

# ERASMUS CONSORTIA PLACEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Raffaele LONGO

Conservatoire of Music, COSENZA

## 1. Introduction: a few general definitions

This presentation aims to describe:

- the LLP Programme called Erasmus Consortia Placement and
- the network “ARTS – Art’s Role in Training for Students”, a consortium headed by the Conservatoire of Cosenza (Italy).

A consortium placement aims to widen and enrich the future employment possibilities of students across the EU countries through the development of targeted educational traineeships.

In this way it is a powerful platform to build and shape professional skills while promoting the knowledge of foreign cultures. In addition trainees, upon return to their home country, will value and give feedback on the experience thus strengthening the feeling of belonging to a common geographical area and common educational, cultural or economic space.

This will lead to a relaxation of the boundaries in the intercultural debate.

Firstly, the text will guide the reader through a few general definitions of the framework which supports the Consortia Programme. Then it will outline the aims, the strategy and the importance of the Erasmus Consortium Placement “ARTS – Art’s Role in Training for Students”. After that the work will show you the partnership, activities, results and the mean data of the first three years of Consortium activity (2008 – 2010).

We can start by looking carefully at four general concepts:

- Knowledge Economy
- Placement
- Enterprise
- Consortia

**1.1 The knowledge economy (Lisbon Strategy)** is focused on the production and management of knowledge within the framework of economic constraints.

In a knowledge economy, knowledge is a product, not a tool: the real infrastructure is the mind space dimension of the people.

The knowledge economy highlights the connections among learning processes, innovation and competitiveness, and is primarily based on intangible assets, know-how and specialized skills.

**1.2 Placement** (“learning by doing”) means spending a period of time (between 3 and 12 months) in an enterprise or organization in another Member State, supported as appropriate by preparatory or refresher courses in the host language or working language, with a view to helping individuals adapt to the requirements of the Community-wide labour market, acquire a specific skill and improve understanding of the economic and social culture of the country concerned in the context of acquiring work experience.

**1.3 An Enterprise** is any entity engaged in an economic activity in the public or private sector,

whatever its size, legal status (form) or the economic sector in which it operates, including the social economy.

This includes, in particular, self-employed and family businesses engaged in craft or other activities, and partnerships or associations regularly engaged in an economic activity.

**1.4 An Erasmus Consortia Placement (ECP)** is a group of higher education institutions who are holders of an Extended EUC (Erasmus University Charter) and possibly other organizations (enterprises, associations, chambers of commerce, foundations, etc.) working together to facilitate placements for higher education students.

A consortium consists of at least one coordinating institution / organization and one partner higher education institution.

Most consortia do not have a separate legal entity but rely on the legal entities of their members.

A consortium is headed by a Consortium Coordinator. Host organisations for student placements may be enterprises, training centres, research centres and other organisations including higher education institutions in the participating countries.

**1.5** An ECP is founded on the relationship capitals.

It needs the **Erasmus Consortia Placement Certificate**.

The ERASMUS Consortium Placement Certificate recognises the financial and operational capacity of a Consortium to organise ERASMUS student placements and apply for funding. It entitles the Consortium to apply to the National Agency for ERASMUS student placements and organisation of mobility funds.

The Certificate is awarded to a Consortium that has agreed to make every effort to ensure high quality in organising ERASMUS student placements. It is awarded by the National Agency for 1 year in a renewable 3-year period with 2013 as maximum date of validity.

Each of the higher education institution partners sending students on placement remains responsible for the quality, content and recognition of the placement.

## **2. Focus on: placement**

As already stated, placements enable students at Higher Education Institutions (HEI) to spend a placement (traineeship/internship) period of between 3 and 12 months in an enterprise or organisation in another participating country. Students can do at least two months in short-cycle higher vocational education.

### 2.1 Aims

The purpose of student placements is to:

- Help students of HEI to adapt to the requirements of the EU-wide labour market;
- Enable students to develop specific skills, including language skills, and to improve understanding of the economic and social culture of the country concerned in the context of acquiring work experience;
- Promote cooperation between higher education institutions and enterprises;
- Contribute to the development of a pool of well-qualified, open-minded and internationally

experienced young people as future professionals.

## 2.2 Papers (Documents)

- Placement Agreement (Financial Contract), covering the mobility period and signed by the student and his/ her home higher education institution
- Training Agreement regarding his/her specific programme for the placement period; this agreement must be endorsed by the home higher education institution and the host organisation
- A "Quality Commitment" setting out the rights and obligations of all the parties relating to the placement abroad.
- The ERASMUS Student Charter, setting out the student's rights and obligations with respect to his/her period abroad.
- Training Report
- Curriculum Vitae

## 2.3 Financial support (Grant)

- Students may be awarded an ERASMUS grant to help cover the travel and subsistence costs (including insurance and visa costs) incurred in connection with their placement period abroad.
- Students may get a financial contribution or a contribution in kind by the host enterprise/organisation.

## **3. The Consortium ARTS**

First of all, the acronym: **Art's Role in Training for Students.**

The main question is: why has ARTS been set up? To try to carry out one of the most important Erasmus Operational Objectives of the Lifelong Learning Programme: *increased quality and quantity of cooperation between HEI & enterprises.*

History also shows that the European musical and artistic tradition has been built on collaboration and the reciprocal exchange of know-how, traditions and creative and educational experiences. This process has resulted in a common musical and artistic identity that spread across the entire Western world. With a CP, the trainee will be offered a placement opportunity to acquire "best practice" as way to develop the specific lexical, scriptural and technical language required to progress in his/her own area of competence. As for the content, the primary objective will be the development of a cultural, artistic and musical industry. It will encompass:

- production (cinema, music, theatre, and advertising) and entertainment (audiovisual, tv, radio and new media)
- preservation and valorisation of cultural, architectonic, environmental assets and musical assets.
- understanding of the role of innovation in the area of competence as well as of the impact of new technologies on best practice.

The activity will be directly supported by theatres, orchestras, foundations, museums, festivals, associations, libraries, museums and groups of professionals from the fields of acoustics, restoration, visual and plastic arts, photography and virtual reality.

Activities will be framed so as to maximize the following indicators:

- delivery of quality (best practice)
- increased student mobility
- increased synergy education-training as well as higher education-enterprises
- increased innovation in higher education (content, process, services, pedagogic and didactic methodology) based on progress in ICT.

The ARTS network has been, up to now, a great and effective experience of institutional cooperation. This cooperation is going to be more and more decisive for the future of our institutions. In fact, the smooth collaboration, among the coordinators of each institution involved in ARTS, has allowed us to use all the grants from our National Agency to the Consortium ARTS. These outcomes, and of course the development of a wider network, have led to an increase in all the ARTS resources, especially financial resources.

In fact having witnessed the good experience of the Consortium, the Executive Board of our Higher Education Ministry has agreed to co-fund ARTS activity in the future. All of us are very glad about this very good news, which promises well for our development in the near future.

Among the 8 Consortia approved by the Italian National Agency, ARTS is the only Erasmus Consortium Placement headed by a Higher Education Institute of Music: the Conservatoire of Cosenza.

### 3.1 ARTS categories.

#### 3.1.1 Aims.

To link academic institutions and enterprises to promote the integration of students in the EU-wide labour market.

In fact, ARTS aims to widen and enrich future employment possibilities of students across the EU countries through the development of targeted educational traineeships.

It is a powerful platform to build and shape professional skills while promoting the knowledge of foreign cultures.

ARTS will also evaluate and obtain feedback on the experience acquired by trainees upon return to their home country, thus strengthening the sense of belonging to a common European geographical educational, cultural or economical space.

Boundaries will thus gradually dissolve in the intercultural debate.

#### 3.1.2 Strategy: possible success factors:

- sustainable cooperation between HEI and enterprises is an explicit mission of the Higher Education Institutions
- career incentives for teachers involved in this ‘non-academic’ activity
- staff (teaching and administrative) involved in cooperation with enterprises
- creation of companies (spin-off?)
- involvement in local / regional development

## 3.2 The role of ARTS:

### 3.2.1 for students

familiarising students with the world of work

enhancing employability

- improving foreign language competence
- promoting inter-cultural understanding and knowledge of other European countries
- contributing to the stimulation of other forms of HEI-enterprise cooperation

### 3.2.2 for enterprises

- influx of new ideas at low cost
- promoting stronger links with higher education institutions and their staff
- adding an international dimension, especially for smaller locally based enterprises

### 3.2.3 for HEI

- better motivated and competent students
- links with enterprise leading to other forms of collaboration
- improving awareness and competence of staff (teaching and administrative)
- strengthening links with the local community

## 3.3 Expected Outcomes

With ARTS, the trainee will be offered a placement opportunity to acquire “best practice” as well as to develop the specific lexical, scriptural and technical language required to make progress in their own area of competence.

Activities will be designed so as to maximize:

- delivery of quality (best practice)
- increased student mobility
- increased synergy education-training as well as higher education-enterprises
- increased innovation in higher education (contents, processes, services, pedagogic and didactic methodology)

## 3.4 Partnership

– Conservatoires of:

Cosenza (Coordinator), Frosinone, Modena, Monopoli, Napoli, Pescara, Vicenza

– Organisations:

Cosenza Local Public Authority, Cosenza Enterprises Association

## 3.5 Some enterprise partners of ARTS

We perfectly agree with Günter Verheugen, Member of the European Commission Responsible for Enterprise and Industry who stated that enterprises are the engine of the European economy. They are an essential source of jobs, create entrepreneurial spirit and innovation in the EU and are

thus crucial for fostering competitiveness and employment. They aim at promoting entrepreneurship, investment and growth. Listening to enterprises is a key towards the successful implementation of the Lisbon goals.

The following are enterprise partners of ARTS:

Wiener Staatsoper	Vienna
Deutsche Oper Am Rhein	Düsseldorf
Finnish National Opera	Helsinki
National Opera	Bratislava
Volksoper	Vienna
Bulgarian National Radio Symphony Orchestra	Sofia
Tonkünstler Orchestra –	Vienna
Orquesta Ciudad de Granada	Granada
Malta Philharmonic Orchestra	Malta
Ed Partika Ensemble	Berlin
Ensemble "La Gamba"	Freiburg
Wiener Singverein (Musikverein)	Vienna
Schönberg Chor -	Vienna
Referat Für Kirchenmusik Der Erzdiözese –	Vienna
Chorvereinigung St. Augustin -	Vienna
Nikolaikirche	Leipzig
Verein Zenith Productions	Vienna
Universitat Pompeu Fabra , Institut de l'Audiovisual	Barcelona
University Of Tromsø – Norway	Tromsø
University of Music	Riga
Real Conservatorio Superior De Musica	Granada
Conservatorio Superior de Música “Manuel Castillo”	Seville
Porgy & Bess	Vienna
ELAK Institut	Vienna
Minoritenkirche	Vienna
Dublin City Public Libraries	Dublin
Association Européenne Des Conservatoires (AEC)	Utrecht

### 3.6 Flows

academic year 2008-2009

<i>topic</i>	<i>enterprise</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Country</i>
Double Bass	Conservatorio Superior de Música "Manuel Castillo"	Seville	Spain
Management	AEC	Utrecht	The Netherlands
Violin	Conservatorio Superior de Música "Manuel Castillo"	Seville	Spain
Music Education	<i>Dublin City Public Libraries</i>	Dublin	Ireland
Singing	<i>Viener Singverein</i> Vienna	Vienna	Austria
Conducting	<i>Wiener Staatsoper</i>	Vienna	Austria
Jazz	<i>Verein zenith productions</i>	Vienna	Austria
Singing	<i>Lifelive maison de concerts</i>	Paris	France
Singing	Referat Für Kirchenmusik Der Erzdiözese	Vienna	Austria

academic year 2009-2010

<i>topic</i>	<i>enterprise</i>	<i>city</i>	<i>country</i>
New Technologies	Universitat Pompeu Fabra Institute of Audiovisual Studies	Barcelona	Spain
Choir Conducting	St Andreas Kirka	Malmö	Sweden
Band	Volksooper Wien Vienna	Vienna	Austria
Double Bass	Bulgarian Radio Symphony Orchestra	Sopia	Bulgaria
Oboe	Bulgarian Radio Symphony Orchestra	Sofia	Bulgaria
Organ	Evangelische Johannes-Kirchengemeinde -	Düsseldorf	Germany

Organ	Friedenskirche-Sanssouci	Postdam	Germany
Flute	Latvian Academy of Music - Collegim Musicum	Riga	Latvia
Oboe	Royal Irish Academy of Music	Dublin	Ireland
Clarinet	Eu-art-network (EAN)  Verein für europäische und internationale	Eisenstadt	Austria
Flute	Eu-art-network (EAN)  Verein für europäische und internationale	Eisenstadt	Austria
French Horn	Eu-art-network (EAN)  Verein für europäische und internationale	Eisenstadt	Austria

### Sources

- <http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/>
- <http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/guide>
- [www.leo-net.org/](http://www.leo-net.org/)
- *The new SME definition. User guide and model declaration*, Enterprise and Industry Publications