

**European Economic Area Financial Mechanism
2009 - 2014**



**Best practices exchanges for
internationalization
of higher education**

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The purpose of this handbook is to support the participating universities in establishing high quality standards in the internationalization work by focusing on cross-cultural communication and solving problems in an international environment.

International Higher Education has continually evolved from a fragmented approach on study abroad and international students into a strategic and comprehensive internationalization concept that affects all aspects of the universities. The Best Practices Handbook serves as a guide to internationalization and offers new strategies for the development of higher education based on the experience of the universities involved in the project.

The Handbook contains measures to improve the activity in the International Offices of universities, guidelines for improving the internationalization strategy, types of activities to be implemented for international students, teachers and staff and relevant best practices cases from Norwegian and Romanian universities.

Higher education institutions develop and promote international education for various motifs and the most important reason is to provide high-quality education for all students. Student mobility often plays the main role in the Internationalization Strategies of universities, closely followed by staff mobility, strategic partnerships and projects, international research and innovation, internationalization of curriculum and internationalization at home for non-mobile students.

The main trends in internationalization are characterized by growing activity in project implementation, enhancement of quality services offered to international students as well as intensification of the improvement of the quality of international courses and programmes. These priorities represent also the goals set up through this project.

My gratitude extends to University College of Southeast Norway, for supporting the project, as well as all project members and participants for their efforts, we could not have implemented a successful project without their dedication and hard work. I am confident that this document will prove helpful for all parties involved.

I want to encourage the reader to take time to become acquainted with the key concepts and issues as well as to look for the lessons learned by those who have already proved their success in internationalization activities.

I do believe that, striving to catch up with leading institutions in internationalization, the materials contained in the Best Practices Handbook will be of great value to the future success of internationalization in higher education institutions.

Assoc. prof. Daniela PREDA
Project Manager
"Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu

The world is more globalized than ever. People travel more than before, but even more important is the revolution caused by electronic communication. Three years ago, I worked in a research project with project team members located in Norway, Austria, Germany and India, all highly competent people in their respective fields. The project team met two times every week, on Skype. We also had physical meetings, but the day-to-day work was coordinated through technology.

Technology overcomes the barriers caused by distance and time-zones. Businesses are outsourcing activities like accounting, IT and help-desks to other countries. The ongoing globalization requires employees with inter-cultural skills.

Universities play an important role in developing the workforce for the future. The opportunity to go abroad for a semester or to attend an international summer school contributes to the development of the students.

Research has always been a driver for international collaboration between universities. Student mobility is not only about inter-cultural skills, but also about opportunities to study subjects not provided by the home institution. It is also a way to experience different teaching methods and research approaches. Student mobility is important, and will become even more important in the years to come.

Therefore, this project about “best practices” is both current and highly relevant. The conference inspired us to review our own practices on internationalization, and provided us with an opportunity to promote some of our ideas. We thank the organizing staff for a well-done job.

Lasse BERNTZEN
University College of Southeast Norway

The project Best practices exchanges for internationalization of higher education supported both partner universities “Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu, Romania (LBUS) and University College of Southeast Norway (HSN) in establishing high quality standards in the internationalization work by focusing on cross-cultural communication and solving problems in an international environment.

The main focus of the project was to improve the key professional skills of staff. The target group consisted of administrative staff working in international relations offices, willing to empower their soft skills (communication, team-work, creativity, flexibility, problem-solving, mediation and negotiation) as well as exchange and bring back ideas to facilitate cooperation, mobilities, project implementation etc.

The project objectives were:

- to strengthen the bilateral relations between Romania and Norway by enhancing intercultural dialogue between staff and experts from partner universities;
- to provide key skills and service effectiveness for university staff in organizing the activity in IRO`s on the following directions:
 - I. Increasing the number and quality of mobilities for a) students - study and placement mobilities through dissemination and promotion of activities, cultural integration support, ECTS integral recognition and other methods of recognition, quality assurance in partnerships & language competence; and b) teachers & academic staff - teaching and training mobilities through formal and informal recognition of STA and STT mobilities, spin-off effects: other cooperation opportunities etc.
 - II. Improvement of services offered by IRO`s and universities through assistance with visa and other legal issues, electronic services, language support & cultural courses, orientation and welcome services etc.
 - III. Internationalization at home for non-mobile students through international activities - workshops, seminars, webinars, summer schools and modules of foreign culture and civilization:
 - to improve the quality in the international services offered by both partner universities based on the increased international experience of LBUS and HSN;
 - to organize a joint workshop at LBUS entitled “Best practices exchanges for internationalization of higher education”;
 - During the workshop the activities were implemented in groups with the purpose of defining a new and improved perspective in university services in international environment through the following strategies and methods: Mind Mapping, World Café, Conversational Leadership,

Co-Creation, Community of Practice, and Appreciative Inquiry. Based on the activities and discussions during the workshop all the conclusions are gathered in the present Best Practices Handbook - a guide with measures and best practice examples to improve the activity in the International Offices;

- to organize a Dissemination Conference for promoting the results of the project and the Best Practices Handbook.

The Best Practices Handbook has 4 sections covering key areas:

I Internationalization Strategy in Universities

II. Quality assurance for mobilities (study, placement, teaching and training, both incoming and outgoing)

III. Improvement of services offered by IRO`s and universities

IV. Internationalization at home for non-mobile students

I. Internationalization Strategy in Universities

1. “Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu

Daniela PREDA

“Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu is an academic institution focusing on research and research-based teaching. Its acting principles are deeply rooted in the credos of academic freedom and cooperation. At such it fosters and supports the exchange of ideas, the common development and exchange of knowledge both in research and teaching. As such collaborating with other academic institutions and their members, both nationally and internationally, is inherent.

The present Internationalization Strategy represents LBUS’ concept for international collaboration and branding until 2020 and is in line with the university’s fundamental acting principles. As a method for implementing the strategy LBUS chooses the Kaplan and Norton’s Balanced Scorecard method. Viewed as a balanced modern tool it allows the university to weigh different perspectives into one common development direction.

The five perspectives which LBUS has established for itself are:

- Research and Innovation
- Education and Teaching
- Internationalization and Knowledge Transfer
- Internal Processes and Learning
- Financial Performance and Growth.

As such the importance of internationalization is immediately visible in LBUS’ view.

When focusing on “Education and Training” the internationalization perspectives looks especially into the internationalization of education as well as incoming and outgoing mobility for students.

The focus in “Research and Innovation” is directed towards facilitating strong and stable international partnerships which can contribute to the goal of internationalizing research activities. Accessing international research networks and exchanging researchers – as outgoing and incoming mobilities – will further boost the research potential of LBUS.

The perspective “Internal Processes and Learning” has been given a lower priority due to the major changes the other two perspectives have gone through in the last years. The university’s credo is that international activities are not only an additional badge but need to become inherent to every activity and to the thinking of the institution. We consider that the best way to achieve this is to live the philosophy through daily interaction with the stakeholders. Learning will then happen automatically.

All activities which related to internationalization are included in the “Internationalization and Knowledge Transfer” perspective with very close links to all other perspectives.

Financial measures will be dealt with in detail in each yearly operational plan.

Internationalization of Education

Being a young and relatively small university, LBUS was and continues to be cognizant that attracting international talent is important. Key to attracting high-potential international talent is a diverse and high-quality offer of courses and/or programmes in foreign languages. As such it is an ongoing pursuit for LBUS to develop courses and/or programmes in English, German and French language. In parallel LBUS is striving to provide more opportunities for international students to attend intensive Romanian language courses upon their arrival in Sibiu.

The provision of courses and/or programmes in foreign languages and in front of an international audience motivates teachers to ensure topical interest and quality in courses/programmes. For students it improves intercultural and language qualifications to participate in such foreign languages courses. Especially in lieu of the European Bologna Process, which is striving towards a harmonized structure of study programmes and emphasizes collaborative elaboration of courses/programmes in form of joint degree studies, a working culture which understands to accept differences while integrating the strengths of different countries/universities becomes inherently important. In context of the general considerations presented above, LBUS focuses on the following to improve its attractiveness for international talent:

a) increasing and diversifying the number of courses and programmes taught in foreign languages

The emphasis lies here mainly on courses in English language.

Nonetheless Romanian universities in general have longstanding cooperation agreements with French universities and institutes, due to the closeness of the Romanian and French language. Due to its geographical location, LBUS is also in a unique position to have also a significant number of active cooperation agreements with universities from German-speaking countries. The percentage of international incoming students from these countries lies at 43% of the total exchange.

The prioritization of the topics/courses to be provided in foreign languages will also take into account strategic cooperation programmes, like Erasmus Mundus Asia Windows, where LBUS is the only university from Romania to be a partner.

The highest priority for internationalization will be given to courses and/or programmes on Master level, followed by those on the Bachelor level.

b) establishing a LBUS Summer University

During the last two years LBUS started pilot Summer Courses, both as externally funded programmes as well as self-financed ones. First experiences showed an increased visibility of the university for students and better cooperation levels with partners closely involved in these courses, especially if/when the courses were awarded ECTS and given recognition at all participating universities.

Thus, LBUS aims to increase the offer of international summer schools.

The aim is to create more flexibility in the degree programmes and tackle relevant scientific and didactic topics which are not (yet) included in curricula but are of interest for the academic communities. Course and programme development is done and made available in close cooperation with strategic partner universities, with ECTS credit endowment, recognition and quality assurance being essential actions to be covered. Summer schools provide good opportunities to increase the visibility of LBUS within the international student community and attract high-potential talent. They also provide good opportunities for lifelong learning.

For programmes and activities, LBUS shall also strive to cooperate closely with Sibiu city and county in regards to the large pool of cultural activities the city offers. There is a high visibility of these events which can be used by the university in domains related to culture. Detailed plans shall be made available in the yearly operational planning.

Primary focus for summer schools at LBUS will be courses and/or programmes at Master level.

c) higher level of international collaboration in creating content and establishing degree programmes

LBUS understands itself as a research-driven university. During the next years, the university will continue its reform of study programmes which it started in 2010. In international context, it will focus on developing content, primarily on Master programme level, in close cooperation with strategic partner universities, aiming where possible at establishing double-degree or joint-degree programmes.

Having the experience from a European-funded joint degree curriculum programme LBUS will direct its activities also in closely cooperating with national regulatory boards in order to support a transparent and coherent set of regulations for establishing joint degree programmes.

d) use of international quality standards

From mid-2012 to mid-2013, LBUS has had its first experience with the process of an international evaluation, through the university evaluation which has been done by the European Universities Association.

Drawing from this, LBUS will maintain the quality standard approach – derived also from national regulation – for the development and accreditation of courses. A systematic approach will also be maintained for the award of ECTS credits to courses in order to maintain the ECTS label. For courses/programmes which are not yet awarded ECTS and which are to be included in the international programme ECTS, course evaluation will be compulsory.

As LBUS decided for a strategic development towards attracting talent from Asian countries and plans to diversify this to countries located in South America, it will begin to develop and promote its educational activities through international accreditations and evaluations.

2. University College of Southeast Norway

Lasse BERTZEN

University College of Southeast Norway (USN) was established on January 1st, 2016 as result of a merger between Buskerud and Vestfold University College and Telemark University College. It is the second largest university college in Norway with around 18000 students.

USN has more than 350 bilateral agreements with foreign higher education institutions. In 2016 the number of outgoing students was 248, number of incoming students was 417. (Incoming students include summer school students). In 2016, USN also had more than 100 faculty and staff exchanges.

Internationalization is a strategic measure and prerequisite to improve quality of both teaching and research. Our university college has a strategy for internationalization with the following four goals:

#1 All teaching programs should have a clear international profile

This includes offering modules taught in English as an integrated part of all teaching programs, and inclusion of English teaching materials in each program.

#2 The agreement portfolio should actively contribute to international collaboration.

The collaboration should be concentrated to selected, reputed foreign higher education institutions, and contribute to better quality of teaching and research. Collaboration should facilitate exchange of researchers and lecturers and strengthen funding from international sources.

#3 All students should be offered student exchanges.

Students can take relevant parts of their programs at reputed foreign higher education institutions. Foreign students are encouraged to take parts of their education in our university college.

#4 A strengthened role as a regional knowledge partner

The university college plays an important role as a regional hub for exchange of knowledge, including exchange with international research communities, and should support the region through its international contacts and collaborations.

3. Babeş Bolyai University - Cluj Napoca

Diana SON ANDRIEŞ

UBB's Internationalization strategy is both a work instrument for various decision-making and executive bodies within the university and an action framework for all members of our academic community. The strategy is conceived as a benchmark for internationalization for a 5-year period of time (2015-2020), while suggesting the main trends of evolution for at least a decade.

Taking into account the general UBB 500 Objective, as well as governmental regulations promoting the internationalization of higher education and transnational education, this strategy is vitally important to streamlining activities in the international field and increasing the degree of institutional visibility. As our university's level of internationalization increases year by year, the traditional approach developed upon student exchanges needs to be radically reviewed in order to create an integrated viable strategy.

Only such an approach will have direct consequences on enhancing the university's influence in the present day international academic environment. Although our university is already perceived both by students and other universities in Romania as an "international" university, we are dedicated to enhance the internationally-oriented processes of education and research in order to bring more consistency and compatibility with academic systems that are internationally acknowledged as competitive.

The four objectives of this internationalization strategy (Curricular internationalization; Increasing the number of international students; Professional and personal development for UBB staff and students; Strengthening UBB's international visibility), identified as the pillars of our future approached within the area of international relations, are based on the analysis of all international activities carried on in our university during the last two decades and, the evaluation of our university's potential in all the professional areas. This working procedure allows us to be consistent with the institutional values and objectives, as formulated in UBB's Strategic Development Plan. Building on our traditional multiculturalism and plurilingualism as well as the historic pluriconfessionalism, these objectives constitute the premises to evolve towards being a true intercultural university of the 21st century. By achieving these objectives, we are also practically addressing the 4th pillar (international orientation) of the European ranking U-Multirank. These objectives are necessarily interconnected, and their accomplishment necessarily implies correlations of activities for each and every UBB structure involved in the process.

Institutional structures involved (the international dimension of these structures will be investigated in the operational plan below)

- UBB Senate
- UBB Rectorate
- Vice-Rectors with specific responsibilities

- Faculties
- Centre for International Cooperation (CCI)
- Department for Communication and PR (DCRP)
- Centre for Research Management
- Institute for Doctoral Studies
- Office for European Programmes
- Office for Fundraising
- Centre for Career, Alumni and the Relation with the Business Environment (CCARMA)
- Centre for University Development and Quality Assurance (CDUMC)
- Cultural centres
- UBB's modern languages centres

The need for a comprehensive vision, structured on the basis of the realities of this professional environment, against the international background, derives from the conclusion of a macro cycle of international exposure for our university (2000-2014). Whilst UBB is definitely perceived as the most international university in the Romanian academic landscape, it is clear that the present international outlook demands that our university must take bold steps in order to innovate in this area. The following operational plan matches the values and objectives as previously described with actions, budgets, institutional structures involved, and timeframes.

UBB's key numbers about mobilities, for the academic year 2015/2016:

- KA 103 – outgoing teaching mobilities 146, staff training 119; outgoing study mobilities 300, student placements 133.
- KA 103 – incoming studies mobilities 224.
- KA 107 – incoming studies mobilities 53
- Erasmus Mundus Action 2 projects (6), EMMC Action 1 (1) : 46.
- EEA mobilities: outgoing teaching mobilities 3, staff training 1, study mobilities 22; incoming staff training 1, study mobilities 3.

4. Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi

UAIC international (EU and non-EU) strategy - Dorina MOISA

UAIC international strategy is best illustrated by its main objectives: to actively contribute to and promote the European Higher Education Area; to support sustainable development through top quality education, training and professional development for students and staff; to help improve and enhance the career prospects of students; to promote intercultural understanding between individuals and institutions having a diversity of backgrounds; to contribute to mutual enrichment of societies by educating open-minded students; to contribute to the development of human resources for academic cooperation and of the international cooperation capacity; to foster culture, knowledge and skills for a peaceful and sustainable development in a Europe, as well as a world, of diversity.

UAIC integrates the Erasmus+ programme in its international strategy through: promoting academic excellence and institutional improvement (e.g. former Erasmus students becoming young staff members, mobile staff members bringing and developing new teaching and assessment methods, introducing new and/or joint degrees, curricula and syllabi); reducing the mobility obstacles (full academic recognition procedures, curricula compatibility, use of learning outcomes for curricula design, accuracy and transparency of the selection process of grantees, increasing placement quality by using the lessons learnt during the first years of Erasmus student placement implementation); internationalization at home (making non-mobile students benefit from Erasmus and other projects, e.g., through lectures initially held by incoming teaching staff and later included in the local curricula, supporting the integration of incoming students through social-cultural activities initiated by student associations, language courses for all incoming students).

Facts and numbers

UAIC anticipated by 10 years Romania's accession to the EU, when starting its participation in the Socrates programme in 1998. Since then, UAIC has had almost 6,000 outgoing students (study and placement), a lower but steadily increasing flow of incoming students (nearly 1,200) and over 1,200 outgoing staff mobilities. During the last few years, UAIC has been constantly ranked among the top 70 European HEIs in the Erasmus programme, thanks to its some 450 outgoing students/year. At national level, UAIC attracts 15% of the total outgoing student mobility in Romania.

For the academic year 2015-2016, UAIC has set up 635 collaboration agreements under the Erasmus+ programme with all EU countries, Switzerland, Iceland, Norway, Croatia and Turkey as well as with the EEA countries (Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein).

Thus, 349 students benefited from a study mobility of one semester or one full academic year, 357 students acquired practical skills during their placement mobilities, while 150 teaching staff and 63 administrative staff shared their expertise and knowledge with colleagues from foreign partner universities.

In 2011, UAIC became the first Romanian university to coordinate an Erasmus Mundus Action 2 project (EMERGE) and it currently coordinates 3 such projects (EMERGE, IANUS, EDEN: <http://www.uaic.ro/uaic/bin/view/Cooperation/Burse>). Two of these projects involve Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine (EMERGE, approved in 2011), respectively Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine (IANUS, approved in 2012), while the 3rd one is for Israel (EDEN, approved in 2012). UAIC is also a partner in the AL IDRISI EMA2 project (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia). UAIC hosts yearly some 30 doctoral students from Sub-Saharan African countries in the Eugene Ionesco project. At university level, during the 2014-2015 academic year, 18 students performed an EEA study mobility in the partner universities from Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein and some other 30 went with a placement mobility in different companies from the same countries.

5. Transilvania University of Brasov

Corina TRIPON

In recent years, building an effective strategy of Internationalization was Transilvania University's constant priority. Its general objective is to increase visibility at the international level as well as the quality of education and scientific research processes, by extending cooperation with countries from all over the world.

Erasmus+ mobilities, both student and staff are a key component of this demarche. Our university spends a lot of effort in order to stimulate the participation of the teaching staff and students in international mobility exchanges and collaborations.

During the 5 last years (2011-2016), there was a constant growth of number of mobilities (as shown in Figure1) and number of Erasmus partnerships (as shown in Figure2).

Erasmus Mobility Dynamics in Transilvania University of Brasov - Period 2011-2016

	INCOMING			OUTGOING		
	Teaching staff STA	Training staff STT	Students (SMS+SMP)	Teaching staff STA	Training staff STT	Students (SMS+SMP)
2011-2012	36	5	99	50	12	210
2012-2013	51	28	127	61	19	218
2013-2014	76	18	121	70	20	232
2014-2015	45	15	148	66	22	241
2015-2016	65	16	139	84	32	246

Figure 1

Transilvania University of Brasov Erasmus Partner Universities - Period 2011-2016

Academic Year	Partner Countries	Partner Universities
2011-2012	27	256
2012-2013	27	262
2013-2014	28	252
2014-2015	29	292
2015-2016	35	325

Figure 2

6. Romanian – American University

Camelia GHEORGHE

From the internationalization point of view, the strategic vision of the Romanian-American University is to “Become a truly international University with a global focus in education, research and services to community”. Contributing to the overall institutional goals, RAU internationalization process is considered highly important for the institutional development, especially due to actual global and national circumstances. The purpose of the internationalization strategy is to embed the international dimension into the goals for teaching, research and services to community.

In the last 5 years, the process of internationalization at RAU was highlighted by: expanding the partnerships with entities from EEA, US and Japan mainly; increasing the number of students and staff mobility; offering new courses taught by international professors; launching new study programs fully taught in English; improving the language skills for academic and administrative staff; widening the opportunities to study foreign languages; creating a truly international environment.

Moreover, the internationalization process represents a strategic option for RAU, taking in to account that: globalization creates a new frame and challenges that cannot be avoided by the educational system; graduates need to be prepared for adapting to a multicultural working environment; students should be offered more opportunities both to study and work abroad; it can bring international recognition due to international competitiveness; the market for educational services exceeds its national borders reaching a global dimension.

To achieve the 2020 aim, RAU developed the following set of goals: a new approach for international atmosphere, recognition and partnerships; increase student mobility; improve students’ international experience through extracurricular activities; strengthen international dimension of study programs; increase the number of international students; attract international staff, enhance staff skills and expertise; enhance the international dimension of research.

It is important to mention that the mobility of staff and students is a significant part of the internationalization process within RAU. Each year there are around 70 outgoing students and 50 outgoing staff, as well as around 40 incoming students being mobile under the Erasmus+ program and EEA Grants. RAU implemented projects under EEA Grants beginning with 2009 for two years, and “restarted” them in 2013, for the new programming period. In the last 3 years, there were 17 exchanges (7 outgoing staff, 6 outgoing students, 4 incoming staff).

7. University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest

Marioara GREBENIȘAN, Delia CHERVASE

The core element of international relations strategy is the strong integration of our university in the European and international academic community. This requires the development of bilateral relations existing with similar universities through joint actions, exchange of students and teachers, organizing international master and doctoral programs jointly with prestigious universities, participation in the European Union or other international bodies. Also, another objective of the strategy of international relations of our university is to facilitate the participation of many professors to scientific or teaching missions abroad, exchanges, internships training, teaching, or at various events as representatives of the university.

Sending an increasing number of students abroad for attending lectures, practical stages, developing projects undergraduate, masters, doctoral, exchanges, and attracting students, master and doctoral students from abroad, including the initiation of study specializations in English are major objectives of the strategy of internationalization.

Expanding and deepening partnerships by developing joint projects with universities from abroad, in order to ensure a quality educational system and to European standards, and the development and implementation of programs of study / curricula in accordance with principles common Bologna.

A great importance is given to concentrate efforts to organize study programs in foreign languages and the development of joint degrees doctoral programs with partner universities abroad.

Our university is member of some international bodies as EUA (European University Association), AUF (Agence Universitaire de Francophonie), IROICA (European Network of International Relations Officers) and others, actively participating in all activities in order to have a better information on education in higher institutions as well as new projects aimed at the mobility actions and research.

Beginning with 2012, UASMV-Bucharest has become a member of the network that includes Higher Education Institutions operating in the field of Life Sciences (agriculture, food, biotechnologies, natural resources, rural development and the environment) in Central and South-Eastern Europe (CASEE - The ICA Regional Network for Central and South Eastern Europe). University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest establish agreements with universities in Europe and around the world on the basis of similarity in terms of the areas of teaching, research and innovation. The most objectives of our mobility activities with regard to staff and students are:

- To enable students to benefit educationally, linguistically and culturally from the experience of learning in other European countries;
- To promote cooperation between institutions;

- To contribute to the development of a qualified skills, to become open-minded and internationally experienced as future professionals;
- To promote exchange of expertise and experience on pedagogical methods;
- To motivate students and staff to become mobile and to assist them in preparing a mobility period.

The target groups are students and teachers (especially juniors) as well as administrative staff to benefit from mobility activities in order to become more experienced and to have the opportunity to gain knowledge and to improve their professional skills.

Some key numbers about mobilities:

Nr.	Anul universitar	Nr. stud. out-going	Nr. prof. out-going	Nr. stud. incoming	Nr. prof. incoming
1	2006-2007	9	2	1	-
2	2007-2008	6	3	3	-
3	2008-2009	10	2	3	3
4	2009-2010	12	2	2	3
5	2010-2011	9	2	-	4
6	2011-2012	16	2	3	12
7	2012-2013	11	4	3	6
8	2013-2014	16	7	4	2
9	2014-2015	15	7	5	10
10	2015-2016	17	5	11	12
	TOTAL	121	36	35	52

8. Danubius University of Galati

Liviu-Mihail MARINESCU

The policy of Danubius University aims at developing and implementing the internationalization strategy of Danubius University in promoting the international image of the University as a forum for education, science and culture in Romania, Europe and worldwide, and in the development of mobility projects for students and the higher education staff financed by the Erasmus+

Program, of mobility projects in higher education funded through the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area (EEA) and of other European or international programs in the field of education and professional training at the level of Danubius University of Galati.

In this regard, at the international level, there are ensured the overall coordination of international activities developed by the university in the field of international relations together with the implementation of the legislation governing the management of this area of activity, as it follows:

- support in promoting the university as an institution of higher education on the international academic market;
- continued development and implementation of the university's internationalization strategy by developing specific policies and objectives of the university in the field of international relations;
- implementation of international mobility programs on annual terms from the baseline of the institutional application up to the final reports to bodies providing the financing;
- activities related to managing the portfolio of bilateral international cooperation agreements, the Erasmus+ agreements and any other agreements falling within the scope of the international cooperation;
- support to the faculties in the development, dissemination and implementation of methodologies for admission of foreign students to studying in the University.
- university participation in the internationalization of higher education projects at national and international levels, and the setting up of projects aimed at developing the international dimension of the university;
- internationally-aimed efforts of the faculties, given the development and strengthening of those regional cooperation activities capitalizing all opportunities for scientific and academic collaboration offered by the EU membership quality of Romania and the international character of Danubius University;
- actions performed by the university structures in the field of European businesses and in that of international relations, in view of ensuring the unity and coherence of the message sent;
- activities of developing the relations with similar institutions or entities in other countries, providing support and promotion of the university's

interests in its relation with them;

- participation of the University in international academic fairs for offers of studies in the higher education;
- logistical coordination of intercultural activities carried out by the university in the field of international relations;
- coordination of activities related to administering the portfolio of bilateral intercultural cooperation agreements;
- coordination of actions undertaken by the university structures in the field of intercultural relations, in order to ensure the unity and coherence of the message sent;
- intercultural endeavours carried out by teachers and students from the faculties, within the intercultural cooperation and collaboration opportunities offered by the international character of Danubius University;



Overview of EEA Financial Mechanism at LBUS

The EEA Financial Mechanism covers several funding programmes with the aim:

- to reduce the economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area
- to strengthen the bilateral relations between the EEA states and Romania.

LBUS has successfully implemented the EEA Financial Mechanism between 2013 – 2016.

The programme provided funding for the following measures:

1. Preparatory visits - the main objective is to help higher education institutions to establish contacts between them. At LBUS we had 2 preparatory visits with the purpose:

- to conclude new inter-institutional agreements regarding mobilities;
- to initiate student placements;
- to initiate cooperation projects.

2. Mobility of students and staff

Outgoing mobilities:

	SMS	SMP	STA	STT
2013 - 2014	0	1	0	1
2014 - 2015	3	1	3	1
2015 - 2016	9	1	3	3

Incoming mobility

	SMS	SMP	STA	STT
2013 - 2014	0	0	0	0
2014 - 2015	0	0	0	0
2015 - 2016	0	0	0	1

3. Inter-institutional cooperation

Purpose:

- to support innovation and improvement of teaching in higher education,
- to contribute to the modernization of universities and
- to ensure a closer relationship between educational offer and labour market.

Implemented Projects:

1."Digital Factory: Concepts, Implementations, Present and Future Challenges" (DigiFact)

Objectives:

- to discuss different approaches and concepts of dealing with frameworks and models of production integration,
- for the management of technology-based industries
- combined with the holistic representation of Supply Chains.



2. Understanding and Tackling the Migration Challenge: Mapping Options for a Resilient Approach

Objectives:

- to develop a comprehensive understanding on combating extremism and manage migration processes
- to organize a joint conference.



3. Understanding Transnational Roma Migration: Challenges and Perspectives for Romania and Norway

Objectives:

- to reach mutual understanding of the social dynamics and consequences of Roma migration between Romania and Norway
- to exchange knowledge gathered by scholars in the communities of origin (Romania) and the communities of destination (Norway).

4. A Mobile Platform for Environmental Monitoring

Objectives:

- to design and develop a mobile environmental monitoring platform
- to improve the quality of environmental monitoring
- to use cars as mobile sensing unit by embedding our mobile environmental monitoring platform.

5. Best practices exchanges for internationalization of higher education

Objectives:

- to provide key skills and service effectiveness for university staff in organizing the activities in IRO`s
- to improve the quality of the international services.



II. Quality assurance for mobilities

The discussions during the World Café aimed at defining what IRO`s need to do in the future in order to ensure high quality mobility to be available for all students and teachers and academic staff. Therefore the term quality is defined as a broad concept, which leaves room for interpretation by the mobility beneficiary. Quality assurance in education is defined by the following traits: helps you develop your skills; reach your personal objectives; to enter and stay in the labour market and anything that an individual might want to add.

Improving the quality of mobility would require, among others, a better integration of mobility periods into the curricula, more joint programmes, facilitating recognition of study periods abroad, better cooperation between sending and receiving institutions, better language training for mobile students and staff as well as for teachers and administrative staff at receiving institutions.

Recommendations:

- Assessing quality must always be based on the objectives of the higher education institution, as defined in the Internationalization Strategy of universities.
- Quality assurance must include students and staff and its main purpose should be their personal and professional development for the future.
- There should be developed a way of mutual recognition of the professional qualifications of mobile staff at formal level.
- The professional development of teacher`s language skills should be given more attention and support.
- The responsibility for the quality of mobilities should be clearly assigned.
- The social aspect of quality needs to be taken into consideration through the improvement of the soft skills (such as team-work, negotiation, mediation, problem-solving, interpersonal skills, flexibility and good communication).
- The cooperation between the home and hosting higher education institution should be strengthened.
- Sufficient funding should be made available for increasing the quality and quantity of mobility.

II.a. How do we increase the number and ensure quality for study mobilities?

INCOMING STUDENTS

1. Increasing the number of study mobilities

In order to increase the number of incoming students it is important for the staff of the international offices to use the foreign incoming Erasmus students to promote the idea of mobility by sharing their experience in the host country, city and institution. The teachers and staff that benefited of Erasmus+ mobility in the institution can also be considered an asset for promoting international mobility. The international offices should provide promotional materials to incoming teachers and staff that will be further disseminated in their home institution.

When it comes to the relation between the quality and number of students, the development of the quality of the incoming students' mobility can increase the future number of incoming students by assuring further promotion of the university through word-of-mouth. The quality of the mobility of incoming students can be created by keeping the available syllabuses up to date and provide easy access on the website. The personnel of the international offices are also important in this regard, the experience of the incoming students being highly influenced by the way the administrative process develops; the quality of the international officers in relation with the partners can also influence the extent to which the university is recommended by partners to their students, as many Erasmus+ coordinators will guide their students towards the universities with which they collaborate in the best manner. The international offices' staff has to keep in mind that information is the key to a correct and complete mobility experience and therefore they have to exchange all the needed information before, during and after the mobility.

Besides the students, the outgoing teachers and staff should be trained to promote the university, to present the contents and structure of their home university curricula, to be an ambassador of their home institution. When it comes to universities where no official agreement is established, the international offices should organize visits in new, top universities, in order to ease the future collaboration with them. It is also important to take into consideration that many times the relation between universities lies on a personal contact, therefore being important to seek to have a personal connection in the partner university, to get to know the academics and personnel and not to rely on the written agreement only.

Former outgoing students that benefited of international mobilities and who now live abroad can be used for promoting the university, together with the local and national values, in foreign universities. Another important aspect when it comes to increasing the number of incoming mobilities is to learn that "selling" your university is not enough, one having to promote the country, the touristic destinations, the national values and traditions as well,

in order to create interest in the country first, an only second in the university. Referring to interest development regarding the university, the connections of the university with companies are also important; when students have the opportunity to also access internships during their study mobility, chance for more students to choose that certain university increases.

Last, but not least, the traditional promotional methods should be not forgotten: participate in International Weeks, Job Fairs, International Education Fairs, and promote your university through video and printed materials. Because the online environment is another important environment that creates awareness, the university can opt to create videos with the testimonials of incoming students that can be shared on social media platforms, for their colleagues to find out more and become curious about the Erasmus experience.

2. Increasing the quality of study mobilities

Being in a direct connection with increasing the numbers of students, it is important for universities to increase the quality of study mobilities. This can be mainly done through the development of English taught courses within the home university, which will ensure class participation for incoming students. When establishing partnerships and curricula it is also important to establish the compatibility of curricula between partner universities. The English course catalog can be also developed by offering courses about the culture and civilization of the county of destination, this, added to the initial information provided by the international offices regarding the national culture and values, reducing the cultural shock that may appear when arriving in the new country. In regard to helping students integrate in the local community and get rid of the strange feeling that may appear when living in the new country, the international offices should offer the students a buddy (local student volunteer) that will guide them in the city and university, helping them with everything they need and answering all their questions. The buddies should be evaluated annually, in order for the quality of their services to be the one expected by the IRO members and the students. Another option is to establish a local student as a tutor for the incoming students enrolled in the same faculty; this will also contribute to the internationalization at home process. The university should seek to involve the incoming students in local academic and cultural events, local student associations and therefore, do not consider them a separate entity. The international offices should also organize different events, such as international film night, international dinner, trips, parties, cultural exchange sessions, orientation week, international scientific events, events that will create a high quality mobility experience for the students. Overall, it is important not to leave students alone during their mobility by considering they can do well by themselves, but offer constant support from academics and staff. In order for the local teachers and staff to be able to contribute to the experience of the incoming students, they have to understand the Erasmus+ programme; this can be done by sending e-mails

to all the personnel of the university or by organizing meetings where all the procedures that they need to follow will be explained.

At the end of the mobility, it is important to ask for feedback from the students, so that the activity can be improved in future periods. Also, the international offices can give the title of ambassador to a student, each year, with the purpose to motivate them to further promote the Erasmus+ programme.

OUTGOING STUDENTS

1. Increasing the number of study mobility

As increasing the number of outgoing study mobilities is a permanent objective of the universities, several activities can be organized and measures can be taken for achieving this objective.

First of all, the international offices of the university should invite the students who already benefited of an international mobility to talk about their experience within Erasmus Open Doors events, information sessions etc. or to organize open sessions where the students who came back from their mobility can talk about their experience with local students and local community. Within these events the incoming students can also be invited, to talk about their countries and universities, as well as about their experience in our country, through these activities developing the promotion of international experiences

In order to create a connection between the local students and the international environment, an Erasmus conference on internationalization can be organized, where incoming and outgoing students can present papers about culture, international experience and international aspects of their field of expertise, rising interest in international experience. Also, the international office can develop a blog and ask the outgoing students to upload short stories while in mobility, in the end, creating a full experience story; the blog will be used to promote mobility for local students and check on outgoing students as well.

In regard to the academic aspect, it is important to partner up with high quality universities that can create high added value to the student, this increasing the chance for students to apply for a mobility. For the development of this area, the international office should get to know more about partner universities, find personal contacts and inform themselves about the curricula, course structure and procedures of partner university, therefore being able to correctly inform the outgoing students. Also, by assuring the students full recognition of the ECTS credits, extra motivation will be created for applying to a mobility, this reducing the fear of having to have retakes when returning in the home university.

When promoting the value of the Erasmus mobility, it is important to stress the importance for the professional life (add it in the CV) but also the importance of the personal experience.

2. Increasing the quality of study mobilities

For the improvement of the quality of the outgoing students' experience it is important to keep contact with outgoing students before, during and after their mobility. The students should also be informed about the cultural shock that they might have when arriving in the country of destination, starting from the moment of selection (where the IRO personnel should participate). For a facile communication, the IRO can ask for a student representative from each faculty (one of the students selected for mobility) to communicate information from the IRO to all the students from the faculty who were selected for mobility.

Also, the international office should involve outgoing students in internationalization after returning home. By doing this, the still non-mobile students will have contact with students who already benefited of the mobility and the former outgoing students will feel reintegrated. The involvement of former Erasmus+ students in student association such as Erasmus Student Network will also improve their reintegration.



Best practices – incoming and outgoing students at HSN

Lasse BERNTZEN

Note: The best practice section is based on experiences from one department, the Department of Economy and Management, located on the Vestfold campus.

BEST PRACTICES – INCOMING STUDENTS

PREPARATIONS

If possible, we try to meet the student before the mobility starts, either by a personal meeting or by Skype. In this meeting, we explain the opportunities and possible problems. If possible, we also do some preliminary discussion about student projects.

ACADEMIC CONTENT

In the department, students may choose to take one or two projects (15 ECTS each) in their field of interest. The project is supervised by a faculty member, and is normally connected to ongoing research. The students are generally very motivated to be included in research activities. The project itself is based on the learning agreement and the student can influence the content of the project within the limits set by the learning agreement. At the end of the project, the student must submit a project report, which is graded.

Students are also offered normal classes taught in English. The university college regards group assignments as important. Each foreign student is assigned to a separate group of Norwegian students to facilitate integration. In theory, it is possible to take 30 ECTS each semester through taught classes, but in practice this alternative is not used. (The university college has a broader offering of normal classes in another campus, and students would probably choose to go to there if the primary goal is to follow normal classes).

The use of projects has been very successful. The students have contributed to research projects, and this has made it easier to recruit faculty members as supervisors. It is a win-win situation where faculty members spend time with the student, but also get something in return.

Foreign students have expressed positive opinions about this approach. They get responsibility, but also freedom and regular one-to-one conversations with the supervisor.

STUDENT HOUSING

Integration of students in the classroom may be important, but proper housing arrangements may be even more important for social integration. Exchange students are placed in student housings, either on- or off-campus. Student housings consist of individual rooms but also shared spaces which provide

lots of opportunities to meet other students. The policy is to distribute international students from one country in different student housings to help integration.

ACTIVITIES

USN supports an international student's organization which organizes activities for international and Norwegian studies. Activities includes introduction day, trips and parties. Other voluntary activities are available, and sport activities are very popular. Having appropriate meeting places (housing and activities) is the most important ways to help students integrate.



BEST PRACTICES – OUTGOING STUDENTS

Norwegian students have access to additional funding for mobility. This includes travel support and tuition. Therefore, a Norwegian student does not have to make hard financial considerations about where to go. To attract Norwegian students, best practices would be:

1. An inter-institutional mobility agreement.
2. Provision of “packages” of modules that fit into the teaching program of the student.
3. Information about module contents, accommodation and social life

Exploring Norway - ULBS

Radu-Alexandru ȘERBAN

Home University: "Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu

Host University: University College of Southeast Norway

Name of the participant: Radu-Alexandru ȘERBAN

Faculty/Field of Study/Year: Faculty of Economics

Before I went to Norway, I did my best to get information about it, then the profile of Norway in my mind was like this: beautiful scenery, different and interesting culture, delicious seafood, friendly folks, cold weather, decent and free education system, high prices for goods and a high living standard.

After I arrived in Norway, I realized that all the things I had imagined before going there were too general. There I got more details about all of these things. I went to the mountains, hiking, running, cycling and skiing, then I understood the beauty of its nature. I have tasted many delicious Norwegian foods: meatballs, smoked salmon etc.

The student life is very colorful, many activities are organized, especially by the ISU (International Students Organizations), they supported us with money in order to have several activities such as: movie nights, trips, international dinner, which were very important in bringing together the foreign students etc. But also the university organized ski trips, corporate visits at Telenor, Snoheta, two big companies in Norway.

Now I have many friends from different countries, we had the chance to get to know each other not only in classes, or while working on team projects, but also at parties, doing different activities together etc. We enjoyed sharing our experience and culture with each other. Concerning the study, we had freedom to arrange our study, when to read books and how to organize the work for the projects, but the deadlines and regulations were mandatory. Teachers were always ready to give us useful pieces of advice.

Some French students who were in Norway from the first semester kept in touch with us by email, created a Facebook group and helped us with precious information about Norway, Norwegian lifestyle etc. They started the "tradition" that Saturday was for party and since I arrived in Norway until I left we had a party every Saturday, without exception.

The prices were quite high, so it is very common for students to cook for themselves, and not only at the international dinner, but each week somebody cooked something from his/her country.

The major issues I faced during my stay in Norway were that, the first two months, the weather was very cold and, the last two months, it was night only few hours and it was difficult to sleep.

In the end, after my Norwegian experience, I can say that I have new friends, unforgettable moments, that I managed to improve my language, cooking and my social skills, that I learned how the student life is when you

are far from home and you have to take care of you and your studies, but the most important is that now I am more capable to adapt to new and challenging situations.



The Norwegian experience – UBB

Andreea Andries

Home University: Universitatea Babeş-Bolyai

Host University: University College of Southeast Norway

Name of the participant: Andreea ANDRIEŞ

Faculty/Field of Study/Year: European Studies/Management/Master

I am writing this text from Bari where we are visiting a very good friend, met during the mobility in Norway. This is just one of dozens of reasons why this type of experience is a memorable one and remains engraved in our minds for a long time.

During these 5 months spent in Norway at Vestfold University College, I learned, I tested and I lived the most beautiful experiences of both academic and also social and cultural life.

The first very important aspect that struck us from the beginning was the multiculturalism. Austria, Germany, Spain, Italy, France, Taiwan, Palestine, Vietnam, South Korea, India, Pakistan, Russia, Ukraine, Hungary, Latvia, Egypt,

Greece, Brazil are just some of the countries we have met through colleagues who shared their insights and thoughts.

From an academic perspective, the University offered us the best resources to acquire good knowledge. The emphasis on research and special training of the teachers counted in maximizing the final outcome of which we are extremely pleased. I believe that an international academic experience such as the one in Norway helps greatly to improve the quality of personal education and skills.

Norway is a country with very strong and clearly defined values, among them, the most important being nearness to nature and equality. The mentality that I found there was a mentality of collaboration, professionalism, quality and appreciation. Students are treated with respect and the direct way of addressing the teachers is inspiring. The economic performance of the region, which made the whole world attentive, is completed by the beauty of nature and the quality of people. A mobility experience in this environment was a great opportunity for professional and personal development.

I conclude with the indubitable fact that the entire time spent at Vestfold University College was extremely beneficial for career development and personal advancement and also very motivating for the future.



Studying in Sweden - USAMV

Luana Andreea Simion Tudor Buhalău

Home University: University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine Bucharest

Host University: Lund University, Sweden

Name of the participant: Luana Andreea Simion, Tudor Buhalău

Faculty/Field of Study/Year: Faculty of Land Reclamation and Environmental Engineering

It happens in a certain place, at the right moment – and this is how a story begins. Listen, evaluate and decide on the spot. So it happened, one day, in April, that I left from the faculty, cultivating Hope. Some formalities followed, under the guidance of Mrs. Ecaterina Stefan, our Erasmus coordinator. She also gave us tips during mobility, whenever we had some concerns.

So we arrived in Sweden. When we started our courses, we made acquaintance with our new colleagues, teachers and with a different education system.

I could discover at once the Swedish temper, both through their reserved behavior and through their discipline but also relaxation, self-respect and privacy emphasized by the spacious student desks. They respected conscientiously the lunch break or the ease serving coffee from their cups during classes, for instance.

We adapted quickly enough to the new situation, given that we had many activities in common, and with us there were many other foreign colleagues, the small town of Lund is mostly inhabited by students from various corners of the world.

We used to be encouraged to work in teams and to support our projects in front of our colleagues, which helped us to improve our language skills and gain confidence.

Although left for one semester, I was in Lund until the end of the academic year.

Along with the chance to support the thesis dissertation in Sweden, this gave us, of course, the opportunity to visit places we knew and reunited with friends, understand a different culture from ours, and learned to appreciate our country.



Studying in Norway - UTCN

Daniela Maria Vandor

Home University: Technical University of Cluj-Napoca

Host University: University of Agder

Name of the participant: Daniela Maria Vandor

Faculty: Faculty of Computer Science and Automation

Studying abroad was the best opportunity I had during my four years as a student at the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, Faculty of Computer Science and Automation. Being in Norway for five months was a life-changing experience, as it came with unforgettable memories, challenging situations, a lot of new things learned and many new friends.

Once I arrived in Grimstad, one of the campuses of University of Agder, a beautiful small town, the stereotypes were broken, one by one: no, it is not that cold (it is the south of Norway, after all), no, Norwegian people are not cold, they are friendly and helpful. Everyone was speaking English well and I adapted quickly to the new cultural environment.

While working on the documents for the new experience, I've noticed quite some differences between the subjects thought at the University of Agder and the ones from my home University. The difficulty level was quite high, demanding both theoretical knowledge and hands-on approaches.

I was impressed by the school facilities (I used for the first time a 3D printer!) and especially by the relationship between teachers and the students: teachers were always available, open to questions and giving extra explanations whenever needed.

Also, in two of my courses we had presentations from companies like Accenture and IBM in which they presented approaches used in their company regarding the fields we were studying for and I went to a conference for international students in Oslo. Overall, all the courses I've taken were useful

and I can say that now I have an overview on what career prospects are waiting ahead.

A great part of my experience was travelling around Norway crossing the famous Atlantic Road, driving around Lofoten Islands, feeling all four seasons in five minutes on top of a mountain, hiking with snow shoes, and, of course, seeing Northern Lights in the beautiful Tromsø, right above the Arctic Circle.



I must admit that this wasn't some fairy-tale and it came with challenges, questionable decisions, mixed feelings, insecurities, a bit of panic and so on but I am proud to say that studying abroad is something crucial in life, in the process of growing and developing as a person. I've learned so much not only professionally, but I've also learned a great deal of things about me and what I want to do further in life.

II.b. How do we increase the number and ensure quality for placement mobilities?

Student mobility for placements enables students at higher education institutions to spend a placement (traineeship/internship) period between 2 months and 12 months in an enterprise or organisation in another participating country. The question raised at this point is how International Relations Offices (further referred as IROs) should increase the number of such mobilities and how they should ensure that the students benefit of a high quality mobility.

After close observation, years of experience and consultation with the IROs from other highly internationalized universities, we came up with some recommendations that shall help each division responsible for placement mobilities offer a never-to-be-forgotten mobility to their students. The following recommendations do not constitute an exhaustive list of the actions which exist but are meant to help the divisions in charge to increase the number and ensure quality for placement mobilities.

I. HOW TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PLACEMENT MOBILITIES

To increase the number of placement mobilities, the IROs should first and foremost increase the number of offers of institutions where the students can develop their mobilities. Therefore, below IROs and the academic coordinators from departments and faculties can find some recommendations on how to increase the number of mobilities and offers.

- Sign agreements with reputable companies, institutes and different entities able to receive students for placement mobilities and create a data base with contact details that the students can use in order to facilitate them the process of application; this will offer them a large variety of destinations, fact that increases the chances that they apply for a mobility;
- Some agreements could be signed by the academic coordinators from each department, as they know the direct correspondents in the labour market in their field of expertise;
- Another way of increasing the number of host institutions is to sign agreements with companies / institutions / organizations through the assistance of partner universities from each country;
- The creation of national data base with placement opportunities (with

contributions from all the Romanian universities involved in international cooperation) will definitely increase the number of students involved in placement mobilities, as they will have a broad variety of possible host institutions;

- A good relationship with local branches of the international companies will also allow the IRO to reach easier international institutions;
- Inviting company representatives for debates will offer the IRO the possibility to create face-to-face relationships with the local and international branches of companies, which will facilitate the collaboration;
- Another possibility to increase the number of partner institutions for placement mobilities is to organize visits to companies with the participation of the academic coordinators together with the IROs;
- Study visits organized by the faculty with IROs to foreign companies is another way to allow the students get to know better the host institutions where they can organize their placement mobilities (students should pay for travel and accommodation; this visit should take place before the selection for placement mobilities);
- In order for all the students to understand the many benefits that a placement mobility has, IRO should heavily advertise the job opportunity that a placement mobility offers, among other benefits. As the employability of the graduates represents one of the main direction that the universities should follow, realizing that the placement mobility is one confirmed, clear method of obtaining a job should have a great impact on the decision making process of the students;
- Mobility as a means for the acquisition of competences such as foreign language knowledge, intercultural awareness, and other soft skills must be integrated in all marketing strategies;
- Optional training and courses (1 course / week) organized by companies in the faculty (through an agreement between university and company) will also be a method though which the students can get a sense of the real, updated requests of the labour market;

II. How to ensure the quality of the placement mobility

The overall quality of placement mobility is determined by the quality of the services offered along the three stages – before, during and after the mobility. During the pre-mobility stage students, professors or IRO should have access to information on hosting institution and the learning plan. The linguistic, intercultural and other necessary preparatory measures must take place at this stage.

Once the students are engaged in a placement mobility the home universities must ensure that they get the most of it. The invaluable horizontal and academic skills and competences to be acquired through placement mobilities by the students, need to be secured through the best-possible information services, as well as mentoring and support measures before, during, and after the mobility period.

The following recommendations do not constitute an exhaustive list of the actions which exist but are meant to raise further awareness of what quality of mobility means.

- To promote quality in mobility, the institutions must give students guidance before, during, and after mobility by taking into account tailored personal needs and recent technical developments so as to develop further mentoring, support, reintegration guidance and feedback between all stakeholders involved;
- Interviews before the mobility should be made by a representative of the company together with IRO;
- Organize monthly video conferences / Skype discussions with the companies and students who are in the mobility to ensure that both the company and the student is satisfied with the mobility;
- To ensure that the students are closely monitored and that the academic and administrative staff offer them support and mentoring, they should be motivated and remunerated (incentives, recognition at university level etc.)
- After the mobility, the student should be ensured with full equivalence for the mobility (ECTS recognition). After the mobility experience there are several relevant issues to be considered, among them recognition, reintegration into the study, research and the study or work environment at home.
- It is also important to commit people to share their mobility experience with those who are going to become mobile and also those who may not have a chance to embark on an international experience (“internationalization at home”)
- Another way to ensure that the students gain experience and knowledge during their mobility is to develop joint collaboration between professors and company representatives for thesis / master dissertations so the

- student can do the placement in the institution also for research;
- Feedback during mobility from the student and the employer must be periodically requested by the IRO and the academic coordinator.

Liechtenstein - more than just a financial paradise - ULBS

Sara Timariu

Home University: “Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu

Host University: University of Liechtenstein

Name of the participant: Sara Timariu

Faculty: Faculty of Letters and Arts

“Travelling is the only thing that money can buy and makes you richer” they say. Well, I can confirm that spending 9 months as an intern at the University of Liechtenstein, going up and down that road that you can see in the picture has definitely made me richer. Liechtenstein or the so much used abbreviation FL is definitely not the most popular destination for the typical mobility experience but everything that differentiates it from the mobility experience sticks with you for longer than expected.

All I knew about Liechtenstein was only what Wikipedia offered and let’s face it, those are just facts and figures. But many of you know that you get to know a country when you are actually there and can breathe the air and see the people and hear their language, in this case dialect that you can only learn by hearing it and trying to imitate it.

As an intern at the International Office I discovered the university from a different point of view if you consider the fact that in my country I am still a student. I remember how interesting it felt to deal with Erasmus or EEA students since I myself arrived in FL because of a scholarship. But I worked in an office and had working hours and colleagues with whom I often drank coffee and went to different events.

But you know those times when you do not have any expectations and the experience turns out to be an unforgettable one? Well, this was one of those experiences. The cherry on the cake was that I became famous in the local newspaper. All it took was one invitation to a dance and then I did not sit down for the next couple of hours. But this was not the only time I appeared in the newspaper. Apparently, since it is such a small country, you are more likely to become a celebrity. I happened to be the subject of an article dedicated to interesting people living in FL. A friend recommended me and so I was asked a couple of questions and somebody even contacted me afterwards to tell me he had been travelling to Romania every summer even before I was born.

I stated before this was not the typical mobility experience and by that I meant the number of parties that I attended or the number of people I got to meet

in the dorms. But there was one other experience I think not many of you had during a mobility and by that I refer to hay collecting. How did I get to collect hay in the modern FL? Well, apart from its modern aspects, there are many farmers in Liechtenstein who breed cattle and in order to feed them they need to collect the hay and for this they need all the help they could get. That is why my boss decided to help one afternoon and she of course “dragged” me all the way up in Triesenberg (one of the highest placed towns in FL) where we spent several hours collecting hay in the scorching heat. But after such an experience you get to understand why physical effort can be even more challenging for us, the city kids who are used to the comfort of the city life.

Another unique experience for me was the meeting with the U.S. ambassador, Suzi LeVine. I remember we had prepared for that event for about a month before. If you see the University of Liechtenstein, you are at first surprised at how small it is (800 students). Despite that, it attracts academic staff as well as students from all over the world. The visit of the U.S. ambassador was a confirmation of that fact.

I did not choose this place, it chose me I think. And it pushed me and it forced me to open my eyes and my mind. And now I cannot get enough of what I see and understand. An EEA mobility or more likely travelling and studying will do that to you.



The Liechtenstein Experience - ULBS

Adina Fărcaș

Home University: "Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu

Host University: University of Liechtenstein

Name of the participant: Adina Fărcaș

Faculty: Faculty of Letters and Arts

I found out about the possibility of working in the International Office of the University of Liechtenstein 2 weeks before the start of the placement. This meant that I had to decide pretty much on the spot about this and that all the details and paper work had to be solved immediately and very efficiently. Both my home university and my receiving university were very operative, all the details were received on time – details regarding the grant, the interview, the acceptance, details about the residence permit, my accommodation, the grant was delivered before the departure, etc.

The UniLi has two main fields, Architecture and Economics, around 1000 students in all, including bachelor, master and PhD students. The greatest thing is the report of employees/students – 1/12! This creates a friendly atmosphere in the university, certain openness between students and teachers, and an easier approach and facilitates connections in the university. My experience in the International Office of Uni Li was a very special one. They have 3 employees – Trudi – the head of the International Office, Mirjana – responsible for the outgoing students and Simon – responsible for the incomings. Upon arrival, after I participated with the rest of the incomings at the Introduction Week, I was presented by Trudi to the rest of the employees in the UniLi, which was of great help for my future contacts with them. This



means that you are considered to be one of them, with equal rights and almost equal responsibilities.

The work I needed to do was related to the incoming students – organizing events for them, trips, thematic evenings, etc., outgoing students – helping with paper work, creating files, calling for Visa appointments, etc., updating data on the website and getting in contact with partner universities for that and organizing the Staff Training Days, which was the biggest task I had. Organizing the Staff Training Days at the University of Liechtenstein included emailing our partner universities, making the list of participants, answering individual emails, checking out the hotels that we recommended for the event, explaining how to reach Liechtenstein and the university, participating in the workshops, taking photos, filling out papers, etc. It was a great experience, with a lot to learn and lots of new acquaintances and fun. It was a real pleasure to have there Mr Daniel Mara from ULBS, who was a great presence at the Staff Training Days.

Travel a lot, speak with people from different cultures, with different incomes, perspectives on life and you can learn a lot!

In my opinion it was worth it – there’s a lot to do and see, learn and practice!

II.c. How do we ensure quality in teachers and staff exchanges?

Funding programmes like EEA Financial Mechanism and Erasmus+ offer an opportunity for professors to teach at a partner institution in one of the participating countries in Europe. These mobilities:

- Give a chance to academic staff to contribute to, and learn from, best practice,
- experience the working environment of a different educational system
- bring their contribution to teaching a course with foreign colleagues.

The grants offer professional development opportunities for academic and administrative staff to improve the skills required for their current job by participating in training in another country.

Training may take the form of: job-shadowing, attendance at workshops and attendance at staff training weeks.

The training programme could be built around:

- The transfer of knowledge and good practice
- Learning from shared experience
- The acquiring of new practical skills
- To discover new ideas for teaching and learning

These mobilities are intended to contribute to the wider internationalization and modernization strategies of the home university besides the individual’s professional development.

The main outcomes for both academic and administrative staff are the following:

- improved competences, linked to their professional profiles
- broader understanding of practices, policies and systems in education and training across countries;
- increased capacity to trigger changes in terms of modernization and international opening of the educational institution;
- greater understanding of interconnections between formal and non-formal education, vocational training and the labor market respectively;
- better quality of their work and activities with students, trainees, volunteers, young people: greater understanding and responsiveness to social, linguistic and cultural diversity; increased ability to address the needs of the disadvantaged;
- increased support for and promotion of mobility activities for learners;
- increased opportunities for professional and career development;
- increased competence in foreign languages;
- increased motivation and satisfaction in their daily work.

The World Café was an activity organized during the Workshop with the purpose of graphic recording the outcomes of the discussions which allowed us to share the group`s collective work with others.

In order to ensure the quality of the mobilities performed by the participants in the Staff Teaching Activities these measures were suggested by the participants:

- identify matching fields of expertise
- common academic ideas
- transparent and quality selection for participants based on the expected outcomes
- solid selection criteria / good motivation for planning a teaching mobility followed up by an academic result such as joint research papers, improve the current teaching topics by sharing updates and trends in the shared teaching area, improve teaching methods
- short feedback report where the beneficiary presents the outcomes to colleagues
- monitor the outcomes in time
- focus on institutional interests rather than only on personal gain
- teachers should be aware of the importance of mobilities and not relate their mobilities to financial issues, this way the number of mobilities can be increased
- a second mobility to the same university might conduct to new cooperation projects
- development of new scientific networks
- development of new teaching programmes in foreign languages
- In order to ensure the quality of the mobilities performed by the participants in the Staff training Activities, these measures were suggested by the participants:
- participation in staff training weeks, job-shadowing and trainings

- contribution to promotional materials for those going abroad
- The following measures apply for both Teaching and Training activities:
- recognition of activities / transcript of activity
- priority in selection given to young teachers and academic staff, as well as to those who haven't benefited before of a mobility
- personal development and investment in human resources
- feedback questionnaires, sharing feedback and experience
- new cultural experience and development of soft skills
- challenges in financing a higher number of mobilities
- internationalization should be prioritized by participants due to the positive effects both at personal and institutional level
- the objectives, impact and benefits of the exchange should be defined clearly beforehand
- exit comfort zone
- development of partners network
- ambassadors of home universities

International Week at LBUS

As an example of best practices in the process of internationalization, we can mention the International Week of “Lucian Blaga” University event, which appeared in a context where every year we hear great things about the Erasmus experience from our students and because every time their foreign teachers had a great contribution to their personal and professional experience, we decided to broaden up the classic framework of international education and to invite international partners to visit “Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu, to hold lectures in different field of expertise and to exchange best practices in the field of internationalization.

The first edition of the International Week of LBUS took place in 2014, followed by two more editions (2015 and 2016), where more participants from a higher number of partner universities contributed to the quality of the event and development of the internationalization concept. The edition of 2016 got together 40 participants – academics and administrative personnel- from 19 countries, who, besides their input in the internationalization of education framework within the workshops organized, held lectures in 9 fields of specialization. Also, based on the success of the first two editions, in 2016, we managed to receive financing for the event from the City Hall of Sibiu, within the Cultural Agenda of Sibiu, the International Week of LBUS being considered an important activity throughout which the society can be developed from a cultural point of view.

With a constant growing number of international guests and interest from the local students, teachers, and staff, we intend to continue organizing the International Week of LBUS event every year.

The objectives of the event are the following:

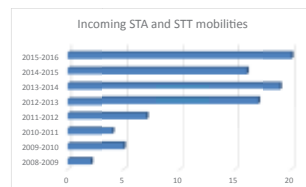
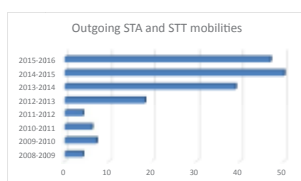
- Assure internationalization of education for the non-mobile students, through their participation in international experts’ lectures
- Increase the probability of local students to apply for international mobilities, by creating an appetite for the international environment
- Increase the quality of the incoming students’ mobilities by engaging them in international academic and social events
- Bring added value to the reintegration of outgoing students who returned from international mobilities by providing the international environment – professionally and socially – with which they were used to during the mobility
- Increase the network and strengthen the relations between LBUS and partner universities
- Develop the international education framework



Teaching and Training mobilities at UAIC Iasi

Dorina Moisa

The Faculty of Economics and Business Administration (FEBA) ranks the 1st within UAIC in terms of the number of international exchanges of all types. If in 2008-2009, there were 4 Romanian teaching and administrative staff who performed an Erasmus mobility abroad, in 2015-2016, there have been 47 persons, an increase which proves the commitment of the faculty's management board to encourage and support the international exchanges of its members. At the same time, the number of incoming STA and STT increased from 2 to 20 persons during the same reference years.



This increase can be explained through several factors:

- development of programs taught in foreign languages which ensures a greater insertion of incoming STA and STT (currently 2 at bachelor level and 3 at master level);
- development of professional networks (workshops and conferences held

at FEBA) - the faculty is a member of several networks such as ASECU, HUMINT, CEEMAN;

- professors who work with foreign students are rewarded with additional points in their yearly self-assessment evaluation form;
- professors who are involved in international activities in the faculty receive additional points during the STA selection process and are greatly encouraged to participate in staff teaching mobilities abroad;
- raise of awareness regarding the benefits of international exchanges to the academic career and personal development.
- Many new bilateral agreements have been born due to the relationships created by the STA and STT of the faculty, agreements which in their turn, brought to us new incoming students but at the same time, extended the sphere of all exchanges. I would like to point out that each increase has a ripple effect, meaning that it triggers increases in other types of exchanges.

Teaching in Norway-LBUS

Adrian Florea

Home University: "Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu

Host University: University College of Southeast Norway

Name of the participant: Assoc. Prof. Adrian Florea

Faculty: Faculty of Engineering

The professional activities started with the meeting of our host, Professor Lasse Berntzen. He presented us the campus facilities and the study and the rest of the buildings including the sports room. He showed us two important places where students learn to survive in case of natural disasters: plane crashes and fires. Then, Lasse introduced us to Professor Marius Rhode Johannensen who was my guide for the next two days. Together, we set up the schedule of the activities during the whole period of my teaching mobility. I presented my lectures for freshman students in Larvik auditorium. I was asked some questions regarding multithreading and parallel algorithms that you must write in order to increase performance of multicore architectures. We discussed topics related to Computational Thinking and to Understanding the Hardware – Software Interface in Computers science. I visited with Marius the International Office from HSN and we talked about students' concerns. Another interesting activity was related to the using of ubiquitous computing/ devices to improve the older people's life. We visited the Innovatoriet where we saw many devices created by Danish and Norwegian companies that measure a unique concentration of announcements: changing weather, morning in/out of bed, helping people in wheel chair, or people that are recovering after suffering accidents, cleaning windows and houses etc. Behind these devices, there is hardware and software intelligence, Bluetooth, wireless technology, etc. We met the director of the Innovatoriet center, Sandra

Knutson, who gave us details about the project competition in which their students took part before graduation (similar somehow to the Romanian HSE competitions).

Finally, we set work and learning contacts with University College of Southeast Norway after a fruitful professional visit. I believe that this visit was very useful and successful regarding my academic career considering the fact that together with Professor Lasse Berntzen we successfully applied and implemented the project “A Mobile Platform for Environmental Monitoring”.

Mobility in Norway - RAU Camelia Gheorghe

Home University: Romanian-American University

Host University: UiT the Arctic University Of Norway, Campus Alta

Name of the participant: Camelia-Monica GHEORGHE

Faculty: School of Domestic and International Economy of Tourism

The visit of our staff to UiT The Arctic University of Norway, Campus Alta, took place in April 2014, within the framework of EEA Grants – Norway Grants. We had decided to visit this university not only because, at that time, the institution represented a new academic partner from Norway, offering a program in the field of tourism (RAU also has a program in tourism studies), but because our colleagues from UiT had developed and implemented new curricula for bachelor and master level and we were very interested in sharing the experience and learning from their best practices. We were also interested in finding more information about how UiT is dealing with its partners from the business environment: how they select the business partners, in which way they build the relationship, which are the directions to develop the cooperation etc.

On the other hand, we had the chance to host a professor from UiT before our visit and we had discussed with that occasion about the possibility to expand the institutional collaboration between RAU and UiT.

All the time before the beginning of the mobility, we had been communicating very effectively with the UiT International Office, and, after sending our mobility program proposal, we had received the final form of the schedule, which included not only the teaching plan, but many other activities with staff and international students from different programs at UiT, visits at partner SMEs involved in the tourism industry (Sorrisniva Igloo Hotel, a hotel made entirely of snow and ice; the Alta Museum, a world heritage rock art centre, Holmen Husky Lodge etc.), discussions with staff on academic and research possibilities of future collaboration.

During the visit, besides the teaching hours, our activities included:

- Meeting administrative and didactic staff of UiT - THE ARCTIC UNIVERSITY OF NORWAY, Campus Alta;

- Evaluating the study conditions for students;
- Discussing about new opportunities for projects under Erasmus+, EEA Grants, Horizon 2020 etc;
- Discussing about following RAU events: International Conferences; International Week; Staff Training programs; Teaching Assignments etc.
- Discussing about the way the Bachelor program of Rock & Roll Entrepreneurs is organised;
- Discussing about new master programs in Tourism Management;
- Presenting studies possibilities at RAU, including the new master programs starting next academic year;
- Preparing INCOMING staff mobility;
- Preparing the student and staff mobility;
- Discussing about new study possibilities in campus Alta;
- Sharing experiences about the Erasmus Program and EEA Program.

Moreover, at the end of the mobility, a recognized professor ofUIT The Arctic University of Norway, accepted our proposal to be one of the RAU International Conference’s Keynote Speaker. The conference is entitled Management, Leadership and Innovation towards a Better Changing World, being organized in partnership with Varna University of Management (Bulgaria) each year, in November.

Teaching music – UniTBv

Alina Maria Nauncef

Home University: Transilvania University Brasov – Faculty of Music

Host University: “Conservatorio Superior de Musica de Malaga” - Spain

Name of the participant: Nauncef Alina Maria

Faculty/Field of Study/Year: Faculty of Music

An Erasmus success story is my personal experience that I had with “Conservatorio Superior de Musica de Malaga”, where I was in mobility to personally meet the Erasmus coordinator and to have a concert in that faculty, with Sara Calvo, a piano teacher that I met there. The mobility experience was a very good one and the results came instantly. Two of our students decided to go in an Erasmus mobility in Malaga in the same year (2015). Another important result of my mobility was the visit of the pianist Sara Calvo in our faculty, and another concert that we had in Patria Hall, Brasov.



Our very good collaboration didn't stop here. The next year (2016), I went again to "Conservatorio Superior de Musica de Malaga". The students I had met the previous year were waiting for me. They enjoyed my violin classes, as well as my concert. In 2016, after the concert that I had again in Falla Hall from the conservatory, I had the pleasure to meet the head of the Philharmonic Society from Malaga – a very good orchestra from that town, very well known in Spain. He asked me and Sara Calvo if we were interested to be a part of the philharmonic program for the 2016-2017 season. Of course, for us it was an honor to be invited to have a concert in a philharmonic hall abroad, especially because, usually, the artists are not invited to have concerts, they ask the director to be accepted in the philharmonic seasons. So, we accepted the invitation and we programmed the concert on 27th April 2017.

I think that, in this way, we can increase the visibility of our Faculty of Music in Europe, because the program of the philharmonic is transmitted not only in Spain but all over Europe.

Considering the vocational activities of our faculty, this Erasmus collaboration is a successful one and we hope to maintain it as long as possible, to increase visibility and achieve the internationalization of our institution.

Discovering Iceland - LBUS

Ioana Mircea

Home University: "Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu

Host University: University of Iceland

Name of the participant: Ioana Andreea Mircea, PhD

Faculty/Field of Study/Year: Service for International Relations and Community Programmes

I was selected for a Staff Training Mobility at University of Iceland. I attended International Staff Days organized in April 2016 where I had the opportunity to meet with colleagues from International Relations Offices from universities like University of Bergen (NO), University of Stavanger (NO), Universidad del Salvador (AR), Universite de Franche Comte (FR), etc.

I participated in the activities organized during the event and I assisted to presentations of best practices and new initiatives from



University of Iceland and other universities. I have also visited the University of Iceland campus, the library, the international relations office in order to receive new perspectives in managing and improving the administrative activity.

Based on the experience gathered by the mobility, I have acquired specific relevant skills for my current position at the Service for International Relations and Community Programmes, I benefited of transfer of know-how and good practices from University of Iceland and other participant universities and I have sought new possibilities in developing the existing cooperation between institutions.

Based on the activities developed during the mobility I had valuable contribution to the preparation of a new project Best Practices Exchanges for Internationalization of Higher Education financed under EEA Financial Mechanism.

Study Abroad – snippets – UAIC

Dorina Moisa

Home University: “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași

Host University: University of Liechtenstein, Liechtenstein

Name of the participant: Dorina Moisa

Faculty of Economics and Business Administration

I benefited from an EEA grant in September 2015 in the University of Liechtenstein. Even if I had known my colleagues from emails, it was such a lovely experience to get to know them personally. I participated to the International Week dedicated to their incoming students where I held a 1.5h-workshop on the topic “Study Abroad – snippets” focusing on the benefits of international mobilities to the students’ personal development. Since this is a topic very close to my heart, I was pleasantly surprised to find out that my colleagues from the International Relations office from Liechtenstein agreed to open a spot for me in the programme (which had been already set up) and had faith that everything would be ok. After my lecture, I continued to develop my personal relationship with the colleagues from Liechtenstein and it’s due to them that I made research in the intercultural communication literature.

Following my visit in Liechtenstein, we received in 2015-2016 a student from our partner university who came with a study mobility during the 2nd semester. We also concluded an Erasmus+ bilateral agreement in order to continue our cooperation. In fact, in my opinion, the EEA agreements are among the most fruitful ones since they involved all types of exchanges (students, teaching and administrative staff) and nowadays there are solid, friendly contacts between different persons belonging to the partner universities.

Staff Training Mobility – LUBS

Roxana Săvescu

Home University: “Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu

Host University: University College of Southeast Norway

Name of the participant: Roxana Florenta Savescu, PhD

Faculty/Field of Study/Year: Faculty of Engineering

Objective of the mobility: to get expertize on how the research activity within the university is supported by different administrative structures

The staff training program consisted in discussions with key resource persons in the field of research support services within the university.

I have established meetings with the following representatives of HSN: professor Lasse Berntzen, Department International Coordinator, Mikael Lagerborg, Specialist librarian, University Library, Thor Egil Eide, Special adviser, International Office, Thomas Slagsvold, Special adviser, Research Department, Thomas Brehhe, Associate Professor, University – Industry relationship, Torill Lonningdel, Manager of the Innovatory.

The meetings with these key resource people, provided the knowledge in the following areas of interest:

- How the university library is monitoring the students attendance and what activities are performed to increase this attendance;
- How the The Research Information System is organized in Norway (CRISTin);
- How the activity within the research support centre is organized: what activities and services are performed, who the users are, how to develop a network of organizations, how to obtain the funding, etc.;
- What are the human resources involved in running a research support centre (staff requirements, staff responsibilities, job descriptions, volunteer opportunities etc.);
- How is the university supporting the academic staff in the process of application for EU funded research projects (Horizon 2020);
- What technology is used in the research support centre? (databases, e-platforms etc.);
- How the research support centre is creating awareness within the groups of interests like: students, academic staff, business organizations, other stakeholders, etc.;
- How the university is managing the relationships with the industry environment; how are the local clusters administrated and what are the challenges in managing these clusters;
- How the university Innovatory Centre is working: activities performed, sustainability, relationship with the academic staff and industry representatives, projects undertaken by students etc.;
- Potential future areas of cooperation.

Overall, the staff mobility reached its objectives. LUBS will apply the information received during the staff mobility in strengthening the capacity of its Research Support Centre.

III. Improvement of services offered by IRO`s and universities

The International Relations Offices (IROs) is the division that provides services and support for international students and staff at institutions of higher education to enhance internationalization process. The size and organization of an IRO or department may vary based on the size, type, and location of an institution but, in order to offer excellent services, we hereby recommend some tips of improving services for a smooth international cooperation.

1. International officers should keep in mind that students and staff might not know some facts that are usual terms for people dealing with international projects. Therefore, in order to facilitate administrative challenges, relevant information should be made public and accessible through:

- Institutional websites – these should be clear, simple to access, up-to-date, attractive.
- Social networks – social media has become an important communication factor
- Online information related to curricula and coordinators contacts should be available
- International students guide – which should summarize relevant information for new international students studying in a totally new environment
- Orientation programs – these will facilitate the presentation of info packs, organization of cultural activities and provide information calendar of international events planned during the semesters.
- Dissemination/promotion events – such as Open Doors Events which can offer more visual reality by sharing direct experiences through presentation, photos, films.

2. Human resources are one of the most important factors for excellent international services. International exchange is facilitated by a good communication between:

- Administrative staff from home and host institutions that should be very active in the implementation and developing of international projects. For this matter, some strengths an international relations officer should own are: being open mind, good communication skills, good social skills, available for assistance when required;
- Academic home coordinators who should be able to provide correct and updated information on the host institutions by collecting and sharing info sheets. For this matter, previous interaction with the host institution is recommended;
- Academic host coordinators who have a major importance for an easy enrollment of international students;
- Student networks are very supportive when getting involved in

international actions, as buddy systems type makes it easy for international students to adapt to a new place, country, culture;

- Alumni networks can easily facilitate placement mobilities and research exchanges;
- Institutional management teams are decisional factors that contribute to the development of good internationalization strategies and implementation of international exchange projects.
- Direct contacts between cooperating institutions are highly recommended for a smooth monitoring process (before, during and after mobility). Win-to-win actions should be implemented so that all the involved parties can benefit somehow from it.

3. In what administrative assistance is concerned, a good administrative support is reflected in the process of organizing the students and staff exchanges, a clear reporting of all the activities and an organized data base of documents. For student mobilities, an online nomination and registration process is recommended as this simplifies the communication between cooperating institutions and provides transparency to the entire process by centralizing all the data. An online catalogue will also facilitate a quick access to students' transcript of records, as these are sometimes received with delay due to a great volume of paperwork. International relations services should also support beneficiaries with visa assistance, accommodation in university campus, residence permits, opening bank accounts etc.

4. International Relations Offices should periodically offer internships for students who have good language, social and technical competences to assist international officers in their activity.

5. For both international students and professors, the teaching language in classes is an important factor of internationalization. By offering intensive language classes, culture and civilization modules and, most important, full English programs university facilitate mobility exchanges and an increased number of mobility flows.

6. Foreign language competences should be mandatory for administrative staff directly dealing with internationals, such as faculty secretaries, dormitory administrator, librarians etc. As internationalization is one of the priorities of most of the higher education institutions, trainings could be organized for a better understanding of international programs and methods of good implementation.

7. The dissemination and exploitation of results will facilitate the sharing of good practice ideas. At institutional level, an internationalization board composed of faculty members dealing with international projects could meet regularly for discussing about new international project proposals and bring

contribution to the internationalization process of the institution.

8. In order to continuously improve international relations services, the feedback received from mobility beneficiaries is very important. This can be done through surveys meant to measure beneficiaries' satisfaction on the assistance received from administrative staff, academic staff, buddies, campus administrators etc. It is important that assistance is provided in a professional way.

Good practices at UCB

Andreea Mihaela CILIBIU

"Constantin Brancusi" University of Targu-Jiu (UCB) main objectives in carrying out the Erasmus + Programme are: promoting and increasing the cooperation with the European community, enhancing the number of partnerships, extending the present ones, improving quality and increasing mobility, enhancing the transparency and compatibility with the partner universities. Also, UCB aims to implement other projects under the Erasmus + Programme. The impact area covered by the university has grown from local and national, to regional and European, strategic plans foreseeing increasingly ambitious goals.

Good practices for cultural integration support

Special events are organized each semester for Incoming Students:

- Erasmus Welcome Dinner;
- Cultural trip;
- International Cultural Night (traditional food, dances, music);



Furthermore, Incoming students are involved in other cultural events at the university or municipal level. For example, Portuguese students participated in

the cultural event “6 Continents” - a cultural festival where Portuguese culture was celebrated in over 120 cities and 30 countries. This festival was held also in Targu-Jiu and Erasmus Incoming students from Portugal made a presentation about culture and traditions in their country (1-2 October 2016).

Good practices for Language support

Each semester, UCB Targu-Jiu organizes 2 intensive language courses:

- Romanian Language and Civilization for Incoming Students;
- English Language for Outgoing students and staff;



Good practices for dissemination of results

1. Organizing conferences for the dissemination of results obtained during mobilities, held at the Teachers’ Training Department: “Erasmus mobility for training and teaching - cultural and scientific issues” (25.04.2016), “Erasmus mobility - educational and cultural aspects” (14.03.2016);
2. Every semester, UCB Targu-Jiu organizes one event for disseminating information about Erasmus + Programme, within the academic community (before organizing the selection for the new semester) :
 - Erasmus Day (November);
 - Erasmus Open Doors (March);
3. Every member of the staff who has developed a mobility – at their arrival – must submit a Project regarding the implementation of good practices observed during the mobility at the host university. After a few months (in November), they are asked to present a Report

regarding the implementation of good practices observed during the mobility at the host university.

The Erasmus coordinators for each faculty collect these reports and they make that Report at the faculty level. This report is presented in Faculty Council and it is sent to the Erasmus + Office (BE+).

BE+ informs twice a year the Administration Board and the University Senate about its activity. Thus, the information received from all the faculties regarding the good practices observed and their implementation is used in those activity reports.

4. UCB makes also use of an open policy towards the society at large and mass-media, in particular. All the events organized are disseminated in the local newspaper. There were made even some TV Shows.

Erasmus student Network at LBUS

In order to develop the internationalization process of the home university, it is important for the international offices to involve the international students association in the everyday activity. The biggest European student association that supports and contributes to developing the skills of international students since 1989, is Erasmus Student Network (ESN). ESN Sibiu of LBUS, as one of the 500 sections of Erasmus Students Network, has always been involved in the international activity of the university.

ESN Sibiu directs its activity to two target groups: ULBS students who want to learn more about Erasmus+ and international students studying at LBUS through the Erasmus+ programme. In terms of promoting Erasmus +, ESN Sibiu's members took part in all the internationalization dissemination meetings organized by ULBS. Thus, in these meetings, volunteer students shared their experience in other countries, motivating the audience and encouraging students to apply themselves to international mobility. Also, in terms of Romanian students, ESN Sibiu successfully contribute to the reintegration of students who return from mobility, by involving them in various activities associated with internationalization and inviting them to be actively involved in the association. Often, they become buddies (mentors) for international students, providing support throughout the period in which they study at ULBS.

The second category of activities that is carried by ESN Sibiu aims to integrate foreign students in Sibiu's and Romanian academic communities. ESN Sibiu is the proud winner of the "Integration of foreign students in the Romanian Academic Society" award, offered by the County Department of Youth and Sport.

For nearly five years, ESN Sibiu held a series of activities for foreign students, along with LBUS. The purpose of these events is to familiarize students with the Romanian culture, bring them one step closer to the values and traditions of our country, help them feel "at home" and create a family from the group

of foreign students, which helped them, during Erasmus + mobility, to develop both individually and collectively. Every semester, international students are assigned a buddy, a mentor who is “first friend Erasmus student”. In the next period, ESN Sibiu, together with LBUS, organized the Welcome Week event, a period of about 10 days during which the students are involved in special events organized for them. Students participate in city tours, workshops and trips, participate in international dinners, receive welcome packs with Romanian products, all these activities being designed to help shaping a first impression of Sibiu and Romania.

During the year, ESN Sibiu organizes weekly events, whether cultural, sporting, social or excursions. Students also participate in three national events of Erasmus Student Network Romania, events attended by 400-700 Erasmus + students from the country.



Students Welcome Team (SWT) - UniTBv Corina Silvia Micu

The development of a coherent internationalization strategy for Transilvania University of Braşov is one of the priorities in our university's Strategic Plan for the period 2016-2020. This will contribute to the University's adaptation to the current international context of higher education, and of an ever-changing environment.

The general objective of our university's internationalization strategy is to increase the visibility at the international level, as well as to enhance the quality of the education and scientific-research processes, by extending the cooperation with relevant institutions, both from the European Union countries, and from non-European Union countries.

Some of the most important specific objectives of the internationalization strategy of our university are: stimulating the participation of the teaching staff and students in international mobility-exchanges and collaborations, increasing the number of study programs taught in foreign languages, extending the cooperation with the foreign companies in Braşov area, and

abroad, for practical placements and internship stages. We consider as equally important other aspects, such as improving the international students' accommodation process, by involving the Romanian staff and students, in the former's adaptation process to university and city life, as well as periodically organizing cultural events for the international students, with the participation of Romanian students, in order to offer them the opportunity to explore each other's culture.

The Transilvania University Students Welcome Team (SWT)

In order to help the international students (both Erasmus+ and full-time) to get better acquainted to the academic life of our university as well as to the city, the International Relations Office (IRO) from Transilvania University of Braşov founded the Students Welcome Team (SWT), a group formed of Romanian students. Their role is to assist their international peers with all administrative matters that can occur during their studying here, especially at the very beginning of their stay in Braşov, as well as being their guide through the city and Romanian language and culture! The SWT gives assistance to the IRO staff, as well, on the occasion of organizing international student cultural events.

Students from the SWT, during International Students Cultural Night Out, December 2016 (left)



IV. Internationalization at home for non-mobile students

Internationalization at home for non-mobile students is crucial for universities world-wide and international offices perform constant qualitative activities to raise the awareness of this aspect by involvement in international partnerships and projects, research initiatives, cross-border delivery and branch campuses or franchises using face-to-face or distance learning platforms. The attention to the aspects of internationalization focus on what would happen in a national campus, the intercultural and international dimension in the teaching-learning process, extracurricular activities and relationships with local cultural and ethnic community groups. By doing this, the non-mobile students will gain more experience regarding internationalization, they will develop and improve their soft skills and they increase their chances of employability.

First of all, the non-mobile students need to have access to more information regarding the international environment, as to be familiarized with the context of international education and to correctly evaluate opportunities. This objective can be achieved through the following activities:

- E-learning courses that can provide international education without leaving the home country;
- Video – conferences with international partners where the students can ask specific questions in accordance with their interest;
- Organization of networking groups, where students can interact with persons who have more international experience;
- Involving non-mobile students in cultural and academic international activities, therefore boosting their confidence in becoming mobile;
- Inviting international personalities (professors, researchers, trainers) to participate in conferences in the home university and encourage students to participate in lectures;
- Include in the curricula new courses, such as professional courses and communication in a multinational environment, in order to create a frame for internationalization as a starting point for future experiences.

Secondly, the universities should consider organizing language courses for non-mobile students as to better integrate them in the international environment and provide them the first required quality – knowing a foreign language - necessary when becoming mobile. This will also boost the confidence of the students and give them courage to apply for international mobilities.

In accordance with the need for internationalization of non-mobile students and increase the probability of them going abroad, it is crucial for the university to provide internationalized curricula and both cultural and academic international opportunities. This can be performed by creating cultural centers at the home university, where international guests, students, teachers and staff can organize cultural events and also by facilitating access

for the students to international scientific databases, as for them to be able to relate their academic progress to the international standards.

By inviting incoming students and teachers to present the academic structures of their home university, the non-mobile students can shape a first idea of the educational systems abroad. Also, the introduction of ICT and VTC training modules, can rise the chances of the non-mobile students to stay in touch with international groups.

For the development of the social and cultural framework, cultural and scientific events can be organized together with the non-mobile students and foreigners, where group discussions can be led on certain topics of interest. Informal meetings, such as work-café can be organized for exchanging information between the participants. Last but not least, seminars at home university on cross-cultural and social aspects can attract non-mobile students into developing their international interest.

The students' interactions are also important, non-mobile students having a lot to learn from already internationalized students. This can be done by involving non-mobile students in international students' association and international activities. Associations like Erasmus Student Network can give non-mobile students the role of buddy, becoming the integration support for incoming students, therefore being in permanent contact with international people.

Home universities can organize international weeks, where incoming teachers have lectures in specific fields of expertise. Through the participation in these events, the non-mobile students can internationalize their professional knowledge but also get to know certain cultures, during one week, by getting involved in cultural activities, socializing nights and trips that can be organized within the event.

Taking into consideration the fact that the modern economy is in need of higher education graduates with international awareness, intercultural competences and a deep understanding of interdependence we can suggest that higher education institutions should have an internationalized curricula – while international mobility components would remain important but optional.

Centre de Réussite Universitaire CRU - UniTBv

Luminita Parv

By analyzing the activities proposed and developed within the Academic Success Centre (CRU), we can say that they correspond to the strategic objectives of Transilvania University of Brasov, defined for the following four years (2016-2020):

- The relationship with the economic and socio-cultural environment brings benefits both for the university and the community
- The internationalization of the university by promoting strategies and measures consistent with internationalization both at home and abroad.

Project's main objective is to establish in the university a didactic space equipped with teaching resources and advanced technical equipment, in order to: modernize teaching; increase the attractiveness of the Francophone academic offer; and increase the visibility of local Francophone actions.

The university is involved as well, together with AUF, in the financing of the CRU Brasov activities. Using grant funds from AUF, the CRU network can be a good example of Internationalization at home.



International Students Cultural Night Out UniTBv

Corina Silvia Micu

The Transilvania University of Braşov organizes twice every academic year, in December and in May, a cultural event named International Students Cultural Night Out (ISCNO).

The purpose of this multicultural event is to bring together international, foreign and Romanian students, so they can share and experience each other's unique culture.

Every group of participating students, from each country, can choose to be a part of at least one of the following sections:

1. Presentation (countries/cities/home universities);
2. Gastronomy;
3. Music;
4. Specific clothing, dancing and singing.

The last ISCNO event from 2016, took place on 9th December and it was a real success, as well as the others before it. There were participating students from 13 countries: China, Germany, Greece, Italy, Moldova, Morocco, Nigeria, Poland, Romania, South Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka and Turkey. The Romanian and international students, as well as the members of the academic staff present, were very interested in the presentations, music and dance and willing to taste the delicious food brought by the participants.



The internationalization process is not a goal in itself, but a means to enhance quality of education and research for students and staff, with an important contribution to society. The most important features focus on visibility and reputation combined with competitiveness, strategic partnership development, increased attention to employability and social engagement. Internationalization strategy requires more concrete actions at the national and the institutional level to become reality:

- enhancing the quality and diversity in programmes involving the mobility of students, of academic and administrative staff;
- increasing focus on the internationalization of the curriculum;
- stimulating bilingual and multilingual learning;
- better align the internationalization of higher education with internationalization at other levels of education (primary, secondary, vocational and adult education);
- greater attention to work placements in internationalization of higher education;
- breaking down the barrier between internationalization of research and education to enhance opportunities;
- recognition of the importance of “Internationalization at home” at all levels; the inclusion of “internationalization at home” as an important pillar in the internationalization strategy;
- the development of the joint degrees which is important for the future of internationalization of higher education
- stimulating the digital learning and virtual mobility which replace traditional forms of student and staff mobility. The digital revolution can improve both quality and access to higher education. The potential of virtual mobility to realize the vision of European integration is very important. Thus, it is necessary to give increased attention to digital and blended learning as an instrument to complement the internationalization of higher education.

The role of higher education in social engagement and in the development of global and European citizenship for students and staff should not be forgotten. The internationalization of higher education can be a powerful instrument for enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. The key priority would be to maintain an open dialogue between the participants about rationales, opportunities and obstacles in this constant process of change.

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