

Leo-Net seminar 2017

5-7 April

Round table discussions

incl. different topics that came along in the discussion

Theme 1

Challenges and opportunities for consortia; new partnerships and new roles for consortia?

(cf. topic presented by Johannes Gehringer)

Importance of reaching out and sharing (cfr. Modernisation Agenda: reach out for community).

Need for data and experience exchange will be met by the new Erasmus app.

However, it remains important to define the data and where they stand for as data may be used to make decisions. For example:

- what does '20% found a job' exactly mean? A job abroad, in the host company or elsewhere? Does the job match the diploma or is it just a job, whatever one.

- '51% of the traineeships did not experience any trouble'; so 51% happy, but what about the other 49%?

- '5% had problems with the legal framework'.

Indeed, the **legal framework** for traineeships turns out to be different in the member states and not very transparent.

Advice to EU-Commission:

- development of a special status for trainee, easy for insurance
- either make it obligatory for companies to pay for insurance
- or increase grant and make trainee responsible to pay for insurance
- offer a European student/trainee insurance offered by insurance company in cooperation with commission – advantage of numbers, commission can require low rates from companies.

Consortia as **one stop shop** for companies; easy and simple (pre)selection of applicants by consortia, according to company needs; quick availability of participants. No need for HEI's to deal with as sender of participants (graduated trainees). Consortia as center of international traineeship expertise, for HEI graduates as well as VET trainees; different language proficiency, different budget, different age (younger), different concerns.

This role could even be expanded in the framework of EU Solidarity; consortia are acquainted with AU-administration, reporting, match making etc.

Theme 2

CSR as promotor of the European Pact 4 Youth; world of business and world of labour growing towards each other. How to create new opportunities for more dialogue and cooperation for consortia with the world of labour, resulting traineeships and apprentices being 'the new norm'.

(cf. topic presented by Patricia Burssens)

Important to foster all human capital

The gap between world of labour/companies on the one hand and education on the other hand seems still too big. Companies are willing to invest time and money but are not interested to engage in administration, consortiums matters etc – just in need of employees; they are in permanent search for talent.

How to bridge the gap between educational world and labour market? What can consortia do?

- Go & visit regional companies
- Invite companies to consortia meetings
- Make participation in traineeships very simple for companies
- Tap into existing events
- Communicate with other organisations as local CSR-offices and participate to CSR-events

Lack of support of NA's which are more focusing on educational and administrative processes and less understanding towards companies and in some countries even lack of interest in the challenges that consortium are facing.

Possible solutions

- Involvement of intermediate, company related partners, for example CSR
- Guidance of both parties by EU commission, also enterprises as well as educational institutions
- Cfr projects like Erasmus Pro (EUCommission/CSR/companies), upcoming solidarity 'Erasmus+' grants (legal basis to be developed by May 2017 – comparable to EVS but less framework to be provided by the receiving organisation)
- Need for European network of (mobility) consortia Enterprises – specific projects with multinationals

Traineeship in multinationals or SME

Important is to see

- what impact a traineeship has on trainee and in company
- what fits in personal interest and development
- in both cases: quality concern

Theme 3

How to promote / support / create more cooperation between consortia; regional as well as transnational? A matter of resources, role of the NA, role of Leo-Net, or others?

(Cf. topic presented by Frank March)

Erasmus+ and consortia should be brands in the educational market as well as for the general public. The promoters need well operating electronic instruments and platforms; use of social media in a proper way.

Networking events are essential for the optimum of project work accompanied by a fruitful interaction with NAs.

Role of consortia important to grow closer to the companies.

Cooperation with career services / job fairs might be a suitable way to do this. The program as such seems not attractive enough to convince companies to join Erasmus+.

The "reinstallation" of "EU-community" data base is desirable.

The development of minimum standards in the EU (general rules) is on the agenda.

Useful are regular meetings of the promoters, visits to other colleagues and networks, events in companies etc. Networking between consortia – in the past international networking between consortia was more common, got lost, should be reinvented with today's technical opportunities.

Difference between regional needs of consortia and international needs of multinationals – consortia deal with regional students/graduates, multinationals often deal with different international consortia (and legislation)

Quality assurance: consortium responsible for quality of the trainee, company responsible for quality traineeship; work towards quality from both sides.

Consortia are in need for resources to be able to work on quality matters and building active links with companies; most consortia are understaffed.

No more bureaucracy but is needed but rather 1 standard by EU that can be adapted by all.

Quality as a joint concern for consortia, companies and NA's.

Importance of **quality past performance** instead of quantity past performance (cf. point of view of German consortia).

What would create opportunities for consortia

- Better embedment in region
- Include work for incoming students – exchange
This would make cooperation between networks and consortia necessary and consortia could work more regional and internationalise by cooperation with other consortia
- Bonus grants for exchange of trainees – plan at both sides, international partners would be an added value, would push partners to guarantee quality.

Other topics and concerns that came along in the discussions

- **Reconsideration of the obligation to register for an E+ grant in the last year** of study. This aimed at reinforcing the institutional phase – Erasmus+ is a programme for institutions however in the past students used traineeship for reorientation, reskilling or additional skilling (cf. Leonardo).

More important than reinforcing institutional phase is the importance to pay attention to **trends on the labor market**. One of these trends is necessary upskilling or retraining after a couple of years to gain additional, specific skills that are often not taught in curricula.

Traineeships may meet this need; the learning path being very valuable.

The idea that traineeship should be applied for during curriculum is contradictory to idea of **life long learning** and the possibility for students to return any time to the alma mater.

However, not all institutions can be motivated to take responsibility for graduates of their institution – solution can be in consortia where graduates could turn to at any time after graduation. From this point of view consortia may unlock E+ possibility for all graduates.

+ advantage of administrative simplification: if graduating students don't have to register for the E+ grant during their curricula an upload of a diploma would be sufficient. In this way consortia don't have to interfere/check HEI registration with the HEI.