

ACC December 15th 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

The Association for Community Colleges has been invited to contribute with a suggestion/amendment and/or presentation of good practices to the Green Paper on Promoting the Learning mobility of young people.

We would like to convey to the Commission our opinion on the issue of motivation for young people to be mobile.

Please take into consideration, that the aims of the ACC are *not* directed towards boosting the European economy (even if people gravitating around us as professionals contribute a lot to it). Rather, the ACC is dedicated to the vision of an ever closer union of Europeans. Our courses, seminars and other learning events held all around Europe mobilize the enthusiasm and energy of - in particular - young people who contribute to the future of Europe. Participants on our events dedicate not only their enthusiasm and good will to contribute to the overall success of the event, but they invest the networks they come from and their personal capacities.

In general, they leave inspired by their peers coming from different parts of Europe.

It is our general impression that from many of our learning events, participants depart with an intention to keep multiplying the good work in their home environments - be it career wise, in further education or in voluntary contexts. In this endeavor they are very often disappointed. As part of the many frames active in their home environments (national, regional, local) our participants drown in their attempts to pursue with their European oriented initiatives.

The reason is simple: there is no European public sphere, and henceforth there is no European civil society, no European schools, no European media, and in general no European institutionalization of European endeavors.

If there was an aim, if the good will and European initiatives would not disappear in vain, that would represent a very strong motivation factor for the next generation of young Europeans to become more mobile.

A concrete suggestion for improvement of the Green Paper and the mobility of young people in general could be the following: reopen the debate on the European Association Statute. A European Association Statute would allow for the structures to emerge that would meet the eagerness to act European that many of our participants return with.

Concerning the obstacles the multipliers meet while promoting mobility, we would like to put attention to those multipliers whose aim is to promote mobility for the sake of deepening the sense of European identity and European citizenship (we haven't ever heard of multipliers whose aims are directed towards boosting the European economy):

The main obstacle in carrying out the visions of truly European multipliers is - again - the lack of European structures (institutions) within which multipliers could stick to their European visions. Those who “make it” make it because they work within national, regional or local structures. And please don’t get it wrong: we have no intentions of criticizing national, regional or local structures. They are just more appropriate tools for serving national, regional or local interests.

On behalf of the ACC Board,

Mjellma Mehmeti and John Petersen