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Abstract

Over 100 participants from European universities, national agencies and government bodies gathered at the University of Oslo from 4 to 5 September to debate the outcomes of the EUA-led project

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?Mapping University Mobility of Staff and Students? ? MAUNIMO ? and discuss the implications for the implementation of current European mobility targets. The project findings have been published in a comprehensive new report, entitled ?Mobility: Closing the gap between policy and practice?, that was launched at the event. The project centred on the creation and pilot of a (web-based) mobility self-assessment tool for universities, tested on 34 universities from 21 countries. It was designed to help universities examine a variety of issues such as: how they are defining and implementing strategies for mobility, how they collect different types of data on mobility, how different external stakeholders (including local and regional government, employers, etc.) influence mobility, and how perceptions of mobility vary within an institution. The tool consists of a questionnaire that helps structure an internal consultation and mapping of mobility perceptions and practices, and has been further supported by other interactive activities such as practice sharing between universities.The final dissemination conference was an opportunity to share and discuss the findings from the project. The event included case studies and testimonials from the pilot universities, as well as presentations and discussions on the recently launched mobility strategy of the European Higher Education Area, the proposed programme framework ?Erasmus for All? of the European Commission, and the prospects for doctoral candidate and young researcher mobility under the EU?s 'Horizon 2020'. A number of key issues with regard to mobility strategies ? many of which are covered in the project report ? were raised and discussed by speakers and participants. For example, the interrelation of mobility strategies at European, national and institutional level was considered critical. The point was made that all were necessary to truly advance mobility in Europe, and that universities in particular should develop strategic approaches to mobility that crosscut teaching and learning, internationalisation and research. Mobility for teaching/learning versus research purposes, for example, is not appropriately articulated to students and staff and not properly related. The strategic importance of doctoral candidate mobility was mentioned in this regard, which requires connecting the teaching and learning with the research agenda in order to be advanced. In response to this discussion, the European Commission stated the need to better exploit and promote synergies between the proposed ?Erasmus for All? and the ?Horizon 2020? Programmes.Data collection was another important focus of discussion. Different techniques or approaches to collecting data on various types of mobility were shared. The collection of reliable and comprehensive data on staff and researcher mobility was identified as particularly

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challenging, and a number of institutions reported on recent initiatives to tackle this issue. Participants noted that the bottom line is that researchers and staff need incentives to report on their activities, but also that quantifying staff mobility (measuring time duration for instance) can and should be quite different from that for student mobility. It was also very much felt that there should be a strong focus not only on time spent abroad, but also on outcomes and impact. Generally, as for other types of mobility, inclusion into the strategic priorities and support of leadership were found to play a critical role.Finally, the social dimension of mobility was also at the forefront of discussions. It was highlighted that: ensuring access to mobility opportunities, particularly for lower socioeconomic groups, would also be a critical point for institutional self-evaluation and policy more generally. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)

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