

## The POWER of Learning Mobility Changing Lives, changing society 2 – 4 April 2019, Ostend, Belgium

### Aim of the conference

This conference will look at the **impact of quality learning mobility projects** in the youth field, and the **balance between personal and societal gain**. It will explore what learning mobility means **for communities and society at large, as well as individuals**.

### Quality in Learning Mobility - what for?

Youth has become a priority at policy level in the EU in the last months and years. Budgets have increased and the development of new EU programmes (European Solidarity Corps, Discover EU etc) have brought an additional emphasis on increasing the number of mobilities – more opportunities, for more young people.

There is concern by many in the field that this current focus on quantity will detract from the learning and impact that mobility projects can have. **Statistics are meaningless** in proving the success of a project – it is rather the **knowledge, skills & attitudes gained**, and how this contributes to the **development of societies and individuals in their communities**.

Responding to this concern, quality mobility tools have been developed by the European Platform for Learning Mobility to support project organisers across Europe. **A Handbook and a WebApp** have been built through extensive involvement of stakeholders since 2016. They are based on the [22 quality principles](#), and will include resources, tips, tricks and good practice to encourage further quality development. They will be launched at this biannual EPLM conference, hosted in Ostend.

It is hoped that these tools will provide a common ground from which the youth field can increase learning and impact through better quality mobility projects.

Now the question is - **what can quality projects bring?** Where is the emphasis for the learning, and how can quality learning mobility impact more than the individual? The EPLM Power conference will open up these conversations.

### The context in 2019 - where does (quality) Learning mobility find its place?

Europe is changing. Over the last few years, the role of civil society and youth work is becoming more and more relevant. With the influx of refugees, far-right populism threatening the cohesion of the EU and the trends of violent radicalisation, a renewed activism is apparent, expressing solidarity with new relevant groups and stressing respect

for human rights to be safeguarded. There are many upcoming developments on the European level, including the new EU Youth Strategy and the Youth Goals within that, the European Solidarity Corps, DiscoverEU programme, new EU Youth Programmes being developed and the Council of Europe's Agenda 2030, to list a few. In this changed context, quality learning mobility (as a concept and a practice) has to redefine and find its place and role again. We believe that societal impact is one aspect of that which needs to be re-evaluated and promoted further.

### *It's important to support:*

**Changing LIVES:** personal gain of individuals: development of competences, intercultural learning, increase of employability, developing European values, increase of personal investment and benefit...

### *However, we should discover more how to:*

**Change COMMUNITIES:** more cohesive society, the altruism that comes with making a community a better place, impact of volunteering on host communities, internationalisation at home, providing opportunities for all, increased contribution and gain through the interchange that learning can bring...

## *Questions for the Conference*

Within quality learning mobility projects, how can we...

- ? Help young people to make (more of) a difference on a societal level?
- ? Ensure we are capitalising on the potential of the two-way impact of projects? (hosting community on the project and project on the community?).
- ? Assess the societal impact, from the perspectives of research, practice and policy?
- ? Balance the individual and societal gain of learning mobility projects? Which tools, methodologies and approaches work well?
- ? Ensure that these opportunities are not only for the privileged and the resourceful?
- ? ...and more topics to be developed in the months leading up to the conference

## *Background information*

### *What is the EPLM?*

The European Platform on Learning Mobility ([EPLM](#)) is coordinated by the youth partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe. It aims to improve knowledge, visibility and recognition of learning mobility in the youth field through exchange and cooperation of stakeholders (**researchers, policy makers and practitioners**). It creates and maintains a collective, multi-professional voice from the youth field on the common concern of learning mobility, organises events bringing

together actors in the field of learning mobility and publishes materials and tools for the support of all actors involved.

## Why is JINT hosting this?

Learning Mobility is more than Erasmus+. The EPLM includes many networks, programmes and stakeholders, including National Agencies. Over the last 7-8 years, National Agencies have been heavily involved in sharing their expertise and experience to support learning mobility. This has included supporting the biennial conferences. In previous years Germany, Hungary, Turkey and France have hosted the conferences, also with the support of other National Agencies. JINT (NA BE-FL) is contributing its expertise to focus on this 2019 one. It's an excellent occasion to celebrate learning mobility and the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of JINT.

The EPLM benefits and grows as more/different National Agencies contribute.

## The conference

It will be hosted in the Flemish town of Ostend, Belgium. Accommodation and conference costs will be covered through the Erasmus+ Youth in Action Programme, with support from the youth partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission. Economy travel will be reimbursed through the National Agencies/SALTOs of your area.

The conference programme will start late afternoon on Monday 1st April and will finish at 14h00 on Thursday 4th April 2019. An additional researchers' networking meeting will be held from 10h00 – 17h00 on Monday 1st April.

As 2019 marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of learning mobility programmes in Belgium, part of this event will be used to celebrate that.

## Participant profile

There will be 150 people supported for this conference. As the EPLM supports the connection between research, practice and policy, this event should have representation from all of these, as well as young people themselves. The national delegations (of maximum 4 people per country) should come from 6 different profiles:

1. Youth worker/NGO worker in the youth field
2. Young person (age 18+), especially if they have a story to tell about how their learning mobility experience influenced them to make a (positive) impact on society
3. Policy maker from local/regional/national level, related to youth policies
4. Researcher (social scientists, and also including those who have other relevant PhD studies) with an interest/record in societal impact, especially from the youth field
5. People from 'local communities' – those connected to society impact or social capital, rather than learning mobility
6. National Agency staff members

IYNGOs and individual researchers will also be supported.

Applications will soon be open on the [SALTO website here.](#)

### Timeline for the conference development

When	What
<b>15 January 2019</b>	Application deadline online
<b>28 February 2019</b>	Successful participants notified
<b>By mid-March 2019</b>	Welcome and information packs sent to participants
<b>1 April 2019</b>	Researchers meeting
<b>2 – 4 April 2019</b>	POWER conference