
Virtual Mobility – The educational challenge of the future

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Abstract - Summary

BEST Events on Education are the fundamental building blocks of the educational programme of the Board of European Students of Technology (BEST). These events, commonly referred to as "Symposia", usually last for a week and gather twenty to thirty students from different parts of Europe to discuss educational matters.

A Symposium consists of daily lectures, which are given by professors or other professionals working closely with the discussed theme, then followed by discussion groups where each topic is handled from various aspects in order to bring up the different views of the participants. The conclusions and results of these discussions are then gathered and summed up into reports which present the opinions of the participants and offer hints or proposals on what kind of development and/or improvement could be made concerning the topic at hand. Such reports are consequently forwarded to the interested stakeholders in education, or directly presented by BEST members in educational-related conferences around Europe.

These last years, there has been a shift in the orientation of European Engineering Education. Developing a new way of thinking of the educational process as a cooperative process of the teachers and students, a process in which all participants are creating something new and in which everybody is participating became a challenging task to a lot of education related people. Active learning methods appeared to be preferred from both students and teachers and their development and application increased in the last years. E-learning methods complete that new interactive and with no doubt more effective way of teaching. Research clearly supports the widely accepted proposition that students need to do more than just listen to learn - telling is not teaching. When using active learning students are engaged in more activities than just listening. They are involved in dialog, debate, writing, and problem solving, as well as higher-order thinking, e.g., analysis, synthesis, evaluation.

BEST organized a Symposium in Bucharest under the topic "Virtual Mobility – The educational challenge of the future". The first two days were dedicated to the project ReVE when students worked on the virtual mobility. The last day, the Thematic Network EIE-Surveyor presented their project related to the Bologna Process. In this paper we present the findings of the students gathered for a week in Bucharest.

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The Outcomes from Virtual Mobility Day

The day started with a presentation of ReVE project delivered by Mrs. Katrin Bijmens and followed by Mrs. Isabel Peres presentation about Quality in e-learning and Mrs. Reetta Koski about the Virtual Mobility Manual. The Virtual Mobility Manual is a project output that includes collaboration models, agreements and guidelines that enable e-learning to really happen between higher education institutions.

The students, organised in smaller groups, discussed the different aspects of a virtual mobility course sharing their ideas and pointing out what they consider as "important" or "indispensable" when taking a Virtual course.

On the end of the parallel discussions each group presented the highlights of their discussion to the entire audience.

ReVE Project

The purpose of the Thematic Network ReVE (Real Virtual Erasmus) is to enhance the impact and the efficiency of the traditional Erasmus programs through the development and support of virtual Erasmus actions. It has two main goals: to complement the traditional Erasmus program and to embed them in the mainstream of higher education.

The expected results of the project are:

- Real working virtual mobility actions within the real environment of mainstream education of the partners;
- Concrete and validated procedures as well as recommendations at institutional, network (local as well as trans-national and European level), published in a manual about a global framework for networked e-learning, as a further development of the existing Manual for a Collaborative European Virtual University (finished cEVU project);
- Tools and techniques that support the virtual mobility actions, including training materials;
- Effective dissemination to stimulate the uptake of the outcomes inside and outside the partnership.

For more information you can check the web pages:

<http://www.elearningeuropa.info> or <http://reve.europace.org/>.

E-learning is any learning that utilizes a network (LAN, WAN or Internet) for information/knowledge delivery, interaction or facilitation. This would include distributed learning, distance learning (other than pure correspondence), CBT (Computer Based Training) delivered over a network, and WBT (Web-Based Training). It can be synchronous (real time), asynchronous (self-paced), instructor-led or computer-based or a combination. It began around 1996 with appearance of the first web courses. The most important benefits of e-learning are: - Best-of-both-worlds solutions; - Online flexibility; - Real-world interactivity; - Personalized learning. Until now university management has not been concerned with ICT and e-learning, as they did not think of it as a core

business area. But in future e-learning will tend to evolve from individual projects and experiments into an integrated feature of the universities.

Group 1

The discussion group started to define the meaning of virtual mobility for them. Students agreed that Virtual Mobility means the possibility to take an abroad course without travelling. There are several advantages of virtual mobility such as having much more easily cultural exchanges interactions between students, a very large flexibility coming with it and low costs of this mobility system. Virtual mobility can bring a development of different skills and also a huge individual progression. There can be some disadvantages also like evaluation problems of the mobility programs, some technical problems and obstacles. The availability of supervisor is another issue which can create problems. There can be also a lack of laboratories because of virtual classes.

Students had some experiences with Virtual Mobility. They are aware of Internet benefits; however nobody used virtual mobility for their degrees, even if they are aware of e-learning methods. They also agreed on that there are some challenges for Virtual Mobility such as the motivation of teachers. The evaluation process is supposed to be well defined. Related to the evaluation, accreditation is also another issue with quality of the courses.

There is another challenge between real mobility and virtual mobility. Students prefer to go abroad with real mobility. Beside the quality issues and possible accreditation problems, virtual mobility has another advantage on the technology usage. Students are already using several instant messaging programs, but then they will be aware of e-learning methods and with video conferences, the impact between students can increase more. Thus, there can be an impact on their future career.

There are several expectations on that topic from students. They are looking for the creation of guidelines for the teachers and having some cases or examples on virtual mobility available on internet. There can also be a standard for software used in different universities' same departments. So students won't have so many difficulties to learn the preferred software while having virtual mobility. They are looking for an accreditation process for Virtual Mobility and also quality insurance system for these programs.

As a conclusion, there are many differences between real mobility programs and virtual mobility programs. It is seen that now, students prefer real mobility than virtual mobility. Currently, there are very few users of Virtual Mobility. There are difficulties of implementation of the Virtual Mobility in some areas of study where especially real laboratory work is needed. As a last remark, there is a lack of experience in e-learning methods.

Group 2

When the students were asked to do a short brainstorming on what is Virtual Mobility, the first thing that came through their mind was flexibility.

One of the advantages that the students saw in Virtual Mobility is that they can study abroad even though they cannot afford to travel there, especially in the countries with small possibilities. Virtual Mobility is also good for people that work or have families and do not have enough time for school.

Some students can choose to take a Virtual Mobility course just to have access to some new equipment in a foreign university that they cannot find in their own university. One of the students talked enthusiastically about his experience on a course he did in a virtual laboratory.

In this discussion the students also learned more about the difference between virtual learning and virtual mobility.

The participants talked about how the assessment procedure should be.

In Belgium the teacher splits the students in groups and they have to assess each other in the same group. Some students would like that the teacher let them evaluate themselves, to permit them to have an active participation in the assessment process.

Students considered that, usually, the professor does not have a good overview over the level of the students he has, and does not make the exams at a difficulty appropriate to the average level. Regarding the cheating issue in Virtual Mobility courses exams the participants agreed that it is the same problem as in normal courses. If the student wants to cheat, he will cheat.

It is in the interest of the student not to cheat and have a good outcome after the course he/she has just taken.

One of the first challenges raised by the students was the lack of physical contact between the teacher and the students in a Virtual Mobility course. For several people the real contact is very effective. Many students are not used with that and could need some time to change their habits regarding this change. Video-conferences and e-mails can be useful, even though for some people a good manual or documentation is enough. But a student is quite aware of this issue when deciding to take a Virtual Mobility course. Other challenges from the side of the students would be the access to technology and the language barrier that could exist because some students do not know English or the official language of the university that well and they could have language problems while studying. Related to this issue many universities offer the possibility to study the language in a preparatory year.

The motivation of the students can be another challenge. Studying from distance, the student can lose his motivation and can start postponing most of his tasks and homework. In order to keep him motivated and aware, deadlines for homework should be put and frequently tests can be given. Making working groups for some projects can be a very effective mean of motivating the student and for personal development.

From the university side, it is easier to have a Virtual Mobility course because it is saving money. The university will not have to worry about the accommodation of the students.

Professors could use some extra-trainings before teaching in a Virtual Mobility course. Before taking this responsibility the teachers have to be sure that they have enough time to spend for this course because it could

be more demanding than it seems. This type of course also needs some special preparation from the professor's side. They should have different standards for these courses.

Participants discussed about the advantages and disadvantages of Virtual Mobility courses compared to classic Erasmus courses. That system will save money and time, while Erasmus courses offer a very useful experience.

Most of the participants did not know for sure whether they have an association responsible for accreditation in their country or not, but most of them agreed that there should exist a European accreditation system common to all European countries. In many cases, when returning from an Erasmus students have to take the same exams they took in the other university, just because their home university does not recognize most of those courses. Other difficulties appear for the students before going on a Erasmus, when they have to choose only the courses accepted by their university so they will not have to take the same exam twice.

Virtual Mobility courses can be a useful experience, because they can help the student develop new skills like team work skills. Through these courses the student can contact other people from all over Europe attending the same course. They can also learn about new technical tools used for communication between people in different locations, tools like flash meetings, writely, video conferences. The student can study new subjects and learn how to work using wiki.

For the university frameworks and these courses, the outcomes depend on the students and also on the teachers. Both of them have to reach in the end the same framework, learning becomes e-learning and eventually e-learning becomes learning again. In order to achieve the goals of these courses the frameworks and the models should not change in order to standardise everything.

Now it is quite early for universities and these courses to have the same frameworks, but in time this issue would be solved. There should be created a European standard, but this could be very hard to achieve.

The universities have the potential to reach the same frameworks, because most of the students and professors are quite aware of the developments in education and are willing to solve the nowadays issues and reach the same standard all over Europe. Right now most of the universities in the European Union are dealing with this and it is considered that this will be solved until 2010. Soon universities will go in the same direction.

The biggest obstacles encountered by universities while implementing these courses and e-learning can be the financial problems and some old fashion professors that do not agree with these necessary changes.

In order to implement e-learning programs there should be an agreement between universities because you cannot start this process from a single university. An important measure is to try to convince the students that it is not necessary to have a real contact with the teacher. Professors should also be trained on how to make an e-learning course.

The Virtual Mobility manual presented to the participants is considered a powerful tool. For this manual the students' input is very important, because the students are interviewed in order to improve it and also the students can login on the web site of the manual and add pages or give comments on

a forum. The idea of an online manual is very good because it is quite easy to access any chapter and the hyperlinks make it even faster and easier to use.

The students can also promote the idea and the manual among their colleagues or even show it to their professors.

Group 3

The students started the discussion sharing their own idea about what a Virtual Mobility course is, via brainstorming. They discussed possible examples, how to play a Virtual Mobility course, how to implement it and which areas would be possible to implement on their point of view. During this brainstorming session many of students pointed out doubts concerning the differences between e learning and a Virtual Mobility course. The resulted definition was: E-learning program to take lectures abroad on higher education having a European quality accreditation and direct recognition from their own university. To finalize this introductory point to the discussion the students talked about actions on their educational institutions about this topic, mainly e-learning courses like:

- TOEFL (Test Of English as a Foreign Language) – worldwide taken via internet;
- Serbia: researches about efficacy of e-learning in medical field;
- Sweden: language courses online;
- Italy: Computer Science undergraduate degree online and
- Macedonia FYR: Java programming courses online.

Having the definition of what is a Virtual Mobility course helped the students to point future challenges to implement the courses. On their point of view the main challenges are access to resources; agreements between universities; evaluation; laboratories (e.g. engineering courses); localisation (language, academic calendar) and level of difficulty.

They mainly focused the assessment issue, it was considered the biggest challenge in a virtual mobility course implementation, how to evaluate a student?

Afterwards the students pointed the advantages/disadvantages of taking a Virtual Mobility course in comparison to mobility courses. As advantages they focus the students' self-responsibility implicit on the learning process. The time flexibility and the freedom of choices were pointed as well. The students found the lack of physical socialization between students and the lack of a physical experience including the social and work adaptations process as a disadvantage when taking a virtual mobility course instead of a regular mobility course.

For this group the criteria for a high-quality virtual course are: interaction between students; interaction between students and teachers; teachers support during the course; dynamism; creativity and support from the universities.

The quality of the Virtual Mobility courses can be improved by improving the interaction among students and teachers, by gathering all the feedback and points of view in order to develop and improve the courses. The university support is essential but the enthusiasm and the motivation that a

teacher teaches and a student learns was defiantly pointed as the most important issue regarding the quality issues in virtual mobility.

The last point of the discussion focused the Virtual Mobility manual; the students shared their thoughts and ideas after having contact with the manual. They found that the manual could be more of value, having more examples and including implementation of potential problems on it. Enabling the access to the interested teachers to implement a virtual mobility course, promoting the manual and helping the stakeholders to disseminate the manual in course design and teaching in order to have a most value, fast and efficient implementation of the courses.

The Outcomes from Case Study Day

The session started with a short presentation on the basics of the scenario typology as identified by REVE consortium (Remote access interaction scenario, Franchising interaction scenario, Coordinated federation interaction scenario, Joint course offering interaction scenario, Course adaptation interaction scenario). The presentation contained also guidelines on course design like the main phases of designing a course and the e-learning issues that have to be taken into account when designing a Virtual Mobility course.

Students were divided in 3 different working groups with the aim of creating a virtual mobility course on a given scenario. The technical resources mostly used by students in their work were the Virtual Mobility Manual and the valuable input from one of the professors.

Group 1: Remote access interaction scenario

The group had the benefit of very useful information, valuable questions and support from the professor who indicated the students the steps they have to take in designing a Virtual Mobility course in the terms of the remote access interaction scenario.

First the students identified the stakeholders and the typical activities needed to offer a joint learning activity in a Virtual Mobility way and discussed about the interaction among stakeholders concerning the coordination of the activities.

Following the guidelines offered and the identified stakeholders (provider university, consumer university, students, teachers, administrators) the students decided the hypothetically Provider University Chairies University, Bucharest, the Consumer Universities Polytechnic University, Milan, IUFN member (International University Furniture Network) and Skopje University not a member of IUFN and the title of the course "ADVANCED CHAIR DESIGN".

Passing to the next step, the recurring phases as they were identified in the manual, announcement, preparation enrolment, registration, learning, result registration the students found some specific details and aspects which they considered important and emphasized them in their presentation. For the announcement phase, more exactly for the promotion of the course among the consumer universities students believed that it is very important that the provider university has a certain peculiarity (it should be relevant for the course, like in students' example, the provider university was awarded the Nobel Prize for Chair Making, had tradition in chair making, was known as a very innovative leader in chair design).

The promotion itself in students' opinion would be made by contacting the European University networks and also by sending emails and calling the universities interested in Virtual Mobility (part or not of a network). The promotion among students would be made with posters, web page advertisements in the students' mailing list, local presentation by coordinators.

During the process of preparing the course students agreed on the fact that is very important to have a certain procedure describing how stakeholders work together in order to provide students with teaching and learning.

In selecting the participants for the course the decision concerning the acceptance criteria were made according to the degree of the target students, so in our case (an advanced course) it was previous knowledge on CAD and materials sciences. The selection criteria were used to ensure the fact that participants have the necessary information and the same knowledge level.

The main learning objectives students found as desirable and achievable throughout their course were learning advanced design technologies, receiving expert teaching and international working groups.

Moving on to the design of the actual course, students structured it in two parts, one about the history of chair design (seen as theoretical part) and the other one a project (with the concept and guidelines given by the Professor, seen as a practical part). For the theoretical course the tools and techniques that would be used are presentations and pictures, live lectures with web-camera and taped lectures, cultural research about famous chairs of each students' countries, and discussion forum. On the other hand the project concept includes more human contact considering there will be created groups of 3 people from all 3 universities involved and they will have to work together, sharing their ideas and views about the project. At least one contact with the professor every two weeks is compulsory so that the professor can give input and suggestions about the students' work and also establish deadlines. As working methods for the project concept students thought about using remote 3D CAD software for drawing and for opinion sharing modules and messaging programs.

For students' assessment there will be used a portfolio type of evaluation consisting of individual evaluation about the theoretical part and group evaluation about the whole project and individual evaluation about the contribution of each student in the project.

The implementation of the course would bring together two of the newest teaching methods e-learning and project based learning apparently considered very valuable and useful by students.

As a conclusion from the designers of the course the REVE manual and the scenarios included can be considered guidelines for organizing virtual mobility courses and also a useful tool regarding virtual mobility and its possibilities in general.

Group 2: Franchising interaction scenario

The students in the group seemed enthusiastic and motivated to accomplish their work since the beginning. They had the help and the support of two professors (one from ReVE and one from EIE-Surveyor) and two members of the Educational Committee, who guided them while taking care of their project. The distributed the tasks for this project to 2 teams of 3 students each.

From the beginning the group made a plan of their work and established their objectives. According to them one of the main objectives is to learn how to team work on international level. Their other objectives were concerning more the personal development side like being able to make their own decisions, being able to share ideas with students and teachers from abroad and also to use acquired knowledge in real projects.

Regarding the media and technology issues appeared the group had several ideas on how to implement a Virtual Mobility course. They considered that the lectures should be published on the internet and that a shared information system like text messaging, forums, mailing lists, video conferences, should also be used. The development of special software for this course is needed, and also special equipment like webcams and microphones is required.

The use of mailing lists is to inform students on homework, deadlines, important news and exams. The main purpose of forums is to host discussions between students and professors in order to make easier the communication between them. If needed, real time services can be used.

For making the structure of the course the group chose as an example a course on Industrial Management that will last for 12 weeks. The lectures would be in electronic format and there would be weekly real time contacts with professors. The students attending this course have to do personal and team work in parallel, and can use forums for communication.

The evaluation also should be more complex so that the grade should be as relevant as possible for the knowledge of the student. The group decided that 50% of the grade should be for the teamwork projects. The presentations of the projects would be made through video conferences. 30% go for monthly personal homework that will consist of exercises and case studies. The weight of the final written exam consisting of theoretical issues would be 20% of the final grade.

The duties of both the provider and consumer universities were established, after an assumed agreement between them. The provider university should come up with the technical support, the environment and the materials needed for the course, and also it has to take care of the teachers training. On the other side, the consumer universities would have to evaluate the students, do the tutoring of the students and also to promote the course among its students. From both universities there should be contact persons related to the course who can give more information and help interested students.

In order to improve the quality of the course the feedback from students to consumers and from students and teachers to provider should be considered. To obtain them it should be made questionnaires to evaluate the professors, the course and the learning environment. Using the feedback and the new knowledge after every course an update should be made for the next course. Training and bringing new tutors to the course is a good way to improve the course and keep it actual.

The problems that could appear were also discussed. One of the most important ones was the language barrier. Many students and professors have problems with speaking English. Before giving the course the teachers should have English language training. One of the criteria for selecting students for the course should be the level of English knowledge of the student. Because many universities have different calendars, students could

have several problems having two different schedules to follow, so a standardization of the calendar between the universities would be welcome.

Group 3: Joint Course Scenario

In this scenario, the agreement for the Virtual Mobility is done between 3 departments. One department is the provider and two others are consumer universities. The name of the course is "Methods in Bioinformatics".

The learning objectives and outcomes definitions are defined as the effective management of biological information through the usage of Internet databases and current software. The appropriate media and technology selection is done. On that field, an internet connection, specific software tools and interaction platform are the "must" part of the courses because of 3 Video conferences which will be organised later on.

The design of the content and activities are done with defining the methodology. So the student's evaluation will play also a key role for the development of the course. For the content, it is a task of the provider university. For that scenario, the department of genetics of Uppsala is the provider one.

The reading materials will be provided by consumer universities. The materials can be in the format of video, text, some links to different databases.

During the course, there can be introductory essays and on the methodology of the course, it is defined several working groups from the second half of the course and tutoring sessions (once in two weeks). What is aimed in methodology is creating some interaction activities among students of the three universities.

The students' evaluation is one of the key tasks of the course. There can be homework once in two weeks as local evaluation. To evaluate students, an online testing is also a solution. Results can be sent to provider of the course. So the evaluation contains tests, assignments and projects. The participants can use forums and chat to exchange information.

The delivery of the course will be for one semester and the support will be basically via support responsible or supervisors. Each consumer can have up to 20 students and in each university, there can be up to two tutors per university. This means that there will be up to 10 students per tutor. One assistant per university can be assigned for the course and there can make consulting sessions once in two weeks. However, for that type of course, students' guide including exercises, reports, deadlines, dictionary, help for software, and so on is another must.

The technical support will be provided by the tutor and he/she is responsible to organise a student training at the beginning of the course. Beside the tutors, there is a need for technicians also.

The assessment of the course will be done by students, tutors and assistants from provider and consumer universities.

Finally, the maintenance of the course will be provided after having the assessment results with the maintenance, there will be a revision of the materials and procedures, and the last but not the least, there will be a revision of the methodology.

The Outcomes from EIE-Surveyor Day

This last day of discussions was entirely dedicated to EIE-Surveyor Thematic Network proposes. The two present experts from EIE-Surveyor presented the Thematic Network and delivered a presentation about the discussion topics that was followed by discussion sessions.

The discussions were focused on quality in European Education Area and mobility, the students presented the outcomes of the discussion on a debate model were each group present their arguments to the entire audience.

EIE-Surveyor

EIE-Surveyor- reference point for electrical and information engineering in Europe- has as objectives producing reflection on generic competences and subject-specific competences in Electrical and Information Engineering (EIE), the implementation of quality assessment methodologies on some educational resources available in EIE, as well as reflection and proposition of a methodology for accreditation, in order to enhance comparability and common certification procedures and proposition of a census of the existing curricula in EIE in Europe, the multinational degrees, and the situation of the implementation of the Bologna-process in EIE, at the bachelor, master and PhD levels.

EIE Surveyor targets through these objectives professional engineering associations, Life Long Learning institutions, students, teachers, learners and accreditation boards.

The expected outputs are updating of the monograph on the degrees and international degrees available in EIE in Europe, guidelines for contents as generic competences and subject-specific competences in EIE, emitting a guideline for a proposition for an accreditation methodology, together with a census on existing accreditation boards and methodologies, mediatheque of selected pedagogical resources available in EIE, with a quality assessment.

These are to be achieved by application of the tuning methodology to EIE, to identify competences, observatory on the degrees available in EIE in Europe, and state of the implementation of the Bologna-process, quality assessment of some resources in EIE available through internet, analysis of existing accreditation procedures, proposition of a methodology.

For more information please visit the website:

<http://www.eie-surveyor.org/>

Group 1

The harmonization of the curricula degrees on a European level was pointed out as priority issue especially in what concern mobility programs. The harmonization of the curricula degrees will increase the quality of a mobility program. A university will understand easily witch disciplines the students should have to take, integrating students in a most appropriated program adapting it properly to each student needs. The typically bureaucracy normally associated to mobility programs will decrease and will bring a lot of benefits for the ones who wish to work abroad.

To achieve a European harmonization of the curricula would cause complicated difficulties. It is an issue that is not even easy to deal in a national perspective since there are huge differences between educational institutions inside the same country. At an international level would cause much more obstacles. It was focused by the participants that these issues can be able to set up and implement in technical areas, although in humanistic areas will be much more complicated.

A common strategy respecting the countries differences should help to create a statement that should describe what the students need to be an engineer. This statement should traduce the quality in European education area.

For quality assessment for European education it is important to create a common framework taking into account the quality of pedagogically and technical issues. An independent body should resolve that assessment, evaluating the students and companies feedback and comparing models, structures and laboratories, emphasising the importance of research.

The most relevant aspects emphasised by students when they plan to make a mobility program are:

- Culture;
- People;
- Financial status;
- Fees and
- Social part.

The major difficulties that a students can find when taking a mobility program are related with the technical differences, cultural and social habits, customs differences, language, university bureaucracy and integration.

The students found the web portal interesting and a very useful tool, they considered the content of the university program as important information available but not enough. It was also considered crucial available areas:

- Frequently asked questions area;
- The contact information of contact person of the different education institutions;
- Links to the universities, so that the students could reach the programs at the host university web page;
- Social aspects and
- Contacts of students that took part in a mobility program in that university.

However students found this project complicated in what concerns updated information; they have some doubts if the universities will update the information frequently.

Group 2

The discussion session started with talking about the quality of the curricula on European level. The students thought that it could be difficult to reach harmony when considering the curricula at the European level. Difficulties can occur even in the same country, especially when students want to enter to a master program on another field than their previous studies. A common problem that rises is recognition of the credits.

For quality assessment of European education it is important to know how many students get employed in their field after graduating and also how attractive is the university for foreign students. Also the quality of laboratories is an important factor when evaluating the universities.

In order to achieve the quality it is first important to make a survey about what kinds of problems the university is facing. Beside internal evaluation the evaluation should also include opinions from the people outside the university in order to get more objective results. It would be good if universities would have a persons employed who are working on the quality issues and on issues how to improve it.

The quality of the education is important when selecting the university to study abroad. Taking the mobility abroad depends also on the fee of studies and agreements between the universities. Most attractive places to go and study abroad were named to be Northern Europe, Netherlands, Germany, but also southern countries. Studying in another continent like in Japan and New Zealand is also considered if there would be a possibility to get a scholarship.

When sharing the opinion about the United States (US) educational system compared to the European one, it was pointed out that students have quite often lack of information about studies in USA. The European programs are promoted much more. It also depends on the university. Some universities have partner universities outside Europe and also exchange programs to those universities.

Raising awareness about mobility programs like Erasmus among students depends in a great extent on a university. In some universities they are promoted by flyers, posters and with info meetings. In some universities the students get e-mails about studies abroad and also information from Erasmus students themselves was considered as a good promotion. However, it was pointed out that the information about mobility programs could be more visible. In some cases you really have to know where to look for the information. The promoting materials should be clear and simple. The main information should include the application deadline and link to the web page, where more information is uploaded.

Getting accepted to Erasmus program can be complicated for many students. The grades and language skills are one of the main things evaluated in the acceptance process. Some universities have even their own pre-selection procedures due to high number of applicants. The grant amount given to students can also be in accordance to the ranking of students who want to go and do the mobility course. Quite often students must find extra funding in order to go abroad.

The general opinion about the questionnaire that is worked out by EIE-Surveyor, in order to get feedback from students about the mobility, was

that it needs further work. The formulation of the questions could be improved. Especially the question about if the student has ever done a mobility course was not clear. Moreover, the structure of the Erasmus questions should be changed. It should be clear if student speaks about "yes" and if "no" to the asked question. The standardized answers should end with a box where a student could "add something else". Sometimes it was hard to see where to put crosses.

Students were positive about the web portal tool, which would present all master programs that are part of the Bologna Process. However, there were doubts about whether it would really work out since the programs can change often and updating of all changes can be difficult.

Credits

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