

**LLP Leonardo da Vinci | PARTNERSHIPS
Cultural Events Management
Mobility Obstacles Reduction**

Report on reduction of mobility obstacles for Cultural Events Managers

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1. Introduction

One of the main objectives of the Input Project is to improve the quality of European mobility for Cultural Events Managers.

The mobility of workers in this sector is already a reality and a need inherent to this specific professional activity; however, there are still many obstacles to effective, successful and fruitful mobility.

Some of these specific problems were identified before the beginning of the project and presented in the application, but many others arose and were verified and confirmed during the development of the project, not only through the *know-how* and experience shared between the partnership, but also through being exposed to hundreds of students, teachers and professionals with whom we have had the chance to contact during the course of the project.

The identification of the most common obstacles that a Cultural Events Manager has to face in a mobility experience raised the need to find solutions to reduce or, whenever possible, eliminate these obstacles.

This partnership, which is composed of institutions working with education, training and mobility at European level, has a proven capacity to address some important solutions and answers, in order to ensure that improvements in the quantity and quality of mobility in this sector become a reality.

2. The main internal and external obstacles found in the mobility of Cultural Events Managers

EXTERNAL OBSTACLES

- ▶ Most CEM participants in mobility programmes do not have a minimally sufficient level of language skills (i.e. >B1) either in a contact language (English) or in the language of the host country. This level of language competence would naturally allow better adaptation, greater effectiveness of the placement and increased self-confidence.
- ▶ Most CEM participants are not prepared, in a general sense, for integration into a foreign country and into the European labour market.
- ▶ This is often due to factors such as a cultural barrier and prejudices = fear of going abroad.
- ▶ Most CEM participants have little or no previous information about the social and cultural context of the host country, crucial for integration at all levels.
- ▶ Most CEM participants have little or no previous knowledge about the CEM sector in the host country/city.
- ▶ Differences between the specific legislation in the cultural events sector in the country of origin and the host country, especially regarding security, quality and protocol.

- ▶ Most participants in this sector need complementary training in subjects as budgeting, marketing, sales, etc.
- ▶ Many of these participants have no formal certification to confirm existing knowledge or skills acquired through non-formal training experiences.
- ▶ Even for those CEMs who have formal certification, there is a lack of transparency of contents and outputs of European university and/or diplomas.
- ▶ Academic qualifications do not have transnational recognition, and this can be a barrier to understanding the level of qualifications achieved by individuals.
- ▶ The non-existence of a common or shared training path.
- ▶ Roles are not described in the same way from country to country, and this can lead to confusion.
- ▶ Definition of a good, relevant training programme for mobility experiences.
- ▶ When applying for mobility, CEMs are bombarded with apparently unrelated, random information.
- ▶ Some of the host companies are simply not prepared to offer an internship to a foreign participant.
- ▶ Matching the participant's competences and skills with those required by the European labour market.
- ▶ Virtually no promotion/communication about mobility opportunities and added value for CEMs.
- ▶ Lack of funding/grants regarding CEM mobility opportunities.
- ▶ General lack of interest on the part of the CEMs themselves in mobility (according to May 2011 Euro barometer, 36% of young people are NOT interested in mobility programmes).

INTERNAL OBSTACLES

- ▶ Specific *know-how* in the CEM sector in order to find and discuss the best solutions for each internship with the intermediary and host partners.

- ▶ Lack of international networks at European level.
- ▶ Defining and negotiating the most suitable training programme, which fits both the host company's needs and the participant's training needs and expectations.
- ▶ The need for more (and better) information concerning the offer in the CEM sector in each host country.

3. Solutions to reduce/ overcome these obstacles

1. Lowering the financial barriers

- ▶ It is clear that it is extremely important to encourage public and private entities to support mobility, increasing the public and private funds available for the mobility of CEMs. Regional authorities, for example, should be encouraged to participate more and more in the promoting and financing of mobility in this specific sector. The EU is responsible for organising the general framework of the free movement of people and workers. However, it is the task of each member state to apply the Community's regulations.
- ▶ The forecast is that more funds will be available for CEM participant's mobility between 2013 and 2017.
- ▶ We could perhaps attract more interest in accepting interns by proposing tax benefits if a company welcomes a European intern. This might help to increase private funds available for CEM mobility. It would probably also increase the number of companies willing to offer internships to foreign participants.
- ▶ Another important measure would be to give companies other tax benefits in exchange for welcoming foreign participants (for example, tax benefits for employers who wish to compensate their interns beyond the necessary level). Companies welcoming foreign participants could also be allowed access to regional co-financing within the framework of competence attractiveness policies

(such as volunteering in a company which allows companies to send one of their employees abroad to develop a subsidiary).

- ▶ Both the public and private sector could become more motivated to accept interns through a study of the companies which have obtained the best results / greatest value from welcoming foreign participants on a placement.
- ▶ Not less important would be better support for intermediary organisations, whose main responsibility and purpose is to welcome, place and supervise European interns, and who are often considered a very important facilitator in terms of adaptation to a foreign country.
- ▶ A big step forward could be taken if mobility in the CEM sector could be made semi-obligatory (or at least perceived as desirable) for all students, as this would certainly prepare them for integration into the common European labour market.

2. Encouraging the learning of foreign languages and providing specific language programmes for CEM professionals

- ▶ We need to provide CEMs with better, specific professional language preparation in some foreign languages, with a strong social and cultural component. Topics such as socio-cultural adaptation must be addressed within the scope of this preparation. The combination ***language + social + cultural preparation*** will easily translate into easier integration and adaptation to a different country/culture. This will mean an effective opportunity to work abroad and be considered “part of the team”, which in turn provides a better chance for the participant to develop professionally.
- ▶ This solution implies designing a specific language course, with professional modules that combine language and professional skills and competences, and therefore building a bridge between learning/improving language skills and familiarisation with professional contents and best practice in the CEM field.

For the reasons mentioned above, the language learning programme should include cultural and social learning modules to facilitate the integration and adaptation abroad.

03. Shared information between European countries about CEM reality

We need to create a platform containing concrete, updated information about the CEM sector in the other EU countries, including:

- ▶ Specific legislation in the cultural events management field;
- ▶ The role definition drawn up by each country to show the similarities and the differences in this profession, highlighting regional variations;
- ▶ Comparative tables, showing how each country rates and ranks specific roles and how they relate to each other.
- ▶ An examination of the main cultural and artistic movements and trends in each country to show similarities and differences

04. Providing common specific training modules in the CEM sector throughout the EU

From our analysis of the current reality in the countries of the partnership (Italy, Portugal, France, Poland, Germany and the UK), it would seem clear that most of young professionals in the CEM sector need complementary training in subjects as budgeting, marketing, public relations, press, sales, programming, human resources, fundraising, sponsorship, etc.

A specific training path adapted to a general European context in this field, available on line with thematic modules based on these transversal subjects, which are usually *learned by doing* at a very informal level, would provide these

professionals with broader, "stronger" training, plus better, more complete competences.

A module about how to apply for an internship in another EU country would be strongly recommendable.

05. Migration of CEM profile in the EQF

The migration of the Cultural Events Manager profile in the European Qualification Framework would improve the quality of the training on offer across Europe, and would provide a clear approach to the contents, the diplomas and the training paths.

In this sense, it would be recommendable to create a standardised table of academic qualifications showing the level of each qualification. This could be shown by comparing different countries, age groups and levels and how these factors translate from country to country.

The solution would come from the systematization of a European Credit System for Vocational Education & Training (ECVET) and the Diploma Supplement (DS) for vocational diplomas, inspired by European Credits Transfer System – ECTS. The DS is an official document which accompanies a higher education diploma, provides a standardised description of the nature, level, context, content and status of the studies completed by the individual.

Two of the partners in this partnership are professional and vocational schools in the CEM sector, and both have made an important contribution towards a preliminary reflection on these possibilities.

06. Creation of model professional training programmes, accepted in the CEM sector in the EU

► Creation of specific training programmes for a European mobility experience, in accordance with the length of the internship and the area in which the placement will be carried out (theatre, dance, music, performing arts, museum, etc.).

► These templates would definitely help all those involved in a European mobility experience, in the following ways:

- For the young worker, it would be easier and clearer to choose the best area for the transnational internship, as s/he would have very detailed information in advance. The participant in a mobility experience abroad would be better prepared for the tasks proposed and would have all the information s/he needs to feel more confident before the beginning of the internship.
- For the intermediary organisations working in mobility but which often do not have deep knowledge of this sector, these programmes could help them to find the best options and solutions for each placement.
- For the host companies, this would be a way to have clear, valid, transparent information about the main objectives of the internship and all the possible tasks in which the participants can be involved, in accordance with their professional profile.

These models would be a very useful guideline. However, they should obviously allow the parties involved the flexibility to add more information and details about concrete events in which each CEM would participate.

07. Promoting Recognition and Certification

Most of the time, “Students travel but diplomas don’t” (Friedrich et al, 2009), this statement clearly translates the need to implement common, valid, transparent certification throughout the EU.

Even organised mobility in general is affected by this, since according to the Erasmus Student Network PRIME 2009, only 66% receive full recognition of their studies abroad. We suggest that:

- ▶ Universities and VET schools should be prompted to introduce double diplomas, double courses etc. by constructing courses with a bilateral approach.
- ▶ Also, education systems (and consequently the labour market) should become familiar with certificates obtained outside organised mobility and thus move closer towards acceptance.
- ▶ For these proposes, it would be important to create templates for certificates that would certify the skills and competences acquired by a CEM professional at a formal or non-formal level, and transfer this to universities, vocational schools and the labour market. This would also be possible through a common platform, to which all the entities and professionals working in this sector could access in order to obtain information and use common documents and references.

08. Promoting and disseminating professional opportunities in the CEM sector at a European level

Once again, the implementation of an online platform where promoters, cultural institutions, companies working in this sector, etc., could display professional opportunities in the CEM field would be extremely useful for the promotion of opportunities across Europe.

Most of the time, the young workers do not have information about possible opportunities, European mobility programmes, the existence of institutions working in European networks whose main purpose is to develop and offer opportunities in this sector.

This platform would not only promote this specific professional field, but also the contact between CEM professionals on a European scale and increase the interest of these professionals in participating in mobility. It would also encourage them



to see the European artistic market as a chance to find work, or simply to improve / acquire new skills and competences.

This tool would provide precious help for young CEM professionals in finding an internship abroad. This, in turn would provide an answer to a clear need, since many studies carried out in the mobility field have proved that finding an internship abroad is a well-known difficulty for a considerable number of students and young workers.

This platform should also include updated information about clear and verifiable results, and about the effects of mobility on employment.

In order to promote this information on a wide scale, the platform should have a direct link to the most important social networks, such as Facebook, Twitter, Bebo, Last.fm, LinkedIn.