



SKILLS#EU

Learning Mobility - Opening European Minds

MODULE 2

UNDERSTANDING NEGOTIATION AND DECISION-MAKING IN EUROPE

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Skills#EU Module 2: Understanding Negotiation and Decision-Making in Europe

1. Introduction

This document represents one out of four central outputs of the Skills#EU project. The project's overall goal is to add civic education components to the ERASMUS+ mobility experience of VET students. This is necessary, first to compensate for the general lack of civic and citizenship education in vocational training; and second, to provide ERASMUS+ VET mobility students with specific knowledge and skills when going abroad for a professional stay in another European country. As mentioned before, each European education system in the field of VET lacks civic education and if VET students decide to participate in an ERASMUS+ mobility experience they are not sufficiently prepared in the areas of European democracy, citizenship rights, EU politics, or intercultural & European communication. Knowledge of these issues is highly important for the students' ability to profit from the opportunities of a European labour market as well as for becoming responsible members of our democratic societies.

The project outputs describe and illustrate three different approaches to civic education and intercultural communication. They are represented in the three modules of the Skills#EU curriculum. The curriculum is designed as a hands-on guideline for teachers and multipliers who are providing preparatory, accompanying, or follow-up courses to VET mobility students, both in their country of origin and the host country. It is assisting teachers and multipliers as much as possible with didactical explanations and practical advice for their implementation. Furthermore, the Skills#EU curriculum has a modular structure. This means that it allows for the three approaches to be applied together or separately depending on the phase of the mobility courses. Units and sub-units of the modules can be used individually or they can be integrated into the specific course structures. This practicality and flexibility makes it easy and possible for teachers and trainers to provide civic education in the context of an ERASMUS+ VET mobility. This increases the probability that this important subject receives more attention and is offered to the VET-mobility participants.

The Skills#EU modules present and explain all the material that is necessary to implement and perform civic education from the three different perspectives. All materials are provided, either online via the Skills#EU website and peer-learning platform, or in the form of a method-box. Accordingly, teachers, trainers, and multipliers of all participating partner organisations have direct access to all relevant material. Trainers, teachers, and multipliers of interested organisations outside the project will have the possibility to directly access the online material free of charge, to compile their own method box, or ask for further information from the Skills#EU project partners.

As well as materials offered, the Skills#EU modules give deep insight into their development process as well as detailed explanations of their approaches and methodologies. They state why they had been chosen and how they have been adapted to the specific VET context. This shall enable teachers, trainers, and multipliers to further develop the presented methodologies and find even better methods of implementation. Ultimately, teachers, trainers, and multipliers in their roles know the best approach to organising their courses and how to deal with their students.

This document covers Module 2 of the Skills#EU curriculum titled “Understanding Negotiation and Decision-Making in Europe”. It focuses, in particular on basic rules of democratic cooperation and is guided by the question of *how it is possible to come to a decision within a group of equally powerful members*. It raises awareness of democratic values and shows how important it is for each and every citizen to participate in democratic life.

This document is structured as follows:

- Section 2 refers to the context of Module 2 within the Skills#EU project. It describes why it is necessary to talk about democratic values and democratic decision-making within the EU in VET education and therefore show how it contributes to the overall project goals.
- Section 3 describes the development process of Module 2 and illustrates how the initial theoretical approach has been adapted to the realities of the ERASMUS+ VET mobility programmes in the different European countries. It also refers to the main lessons learned from the “Skills#EU Whitepaper” and how the project partners have profited from sharing their mutual experiences in the field.
- Section 4 is the core of the document and presents and explains the civic educational material that has been developed during the project.
- Section 5 concludes.

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2. Context of the Module

The Skills#EU Project

Europe is currently experiencing various societal and political challenges. Economic hardship, financial crisis, and serious social problems that exert pressure on politics and promote the rise of extremist and nationalist political movements. In many European countries these new political forces oppose European integration and demand the return to the nation state as the refuge for seemingly lost wealth. They are not interested in constructive further-development of the “European Project”, which could tackle the existing problems. Rather they seek salvation in the borders of the nation-state, completely disregarding the severe problems of the past that were remedied by European integration. The ideological return to the nation-state is romanticised and lacks a rational foundation. It is most likely based on fear and frustration.

Under such political and societal circumstances, civic education is more important than ever. It aims to uphold democratic values and principles and prevent students from falling for demagogues who are basing their arguments on prejudices and hostilities.

Currently, European civic education in member states is not reaching appropriate standards. Studies in Germany, (which probably has the most developed civic education infrastructure), show that civic education, in particular in relation to the EU, is receiving very little attention in the education system, both in terms of time and resources. As a result, topics like democracy and democratic values are only superficially dealt with. Most educational content delivers isolated facts about state institutions and political processes. However, the basic meaning and reasoning of why and to what purpose these institutions and processes exist, remains in the dark. Subsequently, real understanding of our democratic state and the European integration process will not develop. This applies to all types of education – academic and vocational. Yet the deficiency of high-quality European civic education is particularly apparent in the latter. Effective and appealing formats for VET students are extremely rare or often completely lacking in the school curriculum. This is concerning, especially in areas of Germany where VET students are in areas that are most susceptible to extremist and nationalist attitudes (Besand, 2014). Hence, civic education is lacking where it is most needed.

The lack of European civic education has other practical consequences as well. The European Integration process has created a Single European Labour Market eliminating the bureaucratic barriers for workers and employees hoping to take jobs in other EU member countries. The VET systems, however, are not taking these new possibilities sufficiently into account. Training and teaching is still geared very much towards the national labour markets and dedicate very little time to prepare students for the European labour market. They are therefore not trained in European issues, such as rights and duties as European citizens, or effective communication to deal with cultural differences in European states. Such “soft skills” are a very important aspect of personal and professional growth for students. A student should be able to adapt in new working conditions as this will greatly impact upon their performance as employees. Only if the performance gap between foreign and domestic workers is closed, will employers be ready to engage workers from other EU countries in the long run. The full potential of the European Labour Market will not be seen until this is done.

Therefore, the Skills#EU project has two main aims:

- First, to educate VET students in the areas of civic and citizenship education, in order to foster their knowledge about democracy and democratic values. It also hopes to increase their knowledge of the European Integration processes-its advantages for each citizen as well as its shortcomings and challenges. This shall help students to exercise their democratic rights and make them more responsible European citizens¹
- Second, to provide VET students with important “soft skills” that help them to take full advantage of their opportunity in the European labour market. They shall learn about these opportunities, rights and duties, as well as how to behave in different working environments and cultures.

The Skills#EU project follows the following strategy:

¹ Please note that it is not the purpose of the Skills#EU project to convince VET students of any form of political agenda. Rather it aims at achieving that all students, regardless of their educational background, understand the basics of European democracy. They should be able to form an own opinion that is in line with the facts. They should be empowered to fight for their own interests without being instrumentalized by interests and opinions that are not theirs.

1. The Skills#EU project will integrate educational elements into the ERASMUS+ VET mobility programme. Therefore, it is cooperating with sending and receiving organisations in Austria, France, Germany, Malta, and Great Britain, who organise the mobility project for VET students. They provide work placements, accommodation, and supervise participants during their project. Furthermore, they arrange preparatory and follow-up courses for the participants. These preparatory and follow-up courses are the ideal contexts to include new elements of European civic and citizenship education. They can be flexible and are not regulated by strict national standards, and therefore offer the space to include new content.²
2. The Skills#EU curriculum consists of three modules. The module titles are:
 - Module 1: Challenges and Opportunities as European Citizens
 - Module 2: Understanding Negotiation and Decision-Making in Europe
 - Module 3: Intercultural Communication

The three modules implement the new civic and citizenship education content in the ERASMUS+ context and apply modern pedagogic methodologies that are not standard in the VET. They deal with VET students' civic and citizenship education as well as their abilities to cope with the European labour market.

3. The Skills#EU project has developed material that can be immediately used by the trainers and teachers on site. This means that they are provided with hands-on material as well as guidelines and advice on how these materials can be used and further developed. This is responding to the fact that civic and citizenship education material is rarely designed for the VET context and is mostly targeted at academic education. In contrast, the Skills#EU material is specifically designed for the capabilities of VET students.

Module 2: Understanding Negotiation and Decision-Making in the Europe

Module 2 of the Skills#EU specifically targets the civic and citizenship education pillar. Accordingly, it deals with VET students' capability to be responsible citizens of our democratic states, and our democratic Europe. They will understand the essential meaning and notions of democracies, and be able to hold policy-makers accountable for their actions. They will fulfil the most important job in a democracy – that of the citizen.

In doing so, Module 2 is guided by three questions:

1. Why is high quality civic and citizenship education so rare in the VET context?
2. What would modern citizenship education look like?
3. How can modern citizenship education be integrated in to VET lessons – including the ERASMUS+ classes?

The Skills#EU project in general, and Module 2 in particular, have a specific stance on these issues. This is presented in the remainder of this section.

The Intricacies of Civic and Citizenship Education

In order to teach and train democracy, one needs first to understand what it is, and even more importantly why we have chosen this form of government above others. And it is here, already, where our reasoning comes to a standstill. What is democracy and why do we have it? This is definitely difficult to answer and even harder to explain. From the project partner's perspective, democracy is a system of many interacting democratic rules, reaching from

² In contrast, national education systems are highly rigid and difficult to change. New content like European civic education is very hard to be implemented.

institutional decision-making in executives and legislatures, to guarantee individual freedoms, state obligations and social protection. It is important to note that there is not a singular or ideal form of democracy. There are only democratic interpretations of rules and processes. These democratic rules have highly diverse shapes and forms with very different emphases. Differences are not only observable between states but also within states. Democratic participation rights often vary from region to region, from city to city. Even political parties view internal decision-making procedures from very different democratic perspectives and opt for different democratic decision-making processes.

However, according to our understanding, all forms of democracy share one fundamental notion: the democratic organisation of a state is essentially about distributing political and societal power more equally among many individuals, institutions and organisations. This shall balance and reconcile different political and societal interests and find solutions that are acceptable for each of them. There are also societal areas where democratic rules and decision-making may not be necessary, applicable, and can be counterproductive, e.g. in many businesses and private companies or even state institutions, like the police or the military. However, even these are controlled and supervised by democratic institutions that safeguard their neutrality and independence from specific social interests.

Thus, democracy distributes power and forces opposing interests to cooperate. This cooperation is established through the interplay of very different political and societal rules and processes that are often codified but sometimes, are not. When it comes to teaching democracy and democratic values, the core challenge is to convey how different political and societal rules compel individuals and institutions to interact and to come to a common decision. Teaching democracy is equal to teaching a certain (democratic) culture of interaction.

Furthermore, it is important to note that political and societal rules become democratic only in combination. All major aspects of political and societal decision-making processes (according to the standard policy cycle) from the definition of the problem, policy deliberation and design, policy adoption and implementation to the policy evaluation have to have a democratic character. Therefore, democracy is not something that is located exclusively in parliaments or governments. Rather, it is an essential character of our everyday lives. Even more so, if it is not an essential character of our everyday lives, our democracy is incomplete and malfunctioning.

Traditional teaching methods are struggling to convey this deeper meaning of democracy. Far too often it is taught superficially by describing democratic rules that are neither put into context nor grounded in learners' everyday lives. Text-based explanations of democratic rules and their interaction quickly become highly complex and require the audience to have extensive pre-knowledge, personal experience and a very high faculty of abstraction. Civic education about democracy and democratic values is not taking this into account sufficiently.

Consequently, learners, and young people in particular, are quickly losing their interest in the subject and will not be able to fully understand even the more basic concepts of democracy. They will not realise what democracy means in their immediate personal life. In classrooms all over the world, many students (and teachers) regard civic education, politics, democracy and related issues, as far-fetched and boring.

Therefore, new ways have to be found to motivate students to pay attention to this important subject. From the Skills#EU perspective they have to;

- focus on cooperation, interaction, common decision-making and collaborative action,
- illustrate that democracy and democratic values are and have to be incorporated into our everyday lives and affect us all. In fact, they have to raise awareness among young people that each and every one of them is

directly profiting from a democratic society, and that many of the circumstances that they take for granted are directly related to democratic values and democratic culture. Teaching about democracy and democratic values must be rooted in our everyday lives – it must demonstrate how our everyday environment is affected by democratic thinking and what it means if this thinking is lacking.

New methods of civic education: the Skills#EU perspective

Module 2 of the Skills#EU project considers role-plays, simulation games, and similar experiential exercises as the most effective method to raise awareness of the essential concepts of democracy among children and young adults. These methods give participants a role in decision-making and ask them to act based on the information given. Therefore, the type and the extent of the information can almost be called secondary. More importantly, young people start to act upon their own judgements and take the actions of other participants into consideration.

Role-playing, simulations etc. go far beyond merely describing and teaching isolated facts about our democratic states and their institutions. Rather, they create context and reproduce negotiation and cooperation dynamics. They illustrate the core of a democratic institution: people with different interests and preferences having to agree on a common political result. If they fail there is no result and problems remain unsolved.

Furthermore, simulation games, role-plays etc., create a dynamic and competitive environment with mutual dependencies and interdependencies among the participants. This is usually highly motivating, for young people in particular. Furthermore, fictional and experiential scenarios create a protected environment that is free of real sanctions. This lowers the pressure on the participants to act in a certain way and gives them the opportunity to test themselves, to put themselves in another's position and experiment with new behaviours and behavioural patterns.

At the same time, participants in simulation games and role-plays etc., experience first hand the importance of knowledge and diligence. They see that those who know more and who act proactively perform better in the game. At the same time, the protected environment does not impose any sanctions on the participants in terms of how they acquire their knowledge or how they act. This gives them responsibility for their own performance including the possibility of failure.

Authors such as Dierßen and Rappenglück (2015) or Klippert (1996) argue that interactive simulation games, role-plays and the like represent a much more complex form of learning compared with other methods. According to them, students learn:

- substantially and technically about the content of the simulation game or role-play,
- methodologically and strategically in terms of how to reach a final result by applying differing tactics, and,
- socially and communicatively by learning how to behave in a community.

3. Development of the Module

According to the conceptual basis, as outlined in the previous section, the original plan for Skills#EU Module 2 was to work with the participants on the political decision-making process in the context of the ERASMUS+ programme. Now, the module will pursue the following purposes:

1. Participants will receive an introduction to democratic decision-making processes and understand that the EU is as democratic as any of its member states.

2. Participants will develop an understanding of their role in the democratic process and how they can impact and influence democratic decision-making. Imperative is the appreciation that the active citizen has a vital role in democracy and that there are many possibilities given to execute this role.
3. Participants will learn about the ERASMUS+ programme. In particular, they will understand that the money they are receiving and opportunities they are given are the consequence of a political will and a tough negotiation process.

The central methodology of Skills#EU Module 2 had been intended to be a so-called “EU-Sim Light” – a concise simulation of four hours covering the budgetary negotiations of the ERASMUS+ programme for the next budgetary period following the “Ordinary Legislative Procedure”. Including the preparation time and a short introduction to the ERASMUS+ programme as well as the EU decision-making process, the whole exercise is intended to take around six hours.

This should make the participants deal with the three serious issues in a playful manner and help them to develop an intuitive understanding for such political matters.

Milestones of the Development Process

Different milestones contributed to the advancement of Skills#EU Module 2. The first stage involved the publication of the White paper, second the transnational meetings in Perpignan & Malta, as well as the staff training in Berlin, and the pilot of Module 2 in Frankfurt/Oder. The different stages revealed important insights that helped inform the development process.

The Skills#EU White Paper

The Skills#EU white paper was an essential element of the Skills#EU Curriculum development process because of the innovative nature of the Skills#EU project. As explained before, the project tries to integrate civic and citizenship education as well as elements of intercultural training in to the ERASMUS+ context. This is new and currently not practised. It is the nature of innovative projects, like Skills#EU, that there is little structured analytical knowledge about their contents. Therefore, the Skills#EU White paper was necessary for representing a **first reference point** for this task. It was required in order to collect information about the needs and demands of sending and receiving organisations, their trainers and participants in terms of new educational content. By confirming or otherwise the original assumptions of the proposal, the Skills#EU White paper, ensures that the developed content is useful and has a chance of being used even beyond the scope of the project. Furthermore, it serves as interesting first-hand insight for the National Agencies and the central ERASMUS+ bureaucracy in Brussels about the attitudes of the people working in the ERASMUS+ VET mobility programme in terms of civic and citizenship education. Unfortunately, the budget for the Skills#EU White paper was cut from the original project proposal. It was accomplished anyway but at the expense of size and quality. This harmed the quality and the potential impact of the Skills#EU project.

Nevertheless, the Skills#EU White paper provided important insights for the Skills#EU Curriculum and its individual modules. They can be summarised in the following recommendations:

1. Both the interviewed trainers and ERASMUS+ VET mobility participants have a clear preference for interactive on-site courses. The direct interaction between trainers and students is highly valued.
2. Trainers and students consider e-learning as a valuable component of the courses on site. However, according to the survey results e-learning cannot replace personal interaction. This is a core new insight for

the Skills#EU project showing that even the young generation which can be called “digital natives” clearly see the limitations of e-learning and digital communication.

3. Trainers and students alike demand a greater focus on intercultural communication elements. The students should be better prepared for how to deal with new cultures and habits in a new working environment. Considering the restricted time resources, lessons about politics are regarded secondary. This is an important insight, which helped develop Module 2, in particular the emphasis placed on politics. If politics is addressed the interviewees are asked to discuss the most recent developments that are part of the actual public discourse.
4. In general, all interviewees showed a positive attitude towards the European Union and the European Integration process. They asked for more encouraging civic educational elements.
5. The trainers asked for balanced course programmes. On the one hand students will be challenged, on the other hand they should not be overloaded with too much content.
6. The interviewed trainers raised the project’s awareness of the fact that the newly developed course content must be added to the existing mandatory preparatory and follow-up course structures. This adds extra pressure to the participating organizations and the trainers: on the one hand they have many mandatory elements, on the other hand they have very little time and budget for these courses. This leaves very little space for additional course elements.

Transnational project meetings

Projects in the context of the “Strategic Partnership” are particularly suitable for advancing the ERASMUS+ VET mobility programme due to the fact that several acting organisations come together, share their experience with the programme, and come up with concrete reform steps. This is also the case with the Skills#EU project. Sending and receiving organisations from five EU countries develop how to advance the preparation and follow-up courses with elements of civic and citizenship education and intercultural training. The collaboration proved genuinely fruitful.

It was discovered that there is relatively little communication and cooperation between sending and receiving organisations when it comes to preparing their students and following up on their mobility stay. By and large course content are not aligned – each organisation seems to follow their own procedures and deliver the course content that they deems necessary. While this is unfortunate from an ERASMUS+ VET mobility participant’s view, it is fully understandable from the organisations’ perspective. The organisational differences between the national VET systems are so large that coordination is highly demanding and rarely successful. For example, VET in Germany is following a dual education system in which the students are attending VET schools and are working part-time in a company. These companies are counting on the workforce of the VET students and are highly reluctant to grant them the time for a VET mobility. Even if they do so, they want to keep the students’ absenteeism to a minimum. This impedes on the preparation time as well as students not having the possibility to attend extensive preparation or follow-up seminars. In contrast, most other European states educate their VET students in a standard school environment and can incorporate a mobility stay more easily into their syllabus – including time for preparation and follow-up.

Therefore, the first lesson learned from the project partners is:

- Preparatory and follow-up courses are different in different organisational contexts. For the Skills#EU course content this means that it has to be flexible enough to fit in highly diverse course structures. The Skills#EU modules need to be applicable individually. Assuming that the whole Skills#EU curriculum will be applied as one monolithic course before, during, or after a mobility stay is not realistic.

Nevertheless, sending and receiving organisations are required to offer preparatory and follow-up courses to their students. However, the resources given are not adequate and do not meet the formal requirements. They are enough to cover the most important information, for example, the students' duties during their mobility stay and the reporting requirements. However, organisationally and financially there is very little scope for providing fine-tuned and sophisticated training. This is unfortunate because as a result the VET systems are not preparing their students adequately for a job or an internship in another European country. This is not only affecting civic and citizenship education but also intercultural training, which would be particularly useful and enable a more positive experience both in the workplace and private life.

Consequently, our second lesson learned from the project partnership is:

- Sending and receiving organisations have a great interest in upgrading their courses, particularly in areas of; civic and citizenship education, and intercultural training as they see the need for it and experience the respective failure of the national VET systems. However, they are bound by strict regulations and tight budgets and therefore select carefully what they can integrate and what not. From a Skills#EU Module 2 perspective this means that the course content needs to be as relevant and useful for everyday life of the mobility students and less theoretic.

Pilot of Module 2 in Frankfurt / Oder

After Module 2 of the Skills#EU curriculum had been developed and was drafted and elaborated on in the Skills#EU staff training workshop, it was piloted with VET students in an ERASMUS+ specific event in Frankfurt/Oder. This took place in cooperation with the Skills#EU project leader "IHK-Projektgesellschaft Ostbrandenburg". The event, which hosted this pilot, was both presenting the opportunities of ERASMUS+ VET mobilities and awarding EUROPASS certificates to returning students from their VET mobility. The workshops that were especially dedicated to the Skills#EU project were attended by 35 VET students from the educational areas of tourism and office administration. Their age and level of education was extremely diverse, ranging from teenager first year apprentices to adult third year apprentices. The students were mostly of German and Polish origin.

As presented and agreed upon in the Skills#EU staff training, the main element of module 2 is the interactive simulation. The participants had to take the role of a lobbyist or an interest group representative from very different parts of society and negotiate the future of the ERASMUS+ programme. This setup is borrowed from the concept of the "Civil Dialogue Groups" that are taking place in the context of the future "Common Agricultural Policy" (CAP) and are organised by the European Commission (DG AGRI). Agreements that are achieved in these "Civil Dialogue Groups" are usually included in the legislative process surrounding the CAP.

The role-play of module 2 of the Skills#EU curriculum is setting up a hypothetical "Civic Dialogue Group" with hypothetical lobby- or interest groups who present their attitudes towards the ERASMUS+ programme and articulate their demands for a potential reform. In order to reduce the complexity of the negotiations, the concrete issue is reduced to the question of *how much money the whole ERASMUS+ programme should be equipped with*. In other words, the participants shall negotiate the future ERASMUS+ budget and shall subsequently decide how much money each ERASMUS+ mobility participant shall receive during their mobility stay.

The following hypothetical “interest groups” were represented:³

Table 1: Interest groups represented in the role-play

Name	Demands
League of European Trainees and Apprentices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase of ERASMUS+ budget - Lump sums for free time activities and excursions
European Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No decrease of the ERASMUS+ budget - Support for small companies if participating in ERASMUS+
European Craft Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decreasing or abandoning the ERASMUS+ funds - Protection against wage dumping
National Heritage Syndicate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cutting the ERASMUS+ budget - Restricting the programme to students between the ages of 17-19.
Organisation of European Tax Payers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decreasing the budget - No redistribution to the national level
Association of European Consumers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No reduction of the budget- even a slight increase would be desirable - Language courses should be included
Association of Multinational European Companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No reduction of the budget – even a slight increase would be desirable - Lump sums for language courses and insurance
Association of Eastern-European Municipalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eastern European municipalities shall receive special support when hosting mobility students

Two workshops took place with two different groups, each lasting 90 minutes. A sample schedule is shown below.

Table 2: Workshop agenda Skills#EU Module 2 pilot

Phase No	Duration	Action	Explanation
1	10min	Subject introduction	Introduction to the ERASMUS+ programme using the power-point presentation (included in the annex).
2	5min	Role-play introduction	Introduction to the role-play including the procedure (role-profiles, debating rounds and the controversial subject (future financial endowment of the ERASMUS+ budget)).
3	15min	Individual and group preparation	Preparation for the simulation in three phases: a) reading the role profiles; b) discussion of role-profiles in groups and clarifying any questions; c) preparation of a short presentation of the interest group’s position.

³ Due to the fact that the participants were mostly German speaking, German translations of the documents were used. The English text is presented here for presentation purposes.

4	15min	Plenary debate, Part I	Each (interest) group present their position in a short opening statement and argues in favour of a potential negotiation outcome.
5	10min	Plenary debate, Part II	After hearing each opening statement there is room for open discussions and exchange of arguments.
6	20min	Informal Negotiations	After all arguments have been officially exchanged, the groups adjourn and have the opportunity to debate informally and bilaterally in order to form coalitions and partnerships. Common proposals are developed and prepared.
7	10min	Plenary debate, Part III	Presentation of coalition statements and last formal negotiations in plenary. Proposals can be changed for the last time.
8	5min	Voting and Reflection	The participants vote on the different proposals. It's important for the participants to understand: their proposal will only be considered in the future legislation process if they have allies and manage to form coalitions. This shall be reflected with a short recap at the end of the workshop.

In general, the pilot may be considered as a genuine acid test. The participating students were mostly very young and largely apolitical – with a few notable exceptions. Their knowledge was diverse with mostly very little or no knowledge about neither the European political system nor the German political system. The participants had no feelings towards the subject and showed little motivation to learn about European politics or ERASMUS+ policy and therefore were not very enthusiastic about performing a political role-play. In sum, it was a rather average group in vocational training, which made it a good testing ground for Model 2 of the Skills#EU curriculum.

Three concrete lessons were learnt from the pilot:

1. Course content must be as personal and as directly related to the students' everyday lives as possible

As interest for and experience in civic education was low in both groups, they had problems relating to the subject. This was the case despite the fact that all participants were affected by the ERASMUS+ programme in some form or the other and prospective changes could therefore have implications for them as well. In particular, most participants were not able to realize the practical implications of a cut in the ERASMUS+ budget towards financial support that is granted to each participant. This logical transfer was successfully made after multiple interventions of the course instructor. Once the participants made this logical transfer they managed to develop a personal relation to the subject, which resulted in far better involvement in and motivation to contribute to the workshop.

Therefore, the main substantial lessons learned was that substantial content of the negotiation topics has to be further reduced to an even more personal level. The updated role-play workshop will not deal with an overall budget (of ERASMUS+) but with the individual financial rates of support that are granted to each VET mobility participant.

2. Text-based presentations should be minimised as far as possible

Text-based presentation techniques were not particularly well received by the participants. Students in this pilot were largely lacking basic reading-comprehension skills, which led to problems with understanding the profile roles and the subject matter, the tasks, and the basic instructions of the agenda.

Therefore, the main lesson learnt from a presentation point of view is that the amount of text that is presented to the participants needs to be kept to a minimum. If texts are distributed, more time must be allocated for joint collaboration and discussion.

3. Guided self-learning is demanding for students but is eventually highly effective

The pilot has confirmed the well-established didactic insight that once participants manage to relate personally to a subject or a task, they are far better able to understand and grasp it. Here, the participants of this pilot had great difficulties in developing this connection initially but were eventually successful. Accordingly, they learned how to deal with the profile, how to debate and to negotiate on an elementary level. This was definitively not the case at the beginning of the event and therefore, it is safe to claim that participants have gained knowledge, skills, and competences even in this short session of 90min.

Furthermore, participants complained that they had great difficulties in taking a position that they were personally not supporting. From a pedagogical perspective this indicates that participants were performing a thought process, which they were not used to. Again, the difficulties were overcome during the workshop and the participants managed to increase their skills. Firstly, this indicates that interactive approaches have quick and highly positive effects on motivation and skills development. Secondly, participants' initial problems with the tasks confirm that self-reliance and personal responsibility are rarely taught and practised in average vocational schools in Germany.

Conclusion of the Development Process

According to the development process, the project partners decided to fine-tune the content of Module 2 of the Skills#EU curriculum and better adapt it to the needs and demands of the sending and receiving organisation and, in particular, the ERASMUS+ VET mobility participants. The adaptations took place along the following dimensions:

1. Mitigating the Module's strong focus on politics

Both the Skills#EU Whitepaper and the input of the project partners indicated that the original focus on politics was too strong. Although the policy-field in question – policies in the context of the ERASMUS+ programme – has real and direct implications for the mobility participants, the subject is still considered to be too abstract, theoretic and scientific. VET students, in particular, who rarely encounter scientific or abstract issues, such as politics, will show little motivation for this topic. Furthermore, the trainers and teachers have raised the issue that given the short timeframe of the preparation and follow-up courses, teaching politics has little priority for them. They would rather provide the participants with more practical information about their stay e.g. in respect to the work placement and accommodation. Accordingly, they prefer course contents to deal with the actual reality of the mobility, which may include being prepared for their new work experience in a foreign environment and culture, or coming back from a personally exciting experience abroad. Also, it needs to be considered that many of the VET participants are very young and these trips may be the first time they have stayed in another country or been somewhere without their family. In this situation they will probably not be interested in listening to political lectures but more interested in obtaining further information about their upcoming stay or sharing experiences of their past stay.

2. Relaxing the procedural demands of the simulation

Originally, Skills#EU module 2 involved a simulation following the “Ordinary Legislative Procedure” – the main legislative procedure of the EU. This raised concerns among the project partners and participants. While most of them approved the methodology as a very appealing tool for conveying political issues, the unanimous opinion was that the ERASMUS+ VET mobility context is not right for education about such a complex legislative procedure. Regardless of the methodology in use, the mobility participants have difficulties in understanding why this subject is a necessary part of the mobility preparation or follow-up. Therefore, they would probably participate – as they used to participate in their school education – but would not put their heads to the content. In other words, overloading the mobility participants with the complexity of the “Ordinary Legislative Procedure” would jeopardise the learning objective.

3. Adapting the course to the environment of the preparation and follow-up courses

Originally, Skills#EU module 2 was planned as a monolithic course of six-to-eight hours covering all its content in a one-day seminar. It was initially planned to be implemented before, during or after a mobility stay. This setup was clearly rejected by the project partners and most of the participants. On the one hand it was criticised that the interests of the participants are different before and after the mobility stay, which has implications for the course content. The issue was raised that these differing interests needed to be reflected by the course content. On the other hand, neither the preparation courses nor the follow-up courses could integrate six-to-eight hours worth of content. Given the limited time for these courses, this was simply not possible. Therefore, module 2 had to be broken up and matched to the actual demands of students which have been underprepared for their mobility experience and students returning from a mobility experience.

4. Implementation of Skills#EU Module 2

Reoriented Approach and Structure of Skills#EU Module 2

1. Focus on the individual VET mobility participant, on cooperation and interaction

The pilot of Skills#EU module 2, in particular confirmed that interest in civic and citizenship issues among students will probably not be increased by directly confronting them with standard political subjects.⁴ Even if the students are principally affected by the political topic that is dealt with they will probably not develop a sustainable interest in it. Therefore, the Skills#EU module 2 refrains from this direct approach. Instead, it focuses on the individual participants. Module 2 starts with asking for the participants’ thoughts about the mobility programme, to share their expectations for the upcoming mobility or past experiences, respectively, raise awareness and consciousness of their own professional and private circumstances. Specific methodologies motivate them to think about this European exchange, about other European cultures, sensitise them to other working environments and work ethics. Instead of providing them with answers to questions they have not asked, the participants shall be guided in developing their own questions that are rooted in their very own mind-set. Once this is achieved and participants have their own questions in mind, it is much easier to channel their attention to political and citizenship issues that are directly related to their VET mobility experience.

Therefore, the new fine-tuned focus of module 2 is to first raise awareness and second, attach substantial issues. This approach will have a much deeper and sustainable learning impact.

⁴ Such standard political subjects contain lectures about the structure of political systems, political parties, legislative processes, etc. In other words: plain political facts short of context and appreciation of the students’ personal environment.

2. Role-play instead of simulation

Responding to the criticism of the “simulation”, the project partners decided to transform it to a role-play. The core difference between the two is that a role-play does not follow the rules of a real decision-making procedure as for example the OLG. The role play involves participants coming together to reach a common decision. In doing so, module 2 is avoiding the learning objective “knowledge about the OLG”. Nevertheless, module 2 maintains the more fundamental learning objective of “communication, common decision-making and political dialogue”. This is the essential skill that is useful for the participants and is conveyed here.

A second adaptation in this context is the definition of the subject that is being discussed in the role-play. The pilot showed that the participants have great difficulties in understanding the implications of a general budget reduction in the ERASMUS+ framework for their personal funding. Therefore, the role-play discussion is taken to a more elementary level about reducing or raising the direct financial contributions of the ERASMUS+ programme to the individual participants.

3. Separated course-structure: preparatory and follow-up units

Important adaptations were undertaken in the course structure as well. This means that the module was split into two separate units: the first is specifically aligned to the VET mobility preparation period while the second is specifically aligned to the VET mobility follow-up period. This allocation has two major advantages:

- Firstly, by keeping its overall duration to a maximum 5-6 hours but spreading it over two distinct units, the module becomes more flexible and more easily applicable. In particular, the units become shorter and can be better matched to sending and receiving organisations’ course restrictions. This increases the probability that the content of the Skills#EU module 2 will be employed beyond the lifetime of the Skills#EU project.
- Secondly, the individual units are better attuned to the specific interests of the participants. The preparatory unit is specifically dealing with questions concerning the upcoming mobility experience; the follow-up unit is specifically focusing on the reflection of the experiences made during the mobility stay. This reflection phase is particularly important for the students’ individual learning process. In other words: learning takes place during reflection.

This leads to the following principle module structure:⁵ Module 2 is divided in two Units and 4 Sub-Units:

- **Unit 1 is specifically designed for a preparation meeting** before VET students go abroad in the context of the ERASMUS+ mobility programme or at an early stage when the students have just arrived to their host countries.
- **Unit 2 is specifically designed for a follow-up meeting** after or at the end of a mobility stay.

⁵ The remainder of this section presents all teaching material that is necessary for implementing Skills#EU Module 2. Please note that extensive explanations about learning objectives how to use them (e.g. advice for lecturers and trainers) will be covered in the Skills#EU curriculum which represents a hands-on guideline for trainers.

Nevertheless, the sub-units, in particular, are designed in a way that allows them to be applied very flexibly before, during and after the mobility stay. In some cases minor adaptations may be necessary.

Table 3 and 4 summarise the two units of Module 2. More detailed information about the learning objectives, the methodological background, exact timeframes of the exercises as well as specific advice for the trainers can be found in the Skills#EU curriculum. Furthermore, all material that is needed for performing the unit and sub-unit exercises can be found in the ANNEX of this document. It contains:

- The “Instruction Card” for each exercise, which summarises the main rules and the procedure for each exercise.
- Power-Point presentations for each exercise are added as well. The presentation in this document assumes that the single exercises of a unit are performed together and form a coherent block. However, they offer enough flexibility for exercises being performed independently as well. Only minor modifications of the presentations are therefore necessary.
- All the teaching material including “power-point” presentations and instruction cards can be found and downloaded from the Skills#EU peer-learning platform. The download is explicitly referred to in this document.

Table 3: List of sub-units of Skills#EU – Module 2 – Unit 1: Gearing up for the ERASMUS Mobility

	Title	Content	Learning Objective
Sub-Unit 1	Warm-Up	Speed-dating: The group participants get to know each other	Create a good atmosphere among the participants and motivate them to speak-up in front of strangers
Sub-Unit 2	Where am I and what am I doing?	Placement-Reflection: Students reflect on their upcoming stay and communicate about their background, motivation to participate in the VET mobility programme and intentions for their future work	Participants train to formulate their thoughts and to communicate with people they do not know
Sub-Unit 3	The Four Freedoms and ERASMUS+	Moderated Discussion about the Four Freedoms in the EU and how it relates to the ERASMUS+ Programme	Participants are provided with input about the essential achievements of the EU and highlight the current discussions in relation to the Freedom of Movement
Sub-Unit 4	Challenges when working abroad	Illustrative Performance: Participants illustrate the prospective challenges in their work placement ahead	The students reflect on the future mobility experience and go through some of its key aspects. Methods hope to motivate them to express their thoughts in a creative way.

Table 4: List of Sub-Units of Skills#EU – Module 2, Unit 2: Follow-Up – Looking back at the ERASMUS+ Mobility

	Title	Content	Learning Objective
Sub-Unit 1	Warm-Up: Juxtapositions	Participants move physically around the room and talk about issues concerning their recent mobility experience	Participants get to know each other and become more confident when talking to others
Sub-Unit 2	Clustering	Participants are asked to comment on personal and professional questions and share their recent mobility experiences.	Participants reflect upon their recent mobility experience and rationalise them. This aims to trigger their interest in more general issues, like politics
Sub-Unit 3	Role-Play	Participants are handed out roles of fictional interest groups and they have to formulate the future budgetary endowment of the ERASMUS+ programme, in general and the actual financial support for future VET mobility participants.	Participants shift their focus from their own personal opinions to more general issues of politics. They learn to deal with political issues in a structured way, learn to communicate and find joint solutions in a group.
Sub-Unit 4	Feedback	Participants are putting down their roles and talk about their role and the debate.	This reflection is intended to rationalise the previous debate. Ad hoc and emotionally charged events from the role-play shall be put into order, which is a pre-condition to foster the learning objectives.

5. Conclusion

The core objective of the Skills#EU project is to augment the ERASMUS+ VET mobility programme by the learning objective of civic and citizenship education as well as intercultural training. Both are necessary for training young adults how to participate in a democratic society, exercise their citizenship rights in a European democracy and

communicate in a multicultural European setting. This is important because young VET students are facing the reality of a European labour market, which requires these new soft-skills.

This document presents the second of three modules, which implement exercises that practice these new set of skills. Module 2 focuses on the foundations of our democratic societies, which is: *how to come to a decision with several equally powerful individuals with different interests*. It is accordingly called “Understanding Negotiation and Decision-Making in Europe”.

The module is split into two units – Unit 1 and Unit 2. Unit 1 is specifically designed as a preparatory course for an ERASMUS+ VET mobility while Unit 2 performs exercises in the context of a follow-up after students have returned from a VET mobility.

All the exercises of the Skills#EU module 2 are highly participatory, placing the learner – the VET student in the centre. They are motivated and encouraged to think and reflect about their professional life and their role in a democratic society. Furthermore, they learn about the foundation of the ERASMUS+ programme and the source of their financial support. They realise that these financial contributions are not “heaven-sent” but the manifestation of a political will and the result of a complicated and difficult negotiation process.

Module 2 in particular and the Skill#EU project in general is the first attempt to systematically use the ERASMUS+ VET mobility programme as a vehicle compensating for the dramatic lack of civic education and intercultural training in the national VET systems. It is profiting from the requirement for the sending and receiving organisations to provide preparatory and/or follow-up courses to the VET mobility participants before, during, and after their mobility experience. These courses and seminars set the frame for the Skills#EU modules.

However, these course structures also represent the major obstacles for more sustainable and extensive civic education and intercultural training. The requirements that must be met by the sending and receiving organisations are very high and can be difficult to manage in the given times. This leaves very little room for additional course content.

This implies that the Skill#EU modules have to be flexible and adapted into existing course structures. Trainers that are on site can decide for themselves which elements of the three Skills#EU modules they want to work with in practice. Accordingly, all material that is produced in the project’s context aims to provide as much support as possible to the trainers. They can access this material online via the Skills#EU website and peer-learning platform, respectively and/or via a method box containing all components of the modules’ exercises in hard copy. Therefore, the project partners achieve that trainers take the opportunity and upgrade their course offers by civic education or intercultural training and develop their offer further. In conclusion, VET students are better prepared for life and work in a larger, European context.

ANNEX 1: Instruction Cards

Skills#EU – Module 2 – Unit 1 - Sub-Unit 1: Warm-Up –Speed-dating

Goal and Nature of the Exercise

- Light and personal introduction
- Aims to stimulate talk about participants' personal life, their interests, their thoughts and feelings
- Reduce shyness and build up confidence when speaking in front of others

The Course of Action

- Create two rows of chairs directly opposing each other. Each participant should face another participant
- Given questions (see: below) projected onto a screen. Participants are free to choose different questions
- Each group of two (facing each other) have two minutes to go through the questions and answer them. This means that each participant has one minute to go through all the questions. If the workshops have fewer participants, the time per duo can be prolonged.
- Once the two minutes have lapsed the participants of one row move one chair to the right and start the presentation anew.

The Questions

The following questions are suggestions and not mandatory. The list can be changed, shortened, or prolonged according to the preferences of the trainer and the group.

- What is the worst flavour of ice cream?
- How would you spend one million Euros
- What animal frightens you?
- DO you sing in the shower? If yes, what kind of songs do you sing?
- If you could rule the world for a day, what would you ban?
- What was the best vacation you have ever had?
- What is your hidden talent?
- If someone made a movie of your life, what genre would it be?
- What is your favourite Christmas food?
- If you could drive, cycle, or fly to work, what would it be?

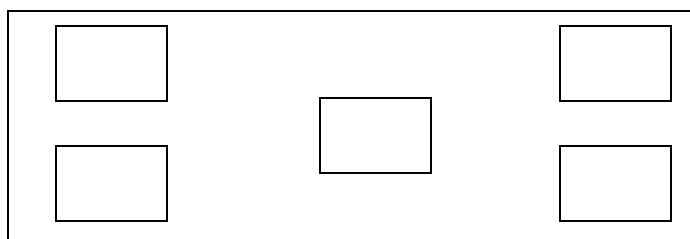
Skills#EU – Module 2 – Unit 1 – Sub-Unit 2: “Placemat”: Where am I and what am I doing?

The Goal and Nature of the Exercise

- First substantial element of the workshop
- Focus on the participants’ professional professions developing awareness for their professional decisions, their professional perspectives and plans for the future.
- Express their expectations towards the upcoming mobility experience in a new working environment.

The Preparation

- Take a large sheet of paper (size A3), which represents a placemat
- Draw one box in each corner of the sheet, leaving space for writing inside the boxes
- Draw a larger box in the centre of the sheet and connect it with the corner boxes by a straight line
- Choose four subjects that the workshop participants shall reflect upon and write them in each corner box
- The number of placemats should correspond to the number of groups you intend to work with. Therefore, prepare one placemat for each group.



Sketch of the Placemat

The Course of Action

- Form groups and cluster them around one placemat each.
- **Reflection Phase:** Give the groups time to reflect upon the questions in the boxes and write their answers, statements, or comments on the sheet next to the respective boxes. This exercise is done individually by each group member and without extensive communication.
- **Communication Phase:** Participants are asked to talk about what they have written for each question and identify anything similar/ different between them. These are written in the central box of the placemat.
- **Presentation Phase:** One member of each group is chosen to summarize and recap the group work and present the terms in the centre of their placemat.

The “Questions” in the corner-boxes

- Why have you chosen your profession – what do you like about it?
- Describe briefly your daily routine at work
- How do you envisage your future work after you have completed the apprenticeship
- Why are you participating in the ERASMUS+ programme – why do you want to go abroad?

Notes for the presentation

- Slide 4:
 - Conclusion: refer to the last question: *Why are you participating in the ERASMUS+ programme?*
 - If there is a comment from a participant about the European job market – elaborate on this.
 - If there is no such comment bring the topic up yourself and ask the participants about their attitude towards the European job market and whether they have thought of looking for jobs in other European countries.
 - Discuss some of the answers
 - This discussion leads over to the next sub-unit which is the moderated discussion

Skills#EU – Module 2 – Unit 1 – Sub-Unit 3: Moderated Discussion - The Four Freedoms of the EU

Goal and Nature of the Exercise

- Connecting personal experiences and opinions to more abstract political subjects
- Raise awareness of the fact that political processes have real ramifications on students' everyday life
- Raise awareness of the fact that the individual support that an ERASMUS+ student receives is not "heaven sent" but the result of a political process
- Get a basic understanding of the EU institutions
- Make students talk about a political subject

The Course of Action

- Follow the presentation and the notes given below

Notes

- Slide 4:
 - Refer to the discussion about the European labour market from the previous sub-unit.
 - Ask the following questions to the participants: Why do we have European labour market at all? Why should we bother about it?
 - Collect some answers
- Slide 5:
 - If not elicited give the answer to the previous questions: The European labour market is one of the core aspects and achievement of the European Single Market
 - Ask the question: Who knows what the European Single Market is – apart from the labour market? What does the European Single Market consist of?
- Slide 6:
 - Give the answer to the previous question, if not given by students: The European Single Market consists of the "Four Freedoms of the European Union". Discuss each freedom:
 - **1. Free Movement of Goods**
 - Almost any goods can be traded between EU member states (and some others) without any restrictions. This means that you can buy goods via the internet in other states without any restrictions
 - This was different in the past. Before the EU Single Market was in place you had to pay a fee - a tariff – if you bought something in another country. A similar experience may have been had if you have been to another country outside of the EU and came back through a border patrol. A customs officer may have checked your bag. This is not only for illegal items but also for things that you have to declare.
 - Such tariffs result in goods from one country not being able to be sold in another country at all or with restrictions. E.g. cars in the U.S. have to comply with very different (stricter) safety regulations, one example is that the safety belts need to be to a specific standard. This means that European cars that are produced in Europe cannot be sold in the U.S. They need to be adapted. This results in greater effort and higher production costs

- However, in the EU we have agreed on a common set of rules that apply to every member state, which means we are able to purchase products within the EU as long as they comply with EU regulations. Also we know that the products we buy are of the same quality and we can trust that they are safe. These assurances cannot be guaranteed when purchasing products outside of the UK, which has become much easier in the age of internet shopping
- **2. Free Movement of Services**
 - The same applies to services, for example, if you were building a house, you could employ workers from all across Europe. You would not be restricted to local workers. If you favour another price or quality you can ask providers from each member state of the EU Single Market to do the job for you
- **3. Free Movement of Capital**
 - The same applies to capital: money can be placed in banks in each member state of the EU Single Market
 - Before the Single Market this was not possible
 - This is most important for banks and companies who are working in different countries
- **4. Free Movement of People**
 - People have the right to move freely throughout each member state
 - They can travel to member countries without any restrictions
 - They can work freely in member countries without any restrictions (the same rules apply to local and EU member state employees)
 - They can settle wherever they wish
 - This was not possible before the EU Single Market
 - The Freedom of Movement creates the European Labour Market which opens up a lot of job opportunities for member state individuals
 - And the ERASMUS+ programme is meant to help each the participants to master the challenges of the European labour market
- Slide 7:
 - These are the general aims of the ERASMUS+ programme
 - Refer back and remind the participants that they form part of this programme.
- Slide 8:
 - These are the main target groups of the ERASMUS+ programme
 - Refer to the variability of the programme: not only VET students are supported, but a whole range of others as well.
 - Refer to the circumstance that they can also participate in the programme for volunteers to have a work placement.
- Slide 9:
 - Explain how the ERASMUS+ programme supports participants.
 - Connect to the single measures to events that are taking place in reality. Attach places and dates with them. This is a good opportunity to integrate the general agenda of the mobility experience.
- **Conclusion:** All these measures are not 'heaven sent'. They are the result of a political will and a complex decision-making procedure between all member countries. This type of cooperation is unique in the world.

Skills#EU – Module 2 – Unit 1 – Sub-Unit 4: “Illustrative Performance” - Challenges when working abroad

Goals and Nature of the Exercise

- Turn the focus to the upcoming VET mobility experience
- Raise awareness of the challenges of working in another country. Such as, assimilating to different work ethics and new cultural habits, or communicating in another language.

The Course of Action

In order to motivate the workshop participants into discussing issues of future concern and triggering their creativity and imagination, the method of an “**Illustrative Performance**” is applied:

- Create groups of four (this may vary depending on the total group size)
- Allocate one of the “challenges” from the instruction card to each group. This can take place voluntarily if the participants are eager to choose themselves. Alternatively, the trainer allocates the terms randomly
- The groups discuss the chosen “challenge” and illustrate it in a performance. The other groups watch and pay attention
- After each group performance the other students are asked for their opinion: *What have they seen? Do they agree with the presented challenge? What is their opinion, in general?* A short discussion should develop.

Terms to perform

- Challenges in the workplace
- Challenges during leisure time
- Challenges with shopping
- Challenges with accommodation

Conclusion of the exercise

- This is the ideal moment to lead over to the practical information about the ERASMUS+ programme.

Skills#EU Module 2 – Unit 2 – Sub-Unit 1: Warm-Up – Juxtapositions

Goal and Nature of the Exercise

- Introductory game and start of the self-reflection
- Activate participants to think and talk about their recent VET mobility experience
- Encourage reflection about their recent VET mobility experience in a structured way, which is the unit's main subject
- Reduce shyness when talking with and in front of strangers

Course of Action

- Choose three (or more) questions with distinct answers/statements that are juxtaposing each other. Present the questions and the answers on the screen or read them out
- Designate certain areas in the room that represent one answer to the question posed
- Pose the question and ask the students to move to the designated area in the room which correlates with the opinion they agree with
- Pick a participant and let them explain their choice

Table 5: Possible Answers and Questions for the “juxtapositions”

Question	Answer
What is your ideal working place?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out in the woods • In a garage • In an office
What is the ideal type of accommodation during a mobility?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With a family • In a hostel • In a shared house
What do you prefer doing in your leisure time?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting friends in a bar • Visiting attractions • Reading a book

Skills#EU Module 2 – Unit 2 – Sub-Unit 2: Clustering - Challenges When Working Abroad

Goal and Nature of the Exercise

- Main self-reflection exercise about the recent VET mobility work experience
- Structured reflection about personal experiences both in the work environment and private life
- Raise awareness of the soft-skills that the workshop participants have learned/ developed during their stay abroad

Preparation of Action

- Choose challenges that you assume to be important in the everyday lives of students who are participating in a VET mobility
- Illustrate the challenges on posters and present them in different areas in the workshop room. They represent the “Clusters”
- Create some space in the workshop room allowing them to move freely between the “Clusters”

Course of Action

- Ask the workshop participants to think about each challenge that is presented on the posters and write it on the sheet
- After each workshop participant has commented on each challenge the moderator randomly picks comments from each poster and asks the author to explain
- The trainer can ask the other workshop participants to comment on the contributions of their fellow participants
- After all “clusters” have been discussed sufficiently, the trainer concludes according to the “concluding questions” (below). The trainer can however choose to conclude differently

Possible Clusters

- Cluster 1: Which challenges did you encounter at your workplace? Did you recognise any differences between the working habits abroad and at home? How did you bridge them?
- Cluster 2: Which challenges did you encounter at home? Did you recognise any differences between the housing habits abroad and at home? How did you bridge them?
- Cluster 3: Which challenges did you encounter in public life? Did you recognise any differences between the public life abroad and at home? How did you bridge them?
- Cluster 4: What was your overall impression? Do you have remarks about the VET mobility programme? What would you recommend colleagues of yours who are preparing for a VET mobility?

Conclusion of the exercise

- Concluding questions to the whole group:
 - Did you enjoy your stay?
 - What have you learned?
 - How will you profit from this experience – personally and professionally?
- Outline the relationship between the ERASMUS+ programme (and the learning content of this module) and the skills required in a European labour market.

Notes: How do VET mobility participants profit from a mobility experience?

- In order to profit from the opportunities of a European labour market, workers and employees have to cope with its challenges.
 - **Opportunities** include:
 - Finding better jobs within companies with business ties to other European countries
 - Finding better jobs within companies with branches in different European countries
 - Finding better jobs in other European countries
 - **Challenges** include:
 - more competition with other job-seekers
 - more flexibility required e.g. to move to another country or to travel
 - better communication skills required including language, and the ability to adapt to other cultures and habits both in the work life and as well as in private life
 - showing initiative and problem solving skills in changing environments

In summary: *“Individuals will need to adapt to a changing labour market and patterns of work; take responsibility for investing in and developing their skills, develop both job-specific and soft skills, including collaboration and communication; and develop the skills required by employers, including enterprise and management skills”* (UK Commission for Employment and Skills, 2014: p.22)

- ERASMUS+ is a real-time training of these skills by:
 - Learning a new language
 - Learning to work with a new set people
 - Learning how to adapt to new working habits and work ethics
 - Learning to cope with unknown challenges and find solutions to new problems
 - Learning to cope with new private conditions and accommodate new cultures and social habits
- If European workers and employees master these challenges they will be of high value to companies and accordingly, highly sought-after.

Skills#EU Module 2 – Unit 2 – Sub-Unit 3: Role play – Negotiating the Budget of the ERASMUS+ Programme

Goal and Nature of the Exercise

- Main civic education element of the workshop
- Shift the workshop participants' attention from a personal to a broader societal / political context.
- Provide more information about the ERASMUS+ programme and its justification.
- Exercise to adopt another perspective
- Exercise how to communicate in a structured way
- Exercise democratic decision-making

Course of Action

- Present the short introduction about the ERASMUS+ programme and the political process in its' context
- Continue with the presentation about the role-play. Refer, in particular to the procedure of the negotiations and the issues that will be negotiated on
- Form eight groups, representing one interest group each. The groups shall appoint one spokesperson, who will have a prominent position during the role-play
- Allocate and distribute the role profiles to the workshop participants. Choose an adequate allocation mechanism e.g. random allocation. If there are not enough participants in the workshop (less than eight) allocate the profiles according to the guidelines given in the "Handling of the Role-Play" section
- The trainer takes the role of the "President" and leads the negotiations. The role of the "President" may be given to a workshop participant as well. However, be aware that this role may be too demanding for a student. Consult the "Handling the Role-Play" section for tips on how to preside over the role-play.
- Distribute the "badges" and the signposts on the tables accordingly.
- Prepare the workshop participants for their role in three phases:
 - i. Ask the workshop participants to read the profiles.
 - ii. Ask the workshop participants to discuss their profile in their group. While the participants are working on their profiles, the trainers should be on hand with help and advice.
 - iii. Ask the group to prepare a short introduction statement, which will describe their position to the other groups. It is the task of the spokesperson to present the statement.
- Start the negotiations with the introductory round – the introductory statements of the groups presented by the spokesperson. Ask the other group members to take notes
- After all introductory statements have been presented, initiate a formal discussion
- As soon as all statements have been made, initiate informal negotiations
- Ask the participants to form coalitions and negotiate a common result. Once coalitions are formed and deals agreed they shall be written on paper and presented to the "President"
- Convene the second round of formal negotiations. Ask the coalition members to present their agreement in front of the others.
- Vote on the proposals.

Notes for the presentation

- Slide 4:
 - Refer to the discussion about the European labour market from the previous sub-unit.
 - Ask the following questions to the participants: Why do we have European labour market at all ? Why should we bother about it?
 - Collect some answers
- Slide 5:
 - If not elicited give the answer to the previous questions: The European labour market is one of the core aspect and achievement of the European Single Market
 - Ask the question: Who knows what the European Single Market is – apart from the labour market? What does the European Single Market consist of?
- Slide 6:
 - Give the answer to the previous question, if not given by students: The European Single Market consists of the “Four Freedoms of the European Union”. Discuss each freedom:
 - **1. Free Movement of Goods**
 - Almost any goods can be traded between EU member states (and some others) without any restrictions. This means that you can buy goods via the internet in other states without any restrictions
 - This was different in the past. Before the EU Single Market was in place you had to pay a fee - a tariff – if you bought something in another country. A similar experience may have been had if you have been to another country outside of the EU and came back through a border patrol. A customs officer may have checked your bag. This is not only for illegal items but also for things that you have to declare.
 - Such tariffs result in goods from one country not being able to be sold in another country at all or with restrictions. E.g. cars in the U.S. have to comply with very different (stricter) safety regulations, one example is that the safety belts need to be to a specific standard. This means that European cars that are produced in Europe cannot be sold in the U.S. They need to be adapted. This results in greater effort and higher production costs
 - However, in the EU we have agreed on a common set of rules that apply to every member state, which means we are able to purchase products within the EU as long as they comply with EU regulations. Also we know that the products we buy are of the same quality and we can trust that they are safe. These assurances cannot be guaranteed when purchasing products outside of the UK, which has become much easier in the age of internet shopping
 - **2. Free Movement of Services**
 - The same applies to services, for example, if you were building a house, you could employ workers from all across Europe. You would not be restricted to local workers. If you favour another price or quality you can ask providers from each member state of the EU Single Market to do the job for you
 - **3. Free Movement of Capital**
 - The same applies to capital: money can be placed in banks in each member state of the EU Single Market
 - Before the Single Market this was not possible
 - This is most important for banks and companies who are working in different countries
 - **4. Free Movement of People**

- People have the right to move freely throughout each member state
 - They can travel to member countries without any restrictions
 - They can work freely in member countries without any restrictions (the same rules apply to local and EU member state employees)
 - They can settle wherever they wish
 - This was not possible before the EU Single Market
 - The Freedom of Movement creates the European Labour Market which opens up a lot of job opportunities for member state individuals
 - And the ERASMUS+ programme is meant to help each the participants to master the challenges of the European labour market
- Move onto the next slide with a puzzle:
 - *So the European Single Market is mainly about having similar rules and regulations for most of our economic and private life. But, where do these common rules come from? We have learnt that in the past there were barriers to trade and to travel and that these were due to numerous different regulations. So, who decides the common rules?*
- Let the participants search for answers themselves before giving the answer.
- Slide 7:
 - Answer to the previous question: All the rules and regulations for the European Single Market are decided by European Institutions composed of representatives of all member states. They decide together the new regulations and supervise their application.
 - The following four institutions are the main ones (of course there are also other important ones, e.g. the European Court of Justice or the European Central Bank, but they are not involved in the actual decision-making and therefore excluded here):
 - 1. The **European Council** is the highest authority of the EU. It is the assembly of the heads of states and governments of all EU member states. They decide the most fundamental decisions concerning the EU
 - 2. The **European Parliament** is the representation of the European people. The citizens of all EU member states directly elect its 799 members every five years in European elections. Each new European law must be debated and decided in the European Parliament. It is therefore extremely influential in our everyday lives
 - 3. The **Council of the European Union** is the representation of the EU member governments. In contrast to the European Council, the Council of the EU is composed of the ministers and secretaries of the national governments. Accordingly, if the Council decides on trade policy, it is composed of the national ministers and secretaries for economic and trade policies. The Council debates and decides each new European law. It is therefore just as powerful as the European Parliament
 - 4. The **European Commission** is the so-called government of the EU. It prepares all new European laws. Furthermore, the Commission supervises the correct application of the European laws. If one member state is not complying with the European laws the Commission can take these states to court and sue them. However, the Commission cannot decide upon new legislation, this is the job of the European Parliament and the Council.
- Slide 8:
 - Refer back to the four freedoms and point to the “Freedom of Movement”

- This is the reason why we have a European labour market. It gives us the possibility to move and work freely within the borders of the European Union
- Refer back to the ERASMUS+ programme: and the ERASMUS+ programme is the opportunity to help the European citizens to cope with the challenges of the European labour market.
- Remind the participants that they form part of this programme
- Ask participants the following rhetorical question (in order to lead over to the next slide):
So, what is ERASMUS+ doing for all?
- Slide 9:
 - These are the aims of the ERASMUS+ programme
- Slide 10:
 - These are the main target groups of the ERASMUS+ programme
 - Refer to the variability of the programme: not only VET students are supported, but a whole range of others as well
 - Refer to the circumstances where they can also participate in the programme for volunteers to have a work placement.
- Slide 11:
 - Explain how the ERASMUS+ programme supports participants
 - Lead on to the role-play: *Do you know how much money is spent on the ERASMUS+ programme?*
 - Answer: more than 2 billion a year and more than 14 billion altogether from 2014-2020
 - Continue by saying: *"You can imagine that there is permanent quarrel and discussion about such a large sum of money. And indeed, the EP and the Council are currently debating the future budget of the ERASMUS+ programme. It is always easy to criticise the negotiations but in reality it is quite difficult to agree on a common law that will satisfy all the different interests and opinions."*
 - ***"Therefore: let us see how you would manage it!"***
- Slide 12:
 - Present and explain the tasks
- Slide 13:
 - Present and explain the agenda. Do not spend too much time here, explanations are more effective throughout the task in smaller chunks
- Slide 14:
 - Present the eight "Interest Groups"
 - Distribute / Allocate the profiles
 - Give the participants time to read the profiles
 - Repeat the tasks and assist the participants in understanding the text.
- Slide 15:
 - Use the slide to protocol the proposals and the voting results

Role Profiles

Outline of Profiles

Name	Acronym	Demands
League of European VET-Students and Apprentices	LE-VET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase financial support - Add support for free time activities and organised excursions
Association of Multi-National European Companies	AMNEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Slight increase of financial support - Fixed rates for language courses and insurances
Association of European Consumers	AEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stable or slightly increased financial support - Fixed rates for language classes
European Chamber of Commerce	ECC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No cuts of financial support - Increased support for small businesses participating in ERASMUS+
Association of Eastern-European Rural Municipalities	EERM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stable financial support if rural municipalities receive more subsidies for economic recovery
Organisation of European Tax Payers	OETP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cut financial support
European Craft Union	ECU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cut or eliminate financial support - Protective measures against wage reduction
Syndicate for National Heritage	SNH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cut financial support - Financial support restricted to young adults between the ages of 17-19

League of European VET-Students and Apprentices (LE-VET)

Context

The ERASMUS+ VET mobility programme is financed by the European Union. It allows apprentices and trainees to spend several weeks or months in another European country in order to gain work experience in a company. Therefore, ERASMUS+ VET mobility participants receive financial support. This includes a travel allowance between (180-275€) and a fixed rate, daily expenditure (approximately 1000€ per month). The figures may vary depending on the destination and the duration of the stay.

Profile

The “League of European VET-Students and Apprentices” represents the interests of students take part in vocational preparation or do an apprenticeship. It is an “Umbrella Organisation” consisting of several national VET-student organisations. Its headquarters is in Brussels. LE-VET is very much in favour of the ERASMUS+ programme because it enables VET-students to study and work abroad and gain experience that is valuable for their personal development. Even if they do not pursue a job abroad it is very likely that they will work in a company which does business with companies from other European states. It is therefore favourable for their future career if they know about the work habits and policies in other European countries.

Demands

- **Financial support:** The LE-VET is highly critical of budget cuts in the ERASMUS+ budget and wants to prevent them. It would rather increase the financial support to each VET-mobility participant.
- **Additional demands:** LE-VET is also demanding more organisational support during the VET-mobility. This relates to organised free time activities and excursions.

Arguments

- The “League” fears that cutting the budget would eventually reduce the popularity of the ERASMUS+ programme because fewer students and apprentices would be capable of financing their stay. This is not what the student’s want: more and more VET-students and apprentices realise the great potential benefits that can be gained from a mobility experience and take the opportunity to go abroad. This trend would be jeopardised if the cuts were instigated.
- Furthermore, if fewer VET-students had the possibility to participate in a mobility programme, future employees would not be as well prepared for a European job market. A European job market is, however, a reality for an increasing number of employees in Europe because European companies are offer and trade their goods and services on a European scale.

Association of Multi-National European Companies (AMNEC)

Context

The ERASMUS+ VET mobility programme is financed by the European Union. It allows apprentices and trainees to spend several weeks or months in another European country in order to gain work experience in a company. Therefore, ERASMUS+ VET mobility participants receive financial support. This includes a travel allowance (between 180-275€) and a fixed rate, daily expenditure (approximately 1000€ per month). The figures may vary depending on the destination and the duration of the stay.

Profile

AMNEC represents the interests of large European companies that have production facilities in various European countries. The members of AMNEC are highly influential and powerful. Their behaviour is verging on the brink of arrogance. However, these companies are also relying greatly on open borders between the European states and appreciate the Single European Market. Therefore, AMNEC is very much in favour of the ERASMUS+ programme because these companies need a highly skilled labour force that is comfortable with both working in another European country and/or working with colleagues from other European countries.

Demands

- **Financial support:** AMNEC disapproves potential cuts in the ERASMUS+ budget. The companies want the financial support of VET-students to either remain stable or increase.
- **Additional demands:** In order to make the ERASMUS+ VET mobility programme more attractive, AMNEC is favouring the introduction of fixed rates for language courses and insurance for the participants.

Arguments

- AMNEC argues that cutting the budget for the ERASMUS+ programme would discourage students from participating in a European mobility. This would result in them missing out on an important component of their education.
- Therefore, if the students miss out on these elements of their education, the members of AMNEC would either need to accept this lower standard of education or provide their own form of European training to their apprentices. This would, of course, entail additional costs and harm their competitiveness.

Association of European Consumers (AEC)

Context

The ERASMUS+ VET mobility programme is financed by the European Union. It allows apprentices and trainees to spend several weeks or months in another European country in order to gain work experience in a company. Therefore, ERASMUS+ VET mobility participants receive financial support. This includes a travel allowance (between 180-275€) and a fixed rate, daily expenditure (approximately 1000€ per month). The figures may vary depending on the destination and the duration of the stay.

Profile

AEC represents the interests of European consumers in various branches. Its headquarters are in Rome. AEC keeps a sharp eye on the business practices of European companies both in the manufacturing and service industry. It wants safeguards in place to ensure products and services are supplied to a high standard and want the best price possible. AEC supports the European integration process as well as programmes like ERASMUS+. It is convinced that the “European Single Market” increases the quality of goods and services produced in Europe and lowers their price.

Demands

- Financial support: The AEC opposes budget cuts in the ERASMUS+ programme. It also promotes additional benefits to the participants like language courses in order to make the exchange programme even more effective.
- Additional demands: The AEC favours more efforts being made to prepare the European employees for the European job market. Therefore, it would favour more support for ERASMUS+.

Arguments

- The AEC argues that trade among European states is the best way to assure high quality goods and services in Europe. Compared to closed and restricted national markets consumers can access much more and better products and services on a European Single Market. Accordingly, companies are pressurised through more competition and need to produce better goods and services. This promotes economic growth in Europe. Therefore, politics needs to do what it can to complete the Single Market.
- Training the workforce for a European labour market is essential. Employees who know work habits and processes in other European countries are the best guarantee for supplying goods and services successfully on a European scale. Mobility is therefore essential for the functioning of the European Single Market.

European Chamber of Commerce (ECC)

Context

The ERASMUS+ VET mobility programme is financed by the European Union. It allows apprentices and trainees to spend several weeks or months in another European country in order to gain work experience in a company. Therefore, ERASMUS+ VET mobility participants receive financial support. This includes a travel allowance (between 180-275€) and a fixed rate, daily expenditure (approximately 1000€ per month). The figures may vary depending on the destination and the duration of the stay.

Profile

The ECC represents the interests of European companies both large and small. It is a very influential and powerful organisation with many member companies in all European member states. ECC headquarters is in Strasbourg. The ECC has to take into account the specific needs and demands of its member companies. In general, the Chamber is very much in favour of the European Integration and the European Single Market. However, it also recognises the difficult situation of many smaller companies especially in Eastern and Southern Europe that suffer from the fierce competition in the European Single Market. Therefore, the Chamber intends to find compromises that benefit to all.

Demands

- **Financial support:** The ECC is favouring the ERASMUS+ programme and is opposing budget cuts in VET-mobility, in particular.
- **Additional demands:** However, the ECC also wants additional compensation for smaller companies who offer traineeships to VET-students. Smaller companies should profit from the ERASMUS+ funds and the burden of bureaucratic paper work should be decreased.

Arguments

- The ECC is in favour of the ERASMUS+ programme because it recognises its large potential for the European job market. If employees are able to work in an international environment, they may find a job more easily. Furthermore, the companies profit as well because they can do business in the European Single Market.
- However, the extensive bureaucracy of participating in an ERASMUS+ programme results in a real obstacle for smaller companies offering traineeships. There is a high volume of paperwork that needs to be handled. Additionally, they do not see the point of hiring trainees from other countries because their business activities are restricted to their town or region. Therefore mobility programmes are less appealing to them. In order to convince the smaller businesses of the potential of a European workforce and the potential of the European Single Market, the ECC is proposing to grant the companies financial support, too.

Organisation of European Tax Payers (OETP)

Context

The ERASMUS+ VET mobility programme is financed by the European Union. It allows apprentices and trainees to spend several weeks or months in another European country in order to gain work experience in a company. Therefore, ERASMUS+ VET mobility participants receive financial support. This includes a travel allowance (between 180-275€) and a fixed rate, daily expenditure (approximately 1000€ per month). The figures may vary depending on the destination and the duration of the stay.

Profile

The OETP represents the interests of the all taxpaying people in Europe. It has its headquarters in Frankfurt. OETP has a sharp eye on how taxpayers' money is spent and promotes all policies that could reduce the tax burden. The OETP in general is sceptical towards state spending, however they are particularly sceptical of spending by the European institutions. It holds the opinion that state funds and subsidies should be kept to a minimum and all economic activity should be organised by economic actors. They believe this is the only way to keep the taxes low.

Demands

- Financial support: The OETP promotes cuts in the ERASMUS+ programme.

Arguments

- OETP argues that the only way to reduce the tax burden of the European people is to lower the state budget. This can only be achieved by cutting budgets of individual programmes like ERASMUS+.
- In times of economic hardship the state activity needs to be limited to the very important sectors of a society which is poverty alleviation. Paying subsidies for students to take a "two months vacation" from work would therefore not be seen as useful.

European Craft Union (ECU)

Context

The ERASMUS+ VET mobility programme is financed by the European Union. It allows apprentices and trainees to spend several weeks or months in another European country in order to gain work experience in a company. Therefore, ERASMUS+ VET mobility participants receive financial support. This includes a travel allowance (between 180-275€) and a fixed rate, daily expenditure (approximately 1000€ per month). The figures may vary depending on the destination and the duration of the stay.

Profile

The ECU represents the interests of all employees in craft businesses – plumbers, painters, masons, etc. It has its headquarters in Bonn. The ECU is highly sceptical towards European Integration and the European Single Market. This is due to the fact that it wants to protect its member companies from increased competition from workers from other European countries who use the Freedom of Movement in order to work in other countries. The ECU argues that this contributes to lower wages in their sector that have already reached an unacceptable low level. They argue that they cannot compete with the low wages of foreign workers.

Demands

- Financial support: The ECU favours budget cuts in the ERASMUS+ programme. It would even support the claim to abandon the ERASMUS+ programme completely and concentrate on educating VET-students solely on a national level.
- Additional demands: They think the least the EU could do is to protect the national craft force from wage reduction and set minimum standards all over Europe.

Arguments

- The ECU does not see the point in the ERASMUS+ VET mobility programme. Its member companies are not doing any business with companies from other European countries and do not rely on a workforce that is familiar with doing business with them. Furthermore, employing young adults from other European countries is difficult because they do not speak the language and find it difficult to integrate in to the business processes.
- National craftsmen are suffering very much from the European competition. They feel that plumbers, painters, masons, etc. come to their country and work for much less money. This results in the average wage dropping. This is the reason why they demand to be compensated for their loss of income.

Association of Eastern European Rural Municipalities (EERM)

Context

The ERASMUS+ VET mobility programme is financed by the European Union. It allows apprentices and trainees to spend several weeks or months in another European country in order to gain work experience in a company. Therefore, ERASMUS+ VET mobility participants receive financial support. This includes a travel allowance (between 180-275€) and a fixed rate, daily expenditure (approximately 1000€ per month). The figures may vary depending on the destination and the duration of the stay.

Profile

The EERM represents the interest of small and medium-sized rural municipalities in Eastern Europe. It has its headquarters in Budapest. Small and medium-sized municipalities are considerably under pressure: on the one hand they suffer from a loss of workforce that prefers to work in bigger cities and other countries – mostly in Western or Northern Europe. On the other hand they suffer from economic underdevelopment. They cannot offer young people in their municipalities adequate jobs. The EERM is therefore not strictly opposing the ERASMUS+ programme, but it is asking for more support in order to compensate for the loss of workforce.

Demands

- **Financial support:** The main demand of the EERM is to get compensation for the loss of workforce in the form of subsidies or special support for building up competitive industries. If they get this, they are willing to support the European Commission to keep the funding of ERASMUS+ stable.
- If the EERM does not receive any help, then it supports a cut in the ERASMUS+ budget.

Arguments

- The EERM hesitates supporting the ERASMUS+ programme because this motivates the young adults to move away. Thus leaving few people that could make the rural areas of Eastern Europe prosper. Therefore, it wants the incentives for young people to move away to be cut. They believe a cut in the ERASMUS+ budget is a step in the right direction.
- Due to the fact that there are not enough job opportunities in these Eastern European rural municipalities, the Association wants to receive financial support and assistance to promote economic development. Therefore, the EERM could agree to keep the ERASMUS+ budget constant if it receives this assistance.

Syndicate for National Heritage (SNH)

Context

The ERASMUS+ VET mobility programme is financed by the European Union. It allows apprentices and trainees to spend several weeks or months in another European country in order to gain work experience in a company. Therefore, ERASMUS+ VET mobility participants receive financial support. This includes a travel allowance (between 180-275€) and a fixed rate, daily expenditure (approximately 1000€ per month). The figures may vary depending on the destination and the duration of the stay.

Profile

The SNH represents the interest of all people who are afraid of increasing Europeanisation and Globalisation. They fear that mixing European cultures would eventually lead to a loss of national identities and cultural traditions. They want the European nation states to remain in full sovereignty and disapprove all attempts to take common decisions on a European level. Accordingly, the “Syndicate” is highly sceptical towards the ERASMUS+ programme in general.

Demands

- The SNH supports budget cuts in the ERASMUS+ programme. It is even advocating a general termination of funding for European exchange.
- As this aim might be a bit radical and far-reaching, they could agree on a compromise to reduce the number of VET-mobility students to a minimum and only allow students of a certain age to participate in the programme.

Arguments

- The SNH is highly critical of the ERASMUS+ programme, arguing that this motivates young people to leave their country and work in a foreign state. This may lead to a loss of workforce in some European areas. Even more importantly, according to the syndicate, these young adults leaving their country and region would completely lose touch with their traditions and cultures. Furthermore, adjourning a new cultural environment would also interfere with the traditions of the host country. They therefore hold the opinion that migration and labour migration in particular is bad for everyone. It should therefore not be promoted by the state and much less by a opaque European political body.

Allocating Role-Profiles

The positions of the role-plays are structurally balanced. This means that three profiles favour additional financial support for ERASMUS+ students, three profiles support cuts of the financial support of ERASMUS+ students, and two who are neutral. This balance should be maintained even if not all the roles are distributed. Therefore, if the group does not have enough members that allow the allocation of each profile the following distribution is suggested (assuming a minimum group size of four):

Number of Participants	Allocate the following profiles		
	Pro budget expansion	Middle ground	Contra budget expansion
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LE-VET - AMNEC 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SNH - OETP
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LE-VET - AMNEC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EERM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SNH - OETP
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LE-VET - AEC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AMNEC - EERM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - OETP - ECU
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LE-VET - AEC - AMNEC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ECC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SNH - OETP - ECU
8	All profiles		
< 8	Define groups for each profile		

Handling the Presidency

The President has the important role of initiating and organising the debate. With participants who are not accustomed to speaking in front of others or discussing political subjects, may find initiating a debate difficult. Therefore, there are some methods that can be applied by the trainer to start such a debate. It is essential to remember that each time the trainer intervenes in the role-play he/she is doing so in the role of the “President”. It is also important that the president gives clear and concise instructions on what the participants should or should not do.

- **Starting a “tour de table”:** The very first group action may be a “tour de table” which means that each participant or representative of a group presents briefly their position, which they had elaborated on previously. Each participant or representative should have 2 minutes to declare their position and present their demands. They should also be advised to explain why they hold their position. A “tour de table” is adequate to initiate the formal discussion.
- **Organising formal discussions:** Formal discussion has to follow certain rules in order to avoid chaos. Therefore, the president has to control and steer the debate. It is advisable to work with a “list of speakers”. This means that each time a participant wants to say something, they need to indicate this to the President. The President notes their wish to contribute to the discussion and writes their name down on the “list of speakers”. The President then gives the floor according to this list. Direct contradictions or replies may be allowed but only after entitlement has been given by the President. To indicate the wish to speak, the participant can put the sign in front of each group in an upright position.
- **Maintaining a free discussion:** It is often difficult to sustain a free discussion. If the participants are not willing to discuss after the “tour de table”, they can be asked to do so by the President. Therefore, the President may ask the participants specific questions:
 - the President may ask for clarifications about positions: “participant XY, you have suggested that I do not fully understand your argument – can you further elaborate on this, please?”
 - The major role of the President is to reach an agreement. Therefore, the participants can be asked to reveal their suggestions for a compromise – especially if they have a very radical point of view: “participant XY, you have a very strong stance on the subject. As we are working on a common understanding, could you point out in which areas you could imagine to compromise?”

Specific questions like this force the participants to think of and formulate some answers. Their explanations may trigger reactions by the other participants. Usually, a natural discussion evolves.

- **Informal Negotiations:** A formal discussion with all participants sitting at the table will not be enough to formulate a compromise. Therefore, once the discussion loses momentum or if the time for this slot expires, it is time to convey “informal negotiations”. At this stage, participants can move freely in and out of the room and talk to each other informally – bilaterally or in groups. It is important is that this does not morph into a break. The participants should have a clear focus and task. This could be:
 - Talk with your negotiation partners and come up with proposals for a compromise. Find your negotiation partners, agree on common approaches towards the “budget allocation” and the “additional provisions”.
 - Once you have reached an agreement with some or all partners, write them down on a sheet of paper and hand it in to the President.

Informal negotiations must have a clear starting and ending time. The President may use the “bell” (provided in the material box) to signal the different phases.

- **Second Round of Negotiations:** Usually, the participants submit suggestions that are very close to the arguments in their profiles. This is a good starting point for further negotiations. The second round of negotiations can be organised just as the first one. However, if the groups do not deliver anything meaningful or if they cannot agree on a common proposal, it is the task of the President to come up with a proposal. Depending on the course of negotiations, the President may formulate their own proposal that can be presented for discussion. Therefore, it is a good idea for each trainer to have a “Plan B” – a suggestion for a compromise. This can be presented to and discussed by the group. As a general rule: it is highly advisable to work with the input given by the participants. Their suggestions and proposals should be the centre of the whole debate – even if these suggestions are contradictory or of bad quality. **The trainer should not intervene too much but let the participants find their own solutions to the problems.**

skills#EU Module 2 – Unit 2 – Sub-Unit 4: Reflection – Placemat Method

Goal and Nature of the Exercise

- Reflection of the content of the role-play
- Reflection of the whole civic education course
- Understanding of the relationship between politics and an individual on ERASMUS+
- Clarification about democratic processes and the individual roles in the democratic decision-making process.

Course of Action

- Ask participants to lay down their badges and hand in their post cards to the President. This symbolises that the role-play is over and that the participants may emerge from their role.
- Project the following placemat, including the following questions (or illustrate it in another way):

Description of the immediate past: The role play	Analysis/Explanation of the events in The role-play
A look ahead – building an opinion	stating what has been learnt – connection between the different course elements

- Go clockwise through the questions starting with the top-left corner. Questions below can be used to elicit a response from the participants.

Possible Placement Questions

- Top-left: What happened during the role-play? What did you experience during the role-play?
- Top-right: How can you explain the role-play dynamics? How did you reach the compromise? OR Why did you not reach a compromise? Which tactics did you use? Did you have a strategy? Do you think they are realistic and happen in everyday politics as well?
- Bottom-right: What have you learnt about the ERASMUS+ programme and the politics surrounding it? What is its aim and why is it necessary?
- Bottom-left: How do you evaluate the ERASMUS+ programme? Which improvements would you suggest?