

## Modernisation of Education in the EU

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*Making quality mobility a reality for all is a highly ambitious objective that has become of paramount importance for building mutual understanding and building inclusive and open societies.*

**...Stakeholders, policy-makers and national authorities should simplify the access to and digitize the administration of student mobility:**

- National policy-makers are invited to update regulations related to the administration of higher education institutions, by making it possible to use digital solutions for the administration of student data and files.
- European policy-makers are invited to further support flagship initiatives aiming at digitizing mobility processes, simplifying administration and making sure programme countries are benefiting from a state-of-the-art public digital infrastructure.
- Well-known and strategic initiatives in the field are:
  - [Erasmus Without Paper](#)
  - [Online Learning Agreement](#)
  - [Erasmus+ App](#)
  - [European Student Card](#)

In addition, a recently [published JRC report](#) also calls for urgent action to define standards that enable the interoperability among EU diploma repositories. A sensible, yet decisive, adoption of new technologies could help make EU-issued university diplomas fraud-proof by 2025, which would have a positive effect on labor mobility, recruitment and institutional reputation.

**...European and national policy-makers should strive for a real social dimension in student mobility and higher education at large:**

- National policy makers are encouraged to ensure national grants, when applicable, are portable for students to study abroad. The non-portability of such grants increases the social selectivity of student mobility, while such opportunities should be made available to all<sup>1</sup>
- The portability of national grants is a particularly central issue for students with disabilities. Grants and support services (such as financial aid for an accompanying person) for disabilities are the least portable and usually stop at the border, making it much harder for a part of the population to have an abroad experience.
- European decision-makers are invited to enhance efforts to ensure Erasmus+ grants support social inclusion by 1) giving greater consideration to students' socio-economic situation and 2) factoring living cost differences in the grant calculation, not only at country level but also at regional level (NUTS 3 classification level statistics from Eurostat) and 3) taking into account student with special needs as recommended by the [MappED! Project](#).
- The recent [HousErasmus+ study](#) shows that student accommodation is an obstacle for student mobility (high costs, limited availability, discrimination) and that half of HEIs in Europe believe it hampers their internationalisation. European and national policy-makers should support local/regional partnerships with housing providers, Higher Education Institutions, student organisations and municipalities to cope with such challenges.

*The fast-changing societies surrounding education institutions in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, require them to be able to anticipate skills' shortages and equip graduates with relevant skills for the century eg. [\(horizontal key\) competences](#) by...*

**...Striving for quality mobility and developing volunteering opportunities abroad:**

- Develop policies to increase the length of mobility periods while striving for more mobility: Longer mobility periods for students have a greater impact on the student's personal development and understanding of the host country. Blended mobility periods can be encouraged for students who cannot study abroad for a prolonged period.
- National and European policy-makers and practitioners should consider bridging the gap between formal, non-formal and informal learning sectors as

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<sup>1</sup> Education and Training Monitor 2017 [https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/monitor2017\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/monitor2017_en.pdf)

a key issue, since it allows to equip students with skills they cannot acquire necessarily in the classroom. Policies should be deployed to support the recognition of prior-learning and volunteering actions conducted by (home-coming exchange) students.

- Reintegration of homecoming students should become a priority for national and European policy-makers, to make sure that the abroad experience translates into more active and employable citizens.
  
- Initiatives in the field:
  - [SocialErasmus+](#)
  - [Campus Europae](#)

**...Ensuring quality education that goes beyond the traditional boundaries of formal education:**

- Implement student centred-learning and promoting open source education resources (OER) can change the boundaries by which education is organised nowadays. National authorities should support their education institutions in deploying the use of new technologies that meet the demand of new generations.
  
- Access to Higher Education should be eased and transition between education sectors, including VET, made seamless for learners who wish to adapt their learning paths to their needs. This applies also to the lifelong learning dimension: young and less young adults should be encouraged to partake university education and consider mobility periods abroad in this context.

**...Promoting excellence in cooperation for the modernization of HE**

Policy-makers should support the idea of creating a European status for [European university networks](#) to enhance cooperation among universities across borders and make sure the European Higher Education Area becomes a vibrant, innovative, attractive and forward-looking space for learning, working and researching at home and abroad.