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GLADE Online Counselling LAB: Demonstrator – Online events to share best practices

DELIVERABLE 4.28
MONTH 8

D4.28 – GLADE Online Counselling Demonstrator

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RATIONALE:

The social learning theories are stressing the willingness to learn from others, from peers, from models. Students, academic and administrative staff of universities are not contradicting these premises. On the contrary, they want to meet peers, want to learn from peers with different experiences, want to develop a sense of belonging and of social recognition, want to belong to a group, to a valuable community as the one of European Alliances – EC2U, in our case.

These approaches positively influence the health status and the individual well-being. Students, professors, researchers, other employees feel valued in finding similarities with their peers from the same or from other universities, in finding support and interest from their equals, in identifying models as – personas, actions, frames for personal and institutional development.

Dimensions of health and well-being - personal, professional, mental, physical, emotional, social, environmental – are reached through peer interactions, through a developmental approach of counselling and learning.

Two interactive events and a new peer counselling service – started as a pilot service in one of the partner universities – Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi (UAIC) – have demonstrate good ways of managing the right responses to the recent challenges of mobilities for studies and placements.

OBJECTIVES:

The online GLADE Counselling lab for students of all ages developed in the EC2U frame relies on the best practices of the seven partner universities – at the levels of their international relations services, of their specialised student' support services and student's organisations.

The academic and administrative staff works in all seven partner universities with at least one of the student's organisations in supporting mobility students.

Students' associations – such as Erasmus Student Network, Student's Unions, Tutors, and buddy groups – have significant experience to be shared among their peers from EC2U and valuable lessons worth to be known.

AUDIENCE:

The online GLADE Counselling lab for students of all ages will continue to address mainly to students during their international mobility in the EC2U universities for a continuously improving approach of their Good Health and Well-Being. The academic and administrative staff are indirect beneficiaries of this peer counselling and peer learning approach.

Introduction

To complement the “website access” to the Counselling Lab, two online events were organised in order to share best practices and exchange ideas in the area of international students management. The first event gathered staff from the 7 international offices in charge of welcoming international students. The second event gathered students associations from the 7 EC2U universities.

The learning outcomes will enable to improve the service offered to EC2U mobile students.

I. Event 1 - The Online Glade Counselling Lab for Students of All Ages: Peer training with and for staff

The first staff training event was organised online on the 26th of April 2021, and lasted two hours (10h-12h CET).

It was organised by the University of Iasi, leader of the Work package 4, and aimed at sharing best practices in assisting and supporting students during their mobility.

Welcome speech
Prof. Daniela Şoitu

University of Iasi
10:05 – 10:20
Norica BĂCILĂ,
International Relations Officer

University of Coimbra
10:20 – 10:35
Regina Freitas
International Office

University of Jena
10:35 – 10:50
Laura Mintstedt,
ESN – Erasmus Student Network
Britta Möbius,
International Office

University of Pavia
10:50 – 11:05
Michela Cobelli
International Office

The online GLADE Counselling lab for students of all ages

PEER TRAINING WITH AND FOR STAFF

26th of April (10-12 CET)

Moderated by
Prof. Ph.D. Habil. Daniela Şoitu

University of Poitiers
11:05 – 11:20
Sabrina Delb,
International Relations department
Olivier Herault,
International relations coordinator
at the Faculty of Literature &
Languages (outgoing students)

University of Salamanca
11:20 – 11:35
Raul Sanchez Prieto
University professor for German
Language

University of Turku
11:35 – 11:50
Kaija Kangasjärvi,
International Officer
Satu Nurmi,
International Specialist, Student
Union of UTU

Conclusions
Prof. Daniela Şoitu

A. Speakers:

- Daniela Soitu - moderator (University of Iași),
- Regina Freitas (University of Coimbra)
- Norica Băcilă (University of Iași)
- Laura Mintstedt (ESN Jena)
- Britta Möbius (ESN Jena)
- Michela Cobelli (University of Pavia)
- Sabrina Delb (University of Poitiers)
- Olivier Herault (University of Poitiers)
- Kaija Kangasjärvi (University of Turku)
- Satu Nurmi (Student Union of University of Turku)

B. Main lessons shared by the international services for students from the EC2U universities

Every university offers comprehensive and some similar services for both incoming and outgoing students, with variations and specificities that the others could use to improve their own services.

University of Coimbra

The digitalisation is implemented in relation to students, including the incoming students. The process of filling in the applications reveals the **digital and self-management skills** they have invested in. During restrictions imposed by Covid 19 Pandemic, a **buddy program** has been implemented; by this, local volunteer students helped the incoming students in social interactions and spent time together.

Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași



The online GLADE Counselling lab for students of all ages

Peer Training with and for staff

26 April 2021

Examples of best practice from UAIC



Norica-Luminița Băcilă, PhD
Inbound student mobilities
International Relations Office

The best results in relation to students performing a mobility, are reached when basic needs – as accommodation, financial security - are covered in close relation to activities enriching the sense of welcoming and the sense of belonging. This working model is also used for ensuring **equal chances to learning** for students with disabilities. A **special technology** has been acquired by the UAIC Iasi for the incoming students having sensorial learning difficulties.

For students being in depressive, anxiogenic situations, unable to cope in new cultural environments, the University Services find variate helping or support solutions. One of these is the new **peer support counselling service** involving mainly Erasmus + students and their peers from psycho-social fields and their supervisors. This acts as an intermediate, when the initial assessment suggests it, between the student in need and professional psychologist and psychiatric doctors. **Welcome Days, Intercultural Cooking evenings, Erasmus Caffè**, other common social events, **buddy programs**, drives to exceptionally good results.

University of Jena

Diverse student life

- 18,000 students; 2,500 internationals (14.5%)
- Manifold student groups, International Centre
- Student choir, University orchestra, clubs/societies, student media
- Parties, excursions, hiking, International Days and concerts, etc.
- Currently mostly virtual

www.uni-jena.de/en/studies+international

Jena University is a students' paradise. Select it and you will never regret.
(International Student Barometer)



Photos: A. Günther, S. Herold, D. Hofmann, E. Hofmann, J. Kasper, C. Worsch, pixabay

FRIEDRICH-SCHILLER-
UNIVERSITÄT
JENA

The incoming students at the **University of Jena** are welcomed by mentors (buddies, volunteers), that offer support upon arrival, provide city and campus orientation, help with documents. During the **Welcome Days**, there is an **Info Café** that offers both useful information for the incoming students, and a space for meeting and getting to know the others.

Other activities consist of **Intercultural trainings**, with the aim of relieving the culture shock for the incoming students; **Academic mentoring programme**, in which an academic and a student mentor are helping an incoming student accommodate with the courses they are taking,

and the **Intercultural Café**, which aims at familiarising incoming students with the local culture and helping them socialize.

Virtual interactions are assured through the **Facebook page for the international and incoming students**; the most experienced students share the advice or form ad-hoc teams for cultural visits, sport, and entertainment activities.

University of Pavia



The **`Digipass`** and **`Unisafe`** are projects which consist of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) with different modules for both incoming and outgoing students, with the main purpose of preparing them for the exchange experience, life in a different country and campus, life away from family and friends etc.

For peer learning, University of Pavia offers two projects, **`virtual exchanges`** and **`Unity Project`**, both online and with the purpose of offering students the opportunity to connect and learn from each other.

The University of Pavia also offers welcoming activities for students and psychological counseling services, as well as a **buddy program** for incoming students, with a matchmaking **platform** in collaboration with ESN Pavia, which also offers other activities for the incoming students.

University of Poitiers



How to improve our support ?

- Getting to know better each other with our partners
=> Meeting, e-meeting and identifying our counterpart shall help when problems surge for our students abroad
- Keeping on a « quality approach ». Each year, we try to improve our communication, our promotion, our follow-up.
Eg : updating our instruction note...
- Digitalisation : our service has launched since two years a paperless system. This proved efficient when Covid appeared one year ago to maintain at best the handling of the mobilities.
=> To follow, giving support to the students, colleagues...

In Poitiers, the incoming students are **welcomed at the train station**, then assigned **student tutors** that provide them with all needed information about the city and the university. There is also **a game** that aims at **familiarising students with the campus**.

The university also takes care of housing, immigration, and other needs the incoming students might have during their stay. The basic support is mixed with digital support for using the university' platform and socialising with other colleagues by the interactive platform.

For the outgoing students, there are information meetings before and during mobility.

University of Turku

Supporting students during their mobility at UTU

Kaia Kangasjärvi, International Office, UTU and Satu Nuora, Student Union of UTU



For the outgoing students, University of Turku offers information and Q&A sessions, support for departure, during and after the mobility.

The incoming students are welcomed and guided by **student tutors**, both for practical and administrative things they must do, but also with campus and city orientation. The university is also organising an **orientation** twice a year, with specific **information about studying and living in Turku**, and a **Welcome Fair**.

II. Event 2: The Online Glade Counselling Lab for Students of All Ages: Workshop with and for students

This workshop was organised as a special event during the second EC2U week (19/05/2021, 14h-16h CET)

The most active student associations from each EC2U university have presented, for 15 minutes, their best practices in supporting the international students during their mobility.

Registered students to the event had the opportunity to raise questions and discuss with their peers.

Welcome speech
Prof. Daniela Şoitu

University of Coimbra
14:05 – 14:15
Beatriz Gonçalves
President of ESN Coimbra

University of Iaşi
14:15 – 14:25
Iolanda Bogleş
ESN Iaşi

University of Jena
14:25 – 14:35
Laura Mintstedt & Anna Lohmüller
ESN Jena
Julia Hoppe/Lisa Kersten,
work psychology/students health
management

Q&A: 14:35 – 14:40
Screen break: 14:40 – 14:50

University of Pavia
14:50 – 15:00
Matteo Carbone
ESN Pavia



**The online GLADE
Counselling lab for
students of all ages**

WORKSHOP WITH AND FOR STUDENTS

19th of May, 14-16 CET

Moderated by
Prof. Ph.D. Habil. Daniela Şoitu

University of Poitiers
15:00 – 15:10
Saturnin Agbofoun,
Association "MAEVA",
Lina Fellah and Doriane Guion,
"Etudiant.es Relais Santé"

University of Salamanca
15:10 – 15:20
Julio Heras Dominguez
ESN Salamanca

University of Turku
15:20 – 15:30
Kaija Kangasjärvi,
International Officer

Screen break: 15:30 – 15:35
Q&A: 15:35 – 15:55

Conclusions
Prof. Daniela Şoitu

A. Speakers:

- Daniela Soitu - moderator (University of Iași)
- Beatriz Gonçalves (ESN Coimbra)
- Iolanda Bogle (ESN Iași)
- Laura Mintstedt & Anna Lohmüller (ESN Jena)
- Julia Hoppe/Lisa Kersten (work psychology/students health management, Jena)
- Matteo Carbone (ESN Pavia)
- Saturnin Agbofoun (Association "MAEVA", Poitiers)
- Lina Fellah and Doriane Guion ("Etudiant.es Relais Santé", Poitiers)
- Julio Heras Domínguez (ESN Salamanca)
- Kaija Kangasjärvi (University of Turku)
- Tiia Niskanen (ESN University of Turku)
- Satu Nurmi (Student Union of University of Turku)

B. Main lessons shared: best practices in supporting the international students

Students, administrative and teaching staff have learned from each other how to support incoming and outgoing students' integration in the EC2U universities and their cities and about new opportunity all EC2U students will have through GLADE (Virtual Institute for Good Health and Well-being): to access the peer counselling for individual and group support.

The most active student association from each EC2U university have presented, during the workshop with and for students, their best practices in supporting the international students performing a mobility, for a continuously improving approach of their Good Health and Well Being.

Moderated by the leader of Work Package 4 from EC2U, prof. Daniela Soitu (University of Iași), highly active students associations in EC2U revealed their best practices and shared their experiences. The speakers have framed a good peer-learning environment for all participants.

The student associations offer diverse services and activities for incoming and outgoing students, with a focus on the incoming. The main purpose of all activities is to support student integration at the university, also socially and culturally in the host city or country.



ESN Coimbra



Erasmus Student Network
Coimbra



ESN Pavia

**ST.E.P. ESN
PAVIA**

**Studenti Erasmus Pavia
Erasmus Student Network**

www.esnpavia.org

University of Salamanca



PRACTICAL INFORMATION FOR INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY STUDENTS

Curso Académico 2020/2021 / Academic Year 2020/2021 Servicio de Relaciones Internacionales Vicerrectorado de Relaciones Internacionales
Auto Heras Domínguez, medical student

ESN Jena

Erasmus Student Network Jena e.V. and Student Health Department

- Teambuilding Events
- Cultural Events
- Socializing Events



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UNIVERSITÄT
JENA

ESN
Erasmus Student Network
Jena

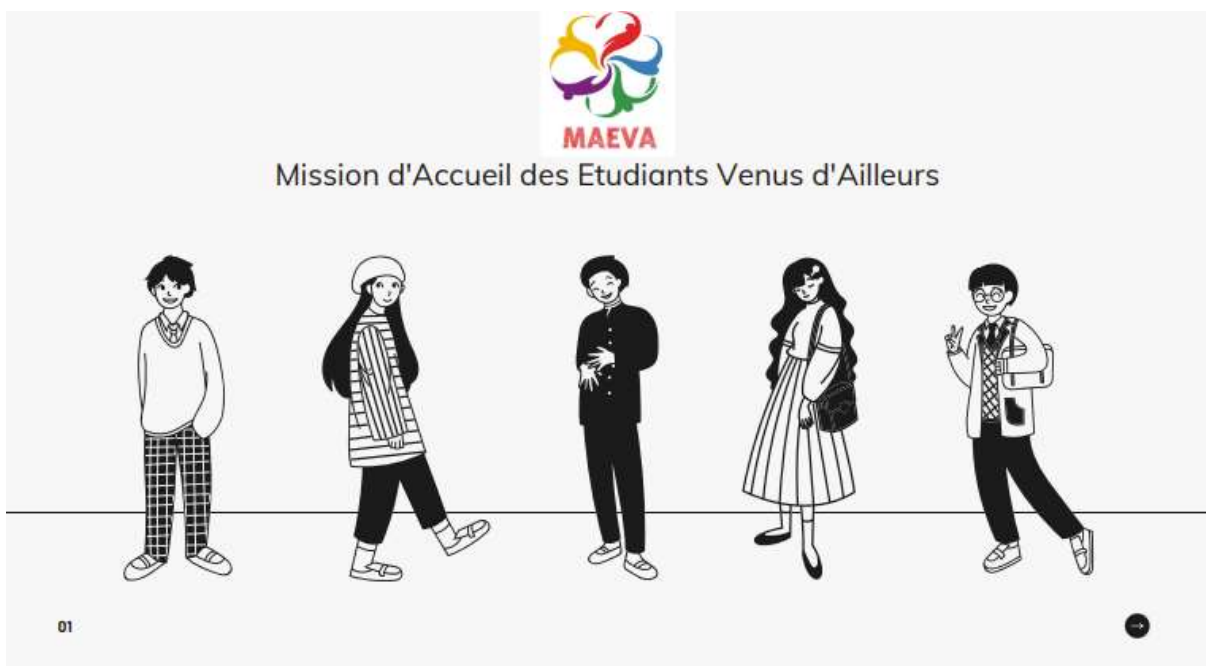
ESN Uni Turku BEST PRACTICES: Supporting international students during their mobility

ESN Uni Turku, Tiia Niskanen

In cooperation with Kaija Kangasjärvi, International Office, UTU and Satu Nurmi, Student Union of UTU



Mission d'Accueil des Etudiants Venus d'Ailleurs



III. MAIN LESSONS LEARNED

The lessons agreed and understood are:

1. The best integration of incoming and outgoing students is assured by combining the economic support to the digital academic, administrative and social platforms, and to face-to-face meetings.
2. All seven universities have developed professional psychological services addressed to students' needs.
3. All 7 partners universities have a good relationship with and empower students' associations using different types of peer helping, but not peer counselling support, as a frame.
4. Personal life skills – such as self-management, digital skills – are very important, but in crisis situations such as Covid 19 Pandemic, human interactions are needed.
5. In the universities where digital platform is very well supporting the administrative interests, the human interaction is still needed by students.
6. Either face-to-face, online or blended, peer interactions may very well assure the connectivity and individual sense of relying on her/himself.
7. A Welcome day event is appreciated but has no effects if it is the only social interaction with incoming students during the mobility.
8. Related Erasmus + projects under way are framing new additional instruments and contexts for giving the support at the time.
9. Peer counselling support gives the opportunity to learn from the most experienced and reflective ones, in a safe and healthy environment.
10. Peer counselling and future group counselling are needed new services, very well connectable to existing ones, contributing to a personalised support.

IV. CONCLUSION

All seven partner universities are offering support for departure, during and after the mobility. The concrete ways of providing such support registered similarities, but also enriching differences.

When the expectations are fulfilled and support goes beyond this expected level, the efficiency of mobility grows. The peer counselling services support the coping and learning results of the students.

For the administrative and academic staff it is comfortable to know their peers, to remark the similarities which frames a sense of belonging to one community of universities, a sense of close otherness, able to cooperate. In addition to this, a very positive competition, based on social learning from peers – staff from other six international offices from the partner universities – drives to new initiatives.

Students' networks – Erasmus Student Network, Students' unions, Student's organisations – are already formally involved in supporting their peers on various issues. The new challenges – pandemic crisis, digitization, travel restrictions, new university-cities interactions – drives to new and appropriate interactive and helping actions. From all, there are lessons to be learnt and lessons to be shared for a European Campus.

The two peer learning events – one with and for staff and one with and for students –, in addition to the pilot phase of the peer counselling (performed for only four months at this stage) - all demonstrate the value of peer learning and serves as valuable activities for the Counselling Lab in the EC2U Virtual Institute for Good Health and Well-being (GLADE).

Dimensions of good health and well-being - personal, professional, mental, physical, emotional, social, environmental – are reached through peer interactions, through a developmental approach of counselling and learning such as the one proposed through The Online Counselling Lab for students of all ages.

A close monitoring process will be performed in the following months. Results and needed adjustments will be included in the reports of *GLADE Service for a Healthy Campus Management* (months 18 and 24 of the project – April 2022 and October 2022), and in the final report.

Please note that the content of this activity / deliverable is available in the different languages of the EC2U Alliance upon request.