

Workshop 2 : University-Enterprise Cooperation : ways of complementing regional and sectoral approaches

4 cases studies were presented with great enthusiasm from speakers to illustrate regional and sectoral approaches of university-enterprise cooperation.

We first identified some **positive aspects**:

Regarding regional approach

- knowledge of local needs/daily life needs
- within regional consortia all partners have equal rights and are able to maintain their activities over many years.

Regarding both approaches the main positive aspects are linked to

- complementary funds coming from regions, sectors of activities and enterprises
- those approaches could also help to balance the extreme changing (increasing) demand from universities for placements

We also identified some **weaknesses**:

- need of new partners and difficulty to extend the experience
- isolated projects, individual arrangements
- necessity to continue via European networks
- placements not enough regulated - no arrangement
- problem of quality in placements, lack of guidance, lack of evaluation

According to these positives and negatives aspects, we recommend the following points:

To universities:

- Integrate the knowledge of placement experience into the curricula
- Establish contracts to regulate all details for placements
- Integrate practical placements in the quality system
- Increase placement staff
- Convince small and medium enterprises to join in the activities of the network

To the European Commission:

- Establish a European framework for U-E cooperation
- Put into place a permanent European program open to regions and supported by DG education and DG employment with a bottom up approach
- Set up of a common network U-E cooperation
- Come up with a scheme to focus on the problem of quality of placement: a tool to evaluate quality, common standards for placements, platforms and conferences to share experiences.

To enterprises:

- A good example was given by the “fair companies “ in Germany: companies which do not offer placements to recent graduates but only to students. They offer normal jobs to graduates.
- They should sign up for European quality placement systems.

To regions:

- To organise staff mobilities and not only student placements
- To create a regional body to organise quality reference centres for placements.

Some information about this topic **in France**:

Both approaches (sectoral and regional) exist.

We think it is important to maintain the 2 approaches because they are relevant and complementary. One of the two cannot be substituted to the other one.

There is an important concern for U-E cooperation at national level:

- The French government is working on new propositions for university governance and one of the aims of these propositions is to enhance cooperation U-E
- The MEDEF (national organisation of employers/ biggest companies) has made one interesting proposition: to open the board committee of universities to enterprise representatives
- Universities are also starting to work together on a regional approach by creating regional bodies: PRES (Pole de recherché et d'enseignement supérieur) common to all universities of one region .

I want to finish by saying that the national French Erasmus/ Leonardo agency, partner of the DAAD for this project will continue to promote cooperation between U-E during its annual event: a conference in October 2007 where representatives of around 400 institutions will participate. On this occasion the DAAD has been invited to present the final results of the survey presented on the conference on June 18-19 in Bonn.

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This publication reflects the views of the author. It does not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission and/or the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and/or its partners as project coordinators.