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**NOTE**

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from: Presidency

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to : Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 1) / Council

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Subject: **Mobility and diversity: How to ensure social inclusion?**  
*- Policy debate*  
(Public debate pursuant to Article 8(2) CRP [proposed by the Presidency])

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Following consultation of the Youth Working Party, the Presidency has drawn up the attached discussion paper as a basis for the policy debate on the above subject at the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council meeting on 26-27 November 2012.

**Background paper****Mobility and diversity: How to ensure social inclusion?****I. Diversity and Social Inclusion in the European Union**

Diversity in Europe is on the rise. Internal mobility, along with the migration influx from third countries towards EU, are expanding the diversity, which already exists in European societies. At the same time, the global economic crisis has affected almost every aspect of young people's lives. Young people have to deal with increased unemployment, insecurity at work, greater family instability, reductions in social welfare programmes, etc.

One of the consequences of the ongoing economic crisis is the increase of youth mobility within the European Union, as well as migration from outside the EU. Over the last years mobility within the European Union has increased significantly especially among young people. It is increasingly common for young people to choose to exercise their right to free movement in order to study or access the labour markets of the other EU member states. Moreover, there is a general growth in the numbers of young people choosing to live in a different Member State. Among people who have experienced studying or working abroad, young adults represent a higher proportion. According to Eurostat, 12.8 million EU citizens are living in another Member State than their own, representing 2.5% of the EU27 population<sup>1</sup>;

The adverse effects of the economic and financial crisis on growth and employment are negatively affecting public opinion towards young mobile EU citizens and young people with a migrant background. At times of economic difficulty, when people are experiencing strenuous conditions, the arrival of new people is usually considered as a further challenge adding to their burden. The long term effects of the crisis, considering the increasing unemployment mostly affecting young people, could lead to xenophobia, discrimination, racism, social fragmentation and ghettoisation. Moreover, this situation apart from being a challenge to young people – mobile EU citizens and young people with a migrant background – constitutes a great challenge to host countries as well and calls for policy responses.

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<sup>1</sup> Eurostat-Statistics in focus 31/2012.

## II. Promoting Active Citizenship

It should be noted that social inclusion of young mobile EU citizens and young people with a migrant background is about providing them with the opportunities and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life. However, social inclusion is also a two way process, as it requires young people to be actively engaged in the society they live in, starting from their local community.

The 2009 Resolution on a Renewed Framework for European Cooperation in the field of Youth (2010-2018)<sup>2</sup> particularly refers to the promotion of young people's active citizenship and social inclusion of all young people among its overall objectives, and sets out that recognising all young people as a resource to society, and upholding the right of young people and youth organisations to participate in the development of policies affecting them, are among the guiding principles that should be observed in all policies and activities concerning young people.

In view of the growing mobility and diversity in the EU, there is an urgent need to strengthen policies that enhance the social inclusion of all young people, based in mutual understanding and respect. Young people have lots of potential, talents and strengths. With that in mind, Ministers are invited to discuss and provide concrete proposals on this very important subject. Consequently, Ministers are invited to consider the following questions for discussion:

- 1. What could Member States do to address social fragmentation potentially caused by the increasing mobility of young people both within the EU and from outside the EU?**
- 2. How could Member States better involve young mobile EU citizens and young people with a migrant background, to unleash their potential, leading to more harmonious and inclusive societies?**

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<sup>2</sup> OJ C 311, 19.12.2009.