

Music & Creativity – connecting people: The Musiccreates project

Karin Luomi-Messerer, ECVET Secretariat

ECVET live on stage: The ‘project weeks’ were one of the highlights of the Musiccreates project. ECVET Secretariat was invited to take part in the band sessions in Tallinn (Estonia), which included lots of live music, great stage atmosphere and a great learning experience for aspiring young musicians.

Aims & objectives

The Musiccreates project aims at improving the quality and internationalisation of music education. It specifically seeks to enhance the professional skills of participants by improving their understanding of the various roles, responsibilities, risks and rewards involved in being a musician, and by increasing their awareness and understanding of different cultural approaches. Professional and intercultural competence are crucial for musicians who want to make a living in the creative industries on an international stage. The project organises and implements student mobility, and the partnership is composed of training providers and industry representatives. They provide the students with advice on how to promote their work and organise events where they can perform their own music.

Applying ECVET in Musiccreates

The project is based on ECVET principles and includes work experience and assessment abroad (carried out by tutors from the partner schools) as well as transfer of the assessed learning outcomes (‘credits’). One key result of the project is the creation and piloting of a study or mobility unit of learning outcomes called ‘Industry experience whilst abroad’. Although the project is music-based, the unit was developed

in a subject-independent way and thus the mobility unit can be used by learners taking part in exchange projects in different areas. It supports the recognition of the experience gained abroad and gives learners a portfolio that provides evidence of competences obtained. This can improve their employability on a European level. The unit was even credit rated against the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) by Glasgow Kelvin College. This was necessary to provide the opportunity for UK students to have their learning outcomes obtained abroad validated and recognised.

For example, the following learning outcomes are included in this unit:

The student is able to

- identify, plan, liaise and undertake an activity with a partner organization;
- make comparisons between home and host professional techniques;
- work independently, demonstrating effective teamwork within the agreed activity structures;
- demonstrate effective use of equipment, tools and materials;
- reflect on and coherently discuss the mobility experience and to evaluate the effectiveness of his/her contribution.



The learning outcomes, the assessment requirements and the procedures for validation and recognition are laid down in **Learning Agreements**. At the Kainuu Vocational College, the ‘WILMA’ student management programme is used to create Learning Agreements (LA) online (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Preparing Learning Agreements via an online platform at the Kainuu Vocational College (Finland)

The WILMA platform is used for transnational mobility as well as for domestic training placements. Learners can make applications online. WILMA enables learners to search for open placements, by country, based on a register that includes more than 2000 institutions. Memoranda of Understanding, Learning Agreements and assessment forms can all be prepared using WILMA. When completing the online Learning Agreement, the learner and the responsible teacher specify the learner's current skills and the learning outcomes to be achieved during mobility. Practical information related to health & safety, dietary requirements or insurance protection is also recorded. The online completion of the documents helps to save time, and keeps the learner's personal information secure.



The project weeks in 2017

Twenty-five students participated in the project in the first half of 2017, beginning in February. Five bands were set up to create their own music. Each band usually consisted of a mixed group of students from different training providers who were at different stages in their education. Their task was to create music in a cooperative manner, beginning from composing and writing lyrics. First, they worked remotely using modern music technologies and applications for storing and sharing ideas and products (e.g. they used Dropbox, cloud storage, social media apps, digital recording - audio



& video). The online collaboration process across borders was supported by guidelines and a toolkit developed by the partnership, including information on how to record songs and store and share both audio and video files.

After this initial preparatory phase, the bands came together in March for a project week in Kajaani (Finland) to participate in workshops to further develop their songs. They were supported by tutors with current industry experience; these tutors played their songs with them as well. Each band performed some of their new songs for the first time at a live event. The second project week was organised in Tallinn (Estonia) in May. During this week, the songs were further improved and the bands had the opportunity to record some of them in a studio. As a *grande finale* of the second project week, a gig was organised in a jazz club. Each band presented four of the songs they had developed together at this event.

Both students and tutors emphasised that these project weeks were very successful and created rich learning experiences. Students worked in teams but also independently, and managed to plan their preparatory work, rehearsals, recording and performing sessions in an efficient way within the given time structures. Furthermore, students at different levels of mastering their instruments supported each other in further improving their techniques, they respected and valued different ideas, and they encouraged and inspired each other in their creative work. The five bands created music of different styles and their team spirit was reflected in their performances. The different per-



sonalities of each band member were visible in an authentic way, too.

The final results of the Musiccreates project

The study unit as well as the guidelines for the online collaboration were piloted during these project weeks and will be improved based on students' feedback. These results as well as the music created by the students will be published at the project website. The project weeks in 2017 were documented by media students from Kajaani; thanks to this, photos and videos showing the 'making off' will be also available via the [project website](#).

Project factbox: Musiccreates project

Funding: Erasmus+ programme (2 years)

Partnership: Colleges and conservatories from four countries: Kainuun Ammattiopisto (Kajaani, Finland – coordinator), Keski-Pohjanmaan Konservatorio (Kokkola, Finland), Otsakool (Tallinn, Estonia), North West Regional College (Derry, Northern Ireland), Glasgow Kelvin College (Glasgow, Scotland), and Connect Entertainment (Glasgow, Scotland – as 'working-life partner').

Target group: IVET students and staff in vocational education in the fields of music performance (classical, pop, jazz and folk music) and music technology.

Participants: 90 tutors and students.

Links: www.musiccreates.eu; www.facebook.com/musiccreates