



Good practices guide

Implementing international activities and insuring the best welcoming for international nursing students in their clinical placements.

**ERASMUS+ Strategic Partnership Program.
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INTRODUCTION

Care For Europe is a strategic cooperation project funded by the European Commission through the Erasmus+ programme.

The project aims to contribute to the internationalization of nursing training, through quality reception and better integration of incoming students in their clinical practices. The "Care for Europe" project brings together 4 higher education institutions in 4 European countries: Croix-Rouge Compétence Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes (CRC ARA) in France, the University of Pécs in Hungary, the University of Lleida in Spain and the Laurea University of Applied Sciences (Laurea UAS) in Finland. This location of participants around the 4 corners of Europe has enabled rewarding exchanges as a result of complementary visions, cultures and care practice.

To achieve our goals, we decided to create innovative educational resources that can be used by those involved in nursing education. Among these resources, this best practice guide is particularly intended for institutions that offer a nursing curriculum, and that would like to internationalize their activities.

We have collected the good practices in place in each partner institution of the project, and we have synthesized them in a structure elaborated in common. Throughout these pages, you will find concrete examples of actions in place in our structures, which we hope can and will be able to be adapted to your institutions, to respond to internationalization strategies, and allow the nursing students and professionals involved to have enriching and successful mobility experiences.

The Care For Europe team.

PART 1

IMPLEMENTING INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES



1

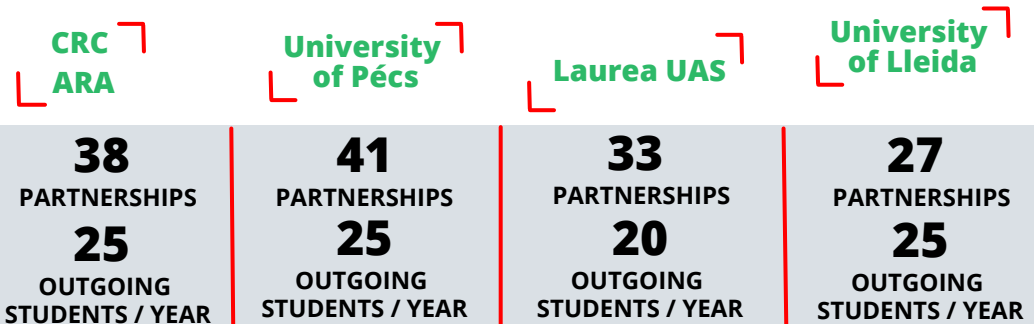
.1 THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAM

The Erasmus+ programme is the European Commission's programme for education, training, youth and sport sectors. It offers great opportunities for any institution that wants to internationalize its activities and allow students to have enriching experiences from a professional and personal point of view.

Established in 1987, it has enabled more than 10 million people to go abroad for training, study or internships in various sectors. Every seven years, the European Commission meets to vote on a new budget and decide on new transversal themes to be highlighted. For the period 2021-2027, the programme's budget amounts to approximately 26.2 billion euros. This funding will allow the development of several types of projects divided into key actions. Key Action 1 is dedicated to the mobility of individuals, Key Action 2 to what are called cooperation projects between organizations and institutions, and Key Action 3 supports policy development and collaboration. The themes of the 2021-2027 programme are inclusion, digital transformation, hybrid mobilities and ecological transition.

All the partners of the Care For Europe project are involved and active in the Erasmus+ programme on key actions 1 and 2.

MOBILITY IN NUMBERS



1.1 THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAM

To be able to actively participate in the Erasmus+ programme, institutions must follow a number of steps. First, they must apply for the European Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) by describing their international strategy and explaining how they respond to the major themes of the programme. Once the charter has been obtained, the institution can then respond to the various calls for proposals that are published yearly.

Step 1: European Charter for Higher Education (ECHE)

In order to participate in the programme's actions, the institution must submit an application that will allow it to obtain an Erasmus+ Charter for Higher Education. It is then valid for the entire programming period, i.e., 7 years.

The following institutions can apply:

- public higher education institutions
- public post-baccalaureate institutions providing higher education training
- private institutions of higher education that: provide training leading to degrees or titles that meet the provisions of articles D. 613-1 to D. 613-12 of the Education Code, provide training leading to a national diploma, within the framework of a partnership with an EPSCP (article L. 613-7 of the Education Code), or award diplomas based on articles L. 443-1, L. 443-2 and L. 641-5 of the Education Code.

In the application, the institution specifies its internationalization strategy and demonstrates the extent to which the Erasmus+ programme will serve the objectives of this policy. It undertakes to implement a series of actions to achieve these objectives. These may include mobility activities and/or strategic cooperation projects with other European institutions. By applying, the institution also commits itself to the following European requirements:

- to ensure equal opportunities for the beneficiaries (non-discrimination and inclusion)
- to ensure the recognition of the achievements of activities carried out in the framework of the Erasmus+ programme

1.1 THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAM

- to promote the implementation of Erasmus+ Digital
- to encourage participants to adopt environmentally friendly practices
- to promote civic engagement and active citizenship of participants in the Erasmus+ programme.

The call for proposals for the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education can be found on the [dedicated website](#).

Step 2: Annual call for proposals

Once the institution has obtained the ECHE, it can respond to all calls for proposals of the Erasmus+ programme. They are published every year in the Official Journal of the European Union and relayed on the websites of the Erasmus+ national agencies. The calls for proposals can be found on the Europe portal.

These calls for proposals make it possible to obtain funding for Key Action 1 and the mobility of individuals. Thus, different individual profiles of the institution can have the experience of mobility in Europe. For students in the framework of study or internship mobility, and for staff for teaching or training mobility. The funding obtained can be used over a period of 26 months. Within the framework of the project, an intermediate report and a final report must be submitted. They allow for a progress report on the actions implemented and a complete final report to detail the actions implemented and correlate them with the strategy developed in the Charter for Higher Education.

There are 2 types of mobility funding that will allow your nursing students to go to another country for an internship:

- mobility of higher education students and staff supported by domestic policy funds
- mobility of students and higher education staff supported by external policy funds

1.1 THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAM

Mobility of higher education students and staff supported by domestic policy funds:

Higher education mobilities supported by domestic policy funds allow all profiles of the institution to go on mobility in one of the 27 countries of the European Union and associated third countries: Macedonia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Serbia and Turkey. Thus, nursing students can go on study and internship mobility to enrich their career. Teachers also have the opportunity to experience teaching or training mobility in order to exchange best practices on a European scale. The inter-institutional agreements established in this framework govern outgoing and incoming mobility.

Mobility of students and higher education staff supported by external policy funds:

Higher education mobilities supported by external policy funds allow for the development of partnerships with institutions from non-associated third countries, and therefore outside the European Union. The institution that submits the project obtains funds that will finance all outgoing and incoming mobility. These partnerships are an opportunity to foster new partnerships through meetings between trainers and student mobility.

FOCUS Croix-Rouge Compétence ARA

The CRC ARA has been able to develop partnerships with several countries, and in particular deepen relations with the Mongolian National University of Medical Sciences in Darkhan (Mongolia). In this framework some French and Mongolian trainers have been able to go on mobility every year since 2014, partly thanks to the funds allocated during the call for projects in 2017. They were able to discover directly respective health systems, care structures and study referentials.

1

.2 OTHER PROGRAMS

In addition to the Erasmus+ programme, other funding programmes allow the development of partnerships in all regions of the world. These programmes can also be an opportunity to host international students within your institution. Here is an overview of the partners of the Care For Europe project!

In France, regional councils award grants to higher education students who go abroad for part of their studies. Thanks to the budget given each year by the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region, about 150 students benefit from financial aid for their international mobility. The students generally leave for 5-week internships in healthcare facilities on all continents: Togo, Benin, Peru or Sri Lanka, to name a few countries.

The students of the Laurea UAS also have several options to follow part of their curriculum internationally. The Finnish institution participates in the "European Nursing Module", a network whose "principle was to develop a Module, which could be accessed by student nurses studying within those programmes". Within this framework, it is the Laurea UAS which gives a scholarship to the students. It is also part of the Nordplus network which allows mobility between Nordic and Baltic countries. The programme provides its own mobility grants. Laurea UAS has also developed a double degree with Nazareth College (New York, USA) and several bilateral agreements with countries outside the European Union. These agreements include both outgoing and incoming mobility and thus result in the hosting of international students from all over the world.

1.2 OTHER PROGRAMS

The UdL Mobility allows academic stays in universities not participating in the Erasmus+ programme and with which the UdL has signed specific bilateral agreements for student exchange. The selected students will be able to carry out a period of studies during the academic year at the foreign higher education institution where they have been granted a place.

Some of the countries with agreements are: Andorra, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China, Chile, Colombia, or Uruguay.

Also, the JADE Internship Programme, subsidized by the Santader Group, let students from seven Mexican universities with which the UdL has an agreement, benefit from financial aid to reduce the resulting economic impact on the student.

Recently, the University of Pécs joined the European Digital UniverCity (EDUC) Alliance, together with five other European universities. This alliance offers a wide range of innovative mobility and exchange scenarios for the students, lecturers and staff of the universities involved. However, it is still a very new programme for the Hungarian university, especially for the Faculty of Health Sciences, and they are still discovering how students, especially Nursing students, can benefit from its wide range of opportunities.



1.2 OTHER PROGRAMS

In the academic year 2021-2022, the University of Pécs had the opportunity to welcome 2 students from France in the framework of the EDUC Gap Year mobility, and a call for applications has been issued for students to participate in the programme.

University of Pécs is constantly looking for new international and exchange opportunities for its increasing number of students. The Faculty of Health Sciences is also involved in customized summer and winter programmes upon request. The summer and winter courses are developed to broaden students' knowledge in their academic fields of study, but students will also gain enriching, first-hand experiences in Europe while being immersed in the unique and welcoming Hungarian culture. Customized summer and winter courses are designed to provide vigorous educational experiences in a safe, friendly environment and meet the educational needs of student groups from select partner universities. The tailor-made programmes provide students with the opportunity to combine education with cultural immersion, while earning credits towards their degrees. The length of the programmes is tailored to the specific requirements of partner universities, which can last from one to eight weeks. All participants receive a certificate of completion at the end of the programme.



1

.3 SETTING UP INTERNATIONAL SEMESTERS

In order to open the programme to as many people as possible, and in connection with the linguistic aspects inherent in the experience, it may be appropriate to open international semesters in English. This will allow students to discover a new health system even if they do not speak the language of their host country. The implementation of these specific programmes requires research in order to find places of internship that will be able to accompany the nursing students in English.

Laurea University of Applied Sciences introduced an international semester called “Mobility Window” in the autumn 2019 to promote and facilitate both incoming and outgoing student exchange.

The international semester includes theory studies, nursing skills workshops, simulations and clinical placement, and it is scheduled for the fourth semester of the nursing degree studies. Theory studies, workshops and simulations are provided in English for all students, and therefore incoming exchange students can easily participate in the studies. The studies focus on nursing care and the well-being of clients at different life stages, e.g., pediatric and adolescent, maternity and elderly care. There is also a strong emphasis on nursing care for vulnerable groups as well as multicultural nursing in the studies.

This arrangement allows incoming exchange students to study together with Laurea’s students and to go on clinical placement after the studies. “Mobility Window” has also been a recommended period for Laurea’s nursing students to go abroad. However, due to substantial reforms in Laurea’s nursing curriculum, the international semester cannot be included in the studies, as it previously was, after autumn 2022. However, Laurea is increasingly offering nursing degree programmes in English, which enables the integration of incoming exchange students in the student groups.

1.3 SETTING UP INTERNATIONAL SEMESTERS

University of Pécs Faculty of Health Sciences offers numerous full-time degree programmes for international students interested in Health Sciences. At the moment, international students can apply for a Bachelor's degree programme in Nursing, Dietetics and Physiotherapy.

At the same time, they also offer English-speaking Master's degree programmes in Nursing (Advanced Practice Registered Nurse) with Intensive or Primary Care specializations, Clinical Laboratory Research, and, from the academic year 2022-2023, they will be launching an international Master's programme in Physiotherapy. For those who are interested in academic careers, the Faculty of Health Sciences also offers a PhD in a Health Sciences Doctoral Programme. The curriculum of these international programmes is elaborated according to European standards. The Bachelor degrees in Nursing acquired at the Health Sciences Faculty are automatically accepted in the European Union in accordance with Community Law.



1 ENSURING OPTIMAL DISSEMINATION

.4 OF THE RESULTS

When an institution is involved in the Erasmus+ programme, it is committed to communicating its international policy and all actions carried out within the framework of the programme.

It is essential to promote the experiences of nursing students, both incoming and outgoing. Indeed, promoting these opportunities is a way of arousing interest in the programme among other students and making health care professionals want to welcome international students in their turn. It is also a question of highlighting the positive aspects of this type of exchange and the advantages for all parties involved, including the patients who will be in contact with the incoming students.

In collaboration with the communication department, the international relations coordinator actively participates in the creation of communication tools. Testimonials can be written and included in brochures dedicated to the institution's international activities. They can also take the form of videos of interviews with students who have experienced mobility, which are published on the school's website and also on social networks.

Events to promote mobility are a great opportunity to showcase student testimonials. Among them, Erasmus Days take place every year in October. During three days, all the institutions involved in the programme are invited to set up actions to promote the Erasmus+ programme and the richness of mobility.

Croix-Rouge Compétence ARA organizes a regional event every year that brings together all the profiles of the institution that are affected by the Erasmus+ programme: the trainers and the students planning to leave. It is another opportune moment to showcase the testimonies of previous experiences.

1.4 ENSURING OPTIMAL DISSEMINATION OF THE RESULTS OF ERASMUS+ INTERSHIPS

Newsletters are also an interesting communication tool as they can give more details about the promoted action. They can be targeted according to the network that we wish to reach: internally with the trainers and employees, and externally with the health professionals who receive our student nurses on placement.

The quality of personalized support also has an impact on the success of mobility and consequently the willingness of the students concerned to encourage their peers to try the experience. Thus, Croix-Rouge Compétence ARA has set up an international relations office composed of 14 Erasmus+ referents to advise nursing students. In the same way, within the Laurea UAS, the Academic mobility coordinator (assigned in nursing education) has an important role in communication and information. The Academic mobility coordinator works as a tutor teacher for exchange nursing students and as a link between the students and clinical placement units.

University of Pécs puts great emphasis on making students take mobility opportunities. One of the ways we do this is that we ask our students who are currently on Erasmus mobility to create content on the various social media university platforms. On Instagram, there is a takeover campaign, meaning that current Erasmus students take over the Instagram profile for one week and share their experiences and pictures from abroad. At the end of their mobility, students also have to submit a report on their mobility, and these reports are published on the mobility website of the University so that others get interested in applying for a mobility period too.



PART 2

HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERS



2

.1 IDENTIFYING RELEVANT PARTNERS

In addition to the Erasmus+ Charter, another condition for active participation in Erasmus+ mobility activities is the establishment of inter-institutional agreements. The purpose of these agreements is to regulate the terms of mobility between the partners, and to specify the incoming and outgoing flows for students and teaching and non-teaching staff. The agreements are valid for the 7-year period of the programme and must be renewed at each deadline. This is an opportunity to take stock of the activities implemented and to rebalance the flows if necessary.

Before embarking on the search for partners, it is important to clearly define the needs of the institution, according to the international policy and the objectives set out in the application for the Erasmus+ charter. It is also necessary to study the needs and sometimes the language skills of the students and staff in order to start with mobility opportunities that will allow them to have the experience of mobility without putting them in difficulty. Institutions are constantly reviewing which of their educational fields require the extension of partnerships, by taking student and lecturer needs into consideration.

In order to develop a network of partners from higher education institutions offering nursing degrees, several avenues are possible.

INTERNAL BOARD

The approach to finding a partner varies according to the organization of the institutions. For instance, the Laurea University of Applied Sciences has an International Advisory Board (IAB) which comprises international experts in higher education, whose broad expertise supports the strategic development of Laurea's operations. The advisory board offers Laurea's management advice and proposals, and supports, in particular, Laurea's internationalization and the enhancement of its R&D activities.

2.1 IDENTIFYING RELEVANT PARTNERS

ONLINE PLATFORMS

Many platforms allow universities to get in touch with each other, either to find institutions active in the field of education in Europe or directly to find partners for cooperation projects. Since these platforms are equipped with advanced search engines, it is quite possible to filter the requests by sectors and to find higher education institutions that offer nursing degrees.

The European Commission, through the Erasmus+ programme, has developed the "[Erasmus+ project results](#)" platform on which the institutions involved publish the results of their projects. It allows searching for projects by theme, and also to explore the results of completed projects. Thus, it is possible to find universities that offer a nursing curriculum, and that work on specific issues that are potentially interesting for your institution.

In the same spirit and made available by the European Commission, the [EPALE platform](#) presents project results and gives institutions the opportunity to find project partners. It is possible to filter by country, type of activity, type of organization and project period.

The [EUPartnersearch website](#) is also an interesting tool. It encourages the exchange of ideas and the development of partnerships in order to improve collaboration between European institutions as well as the exchange of good practices.



2.1 IDENTIFYING RELEVANT PARTNERS

CONTACT SEMINARS

The Erasmus+ National Agencies regularly organize "TCAs" (Training Cooperation Activities) which allow education actors in Europe to meet around specific themes, always related to the education sector. They allow for meetings and the exchange of good practices. Some events, called contact seminars, are dedicated to the search for partners and the development of project ideas. The [SALTO website](#) is a resource tool to find CAWs (Center for Academic Writing) that are likely to be of interest to your institution.

USE YOUR NETWORK

When you already have partners but want to expand your network, you should not hesitate to exchange with your contacts to get leads. Higher education institutions with nursing degrees that are involved in the Erasmus+ programme have a common goal: to internationalize the curricula and give enriching mobility opportunities to all profiles involved in these courses.

Therefore, your partner will be happy to provide you with contacts if you arrive with a specific request about a geographical area or concerning a particular aspect of nursing.

ASK YOUR STUDENTS !

Within Croix-Rouge Compétence ARA, students sometimes contact the Erasmus+ coordinator expressing an interest in a geographical area and more specifically a country or a city. They then identify a potential partner and the coordinator then takes over. The feasibility of the partnership is then studied according to the international policy developed by the institution, but also according to the curriculum offered by the institution. It is up to the educational teams to verify the relevance of the partnership in light of the various elements. Even if this way of establishing partnerships is less common, it remains a way of initiating exchanges with other universities in Europe.

And why not survey your students directly to find out what they want to do?

2

.2 REACHING OUT TO THEM

As mentioned above, it is best to define your objectives before contacting a potential partner. It is also important to find out about the university, as there may be several common curricula that would open up the partnership to other areas of training.

Depending on the size of the institution, the people in charge of developing partnerships vary. Some universities have a dedicated department, while smaller institutions of higher education employ one person to coordinate all international activities. The choice of contact person is very important because the person in charge of partnerships may be an administrative employee and will therefore not be in the best position to discuss the pedagogical issues of the partnership.

Finally, it is essential to carefully study the capacity of your institution of higher education to define mobility flows with your future partner. It is necessary to be able to respect the commitments made when the inter-institutional agreement was signed and to ensure that it runs smoothly.

Fairs are a good way to reach out to new or established partners. The International Relations Office of the Lleida University, together with University Information and Guidance service, participates in actions to promote the UdL's educational offer. For instance, during the academic year 2021-2022 the UdL has had direct presence in 5 virtual international fairs aimed at attracting students:

- Virtual Fair Study in Spain - Colombia, Peru and Ecuador.
- Virtual Fair Study in Spain - Brazil and Lusophone-speaking African countries.
- Virtual Europosgrados - Mexico.

2.2 REACHING OUT TO THEM

In addition, the UdL is also present at events in the higher education sector. For example, in virtual format during the annual conference of the European Association of International Education (EAIE) and in-person attendance is planned at the "NAFSA: Association of International Educators" conference.

At the University of Pécs, the Director of Foreign Affairs writes a letter of proposal to the international directors, centers of the given universities, offering the opportunity of a personal, online discussion about the possibilities of working together. The proposal includes a brief introduction to the programmes, along with the links to the online platforms where they can get detailed information.



2.3

EUROPEAN NETWORKS IN THE FIELD OF NURSING

European networks within the field of nursing and nursing education are potential ways of finding partners for student exchange and for other international cooperation as well. Therefore, participating in some of the identified and listed networks can be beneficial in terms of internationalizing the nursing education in your institution.

COEHRE

Learning organization concerned with issues regarding the education and training of health and social care professionals across the European Union.

EFN, European Federation of Nurses Associations

EFN represents the nursing profession and its interests to the European Institutions. Representing 3 million nurses over 36 National Nurses Associations at European Level, the EFN is the independent voice of the nursing profession.

ENNE, The European Network of Nursing in Higher Education

ENNE is the European Network of Nursing Educations at Bachelor level. The main goal of ENNE is to support quality improving innovations in nursing education and broaden students' horizons with regards to the European working environment, according to the EU/2013/55 directive, regardless of regional differences. Sharing expertise and offering joint projects are key strategies within ENN.

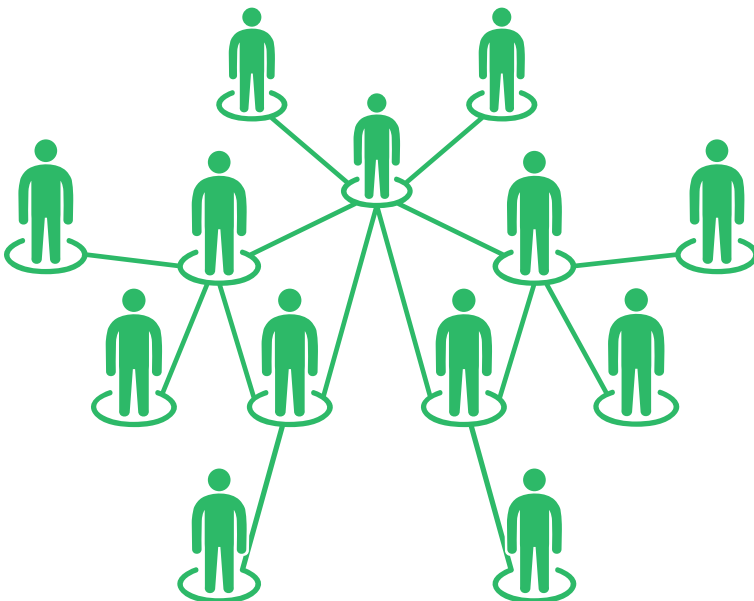
2.3 EUROPEAN NETWORKS IN THE FIELD OF NURSING

FINE, European federation of educators in nursing science

FINE is an international, non-governmental, nonprofit organization. Its mission consists in promoting excellence in nursing education, as well as nurse educators' skill acquisition and ongoing training in the countries of the World Health Organization's European region, so as to better address their populations' constantly evolving health needs.

UDINE-C

An informal professional network, created in 2007, just when the development of the European Higher Education Area was taking place, which suggested a lot of changes in the Nursing field as well. Many nurses around the world have joined the informal group. Currently, it has 47 members from 15 countries, involving 20 Universities around the world.



PART 3



CLINICAL PRACTICES NETWORK



3.1

IDENTIFYING CLINICAL PRACTICES SITES

Clinical practice is a fundamental part of nursing studies. For this, it is necessary to have direct contact between nursing faculties and health care centers at different levels, whether this be hospital or primary care. In the case of international students, this contact is even more necessary in order to be able to address specific needs and solve possible difficulties.

The development and implementation of a network of care facilities that will receive students in an internship depends on the organization of the training institute or university. As we saw in Part 2 on contacting potential partner universities, the people in charge of developing this network vary from one institution to another.

Each of the 5 training institutes of Croix-Rouge Compétence ARA has a clinical placement coordinator. In order to identify clinical placements, the coordinator takes into account feedback from different students, and is careful that the geographical localization is easily accessible by public transportation. By contacting the potential internship structure, a discussion is necessary to ensure the capacity to welcome students and the conditions of the welcome. It is also necessary to discuss knowledge of the Erasmus+ programme with the teams on site. If necessary, the Erasmus+ coordinator can meet with the health executive to introduce the programme and the benefits of hosting an incoming student. Moreover, the staff will identify professional(s) speaking other languages, or volunteer, to support the student.



3.1 IDENTIFYING CLINICAL PRACTICES SITE

At the Laurea UAS, the Academic mobility coordinator collaborates with the placement coordinators to identify suitable placement units for the incoming students. Therefore, it is very important that the academic placement coordinator receives adequate information about the incoming student's background, such as the student's completed clinical theory studies and clinical placements.

The Faculty of Nursing and Physiotherapy of the University of Lleida collaborates with the public and private health system to facilitate student placements. In the main hospital of the city, there is a person in charge of placements for Erasmus students who is responsible for guiding them and coordinating the mentors responsible for the students in each of the units. In addition, at the beginning of clinical training, there is a welcome day where everything necessary to get to know the hospital and the way of working is taught. This is adapted to the particular needs of international students, which could be language barriers or according to their studies.

The Faculty of health sciences at the University of Pécs is cooperating with numerous teaching hospitals as part of the Clinical Centre of the University of Pécs. The clinical placement of students takes place in these facilities. Besides that, it is the responsibility of the clinical placement coordinator at the Institute of Nursing Sciences to collect additional partners for internships (e.g. GPs).

Clinical teachers are important contact persons in healthcare organizations as they can also take part in finding placement units for these students. Overall, close collaboration between the Academic mobility coordinator and healthcare organizations plays an important role in identifying and finding suitable placement units for incoming exchange students. Most units are able to welcome international students as there usually are mentoring nurses speaking and understanding English fluently.



3

.2

HIGHLIGHTING THE POSITIVE IMPACTS OF WELCOMING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

During our discussions about the project and its objectives, we noticed that not all health professionals see the added value of welcoming an international student into their teams. There are several reasons for this reluctance. Indeed, some people have never had a mobility experience and are simply not aware of interculturality. Therefore, they do not know about programmes such as Erasmus+ for example. For others, they see hosting an international student within their team as an additional workload, and therefore a constraint rather than an asset.

According to the feedback of the healthcare team dealing with foreign students in clinical settings, they can benefit in improving their language skills. It can also be beneficial from an intercultural aspect. By dealing with foreign students, one can learn a lot about the culture and healthcare system of another country, or about the differences in the roles of each healthcare professional in different societies, thus, it is also a great opportunity to exchange multicultural professional experience and good practice, from which each party can benefit a lot. It supports the development of personnel cultural competence which benefits both health care teams and patients.

Working in a team with international students in it creates the possibility of making new friends, and friendly relationships that last long after the practice ends. Working with international students creates new stimuli for the hospital staff, which can be helpful in the hamster's treadmill-like work of health care professionals.

This part of the guide aims to give you arguments to support your approach to health professionals and to highlight the advantages of such an experience. They are based on testimonies that we collected from health professionals who are used to welcoming incoming Erasmus+ students for internships.

PROFESSIONAL TESTIMONIES



Jessica Couturier Blanc Lanote - France Nurse, Mentor nurse

"Welcoming Julie allowed us to have another vision about how we take care of our patients in the service because we don't practice some of our nursing care in the same way. It was very interesting to have another point of view as she frequently brought us rewarding comparisons. We also had fun together because even if we are both French speakers, each of us have different expressions to say the same thing. She taught us many things about nursing training in Belgium."

Dorina Pusztai - Hungary Nurse, Mentor Nurse, assistant professor

"It is always a good experience and a new adventure to meet new students from different countries or from different cultures. They share the structure and process of their theoretical education and their clinical placements, and they describe the similarities and differences, which we can examine in detail. During the practical classes, they draw my attention to the distinct guidelines or recommendations of certain nursing interventions that I can check for further use."



PROFESSIONAL TESTIMONIES



Sophie Dicchi - France
Health executive & internship supervisor

"Welcoming Paola was a meaningful enrichment, because first of all it is meeting the Other in all his cultural and social differences. It's also a learning experience in relation to her internship objectives and expectations, which can be different, and also personal objectives, which made it a beautiful human encounter."

Josep Maria Gutiérrez Vilaplana- Spain
Nursing Coordinator of Clinical Practices

"My experience mentoring Erasmus students has been very positive because it is a special occasion to learn from people coming from abroad, about different cultures and different ways. Most difficulties concern language. In Spain not everyone speaks English, so sometimes is difficult for us to understand foreign students, but however, non-verbal language is also useful for us. In the end we can understand each other through the use of translation devices. People are really open and are always willing to help them in order to communicate well. People are afraid of language barriers but at the end if we try it's a good experience."



3.2 HIGHLIGHTING THE POSITIVE IMPACTS OF WELCOMING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS



FOCUS CARE FOR EUROPE

A film to promote the Erasmus+ experience of nursing students

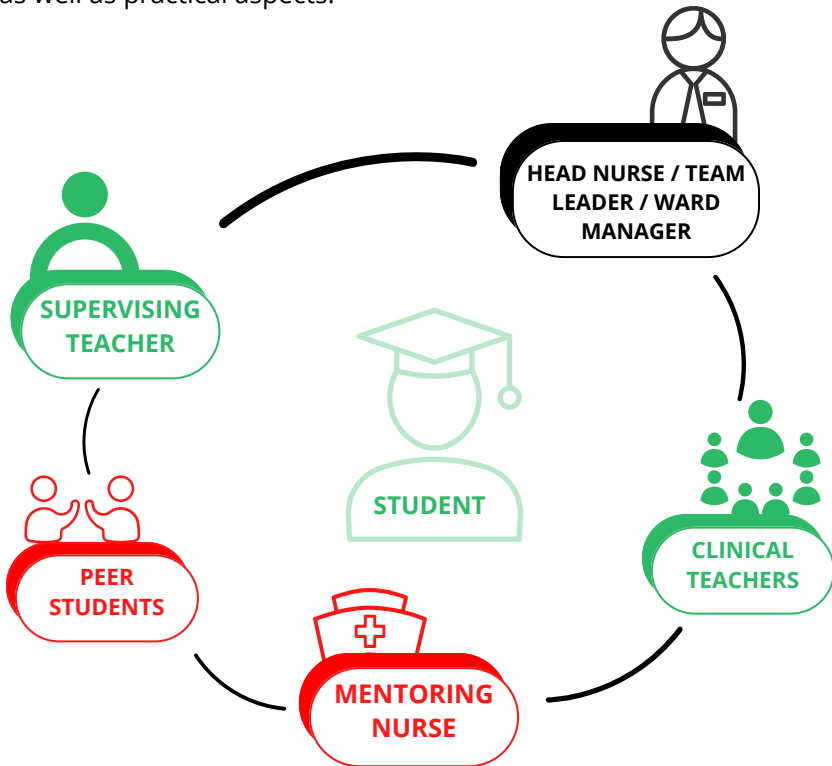
Within the framework of the Care For Europe project, we have made a film whose primary objective is to "demystify" Erasmus internships in nursing, a practice which is still too little known about by professionals in hospitals, healthcare or medico-social structures. As the lack of knowledge sometimes leads to unfounded fears, it seemed important to us to demonstrate the enrichment that this type of internship brings to all those involved (students, professionals, institutions). To do this, we interviewed incoming Erasmus+ students and tutors, as well as health professionals, who have welcomed and accompanied international students. In this film, all aspects of the mobility experience are examined: professional nursing practice and cultural competence, language aspects and more generally the benefits for the individuals and for the clinical practices involved. This film is available to all on the Care For Europe project website and on its Youtube channel. It is a relevant tool in the promotion of the Erasmus+ experience in nursing for all those who might be concerned by the adventure!



3.3

CONTACT PERSONS : MENTORS AND CARE TEAMS

It is important to set up a team within the training institution (or university) and professionals on the placement sites before mobility happens. Then it will be necessary to define and share the missions of each of the actors involved in the student's mobility, in order to cover all the important aspects such as pedagogy, or administration as well as practical aspects.



3.3 CONTACT PERSONS : MENTORS AND CARE TEAMS



Works as a student's mentor during the clinical placement and gives guidance related to the practical issues of clinical placement



The mentoring nurse is responsible for student mentoring, guidance and support in the hospital environment.



Nursing exchange students can always contact the ward manager, for example when the mentoring nurse is absent and there is no nurse appointed as a mentor.



There are clinical nursing teachers supporting students especially in bigger hospitals. The clinical teacher may be the person who welcomes the nursing exchange student to the hospital and briefly orientates the incoming students in terms of the organization and the most important practices.



Besides the healthcare and medical professionals, current students of the university are also assigned to assist the internship students during their clinical placements. Their main tasks are supporting their peer students in the hospital, and bridge the language gaps that exchange and international students might experience during the placement. They also have an important role in helping exchange students in socializing.

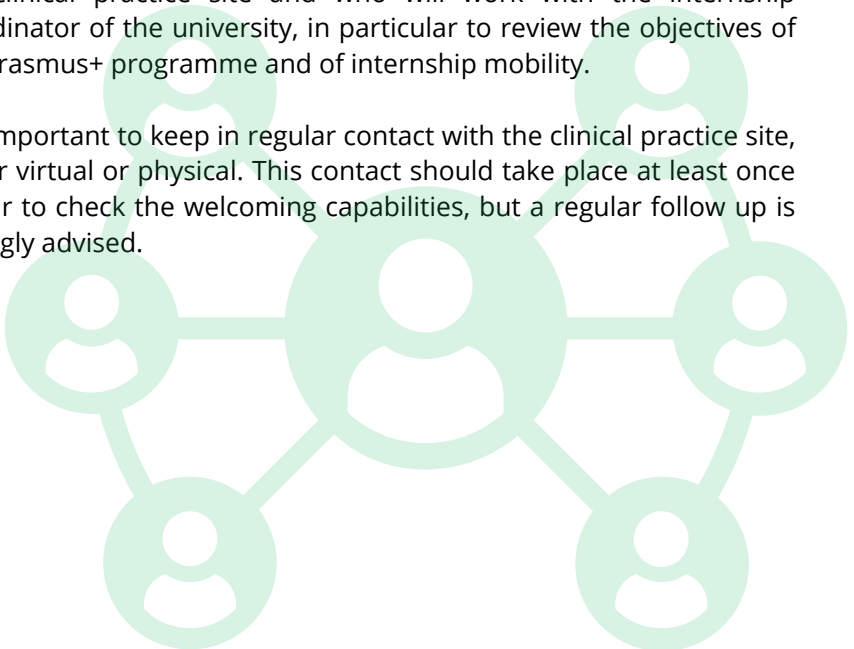
3

HOW TO MAINTAIN GOOD RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE INTERSHIPS STRUCTURE

As we have seen previously, welcoming and accompanying an international trainee can be a challenge for the tutor and the care team. This can be due to cultural differences and different professional practices, but also to communication barriers, such as different vocabulary for different care procedures for example. Thus, it is important to maintain the relationship with the internship facility in order to be part of a continuous improvement process. This will not only facilitate the integration of trainees, but also maintain the willingness of the care facility to accept trainees.

The relationship with the internship site must be approached as a long-term partnership and not as an occasional placement structure. It is essential to identify a contact person who will be the referent of the clinical practice site and who will work with the internship coordinator of the university, in particular to review the objectives of the Erasmus+ programme and of internship mobility.

It is important to keep in regular contact with the clinical practice site, either virtual or physical. This contact should take place at least once a year to check the welcoming capabilities, but a regular follow up is strongly advised.



3.4 HOW TO MAINTAIN GOOD RELATIONSHIPS WITH INTERSHIPS STRUCTURE

Before mobility, placement needs some information to anticipate the organization of the welcome: such as, the incoming student's motivations, goals, and skills. The pedagogical referent always meets the team before the beginning of the training placement with the Erasmus+ student. Clear communication with the unit ensures smooth work together. Upon the student's arrival, the educational advisor accompanies the student to meet the health care team on site to review the practical aspects and objectives of the internship. During the internship, the educational advisor is available and reactive in case of problems.

The coordinator works to find solutions and goes to the placement site if necessary. After the traineeship mobility, the students and the care team can fill out a satisfaction survey, which is a way to improve the welcoming conditions and build a strong and collaborative relationship with the clinical practice site.

At the Laurea UAS, collaboration outside clinical practices is also implemented to enrich the relationship : projects or theses are run together.

Le point rouge

SEPTEMBRE 2022
NUMÉRO 16

LA LETTRE D'INFORMATION
CROIX-ROUGE COMPÉTENCE
AUVERGNE-RHÔNE-ALPES

croix-rouge française

La filière formation dévoile sa nouvelle marque Croix-Rouge Compétence et se fédère autour d'une mission et d'une identité unique

LA FILIÈRE FORMATION DE LA CROIX-ROUGE FRANÇAISE DÉVOILE SA NOUVELLE IDENTITÉ - CROIX-ROUGE COMPÉTENCE - UNE MARQUE POUR FÉDÉRER AUTOUR D'UNE MISSION ET D'UNE IDENTITÉ UNIQUE ET RÉVÉLER LA CROIX-ROUGE FRANÇAISE ŒUVRE EN TERMES DE FORMATION DEPUIS DÉJÀ PLUS DE 150 ANS.

A travers ce nom, la Croix-Rouge affirme sa place de pionnière en matière de formations sanitaires et sociales. Elle ancre dans l'ensemble de ses activités, l'objectif constant d'un impact societal avéré. Elle s'engage notamment à professionnaliser les individus pour répondre aux enjeux de société actuels et futurs tandis que sa vision de l'évolution des métiers lui a permis d'assurer une constante adaptation de son offre de formation et une réponse adaptée aux besoins d'un monde professionnel en mutation permanente.

Un ancrage sur l'ensemble du territoire, une seule identité

Fruit du rapprochement de ses instituts régionaux de formation sanitaire et sociale (IRFSS), Croix-Rouge Compétence est aujourd'hui la révélation d'un réseau d'instituts de formation et de centres de formation qui ont œuvré pour le développement des compétences des futurs professionnels ou des professionnels déjà en poste. Sa nouvelle identité s'inscrit pleinement dans cet héritage et rassemble ces différentes structures qui ont écrit son histoire sous une seule et même marque. Cette nouvelle identité est une des pierres de l'édifice de la démarche d'évolution opérée depuis 2020.

Compétence du latin *competere* : chercher à obtenir, ensemble, se rencontrer, coïncider, s'accorder, convenir... Un nom qui porte une promesse à toutes celles et ceux qui nous choisissent : l'émancipation par la transmission de la compétence pour offrir la possibilité à chacun de trouver sa juste place dans la société et le monde.

Un outil au service de la visibilité de cette nouvelle identité

Pour accompagner sa nouvelle identité, Croix-Rouge Compétence se dote d'un nouveau site internet. Il a été conçu et adapté aux parcours utilisateurs des différents publics que nous pouvons accompagner. Son ergonomie est tout autant adaptée à la recherche d'informations sur nos formations qu'à la valorisation de la vie de nos établissements.

Mieux que des mots, allez voir par vous-même : competence.croix-rouge.fr

Croix-Rouge Compétence poursuivra son engagement à vos côtés pour former les professionnels de demain et répondre aux besoins et évolutions du secteur.

Un nom qui marque notre engagement pour un futur de collaborations fructueuses afin de construire ensemble de nouvelles capacités, utiles aux individus et à la société.

LETTRE CROIX-ROUGE COMPÉTENCE AUVERGNE-RHÔNE-ALPES 1 SEPTEMBRE 2022 # NUMÉRO 16

PART 4

WELCOMING OF INCOMING NURSING STUDENTS



4.1 BEFORE THE MOBILITY

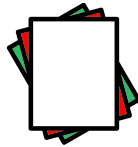
Orientation gives the first general impression about the host institution and the system in which the internship takes place. Therefore, providing students with essential information about their traineeship well before their arrival is of utmost importance.

In order to allow students to prepare their future mobility and clinical practice experience as well as possible, it is necessary to ensure good transmission of information. First of all, all useful information must be available on the website of the training institute.



FACT SHEET

Gather all useful information about the institutions including contacts or application procedures for instance



SYLLABUS

List of available courses and clinical practices for incoming students with corresponding ECTS



ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Important dates of semesters



APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS



WELCOMING GUIDE

4.1 BEFORE THE MOBILITY

In case of any questions arising when the student chooses from the courses offered, the Erasmus referent is at the student's disposal to find out more information about the course content or practice content from the institute responsible for the given educational programme. In case of practical mobility, it is an essential part of the application process to agree on the content of the clinical placement so that the clinical placement coordinator can find the most suitable place for the trainee student as soon as possible. With this in mind, it is important to clearly identify the contact person to answer students' questions. Sometimes, some universities have departments dedicated to processing applications only and these international coordinators may not be able to answer questions specific to the nursing field.

Moreover, proposing virtual activities is one of the best ways to ensure an optimal preparation of mobility and generally, allow easy integration of the students when they arrive. Those virtual activities can take several forms

For instance, the Laurea UAS is developing COIL courses with their partner institutions. COIL means collaborative online international learning which links two or more higher education institutions. During COIL higher education institutions work together to develop a shared syllabus. COIL courses are good ways to raise cultural awareness and to support the students' cultural competence. In a nursing context, COILs are also good possibilities to deepen knowledge of the nursing profession and reflect current issues with peers from different cultural settings.

All the information can be found on a guide available to students on the university's website.



4.1 BEFORE THE MOBILITY



FOCUS CARE FOR EUROPE

A MOOC to help nursing students preparing their clinical practices

Within the framework of the Care for Europe project, we are proud to have the opportunity to develop a MOOC designed to help international nursing exchange students orientate to their clinical placement in a new cultural setting in France, Finland, Hungary and in Spain. The MOOC includes four modules, which offer useful information for the nursing students. The MOOC consists of four modules which offer valuable information about cultural competence in nursing profession, information about the nursing profession and nursing education in all the project countries, information about the clinical placement practices such as how to prepare for the clinical placement, what kind of support the international nursing student gets during the placement and how the clinical placements are evaluated. The MOOC also provides useful information about culture and language which will help the students to settle into the new cultural environment.

The MOOC has been developed using 360° technology and panoramic pictures from clinical placement environments in the four participating countries. The student can do a virtual tour in the real-world clinical environments, which will support their orientation to the clinical placement. The MOOC will also offer a possibility for participants to introduce themselves to other exchange students in Europe and share their experiences.



DISCOVER
THE MOOC

4.1 BEFORE THE MOBILITY



FOCUS CARE FOR EUROPE

A student feedback on the MOOC !



Leire Montoya de Bilbao - Universidad de Salamanca - Spain

"Regarding how would I like to be received as a nursing exchange student if I had the chance to do a placement in a Finnish hospital, I would highly recommend taking the course of "Care for Europe Project" as it has allowed me to learn more about the healthcare system in Finland as well as know the different tasks a nurse can carry out depending on which country you work in. Furthermore, learning a little of Finnish language would not be a bad idea in order not to feel completely lost in hospitals and clinics. Consequently, I would suggest taking as well the "Introduction to Finnish culture" course which permits you to get an insight into the customs of this country and population. Finally, before starting the placement in the assigned placement service, I would fancy foreign students are allowed to visit the work area a few days ahead of time to familiarize themselves with the Finnish healthcare system's employees and resources."

4

.2 ARRIVAL & WELCOMING

Going on a mobility programme in another country can be both exciting and frightening for an international student. This is why it is important to offer a quality welcome and support system that will allow incoming students to get off to a reassuring and serene start. This support can take many forms: administrative, pedagogical, but also more practical support to optimize the students' chances of integration.

ORIENTATION/INTEGRATION DAYS OR WEEK

Nursing faculties should promote appropriate integration of international nursing students in clinical placements. This helps to integrate them into the work environment and to provide them with adequate training by identifying problem-solving mechanisms and reference contacts within each placement. Prior knowledge of each site will reduce students' uncertainty when they start their clinical training. Some of the activities that can be carried out are: specific welcome days for international students, translation of the clinical placement information booklets and the presence of a reference person working within each unit.

Depending on the type of training institute, reception will be ensured by different interlocutors. This may depend on the number of international students received or on the type of mobility. In any case, planning integration days will allow the student to settle in serenely during his or her mobility.

At the Laurea UAS, orientation is mandatory for all the exchange students, and in the past years, this event has been arranged as a hybrid event, which allows students to participate in the event even if they are in their home countries. Usually, the event is held on the first week of the studies and it is for all the exchange students.

4.2 ARRIVAL & WELCOMING

When the university welcomes a fair amount of Erasmus students, they are welcomed upon their arrival first by the staff of the Office of Mobility and Scholarship Programmes, in the framework of central orientation days organized for them. For instance, the welcome week at the UdL lets students enjoy a Catalan course, write a Spanish level test, and have information sessions: International Relations, Youth Resource Centre of the City Council and Catalan Autonomous Police (Mossos d'Esquadra).

They also meet with the coordinators in each Faculty/School: in the Faculty of Nursing and Physiotherapy a welcome meeting is held where the work placement coordinator and the vice-dean of international relations of the faculty explain procedures, and the itinerary of the work placement is agreed with them.

SUPPORT FROM LOCAL STUDENT

The cultural discovery that is part of the Erasmus+ experience takes place in the student's daily life during their stay. From this point of view, links must be established between the incoming student and the local students through different mechanisms. Incoming students may greatly benefit from the support provided by local students. They can give a better view of being a nursing student, compared to a nursing lecturer.



4.2 ARRIVAL & WELCOMING

Croix-Rouge Compétence ARA involves the student association as soon as the student arrives. For example, they are in charge of showing the student around the city. Incoming students are also introduced to the entire class. In Laurea, there are tutor students appointed to each new group of nursing students and they can support exchange students too. Laurea provides specific training for the tutor students, and their work is acknowledged with ECTS (for elective/complementary studies).

Student buddies are also an excellent way of supporting incoming nursing students and helping them to integrate society and student life. Laurea offers a buddy course for local students. Local students work as a buddy and get to know a new person and culture and train their language skills in a safe environment. Buddies meet outside school hours. Also exchange students get to practice the local language. Students get credits for participation. Buddies may arrange free time activities based on their mutual interests, and the local buddy may give valuable advice and tips regarding studies, placement, and life in Finland.



4.2 ARRIVAL & WELCOMING

ORIENTATION TO THE CLINICAL PLACEMENT

During the integration week, and before the beginning of the internship period, the Croix-Rouge Compétence ARA team arranges a meeting between the student and the team of health professionals of the internship site. This meeting can take place by videoconference or on site, which allows the student to discover the future internship site.

At the Laurea UAS, International exchange students will get an orientation to the clinical placement practices if the clinical placement has been agreed in the learning agreement. Laurea has a digital learning platform with all the relevant information about clinical placement practices in Laurea. They will also participate in an info session together with Laurea students who are about to start their clinical placement. Most of the time, the tutor teacher also arranges a separate orientation session before the clinical placement.

Students should be aware of the general learning objectives for the clinical placement in question. They should also start thinking about their individual learning objectives for the placement before entering the placement unit. Their individual objectives should be based on the general objectives, on the competencies they already have and those they need to develop, and on the learning opportunities provided by the placement unit. Therefore, it is important that students reflect upon and write a description of their previous clinical placements and the nursing competencies they have gained. Furthermore, in order to get an idea of learning opportunities, they should familiarize themselves with the nursing care of the placement unit, for example by reading descriptions of the unit (if available) and by researching relevant evidence-based information about the specific field of nursing. It is also very important that students discuss their learning objectives with their mentors when they start their placement. The supervising teachers' role is also important in guiding students towards formulating their objectives, and approving them.



TESTIMONIES: INTEGRATION ASPECTS



Emmaculate Tamankag - Finland
Senior lecturer - Laurea UAS

"From the perspective of practice placement, the host institution and hospitals must collaborate and agree on some practical issues including reserving certain practice weeks for international exchange students and the tutoring language. When students are welcomed in place of practice, they feel a sense of belonging to the work community, and eventually a positive learning outcome and experience from the practice placement. Proper orientation to practice placement guidelines is imperative to the overall success of the training experience. Key players are the placement coordinator and international exchange coordinator of the nursing degree program. "



Xenia Boquera - Spain
Udl - Erasmus+ student in Belgium

"My tutor and the director there were very helpful and they even gave me a letter of recommendation, which is very good because I think that in a curriculum that you have apart from an Erasmus scholarship, it's great to have a letter of recommendation from the hospital."





TESTIMONIES: INTEGRATION ASPECTS



Klára Simon - Hungary

Assistant Professor, Erasmus coordinator
University of Pécs, Faculty of Health Sciences

"We place special emphasis on integrating our exchange students as soon as they arrive. Usually, they do clinical practices together with the full-time Nursing students, that way they can build new relationships and exchange their experiences. We believe that providing students with all the necessary details and information prior to their arrival is of crucial importance for the placement to be successfully carried out. Moreover, exchange students are assisted all along the internship by both peers and professionals."



Anna Sourbier - France Croix-Rouge Compétence ARA- Erasmus+ student in Spain

"First of all, obtaining information about the beginning of the school year and the academic year allows us to be reassured and to organize ourselves beforehand. From this point of view, going to the student office allows us to clear up our doubts and ask our questions. The Welcome Day also seems to be a good way to meet new people and to "reassure" each other."



4.3 DURING THE MOBILITY

Going on Erasmus is an adventure!

But in this adventure, it is important for incoming students to be guided during mobility by resource people in the host university and clinical practice facility. This is how the students can have this adventure serenely in the country where they wish to learn, to train but also to discover.

Students should be equipped with adequate information concerning the clinical placement practices before they enter the placement. This information enables them to have a good start in the clinical environment and promotes good learning experiences and outcomes.

During mobility, Croix-Rouge Compétence ARA gives as much autonomy as possible to the incoming student while staying in touch with him/her: if necessary, one of the two organizes a meeting to review or adjust student goals. Local buddies or tutor students and the incoming student stay most of the time in contact themselves. The pedagogical team have a mid-point training appraisal to evaluate if everything is going well.

At the University of Pécs, Incoming students have the opportunity to participate in Hungarian language courses for foreigners, where they can learn the very basics of this quite difficult language to be able to communicate on a basic level. In case any difficulties arise, students primarily turn to the Erasmus coordinator, whose job is to support them in finding a solution for their issues. During their mobility at the faculty, they can turn to the staff of the Office of International Affairs, the Registrar's Office, and also to their lecturers for information.

4.3 DURING THE MOBILITY

A supervising teacher must be appointed to each student. He/she should have adequate language skills and experience in working with intercultural student groups to be able to support exchange students during their placements. It is recommended that the supervising teacher contacts the mentor(s), or the person coordinating student mentoring at the beginning of the placement to inform and encourage the mentors to contact the teacher quickly in case of concerns or questions. There are clinical nursing teachers supporting students especially in bigger hospitals. Clinical teachers support also mentoring nurses and they may participate in evaluation discussions. Sometimes clinical teachers organize learning activities and reflection sessions for the students during the placement. In case of concerns, the clinical teacher may be involved in the mentoring process and communication is needed between the supervising teacher, the educational institute, and the clinical teacher.

The students should also be aware of their rights and responsibilities during the placement. For instance, the students have the right to guidance and feedback, supporting learning and professional development. The students have the right to receive support from the mentor and supervising teacher when needed. On the other hand, they are responsible for being well prepared for clinical placement: they need to be aware of the instructions and documents related to the placement, to be familiar with the placement organization and unit, to have completed the studies required for the placement according to the curriculum, and to update knowledge of nursing and medical care specific to the unit. The Laurea UAS applies clear criteria for the rejection or discontinuation of a clinical placement and the student should be aware of these, as well as practicalities such as rules or insurance policies for instance.

4.4 AFTER THE MOBILITY

When the mobility period is over, a certain number of documents must be given to the student so that he/she can start the validation process of his/her ECTS upon his/her return.



**CLINICAL
PLACEMENT
EVALUATION FORM**



**TRANSCRIPT OF
RECORDS**



**CERTIFICATE OF
STAY**

In order to continuously improve the processes in place, Croix-Rouge Compétence ARA sends a satisfaction survey to incoming students and to the teams of health professionals who have welcomed them. The survey covers the three stages of mobility, before, during and after arrival, and also covers practical questions - concerning housing for example, and educational issues. The results are then discussed before the start of each academic year at regular meetings of the international relations office. In this context, solutions are considered to continue to improve the experience for all parties involved.

The survey therefore allows for the collection of information to improve internal procedures. As mentioned in section 1.4, it is interesting to collect the students' feelings for several reasons. First of all, it is an exercise that will allow the student to reflect on the experience in order to value it not only through a testimonial, but also in their future job search. Articles or interviews with students are also valuable tools for promoting mobility experiences and encouraging others to take advantage of existing programmes at the institution.

SPOTLIGHT ON OUR PARTNERS



favorite good practices that
we observed among our
partners

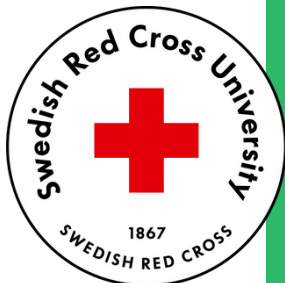
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FAVORITE GOOD PRACTICES THAT WE OBSERVED AMONG OUR PARTNERS

MICHAEL FAURE

ERASMUS + COORDINATOR - CROIX-ROUGE COMPÉTENCE

Our partner of the Swedish Red Cross University in Stockholm has developed a clear and precise incoming mobility programme. Students have the choice between two options: one validates 19.5 ECTS through two internships of 4 weeks each and a 2-week observation internship on the theme of Global Nursing; or 8 weeks of internship plus one week of theoretical introduction to primary health care. This programme is well presented on the institution's website and facilitates the organization of mobility for our outgoing students.



MIKA ALASTALO

SENIOR LECTURER - LAUREA UAS

Oslo Metropolitan University provides clear and well-structured information material for nursing exchange students. Practical information is provided in a visually appealing format and the application process and study selection is clearly presented.

This gives a good impression to students and teaching staff in the institution sending participants.

OSLOMET

4

FAVORITE GOOD PRACTICES THAT WE OBSERVED AMONG OUR PARTNERS

KLARA SIMON **ASSISTANT PROFESSOR - UNIVERSITY OF PECS**

One of the Finnish partners of the University of Pécs, Satakunta University of Applied Sciences contracted a company to make arrangements for accommodation of the incoming exchange students. According to our students, this has been a great help for them when they travelled for their clinical placements. On their website for exchange students, they provide detailed information about the accommodation possibilities at their different campuses. They also organize a Get Together Day each semester for international students, when they can dive into Finnish culture. In the morning, there are presentations about Finland, and in the afternoon, students can participate in different activities, they can taste food and play typical Finnish games or outdoor activities.



samk

Satakunta University of Applied Sciences



hogeschool
VIVES

JOSE TOMAS MATEOS GARCIA **LECTURER - LLEIDA UNIVERSITY**

Our partner Vives University of Applied Sciences in Kortrijk (Belgium) promotes the dissemination of the Erasmus programme by international students. It consists of granting them additional financial support if they recount part of their experiences as Erasmus students in the city through a blog or their social networks. This action makes it attractive to other students and promotes the incorporation of new international students through the Erasmus programme.



The Care For Europe project team would like to thank all the people who have contributed to the development of this guide. Indeed, the collection of testimonies is precious, in order to show in detail the needs of the field as closely as possible. Thank you to the students and health professionals who kindly agreed to answer our questions.



CONTACTS

Would you like more details on the good practices developed in this guide? Do not hesitate to contact us !

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