



16.4.2021

NOTICE TO MEMBERS

Subject: Petition No 1106/2018 by Alexander Edberg Thorén (Swedish) on launching an integrated registration process and an identification document for Erasmus students in Europe

1. Summary of petition

The petitioner writes that, owing essentially to a number of administrative obstacles and complicated and long registration processes, many Erasmus students do not register as residents in their host countries, which can cause them problems in areas such as transport, integration, transparency and even legal protection. With a view to improving the next Erasmus+ programme (2021-2027), the petitioner suggests that the process for accessing the programme be harmonised and digitalised with a view to acceptance by a host university coming with the right to reside in the place where the university is for the duration of the exchange. On the basis of existing initiatives such as ‘Erasmus without paper’ and the pilot ‘European Student Card’ project, the petitioner proposes that an identification document for Erasmus students be created (e-ID) that serves as official ID during their stay abroad and exempts them from the complicated registration places in their host countries. It would also increase transparency for national authorities. The e-ID could be used for other purposes, for example, as a payment method in universities, a transport pass or a health card, following the model introduced in Estonia.

2. Admissibility

Declared admissible on 4 March 2019. Information requested from Commission under Rule 227(6).

3. Commission reply, received on 30 July 2019

According to Article 7(1)(c) of Directive 2004/38/EC¹ on the free movement of persons, students have a right of residence for more than 3 months if they are enrolled in a university of the host Member State, if they have a comprehensive sickness insurance and if they assure the relevant national authority, by means of a declaration or by such equivalent means as they may choose, that they have sufficient resources for themselves and their family members not to become a burden on the social assistance system of the host Member State during their period of residence.

Article 8 of the same Directive stipulates that host Member States may require EU citizens to register with the relevant authorities. This is not an obligation and some Member States do not impose any registration on mobile EU citizens living on their territory. It is thus up to Member States to decide whether to exempt students from the obligation to register.

Regarding the development of a standardised identification document for EU citizens studying in another EU country under the Erasmus+ programme, the Commission is actively supporting the development of the European Student Card². Due to the heterogeneous nature of the technologies used by higher education institutions and other service providers across Europe and the potential costs involved, the Commission has no plans to centrally produce and distribute cards specifically for Erasmus+ students. It seeks rather to add common elements to existing student cards issued by higher education institutions in Europe. These elements will include a centrally produced “European Student” hologram, a unique European Student Card number, and a standardised quick response code (QR code). When students go abroad to study or train, these common elements on their student cards will help them to identify themselves at their host institution and get access to campus services such as libraries, canteens and accommodation more quickly and easily. Furthermore, it is envisaged that this will enable them to benefit from the same student deals and discounts offered to local students, for instance in transport and cultural activities.

In addition, the Erasmus+ mobile phone app will shortly be redeveloped to include a virtual version of the European Student Card and the possibility for students to authenticate themselves online when applying to their host institution. This should further facilitate enrolment and access to all student services upon arrival at their host institutions.

Conclusion

Harmonisation of the registration systems for mobile EU citizens in the European Union is not foreseen, when some Member States have not put such systems in place.

As for student cards, the Commission is not in a position to provide a physical student card to Erasmus+ students. However, it is working towards turning all cards issued to students in Europe into a European Student Card, and it will issue a virtual European Student Card to Erasmus+ students via the Erasmus+ mobile app.

4. Further reply from the Commission (REV.), received on 16 April 2021

¹ Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States amending Regulation (EEC) No 1612/68 and repealing Directives 64/221/EEC, 68/360/EEC, 72/194/EEC, 73/148/EEC, 75/34/EEC, 75/35/EEC, 90/364/EEC, 90/365/EEC and 93/96/EEC (Text with EEA relevance), *OJ L 158*, 30.4.2004, p. 77–123.

² https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-student-card-initiative_en

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