Virtual mobility

New steps towards increasing student’s mobility

OpenUniversiteit Nederland
Objectives of mobility of students

Motivation of students to study abroad:
- to gain international experience and competence
- to approach other (often more specialised) study opportunities
Achievements – *anno 2004*

- Introduction of bachelor – master programmes
- Quality assurance / accreditation in discussion
- Frequent use of ECTS
- Recognition of degrees expected to grow significantly
- Diploma supplement introduced
- More attention for collaboration among universities
- Student exchange is increasing (however slowly)
Concern

Focus at ‘regular students’

More attention needed to:
• Life long learning
• Post experience / executive students

Inadequacy of traditional methods of student’s exchange
Forms of mobility of students

**Physical Mobility (PM)**
- on-site: physical travel & stay in a country abroad
- for limited period
- takes substantial amount of time / creates additional cost
- student experiences face-to-face activities and meetings, teaching and the everyday life of the country
- social, cultural and educational enrichment

**Virtual Mobility (VM)**
- from home, university or work place / no physical stay abroad
- no restrictions in length of time spent studying
- time and cost effective
- no face-to-face activities
- access to courses and study schemes in foreign country; communication with teachers and fellow students abroad via ICT
- educational and intercultural competences
European Virtual Seminar on sustainable development

- Charles University in Prague (Czech Republic)
- COPERNICUS-Campus (Germany)
- Czech University of Agriculture in Prague (Czech Republic)
- Eszterházy Károly College (Hungary)
- Hochschule Zittau-Görlitz (Germany)
- International Graduate School Zittau (Germany)
- Karkonosze College (Poland)
- Karlstad University (Sweden)
- Open Universiteit Nederland (The Netherlands)
- Technical University of Liberec (Czech Republic)
- University of Amsterdam (The Netherlands)
- University of Antwerp (Belgium)
- University of Bologna (Italy)
- University of Bucharest (Romania)
- University of Extremadura (Spain)
- University of Lüneburg (Germany)
- Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (The Netherlands)
- Wroclaw University of Agriculture (Poland)
- Wroclaw University of Economics (Poland)
- Wroclaw University of Technology (Poland)
Pedagogy

collaborative learning via internet
international and multidisciplinary compound groups
three phases in EVS course:
– individual: electronic learning environment and team building
– group: research proposal, research, group report, policy summary
– chat session with an EU-representative and evaluation of the course

assessment and marking:
  group products (report and policy summary) by the expert
  group process (cooperation group members) by the tutor
Content

Overall theme: Sustainable Development in Europe

Case studies

- Enlargement of the European Union and the agricultural policy. Case: Poland
- European spatial planning and policy. Case: the regions with the Mediterranean forest Dehesa
- Climate change and energy technology in industrial production. Case: pulp and paper industry
- Nature and biodiversity conservation. Case: Rumanian forests
Community

**student groups**: international & multidisciplinary (4-6 members)

**tutors**: coaching and assessing group process

**experts**: assessing group products

**institutional coordinators**: project management & formal issues
## Details of forms of VM

| International learning experience | - Discussion groups, seminars, learning communities  
| - Physical and virtual components to be combined  
| - Electronic means for communication; CSCL |
| Courses from foreign institution | - Special content or approach probably not available at home university  
| - Broader number of courses offered by universities |
| Joint courses, programmes, degrees | - Updating skills, knowledge, competencies → enhance employability  
| - Offers and courses available at DTUs  
| - European course catalogue |
| Continuing professional training | - Intercultural and complementary themes with international context  
| - Completely new course or programme  
| - Combining existing courses and materials |
Barriers to development of VM

- Legislation and public perception
  (often: no official recognition of distance learning qualifications, regarded as inferior qualifications)

- ECTS is not universally adopted, and is not yet implemented as an accumulation system

- Diploma Supplement is not universally adopted

- Higher fees charged for non-resident students
  (no Erasmus-scheme-like subsidy available for VM)

- Foreign language skills needed in reading, writing and speaking as prerequisite
## Reflection on barriers of VM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of VM</th>
<th>International learning experience</th>
<th>Courses from foreign institution</th>
<th>Joint courses, programmes, degrees</th>
<th>Continuing professional training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognition/ Accreditation</td>
<td>Integration at university</td>
<td>Agreement by faculties</td>
<td>University and national rules</td>
<td>Relevance for job/career</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECTS</td>
<td>ECTS course catalogue</td>
<td>Helps ceditation</td>
<td>Quantification; not condition</td>
<td>ECATS EuroPass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma Supplement</td>
<td>Might be included</td>
<td>Contains description</td>
<td>Demonstrating international qualification</td>
<td>Improve acceptance &amp; employability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees</td>
<td>No specific fees</td>
<td>Charging per course</td>
<td>Same price for students</td>
<td>Market prices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Most likely English – different levels of competence needed</td>
<td>Examinations: mother language, materials: different languages</td>
<td>Multi-lingual and hence intercultural communication systems</td>
<td></td>
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