

Mobility

Terms of Reference

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I. Objectives

Mobility in all its forms is a crucial element of EUI, especially with the 50% target set by the Commission. With Alliances offering a wide spectrum of mobility formats, ranging from traditional long-term physical mobility to short, blended formats and innovative virtual learning opportunities including internationalisation at home, it is vital to have **common definitions of what inclusive mobilities are**. As the numbers of mobile students and staff are increasing exponentially, there is a need for more sophisticated approaches and tools for **mobility tracking and reporting, both at the institutional and alliance level**. That is also becoming urgent in collecting and reporting **data on Internationalization at Home**. Overarching and well-known **obstacles to mobility** remain largely unresolved and without addressing them reaching the ambitious mobility goals will not be possible. Discussions and recommendations on some of the obstacles are urgent: E+ administrative rules and regulations (and how the interpretations differ from one NA to another), E+ funding cuts in some countries, shortage of affordable student housing, aligning mobility with curricula requirements, etc. The priorities and order will be determined and specified during the first meetings of the group.

II. Background

Although plenty of new and innovative mobility formats have been and are being piloted, challenges in supporting various mobility formats persist and often multiply when moved to an alliance level. Entangling the web of interlinked challenges to providing seamless mobility for students and staff is an urgent priority for alliances, and uniting around this and working towards changes at local, national and international level is essential to reach mobility goals.

Tracking and reporting on all forms of mobility (including Internationalization at Home) within Alliances is critical to the European Universities Initiative as seamless mobility is one of the cornerstones of the initiative. Firstly, it's vital for assessing the effectiveness of the mobility offer and monitoring progress towards the 50% mobility target set by the European Commission. Mobility data allows HEIs, European Universities and policy makers at granting agencies to adjust funding mechanisms and mobility

Possible Outputs:

- Providing recommendations on mobility definitions
- Analysis of the major obstacles to mobility.
- Collection of good practices regarding mobility data tracking, collection and reporting within Alliances.
- Liaising with other stakeholders to provide the Executive Agency/the Commission with concrete recommendations on EU reporting mechanisms.

Possible Contributions to the Workshops:

- Dedicated workshops on specific obstacles to mobility and strategies to address them.
- Involvement in workshops on themes encompassing mobility, be it quality assurance, student involvement or project management. Lending the expertise of mobility management professionals forming the topical group on Mobility.

This is a new group and considering the central position of mobility and all the related practical challenges detailed above, it is evident that assessing and improving the ways we understand and manage mobility is vital. This is also evident in the fact that nearly all alliances have joined this topical group. Prior to the creation of this topical group many mobility experts have expressed a need for a forum of practitioners

to exchange to challenges and best practices in mobility management. The Mobility topical group addresses that need.

III. Work plan and working modalities

Work Plan and Provisional Timeline

Timeline:

Year 1: Presenting the terms of reference and objectives to group members to receive their feedback and input on possible additional mobility – related topics to be covered by the group. Prioritising most urgent obstacles to mobility and discussing each in more detail, creating a work-plan based on the input received, launching first webinars (BIP best practice webinar in September) and another one possibly in December, starting work with possible sub-group on mobility definition and tracking. Assessing interest in taking part in the second workshop call.

Year 2: Taking part in second and third series of WP3/WP4 workshops, discuss and develop initial outputs and potential policy contributions. Liaising with other topical groups on matters related to mobility and mobility management. Working on recommendations for mobility tracking and reporting.

Year 3: Continuing discussions and possible solutions to main obstacles to mobility. Finalising any reporting requirements and dissemination efforts.

The group was created to give mobility experts within Alliances a forum to address challenges and share best practices. Depending on the governance structure of Alliances members should be mobility officers, chairs of mobility working groups or representatives of International Relations Offices, designated by Alliances.

Members of the group will jointly work on achieving objectives of the group as well as share good practices and exchange information on best practices. Members are expected to act as liaisons between the group and their Alliances' community of mobility practitioners.

Meeting Plan and Working Modalities

The Topical Group on Mobility will meet online for 1-hour long meetings on a monthly basis (every second Monday if possible), with a specific topic for each of the meetings, based on the interests expressed by members. The member's initial preferences have been clarified in the first meetings held in May-July. Additional meetings can be held depending on current needs, policy developments etc.

Subgroups can be created to carry in-depth discussions on topics of special interest. Subgroups can then decide on the best format to carry out the discussions, be it webinars, workshops or other formats.

The group Chairing team is responsible for preparing the meeting agendas, minutes and reporting to WP2.

The main focus is that members are experts on Mobility Management. Depending on the Governance/Structure of an Alliance: Mobility Officers representing Alliances or Chairs of Mobility Working Groups or Representatives of International Offices designated by an Alliance. Members will be invited to contribute with their best practice and recommendations in webinars and in general to contribute actively to discussions.

Focus will be placed on making sure that there is a balanced representation of alliances. To ensure that alliances of all sizes, all profiles, from all calls are represented. All activities will be aligned with EU values on equality and inclusion

by examining financial, social, cultural, and disability-related obstacles to mobility that prevent underrepresented groups from participating in mobility schemes diversity and equal access are addressed.

Recognizing disparities in access will help in designing policies that create fairer conditions for all, ensuring that factors like economic status, geographic location, or personal circumstances do not limit participation.

A data-driven approach to analysing mobility challenges will enable better policy development.

Mobility tracking and reporting is crucial in assessing how equitable and inclusive mobility opportunities are, especially for underrepresented groups.

Considerations on Equality & Diversity in organisational modalities

EDI principles were taken into consideration when drafting the proposal for the topical group and when designing the work plan, by creating a fair and equitable environment where everyone feels valued and a sense of belonging. Making sure that all voices and alliances are heard is one of the main priorities., as is holding space for different voices and creating a space for being open and honest. During the first meeting it was agreed that the meetings will not be recorded to guarantee that everyone can feel safe in expressing their opinions.

Communication and dissemination plan of both the topical group activities and outputs

It is planned to make certain activities open to a wider community to share the best practices and results identified, in the format of webinars.

Information on activities and outputs will be shared with the FOREU4ALL WP2 Team in order to be shared with the wider community.

Further to this, it is the task of each of the members in the group to disseminate information in their alliances and universities.

The planned activities

1. Identify major obstacles to increasing student and staff mobility in light of the 50% target set by the Commission.
 - a. List major obstacles identified by the Alliances.
 - b. Discuss best practices and recommendations on tackling obstacles to mobility.
2. Discuss a standardized, inclusive definition of mobility, with minimum requirements. Then, liaise with other topical groups working on the issue to provide them with the mobility management perspective:
 - a. Physical Mobility (short-term, long-term; study/traineeship/teaching/training)
 - b. Virtual Mobility (online courses, different formats of collaborative virtual learning)
 - c. Blended Mobility (different modes of combining virtual and physical components).

- d. Internationalization at Home: i. Metrics for assessing internationalization at home ii. Best practices for data collection iii. Strategies to integrate internationalization at home data with mobility data
3. Discuss strategies for tracking and reporting mobilities within Alliances:
 - a. Identify key indicators for tracking (ex. number of mobilities, duration, areas of study, demographics, etc).
 - b. Explore IT solutions for seamless tracking and reporting. c. Provide recommendations on mobility reporting to other alliances as well as to the Commission.
4. Foster collaboration and exchange of good practices amongst alliances on matters related to mobility management.

IV. Inputs to WP3 Policy Dialogue & WP4 Communication and Dissemination

The group aims to influence and advice on policy related issues in mobility and mobility management. Given that the group is newly founded, the concrete activities will be determined in year one and two according to the workplan.

However, as already mentioned, we aim to open our webinar and other events to a wider audience thus disseminating best practice, recommendations and other results of our discussions.

V. Members

Each Alliance will be asked to nominate two permanent representatives to the group. As the topical group focuses on a very broad topic of mobility management, Alliances will be encouraged to bring experts on the specific issues (e.g., data managers) to meetings devoted to the issue in question.

Members will be asked to prepare relevant input for each meeting and contribute with cases, or presentations for the planned webinars according to their experience with the topic in question.