European perspectives on internationalization: sharing policies and good practices

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The ancient Greeks and Romans used the Exedra (a semi circular portico/ room or outdoor area with seats) for holding philosophical conversations and tertulias, what the Portuguese call the friendly open minded discussions, while savouring coffee or wine. This journal takes its name from this inspirational concept of sharing ideas and vision for a better understanding of the intriguing phenomenon of life, peoples and the world. With this special issue of the Exedra Journal, a more cosmopolitan debate has been started into this publication, a virtual exedra, by gathering authors from various countries, professional expertise, fields of interest and action. The publication of this special issue has great institutional meaning. It signals and celebrates the quick evolution of internationalization at ESEC – in only a decade, it has succeeded in becoming a widely recognized school for the vivacity of its international actions.

I feel privileged and honoured to be the coordinator and editor of this special Exedra issue. This journal is only in its infancy yet, this being its fifth edition since launch one year ago. It is a free access online publication targeted at everyone interested in Higher Education, Pedagogy and Applied Sciences. The announcement and invitation for an international issue was extremely well received by scholars, researchers and academics all over Europe. I envisage this remarkable adherence to the project (18 articles contributes by 31 authors) as a sign of confidence in the quality of our publication and trust in our ability to disseminate valuable ideas, projects, strategies and joint ventures presented in each of the selected articles.

I also see this as an incentive to go on promoting internationalization and its virtues. Internationalization is inescapable for modern day universities, evolving from the blind mechanism of globalization. Some might say that it brings risks, uncertainty, competition and unidentified dangers for institutions, faculty and students. Perhaps. However, it can also coincide with a great many set of opportunities; one of the most interesting, in my view, being the growing cosmopolitism and the reduction of barriers, borders and impediments for us to learn from each other and to collaboratively pursue the project of building a better and more sustainable society. Sharing scientific advancements, interrogations, intriguing data and results, negotiating decisions and adhering to joint projects are all powerful vehicles to walk along this pathway.

This volume is a modest yet valuable part of the project. It is the result of a challenge made some months ago to several European colleagues who are actively committed to internationalization and who are in some way involved in international activities. The goal was to collect examples of policies and practices, organizations and networks,
projects and strategies that might signal good and effective practices in the field of internationalization of higher education and R&D. It was also intended to disseminate such good practices, in its many facets and to propagate the examples of international organizations, such as academic networks and associations and higher education institutions in Europe.

As a whole, the collected articles illustrate the energies and synergies that are being used to create and shape the European space of education. They support the notion of a multi-dimensional internationalization of higher education. These articles also give evidence of a set of projects, programmes and practices that have been developed over the years to face the demands of a cooperative/joint space of higher education. This publication thus portrays a clever and informed adaptation of intellectuals, teachers, departments, institutions and transnational organizations to the abolition of borders, promoting the creation and diffusion of some of the most valuable goods of modern times: information, knowledge and education.

The variety of concerns addressed by the authors illustrates how complex and multifaceted the concept of ‘internationalization’ is. This issue includes seventeen selected articles on the following topics:

- Student and teacher mobility and international Education
- Internationalization at home and International dimensions of the curriculum
- EU and CoE programmes, such as Erasmus networks or the Pestalozzi Programme
- R&D, international cooperation and networking (the example of Cice, Businet, ETEN)
- Promoting intercultural education through internationalization
- International students’ recruitment and integration
- Best practices in internationalization

The articles have been grouped in a structure of four parts: International education and networking, International curriculum development, International students and internationalization at home, and Eu policies and opportunities. Feedback from readers is very much welcome. Authors’ contacts can be obtained from susana@esec.pt. I would also like to encourage further dialogue to continue our efforts and promote a responsible and valuable internationalization.

I am immensely grateful to each author for the trust deposited in this project and for choosing Exedra as a means to share their expertise and to spread their ideas, work, and research/development projects. I also want to thank the Exedra Director and Editorial Board, Margarida Paiva and the staff at ESEC/NDSIM for the cooperation, guidance and responsiveness. This was essential to reaching our goals and make this task more manageable.
Last, but not least, I would like to acknowledge and express my deep gratitude to the Portuguese Fundação para a Ciências e Tecnologia (FCT – the Portuguese government body responsible for financing and evaluating the national scientific and technological system), for the financial support given to the publication of the printed version of this issue, so increasing the visibility and access to this publication.

Susana Gonçalves,

Editor of the Exedra Journal Special Issue

‘European perspectives on internationalization: sharing policies and good practices’

College of Education (ESEC) - Polytechnic Institute of Coimbra, Portugal
INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION AND NETWORKING

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Learning mobility between Europe and India: a new face of international cooperation
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The imperative for International Education

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Abstract

The article explores the meaning, scope and dimensions of International Education as a concept, an ideology and a philosophy of education. From study abroad to the infusion of an international dimension in the curriculum, from international I&D teams to individual study visits, teaching abroad and conferences, from mobility to the appreciation of diversity, International Education includes a great many aspects and is in itself a challenging concept for education and policy makers. Why do we need to learn and teach in an international environment if the majority of us are not supposed to travel for work or training? Why internationalize what can be satisfactorily achieved through a national perspective?

The article is not so committed to answer these questions in dept but to highlight the fact that there are better questions to guide our behaviour as educators. Very few would argue nowadays that a nationalist education is the best fit for the purposes of a nation. This can be seen as politically incorrect and blatant xenophobic behaviour. More useful and guiding questions related not to the why but to the how, when, and for what purposes. Thus, the article evolves from a brief discussion on topics such as student mobility and cosmopolitism to the more sensitive and broad questions of diversity and citizenship in a global world. The linkage between International education and Intercultural education is clarified and discussed.

Key-words

International education, mobility, study abroad, cosmopolitism, Erasmus, interculturalism, transculturalism

I.

Over two decades ago, when I was studying at the university, I had to move from one town to another, up to the north, 200 kilometres away. Today it’s a two hours drive but back then the train took almost four hours, so going back home for the weekend or even holidays was not as easy as it is today; students could be separated from their families for
a long time. Long-distance communication wasn’t what it is now: one wrote letter and postcards to family and friends, and telephoned, often from the post office, as there was no phone in the rented room. Mobile phones, text messages, e-mail and Skype hadn’t been invented yet. Distance in space, those vast 200 Kms, was equal to distance in time: to see family again would only be possible in two or three months.

On the day I was left alone, in a strange city, with no friends around, no one familiar, I sat at a café by the train station and let tears and saudade run free. Then I did what had to be done: pulled my sleeves up, got my bags, and got on with discovering this new place. I hadn’t yet crossed national borders but I have no doubt that a university course was my entry ticket to a boat of discoveries (Nau das Descobertas), to the world and myself. I didn’t need to leave my country to feel cultural shock, to hear accents and strange words, to taste food that wasn’t usual at home, to suffer (and perhaps cause suffering) at the hands of stereotypes associated to one’s origins. I made friends from all over the country and learned from them as deeply as from tutors; I understood that there are countless ways of seeing the same realities; made beginners’ mistakes and finally, after a few years’ journey, was considered able: I got a diploma!

Twenty-five years have passed. The world is shorter and more connected. National accents have become diluted, what is left is almost only different ways of speaking work languages (English, predominantly). What happens on another part of the world is at our minds’ disposal, just a Blackberry click away.

Today, I feel that my university student experience in an adopted city in my country was a study abroad experience, as it is that of the students who now go on the adventure of an international exchange program (such as the famous Erasmus). Those four hours between Lisbon and Coimbra in the 1980s are now plenty to get to distant world capitals, over 2500 Kms away from Lisbon: Oslo, Stockholm, Helsinki, Athens, Bucharest, Riga, Tallinn or Warsaw.

The above picture, although simplistic, helps to understand that student mobility has existed for a long time, both national and international. Let us remember that in Erasmus’ medieval times, when the term university was created to mean the locus of knowledge, universities were bodies of intelligentsia distributed through European centers that (international) students would visit to complete their studies. The difference between then and now, and what justifies the movement of thousands of students between universities each year, is the transition from an elitist state of opportunities to study abroad to a system of democratic and universal access to higher education. International studies become more common also due to the fortunate advances of democracy (and democratization of higher education) and globalization.
The Erasmus programme or other continental (I dare not say inter-continental yet) student mobility programmes are little steps students are challenges to take to expand their international and intercultural horizons. To many, this is their first time abroad. Perhaps we should look for this first time effect to explain why studying abroad is such an intense and long lasting experience (cf. McKeown, 2009), which is recalled more frequently and with more emotion attached to it than “college memories.” (Wallen, 2009).

A study by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) (cf. Grothus, 2009) shows that undergraduate German students abroad recognize the importance of study abroad for various aspects of their lives, such as learning more about the host country culture, new intellectual approaches, improving language skills and academic and professional skills. Other aspects such as new perspectives on Germany and making contacts with foreign scholars are also valued. The period of stay doesn’t seem relevant for this study abroad impact. The majority of those students say that they remain in touch with the host country and about half of them have subsequently lived abroad for more than three months (average total: 30 months). Findings also suggest that Academic motivation for the choice of host university and program supervision and counselling at host institution are critical factors for success. Now, regarding diplomats, it looks like this experience impacts significantly on their careers: more than 50% mention that they frequently use the qualifications acquired abroad in their jobs (language skills and cultural expertise), 83% mention a positive impact of their stay abroad on getting their first jobs, 65% on their current responsibilities.

Evidence tells us about similar results in other studies (for a review cf. McAllister, 2006). This essay is not merely about study abroad, however. On the contrary, the focus is on the broader notion of International Education. This concept includes study abroad but is not restricted to it. This difference must be highlighted and the conceptualization of international education must be infused in the curriculum so that it doesn’t remain a satellite activity of concern of the minority of students who experience the Internacional mobility for some time during their graduation (or postgraduate studies). International mobility is part, not the whole, of a prospectus of Internacional Education. And this is part (not the whole) of intercultural Education.

II.

The impact of globalization on culture and economy is tremendous and although frequently mentioned it still is not duly appreciated by many, both on managerial level and on the work floor (Joris, 2006). The statement is especially relevant for institutions of higher education “where, in spite of the obvious need for change management,
we witness a reluctance to fully embrace the idea of globalization and to bring internationalization in as a defining element or instrument for curriculum design and classroom experience." (op. cit., p. 91). Even if there are already many who accept the idea of internationalization as positive and mandatory, it is also evident that there’s still a lot to do in order to change mentalities, actions and institutional policies. Globalization, together with political changes in the relations between countries and nation-states, such as the creation of European Union, translate into profound changes of issues such as consumership, citizenship and identity. All these changes are marginal to geography and territory constraints. As a matter of facts, it has more to do with cross-border mobility, transnational networks, supranational policies, the global market, a new social, political and mental order.

A learning process is needed for young people to deal with these new demands. The learning process includes the transition from a local view (local used here as a synonym of national culture) to a cosmopolitan view and understanding of the world. It isn't only about appropriating some elements of the other's culture, but of will and capacity of interacting with the other, of learning from him, cooperating and actively participating in the cosmopolitan, transnational, transborders and transcultural citizenship model. This isn’t an easy task, especially since ethnocentrism is learned by immersion in the culture of belonging, the mother-culture, which has been handed down by the origin community (national, ethnical, linguistic, religious). Assimilation of the mother-culture depends on the assumption that it is a good culture, which deserves to be preserved, lived and defended from all threat of disappearance, decay or corruption.

Cosmopolitan citizenship doesn’t have an easy agenda as it somehow implies change to this cultural absolutism and openness to external influence. It isn’t demanded of the global citizen that he stops acknowledging and loving his culture, country and cultural heritage, but individual adaptation to this kind of franca citizenship is made on assumptions different to the mother-culture’s. Cosmopolitanism is thus, as Hannerz (1996) clarifies:

First of all an orientation, a willingness to engage with the Other. It entails an intellectual and aesthetic openness towards divergent cultural experiences, a search for contrasts rather than uniformity. To become acquainted with more cultures is to turn into an aficionado, to views them as artworks. At the same time, however, cosmopolitanism can be a matter of competence, and competence of both a generalized and a more specialized kind. There is the aspect of a state of readiness, a personal ability to make one’s way into other cultures, through listening, looking, intuiting, and reflecting. And there is cultural competence in the stricter sense of the term, a build-up of the skill in manoeuvring more or less expertly with a particular system of meanings (p.103).
Because of the influence of ethnocentric ideas, worldviews, education and biased experience, travelling for study abroad (or even for touristic/leisure, cultural or work purposes) is strategic for such learning, but in itself it is not enough to make a student become a more cosmopolitan citizen. Travelling and studying abroad alone can be a rather innocuous and superficial experience. Other educational strategies are needed and these should be planned, intentional and based on an unambiguous rationale.

III.

For years I have heard criticism from tutors/teachers who do not believe in the Erasmus programme and refer to this kind of programme as a few months of tourism in the students’ lives. These comments result partly from doubts about the quality of formation and rigorous assessment by the welcoming institution, and partly from the tutor’s own lack of experience with these programmes. But by and large, the quick and negative judgment understated in these comments are associated with the notion that travelling and knowing other places during the study years is a waste of time, as it clashes with academic learning and studying. At the same time, it also denotes the lack of importance attributed to tourism in relation to academic studies.

This critical posture and the adverse attitude it implies, is also subject to criticism, especially from the professionals who lead international programmes, who complain of the powerful blocking power that these attitudes represent against the study abroad programmes’ success. If we wish to play devil’s advocate, we will have no trouble finding arguments to support this criticism. Indeed, the tourist’s experience and the cosmopolitan citizen’s experience are not equivalent. The simple act of travelling doesn’t start by itself a process of deep transformation and experiential knowledge. It isn’t enough to know distant landscapes, taste exotic dishes or live for a while amongst people of various languages and customs to learn something from this diversity and to learn to live adaptively with difference. What separates the tourist and the cosmopolitan citizen is the distance between superficiality and a desire to penetrate the core of others’ cultural realities. You don’t know the forest for having seen a tree nor do you understand the tree for having seen a forest. It is necessary to continuously focus and lose focus, reflect and question, enjoy and suffer both similarity and difference. The cosmopolitan competence doesn’t depend on the trip or the tourist/cultural offers pack one has acquired, it depends on the traveller’s attitude and his way of facing intercultural relations.

Many tourists seek only a few select alien elements, while keeping themselves closed to the whole of the difference. They especially avoid profound cultural difference, at the same time looking for superficial exotic difference (gastronomy, music, folklore, customs). Paul Theroux (1986, ref. in Hannerz, 1996) mentioned how many people
travel to find “home plus” (Spain = home + sunshine; India = home + servants; Africa = home + elephants and lions; and many other places equal home plus good deals on exotic goods and souvenirs). This formula may apply to some students (not all), which would explain the lack of faith of so many tutors in the temporary study abroad programmes (such as Erasmus).

Having presented these arguments, it is time to consider the other side of the coin. The fact is that few people will stand behind the idea that travelling, studying abroad or even tourism can be time-wasters. Indeed, all, including student mobility critics, accept more or less peacefully that international mobility adds value to life experience and many will accept that academic experience abroad will be beneficial in a student’s path, under certain circumstances. Through analysis of the critics’ points we are many times led to the conclusion that what’s at stake is on the one hand, the student’s maturity and responsibility to resist temptation external to his or hers academic path, and on the other hand, some fear that Erasmus students may somehow gain advantage due to less rigorous assessments than they would have at the home institution.

It is beyond the scope of this article to discuss this second aspect and it is enough to say that institutions should take on the responsibility of establishing fair partnerships and to send their students only to destinations that can assure academic quality, if that is the point of the mobility. Concern with the student’s skills is more interesting to us in this context, as what takes place is a learning process, and the student’s rule is precisely to learn, in a guided manner. To guide learning in the best way – this is universities’ purpose.

What are then the strategies we use to guide learning abroad? In what way do we prepare students for the world out there, to face the temptations of multicultural parties, to absorb the essence of the cultural kaleidoscope instead of limiting themselves to the intoxicating exotic, the alienated dissipation of youth or the anxieties of cultural shock?

If we intend to have cosmopolitan students, isn’t it appropriate to think we must prepare them for cosmopolitanism? What are we doing in that respect? It is universities’ responsibility to invest in the development of their students’ knowledge and skills in order to prepare them for a successful professional life, an able life and a responsible and active citizenship. It is here that lies the essence of International Education in the global era. It is also in the domains of politics and practices of internationalization that we find the bridges between International Education and Intercultural Education.
Before moving forward it is necessary to open a parenthesis to mention the importance of the models of thought on practices in education in general and in International and Intercultural Education particular. Nowadays we need a model that’s based on complexity, simultaneity, on change and chaos rather than linearity, constancy and law. Reductive, isolationist and simplistic models of thought are no longer useful in a society of information and in today’s interconnected and global world. On the contrary, we need a kind of posture and academic thinking that is integrating, complex, multidimensional, that allows us to face uncertainty and contradiction (Gonçalves, 2008b).

Edgar Morin (1973, 1980, 1996), relates the challenge of complexity with the meaning variations of information depending on the context in which it is divulged or understood. To Morin, any information holds meaning only in relation to a situation, a context. Complex thought is, according to this author, a thought that allows a connection between human autonomy and dependency – if this is an autonomous being, able of self-organization, and in possession of an individuality and an identity, it is the case that his autonomy depends on the exterior, of material and cultural resources that the environment offers. The individual’s survival and development are not isolated acts, in fact they compromise the whole of humanity and the world. These ideas could not be more actual and relevant for our concerns in this essay: “in a time of globalization, it is fundamental to understand the simultaneity between unity and diversity. Our destiny is uncertain and our situation extremely complex and we should know how to place ourselves within this uncertainty.” (Gonçalves, 2008).

International education strongly relates the economical, cultural and social sides of coexistence and cooperation between human peoples and that’s where its virtues, tests and interrogations are to be found and explored by educators. A broad definition of international education labels it as strategic for international development and social cohesion, while asserting that it goes beyond study abroad. From this perspective, International education entails a comprehensive vision of education as a mean to foster student’s intercultural competence and the skills needed to adapt to diversity, to communicate with people from diverse backgrounds and to be able to work, learn and cooperate across borders. It also includes knowledge about other cultures and social, cultural, economical context in different regions of the world, respect and appreciation of diversity and the will to learn from it, and the ability to communicate in other languages, not just the mother tongue.

This perspective of International Education which we’ve just presented implies the linkage of internationalization to Intercultural Education and promotes an education to complexity as it secures students’ placement in culturally complex situations and guides
them on how to interpret such situations, how to move in the ambiguity they imply and how to adapt to them in order to reach goals in an autonomous and responsible way.

Hobbs e Chernotsky (2007) mention, by way of political sciences students’ abilities for global citizenship, the need to change syllabi for the development of fundamental skills suggested by literature:

“First, there is the vital task of fostering an appreciation of the multiple perspectives guiding perceptions and visions across the world. (…). Second, there is the need to impart a view of the world as an increasingly interconnected set of systems. (…) Third, familiarity with critical issues and controversies impacting on relationships across those systems must be promoted. (…) Fourth, students must come to understand the impact of choices in shaping the future direction of those systems”.

In order for an institution to guarantee the link between its teaching practices, its syllabus, its contents and the methodological choices that favour international and intercultural education, and the development of the four elements suggested by Hobbs and Chernotsky, It is necessary to have cooperative participation and the synchronized voices of international affairs’ tutors, managers and technicians. Allow me to stress that it is *synchronised voices*, not *one voice*, which silences diversity, nor *parallel voices*, which are nothing but monologues or communication noise. Synchronization is achieved only by dialogue and common reference points.

I would like to use another personal example to illustrate these ideas of complexity and synchrony. Fortunate circumstances of my life provided me with the privilege of becoming a teacher, of modules in psychology and intercultural education, and of coordinating an international affairs office. Psychology, teacher training, multiculturalism and the international affairs revealed to be connected in ways that I couldn’t have predicted ten years ago. In fact, they were initially separate subjects, kept on separate shelves of the knowledge and professional activity library. Today I no longer see them this way. However, it wasn’t the knowledge archive that prompted this understanding of the connections between themes and the necessary interdisciplinarity to better understand and intervene.

Psychology – Teacher training – Interculturality: these subjects give each other meaning in a higher education context and need each other to get meaning themselves. This lesson, which seems more or less obvious (sustainable) in the theoretical plan, is extremely hard to translate into effective practices. In truth, traditionally there is no preparation for a truly interdisciplinary point of view. My own learning on these bridges between science and culture, formal and informal education, life and academia, the brain and the heart, developed from my travels, conversations with students and
national and international colleagues, reading from other shelves and reflecting on my readings, analysing others' practices and evaluating their effect with the unavoidable Sherlock Holmes' syndrome, common to so many teachers.

It was necessary to leave my comfort zone to understand this bigger lesson: it's only worth to talk about the things we've lived, and indeed only then are we truly qualified to speak about them. Here I paraphrase Henri Cartier Bresson, the critical moment photographer, to whom photography was the alignment of vision, mind and heart. So is teaching! The teacher works on the critical moment and if he or she misses it so too is the student lost, the profession's raison d'être. Teaching is a complex task. It's easy to learn the truth by heart (as great pedagogues have said, in accordance to teaching and learning theories), but it's difficult to learn with the heart. This is especially true when we're offspring of the positivist tradition, still embarrassed about our emotions, even after Damásio's revelations (1995, 2000), after whom we can no longer ignore the fact that our brain doesn't function without emotional fuel.

Science's linear paradigm, pre-colombian positivism, doesn't help to integrate this evidence of cognitive-emotional functioning into teaching (and science). On the other hand, it also doesn't help to understand the reasonability of educational work in an interdisciplinary context. The division of subjects, common in higher education, according to their departments or scientific areas (i.e. comfort zones) blocks teachers' ability to see the trees and the forest I mentioned earlier. Whilst some focus on the forest and others on the trees, the ability to understand the phenomenon and its context is lost, and thus we also lose the ability to understand that what interests and intrigues other scholars, subjects and departments is sometimes exactly what interests and intrigues us.

Nowadays, I do things differently in order to be a good professional. To mention the Cartier-Bresson vision-mind-heart alignment means to integrate artistic expression in teaching, to favour the presence of guest specialists and practitioners, to mix up traditional academic activities such as conferences and talks with other types of events (cultural, festive, alternative); it also means not to limit myself to the role of teacher but to engage in other activities, like international I&D projects, writing and using literature, cinema and photography as alternative and complementary forms of understanding the world; it also means circulating through spaces where culture is produced, transformed and preserved. Wherever I got it was by an effort of interdisciplinary, multimodal and multidimensional learning.

This effort implies a challenging but pleasant work of reflexion on our practices. The following questions have been selected from a long list by Karwacka (2010) and have to do with intercultural competence and sensibility. I have picked them as examples of
useful tools (and present them as a challenge) to walk this reflexion path.

- Do I think creatively and critically?
- Do I have long lasting relationships with people from other cultures?
- Am I able to adapt to changing social circumstances?
- Do I respect and value human diversity?
- Do I have the flexibility to see different values as they are in the context of another cultural filter (not from my culture's perspective)?
- Am I ready to open emotionally and intellectually to foreign and unknown?
- Am I able to gain knowledge through interactive learning?
- Do I work on common projects?
- Do I develop tolerance of ambiguity?
- Do I developing strategies of solving and negotiating conflicts?
- Do I have multiple identities (do I develop my identity basing it on more than one culture)?

This kind of questions, together with the challenge of experimenting with new form of thinking about teaching and our professional mission in the globalised world, may take us far, individually, and favour positive changes and the improving of our practices. However, in the institutional plan, the collective force is a must. Individual action has great power for change, but the collective can act far quicker.

Some practices work better than others when it comes to interdisciplinarity and complexity. Contrary to what one may think, simple practices are better for complex learning. I could list a few of these practices as solid examples of actions good for interconnecting international education and intercultural education and for promoting internationalisation in universities. However I have already presented these actions and strategies elsewhere (Gifford, Gocsál, Balint, Gonçalves & Wolodzko, 2007; Gonçalves, in press, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2003) and prefer to adopt a more socratic strategy in this article.

The practices that work for a school can easily be transferred to the next school with little trouble if the key-questions are kept in mind and there is the necessary internationalist and intercultural guidance. The presentation of good practices is interesting but not a substitute for the school’s institutions’ participation in their own activities, methods and strategies. They should be consistent with the nature of the institution, including its mission, regional and national context, goals, course type, students’ expectations, resources, etc. Sometimes the repetition of what one has seen others do will only turn out superficial and inconsequent approaches. If true conviction about the action’s validity is not at its core, the action will quickly lose its power and risk
failure. This is often the case with internationalisation and interculturality, especially when these subjects haven’t been collectively recognised as central in the institutional mission.

What mobilised the action and the critical sense regarding it is the intelligence we bring to our problems' analysis, the way we see (or don't see) the trees, the forests and the countless creatures (problems, opportunities) who jump between branches, between light and dark.

In summary, it seems to me that it's more effective to teach how to fish instead of handing over the fish. Teaching how to fish, in this article's context, is not something you do merely by presenting ideas. It’s better done as Socrates did with his maieutics: asking instead of answering. It’s for this reason that I’ve selected and present in the annexed table a few questions which may be taken as indicators of the syllabus' level of internationalization and International Education's success. The questions have been picked out of the many dozen posed by Karwacka (March, 2010). I also suggest the reading and thinking of the ones indicated by Whalley (1997). These indicators’ simplicity is the secret to their efficiency and relevancy. The questions are real torches to illuminate our path. They aren’t the way or the steps, but the light which allows us to decide.

I heartily recommend the reading of lists such as these as the questions have a transformative power that no answer may ever have. The learning of complexity is better achieved when we’re the ones asking and seeking the answer rather than when we’re listening to the answer someone else has found. To internationalise a higher education institution in a deep and transforming way and to prepare the academic community (including students, faculty and staff) for the challenges of multiculturalism and the cosmopolitan citizenship is not a task accomplished in one go – it takes several small steps, from question to question. The questions that stick to the mind are those with real power to transform practices.

V.

One of the reasons why many don’t teach about these subjects nor in accordance with an internationalist and intercultural vision is because these teachers do not themselves experience the global dimension of teaching or see its consequences from a closed (even narrow minded) perspective of teaching. Another reason may be the fact that this is a huge subject and therefore might be perceived as scary. It implies living through linguistic, cultural and even ideological barriers. Anything to do with internationalisation and global citizenship evokes complexity and therefore falls out of the comfort zone. The challenge of uncertainty may be insurmountable.
Nevertheless, I believe that this is no longer a choice we can make based on our individual will. Higher education in Europe is tuned (remember the Bologna process and its intentions and ways of being put to practice) and this relates to the political project of European construction. It is also related to an international project of cooperation, of sustainable development of science and societies, above all of peace.

It's important to understand this new paradigm in order to make the small personal revolutions that will allow the materialization of the ideas which guide Bologna. Otherwise we will only have the ruins of a well designed (and full of intentions) building which was eroded by the conservative rigidity of simplistic, isolationist models and practices. I hope the ideas (and lists of questions) in this essay may help to kick-start the quest for tune and complexity that is presupposed by global citizenship, internationalization and internationalism in higher education.

References


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Annex

Shortlist of institutional indicators for success in intercultural education Taken from Karwacka (March, 2010)

- Are we involved in hosting of a foreign pupil during intercultural exchanges?
- Do we promote engagement of teachers, school management and students in intercultural experiences (professionally and in life)?
- Do we provide intercultural, mixed and integrated school environment in order to reduce the social distance among students from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds?
- Do we give the students an opportunity to develop their plurilingual competence?
- Do we make a selection of topics which are related to the multilingual context of education?
- Do we promote new teaching and learning methods orientated on students (e.g. explorative learning, project-oriented learning, role play, learning to negotiate positions and views)?
- Do we develop methods of dealing with otherness and difference?
- Do we encourage learners to develop larger loyalties beyond their home and their nation?
- Do we give students various opportunities to meet different needs, interests, abilities and cultural backgrounds?
- Do we promote non-centric curriculum based on principles of non-discrimination, pluralism and cultural relativism?
- Do we create deliberate and explicit intercultural learning situations (e.g. through encounters with the unknown)?
- Do we promote the understanding of cultural differences in relation to meaningful context (learning from differences and multiperspectivity)?
- Do we extend the range of choices and options, including alternative and non-public provisions (without affecting the core curriculum and overall cohesion of education delivery)?
- Do we teach social skills and competence necessary for democracy learning (e.g. the capability to take part in a public debate, resolve conflicts)?
- Do we provide opportunities for multicultural delivery, intercultural communication and exposure to the other countries?
- Do we measure academic achievements in citizenship-related subjects (civics, history, social studies and political sciences)?
- Do we value intercultural encounters and experimental learning situations occasioned by non-formal education (e.g. exchanges, visits, projects)?
- Do we include in curriculum specialised modules and training programmes as well as cross-cultural topics with “European” content?
Pan-European training and networking for education professionals: the Pestalozzi Programme of the Council of Europe

Josef Huber
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Abstract

Over the past decades (since the 80s of the 20th to the first decade of the 21st century) we have witnessed a strong move towards considering education principally as a technical issue, probably also inspired by the technological revolution during these decades. “How to teach?” became more a question of “How to structure the learning process?” than providing an answer to the more fundamental questions like “What shall the society look like for which we are educating?” or “How does effective learning take place?” Efficiency, benchmarks and a close to obsessional addiction to evaluation have taken up the main space in public debate and in practice.

A change of direction in education is needed. This is not new. Change is the only permanent feature. Many have expressed this wisdom in one or the other way. For example Herakleitos of Ephesus1 “Everything flows, nothing stands still.” This doesn’t imply that any change is desirable. We need to agree on the direction of change and we need to be active, be the actors of the change we would like to see.

So, the first question certainly is the one about direction “Where do we want to go?” The second question will definitely be “How do we best get there?” The Council of Europe proposes a vision of “Sustainable democratic society” based on the principles of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in all the concrete manifestations they may take when applied as underlying guiding values for living together in peace.

The Pestalozzi Programme of the Council of Europe adopts and advocates an approach to teaching and training based first and foremost on the conviction that education must mirror the principles and values of the society we want to live in today and we want our children to live in tomorrow.

The contents of our teaching and the desired learning outcomes must be in line with what we want to achieve. Most people will agree to this. However, this implies that our pedagogy and the methodology must change too.

Key-words

Sustainable, Democracy, Education, Training, Learning, Council of Europe
I. Are we doing the right things? Are we doing them right?

Over the past decades (since the 80s of the 20th to the first decade of the 21st century) we have witnessed a strong move towards considering education principally as a technical issue, probably also inspired by the technological revolution during these decades. “How to teach?” became more a question of “How to structure the learning process?” than providing an answer to the more fundamental questions like “What shall the society look like for which we are educating?” or “How does effective learning take place?” Efficiency, benchmarks and a close to obsessionl addiction to evaluation have taken up the main space in public debate and in practice.

A change of direction in education is needed. This is not new. Change is the only permanent feature. Many have expressed this wisdom in one or the other way. For example Herakleitos of Ephesus² “Everything flows, nothing stands still.” This doesn’t imply that any change is desirable. We need to agree on the direction of change and we need to be active, be the actors of the change we would like to see.

So, the first question certainly is the one about direction “Where do we want to go?” The second question will definitely be “How do we best get there?” The Council of Europe proposes a vision of “Sustainable democratic society” based on the principles of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in all the concrete manifestations they may take when applied as underlying guiding values for living together in peace.

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The contents of our teaching and the desired learning outcomes must be in line with what we want to achieve. Most people will agree to this. However, this implies that our pedagogy and the methodology must change too.

It is time to look at the underlying philosophy of learning and at the desired effects of education. The Pestalozzi Programme currently bases its work on the following assumptions:

- The principles and values of the Council of Europe, its standards, frameworks and guidelines in education are the basic ingredients of education for sustainable democratic societies.
- Training, in order to be effective, needs to build on trainees’ knowledge and experience. It needs to be interactive, learner-centred, and offer an opportunity to learn by doing and to work collaboratively over time to find fit solutions suitable for different contexts.
The competences education professionals need are varied and need to be acquired in a balanced way. Training has to encompass the development of sensitivity and awareness, of knowledge and understanding, of individual and societal practice.

The medium is the message. Training needs to be organised and delivered in a way that models its content and the competences we wish to develop.

Trainees should become multipliers of their acquired expertise. For this to come about effectively, issues relating to the cascading and dissemination processes must be built into the training itself.

The promotion of intercultural understanding is central to each training activity, whatever its specific topic.

The training activities help to create networks of education professionals across the continent; these networks need continued support and are maintained and strengthened through virtual platforms.

II. The Pestalozzi Programme of the Council of Europe

1 Background

The Pestalozzi Programme of the Council of Europe builds on a long history of cooperation in the field teacher education and training within the framework of the organisation. It has evolved from an early teacher training bursary scheme and has been developed to respond to the challenges identified by the Third Summit of Heads of States and Governments in 2005. At this summit leaders called for a concerted effort of the Council of Europe to ensure that its values of respect for democracy, human rights and the rule of law are placed at the centre of educational practice in our member states and they emphasised the key role of education professionals in this process. In their plan of action for the coming years they stipulate that “The Council of Europe will enhance all opportunities for the training of educators, in the fields of education for democratic citizenship, human rights, history and intercultural education”.

This Call from the Summit leaders underlines the importance of reaching out to the practitioners in the field of education. The fundamental principles and values of the organisation need to be reflected not only in education policy, but they need to influence the day-to-day practice of education in the classrooms across the continent. Only then can we hope that our European societies will manage to maintain the level of democracy and respect for human rights they have reached and to further develop towards sustainable democratic societies in the face of the challenges of the 21st century.

The Pestalozzi Programme attempts to build and maintain this bridge between policy and practice. It looks at how education policy can best be transposed into the everyday practice of teaching and learning so that the desired change influences the day-to-day experience of all learners. It acknowledges the vital and crucial role of education
professionals in this process of change and builds on the convergence of competences: specialist and subject-specific competences need to be complemented by transversal knowledge, skills and attitudes if we want them to bear their fruit for politically, socially, economically and environmentally sustainable, democratic societies in the Europe of today, and above all, tomorrow.

Through its range of activities, the Pestalozzi Programme seeks to offer a space where education professionals have and take the opportunity to learn together, to elaborate fit answers in the diverse contexts they work in, answers which are based on the fundamental values the Council of Europe was created to uphold.

2 Functioning of the Programme

Every year the programme offers a wide range of pan-European training opportunities for different categories of education professionals such as teacher, teacher trainers, school heads and other actors with an educational role as well as parents as important stakeholders in education. All together about 50 pan-European training events for a total of about 1000 participants from the 50 countries party to the European Cultural Convention and beyond are organised annually. These comprise:

- European Workshops which are hosted and organised in the countries
- European Seminars which are co-organised by the Secretariat and partner institutions (Academy of Bad Wildbad, Baden-Württemberg, Germany; European Wergeland Centre, Oslo, Norway)
- European Modules for trainer training organised by the Secretariat with the support of particular member states
- Targeted cooperation and assistance (such as training courses for teachers in the framework of Joint Programmes with the European Commission).

Education professionals from all over Europe can participate in these events free of charge subject to available places (for details consults the “How to participate” section on www.coe.int/pestalozzi)

Beyond the training activities, the Pestalozzi Programme also provides a platform for the exchange of experience and the collection of practice examples as well as collaborative reflection on practice and the development of workable answers to challenges based on Council of Europe values.

The programme is led and monitored by the Steering Committee for Education and implemented by the Secretariat in cooperation with a network of national contact persons (National Liaison Officers (NLO)) and partner institutions and organisations. It is funded through the ordinary budget of the Council of Europe (Directorate of
Education and Languages) and through voluntary contribution either in the form of direct financial support or through the hosting of activities.

3 Teaching and learning

The Pestalozzi Programme is a tool of the Council of Europe to make its voice heard in the practice of education through the promotion of its values and standards in the field of education and through the promotion of an appropriate pedagogy.

What is appropriate pedagogy then? This is a long overdue debate in teacher education in Europe. For decades, it almost seemed that people believed more in just providing the right input, the right content and didn’t care which way this content was transmitted, thus neglecting whether real learning did actually follow.

The Council of Europe has adopted the name of Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi for its training programme, as the best symbol of its focus on developing learning methodologies which have a lasting effect and which place the individual’s needs at the heart of the learning process. Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi developed a holistic pedagogy focusing on the development of every faculty of the learner: intellectual, affective and manual (“The head, the heart and the hand”).

But the Pestalozzi Programme draws from a wider array of pedagogical thinking in its attempt to identify a pedagogy which models the values the Council of Europe has been created to uphold: a culture of democracy and respect of human rights and the rule of law. Currently a publication is in preparation which shall shed more light on this to initiate this long overdue debate. What is central is the conviction that methodology is not neutral.

The way we train and teach needs to reflect and model the principles we train and teach for. In other words: the medium is (also) the message. Participative, democratic skills and behaviour cannot be taught in the same way mere knowledge can be transmitted. The training approach adopted focuses on collaborative work and knowledge construction, learning by doing and it builds on the potential and expertise of the trainees as much as on the expertise of the trainers. It aims to mobilise the trainees’ knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to further develop them through a collaborative process of challenge, experience and reflection. Such a process needs time. The learning outcome of a training process that covers a certain period of time, with phases of face-to-face meetings and phases of individual work coupled with mentoring and peer support largely exceeds one-off training activities that do not build on organised and structured follow-up.
4 Converging competences

The importance of so-called soft skills has long been underestimated and the challenge presented by their assessment is central to their recognition. Today we start to realise that only through the convergence of competences, specialist and subject-specific competences on the one and transversal, “soft” knowledge, skills and attitudes on the other, will it be possible to reach the nature and level of learning outcomes which are essential to making our societies politically, socially, economically and environmentally sustainable and democratic in the Europe of today, and above all, tomorrow. In this context “Education for all” also takes on a new dimension. It is not any longer enough to offer some education provisions for all citizens. If we want to meet the challenges our global world faces today, the education offered needs to develop the full potential of every citizen in our diverse democracies so that they can contribute with all their experience and expertise to the way forward. This has moved beyond a humanistic wish, it has become a necessity for the survival of our democracies.

5 And what about higher education?

There is a lot which could be said about higher education and the general approach to teaching and learning which is believed in and promoted by Europe’s higher education institutions. Some say it is “a barren field” for pedagogical innovation, others take a less pessimistic stance and point to modes of collaborative research and similar initiatives. This is not the place to go deeper into this debate although it needs to be led too.

We should however ask ourselves whether the experience of participation in pan-European teacher training as it is offered through the Pestalozzi Programme could not become an integral part of every teacher’s professional life be it as part of the initial preparation for the profession or as part of life-long professional development. The structural changes in European Higher Education brought about by the Bologna Process, creating a European Higher Education Area, could be instrumental in changing the place and importance of international exchange and involvement in teacher education. The 3 + 2 formula (BA and MA) applied to pre-service teacher education could offer the opportunity to dedicate part of the MA to involvement and participation in European training activities dedicated to the knowledge, skills, attitudes and dispositions necessary for sustainable democratic societies in Europe.
III. Social networking for education for sustainable democratic societies

There are hundreds of thousands of education professionals in Europe and many of them share our concerns for a more just and democratic society, a Europe without dividing lines, people living together based on mutual respect. They also share our belief in the important role education has to play in this respect. Teachers are probably the one group of professionals who are in close and intensive contact over a long period of time with ALL citizens of Europe. Their role in forming the knowledge, skills, attitudes and dispositions cannot be underestimated.

However, the day-to-day struggle in educational institution may also lead to disenchantment, burn-out and loss of motivation. Furthermore there is a constant lack of opportunities to share one’s successes and one’s failures, lack of supportive discussion and exchange, lack of stimulating examples of practice and ideas from colleagues.

Bringing all these education professionals in contact is a challenge which can potentially be mastered with today’s communication and information tools and it is a challenge the Pestalozzi Programme is preparing to take up together with partners.

Illich’s vision of learning webs already pre-empts today’s technological developments which make such learning webs a realistic and feasible option:

*The operation of a peer-matching network would be simple. The user would identify himself by name and address and describe the activity for which he sought a peer. A computer would send him back the names and addresses of all those who had inserted the same description. It is amazing that such a simple utility has never been used on a broad scale for publicly valued activity.* (Illich, 1971)

Visibility helps to maximise the impact of activities. Comprehensive and updated information attracts a wider audience and potential target group of users. User-friendly documentation of background information and documents as well as of the concrete products for training and teaching allows a wider professional public to benefit from them. Following these considerations, the Pestalozzi Programme has completely remodelled its web pages and continues improving them.

However, this is only a first step towards effective communication and networking.

Two-way communication and communication channels are a key factor when working with networks and individual professionals from about 50 countries on an ongoing basis. For the time being an online platform (social networking platform) was put into place so that the participants in the training activities of the programme can communicate and exchange before, during and after the training activities and document their work online. This does not only provide a convivial space for exchange and communication,
but above all it increases the quality of the work and the exchanges and feedback from the peers and the opportunities for monitoring and follow-up. Currently there are about 500 education professionals participating in this social network which constitutes a living resource and reinforces the identity of the training programme. It also offers the possibility to develop into a real community of practice of education professionals across the continent upholding and disseminating Council of Europe standards and values.

Currently the Pestalozzi Programme is working on a customised social networking platform together with the European Wergeland Centre10 in Norway which is intended to provide an open networking space for education professionals from all over Europe who share the principles and values of the Council of Europe and our concerns to base the practice of teaching and learning on these values. The platform will offer amongst others information and relevant news, spaces for topical discussions and exchange, online databases for expertise and resources, and spaces for collaborative work on activities and projects.

You are already invited to participate in and contribute to this open, collaborative project as soon as it will be launched in the course of 2011.

References

Notes
1 Ηράκλειτος (Herakleitos; Heraclitus) of Ephesus (535 BC - 475 BC)
2 Ηράκλειτος (Herakleitos; Heraclitus) of Ephesus (535 BC - 475 BC)
3 Named after Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827), Switzerland
5 In this document, the terms ‘training’, ‘education’, ‘capacity building’ are all used in the meaning of “offering opportunities to learn”.
6 For several years now, the Pestalozzi Programme offers places to participants from countries south of the Mediterranean in parts of its activities in order to increase the opportunities for intercultural dialogue in the field of education.
7 See list of the National Liaison Officers on www.coe.int/pestalozzi.
8 Academy of Bad Wildbad, Baden-Württemberg, Germany; the European Wergeland Centre, Oslo, Norway, the Anna-Lindh Foundation, and others.
9 From the Greek παιδαγωγέω (paidagōgeō); in which παιδ (paid) means “child” and ἂγω (ágō) means “lead”; so it literally means “to lead the child”.
10 More information on the European Wergeland Centre on www.theewc.org
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Children’s identity and citizenship in Europe: an Erasmus academic network project

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Abstract

This paper reports on the activities of CiCe (Children’s Identity and Citizenship in Europe), an Erasmus Academic Network, funded by the European Commissions’ Lifelong Learning Programme. The Network links Higher Education institutions concerned with citizenship education and the development of identities in young people. Our partners are in teacher education; and, the education of social pedagogues, youth workers, early childhood workers, sociologists and social psychologists. CiCe brings debates around citizenship and identity to the education of these and other professionals who teach or work with young people as they develop new and multiple identities in a ‘Europe of difference’. Networking activities support lecturers in higher education by providing a forum for the sharing of practice, discussion and development. We also produce and widely disseminate a range of materials, including discussion papers on relevant issues; materials for teaching and learning; and, guidance on course design and development.

Key-words

Citizenship, Identity, Children, Higher education, Europe

CiCe (Children’s Identity and Citizenship in Europe) is an Erasmus Academic Network linking institutions concerned with citizenship education and the development of identities in young people. It was formed in 1998 and since its inception has been funded with the support of the European Commission, from 2008 through its Lifelong Learning Programme. The network is comprised of nearly 100 partner institutions from 30 European countries, with members involved in teacher education; the education of social pedagogues, youth workers, early childhood workers, sociologists and social psychologists; or related disciplines. Our network brings debates around citizenship and identity to the education of these and other professionals who teach or work with
children and young people as they develop new and multiple identities in a ‘Europe of difference’.

**Academic theme**

Erasmus Academic Networks (previously referred to as Thematic Networks) are designed to promote innovation in a specific discipline, set of disciplines or multidisciplinary area. They promote European co-operation and innovation in specific subject areas and contribute to enhancing quality of teaching in higher education, defining and developing a European dimension within a given academic discipline, furthering innovation and exchanging methodologies and good practices.

The theme of our network is children’s identity and citizenship in Europe. As an Erasmus network our focus is on higher education with particular emphasis on pre- and in-service educators concerned with the education of children, defined in broad terms to include all young people from birth to early adulthood, in both formal and informal settings. As such we are concerned with questions such as: What do pre- and in-service professions need to know about the children and young people they work with? What do these children and young people understand about their society? How do they act within it?

How do they construct their identities? How can their participation in society be encouraged? What pedagogic strategies are effective? Where? When?

Citizenship is a contested notion with conceptions ranging from affiliation confined to a nation state to more complex and open conceptions ‘based less on a shared sense of identity, and more on membership of complex network of relationships with others (Kratsborn et al, 2008). Citizenship and identity meet in a multidimensional complex where subjects and subjectivities are dynamic, multiple and positioned in relation to particular discourses and practices. Given this complexity we do not advocate one form of citizenship or citizenship education, nor a common programme, but rather raise debate around citizenship and identity in context, recognising that the societies in which we live are subject to similar pressures and changes, and that other states have different demands, practices and approaches. In practical terms we are concerned with questions such as: who is included and excluded? What rights, obligations and duties do we have? To what extent should our identity as citizens take precedence over other sources of social identity? What are societal constraints in time and place? And ask: What are possible educational responses to these questions?

Europe provides the geographical context for our work: CiCe is above all a European project and our membership and activity gives an explicit European dimensions to
citizenship and identities. Moreover, the areas we address are major priorities of the European Union – social cohesion, tolerance, actively combating racism and xenophobia, the promotion of a European identity, countering the democratic deficit and the promotion of European citizenship. We do not promote one single model of European citizenship rather our concern is with citizenship education and identity formation of children in Europe. Europe is seen as a dynamic entity that is far from being sealed off from the wider world, and within this, we are keen to promote active participation in society as a continuing and pressing priority. For a democratic community to work, the membership must participate, not just as spectators of an elite pursuit ‘accepting a label, assenting to be part of something’ (Ross 2005a), but as active agents in a dynamic society. Equally, we believe that understanding identities as multiple and contingent, embracing the European and other possibilities, contributes to mutual consideration and tolerance. We therefore not only consider what knowledges children need to know, but also what skills and attitudes they need in order to be able to participate in society now and as adults.

How we work

The Network is coordinated by London Metropolitan University, UK, and managed by an Executive Committee drawn from partners in different countries across Europe. Apart from the Network Coordinator, which is an appointed position, the Executive Committee, including President, is democratically elected through our parallel CiCe Association (see http://www.cicea.eu).

Our networking activities and the materials that we produce support lecturers in higher education institutions by providing a forum for the sharing of practice, discussion and development; discussion papers on relevant issues; materials for teaching and learning; and, guidance on course design and development. Lecturers are involved in activity in several ways: annual network conferences and regional events provide a platform for them to propose papers, symposia and workshops that demonstrate relevant practice, discuss course content, disseminate research findings and promote research relevant to teaching in Higher Education. Partners actively volunteer to join working groups and the reports and materials that they produce, which offer, for example, guidance on curriculum design, research student supervision and reflections on current practice in different countries, are circulated to all partners and are freely available on our website (http://cice.londonmet.ac.uk).

Implicit in the above is the involvement of students in undergraduate and postgraduate study, including pre-service and continuing professional development courses, whose work will, in turn, impact on the children and young people that they work with.
Explicit involvement of students within network activity is focused at post-graduate research level. We hold an annual research student conference where up to twelve doctoral research students have opportunity to present and discuss their work.

We also aim to have impact at policy level. Our materials are shared with policy makers concerned with the direction of citizenship education in partner institutions and other educational policy settings including at government level. Each partner has an Institutional Coordinator who, among other things, is responsible for the dissemination and promotion of CiCe materials within the institution. At a national level we have a National Coordinator for each country represented in the Network, responsible for liaising with partners in that country; for working with NGO’s and governmental education authorities; organising national and regional events; the distribution of CiCe materials to national libraries; and, for coordinating with other National Coordinators.

A further strand to our work is with public and community organisations concerned with civic education, social cohesion and the development of respect and tolerance. Where possible we work with such groups and encourage their involvement in HE delivery. In addition to the role of Institutional and National Coordinators as noted above, a Working Group closely liaises with NGOs to establish common ground and guidance on ways of working together. Moreover, we have NGOs as network partners, and many individuals have formal and informal links to such organisations which together with the above helps promote effective dissemination of materials and the sharing of practice. This is further enhanced in local and regional events which specifically seek to involve public and community organisations in contributing and in debate.

We also aim to build and develop positive links with schools and pre-school settings. To this end members are encouraged to involve their existing partners in CiCe networking and events both at local, national and international level through disseminating materials, participating in conference including presenting papers that reflect on educational practice in the area of citizenship and identity formation. More formally we have established a Working Group that aims to build synergies through links between our network and other sectors of lifelong learning with particular focus on Comenius activities.

Cice activites

It is beyond the scope of this paper to outline our activities in detail, but in order to give indication of extent and flavour, information with respect to the following three areas of activity is presented:

- Guidelines on the design of higher education courses
• Building Research Capacity
• Professional guidelines for educators working in the field of citizenship education

Guidelines on the design of higher education courses

We have produced a number of guidance booklets on course development including for teacher education programmes, continuing professional development courses, research degrees, and working in collaboration with NGO’s (http://cice.londonmet.ac.uk/publications). In this paper we present, by way of example to illustrate our activity, some aspects of our guidance for research degrees that relate to citizenship education and identity. Impetus for this in part came from the Tuning Educational Structures in Europe project, undertaken by the European Commission’s Department of Education and Culture (see Gonzales and Wagenaar, 2003). This project addressed several of the Bologna action points: an easily readable and comparable degree structure; a three cycle system; and a transferable system of credits. Significantly, it began the process of identifying generic competences that might be expected to be developed in courses in European higher education. These generic competences were to be complemented by specific competencies ie the competencies one might expect to be developed within a particular academic discipline. CiCe took this forward to consider specific competences relating to citizenship education and identity in first cycle (see Rami et al, 2006), second cycle (Ross, 2005b) and third cycle (Ross et al, 2005c).

With regard to third cycle, research degrees, we identified, through surveying PhD supervisors and students, specific competences that might reasonably be expected to be found in a person with a doctorate in the area of children’s understanding of citizenship and the development of identity. These were grouped into four areas of research ability, social sensitivity to the context of research and study in this area, ethical awareness of the uses and consequences of research and study in this area, and the ability to set such study in a broader socio-political context. So for example specific competences associated with research ability and the processes of carrying out research included:

• Ability to design and use sensitive instruments for fieldwork with young people, both (or either) qualitative and quantitative;
• Be a sensitive researcher – in the interpretation of data, in negotiation with informants – with an awareness of the varieties of meaning of identities, citizenship, etc., particularly as they are affected by issues of gender, social class, ethnicity, linguistic, religion, and within the researcher’s own society and in other societies in Europe and world;
• Be able to critically reflect on their own history/identity construction; and attempt to control for this in the research process;
Ability to work sensitively with children and young people.

Guidelines provide further discussion on each of the identified competencies, and in order highlight their importance, include case studies that report on the experiences of research students. As with all our guidelines, these are freely available on our website and it is hoped that they will prove useful for supervisors and students both within and beyond the CiCe network.

Building research capacity

We hold an annual research student conference where up to twelve doctoral research students have opportunity to present and discuss their work. The conference involves direct input from CiCe members experienced in research and doctoral student supervision, on a range of relevant topics from research design to ‘getting published’, as well as giving personal feedback to students. Masters students are also invited to attend the conference as participant observers. It is hoped that supporting current research students at doctoral level and their supervisors will help ensure a better informed research community, support the development of network at that level, and contribute to the development of ideas of active citizenship, and multiple identities that include a European dimension.

This activity is supplemented by published guidance on research and research supervision from a number of different perspectives. An extract from a booklet exploring Controversial Issues in Citizenship (Nausman et al, 2007) is presented below:

‘Citizenship education is concerned with an exploration of fundamental values in society. Focusing on controversial issues may motivate students and, as they learn to handle tensions and conflicts, their practical training in citizenship will be enhanced. The issues addressed, however, may be sensitive and even threaten the integrity and identity of individuals and groups during the educational process. Citizenship education focuses on questions that may be controversial and as such cause tensions or conflicts that must be dealt with by social scientists. The existence of controversy is both a consequence of the topic area in itself and of the pedagogical methods that are commonly used. Citizenship education encompasses values and value conflicts and this may pose research problems that a student needs to be prepared for. Research on topics related to citizenship may require consideration of controversial issues’.

This booklet goes on to discuss the connection between research about citizenship and, by examples chosen from different disciplinary contexts and from several countries, the main obstacles and opportunities that controversial issues may produce in research. In so doing it provides different perspectives with the aim of stimulating research
students to reflect on their own work.

Another example of guidance from this series on research practice and supervision, is taken from the guidance booklet, ‘Developing practice-based research for critical thinking with philosophy for children’. One section considers the use of questioning with children:

‘One of the questions that might be asked on this topic is whether children, especially younger ones, are actually capable of doing philosophy? The question is particularly pressing for professional philosophers: those involved in postgraduate study, teaching or research. For philosophy is not just about asking random questions out of curiosity, - even, as in this case, ‘childish curiosity’. To do philosophy is to ask questions - and seek answers - that probe beneath the surface of a cliché like: ‘Why is the sky blue?’.

Before asking whether children are capable of philosophising or not, we need some kind of working definition. Some argue that philosophy is primarily concerned with foundations. Thus ‘Why is the sky blue?’ would not be generally thought of as a truly philosophical question, while asking: ‘is blue a colour that exists in my head or in the world?’ is of a different order. The motivation behind the second question may come from the same aimless curiosity that was behind the first; but this second question is ontological and is a basis for further questions of a philosophical nature.

To ask whether children can philosophise must surely be answered in the affirmative. This is not to say children will be aware that, in asking such questions, they are engaged in a philosophical activity. Philosophy is not the sole property of the ivory tower academic or departmental specialist. Philosophy begins with the mundane or ordinary questions of everyday life. To dismiss a question in citizenship education like ‘is President X a good leader?’ would be too hasty. The question is not especially philosophical, but questions like: ‘What makes a good leader?’ are of interest not only to the political historian, but also moral philosophers and, last but not least, teachers of citizenship education. The first question is in itself philosophically inadequate, but it sets the stage for the second’ (Etienne et al, 2007).

**Professional guidance**

We produce a range of guidelines for professionals working in different educational settings, with different age groups and in different cultural contexts. Again to give flavour of our work, presented below is an extract from the introduction to ‘Citizenship Education and Identity in courses for those who will work with Pre-school children’:

‘Citizenship for young children - is there really such a concept? What could citizenship for the young child consist of? Would it be different
from citizenship for an adult? We believe that the child is a citizen from birth, but also that the young child has to grow into the responsibility and rights that are part of being an active member of a democratic society. In one way, being a citizen is different for young children than for adults. The child has to develop and grow into an active citizen, working from experience and trying out different roles, gradually taking on an increasingly active role. One of the aims of every early childhood program should be to teach the child to become an active citizen in a way that does not conform to their surroundings, but is imaginative and exploratory. This emphasis on experience in early childhood institutions reflects certain values that firstly indicate that the child is looked on as an active citizen from the beginning, and secondly show that children are trusted to make decisions concerning their everyday life, which will lead them to being able to make decisions about wider society. Early childhood institutions that exercise a democratic pedagogy give children the sense that everybody is part of society, and that they are valued, included and have a say.

This view of the early childhood institution's role in building up citizenship corresponds with Ocana's (2003) definition: citizenship is not a passive condition (simply enjoying a set of rights and freedoms) but should be active, based on political and civic participation. He points out that historically national citizenship has been constructed through social participation, and that this involvement has often adopted the shape of clashes and conflicts.

Over time, this led to the development of a set of civil, political and social rights and duties, conscience and identity. This can also be said to be the cultural and historical route that early childhood educators follow when educating and talking about citizenship, and how children become active members of their societies. Korsgaard et al. (2001) explains democratic citizenship in a similar way. The first right of a citizen is to establish a law and the first duty of the same citizen is to respect that law. Medve (in Kroflí, 2004) states that while education should prepare children for the social reality of life, it can never truly embraces the realistic conditions of life. In the end, therefore, education is always a discourse of a person with values. For the early childhood educator who aims to work for democracy, the journey must therefore begin with a clarification of values: which values are important, and why do we want those values transferred to our children? (Dyrfjord et al, 2004)
The CiCe community

Our network is founded on the premise of sharing knowledge and understanding between partners, and translating these to active implementation in practical programmes that impact on the practice and delivery of courses and educational policies. As can be seen from the extracts presented above, CiCe activity addresses a range of aspects of citizenship education and identity relevant to educators working with children in pre-school settings through to study at doctoral level. We are active in and involve all European countries in the Union and three others. Our processes attempt to ensure that we consider and present a wide range of practices and policies from across Europe. We connect partner institutions and people within them who feel they can achieve more by working together than by working each on their own. This is significant in relation to both geographical coverage and the cross-discipline establishment of the network with focus on a common theme with topics of contemporary concern. Relevance of activity to partners together with a network structure and culture that fosters social belonging and interdependence are seen as central to the success of participation to date.

The conceptual dimension of CiCe with focus on children’s identity and citizenship provides coherent focus for participation from different academic disciplines. Cross- and inter-discipline approaches also add value activity and serve to, through conference and seminar meetings, stimulate discourse and contribute to the sharing of innovative ideas and practices. Such collaboration helps promote synergy between teaching and research by encouraging higher education institutions to integrate research results in their teaching. Moreover, our activities help to reinforcing the link between education and society, bringing together public and private sector, scientific and professional players, thereby contributing to Europe’s innovation capacity.

Networks have both a conceptual and a social dimension and CiCe aims to be inclusive and foster a sense of belonging which we believe in turn stimulates active participation. This is fostered through regular working group meetings, including three face-to-face meetings per year, and an Annual Conference held in a different European country each year.

This paper has only provided a brief overview of the CiCe network. Further information can be found on our website, which includes over 700 articles related to children’s identity and citizenship in Europe.
References


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Practical networking as an internationalisation tool: a case study of the Businet Organisation

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Abstract

Higher education in Europe continues to evolve rapidly, mirroring industry, and is becoming increasingly global. Globalisation is described by Charles W.L. Hill (2009) as “the shift towards a more integrated and interdependent world economy. Globalisation has several facets, including the globalisation of markets and the globalisation of products”. In higher education the term globalisation is seldom used, instead we refer to “internationalisation”. Universities and colleges of higher education need to examine what globalisation (internationalisation) means to them. Do our products need to be adapted? Have our markets changed? What do we need to consider in terms of both market and product? Is it a threat, an opportunity, or indeed both?

This article will examine internationalisation in higher education, the goals, both in terms of aims and objectives that institutions set for themselves, and the part that networking plays in the internationalisation process. A case study of the Businet organisation, “a network for the development of business education programme,” will be used to examine the practical role that an educational network can play in helping to enable and support an institution to achieve its institutional goals.

Key-words

Internationalisation, Networking, Enabling, Businet

Introduction

The internationalisation of higher education has been usefully defined by Jane Knight and Hans de Wit (1997) as “the process integrating an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institution.”

Most Universities and colleges of higher education are committed in principle to the process of internationalisation and generally have established what their aims and objectives are. Some institutes have already made significant progress towards achieving an integrated policy on internationalisation. Some are at the very start of the
process. Many institutes may have started the process but are still looking at ways of operationalising their initial goals. This article examines what institutes should consider when they are looking at the issue of “internationalisation”, and proposes some practical suggestions which institutions may find useful.

The European Union’s Lisbon Agenda initiative set out the aim of making Europe the most competitive and dynamic economy in the world. Education has a major role in achieving this ambitious goal. The International strategy of educational institutions is particularly significant when considering the European Unions Lisbon aims.

The Lisbon Agenda is strongly linked to the “Bologna Process”. The over-arching aim of the Bologna Process (established by the 1999 Bologna Declaration) is to create a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) based on international cooperation and academic exchange that is attractive to European students and staff, as well as to students and staff from other parts of the world.

The envisaged European Higher Education Area will

- facilitate mobility of students, graduates and higher education staff;
- prepare students for their future careers, and for life as active citizens in democratic societies, and support their personal development and
- offer broad access to high-quality higher education, based on democratic principles and academic freedom.

The Bologna Declaration and process provides the framework for internationalisation across the Higher Education (HE) sector. EURASHE (Eurashe, the European Association of Institutions of Higher Education) is part of the Bologna follow-up Group (BFUG) and a consultative member to the Bologna process. Eurashe’s views on “The implementation of the Bologna Process in Professional Higher Education” (cf. The official Bologna Process website 2007-2010, at: http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/about/) based on a report published in 2010, will be considered later in this article.)

The second issue to be considered in this article is the role networking can play in achieving the goals of internationalisation. A broad definition of networking can be found in Webster’s dictionary, which describes the process as “meeting and interacting with individuals who have similar interests in an effort to build relationships that will produce current and future benefits”.

A case study exploring the activities of an established educational network and how the organisation facilitates successful activities will be used. The network identified is Businet, a network for the development of Higher Education, which was established in 1987. The organisation was established by 6 forward thinking institutions, many of whom are still involved within the network today. Businet now operates across 24
countries and has a membership of almost 100.

The case study demonstrates the part an active educational network can play in helping organisations to achieve their institutional goals. It will also consider elements of relationship management and relationship marketing that are required to achieve the desired levels of internationalisation.

The Businet network seeks to provide something for all of the stakeholders associated with higher education institutions. This article will examine those activities.

1 Internationalisation of higher education

There are many definitions of internationalisation and what internationalisation is in relation to education. The definition of De Witt and Knight (1997/8), as proffered in the introduction is interesting because of the elements of the definition and what can be interpreted from them

- This definition refers to internationalisation as a process; this differs from many definitions in which it is seen as a product (study abroad, mobility...).
- Internationalisation is seen as being a response to (driven by) outside factors.
- Internationalisation includes what occurs at the home institution as well as outside the home country.

De Wit and Knights definition would indicate that internationalisation has to be part of the ethos of an organisation and not just a hollow statement of intent.

Internationalisation will mean different things to different institutions and the variety of definitions just serves to underline this fact. Internationalisation is seen differently by different organisations; reflecting both the organisational and respective, national cultures. It may be that in some countries, internationalisation is driven by commercial motives, whilst in others the “educational benefit” is the major driving force. It is apparent however that internationalisation has to be driven by the institution and that the “ethos” of the organisation has to have an international focus for it to be successful.

1.1 University’s international strategy

In the publication “Academy Exchange” (issue 5 Winter 2006) issued by the UK organisation, The Higher Education Academy, Professor Ella Richards, Pro-Vice-Chancellor at Newcastle University examines Internationalisation at her institution and asks the question, “where are we going and how do we know when we have got there?”

This is a valid question that we can all ask ourselves about our own organizations
The methodology applied by Newcastle University and described in the journal was:

- Mapping exercise “where are we”.
- Consultation with staff as to what the University’s international strategy should be.
- Explore literature and issues.

This reflects the “Egan Model B” approach to organizational change. The model identifies three stages to change approach: Diagnosis, Future Vision and Strategy.

Newcastle University identified two key areas that their strategy had to address, “internationalisation at home” and “internationalisation abroad”.

Professor Richards states in her article that, “implementing this strategy and ensuring that our student-focused activities were centred in a wider, more clearly articulated University strategy, involved a complex change process. The key to this change was to give a clear message, at both central and faculty level, from the Senior Management Team on what the University was aiming for, and to ensure that champions and enthusiasts were supported in taking change forward. We had to learn from and disseminate expertise from across the institution... Finally staff need to be supported and valued in accomplishing change”.

Professor Richards concludes her article with a list of helpful principles that in part reflect the Change Approach identified in Kotter's “Eight Step Model” (Kotter, 1996)

Taking the advice of Professor Richards and putting it into the model of Kotter the following could form a model of change for other institutions – this model would incorporate the following elements, namely:

- A “Guiding Coalition”, in other words, champions from different areas of the organization that will promote change, led by a committed senior management team.
- A vision and a strategy – making a clear strategic commitment to an international aspiration.
- Communication of the vision – the vision must be communicated across the organization and to all stakeholders – it is vital that everyone understands why internationalisation is important.
- Empower broad based action – ownership is the key to success, by empowering individuals and teams they will take forward the vision of internationalisation.
- Generate short-term wins – short-term wins will encourage and demonstrate the benefits of internationalisation, Professor Richards refers to developing more effective induction programmes, because they have immediate benefits to students.
- Consolidate gains – it is important to communicate that change is occurring, and to demonstrate the “wins” that have been secured. This can be done by the sharing of good practice, both across the institution and with partners.
- Anchor into the culture – it is important to make internationalisation the “norm” by
embedding international practices into the everyday life of the institution.

An important message to keep reiterating to the stakeholders is that internationalisation is not just about what happens outside of your country, but it is about what happens in your institution.

1.2 Eurashe

Eurashe, the European Association of Institutions of Higher Education, was established in 1990 as an International association that promotes professional Higher Education at a national and international level and through cooperation, promotes internationalisation within Professional Higher Education (PHE). It has a vital role within the Non-University sector, as it represents the sector on the Bologna Follow-up group.

In a recent report “Implementation of the Bologna Process in Professional Higher Education” (Eurashe, March 2010), Eurashe takes stock of the implementation of (progress towards) the Bologna objectives. The text identifies the commitments that Eurashe feel essential if the vision for the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) is to be achieved by 2020.

Eurashe states that “during the next decade, nations and governments must cooperate to remove all social, economic and cultural barriers where they still exist”. It is evident that for this aspiration to be realised education providers will need to work effectively with government agencies. It is, however, still the case that in a number of important EU countries artificial barriers are still in place which limit progress and that some traditional establishments are not moving at the same pace as other organizations.

Eurashe goes on to articulate its ambition for the establishment of National Qualifications Frameworks, and the employability of graduates and lifelong learning to be central to the higher education curriculum. In short the aim is for coherence, transparency, innovation, flexibility of approach and acceptance of these aspects of higher education. The vision of Eurashe would allow for “real internationalisation” across the HE sector.

Eurashe goes on to express its commitment to International openness: “Our vision for 2020 is an European Higher Education Area where the international dimension is perceived as an integrated part of the mission and role of higher education institutes (HEI); where all study programs will offer students the possibility to carry out at least one semester abroad; and where the positive significance of international openness also considers immigrant students as important contributors to the internationalisation of higher education (HE). We urge governments to abolish all legal obstacles relevant to
This would seem like the dream scenario for many people working in internationalisation. The question is whether it is realistic and achievable? The answer is a qualified “Yes”; However, HE across Europe is still restricted by government education policies and practices and to achieve this proposed dream scenario governments must be fully committed to achieving the goals of Eurashe. Are all national governments represented in the EU really committed to such goals? Currently it would not appear so.

Where educational establishments can exert their influence is in providing as many opportunities as they can for both staff and students in terms of mobility. The Bologna process sets a target for students mobility at 20% by the year 2020. In some countries this target would seem to be achievable. In others it remains a fantasy. Government again must play their part if the 20% target is to be met. Institutions however must look at the way that their programmes are structured and how mobility is promoted within the institution to maximize the possibilities for students, and equally important, for staff. The role of staff as “international ambassadors” should never be underestimated, as they can promote the concept, and extol the virtues of internationalisation to students and colleagues.

Eurashe state that the “mobility of students and staff remains an important goal of the Bologna Process. Mobility is important for sharing and dissemination of knowledge and skills among students and professionals; it contributes to the personal development and responsible citizenship of the individual; and it underpins the European identity and the multilingual tradition in a global context.

Eurashe state that we will inform our students about the specific advantages of studies or practical training abroad, and we will stimulate the interest of employers who accept foreign students for practical training as a part of their HE studies. We will stimulate multilingualism and multi-cultural competencies, and promote mobility in a harmonious way, avoiding the brain drain phenomenon. And we will enter into a discussion with those of our member institutions who might still believe that a mono-lingual and mono-cultural approach is to be preferred”.

To achieve the 20% target of student movement across the EU would, at this stage, seem almost impossible. Despite what the politicians would like to believe Europe is made up of a number of states that are not homogeneous. What may be more realistic is to set national targets based on current performance rather that set targets that are unrealistic across all countries. Unachievable targets are a deterrent not a motivation – this truth needs to be acknowledged.
1.3 Internationalising higher education: enhancing learning, teaching and curriculum

In the book entitled *Internationalising Higher Education: Enhancing learning, teaching and curriculum*, Elspeth Jones and Sally Brown (2007) propose that the “international student lies at the heart of the university as a source of cultural capital and international diversity, enriching the learning experience, enhancing staff experience, and building a more powerful learning community”. This book provides a very useful introduction for anyone new to the concept of internationalisation and it provides a valuable checklist of the top factors that institutions need to reflect on if they are seeking to implement a meaningful move towards genuine implementation of internationalisation within their organisation. The author poses questions surrounding Internationalising Higher Education, and provides academic consideration of the key issues of implementation of a cross-cultural strategy.

Topics considered include:

- the impact of internationalisation on the organisation;
- considering and facilitating cultural change within an organisation;
- quality issues surrounding the organisation and internationalisation;
- assessment, teaching, learning issues;
- student support issues for home and international students;
- the process of inducting, welcoming and guidance for students;
- heightening the awareness of the impact of internationalisation on employability and fostering engagement of students and staff within the wider community.

An edited extract from the book, published by the Higher Education Academy in the UK (issue winter 2006), summarises the key factors referred to above in “Internationalising higher education”. These factors are broken down into categories: institutional, staff, students, curriculum, and support. Incorporated in institutional factors are:

- Vision.
- Values.
- Policies and strategies.
- Partnerships.
- Visible internationalisation.
- Management information.

These factors serve to emphasize that for internationalisation to be successful it must be embedded across the organisation. There needs to be a visible commitment throughout the organisation. Internationalisation will flourish in the right environment – an environment that supports what is trying to be achieved, an environment where there is
a culture of shared values and an understanding of the benefits of internationalisation.

- Incorporated in the staff factors are: breadth (range) of activity, international staff, enthusiasts, support for international perspectives, staff development.
- Incorporated in the student factors are: communication, diversity.
- Incorporated in the curriculum factors are: internationalised curriculum, exchanges, volunteering and internationalisation at home.
- Incorporated in the support factors are: services, pastoral, linguistic, cultural and academic.

Later in the article we will explore how an active Educational Network can help achieve these key factors.

Networking as a tool of internationalisation

By the very nature of internationalisation it is necessary to work with organisations outside your home country. When working with these organisations it should be the objective to develop a strong long term relationship. It is preferable to work with organisations that you can feel comfortable with, which have similar values to your own, and where a relationship of mutual respect and trust is established. These are the characteristics of a partnership. In this process both organisations and individuals are equally important. Institutes where internationalisation is embedded in the organisation will have established their own group (network) of partners with whom they feel comfortable. Institutions new to internationalisation will need to develop their own working links, which may, or may not develop into successful working relationships. All working links, because of the dynamic nature of education will be fluid, as the needs of all partners will change and the key players in the institutions also move on.

Some institutions make a positive decision to become involved with network organisations. There are many such organisations. These networks can be defined by size, range of activities, range of partners, curriculum specialisation and aims and objectives. The benefits to members will vary according to the type and scope of the individual networks. The number of networks in Europe alone is surprisingly high. Many have been in existence for a number of years, and many are growing, consequently it can be assumed that their existence meets the needs of their members and that new parties are seeking to enter into these networks. Membership of a network will generally incur payment of an annual fee. The level and types of fee charged will vary. The majority of networking organisations are non profit organisations but will charge a fee to cover their costs.

Various definitions of networking, which are noted in the text “Brilliant Networking”
by Steven D’Sousa (2008), give a flavour of what networking means to different people:

- “Networking is like a road trip. Working with others to reach a common destination and enjoying the journey”, Carole Stone, Journalist.
- “Networking is using connections with others intelligently”, Martin Berger.
- “Networking is about developing even further your professional reputation and building a support network that you can call upon”, Melvyn De Freitas
- “Relationship building is at the heart of professional success”, Arti Patel.

Whilst these definitions are diverse it can be concluded that they express a common core of thought, namely that:

- Networking can help to achieve goals.
- Networking can be used to enhance your working environment.
- Relationships are at the heart of successful networking.

The key to finding the right network is practical field based research. It is necessary to search for the networking organisation that meets the needs of your organisation. It is however equally, if not more, important to find a network that shares your values. If you find people who share your values it is most likely that you have found someone that you can work with and develop a relationship based on mutual respect and trust

Networking is of course not an activity exclusive to the work of educators. It is part of what effective business is about. Websters dictionary defines business networking as:

“the exchange of information or services among individuals, groups, or institutions; specifically : the cultivation of productive relationships for employment or business”.

There are networking enterprises where business and education meet. One such organisation is Businet, an organisation which serves as a useful case study vehicle to further explore the relationship between internationalisation and networking.

**Businet – network for the development of businet education programmes – a case study in networking**

Businet was established in 1987 by a group of institutes that had the vision to bring together education providers of institutes from across Europe working together to meet their institutional needs and provide opportunities for the institutions, their staff and their students. The activities of the organisation have changed significantly over the 25 years of operation but the organisation has remained true to the initial core aims.

The network now has almost 100 members in 23 countries. The network took the strategic decision to expand beyond Europe last year and has recently recruited its first
member in India. It is anticipated that in the near future members will be recruited from other parts of the world.

There are two types of members: Full membership is available to any educational institution delivering a business curriculum at a higher education level and Associate membership is available to any public or private enterprise, which supports the aims and objectives of the Association, thus complimenting the activities of the full members of the network. Associate members bring a valuable additional resource to Businet through their business connections, industrial experience, expertise and varied experience. They also provide a valuable link to industry for educational partners.

Businet aims to provide a vehicle to facilitate the networking of the stakeholders associated with education, the institutes themselves, the staff and students of those institutes and industry. Businet provides a structure to enable successful and effective co-operation. ("specifically: the cultivation of productive relationships for employment or business").

The aim of Businet is to enable its members to achieve their institutional goals in respect of internationalisation.

The rationale for including this case study is in order to provide an example of an active networking organisation.

The Businet network is an active one, offering a range of opportunities to meet the diverse needs of the member institutes. It has established an effective model for facilitating networking through the activities of the organization and its members.

Member organisations work together on activities such as:

- Student exchange.
- Staff Exchange (non-academic staff) and Teacher Mobility, (with and without European funding).
- International work placements, both funded and unfunded.
- Leonardo da Vinci project such as partnership and mobility projects.
- Multi-lateral projects, both funded and non funded.
- Intensive short term courses, both Erasmus (e.g. Intensive Programmes – IP’s) and non-funded.
- Student conferences.
- Curriculum specific working groups.
- Interdisciplinary working groups.
- Thematic working groups
Student exchanges

Student mobility for study abroad is a core activity that member institutions work on together. Most member institutes have active mobility programmes and members have bilateral agreements that allow for study abroad activities (within Europe) within the framework of the Erasmus programme. The relationship between members ensures that mobility activities are enhanced. Members will use formal networking events, such as the Annual Conference of the network, to negotiate student, staff and teacher mobilities with their established partners. They can also seek out new partners to develop their own network of partners. Bi-lateral agreements are often established during the Annual Conference and subsequent events.

Staff exchange and teacher mobility, Erasmus activities

The networking opportunities afforded by the organisation are ideal when looking for and setting up teaching and staff mobility assignments. Having an ongoing relationship with other organisations / individuals in the network facilitates this type of activity. The establishment of personal relationships assists when looking to put movements in place.

Members can use the internal communication system of the network to search for, or offer, opportunities for staff and teacher mobilities.

An example of good practice is of a Finnish college that organises an international week at its institution where home and guest lecturers deliver an international intensive short course of a themed study. It promotes the event, and offers the opportunities for partner institutions to participate in it, via the Businet communication system – using its membership of the network to facilitate the international activities of the institution.

International work placements, both funded and unfunded

Member institutions make applications for the mobility of students on Erasmus, or Leonardo, funded placements within Europe.. They often use fellow member institutions as placement “finders/identifiers” outside their home country - sharing information to help each other.

Where members are approached by employer organisations offering work experience possibilities the member institute can share those opportunities with other institutes via the internal communication system.

Businet also offers certification of the placement period with the “Certificate of International Business Practice”. This enables those students who wish to, the
opportunity to gain formal recognition for the successful completion of a period of work experience outside of their own country.

**Multilateral projects**

The network provides the opportunity for like-minded organisations to work together to consider and develop project funding applications (to access regional, national and international funding mechanisms) EU. Members build trust based relationships and therefore are aware of who they can look to when developing a project idea.

An example of good practice, in relation to a major project, was the development of a project called “Framework”. Framework came about as a result of a brainstorm held at the Annual Conference, where members identified issues that they had in relation to providing good quality work experiences for their students, and potential solutions to those problems.

What this culminated in was a Leonardo “Thematic Action” project that received very significant funding from the EU. Members of the network were given the opportunity to become members of the project at the planning stages. A significant number of members (19 in total) chose to become partners in this project and were involved in the development and delivery of the project.

The Framework project was established to meet the needs of 3 stakeholders groups, in relation to periods of work placement. The stakeholders are the educational establishments, the students and industry (the placement provider).

The project aimed to provide a quality framework to underpin the learning experience of students working on an industrial placement. The needs the project sought to provide are:

- A quality placement experience for which the student is appropriately prepared and through which the student is properly supported, enabling maximum benefits to be gained from the work based learning taking place.
- A quality system that supports the role of the placement provider in offering an appropriate learning environment for the work based learning to be undertaken.
- A system that enables education institutions more effectively to integrate the academic curriculum with work based skills development, and which offers a more attractive means of encouraging employers to provide quality placements.
Curriculum specific and special interest work groups

The Businet organisation has always incorporated a number of “working groups” to establish good practice, address issues, establish a common ground and promote development of the curricular in business related subject areas.

Many of the networking activities of the organisation take place within the working groups. These working groups are established by either curriculum area or by a common area of special interest.

The activities of these groups involve managing teacher and student exchanges, the conferment of Higher European Diplomas and Certificates, the organisation of international short courses (e.g. IP’s) bringing students from across Europe together, and the accessing of opportunities provided by European funding mechanisms.

The curriculum (working) groups currently are:

- Financial Services and Accounting.
- Information and Computer Technology.
- Marketing and International Trade.
- Tourism.
- Communications.
- Business Languages and Information Systems Business Law.

Additionally there are three special interest groups

- International Relation Managers.
- Lifelong Learning.
- Decision Makers Forum.

Short programmes (intensive programmes), both Erasmus and non funded

Businet member organisations organise intensive programmes together with fellow members. Thus providing added value to the students programmes of study. Intensive programmes are organised within the curriculum grouping, for example the Finance group hold events every year at different institutes across Europe. These types of activities are becoming increasingly more popular as they provide a very interesting and worthwhile experience for the student. They will always involve representatives of industry (future employers) and this strong “industry” involvement also benefits the education institute.

Erasmus funding for intensive programmes is restricted to those programmes that have a minimum duration of 10 working days. A number of members do have projects that are funded working with their Businet partners. There has been a trend for partners
to develop short programmes that are either institutionally funded, student funded, or more commonly both. These intensive programmes tend to be organised within the curriculum groupings. An example of this is within the Marketing group where they hold a series of short events that they call “Busidays” events, annually. An example of Busiday events was a short programme held in Eindhoven, which involved Phillips. The student newsletter referring to this event is displayed in Appendix 2.

Other curriculum groups specialising in Tourism, ICT and Communications also run very successful events annually.

**Student conferences**

In addition to the student events organised by the curriculum groups, Businet organises an Annual Student Conference (established in 1999) open to students of all member institutes. The primary aims of this conference are to bring students from a range of countries together to experience a “real conference” and to undertake activities surrounding a theme.

The Businet “Unite” Student Conference, as it is known, is held annually and is of 5 days duration. The most recent event was held in Edinburgh in November 2009. The theme of the conference was “Employability Skills and Cultural Awareness”, with 110 students from seventeen institutes of Higher Education, from nine EU countries attending the event. Speakers from a variety of backgrounds (Human Resource Management, specialist recruitment organisations, academia, journalism and business) provided plenty of stimulus material for the students to think about. The conference is designed to encourage reflection, and self analysis and stimulating thoughts about future opportunities. Evaluation after the event regularly indicates that this is achieved.

The event also promotes networking amongst the students and the sharing of experiences and best practice. Students continue to share experiences after the event using social networking systems.

The network places great value on the education of employability skills, and feels that the blend of nationalities at the event makes for a perfect vehicle to promote, educate and use the defined skills.

The structure of the event is indicated below:
Annual conference

The Businet Annual Conference is central to the activities of the organisation. It is the networking event where relationships are developed, activities planned and ideas turned into actions. It is the formal networking event of the organisation.

The conference is a three day event (plus optional social day) with keynote speakers, workshops for the sharing of good practice, and curriculum / special interest working group meetings. There is also a full social programme during the event, which enhances networking opportunities.
By design the conference is always held in a hotel with a conference facility, allowing delegates to stay on. This enables delegates to meet and to maximise the networking time available. Businet is very conscious of the needs of the delegates and strives to create a welcoming environment that makes the event both useful, and enjoyable. Newcomers are introduced to the organisation and welcomed prior to the start of the main event. This introduces them to key individuals and the “language” (jargon) of the network. Newcomers are seen as bringing new ideas and experience, so ensuring that they are comfortable at the event is a priority. The reflections of a first time delegate can be found in Appendix 1.

The “success” of the event is evaluated each year and the suggestions of the members are considered when planning the next event. Over time the structure of the conference has developed to allow members to pursue their institutional and personal goals. The conference has to provide opportunities and be suitable for a range of delegates. The roles of the delegates range from Senior Managers, to International Managers and teaching staff.
The conference is designed to offer both formal and informal networking opportunities. It is the organizations show piece annual event. An aim of the organizers is to encourage and facilitate the creation of a suitable environment that enables the delegates to maximize the time / opportunities available. Evaluation tools are used to ensure that a suitable environment was present throughout the conference. When identifying future venues, factors such as conference facilities, networking areas, cost and accessibility are considered. These factors are the key to providing the correct physical environment. The physical environment has to be right in order that the correct “facilitating environment” can be achieved.

Conference networking is enabled by a series of activities (such as a rational ice breaking event referred to as the “European Aperitif “and social activities), with supporting organizational materials (such as personalized information packages).

Conclusion

It is evident that to achieve international objectives institutions will be required to work together with other institutions in other countries. Although it is possible to source partners individually it is clear that strong networking organizations can assist in the development of suitable partnerships. In addition, it nurtures an environment in which the concept of internationalisation is encouraged to the point that it becomes the norm. An active network provides the impetus for staff development, student development, the internationalization of the curriculum and the institution, and international research, all of which are considered to be key reasons for internationalization (J. Knight, 2003).

As the working title of Businet is ‘a Network for the Development of Businet Education Programmes’, networking needs to be central to the activities of the organization. The organization needs to be constantly reviewing its activities and what ‘added value’ it can offer the members, particularly in relation to networking. The methods of networking, including the modes of communication, need to be considered in order to take the network forward.

The strength of the network is based on the trust between member institutes and the individuals within them. Consequently there is a strong sense of community within the network. This is fostered by the willingness of members to share best practice and knowledge, which enables them to benchmark and consider their own aims, and objectives. Businet also provides a platform for the provision of information about trends and developments in Higher Education, with a special emphasis on Vocational Business education. Businet members are so familiar with the “idea” of thinking beyond national boundaries when they plan curriculum activities, events, projects etc, that for
them the internationalization is truly embedded, it is not a ‘bolt on' that is pursued because external forces require it, but because the members are already persuaded of the added value it brings.

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Appendix 1

Reflection on the Annual Businet Conference regarding networking from a newcomer’s point of view

Mareen Schoenfelder, New College Durham

When I registered for the Annual Businet Conference for the first time, I had already heard about Businet on a few occasions. Especially the always varying locations roused my interest. I understood that a main concept of this educational network is indeed about networking. However, I did not know what to expect. Therefore, I went to the conference free of expectation and with only little background knowledge or people I knew.

At the Conference

The first point of contact after arrival was at the Reception Desk. A very warm welcome was made by Businet staff. The reception desk was directly in the reception area of the hotel. Already you got a glimpse of how Businet was operating: people who were arriving, were welcomed with a very warm smile, one or two comments were made about how the children were doing and everywhere around you could see little groups of Businet member hugging each other and trying to get up to speed with what has happened since the last conference.

And although I was new to the “Businet family”, I already felt like a part of the whole. So, I made my way from group to group, got introduced, introduced myself or people came over to say hello themselves.

After the first steps were taken, the next big event was the Newcomers’ meeting. This meeting was meant to introduce new members to the network and get to know its structure, aims and objective and likewise to meet other newcomers. I thought it was a very good idea to attend this meeting as it took away my nervousness a little.

An interesting observation for me was that during lunch breaks and within the bar area, people were chatting loosely or exchanging ideas and thoughts all the time. Not rarely I picked up sentences like “I was thinking about a project...” or “Now that I see you, can we talk about..."

These ideas were then further developed in the free time between key speeches and working group meetings that have been particularly dedicated for networking activities in the conference programme. During this time, people met and discussed new or current projects in the hotel bar, reception area or on the hotel terrace.

The key speeches were very interesting and closely related to day-to-day issues I
deal with in the International Office. During the speeches and in the working groups I then got the opportunity to exchange ideas and discuss the speeches with like-minded people. What a wonderful chance to broaden my horizon which got enhanced further by the evening programme. Simply because some ideas can be better discussed with a nice glass of red wine...

**Advantages of the Businet Network:**

I have been to various conferences and seminars – and never did I experience such a dynamic and almost informal/familiar atmosphere. What definitely helped effective networking was the fact that the conference venue and accommodation were in the same hotel. Participants could use their time most efficiently and use every single opportunity from breakfast to nightcap for networking activities.

Another very useful fact is that the “Working Groups” were divided into interest groups. This gave you an optimal opportunity for exchange with like-minded colleagues. Instead of unwillingly being put in a room with a bunch of people with different interests, the working group rooms of this conference seemed very lively and you could observe on a stroll to the ladies room people engaging, mind mapping and discussing law, marketing or travel and tourism topics.

On a voluntary basis, members could sign up for the “Saturday’s Social Visit” where you have been given the opportunity to experience local landmarks. And even though some members looked extremely tired (from the Gala dinner the night before), the networking seemed to have reached its peak.

Last but not least, as already mentioned earlier, during the entire conference you could feel this warm, open and welcoming “family” atmosphere. What an experience to remember!

**Now What:**

**When I went home, I was reflecting on the outcome of this conference. I could not believe the long list of things to do on my writing pad. Things like:**

- To develop networking contacts further
- To use new contacts for projects (e.g. International Weeks) and exchange activities between colleges for staff and students
- To consider outcomes for the requirements of European Exchange Programmes which brings European funding opportunities
- To use activities and key speech notes for enhancement for the college as well as for its
students
  • To follow up conference ideas and email potential partners

Not bad, I thought, for a newcomer of the Businet Conference. But the most important insight I took away from the conference is the following:

If I find the right partners within this vibrant network, then there are no limitations for my creativity, scope or type of projects and exchanges. New doors were opened and I very much looked forward to report this to my colleagues at home.
Appendix 2

Busidays

Students Conference Eindhoven 14th – 16th March 2010

Eindhoven The Netherlands

Together with Philips and Fontys University of Applied Science we organized a Businet students’ conference.

Sunday - Students and lecturers from 8 different schools arrived in the afternoon at the hostel for “taste my country” (students bring in traditional drinks and aperitifs from their countries).

Monday - We started for a guided tour at the Philips Museum and the Philips football stadium. In the afternoon there was a guided tour in the spectacular light application centre of Philips Lighting.

Mr. Erwin Dolman, Senior Director Outdoor Segment Philips, introduced a real Philips case: Solar LED Outdoor lighting for the Indian market.

Tuesday - The students were mixed in different groups for the Philips case.

After a briefing by Mr. Wilms, Senior Lecturer in international marketing of Fontys University of Applied Sciences, students started to work on the case.

At the end of the afternoon students had to present the solutions to two directors of Philips lighting.

The presentations were very good and the students were complimented by Philips for the outstanding quality of their solutions.

At night there was a closing dinner and the students were handed out a certificate of the international Busidays signed by the Senior Director Outdoor Segment Philips, Mr. E. Dolman.

Wednesday - All the students went home very satisfied after three days of hard work in the Netherlands.

Six days later I received a telephone call from the marketing department of Philips Lighting to say that they were interested in starting market research in India for Solar LED Lighting with a group of students!

Geert Timmers

Senior Lecturer International Marketing

Where in India should Philips start a marketing survey for Solar LED Outdoor Lighting?
Internationalisation: an agent of change and development (the case of EAIE)

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Abstract
Internationalisation of higher education started out as a satellite activity in most universities, something very peripheral with its own agenda. In retrospect it is however very clear that the impact of this internationalization has touched many more areas than anticipated. University management has changed so has the role of the international offices and their management. The most important changes however can be seen in them multinational or global context. The Bologna declaration, the multinational cooperation programmes and the student and teacher exchanges. The most unexpected areas is however the development of international associations and organizations all over the world concerned with international education. They have today become important factors in policy making within the higher education area.

Key-words
Internationalisation, Management, Global impact, Associations

Europe
Following the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, Europe went through a period of profound change. New nation states came into existence, as well as new regions, and the European Union more than quadrupled its number of member states to 27. The Maastricht Treaty of 1992 created a common market built on the free movement of people, goods, services, and capital. Higher education and research were included in the European treaty stating that that “the activities of the Community shall include: the promotion of research and technological development; and a contribution to education and training of quality (European Union, 1992)

Against this background both the entire European Union and its neighbours started to develop and implement policies bringing together ideas and new initiatives to serve national needs as well as international ambitions.
New ways and new days

International higher education has been boosted by a series of innovative programmes to encourage new ways of international co-operation. ERASMUS, now in its 23rd year, has proved to be a success, moving 2 million students to study at a foreign university in Europe. The program fostered exchanges beyond traditional partnerships, introduced international curriculum development and the seminal system of credit and grade transfer - the ECTS. It was followed by ERASMUS MUNDUS, a worldwide cooperation and mobility programme that aim to enhance quality in higher education and promote intercultural understanding.

International research in Europe was boosted by the EU Framework Programmes, currently in is 7th stage, with more money than ever before. And of course the Lisbon Strategy was launched with the objective of making the EU “the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion, and respect for the environment (European Union, 2000).

Reform and change also took place on the national level. Many countries reformed their national higher education and research systems, often as part of more general public sector reforms identified as New Public Management (NPM) (Bleiklie, et. al, 2000). The general objective was to make the higher education sector more responsive to demands and expectations from the broader society. NPM introduced an active state assuming responsibility for the efficiency of higher education, its organisation and quality of its services. International competition became more apparent and market forces entered the higher education sphere.

The Bologna Declaration was signed in 1999 and took university reform and internationalisation to a new level. A number of countries used the opportunity to restructure their entire higher education system. Germany introduced a number of legal, financial and organisational measures to make their universities more responsive, notably the “excellence initiative “, an attempt at introducing a performance based allocation of resources. Comparable changes have taken place in countries as far apart as Finland, Denmark, France, Spain and Portugal, albeit different in detail. One of the outcomes so far are hybrid institutions, combining elements from the old systems as well as elements of a more contemporary nature, not least in terms of bring in outside experts with new perspectives on governance of the institutions (Schimank in Bleiklie et. al).

The university systems in Europe will need considerable time in order to adjust to Bologna and the university reforms. Time is a scarce resource for universities, since the financial situation, international competition and globalisation currently demand all their attention.
The changed role of the international officer

The macro level developments percolated down through institutions to affect all senior leadership and management roles, including that of the senior international officer. In the mid eighties only large universities were equipped with a professional capacity in internationalisation. Internationalisation, identified as a separate activity requiring advanced level management and leadership skills, was conspicuously absent in most universities. “Internationalisation” was seen largely as the province of staff who were experienced international travellers with contacts abroad, often linked to their personal experiences.

By the mid eighties, at the time of the major national reforms, responsibilities for “internationalisation” were beginning to become professionalized. Smaller institutions may have had an “international person” (Hunter, 2009) having an acceptable command of English as a foreign language, ready to accommodate foreign visitors and students, and frequently being the recipient of all mail with foreign stamps on the envelope. This reflected the small scale, pre-programmatic approach to internationalisation. Larger institutions, particularly those with greater volumes of incoming students from U.S. institutions had an “Auslandsamt” (International Office) of some sort.

With the advent of European mobility programmes this changed dramatically and rapidly.

Firstly, academics became directly involved in the administration and implementation of exchanges. Mobility was no longer the sole responsibility of the individual student supported by university bureaucrats, but involved professors leading the way to partnerships with foreign universities and setting up the actual exchange. Secondly, curricula were reviewed, in some cases overhauled and re-designed, to meet accreditation requirements at partner universities. A growth of courses and programmes in English followed. Thirdly, the volume of institutionally organised mobility increased rapidly.

For the international officer, changes meant a shift from the relative stability and predictability of administration and management to quite dynamic collaborations schemes involving international programmes and projects. The international officer became a change agent and a manager co-ordinating people, funds and policies. With the Bologna Process, international officers are challenged on an even more comprehensive level. The question now is no longer just to take charge of change, but to take charge of reforms.

Moreover, the operational side of internationalisation could no longer be managed at the central level only. The sheer volume of paperwork and grant management of ERASMUS contributed decisively to delegation and differentiation of tasks, at least
within medium sized and larger institutions. Faculties and department were given a more prominent role. Some institutions even dismantled central international offices in order to decentralise funds and staff. Many governments, for their part, took action at the national level to established national agencies in countries that had been without such structures.

For institutions depending on tuition fees, notably in the UK, internationalisation had been an important source of income for many years. ERASMUS however was created from more idealistic visions and was never meant to be source of income. ERASMUS can nonetheless be considered a modernising influence that stimulated and enhanced the growth of demand for international education within Europe. A larger student mobility market was created.

In later years the introduction of tuition fees in other European countries has again lead to a change in the roles of the international officers. Marketing and recruitment has been brought to new levels. So has alumni activities. These elements have contributed to make the profile of the international officer even more complex and professional.

Impact on university management

Two hierarchies have been identified pertaining to higher education institutions: the descending external hierarchy starting with the Ministry and descending towards the institution, and the ascending internal hierarchy starting at the ground level of the institutions, culminating in the institution’s Rector (Neave 2009).

Within and between these vertical hierarchies changes have taken place in the form of new legal regulations, re-structuring, new budgeting’s schemes, funding arrangements and internal reorganisations of universities, faculties and departments. Further developments and challenges for international education leadership will be embedded and played out along both the vertical and horizontal dimensions.

However, this view could be challenged. It is sometimes said that international education leadership is more about the horizontal not vertical. In Europe, international officers are rarely at home moving in the ascending or descending hierarchies, but tend to focus more on horizontal relations with partners abroad, organising mobility of incoming and outgoing students student and staff, initiating projects with fellow officers at home and abroad, and last but not least, - applying to international agencies for funding of their projects. This suggests that the current focus of leadership of internationalisation in Europe is directed horizontally.

The Communiqué from the Bologna Ministers meeting in Leuven in April 2009
sets goals for the next decade to 2020, emphasising the horizontal approach on at least two dimensions of particular importance to internationalisation: firstly, an emphasis on increasing the quantum (to at least 20% of the graduating cohort) and diversifying the types and scope of mobility and secondly encouraging the greater prevalence of joint degrees and programs (Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, 2009).

The vertical hierarchies are not left out by the Ministers, but nonetheless their communiqué leaves the impression that universities in Europe must energise their efforts to meet demands for horizontal co-operation on all levels.

A third dimension

Parallel to reforms on the national or international level, Europe has seen the growth of a supplementary structure of organisations, associations and networks serving the needs for efficient and professional co-operation in the field international higher education.

Networks like the Coimbra Group, the Utrecht network, the Compostela Group and several others have broadened the scope of collaboration between European universities. Europe has also seen new associations emerging. Mentioned should be ACA, the Academic Cooperation Association, the European Universities Association (EUA), and the European Association of International Education (EAIE) founded in 1989. From its modest beginnings, the EAIE has grown into a large learning organisation offering a comprehensive Profession Development Programme to its members now comprising training courses, one-day Executive Forums and a one-week Professional Development Modules offered in collaboration with European universities with the option to earn ECTS credits (Hunter 2009).

More recent developments such as the upcoming project on Transforming Universities in Europe (TRUE), funded by the European Science Foundation, will raise and address new issues. TRUE will bring together researchers from across Europe to undertake comparative research in eight European countries, aiming to clarify “how steering and governance affect essential organisational characteristics of institutions and in turn how this affects the differentiation of the European higher education landscape”. When it comes to emerging Europe based strategies for basic research itself; research will be integrated in internationalisation of higher education.
The overall impact

It is becoming increasingly obvious that internationalisation has a much wider impact on higher education and its management than no one ever could imagine. The journey from a small satellite activity for a small group to have influences and representatives on all levels of university activities and management is indeed spectacular.

All over Europe and also on the global scale there are today a number of organisations and networks active in one aspect or another of international higher education and research. Regardless of whether they are based on individual or institutional memberships, they have become important factors in policy making in the field.

As a change factor internationalisation is one of the largest in the past 25 years. Its long-term effects will continue to appear and make their imprints. The opportunities for higher education worldwide are limitless.

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ETEN: an european network open to the world

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Abstract

Some years ago the transition from the “Industrial Society” to the “Information Society” was the main concern for many of us. Information permeated all aspects of our societies; lately, we have moved on to talk about the “Knowledge Society.”

At the present time we live in a society of heterogeneity and interdependence which demands from us more flexibility, more openness, more awareness of others, more interconnectedness among our institutions. As professionals of education we need to think differently: we need to focus on man’s ability to grow and learn, on human resources and values, and less on institutions and systems; we need to focus more on learning ability, playfulness and creativity, less on memorizing facts, more on children as a valuable source of ideas, and not just on adults as the sole source of ideas, on technology to enable us to do new things, instead of on technology to enhance efficiency.

The challenge, we believe, is to construct partnerships driven by common interests that will multiply creativity, the keyword to an unpredictable world, but that will only happen if we pay more attention to new approaches to solving the prevalent problems of the increasingly multicultural societies. This is one reason why we believe that it is through enticing professional mobility networks that we lay the foundation for solutions to promote a more peaceful planet.

Recently, we see an increasing number of institutions applying for international
networks membership. And why do people join networks? In our opinion there are two main reasons: first, like the tide, it is inevitable: we cannot avoid it; it is a natural movement to become connected; secondly, this world is becoming more open (market-, finance-, information-, business-, health-, and education-wise). We are moving from a relatively fragmented world to the dense and indispensable interdependencies of an integrated planet. So we need collaboration, and we need policies which encourage the potential synergies and which can minimize the friction and risks of conflict that these changes may bring. These are just some of the motivations why we got involved in ETEN.

Key-words

ETEN, Internationalization, Teacher training, Europe

Writing about the European Teacher Education Network (ETEN) is, for us, a difficult task because the atmosphere that is experienced by the participants every time we meet cannot be described using only words. Nevertheless, we will try to give the readers an abridged portrait of our network.

ETEN was founded in 1988 by a group of teacher educators who decided that it would be imperative to promote cooperation, international collaboration in research and development, exchange of students and staff to provide opportunities for professional development, research and publication, understanding of the history, culture, values and traditions of the member countries.

As of 2010, ETEN has become a Network of over 60 institutions in more than 17 countries, mainly from Europe. ETEN, like the Internet, is a network without a hierarchy, but with a purpose: besides promoting the exchange of students and staff, we focus around TIGs - the Thematic Interest Groups. These groups of common interest are the stamina of the network, and would not exist without special people, the TIG leaders. The annual conference of ETEN is, in essence, organized around each TIG, where each TIG leader is responsible for accepting papers, organizing presentations, moderating discussions—a unique and a huge task. What makes this network so interesting is the way TIGs are created, become alive, or disappear (if they don’t raise interest to more that 5 participants during two consecutive years) according with the interests that evolve from discussions during the network meetings. So, the network is very dynamic, always changing its geometry, which makes it a very lively body. To facilitate comprehension of ETEN, allow us to give you a portrayal about each TIG.
Knowing traditional stories from around the world, we find that the things we value most highly, fear most deeply, and hope for most ardently, are valued, feared, and hoped for by all people. But each culture has a unique response, made richer by details from its stories. Whatever the explanation, they fire our own imagination: so we explore Myths and Fairy Tales with the TIG leader Henning Kopart, from Denmark.

Knowing different ways of teaching in international educational systems, and respecting all sources of experience, and the range of ways through which such experiences can be mediated and interrogated, is essential in order to comprehend any community of learners, so we engage in Reflective Practices with the TIG leader Hilde Stroobants, from Belgium.

Other powerful influences affect people: some start to sing, some create images, some dance; we acknowledge our emotions, whether through visual arts, performance arts, or a combination of all. We are gathering also to recognize the value of Arts Education, with the TIG leader Peter Gregory, from the UK.

Some like to wonder about how children should be prepared physically, and how each country is putting their philosophy/paradigm into practice: Outdoors and Adventurous Activities? Scandinavian practices? Motivating Children? Inclusion in Physical Education: Yes/No? Movement Principle: 'Everything Every time'? These are just some among many other interests of the Physical Education Movement Activities, Health and Outdoor Learning TIG, lead by Anne Moerenhout from Belgium and Kaaren Mari Eid Kaarby from Norway.

Discussing and comparing different practices and experiences dealing with special education needs, inclusion, and diversity in different countries, sharing examples of good practice relative to students with special needs and their families, is part of the interest of the Special Needs TIG, lead by Danny Wyffells, from Belgium.

Some of us come to annual conferences looking to address issues like: the education of ethnic minority children, the education of children living in poverty, the education of children who are not speakers of the dominant language. Many children have ample opportunities while living in such settings, while many others don’t. This is a concern that some of our colleagues are dealing with in the Urban Education TIG, like Fran Huckaby, from the USA, and Irene van der Leer-Veth, from The Netherlands, who share the leadership of this group.

We are also a group of people keen on meeting other people who investigate competencies for internationalisation in teacher and social educator training, but who mainly believe that there is an urgent need for our students to learn and understand about diversity in cultures, religions, and lifestyles in a spirit of mutual respect and open
dialogue inside society, between nations and cultures. At many universities there are admirable initiatives and practices in this area of global awareness. That is one of the aims of the Internationalisation TIG, lead by Ben Bartels, from The Netherlands.

Comparing each other’s science curricula, our science teaching philosophies and strategies, reflecting about how students understand biological functions, and the usage of daily life situations in biological subjects at school, is one of the interests of the Biological Sciences TIG, lead by Bart Hempen, from Belgium.

In our respective countries Engineering, Science and Technology may have different approaches. By sharing and comparing experiences, we are developing a «World perspective» on Technology Teaching and Learning, making young people more interested in studying these subject areas. This is one of the aims of this TIG, lead by Maria Svensson, from Sweden.

Some say that, as we move south through Europe, performance results in mathematics become lower. We don’t know if we totally agree with that, and that’s why some of us will make an effort to participate more often in the Mathematics Education TIG. What we are sure of, is that sharing experiences and ideas among mathematics educators, will contribute to a better understanding, to promoting joint research and collaborative projects, and to the design of solutions to overcome the problem, which, we are sure, are also the concerns of the TIG leader Melvyn Brown from the UK.

Cellular phones are everywhere, from classrooms to the most remote places of our planet. Communication and information technologies and ways to work with young children need to be investigated. Around the world there are many governmental programs to make computers more available, seeking to provide children with new opportunities to explore, experiment, and express themselves. Computers are both a window and a tool: a window into the world and a tool with which to think. What are the issues that this raises to educators, schools, and policy makers? These are issues for Early Learners and ICT/Multimedia, TIG lead by An Vrouenraths, from The Netherlands.

We are realizing that we cannot live without computers; we wonder how we can promote a greater understanding of the role and application of instructional technology in learning? What will be the school of the future? Will it be an “expanded school” which grows beyond the walls of the classroom? What about the impact of connectivity among nations and cultures? These are just a couple of issues for the Instructional Technology and Learning (ICT) TIG, lead by Kari Kumpulainen, from Finland.

Some of us live well without religion or faith, however religion has become an increasingly powerful and pervasive influence on global affairs and international relations as well as a foundation for cultural and civic life, ethics, and human self-understanding.
Providing a forum for the exchange of knowledge and techniques for teaching about religion and culture on all levels, for learning about and promoting understanding, respect, and tolerance for cultural and religious differences in teacher education and all educational curricula, and encouraging appropriate and responsible dialogue among teachers, students, and administrators of all faiths and religious perspectives about the challenges of multicultural and multireligious classroom instruction is the aim of the Religion and Cultural Education TIG, lead by Astrid de Keizer from The Netherlands, and James Gibson from the USA.

All of these considerations, thoughts, beliefs, and rationales are only possible because we enjoy debate, along with with the right of freedom of expression; we get a sense of fulfilment from liberating learning, while underlining the importance of values in human/child development and improving the quality of education by introducing and integrating democracy and human rights in education. Specifically this is one of the foci of the Democracy TIG, lead by Jan Pouwels, from The Netherlands.

ETEN is thus a dynamic network, a participatory learning platform and a community of practice, that reflects the will of its members, but also the challenges and changes that each of our countries and our institutions are facing nowadays. Our meetings are exceptional opportunities for sharing concerns and learning solutions to problems that we face everyday. After our meetings and conferences, a feeling lasts with us that we regained new and refreshing ideas, proposals that generally become solutions to problems we experience back home. Today many countries, and consequently our institutions, are undergoing dramatic and quick changes. It is only possible to change the world if we change the way we look at it in order to avoid escalation into chaos. Besides rebuilding trust and reform in our financial and economic world, we need urgently to better understand each other, to experience other ways of living, not simply putting ourselves in other people's shoes, but “getting inside the skin” of the other person. When we develop empathy with another human being, when we put ourselves emotionally in another person's situation, identifying ourselves with, and understanding better, the other, we tend to be more confident, sensitive, and assertive individuals and less self-centred and unconcerned. All this makes us stronger and richer, better equipped to face our daily lives, to work with our students and our colleagues in our own countries, and to share with them many of our values and knowledge, thus contributing to the preparation of citizens better able to deal with the challenges of a growing globalized, interconnected, and uncertain world. This is, in our humble opinion, one of the main purposes of ETEN.
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Learning mobility between Europe and India: a new face of international cooperation

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Abstract
Europe and India are coming much closer today than ever before. Mobility, particularly learning mobility is one of the main priorities within international cooperation activities. Learning mobility, especially in higher education is one of the areas that both partners have agreed to engage widely. Though educational cooperation has been taking place for centuries between India and Europe the present decade has been marked as the golden era of cooperation on learning mobility between Europe and India. This paper explores the new face of international cooperation on learning mobility between Europe and India.

Key-words
Learning mobility, International cooperation on learning mobility, Learning mobility between Europe and India.

Introduction / background
Mobility for learning has been happening ever since the advent of study abroad. Yet the recent acceleration in internationalisation of education has given a new face to learning mobility (LM). Europe has become a prominent region that promotes LM within and beyond. India is one of the big players participating in LM. According to UIS (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2009) 'since 1975, the number of mobile students has grown by almost 3.5-fold'. There were 0.8 million students on learning mobility during 1975 but during 2007, it raised up to 2.8 million. According to UIS, fifteen countries together account for 44% of the world's mobile students. The top two mobile nations are China and India (in terms of numbers). USA, UK, France, Australia and Germany are the top five host countries (UIS, 2009). Tertiary students are more mobile than the rest of the group in LM.

Some of the underlying reasons for the promotion of LM are economical, political,
social and cultural. The economical aspect is that a multibillion dollar potential has been estimated in the international higher education (Sanyal, 2005). The political aspect is that higher education is used as an instrument of national globalisation policy (Derek, 2007). The social aspect is that LM helps better bilateral understanding and the cultural aspect is that LM helps to know other culture, to acquire linguistic skills and to gain social and cultural intelligence.

1 Mapping learning mobility

1.1 Learning mobility – broader definition

The prefix learning has been attached to mobility (M) to differentiate labour and other mobility with LM. LM refers to anyone such as students, teachers moving from one institution or place to another for a formal, non-formal and in-formal learning or teaching either within or outside their own country for a limited time. According to UNESCO a mobile student is someone who leaves his/her country/territory of origin and moving to another with the objective of studying (UIS, 2009). LM might be classified as free-movers (students and teachers who travel on their own initiative) and structured-movers (students and teachers who use exchange programmes to move). Some of the well known exchange programmes are Fulbright, Commonwealth and Erasmus. LM might be further classified as physical and virtual mobility. In physical mobility the student or the teacher is physically moving to another institution, where as in virtual mobility they do not leave their home country but maybe learning or interacting through internet or through other distance learning portals.

The definition of cross-border education given by UNESCO/OECD is interesting to note. Cross-border education includes education that takes place in situations where the teacher, student, programme, institution/provider or course materials cross national jurisdictional borders. Cross-border higher education may include higher education by public/private and not-for-profit/for-profit providers. It encompasses a wide range of modalities, in a continuum from face-to-face (taking various forms such as students traveling abroad and campuses abroad) to distance learning (using a range of technologies and including e-learning) (OECD/UNESCO, 2005).

1.2 Learning mobility according to Europe

LM according to European Commission (EC) is mobility among young people in all sectors (schools, HEd, VET, volunteers, youth exchanges...). Organised LM is linked to learning outcomes. LM of Europe is focused mainly within Europe, but also beyond. Europe not only encourages mutual M, but also cross-sector M. Europe is concerned
about physical M primarily, but virtual M can play an important role as well. LM is attractive to Europe as it helps for Europe’s competitiveness. LM in Europe concentrates on young people (around 16-35 years) (DG EAC, July 2009).

As stated in the green paper of European Union (EU) learning mobility is helping to acquire new skills in which individuals, particularly young people can strengthen their future employability as well as their personal development (European Commission, 2009b). And studies confirm that learning mobility adds to human capital, as students access new knowledge and develop new linguistic skills and intercultural competences. Furthermore, employers recognize and value these benefits. It has been also observed that students who are mobile as young learners are more likely to be mobile as workers later in life.

According to EC, LM helps to strengthen employability and personal development, helps prepare for mobility in working life, helps education and training systems more open and international, helps competitiveness (as envisaged by Lisbon Strategy), helps acquiring new skills and knowledge, particularly linguistic and social skills and helps combat isolationism and xenophobia. LM helps educational and training institutions to update their programmes and become more international.

1.3 Learning mobility according to India

LM in India is a two way street. Yet the street ‘mobility out’ is busiest than the street ‘mobility in’. Though the discussion about LM is relatively low in India, some of the public documents such as the national knowledge commission encourage mobility of students and staff within and outside the country (National Knowledge Commission, 2006). The 10th five year plan emphasized on improving the mobility of students and staff and allocated additional funds for the same (Planning Commission, 2006).

LM has been often associated with brain drain and commodification of education. It is viewed that most Indian students who leave the country for study abroad seldom return to the country. The presence of foreign universities in India is often attached to profit making and as a threat and competition to Indian universities. Yet around 150 thousands of Indian students are studying abroad and several foreign universities are already operating in India through twining, study exchanges and various other forms of partnership. Many private as well as public institutions have signed memorandum of understanding (MOU) with foreign universities.

Bhushan considers internationalisation of education against the 1986 policy guidelines, relating to access, equity and quality and the importance that it attaches to public provision of education and the recent trends of commodification and
internationalization of education that may set up forces acting against those objectives. This tension may also get reflected in the policy of protection to public provision of education and various GATS articles that imposes free trade philosophy and approaches upon a country (Bhushan, 2004).

Ved Prakash observed that India is still at its formative stage with regard to providing education abroad and regard to the presence of foreign universities in India. At the same time a number of good and low quality foreign institutions are operating in India without any sound mechanism to regulate their entry and operation. India has to take urgent steps to ensure that only quality institutions are allowed to operate in India along with proper mechanism for mutual recognition of degrees. (Prakash, 2005).

The private university bill and foreign universities act bill are on long discussion to be approved by Indian Parliament. Yet the operations of private institutions and foreign institutions are a vivid reality. There is also a strong absence of regulatory frameworks for the operation of foreign universities in India. After 4 years debates the bill finally has been cleared by the union cabinet and ready to be introduced to the parliament to be approved (The Times of India, March 15, 2010). This decision has been both opposed and supported. Those who support the move say it will give a boost to the higher education sector, increase choices and competition. The critics, on the other hand, warn foreign universities - that will cater to a minuscule elite - could “poach” faculty members from premier institutes (India Today, March 18, 2010).

While strong debate is underway for the bill that would allow the legal presence of foreign universities, the debate about LM of students and staff outside and inside the country has not taken momentum. However a silent revolution is taking place in the area of LM in India. As India is becoming economically important region, more and more Indians living outside the country considers moving back to the country resulting in Brain Gain than Brain Drain.

2 Actions and instruments for learning mobility

2.1 Europe’s actions and instruments for learning mobility

European Commission came out with a green paper on promoting the learning mobility of young people (DG EAC, July 2009). As LM has gained momentum in modern learning, Europe has been promoting LM through various programmes. As there was a demand for promoting LM in all disciplines and contexts, European Commission launched the green paper on 8th July 2009 for public consultation which was open until 15th December 2009.

The green paper presents a number of issues where further efforts towards learning
mobility are needed. The aim is to promote organised mobility that is carried out across borders as well as within and across sectors. While the value of virtual mobility is recognised, the focus is on physical mobility and the challenges arising before, during and after such periods (DG EAC, July 2009).

European Commission has initiated numerous LM programmes such as lifelong learning programme, Marie Curie, Culture, Youth in Action, Europe for citizens. Several European tools related to LM such as ECTS, ECVET, Europass, EQF, Diploma Supplement, Youth Pass, EURAXESS have been launched. Yet, only 310,000 of 16-29 age group profited from EU’s LM programmes (which is only 0.3%) during 2006. Thus it is clear that much more could be done to boost LM in Europe and beyond (DG-EAC, July, 2009).

EU directives on visa for students and researchers facilitate incoming mobility. Visa problems exist in with regard to volunteers, pupil exchange and unremunerated training (ibid). Bologna Process, Copenhagen Process and European Research Area have improved conditions for educational recognition. European tools such as European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET), European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQARF) have been developed to validate LM. Attempts have been made to validate non-formal and informal learning in the spirit of Lifelong learning (LLL) (ibid).

The European Quality Charter for Mobility was approved by the European Parliament in 2006 as a reference document for people undertaking, planning or organising education or training visits (“mobilities”) abroad. The European Quality Charter for Mobility constitutes the quality reference document for education and training stays abroad. It complements, from the quality point of view, the 2001. Recommendation on mobility for students, persons undergoing training, volunteers, teachers and trainers and has the same scope European Commission (December 2000).

The high level expert forum on mobility was mandated to undertake a reflection and to make recommendations with a view to promote an expansion of mobility between member states for students and young people. The aim was to explore how the EU can, building on the success to date of the Erasmus programme, further expand mobility not only within the university sector but also among young people more generally, for example among young entrepreneurs and artists and in sectors such as vocational training, adult learning and voluntary activity. In this regard, the forum examined the barriers to mobility, the potential for future EU actions and for action at member state level to support the general EU objectives.

The vision of the Forum is that mobility does not simply involve “like-to-like”
movement from university to university, from school to school. It also places people into
different sectors, from the world of education into the world of business and vice versa;
from education into voluntary action; from vocational training to academia; from public
research bodies to business. Tempus and Erasmus Mundus are two key instruments used
to encourage LM between Europe and the rest of the world. Furthermore Marie Curie,
Jean Monnet and Youth in Action programmes have also supported learning mobility
between Europe and the Rest of the World.

2.2 India’s actions and instruments for learning mobility

India has also set huge interest to attract foreign students to study in India. The
following are some of the known Indian government scholarship for foreign students:
Cultural exchange programme, General cultural scholarship scheme, Apasaheb Pant
scholarship scheme, Commonwealth Fellowship, Technical Cooperation Scheme (TCS),
Reciprocal scholarship scheme, SAARC scholarship scheme, ICCR scholarship scheme
(Silchar Today (2010). Besides these government scholarships, several independent
scholarships are available from various organizations for foreign students to study in
India. Asian, particularly South Asian students make a big share among foreign students
in India. India is ambitious to attract students from other continents as well.

Educational Consultants India Limited (Ed.CIL) supported by the Ministry of
Overseas Indian Affairs. The agency has been designated as the Single Window Agency
to facilitate the admission of Indian Diasporas and foreign students. Ed.CIL not only
guides and informs students about higher education opportunities in India but takes
care of admission formalities, provides administrative support and acts as local guardian
(MOIA, n.d.). Many universities have set up foreign student’s cell in order to encourage
their admission. Most of the institutes of national importance such as Indian Institutes
of Technologies, Indian Institutes of Management and Indian Institute of Science do
recruit international students.

The Department of Higher Education under the Ministry of Human Resource
Development has set up an international commission for cooperation in the area of
education. It mainly relates with UNESCO, however function as authorized body for
international cooperation in education with the rest of the world (Cf. the portal of the
ic.in) India compared to Europe has not yet become an attractive destination for
international students and has not yet invested funds (as Europe does) to attract foreign
students.
3 Opportunities and challenges of learning mobility

To better understand LM, it would be worth mentioning the challenges and opportunities for cross-border education listed by UNESCO and OECD. There are both opportunities and challenges for cross border education. The opportunities are the increased supply of higher education, greater access for students, support for the knowledge economy, development of joint degrees, fusion or hybridisation of cultures, growing comparability of qualifications, increasing role for the market-based approach, economic benefits for education providers, and diversification and generation of new academic environments.

The challenges include concern about quality of provision, inequality of access leading to a two-tier system, the growing problem of physical and virtual brain drain on the developed country-developing country axis but also on other routes, homogenisation of culture, weakening role of the state in establishing national policy objectives, growth in market-oriented programmes such as business and information technology, and decline in some liberal arts and pure science disciplines. These opportunities and challenges depend on the priorities, policies, resources, strengths and weaknesses of countries (UNESCO, 2004).

OECD/UNESCO’s guidelines (2005) on quality provision for cross border education (non-binding international guidelines that facilitate but would not supersede individual countries’ authority to regulate their own higher education system) provide four main policy objectives in this regard: 1. Students/learners’ protection from the risks of misinformation, low-quality provision and qualification of limited validity, 2. Qualification should be readable and transparent in order to increase their international validity and portability. Reliable and user-friendly information sources should facilitate this, 3. Recognition procedures should be transparent, coherent, fair and reliable and impose as little burden as possible to mobile professionals and 4. National quality assurance and accreditation agencies need to intensify their international cooperation in order to increase mutual understanding.

4 New face of higher education cooperation between Europe and India

Europe and India has been cooperating for longtime in learning mobility. Europe, particularly United Kingdom has been a center of attraction for learning for Indians during and after colonial time. India has been a country of maximum global exchanges both in importing and exporting on knowledge spheres, since time immemorial. Nalanda, one of the early higher educational institutions in the world, was involving in knowledge exchanges through many foreign students and scholars primarily from South Asia as
early as the 5th century A.D. Yet the cooperation between India and Europe on LM has become prominent recently.

During the India - EU Business summit held on 30 September 2008 at Paris, Dr. Manmohan Singh the Prime Minister of India envisaged seven areas of cooperation between the EU and India; such as infrastructure, service sector, skills up gradation and development of workforce, solar energy development, civil nuclear commerce, development of technologies in agriculture and cooperation in outer space use. Most of these seven areas have some connections to the knowledge sector.

It has been observed that the Europe and India are coming much closer today than ever before. Education, particularly higher education is one of the main priorities within international cooperation activities. Higher education is one of the areas that both partners have agreed to engage widely. Though educational cooperation has been taking place for centuries between India and Europe the present decade has been marked as the golden era of higher education cooperation between Europe and India.

The India – EU Higher Education Cooperation symposium that took place during the European Higher Education Fair at New Delhi on 12th November 2008 addressed the need to boost social and economic development through better cooperation in higher education. A Joint Declaration on Education was made in New Delhi on the 12th November 2008, between the then Commissioner Mr. Jan Figel (Commissioner of Education, Training, Culture and Youth – European Commission) and Shri Arjun Singh, the then Minister for Human Resource Development, Government of India.

In line with the India Country Strategy Paper 2007 – 2013 under the Development Cooperation Instrument, EU has committed 360 – 480 Million Euros for the period 2007 – 2013 as support to social sectors (education/health) and as support to the implementation of the joint action plan. 15 – 30 million Euros has been committed for higher education cooperation alone through Erasmus Mundus India Window – III. Another 7 million Euros has been committed for 2010 as support to skills development initiative.

Higher Education Cooperation of the EU with the rest of the world has been facilitated through the instruments of Erasmus Mundus (EM). EM combines the EU education, cooperation and external policies to further deepen and enhance the higher education links between the EU and the rest of the world. EM was launched in 2004 and is instrumented till 2013 as several phases and as several actions.

During the period 2004 – 2010 around 1356 Indian students have been awarded EM scholarships to study in Europe. In addition, 1046 scholarship were awarded through a special India Lot of EM during the period 2008 – 2010. India has a privilege with the
special EM lot. Similarly considerable number of European students were awarded to study in India under EM. During 2003-2004 there were 178 European students studied in Indian Universities and during 2007-2008 there were 309 students from Europe studied in Indian Universities (Dongaonkar & Negi, 2009). This number is relatively lower to the number of Indian students studying in Europe. There are roughly around 40 thousands Indian students studying in Europe, yet most of them are in UK. 150 joint masters and 35 joint doctoral programmes have been agreed between selected higher education institutions in the EU and the rest of the world for the sake of higher education cooperation.

The India for EU platform supports institution-based mobility and scholarship project organized by a Consortium of some of the most prestigious universities in Europe and India. DG EAC (Education and Culture), DG AIDCO (EuropeAid), EACEA (Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency) and DG RELEX (External Relations) are responsible for the management of all actions of EM and other EU educational cooperation programmes. The role of DG RTD (Research and Technology Development) is also inevitable for the cooperation at research and technology, especially in technology transfer and engaging in joint technology development. The EU and India have committed to engage in joint technology development in the area of solar energy, space research and climate change.

Besides EM, there are several other programmes initiated by the EU (such as Marie Curie) and by several member states (such as DAAD, Common Wealth, Chevening, Eiffel, etc...). It is estimated that more than 1000 Indian students come to Europe to study every year through some support from the EU and the member states. During 2007 around 150 thousands Indian students studied abroad of which almost 100 thousands opted USA and around 10 thousands chose Australia. Though 30 to 40 thousands students came to Europe to study, a large number of them were still choosing UK as an option in Europe.

Conclusion

It is viewed that cooperation in LM helps countries and regions come much closer to each other. It supports students and staff to understand others countries and regions better and it helps for better cooperation in other areas as well. Europe and India have taken strong cooperative steps to encourage LM between both partners during recent times. Europe with its huge educational capacities expresses deep interest to provide knowledge and training support Indian students and staff.

It is expected that EM would help making European higher education attractive.
While some critics see scholarships from the EU as stimulating packages to make European Higher Education attractive, the attachment of development cooperation, the sense of positive discrimination (for developing countries like India), the flexibility and openness make it more open and participative. The disconnection of mere meritocracy ascertains the commitment of the EU for social justice.

While making European higher education attractive, attention must be given to make Indian higher education attractive as well, in order to create a win-win situation. It would be collaborative for bilateral cooperation, if India would commit financial resources to attract European students to study in India. The cooperation does not end with simply students exchange but encourages all types of learning mobility. The growing cooperation between the EU and India in the area of higher education and research is just a good beginning and the best is on its way.

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**Notes**

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INTERNATIONAL CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

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From ESPIEW to NESPIEW: a witness about a curriculum development project life time

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Abstract
HOWEST submitted a successful proposal to the Lifelong Learning Call for Proposals 2008. The EACEA (European Union) approved the ESPIEW Curriculum Development project proposal and selected for Community co-financing in 2008. HOWEST is since 1st October 2008 leading partner in the LLP ERASMUS Multilateral Curriculum Development Project ESPIEW.

The project is a multilateral cooperation of international partners from:

- Belgium: University College West Flanders (project co-ordinator) & Plantijn hogeschool Antwerp
- Denmark: Metropolitan University College Copenhagen
- Finland: Lahti University of Applied Sciences
- Germany: Hochschule Neubrandenburg
- Romania: University of Craiova
- Cyprus: Frederick university

Key-words
Networking, Erasmus, International cooperation, Entrepreneurship.

1 “Entrepreneurial Spirit Improving European Welfare»

This project stimulates the entrepreneurial potentials of young Europeans especially in the field of Social Work and Health Care.

Most of the EU countries are going through a period of economic and demographic changes while new EU members are facing the challenges of a transforming social economy. If Europe wants to be socially and economically successful its policy has to stir competitiveness, job creation, creativity, innovation and growth. Entrepreneurship is
Whereas Europe needs social entrepreneurs, its education rarely succeeds to stimulate “entrepreneurial spirit”. This ESPIEW project assumes an important role stimulating the entrepreneurial potentials of young Europeans, students and graduates, especially in the field of Social Work and Health Care.

Research clearly disclose the lack of entrepreneurial development and education related to European welfare.

This project brings together creative professors and persons active in the field of social welfare, who got a knack of entrepreneurship but cannot develop this quality in their education activity. They take the opportunity to enhance entrepreneurial spirit by elaborating together a module for training students’ skills and developing essential characteristics for successful entrepreneurship within a European context and based on an interdisciplinary approach. Bringing them into contact with persons having the same drive, but a different nationality and cultural background, creates an important extra value.

Entrepreneurs participates actively in this project, which focusses on theoretical and practical activities coached by experienced staff.

During the first year the project partners elaborate the course packages for the module. The second year is the period of implementation, quality control and assessment for an almost perfect final product ready for dissemination. Printed, online materials, expertise and practice in a useful module ready to be implemented in the European Higher Education.

A powerful “tailor made” interdisciplinary European Module training the skills of well-grounded future social entrepreneurs to improve European welfare.

An important extra objective is to embed the “Entrepreneurial Spirit” into the curricula of non-business higher education in Europe.

This project intends to anticipate the impact on social responsible citizens from the cooperating European countries and will activate a cross-pollination between groups of participants resulting in a upstream of the entrepreneurial spirit in the sector of European welfare.
2 The ESPEIW project objectives

During the first year of the project - as planned and stipulated in the proposal - the experienced group of professors managed to elaborate a highly qualitative joint European Module by taking into account the requirements of the EU Lisbon strategy; new competences and skills have been strongly emphasized in order to reach the main objective: educate social work and health care students with the ability of using an entrepreneurial spirit in their professional way of acting.

2.1 Objective on student level

The ESPEIW European Module allows students to acquire a research-based and socially oriented understanding of the entrepreneurial spirit which means “thinking” and “acting” using entrepreneurial competences in their non-business professional activities. This European Module must also contribute to increase the level of graduates in welfare education by using interdisciplinary, multinational and multicultural learning methods in order to improve the employability of young Europeans.

The ESPEIW partnership wants to meet the needs for a social and ethical dimension in society by creating a learning environment for an entrepreneurial spirit and by sharing the benefits resulting from the project. In building up a European Module based on five course packages, each multilaterally composed partner group took care of the main objectives for the students in this module to improve their entrepreneurial skills:

- identify what professional new steps can be taken to enhance entrepreneurial thinking
- leadership and management skills to improve the social responsibility within the community
- awareness of ethical problems when implementing entrepreneurship in the area of welfare
- communication and negotiation skills
- creativity and the capacity to overcome obstacles
- choose entrepreneurial strategies for turning ideas into reality by creating awareness for social market mechanisms
- create professional business planning
- determine how one differentiates between good ideas and profitable opportunities
- recognize the investments in people required to turn opportunities into realities
- understand the financial tools important to entrepreneurial success
- sustainability of entrepreneurial thinking in a high-growth context
- awareness of the impact of social institutions and instructions
- ethical awareness
2.2 Objective on teachers and teaching level

The multilateral interaction between EU partners with a very divergent economic and entrepreneurial level was fundamental by the creation of a well balanced module content of high level education.

Innovation and creativity is the central component in the delivery of every course topic. The ESPIEW project is already nominated by the Danish CIRIUS group in the top ten of most creative and innovative projects in 2009 in the Nordic countries! (www.ciriusonline.dk)

All participating professors and lecturers need to be flexible in both the offering of courses to students and the essential cooperation with the other teachers. This project is clearly building bridges between creative professors and entrepreneurs active in the field of Welfare giving them the opportunity to share their knowledge, expertise and experiences.

The use of the electronic platform Dokeos for communication (Forum), storing content and documents, etc... was of extremely high importance to succeed in reaching the aims and objectives.

The use of several pedagogical and didactic methods should guarantee a continued participation of the enrolled students during the test phase and afterwards. Based on a well balanced mix of intensive teaching linked with complex multidisciplinary assignments evoke the need for networking and creativity. The pedagogical and didactic methodology is summarized in the standard of competences per course package.

2.3 Objective on european higher educational level

In the pilot ESPIEW European Module it was foreseen to enrol the students from each partner university in order to find out whether the programme really meets the needs of the globalized market and whether the module meets the aims and objectives. Only after an accurate evaluation and where necessary an adequate refining of the content and the educational approach the module will be implemented in the curriculum of social and health care higher education.

Those activities are elaborated during the second year of the projects life time.

Till now the role of the external expert, the quality manager and the management team and their use of the Prose tool for Quality Assurance and Quality Control have been of very great importance on all levels of the ESPIEW Module (content, didactics, university-business relation, etc...) and the project as a whole.
2.4 Objectives on education level

In the process of developing the course content in all five course packages a continuous interaction with private and public organisations took place, aimed at meeting the real needs of the European social and health market. Acting in this way the university-industry co-operation enhanced.

The main output of the European Module is to improve the entrepreneurial spirit in the area of Welfare by supporting entrepreneurial health care and social work professionals to use skills required to move an initial idea to a successful venture.

New quality standards of competences have been written out by the different course package teams. Those standards will hopefully be introduced in the higher education area of social work and health care.

Universities will be obliged to introduce into their curricula developments, new technical applications and approaches in the non-business world more quickly. The need to install good relationships with the “entrepreneurial” environment will be a key requirement for being successful on the education market.

The common project, the exchange of knowledge plus the inevitable insight into cultural and economic differences will increase the quality of education and its systems in the different EU member states. New quality standards will be introduced.

The contact with the non-academic world (the advice of experts, the cooperation of companies and hospitals, etc.) create a clear win-win situation in this project for all the parties from the different countries involved.

This European Module must contribute to increase the level of graduates in welfare education by using interdisciplinary, multinational and multicultural teaching and learning methods in order to improve the employability of young Europeans. We can very much imagine that students having acquired the competences of this course could be appointed as staff members, personal assistants to top executives and should be able to support any non-business organisation by providing entrepreneurial services at a high strategic level.

The final result will be a tailor made module ready to be implemented in the European Higher Education System of Social Work and Health Care. This new to a gradual imbedding of the “entrepreneurial spirit” into the regular curricula of non-business higher education in Europe.
3 The ESPIEW project approach

During this first year of the project’s life time - as stipulated in the proposal - a detailed “Project Planning” was the steering guideline for the whole elaboration of the European Module: on the one hand concerning the content and the didactic approach and on the other hand concerning a logical process of progress. The first year of the project was hard work to offer a qualitative, innovative and creative new module to the students by September 1st 2009.

3.1 Didactic approach

The central components of all course packages are innovation and creativity. All participating professors and lecturers need to be flexible in the way of offering courses, in dealing with students, and in cooperation with other teachers and professionals. It is the management team that is steering this process during the whole project process.

The management team together with all partners are aware of the fact that the module must provide opportunities for learning through lectures, presentations, workshops, case analyses, entrepreneurship simulated exercises, text readings, project work and computer conferencing with an interdisciplinary, intercultural and international approach in a practice learning based module.

Added value of the didactic approach: awakening and development of the students personal entrepreneurial skills and attitudes in a multicultural, innovative and creative international social and health environment.

3.2 Project approach in the progress process

As foreseen a management team was acting from the very first day under the supervision of the project co-ordinator and the external expert.

It was the intention and goal of the management team to have the project planning elaborated as agreed during the Berlin preparatory meeting (Jan 08) and taken down in the approved project proposal. The project co-ordinator, together with the project management team, built on a solid project structure and work planning.

3.2.1 The elaboration and implementation of management documents

The management team is closely guiding the operations by offering new documents to help and support the activities of all project partners, such as:

- the project work planning (activity plan) and responsible for task division between the partners
- the activity work plan + follow up. An spreadsheet allowing to indicate the activities
carried out by each individual partner as stipulated in the activity work plan of the project.

- the work plan checklist for partners use. A guideline for each partner to check their own activities in relation to the project’s planning and the agreed engagements.
- the Standard of competence form
- the course package planning form with ECTS, teaching and coaching hours, non-teaching and coaching hours and total study load
- a document for dissemination activities per project partner
- financial documents and time sheets
- etc

3.2.2 The implementation and support by introducing an ICT e-platform

After one month of activities the project manager started up an e-platform as a communication and storage tool for all project activities for all partners. Also the EACEA has admittance to the Dokeos.Espiew e-platform.

The IT tool Dokeos.Espiew e-platform contains all information and results of activities of the management team and the partners during the project’s lifetime in accordance with the foreseen project plan, such as:

- needs analysis – questionnaires and results of survey
- report curriculum needs
- all necessary tools to develop the five course packages of the module: Standard of competences form and the course package planning form.

A second platform is in use for uploading the project products like the five course packages and will be accessible for the participating students in the European module.

3.2.3 Surveillance of the quality assurance and quality control during the project’s life time

The management team together with the external expert are continuously taking care of the quality assurance on the level of the project itself as on the module content and didactic approach. The management team is composed as agreed during the project preparation.

The management team decided to make use of the Prose-tool (http://www.prose.be) by implementing the methods and tools for total quality management in organisations. The existing Prose tool was especially adapted to be used for the Quality Assurance in Curriculum Development projects such as the ESPIEW project.

The external expert is making quality assurance reports on the project.
The planned project progress is measured by comparing the achievements with the short term aims and the main aims of the project using the Prose tool.

4 Budget follow-up and management

The project co-ordinator drew up the “Agreement with An International Partner Co-operating in An International Project”. This kind of contract between Howest and the project partners refers to the contract signed with the Executive Agency and to some other administrative agreements. All Agreements were signed by the rectors, legal representatives of the different partner universities.

In order to deal correctly with the administrative and financial matters and rules of an ECDEM project, a financial project manager was appointed. This is as structured and foreseen in the project proposal.

All partners have been asked to keep records of time spent for the project, and also to use standard forms and to report on a regular basis about their expenses related to the project.

4.1 Contacts and partner visits

As the project co-ordinator, I’ve visited some of my partner institutions during the general ESPIEW meetings. During the first year, a lot of time was spent giving general information and to explain the overall view of the project.

From former international project experiences, we experienced that getting the support of responsible persons in the partner universities is an important factor to make a project successful.

Co-ordinating several Intensive Programmes and being a partner in Leonardo da Vinci Pilot projects, Tempus projects, etc..., the project co-ordinator always was aware of finding compromises and of being very flexible to deal with the differences in work attitudes and time keeping. Flexibility is crucial because dealing with partners from the whole of the EU area is an experience. Some partners are almost asking for a very close support, other fulfil their commitments in a more independent way.

4.2 Organisation of two general partner meetings

Two general partner meetings were organised by the project co-ordinator. The agenda was set up in agreement with the management team.

It was quite obvious that the project co-ordinator in close cooperation with the
Bringing the participating professors and lecturers to the same way of thinking about the European Module was a hard task but a real challenge. Besides that, the coordinator had to concentrate on the inherent coherence between all the courses, plus all the different topics of each course package. Topics of the same course are to be delivered by teachers of different universities so the problem of keeping necessary coherence was of the highest priority. During the second general partner meeting in Craiova (RO) a Coherence Group was established under the supervision of the Danish partner.

4.3 The extra management and coherence meeting

During a management meeting in Antwerp (15 June 2009) the management team found out the necessity to organise an extra management meeting before the start of the pilot module. It was decided that on 17th and 18th August 2009 the management team should invite one responsible teacher from each course package (sub-module) to guarantee the content quality, the coherence between all course packages en between the different parts in each course package and finely to make appropriate appointments concerning teaching methodologies, evaluation methods, next to some practical arrangements as accommodation, course timetable, etc...

4.4 The creation of the course packages

As foreseen in the project proposal the partners work in different teams linked to their personal interest, expertise and experiences to produce innovative, qualitative course content. The teams are communicating through the Dokeos Espiew Forum, e-mail and telephone. During the two general meetings time was foreseen for teamwork on the course content in working groups grafted on the course packages. Regular follow-up, feedback, refining and adjustments guarantee the production of quality assured course content.

A needs analysis survey (questionnaire) was elaborated and the course packages content is worked out along the lines of its results. The answers from students and professors on this questionnaire were uploaded on the Dokeos Espiew e-platform in support of all course package working teams.

For each course package a “Standard of Competence” and a “Course Package Planning” form has to be filled in by each course package partner group.
4.5 Dissemination activities

Preparing the launch of the European module.

The management team together with the project partners have to deal with the practical requirements: recruitment, public relations and advertising, common standards between all the partners.

From the beginning it was decided that every partner should enrol a minimum of 5 students for the test phase.

As we aim at testing, evaluating and eventually refining the module, a small group is better to work within the test phase.

In the mean time, in co-ordination with the external expert, individual lecturers and professors are working out new course packages.

Dealing with timetabling, student and staff accommodation, room and equipment scheduling, enrolment procedures was the next step before the real implementation from the 1st September 2009 at the Howest Campus in Bruges BE.

5 Bringing the ESPIEW module to colleagues and students

The management team steered the whole process of information and internal and external dissemination of the project progress and interim results. All information concerning the brand new ESPIEW European Module was brought to their university colleagues and students in order to enhance the interest in the European Module and to help motivating colleagues to introduce the entrepreneurial spirit in the regular curriculum in social and health care higher education.

Creation of:

- The link to the ESPIEW website (http://www.espiew.eu, the website of each partner university exposes the ESPIEW project summary and partnership (with a link to the other partner universities), an informative poster, a detailed informative Espiew brochure for students, etc...)

The management team took care of disseminating the information through presentations and poster sessions at conferences, through special made PowerPoint presentations.

Each project partner had to fill in its own list of dissemination activities.

All dissemination products will continuously be updated during and after the project’s lifetime to guarantee the sustainability of the ESPIEW European Module.
Added value of the project approach: facilitating the maintenance of a continuous and qualitative activity of all partners involved in the project. This includes all activities foreseen in the project proposal such as: contacts in the own university, contacts with the field of social work and health care, development of the standards of competences for each course package, development of the course packages content, dissemination, information to and selection of students, practical elaboration of the pilot module, etc.....

6 Project outcomes & results

Results: Dokeos.Espiew Project e-platform; Dokeos.Espiew Course e-platform; website http://www.espiew.eu; link on all partner websites; brochure; poster; PowerPoint presentations for dissemination; work plan; standard of competence; course packages; course packages timing; minutes and reports; Quality assurance and control via Prose-tool and questionnaires, etc....

Results on organisational level:

The Dokeos.ESPIEW e-platform.

An important outcome of the ESPIEW project is the delivery of the five course packages to start the pilot programme on the 1st September 2009.

For this purpose an e-platform was created on Dokeos from the early beginning of the project. https://dokeos.howest.be

The e-platform is structured in a Forum part for discussion, a Group part for work package and course package preparation, a document part, an announcement part and an agenda. Also “Announcements” from the project co-ordinator to all partners and the communication of useful e-“Links” to important informative websites next to the “Agenda” were intensively used.

The use of this platform was not that easy in a first phase because most partners were not used to this working method. After some weeks the use of the e-platform was fluent and successful using the guidelines and the helpdesk set up by the management team.

A lot of new documents were uploaded on the e-platform such as:

- documents and formats for use by all partners (activity reports, dissemination, financial reports, etc....
- partners task division and follow up
- activity reports completed by the partners
- standards of competences
- course package planning
6.1 Quality assurance and quality control – prose tool.

The ESPIEW management team and the quality manager (external expert) in agreement with the whole project partner team agreed at the general meeting in Craiova to use the Prose tool for Quality Control. The management team and the quality manager created a “quality culture” within the group of project partners.

The Prose tool develops, promotes and distributes methods and tools for total quality management in organisations. These methods are focused on quality measurement, quality assurance, and quality improvement on the basis of self-assessment. A diagnosis results automatically in the formulation of actions for improvement. The tool is compatible with the Excellence® model of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM), and uses self-assessment as a cornerstone in total quality management. Because of the modular construction, the tool can be used for specific diagnoses in specific units, such as the ESPIEW Project, as well as for general audits of the global organisation. PROSE has been developed in different versions and in different languages (Dutch, French, and English).

The initial existing Prose tool for quality measurement and control was adapted by the Prose team to be used for an international project in curriculum development. These adjustments were done based on the remarks and suggestions put forwards by the ESPIEW management team after deliberation during the general meeting in Craiova. By the end May the Prose tool was ready for use and the questionnaires could be filled in by the project partners who each received their own login and password. Also the EACEA received a login and password to enter the Prose Quality Control e-tool online.

The Prose e-questionnaires, especially made for the ESPIEW Project, consists of 20 questions: for each topic:

• curriculum design
• teaching and learning methods
• quality management
• quality of the CD
• open questions and remarks made by the Prose users

Results on product level:

The website.

Initially the German partner from HS Neubrandenburg created a special website for the Espiew project on: http://www.espiew.eu online from the 1st December 2008 is under reconstruction and will be again available from 1st May 2010 on. That worldwide website mentioned the project summary, offered a link to the homepage of all projects partner universities and a contact address. On every website of the partner universities, a link is available to the ECDEM ESPIEW project.

6.2 The new developed course packages

All project partners were present at the general meetings and used the online Dokeos. Espiew e-platform during the development phase of the five course packages. Each partner contributed to the creation of the course packages in relation to its own expertise and experience. All the ECTS files, the standard of competence and the course package planning and timing are prepared, with indication of teachers, teaching and evaluation methods. According to the agreed module programme, the topics are combined in course packages.

The online courses have been developed and are available for the students on the Dokeos.Espiew Course e-platform since 1st September 2009. https://dokeos.howest.be

Each registered student has the free access to all online course material, announcements and an own email address with a personal login and password. A large use of IT opportunities and multimedia such as e-conferencing, e-learning using internet and intranet are an integrated part of the course packages. The module provides opportunities for learning through lectures, presentations, workshops, case analyses, entrepreneurship simulated exercises, study visits, text readings, project work and computer conferencing, individual and group coaching moments with an interdisciplinary, intercultural and international approach in a practice learning based module. The course package teams constantly created a stimulating, positive and entrepreneurial learning environment structured to improve the entrepreneurial spirit and based on interdisciplinary, multinational and multicultural approach, taking care
to introduce professionals from very diverse backgrounds, nationalities and cultures. In each course package team a “Standard of competence” and “Course package programme and timing” was developed for implementation in the European Module based on a uniform document created in the Management group.

It was decided and written in the proposal that each course package would have a competence-based assessment using oral or written exams, portfolio, presentations, self- and peer assessment in relation to the course content. The testing methodology will be decided upon during the module development by each responsible per course package in agreement with the involved partners. This assessment methodology was also part of the discussions during the Craiova general meeting and the preparations during the course development period.

Provisions are taken to ensure the recognition of the European Module as part of the curriculum specified in the diploma supplement at bachelor level. The use of ECTS is foreseen and the appointed credits goes with the module programme in the brochure and poster. The amount of thirty ECTS credits will be awarded to all participating students from all institutions and countries.

Since the very beginning of the project and based on the existing networking of the different project partners, the large number of contacts with professionals, social partners, etc... (needs analysis / questionnaires) during the preparation of the course packages guide the institutions to be more responsive to employers’ needs and helps employers to better understand the institutional perspective to train responsible, inventive and entrepreneurial graduates for the future. This is the growing link to the important objectives of interaction and cooperation between universities and the industry and of the improvement of employability of young graduates.

6.3 Result on european higher education level

A particular interesting result is the large number of students from the different partner countries and beyond that enrolled for this first pilot version of the ESPIEW European module in Bruges starting the 1st September 2009. No less than 25 students are participating. This shows the large interest for the entrepreneurial spirit and the course content in the non-business sectors of social work and health care. This interest is an important confirmation of a positive evolution to the progressive integration of entrepreneurial competences in the curricula of higher education in the area of social work and health care, being the final goal of the total project.
7 The ESPIEW partnerships

The consortium partnership from six EU countries was created during the Neubrandenburg Symposium concerning “The Future of Social Work and Health Care in Europe” (Sept. 2007), based on the need to fill the existing gap of entrepreneurial spirit in these areas.

A multilateral cooperation of international partners from

- Belgium: University College West Flanders (project co-ordinator) & Plantijn University College Antwerp,
- Denmark: Metropolitan University College Copenhagen,
- Finland: Lahti University of Applied Sciences,
- Germany: Hochschule Neubrandenburg,
- Romania: University of Craiova,
- Cyprus: Frederick university.

The internal partnership in the project’s progress during the first year:

All delegates at the preparatory meeting in Berlin (Jan. 2008) keep their promise to actively co-operate in the development, implementation and other agreed tasks related to the multilateral Curriculum Development project.

The “list of skills and expertise of the key staff involved in the project” clearly proves the capability of the consortium to undertake the project. The management used the project planning as a basis for an spreadsheet mentioning all tasks per partner and allowing the project co-ordinator to mark the tasks carried out or not. The document is weekly updated.

The multidisciplinary project team and the high level of competence and expertise of the individual co-operators allows for the creation of the course package teams in relation to personal interest and expectancy. This is reflected in the cooperation ability to come to a number of necessary consensuses: on the content, the course package planning and timing, student recruitment and even the cooperation after the project’s life time.

The multi-country partnership provokes a precious interaction and international openness on intercultural, ethic and law principles, being the foundations of the entrepreneurial spirit for non-business workers.
7.1 External partnerships

The multiple links of partner universities and professors with private and public organisations allow to evaluate the different needs to bridge the gap of entrepreneurial spirit in the areas of social work and health care in Europe. The existing external relations and partnerships open doors to invite guest lecturers to the European ESPIEW Module and facilitates the creation of experiences in the field for the students.

7.2 The role of the external expert

By subcontracting an experienced external expert the project meets the general concern of the consortium to guarantee good management and the quality of the project and project’s outcomes. The external expert, Mr. Ignace Ingelaere, retired in 2007 with twenty years of experience as an international coordinator at the Katholieke Hogeschool Leuven. Mr. Ingelaere possesses all necessary skills and a large experience in internationalization and higher education. His task is of high importance in the Project Management and the Quality Assurance by being the independent actor during the meetings, by preparing and evaluating questionnaire results, by giving positive impulses and stimulating to action where necessary. All partners clearly showed respect and admiration for his interventions and intellectual input.

7.3 The management team

Working in a real partnership ambiance also in the management team supporting the activities of the team, guarantees the steady progress as foreseen in the project work plan.

During projects problems appeared and disappeared and up to now the consortium and management team have faced and tackled all the problems with a determined drive to solve them. All the partners are absolutely convinced of the extra value of the European module and will do their utmost to realise the final goal: a European wide module on entrepreneurship in the non-profit sector.

8 Conclusions after one and a half year of project progress

The solidity of the partnership indicates that it will go on right to the end and that it will launch the European module on the 1st September 2009 as a pilot European module.

At the beginning co-operators were more focused on all the possible problems and difficulties in the different approaches and the other ways of dealing with the same things. After the first general meeting in Finland all partners really started to look for
solutions to get the ESPIEW module up and running.

The partnership covers a great area of the EU: covering in the North Finland and Denmark over Flanders and Germany to Romania and over Greece to Cyprus. All partners are sharing expertise and experience. Next to the project other agreements for teachers, staff and students learning and internship mobility are set up.

This partnership shows a common interest in innovation and creativity: a lot of expertise on social work, health care, social health care, welfare, wellness coaching and management, etc.....is available in all the partner institutions.

A real challenge is the cooperation between University Colleges and academic Universities with sometimes a different approach for the same goal.

During the project progress all co-operators have to deal with differences in legislation in education, in terminologies, in cultural backgrounds and in institutional organisation what makes it interesting and challenging for all the partners involved.

8.1 Plans for the future

On the first of September 2009 the Pilot of the ESPIEW European Module starts at HOWEST in Bruges. It was foreseen that students from each partner university should follow the ESPIEW European Module. 25 students applied for the course. Also students from non consortium partners enrolled proving the interest in the project and the ESPEIW European Module also outside of the project partnership.

Based on the preparatory work of each course package team we took care of: planning the schedule of lectures, planning the teaching rooms and the equipment, the creation of a welcome folder, etc...

At the date of this progress report the teachers are still preparing new course content. Especially for those course packages taking place in November & December 2009.

During and after the pilot period (September – December 09) several quality control actions are planned in order to refine the module afterwards. The second main quality control moment will be held via the PROSE tool again with the accent on content, teaching and tutoring, testing and assessment and an overall evaluation of the project. The results will be summarized in the Quality Report made by the external expert and will be taken into account in the refining of the European Module by the project partner team. To ensure a qualitative refining of the European Module students, professors and other stake holders will be invited to fill in the questionnaire and to give their personal comments and suggestions for improvement. Special attention will be given to the question whether the programme has achieved its aims and objectives (competences
and skills) in the creative and innovate manner as it was envisaged in the concept and development. Experts will be invited to participate in some assessments and presentations in order to get their feedback. Taking into account the comments of the Quality Control Manager based on the results of the inquiries held via the above mentioned PROSE tool by all the participants (lecturers, professors, students, administrative staff, experts and other stakeholders) adaptation of the content of the courses, the schedule of lectures, the online courses and the assignments will be considered, agreed upon and implemented. The project management team will then propose a final European Module programme for the next academic year the whole partnership should agree on.

At the end of the project’s life time on 1st September 2010 a refined version of the ESPIEW European Module will be taught to a group of new applicant students. The location will be in Antwerp. HS Neubrandenburg is willing to organise the module in Germany in 2011. Every student can enrol in this programme if she/he fulfils the enrolment requirements (Minimum 2 successfully completed semesters in a Bachelor Health Care or Social Work programme or an equivalent of 60 ECTS ). Students can be enrolled for the whole semester or for one of the course packages.

It is the intention of the consortium to sustain the project results by offering the ESPIEW European Module year after year also in distance learning. The final goal is to have the “Entrepreneurial Spirit” as a part of regular curriculum in social work and health care higher education all over Europe.

8.2 The wide external dissemination

Already during the first year of the project a wide internal dissemination activity was set up to inform students from our institutions and to ensure the enrolment of selected students. This was at most an internal dissemination as planned within the partner universities reaching professors and students. All partners in the consortium were asked to provide a dissemination activity list for the first year of co-operation in the project. To enhance the dissemination the project management team made a brochure with all necessary information concerning the Espiew European Module, a poster and several PowerPoint presentations. All this material was uploaded on the Dokeos.Espiew e-platform and free to be used by all partners. The information was also sent to all international partners of the consortium.
8.3 The follow up of the ESPIEW project

During the general meeting in Craiova (Romania) a discussion was held on the future of the ESPIEW Project as entered on the agenda of the meeting. Several ideas were discussed. One of the most solid ideas was to exploit the project results of the ESPIEW project to establish a Network of institutions of higher education and private and public organisations, working around the idea of the implementation of the entrepreneurial spirit in the curricula and the profession of social worker and health care professional and/or in other non-business studies. For this an application for a LLP Erasmus Network Project could be submitted in Spring 2010 to start just at the end of the ESPIEW project in Autumn 2010. HOWEST is ready to prepare and co-ordinate the application.

9 Contribution to EU policies

During the whole process of the elaboration of the new European module all co-operators took care to contribute in all activities and content matters to the EU policies in the area of the Objectives of the Lifelong Learning Programme, the Lisbon Education and Training Progress Indicators and the Lisbon Key Competencies.

9.1 Objectives of the Lifelong Learning Programme

To contribute to the development of quality of lifelong learning and to promote high performance, innovation and a European dimension in systems and practices in the field:

The first year of the project’s lifetime clearly denounces that the nature and level of the partnership, plus the specific expertise of the selected professors and their networks guarantees high performance in creating innovative course content with a spirit of a modern didactic approach.

Especially the drawing up in an international team of the “Standards of Competence” for the different course packages leads to a harmonisation of the programme standards in the EU and in the end it will make the higher education in social and health care able to conquer all other continents.

To support the realisation of a European area for lifelong learning:

The courses are offered to the students via a digital learning platform. Demanding assignments oblige them to cooperate with organisations from all over Europe. In order to be successful, students are required to continuously monitor what is going on in the EU and the rest of the world. Networking and self study are presented as vital tools to be flexible as a professional on the European common market. Students in the European
Module will immediately be immersed and stimulated to an empowering lifelong learning strategy as a necessity to be able to deal with and to understand constant changes in the European social and cultural environment.

Creating the new course content in an international team pushes the co-operators into a multidisciplinary approach on typical social entrepreneurial matters in a very European Union related framework.

To help improve the quality, attractiveness and accessibility of the opportunities for lifelong learning available within Member States:

All partners have strong links with public and private organisations. Cooperation with networks from professionals in the field were used to design courses and to monitor the quality. In return, internships and outcome information of student assignments will be available for the consortium members and all co-operators.

The internship part of the programme requires good contacts with the field and professional world. All partner universities involved in the project have been dealing with placements for a long time, are very experienced in the follow-up of internships and have set up very good contacts. For some of the students, going for international placements is new and will broaden their horizon and contact with the international world in the field of social and health care.

Students will be able to do an interesting internship in their home country or in an EU partner country during the fifth course package.

The required internship control of the competences and skills to be gained will be done effectively via a balanced system of strong contacts from the teaching staff, the professionals from the field, mentors and supervisors.

To help promote creativity, competitiveness, employability and the growth of entrepreneurial spirit:

The five course packages making up the new European module are designed with the aim of educating top level social entrepreneurs in the management process able to work efficiently with flexible, entrepreneurially motivated colleagues and associates in a very fast changing, competitive environment. It was the fundamental aim of the course developers to have all students consequently develop a more creative and dynamic way of dealing with career planning, job security and entrepreneurship.

After the students have followed a solid innovative programme, their employability will increase. In this period of recession, the need for flexible, problem solving personnel increases. An education programme that squarely faces this specific economic situation of rapid change fits entirely into the Lisbon Strategy.
To reinforce contribution of lifelong learning to social cohesion, active citizenship, intercultural dialogue, gender equality and personal fulfilment:

It is foreseen that during the course introduction and through the ethical and practical course content, the diversity of professors, students and institutions involved, participants are strongly encouraged to open their minds towards gender equality, intercultural dialogue and active European citizenship in order to create possibilities for social cohesion and personal fulfilment.

An organised recruitment strategy in all partner universities guarantees that there won't be any social-religious nor gender exclusion and that all courses are open for disabled students.

All Social Work and Health Care students will have the opportunity to broaden their horizon and improve European citizenship.

To promote language learning and linguistic diversity:

The working and communication language was English also during the general meetings. The teaching language during the courses is English, so the practical use of this language will result in a significant improvement for all participants and persons involved in the organisation.

All the students can also follow language courses at their home universities. implementing the module

The international backgrounds of the participants, professors and students guarantees a large informal linguistic diversity.

To support the realisation of a European Higher Education Area:

Because of the consortium and the broad spread of universities throughout Europe, common experience and expertise lead to improve higher education (quality) standards. Vital importance was given to the use of an common standard (QA) across the management and the project’s process using the Prose quality control tool. Especially the drawing up in an international team of the “Standards of Competence” for the different course packages leads to a harmonisation of the programme standards in the EU project partner universities. It is quite conceivable that this will influence the harmonisation in the EU partner countries.

To reinforce the contribution of higher education and advanced vocational education to the process of innovation:

The co-operation between universities and university colleges has a reciprocal beneficial impact on the stimulation and liberation of wider possibilities and synergies
within the process of innovation in education, along with making a wider orientation on the European social market. To this purpose, among other things, universities from Cyprus and Romania were invited to participate in the project. The project progress and the interested involvement in all project activities denounces the good chance to meet that objective.

To improve the quality and to increase the volume of students and teaching staff mobility throughout Europe:

Because the module is organised as a pilot in Belgium, students and professors from the consortium are asked to go abroad under the Erasmus Mobility Programme during the project’s lifetime. Erasmus bilateral agreements were signed between the universities for that purpose.

After the project’s lifetime, students from all over Europe will have the opportunity to enrol in this European module under the Erasmus Mobility Programme.

To facilitate the development of innovative practices in education and training at tertiary level, and their transfer, including from one participating country to others:

New and modern pedagogical and didactical approaches (self-organising team work, interactive learning, group facilitation, network organisation behaviour, peer- and self evaluations, self study, tutoring, e-learning, etc) are introduced in all courses across all subjects, platforms and borders. This sharing of expertise in pedagogical and didactical approaches creates a win-win situation for all participants in the different (new) Member States.

To support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning:

Special attention is given to the development of online courses and a well structured digital learning platform Dokeos is in use. This leads to an improved technological capability for all students and all members of organisations / enterprises that co-operate in this project.

All communication between the actors in the project is ICT-based, e-mail, discussion forum, Dokeos platform. In the long run the courses could possibly be delivered as an “open university” module helping to sustain the results of the project.
9.2 ESPIEW and the 2008 priorities

Teaching modules in highly interdisciplinary areas or in areas with specific need for strong transnational cooperation in teaching:

The reached target group are bachelor students in Social Work and Health Care in search of profound knowledge of modern entrepreneurship to gain specific competences in the competitive social market.

Professors and students make up a multidisciplinary, multicultural group with different backgrounds.

Interested Master students, graduates and working people in search of knowledge and entrepreneurial skills are the second target group.

As the project is covering a borderless subject, the elaboration and implementation of the European Module is based on transnational cooperation in teaching.

9.3 Lisbon education & training progress indicators

**Mobility**

During the preparation period and the first year of co-operation in the project the participating professors exchanged a lot of expertise and experience. They have already learned a lot about new methods and, from discussions on the content, have received new insights into the differences of the educational systems, the differences in interpretation of the Bologna declaration and the needs evoked by the Lisbon Strategy.

Professors are aware of that, during the implementation period of the module, teachers and students from all participating universities will have to go abroad. The exchange will be organised based on the LLP Erasmus Teacher/Student Exchange Programme.

Bilateral Agreements for teacher and student exchange in the Erasmus Programme are signed between partner institutions. A total of 25 students coming from 6 countries.

Participating students during the test-implementation phase are coming from different EU countries (enlarged EU).

Incoming students have been welcomed by Howest, the university organising the module on 1st September 2009.

The European Module offer participants 30 ECTS credits giving the possibility to obtain those credits on the diploma supplement at the end of the international semester.
In a later stage the module will hopefully become so attractive that students from tertiary level from all over the world will enrol.

The enrolment of students in this module is increasing the total mobility figures of every university involved.

Concrete percentage cannot be given for the moment.

9.4 Lisbon key competences

Communication in foreign languages

All communication and courses are in English. Part of the prerequisites for students is having initial competences for communicating in English and being able to understand spoken messages, to initiate, sustain and conclude conversations and to read and understand texts. Participation in this module will refine these competences. Multi-culturalism of the group, the European social context, communication with the professional world, formal and informal communication certifies the process progress of language learning.

Final result: improved level of communication throughout lifelong learning.

Digital competence

It is foreseen in the module preparation that students will be trained in the search for, the collection and the handling of information via computers. A lot of computer applications will be used. The course of the virtual learning platform Dokeos will increase student’s competences and skills to deal with ICT in a critical and systematic way, assessing relevance and distinguishing real from virtual.

Professors and students will use internet for networking and contacts with the external organisations.

The confrontation of Social Workers and Health Care workers with Communication, Management and ICT (cross and multi-disciplinary approach) in combination with the education-industry relationship (experts/internships) fits entirely in the aims of the EU to go for a more knowledge-driven EU society.

The creation of online course packages on the Dokeos.Espiew e-platform encourages and simplifies the lifelong learning.
Learning to learn

The implementation of group and individual assignments provoke the necessity to adapt learning methods with real time planning and management, improving problem solving, acquirement, evaluation, assimilation of new knowledge and skills to apply in a variety of contexts.

Students make a social business simulation plan and integrate acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes into a professional work placement.

This contributes to the acquisition of competences needed for own carrier management.

The module induces self-study and tutoring in a way that students will find learning to learn lifelong normal.

Interpersonal, intercultural and social competences and civic competence:

As professors/students have diverse nationalities and different cultural backgrounds awareness of their interpersonal, intercultural and social competences increases. Cultural differences and diversity will be crucial in workshops, team and group work and will give students the ability to communicate constructively in multicultural environments and to elicit civic competences.

Social diversity and inclusion are to be taught as part of a course "intercultural communication" to deepen solidarity and to stimulate social responsibility and competition affecting the EU community.

Entrepreneurship

Professors and students are making a group of interested persons bringing ideas to realisation using their personal initiatives, creativity, acquired competences and improved entrepreneurial sense and spirit.

Starting from creative ideas students are to be coached to work out a social project plan based on entrepreneurial strategies, to set up objectives, to take responsibility for their actions in order to succeed in a successful social venture.

Students are guided to adapt their attitude to a open-minded exploitation of their creative ideas influenced by external circumstances.

After the implementation of the pilot programme, partner universities from all over the EU will be invited to be engaged in this new European module.

The combination of being involved in a very new and innovative topic in the world of
social work and health care in an international, multilateral programme gives all lecturers of all partner universities a special set of tools to look at the labour market and the need of an entrepreneurial spirit in the world of professionals. It create the possibility to work out the programme in a more complete European context and it already nourished the intention to build a network of institutions of higher education and private and public organisations, working around the idea of the implementation of the entrepreneurial spirit in the curricula and the profession of social worker and health care professional and/or in other non-business studies.

10 From ESPIEW to NESPIEW: “Network for Entrepreneurial Spirit Improving European Welfare” – a network combating poverty and social exclusion

The future of the successful ESPIEW project was often discussed during the several general meetings. Several ideas were discussed. One of the most solid ideas was to exploit the project results of the ESPIEW project to establish a Network of institutions of higher education and private and public organisations, working around the idea of the implementation of the entrepreneurial spirit in the curricula and the profession of social worker and health care professional and/or in other non-business studies. (at least 31 partners should participate in the project!)

For this an application for a LLP Erasmus Academic Network Project could be submitted 26th February 2010 to start just at the end of the ESPIEW project in Autumn 2010. HOWEST was willing to prepare in co-operation with the ESPIEW consortium partners and co-ordinate the application and project.

NESPIEW – the proposed Work Packages, content and goals of the Academic Network:

- WP1 Project management, co-ordination and steering committee
- WP2 Control and quality assurance
- WP3 Research and analysis of entrepreneurial skills: similarities and differences between EU member states
- WP4 Design of a European NESPIEW vision and mission statement
- WP5 Subgroups activities on specific topics like ethics, law, entrepreneurial skills, etc.,... with related activities (organising of seminars on entrepreneurial topics, literary overview)
- WP6 Annual organisation of the ESPIEW European Module and its future development
- WP7 Organisation of an international conference concerning entrepreneurial spirit in the non-business education sector - Organizing workshops and training sessions in entrepreneurial skills
• WP8 Dissemination, promotion of the network and project results
• WP9 Exploitation of project results

The final NESPIEW Erasmus Academic Network project proposal was submit to the EACEA on 26th February 2010. All 42 partners from all 31 LLP EU countries are hopeful to co-operate in this interesting new network starting in Autumn 2010.

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The Project To-Gather: good practice in real life learning

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Abstract

In this article answers are given to the following questions: What was the starting point and what were the sources of inspiration for the project To-Gather? How is the concept closely linked to the society and to the youth of today? Why is the project called To-Gather? What are the sources of information? What’s the follow-up? Finally I hope that we will come to gather.

Key-words

Real life learning, Multiple intelligences, Field of view, Multiple choice identity

The starting point and the source of inspiration for the international project ‘To-Gather’ are young people, learning them to develop an identity in Europe or outside of Europe. That is why we designed a complete learning arrangement with five special learning routes for the age-groups between 3-6 years, 7-11 years, 12-16 years and 17-25 years. All groups work on the five core themes of To-Gather: Identity, Family and Friends, Good Work (ecological identity), Migration and Mobility, and the Other. The learning routes comprise of seven unique steps and every step is an important phase for the learning process towards active and democratic citizenship in Europe. At To-Gather, we use knowledge from different disciplines, European perspectives, places and cultural backgrounds. And we believe that it is important to use a broad range of sources of knowledge such as texts, images, paintings and especially music. Music is the energizer of the project as a sense-opener, source of knowledge, problem-solver and a way of communication, presentation and reflection. That is how we activate new learning-styles, such as multiple intelligences, systems thinking, digital learning, lateral thinking and creative learning.

The aims, the structure, the content and the learning-styles are related in the project To-Gather. This is called ‘synchronisation didactics’. That means we can use concrete
examples and good practice that proved very successful in practice: experiential learning. During the course you will experience all this and make it meaningful for yourself. This is learning by doing, based on the work and practice of more than 1000 young people and 75 teachers from all over Europe.

This is learning from and in reality: real life learning. It may seem ambitious but this is our way to respect you, the Other and Europe.

Since 2005 we have been working with young people between 3 and 25 years and since 2009 in 10 European countries: Latvia, Slovenia, Portugal, Denmark, Turkey, Hungary, Slovakia, Belgium, England and the Netherlands. Furthermore we have links to Sweden, Syria and Lebanon. Out of these collaborations emerged a lot of interesting learning and working material designed by teachers and young people from different European countries.

The theoretical aspect of the programme is based on the work of such influential thinkers like Howard Gardner, Fred Korthagen, Peter Sloterdijk, Anthony Giddens, Jeremy Rifkin, David Fromkin and Norman Davies.

In addition, we also cooperate with networks such as EMUNI, CiCe, ETEN and the Humanistic League as well as with musicians of bands like Audiofeel, Scanner, VanderLinde, Loreena McKennitt and Sigur ros.
Why is the project called To-Gather?

The first reason is to let teachers and young people meet and work/learn together. It’s cooperative learning and real life learning in a dynamic way.

The second reason is the intercultural dialogue between young people from Europe and outside of Europe (Northern Africa and the Arab world). It is the gathering of the self and the other, thinking out of the box and searching the unknown.

The third reason is to gather theories and practical experiences (learning strategies and didactics). A multi-perspectivistic approach is realised by gathering multiple intelligences and multi-disciplines, the multiple choice identity and the multiple society. We designed a special organizer Field of View to get an overview from four different perspectives: past and future, theory and reality.

What are the sources of information?

One source is the flyer with the aims or seven reasons to come to gather. This is about the why, what, when, where, who and how. Another source or medium is the website where good practice, background information, highlights and news may be found. The website is also an important place to communicate and exchange ideas and material.

A third source is the toolkit, where 7 different tools are worked out in a key tool, a target tool, a change tool, a frame tool and a planning tool and finally in a route tool and material tool. This toolkit useful during the dissemination (training courses and conferences). You can use these tools to get an overview but also for the training of their students and teachers and for the transfer of the learning routes in practice.

A fourth source is the package of results of To-Gather inclusive learning routes, music-cds, the game, the story and clips. For example the song ‘Passenger in time’, the photos by Tadej Bernik and Zigurds Bilzonis, the film ‘The family’ and the clip ‘Come to gather’ are aesthetical visualisations of the concept.

Finally the book ‘It’s hard to become who you are’ is a source for background information from different perspectives and disciplines, written by different co-writers from all over Europe (Robi Kroflic, Susana Goncalves, Layla Radjab, Sandra Rone, Henrik Bak, Marta Fülop) the Arab world (Bassim Kaissi, Kinda Tabbah) and the USA (Howard Gardner). Chapter 1 ‘A story of Europe’ is about the history of Europe, Chapter 2 ‘Welcome to the multiple society’ describes the present, Chapter 3 ‘Plug in to gather’ explains the learning strategy in the project To-Gather, Chapter 4 ‘Braindrops’ is focussed on theory and Chapter 5 ‘The future is not what is was before’ on what has to be done in the future.
There are many European projects about citizenship and identity. What is the surplus value of the project To-Gather for Education? There are seven reasons to come to gather:

1) It is a complete learning arrangement with learning routes that learners and teachers may follow step by step in order to develop an own identity in Europe. The whole package or parts may be used flexibly to follow the learner from 3 till 25 years. Two music-cds, an educational game, clips, a story, a website and a book are produced. The focus is constantly on high quality in theory and didactics. Specific theoretical concepts are important and some concepts are ‘stolen’ from other projects such as systems-thinking, multiple intelligence and five minds for the future and other concepts are developed in the project itself such as the multiple society, the multiple choice identity, field of view and synchronisation didactics.

2) The learning arrangement is designed by teachers from 5 different countries and tested in pre-primary, primary, secondary and higher education. The commitment and talent of all these teachers and learners makes it possible to take new learners into the flow in a sense-opened, knowledge-based, problem-oriented, communicative, productive, cooperative and reflective way. It’s hard fun.

3) It is in-service learning, because the focus is on hot items such as identity, family and friends, environment, migration and the other. It helps teachers and learners to solve problems in daily life or learning.
   - How may young people be motivated and fascinated?
   - How and why can Europe be meaningful for young people and Europe?
   - How can young people develop an own identity and become good democratic citizens?
   - How and why should other cultures be known, understood and respected?
   - How can old and new learning strategies be mixed and balanced such as knowledge and multiple intelligences, individual and cooperative learning, learner-centered and teacher-centered education?

4) To-Gather did grow in a natural and organic way during 25 years while working cooperatively with a varied group of people in many European projects. It is a sign of the times. It’s an up to date balance between knowledge and creativity, individual and cooperative learning, learner-centred and teacher-centred education.

5) Innovative learning strategies, theories and didactics are mixed and concretised in a multi-perspectivistic and multi-disciplinary way. The slogan is: ‘Teach what you preach’ by integrating in a concrete and applicable way music and drama, creative learning, systems-thinking, social constructivism, sustainable learning, real life learning, good work, five minds for the future and lifelong
learning. We are standing on the shoulders and the books of giants such as Howard Gardner, Peter Sloterdijk, Jeremy Rifkin, Jeffrey Sachs, Zygmunt Bauman, Kishore Mahbubani, Manuel Castels, Roger Scruton, James Taylor, David Fromkin, Norman Davies. Frank Ankersmit and Anthony Giddens.

6) To-Gather is linked to and cooperating with big European networks as CiCe and ETEN to disseminate the project. The cooperation with EMUNI is important to stimulate the intercultural dialogue with Northern Africa and the Arab world by organising the Summerschool ‘Come to gather’.

7) The project To-Gather is a creative artwork, using aesthetics such as (modern) music, art, drama, dance, design and photography. Musiccd’s, videoclips and photos are especially made for the project with the help of specialists and artists from all over Europe.

The follow-up?

The most important follow-up is the dissemination of the project at schools for primary, secondary and higher education in Europe by using the learning arrangement, inclusive the learning routes and the other material. The good news will also be spread at conferences, training courses for teachers and through the To-Gather Tour. The project To-Gather has been selected as a DIVA-project by the European Commission as good practice in education, culture and Europe.

A group of about 15 people are visiting the To-Gather Festival that is organised by one of the partners. The aim is to present the practical results, to meet with other teachers and to promote the project in Education.

The To-Gather Festivals are celebrated at all places such as Den Bosch, Liverpool, Haslev, Jurmala, Istanbul, Coimbra, Torhout, Damascus, Miskolc, Presov and Ljubljana. A festival consists of lectures, workshops and performances by the dancer Margarita Kamjaka and the rockbands Audiofeel or Vanderlinde.

Another follow-up is the international minor ‘Create your future’ for high talented students from February 2012 till July 2012 at Hanze University Groningen.

A creative result is the film ‘It’s hard to become who you are’ by Wim Kratsborn, featuring Duygu Akkaya as Europe. The film is about the turbulent and fascinating double life of Europe as a young woman of 27 years old and of young people in Europe, Northern Africa and the Arab world. The making of the film will be in 2011 and 2012.

Finally we are going to apply for an International Joint Master, starting in 2012. Partners may be universities in Liverpool, Coimbra, Istanbul, Riga, Ljubljana, Beirut, Damascus, Cairo and Groningen. In this way the project (2005-2011) will be concretely
implemented in education in Europe, Northern Africa and the Arab world.

'It's a long and winding road that leads to you door' (Paul McCartney)

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Developing a curriculum for ‘learning to live together’: building peace in the minds of people

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Abstract

In this article, Scatolini and Van Maele reflect on ‘learning to live together’, one of UNESCO’s Four Pillars of Education, from their experience as faculty at GROUP T – Leuven Education College’s ‘International Educating Class’ [IEC]. They explore how this pillar can infuse an international dimension into the curriculum and describe how it informed the objectives, contents and method of two core modules of IEC, namely ‘Society, Education, and Intercultural Dialogue’, and ‘Living Together in 2025’. The former module covers the horizontal dimension, focusing on living together across space, whereby students’ attention is drawn to various barriers to educational opportunities and how to overcome them. The latter module takes a vertical approach, focusing on living together across time. By picturing scenarios in the future that are based on robust trends reaching into the past, students discover route planners for navigating the present. Bartholomé offers a concrete example of how he has been seeking to apply the insights gained during his participation as a student in the IEC in ‘Brasil Feliz,’ a multifaceted educational project in Brazil.

Key-words

International educating class, Unesco, Learning to live together, Intercultural dialogue, Scenario thinking, Brasil feliz

1 Internationalization and curriculum development

It is not a new phenomenon that education should have an international dimension. Expansion and colonization have been internationalizing factors throughout history. At this moment, however, technology makes it possible for structures and curricula to cross borders without having to leave one’s place. Time and space are being redefined as internationalization becomes commonplace among education providers.

Educational institutions are internationalizing themselves through different channels; for instance, by reformulating their vision of education and mission statements,
participating in cross-border academic schemes both for students (e.g. Erasmus) and faculty (e.g. Comenius), as well as by integrating international internships into their curricula, organizing and taking part in international conferences and congresses, setting up bilateral projects with partner schools, etc.

In the case of GROUP T – Leuven Education College, UNESCO has functioned as the main source of inspiration (Beelen & Dhert, 2009) for delineating the institute’s vision on internationalization. The main elements in this respect have been UNESCO’s Four Pillars of education, its understanding of cultural diversity and its view of education as an instrument for positive change and peace. Above all, it is the pillar ‘Learning to Live Together’ that has informed the international dimension of recent curriculum developments.

1.1 UNESCO’s four pillars of education

The ‘Four Pillars of Education’ were originally set out in a report for UNESCO by the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century chaired by Jacques Delors (UNESCO, 1996). These pillars underline the very breadth and depth of UNESCO’s vision of education within and beyond schooling. Education, the report holds, must be organized around four fundamental types of learning throughout a person’s life: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, and learning to be. Although they can be defined separately, they form an integrated whole and should ideally be present in all pedagogical encounters and the curriculum as a whole (Scatolini, 2010).

The Four Pillars are programmatic and can be summed up as follows:

- **Learning to know**: ‘Learning to know’ lays the foundations of learning throughout life. This pillar refers to the basic knowledge that we need to be able to understand our environment and to live in dignity. It is also about arousing curiosity, allowing us to experience the pleasures of research and discovery. It faces us with the challenge of combining a sufficiently broad education with the in-depth investigation of selected subjects. Learning to know implies learning how to learn by developing one’s concentration, memory skills and ability to think.

- **Learning to do**: ‘Learning to do’ refers to the acquisition of practical skills, but also to an aptitude for teamwork and initiative, and a readiness to take risks. As such, this pillar is about the competence of putting what we have learned into practice so as to act creatively on our environment. A variety of situations, often unforeseeable, is bound to arise. Learning to do enables us to turn our knowledge into effective innovations.

- **Learning to live together**: ‘Learning to live together’ is the pillar that the UNESCO Commission emphasizes more than any other. It refers first of all to developing an understanding of others through dialogue leading to empathy, respect, and appreciation. Yet if we are to understand others, we must first know ourselves. ‘Learning to live together’ is also about recognizing our growing interdependence, about
experiencing shared purposes, and about implementing common projects and a joint future. Only then will it be possible to manage the inevitable conflicts in a peaceful way.

- **Learning to be**: ‘Learning to be’ is founded on the fundamental principle that education needs to contribute to the all-round development of each individual. This pillar deals with the broadening of care for each aspect of the personality. It deals with giving us the freedom of thought, feeling, and imagination that we need to act more independently, with more insight, more critically, and more responsibly. The end of education is to discover and open the talents which are hidden like a treasure within every person. As a means of personality training, education should be a highly individualized process and at the same time an interactive social experience.

By speaking of learning to know rather than of knowing, UNESCO indicates that this is a never-ending process that is both personal and shared. Education is not only about know-what, but also about know-why, know-how and know-what for. Said otherwise, learners are not called to merely become experts in their field, but also co-workers in knowledge production processes and managers of meaningful, responsible and sustainable development (Burgoyne & Reynolds, 2002).

### 1.2 Dimensions of ‘learning to live together’

The third Pillar, ‘learning to live together,’ underscores the broad scope of education. It does this horizontally and vertically, for the learning trajectory entails mechanisms that influence both individuals and communities throughout physical and virtual space as well as chronological and lived time.

Horizontally speaking, ‘learning to live together’ involves current local, regional and global variables, some of which contribute to the creation of communities, while other ones have fragmentary effects. Vertically speaking, it includes the past and the future, both as weight and as magnet. Consequently, living together also includes cross-generational understanding, since one’s own ancestors and posterity may at times be harder to understand than contemporary foreign people.

Even though these two dimensions involved in ‘learning to live together’ may give the impression of being two discrete realities, they actually reveal how porous and unfinished all educational endeavours are. Education, unlike knowledge and information, is not something that some have and others lack, but a process of which we are all part. Without education, the human person would remain a possibility, without ever becoming an actuality. Humans learn to be humans through being together with other humans (cf. the Bantu ‘ubuntu’ philosophy). Life is a network. Objective, subjective and interpersonal factors affect the learners’ learning process, either positively or negatively. ‘Learning to live together’ is therefore not a negligible contingency that education providers and educators may disregard at will; it is a human necessity. An adequate curriculum for
'learning to live together' ought therefore to enhance: (a) learners' participation, (b) the coherence between the group's goals and its action, (c) the unfolding of learners' potentials, and (d) the learners' awareness of themselves as well as of the dynamics of their immediate and remote communities (as highlighted by Isaacs in the Dialogos project).

Considering both the importance and the scope of a curriculum for 'learning to live together,' we shall now tease out some of the implications of this task.

1.3 Thinking and acting from the third pillar in and beyond schooling

As the preamble to the constitution of UNESCO reads, its mission is based on the simple conviction that 'since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed'. Not surprisingly, peace education is seen as a central theme for curricula centred on 'learning to live together'. The authors of the Delors report warn that it is not enough to establish communication among diverse groups, for instance, in inter-racial or inter-denominational schools. 'If the different groups are rivals or if they do not have the same status in the same geographical area, such contact may have the opposite effect to that desired - it may bring out hidden tensions and degenerate into an opportunity for conflict. (...) The conclusion would seem to be that education should adopt two complementary approaches. From early childhood, it should focus on the discovery of other people in the first stage of education. In the second stage of education and in lifelong education, it should encourage involvement in common projects.'

One way in which UNESCO encourages and promotes peace is through its Associated Schools Project network (ASPnet), among which is GROUP T – Leuven Education College. A curriculum designed from this perspective will be geared towards:

- eliminating all manifestations of racism, xenophobia, exclusion, discrimination and intolerance,
- strengthening education for democracy, civic responsibility, critical thinking, tolerance and non-violent conflict resolution, and
- raising awareness of human rights in theory and practice, sensitizing students to their own rights and responsibilities, including the rights of others.

In this case, 'curriculum' is not restricted to what one does in the classroom for a given school subject. It may also refer to so-called 'extra-curricular' activities which, together, constitute a planned course of action. Collaborating on common projects from an early age, both inside the school and in the community, is one of the key recommendations from the Delors Commission for 'learning to live together'. Hence, not only schools but also theatres, museums or sport clubs could in principle design and implement curricula.
based on ‘learning to live together’.

There already exist programmes that are based on the idea that we should, on the one hand, understand ourselves, our context and others and, on the other, transform the world together. The goal is simple: ‘to enable and encourage people to think constructively about issues, both physical and social and to develop constructive attitudes towards living together and solving problems that arise in their communities through peaceful means’ (Verdiani, 2005:8).

There are also examples of integrated curricula that combine specific learning contents with ‘learning to live together’. Examples thereof include the ASPnet flagship project ‘Breaking the silence’ on slave trade⁴, and ‘Learning to Live Together: An Intercultural and Interfaith Programme for Ethics Education’.⁵ Across the world, ASPnet schools have designed an array of educational projects from a ‘learning to live together’ perspective, focusing on themes such as inclusive education and human rights education.⁶

In Belgium, GROUP T – Leuven Education College is in the process of redressing its curricula in view of the Four Pillars of Education. On the level of governance, it has enshrined the Four Pillars principle in its mission statement and articles of association.⁷ Among the members of the institute’s board of directors is Zhou Nan-zhao, who sat on the Delors Commission and has remained an influential propagator of the Four Pillars in general and ‘learning to live together’ in particular (e.g. Zhou, 1998). One of the college’s recent initiatives has been a series of educational encounters around the question ‘Who believes in indifference?’ using interactive theatre as a trigger for shared reflection on educational practice.⁸ At the programme level, its ‘International Educating Class’ (IEC)⁹ constitutes a clear example of how college curricula can be built around UNESCO’s Four Pillars of Education (George, 2009). Two of its modules are dedicated to ‘learning to live together’: (1) ‘Society, Education and Inter-cultural Dialogue’, which focuses on the horizontal dimension, and (2) ‘Living Together in 2025’, which zooms in on the vertical dimension. It is to these two modules that we shall now turn.

2 Thinking horizontally

In the module on ‘Society, Education and Inter-cultural Dialogue,’ students are invited to become aware of the many levels on which education and schooling take place. This includes the study of ways in which the relationship between the individual and society is envisaged, the intersection, congruencies and differences between education and schooling, and the effects of globalization on social cohabitation. First, the curriculum of ‘Society, Education and Inter-cultural Dialogue’ draws the students’ attention to some of the variables that hinder the provision and attainment of ethically responsible
educational opportunities; we shall call them ‘barriers’. After that, it also encourages them to discover ways in which those barriers can be lowered and eventually removed. The international composition of the IEC student population facilitates a multi-sided look at the issues in question.

2.1. Barriers to equality of educational opportunities

Once post-modernism de-centred modernity, its democratic intake on the world became not only a political system, but also an outlook on life. Then, when democracy cross-pollinated with capitalism, consumerism became a lifestyle without which today’s world economy would suffer severe losses. Finally, globalization and the birth of the knowledge economy contributed to education’s becoming not only one more commodity, but also the key to growth and sustainable development.

However, as is the case with other goods in the global market, education, too, is not always within the reach of all citizens. Despite the changes in the world, many of the old barriers between the weakest segments of the world population and education are still in place. Deep-level continuity seems to be stronger than changes on the surface (Depaepe, 1997). The following factors are among the many obstacles that prevent equal opportunities in education.

a) Environmental constraints

The characteristics of the terrain can limit the actual learning opportunities of prospective learners. This may be due to either the lack of enough schools in the vicinity or the dangers involved in reaching them (e.g. in case of war-torn areas; Auduc, 1998). In countries with island or forest territories (e.g. in the Maldives or the Amazons, respectively), communication between their different parts often requires resources that are not always available. Boarding schools are at times an option to overcome these constraints, but not everybody can afford them.

b) Social constraints

Stratification

This term is understood here in a broad sense as the categories into which individuals are pigeon-holed. These classifications may be determined by solvency, social approval, status, ethnic background or by a combination of these and other factors. Sometimes, the social (especially ethnic) stratum to which pupils and students are assigned plays a more important role in their educational prospects than the influence of their teacher
(this seems to be the case in both the developed and the developing world).

The effects of social stratification underline the fact that although human beings are born equal in terms of dignity, we are not all equal in terms of our social value. Social standing is one of the most usual obstacles preventing children and students from unfolding their potentials to the full.

**Gender**

Engendered educational parity is the fifth Millennium Development Goal. Most countries are making efforts to achieve this mark; some are even succeeding in doing so. Notwithstanding the progress made in some parts of the world where girls are increasingly becoming the majority group in formal education, this is not yet the case everywhere.¹⁰ ‘In no society do women yet enjoy the same opportunities as men. They work longer hours and they are paid less; their life chances and choices are more restricted than for men’ (Colclough et al., 2003:3).

The fact that more and more girls are now benefiting from formal education does not mean yet that they are always and everywhere allowed to study whatever they wish to or have talent for. The tendency to consider gender as a disqualifying criterion for education may have various causes. For instance, it may be due to cultural perceptions (women belong to the domestic sphere), economical constraints (educating girls may at times be a bad investment), religious interpretations (motherhood is women’s primary vocation), the girls’ health situation (e.g. due to AIDS) and disabilities, etc. (Colclough et al., 2003:12).

**C) School-related constraints**

**Costs of studying**

The high cost of education is one of the most common obstacles promoting educational inequality (Auduc, 1998), especially in the area of the internationalization of higher education. Very often, even world organizations meant to be at the service of the education of the disadvantaged contribute to keeping study costs exorbitantly high. Moreover, by establishing a system of scholarships (for instance, under the pretence of safeguarding quality), international organizations and donors continue to hold a grip on the world, determining who ‘deserves’ education and who does not.
Curriculum

Not all learners are given the same opportunities to study curricula that have been designed taking into account their motivation, needs and talents. This means that even when children or students manage to find a school and are allowed to register, not all of them will be treated as they need to be. Some learners are being provided with more and better ‘scaffolding’ than others.

Academic standards

Sometimes, learning failure is due to the learning standards, for instance, because they have been established with other learners in mind. In such cases, it is not the learner who is to blame but the policy makers. Standards can prevent learners from benefiting from schooling by disqualifying them as eligible candidates (the entrance criteria are too high) or by making it too difficult for them to succeed (exams are exceedingly hard). Even though it is not a priori desirable that standards be lowered, complementary structures ought to be in place to compensate for the lacunae in learners’ educational luggage.

Instruction

Teachers and their instruction styles represent another variable that creates inequality in education. Having access to a school does not guarantee that learners will find there (1) the teaching style that befits their learning needs and/or (2) teachers that possess the appropriate qualitative knowledge, skills and didactic material11 to best help them to progress to higher levels of education (Darling-Hammond, 2009). The concrete infrastructure of daily instruction speaks volumes about the barriers preventing learners from activating their learning potentials. Educational equality or inequality can be measured by comparing schools and countries in terms of ‘the number of students per teacher, teacher training, public expenditures and educational achievement’ (Colclough et al., 2003:6).

D) Family-related constraints

Parental educational background

Studies seem to be indicating that parents with a stronger educational background contribute to the educational success of their children in significant ways. The educational background of the parents is often proportionally related to their social class: the higher the class, the higher their education and the greater their involvement in the education of their children (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003:21).
Poor levels of parental involvement

Children of parents that cannot or simply do not help them with their education seem to be at a disadvantage compared to others. Studies show (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003:17) that at age 7, parents' involvement is an influential variable fostering school achievement. By 16, the class composition becomes more important than parents' involvement. A great many learners will thus be at a disadvantage during their primary education, which will probably mark them for life.

E) Personal constraints

Some of the obstacles that foster educational inequality have to do with the person. Failure to enter the spaces of education or to succeed in them may be due to either physiological or psychological causes, or to a combination of both.

2.2 Creating equality of educational opportunities

Since the axiom ‘success breeds success’ has been upheld by some studies, at least in some respects (Salanova, 2010), the aforementioned barriers call for pedagogies that combine realism and idealism or, said otherwise, pragmatism, ethical awareness, critique and inventiveness (Giroux, 126).

Studies about inequality in school performance seem to indicate that the issue of equality of opportunity, understood in a broad sense, is the main predictor for the success or failure of the ideals of education for all. In the words of Darling-Hammond (2009): ‘education resources do make a difference, particularly when funds are used to purchase well-qualified teachers and high-quality curriculum and to create personalized learning communities in which children are well known. In all of the current sturm und drang about affirmative action, “special treatment,” and the other high volatility buzzwords for race and class politics in this nation, I would offer a simple starting point for the next century’s efforts: no special programs, just equal educational opportunity.’ However, equal opportunity can only be guaranteed if the barriers that stand in its way are removed. No magical solution can claim universal validity, since different barriers will be more important in certain places than in other ones. That is why we shall now limit ourselves to a few remarks on overcoming the general structural obstacles enunciated above.
A) Overcoming environmental constraints

Current technologies offer means to overcome physical limitations. The old views of education, moulded around the classroom and its factory-like setting, must make way for new ones. The FLACSO is an example of this trend in Latin America, as are Open Universities around the globe. However, similar applications for primary and secondary education are still missing. Sometimes it is pedagogues that stand in the way of virtual classrooms complementing or substituting physical ones. Hence, teacher colleges should no longer educate students (almost) exclusively for the traditional physical classroom environment, but also for more delocalized spaces for teaching and learning (e.g. virtual classrooms). Curriculum developers should also produce material for the same target group.

B) Overcoming social constraints

Redressing class-related inequalities

In order to redress the educational deficiencies due to social class, some support the institutionalization of affirmative action. But there are also voices against such initiatives. For instance, some argue in the USA that even though equal opportunities now exist, non-white and non-Asian students continue to show low levels of achievement. They conclude hence that poor results must be due to genetic predisposition, culture, or a lack of effort and will (Darling-Hammond, 2009). In Belgium and Holland, it is also being discussed whether ‘coloured’ schools are conducive to better or poorer school results. However, the problem is not that schools are ‘coloured’ (what is so abnormal about a ‘coloured’ school in a ‘coloured’ neighbourhood?), but that the facilities and resources to which the students have access are ‘coloured’. These schools do not always have the same infrastructure, didactic material, teacher quality, extra-curricular activities, home support and social appreciation as their ‘non-coloured’ counterparts (Darling-Hammond, 2009).

Even though mixed groups are not enough to guarantee success, some studies show that, at least in higher education, such groups promote deeper and broader learning (Kurlaender & Yun, 2002:3).

Working with gender and not against it

Even though gender parity in education is one of the millennium development goals, this is not a reality as yet. Despite the fact that ‘investing more in the education of girls drastically increases personal and social well-being – the end objective of all development activity’ (Colclough et al., 2003:4), UNESCO’s EFA Global Monitoring Report (2003/4) shows that Brazil was at the time one of the countries where there is still considerable
work to be done on this front.

The presence or absence of female teachers seems to be one way to judge, especially in the developing world, whether gender parity is growing or declining (Colclough et al., 2003:7). Although, in this respect, progress has been made in primary education, there still remains much to be done in secondary and tertiary education before the male and female ratio among teachers has reached levels that are proportional to the size of the overall population. In places such as Belgium, the gender variable works the other way around: it is men that are underrepresented in primary education and in the first part of secondary education.

Educational planners will have to take into account the causes of gender disparity so that they can promote the rights of girls’ rights to, within and through education (Colclough et al., 2003). In their attempts to overcome structural obstacles at these three levels, the help of important social agents should be sought and made use of, such as religious bodies, the commercial world (e.g. those that rely on particular skills for their production) and NGOs (Colclough et al., 2003:14).

Some good practices in this area have emerged; for instance, demographic shifts, women in the labour force, changing the law, giving incentives to reduce child labour, offering scholarships and food, changing traditional attitudes, setting up early childhood benefits, empowering women to envisage themselves as valid and important agents in society (Colclough et al., 2003:17).

C) Overcoming school-related constraints

Facing the costs of studying

Sponsoring programmes should be set up so that children and teenagers can gain access to education. However, given that for UNESCO the ideal educational structures are those that transform children in need into community agents, sponsoring and scholarship programmes should include clauses whereby the beneficiaries must ‘pay back’ what they have received by enabling others (EFA, 1990: art. 1—4; Auduc, 1998). Even programmes meant to help students from developing countries to study in foreign universities could be conceived of in this manner to ensure that those students become agents of positive change. This might help counter the negative effects of brain drain.

Improving on the curriculum

There are studies that show that once the curriculum has been attuned to the learners, they perform better and ethnic differences begin to fade away (Darling-Hammond, 2009). In Europe, countries such as the UK and Germany have seen the
appearance of what is called ‘immigrant education,’ whereby pieces of the new cultures are plastered onto the old curricula without challenging the old assumptions (Arora, 2005:19ff.). These practices have had ideological goals rather than pedagogical ones. Education ought once again to be about the education of individual learners, not just about training this or that group to fulfil what is expected of them.

**Enabling qualitative instruction**

Whenever isolated individual learners fail, their failure might be due to individual characteristics. However, as ‘Education for Some’ or, as it is known, the Eggleston report (1986) suggested, *when whole segments of the population fail, then that is a sign that the system has failed* (Arora, 2005:32).

**D) Overcoming family-related constraints**

**Fostering parental involvement**

Parents’ involvement is not always fully dependent on the parents. Children from the lower class will at times purposefully block parents’ involvement, e.g. because they know that their parents have to work hard and need their rest when they are at home, or because they do not want outside things, such as school, to come into the home.

The attitude and expectations of the parents concerning education may be one of the more important inheritances that they will bequeath their children. If parents think that helping with school is not part of their job as parents, they will be less readily inclined to take up an active role in the education of their children (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003:49). Consequently, their children might interiorize their parents’ lack of involvement as an expression of how parents should be or of the lack of importance of learning. Yet, even in cases where parents are involved, it is not the overly helpful parent that is the most conducive to a learner’s educational achievement, but the one that motivates *independent learning* the most (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003:51). In order to promote success, educational agents ought therefore not to work on the attitude and skills of their pupils and students only, but also of their parents.

To promote equality of educational opportunities, there is a real need for programmes that (1) help parents with parenting (e.g. through special workshops), (2) establish communication channels between the school and the parents, (3) encourage parents to do voluntary work in favour of their children’s learning environments (e.g. the school or the library), (4) train the parents to help their children with their homework (e.g. by forming study groups for parents and learners similar to home schooling settings), (5) give parents the feeling that their input counts in times of decision making, and (6) find ways to broaden the parents’ vision of education (e.g. by organizing study trips for
Compensating for deficient parental educational luggage

Not every classroom teacher will be able to compensate for the parents' educational lacunae by offering extracurricular activities; this is especially true in developing countries where teachers must have a second (and even a third job) to make ends meet. This is therefore an area in which the assistance of governmental departments, religious organizations, NGOs, international voluntary and internship programmes is needed.

E) Overcoming personal constraints

Physical and psychological impairments can represent real barriers preventing children from receiving systematic education. Emotional problems must not be forgotten (e.g. due to abuse, abject poverty or traumatic experiences such as drought, floods, war or terrorism). This is an area in which specialized coaching is necessary, as well as infrastructural adaptations that require funding. Herein lie a lot of opportunities for education providers from the developed countries, who could demonstrate their sincere commitment to the internationalization of education. Ideally, it should be non-addictive cooperation: foreign agencies could help with setting up the necessary structures and training the local service providers so that no long-lasting dependence relationship arises.

3 Thinking vertically

There is also a vertical dimension to ‘learning to live together,’ which invites us to consider our ties across time. In the module ‘Living Together in 2025’ the students set out to define a shared vision on this prospect in a stepwise approach. Given their interest in education, students tend to select a related aspect as their focus, for instance, what it will be like to educate teachers in 2025. From the field of futures studies they first learn to identify the megatrends of today that will shape tomorrow's world. Next, by applying the scenario method, they learn to turn those possible futures into vivid scenarios and backcast ways to arrive there. Drawing on strategic management theory, they finally learn to define paths toward the most desirable visions. In this way, the exercises in envisioning the future are informed by trends that originate in the past, yielding route planners for navigating the present.

Living together is more than a theme in this course. In addition to constructing knowledge about living together in 2025, students will tackle hands-on exercises in ‘learning to live together’. As the students envision desirable futures, they engage in
strategic conversation and genuine dialogue with students from different cultures and backgrounds. As they develop scenarios towards plausible futures, they come to terms with promoting values with respect for others. In this way, this module supports the development of a range of faculties, including imagination and creativity, analytical and synthetic thinking, empathy and pro-activity. And as in the module on ‘Society, Education and Intercultural Dialogue’, the plurality of perspectives that comes with the international composition of the group enhances the in-class dialogue.

3.1 The presence of the past

It is very hard to be truly visionary. When the first advertisement for an automobile was published in 1898, it was named the ‘horseless carriage’ and that is exactly what it looked like. When we try and look into the future, mostly we just extrapolate what already exists today. The question is whether this means that we should refrain from trying. When John Naisbitt, a leading futurist and author of the groundbreaking Megatrends, was recently interviewed by the Copenhagen Institute for Future he declared that we had had all of the major breakthroughs for the time coming —information technology, biotechnology, the rise of China— and that this will be a period of evolution rather than revolution. On this assumption it becomes possible to describe plausible tomorrows based on what we can see around us today.

In order to detect these evolutions and feel the pulse of time, we need to look beyond the constant twists and turns of events – stocks crashing, athletes achieving victory, governments toppling, companies merging, volcanoes spewing ash clouds – and search for patterns of behaviour. Events may fascinate us but it is the patterns or trends that provide windows into the underlying systems which have the explanatory power to tell us why things are what they are and what we can do to change them (Meadows, 2009). Looking at trends, many of today’s events will be revealed as the logical continuation of what preceded. The here and now carries inside it the there and then. That is why a curriculum for learning to live together, even though it may be preoccupied with the concerns of the day, will always reach out to the past and connect with the generations that came before us.

In the module ‘Living Together in 2025’ we primarily investigate trends as indicators of how the future may unfold, though. Fortunately, there exists a vast body of excellent research at institutes and think tanks around the world that students can rely on, notably from OECD’s Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (e.g. Trends Shaping Education, 2008; Higher Education to 2030, 2009) and UNESCO’s International Institute for Educational Planning (e.g. their quarterly newsletters and the series on New Trends in Higher Education). Other useful sources include the U.S. National Intelligence
Council (Global Trends 2025, 2008), the Dutch STT Foresights on Technology and Society (www.stt.nl), and private institutes like the Copenhagen Institute for Futures Studies (www.cifs.dk) or Fast Future (www.fastfuture.com). Students are asked to skim these publications and identify trends that are likely to have a considerable impact on the chosen theme, for instance educating teachers in 2025. In order to encourage students to look beyond the domain of education and consider trends that reflect a more complete experience of living together, we have coined the acronym DEEPEST. Each letter stands for an external domain of forces that are bound to affect education deeply: Demography, Ecology, Economy, Politics, Ethics, and Science & Technology. This web of interrelations with different domains of the evolving environment brings the horizontal dimension of living together into this module.

In a follow-up activity students are asked to literally take a stand, whereby their position in the classroom reflects the extent to which they believe a particular trend is likely to (1) continue in the years to come, and (2) affect the chosen theme in 2025. This physical impact diagram with real-time feedback, a tool recommended by Benammar et al (2006), encourages students to muster all the supporting evidence they have when they present their selected trends to their classmates. This is crucial because trends that are backed up by robust research provide us with the much-needed reality check of our visions for the future. Visions often derive from dreams and fantasies, and it is this imaginative power that gives visions much of their appeal and lure. However, in order to serve as useful beacons for taking effective action, they should transcend fiction and be compatible with the facts that we can perceive today. As they say, without the data your chatta’ don’t matta’. This is the reason why in the initial stages of the module ‘Living Together in 2025’ the emphasis is on logical and analytical thinking.

3.2 Picturing plausible futures

Scenarios are multiple stories about possible futures. Scenario thinking was brought under the attention of a wider audience after it had been applied in a business context at Royal Dutch Shell by Kees van der Heijden (1996) and before him by Peter Schwartz, who links scenarios to ‘the art of the long view’: ‘Scenarios are a tool for helping us to take a long view in a world of great uncertainty (...) Scenarios are stories about the way the world might turn out tomorrow, that help us recognise changing aspects of our present environment’ (Schwartz, 1991). Since then scenario has also been applied extensively in non-profit organisations (Scearce, Fulton & the GBN Community, 2004). More recently, the method has been developed as an educational tool to be used by students in the Netherlands by Marco Snoek and his colleagues. Benammar et al (2006) cite several ends to which scenario thinking can contribute, such as to become aware of
important value systems within the students' field and of their own position in relation to these, and to expand their horizons by examining changing perspectives and exploring the complexity of contexts.

In the light of learning to live together, it is worthwhile pointing out that this examination of multiple perspectives should include opposing voices: ‘When one is working with passionate convictions, it is easy to become deaf to voices you may not agree with. Yet consciously bringing these voices to the table exposes you to ideas that will inform your own perspective and could prove extremely helpful in your efforts to see the big picture of an issue or idea’ (Scearce, Fulton & the GBN Community, 2004:14). In this way scenarios can help us to arrive at a more comprehensive understanding of the world in which we operate so that we can use that understanding to improve our ability to make better decisions. Van der Heijden (1996) links scenarios to ‘the art of strategic conversation’. ‘It is my experience’, he says, ‘that scenarios are the best available language for the strategic conversation, as it allows both differentiation in views, but also brings people together toward a shared understanding of the situation, making decision making possible when the time has arrived to take action’ (1996:ix).

**Forming a scenario matrix**

The central question in scenario thinking is: What if powerful forces of change evolve in opposite directions? Accordingly, scenarios are set in internally consistent yet structurally distinct environments that are constructed around a limited number of critical uncertainties. These critical uncertainties make up the foundation of the scenario matrix, typically a 2X2 template. The axes of the matrix represent two of the important driving forces behind the identified high-impact trends. Both selected driving forces should be characterized by large impact as well as large unpredictability; they should be highly relevant to the issue at hand and highly uncertain in that each pole represents a plausible future. Will government spending for education be high or low in 2025? Will migration policies be strict or mild in 2025? The response to each of these questions will have a considerable impact on the state of education yet it is not clear today which way things will turn. What is more, the answer to one of the question does not determine the answer to the other. This makes it worthwhile picturing the four futures that arise when we combine both axes: for instance, what could it mean to be a student or a teacher in a future where government spending is low and migration policies are mild? The definition of the scenario matrix is indeed a crucial milestone of the method and as a novice practitioner it might be wise to ask for expert feedback at this stage.18
Developing the scenarios

Once the scenario matrix has been formed, it is time to develop the scenarios proper. The key is to make each quadrant come alive by trying to live inside each scenario and to tell a story from the perspective of the future. Each future will distinctive as a result of the combination of the poles of the axes, yet they all share features related to the high-predictability trends that were identified in the first stage. As a showcase product, student teams could for instance work together to write the education pages of an online newspaper, integrating techniques from digital storytelling (Tolisano, 2010). Some contributions would focus on the flavour of the day (e.g. account of the first school day of a teacher trainee in 2025; an editorial about the controversy over a new policy); other contributions would backcast from the future and present a glimpse of what happened between today and 2025 (e.g. an obituary of a leader in education); others would look forward beyond 2025 (e.g. a visit to an innovative school).

3.3 Paving the way

Scearce, Fulton & the GBN Community (2004:15-18) name four applications for scenario thinking, all of which are relevant to a curriculum for ‘learning to live together’.

- Setting strategic direction, based on the exploration of how complex factors could create very different environments that we might have to navigate.
- Accelerating collaborative learning, by providing a platform for making our mental maps explicit, appreciating other perspectives, and leading to novel insights.
- Alignment and visioning; facilitating the development of a shared vision for the future.
- Catalyzing bold action; based on the realization that the status quo is not sustainable and pushing us to intervene in the system and take action.

‘Think of this guide as an introduction to a discipline aimed at increasing your ability to change the world’, the authors write (2004:3). In the module ‘Learning to Live Together in 2025’ the students are asked to evaluate the four scenarios they developed. Which one is the most likely to unfold? What can we do to anticipate that expected future? Which scenario is the most desirable? And what can we do today in order to increase the chances that this common vision might materialize? As a final step the group writes down its recommendations on how to act as a formal mission statement with reference to the purpose, the strategy, the values, and the behavioural norms (Campbell & Yeung, 1998).

And again, dialogue provides the key. Just like with scenario thinking, dialoguing is often referred to as an art. William Isaacs (1999), founder of the Dialogue Project at MIT, speaks of ‘the art of thinking together’. He presents a methodology for dialogue that
rests on listening, respecting, suspending, and voicing. ‘We are entering an age where we cannot know what is coming. […] Dialogue can help by stretching the minds to inquire into points of view we might not naturally accept, and so holding more possibilities and options open’ (1999:334). It goes without saying that when we embark on this process with a group that holds many different nationalities, cultures and persuasions, the voyage may be slightly rougher but the views along the way are magnificent.

4 ‘Learning to live together’ in Brazil: Manu’s story

During the IEC programme, I wrote a paper for ‘Society, Education and Intercultural Dialogue’ about education in rural Brazil. After my graduation, it was time to put the theoretical knowledge into practice, which I did together with Micheli, my Brazilian partner, in the village of Teolandia.

4.1 Teolandia

The first step, before our departure for Brazil, was to set up a charity (VZW) called ‘Brasil Feliz’ (‘Happy Brazil’).

Once we had arrived in Salvador da Bahia, we began our journey to Teolandia, a small rural village, situated 260 km south of Salvador. It has a surface of 289 km2 and houses about 12,000 inhabitants. After studying the local educational landscape, it became apparent to us that there were a few barriers preventing universal access to education, which I shall now briefly describe.

A) Environmental constraints

Schools are at about 30 minutes’ drive from one another. They are mostly small schools with merely two or three classrooms and a very limited school curriculum. Children go to school till they reach the age of 10. After that, they have to go to another school that has the other classes. At that moment, many children drop out of formal education.

There is often only one teacher per class made up of 3 different (age) groups at once. Hence, most of the time, there is one teacher every 40-50 pupils. Many of these teachers are volunteers without any pedagogical education and with no knowledge of didactics. Nonetheless, if it was not for them, a great many children would not have any education at all.

Since building more schools was beyond my means, my partner and I thought of helping the children by solving their transportation problems. We bought an old truck,
a Ford F4000, and transformed it into a school bus of sorts. We also sought and found a driver for it. On this make-shift bus, we transported pupils to a school that offered a curriculum suitable to their age and learning needs. A lot of them had previously had to travel on horse back, on foot or by other means. The local government subsidized the fuel and the driver’s wages.

Social constraints

Adult illiteracy

Once we began to map out the local social structure, we realized that many elderly people were unable to read and write. When we sought to find some more background information, we were told by a teacher that Brazil was conducting an alphabetization programme, destined for elderly people, and entitled ‘Brasil Alfabetizado’. The government pays the wages of educators who, in their spare time, can teach elderly people to read and write. Our contact was willing to do that but lacked the necessary space, since she lived in a very small house.

To solve that problem, we set up a project whereby a house was going to be built, big enough for her and her family to live in and for a classroom to alphabetize adult people. The construction was almost finished when we left for Belgium in order to raise more funds. At present, the building has been completed and the lessons have started.

School-related constraints

Curriculum

As part of our preparatory research, we visited all the local schools, both private and public, and interviewed the teachers about their experiences and difficulties. We concluded that both types of schools offer a weak curriculum and need professional assistance.

4.2 Vision for the future

Seen that the social and learning needs of Teolandia are considerable, we shall have to concentrate our efforts and means on a reduced number of initiatives in order to ensure positive results. In order to foresee future educational needs, possible trends were analysed using the scenario method. The two variables employed in the quadrants are: 1) regional economic growth levels (envisaged over against the background of a predictable positive national growth) and 2) the perceived value of education.
From the above scenarios, we draw some conclusions.

- Whatever the developments may be, one aspect that will probably remain unchanged is the need for projects in the area of sports, hobbies and useful, shared pastimes.

- If the regional economy does not improve and the perceived value of education stays low, the people will continue to be dependent on the landowners in whose farms they work. The choice for them will be between staying put or migrating to another region.

- If the levels of regional economic growth remain low but the perceived value of education increases, the need for qualitative education will also expand. Before the government has managed to provide adequate educators, there will be a demand for ‘train the trainers’ enterprises. We could tap into that need and offer such programmes.

- If the regional economy improves but the levels of appreciation of the value of education continue to be low, we shall have to focus on vocational trainings that lead to better paid jobs. If the people can see that there is a correlation between education and financial and social improvement, their perception of the value of learning will probably increase. Innovative and vocational trainings (e.g. ICT and technological trainings) will be advisable options. The increase in economic solvency will lead to the acquisition of new tractors, agricultural machines and vehicles, computers, domestic gadgets that are still very rare in the region (such as washing machines, freezers and air-conditioning). Consequently, new businesses and shops will emerge. These changes will entail that in this primordially agricultural region, new technical skills will be needed and, hence, also new training opportunities.

- If both the regional economy and the general appreciation of the value of education increase, the need for new educative programmes will also augment; for instance: training the trainers, educating the educators, subsidiary trainings focussing on aspects of education (such as coaching, special education, technological education), adult education schemes (e.g. second-chance education), education for innovation, etc.

In light of the above analysis, we have decided to study a number of possible courses of future action.
Overcoming social constraints

Since youngsters spend a great part of their day doing nothing, we will set up a project that uses sports and games to keep them off the streets and busy. By creating stronger bonds between them, we hope to minimize crime.

Overcoming school-related constraints

Educating the educators

It is our intention to establish bilateral schemes between the schools in Teolandia and teacher education colleges in Europe, especially GROUP T – Leuven Education College. Student teachers would thus be able to volunteer in our projects: they could educate the teachers and, at the same time, learn Portuguese and/or Capoeira. The school principals have already lent their support to the idea; now we must find partner institutions in Europe and sign the necessary international accords and memories of understanding.

Overcoming the costs of studying

We are planning on founding a ‘foster a pupil’ programme. People of means could foster a pupil for approximately 5 EUR a month so that he or she can gain access to education.

Offering extra lessons

In order to compensate for the deficiencies in school instruction, we are also planning on organizing extra lessons (e.g. English, homeworks, Physical and art education, lessons in sustainable development, etc.) in another house, closer to where the learners live. For adults, there would also be trainings to acquire new skills (car mechanics, building, hairdressing, clothes making, etc.).

Finances

In order to realize the above initiatives, we shall need sufficient funding. At present, we are giving paid Capoeira workshops and organizing sponsored Brazilian cultural and culinary events in Belgium. In the future, we hope to conduct a systematic fund-raising campaign.
5 Suggestions and questions arising

In itself, internationalization in education is a pre-ethical reality: intrinsically neither
good nor bad. Its open-endedness raises questions, such as what we mean by ‘education,’
what we want it for and what we want to get out of it. While some see it as an economic
asset and become sellers of trainings, UNESCO sees it as an opportunity to build on the
common non-quantifiable human heritage.

The double-sidedness of education highlights the relationship between education
and schooling. Depaepe has shown that schooling often ‘scholarizes’ education, whereas
schools also becomes ‘pedagogized’. In other words, one the hand, one can detect a
reduction of the meaning of education to going to school, while, on the other hand,
modern life demands that schools increasingly take over the role of parents and the
state, playing a greater role in the upbringing of children and the training of the (future)
workforce. Consequently, providing education nowadays involves a lot more than simply
founding schools and running schools entails more than merely implementing the
curriculum. UNESCO’s educational philosophy represents and attempt to enunciate
and enact an ethically, realistic and future-oriented respond to the ongoing societal
processes, precisely there where education, schooling and the economy intersect and
shape one another.

At the IEC, policy makers, educators and learners continuously evaluate the
programme’s components. Our experience with the two modules focused on ‘learning
to live together’ spoken of in this contribution confirms what others (Isaacs, 1999) have
been indicating for a while: the internationalization of the economy and education calls
for curricula for ‘learning to live together’ in a decentred world that are fully aware of
the enhanced, horizontal and vertical systemic nature of present-day life. Such curricula
must remain conscious of the local, regional and international context within which
learners and education facilitators function now and will do so in the future. There is a
need to map the network of relationships and variables that shape social trends, to which
purpose systemic approaches must be set into place. However, ‘systemic approaches’
must not be understood as uniformity-oriented but as open-ended and flexible strategies
capable of continuously incorporating new voices into ongoing international, polyphonic
dialogues. Having said that, lest one should fall into vagueness, priorities and centres of
action must be selected and seen as evolving targets subject to evaluation and revision.
Educational endeavours must, after all, follow, predict and thus shape the world’s flow
of change.
References


Notes

4) http://old.antislavery.org/breakingthesilence/educationproject2.shtml.
8) This activity is an initiative from the dean’s office, the team for ‘Religious and Non-Religious World-views Education,’ and the diversity co-ordinator. For its implementation, the assistance of AndersOm (‘TheOtherWayAround’), a theatre group, has been sought.
10) For instance, the access of girls to primary school seems to have declined in Algeria, the Congo, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Oman, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, Thailand and the United Republic of Tanzania). (Colclough et al., 2003:6).
11) In 2003, the situation was still far from perfect. At the time, half the teachers in the developing world had not yet received (adequate) pedagogical training (Colclough et al., 2003:11).
13) For instance, the African Virtual University (http://www.avu.org/home.asp), the Arab Open University (http://www.arabou.org.sa/en/index.php), the Asian International Open University (http://www.aiou.edu/eng/index_e.htm), etc.
14) In Belgium, they are called ‘concentration schools’ (on account of the concentration of allochthonous students in them) and in Holland, ‘black schools’ (because of the visibility of the non-white student population).

16) This interview took place in 2007. See http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4QLFObhKoXI (retrieved on April 28, 2010).

17) All IIEP publications can be downloaded free of charge at: www.iiep.unesco.org/information-services/publications.

18) In the context of GROUP T's International Educating Class we have been so fortunate to call on the expert advice of Henno Theisens from OECD-CERI and of Marco Snoek from the Hogeschool van Amsterdam, University of Applied Sciences. Without their much appreciated guidance and support we would not have been able to serve our students as well as we did.

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Evaluating and enhancing the quality of provision in early childhood intervention: exploring some European perspectives

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Abstract

This paper reflects on research undertaken by eight European partners involved in a Leonardo da Vinci funded project over a two year period, focusing on early childhood intervention. As part of the project, the partners investigated quality issues in the field, based on their professional expertise and experiences as practitioners and academics across the different European countries involved. The quality of provision for children and their families was explored and evaluated in terms of accessibility and reach of the services; effectiveness and sustainability of any intervention undertaken; training of professional involved in delivery; and overall impact against success criteria. The paper provides some insights into the range of existing policies and practices in the different European countries whilst reflecting on the existence and development of a shared conceptual framework between individual partners. The benefits, both intended and unintended, of such international cooperation are discussed as are the challenges for such projects in developing a greater shared understanding.

Key-words

International, Early childhood intervention, Policy, Practice

1 Context

This paper reflects on research into the different policies and practices related to early childhood intervention as experienced by the eight European partners engaged in a funded Leonardo da Vinci funded project over a two year period. It investigates and explores the shared learning undertaken by the group members in order to facilitate greater understanding of the existing provision and the training needs of practitioners working in the field of early childhood intervention. Without achieving some common understanding of the nature of provision in each country, the group would have been unable to focus on or identify the specific training needs and to develop tools to support this need, which was the essence of the funded project.
The development of this understanding for members of the group was recognised as critical to us achieving the required and agreed formal outcomes and became increasingly critical. Whilst it appeared that we were all using the same or similar terms and language to describe or explain situations and experiences, it became increasingly obvious that the meaning behind the terms or the language used was not always commonly shared. For example, the concept of ‘early intervention’ had different meanings to different members of the group. To some, it meant recognising and diagnosing a young baby’s or child’s problems (often medical and often long-term) and providing the appropriate medical intervention. For others, including the UK members, it meant recognising ‘vulnerable’ children and their families at any point in the child’s development and providing support to address the focus of the vulnerability. This might of course be a long term medical condition but equally it might be social, economic or educational. Similarly, it might be a short-term situation such as maternal illness or unemployment which might cause a period of particular need for the child (and for the family) which in turn required help and support from a range of services. The latter interpretation could mean early intervention might be required at any point in a child/young person’s development, up to and including the age of compulsory schooling that is 16 or older for children with recognised special needs. Thus we realised we needed to spend some time developing a better, deeper and more common understanding of national/individual perspectives and practices before we could progress on other substantive foci. It is, therefore, this aspect of the group members’ learning as well as policies and practices in early childhood intervention across the countries involved in the project which forms the focus of this paper.

Communication between members of the group was critical to this end and thus the face to face meetings held throughout the life of the project and located in five of the different partner countries over the period contributed significantly to this. During these meetings individual partners undertook presentations both formally and informally to the group which developed both aspects of our understanding as this provided opportunities to question and explore each others’ conceptual frameworks and related terminology. In addition, meeting in different countries enabled members to visit practice in the host country and to observe and discuss practice and theories and policies which underpinned their approaches. It similarly enabled national experts in their field to join the group for focused discussions about national policy and related practice in early intervention. Through organising more formal conferences in two of the host countries, professionals, academics, practitioners, experts and sometimes parents formed part of the 100-200 strong audiences, enabling some first-hand and invaluable exploration by members with those delivering, receiving or formally writing about policy and practice in the host country.
Between these face-to-face meetings other forms of communications took place between the group, including electronic (both written and video conferencing). This enabled us to undertake and then share data collection and analysis undertaken on return to our own countries, completion and submission of common audits of current training and training needs and conducting questionnaires with group of professionals to inform wider practice within the group. Uploading resources onto the web based resource tool for professionals also enabled us to share websites and other resources available within our own countries to support professionals working with vulnerable families. Informal communication between members also developed rapidly as rapport between the group was established. Members requested from and shared with each other related information, interests and knowledge, outside the remit of the project and, for example, some visits to each other’s countries between partners were arranged in which colleagues with a common interest outside the group participated. Other academic and potential formal partnership links were developed and explored.

The wide range of effective and authentic communication enabled the group to function beyond face to face meetings, developing a common purpose and understanding of our shared commitment to early childhood intervention. (Robertson, 2010 forthcoming; Robertson et al, 2009; Lave and Wenger, 1998; Wenger et al, 2002; Smith 2003, 2009).

2 Methodology

The group explored the nature of early childhood intervention in each country, both policy and practice. It explored the training programmes both academic and professional afforded to practitioners working in the field of early childhood intervention in each country or region/district, as appropriate, and the related identified training needs of practitioners in the field. The methodology undertaken to explore these issues was participatory with group members reflecting on practice through group presentations, informal and formal papers, a common audit of current national/regional provision and formal conference presentations. First hand experiences of provision for children and families in terms of provision was further enhanced by visits to early intervention provision in the countries where the meeting of the group were held. Similarly, experts from the country where the group’s face to face meetings were held, joined the group for discussion, undertaking presentations about policy and practice. Conferences held in two of the partner countries and attended by practitioners, experts, academics and students in the field further contributed to the growth of a common understanding, providing challenge of or support for existing practices and policies.

Data was collected from written evidence in the form of:

- Written reports to a common focus, presented by members
• Conference papers with a given conference theme, written by individual group members
• Collaborative input into an audit of provision across all partners with a standard proforma
• Informal notes taken at meetings
• Notes of meetings taken by the project leader
• Informal discussion between group members

2.1 Ethical issues

Members of the group were consulted about and agreed to the use of their written and oral conference presentations and papers being used as data in an academic paper. Whilst anonymity has been preserved and respected within the body of the text, all written contributions of the individuals involved have been acknowledged as appropriate in the references provided for this paper. The contributions of the group as a whole are also jointly acknowledged in enabling the creation of this paper and without whom this paper would not have been possible.

3 A discussion of findings

Thus, through sharing and discussing academic and other acknowledged definitions of early intervention (Carpenter, 1997; Guralnick, 2008a & 2008b; Guralnick & Albertini, 2006; Pretis, 2006), we began to clarify our own and others’ thinking. Alisauskiene (2009) offers a definition of early childhood intervention that takes into consideration ‘rights’ ‘support’ and ‘empowerment’.

‘Early intervention relates to the right of very young children and their families to receive the support they might need – and usually this is multi-professional support. (Early Childhood intervention) ECI aims to support and empower the child, the family and the services involved.’

Guralnick and Albertini (2006) suggest, that it is a realistic expectation that early intervention programmes can prevent risk factors from exerting negative influences on children’s development and even for children with intellectual disabilities, early intervention can not only minimize intellectual delay but other secondary complications as well. However, throughout Europe there is a diversity of provision. Pretis (2006) considers there to be a need for generating a common set of principles and corresponding practices. In his view, it does not appear to be a problem to agree on the principles associated with Early Childhood Intervention. These, for example, would include inclusion, child and family-centred activities and empowerment. However, he considers that it is the policies and practices that are highly fragmented. Guralnick, however,
considers much still needs to be done to implement accepted principles, including evidence-based practices in early intervention.

Pretis (Ibid) suggests that specific issues in early intervention are continually coming under closer scrutiny across Europe. These issues would include quality assurance, evaluation, professional training and efficiency and management. Whilst it is neither desirable nor achievable to work towards complete uniformity and standards in practices across Europe, Pretis suggests that comparability should be possible, especially in relation to the major professional training challenges.

Although it may be difficult to identify one single professional intervention model as most appropriate or valid, according to Pretis, as the work becomes increasingly complex it is important to try to establish a common philosophy and common standards across the different professional disciplines.

3.1 Conditions necessary for high quality

Alisauskiene (2009) suggests that the purpose of early childhood intervention is to support and enhance the child’s personal development, strengthen the family’s own competences and promote the social inclusion of the family and the child. In parts of Europe over the last twenty years, there has been a shift of focus from intervention, mainly being focused on the child, to a broader approach where the focus is placed on the child in the family within a community context.

This would appear to concur with the increasingly current movement away from the medical model of disability where the child is seen in isolation and as having a problem that needs to be ‘treated’ to that of the social model of disability where the child is seen within the context of their family and community with having needs that should be met.

The ecological-systemic approach advocated by Alisauskiene (2009) provides a systemic way of analysing, understanding and supporting the young child and their family. Importantly, family members are partners in this process of intervention. The European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education conducted an analysis between 2003 – 2005 to examine the nature of Early Childhood Intervention in Europe. In their view, the elements that were required in order to deliver high quality Early Childhood Intervention services were:

- Availability – Early childhood intervention should reach all children and families in need.
- Proximity – The early childhood intervention services should be as geographically close as possible to the families needing the services.
• Affordability – Cost-free services and provision should be made available to all families regardless of their socio-economic background.

• Interdisciplinary working – early childhood intervention involves professionals from various disciplines and backgrounds working together with families to develop a team work approach.

• Diversity – In order to ensure that health, education and social sectors share responsibilities, there needs to be adequate co-ordination of the sectors and adequate co-ordination of the provision.

3.2 Policy issues in early childhood intervention

The policy regarding Early Childhood Intervention varies between countries although for the majority it appears to be funded largely or in part by the state, Gine, Balcells and Mas (2009) consider that this is because in many countries it has been recognised that early intervention has a positive and lasting impact on children and families. However, co-ordination of funding appears to be one of the biggest challenges. For example, in Hungary, according to Czeizel (2009) early childhood intervention is financed through a variety of agencies including the Ministry of Education, health care services, social security, local municipalities and charitable donations. She highlights that there is little co-operation between the funding bodies which makes it difficult to plan strategically and to develop the services further, particularly for those responsible for delivering services on the ground.

In the UK this issue began to be addressed following the imperatives of the New Labour Government under the then Prime Minister, Tony Blair. That particular government pledged through its ‘Every Child Matters: Change for Children’ agenda (DfES, 2004) and underpinned by the ‘Children Act’ (2004) that all those engaged in the care and education of children in Britain would work together across professional boundaries to meet client’s needs (Robertson and Cox, in McConachie et al, 2008). Since 2004 until the present change to a new government in the United Kingdom in May 2010, all early intervention services for children have been funded centrally and co-ordinated by one government department, the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). This meant that during this six year period, services for children and families became increasingly integrated, offering a service based on the principle of the ‘team around the child’.

To quote the Chief Nursing Officer in ‘Every Child Matters Change for Children in Health Services’ (Department of Health, 2004, p 4):

‘A key theme that emerges .... is the need to follow the child. For too long professional roles and organisational boundaries have dictated where services are provided rather
than where vulnerable children and young people are. ... This means being as close to home as possible, in schools communities, in surgeries ... children’s centres, youth justice services, and prisons’.

The focus of this child centred policy and related inter-professional practices was an ‘emphasis on strengthening early intervention by enabling children to receive help at the first onset of problems’ (Ibid, p48).

However, post election in May 2010, the new government disaggregated the Department for Children, Schools and Families, immediately returning to a Department of Education with health and social services now located elsewhere. Whilst at this early stage in the roll out of the new coalition government’s policy, it is difficult to predict the future of the existing practice of greater integration of health, education and social services, the United Kingdom may well be looking at a future change of direction and currently this journey is uncertain in nature and direction.

Within the time frame of this project, according to Robertson (2009) the radical reform of public services in 2004 which brought together all services for children, including health, social care and education had begun to have a positive impact on services for children and families, particularly the most vulnerable families. This policy was based on the premise that children and families do not distinguish their needs based on which agencies run their services. Robertson considered that The ‘Every Child Matters’ (DfES, 2004) government policy paper suggested there needed to be a whole system reform of the delivery of children’s services. The services needed to be built around the child and the family and a shared sense of responsibility across agencies needed to be developed. There needed to be changes in the culture and practice of the workforce and integrated universal services of early years, health and education became a priority. The change involved several layers of reform, taking a top-down strategic approach, namely:

- Interagency governance of services
- Integrated strategy between services
- Integrated processes between services
- Integrated front-line delivery of services
- A clear focus on better outcomes for children and young people

A national framework for change was developed which put clearly defined outcomes at the heart of the process and gave attention to the following: policies and products, improvement cycles, how change could be supported, communication, inspection criteria, targets and indicators and outcomes and aims. Fundamentally this was a top down radical approach to improving services for all children including those requiring early intervention. This radical reform of services was later embedded in law in 2004 with passing of the ‘The Children Act’.
Clearly this strategic approach has not been without challenges and has not been easy to implement in practice. Some of the challenges have been:

- Maintaining effective communication with all parties
- Developing a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities between professionals and families
- Maintaining a high level of professional specialism
- Developing trust
- Empowering parents and families.

The benefits do seem none the less to have been significant, if still embryonic, outweighing the impact of challenges. Inter-professional communication and related action has progressed to levels hitherto unknown in the United Kingdom. The professional journey has been significant and ground breaking, reflecting many of the benefits echoed in Kemmis (in press).

However, in the light of changes in political leadership in the United Kingdom the positive journey that had begun is now less clear in its future direction of travel. In the context of this reflective paper, however, this current existing uncertainty at the time of writing for the author, in itself provides an excellent example of the power of government over policy changes in this field which then may impact directly on the services involved in early intervention and the professionals delivering them.

### 3.3 Models of evaluating quality

It is interesting to note that the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2004) in their recommendations for delivering high quality early childhood intervention services considered that co-ordination between sectors and government departments was a crucial necessity. As society has increasingly recognised the benefits of early intervention services, Gine, Balcells and Mas (2009) note, that a consequences of this is often a government desire to regulate and control, ‘particularly in countries with an important financial investment from the public sector’ (p1). Based on their research, they advocate a model of quality enhancement which embraces both accountability and improvement and ‘combines direct participation of professionals through self-evaluation and external evaluation’ (p2). They advocate that the voice of all stakeholders should be incorporated with both professionals and families having a central role in the process. Dimensions and indicators have been developed with a view to the possibility of them being able to be measured. They include:

- Consideration of the family rather than the child as the main focus of attention and the recognition of the relationships between family members and between family members and the professionals involved.
• Adoption of an ecological systemic perspective
• Consideration of the family from a developmental perspective focusing on strengths, thus leading to empowerment
• Sensitivity to the different values of families, learning to work with ‘different’ families from a wide range of cultural backgrounds and from a range of family structures.
• A commitment to a competence-based approach whereby the focus is building upon the family’s strengths and their ambitions and hopes for the future.
• The promotion of an inclusive environment for the child and the family whereby they will have opportunities to be to be part of formal and informal social networks as sources of support as well as enhancing their quality of life.
• The promotion of positive perceptions in families in relation to the role and impact of early intervention and their child’s potential.
• The promotion of children’s development in different areas, in particular their social competence.
• The building of a relationship between professionals and families based on confidence, appraisal and respect.
• The ability to work collaboratively as a team assuming a cross-disciplinary perspective.

Gine et al suggest there may be other criteria, but ‘it is the will to change, innovate and improve through critical collective reflection’ (p7) involving the child, the family and the professionals involved that is most important.

Complementary to the work undertaken by Gine, Balcells and Mas (2009), Pretis (2009) has similarly developed a quality management process which was implemented at an early intervention centre in Budapest in 2006. Through this specific case study, he outlines the process which involved several stages and which as a model could be replicated in other settings. The first stage was the appointment of an external expert who was invited to join the centre with a view to supporting the quality management process. At the first meeting the team of the centre were informed about the basic approaches in quality in the field of early childhood intervention. The next stage in the process was to establish a steering team with a special focus on the participation of parents, examining all aspect of quality of the provision. Leading on from this, the steering team discussed their findings with the external expert who then provided feedback from his professional point of view. An important factor was for the parents of children at the centre to be involved at every stage of the process.

The theoretical framework within which this takes place, according to Pretis, is termed the ‘pyramid of quality and external quality indicators’. This pyramid begins by looking at activities and processes; moves on to operational fields which are located within the organisation’s mission for its clients; and finally examines these in the organisation’s wider vision for society.
The role of the external expert in this process is deemed by Pretis as critical in facilitating the process by enhancing the level of reflection and self-evaluation of the participants thus, as with Gine et al’s (2009) model, both external evaluation and internal self reflection appear critical to operating a successful quality process.

Pretis (2009) highlights the eventual outcomes for an Early Childhood Intervention Centre in Budapest as follows:

- The creation of a quality handbook.
- The initiation of a concrete ‘change process’.
- The development of a conceptual framework for a quality management system that could be used by other early intervention centres in Hungary or elsewhere.
- The commencement of involvement of the centre with a lifelong learning project, thus impacting on quality beyond the quality process itself.

Pretis emphasises the importance of listening to parents and that any step that professionals might take in this very complex field has to reflect the parents’ point of view. He also considers that quality management is a process which has to be ‘lived’ by the management and the team which is informed by research and is undertaken in dialogue with the relevant financial bodies. As testament to this, one of the parents at the centre, presented with him at the ‘Early Intervention Conference’ (2009, Budapest) and spoke of her engagement in the process, the benefits of the process but also of the real and tangible outcomes for children and parents which had resulted.

The process appeared to demonstrate that culture change had occurred and that parents were now being empowered to support and meet the needs of their children much more actively rather than allowing the professionals to have full autocratic control. This case study again demonstrated some of the significant differences which exist between different European countries and between the medical and social models of support which co-exist across Europe.

3.4 Training issues in early childhood intervention

From the data gathered from the conferences, audits and papers and supported by literature, it would appear that if quality in early childhood intervention is to be enhanced, then training of professionals working in this field needs to be examined. The research undertaken by members of the group through this project, provides evidence that the quality and type of training varies between European countries as do the models of early childhood intervention employed, as discussed above.

In Hungary for example, Czeizel (2009) considers that professionals working in early childhood intervention are not sufficiently trained and training at post graduate level is
sporadic. Gine et al (2009) undertook an analysis using the EBIFF curriculum (http://www.eqm-pd.com/ebiff/projekt/index.php) as a criterion by which to measure the nature and type of training that currently exists. The broad categories of the curriculum include:

- Recognition and detection
- Joining the family
- Team work
- Individual intervention methods
- Functional competences
- Personal competencies
- Practice placements

Training would appear to be organised in three different modalities:

1) At first degree level, early childhood intervention training is integrated into a variety of professional courses. Some of these include teacher training, early years professional courses, social work, nursing, educational psychology, clinical psychology, therapeutic pedagogy and speech therapy.

2) At Masters level there appears to be at least two possible models which could address aspects of early childhood intervention. Currently there are several examples in the data which demonstrate that these aspects are being addressed and integrated in some Master of Arts programmes. An example would be the Master of Arts in Special and Inclusive Education (delivered by the University of Worcester, United Kingdom) where early childhood intervention is embedded within several modules but is not taught as a discrete component. Data indicates that currently there is very limited named Masters level provision which provides a discrete early childhood intervention route.

3) At an informal level early childhood intervention training and continuing professional level does exist in the form of seminars, course, summer courses, and conferences, for example.

Thus, in the majority of European countries in this study, training in early childhood intervention is most commonly integrated into other related disciplines and courses. Gine et al (2009) make the following recommendations in order to deliver high quality training:

- There needs to be a specific early childhood intervention training programme, for example a Masters with its own identity and with its own academic award in which everyone working in the field of early childhood intervention can undertake
- At government level and local level there needs to be a requirement that training in early childhood intervention is compulsory for professionals working in this area.
- Experienced professionals are required to supervise and help deliver training
- There needs to be a stronger relationship of collaboration between universities and professionals working in the field.
It is important that a common set of values and principles are established between the professionals providing and families requiring support.

4 Implications and next steps

The members of the project considered that the best way to bring about changes in the quality of early childhood intervention services and provision for children and families would be to build upon the initiatives that are currently being implemented at universities and by non-governmental organisations. However, the group recognised that there are clear challenges ahead in bringing about greater consistency of quality in early childhood intervention across Europe. Guralnick (2008b) considers there are four major ones;

- Differences in culture because culture provides a framework for understanding the transmission of values and expectations
- Diversity of political systems which translates into differences of policy
- Resources availability to support early childhood intervention in different countries or even across communities
- Societal commitment to young children and in particular vulnerable young children and their families.

Whilst these challenges exist, acknowledgment of their existence provides a way forward. Throughout the life of this European project, these issues have been discussed at length, particularly in relation to the training of professionals within early childhood intervention. The online resource has been developed, as part of the agreed outcomes of the funded Leonardo da Vinci project, with flexibility in mind so that different perspectives and practices can be acknowledged whilst at the same time encouraging the development of proven good practice within the field. Providing a menu of wide ranging self-learning and support resources should in this way facilitate professionals to engage in their own personalised learning, which meets their identified and specific needs.

The issue of initial training, however, is more complex and varied as it currently exists and is delivered across the different countries. In several of the European countries the first degree programmes are designed as a purely academic programme with no facility for students to engage in practice based learning. In the United Kingdom, this is not the case and students invariably do have considerable and significant practical experience embedded into their first degree academic programmes, thus enmeshing theory and practice. Where traditionally this has not been the case in many universities in Europe, developing such a model will remain a challenge.

Postgraduate study for professionals in the field is similarly a complex issue. As part
of the work of this project, a Masters in Early Childhood Intervention, has been developed and is intended to be rolled out in 2011 in Germany, in a university where a Bachelor of Arts in Early childhood intervention already recruits successfully. A European Masters in this area taught across the different European countries was an aspiration of the project group. However, small scale market research in the United Kingdom indicates that current requirements for professionals require a much more integrated service approach with professionals failing to see the benefit or value of undertaking a discrete Masters in this field. It seems more likely that some of the individual modules developed by the project could be utilised as options within, for example, a Masters in Education, as run by the authors’ university. As yet, the market demand has not been identified and it may be some time before this happens. It may be that the political context in the United Kingdom has taken meeting the needs of vulnerable children and their families in a different direction to that undertaken by some of the other partner countries, reducing the need for this type of named award.

For some of the other partners, such an award would be valued but the economic situation and the salaries of the professionals who may want to undertake such an award would mitigate against them being able to do so. Unless significantly subsidised, in general, the appropriate workforce in Hungary or Bulgaria, for example, would not be able to participate financially. The on-line resource developed by the research group is, however, and ‘no cost’ to those who wish to use it and therefore accessible to all, and may be of greater relevance currently.

In terms of the project’s outcomes the group of partners achieved their intended outcomes as agreed within the formal Leonardo da Vinci contract but in addition the members of the group achieved much more as a shared and common understanding of the different national and regional contexts in which we each practised and worked in the field of early childhood intervention. This paper also reflects on these less tangible but nonetheless important outcomes which members of the group have achieved.

References


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INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND INTERNATIONALIZATION AT HOME

How to offer an international experience to every student? Realization and implications of an integrated internationalization policy at Katholieke Hogeschool Leuven
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Doing cross culture: some practices of internationalization in higher education
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Minna Porasmaa / Anu Suomäki
How to offer an international experience to every student? Realization and implications of an integrated internationalization policy at Katholieke Hogeschool Leuven

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Abstract
We will discuss the internationalization policy of Katholieke Hogeschool Leuven, department of Business and Management Studies to offer (at least) one international experience to every undergraduate student. After having presented the general political and social background of this policy, we will review the different internationalization initiatives and the possibilities for students and staff members to participate. Finally, we will discuss the implications of this policy for the organization arguing for a broad and structural integration of internationalization initiatives at all levels of departmental organization.

Key-words
Internationalization policy, International week, Bachelor degree program, Double degree program

Introduction
In the present paper, we will discuss the policy to offer an international experience to every undergraduate student at Katholieke Hogeschool Leuven (Leuven University College), department of Business and Management Studies, hence abbreviated as ECHO. We will give an overview of the internationalization initiatives and discuss their embedding in the study program. Finally, we will show how this broad and structural embedding has given rise to the creation of a novel initiative challenging the actual organization.

ECHO is one of the four departments of Katholieke Hogeschool Leuven, a university college organizing professional bachelor degree programs. Compared to academic
bachelor programs, where graduates are – most of the time – prepared for a master program, professional bachelor programs prepare students for a specific job, such as accountant or office manager. The program is characterized by a practical and case-driven approach, as opposed to the theoretical and general(izing) point of view adopted in academic programs.

ECHO hosts about 1,300 students in the following bachelor degree programs:

- Bachelor in Business Management, where students can choose between the following options: Marketing, Legal Practices, Accountancy & Tax, and Finance & Insurance.
- Bachelor in Office Management, where students can choose between the following options: Management Assistant and Business Translator.
- Postgraduate bachelor in Advanced Business Management, with the following options: Marketing & Communication, Logistics, Human Resources Management, and International Tax.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. First, we will briefly sketch the social and political background that has led to the decision to focus on internationalization (section 1). Next, we will give an overview of how internationalization is realized at the department (section 2). Finally, we will discuss some practical implications for the organization (section 3).

1 Social and political background

Before describing the internationalization activities at ECHO, we will briefly review the social and political background motivating the departmental policy to focus on internationalization as a component of the curriculum of bachelor degree programs in Business Management and Office Management.

1.1 Politics

During the last decade, politicians have been progressively creating a framework to enhance international collaboration in higher education. Collaboration amongst EU partners is considered a necessary condition to maintain their international competitiveness in a changing and globalizing market.

At the European level, the Bologna Declaration in 1999 was an important milestone aiming at the creation of a European higher education area with comparable and interchangeable degrees and quality insurance standards. The resulting Bologna Process has progressively enlarged the opportunities not only to exchange students and staff members but also to jointly organize degree programs. At the Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve summit in 2009, the Ministers Responsible for Higher Education of the countries
of the Bologna Process have set “International openness” as well as “Mobility” as priorities for the next decade. The goal that has been set states that 20% of the students in higher education should spend a study period abroad by 2020.

In Flanders, these goals have been adopted in the Flanders in Action-plan, translating the Flemish ambition to figure amongst the best performing European regions. Internationalization is considered a prerequisite to maintain and enhance the competitiveness of the Flemish economy and industry. As a consequence, the current Flemish government (2009-2014) considers internationalization as a strategic goal in its policy in the domains of economy, research and innovation and education.

1.2 Business and industry

Entrepreneurs stress the importance of internationally sensitive employees. In 2005, an inquiry amongst entrepreneurs organized by Flanders' Chamber of Commerce and Industry has identified internationally sensitive employees as one of the most important needs of the Flemish economy. Flanders District of Creativity, a governmental organization promoting entrepreneurial creativity, also stresses the importance of internationalization as a key to entrepreneurial success.

In short, in Europe as well as in Flanders, one can witness a growing movement stressing the international dimension of business and entrepreneurship and hence the importance to integrate it in (higher) education. However, due to historical and cultural reasons, Flemish educational law sets far-reaching language restrictions to the organization of international programs at bachelor-level, mainly because this level is considered essential for the development of a Dutch professional and technical terminology.

2 Realization of an integrated internationalization policy in higher education

In this section, we will first present how internationalization is integrated in departmental policy plans and next we will show how these plans are put into practice, for students as well as for staff members.

2.1 Departmental policy plan

Internationalization is one of the four focuses defined by the department. This choice is strongly motivated by taking into account the political and social context outlined in section 1.

As a result, internationalization constitutes a separate chapter in the departmental
policy plan for 2008-2013. The main advantage is that separate critical success factors and operational goals have been formulated for internationalization:

- Every undergraduate student must take part in at least one international experience in his/her bachelor program.
- The international mobility of staff members has to be stimulated and improved.

The progression toward these goals is monitored at the end of every academic year.

2.2 Realization of the departmental policy plan

2.2.1 ... for students

From the students' point of view, the default internationalization program and the optional internationalization opportunities have to be distinguished.

The default program is mandatory and consists of a series of international weeks. These international weeks are conceived as short internationalization at home programs offering an international experience to students at their home campus. The mandatory character requires that those initiatives are organized at home in order to be financially accessible to all students and that a separate international week is organized for every option in the bachelor programs. During one week students collaborate in international teams to solve a case in their domain of expertise at the ECHO campus. The international experience is twofold: first of all, working and living with students from various nationalities brings the students in touch with – often subtle – cultural differences and sensitivities; next, the international dimension of the case to be solved confronts the students with different national systems next to the European system (e.g. tax, law, accountancy).

Moreover, instead of participating in the international weeks at ECHO, students have the opportunity to participate in an international week abroad organized by one of our partner institutions. There is a tendency to organize the international weeks in the same week to reduce the practical problems for the students and staff members attending an international week abroad. Table 1 lists the international weeks students can attend abroad during the academic year 2009-2010.
The organization of these international weeks requires an extended network of trustworthy partners sending each year students and staff members and organizing each year an international week.

Next to the international weeks, students can engage in one of the following initiatives. These initiatives, except the business games, generally represent the study load of one semester, viz. 30 ECTS.

The Erasmus exchange program offers students the possibility to study during one semester at an institution in another EU member state, offering an intensive linguistic and cultural immersion. Moreover, ECHO organizes an international (and English-taught) program in Business Management for incoming Erasmus students during the second semester of the academic year. Since academic year 2008-2009, Erasmus students can also follow an international program during the first semester: these students join the EBM students (see below for more information). To organize these Erasmus exchanges, bilateral agreements are signed between both partner institutions.

During the sixth semester (viz. semester 2 of year 3 in the bachelor program), students conclude their training with a 13-week internship where they put into practice the knowledge and skills acquired. Students have the opportunity to do this internship abroad by means of an Erasmus exchange. To bridge the geographical gap hampering the follow-up of these students, a software platform has been developed where the student’s activities are monitored by the company mentor as well as the school mentor.

From the academic year 2008-2009 onwards, a limited number of internships is offered in Africa (Malawi) and Latin-America (Peru) in the context of North-South collaboration. After an intensive introduction in Belgium, including a specialized module about North-South collaboration, to prepare for activities of the internship, students train local partners to start a new business or to extend and optimize the activities of an
existing business.

Erabel (Erasmus Belgium) is an exchange program similar to Erasmus but takes place within Belgium. Flemish, viz. Dutch-speaking, students are offered the opportunity to study for one semester in the French-speaking community and vice-versa. This immersion in the language and culture of the other main community in Belgium is of a particular interest for students in Business Management, since the French-speaking community is Flanders’ most important business partner.

ECHO participates in two international business games, namely the case competition organized by the Network of International Business Schools (NIBS) and the Hagen Business Game. Students of the postgraduate bachelor in Advanced Business Management can apply to represent the ECHO teams in these international competitions.

Finally, ECHO has initiated two international projects, the first leading to a double bachelor degree and the second leading to a UK master degree. We will first discuss the double bachelor degree in Business Management (EBM) that has started in September 2007. Students following the bachelor in Business Management – option Marketing can choose between the regular Dutch-taught program and an English-taught variant of this program, the European Bachelor in Business Management – Marketing (EBM). This is a three year bachelor degree program organized by the International Business Academy Kolding (DK), Coventry University Business School (UK) and ECHO (BE). Students take the first year at the International Business Academy Kolding (60 ECTS), the second year at ECHO (60 ECTS) and conclude the program at Coventry University Business School (60 ECTS). The goal of this program is to turn out internationally sensitive graduates who can flexibly collaborate in an international setting and adapt to different cultural environments. Next to the UK degree issued by Coventry University Business School, students taking the EBM program have the opportunity to obtain the Flemish degree when they meet the criteria stipulated in the ECHO Education and Examination Regulations. To this end, they have to pass modules of Business French or Business German for 15 ECTS. In order to issue the English-taught bachelor degree, the EBM program had to be approved as equivalent to the regular Dutch-taught program by the Flemish administration checking whether this program meets the criteria stipulated in Flemish legislation for programs taught in a foreign language.

Let us now consider the international master program. Students following the postgraduate bachelor in Advanced Business Management have the possibility to get a master degree in Marketing, Logistics or Human Resources Management at Coventry University Business School by following a shortened program in Coventry from the academic year 2007-2008 onward. To this end, Coventry University Business School recognizes part of the 60 ECTS of this postgraduate bachelor program as APEL/APCL so
that students only have to take 2/3 of the master program, 1/3 consisting of modules and 1/3 consisting of a research project. However, graduates who want to work in Flemish administration still need to have their master degree recognized on an individual basis by the Flemish administration because ECHO, as a university college organizing only bachelor programs, is not authorized to (co-)organize nor recognize a foreign master program.

After having presented the initiatives, we will now turn to their impact. In other words, to what extent does ECHO meet the objective to offer one international experience to every student and to what extent do students seize the opportunities to internationally upgrade their resume? The first question can be answered by looking at the curricula: in all bachelor programs, the project work in year 2 includes an international week for 2 ECTS. As a consequence, every student has at least one international experience in his/her curriculum. To answer the second question, we will have a look at the data in table 2. In this table, student participation in internationalization activities is summarized for the academic years 2008-2009 and 2009-2010.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internationalization activity</th>
<th>2008-2009</th>
<th>2009-2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International weeks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECHO students participating in ECHO international week</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting students at ECHO</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outgoing ECHO students</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erasmus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outgoing students – academic</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outgoing students – internship</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incoming students</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erabel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outgoing students</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incoming students</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBM18</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-South collaboration</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortened master program</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Games</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hagen Business Game</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIBS Case competition</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Student mobility (academic years 2008-2009 and 2009-2010)
These data clearly show that there is considerable student interest to participate in internationalization activities, in particular short activities as can be deduced from the figures for outgoing ECHO students for the international weeks. Although we notice a broad student participation in the long activities, it is evident that the numbers are lower since those activities require a greater personal and financial engagement. Moreover, the number of students that can apply for some of those activities is limited due to the character of the activity (e.g. business games, North-South internships).

We can conclude that ECHO succeeds in offering every student at least one international experience by organizing at its campus an international week for every bachelor program. Students looking for a more challenging experience can choose from a wide range of activities.

2.2.2 ... for staff members

Staff members can engage in several internationalization activities related to education and research. As far as education is concerned, staff members can engage in different mobility activities.

- They can coach students during an international week at ECHO or abroad. Whereas coaching students at ECHO focuses on the contents of the case study to be solved, coaching students during an international week abroad encompasses the contents of the case as well as the practical organization of the journey and the stay.
- They can coach as school mentor students doing an internship abroad.
- They can teach international students taking the Erasmus program or the second year of the EBM program at ECHO.
- They can give training sessions to students and colleagues at partner institutions. This is mainly done in the context of international projects.
As for research, ECHO has participated as partner in the following international projects since 2005:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GROEI-kans ('GROWING opportunities')</td>
<td>2009-2011</td>
<td>Interreg IV (Belgian-Dutch interregion)</td>
<td>This project aims at supporting farmers to become ‘rural entrepreneurs’ in order to tap new market opportunities. More in particular, models are developed to manage farms as rural enterprises and tools are created to train farmers to start market-oriented activities to sell their products in a B2C environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise University Virtual Placements (EU-VIP)</td>
<td>2009-2011</td>
<td>EU-LLP-Erasmus</td>
<td>In this project, tools and modules are developed to organize and coach students during international internships. Two kinds of international internships are distinguished: (i) internships where students are physically abroad and virtually coached and (ii) fully virtual internships where students do their international internship at their home institution (with an intensive use of modern communication media and at least one visit abroad).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsible Business: European eLearning Module (REBEL)</td>
<td>2008-2010</td>
<td>EU-LLP-Erasmus</td>
<td>In this project, e-learning modules are developed to prepare future managers and engineers to do business in a sustainable way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual Mobility Before and After Student Exchanges (VM-Base)</td>
<td>2006-2008</td>
<td>EU-Minerva</td>
<td>In this project, modules have been developed to coach students before and after a student exchange in order to maximize the learning effect of the international experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framework for the preparation, recognition, assessment, mentoring and evaluation of the work placement period in Higher Education (Framework)</td>
<td>2003-2006</td>
<td>EU-Leonardo Da Vinci</td>
<td>This project has developed a software package to organize and follow-up internships. Student, company mentor and school mentor jointly monitor the student’s internship activities and progress. This package enables an integrated follow-up of all activities starting from the preparation over the actual internship to the evaluation at the end.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: International projects with ECHO as partner
The projects listed in table 3 can be divided in two categories: projects (creating tools and modules) to support and optimize the internationalization activities and projects where the know-how of staff members is used for knowledge creation and dissemination.

In conclusion, staff members have various opportunities to engage in internationalization activities. In the academic year 2008-2009, staff members participated in 77 internationalization actions. We consider as internationalization action any activity abroad that is primarily related to internationalization. This can be coaching a student group during an international week abroad, visiting a student on an internship abroad or participating in an EBM board meeting.

3 Implications for the departmental organization

The large scale of internationalization activities outlined in the previous section requires administrative support for both students and staff members. Moreover, in order to guarantee the sustainability of those activities, they have to be structurally embedded in the organization, for the students as well as for the staff members.

We will start by discussing the administrative support which covers a wide range of services.

- The overall support and management issue has been tackled by the creation of an internationalization office staffed with the coordinators of the different initiatives mentioned in section 2.1 and managed by the internationalization coordinator. This office meets on a regular basis to outline the management of activities and to discuss matters at hand. The internationalization office also manages the international partner network which is essential for a sustainable internationalization project.

- The presence of international students on the campus requires (i) English ICT facilities, (ii) English course materials, (iii) communication with the students in English and (iv) official documents in English (such as the Education and Examination Regulation, the transcripts, the year programs, the study contract). Whereas items (i) and (ii) are rather easy to implement due to the language settings in computers and the lecturer’s individual responsibility of the course materials, the implications of implementing items (iii) and (iv) are far-reaching because affecting various aspects of the daily organization (e.g. instructions on the copy machine) and departments (such as, communication by mailings, communication on the intranet; student desk, student administration, etc.) that have originally been created to confer monolingual services in Dutch. Although the recruitment of a certified translator has solved the problem of the availability of English (official) documents, this does not solve the problem of monolingual Dutch structures. We will illustrate the practical consequences by looking at an example, namely the portal site. The portal site is an intranet that is used for all internal communication with students and staff members. It is conceived
as a monolingual Dutch platform where only the top layer (viz. the message board) is translated in English, which rules out the use of the database underlying the portal site including, amongst others, the library catalogue, the students’ personal portfolio, the students’ year program and the academic calendar. In order to transform it into a bilingual or multilingual platform, the underlying architecture has to be completely redesigned. The actual situation generates *ad hoc* manual work for the internationalization office and administrative services increasing the risk of committing mistakes and creating inconsistent documents. Moreover, the international students feel set back because of the overwhelming presence of information exclusively available in Dutch.

- Staff members have to teach in English to a culturally heterogeneous group instead of using Dutch to a (mainly) homogeneous group of Flemish students (viz. students living in Flanders who have generally obtained a Flemish secondary education degree). This has repercussions for all aspects of teaching: the use of English course materials with international cases and examples, the longer preparation time due to the use of English, teaching to students with different backgrounds and expectations, etc. Although language support is offered, there is no support or training to cope with the specificities of teaching to intercultural groups.

- Outgoing as well as incoming students have to be prepared for their international experience: they will live and study abroad in a foreign language as member of an intercultural group for a limited period. Moreover, some exchanges, such as international internships, require a permanent follow-up from the home institution. At this point, major progress has been achieved in several of the projects mentioned in table 3.

Next, let us turn to the structural embedding of internationalization activities in the departmental organization. From the students’ point of view, most activities – mandatory as well as optional – are integrated in the curriculum. This implies that students obtain credits when they successfully participate in an activity. The business games constitute the only exception since students are not rewarded with credits for participation. The internationalization activities are integrated in the curriculum in the following way:

- The mandatory international weeks are part of the curriculum representing 2 ECTS credits. To be more precise, the international weeks are integrated in the project work closing the first semester (for the Accountancy & Tax, Finance & Insurance and Legal Practices students) or the second semester (for the Marketing and the Office Management students) of year 2.

- The programs for outgoing Erasmus and Erabel exchange students represent the full 30 ECTS of respectively the first semester of year 3 and the second semester of year 2. For the administrative processing of the credits acquired during an exchange, ‘dummy’ modules have been created in the curriculum. Those modules are linked to the modules taken as part of the exchange program so that the credits acquired abroad can easily be inserted in the student’s program and transcript.
• Students who take up an international internship or a North-South internship do it in the second semester of year 3, parallel with the other students who conclude their formation with an internship.

• The EBM program constitutes an extra option within the bachelor in Business Management. Those students (can) obtain an ECHO degree in Business Management, option Marketing as part of the double degree at the end of the program.

As for the empowerment of staff, internationalization activities are mentioned in the job description, including the estimated work load expressed as a percentage of FTE, of the lecturers concerned. As a result, on a total number of 55.68 FTE of employees, 2.99 FTE are reserved for internationalization. Table 4 shows how this internationalization budget is used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internationalization activity</th>
<th>Budget (FTE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internationalization office19</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching students at international week abroad</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching in EBM program</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching in international program incoming Erasmus students</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research projects (external funding)</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Internationalization budget academic year 2009-2010

However, if ECHO wants to become a real international business school21, the institution will need to run a parallel Dutch and English administration for the services outlined above.22 This has become apparent by organizing the EBM program: while most internationalization activities have a minor impact on administration since they are confined to 1 module or 1 semester (for which special ‘dummy’ modules have been created) at most, EBM is a complete English-taught and English-run international program issuing a Flemish degree and hence affecting all sections of administration.

4 Conclusion

In the present paper, we have outlined the internationalization policy of the Business and Management dept. of Katholieke Hogeschool Leuven. Given the growing political and social interest for internationalization as necessary condition to maintain and improve the competitiveness of the EU in general and Flanders in particular, departmental policy aims at offering at least one international experience to every undergraduate student and to stimulate staff members to participate in international activities.

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This ambitious goal not only influences the offer of internationalization activities but also their status and the way these activities are managed. The offer comprises a large range of internationalization activities. The organization of international weeks on campus is the solution to offer at least one international experience to every student. An internationalization office has been set up to coordinate the various activities that are integrated as much as possible in the curriculum of the different bachelor degree programs and the job description of staff members. This firm organization makes it possible to develop and optimize the activities, as is shown by the creation of the double degree bachelor program and the North-South internships.

However, there is one final step to be taken to become a full-fledged international business school, namely the creation of a true parallel administrative organization. This step is necessary, not only to make the international students feel at home but also to computerize administrative tasks (e.g. generating English year programs and report cards) and to minimize the risk of administrative mistakes due to manual data treatment.

Notes
1) We thank Barbara Gos for helping us to gather the figures used in this article.
2) In a postgraduate bachelor program, students specialize in one particular domain of Business Management. This is a 60 ECTS program (one academic year) where students take modules for 30 ECTS (viz. semester 1) and where they do a business project in a company for the remaining 30 ECTS (semester 2). In Flanders, a postgraduate bachelor is the only possibility to organize postgraduate programs for an institution with only professional bachelors since master programs are the privilege of the universities and a limited number of university colleges organizing (due to historical reasons) academic bachelor programs.
3) Joint declaration of the Ministers responsible for higher education convened in Bologna on the 19th of June 1999.
4) These standards have been stipulated in the European Qualification Framework in 2008 (Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (2008/C 111/01)).
6) Notice that we jump from the supra-regional European level to the regional Flemish level, apparently discarding the federal Belgian level. Irrespective of any political statement, this choice is motivated by the assignment of responsibilities in Belgium where education is organized by the communities, viz. the Dutch-speaking, the French-speaking and the German-speaking Communities. As a consequence, ECHO issues Flemish degrees.


12) In Belgium, Dutch has progressively been recognized as an official language in the 20th century. Up till then, Belgium was a monolingual French-speaking country.

13) When we have a look at higher education legislation (*Decreet betreffende de herstructurering van het hoger onderwijs in Vlaanderen van 4 april 2003, §92*), we find the following major language restrictions on professional bachelor programs: only 10% of the ECTS in a bachelor program can be taught in a foreign language and when a module is organized in a foreign language, students must be offered the possibility to take the same module in Dutch.

14) The international weeks were originally funded by European IPP grants.

15) The only exception to this principle is the Office Management Week that is organized for both options, viz. Management Assistant and Business Translator.

16) One of the realizations of the Bologna Process is the possibility to organize joint and multiple degree programs: in case of the former, the students are granted one joint degree by the different institutions co-organizing the program; in case of the latter, students are granted separate degrees from the different institutions collaborating in the program. Whereas a joint degree requires the creation of a new and integrated program, a multiple degree program can be created combining existing programs in the different partner institutions.

17) *Decreet betreffende de herstructurering van het hoger onderwijs in Vlaanderen van 4 april 2003, §94.*


19) Since this program started in September 2007, the data for the academic year 2008-2009 only comprise the students in the first and the second bachelor year.

20) The budget to coach students during the international weeks at ECHO is not included in these figures since it is part of the budget for project work.

21) On 14 May 2008, at the end of an audit conducted by NIBS, ECHO was granted the title of International Business School.

22) For some of these matters, such as communication and student administration, ECHO depends on the 3 other departments of the university college, where internationalization has not the same importance.

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Doing cross culture: some practices of internationalization in higher education

Wolfgang Berg
Hochschule Merseburg, Germany

Abstract
The article is focusing on one aspect of internationalization, namely its impact on the curricula. The example which can be used to discuss the aims and objectives stems from a bachelor program in social work. The module is called “Intercultural and International social work” and mandatory for all students. The students are expected to compare systematically social problems and social work practice in different countries and to experience learning and other activities in a culturally diverse setting. The setting is a multilateral workshop which “compells” them to practice intercultural communication.

The articles presents the results as far as they can be summarized on the basis of individual reflections (portfolio) given by the students themselves. Matter-of-factly there is an international, not only European Area of Higher Education, but it is still a minority of students and faculties who actually move within this area. More and more efforts are undertaken in order to increase and accelerate the “internationalization” of study programs.

Key-words
Students mobility, Cross-cultural learning, Empathy, Comparative approach, Social work in Europe

Internationalization
Among the various aspects of internationalization the following three ones seem to be most important:

- Mobility of students and lecturers
- Access to and exchange of knowledge and findings among the scientific communities of all disciplines
- Cross-cultural learning, intercultural competences as part of the “soft skills” all actors in a globalized world need to apply.
Mostly mobility is enhanced and supported by particular programs (like LLL Erasmus) or institutions (like federal agencies of cultural exchanges), and more or less the academic bureaucracies. Mobility remains an individual project, sometimes estimated as an ambitious initiative, sometimes ignored as a private adventure.

All types of publications and conferences serve to exchanging scientific findings. Beside the (natural) sciences and general theories there is a wide variety of disciplines which are closely restricted to national states, working within societies. The details of national economy, the impacts of particular legislation, the inquiries about political preferences etc. are mostly of no immediate concern for people outside this country. They are, however, the background of all problems, practices and projects, which are taken into consideration for a comparative study.

Cross cultural communication does take place in multicultural societies, in daily life. But there are only few cases in which they are steered, guided, prepared or reflected by educational authorities. Enterprises “discover” the importance of cross-cultural trainings only as soon as their customers or partners in other countries “make troubles”.

Hence there are many reasons to establish “internationalization” in a more obligatory, reliable, practical, systematic and sustainable way.

Curriculum

In Merseburg/Germany, Faculty of Social Work, Media and Culture of University of Applied Sciences, in order to proceed this way fairly, the decision was to respond to the challenges of internationalization by the means of institutionalizing, i.e. within the curricula. There are two Bachelor programs (Social Work = SW) and Culture and Media Education (CME). Each semester the students have to absolve 6 modules, with 5 credits each. There is one module in SW which is called “Intercultural and International social work” (3-1. i.e. third semester, but starting in the 2nd semester actually), another module in CME called “Intercultural learning” (4-4, i.e. forth semester) – obligatory for all students of these programs. In these modules three aspects are highlighted:

- Knowledge about the history, societal structure, daily life, arts in other - less known or smaller - countries like Romania, Iceland, Ireland, Russia, Portugal (CME)
- International comparison, comparative approach to social problems (SW)
- Intercultural competences (SW, CME).

Of course, there are other modules which deal with cultural traditions in other countries, too. Social work education cannot but deal with any social problem in a comparative way (How did Denmark manage to achieve this low rate of unemployment? Does the low protection against dismissal/security of work place there fit to German
But it is a principal decision to design one module explicitly as a comparative one.

Merseburg is sited in the Southern part of Saxony-Anhalt, close to Saxony and the city of Leipzig. In Saxony-Anhalt the quota of “foreigners” (residents without German nationality) is about 2%. Concerning residents with “migration background”, thus including “Aussiedler” (German rooted people who left Poland, Romania or former Soviet-Union during the last two decades) the figures are maybe 5%, but still extremely low in comparison with West Germany (8 resp. 19%) or cities like Munich (22% resp. 40%). Actually people and also students living in the area of Merseburg do not really experience cultural diversity that immediately and directly in their daily life.

It is one advantage of German universities of applied sciences, to research and teach close to the practice, be it engineering, architecture, media production or social work. According to modern learning theories and empirical research all types of knowledge, not to speak about skills and techniques, are getting learned better, more easily and more sustainably if it has a relation to practice and can be exercised in real situations.

Because of these reasons the decision was made to realize at least one module (SW3-1) in any case, the other modules if possible, in a setting which allows students

- to do comparison and
- to practice intercultural communication.

In the best case the learners have already acquired knowledge or skills and can apply these to a particular situation. In the same way they can make experiences and reflect them in order to generate new knowledge and extend their skills.

**Objectives**

As intercultural competences include – first aspect – cultural awareness, i.e. the ability to become aware of cultural differences (concerning the rules of behavior, thinking, feeling etc.), this skill is similar to the comparative approach which demands the ability to observe and perceive the reality of life, also related to societal structures, economical development, traditions, legislation etc. at one particular place. Mostly inevitably this perception is due to one’s own rules – and it is an important step to work out the implicit comparison and convert it to an explicit comparison reflecting the observer’s point of view.

In order to operate this concept, workshops are organized. Those workshops bring students from different countries together and enhance them

- to compare systematically social problems and social work practice in their countries
to experience learning and other activities in a culturally diverse setting.

The workshops usually take place in the first week of October, be it in Merseburg, in the average with 25 German and about 30 students from partner institutions, be it at the partner institution’s places (groups of 5 to 12 German students stay about one week abroad). Hence, beside the Merseburg crew, students from Czech Republic, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Belgium, Romania, Moldova, Spain, and Russia used to be involved.

A typical workshop consists of lectures, presentations by the domestic group as well as by the guests, working groups, field visits, artistic production (e.g. music, photos, theater, and video) and all kinds of parties.

After having organized similar workshops every year since 1994 as an option within the diploma studies, an offer students could choose, this module now is an obligatory part of the Bachelor program since 2005, students have to acquire credits and get marks in order to pass this module.

Questions

The module raises lots of questions.

1) Every year about 90 students have to be provided with this course. Fifty to sixty students are supposed to go out in small groups; hence about eight destinations have to be available. The workshop in Merseburg can be successful only if more than 20, better 30 students from abroad take place. Hence the “setting” depends to a high amount on the partners´ interest and opportunities.

2) The German students have to attend around 8 preparatory meetings; lectures make them familiar with the comparative approach (literature is available s. Berg 2002 etc.). They get an introduction in intercultural learning and do first exercises towards cultural awareness. They are demanded to prepare a presentation with regard to social work in Germany and/or a social problem from a German point of view. There is some evidence that these tasks are still too difficult for students in the second semester.

3) Though the general topic of each workshop is defined jointly and communicated several months in advance, the partner institutions might be unable to prepare the workshops straightly, in particular if the group mobility is not part of the curriculum there.

4) All feedbacks tell that students like the creative activities best: to make music together, to develop some dramatic scenes, to make photos and present them in an exposition, to shoot videos and cut them digitally, to make a newspaper jointly. Actually active learning, in a multicultural group, is the best method to acquire intercultural competences... Doing things together – on the stage, in the cutting room - is more demanding than sitting in the last row of a huge lecture hall. Due to this setting, however, people like to express rather communities than differences. Social work in Europe seems to be a topic which is not controversial.

5) Whereas students like to elaborate and create artistic products in multicultural groups,
and do it on the common basis of social engagement, they come to good results alongside a comfortable process, which seems to be without any irritations and problems. They “forget” somehow that there are German, Romanian, Lithuanian or Flemish students who work together. It might be the case that they follow different rules of communication and cooperation, but they do not become aware of this for several reasons. Even the fact, that the presentations which have to be prepared within the groups, get recorded and broadcasted in the local TV-channel, does not raise “enough” stress, conflicts are not “necessary”.

6) The comparative approach, as transmitted and enhanced by lectures, field visits and working groups, leads to more general insights, concerning the differences of the standard of living, the economical conditions, the societal development - in particular with regard to the Old Europe (Belgium, but also Germany – though Merseburg is sited in the former GDR) vs. post communist countries. The strongest concern, as it seems, comes about when the students are comparing the conditions (wages!) under which themselves as students and social workers in general are living and working.

7) To prepare the workshops, to be busy and even abroad for a week in the workshops, and to reflect and report own experiences - students do merit the five credits doubtlessly. But what about the marks? In the first two years, the students have had to individually present the project; each student reported about his/her workshop to other students who had been attending another workshop, presented its results (in terms of comparison). To some amount the quality of this report depended on the workshop itself (which was only partly the student’s responsibility); actually it was the individual way of presenting things, not the learning process, which was marked. Therefore the evaluation has been changed 2009: The students have now the task to report their learning process over all five months, from the first planning and introductory lectures until the workshop; it is a portfolio which is not judged or marked due to its form, but as reflection on the student’s own feelings (for instance before entering the plane for Moldova) and their sentiments and recognition at the spot.

The students’ view

The portfolios are important because of the necessity to give the students marks, but most important is to get more ideas about the actual learning out-come. Who does know it better than the learners themselves? The students’ have been told to make a report about the entire process under two aspects:

- comparison of social work between Germany and the other countries involved
- intercultural learning.

Reading the portfolios brings about a first surprise: Many students express concerns which have been important for them, but not taken into consideration by us, the well experienced professionals: It is not that easy for them to manage the trip, be it because of financial problems, their family (some students are married and/or have children). More than one student indicates that it was the first flight in his/her life. More than one
student told us that s/he has decided for just that project which was accompanied by a lecturer as it promises more “safety”. Hence we should not underestimate the challenge such a trip might be for students – not of all of them are global players since ever.

And there are more aspects which are not immediately related to international comparison and intercultural learning. Some groups have had to organize the trip themselves, i.e. find out the cheapest travel and a comfortable, but also affordable accommodation. To make decisions in this preparatory phase as well as during the sojourn abroad may cause a sort of group dynamic which can affect the “official” learning process remarkably. Being active in a group, but an unfamiliar environment, enduring conversations in English and finding one’s way, maybe by public transport which is organized differently etc., is more “work” than expected. It is not only because of room parties and nightly meetings with their partners (students from the domestic university), that the Merseburger students report how exhausted they were.

Comparison

With regard to the international comparison, lots of insights have been reported. Here a couple of examples, each item is in explicit or implicit comparison with Germany (to discuss the reality in Germany or judge its advantages and disadvantages, is not possible here):

- Sociocultural centers in Flanders do community work as they offer space and rooms for youth from all shifts
- For elderly people in Lithuania there are less services which allow them to stay in their own home, the only alternative seems to be institutional care
- In Moldova the main concern of social work is due to the fact that parents go abroad for work and leave children back with grandparents.
- There are day centers in Moldova which offer learning opportunities to children with handicaps and without handicaps, thus do a real integrative work.
- Whilst in Flemish youth centers the young people can drink beer, in Lithuania liquor can be purchased in the age of 18, but consumed (in public) only in the age of 21. To consume alcoholic drinks in public is strictly forbidden and charged in Granada.
- All services and assistance, may they have to do with family allowances, pensions or job seekers allowances, are given in one and the same office in Czech Republic.
- Poverty is not only a relation to the average income, but a dramatic lack of resources, an existential problem – concerning pensioners in Lithuania or the majority of families in Moldova. It is not easy to recognize the poverty in and behind the small tiny houses in some “nice” neighborhoods in Flanders.
- Volunteering seems to be more widespread and acknowledged in Flanders, less accepted in France or Lithuania.
Services for families are, to some degree, in Moldova and Lithuania somehow reluctant, as nobody wants to have to do with the “state”.

There is violence against elderly people, also by children against their parents, e.g. young men against their mother in Spain.

“Kindergarten” in Russia and so some degree also in Lithuania are places where children are strictly educated to behave properly, function well.

Empathy

The starting point of Intercultural learning is awareness. Students have observed differences in the environment, be it the traffic means (Trolley), the smell or the architecture. Some students are strongly reminded to their childhood (in former GDR) when they stroll along in “East Europe” cities. Others are shocked by the poverty behind the facades, others by the number of extremely expensive cars in the streets of Chisinau.

Students have been surprised by the elegant clothes of their mates and their excellent knowledge of English – and have learnt that many of them did work (had to work!) in Ireland or Spain in summer times in order to be able to afford that (and the fees they have to pay to the university). Students are shocked by dormitories where 4 students share a room, shocked by lecture halls which are not heated because the university has to save money. “I have taken our standard of living for granted – now I know how well off we are” – recognized more than one student.

There have been also classical incidents, misunderstandings: the domestic universities invited the German students to a concert which they intended to attend by the way and remained totally underdressed as it was a classic performance in the opera hall. Students ordered a particular beer and found out that it was mixed with pure water. Other students ordered literally spider juice instead of orange juice (naranja-arana) in Spain. Funny and unforgettable experiences.

Comparison and intercultural learning go alongside each other and do this with high importance, when the conditions of students’ life are touched. The German students appreciated much the fact that students in Metz have to do an internship, too, but with payment! The impact, however, is a lack of placements, because voluntary organizations cannot afford it. Lithuanian students have to pay fees which can be reduced or even deleted if the marks are good or very good. Hence the students are under strong pressure and forced to be interested in the outcome of all these exams, not in the issues. It is quite natural that the fact of being student has the highest potential of empathy. Students start to imagine how they would feel in that situation, whether they could cope with the reality in other countries.
The same is true with regard to the (future) role as social worker. Job opportunities, working conditions and – last, but not least – the salaries are of high interest. Those students who have been in Lithuania or Moldova have learned how important the acknowledgment of social work in the society and the development of a welfare state are.

The students did not hesitate to compare the buildings and equipment of the partner universities with Merseburg, and in some cases, e.g. Flanders and Czech Republic could hardly hide their envy.

**Personal growth**

Most of the students have confessed that they were afraid of the task to give a presentation in English and to follow lectures in English, too. Actually, almost of all of them did overcome this fear, even improved their capabilities and promised to work continuously in that direction.

Many students had been aware of all the stereotypes they had “in their luggage”. They expected grey towns with sad people, and enjoyed then festivals with people dancing and singing (by accident the fiesta of wine in Chisinau is just in the same period of time as the workshop). The students are deeply impressed and overwhelmed by the friendliness of people at the Czech university or generosity of their Lithuanian mates, not to speak about the rich traditional dinner a Moldovan family is offering them (a group of 10 persons!). How welcome are guests in Germany? Students in Czech Republic, Moldova, France, and Flanders have spent a lot of time in order to guide them, to show them the supermarket nearby or the best place at the beach to collect amber. Of course, it was also some fun for them, but a sort of volunteering which threatens to disappear in a world of Credits and accountability. It is a necessary and natural impact of doing cross culture to reflect one owns life, the values in mind, and the (opposite?) routines in practice.

Many students – and we can believe the portfolios here, too – are convinced that the workshops abroad have made an important contribution to their personal development, i.e. openness and empathy, self-awareness and self-efficiency conviction. They feel good as they experienced that they could cope with a complex, open or unknown situation. They learned that it is good to be able to act beyond the routine.

The students did appreciate this module, as a learning opportunity, not because it was a cheap travel opportunity (it was exhausting enough).
Conclusion

From the author’s and his colleagues’ point of view the module is worth the effort, though some improvement is possible. Next time the students have to be enhanced to understand and realize the portfolios more as reflections, less than report. And the portfolios should be an opportunity to have again group discussions and personal counseling: comparative approaches and intercultural learning do never end.

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Internationalization at home: the case of Business Week Entrepreneurship

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Abstract
Globalization and changes in market labour demand for higher education institutions concerning new commitments in the process of students training. The internationalization and entrepreneurship are strategic factors that promote the differentiation of students skills profile at the end of each cycle of education.

This study analyzed the contribution of International Project Business Week Entrepreneurship Setubal to the internationalization of the campus, also considering the purchase of a set of skills essential to a manager in the twenty-first century. This study uses a case study methodology supported in two sources of data collection - questionnaire surveys applied to all students and interviews applied to Portuguese students. The results allowed to confirm the propositions and assess the relevance of this kind of projects and teaching methodologies for the development of important skills to nowadays managers.

Key-words
Methodologies, Internationalization, Multicultural, Entrepreneurship

1 Education for entrepreneurship: state of art
The entrepreneurship education becomes more important in educational programs in several countries. Recently the following question “Entrepreneurs are born or made?” have been discussed by professors, politicians and others stakeholders.

According with some perspectives entrepreneurs can be born. These perspectives recognize that entrepreneurs born with a set of intrinsic characteristics that promote an entrepreneurial attitude. However there are other perceptions that considerer the role of training and other extrinsic stimulus relevant for develop an individual entrepreneur. In fact, during 1980s and 1990s we have seen an unprecedented grow in demand for
entrepreneurship education which has been matches by a corresponding grow in the number of courses offered by academic institutions and enterprises agencies (Sexton and Smilor, 1997). The importance of entrepreneurship was recognized and consequently the rising of the number of teaching entrepreneurship courses (Jack and Anderson, 1999).

At the same time increase the number of schools of different levels of education and other extra-curricular programs appeal for entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship education only recently got some attention from scientific community, and is far from maturity, despite a large number of initiatives, experiences, curricular courses and programmes developed in last decades across the world (Charney and Libecap, 2000; Li and Matlay, 2005; Solomon, 2005).

Some studies appoint several perceptions of role of Higher Education Institutions (HEI) to promote entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship education has evolved in waves (Volkmann et al, 2009). If in the beginning it was associated with management courses, gradually got his space, to produce more quickly a greater diversity of ideas for how to exploit a business opportunity, and the ability to project a more extensive sequence of actions for entering business (Vesper and McMullan, 1998).

Concerning pedagogical issues, several methodologies such as lectures were gradually replaced by application of active methodologies (Bell, 2008; Fayolle and Gailly, 2006; Heinonen and Poikkijoki 2006; Peterman and Kennedy, 2003), such as problem base learning, project development, entrepreneur for a day, business drinks, simulations and other similar, allowing students to develop their potential by assuming more responsibilities in learning process.

Other kind of activities that require a more community’s (e.g. entrepreneurs, entrepreneur agencies, incubators) involvement becomes crucial. Bring entrepreneurs to the classroom to talk about their experiences, contact with local entrepreneurs, company visits, involve local business organizations in curricula’s design, offer workshops and seminars, invite business angels and risk capitalists.

The successful of this strategy depends on teachers competences in the area as well as in their research work in the field of entrepreneurship (EC, 2003) allowing the development of an adequate curricula (Volkmann et al, 2009).

2 Globalization, and internationalization in higher education

Globalization and internationalization can be defined in a vast number of ways, however despite they are distinct concepts they are linked “Globalization is the context of economic and academic trends that are part of the reality of the 21st century. Internationalization includes the policies and practices undertaken by academic systems
and institutions – and even individuals – to cope with the global academic environment” (Altbach and Knight, 2007). Witt (2002) consider internationalization of higher education as the process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research, and service functions of the institution. Knight and Witt (1997) describe globalization as the flow of technology, economy, knowledge, people, values and ideas that across borders. This phenomenon affects the countries in different ways, depending on its history, traditions, culture and priorities. The same authors refers that internationalization of higher education is one of the possible answers to the impact of globalization.

So, we may conclude that the increasingly international focus of higher education is connected to the present globalization and regionalization of our societies and markets. As a result, the importance of quality assessment of internationalization strategies has grown, international academic consortia and networks have emerged, and English has been firmly established as the language of communication in higher education.

The motivations for internationalization include commercial advantage, knowledge and language acquisition, enhancing the curriculum with international content, and many others aspects (Altbach and Knight, 2007). Specific initiatives such as branch campuses, cross-border collaborative arrangements, programs for international students, establishing English-medium programs and degrees, are some of the possibilities for educational internationalization.

The case study described in the next section is one of this possibilities that try to promote this kind of education experience through the creation of multicultural groups, including students from several nationalities (Belgium, Czech Republic, Ireland, Finland, Latvia, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal and Spain,). The activities were expressed and resolved within various cultural groups (Lee, 1995).

3 Empirical study

In this section it is our intention to characterize the methodological approach and tools used in this research, present the main goal and specific goals, as well as the propositions of the study.

This empirical research applies the case study methodology. According with Bell (1997), this methodology allows the researcher to focus in one case or specific situation and identify the interactive processes involved. Yin (1994) considers that the case study method is most appropriate for the investigation that search questions such as “how” and “why” about a contemporary phenomena about which the researcher has little or no control.
The literature review drive to the formulation of the following propositions:

P1: The development of skills contributes to increase entrepreneurial competencies.
P2: The apprenticeship in multicultural environment enable the development of entrepreneurial competencies.
P3: The international project (Business Week) contributes positively to the student’s propensity to internationalization.

Concerning data collection this study uses several sources of evidence. The main sources are; (1) direct interview to stakeholders involved; (2) documental analysis; (3) inquiry through questionnaire.

3.1 Case study applied to international business week

The international project Business Week is the result of the efforts of the international network Businet. This network organizes an annual meeting, once a year, with the objective to promote contacts between partners and enlarge the network with new partners from different business schools.

The School of Business and Administration of Polytechnic Institute is an organizer member of the Business Week since 2007. Business Week congregate students and professors from different european schools, during one week and occurs in several europeans countries. This event includes a set of pedagogical and social activities. Its main objective is to promote a multicultural experience and develop entrepreneurial skills.

Each country as a subject, that is permanent in each year that means that subject don’t chance annually. In Portugal the subject is entrepreneurship and during the Business Week students simulate part of entrepreneurial process in international context.

3.2 Characterization of population

Concerning the international dimension of the Project, table 1 shows participants per country, for students and professors.
Table 1 – Students and professors that participate in 3th edition Business Week – Entrepreneurship - Setúbal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Week per country</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Professors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leuven - Belgium</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotherham - Netherlands</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saxion - Netherlands</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riga - Latvia</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jihlava – Czech Republic</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budjwice - Czech Republic</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erasmus Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3 Analysis of results

The results of the study are obtain from quantitative and qualitative analyse. The first analyse allows to test the first hypothesis. The second one test the second and third hypotheses.

3.4 Quantitative analyze

The qualitative analyze is supported in an inquiry made at the end of Business Week – Setúbal. The inquiry intends to evaluate the acquisition of several skills and evaluate the contribution of activities developed in the game to achieve: self-confidence, critical spirit, team work skills and creativity in a multicultural environment. These inquiry use a Lickert scale from 1 to 5 (1 – without importance; 2 – low importance; 3 – medium importance; 4- high importance; 5 – very high importance).

Table 2, reveals the inquiries results and allow to test proposition 1 (P1: The development of skills contributes to increase entrepreneurial competencies, through the results gave by students to the several items: Creativity, critical spirit, peer assessment; team work and confidence rate.
Table 2– Analyze results from inquiry appliance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>0,00%</td>
<td>2,78%</td>
<td>30,56%</td>
<td>27,78%</td>
<td>38,89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical spirit</td>
<td>2,78%</td>
<td>5,56%</td>
<td>36,11%</td>
<td>25,00%</td>
<td>33,33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer assessment</td>
<td>0,00%</td>
<td>8,33%</td>
<td>19,44%</td>
<td>27,78%</td>
<td>44,44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team work</td>
<td>0,00%</td>
<td>2,78%</td>
<td>19,44%</td>
<td>27,78%</td>
<td>50,00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence rate</td>
<td>2,78%</td>
<td>0,00%</td>
<td>30,56%</td>
<td>36,11%</td>
<td>33,33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result analyze permit to conclude that the most answers are situated between 4 and 5, confirming the self-perceptions of the students are extremely positive concerning the acquisition of the competencies evaluated.

3.5 Qualitative analyze

According with Yin (1994) the case study methodology allows a higher efficacy in collecting qualitative information. This study applies semi-structured interviews to Portuguese students. The interview guide is presented on Table 3.

Table 3– Interview guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Aim</th>
<th>Specific aim</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Evaluate apprenticeship in multicultural environment.                       | To understand the contributes of the apprenticeship in a multicultural environment to the acquirer of new skills. | Your participation in BW enabled the development of new entrepreneurial skills?  
List the skills acquired.                                                   |
| Evaluate the contribution of this internationalization project concerning the increase of the students propensity to participate in international programs. | Understand how the participation in a project to internationalize the campus can facilitate following student experiences in projects of international mobility. | How many times have you participate in international programs?  
Have you participate in any international event (conference, meeting, other?) If it is your first international experience, please evaluate your the participation in participations in others international projects. |
The case study analyze demonstrate that the students consider their participation in BW as an opportunity to develop a set of skills relevant for business studies in a multicultural environment, which are considered difficult to obtain in formal curricula. Students also believe that this experience represents an opportunity to working in multicultural teams and to contacts with the reality of other countries. They also consider a possibility for overcoming some language barriers and sometimes unfounded fears to overcome a challenge to work in a different language.

“Business Week, entrepreneurship is an excellent idea because it gave us the opportunity to meet people from different countries, working in teams and know different points of view. I will recommend participation in the Business Week to other colleagues.”

“Initially I was afraid to participate in Business Week because I thought that my english level was not so good. At the end of the week I was happy to overcome this anxiety and I think it was worth it!”

“Business Week was an amazing experience and I could better understand what is entrepreneurship. I found this a very interesting experience with different nationalities and cultures.”

“I discovered that I am more entrepreneur than I thought. I managed to meet the challenges that were placed during the Business Week and I want to repeat the experience.”

The second goal allows evaluating the contribution of participation in the Business Week for the propensity to internationalization. Most students surveyed reveal that they had never participated in a mobility program, except for two students (one student performed Erasmus mobility, and other participated in a meeting that brought together students from different countries to Portugal as part of an activity carried out in education secondary).

The majority of interviewees report that participation in the Business Week has increased availability and reduced fears in the face of future participation in mobility projects abroad.
3.6 Propositions validation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposition</th>
<th>Validation</th>
<th>Analyse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1: The development of skills contributes to increase entrepreneurial competencies</td>
<td>Accept</td>
<td>Table 2 demonstrate that students self-percept their participation in the business week with positive values. And indicate the contribution of their participation to the development of entrepreneurial skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2: The apprenticeship in multicultural environment enable the development of entrepreneurial competencies</td>
<td>Accept</td>
<td>The case study analysis allows the assessment of the contribution from Business Week to the development of new skills, particularly entrepreneurial. It was clear the contribution of participation to reduce multicultural anxiety and to increase self confidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3: The international project (Business Week) contributes positively to the student’s propensity to internationalization.</td>
<td>Accept</td>
<td>The analysis confirms Business Week contribution for motivate Portuguese students in others (deep and long) international experiences. For most students this experience was the first contact with learning in a multicultural environment, revealing an essential factor in the overthrow of anxiety and psychological multicultural barriers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 Concluding remarks

Globalization and changes in labor markets represents new challenges to training in higher education. The business environment requires new skills that are sometimes difficult to acquire inside formal curriculums.

The global world where knowledge and information don’t recognize borders requires professionals with new profiles accustomed to contact with multicultural environments. Additionally, the capability to understand and accept cultural diversity becomes more and more required. The valorization of students training requires further participation in extra scholar activities and on international projects.

In this sense, the Business Week Entrepreneurship Setúbal is a double opportunity for the students of Business and Administration School from Polytechinic Institute of Setúbal. The participation in an international project enables learning in a multicultural environment; moreover, develop entrepreneurial skills considered strategic for entering the labor market.

The analysis of the case study propositions confirm the importance of this project to development entrepreneurial skills in a multicultural environment and their effect in increasing the students propensity for participate in international mobility projects.

This study and the experience accumulated by the organization of three editions of
Business Week Entrepreneurship Setúbal lead us to think about the challenge of future involvement of the various schools that comprise the Polytechnic Institute of Setúbal in this project, assuming a greater extent in the process of internationalization of the Campus.

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Integration of foreign degree students into the finnish school system & society

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Abstract
Most of the foreign degree students of Lahti University of Applied Sciences, Faculty of Business Studies leave Finland after their graduation. However, their newly gained expertise could also stay in Finland and be available for the local and global companies and the society after their graduation. To make the students more committed to staying in Finland, they should be better integrated into the Finnish school system and society. This is a common objective of many actors operating in the integration field. The different universities and other educational organizations should also understand their role and responsibility in this demanding process. Due to the current flight of educated foreign graduates, Lahti University of Applied Sciences, Faculty of Business Studies decided to construct its own integration programme for its foreign degree students.

Key-words
Finland, Foreign degree student, Integration, Integration programme

Introduction
Lahti University of Applied Sciences, Faculty of Business Studies, Finland is a melting pot of students coming from all over the world. According to a research done in the autumn 2009, the student body of the faculty consisted of more than 100 foreign degree students coming from 19 different countries. These students basically carry out all of their studies in Finland, and therefore it would be a great advantage to the Finnish society and companies if they would also stay in Finland after their graduation. Unfortunately only a minority of the foreign students actually do stay in Finland having received their degrees. Most of them return to their home countries. This is an unfortunate fact that could be changed with persistent work. The newly gained, up-to-date expertise of the students could also be available for the local and global companies in growing number after their graduation. The immigrants have also been seen as one solution to fix the
coming lack of labor force of the Finnish labor markets. A large proportion of the current Finnish labor force will be retiring during the coming years (Ministry of the Interior 2006). The foreign graduates would thus be needed in the Finnish markets and society both to benefit the Finnish and international companies with their fresh ideas and thinking but also to fill the coming gap in the labor force caused due to the massive, near-future retirements (Ministry of the Interior 2006).

To change the prevailing situation, the management of the Lahti University of Applied Sciences, Faculty of Business Studies decided to start acting towards better integration of their foreign degree students. The actions were begun in the form of setting up a study to address the important questions: How to integrate the foreign degree students into the Finnish school system and society more effectively and consequently, how to also make them stay in Finland after their graduation? Based on the research questions, the objective of the study was set to be the construction of a qualitative integration programme for the foreign degree students of the faculty. The integration programme was decided to be limited to school, study life, and work related issues. These topics were seen as factors the university could affect. The social welfare, healthcare, and similar issues were thus ruled out from the study.

The goal of this article is to describe the theoretical background of the study conducted and also to present its main findings. The emphasis is on presenting various integration possibilities and measures the faculty can adopt in the future. Although the study was conducted solely from the viewpoint of Lahti University of Applied sciences, the results gained are not linked to any specific university or country and can thus be utilized in various circumstances.

1 Background – finnish integration laws and integration measures of different Actors

1.1 Finnish integration law

The theoretical framework of the study had its foundation in the first Finnish integration law, Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers, that came into force in 1999. This first integration law and its amended version from 2005 give rules and guidance for the integration actions and procedures of different municipalities. The law sets the limits that can and should be done in order to enhance the integration of various types of immigrants. While setting the limits for the municipalities, the law also sets the limits and boundaries for all different actors operating in the integration field, including the universities. (Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers 493/1999; Act on the Amendment of the
According to the law, each municipality has the obligation to construct an integration programme for its immigrants and also to act according to the programme developed. The ideology behind the law is that each individual in a society should have similar rights and obligations. The law states the ground rules for the programmes, names the authorities involved in addition to their responsibilities, and gives guidance how to actually perform the planned integration operations. The law also recognizes the fact that an integral part of the integration process and especially its success, is the immigrant him/herself. Therefore, while setting obligations for the different authorities, the law also sets obligations and responsibilities for the immigrants themselves. (Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers 493/1999).

The amendment of the integration law (Act on the Amendment of the Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers 1215/2005) goes deeper into the issue and gives more specific descriptions of the duties of the different authorities. Concentrating on the duties of the municipalities, the municipalities are responsible for planning, executing, and monitoring the integration of the immigrants living within their borders. The municipalities are obliged to organize such services that support the immigrants' adaptation process into the Finnish society and to enhance the integration via those services. The municipalities are also obliged to work in close co-operation and share information with the other authorities involved in the integration process, such as, for example, the employment agency. According to the law, the integration measures of different municipalities should include, for example, an introduction of the Finnish society and its customs and habits, teaching of oral and written Finnish language, offering of various types of information, guidance, and interpretation services, and organizing of different procedures advancing equality and enhancing the immigrants own initiative to acquire the knowledge and skills needed in order to function as a part of the Finnish society. (Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers 493/1999; Act on the Amendment of the Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers 1215/2005).

As stated above, the integration law forces each municipality to design its own integration programme for its immigrants. The programmes include general strategic guidelines, how to execute the integration process and which actions to include; the programmes treat the immigrants as one entity. Based on the integration programmes, the municipalities are also obliged to construct a personal integration plan for each immigrant. The objective of the personal integration plans is to make each immigrant's adaptation process as effective and as fruitful as possible. While again setting objectives for the municipalities and its services, the plans also set profound responsibilities for
the immigrants themselves. The immigrants need to be active in their own integration operations. Otherwise the execution of the integration plans may be ceased. (Ministry of the Interior 2009; Act on the Amendment of the Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers 1215/2005.).

As can be seen from the brief introduction, the Finnish integration law sets a profound ground for the integration actions of various authorities. However, as according to the law, permanent full-time work or full-time professional or academic studies cease the immigrants’ right to have a personal integration plan (Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers 493/1999), the foreign degree students are automatically ruled out from the governmental integration operations. This leaves a vast responsibility for the universities for integrating their own foreign degree students into the Finnish society and making them feel at home, although abroad.

1.2 Integration measures of different actors

As the integration law, although very important, was not able to give enough information in order to construct the integration programme of the faculty, the integration actions of various actors operating in the integration field were reviewed. The target of this review was to gain understanding of different integration actions already taking place, both in the Finnish society and abroad. Based on the review the faculty could consider which integration actions it should and could include into its own operations.

The main emphasis of the review was on studying the integration measures of the municipalities of Lahti and Helsinki, Finland, in addition to studying the Canadian integrations measures. Canada has been the forerunner in integrating its immigrants into its society. On the other hand, as Lahti University of Applied Sciences operates in the town of Lahti and as Helsinki is the capital of Finland, their integration actions were seen to greatly affect the actions the University of Applied Sciences could adopt. In addition to studying these actors, the integration measures of various other Finnish municipalities and universities were briefly reviewed. (See for example: Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2010; The Integration Programme of Lahti 1999; The Monitoring Report of the Integration Programme of Lahti 2006; The Integration Programme of Helsinki 1999; The Monitoring Report of the Integration Programme of Helsinki 2007; The Political Programme of Immigration Päijät Häme Region 2009; Byman & Ramberg 2008.).
1.3 Municipalities of Lahti and Helsinki

Presenting some ideas from the integration programme of the municipality of Lahti, the objective of the town is to support its immigrants to learn the Finnish language, to participate in different educational, cultural, and leisure time activities, to be employed, and to be personally active in his/her own integration measures, both in the planning and execution phase. The town has made a decision of locating its immigrants into different parts of town in order to enhance the integration. The town also organizes various cultural and language studies in order to make the immigrants familiar with the Finnish culture and language. The cold fact is that if an immigrant wishes to be employed in Finland, the Finnish language skills are nearly always required. In addition to teaching the immigrants the Finnish language, the town aims at enhancing their employment by organizing for them courses discussing the Finnish labor market and finding them practical training places. The immigrants are also given guidance concerning vocational selection and rehabilitation. (The Integration Programme of Lahti 1999; The Monitoring Report of the Integration Programme of Lahti 2006.).

One very important integration actor in the town of Lahti is the multicultural community center Multi-Culti. The objective of Multi-Culti is to promote the interaction between the locals and the immigrants and to increase tolerance and internationality of the area. The center organizes various events where both locals and immigrants are welcome. Multi-Culti aims at building an area which appreciates multi ethnicity, equality, and diversity. (The Integration Programme of Lahti 1999; The Monitoring Report of the Integration Programme of Lahti 2006; Lahden nuorisopalvelut 2010.).

Moving forward, the integration programme of the city of Helsinki follows the guidelines set by the Finnish integration law. Therefore the integration programmes of Lahti and Helsinki include similar items. However, as Helsinki has more immigrants and is perhaps more experienced and familiar with handling issues related to immigration, the integration programme of Helsinki is more profound. In addition to discussing the same items as the integration programme of Lahti, the programme includes, for example, translating of various important brochures into many different languages, organizing of sports, cooking, and relationship skill courses, offering multilanguage library services in more than 60 languages, and cooperating with different immigrant associations. Helsinki also has its own multicultural community center, Caisa. As was the case with Lahti and Multi-Culti, Caisa has a large responsibility and meaning in the integration actions of the town of Helsinki. (The Integration Programme of Helsinki 1999; The Monitoring Report of the Integration Programme of Helsinki 2007; Joronen 2003.).

As the immigration has increased and as the immigrants have increasingly started to be seen as a potential, positive resource for the Finnish society, many municipalities have
started to enlarge and refine their integration operations. This trend also reflects the situation in Lahti. The town of Lahti constructed its new political programme concerning immigration together with its surrounding municipalities during 2009. The programme was published in December 2009 and it sets a vast list of integration responsibilities to be executed by different actors (The Political Programme of Immigration Päijät Häme Region 2009). The actual execution and success of the programme remains to be seen.

1.4 State of Canada

As stated above, Canada has been a pioneer in organizing integration measures for its immigrants. It receives the second largest amount of yearly immigrants in the whole world and has been very successful in its integration operations (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2010). Therefore it was seen as an interesting target to review while gathering background information for the integration programme of Lahti University of Applied Sciences, Faculty of Business Studies.

Canada has a vast number of various associations and voluntary organizations performing integration operations. Many of the persons working in these associations and organizations are former immigrants and therefore have a deep understanding of the challenges the immigrants go through when entering their new home country. The associations and organizations work under four Canadian governmental organizations responsible for aiding and guiding the immigrants. These organizations are called: LINC (Language Instructions for Newcomers to Canada), Host Programme, ISAP (Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program), and ELT (Enhanced Language Training). (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2010.).

As the name says, the target of LINC (Language Instructions for Newcomers to Canada), is to make the immigrant familiar with the local language and habits. On the other hand, the Host Program matches the immigrant with a Canadian family or individual in order to enhance the integration and understanding of the Canadian way of life. ISAP (Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program) guides the immigrants how to use the different community services, such as social, economic, and educational services, offered. ELT (Enhanced Language Training), on the other hand, concentrates on giving the immigrants higher level language education. The target of ELT is to increase the immigrants' language skills to such level that they will manage in the Canadian labor markets. In addition to offering language training, ELT also gives work life related mentoring and helps the immigrants in finding internships and permanent work positions. (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2010.).

The Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP) is also responsible for
the execution and management of the Canadian Integration Programme. It sets the basic outline of the integration operations and provides funding for various governmental and non-governmental organizations involved in the integration process. (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2010.). All in all the Canadian integration operations have been brought to the highest level. Many other countries and organizations could learn from their experiences.

1.5 Utilization of background research – methodology of the study

The information gained through the background research was used to give advice as to which integration measures to include in the integration programme of the faculty. As the faculty also wished to take into account the opinions of its current foreign degree students, an internet survey targeted at the foreign degree students was also conducted. The objective of the survey was to explore and gain knowledge of the students’ opinions on the former integration actions executed by the university and how the university should develop its future integration operations.

To make the programme as thorough as possible, the experiences of other Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences were also used in designing the programme. The information used was gathered at a seminar organized in October 2009, discussing issues linked with the different English language programmes of the Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences.

2 Integration measures of Lahti University of Applied Sciences, Faculty of Business Studies

Based on all the information gathered, a preliminary integration programme of the faculty was designed. The actions of the programme are versatile, starting with student recruitment and ending at the students’ permanent integration into the Finnish society. The programme is divided into three parts: 1) integration measures to be taken before the students arrive in Finland, 2) integration measures during the studies and study life, and 3) integration measures aiming at permanent integration into the Finnish society in the form of finding a permanent work place in Finland.

The programme assigns duties for both the university itself and the surrounding community. It should be noted that although the report generated is called a programme, it is not a finalized plan with deadlines and responsibilities. The main objective of the programme is to give ideas of different integration measures that the university could adopt in the future. The decision, which actions the university will really execute, is to be made by the management of the faculty and university.
The main findings of all three parts of the programme are presented below.

2.1 Integration measures to be taken before the students arrive in Finland

A large number of the student body of the Lahti University of Applied Sciences, Faculty of Business Studies consists of students coming from Asia. As the Asian cultures differ considerably from the Finnish culture, there exists a serious risk of non-integration of the students. The large number of Asian students results from long term, close relationships with several Asian universities and organizations. A lot of resources have been invested into maintaining those close ties.

However, as the integration of the Asian students has not proved to be the easiest process, it is suggested that the faculty should start recruiting more actively students from such countries where the culture would be closer to the Finnish culture. In practice this would mean developing better recruiting methods in Europe and North America. It has been seen that the closer the cultures are to one another, the easier is the integration process when moving from one culture to the other.

On the other hand, as permanent employment has been seen as the key to the final integration into a society, it is also suggested that the faculty should recruit such students the current and future labor market would be interested in, considering both the nationalities and skills of the students. Adopting this ideology would mean that in order to find the right students to recruit, the faculty should do even closer cooperation with the business life to ensure that the future needs of the labor market would be taken into account and could be considered in the student recruitment.

Whichever recruiting strategy the faculty chooses to use in the future, the entrance examination venues should be used as a means of early integration. The more the students would receive information of the Finnish society, school system, and the university itself, the better platform they would have to start their studies in Finland. Moreover, the applicants could also use the information received to evaluate and validate their decision of wanting to study in Finland. The more conscious the decisions of coming to Finland to study would be, the more motivated students the university would consequently have.

In addition to giving information during the entrance examinations, the chosen applicants should also be given even more information before leaving their home countries. It is suggested that the faculty should send the coming students a written welcome to Finland and Lahti package which they could and should familiarize themselves with before coming to Finland and starting their actual studies. The ideology behind the package is that it would include a large amount of information ranging from a presentation of the town, university, and study structure to a presentation of the local
multicultural community center and a comprehensive list of Internet addresses which
the students could follow to learn more about Finland, depending on their interests.
The final contents of the package could be planned together with current foreign degree
students of the faculty. They have the best knowledge of which information they would
have needed when starting their studies.

As the information given in the material package would be rather formal in nature,
the faculty could also open a tutoring platform where the coming students could discuss
their questions and problems with the older students. The tutoring platform would
 guarantee that if the new students would be too timid to contact the personnel of
the university with their questions, they would still have a way of getting the needed
information.

2.2 Integration measures during the studies and study life
2.2.1 Beginning of the studies

Following the guidelines of the Finnish integration law, the apartments of the foreign
degree students should be located around the town of Lahti. In the best case, in order to
facilitate the integration, the foreign students could be placed into the same apartments
with the Finnish students. This would guarantee that the foreign students would be
exposed to the Finnish culture and habits and would be forced to interact with the local
people. If this would not be possible to organize, in the second best case the new foreign
students would share apartments with an older student of their own nationality. In this
case the more experienced students could help the newcomers with their questions of
settling in Finland and the university.

When the students actually arrive in Lahti, they should be met by a tutor student,
who would help them to find their way home and make them feel at least a little bit
like home, although being abroad. In an ideal case each foreign student would have
two named tutor students, one student of Finnish origin and one older student of his/
her own nationality. This would guarantee the best possible integration and problem
solving in any situation. Although presented in the current chapter, the tutoring actions
should not be limited to the beginning phase of the studies. On the contrary, they should
continue at least throughout the first academic year.

When concentrating on the studies, the actual academic studies should start with an
introduction week aiming at giving the students the best possible means to both begin
their studies and to proceed with them successfully. The introduction week has already
been used by the faculty since autumn 2008 and has proven to be really useful. The aim
of the week is, for example, to give the students all the needed information in order for
them to be able to operate in the university, teach them how to use the university IT systems, introduce them the social services of the university, and to make them socialize with and get to know one another, despite the nationalities. Some of the actual studies may begin, but the main emphasis of the week is to help the students to get settled in their new hometown and university. The introduction week has proven to diminish the uncertainties many of the new students are bound to have. In order to make the introduction week even more comprehensive, the faculty should put more emphasis on introducing the other integration operators in the area. As mentioned earlier in the article, Lahti has its own multicultural community center Multi-Culti. However, so far the cooperation between the university and Multi-Culti has been almost nonexistent. This is a factor that should be changed in order to enhance the integration of the foreign degree students.

In addition to the introduction week, the new students should have a compulsory introduction course to the Finnish culture. The cultural introduction would guarantee that each and every foreign student would have some knowledge of the Finnish culture having taken part in the course. The course could be organized even before the beginning of the actual academic year or at the latest in the beginning of the studies. The cultural course would enhance the foreign students understanding of the Finnish mentality and could thus help to prevent major cultural shocks. In order to facilitate the integration, other courses concentrating on different aspects of the Finnish culture could be organized and offered later on during the studies.

2.2.2 During the studies

It is a commonly known fact that knowledge of the local language is the key to the foreign society. Therefore the faculty should put a lot of emphasis on exposing the foreign students to the Finnish language. The curriculum of the foreign students of Lahti University of Applied Sciences, Faculty of Business Studies includes currently 16 ECTS compulsory Finnish language courses. Although already being a considerable amount, it is not enough to make the students manage with the Finnish language. Therefore more Finnish studies should be added to the curriculum. Based on the feedback received from the current students of the faculty, the studies should also be organized outside the class rooms.

To really make the foreign students absorb the Finnish language, they should also be forced to use it as much as possible. Although the students are taking part in English language programmes, the personnel of the university could use the Finnish language when handling their issues, whenever feasible. The lecturers could also translate the most important business terms into Finnish during the courses. This would help both
the Finnish students studying in the English language programmes and the foreign students. The Finnish students would also learn to understand the issues in their own language and, on the other hand, the foreign students would become familiar with the Finnish business terminology. This knowledge would help both groups later on when entering the business life. In addition to these measures, it could also be considered whether some of the last year courses could be taught in the Finnish language, adapting the contents of the courses to match the language skills. This could be a motivational factor for the foreign students to study the Finnish language as thoroughly as possible during the whole study time.

In addition to teaching the language, the integration could be facilitated by combining the Finnish language and English language programmes to study some subject together. This ideology is already used to some extent at the faculty, but its usage could be increased. The mixing would benefit both the Finnish and foreign students. In addition to having joint lectures, the Finnish and foreign students should also be forced to make mixed groups fulfill various assignments. This would enhance all students’ knowledge of intercultural communication and how to work with people coming from different national and cultural backgrounds.

In addition to the proposed actions, a very recommendable integration measure would be to match the adult students of the faculty, who are studying simultaneously while working, with the foreign degree students. This measure has been adopted by some other Finnish universities and the results have been really promising. The student pairs have carried out various tasks together and have, for example, visited the adult students’ workplaces. Such matching would benefit both parties. The foreign students would get a closer look into the Finnish way of doing things and Finnish business life, whereas the Finnish students would also be exposed to intercultural communication. The matching would also create a good opportunity to improve the language skills of both students. In the best case the students would become real life-long friends.

2.2.3 Extracurricular integration activities

In order to help the foreign students’ integration, the faculty should also organize some extracurricular activities. Due to tight budgets, in the past the extracurricular activities organized by the faculty have been minimal. This side of study life should, however, also be improved.

By using consideration, the faculty could organize, for example, some recreational hobby groups and events where the students could get together and interact with one another. In the least case the faculty could organize the premises for the different
happenings and let the students themselves take care of the actually planning and execution of activities. As presented earlier in the article, a very unused resource for the organizing of various events is the local multicultural community center Multi-Culti. The faculty should take the initiative and tie closer relationships with Multi-Culti in order to reach the common objective of both parties, well-being and integration of the foreign degree students.

As discussed earlier in the article, the integration programme of the faculty also sets responsibilities for the surrounding community. The integration of the foreign students is heavily dependent on how they see the surrounding environment to act towards them, are they accepted or not. Moreover, the integration could also be boosted if the students could be given a real insight into a normal Finnish way of living. Due to these reasons, an idea of a friendship family was added into the integration programme of the faculty. The idea was to follow the Canadian model of turning the immigrants into a part of the society by matching them with local families. The faculty decided to test the friendship ideology by finding Finnish friendship families for the foreign students starting their studies in January 2010. So far the experiment has been exceeding all expectations, both foreign students and the Finnish families have been really happy with the cooperation. Encouraged by the good experience and feedback received, the friendship family actions have been decided to be continued in the future as well.

Integration Measures Aiming at the Permanent Integration into the Finnish Society in the Form of Finding a Permanent Work Place in Finland

Finding a permanent work position is a very decisive factor integrating the foreign degree students into the Finnish society. However, finding a suitable and satisfying work place is not always an easy task. Therefore the university and faculty should assist the students in this challenge.

It is controversial as to whether the faculty should assist the students in finding a workplace after their graduation. However, the least the faculty should do would be to assist the students in finding practical training places in Finland. Practical training forms a compulsory part of their studies and could open doors to future employment possibilities. Currently the students are obliged to search and find the practical training places on their own.

In order to help the students, the faculty should assign persons or an organization responsible for cooperating with the Finnish companies and consequently finding connections and practical training places for the foreign students. The networking demands a lot of time and therefore should be given enough resources. It cannot be
performed halfheartedly. While helping the students, by organizing its practical training operations more effectively and visibly, the faculty could also improve its image among the local business life as a source of talented and educated current and future labor force.

In order to boost the employment of the foreign students, the faculty should also build closer connections with the Finnish employment authorities. The faculty could offer study places for immigrants listed as unemployed workforce, whereas the employment authorities could simultaneously inform the faculty of open vacancies and practical training places. The faculty and the employment authorities could also organize various job seeking courses together.

In addition to the measures mentioned, the faculty could also design two small guidebooks in order to improve the execution of the practical training process, one for the foreign degree students and another for the possible employers. The target of the first guide would be to give the students brief insights how to apply for a job in Finland and how to operate in the Finnish business life. On the other hand, the objective of the guide targeted at the employing companies would be to give them information they need to know when hiring a foreign trainee.

To briefly summarize all the issues linked with employment in any form, it can be said that anything the faculty could do in order to find practical training places and open vacancies for its foreign degree students would be an investment into integrating the students into the Finnish society and creating a more diversified Finnish labor market.

3 Execution of the integration programme, closure

Integrating the foreign degree students into the Finnish school system and society is a very challenging task. Although the preliminary integration programme has now been constructed, it is only a first small step in the actual integration process. In order for the programme to be successful, it needs a very motivated group of people responsible for the actual actions. If the people responsible for the integration measures are not genuinely interested in their duties, the programme is bound to fail.

The programme should also be updated as the experience of the chosen integration measures grows. The faculty should continuously gather feedback from its foreign students concerning the integration actions performed and act accordingly.

Although being a challenging and demanding task, the integration of the foreign degree students should be taken seriously. Hard and persistent work can lead to rewarding end results. If the faculty is able to work persistently towards the final goal of permanent integration, it will see more and more of its foreign students staying in Finland after
their graduation. This would benefit both the local and global companies searching for talented, educated, multicultural workforce.

Lahti University of Applied Sciences is in a key role, together with all other universities and educational organizations, making the Finnish society and labor market more multicultural and diversified. Although the amount of various integration operators is numerous, all educational organizations should understand their role and responsibility in the process and take part in achieving the common goal.

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EU POLICIES AND OPPORTUNITIES

EU policies matter in education
Anne-Marie Van Den Dries

An Inquiry on application process of EU Erasmus Programme & students’ views regarding Erasmus programme of student exchange
Ebru Aktan / Burcu Sari / Ismail Kaymak

Functions of European higher education in the context of students’ mobility
Emilia Żyłkiewicz
EU policies matter in education

Anne-Marie Van Den Dries
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Abstract

From the Memorandum on Higher Education in the European Community to this year’s Budapest-Vienna Declaration, over Bologna and Maastricht, thousands of students have been moving around and studying in Europe and even further afield. Would this have been possible without the impact of the EU policies on Education? Would the fantastic increase in the newest communication and transportation tools over the last decades have achieved the same results, i.e. a higher education area with more comparable, compatible and coherent systems in Europe and ….worldwide.

Key-words
Sorbonne, Bologna, Maastricht, Mobility, Curriculum development, Virtual courses

The hardest thing about education is to be ambitious enough
(Stephen Heppel, in ‘Future of Education’)

Currently, mid August 2010, the official letters/e-mails with the dreaded sentence “we regret to inform you” or those leading to an explosion of joy “we have the pleasure to inform you that your application has been successful”, are dropping in at the International Offices’ letterboxes of many Universities and University Colleges.

Having a quick look at the results of the successful applications (here limited to the centralised action of multilateral projects/networks for Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Grundtvig) of this year we notice titles like:

of Staff and Students”, “Sustainable know-how in intercultural learning in Student Placements and the knowledge transfer to Enterprises”, “Employability: learning through international entrepreneurship”, “Comparative study of European and national-level policies and practices on academic mobility”, “Professional driving – more than just driving! Qualification requirements and vocational training for professional drivers in Europe”, “Innoguide – innovation in LLL Tourist Guide Training - Tourist Guides as partners for a sustainable, diverse and exciting Europe”, “Qualification of seniors coming from restructuring sectors for the intergenerational knowledge transfer”, “Financial literacy competencies for adult learners”...

In all fairness, would you, as a teacher/lecturer have thought yourself to bring forward one of these topics? What would have been the reaction of your Head or Dean on signing the application, if the potential incentive of funding would have been lacking? If this incentive was missing would you have been looking for at least two other European partners (and for some sub programmes up to more than thirty partners) to establish the partnership for the project or network?

In fact the titles of these successful projects (giving a very limited information of course) are attractive: these are topics of everyday life, but by going in-depth and in-width with other partners with other cultural backgrounds makes it all so much more exciting and brings in a comparative flavour that would be missing if you did the same exercises completely on your own or with the support of an institution in the neighbourhood. The impact would have been limited to a PR stunt for the local school recruitment area.

Did you notice also that the European buzz-words linked to the current policies are included in practically all the projects mentioned? .... Employability, intergenerational knowledge transfer, adult learners, virtual learning, citizenship, sustainable development, entrepreneurship, comparative study, intercultural awareness....

Education was formally recognised as an area of European Union competency in the Maastricht Treaty which established the European Community in 1992.

In the EU system, Education belongs to the “subsidiarity” principle, i.e. the principle which ensures that activities best managed at national, regional or local level are funded at the most appropriate level and that the Union does not intervene. But on the other hand the EU influences directly the European Higher Education Area by investing (approx. 7bn euros) in education projects as part of its (2007-13) learning programme. A variety of projects cover everything from schools and adult learning to vocational training schemes and assistance for students who wish to study in another EU state. The idea is to help EU countries improve the skills base of their workforce, equipping them to remain competitive with countries such as China and India, in areas such as
bio-engineering, pharmaceuticals and high-technology manufacturing. Programmes also exist to enable easier comparison of qualifications between countries, as this would give employers more confidence to recruit from other member states.

The European Union has so two different types of instrument to increase the quality and openness of the education and training systems of the EU’s Member States: on the one hand as explained above a substantial programme to support exchanges, networks and mutual learning between schools, universities or training centres as well as between the political authorities responsible for these areas in the different Member States. But also a set of policy instruments through which EU countries are encouraged to develop their own education systems and to learn from each other’s successes.

This means also, if one wants to have access to EU money a basic principle has to be followed! Paraphrasing Luke 20:25: “Well then,” He said, “give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give to the EU what belongs to the EU…..”. In other words, if a project developer wants EU money, he/she has to play the game by the rules set out by the EU money holder….and these are nicely written in the guidelines of the programmes. And that’s where the development of EU policies and recommendations comes in, as the guidelines for handing in good applications are based on these policies.

Going back in time, a very interesting document is the Memorandum on Higher Education by Dr Finbar O’Callaghan, who played a most influential role in Ireland in promoting non-university higher education (see Tony White, Investing in People, Higher Education in Ireland 1960-2000, IPA, Dublin, 2001). Dr O’Callaghan was consulted by the then called European Communities about Higher Education and the vision and strategies it could develop to increase the efficiency of Higher Education. We are talking Brussels, 5 November 1991. Interesting to read are also “The Responses to the Memorandum on Higher Education in the European Community” by Pierre Tabatoni (November 1993) and Jean-Pierre Jallade (December 1993).

We are at that moment in the very early nineties – with European economies at different paces. The Western European states had, for some years already, linked their economies with a huge increase in shared infrastructure and cross-border trade. Since 1986 we were 12. The economy of the former COMECON countries had suffered greatly due to the massive cost of the Cold War. After the fall of the Berlin wall, most Eastern European countries were struggling with GDP and living standards very much behind those of the Western neighbours.

The memorandum comes in at a time when the COMETT programme was already functioning. It was designed to stimulate contacts and exchanges between universities and industry (July 1987). This programme was rapidly followed by the ERASMUS
programme, which promoted inter-university contacts and cooperation, as well as substantial student mobility (as, in 1989, did the “Youth for Europe” programme, the EU’s first youth exchange support scheme). These programmes were adopted by the EU countries but with considerable support from the European Parliament.

This was the memorable time of the ICP’s (Interuniversity Cooperation Projects), and the period also of the first discoveries that educational civilisation existed not only in the home institution but also across borders, this being the case certainly for the so-called Polytechnics. It was the period of lifelong friendships with colleagues in the EU countries. It was the period that sending students abroad was only done under the wings of that same friendship. Communication was done by snail mail. It was only the second batch of exchange students who used the fax. Internet and mobiles came in so much later. But it was also the time of reflecting: are we going international or is the shadow of our local spire sufficient to our needs? Why should we do this?

The memorandum came in timely and presents and explains the position of the Commission of the European Communities on issues of higher education. In establishing the context for the memorandum it notes population and labor market changes. It identifies a series of actions which could be taken and raises a wide agenda of issues which argue for a stronger European dimension in planning and functioning than existed at that time (1990) in higher education.

It also identifies the Commission’s role as a catalyst and facilitator of cooperative and common action in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity and respecting a diversity of provision. Critical areas discussed include participation in and access to higher education, partnership with economic life, continuing education, open and distance education, and the European Community dimension. The contours of the European dimension are defined and include student mobility, cooperation between institutions, Europe in the curriculum, the central importance of language, the training of teachers, recognition of qualifications and periods of study, the international role of higher education, information and policy analysis, and dialogue with the higher education sector. Compared to to-day’s policies: very much ahead of its time, I would say!

In the meantime the Tempus programme was adopted by the Council in May 1990, to promote educational exchange and cooperation between educational institutions inside the EU and those outside. The idea behind Tempus was that individual universities in the European Community could contribute to the process of rebuilding free and effective university systems in partner countries; the programme was an immediate success and by 1993 the number of participating countries had grown from five at the start to eleven. The programme was subsequently enlarged to include the Newly Independent States.
of the former Soviet Union; again to include the countries of the Western Balkans and finally to cover the Mediterranean countries.

Tempus was followed by a series of smaller programmes built more round the mobility of academics towards the EU. These included the ALFA/ALBAN programmes with Latin American universities; the Asia-Link programme; and others, like Edu-link, sometimes time-limited. A number of these appear to have been set up as a means of development assistance rather than with the development of universities as such, an impression strengthened by the fact that they were managed by the European Commission’s development assistance service EuropeAid rather than (like Tempus or Erasmus Mundus programme) by its Education and Culture department. Bi-lateral cooperation has also been encouraged with Canada, US, Australia, Republic of Korea, Japan, New Zealand, ...

Finally, in 2003 the European Union launched the Erasmus Mundus programme, a project to ensure the place of European Universities as centres of excellence across the world; to attract the best students from around the world to Europe; and to enable partnerships between European universities and those in other countries.

As from 2007 all the education and training programmes were brought together in one single programme: the Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013. This programme comprises separate sub-programmes for schools, universities and higher education, vocational education and training, adult education, teaching about the EU in universities (Jean Monnet) and a ‘horizontal’ programme for policy development. We are neither to forget the separate FW7 programme with its numerous sub-calls linked to research.

And by this time, nearing the end of 2010, and mid-term for most of the European educational programmes, we do not speak any more about interregional or transnational exchanges, but all attention is focused on globalisation, and this in its different meanings. Mars seems though to be the limit....

How is the world at present? We are 27 in the EU, speaking 23 official languages, using 3 alphabets. More countries want to join, and Education is ahead with Turkey a longstanding partner in the education projects. Croatia and Switzerland are also joining now, and there are loads of opportunities for “third countries” to join the projects. The Ministerial EU Conferences work now with two chairs (EU country and non-EU country: at present Belgium and Albania, next semester Hungary and Andorra). We have a Eurozone, a euro stronger than the dollar, we are aware that 911 is a daily reality for a series of countries, we are at the same time aware that the arms’ lobby is not to be underestimated, we know about the Kyoto protocol, we are unhappy about Copenhagen, we tried to read the introduction to the Lisbon Treaty, we read online the daily news of
India, China, Aljazeera. In short we know about the “world” thanks to the wonderful development of communication technologies.

And then there is the crisis! How do we counteract it? Europe 2010 becomes now Europe 2020. Financial markets have failed us, we have a high number of unemployed people, so it is time to look for new jobs and...new skills. Europe was lagging behind the US at one time? What was missing? competitive skills, that’s why the policies were geared at creating the knowledge-based society. Innovation and Creativity, University and Enterprise....and to-day? We are heading towards Europe 2020!

The crisis is a wake-up call, the moment where we recognise that “business as usual” would consign us to a gradual decline, to the second rank of the new global order. This is Europe’s moment of truth. It is time to be bold and ambitious (José Manuel Barroso-3/03/2010).

The Europe 2020 strategy put forward by the Commission sets out a vision of Europe’s social market economy for the 21st century. Reading the documents of the Commission and the Council, buzz words continue to crop up: **smart, sustainable and inclusive.** That’s the way economy has to develop delivering high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion. The Commission is putting forward seven flagship initiatives to catalyse progress under each priority theme:

- “Innovation Union” to improve framework conditions and access to finance for research and innovation so as to ensure that innovative ideas can be turned into products and services that create growth and jobs.
- “Youth on the move” to enhance the performance of education systems and to facilitate the entry of young people to the labour market.
- “A digital agenda for Europe” to speed up the roll-out of high-speed internet and reap the benefits of a digital single market for households and firms.
- “Resource efficient Europe” to help decouple economic growth from the use of resources, support the shift towards a low carbon economy, increase the use of renewable energy sources, modernise our transport sector and promote energy efficiency.
- “An industrial policy for the globalisation era” to improve the business environment, notably for SMEs, and to support the development of a strong and sustainable industrial base able to compete globally.
- “An agenda for new skills and jobs” to modernise labour markets and empower people by developing their of skills throughout the lifecycle with a view to increase labour participation and better match labour supply and demand, including through labour mobility.
- “European platform against poverty” to ensure social and territorial cohesion such that the benefits of growth and jobs are widely shared and people experiencing poverty and social exclusion are enabled to live in dignity and take an active part in society.
Looking at this set of flagships we are aware that we in education, can, as international officers, help out the different departments and faculties of our institutions, to be the lead ship in a fleet of vessels (this means handing in successful applications). We just have to wait the directions/guidelines of the new priorities, the new rules of the game as set out by the EACEA, the Executive Agency for Culture and Education (see: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/index_en.htm).

A lot has already been published.

- **The Commission**: Here we are in the midst of the essential elements to benefit from the financial support of the EU (http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc36_en.htm and http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc1120_en.htm)

- **Many reports and studies** by the Commission itself:
  - like “Study on Key indicators on Social Inclusion and Efficiency, Mobility, Adult Skills and Active Citizenship – 2006” (http://ec.europa.eu/education/more-information/moreinformation139_en.htm)

- Not to be forgotten: the Barometers giving an insight in the public opinion: *e.g.* Entrepreneurship in the EU and beyond - A survey in the EU, EFTA countries, Croatia, Turkey, the US, Japan, South Korea and China (May 2010) (http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm)

- **CEDEFOP** (http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/publications/16435.aspx)


- **The Years**: Intercultural dialogue, Against racism and combating poverty, Volunteering, ....

- **Commission Staff working documents**: e.g. Progress towards the Lisbon Objectives in Education and Training – Indicators and Benchmarks – 2009.

- These “EU” documents find their “applied” version in studies and papers, produced for example by:
  - EAIE: http://www.eaie.org/publications/,
  - EURASHE: ‘10 Commitments for EHEA in 2020 - Vision and Strategies’

- and then we have also the **Commissionners** for Education themselves, like Viviane REDING (Erasmus Mundus), Jan FIGEL (EIT) and now ANDROULLA VASSILIOU. Read her priorities linked to a very realistic analysis of the current situation in Higher Education: http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/vassiliou/about/priorities/index_en.htm and listen to the Press Conference 15/09/2010 on “Youth on the Move”.

- Initiatives have also been developed by the **networks of universities and university colleges** like EUA, EURASHE, ACA, starting obviously with the Sorbonne Joint
Declaration on harmonisation of the architecture of the European higher education system by the four Ministers in charge for France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom (May 25, 1998) leading to the Bologna Declaration and the so-called Bologna Process (see: http://www.ehea.info/)

- EAIE, NAFSA, ASEM, CHEPS regroup also internationalists and study centres.
- The national education units like DAAD, NUFFIC, CIMO, SUI, EPOS, AEF, FLAMENCO, and so many more, do their utmost to provide assistance to the local international officers and are a real asset in the decentralised actions.
- Interesting are also the publications of the Students’ networks like ESN. Having 3 million students on the move in 2012, needs more support than at present, and not only financially, but also concerning administration, recognition of study or placement periods, joint or double/multiple degrees and also plain support!
- On top of that not to be underestimated the work of the Bologna experts, the Tuning specialists and the Quality control organisations like ENQA

To come back to the initial statement: Do EU policies matter in Education? Yes, they definitely do. The EU has the necessary incentives to encourage emulation among institutions (and not only ranking-wise) and helps assuming responsibility towards students and staff, which is the core business of the CEO’s of Education. The International Officers have to second them through the labyrinth of guidelines of the various programmes. It would (wishful thinking?) be good to have a regrouping of programmes with more coherence for the financial and administrative criteria? Will there be an encouragement for a longer duration of the projects? Will the programmes be simplified? (this is certainly a dream!).

Two things to focus now already on:

- **ET2020** (Education and Training) is very much in at present, based on strategies for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth through: making lifelong learning and mobility a reality; improving the quality and efficiency of education and training; promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship; enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.

  This means also focusing on vocational training, on adult education, on multidisciplinarity, on multifocus interregionalism, on multi-actor challenges, on multi-ethnicity. How otherwise develop “new skills for new jobs”, in the aftermath of the crisis. This all ought to lead to a new concept (buzz word already?) “world class education”.

  And the other is “Youth on the Move” flagship initiative: the aim is to enhance the performance and international attractiveness of Europe’s higher education institutions and raise the overall quality of all levels of education and training in the EU, combining
both excellence and equity, by promoting student mobility and trainees’ mobility, and improve the employment situation of young people.

Although this all can be found on the web: http://ec.europa.eu/youth/news/news1646_en.htm, it is good to have a go at it immediately as the guidelines will be based on these resolutions of the Council:

At EU level, the Commission will work:

- To integrate and enhance the EU’s mobility, university and researchers’ programmes (such as Erasmus, Erasmus Mundus, Tempus and Marie Curie) and link them up with national programmes and resources;
- To step up the modernisation agenda of higher education (curricula, governance and financing) including by benchmarking university performance and educational outcomes in a global context;
- To explore ways of promoting entrepreneurship through mobility programmes for young professionals;
- To promote the recognition of non-formal and informal learning;
- To launch a Youth employment framework outlining policies aimed at reducing youth unemployment rates: this should promote, with Member States and social partners, young people’s entry into the labour market through apprenticeships, stages or other work experience, including a scheme (“Your first EURES job”) aimed at increasing job opportunities for young people by favouring mobility across the EU.

At national level, Member States will need:

- To ensure efficient investment in education and training systems at all levels (pre-school to tertiary);
- To improve educational outcomes, addressing each segment (pre-school, primary, secondary, vocational and tertiary) within an integrated approach, encompassing key competences and aiming at reducing early school leaving;
- To enhance the openness and relevance of education systems by building national qualification frameworks and better gearing learning outcomes towards labour market needs.
- To improve young people’s entry into the labour market through integrated action covering i.a guidance, counselling and apprenticeships.

We have this way our new checklist at hand: smart, inclusive, sustainable, quality, mobility, qualifications, recognition, ranking, benchmarking... coherence. Do enjoy writing your next application(s) leading to world-class education!
References


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An inquiry on application process of EU Erasmus programme & students’ views regarding Erasmus programme of student exchange

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Abstract
In the globalising world, the number of international organizations in education field increases with each passing day as in all the other fields. The most meaningful one among the said organization is Education Programmes of European Union (Demir ve Demir, 2009). The Europe based activity in higher education was changed into a structural frame through Erasmus Programme of Student Exchange as from 1995 and it keeps continuing increasingly today. Erasmus Programme of Student Exchange was formed to increase the quality of higher education in Europe and to give weight to European facet. It provides the exchange of students and educators in Europe encouraging universities to cooperate. (Yagci, Ekinci, Burgaz, Kelecioglu & Ergene, 2007).

The aim of this study is to examine the progress and historical process of Erasmus Programme of Student Exchange in Turkey and to introduce the current situation seeking the views of students who benefit from the programme. In the first part of the study, the aim and formation of Erasmus Programme of Student Exchange and the process of Turkey’s participation in this formation were examined while in the second part of the study, you can find the results of the study in which the views of students who participated in Erasmus Programme of Student Exchange in Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University regarding this exchange programme were examined. The views of students were stated using a half structured form of interview which was developed by Sahin (2007). When looked at the results of the interviews, it is seen that students stated this experience stood out with meeting different cultures, seeing different countries and making new friends. They also stated that they were going to keep their experiences in their future professional life and the program was going to make a positive contribution to their profession. The students participating in the inquiry also indicated that the experience they gained made them to have more self-confidence in themselves, to have a intercultural perspective and it was beneficial to improve their horizon.

Key-words
Education programmes of European Union, Erasmus programme of student exchange, Progress in Erasmus programme of student exchange in Turkey, Students’ activity
Globalism caused several changes almost every field and basic principles of global politics restructured sectors related to economy, business world, social relationships, cultures and public services. When we look at the heart of global politics, we see internationalism in every field (Agri, 2006). Education field also is being included in this day by day.

Higher education heads the list of fields in which global values have been disposed. Universities began to study on setting international standards and in this respect forming of the Project of Erasmus came up in Europe in the end of ’80s. Principles of global politics on higher education hold a place in the content of the project (Agri, 2006).

Erasmus Programme was formed to increase the quality of higher education in Europe and to give weight to European facet. Nonetheless, it provides the exchange of students and educators in Europe encouraging universities to cooperate. Consequently, it helps recognition of studies and places academically in the countries which join the program (Yagci and others, 2007).

Erasmus Programme has three sub-programs. These are; cooperation between European universities, exchange of students and educators and networks with subjects. Exchange of students and educators branch off in itself. In student exchange, every student but freshmen can be included in the program for 3 to 12 months with the criteria of being successful. Students of Erasmus can benefit from this right once in their school life. Students of Erasmus receive monthly gift aid at the rate which National Agencies in their country determine. Also they are exempted from fee of education in the university they attend. Students of Erasmus are also the citizens who support European facet providing the dialogue between cultures and make the concept of citizenship of the European Union live (Tanyeri, 2006).

25 countries in the European Union, 3 candidate countries (Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey), 3 countries of European Free Trade Association (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) can attend in these programs. 31 countries in the aggregate have equal rights in all 3 sub-programs. Citizens of the countries are equal to each other in the rights raising from the projects (http://ec.europa.eu).

Erasmus Programme was started as a pilot application in 2003-2004 academic years together with the establishment of National Agency in Turkey and all inquiries regarding the commission were planned to executed here (Tanyeri, 2006).
Turkey’s participation in education programs of the European Union

Turkey’s participation in education programs of the European Union was put on the agenda together with its being accepted as a candidate country at Helsinki Summit in 1999 and studies were started regarding this subject. It took for Turkey long to form required infrastructure and to complete legal process. Turkey’s being under economical and political indefiniteness then were to be the reason for this delay.

Some legal arrangements and work for preparation before Turkey’s participation in Erasmus program had a great importance. Several pilot projects and some other work equal to these pilot projects were executed in the scope of preperation work. All of these had an effect on the evaluation of the process of Turkey’s participation in the program (Agri, 2006).

1.1 Forensic studies Turkey executed in order to participate in education programmes of the European Union

Turkey could start preparation work in order to participate in the programme in 2002 while it was supposed to start it in 2000. Studies regarding participation process started after 59th government of Turkey was instituted. The most important evolution was the “Framework Agreement” signed between the Republic of Turkey and European Community. With this agreement, a decision was made on general principles of Turkey’s participation in the Programs of Community. Thus, it was indicated that Turkey was also a candidate country like the other candidate countries and could benefit from the programmes under the same conditions. Framework Agreement was approved by the law no 4793 in Turkish Grand National Assembly and published in official gazette on 28 June, 2002. By the Framework Agreement, the authority of determining special conditions regarding Turkey’s participation in education programmes of the European Union was given to European Commission and Turkish authorities (Agri, 2006).

With this agreement which started preparation work, it was dwelled upon a unit which was supposed to coordinate and introduce the program nationwide in the first place. For this purpose, a governmental unit was established regarding these studies within State Planning Organization. The name of this governmental unit was determined as “Department of European Union Education and Youth Programmes (Turkish National Agency)”. This center gained an autonomous statute and its name was changed to “Center for European Union Education and Youth Programmes (Turkish National Agency)”. Within the scope of preparation work, infrastructure of Turkish National Agency was changed, pilot projects were done, presentation meetings were arranged and people who were going to apply the programme were given required education.
Preparation work started with the Framework Agreement in 2002 was completed on 31 March, 2004. Turkey took its place among participant countries after memorandum of understanding came into effect by being signed with European Union and published in official gazette on 8 May, 2004.

1.2 Institutional structuring in order to execute education programmes: Turkish National Agency

In order to introduce, coordinate and evaluate the Education Programmes of European Union, a National Agency was established in all participant countries. The functions of Turkish National Agency which was established for this same purpose are listed herebelow.

Giving information to originators of a plan regarding the conditions and process of participation, organization of application procedure,

- Directing originators of a plan who prepared a project proposal and applicants regarding the application of elected projects,
- Evaluation of the applications before acceptation and give opinions on projects to European Commission at the election of European Commission centered projects,
- Providing the signing of required agreements between people who are going to benefit from the programme and European Commission,
- Observation and evaluation of the projects which were financed,
- Providing the propagation of results of projects in land and abroad.

National Agency performs its duty between European Commission and the people who want to benefit from the programme. The judicium of National Agencies has an important role when European Commission elects projects and this makes these institutions more important. Thus, National Agencies should be at equal distance to all originators of a plan and should work independently and equitably. It is vitally important for individuals to benefit from Education Programmes of European Union as they deserve (www.ua.gov.tr).

1.3 Process of Turkey's participation in education programmes of European Union

Process of Turkey’s participation in education programmes of European Union and work executed within this process have been examined in three stages. These are preparatory measures, pilot applications and signing of memorandum of understanding and full participation. Preparatory measures includes the period between years 2002
and 2003. Pilot applications were performed in the academic year 2003 and 2004 after preparatory measures were completed. Official participation were actualized after memorandum of understanding was signed and Erasmus programme started to be institutionalized in the universities in Turkey (Agri 2006).

1.3.1 Preparatory measures

In this period, it was tried to establish and improve the infrastructure of Turkish National Agency. After several efforts, Turkish National Agency became autonomous and its infrastructure was formed in the meaning of resources in men, management and finance. After infrastructural work was completed, presentation and education activities were done. These activities were firstly done for the workers of Turkish National Agency. Documents about education programmes were translated into Turkish and introductory materials were prepared to present programmes. After these works, presentation activities were started for the ones who were going to apply the programmes, for guiders and for the ones who were going to benefit from the programmes throughout the country. 7 local conferences and 84 presentation meetings were arranged in between June – October 2003 (Yaman, 2002).

It is stated that the number of universities at which a presentation was made is 80 as per March 2004. In addition to these works, national and international conferences were arranged, universities in Turkey and Turkish System of Higher Education were introduced in the meetings held abroad. Universities which were going to participate in the pilot project were determined in this period and preparation works were done (www.erasmus.metu.edu.tr).

In conclusion, works made in this period started with election of the ones who were going to apply the programme, their education and presentation of the programmes. Then, education programmes started to be introduced nationwide. The main target was enabling necessary for the application of the programme.

1.3.2 Pilot applications

After preparatory measures were completed and necessary presentation activities were done, application of the pilot project was started. The temporary commission constructed by Turkish National Agency in this period chose 15 universities which were going to participate in pilot application on 18 April, 2003. Geographical distribution and the number of the students were important while choosing these universities. Yildiz Technical University, Bogazici University and Uludag University were not turned to account in the process of choice since they participated in the Project of “Culture of Quality” (www.erasmus.metu.edu.tr).

In each of 15 universities chosen within the frame of the pilot applications,
three departments were chosen. Also, consultants of ECTS/DS and foreign relations consultants chosen in these universities received an education in land and abroad during preparation process.

After education was completed, universities chosen for the pilot project and universities chosen by European Commission were matched and some limited visits were arranged regarding exchange activities and preparation. Universities participated in exchange programme and universities in Europe they were matched are listed herebelow:

- Akdeniz University – Hannover Medical School (Germany)
- Ankara University – Bologna University (Italy)
- Bilkent University – Turku University (Finland)
- Cukurova University – Linköping University (Sweden)
- Dokuz Eylul University – Maastricht University (the Netherlands)
- Ege University – Porto University (Portugal)
- Galatasaray University – Paris 1 Pantheon Sorbonne University (France)
- Gaziantep University – Algarve University (Portugal)
- Istanbul University – Humboldt University (Germany)
- Istanbul Technical University – Technical University of Munich (Germany)
- Karadeniz Technical University – Gent University (Belgium)
- Marmara University – Johannes Keppler University (Austria)
- Orta Dogu Technical University – University of Cologne (Germany)
- Sabanci University – Aarhus University (Denmark)

Within the scope of pilot applications, 124 students from Turkish universities went abroad in the aggregate while the number of students coming from European universities to Turkey was 17. There are several reasons of why the number of students came to Turkey was so limited. First of all, universities in Europe make their exchange programmes earlier as they have been attending Erasmus Programme for a long time. In addition, Turkey attended Erasmus Programme for the first time and universities in Turkey were not known enough abroad. These could be some other reasons as well (Agri, 2006).

Close attention of Turkish universities to Erasmus Programme showed that presentation activities were successful. According to these numbers, universities qualified Erasmus Programme to be successful and showed their desire to cooperate with European universities.
1.3.3 Full participation in the programs' becoming definite

Preparatory measures and pilot applications were concluded as per March 31st, 2004. Turkey took its place among the countries which benefit from the programme as per May 8th, 2004 after Memorandum of Understanding signed with European Union was approved by President and published in the official gazette. In the Memorandum of Understanding, detailed arrangements regarding Turkey's taking advantages of the programmes were stated. In the first attachment of Memorandum of Understanding, there were terms and conditions of Turkey's participation in the programmes while it was stated that what financial contributions Turkey was going to make in the second attachment. It was also stated that Turkey could use pre-accession aids while doing the payments and these could be deducted from the indicated amount.

1.4 Evaluation of process of Turkey’s participation in Erasmus Programme

Experiences of Erasmus students have a great importance in evaluation of participation process in Erasmus Programme. When the reasons of students examined for participation in Erasmus Programme, it is seen that their desire for having experience in abroad and meeting different cultures walk away. Seen from this aspect, cultural perspective of Erasmus Programme is more important for students. Meeting people from different cultures, learning about different points of view and education systems are among the reasons why students want to participate in Erasmus Programme. The other reasons are obtaining a new ambit, having experience in Europe and doing academic studies. When all these reasons are evaluated, it is seen that the number of participant students increases each year.

The number of students who benefited from Erasmus programme in academic years 2004/05, 2005/06 and 2006/07 were listed in herebelow table.*
### Table-1 Numbers of students who benefited from Erasmus programme in academic years of 2004/05, 2005/06 and 2006/07

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When we look at the table showing numbers of student exchange, it is clearly seen that the number of the students who went abroad increased each year. It is possible to say for Erasmus Programme that it is a student exchange programme which is known better among students gradually and students want to participate in that programme along their university life.

### 2 Inquiries done regarding Erasmus programme

Yagci and others did an inquiry (2007) in order to determine the level of satisfaction of the students who went abroad by Erasmus Programme from Hacettepe University regarding their daily life, academic life and student support services. Results of the inquiry showed that most of the students' expectations were met regarding their daily
life, academic life and student support services. But it was also determined that there were a notable number of students whose expectations in some points were not met.

Sahin did another inquiry in 2007 and examined how much Erasmus programme met the expectations of the students, if they achieved their personal purposes and how much attitudes and behaviours of students who participated in the programme about Europe changed after their experience in Europe. Results of the inquiry showed that all participants were extremely pleased with their lives within Erasmus Programme in host countries. According to the findings, Erasmus was seen as an important opportunity in terms of international environment and possibilities for scholarship it provides. These students indicated that the programme was very beneficial since their experience within the programme increased their self-confidence, earned them an international perspective and broadened their mind.

Bulut did an inquiry (2008) in Orta Dogu Technical University and examined the efficiency of management in Erasmus Programme according to the students and Erasmus coordinators. Results of the inquiry showed that the students and the department coordinators were more pleased with managerial services than they are pleased with the points of communication, interaction and academical subjects.

Another inquiry was done regarding Erasmus Programme by Demir and Demir (2009). The aim of this inquiry was to determine experiences of the students of Erciyes University, Faculty of Education who spent some part of their educational process in abroad through Erasmus Programme of student exchange, regarding social and cultural atmosphere they are in and to evaluate its attribution to themselves and to the society regarding formation and development of a universal culture. Inquiry put forth personal and professional acquisition of teacher candidates participated in Erasmus Programme after social and cultural interaction. Themes which personal development was observed were improvement in self-confidence and ability to handling with problems, increase in the capacity of undertaking responsibility, aptitude in positive thinking, declining of bias, awareness regarding their own culture, orientation in dialogue between cultures and religions. Professional advantages of the programme were determined as development of professional self-confidence, learning about other / different education systems, improvement in the level of foreign language knowledge.

3 An investigation on Erasmus student exchange programme:

3.1 Sample of Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University

Erasmus Student Exchange Programme has been put into practice in Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University since 2004. 154 students benefited from this programme
and were sent abroad in between 2004 and 2009. The number of students who benefit from this programme has been increasing each year. The distribution of students in Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University who went abroad in between 2008 and 2009 by means of Erasmus Student Exchange Programme is shown according to academic units at Table-2*.

Table 2. Distribution of students who went abroad in 2008 / 2009 according to academic units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students Who Went Abroad in 2008 / 2009</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biga Faculty of Economics and Administrative Science</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Education</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Art &amp; Sciences</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Fine Arts</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Theology</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Engineering and Architecture</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Fishery Products</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Agriculture</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism High School</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>43</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* taken from http://erasmus.comu.edu.tr

The general aim of this study is to receive views of the students who benefited from Erasmus Student Exchange Programme in Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University in between 2005 and 2010 regarding this exchange programme. Within this scope, we tried to determine experiences of the students who participated in Erasmus Student Exchange Programme in Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University regarding this programme, their impression regarding Europe and their perceptions regarding Turkey’s participation in European Union.

3.2 Method

3.2.1 Model of the investigation

The views of students who participated in Erasmus Student Exchange Programme in Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University regarding this exchange programme were examined by using qualitative method.
3.2.2 Means of collecting data and application

A half structured interview form developed by Sahin (2007) was used to receive views of students who participated in Erasmus Student Exchange Programme. Interview forms were examined based on personal information, Erasmus experience, experiences regarding Europe and Turkey’s being a member of EU. Each student was interviewed for once and these interviews were recorded.

3.2.3 Sampling

36 students who participated in Erasmus Student Exchange Programme during their education of licence and postgraduation in Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University in between 2005 and 2010 have been constituting the sampling of the study. 28 of 36 Erasmus students are female and 8 are male. Interval of students’ ages changes from 20 to 26. Faculties and Departments in which students study are listed at Table-3.

Table 3. Distribution of the students who participated in Erasmus student exchange programme according to faculties and departments at which they study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty / Department</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Education / Preschool Teaching</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Education / Teaching English</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Economics and Administrative Science / Labour Economics and</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Relations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Education / Classroom Teaching</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Education / Computer Teaching</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism and Hospitality / Travel Management</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism and Hospitality / Accommodation Management</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Education / Social Science Teaching</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Education / Physical Education Teaching</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Education / Arts and Crafts Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Education / Science Teaching</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Education / Teaching German</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Theology / Basic Islamic Sciences (MA)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Architecture and Engineering / Food Engineering</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Economics and Administrative Science / International Relations</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Agriculture / Horticulture</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Economics and Administrative Science / Public Administration</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When we examine Table-3, we see that 9 students in the sampling group have been studying on Preschool Teaching, 6 have been studying on Teaching English and 3 have been studying at the Department of Industrial Relations and Labor Economics. 2 students from each Teaching, Computer Teaching, Travel Management and Accommodation
Business Department; 1 student from each Social Science Teaching, Physical Education Teaching, Painting Teaching, Science Teaching, Teaching German, Basic Islamic Sciences, Food Engineering, Horticulture and Public Administration Departments participated in this study.

35 students in the sampling group participated in Erasmus Student Exchange Programme during their education of licence and 1 during their education of postgraduation.

Countries which students in the sampling group went by means of Erasmus Student Exchange Programme are presented at Table-4.

**Table-4 Distribution of students who went abroad by means of Erasmus student exchange programme according to countries they went**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holland</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuanian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>36</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When Table-4 is examined, it is seen that 15 students in the sampling group benefited from Erasmus Student Exchange Group by going to Belgium, 3 students to Slovakia, 2 students each to Finland, Germany, Norway and Republic of Çek, 1 student each to Bulgaria, Italy, Spain, Poland, Denmark, Holland, Lithuania and Greece.

### 3.3 Findings

When views of Erasmus students were examined, findings were structured on three main matters. These matters were Erasmus Experience, Experiences Regarding Europe and Turkey’s Being a Member of EU. Subcategories were formed in the light of these main
matters. These subcategories were views regarding participation, academic experience, difficulties of their experience, effect of their experience on the students, attitudes towards host countries, impression about Europe, definition of being a European, self-identity, being a Turk in Europe and Turkey’s being a possible member of EU.

3.3.1 Findings obtained regarding Erasmus experience

a. Participation

Views of students in the sampling group were examined on two bases which were the reason why the students preferred studying abroad as a part of their educational life and why they preferred those host countries in Erasmus Student Exchange Programme. Reasons Why Students Participated in Erasmus Student Exchange Programme are presented at Table-5.

Table 5. Distribution of students according to reasons why they participated in Erasmus student exchange programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons Why Students Participated in Erasmus Student Exchange Programme</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visiting different countries, learning about different cultures</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving their foreign language</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution it would make to their educational life, their area of study and their professional life in the future</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting new people, having relations regarding cultures, learning about different religions and languages and promoting their own culture</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving themselves, their horizon and their vision of the world</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience in abroad</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning about different education systems and comparing them with their own education system</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeing Turkey’s place in the others’ eyes</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travelling, having fun</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curiousity</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being away from Turkey for a while</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students in the sampling group used the expression of “Visiting different countries, learning about different cultures” as their reason for participation at the top level (29). This reason was followed by improving their foreign language (21) and contribution it would make to their educational life, their area of study and their professional life in the future (16).

‘The most important reason why I would like to participate in the programme was to have experience in abroad. Besides, improving my
foreign language, having an opportunity to practise, meeting people from different nationalities and broaden my vision regarding European culture and people by sharing the same environment with them could be taken into account as my other most important reasons.’ (S20, Holland)

Students in the sampling group used the expressions of curiosity (1) and being away from Turkey for a while (1) as the reasons at the bottom of frequency.

‘I participated in Erasmus Programme in order to learn about different cultures, to travel, to examine emotions, thoughts and lives of people who live abroad, to learn how my own country is seen from abroad, to have a change in my life in Turkey which became monotonous, to raise the average of my marks, to stay away from distress and trouble in Turkey, to obtain information about other countries based on my close and personal observation in order to compare Turkey and other countries in the politic, economic, geographical and physical ways and for other reasons similar to these ones but I do not remember now.’ (S31, Denmark)

Reasons which students in the sampling group considered while choosing the country they were going to go by means of Erasmus Student Exchange Programme are presented at Table-6.

Table 6. Distribution of students in the sampling group according to their reasons. Why they chose those countries to go by means of Erasmus student exchange programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for Choosing Those Countries</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The country is in the Central Europe and close to other countries</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The importance given to education, the quality and being improved in the area</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive opinions of the students who went to that country before</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being a developed country</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance of lecturers in their own university</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being easy to Access</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being the only country which was made an agreement with</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a low rate of crime</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a lot of places to see</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Since English is spoken widely</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Since there are a lot of Turks there</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having cultural similarities</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having foreign friends in the country to go</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

50 % of the students in the sampling group stated that the reason for choosing the country to go by means of Erasmus Student Exchange Programme was that the country is in the Central Europe and close to other European countries (18).
'The effect of presentations made by my friends who went before and the country's being capital of Europe. Being close to all countries.' (S11, Belçika)

Students in the sampling group stated that importance given to education by the countries had a great effect on deciding which country to go.

'The reason why I preferred Finland was its being one of the countries which has the best education system in the world and its having proved this with the success of PISA. Another important reason for choosing Finland was a book I read about this country.' (S4, Finland)

When Table-6 is examined, it is seen that 3 students in the sampling group indicated that the reason for choosing the country they were going to go by means of Erasmus Student Exchange Programme was guidance of lecturers in their own university.

‘In fact, I was going to go to Holland first. Our university had an agreement with Holland for Classroom Teaching. Then, I learned I could go to Belgium after talking to my advisor. Luckily, I went to Belgium.’ (S9, Belgium)

b. Academic experience

All the students who participate in Erasmus Student Exchange Programme take a lot of lessons during their education there. All the students in the sampling group participated in classes in the host country for an academic term. When students were required to compare education system in the host country with the education system in their own country, the answers appeared to change greatly. Academic experience were examined in 4 dimensions as techniques of education-instruction, instructors, contents of courses and evaluation.

First of all, students in the sampling group were required to compare academic experience in the meaning of techniques of education – instruction. Students, at the first level, stated that there were a various kinds of techniques regarding education and instruction and these techniques were modern and aimed at practice.

‘There was not only technique of presentation as in our country. Even, I could say we tried all techniques. Discovering, searching / examining, group working etc.’ (S5, Finland)

Another criterion students dwelled upon was technological rigging and usage of technology (8) and techniques’ being student-centered (6).

‘It was a school in which technology is used extremely well. Everything was progressing on computer environment and in the parallel of it. I think, it was very beneficial. Lecturings were mostly made by using projections
and videos. There was a class environment during which both students and lecturers were active using visual materials and making discussions.' (S24, Norway)

When it comes to comparing instructors, students in the sampling group indicated at the first level (24) that instructors in the host country were dominating in their area, open-minded, communicating easily and friendly.

‘Instructors I met and observed were educators who do their job well and were like friends with their students. In Turkey, there is almost no classroom management. There was not even a little noise there while instructors in Turkey yell, scold, threaten with giving a low mark and even use violence in Turkey. Decisions were made in student-center. Instructors and students esteemed each other. In my opinion, the most important difference was this.' (S9, Belgium)

3 students in the sampling group stated that instructors in the host countries had prejudice about Turks.

‘They have prejudice about Turkish students and reacting and cold. Their aim is not to teach something to students who came for a short time but just to parry. They do not pressure too much but they give importance to attendance to classes. I can even say we could not see places enough because we were afraid of absenteeism. I think they should have been more tolerant about this matter because many people who came might not have a Shengen visa once more and even might not go abroad. Every student is not financially strong, so they could be more tolerant in order we can visit and see other countries especially neighbour ones during this period of 2 weeks.’ (S27, Czech Republic)

Students in the sampling group stated in the first place that contents of courses were addressed to practice, updated and within daily life in the comparison of contents of courses.

‘They give more importance to practice and everything which was learned is applied directly after a short time. For example: A subject learned during Physical Education lesson is applied with children a week later.’ (S10, Belgium)

7 students in the sampling group stated that the host country was more fair and neutral within the scope of evaluation.

‘Evaluation of each student is neutral and instructor prepares ‘an evaluation form’ for each student. He / She explains why he / she gave that mark.’ (S3, Belgium)

There are 5 students in the sampling group who stated that evaluation was not neutral and there was discrimination of race and gender.
‘I think it is not fair. Most of the other students except Turks come from Poland and Ukraine and they do not live any trouble with Czech language. They can understand each other speaking their own language with Czech people everywhere and as a matter of fact, they can succeed in the lesson of Czech language getting high marks. I personally witnessed that instructors do not give very high marks to Turkish students and we heard them saying “You, Turks are all the same.” several times. I can only say Czech instructors who came to Turkey are more moderate and unprejudiced.’ (S27, Czech Republic)

c. Difficulties of experience

Students in the sampling group were asked to express their experience regarding the programme as an exchange student. Students in the sampling group stated that Erasmus Student Exchange Programme is not a problem for themselves and most of the problems were about living in a different country.

Matters going to the fore regarding experiences of students in the sampling group about Erasmus Student Exchange Programme are presented at Table-7.

Table 7. Distribution of sampling group

According to matters going to the fore in Erasmus experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matters Going to the Fore</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting different cultures, seeing different places, making new friends</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning how to stand on their own feet, experience in abroad, increase in self-confidence</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving language</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning about different education systems, positive contribution to my profession and its changing my point of view about life</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fun, trips</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students in the sampling group used the expressions of “Meeting different cultures, Seeing new places, Making new friends (17)” as the point going to the fore in their Erasmus experience at the first level. This was followed by “Learning how to stand on their own feet, Experience in abroad, Increase in their self-confidence” (13)”

‘I saw Europe and now I have an opinion about it. I also have an opinion about European culture, their family structure and education system. Now I feel as if I can go anywhere in Europe and I can adapt myself there easily. I can not even describe how much it made me to gain regarding self-confidence.’ (S20, Holland)
The difficulties which students in the sampling group experienced during Erasmus Student Exchange Programme are presented at Table-8.

### Table 8. Distribution of sampling group according to difficulties they lived during Erasmus student exchange programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Difficulties Experienced</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having difficulty in adapting to daily life (food, transportation within the city, residence, official holidays, weather conditions)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having difficulty in using language, expressing himself / herself</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being away from the family and friends, homesickness</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial difficulties, country's being expensive, having difficulty in drawing money</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulties regarding health</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having no sign boards in English in the country</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulties in having a visa</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course selection</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students in the sampling group used the expression of “Having difficulty in adapting to daily life (food, transportation within the city, residence, official holidays, weather conditions) as the point they lived difficulties in, at the first level, during their Erasmus experience.

‘I lived some difficulties with food. Some flavour was not good for me at all as in most of the places in Europe. It was especially difficult to be a place where pork is consumed a lot.’ (S12, Bulgaria)

‘Siesta and official holidays make people to have difficulty with shopping. Besides, Mediterranean people look after their own comfort too much. Italian people are too slow and numb.’ (S17, Italy)

‘My biggest problem was the problem of residence. I changed 4 places during my first 4 months. It made me to feel tired both physically and psychologically.’ (S35, Poland)

4 students in the sampling group stated that they had difficulties in both adapting to daily life and had some financial problems.

‘The biggest difficulty is the adaptation process sourcing from Turkish and Danish cultures’ being very different from each other. Because it is one of the most expensive countries, expenses for personal activities cost too much although Erasmus donations meet basic needs. Weather conditions are too hard because it is in the north and because of its geographical position. As
getting farther away from the equator, people get colder too. So, Danish people somewhat coolheaded. I had a big difficulty as a person who loves teasing and fun.’ (S31, Denmark)

d. Effect of experience in Erasmus student exchange programme on students

Academic change could be very productive for students in many ways. Views of students in the sampling group regarding the effects of their experiences in Erasmus Students Exchange Programme on their personalities and attitudes are presented at Table-9.

Table 9. Distribution of experience in Erasmus student exchange programme according to Its effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effects of Exchange Experience</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My self-confidence and courage has increased, I have become mature.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive progress has happened in my own area, level of my being cultured has increased.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I met new people, I learned about new cultures.</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My vision of life has changed. It had positive contributions to my life. I learned to remove my prejudices.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I improved my English.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It showed me the ways which separate my country from Europe.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When Table-9 is examined, it is seen that the most important contribution of Erasmus Student Exchange Programme to students in the sampling group is increasing students’ self-confidence and courage.

‘Although it is a cliche, I can not find any other expression to use instead of “experience in abroad”. I can now place my country, Turkish people and our education system in the general order of the world. I know where we are, I can determine wrongs, rights and what need to be improved in a healthy way. In addition to all those, my self-confidence has increased as an individual and I am more encouraged about abroad.’ (S20, Holland)

‘Self-confidence, courage and having a lot of friends. The most important one is its contributions to my area by means of benefiting from such a programme during my education period.’ (S5, Finland)

In addition to an increase in self-confidence and improvement in language, 5 students in the sampling group stated that they recognized the ways which Turkey is seperated from Europe.

‘It made me to see the points which my country is seperated from other European countries. Although I have a commitment to Turkish culture and customs, I try to apply some new things which I learned there in my life, especially the things in education area.’ (S1, Belgium)
3.3.2 Experiences regarding Europe and findings obtained

a. Attitudes towards the host country

An important point which needs to be considered while examining attitudes of the students towards the host country is students’ in the sampling group not having a complete information about the host country before going there. When views are examined, attitudes appear to show a great change.

50% of the students in the sampling group stated that their views regarding the host country and EU have changed in a positive way while 11 students indicated that they exaggerated some points about the host country and they have obtained negative opinions.

‘I saw that being a fan of Europe is unnecessary and Europe is not so magnificent as it has been told. I do not have a plan to live in Europe except education any more.’ (S17, Italy)

‘I have a very positive attitude towards my host country, Holland. I personally witnessed and lived the tolerance and facilitating manner of the country to the ones who come from abroad. I can also use these expressions for Germany which I visited during this programme. I can say that my attitude regarding European Union has changed somewhat more after my experience in these two countries. I used to think it was necessary for us to be a member of European Union and now I am satisfied with the opinion that it is a must in order to have living standards as in there.’ (S20, Holland)

What I lived during Erasmus Programme has affected my attitude towards Belgium and other European countries very much. Especially there were students from all countries which participate in Erasmus Programme in our classes about European Union. I understood by means of this course which we met every week that how much Turkey is, in fact, aimed at Europe. We were in Brussels which is the heart of European Union via a trip arranged to visit European Parliament. I learned a lot of things regarding European Union.’ (S9, Belgium)

b. Impression of Europe

Views of students in the sampling group regarding their impression of Europe after their experience in Europe by means of Erasmus Student Exchange Programme were taken. Although students stayed for a short time in the host country, it is seen that they had a chance to visit and see other European countries too. Views of students regarding Europe and being a European are presented at Table-10.
Table 10. Distribution of sampling group according to their views regarding being a European

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Views Regarding Being a European</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obeying rules, being arranged, disciplined and systematical.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having high standards of living, being developed and being strong financially</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having respect for people and human rights, giving importance to human more than anything</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being calm, coolheaded, selfish and distant from other people</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having many diversities in itself, being democratic and not discriminative</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to travel freely</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a high level of education, giving importance to education and being cultured</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living in European continent</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Almost 50% of the students in the sampling group (15) stated that being a European was ‘Being Disciplined, Being Systematical and Obeying Rules’. This was followed by high standards of living (12), having respect for people and human rights (9) and democratic (6).

‘To be disciplined well in business, to respect others in business life and within the community, to give more importance to individual life than social life.’ (S31, Denmark)

‘Being a European is move freely within a large area, to live comfortably and to comprehend what justice is completely.’ (S3, Belgium)

‘Being a European is to give importance to human life more than anything, to give importance to each level of education from preschool to university, to obey rules, to respect everyone at least you do yourself, to think wide, to develop different points of view etc.’ (S6, Belgium)

c. Self-identity

After discussing being a European, students in the sampling group were asked whether they feel as a European taking also their own self-identity into account. 15 students in the sampling group stated that they do not feel as a European while 12 students indicated that they feel as a European. 8 students in the sampling group stated that they do not treat differently in this matter.

‘No, I do not feel like that. I love my own culture but I appreciate their education, technology and their evaluation of taking opportunities of using them.’ (S5, Finland)

‘Although we are different in many ways, I feel as ‘a European Turk’ more than a European.’ (S19, Belgium)

‘In fact, it is hard to answer that. I define myself to be in a different
Students in the sampling group were asked whether they feel as a European and after that they were asked if their experience in Erasmus Student Exchange Programme affected their opinions regarding their own country. 17 students in the sampling group stated that their opinions were affected. 12 students in the sampling group, after this experience, indicated that their country should progress more and the importance given to education should increase.

‘I understood that my country should develop more because when I compared Belgium and Turkey, I saw that the population of Belgium is just 10 millions and the population of my own country is 70 millions. I realized that my country considers itself more important than they really are and in fact, it has a lot to learn. They do not have interest in luxury as we do, they do not ever have irregularity which we have; as a small example, while walking at a pedestrian crossing we give the way to cars but cars have to stop there. They are aware of that they would be fined for that. And there are lots of other differences which are small but were placed in my mind..’ (S9, Belgium)

12 students in the sampling group indicated that they understood better how valuable their own country and people in their own country after this experience.

‘It affected my thoughts about my own country. I saw that our country is also as modern as at least a European country and Turkey was mentioned as “Modern Moslems”. Also I understood how beautiful our culture is when I compare it to other cultures.’ (S33, Spain)

On the other hand, 8 students in the sampling group stated that they could look at their country from outside after this experience.

‘As I expressed before, I can find more clear answers to the questions like “What is the position of Turkey among world countries?”, “What is the thing which separates Turkish people from European people?”, “What are our cultural differences?” ‘ (S20, Holland)

d. Being a turk in Europe

Students were asked how they felt as a Turk during their experiences in Europe. In Table-11, attitudes of people who live abroad towards Turks and experiences of Turkish students regarding their culture and habits are presented.
Table 11. Distribution of sampling group according to their experiences regarding being a Turk in Europe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experiences Regarding Being a Turk in Europe</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It was a nice and honourable feeling.</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I faced with wrong and silly prejudices.</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt ashamed of Turks who live there.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt we were different in the meaning of cultures and customs.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16 students in the sampling group expressed their feelings that they were happy with being a Turk in Europe.

‘There was a need in almost every environment to correct wrong information of other Europeans regarding Turks and Turkey. I saw that people had very wrong thoughts about Turkey on subjects I would never expect. I was surprised by an instructor’s being surprised by the fact that it is not legal in Turkey for a man to marry with more than one woman.’ (S22, Belgium)

When Table-11 is examined, it is seen that 14 students in the sampling group stated that they faced with several prejudices in the countries they went.

‘It was definitely an advantage that there was no prejudice against Turkey and I was definitely proud of this situation. Because I both observed personally and heard from many people that Dutch youth had problems with their families while children of Turkish families are at a very very good position. In addition, I was praised by the fact that a lot of friends of mine had a sympathy for Turkey and I think I was a good sample within this context.’ (S20, Holland)

3.3.3 Turkey’s participation in European Union

Whether Turkey is a part of Europe or not is a question asked frequently in discussions of Turkey’s possible membership of EU. In this part, views of students in the sampling group regarding Turkey’s participation in EU were taken. In Table-12, views of students in the sampling group regarding Turkey’s participation in EU are presented.
Table 12. Distribution of sampling group according to their views regarding Turkey’s participation in EU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Views on Turkey’s Participation in EU</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am against EU and I do not think we could be accepted.</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We should be a member in the meaning of economics, I support it.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some sanctions for membership are not right, there is a policy of detaining us.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am unstable.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turks are richness for EU, EU needs us.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We should have been accepted a long time ago.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They would not accept a Moslem country.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When Table-12 is examined, it is seen that 16 students in the sampling group indicated that they were against EU and Turkey could not be a member of EU.

‘As a Kemalist youth who committed to the concept of independence, I am against European Union which tries to make us to say yes to the criterions that would harm honour of my country, humiliate it and make it more dependant.’ (S1, Belgium)

On the other hand, 10 students in the sampling group stated that Turkey’s being a member of EU would result well in the meaning of economics and they have positive opinions about Turkey’s being a member of EU.

‘Turkey is a country which had ruled Europe for a long time. Turkey is an ambassador of culture between Asia and Europe. Turkey has strong relations with both Asia and Europe. It could also be understood from remains we left in many cities of Europe. Turkey should be a member of European Union, yes, I think it should. Because Turkey is above a lot of European countries with its young population already. But if they do not leave history to historians and do not want to accept us into European Unions, I think there is no meaning of trying to make them to accept us by force. We should be a powerful country which knows to suffice itself just like Norway, England.. We are a part of Europe and nobody could change it.’ (S9, Belgium)

When students in the sampling group were asked if their Erasmus experience affected their opinions regarding Turkey’s being a member of EU, 19 students stated it did while 14 students stated their opinion did not change at all.

‘Yes, it did. I was thinking that our being a member of EU would result well in every means. But now, I think that there could be negative ways and what happens if there are negative ways.’ (S6, Belgium)

‘It never did. It made me to see that I was right about my thoughts...
3.4 Conclusion

The main aim of this study is to determine the views of the students regarding this exchange programme who participated in Erasmus Student Exchange Programme in Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University in between 2005 and 2010. When the results received through interviews made within the frame of this aim are examined, it appeared that Erasmus Student Exchange Programme was seen as a very important opportunity which every student should participate in.

Results of the investigation showed that students were generally pleased with their lives within Erasmus Student Exchange Programme in the host country. Students indicated that learning about different cultures, seeing different countries and making new friends were in the most important place. Erasmus Student Exchange Programme is, in fact, a student Exchange programme which aims students' activity and recognition of academic studies within Europe. Within this frame, Erasmus students who participated in the study in Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University stated that they would keep their experience within the programme in their future professional lives and the programme contributed to themselves in the meaning of their profession. Students also indicated that their experience within the programme was beneficial since it increased their self-confidence, had them acquire an intercultural vision and broadened their horizon. An investigation by Demir and Demir (2009) exposed that an increase had occurred in self-confidence, ability to handling with problems and capacity of undertaking responsibility of the students who participated in Erasmus Student Exchange Programme. Within this context, results of this investigation suited with the results of the investigation carried out by Demir and Demir (2009).

Time period spent in abroad changed the information level of students regarding the host country and their attitudes towards that country in a dramatical level. It was seen that students did not receive enough information about the country and the university they were going to go before their participation in Erasmus Student Exchange Programme. In an investigation carried by Yagci and his friends (2007), students expressed that they did not receive enough service of guidance and counseling on adaptation to the university they were going to go.

Students indicated that their former views regarding Europe became stronger after their participation in this Exchange programme. According to this, two main headings went to the fore regarding students' impressions about Europe: First was existence of a ruling order reflecting on all areas of life and the other was having high standards of

regarding this matter. Turkey is not suitable for EU. I heard that several times during the period I was abroad.' (S1, Belgium)
living. Most of the students mentioned about a bias going to the fore against Turkish identity. They stated that this bias was caused by being introduced wrongly and people’s wrong opinions started to change when they were explained about the truth. Students see Erasmus Student Exchange Programme as a means of removing this prejudice, improving Turkey’s image in the international platform so that facilitating being a member of European Union. Besides, most of the students do not support Turkey’s being a member of European Union.

3.5 Recommendations

Recommendations developed based on the findings of this investigation are as follows;

3.5.1 Recommendations regarding Erasmus units in the universities (Offices of Foreign Relations, Offices of EU etc.)

- Erasmus Units in the universities should provide that students who are going to go abroad and who had already gone come together and new students are orientated in order to adapt themselves to the countries they go.
- Students indicated that they lived difficulty in using the foreign language within the first weeks they were abroad. Regarding this matter, language courses could be arranged by Erasmus Units in the universities for the students who are going to go abroad by means of Erasmus Student Exchange Programme to practise their foreign language before going.

3.5.2 Recommendations for Erasmus coordinators of Faculty / Department / Anabilim Dalı

- If Erasmus Coordinators in units work actively and do agreements with different departments and different countries, students who are going to benefit from Erasmus Student Exchange Programme would have an opportunity to make their choices more comfortably.
- Erasmus Coordinators in units could encourage students who had benefited from Erasmus Exchange Programme before to share their experience.
- Erasmus Students Communities could be established to introduce and to share information about Erasmus Student Exchange Programme.
- Selective lessons regarding European Union and being a European, could be included in the curriculum.
- Coordinators could encourage students to host guest students who come to Turkey from abroad by means of Erasmus Student Exchange Programme.
• Coordinators could invite lecturers who come to their university from abroad for 1st and 2nd grade university students to have a visit to their classes.
• Coordinators could encourage university students at 1st and 2nd grades to participate in international works like çalıştays and symposiums.
• Students and their families could be informed about Erasmus Student Exchange Programme by several promotions when they first enter to their universities.

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Functions of European higher education in the context of students’ mobility

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Abstract
The paper presents a new phenomenon of European education in the context of European social and cultural integration. The emphasis has been put on functions of European higher education in the context of students’ educational mobility in LLP-Erasmus Programme.

In the first part of the article, definition of European education was presented. Moreover specificity of different forms of European education (“education about Europe”, “education for Europe” and “education through Europe”), have been explained. The author shows new perspectives in the field of European education as a result of multiculturalism in Europe.

The author, in the second part of the article, specifies different functions of European education in the context of international students’ mobility. Practical example has been given by analyses of experiences and reflections by the students who had participated in LLP-Erasmus Programme.

Key-words
European education, Functions of european education, LLP-Erasmus, Students mobility

Introduction
Education becomes more important in the European Union policy. For the first time tasks about education was included in The Treaty of Maastricht (in 1993). Then consequently new declarations have been signed by different European countries. In 1998 Sorbonne Declaration, then in 1999 Bologna Declaration has been signed.

At the beginning of XXI century (in 2000) new strategy of European Union policy was established in Lisbon Strategy. The aim of this Strategy is to make European economy most dynamic and competitive what is founded on professional knowledge. On the base of European integration, multiculturalism and world economy competition, new needs have been created. That is why European education has to responds and adopts itself towards new necessities.
The aim of the paper is to present functions of European education which are fulfilled by students in aspect of international mobility in LLP-Erasmus Programme (as an example of European education - learning through Europe).

**Introduction to european education**

Discussion about European education was caused because of cultural differences between societies from European countries and the need of integration. It is worth to emphasis two aspects of socio-cultural integration: inner and international. Inner integration is taking place inside each country to prevent from conflicts, tensions and arguments between social and/or cultural majorities and minorities. International integration was started in 1951 by signing the Coal and Steel Treaty to unify European economy. Later, international institutions (e.g. the European Parliament) and organization (UNESCO) has been created to extend economy integration towards social and cultural aspects.

Cultural diversification was caused for example by armed conflicts which brought about to borders changes (as a consequence aboriginal minorities appears). The next source of European cultural diversity is process of international migration. Internationalization, which means cooperation in policy, law, economy, science, even ecology also intense European cultural diversification.

Jerzy Nikitorowicz (2000) sets down condition that if multiculturalism is a rising social process then we have to prepare new education strategies. It enables to create all necessary competences and cultural attitudes at micro and macro level.

European education refers to preparing individuals towards living in modern, liberal, intercultural, civil society. We may say that European education means moulding somebody’s personality and process of upbringing people to fulfill ideals of integrated Europe (Nikitorowicz, 2009). It would be professional training towards respecting European norms, values (as a democracy), common market, law and institutions in a civil society.

In the literature three concepts of European education come into consideration: “education for Europe”, “education about Europe” and “education through Europe”.

- “**Education for Europe**” means to educate people for active participation in integrated Europe, who can quickly adapt to new conditions and benefit by getting new competences and employability. The aim of this kind of European education is mutual understanding and creating new cultural values by different societies. New quality of European culture should refer towards national roots and values.
- “Education about Europe” relates to historical, cultural, social, economical and political aspects of Europe and European integration. This kind of education is realized by students mainly by attending different subjects at schools.

- “Education through Europe” concerns acquiring individual skills and experiences by mobility for tourist or academic reasons. One of the best examples of this kind of education is Lifelong Learning Programme Erasmus. This programme promotes students’ international mobility, which is the main aim of Bologna Process. As benefits of participation in international mobility which are shown in European Commission publications are: professional and personal development, employability at international market, promoting European identity, increasing satisfaction of learning which lasts for whole life and many others.

**Chosen functions of European higher education**

Generally, term function is used to describe results of exact activities. Educational practice as an intentional process (in formal, informal, non-formal learning) suits to establish exact aims and results. Students who participate in LLP-Erasmus Programme are involved in many activities at school, in the neighborhood, associations, with their peer group, etc. While being active they realizing different functions of European education (consciously or not).

LLP-Erasmus students realize **didactic function** at the university. They extend knowledge and better understanding of the discipline which they are studying. This happen because of the different learning and teaching methods in foreign education system. Exchanged students have an access to different technologies, devices, techniques, other experiences and resources than in their home institution. They also have to communicate all the time in different language. It improves students’ international communication skills.

Participation in LLP-Erasmus Programme and living in multicultural society (among strangers) strengthen students’ reflections about themselves. They try to understand better the world and their place in it. Also they are becoming more critical towards surrounded reality. In this case **interpretation function** of European education is realized.

Modern European education **function** is to **prepare towards future**. The students, while experiencing European education, do not get ready solutions to the problem, but they are provided with the ability to “know-how” to face difficulties and approach new strategies to overcome obstacles. Mobile students should realize better **function of getting ready to take up a new challenges** because of experiences of living and
learning abroad in permanently variable conditions.

**Function of building intercultural identity** is extremely important in modern multicultural societies. Zygmunt Bauman claims that people do not think about “having” their identity until they happily belong somewhere, not seeing alternative, different choice (Bauman, 2007). I would add that we do not hesitate about our personal, social or cultural identity until we meet “Other”, “Different” (representative of other religion, culture, nationality etc.) Question “Who are you”? makes only sense when respondent is aware that it is possible to be another that she/he is. Students while mobility period participate in different cultural dimensions (of home and host country and native cultures of their international friends, etc.). They develop abilities to cooperate in multicultural environment and respect and acceptance for somebody’s otherness.

**Function of integration** is most important because of creating European Superstate (G. Morgan, 2005). The aim of this function is to integrate and show similarities between European citizens in aspect of “unity in diversity”.

**Innovative function** is connected with the rapid changes in global societies and informative communities, where the knowledge is becoming obsolescent. Mobile students should be better prepared to work effectively in new circumstances. Also, they had an experience of adaptation towards different social and cultural conditions.

**Function of emancipation** is connected with causing individual and collective changes. Professionally educated European students do not only have to get used to rapid changes but they also should create changes. “Emancipation does not mean decreasing differences, but relieving from stereotypes and oppressive social relations” (Czerepaniak-Walczak, 2006).

**Conclusions**

Realizing different functions of European education by students, causes special results in their life. Those, who are active participants of education through Europe benefits in private and professional life. It can be ability to react for changes and to manage with new circumstances in variable environment and being able to “learn how”.

To conclude, European education in a form of students’ mobility is a great challenge of getting known other cultures, extending own horizons, becoming more attractive as a potential employee and realizing oneself.
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