

# Making mobility a reality



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# Mobility is desirable!

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For academic staff

The institutions

The societies

and of course students

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## Bologna Declaration

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“With respect to teachers, researchers and administrative staff, one of the six core objectives of the Bologna Process is the “Promotion of mobility by overcoming obstacles to the effective exercise of free movement with particular attention to ... [the] recognition and valorisation of periods spent in a European context researching, teaching and training.”

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## Prague communiqué, 2001

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“Ministers reaffirmed that the objective of improving the mobility of students, teachers, researchers and administrative staff as set out in the Bologna Declaration is of the utmost importance. Therefore, they confirmed their commitment to pursue the removal of all obstacles to the free movement of students, teachers, researchers and administrative staff and emphasized the social dimension of mobility.”

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## Berlin communiqué, 2003

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“Mobility of students and academic and administrative staff is the basis for establishing a European Higher Education Area. Ministers emphasise its importance for academic and cultural as well as political, social and economic spheres... They reaffirm their intention to make every effort to remove all obstacles to mobility within the European Higher Education Area.”

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## Bergen communiqué, 2005



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"We recognise that mobility of students and staff among all participating countries remains one of the key objectives of the Bologna Process. Aware of the many remaining challenges to be overcome, we reconfirm our commitment to facilitate the portability of grants and loans where appropriate through joint action, with a view to making mobility within the EHEA a reality. We shall intensify our efforts to lift obstacles to mobility by facilitating the delivery of visa and work permits and by encouraging participation in mobility programmes. We urge institutions and students to make full use of mobility programmes, advocating full recognition of study periods abroad within such programmes."

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## Different types of mobility:

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- The long term stay in another country requires attractive wage and working conditions at the receiving institution,
  - The short term stay often requires stability in working conditions at home (you need a stable job to return to)
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## Academic freedom



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Mobility is not only physical movement of “natural persons” but also mobility of thoughts, ideas and methods

– in other words academic freedom including the right to publish and debate within the public and the scientific community

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# No financial punishment

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Mobile staff should not necessarily gain financially but should certainly not be punished in any way (salaries, pension, social security etc.) by staying abroad

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## Remove obstacles

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There is a need for governments to remove obstacles related to work and stay permit and to remove other unjustified obstacles related to social security etc. for mobile academics.

Not all obstacles are unjust and requirements of protecting diversity in language and culture are important for the development on any higher education system

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# Brain drain

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How do institutions or governments make it attractive to move against the brain drain flow?

Arrangements where such mobility is protected in that the academic involved is allowed to retain their home salary and conditions?

Maybe a pool of funding from all the Bologna states could be set up to "subsidise" such mobility.

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# Individual/institutional Responsibility

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Institutions and governments need to take the responsibility in creating terms and conditions which could enhance the mobility

Exchange agreements between institutions could be a way of developing mobility and avoid brain drain

Growth of mobility is not likely to happen if based on individual arrangements only leaving all risks of career development (or the contrary) on the individual academic

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## Time to be mobile

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Time to be mobile should be included in collective agreements and/or set by law as **sabbatical leave** or its functional equivalent to give the individual a right to short term stay in another institution with full pay etc. from the home institution.

It would be preferable if it also could include a "leave-of-absence scheme" which could give the individual academic a right to return after a longer stay abroad without pay from the home institution

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# Urgent improvements needed

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- Not individual responsibility but institutional/governmental
  - Pooling resources in the EHEA to support mobility and avoid brain drain
  - Removal of unjust obstacles
  - Improvement of attractiveness and transparency of the academic profession
  - Professional development – language etc.
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