Council of the European Union

Brussels, 13 November 2026
(OR. en)

15866/26

EDUC 459

NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	AOB for the meeting of the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council of 19 and 20 November 2026: Balanced degree mobility: moving from diagnosis to a European response - *Information from Belgium, Austria and Latvia*

We thank the Commission for the publication of the study on balanced and inclusive learning mobility, carried out as a follow-up to the Council Recommendation "Europe on the Move", adopted in 2024 under the Belgian Presidency.

The first of its kind, the study establishes that no European country has defined balanced mobility, that equilibrium cannot be reduced to a parity of flows and that it must be assessed in the light of the distribution of costs and benefits. It shows that educational mobility produces lasting effects that accumulate asymmetrically between and within Member States. It concludes that these imbalances persist, in all the scenarios studied, without coordinated European action.

We remain committed to open higher education and student mobility but continues to experience certain challenges linked to imbalances: financial sustainability, reception and planning capacity made more difficult, as well as the quality of supervision, linked to the over-representation of non-resident students without a compensation mechanism.

The study highlights several findings:

- Firstly, education systems that welcome a large number of mobile students finance their training without there being a financial compensation mechanism at European level. The study therefore considers that a reflection on European cost-sharing instruments is necessary. This is a recurrent debate, which has been going on for almost twenty years.

- Secondly, the study argues for a stronger anchoring of diploma mobility in the European objectives. However, it also shows that flows remain highly concentrated between a limited number of countries, which questions the real scope of this ambition. Although it refers largely to national contexts, it should be remembered that the Member States' room for action remains strongly framed by EU law. In this context, a European response appears to be the most coherent way.

- Finally, the study itself highlights significant gaps in the available data, particularly with regard to outgoing diploma mobility and the future of graduates after their studies. The costs borne by the most attractive systems, as well as the impact of these flows on supervisory conditions and the quality of teaching, deserve to be analyzed in greater depth.

We would like to invite the Commission to:

1. Develop, together with the Member States, the common operational framework for balanced and inclusive learning mobility, as recommended by the study, with shared indicators to assess the distribution of costs and benefits, the inclusiveness of mobility opportunities, and the balance of incoming and outgoing mobility flows between Member States, while taking into account national contexts, institutional capacities and the specificities of pathways leading to regulated professions.

2. Improve, together with Eurostat, the collection of data on graduation mobility and graduate retention, harmonising definitions, indicators and monitoring methods.

3. Explore possible cost-sharing options between host and sending systems, including in the context of post-2027 financial instruments, without preempting the agreement on the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF).