GREEN PAPER
Promoting the learning mobility of young people

CEEMET Response

The Metal Engineering and Technology based industries are the largest industrial sector in Europe in terms of employment and added value. Moreover the industry is one of Europe's prime exporters with a wide range of engineering services and products, which are at the leading edge of technology. For companies to maintain and increase their competitiveness, it is essential to have a highly skilled, committed and adaptable workforce. Against this background, CEEMET sees in "learning mobility" an important tool contributing to**:**

- The preparation for mobility of workers which can, notably, contribute to temper the effects of skills shortage and demographic trends of an ageing workforce – **mobile students are more likely to be mobile workers.**
- The **development of important soft skills** (language, culture, adaptability) which are important in a globalised, technologically fast-paced industry and are crucial to strengthen future employability and personal development of young people.

Therefore CEEMET welcomes the opportunity given with the Green paper on "Promoting the learning mobility of young people" to share its views on some of the questions raised in the latter.

GENERAL IMPROVEMENTS

To promote mobility, "studying abroad" has to be made **a *real* option** and **readily available.** Recognition, financing, visibility, information of learning are key in promoting and motivating young people to be mobile. The specific situation facing apprentices regarding mobility - in particular in the dual system - needs to be acknowledged. These issues primarily have to be addressed by governments within the national education systems.

Achieving mobility among young people can only be realised if:

- Legal & financial obstacles are reduced. This includes :
    - o Improved Transparency and recognition/validation of competences acquired abroad to which the appropriation by all stakeholders of EU tools should contribute (Europass, EQF, ECVET, …).
    - o Adapted legal framework for labour law and social protection.

- Practical/social support is provided to students when they are learning abroad. This includes accommodation, mentor (for example through partnership with local schools), social network, etc.

- Cultural obstacles are addressed.
    - o The quality of language education/training needs to be improved at all levels of education (including in VET).
    - o It is crucial to ensure that students take responsibility for the quality of their mobility period through strong framework outlining notably their expectations.

- Better and comprehensive information/communication targeted at students is provided.

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COMPANIES INVOLVEMENT

As stated before, **Business is convinced of the value of learning mobility**. Numerous companies provide internships, contribute to research programmes and collaborative projects, which allow young people from their country and from others to work with or within a company.

However for SMEs, extending the offer is often not a question of motivation; rather it is a question of means (not only funds but also time and work organisation) which are sometimes limited, especially in the present crisis. SMEs need financial incentives and a technical support to see an added-value in sending apprentices abroad or in welcoming foreign "stagiaires".

In general, business will be supportive to learning mobility if comprehensive framework conditions allow for young people to really benefit from **an option for mobility proposed and organised by the education and training institutions**. Furthermore, other stakeholders should also improve their offer of experience in workplace.

While fully respecting the Member States' responsibility for their Education systems, the development of a new **benchmark** on **mobility** might be a useful tool in defining a European mobility strategy. However any benchmarks for mobility should not be limited to quantitative criteria and should take **quality** criteria into account.