

MINUTES OF MEETING: IGLO Higher education and MSCA WG – PhD mobilities

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DG EAC: MSCA Unit (Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions) – Possibilities for PhD students within MSCA and updates on current situation

- MSCA is part of the Pillar 1 of the Horizon Europe programme.
- The budget allocation is 6,6 billion for current programme period.
- There were already 16 Nobel prize winners with background or support from MSCA.
- Signature principles of MSCA and areas of focus:
 - researchers' skills
 - excellent research (bottom-up approach)
 - international, intersectoral and interdisciplinary mobility
 - attractive working and employment conditions
 - impact on organisations and strategic international partnerships
 - fostering collaboration beyond academia (notably with industry)
- Available actions:
 - Doctoral networks (50% of budget)
 - Postdoctoral fellowships
 - Staff exchanges
 - COFUND
 - MSCA and citizens
- Mobility in MSCA is not an objective in itself, but rather a tool to equip researchers with research-related and transferable competences and provide them with enhanced career opportunities.
- The next call for Doctoral networks is opening on 24 May and closing on 27 November.
 - Types of networks: standard doctoral networks; industrial doctorates with co-supervision from academia and non-academic institution (at least 50% of time must be spend in non-academia, even though it doesn't have to be industry, but can be also e.g. charity, ministries and similar organizations); joint doctorates focusing on joint, double or multiple highly integrated doctoral training.
 - There is a possibility of secondment to other members of the consortium - in case of standard networks for a maximum of one third of the whole stay abroad, in case of industrial and joint doctorates there is no time limit.
- In most countries the mobility is not balanced and usually more people are going abroad than are coming into the country from abroad. Czechia and Spain are the only two countries where these numbers are balanced.
 - 58 % of incoming PhD students go to 5 countries (Great Britan, Germany, Spain, France, Netherlands).
- Main reasons for choosing a specific country are (in the descending order): the possibilities to work with leading scientists, the quality of training offered, research infrastructure, social and cultural conditions, good career opportunities in the host country and salary.
- In total 92 % of long-term fellows are hosted in EU or Great Britain.
- Approximately 40 % of fellows return after two years to their home country.
- MSCA positively contributes to attracting and retaining research talents in Europe.



DG EAC: Higher education Unit – Possibilities for PhD students within Erasmus+ and updates on current situation

- The Erasmus+ offers students studies, traineeships and staff mobilities for teaching and training (all three including the possibility of blended mobilities).
 - For the short term mobility of students at doctoral level the virtual component is not mandatory, but only optional (while the physical mobility has to last 5-30 days).
- In the Call 2022 1,3 % of all student mobilities were done by PhD students.
- Doctoral mobility can be for studying (focused on skills development, thesis research and cooperation) or for traineeship (focused on transversal skills including research skills, gaining work/non-academic experience and thesis research).
- There are differences between countries – PhD students can technically go on a mobility as both students and staff, depending on the position of the PhD student at the sending higher education institution.
- There are synergies with MSCA, for example the possibility of participation of MSCA teams in projects through Erasmus+, or the possibility to develop study and training programmes for doctoral candidates within Erasmus+ projects.
- The European Strategy for Universities is focusing also on gender balance of doctoral candidates, especially for STEM fields.
- The draft Council Recommendation “Europe on the move” focuses on balanced mobility of researchers and on making mobility more inclusive, including for young researchers.
- In the 2014-2020 programme period there were more than 40 000 doctoral mobilities (1,8 % out of all student mobilities) out of which 2/3 where mobilities for traineeships. Within the International credit mobility, the share of doctoral students was higher, 11,6 %.
- In the current programme period (2021-2023) there have so far been 14 000 mobilities (2,1 % of all student mobilities) – out of these 67 % were for traineeships, 57 % were female PhD students and one third was for short-term mobilities.
- Czechia is 9. top country for incoming students (with 3 % of all students coming to CZ) and 5. top country for doctoral mobilities (with 5 % of all doctoral mobilities taking place in CZ).
 - Top 3 countries for mobilities overall are Spain, Italy and Germany.
 - Top 3 countries for doctoral mobilities are Germany, Spain and Italy.

