

European Platform on Learning Mobility in the Youth Field Presentation

Mission

Our mission is to engage in the improvement, knowledge, visibility and recognition of learning mobility in the youth field.¹

Definition of Learning mobility

By learning mobility we mean *transnational mobility undertaken for a period of time, consciously organised for educational purposes or to acquire new competences² or knowledge. It covers a wide variety of projects and activities and can be implemented in formal or non-formal settings³.*

Approach

We create an open participatory space for exchange and cooperation between **practitioners, researchers and policy makers**: the European Platform for Learning Mobility (hereinafter EPLM). By ‘practitioners’ the platform means programme staff, trainers and consultants, youth workers and other multipliers in the youth field and in youth work⁴.

Scope

The bodies involved in the EPLM understand **Europe** as the region that includes the countries and actors represented in the Council of Europe and the European Union⁵.

The **EPLM focuses on the learning mobility of young people and of practitioners in the youth field**, and particularly in various forms of youth work, which, in the view of the EPLM, should be supported by European youth policy.

The EPLM focuses on non-formal learning with links to informal learning as well as to formal education. Learning mobility in this framework aims to increase **participation, active citizenship, intercultural learning and dialogue, individual competency development and employability of young people**. Mobility is also to be understood as a possible source of genuine and diverse learning experiences, and it therefore becomes important to critically investigate links between learning mobility (settings and contexts) and identity building. The EPLM, in its work, not only considers European youth mobility policies and programmes, but is also more generally interested

¹ Paper no. 1: European Platform on Learning Mobility in the Youth Field - Programmatical Frame

² Competences are to be understood as an overall system of values, attitudes and beliefs as well as skills and knowledge, which can be put into practice to manage diverse complex situations and tasks successfully. Self-confidence, motivation and well being are important pre-requisites for a person to be able to act out his/her developed competences’. SALTO T&C RC (2013). *Competence framework for trainers*.

³ ICON Institute for EU Commission, Education and Culture (June 2012). *Study on Mobility developments*.

⁴ The platform defines youth work as stated in *The Declaration of the 1st European Youth Work Convention*.

⁵ Researchers, policy makers and practitioners active in the field of youth work at European level and/or in one of the 28 Member States of the European Union and the 47 Member States of the Council of Europe.

in learning mobility as a set of complex social processes transforming the conditions of growing up in Europe.

Moreover, the EPLM focuses on physical and organised learning mobility but does not overlook the virtual mobility facilitating and supporting physical mobility experiences.

Structure of the EPLM

The **EPLM is an open network and is conducted in a participatory way**. Thematic working groups may be formed and supported with means available and depending on the needs and developments related to learning mobility in the youth field.

A Steering Group guides the EPLM for a certain period of time. The members of the Steering Group represent a wide variety of stakeholders, programmes and formats in the field of learning mobility, a balanced mixture of the respective fields of work and a regional diversity within Europe. The Steering Group consists of researchers, policy makers and practitioners. All those include: young people's representatives and youth NGO's - including the European Youth Forum, policy makers from European institutions, national youth ministries and regional, local entities, researchers from universities and institutes, national agencies of the Erasmus+ programme, the trainers community, youth work practitioners and youth workers, youth information services, social work and employment / vocational education, and training sectors.

The Steering Group is also responsible for the **organisation of conferences to be held on a bi-annual basis**. Hosts of the last, current and future conferences should be members of the Steering Group.

A **Coordination Office** at the EU-CoE youth partnership supports the work of the EPLM and its Steering Group.

Actions of the EPLM

- 1) It provides a network for the exchange and cooperation of researchers, policy makers and practitioners dealing with learning mobility in non-formal and informal learning as well as formal education;
- 2) It creates and maintains a collective, multi-professional voice from the youth field – and beyond if relevant - with the common concern of learning mobility;
- 3) It deepens knowledge and understanding and provides regular state-of-the-art on existing research linked to learning mobility;
- 4) It works on a number of themes, as described in the EPLM's position paper, regularly revised;
- 5) It implements projects such as conferences bringing together actors in the field of learning mobility, and develops publications;
- 6) It follows-up and implements outcomes of conferences and links them to relevant policy discussions in Europe.

History of EPLM

Amongst other processes, the **European Platform on Learning Mobility in the Youth Field** mostly finds its origins in the International Conference '[Framework, Quality, and Impact of Young Europeans' Learning Mobility](#)' that took place from 11 - 13 May 2011 at the European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe in Budapest. The conference was initiated and organised through cooperation between the German Ministry for Family, Women, Senior Citizens and Youth, the EU-CoE youth partnership, the National Agencies for YOUTH IN ACTION in Germany (JUGEND für Europa) and Hungary (Mobilitas), and a consortium of German institutions organising the long-standing 'Research-Practice Dialogue on International Youth Work'.

An important result of the conference was the suggestion to create a **European Platform on Learning Mobility in the Youth Field**, seen as a much-needed place to connect political, scientific, institutional and practical activities and knowledge.

The first conference of the EPLM '[Mobility Spaces, Learning Spaces - Linking Policy, Research and Practice](#)', took place on 20 – 22 March 2013 in Berlin and was therefore the starting point for a sustainable dialogue supported by the Platform, linking the different perspectives policy, research and practice, and examine the implications for the field. The conference tackled the six themes considered as those the EPLM should focus on in the coming years: workshop themes were: linking youth work and learning mobility; learning mobility for all and in diversity; information and guidance; competence and training; quality and recognition; and impact, learning transfer and evaluation. As an outcome of the conference, the themes have been translated into concrete 'action points', further detailed in the EPLM's *Position Paper*.

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