

**OPEN DEBATE: EDUCATION-TRAINING-RESEARCH-THE OBSTACLES TO
TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY**

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The debate was based on a note, submitted by the Commission to the Council, following the Green Paper on "Education, Training, and Research: the Obstacles to Transnational mobility", launched by the Commission in October 1996. This note examines some of the major obstacles and reflects on possible ways and means to remove them.

In their interventions, the Ministers broadly shared the view that the internal market is imperfect without the free movement of students, trainees, apprentices, volunteers, teachers and researchers.

Most delegations stressed the need to take steps

- to improve transparency of national education systems, so as to enable their equal comparison at Community level
- to proceed further to mutual recognition of diplomas
- to remove remaining obstacles to transferability of grants between Member States
- to develop a functioning structure for traineeships across the borders and
- to further develop learning of foreign languages

While some delegations supported the idea of some harmonization of taxation of grants and traineeship allowances, others found that this should take due account of the subsidiarity principle in the Community.

The Presidency summed up the debate by recalling that next year it will be 25 years since the Council first discussed mobility, and, while considerable progress has been recorded on several issues, concrete measures still need to be taken in order to meet the target of full mobility of persons in the area of education in the Community.

Commissioner CRESSON informed the Council of her intention, next autumn, to come forward with proposals on action to be taken on

- transferability of grants
- legal framework on the status of apprentices at Community level, and
- initiatives to develop their training network.