

Supportive management with a well-defined strategy to embed internationalization

WP2A

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Group 1 Main points (question 1 *Why would you want to become a real international VET institution?*):

- Increase the European perspective
- Internationalization attracts students; prestigious
- Learn how to work with others, even in your own country

Group 2 Main points (question 2 *What do you need to become this?*):

- Good organization regarding policy plan, management, commitment, dedicated teams and funding
- Internationalization at home; embedding activities in control/steering documents, for example curriculum
- Important to decide how to measure impact indicators

Group 3 Main points (question 3 *Share your best international experience with staff. Why did it work?*):

- Supporting management
- Having a strategy with mandatory activities for all staff
- Job shadowing; stimulating and motivating

Comments:

The workshop attracted participants from The Netherlands, Germany, Finland, Denmark, Italy, Spain, France and Greece.

Hans Lehmann introduced the topic "Strategies for Internationalization of VET colleges" by presenting the process of internationalization at EUC Syd, Denmark. The work has been done gradually and is being revised and reevaluated every 2 years. One takes into consideration current and future workforce and the importance of globalization, not least for small countries.

Management thinks it is necessary to take people out of their comfort zone. Integrated students or foreign groups are being taught by ordinary staff.

There are many barriers, such as staff asking "why?" and the financial part too. Not to forget though, that students from abroad generate an income for the college. EUC Syd receives 250 French students per year, but also students from China and India. Selling courses to companies with interest in this part of the world is also a successful measure.

Merging the Danish and the German system would make it possible to offer a double degree.

Notes from walking around and listening to the discussion in the different three groups in our workshop:

- Often, when the initiative comes from the management; teachers are not interested.
- Example from a "European school": 180 teachers and they do have a strategy, bilateral relations and teams with team leaders and also units for learning. Management tries to form international teams. When it comes to dissemination, European schools don't have a problem as part of the concept is to report and disseminate.
- Heard sometimes as a reason not to engage in internationalization: "We don't want to skip lessons for the students."
- "Snow ball effect" when motivated staff inspires students.
- Many times, teachers in rural areas don't get much input, so job shadowing for that category could be a good idea.
- About the use of English in countries with another mother tongue: - No teacher listens when students speak English in their free time. - The teacher doesn't have to speak English in class/teach in English, but the students should use the language! -In Germany there seems to be a problem that many teachers don't want to speak English. German managers don't seem to allocate resources for internationalization; and it all starts with management; without it, teachers lose interest. But the deputies are important too as they often create structures.
- "Communication can be more than languages."
- Involve universities as they are often well organized. There are examples of upper secondary students going to university 1-2 hours/month.
- Try to find contexts (*at home*) that can foster international activities *at home* "There are people from all over the world in Denmark". Students in work practice have to be able to deal with people from other countries. "Of course, we are international; they are already international in primary school "automatically" because of exposure from different channels/areas.
- Example: Vocational teachers go to a company and initiate connection with another company.

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