

webLab-Manual

Product D4

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centre for vocational education and training (cevet)

Authors:

Kremer, H.-Hugo / Frehe, Petra / Kückmann, Marie-Ann

Websites:

<http://wiwi.uni-paderborn.de/departments5/>

<http://cevet.uni-paderborn.de>

Layout:

Marie-Ann Kückmann

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webLab-Manual
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D4: webLab-Manual

(Overworked Version)

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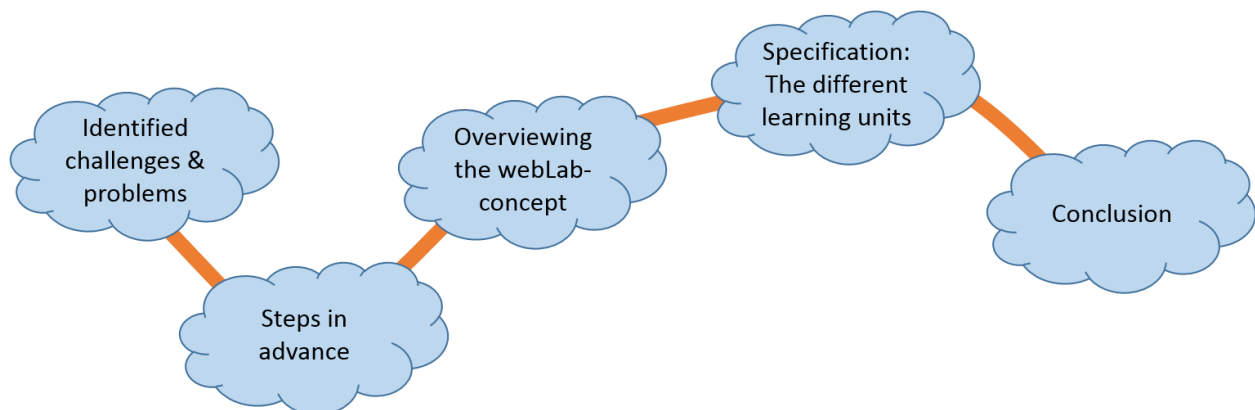
1. Introduction

This manual intends to be a didactical support for teachers to prepare, implement and reflect students' internships abroad. It is an instrument that helps to include a stay abroad as an element of an overall and personalized learning process. It applies to all students within the vocational education and training system who are willing to gather both work and cultural experiences in a foreign European country within mobility projects. The whole learning process is accompanied by the use of a weblog. In this way, the students learn how to use a weblog while preparing their internship abroad in order to be used to this tool beforehand their stay abroad. Altogether, we call this instrument the webLab-concept.

At the same time, this instrument has to be seen as a framework. This means that specifications and adaptations regarding the different conditions and resources need to be done. However, this instrument provides an overall structure concerning the learning process. Furthermore, there is a description of each learning unit which appoints the overall learning goal, the competences intended to be developed. Also they include suggestions for possible learning topics and methods. Additionally, there are advices how to combine the learning unit with the use of the weblog. For each learning unit there is at least one learning product that needs to be posted / uploaded in the blog (see the red exclamation mark).

The webLab-concept has been developed and implemented within the webLab-project in two flows. The gained experienced regarding this process have been collected and documented systematically. As a result, we could revise the concept itself and discover best practice examples within the group of partners.

This manual is based on the development process of the webLab-concept. Initially, the seen problems and challenges regarding the didactical preparation, implementation and reflection of internships abroad are summarized. The next step concerns the organizational considerations before the implementation. Thereafter, firstly, there is given an overview regarding the whole webLab-concept, which is followed by detailed descriptions of the single learning units. The following picture illustrates the guideline through this manual:



2. Main assumptions regarding the webLab-concept

The following aspects show an overview of the problems and challenges the webLab concept needs to address to:

1. Staying abroad is more and more taken for granted
2. We already know from regional internships that it is insufficient to just send the students to companies to gain practical experience
 - The internship has to be prepared
 - The internship needs to be attended by the teachers → this occurs to be a special challenge in the context of internships abroad
3. Additionally, by integrating the webLab-concept we intend to understand the internship abroad as part of the personalized process of competence development
 - This means that the students have to think about the function, that the internship occupies from their individual point of view (for example vocational orientation, getting to know a foreign culture, getting to know a specific profession in a non-German environment etc.)
 - The students have to think about personalized learning objectives, which they would like to achieve in their internship
 - Teachers have to think about curricular useful aims in order to link the internship with learning contents in school

3. Some steps in advance?

The webLab-concept relies on an existing infrastructure and experience in undertaking mobility at the school / by the teachers. Thus, the framework does not determine how to implement the webLab-concept within the context of the given day-to-day school life. To start with, teachers should clarify or answer the following circumstances and questions:

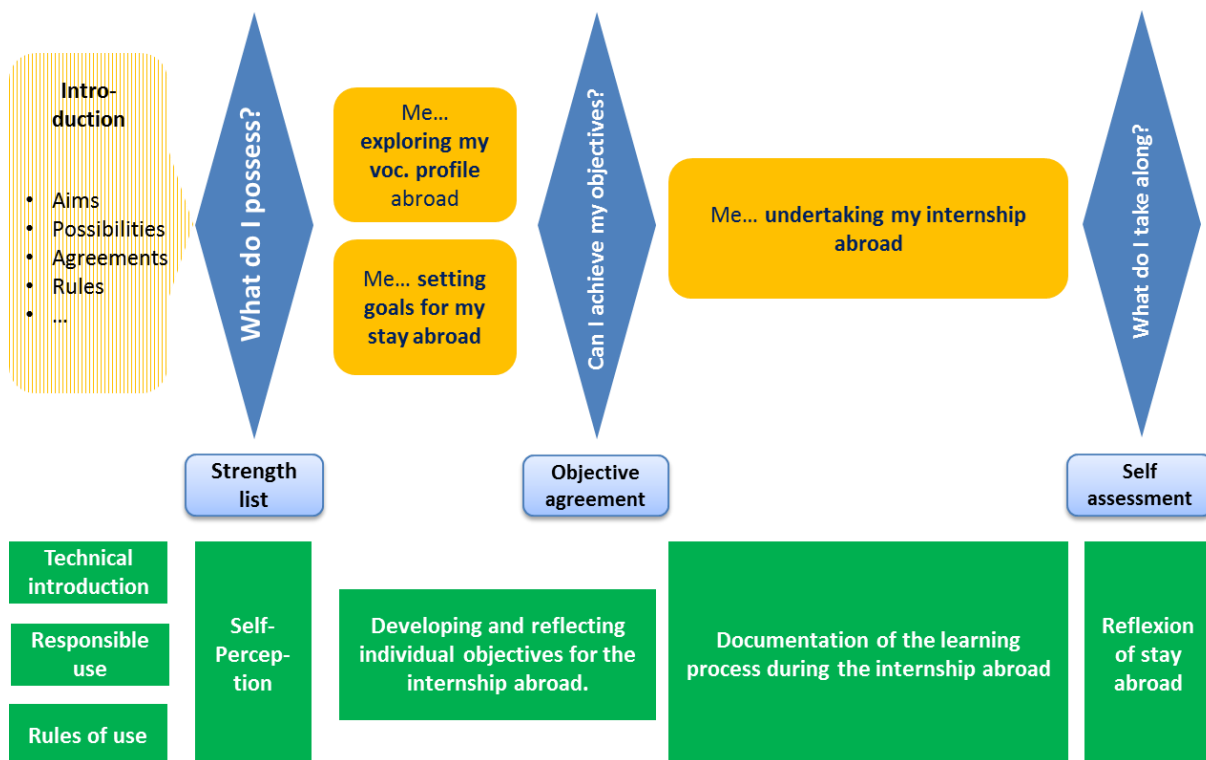
- Which students take part?
 - Selection / choice of particular students (very good ones, disadvantaged ones, choice as a reward for students etc.)
 - Students' internship application
 - Acquiring students (announcement / advertising)
- What partners do we have? (schools, companies, both?)
- Timing the mobilities (simultaneously, successively / one after the other)
- Planning / scheduling mobilities in the school year (what time of the school year?)
- Planning and organizing the travel (documents, travel facilities, insurance, accommodation...)

- How to include the webLab-concept in the day-to-day school life (curricular model):
 - the whole class is preparing for internships (abroad)
 - only selected students take part
 - in additional learning settings (before / after normal lessons)
 - offered as an intense block course (shortly) before the internship

Once these questions are answered and the conditions are prepared, the webLab-concept can be carried out.

4. First overview on the framework of the webLab-concept

The following figure shows the framework of the webLab-concept. Overall, it describes seven learning units from the student’s perspective. The learning units can be differentiated in an introducing learning unit, in three self-reflecting learning units (blue diamonds) as well as three content-orientated learning units (yellow boxes). The learning units are linked to the overall process and its phases of preparing, realizing and reviewing the internship. Furthermore, the learning units are linked to a weblog. Its use begins simultaneously with the webLab-concept. This means that the weblog is not only an instrument in terms of documentation during the stay abroad, but is already / still used in phases of preparation or reviewing the internship. For this reason, the weblog becomes an accompanying instrument throughout the whole learning process (green boxes).



In the following chapter, the objectives of the learning units will be described in detail. Based on a rather rough tabular description of each unit there will be a deepening to the following aspects:

- Competence that can be developed
- Possible topics that can be considered
- Possible learning methods that can be used


In addition, there are given some advices how to link the learning units or learning products to the weblog.

5. The webLab-concept in detail

5.1 Introduction



Social mega trends such as globalization and more and more flexible working environments might be far off the students' concepts of working and occupation. Therefore, it seems important to give some deeper insights of the individual relevance these growing trends might have for the single student. Topics like globalization, cultural diversity, living in the EU etc. can be involved in this first learning unit and might also be important subjects for the entire learning group.

 Introduction-Unit	Introduction in the internship abroad	
	Learning goal: Using the internship abroad as an individual vocational exploration and learning context	
	Competences: The learners... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand the internship as a chance of self development. • reflect the internship in respect to a deepened professional orientation. • deal with social trends (so called 'mega trends') in the European area. • deal with the organizational conditions of an internship abroad. 	Possible topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Globalization • Cultural diversity • Europe / EU • Employment market in Europe • Internship abroad • Judicial frame conditions
Learning-method: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion from newspaper article about globalization, Europe, etc. • Discussion round • Research assignment • Creation of a checklist / To-Do-List to organize the internship 	Integration in the weblog: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post to the subject: "Working in Europe" • Post to the subject: "How do I envisage my internship" 	

Alongside, during the introduction phase it is important to familiarize the students with the following main aspects:

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- a) **The webLab-concept:** Teachers have to explain the overview of the concept and tasks to the students in order to make the whole process more transparent to them. They also should emphasize that the internship itself is only one part of the webLab concept. In this context, it is also important for the students to understand that the internship should not only be used as an incoherent experience abroad, but also offers them an environment to develop their competences in a purposeful way.
- b) **The stay abroad:** As a matter of course, the students also have to get accustomed to the idea of going abroad to a (foreign) country in order to work, experience and develop competences. It could be useful to let the students do a first research on the country, area, culture, etc. they are going to visit.
- c) **The weblog:** The students have to get to know the social media format of a weblog. This means that they need to have the knowledge about the opportunities and limits of this new media format. In general, the students should be sensitized regarding the use of this media in occupational contexts. In addition, they should be able to cope with the technical infrastructure. In order to ensure a regular communication during the stay abroad, there some basic rules should be fixed concerning the use of the weblog beforehand:
- How often does the student have to post (once a day, every second day, once a week...)?
 - How promptly do the teachers comment?
 - What is supposed to be content of the posts?
 - How long / short should a post be?
 - What other formats of documentation are permitted or also wanted (videos, photos, links...)?

To link this first learning unit to the weblog, a first post can be created. Possible is an essay or article on the topic “Working in Europe” or “How do I envisage my internship”.

In addition, there is a wide range of possible learning methods. Depending on the number of students, discussions are conceivable as well as the individual creation of checklists. This also has to be decided with regard to the chosen topics (see above).

5.2 Discovering myself: What am I good at?




This learning unit is the first of three self-reflecting and / or self-assessing learning units. Based on a strength perspective, the students face the task to analyze what kind of strengths / competences they possess. In this connection, they examine their own roles taken in their everyday-life (e.g. older sister, football player, computer expert, etc.). In order to do self-assessments as well as assessing other students, a learning process can be initiated. By this, competences such as reflecting, analyzing, giving feedback etc. can be gained.

Focusing an intercultural topic, it can also be interesting to abstract from the individual level to cultural typologies: For example, it could be analyzed, what is seen as the 'typical' strengths of Germans, a French or a Turkish person in general. In this way, also cultural differences, stereotypes and conflicts can be made a subject of discussion.

From a methodic point of view, there are many opportunities to create beneficial learning environments. In this context, it seems to be essential to offer the students a creative access to gain a strength-orientated portrait.

As an obligatory learning product, a strength list has to be prepared. It needs to be published in the weblog. This strength list can be extended during the process of the webLab-concept and in particular during the internship abroad. Besides this, other products can be posted in the weblog as mentioned in the following table.

1	Discovering myself: "What am I good at?"	
	Learning goal: Development of a strength-oriented self concept	
	<p>Competences: The learners...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can assess themselves. • can handle assessments of others. • can name occupied roles in different life situation and analyze them with regards to occupational matters. • can deflect from occupation on own strength. • name character /virtue which are connected to own nationalities and can reflect them critical. 	<p>Possible topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-assessment and foreign assessment • Give and take feedback • Standardization: "The German", "The French" etc. • Working virtues and morals
<p>Learning-method:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative forms of self-expression (collages, graffiti) • Mind maps • Strengths' table • Presentation • Role-play • Partner discussion / group discussion 	<p>Integration in the weblog:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picture of creative self assessment (Picture documents) • Post: That's me • Strengths table  	

5.3 Exploring my vocational profile abroad



In the following learning unit, it is the students' task to explore their vocational profile abroad. Obviously, the way of realizing this task depends on how concrete their concepts concerning professions and occupations are. Accordingly, a student in an apprenticeship has a deeper understanding of specific working environments and vocational demands than a student, who is trying to get a qualification on a general education level and his vocational orientation has just begun. In consequence, a student's individual situation or starting point has to be considered.

Even if the level of concretion will be different from student to student, it seems to be crucial to analyze observed differences between the occupational profiles in the home country and the host country. Moreover, it can be interesting to let the students do some research both on specific training processes as well possibilities of further education. It might also be interesting to reflect on the social standing of the chosen job / sector / field.

1	Me... exploring my vocational profile abroad				
	Learning goal: Analysis of characteristics and requirements of the apprenticeship and its profession abroad				
	Role: Vocational Explorer	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Competences: The learners...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> deal intensively with the job profile abroad. are able to create a profile of requirements regarding their own occupation requiring formal training. get to know typical possibilities of training as well as further trainings. recognize differences as well as commonalities with regard to training issues / job issues in their home country. are able to appraise a job's importance / significance in the host country. use relevant sources for information seeking. use assistance offers regarding lingual orientation. (reference books, translation tools etc.) </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Possible topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Company's ratios (balance, number of employees, etc.) Company's structure (organizational structure, etc.) Corporate organization Methods how to search on the internet To read / understand requirements' profiles / qualifications' profiles </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p>Learning-method:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Researches (Internet, conversations, etc.) Presentation Creating companies' profiles Writing fictive job advertisements (maybe in a foreign language?) </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p>Integration in the weblog:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post: Illustrating a company's profile Post: Illustrating a job's requirements' profile </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Competences: The learners...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> deal intensively with the job profile abroad. are able to create a profile of requirements regarding their own occupation requiring formal training. get to know typical possibilities of training as well as further trainings. recognize differences as well as commonalities with regard to training issues / job issues in their home country. are able to appraise a job's importance / significance in the host country. use relevant sources for information seeking. use assistance offers regarding lingual orientation. (reference books, translation tools etc.) 	<p>Possible topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Company's ratios (balance, number of employees, etc.) Company's structure (organizational structure, etc.) Corporate organization Methods how to search on the internet To read / understand requirements' profiles / qualifications' profiles 	<p>Learning-method:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Researches (Internet, conversations, etc.) Presentation Creating companies' profiles Writing fictive job advertisements (maybe in a foreign language?)
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<p>Learning-method:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Researches (Internet, conversations, etc.) Presentation Creating companies' profiles Writing fictive job advertisements (maybe in a foreign language?) 	<p>Integration in the weblog:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post: Illustrating a company's profile Post: Illustrating a job's requirements' profile 				


Within these research activities, the students get to know different sources of information, also on an European level. Simultaneously, the students can improve their language skills and enhance the handling of translation tools as a matter of course.

To link this learning unit to the weblog, the students are asked to post at least an exemplary (job) requirement profile concerning the chosen job / field etc.

5.4 Setting goals for my stay abroad



In the context of this learning unit, it is intended to widen the perspective of the individual student on his / her stay abroad (not only on the vocational internship). Accordingly, the student needs to realize, what interests he or she is carrying along with the mobility. For example, the student could intend to gain special cultural experiences (language, traditions, customs etc.). From a vocational point of view, it could be interesting for the student to see some specific departments or production areas, which are maybe particularly different from the known vocational environments.

2 Role: Self-Explorer	Me... setting goals for my stay abroad	
	Learning goal: Formulation of individual interests and aims of development for the stay abroad	
	Competences: The learners... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are able to anticipate the stay abroad. • can list own interests concerning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – interesting vocational aspects (activities, processes, departments) – interesting cultural aspects (language, socializing) • are able to formulate learning goals concerning to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a (school) subject / issue – language skills – knowledge about how to orientate – processes 	Possible topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host country <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Structure – Customs and traditions – Countryside – Politics – Culture – Language • Formulating of interests and goals
Learning-method: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mind-map • Research • Presentation • Cooperative learning 	Integration in the weblog: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post: Profile of the host country • Post: My interests and learning goals  	

Altogether, goals for an individual competence development can arise against a background of both individual interests as well as curricular legitimated learning objectives. In this learning unit, it seems to be very important to discuss objectives with other students and especially with the teacher.

Moreover, for this learning unit, the developed objectives need to be published in the weblog. This can offer another possibility to exchange ideas regarding further or more detailed objectives.

5.5 Process of (re)defining goals: Can I achieve my objectives?



Looking back on the learning process up to this point, the students have analyzed their own strengths both as an individual as well as a member of a certain nationality / society (competence diagnosis 1). Alongside they explored vocational profiles abroad purposefully. In addition, there have been aims discussed as well as set, concerning the stay abroad in general as well as referring to the specific vocational internship abroad. In this second competence diagnosis, both a matching according to the researches vocational requirements takes place and the individual / curriculum based learning aims. The student in this situation faces the challenge of estimating in how far or to which extent the chosen aims are reachable. In this process, he / she might need the help of the teacher. Furthermore, responses from other students can be helpful for an appraisal.

2 Competence diagnosis	Process of (re)defining goals: “Can I achieve my objectives?”	
	Learning goal: Merging individual interests and objectives with the requirements of the occupational demands in the host country	
	Competences: The learners... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ compare individual interests and learning goals to vocational requirements. ▪ reflect if the vocational requirements are compatible to the individual interests and learning goals. ▪ reveal problems occurring during the matching process and find solutions. ▪ think about how to use their own strengths (strength list) in order to meet the occupational and learning requirements ▪ are able to position themselves in an argumentative way. 	Possible topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ (Self) assessment ▪ Give and get feedback ▪ Setting goals ▪ Responsibility ▪ Self organized learning
	Learning-method: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Talks / conversations ▪ Comparison ▪ Graphics ▪ Priorization 	Integration in weblog: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learning-Agreement

By the end of this learning unit, it is intended to formulate an agreement, to which both teacher as well as learner agree. This learning contract needs to be documented in the weblog. During the stay abroad, it can be used as a guideline for both the student as well as the teacher.

5.6 Undertaking the internship



Finally, the students can operate their internship abroad. At this step, they are well prepared and able to

3	Me... undertaking my internship abroad	
	Learning goal: Learn objective-based passing of the internship abroad	
	Competences: The learners... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ get to know the internship's company. ▪ integrate into the social group at their work. ▪ learn about typical products, processes, and procedures in day-to-day business. ▪ do actively offer their work power. ▪ follow their learning aims in a targeted way. ▪ document their experiences in the weblog. ▪ consider the teacher's feedback (comments) from the weblog for running their further internship. 	Possible topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation on learning goals agreed
	Learning-method: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working via weblog: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Exercises – Exploring tasks – Questions and hints – Consulting – Suggestions – ... 	Integration in the weblog: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of activities • Pictures, videos, podcasts, etc. • Communication of uncertainties, questions, problems • Considering the teacher's tasks and comments during the internship process • Daily / weekly reflections

follow the previously set goals. In this phase, the weblog becomes a core instrument for accompaniment and support. The weblog can be supportive in the following ways:

- Problems and challenges can be communicated promptly by the student. The teacher can react and help in an appropriate way to the situation, even if he / she is not personally attended.
- The student is asked to document his / her daily experiences within the vocational internship abroad. In particular, he / she has to show or describe how the set goals (learning contract) are followed.
- The students' documentation offers the teacher a basis on which he / she can comment and by this foster the (next) activities for the student. For instance, the teacher could ask in the blog:
 - How was your first day? What was the most exciting experience for you so far?
 - You posted some pictures of the working environment. Why did you choose these pictures? What do they mean to you?
 - In the learning contract, we recorded that you would like to get to know the tools, which are used in the foreign garage. Please do some research on that and take this as a topic for your next post.
 - It would be nice if you could welcome me next time in the blog in Turkish language.
 - (Maybe the partners have more examples concerning the use of the weblog during the stay abroad)

For this very intense use of the weblog, it seems to be relevant to have some fixed rules concerning the regular use of the blog. This includes rules for both the learners as well as the teachers (see learning unit 'Introduction').

5.7 Reflection: What did I learn?





The internship as well as the use of the weblog does not finish with completion of the internship abroad. Coming back, the students are asked to reflect their stay abroad with regard to their previously set goals.

In particular they should be able...

- to formulate the main experiences / most impressive situations they have been part of,
- to describe mastered challenges and problems,
- explain the main differences to the vocational environment they know from their home country,
- to develop a position whether they can imagine to take a job in a / this foreign country (why? / why not?),
- to summarize, what learning goals they could reach and in what way,
- to formulate what impact this internship abroad has had on their vocational orientation and / or occupational decisions that have to be made.

These reflections can be communicated in different ways. On the one hand, a reflection in the blog seems adequate. In addition, it is possible to let the students prepare presentations (poster, slides etc.). It is also possible to discuss the given questions in a learning group.

 3 Competence diagnosis	Reflection of the whole webLab-Process “What did I learn?”	
	Learning goal: Individual reflection and view regarding the entire webLab process.	
	Competences: The learners... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflect the entire webLab process. • are able to position themselves regarding to working opportunities in Europe. • are able to formulate advantages of the host country, concerning both technically / vocationally as well as social / cultural perspectives. • run a self-critical assessment concerning the achievement of the set learning objectives. • are able to formulate more goals of development, resulting from the internship experience. 	Possible topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working in a foreign European country • Host country as a model? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – profession / job – culture/ society • Reflexion of self set learning goals
Learning-method: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation • Discussion group • Vision of the future • Self-assessment • Assessment 	Integration in the weblog: Post: “Did I achieve my learning objectives and what did I learn?” 	

6. Conclusion

Based on intensive experiences gathered during the implementation process, the webLab-concept has been continuously developed. Throughout the process the teachers could discover several potentials. According to this, it is seen as a very helpful instrument to prepare and reflect the students' experiences abroad. Furthermore, the constant use of the weblog helps supporting and accompanying the students during their internship. However, also the limitations of a weblog have been identified: It turned out to be suitable to use more than one social media format to communicate in different situations (e. g. emergencies, general questions, cooperation among teachers etc.). It could be useful to consider this for further developments.

webLab Participants and Contact Persons:

Project Programme:

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Project Coordination:

Geschäftsstelle für EU-Projekte und berufliche
Qualifizierung der Bezirksregierung Düsseldorf (GEB)
Christoph Harnischmacher

Participating Regional Institutions:

Servicio Periférico de la Consejería de Education,
Cultura y Deportes en Albacete
Antonio Martínez Núñez

Rectorat de l'Académie d'Aix-Marseille
Christophe Gargot

Tekirdağ İl Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü
Emre Bilgin

Raision seudun koulutuskuntayhtymä
Hannu Koivisto

cevet – Scientific Support:

H.-Hugo Kremer
Marie-Ann Kückmann
Petra Frehe

Participating Vocational Schools:

Heinrich-Hertz Berufskolleg
Rüdiger Könemann

Max-Weber-Berufskolleg
Barbara Stieldorf

Franz-Jürgens-Berufskolleg
Manfred Uchtmann

Landesberufsschule Hartberg
Wolfgang Eder

IES Universidad Laboral Albacete
Mari Luz Ortega Simon

Tekirdağ Teknik ve Endüstri Meslek Lisesi
Zübeyde Aykaç



Contact:

Universität Paderborn

cevet – centre for vocational education and training

Warburger Straße 100

D – 33098 Paderborn