



UNION EUROPEENNE DE L'ARTISANAT ET DES PETITES ET MOYENNES ENTREPRISES
EUROPÄISCHE UNION DES HANDWERKS UND DER KLEIN- UND MITTELBETRIEBE
EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF CRAFT, SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES
UNIONE EUROPEA DELL' ARTIGIANATO E DELLE PICCOLE E MEDIE IMPRESE

UEAPME position on mobility in the framework of the proposal for the new integrated lifelong learning programme

Mobility is an objective, especially important to European crafts, small and medium-sized enterprises. Living and working a certain time in a different Member State does not only enrich the work experience and know how of an individual, but also increases the understanding of the European Union and European citizenship. Additionally, it helps the individual to be pro-active in his or her life.

Therefore UEAPME strongly supports the European mobility programmes, in particular the Leonardo da Vinci (LdV) programme, and its objectives. However, we see two major difficulties with the current LdV programme.

First of all it currently tends to favour young people coming from a higher education background rather than from a professional education and training background. This situation needs to be changed. This is a question of equity and social justice, but also about reinforcing European citizenship and the development of entrepreneurship.

Secondly, the participation of SMEs in these programmes is rather low. There are various reasons for this. On the one hand the administrative burden for an enterprise to either participate as a host or sending company is too big, especially for micro enterprises. Furthermore, companies do not see the benefit of sending or receiving young people because it costs them not only money (as the worker continues to be paid by the enterprise) but also time and effort (as the guest apprentice needs to be looked after).

The aim of the LdV should be to increase the volume and to improve the quality of mobility throughout Europe of people involved in initial vocational education and to raise the involvement of SMEs in mobility programmes.

The pilot project for an ERASMUS style programme for apprentices, agreed on by the EP and the amendments of the European Parliament on the integrated lifelong learning programme can be seen as an important step towards improving this situation. The amendments propose to:

- reduce administrative burden
- ensure individual participation by trainees in mobility programmes
- provide accompanying measures for apprentices and young people in their initial vocational training
- provide supporting measures for SMEs, in particular, very small enterprises

- enhancing the attractiveness of vocational education and training and mobility for employers and individuals

Consequently, UEAPME calls upon the Commission to support these broad objectives for mobility, in the further discussions with the Council and the EP on the new integrated programme for lifelong learning.

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	<p>UEAPME is the employer's organisation representing the interests of crafts, trades and SMEs from the EU and accession countries at European level.</p> <p>UEAPME has 78 member organisations, which represent crafts and SMEs across the whole of Europe, covering over 11 million enterprises with nearly 50 million employees.</p> <p>UEAPME is a European Social Partner.</p>
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