

CO-CREATING ERASMUS+ AND THE EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS

28 & 29 JANUARY 2020, ULB CAMPUS SOLBOSCH BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

B9 - Alliances for Innovation- Closer collaboration to develop the solutions for tomorrow's challenges

Summary of the session

Participants discussed the future action 'Alliances for Innovation' and voiced their expectations and ideas, which include a) making innovation a part of the curriculum; b) creating incentives for enterprises to collaborate with education providers; c) recognition of VET skills acquired abroad, including development of guidelines for countries for the formal recognition of skills; e) tackling skills gaps; f) spread innovation to countries with less experience or a less extensive network; g) strengthening synergies between different EU programmes; h) capacity building of National Agencies, webinars on calls, assessment of projects etc., and i) increasing the attractiveness of VET – opening pathways to higher education.

Main outcomes/ operational conclusions of the session

A) How can we promote a deeper involvement of businesses/enterprises?

- Via the so called "business playmaker"(based on a Danish model) who is employed at a municipality and in charge of establishing a link between schools or training centres and businesses.
- Promoting chambers and business involvement as a form of company branding and schools and universities as future recruitment grounds. Business should tap into the creative potential of school and university students with real life questions.

B) Can we promote better synergies between HE and VET sectors without detriment to the priorities of one or the other?

- Importance of adopting a challenge-related approach (rather than an approach based on sectors, institutional structures or level of education).
- Place sufficient significance on VET, instead of considering it a second choice.
- These forms of cooperation already exist in some countries, but the level of cooperation is vastly different from one country to the other.

C) How can we ensure a deeper involvement of VET actors and a better involvement of national or European social partners?

- Reinforcing personal contacts, partnerships and networking.
- More flexibility at the level of national and regional authorities by removing rigid structures and roles of actors to empower national stakeholders and provide the space for the development and of innovative ideas, as well as enhancing the support from these national authorities.
- The development of common European core profiles.

D) How can we deepen the synergies with ESF+, ERDF, CoVEs, European Universities, Urban Agenda?

- Offer a holistic approach – offer a certificate of excellence for good-quality projects that could not be funded in one programme, as reference when applying for ESF/ERDF or any other funds.
- Focus on applied science in higher education and VET within CoVEs (e.g. in medical sector, broad training to provide skills to operate robots and other complex machines)
- Capitalise on similar overarching priorities of Erasmus+ and ESF, ERDF.
- Establish a link with the Regional Operational Programme of the ERDF and in this context the analysis of innovation, skills gaps and labour forces movements