



Network of Universities  
from the Capitals of Europe

## **UNICA IRO MEETING 2012**

### **World Cafe on Welcoming Skills**

UNICA IRO Meeting May 3, 2012

Welcoming Skills were first discussed by UNICA's IROs in 2010 in Vienna. The Bologna process, the Erasmus Mundus programmes, the internationalisation of staff have increased the need to think about how to welcome incoming students and staff.

#### **Foreign degree seeking students** (*Antonella Cammisa, Roma 1*)

##### *Recruitment techniques*

- Some use agents and have agreements with them at university level and at faculty level.
- Some countries have national agencies for that purpose; participate in international fairs abroad.
- Some do not recruit but look for good Master and PhD students.
- Good websites are very important.

##### *Admissions*

- Very different systems. Some countries have the Ministry deciding, or national agencies receiving the applications, or an academic evaluation centre to evaluate degrees. Italy: admissions through the Embassies.
- International offices not concerned except in UK (but UKAS deals with undergraduates).

##### *Languages*

- English programmes at Ma and PhD. But need to give the students a knowledge of the national language (before the stay 'on line' and during)

##### *Welcoming*

- Welcome weeks for all students + social events.
- Clear need of having intercultural initiations for academic and administrative staff.

#### **Mobility and Placement students** (*Sylvie Kohli, UNIL*)

##### *Experiences*

- Tutoring by local student who receive credits for tutoring tasks.
- Module for career management with welcoming of students included.
- Free language courses with credits.
- Language tandems / abilities tandems.
- Placement students: in some universities are treated like the mobility students.

### *Improvements to make*

- Integration with local students.
- Housing.

### *How to welcome back*

- ESN organises meeting with students coming back.
- Make students aware of their increased employability after a placement abroad.

### *Innovative suggestions*

- Psychology students help incoming students.

### *UNICA*

- Share orientation programmes.
- Exchange of trainees.

### *Tips of the year*

- Minimum standard charter.
- Interactive welcoming fairs.
- Internationalize the content of courses so that local students need to interact with exchange students.
- Keep personal contacts and link with faculties, ESN and all stakeholders (e.g.housing agencies...).

## **Visiting Professors and Researchers** (*Sabine Lopez Paris 6, Elena Tegovska ULB*)

### *New foreign faculty*

- Welcoming new foreign faculty is not too much discussed in the majority of the institutions. Normally, done by the hosting institute, department, faculty.
- With a salary even for 3 months are taken care by faculties; human resources take care of the contracts.

### *Short terms stays*

- Centralized.
- In the faculties.
- Or responsibility shared between Centre and faculties.

### *Main problems*

- Visa, financing issues, sometimes don't know who is coming in the institutes.
- In some institutions, accommodation is centralized into one person.

### *Improvements proposals*

- Improve communication with faculties.
- For the integration of foreign academics: Meetings to welcome them, social events, get them to know each other.
- Have a real policy to develop that kind of service? Could be part of a general policy of internationalisation? Some institutions wonder why developing that kind of service: it depends on the situation.
- Think of language training: necessary even for the academic staff.