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Compendium to the master thesis

How do the national and European policies support youth mobility?

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Since the beginning of the 1990s the phenomenon of globalization has gained huge momentum on the world stage and consequently and has significantly changed the world as we know it. As a result of this phenomenon, capitals, services, merchandises, information techniques and people are able to move freely in a deregulated world.

This phenomenon also occurred in Europe and has been facilitated by the creation of a new entity which is the European Union. With only 6 members at the beginning, this union has been able to structure itself thanks to the creation of institutions, which have in turn, fostered a certain stability. This stability allowed the union to gain more and more members, which today, constitutes 28 member states. One of the aims of the European Union is to be competitive toward the others world superpowers such as Russia, the United States of America or recently China.

To be able to reach this level of competitiveness, the union made the decision in 1998 to create one common European framework for higher education. This new framework allowed the development of the university exchanges across the European Union and seemed to be a good way to respond to the new challenges proposes by the globalization.

However, we may ask the question if these exchanges across the union really do enable us to face new challenges and how exactly are these exchanges supported by the EU.

1) Objective and approach

This thesis will focus on the development of the university exchanges, drawing particular attention to student mobility so as to see what has been achieved in this field, as well as the possible consequences of such programs. The objective will be to carry out an evaluation of good practices, in this case, the policies and financing possibilities on a national and European level and to show what impacts it can have on the mobility of individuals. The thesis will be centered on the research question: “How do the national and European policies support youth mobility?”.

To answer this question this paper will firstly define the keywords of the thesis which are mobility, good practices, youth and skills. Subsequently, this paper will perform a study and evaluation of the good practices concerning the policies and the financing possibilities. Following that, a practical analysis of the mobility will be presented, in

order to highlight the possible consequences of this process. To conclude this paper will answer the research question of this thesis.

2) Definition of the keywords

Before delving further into the development of the thesis, this paper will define the keywords of the topic.

Mobility. This simple term can have many meanings such as instability, fantasy, the capacity to move, to change or to evolve. The latter part of this definition is more noteworthy and adapts more appropriately to the subject matter of university exchanges, how they are organized and what they achieve.

Good practices can be defined as the reality of the set practices, in this case, according to the mobility process. In other words, good practices can be described as the actions set in the past, which are currently setting the action which would be possible to set in the future, which provides a favorable framework for the exchanges. In the case of this thesis, the good practices will concern the policies and financing possibilities from a national and European point of view.

By giving an answer to the present topic, one is also going to try to show how the European Union and the governments of the member states do support youth mobility. That's why one has to define what "youth" means. After carrying out vast amounts of research and contacting the Erasmus+ national agency in France and Germany, it seems that there is no precise definition of this term. However, the one group of people, who seem able to take part in the mobility process tend to be students. That's why we can set the low limit at 18. Furthermore, the high limit of 30 seems to be accepted by most people especially in terms of eligibility to the European Voluntary Service.

One of the advantages of mobility is that it would allow the participants to gain new skills. The skills can be divided into two categories: "the soft skills" and "the hard skills". The soft skills are competences which are linked to the personality of an individual. Such examples include, assertiveness or empathy. On the contrary, the hard skills are competences which have been learned to produce one specific work. In this context, one can give the examples of knowledge in foreign languages or the understanding of an informatics system.

After having defined the keywords of the thesis, one can ask oneself which policies are set at a national and European level to support the mobility process.

3) Policies

The European Union is a unique entity by its nature. Indeed, there is no comparable organization in the world where each member state remains its own chief across its borders but has to conform itself to the European rules. In the aim of becoming the best knowledge economy; the most competitive and dynamic in the world, the European Union has set many measures for a collective effort to reach this objective. One of them is the Bologna process.

3.1) The Bologna process

Having its origins in the Sorbonne declaration in 1998 which aimed at the creation of the European framework for higher education, the Bologna process, signed in 1999 had the aim to create this framework by 2010 supported nowadays by 46 countries around Europe. By joining this process, the countries engaged themselves to modify their own high education system to make easier the passage from a country to another one in the perspective of studying or working. Moreover, this common framework should be more attractive in the eyes of non-European students. Finally, this common space should allow the European Union to gain good competences, which would enable it to compete with the other world superpowers.

It is important to notice that the Bologna process is not an intergovernmental treaty. This means that every participant is able to decide for themselves if they approve or rejects the decision made for this process. Furthermore, it is interesting to highlight that this process doesn't aim to standardize the higher education European systems. On the contrary, it aims to work as a platform allowing the student to take advantage of the diversity of the European systems.

The process is also helped by the diversity of its participants. Indeed, they can be divided into two categories: the active members who are actually all the countries who have signed the process and the consultative members such as the Europe Council, the European association of the universities, the Union of the European students, the European association of the higher education institutions.

At the beginning of the process on the 19th June 1999, 29 countries signed the process and set six objectives:

- The adoption of easily readable and comparable diploma system
- The adoption of a system essentially founded on two main cycles, before and after the Bachelor degree
- The implementation of a credits system as the ECTS system
- The promotion of the mobility surmounting the obstacles to the free circulation of the students, teachers, researchers and the administrative personal
- The promotion of the European cooperation for the evaluation and the quality
- The promotion of the necessary European dimension in the high education

The process has been modified over the years and gains more and more participants which, today, amounts to 48 members. In addition, other policies and objectives were settled over the years. Indeed, eight ministerial conferences took place to determine clearer objectives and set new ways to achieve them.

The first of them was in Prague (2001) and allowed to highlight the social dimension of the process and introduced new rules as the recognition of the European students as full-fledged partners or the idea that the high education is a public good.

After this, the conference took place in Berlin in 2003. Thank to this conference, the European research space and the European high education space have been defined as the keystones of the knowledge society. Moreover, objectives have been sets during this conference, which have to be analyzed in the next conference.

The following conference took place in Norway and more precisely in Bergen in 2005. Apart from the enlargement of the number of members, common at every conference, this meeting helped to determine the adoption of a global qualifications framework for the European high education space. Moreover, the members worked to create a national qualification framework by 2010. In addition, the social perspective has been reinforced and the members find out that the European high education space should exist after 2010.

In 2007, the ministers met in London. Due to the development of globalization, the politicians decided to adopt one strategy for the Bologna process which is more suit-

able in a global context. Furthermore, the ministers find out about the second report on the assessment of the Bologna process.

Another meeting took place in 2009 in the Belgian city of Leuven. During this conference the ministers carried out the assessment of the Bologna process in the period 1999-2009 and made the decision to determine the priorities and aims of the European high education space for the period up to 2010.

Three other conferences took place in Vienna in 2010, Bucharest in 2012 and Yerevan in 2015. Apart other enlargement of the members in 2010 and 2015, the conference of Yerevan in 2015 allowed the ministers to set the main priorities for the future which are:

- The improvement of the quality and pertinence of the learning and teaching
- The reinforcement of the capacity of professional insertion of the graduated all their active life long.
- Be careful that our systems are more inclusive
- Implement the agreed structural reforms.

Even if these changes should have been ended by 2010 they should never mean that every European member state should abandon its own high education system to a common system. On the contrary, the process wanted to show people in Europe that there is a big diversity of education systems across each country, but it is this diversity which would be profitable for everyone. The process also tends to facilitate the exchanges between its members to increase the number of student and staff mobility across the European Union, whilst erasing the political boundaries between the countries. By allowing the European Union to evolve, the process also permits the entity to be more attractive and to be more able to face the challenges proposed by the globalization offering a global educational system.

However, this evolution would have not be possible without the support of other European strategies.

3.2) European strategies

3.2.1) European strategy in favor of the youth

In order to allow the Bologna process to act effectively the European Union used via its member states and its institutions several strategies.

The first strategy the union used was the strategy in favor of the youth. Indeed, young people are the first people to be concerned about the changes of the European high education environment and of the labor market. This strategy, based on the period 2010-2018 is directed at a national level and pursues two main objectives: the creation of more possibilities and the instauration of the chance of equality for every young person in the fields of the high education and the labor market, and secondly to encourage young people to take part more in the active life of the society.

The first field of action of this strategy is about employment because the European Union wants to develop entrepreneurship, promote employment for young people and also develop a corporate culture. To achieve these goals, the European governments tend to develop similar policies so as to:

- Be able to answer the concerns of the young people about employment strategies
- Invest in the skills which the employers like
- Promote the possibility of working and learning abroad

This goals are in correlation with the strategy “Europe2020” in favor of growth and employment. The main ideas of this strategy are to reduce the unemployment of young people, encourage mobility to have more chance to obtain a job, assure a qualified framework for the internships allowing students to get professional experience of good quality and in good and equitable conditions.

The European youth strategy want to help toward other aspects. That’s why it tends to promote social inclusion, a higher participation to the civil society, benefits of health and well-being, encourage volunteering actions across the European Union or to give a better place to the young people in the world. Furthermore, the European Union aims to

achieve these goals without losing creativity, which means that the union aspires towards innovation for the development of the European space. As a consequence, many activities are proposed to favor the development of creativity among young people.

Finally, the last element of the European Union strategy in favor of young people deals with education and formation. Indeed, the European Union wants to erase, as efficiently as possible, the differences of the competences among young European to enable them to be part of the current worldwide society.

To reach every objective, the European Union has set up a program called Erasmus+ which is actually present in every point of the European Union strategy for the young people. This program is also one of the keystones of the internationalization strategy of the universities.

3.2.2) Internationalization strategy of the universities.

In order to develop the mobility of young people in the European Union, the European Union decided to implement one program which would allow it. This program which is called Erasmus+ is currently a very important point in the internationalization strategies of the European universities. It is possible to distinguish two mobility types: the cross-national mobility implying the student mobility or the recruitment of university teacher from other countries and a step forward towards a universality, a globalization, an internationalization or regionalization of the universities implying the development of a European dimension of the universities. It does not mean that a standardization of the systems occurs but on the contrary that the members of the European Union take advantages of the diversity of methods.

This strategy appeared between the 1970s and the 1990s and it has evolved over the years around 3 axes: the development of the interuniversity collaboration and the development of the international mobility, an important support for the Europeanization of the territories, as well as the respect of the diversity of the high education systems. This development had four main consequences:

- Dramatic increase in student mobility
- Reduced the inequalities in the framework of European projects
- Take into consideration the European dimension for the construction of new subjects of study

- Create a European dimension of teaching

Even if it took time so that the internationalization strategy could be successful, the engagement of pioneers in favor of this idea, allowed it to democratize this strategy. This extension of the strategy to an even higher number of universities also had consequences on the universities themselves on their decisional structures, their infrastructures and services. For example, some international relationship services have been created and the universities were obliged to publish a declaration of their European policies.

This evolution of the program has required each university to organize international activities. This enlargement of activities means that activities are no longer isolated, but coordinated for a better efficiency. Moreover, and this is a clear aim of the Erasmus program too, the effects of the program have to be for the mobile as for the non-mobile people.

In addition to these first changes, the development of the Erasmus program tended to modify typology of mobility. Indeed, the European students previously had a more vertical mobility which means that they went in countries where the instruction level was higher. But, with the unification of the level through Erasmus, young people made other decisions. In fact, they carried out a horizontal mobility, which means that they take advantage from the collaborations between the universities to go abroad to a university of the same quality allowing them to learn new things in a comparable environment. These modifications in the mobility process changed peoples' minds about mobility, which was negatively perceived before and gained a much better reputation thanks to the named changes, which can be summarized under the term "denationalization". That means that the European universities have kept the differences which are part of European diversity but erased everything which could have disturbed the development of a European unification with the well-known Bachelor-Master-Doctorate system for example.

After all, it is possible to mention the most important consequences of the internationalization strategy. At first, it helped to significantly increase the number of people involved in mobility, as well as contributing to the international dimension of the research, teaching and studies. Then, the courses have been modified and are now more attractive for the foreign students. Finally, a huge change has taken place from an or-

ganizational point of view in the universities. All these results could not have been reached without the support of every member state.

3.3) The European mobility programs: the example of Erasmus+

3.3.1) Presentation of the program

Even if numerous programs allow people to go abroad as the program Voltaire or the program of French assistant abroad, Erasmus+ has imposed itself as the reference of the mobility programs. Indeed, there were almost 22 981 French students who took part at the program for the year 2006-2007. Furthermore, this is possible to say that Erasmus+ is a global program because it allows students from very different fields such as social and economic sciences, engineering or applicate foreign languages to spend one semester or one year abroad and take advantage from it being high-qualified and more able to find a job. But what really is this program?

Created in 1987 under the name of Erasmus, the program has evolved over the year to become Erasmus+ in 2014, backing on the previous experience of the Erasmus framework. The modification in 2014 implied a unification of several program created between 2007 and 2013 by the European commission under the name of Erasmus+. These programs were:

- The Lifelong Learning Program
- The Youth in Action Program
- The Erasmus Mundus Program
- Tempus
- Alfa
- Edulink
- Programs of cooperation with industrialized countries in the field of higher education

To avoid any misunderstanding, the European institutions have decided to enroll all these programs under the only Erasmus+ appellation. But this is important not to forget other actions which are led under the name of Erasmus+ such as: "Erasmus+: Youth in Action", in relation to the activities of the Program exclusively related to the field of youth non-formal and informal learning; "Erasmus+: Erasmus Mundus", in relation to

the Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters Degrees or "Erasmus+: Sports", in relation to the activities of the Program exclusively related to the field of sport. Each of these actions aim to help to achieve the objectives of the strategy Europe2020.

The Erasmus+ program is unique and has specific characteristics such as:

- **The recognition and validation of skills and qualifications**

Being a program exclusively conducted by the European Union, Erasmus+ supports EU transparency and recognition tools such as Europass, Youthpass, the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) or the Euroguidance networks supported by Erasmus+. A common purpose of these tools is to ensure that skills and qualifications can be more easily recognized and are better understood, within and across national borders, in all sub-systems of education and training as well as in the labor market, no matter whether these were acquired through formal education and training or through other learning experiences. Furthermore, the tools also aim to ensure that education, training and youth policies further contribute to achieve the Europe 2020 objectives of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and its education and employment headline targets through better labor market integration and mobility.

- **The dissemination and exploitation of projects results**

This is one of the most important aspects in the Erasmus+ projects lifecycle. It allows the organizations having conducted the project to communicate and share the results of the projects, so as to make clear what the Erasmus+ project has brought. Communication is so important, that the project team has been asked, right from the beginning of the project, to define one communication plan which will meet the target as close as possible.

- **An open access requirement for educational materials, documents and media produced through Erasmus+**

Erasmus+ promotes the open access to materials, documents and media that are useful for learning, teaching, training, youth work and are produced by projects funded by the

Program. As a result, every piece of material, document and media produced have to be made available to the public in digital form, freely accessible through the Internet under open licenses.

- **The international dimension of the program**

Erasmus+ includes a strong international dimension notably in the fields of higher education and youth. In the field of higher education, Erasmus+ supports the following main Actions targeting cooperation with Partner Countries: the international credit mobility of individuals and Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees promoting the mobility of learners and staff from and to Partner Countries; the capacity-building projects in higher education promoting cooperation and partnerships that have an impact on the modernization and internationalization of higher education institutions and systems in Partner Countries, with a special focus on Partner Countries neighboring the EU; the support to policy dialogue through the network of Higher Education Reform Experts in Partner Countries neighboring the EU, the international alumni association, policy dialogue with Partner Countries and international attractiveness and promotion events as well as the Jean Monnet activities with the aim of stimulating teaching, research and reflection in the field of European Union studies worldwide.

- **The multilingualism**

Multilingualism is one of the cornerstones of the European project and a powerful symbol of the EU's aspiration to be united in diversity. The EU has set the goal that every citizen should have the opportunity to acquire at least two foreign languages from an early age, to be better prepared for society and the labor market making, which proves to be advantageous in both of these fields. The students who take part at Erasmus+ have the possibility to obtain one linguistic support during their stay abroad thank to the OLS platform. In addition to this support to the students the European Union try to support to establishment of strategic partnership in the field of learning languages.

- **The equity and the inclusion**

The Erasmus+ program wants to be a strong social equality vector making easier the access to the program for people from disadvantages backgrounds or to people for whom the participation to transnational activities is impossible due to:

- Disability. Some participants with special needs, people with mental, physical, sensory or other disabilities
- Educational difficulties: young people with learning difficulties; early school-leavers; low qualified adults; young people with poor school performance;
- Economic obstacles: people with a low standard of living, low income or homeless;
- Cultural differences: immigrants, refugees or descendants from immigrant or refugee families, people with linguistic adaptation and cultural inclusion difficulties
- Health problems: people with chronic health problems, severe illnesses or psychiatric conditions
- Social obstacles: people facing discrimination because of gender, age, ethnicity, religion
- Geographical obstacles: people from remote or rural areas; people living in small islands or in peripheral regions.

- **The protection and safety of the participants.**

These two principles are very important in the Erasmus+ program because every participant should have the possibility to fully live his learning and developing experience. In every case, students have to be covered in different ways as: a travel insurance (including damage or loss of luggage), a third party liability (including, wherever appropriate, professional indemnity or insurance for responsibility), against accident and serious illness (including permanent or temporary incapacity) and against death (including repatriation in case of projects carried out abroad). That's why it is really recommended to all the participants to get the European health card which allows students to get medical care under the same conditions and at the same cost (free in some countries) as people insured in that country.

In addition to these characteristics, the Erasmus+ program is organized around three key actions which allow the program to reach its goals.

Key action 1: the mobility of individuals

This action supports: the student, staff and administrative personal mobility giving the possibility to students, intern, young people and volunteer as well as teachers and administrative personal to get a professional experience or a learning experience abroad. Furthermore, it helps the common Erasmus Mundus master degree which are high level international study programs. Finally, it backs the students for the loan for the Erasmus+ master degree.

Key action 2: Cooperation for Innovation and Exchange of Good Practices

The aim of this key action is to build strategic partnerships, alliance of knowledge, sectorial alliances for the skills, projects to reinforce the capacities and informatics platforms.

Key action 3: Support for Policy Reform

This action tends to help: skills in educational, formation and youth fields, new initiatives, European strategic tools, cooperation with international organisms and for a dialog between the actors of the program and the politicians.

The Erasmus+ program is financially supported by the European Union. Indeed, all the member states agreed to allow 16 billion Euro to set these key actions in practice. This can be considered as a big amount of money but this seems to be necessary to reach the objectives of the strategy Europe 2020 which are an 75% employment for the people between 20 and 64 years old, a research investment about 3% of the GDP,

In the case of this thesis and due to the complexity of the topic, one is interested in the first key action and more particularly in student mobility which is the most common type of mobility, fighting against dropping out of school and reach a proportion of 40% of the 30-34 years old people who are high graduated. In addition to the budget, the European Union got other tools to help to reach its goals such as a decentralized organization. Indeed, Erasmus+ is conducted by numerous institutions. At first, at a European

level, one of the institutions is the European Commission, which can be may be described as the most important institution for the program. Then, the Commission is directly helped by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive agency. Even if these two organizations have many activities the most important one for them is to guarantee the well-functioning of the program. However, the program could not be as successful as we know if the European organizations should not be helped at a national level by other institutions. In fact, there are national agencies which implement the policies of the European Commission and the Executive agency at a national level with clearly defined activities such as give information relating to the program, conduct the program in the geographical boundaries of their country, collaborate with the other European agencies. Furthermore, these national agencies are supported themselves too by other organizations such as: The Eurydice network, the youth wiki national correspondents network, the national Erasmus+ offices or it is possible to mention the eTwinning support services, the school education gateway, the network of higher education reform experts, the Euroguidance network and the Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe (EPALE).

After presenting the program one can ask to whom is Erasmus+ addressed? It is possible to answer that the program has been constructed for young European people who can spend from 3 up to 12 months abroad in the framework of their studies. However, this time should be an advantage to get a diploma and only the students from the second Bachelor year are eligible. Young people have the opportunity to go in one of the 28 European Union members or to one of the members of the European free trade association and to Turkey. Spending at least one semester in one of these countries guarantee the students that everything they learned abroad will be recognized when they go back to their countries thanks to the ECTS system. Moreover, the program tends to have several impacts and especially according three perspectives: personal, academic and professional. Indeed, studying abroad allows the student to be more independent, to define themselves more from an international point of view or to develop a new relationship towards their mother tongue. From an academic point of view, this time in another country permits young people to learn in a different way than what they are commonly acquainted with. Finally, everything that has been learnt during this time, personally and academically tend to have impacts on employability because students come back more flexible and more able to adapt themselves to a new environment.

Despite all the apparent advantages given by the Erasmus+ program, a lot of students do not want to take part to the program because they are afraid of not having enough money to finance their stay abroad. One can also ask; what is done from a national and European perspective to erase this mobility obstacle?

3.3.2) Financing possibilities

Globalization has not only had economic and environmental effects, but also social ones. Indeed, the inequalities between European citizens has grown. The European Union is aware of it and took the decision to fight inequalities by including the reducing of them in its Europe2020 strategy helping the young people to have access to the mobility for example.

To reach this goal some financial aid is needed to get from a national and European level. It would have been impossible to list every national program from the 28 European member states, that's why I decided to focus on France and Germany. Before proceeding, it is essential to mention potential financial supports which can be afforded without the support of the states. These financial sources include: getting a job during the holidays or to be helped by the family. However, this seems to be even more difficult to get that's why the national states have created national financial support sources. In Germany for example, every young student can afford the BAföG. This grant is accorded regarding the parents' income that means that the poorer student will be financially helped and the gap between poorer and richer students will be reduced. Furthermore, when students decide to go abroad they can afford the "abroad-BAföG" which is the same grant but the student will receive more money according to the charges due to the stay abroad. Moreover, German student can address them to the German national Erasmus+ agency which also provides financial support. The same system as the BAföG also exists in France with the same system. These grants are given by the centres régionaux des œuvres universitaires et scolaires (CROUS). Moreover, French students can afford other financial support from the city hall of their home-city, as well as at the departmental and regional council. The French government also provides financial aid to support students willing study abroad as the national education mobility grant;

In addition to the national grants, students can afford European support. By participating at Erasmus+ students don't have to pay the inscription fees in the university abroad.

Furthermore, they obtain one Erasmus grant which depends of the country of their stay. Indeed, there are three country groups according to the living costs in the countries. The first one is for countries where the life is the most expensive and students will also get more money than students going abroad in one country of the third group. This grant is the most important European financial support, even if it is possible to obtain other financial aid from international organizations as the UNESCO for example.

Now that the Erasmus+ program seems to be more familiar one can ask what have been really done so far over the existence years of the program.

4) Good practices study and analysis

As it was said before, even though mobility has developed dramatically in the past few years, some students still don't want to take part in the program because of some obstacle. Indeed, some of them still think that they cannot finance their stay abroad or they are not well informed enough about the program or they don't want to go far away from their families. To erase this the European Union, via the European Commission and the Executive agency, has set up some measures which can be called good practices. These good practices were analyzed in 2012 by the French national Erasmus+ agency. To do that the agency did research among 19 universities across the whole of France to have a better comprehension about what is done in terms of policies and consequently know what has been set. The study is structured around 6 main lines.

The first of the six lines is about the development of the international strategies in the French universities. This strategy got in importance with the law of the 10th August 2007, law which has changed the structure of the universities. Thanks to this law, the French universities should manage to accomplish three goals: an increase of their activities, to go out from the paralysis of the current governance and make the research visible at an international scale. However, even if some actions have been done in France so far as the implementation of Research and High Education Poles the universities have to work on their international partnerships because this is the most important component to be internationally attractive. Consequently, two new trends appeared: the refocusing of the partnership of special states and the opening to new states as China, Russia or the USA. Furthermore, more and more stays abroad are directly settled in the formation

descriptions as in the university Pantheon-Assas Paris 2 which allowed an increase of the mobile students in 2006-2007 about 57%.

The second approach was about the organization required to set the international mobility. The French universities reorganized themselves too with the designation of a vice-president who has to care about the international relationship policies. Moreover, specific services which have to organize the mobility from an administrative point of view as international relationship services or international relationship direction have been created. For example, the university Paul Cézanne Aix-Marseille III decided in 2008 the creation of an international policies council in which every decision about the international strategy is taken. Furthermore, the universities got different organization forms. Indeed, some of them chose one centralized organization whereas others one chose a decentralized one.

The third position of this study was to know how the universities do to raise the awareness, to inform and to accompany the students as well as possible during the whole mobility process. To achieve these goals, an implication from other actors than those mentioned before is needed. Indeed, teachers have an important role to play to promote the mobility because they are often at the heart of some partnerships and can give good advice to the students. Another important point which was not compulsory before, is the recognition of the studies abroad, which is now possible and easier thanks to the ECTS. The university François-Rabelais from Tours implemented a free lesson called “prepare and succeed in the international mobility” which provide a good preparation to its students.

The fourth line of the study is about the financing sources available to do one mobility. As it was said before there are plenty of possibilities to finance a stay abroad. However, two logics seem to develop. One of “counter” which means that the university do every procedure to get as much financing as possible and redistribute the money it has got to its students from internal criteria. The university Clermont I finances the mobility of its students thanks to an internal foundation created in 2008. The other logic is rather decentralized that means that the university tell the young people every procedure they can do and after the students have to do it on their own.

The fifth approach of the study is about the staff mobility. These are very important to make the partnerships more stable. Unfortunately, this mobility type remains rare due to

the less advantages that the staff can take from it. In order to make its staff more mobile, the university Pantheon-Assas Paris 2 welcome more and more teachers. As a consequence, the staff mobility increased about 45,5% from 2005 to 2010.

Finally, the last line of the study deals with the fact that the development of the mobility process can only succeed if the whole territory is involved in this process. The university of Reims implemented a federation approach around festive events as the international day of the students which involves many actors of the agglomeration of Reims.

According to this study, it is possible to say that the French universities set strategies in the same direction about the development of the students' mobility and also have implemented new structures, new formations to achieve their objectives regarding this strategy. However, this development is made according different methods relatives to each university.

To conclude, one can say that there still remain some obstacles which have to be erased to facilitate the mobility process even further, but that the international strategies seem to have real impacts on the mobility process and these impacts tend to help the European Union to achieve its goals in the framework of the strategy Europe 2020 allowing young people to get new skills.

According to what one dealt about in this thesis it is possible to say that the national and European policies and financing support the student mobility process. Moreover, Erasmus+ could have consequences on the students taking part at the program allowing them to obtain an added-value toward the non-mobiles students. Finally, it would be possible for students to transfer various skills they learned during their mobility to their future professional life. This paper will now try to verify these affirmations in the second part of the thesis.

5) Hypothesis

Before the begin of the empirical part I would like to propose hypothesis which I constructed through my literature review.

At first, it is possible to suppose that the programs financed by the European Union and Erasmus+ allow the students to improve their skills in foreign languages.

It is also conceivable that the Erasmus+ mobility, which is supported by the national and European policies permits students to acquire other skills.

It seems to me that young people come back more mature, more independent and more open-minded in their home country after staying abroad thank Erasmus+.

Furthermore, it is possible that the national and European policies which support the student mobility allow the students to develop a European culture.

Finally, according to my researches the participation to Erasmus+ can represent one opportunity to have better chance to find a job allowing students to gain skills which can be used in the professional life.

6) Empirical study

In the second part of this thesis one is going to do an empirical study to see how the Erasmus+ program does influence students and also answer the hypothesis.

6.1) Method

To do this study I concentrated first on the keywords of the topic. The first field that I dealt with was good practices. The second part was based on the consequences and the possible added-value of a Erasmus+ stay as well as the possible transfers from what have been learn in Erasmus and the professional life. I also decided to make a qualitative research about the effects of the Erasmus+ program according a personal, academic and professional perspective.

After that I thought carefully about who I would like to interview. Having done an internship in the international office of the University of Applicate Sciences of Magdeburg-Stendal, I endeavored to use this network to interview students from the university who were abroad thank to the Erasmus+ program and already came back to Germany. I wanted to interview people who I don't know to not have any influence on their answers. Then I decided to formulate a questionnaire, at first in French. I also decided to do a semi-directed interview allowing me to respond in the best way as possible to my problematic. I tried to write the question in a simple and chronological way.

Once the questionnaire was finished and approved by M Bauch, my next step was to contact the students of the university. For this step I received the support from my internship colleagues. I also wrote a consentient declaration in German to give to the students, to ensure I was allowed to use their interview for my research. Unfortunately, there weren't enough students who were willing to be interviewed and I chose to interview people I knew looking for French, German and Czech friends from to my own trinational master degree between France, Germany and the Czech Republic. After gathering information from all the students I needed, I looked for staff and yet again I received support from my internship colleagues because two of them were ready to be interviewed. However, I used the network of the university to interview Ms van Dyk who teaches French at the university and used my personal network to get in contact with Ms Jakobsen. I recorded every interview on my phone and on a Dictaphone. After what I directly saved the data on my Notebook and on an USB key. Then I transcribed all the interviews. I did four of them simply by hearing and typing in Microsoft word and did the rest with the transcription software E-LAN which saved me a lot of time. Finally, I put the important information for my researches in tables.

6.2) Results from a personal point of view

Even if every person I interviewed went abroad for different reasons, each of them told me that this experience has had impacts from a personal point of view. Indeed, some of them noticed that they became more courageous, more independent as Ms Seyfert and Jakobsen. This is due to the fact that problems have to be solved alone and one has to go to people to get to know other persons which lead to a personal fruition according to Ms Kriege. Moreover, Ms Metwaly noted that this experience allowed her to really be aware that each country is different from the other. M Combefreyroux summarizes this experience as a reality TV program because “this is something intense in a short period of time which transform us and our relationship to the other people”. Furthermore, the person interviewed seem to be more aware and to have a better understanding of what interculturality is and what is done by the European Union to allow such a program to exist. Moreover, they are aware as Ms Reussner that the program gives advantages which can be used all the lifelong.

6.3) Results from an academic point of view

One of the aim of the Erasmus+ program is to allow the European students to experience other educational system to profit from the European system diversity. This has been noticed by Ms Kriege and M Schmitz having experienced a system where the hierarchy between teachers and students does not exist which they found great. Moreover, some particularities were sometimes strange for the interviewed as M Combefreyroux as he said that there is no class in Germany because students choose the classes they want to attend and M Leuchtmann noticed that on the contrary in France had a system of small classes, in which attendance was obligatory, which is not the case in Germany.

In addition to the system differences Erasmus+ allows the students to learn new things, improved foreign language skills, take part in lessons which are not given in their home-university. It was the case of Ms Metwaly with one phonetic and intercultural course or M Combefreyroux who took advantage of the German system to take one class about the History of the Russian empire from the XVII century to the revolution, a course which was not possible to follow in France.

6.4) Results from a professional point of view

Even if the students I interviewed are still studying I wanted to know what they think about the impacts of the Erasmus+ program from the perspective of finding a job. Each of them agrees that it could never be an inconvenience, to quote Ms Blazkova. Moreover, it allows the students to differentiate themselves from the others having several experiences abroad as M Cangianiello or getting double-diploma as M Blazkova or Ms Briand. Furthermore, it gives the opportunity to show employers that “we lived in several places, we can speak numerous languages” according to Ms Metwaly. Erasmus+ gives also the opportunity to young people to find which job they want to do later as Ms Le Meur who found it “during the second semester of her experience by helping Ms van Dyk, French teacher at the university of applied sciences in Magdeburg”.

For other people as Ms Brosig the program played a very important role because she is now responsible for the Erasmus+ program at the university of Magdeburg and is able to give advice to the students and tell about her own experience to secure them and allow them to go abroad.

6.5) Interpretation

According to the results from the empirical study it is possible to verify the following hypothesis:

The persons interviewed showed that the Erasmus+ program allowed them to develop skills in foreign languages such as French, German or English.

Furthermore, this mobility supported by the national and European policies made possible to acquire other skills by following courses which are not proposed by their home-universities.

Thirdly and thanks to Erasmus+ the students come back to their home countries more mature, more independent and more open-minded because they had to make decisions alone and have a new attitude towards interculturality. Many of them noticed to have grown thanks to this experience. Then, the national and European policies allowed the students to develop a European culture.

Finally, it has been supposed that the participation in the Erasmus+ program could be an opportunity to improve one's employability. This has not been clearly verified but it is plausible to say that the participants acquire skills which can be reused in their job.

6.6) Critic

Even if this research seems to have achieved its goals some points could have been better. Indeed, the three first interviews were not as good because I was not fully prepared and did not know where I wanted to go with questioning. This was improved after my presentation in Zwickau even if I did not manage to answer the question proposed by Ms Fetscher.

Another point could be about the formulation of the question. Although I tried to ask the question as objectively and open as possible so as not to influence people, it is possible that I influenced them indirectly.

Nevertheless, I am satisfied with the results I obtained.

7) Conclusion

To conclude it is possible to say that the European Union support youth mobility thanks to the policies which are set and the financing possibilities which are offered.

Furthermore, the program gives the opportunity to the students to learn to take advantage of European diversity, by taking part in lessons they can usually not attend or participating in formations giving several diplomas at the same time. This increase the level of the formations in Europe allows the union to achieve its objectives in the framework of the strategy Europe2020.

This increase would have not been possible without the restructuration of the universities across Europe with the nomination of vice-presidents responsible for the international strategies and the creation of new administrative structures such as the international relationship services or directions.

This has also been only possible thank to a common effort of all European states to tackle the challenges proposed by the globalization and they could back their actions on the previous successful ones.

Finally, it is important not forget that the success of the Erasmus+ program and of the international strategies is due to the students too, who went abroad and promote the program.

Nevertheless, even if the European Union did take huge steps forward thanks to the success of Erasmus+ it should not be forgiven that there is still a long way to go to fully achieve the goals of the European Union, notably concerning the staff, researchers and trainee mobility.