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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

from : General Secretariat of the Council
to : Council

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Subject : Proposal for a Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on transnational mobility within the Community for education and training purposes: European Quality Charter for Mobility
- General approach

1. On 26 September 2005 the Commission forwarded to the European Parliament and to the Council the above draft recommendation on a European Quality Charter for Mobility, the main aim of which is to establish a common set of principles aimed at greater effectiveness in all types of organised mobility for learning purposes. Building on previous achievements in this area, particularly Recommendation 2001/613/EC on mobility within the Community¹ and the work done by the expert group set up under that Recommendation and subsequently endorsed by Education Ministers at their informal gathering in Rotterdam in July 2004, the proposed Charter consists of ten practical and easily accessible guidelines covering the period prior to departure, during the stay and after the person's return.

¹ Recommendation 2001/613/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 July 2001 on mobility within the Community for students, persons undergoing training, volunteers, teachers and trainers, OJ L 215, 9.8.2001, p. 30.

2. On 14 February 2006 the Economic and Social Committee delivered its opinion², while that of the Committee of the Regions is still pending³. As for the European Parliament, its opinion is unlikely to be available before the end of May 2006.
3. Following detailed consideration of the draft recommendation by the relevant Council body since October 2005, the Permanent Representatives Committee of 3 May 2006 noted that, with the exception of two parliamentary scrutiny reservations (DK and UK), there was now unanimous agreement on the text.
4. Under these conditions, and subject to the lifting of these two scrutiny reservations, the Council is invited to endorse the text of the general approach annexed hereto, pending examination of the European Parliament's opinion.

² CESE 235/2006, SOC/222

³ Draft Opinion: CdR 34/2006 rev.1, dated 14 March 2006

DRAFT

**RECOMMENDATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL
on transnational mobility within the Community for education and training purposes:
European Quality Charter for Mobility**

(Text with EEA relevance)

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community, and in particular Article 149(4) and Article 150(4) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission⁴,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee⁵,

Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions⁶,

Acting in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 251 of the Treaty⁷,

Whereas:

- (1) Mobility in education and training is an integral part of the freedom of movement of persons – a fundamental freedom protected by the Treaty – and one of the main objectives of the European Union’s action in the field of education and vocational training; indeed, it is an essential tool for creating a European area of education and training and for developing European awareness.

⁴ OJ C [...], [...], p. [...].

⁵ OJ C [...], [...], p. [...].

⁶ OJ C [...], [...], p. [...].

⁷ OJ C [...], [...], p. [...].

- (2) Intensifying European mobility and exchanges for education and training purposes, and events such as the 2006 European Year of Workers' Mobility, have a key role to play in achieving the Lisbon goal of making Europe the most innovative and competitive knowledge-based economy⁸ by 2010.
- (3) A first Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council⁹ was adopted in 2001 with the aim of facilitating Community action to encourage mobility.
- (4) The work of the group of experts set up by the Commission in accordance with point III.a) of the above Recommendation, and the first follow-up report, while showing the progress made both at national and at European level as regards mobility for education and training purposes, demonstrate the need to focus not only on increasing mobility but above all on improving its quality.
- (5) This objective can be achieved by adopting, in the form of a Recommendation, a Quality Charter for mobility, laying down a set of principles in this field to be implemented on a voluntary basis.
- (6) Because this Charter incorporates the underlying principles of educational mobility, it constitutes a reference framework which will help increase exchanges, develop recognition of study periods and help to establish mutual trust between the authorities, the organisations and all the stakeholders in mobility.

⁸ Lisbon strategy, European Council Conclusions, doc. SN 100/1/00 REV 1.

⁹ Recommendation 2001/613/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 July 2001 on mobility within the Community for students, persons undergoing training, volunteers, teachers and trainers, OJ L 215, 9.8.2001, p. 30.

- (6a) This Charter is intended to complement, and not replace, the specific provisions outlined in the Erasmus Charter.
- (7) The advantages of mobility strongly depend on the quality of the practical provisions: preparation, support and recognition. The people and organisations involved can considerably improve its value by careful planning and suitable evaluation.
- (7a) Europass is a particularly useful instrument for developing transparency and recognition in order to aid mobility.
- (8) It is desirable that the principles in question cover not only the period of mobility itself but also the period preceding and following it.
- (9) A learning plan should be drawn up in advance. General preparation of the participants is also necessary.
- (10) All questions related to finance, in particular what financial support is available and who bears the costs, should be resolved before departure.
- (11) For the period spent abroad, the quality of mobility can be enhanced by the provision of schemes such as mentoring for participants.
- (11a) A detailed and clear description of any courses and/or training followed in the host country, including the duration, should help to facilitate recognition on returning to the home country.

- (12) Transparency and good administration call for a clear definition of the stakeholders responsible for each stage and action of the mobility programme.
- (13) In order to ensure the overall quality of mobility, it is desirable to apply as far as possible the above-mentioned principles and recommendations to all types of mobility for learning or professional development purposes: education or training; formal or non-formal learning including youth volunteering; short or long mobility periods; for school, higher education or job-based learning; for young or adult learners.
- (14) In view of the diversity of the nature and duration of mobility activities, Member States may adjust the implementation of the Charter according to circumstances, i.e. adapt it to specific situations and programmes; make some of the points compulsory and consider others as optional.
- (15) As the objectives of the present Recommendation, extending to all Member States, can be better achieved at Community level, the Community can take measures, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity provided for in Article 5 of the Treaty. To also respect the principle of proportionality, such as stated in the same Article, the present Recommendation does not exceed what is necessary to achieve these goals.

HEREBY RECOMMEND: that Member States endorse and promote the use of the attached European Quality Charter for mobility and, as from the second year following the adoption of the present Recommendation, report on this and any complementary measures they may choose to undertake in their national contributions to the "Education and Training 2010" work programme.

HEREBY INVITE the Commission to:

- encourage the use of the Charter by the National Agencies and other organisations working in the field of mobility;
- continue to cooperate with the Member States and the social partners, so that useful information and experience concerning the implementation of the measures advocated in this Recommendation may be exchanged;
- consider the present Recommendation as forming a whole with Recommendation 2001/613/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and therefore to include its requested biennial reports in the general reports of the "Education and Training 2010" work programme.

Done at Brussels,

For the European Parliament
The President

For the Council
The President

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EUROPEAN MOBILITY QUALITY CHARTER**INTRODUCTION:**

Strengthened by the Mobility Action Plan of 2000¹⁰ and the Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council of 10 July 2001¹¹, mobility has always been of considerable interest to stakeholders. That Recommendation was broad in scope, addressed a whole range of important questions associated with mobility and was targeted at anyone who might benefit from a period of learning abroad (formal and non-formal); including students, teachers, trainers, volunteers and people undergoing training. The present Recommendation, of which this Charter constitutes an integral part, has the same scope but focuses on the quality aspects of mobility, as proposed by an expert group established following the first Recommendation¹². It should help to ensure that participants have a positive experience, both in the host country and in the country of origin once they return. This Charter offers guidance for mobility undertaken by individual young people or adults, for the purposes of formal and non-formal learning and for their personal and professional development. It has been designed as a basic reference document, which takes account of national situations and respects Member States' competences. Its scope and content may be adapted to suit the duration of the mobility and the particularities of the various educational, training and youth activities as well as the needs of the participants. Although primarily addressing mobility for learning purposes, it is felt that this guidance could also be useful for other types of mobility, such as mobility for work.

¹⁰ Resolution of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 14 December 2000, concerning an action plan for mobility, OJ C 371, 23.12.2000.

¹¹ OJ L 215, 8.8.2001, p. 30.

¹² Report on the follow-up to Recommendation 2001/316/EC - COM(2004) 21.

1. Information and guidance

Potential candidates for mobility should have access to reliable sources of information and guidance on opportunities for mobility and the conditions in which it can be taken up.

2. Learning plan

Before undertaking mobility for education or training purposes, a learning plan should be drawn up and agreed by the sending and hosting organisations and the participants. A learning plan is particularly important in the case of long-term mobility and may also be useful in that of short-term mobility. The plan should outline the objectives and expected learning outcomes, as well as how these would be achieved and implemented. Any significant modification of the learning plan should be agreed by all parties. When drawing up the learning plan, the issues of reintegration into the home country and evaluation should be borne in mind.

3. Personalisation

Mobility undertaken for education or training purposes should fit in as much as possible with the personal learning pathways, skills and motivation of the participants and should develop or supplement them.

4. General preparation

Prior preparation of the participants is advisable, and should be tailored to their specific needs. It should include linguistic, pedagogical, administrative, legal, personal and cultural aspects, and information on financial aspects, as necessary.

5. Linguistic aspects

Language skills are important for effective learning, intercultural communication and a better understanding of the host country's culture. Participants, and their sending and host institutions, should pay special attention to appropriate linguistic preparation. Wherever possible, mobility arrangements should include:

- before departure, language assessment and the opportunity to follow courses in the language of the host country and/or the language of instruction, if different;
- in the host country, linguistic support and advice.

6. Logistical support

Where necessary, logistical support could be provided to the participants. This could include information and assistance with travel arrangements, insurance, residence or work permits, social security, accommodation, and any other practical aspects, including safety issues relevant to their stay, as appropriate.

7. Mentoring

The hosting organisation (educational establishment, youth organisation, company, etc.) should provide schemes such as mentoring to advise participants and help with their effective integration into the host environment, as well as act as a contact point for obtaining ongoing assistance.

8. Recognition

If a study or placement period abroad is an integral part of a formal study or training programme, this fact should be stated in the learning plan, and participants should be provided with assistance to facilitate recognition and certification, where appropriate. In the learning plan the sending organisation should undertake to recognise any successful period of mobility. For other types of mobility, and particularly those in the context of non-formal education and training, an appropriate document should be issued so that the participant is able to demonstrate his or her active participation and learning outcomes in a satisfactory and credible way.

In this context, use of the Europass should be encouraged.

9. Reintegration and evaluation

On return to their home country, particularly after long-term mobility, participants should be given guidance on how to make use of competences and skills acquired during the stay. Where necessary, help with reintegration into the social, educational or professional environment of the home country should be made available to people returning after long-term mobility. The experience gained should be properly evaluated by participants, together with the organisations responsible, to assess whether the aims of the learning plan have been met.

10. Commitments and responsibilities

The responsibilities arising from these quality criteria should be agreed by the sending and hosting organisations and the participants. They should preferably be confirmed in writing, so that responsibilities are clear to all concerned.
