Informs

September 2011
Issue 02/2011

ALLUME: Pathways for Lifelong Learning Universities?

More than 40 delegates from roughly 20 different European countries participated actively in the final event of the ALLUME project "Pathways for Lifelong Learning Universities?", which took place in Barcelona from 12-13 September.

During its 2-year lifespan, the project focused on developing tools based on good practice examples of successful LLL strategies in universities, the BeFlex Plus recommendations, the European Universities charter on LLL and on a testing phase of the tool in six European universities in order to facilitate universities strategic development on their way to becoming Lifelong Learning Universities (LLLUs). Thus, ALLUME aimed at providing a set of reflexive and inspiring tools to practitioners and (vice) rectors involved in LLL which could help their teams to define and implement concrete actions and could enhance their participation in LLL.

The event offered interactive workshops at the first day to familiarise participants with the context and challenges of higher education institutions and introduced them to the different approaches developed by the project, while the second day was dedicated to the presentation and discussion of the project's methodology and its final results.

These final results include:
- A tool for self-assessment and positioning
- An exercise for the definition of the institution's strategy processes
- Two transversal analyses of the initial case studies

One of the main findings of the project was the fact that there was no unique model or approach for university Lifelong Learning activities, but that there are several pathways. Consequently, the developed tools intend to respect this flexibility by allowing universities to adapt them to their own circumstances, to concentrate on their self-chosen priorities and thus to find their own pathway for improving Lifelong Learning at their institution.
Throughout the event, participants enriched presentations and the workshops by their comments and thus gave valuable ideas for the finalisation of the ALLUME results and discussion points for a further development of the project's idea.

"…the ALLUME materials could help university centres to manage to launch the conceptualization of their lifelong learning strategy or to re-think it."

- Participant of the ALLUME event –

More information and the given presentations can be found at http://allume.eucen.eu/node/96

IMPLEMENT: 2nd Full Partner Meeting in Granada, Spain

The second full partner meeting of *IMPLEMENT – Implementing ULLL through training and development* – took place alongside the EUCEN conference in Granada, Spain, on 25th and 27th May 2011.
The meeting was mainly dedicated to the presentation of the IMPLEMENT Moodle platform as a virtual learning and internal communication platform as well as progress on the partners' case studies for the learning materials and upcoming institutional training events.
With this meeting, an important step has been taken into the direction of further disseminating and actively exploiting the highly praised results of the BeFlex Plus project. During the IMPLEMENT project, partners will, in a first step, adapt the existing training materials to their national context by contributing additional case studies from their institutions or regional and national backgrounds. From June to September 2011, these adaptations will be presented in institutional training events in the partners' countries.

Next to the adaptation of the training materials to the national and regional contexts, IMPLEMENT aims at providing an online course with the developed learning materials, which will address ULLL professionals wishing to improve their institutional LLL approaches in specific areas. For this purpose, the Moodle platform has been created and presented at the partner meeting. During these months, it will be developed to provide one online test

EUCEN – European University Continuing Education Network
Balmes 132
08008 Barcelona (ES)
www.eucen.eu
Tel. +34 93 542 1825
Fax +34 93 542 2975
executive.office@eucen.org

The European Association for University Lifelong Learning

2

course in the area of PRL (recognition of prior learning) for participants of the next EUCEN conference "Bridging the gaps between learning pathways" from 16th to 18th November in Genoa, Italy. For more information on the EUCEN conference, please see http://www.perform.unige.it/eucen/index.html

DIALOGUE: Development of social networking tool

Since the first partner meeting in Barcelona in January 2011, the DIALOGUE partners have been active in their working groups (Access & Progression, New Media, Learning & Guidance and Quality) and are currently developing case studies of best practices in their areas of dialogue.

In the meantime, a social networking tool has been created at mixxt.eu, which will be used for internal communication and exchange within the working groups in a first phase. Once the case studies will be ready for publication, it is intended to open this group for the wider audience to encourage a vivid dialogue between professionals in the area of LLL.

For more information and updates, please visit http://dialogue.eucen.eu/

RPL: The case of Denmark

Interview with IMPLEMENT partner Kirsten Aagaard, Head of the National Knowledge Centre for Validation and Prior Learning, DK

EUCEN: Good afternoon Ms Aagaard. You are a partner in the IMPLEMENT project and responsible for the part of RPL. Could you please explain briefly what RPL is about?

K.A.: RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) refers to recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning. Of course, there are different concepts and definitions across Europe, but generally speaking RPL is part of Lifelong Learning (LLL) and means that learners can gain recognition for knowledge, understanding, skills and competences that they already possess.

EUCEN: Could you please tell us what kind of RPL activities are carried out in Denmark?

K.A.: In Denmark we have legislation dating from 2007, which allows individuals to have their competences recognised in all broad areas of the educational system. I think that in comparison to other European states, Denmark is emerging and we have a practical way of working with the recognition of prior learning in educational institutions. However, we still have to dedicate more efforts to ensuring that the possibility is known by individual users with regard to using this option of RPL. Still, the methods and methodology used in educational institutions can be refined and improved. In general, the level of RPL is good in Denmark, but still more can be done. Professionals have to be more competent and have to know more about the RPL system.

EUCEN – European University Continuing Education Network
Balmes 132
08008 Barcelona (ES)
www.eucen.eu

Tel. +34 93 542 1825
Fax +34 93 542 2975
executive.office@eucen.org

The European Association for University Lifelong Learning 3

EUCEN: We think that in Denmark you are quite advanced in comparison to other European countries.

K.A.: We are advanced in some regards as we have legislation and a well-regulated educational system and a national qualifications framework, which helps implementing RPL. Learning outcomes described in the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) give in broader sense criteria for assessment and recognition of prior learning. And work is increasingly initiated to develop practice.

EUCEN: Regarding IMPLEMENT, what was your motivation to participate in this project?

K.A.: In the IMPLEMENT project, I am responsible for the part concerning RPL. The interesting point of IMPLEMENT is that it concerns tangible learning materials from a previous project, the BeFlex Plus project, which were designed to help professionals to understand what RPL is about and to work with it in different ways. So, in many ways, we are working to provide materials to be used both in groups and by individuals to increase understanding, reflection and develop practice in the fields of recognition of prior learning.

Actually, in Denmark we have made two cases which describe RPL from the point of view of the individual and from the point of view of the professional. We want to outline how to practice RPL and how to inform about the perspective of RPL and to give the possibility to be much more aware of what the challenges are if we want to work with RPL.

In the IMPLEMENT project, the BeFlex Plus training materials have to be adjusted and developed so that they can be placed on a virtual learning platform and become interactive. In this way, it will be more accessible for working in peer learning groups. We use Moodle in the framework of the IMPLEMENT project.

EUCEN: Would you think that the fact that in Denmark RPL has been included in legislation was and is crucial for the development of RPL? Would it be recommendable for other countries to include RPL in their legislation, too?

K.A.: Maybe including RPL in their legislation is not the right way for all countries since national circumstances vary a lot. However, the Danish system can be inspirational as there is, for instance, a very good collaboration between the Danish ministries and social partners. Right now we have a working group in the ministry with the aim to outline suggestions to make progress in the use of RPL in a more solid way. Representatives from the different educational systems, social partners, and other stakeholders are contributing to this working group, too. To my mind, it is crucial that the ministry is well aware of the usefulness of including all stakeholders in this working process in order to progress in this area.

EUCEN: Thank you very much, Ms Aagaard, for sharing your thoughts on RPL with the EUCEN team.

For the full version of the interview, please check http://implement.eucen.eu/news

EUCEN – European University Continuing Education Network
Balmes 132
08008 Barcelona (ES)
www.eucen.eu

Tel. +34 93 542 1825
Fax +34 93 542 2975
executive.office@eucen.org

The European Association for University Lifelong Learning

4

Call for Abstracts on Validation of Prior Learning

Genoa, 16-18 November 2011
EUCEN 42nd European Conference
Bridging the gaps between learning pathways

42nd EUCEN Conference - Bridging the gaps between learning pathways

Universities are increasingly called upon to address various issues relating to adult education. Higher education institutions are indeed expected to contribute to the development of a new learning paradigm. Universities are demanded to expand their mission by increasing the dissemination of knowledge, by enhancing the learning spaces for a variety of new kind of learners, so that citizens can be offered real training opportunities, and finally by fostering the recognition and validation of acquired experience. The EUCEN Genoa Conference (16-18 November 2011) will address the following conference topics:

- Learning contexts
- Universities acknowledgment of acquired competences
- The VAE model and experimentations in European countries
- Implementing Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- Recognizing virtual qualifications

We welcome contributions that are related to one of the five topics of the Conference in the form of **Posters**, explaining a case study, results of research and/or development projects or a critical analysis and reflection on the theme. The poster exhibit will be open throughout the conference and there will be a special slot of 1:30 hours on the afternoon of Thursday 17 November 2011 for the posters accepted to present their work to participants interested to know more.

To submit a contribution, please fill the "Call for posters" form and send it by e-mail to EUCEN no later than **15 October 2011**. Authors will receive feedback from the Conference Scientific Committee by 03 November 2001.

The authors of accepted posters must register to the conference by 05 November 2011.

Link to the Conference website:
http://www.perform.unige.it/eucen/index.html

Link to the Call for Abstracts:
http://www.eucen.eu/sites/default/files/FinalCall_Posters_Genoa11.doc

EUCEN – European University Continuing Education Network
Balmes 132
08008 Barcelona (ES)
www.eucen.eu

Tel. +34 93 542 1825
Fax +34 93 542 2975
executive.office@eucen.org

The European Association for University Lifelong Learning

5

Informs

General Assembly of EUCEN Members

EUCEN's next General Assembly of members will take place at the University of Genoa (Italy) during EUCEN's 42nd European Conference (**16-18 November 2011**). Full members of EUCEN who are not attending this meeting can send their Proxy until 10 November 2011.

During the meeting there will be the election of one member of the Steering Committee. If you are interested to stand for the election, please send all your documents to our Secretary General (Professor Françoise de Viron) by 14 October 2011. You can do that via carme.royo@eucen.org.

The draft minutes from the previous meeting (Granada, May 2011) and the Preliminary Agenda for the meeting in Genoa can be downloaded from the Members' Room of EUCEN's website. The related papers will be also available there in due course. Remember that only members who have register on EUCEN's website have access to this section.

Link to the Agenda and Papers for the meeting:
http://www.eucen.eu/members_room/general_assembly

Webinar on EQF & Recognition of Prior Learning

VIRQUAL, the Network for integrating Virtual Mobility and European Qualification Framework in HE and CE institutions, is organising its last webinar. This time the theme is EQF and Recognition of Prior Learning. The webinar will take place on 20 October 2011, starting at 11:00 CET until 12:00 CET, using Adobe Connect Meeting Room from University of Geneva. The invited speaker will be Michel Feutrie, former President of EUCEN and expert in this area.

The main points presented by the Keynote Speaker, Michel FEUTRIE, will be:
-   National Qualifications Frameworks referenced to the EQF,
-   Recognition and validation of prior or experiential learning,
-   European policy's key instruments to make possible positive personal and professional pathways
-   Where are we now? What is the specific role of Higher Education and Continuing Education?

This webinar is part of the VIRQUAL project initiatives to explore and amplify the implementation of virtual mobility, e-learning and recognition of prior learning at Higher Education and Continuing Education levels. For more information, registration and other details please visit the VIRQUAL website at http://virqual.up.pt and check for the programme and speaker information in the grey box on the right side!

Registration and queries should be addressed to soeiro.alfredo@gmail.com

The European Association for University Lifelong Learning