

Benchmarking study visits

Evaluation report

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Four (?) benchmarking study visits were realised in the framework of Work Package 1 (deliverable 1.3) at the following European partner universities:

- Pädagogische Hochschule Kärnten/Viktor Frankl Hochschule
- Università Carlo Cattaneo
- University of Bristol
- Warsaw University of Technology

CHE Consult conducted a **joint online survey** for all site visits' participants in September/October 2013 in order to evaluate the quality of the visits and their impact on participants' knowledge, skills and attitudes in the area of internationalization practices. Participants were asked to self-evaluate their knowledge before and after the site visit to show the contribution of the IRIS project on the development of their expertise and motivation for internationalization. The questionnaire contained four-point Likert scale-based assessments and open reply options. Different sets of questions were used for visitors from Israeli colleges and European hosts.

Overall, 18 persons participated in the site visits (12 visitors from Israeli colleges and 6 representatives of European hosts). **12 respondents** filled out the online survey (6 visitors from Israeli colleges and 6 representatives of European hosts).

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

Visitors from Israeli colleges



The majority of respondents (67%) answered that the workshop has either met or exceeded their expectations, while the remaining 33% felt it met their expectations only partly. In general, on the scale

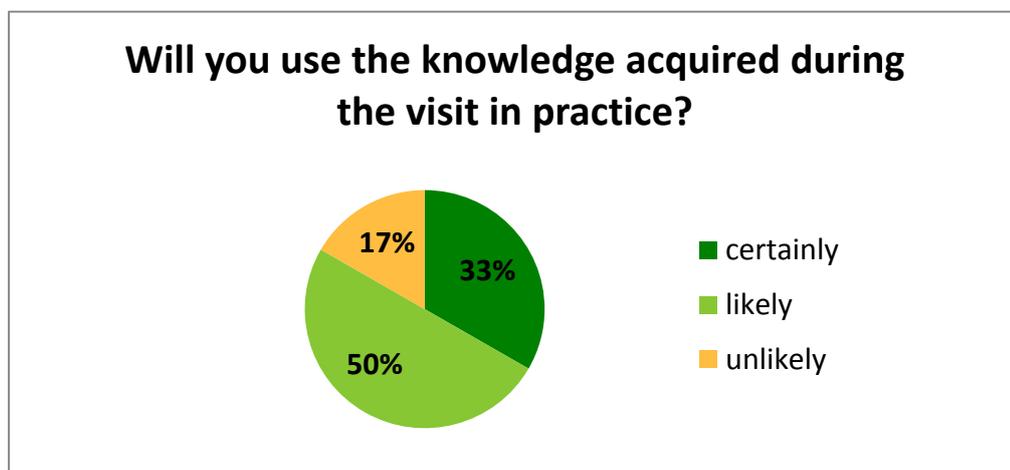
from 1 to 4, the site visits were rated **3,2** with 50% of participants evaluating it as “good” and 33% as “excellent” (see table below). All particular elements of the site visits received an average evaluation “good” or above. There was only one negative response concerning the site visit’s content.

How would you rate:	poor	average	good	excellent	AVERAGE on scale 1-4
Site visit's agenda		1	3	2	3,2
Site visit's content	1		3	2	3
Organization of the site visit		1	3	2	3,2
Site visit in general		1	3	2	3,2

Regarding the site visits’ impact on increasing participants’ expertise in the area of internationalization, the results of the survey are **quite positive**. One respondent stated that the site visit has extremely advanced his/her internationalization expertise and the majority (67%) rated their level of advancement as considerable. In one respondent’s view, the site visit has only slightly improved his/her expertise.



More importantly, the vast majority of respondents claimed they will certainly (33%) or likely (50%) use the knowledge and skills acquired during the workshop in practice. Only one respondent felt that chances of putting the gained knowledge into practice are not very high.



Comparison of participants' self-evaluation before and after the site visit shows that the **target group's knowledge, skills and attitudes have increased**, although **not very considerably**, in all areas under evaluation, with the exception of motivation.

Before the workshop, knowledge and skills related to internationalization were on average rated **below "good"**, with a vast majority of respondents evaluating their competences as average and, in one case, poor. Participants of site visit were also not really confident they could develop an internationalization strategy plan (only one participant stated he/she was "very confident" and two were "quite confident"). On the other hand, all respondents indicated **high level of motivation** to be involved in internationalization activities.

How would you rate your knowledge, skills and attitudes BEFORE the study visit?

	poor	average	good	excellent	AVERAGE on scale 1-4
Knowledge on internationalization practices in European HEIs		6			2
Understanding how my college compares to other HEIs in terms of internationalization	1	3	2		2,2
Knowledge of best practices in internationalization		5	1		2,2
	not confident at all	not very confident	quite confident	very confident	AVERAGE on scale 1-4
I feel confident I can develop an internationalization strategy plan		3	2	1	2,7
	not motivated at all	not very motivated	quite motivated	very motivated	AVERAGE on scale 1-4
I feel motivated to be involved in internationalization activities			3	3	3,5

After the workshop, the overall **level of knowledge and competences has increased**, especially concerning internationalization practices in European HEIs. The majority of respondents evaluated their knowledge and skills as "good", but the average rating of knowledge and skills still remained slightly below "good". Confidence in ability to draft an internationalization strategy grew as well, all respondents stated they became "quite confident" in this area. Slightly disappointing is the result of motivation development. Although the majority of participants stayed quite or very motivated to participate in internationalization activities, one participant felt not to be very motivated, which resulted into the decrease of the average rate of motivation.

How would you rate your knowledge, skills and attitudes AFTER the study visit?

	poor	average	good	excellent	AVERAGE on scale 1-4	Change
Knowledge on internationalization practices in European HEIs		2	4		2,7	+ 0,7
Understanding how my college compares to other HEIs in terms of internationalization		1	5		2,8	+ 0,6
Knowledge of best practices in internationalization		1	5		2,8	+ 0,6
	not confident at all	not very confident	quite confident	very confident	AVERAGE on scale 1-4	
I feel confident I can develop an internationalization strategy plan			6		3	+ 0,3
	not motivated at all	not very motivated	quite motivated	very motivated	AVERAGE on scale 1-4	
I feel motivated to be involved in internationalization activities		1	3	2	3,2	- 0,3

When asked about the “topics or elements of the visit that were most valuable”, participants indicated aspects like **opportunities for collaboration, new internationalization practices and ideas, meetings with senior officials and practical issues regarding teaching of international students and functioning of international offices.**

Which topics or elements of the visit were most valuable for you?

- *I realized that there is great divergence in the nature, character, size, and orientation of the different institutions within and across the country and the project.*
- *Opportunities for collaboration, practices of internationalization, ideas, exposure to culture and educational system in Austria, personal relationship with colleagues.*
- *Meeting with senior officials.*
- *To see how the university treats issues about teaching international students.*
- *The hands-on and practical side where we visited the different units that work in the international office. Very impressive. Also the openness and willingness to discuss all issues freely and openly was of great help and made this visit very special and useful.*

Respondents were also encouraged to give suggestions on what could be improved in the organization, agenda or content of the visits and any other comments.

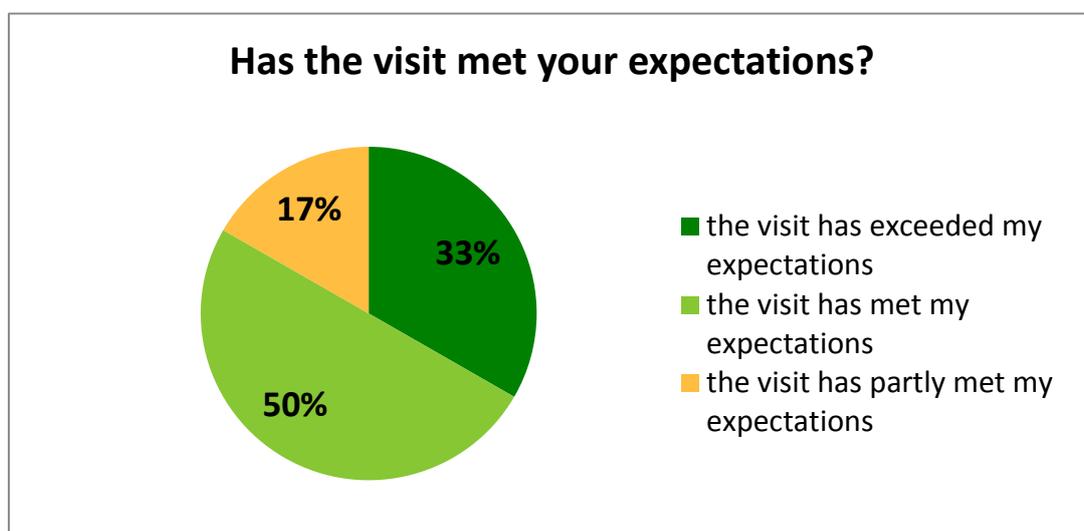
Do you have any suggestions on what could be improved in the organization, agenda or content of the visit?

- *Agenda should be set up in consultation with the incoming guests. People should be able to have time to not only see but also ask, discuss and share what they know or want to know not just what the host institution wishes to "show".*
- *No, it was a very fruitful visit.*

Do you have any other comments?

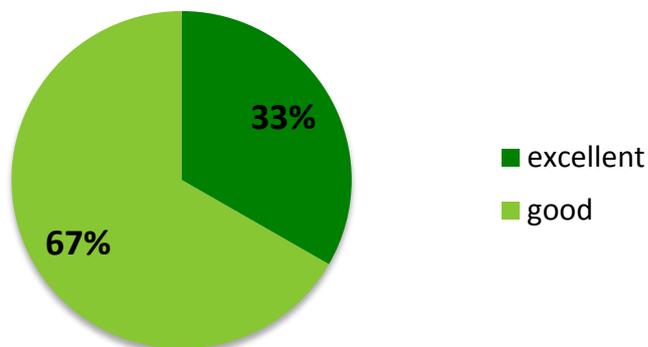
- *Thanks to Pia-Maria and her staff.*

European hosts



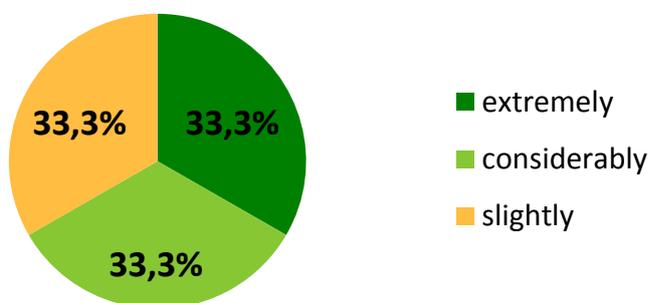
Only one respondent indicated that the visit has only partly met his/her expectations, the rest of respondents from European host institutions (83%) answered that the workshop has either met or exceeded their expectations. In general, the site visits were rated **very positively** by host institutions, the average score was **3,3** which is even slightly better score than the score given by site visits' visitors. All European hosts evaluated the overall quality of site visits as "good" or "excellent".

How would you rate the site visit in general?



As far as the site visits' impact on **increasing host institutions' knowledge** in Israeli internationalization practices, the results of the survey are **quite positive**. Four out of six respondents confirmed that the site visit advanced their knowledge in the respective area (two of them stated "considerable" and two even "extreme" development). The remaining two respondents indicated only slight development of their internationalization expertise.

Has the visit advanced your knowledge on Israeli internationalisation practices?



Finally, when asked about the "topics or elements of the visit that were most valuable", host institutions indicated aspects like **meeting partners face to face, understanding their needs and exchanging experience and knowledge about internationalization processes at different institutions.**

Which topics or elements of the visit were most valuable for you?

- *Just the fact of meeting partners face to face and understanding their needs and realities was key to me as a host.*
- *Practical approach to the process presented by Israeli colleagues from SAPIR and SHENKAR, their realistic description of internationalization environment there, their awareness of the issue in all aspects*

- Visit exchange how internationalization works at the partner institution
- Visit 2 from Kaye Academic College

Respondents were also encouraged to give suggestions on what could be improved in the organization, agenda or content of the visits and any other comments.

Do you have any suggestions on what could be improved in the organization, agenda or content of the visit?

- As the host I felt it went well and the visitors told me they were very satisfied
- No suggestions - both parties (visiting and hosting) really appreciated and enjoyed the visit
- Visit 1 - a **common questionnaire from wp-leader** that both institutions could work on it: the visitor and the host institution
- A questionnaire from wp-leader that both sides (guests and hosts) can work together on the exchange of different points of view concerning internationalization.

Do you have any other comments?

- Come up with a template for such visits that can be shared across the host institutions.
- Promised filled in questionnaire from all three colleagues was not sent. Instead of this host received a lukewarm and general feedback from all three colleagues together.
- A **bilateral agreement** between PHK and Kaye Academic College has been signed to build up other cooperation possibilities in future also when the Tempus-project will end.