



FACT SHEET

Why should the Visa Directive cover pupils and volunteers?

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The major destination of mobility is Europe. But getting a visa to Europe can often be a complex and expensive process. The Visa Directive (2004/114) is the piece of EU legislation which sets the conditions for how non-EU nationals can come into the EU for research, studies, pupil exchange, training, volunteering or au-pairing.

So why should the Directive be mandatory also for pupils and volunteers?

42% of mobility schemes target pupils; 28% of mobility schemes target young people.¹

Volunteers and pupils have a positive impact on our economies

Pupils and volunteers contribute to Europe's economic growth, in the form of direct fees, taxes, and expenditure for goods and services.

In many countries, volunteers represent the equivalent of **3-5% of the economically active population.²**

The economic value of formal volunteering in the UK has been estimated at more than **EUR 65 billion per year, or 7.9% of GDP³**

In Denmark, the voluntary sector contributes **9.6% towards GDP.**

Research indicates **that around 60% of youth travel budgets are spent in the destination.⁴**

Volunteers and pupils help make Europe more competitive

Young volunteers and pupils in mobility schemes spread a positive image of the EU, which increases its attractiveness and, in the long term, its competitiveness.

In a study conducted on German and American pupils who went on exchange, **approximately 90% of them claimed that they wished to go back to the host country someday.⁵**

¹ European Commission, (2012) Study on Mobility Developments in School Education, Vocational Education and Training, Adult Education and Youth Exchanges http://www.europemobility.eu/download/TC/funding_schemes/Mobility_Study_Final_Report.pdf

² European Commission, (2010) Volunteering in the EU http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/doc1018_en.pdf

³ European Volunteer Centre (CEV) (2006) Manifesto for Volunteering in Europe.

<http://www.unv.org/fileadmin/externalphotos/CEVManifesto.pdf>

⁴ WYSE Travel Confederation/UNWTO (2011) "The economic impact of youth travel", Greg Richards, The Power of Youth Travel.

http://www.academia.edu/2397554/The_economic_impact_of_youth_travel

⁵ David Bachner, Ulrich Zeutschel, (2009) Long-term effects of international educational youth exchange <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ870907>

Volunteers and pupils gain key skills for future employment

Young people who participate in activities abroad are more likely to attain skills that make them more attractive on the job market.

Amongst the six skills most demanded by employers, five are developed through involvement in youth organisations (communication, team work, decision-making, organisational skills and self-confidence). **67% of young people** surveyed considered that these skills are quite or very useful in their current occupation.

When asked how important intercultural skills are to their organisation, **almost all employers** responded they were very or fairly important.⁶

Almost **three-quarters of employers** prefer to recruit candidates with volunteering experience on their CV.⁷

When young adults were asked to identify the most important benefit of spending time abroad, the largest proportion of **38% named their improved foreign language skills**.⁸

To comply with principles enshrined in EU legislation

The Regulation establishing 'Erasmus+' calls for Member States to **"take all appropriate measures to remove legal and administrative obstacles to the proper functioning of the Programme**, including, where possible, measures aimed at resolving issues that give rise to difficulties in obtaining visas."⁹ Since pupils and volunteers are among the target groups of the Erasmus+ Program, the Visa Directive should be consistent with existing legislation and align with EU programmes and initiatives.

Volunteers and pupils are an asset to the EU. It is time that legislation on the entry of non-EU nationals into the European Union reflected this.

Find out more at: <http://www.youthforum.org/freedom-of-movement/>

⁶ British Council, Booz Allen Hamilton (2013) Culture AT WORK- The value of intercultural skills in the workplace. <http://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/britishcouncil.uk2/files/culture-at-work-report.pdf>

⁷ European Volunteer Centre (CEV) (2009) European elections manifesto. Do you engage for those who engage? http://www.cev.be/data/File/CEV_2009_EP_Elections_Manifesto_EN.pdf

⁸ European Commission (2011) Flash EB Series 319b Youth on the move http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_319b_en.pdf

⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/documents/erasmus-plus-legal-base_en.pdf