must be adapted to every country's complex reality (some countries face **brain drain**, others are much more balanced for example).

Davide CAPECCHI emphasised that the focus should not just be on how mobility has changed, but how the **lives of young people have changed**. **Complexity** is the key word. Becoming an adult is complex, young people have less and less jobs, and face increasing anxiety and performance pressure. Mobility can also reinforce inequality. Mr. Capecchi stated that mobility programmes should focus on **quality not quantity** – numbers do not show the impact of mobility. He summed up mobility in 3 key words: **complexity, inequality, quality.**
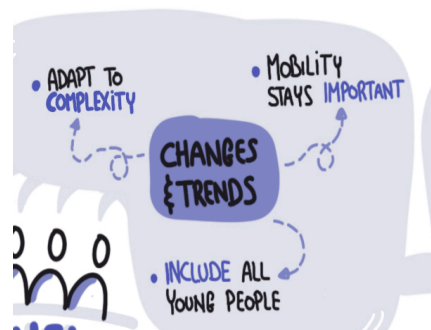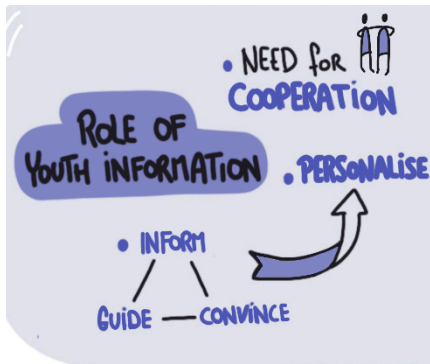
*A major challenge for youth mobility is young people's lack of information. What is the role of Youth Information in addressing the negative effects of mobility and boosting the positive ones?*

- **Personalised support** to young people is crucial, and they must be educated in formal and non-formal ways.
- Before information comes **basic awareness that this is a life choice**. In higher education it is a given, but for other mobility types (such as VET), young people are not even aware that this is a possibility for them. Therefore, 15-17 year olds should be offered a **diverse range of exchanges**, so that they are aware of the possibility of going abroad later on.
- **European-level partnerships** are crucial to reach out to those that are excluded, as not all young people are part of the 'European bubble.' There should be **funding from many sectors.**
- The European Solidarity Corps has proposed 25% more than the funding for EVS (they are currentlywaiting for final outcome). Erasmus+ budget will not be cut in face of budgetary crisis.
- **Long-term investment** is necessary, invest in organisations that can ensure a better impact and a **multiplier effect**, as well as in **information and guidance**. This must follow a **knowledge-based approach**. The higher the quality, the higher the cost and the smaller the numbers, but the greater the **impact**.
- Regarding higher education, the goal is to have as many young people as possible going abroad and to open mobility opportunities up to more young people, however quantity is not the aim. Universities are understaffed, and cannot ensure real guidance.
- Support is very different in different countries, it is necessary to look at national programmes as well as European programmes, because the opportunities are not the same.

*How can different sectors work together in addressing the challenges facing youth mobility?*

- Part of the problem is that often different sectors are trying to solve separately the same problem. **Strategic partnerships** should be established: **private funding** can be an interesting partner. Everyone agrees with this but the question is *how* these partnerships can be formed.
- Part of the quality of the MOVE project is that it looks at **different mobility types** and works closely with the youth sector (in particular ERYICA). This should be expanded to organisations such as Eurodesk and EURES. It is very complementary to have **practitioners and researchers** look at these issues together.
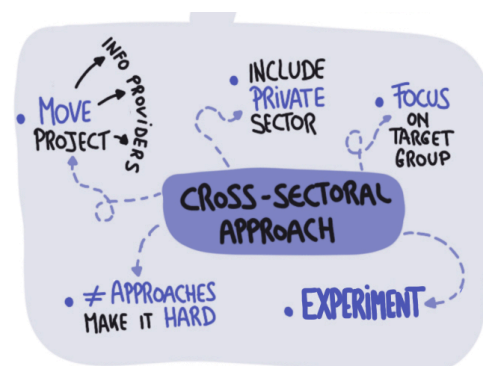


The panelists discussed the connection between **inequality and immobility**. Finances play a big role: there is a big connection between social class and immobility.

- According to panelist João PINTO, regarding higher education, in 2014, 25% of short-term exchanges (between 7 and 10 days) came from disadvantaged backgrounds. With longer exchanges (1 semester) only 5% came from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- 70% of young British people did not vote for Brexit. Those that had carried out a mobility experience felt more European than their peers who had not been abroad (88% against 62%). Only 0.66% of British young people go abroad on average (in higher education).

The floor was then opened up to the audience, and Elisa BRIGA, from the European Federation for Intercultural Learning (EFIL), pointed out that the only research that is carried out in depth about mobility is Erasmus+, but there is mobility outside of this. How can we put the data together to see who we are reaching through multiple mobility programmes? Ms. Briga also raised the possibility of giving people from disadvantaged backgrounds more funding, which is the case for some Erasmus+ grants for people with fewer opportunities.

## European Platform on Learning Mobility

**Soren KRISTENSEN**, Researcher for the European Platform on Learning Mobility (EPLM), presented the platform, an initiative in the framework of the Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth, to the participants.

The EPLM is a platform that brings together practitioners, researchers and policy makers engaged with learning mobility. It works on quality improvement, knowledge-sharing, visibility and recognition of learning mobility and covers EU and CoE countries. More information can be found on the EPLM website: https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/european-platform-on-learning-mobility
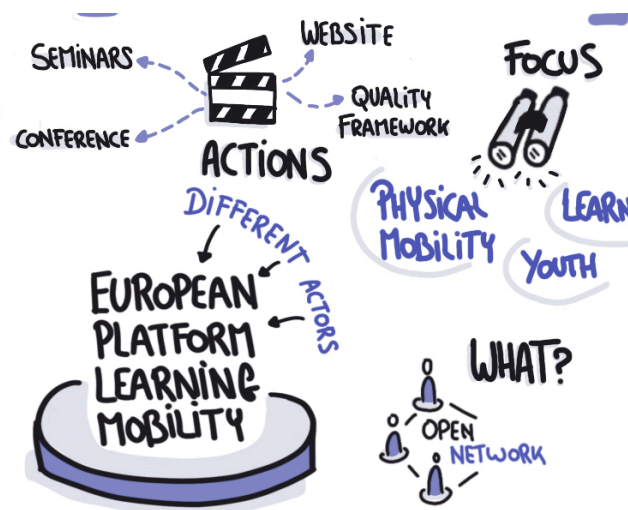
# Recommendations

Throughout the afternoon, the participants were split into 6 'working groups', each group looking at the different mobility types that have been analysed in the MOVE research. After a brief presentation from a researcher who had been looking at that topic, the participants discussed the issues regarding the mobility type and came up with recommendations, which are listed below.



## Pupil's Exchange

- **Create a cross-sectorial systemised collection of data** to be used across Europe, so different sectors are not carrying out the same research;
- **Ensure connection/cooperation between research projects on the same topic**. This could be coordinated by the EU institutions, there could be exchange events, the EPLM could be involved;
- Use/learn from non-formal education practices
- Teacher training/intercultural learning;
- Community impact;
- Tools/resources;
- Individual/group facilitated learning.
- **Ensure flexible formats of pupil's exchange, so that they are more inclusive**. Ensure different choices are available to students, which fit the needs of all young people;
- **Increase intercultural competences** for young people, teachers and families, creating a welcoming culture with strategies such as host families;
- **Ensure recognition of the study period abroad**, so that the young people do not have to repeat a year; and
- Reciprocal programmes/funding and individual/community interaction should exist.

## Voluntary mobility

- Allow **more flexibility** within and across programmes, to match the flexibility with which young people approach mobility: "concatenated mobility";
- Connect schools, municipalities, families and youth organisations, for a **community-based approach** to youth mobility;
- Offer **funding (loans or grants) at a local level**: through the municipality, youth would be able to cover the costs for their mobility, as often they have to pay for their travel or even for the whole period abroad in advance, but might not be able to;
- Criteria for selection for EU youth mobility programmes needs to be **more inclusive**, including youth with psychological issues, disadvantaged youth, youth in trouble with the law. Currently, it is particularly difficult for such young people to become mobile, because the necessity for the mobility to be "successful" leads organisations to choose those who have already been "successful" (e.g. in their education);
- Create **possibilities for youth to connect to the place they are staying**, e.g. work at a local youth club;
- Alternative forms and **more experimental programmes** are needed;
- **Institutional harmonisation between the organisations managing youth mobility** would lead to smoother processes; and
- Create spaces for youth to share their mobility experiences with non-mobiles: this would show appreciation for the young mobile youth, it would offer non-mobiles an insight into mobility processes and allow the mobiles to reflect upon their experience. It would also lessen the pressure on youth to become mobile at all costs, since many do not want to or cannot be mobile.

## Entrepreneurship

- **Create trainings and possibilities for exchange on business creation abroad;**
- Make **funding possibilities** and procedures more **transparent;**
- **Ensure equal opportunities** to people of different regions of same country;
- Establish **mentor-mentee relationships/ peer networks;**
- Different narratives on success between young people and institutions: institutional design of programmes should take youth narrative into consideration; and
- **Design support programmes according to the needs of young people** – not according to the need of institutions.
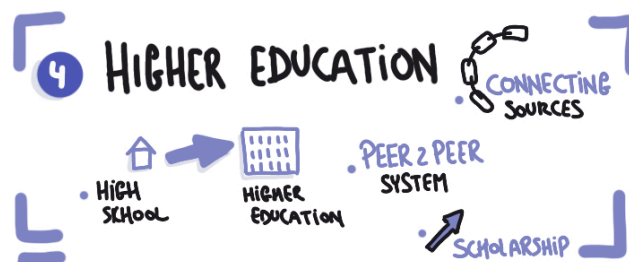


## Higher Education

- **Role of pupil mobility: secondary school students should experience more mobility and more inclusive mobility**. Mobility produces mobility – awareness should be raised from an early age, **language skills should be more developed** and also inequalities should be taken into consideration, with virtual mobility programmes and other means of helping students to experience smooth mobility;
- **Sources of information: coordination and support structures in sending and host universities should be improved**. Often different departments are not in contact with the international offices, there is a big problem in accrediting the subjects and sometimes international students cannot access classes in host universities;
- **Role of peers: peer-to-peer knowledge transfer:** peer information is a very efficient way of spreading information, but it is not so common as there is no concrete system in place. When

students come back, there should be a system of spreading the knowledge, which is a mixture of peer-to-peer and coordination at the university level;

- **Difficulties in funding:** funding is a big problem, especially in periphery countries. Scholarships are **not enough to cover the costs**, increasing funding for disadvantaged students should be introduced, so that mobility does not increase inequalities but decreases them. Other types of mobility could also be increased (shorter-term mobility for those that do not have the means to go for a longer period of time); and
- **Decrease the excessive institutional demands.**



## Employment

Employment mobility is a transition from youth to adulthood, from education to work, from unemployment to employment. However, this transition is not always direct. Once youth become mobile, they are vaguer about their return. Employment mobility is **not as structured as other mobility types**. Entering the labour market is problematic for youth in the destination countries.

- **Information** - Information is available for young people, but it is difficult to filter all of the different sources. It is therefore crucial to have centres & programmes, which can help young people to reach the **information about employment opportunities.** This should be for all young people;
- Formal information is available if you can find it. However **informal information sources** are missing, such as: a bridging person, the significant person, peer-to-peer communication, active youth organisations, etc.;
- There is a need to **invest in youth workers and youth organisations**, which can guide youngsters before mobility experiences, or they can be the first ones to plant the idea of "being mobile" at an early age;
- Many young people get stuck in the lower segment of labour market in the destination countries, and have no assistance in climbing the job ladder. Some of them do not know their rights and opportunities in the destination countries. They need **job consulting;**
- **Language support** is crucial;
- EURES have to put efforts on **quality**, not just quantity. **Placement instead of recruitment;** and
- Research should be shared with all those working in the youth sector (the European commission, national organisations, local authorities, public national services, employment organisations, companies, universities etc.) to develop their way of working within youth mobility with evidence-based research.
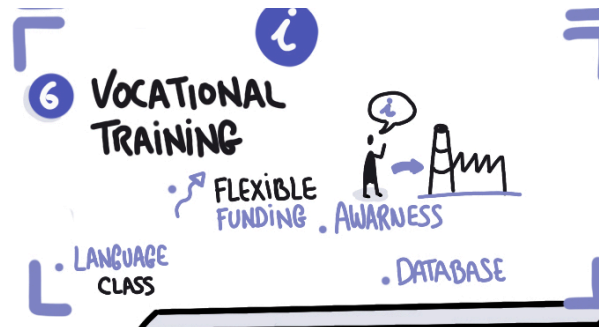
### Vocational training

1. **Funding – more flexibility**, especially if the National Agencies can be more autonomous in managing their funds;
2. **Raising awareness among young people**, and **companies**;
3. Language – **compulsory language training before mobility**; and
4. **A database of European companies and employers** willing to take mobile students on.

## Conclusion

Inviting a wide variety of stakeholders from different sectors to the MOVE pre-conference meant that the discussions that were held were very enriching for all involved, allowing participants to exchange and discuss with other participants coming from a different perspective and professional background. The recommendations that have come out of the discussions come from experienced professionals who are familiar with European (and international) youth mobility, and **should be seriously considered at both European and national levels.**

# Annex 1 – Final programme

## PROGRAMME MOVE PRECONFERENCE
### 7 March 2018, 10:30-16:00
### Université du Luxembourg
### Belval Campus
### Maison du Savoir
### 2, avenue de l'Université
### L-4365 Esch-sur-Alzette

Moderator: Imre Simon

## 10:00 – 10:45 Registration and Welcoming Coffee

## 10:45- 11:00 Welcoming Words
**Claire Conlon,** Governing Board member of ERYICA and European and International Affairs Manager, Centre d'information et de documentation jeunesse (CIDJ), France

## Presentation of MOVE final results
11:00-11:45    *MOVE: Mapping mobility pathways, institutions and structural effects of youth mobility in Europe - Horizon 2020 project*
**Birte NIENABER,** Coordinator of the MOVE project, University of Luxembourg

## 11:45-12:45 Discussion with invited speakers – How to make use of results
**Marc KUSTER:** Head of sector "Youth Communities Management and Support", Directorate General for Education and Culture, European Commission
**Jacques SPELKENS:** Head of CSR Benelux at ENGIE and member of the Board of CSR Europe
**Reinhard SCHWALBACH**: President Eurodesk and MOVE Advisory Board member
**João PINTO**: President of Erasmus Student Network
**Davide CAPECCHI**: Research and Youth Policy Officer, Partnership between the EC and the CoE in the field of youth

## 12:45 – 13:00 Input of the European Platform on Learning Mobility (EPLM)
**Soren KRISTENSEN**: Researcher, European Platform on Learning Mobility

## 13:00-14:00 Networking lunch

## 14:00-15:30 Thematic discussion groups
Group discussions looking at different mobility types:
1) **Employment**
   <u>Moderated by</u>: Stefan JAHNKE, Senior Policy Officer, European University Foundation (EUF)
   <u>Contribution</u>: Volha VYSOTSKAYA, MOVE researcher, University of Luxembourg

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Rapporteur: Tuba ARDIC, MOVE researcher Høgskulen på Vestlandet (Western Norway University of Applied Sciences), Norway

2) **Voluntary**
Moderated by: Rares CRAIUT, European Confederation of Youth Clubs (ECYC)
Contribution: Monica ROMAN, MOVE researcher, Academia de Studii Economice din Bucuresti, Romania
Rapporteur: Alice ALTISSIMO, University of Hildesheim, Germany

3) **Entrepreneurship**
Moderated by: Corina PIRVULESCU, Project Manager, European Youth Card Association (EYCA)
Contribution: Laura MURESAN, Academia De Studii Economice Din Bucuresti, Romania
Rapporteur: Andreas HERZ, University of Hildesheim, Germany

4) **Higher Education**
Moderated by: Karin GRANEVI, Stockholm University
Contribution: Emilia KMIOTEK-MEIER, MOVE researcher, University of Luxembourg
Rapporteur: Julianna KISS, MOVE researcher, Miskolci Egyetem, Hungary

5) **Pupil's Exchange**
Moderated by: Susannah NICODEMI, Winchester International Network, UK
Contribution: Irina PAVLOVA, MOVE researcher, Høgskulen på Vestlandet (Western Norway University of Applied Sciences), Norway
Rapporteur: Jan SKRONABEK, MOVE researcher, Høgskulen på Vestlandet (Western Norway University of Applied Sciences), Norway

6) **Vocational Training**
Moderated by: Jon HARDING, Bridgwater & Taunton College UK
Contribution: Tabea SCHLIMBACH, MOVE researcher, Deutsches Jugendinstitut EV, Germany
Rapporteur: Clemens SCHMIDT, Deutsches Jugendinstitut EV, Germany

15:30-16:00 Summary of group findings and conclusions

16:00   Closure