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Foreword

This handbook is addressed both to guidance practitioners who already work in a transnational dimension supporting European mobility for educational and/or working purposes and to practitioners who would like to be involved in such activities.

According to the Lisbon Strategy (2000) the European Union should become by 2010 the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world. The reference context for guidance services should be Europe: guidance practitioners should be in charge with offering information on training and working opportunities not only at a national level. Modern guidance services should be able to answer to new individual information and guidance needs that go beyond national and local contexts.

A direct consequence of this challenge is that guidance practitioners should be prepared to network with other organisations in Europe and to communicate within culturally different contexts. For that, quality standards of guidance services and the professional profile of guidance practitioners should be framed according to European standards.

This handbook is not an exhaustive product. We are overloaded by information and one of the challenges of experts working to this publication has been that to select in a reasoned way the most useful information contents and best practices on guidance and mobility and to make them easy accessible to guidance practitioners.

This handbook is the result of a networking and fruitful collaboration of a group of experts in mobility fields and of guidance practitioners, i.e. the direct beneficiaries, who gave their feed-back during the whole project's development, according a bottom-up approach, both helping the project partners to identify the handbook contents' fields and evaluating and validating its contents.

Information resources, best practices and contents were selected according to eight main subjects which correspond to the chapters of this publication. These study contents were the result of a survey which was carried out with a sample of guidance practitioners in Europe aiming at identifying their information and training needs when working in a transnational perspective. The product is an information and methodological tool for guidance actions in a European dimension but it can also be used as a training material for the up-dating of guidance practitioners' competences.

This book is not the main product of the Ergo-in-Net project. It is one of the project outcomes together with the collaborative methodology carried out with local and transnational networks, communities of guidance practitioners and stakeholders and with dissemination activities and training events addressed to stakeholders and guidance practitioners that were carried out both at a national and a transnational level during the project's duration.

Ergo-in-Net has been a network project, financed by the European Commission within the Leonardo da Vinci programme and carried out with a partnership of 11 organisations from 5 European countries: Italy, France, Germany, Poland and the UK. In detail, these were:

- In Italy - *Regione Liguria* (the project promoter), *ASTER Soc. cons. p.a.* (the project coordinator), *Centro Studi Pluriversum* and *Padova University*, task force of guidance for the *Coimbra Group* of universities;
- In Germany – the *European Service* of the *German Federal Employment Agency (ES-BA)* ;

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chapter

Internships
in Europe

Introduction

Internships represent nowadays one of the most widespread way for younger to get work experience and to improve skills and abilities and for companies/organizations to know future motivated employees.

The aim of this chapter is to collect the most efficient features on internship and to put a number of relevant references we have expertised for each country in order to give guidance practitioners efficient and basic tools on this issue. What we can add, as a general remark is that mobility throughout internship concern mostly students and represent for them a necessary training step in their studies and a real added value. This chapter is meant for them. Apprentices in Europe or youngsters in vocational education may be concerned as well but their periods abroad are mainly organized and promoted by their training institutions, very rarely on a voluntary basis. So, you'll find in this chapter definitions of internships trying to underline the main characteristics in each country, a sort of vademecum for each guidance counsellor, describing step by step the internship procedure, then what you have to know on each country according to key features, summarized in a table and as annexes references to European projects related to this theme and examples of tools such as agreement examples, internship reports, and etc.

Definitions

In **France** the term to define internship is stage. Taking a placement during secondary education or university courses is a regular practice, small/large companies, public organisations, local communities and associations are often requested by schools and students themselves to host one or more trainees. Post diploma placements are very rare. Stages are compulsory in engineering schools, business schools, and vocational courses at university. The problem in France is that "*stagiaires*" can happen to be considered as real staff without being paid and considered as such.

In **Germany** the term is to define internship is "*Praktikum*" and can have more than one meaning, namely a period of on-the-job training, a period of work experience, traineeship, a part of a education, practical experience for school leavers, a practical experience for student before, during or after a higher education and moreover during in-company training, etc..

Large and small companies or public institutions can be contacted by schools, universities and students themselves to obtain a "*Praktikumsplatz*". Usually a placement agreement (*Praktikumsvereinbarung*) between the company and the interested student is signed.

The most popular types of *Praktikum* in Germany are the mentioned examples.

- Voluntary *Praktikum*. Among all the voluntary *Praktikum* for school pupils, students or other persons who are interested in a

Legal matters and taxation

Once in the other country you will be subject to their laws. In the event of any legal problems you should contact your Embassy.

Where you pay tax depends principally on whether you are defined as resident in your own country or not during a particular tax year. If you pay in the host country, remember there may be local as well as income taxes. VAT must also be considered. You may also incur import taxes if you move certain household goods. Consult the tax and/or customs and excise offices in your country before you leave. See <http://europa.eu.int/youreurope> (>"citizen" and select "taxation" from the drop-down menu) for more details.

In France

Social contributions:

- Automatically deducted from your gross salary on your pay slip.

Income Tax:

- Paid by an employee either three times a year or in 10 monthly instalments.
- Assessed on earnings in one year.
- Payable the following year. In February, fill in and send a *déclaration d'impôts* (tax return) to your local *Centre de Paiement des Impôts*.
- Contact your nearest *Trésor Public* for further information.

In Germany

If you are liable, you must register with the local tax office / *Finanzamt*. German taxes are higher than average, including regional and local taxes. Income tax also includes church tax and the *Solidaritätsbeitrag* – to support former East Germany.

In Italy

You may need the services of an accountant (*commercialista*). Trade Unions offer advice.

Tax Offices

Find a local *Agenzia delle entrate* (<http://www.agenziaentrate.it>).

IVA - Imposta sul valore aggiunto (VAT - Value Added Tax) is 20%.

Further information: *Ufficio Provinciale Imposta sul Valore Aggiunto* (Local VAT Office).

Local taxes

ICI - Imposta comunale Immobili – 4-6% on the value of your property. Householders also pay for rubbish disposal (*Nettezza Urbana*) and water (*Acquedotto Comunale*) both calculated on the area of the property.

For further details see *Ministero delle Finanze* (Ministry of Finance): <http://www.finanze.it>

In Poland

Income tax exists in the form of income tax on companies, income tax on individuals (19% - 30% or 40% - more information below) and lump sum taxation forms.

Base for calculation of tax in PLN (2006)		Amount of tax
above	up to	
	37.024	19% of the assessment base minus the amount of 530,08 PLN
37.024		6.504,48 PLN + 30% of the excess above 37.024 PLN
74.048		17.611,68 PLN + 40% of the excess above 74.048 PLN

Indirect taxes include Value Added Tax (0% - 22%) and excise tax as well as Gambling and Lottery tax.

More information on: <http://www.mf.gov.pl>

In the UK

As well as income tax and VAT there is a local *council tax* which pays for public services in your area and is assessed on the value of your property.

National Insurance Contributions

Deducted from your wages (or paid direct by the self-employed). Everyone is issued with a national insurance number (NINO). Your employer will arrange this and deduct contributions from your salary.

For additional information:

HM Revenue & Customs
International Division (Double Taxation)
Victory House, 30-34 Kingsway, London,
WC2B 6ES
Tel.: +44.207.4386622
<http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/rates/index.htm>

Pensions and unemployment benefits

Under EEA regulations, if you work in two or more EEA countries you can combine state pension contributions paid in each state in order to qualify for a state pension.

If you are entitled to unemployment benefit and have been claiming this in your own country, you may continue to receive it for a while in your own country, while you actively seek work elsewhere. Contact the employment service in your own country for details.

Insurance, social security and health care

Your social security rights are the same as those that apply anywhere within the EEA. When you start work you contribute to the social security system and consequently, gain the right to benefits. Social security benefits cover unemployment, illness, invalidity, work accidents, work related illnesses, maternity, widowhood and pensions.

If you are an EEA citizen you should obtain certificate E301 from your social security department before you leave. This will show the amount of social security insurance you

have paid in your home country. Take this certificate to your local employment or social security office in the new country in order to make a claim for social security benefits.

Further information in: leaflet SA29 "*Your Social Security, Insurance, Benefits and Health Care Rights in the European Community and in Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein*".

You get urgent medical treatment free anywhere in the EU.

The *European Health Insurance Card* (EHIC) has replaced forms E111, E111b, E110, E128 and E119. It entitles you to free, or reduced cost, emergency healthcare when visiting another EU country, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland. The card is intended to simplify procedures if you need medical care. It is not valid if you are going to live and work abroad permanently but will otherwise allow you to access any state-provided medical treatment you need while abroad because of an accident or illness: <http://www.ehic-card.com>

EU countries have different rules about state-provided medical treatment. You may have to pay part or all of the cost of medical treatment/prescriptions, and then claim a full or partial refund. It's best to take out private insurance covering medical care as well.

If you are in receipt of Sickness Benefit in your country, you may be able to transfer payment to the other EU country. Ask at your local labour office, or social security office.