

**“European Educational Area”:  
welcoming the European Commission’s policy suggestions  
and calling decision-makers’ attention on important elements of policy implementation**

EEE-YFU and EFIL support the European Commission’s proposal to put in place a “European Educational Area” by 2025, as presented in the [Communication “Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture”](#). In particular, **we welcome the political intention to increase pupil mobility and to work towards recognition of school diplomas/study periods abroad.**

Indeed, the European Commission calls for boosting the Erasmus+ programme in all categories of learners. In its additional document “[Making Mobility a reality for all](#)”, **the Commission recommends increasing pupil mobility up to 500,000 school pupils** through simplified partnerships between schools.

Not only the Commission aims for greater outreach of pupil mobility, but also calls for removing the existing obstacles, via a **Council Recommendation on the mutual recognition of higher education and school leaving diplomas/study periods abroad**. In its additional document “[Mutual recognition of diplomas](#)”, the Commission indicates May 2018 as the time to publish the proposal for a Council Recommendation.

We strongly hope that these policy recommendations will guide the discussions at the EU Leaders’ meeting in Gothenburg on November 17<sup>th</sup>, thus shaping the path ahead towards a Europe in which learning, studying, and doing research would not be hampered by borders.

While we recognise the importance of the issues raised in the Commission’s Communication, we invite decision-makers to consider a few elements and aspects that can have a strong impact in the implementation of these policy suggestions.

We believe that a Council Recommendation could represent an important instrument to address this issue, but only if the **Recommendation covers also the recognition of study periods abroad that do not result in school diplomas**. Many pupils are mobile during school years that do not foresee the attainment of a qualification, and they should not be penalised for that. Moreover, we call for a system based on the principle of mutual recognition within the “European Educational Area” rather than on a complicated credits’ system, like in the Bologna process. As highlighted in our campaign [#RecogniseStudyAbroad](#), the Italian and the Austrian systems of automatic recognition should be seen as successful examples.

While investing more in individual pupil mobility within the Erasmus+ Programme is crucial, more funding does not automatically imply bigger outreach. **Non-profit organisations who have experience in running pupils’ mobility programmes and are present with local branches all over the territory of a country, should become eligible partners** of projects and assist a variety of schools in applying for and managing Erasmus+ pupil mobility. These partnerships would provide support to schools in their process of internationalisation, thus making quality mobility programmes accessible to more school students and not only to those enrolled in schools which have the capacity to engage in EU-funded projects. (You can read our [Position Paper on Pupil Mobility in Erasmus+](#)).

We look forward to the promising next steps towards a “European Educational Area”, where mobility and recognition are a reality for all learners, including school students.