



Enhancing Intercultural Learning in European Enterprises

Newsletter

September 2016

Who is EILEEN?

EILEEN stands for Enhancing Intercultural Learning in European Enterprises. EILEEN is a 2-year project (01.09.2014 - 31.08.2016) funded by the ERASMUS+ Programme. The project seeks to promote intercultural competences and a welcoming culture in European enterprises.

The Europe Union is making significant efforts to eliminate the barriers to labour mobility. However, most of the enterprises in European countries do not necessarily have the essential intercultural know-how for receiving employees with a different cultural background. At the same time, often the foreign employees are not ready to face the challenge of working in a different country, and encounter difficulties in identifying the new cultural paradigms, accepting the differences and acquiring cultural knowledge.

Given this context, the EILEEN project team has developed training modules on intercultural topics both for multipliers in European enterprises and for young people that are ready to do an internship abroad. Both groups will be trained on how to cope with cultural diversity at the workplace.

The competences (e.g. intercultural, entrepreneurial and mentoring competences) acquired by both groups will be validated and documented through the innovative LEVEL5 methodology developed by the network REVEAL (www.reveal-eu.org), aimed to promote, visualise and validate informal and non-formal learning.

EILEEN Final Conference in Athens



The EILEEN consortium organised its final conference on 09.09.2016 in Athens. The conference offered a platform to present all main outcomes of the project and to discuss changes and challenges of intercultural teams in European enterprises. In various workshops some of the EILEEN outputs were presented and tried out.

The highlight was certainly the award ceremony. During the conference the award winners were celebrated and presented their trophies and certificates. The main prize of the award was the trip to the final conference. The winners were given the opportunity to present their projects to the audience.

The three winners are:

- Swiss Approval Technische Bewertung S.A., Athens, Greece



- Intermobil – Intercultural competence training for SMEs hosting European mobilities, Erasmus+ Project, presented by FH JOANNEUM, Graz, Austria
- EasyDoesIT, presented by G. Anna Rodriguez, Marseille, France

Find out more about their projects at:

http://eileen-eu.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Award_winners_all.pdf.

Experience on the practical phase

The practical phase of the EILEEN involved all partners in the selection, training and preparation of young people seeking an internship abroad and matching them with business based mentors in a receiving country. Following comprehensive training via the EILEEN online platform and some face to face input, participants were encouraged to further develop their intercultural competences in a real-time business environment. This was to be facilitated via a number of learning projects carried out by participants during internships abroad. At the end of the training period, the aim was to evidence and authenticate the newly acquired intercultural competences of all participants (Interns and Mentors) using the innovative LEVEL5 system for validating informal and non formal learning.

Feedback was gathered from all involved parties and findings were reported by each partner in a national report that highlights lessons learnt, obstacles, challenges and recommendations.

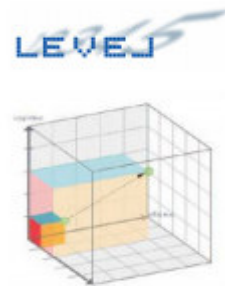
The outcomes and results of the EILEEN pilots demonstrate that overall the project has been successful in achieving the key activities. More than 100 learners registered on the e-learning platform and took one or more training modules. In all there were 24 learning projects where participants benefited from access to the EILEEN learning resources and applied their newly acquired knowledge in a learning project. As a result, they gained a deeper knowledge and experience of interculturalism and its value in the workplace.

All partners reported that it was more difficult to involve learners from the business community than young people. It is necessary to take into consideration that as a group, they seem to be less familiar with online learning and very few had accessed a Moodle platform before. This lack of experience together with time constraints in many cases, influenced their readiness to get involved in a learning project. Nonetheless they provided a number of positive comments and feedback.

The number of participants who validated their competences through the LEVEL5 system was fewer than anticipated – it was above all the group of young interns who demonstrated an interest in reflecting on and assessing their competences. However, we are now in a better position to understand the reasons for this and take the necessary steps towards increasing participation.

Similarly, evidence across the partnership suggests that commitment to cross border internships amongst employers could be greater so we need to focus more on employer engagement promoting tangible benefits for the companies.

Despite the difficulties encountered in engaging large number of employers, the EILEEN pilot has undoubtedly improved the experience of internship for trainees, raised awareness of intercultural issues with a large number young people and local business communities and





crucially, improved the intercultural understanding and competence levels across a broad spectrum of project participants. EILEEN thus leaves a valuable legacy for the future of intercultural learning across Europe and beyond.

Please find more details on our website:

<http://eileen-org.eu>



Project Partners



Coordination

BUPNET GmbH, Göttingen, Germany
www.bupnet.eu



Apricot, Loughborough, UK
www.apricot-ltd.co.uk



CATRO Bulgaria EOOD, Sofia, Bulgaria
www.catro.com



CECE, Madrid, Spain
www.cece.es



INSUP, Bordeaux, France
www.insup.org



OCEAN, Athens, Greece
www.oceanorg.gr



Materahub, Matera, Italy
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Time4Society, Mechelen, Belgium
www.time4society.be



Sociedade Portuguesa de Inovação

SPI, Porto, Portugal
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