



# The IES Ramon Llull in Europe, Europe in the IES Ramon Llull

## Introduction:

When the leading team began working on the PEC we included as one of our objectives to expand internationally the centre. The situation in this respect was that, although we were already participating in several local and national actions, we only had a European exchange.

With the internationalization of the activities of the Ramon Llull we wanted to give our students and teachers the opportunity to enjoy a European dimension in education in a really direct and practical way.

On the one hand the leading team committed to the development of a project applying for an ERASMUS+ Key Action 1 (KA1) to do Job Shadowings in four European schools and to attend structured courses on school management. At the same project we aimed to strengthen multilingualism of the teachers and the student exchanges with structured courses to improve the language skills of teachers.

## What was the process?

Academic year 2013-2014: it was the first call of Erasmus + programs, as it often happens in the beginning, it was all very confusing and it seemed a very tough work and, above all, very difficult to achieve because the competition hard.



The leading team considered whether to apply but we thought it was best to wait for the next year to encourage more teachers to participate. It did not work, Paloma Silla, our advisor in the CEFIRE offered us her help and convinced us to participate.

We formed a team with our leading team and the students of the Management Master studies who were doing their internships at the center and with the help of the advisor of the CEFIRE and the students she was tutoring.

On the one hand, we were recording us in ECAS, getting the PIC, enrolling ourselves in eTwinning, reading all legal documentation and all previous models of Comenius, etc. On the other hand, we were outlining the objectives and project development.

Meanwhile it was reported to the teachers assembly and we offered the opportunity to participate actively in the preparation of the project or in the actions to be carried out. The reality was that the project was developed by the leading team and some teachers asked to attend courses organized.

We contacted the partners, which we will later present and we submit the application by 15 March with the Fallas going on.

The grade was very good, 7,3, but not good enough to obtain the grant. The SEPIE sends an email with the grade and a very detailed report about the strengths and the areas for improvement, so the next time you apply is easier.

Academic year 2014-2015: with this information and the clear objective of the management team, during 2014-2015 we offered again the teachers the opportunity to participate actively in the project ERASMUS +.



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This time there was less participation from the teachers. The participation was concentrated on the leading team and some of the teachers involved in the exchanges of students.

Regarding the project, we detailed more the structured courses and the objectives of the Job Shadowings. We also mentioned the people who would carry out each of the actions and what they would do before, during and after. With these improvements we got the approval from the European Union and our project was accepted and the true internationalization of the IES Ramon Llull began.

One of the partners, Järvenpään lukio in Finland, had obtained a KA1 in the first round and we received in a Job Shadowing the Principal, Marja-Liisa Lehtiniemi and the teacher of Spanish and English, Marjo Uotila, also in charge of various international projects and coordinator for the stays of two months for students.

That year we started the stays of two months for students at the Finnish school (together with IES Puçol) and the French school, Ensemble Scolaire Jeanne d'Arc in Millau. The exchanges of one week to Pisa (together with IES Serpis), Millau (together with IES Ferrer I Guàrdia) and Skövde, in addition to what we were doing with Schopfheim, Germany.

Later this year we received the good news about our grant and we started organizing the visits and courses, eight Job Shadowings and three courses (two on foreign languages and one on school management) to be carried out during two years from June 2015 to May 2017.



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Academic year 2015-2016: the activities begin, we reinforce the exchanges and stays of students at the European schools with the stays of members of the management team and the attendance to structured courses.

We started a seminar with the participation of internationalization:

- Pilar Marín, Secretary (Job Shadowing 15-16 with France and coordinator of the seminar; teacher of Economics; attends a French course)
- Josep Vicent Porcar, head of studies (Job Shadowing 15-16 with Germany; teacher of Music)
- Angels Romeu, Principal (Job Shadowing 15-16 with Sweden and Finland, coordinator of student stays for two months in Finland and France; teacher of English)
- Elvira Marco, head of the English department (in charge of the exchanges with Sweden and Germany, teacher of the German workshop)
- Loles García, head of the department of Spanish (in charge of the exchanges with France and collaborator in the exchange with Sweden)
- Albert Fort, head of the department of Geography and History, and M<sup>a</sup> Josep Simbor, teacher of Geography and History (both in charge of the exchange with Italy)
- Alberto Cuadrado, teacher of Geography and History in the IES Serpis (in charge of the exchange with Italy in his school)
- Eva Céspedes, English teacher (collaborator in the exchange with Germany)
- Ana Roma, head of the Department of French.

This seminar will bring together the most immediate tasks to synchronize them to organize exchanges. This is done not to duplicate the work and unify documents. In the two long stays and some of the exchanges of students we work with other secondary schools: IES Puçol (two-month stay in Finland), IES Ferrer Guardia (two-month stay in France and student exchange) and IES Serpis (exchange with Italy). The collaborations with other IES of Valencia gives an



extra dimension to our actions, connections with other public institutions increase sustainability and dissemination of projects.

By now we have carried out three Job Shadowings (the head of studies at the moment is carrying out the fourth) and a German language course. This summer the other two courses will be done and next year the remaining four Job Shadowings.

### **What are the objectives of our KA1?**

- Internationalisation of the school.
- European Dimension of Education.
- School management: software/hardware used, financial resources, human resources, structuring of studies regarding the Directors regarding the families, etc.
- Transition from Primary to Secondary Education.
- Multilingualism: CLIL methodologies in Europe.

### **Which members? How? Why?**

- *Järvenpään Lukio, Järvenpää, Finland.*

We got in touch thanks to Paloma Silla, our advisor in the CEFIRE. This is one of the best schools in Finland for both its architecture and for international studies. In fact the Finnish educational authorities chose to make the video for the internationalization of schools.

It is a school that receives only high school students from different locations and must have a score of 8 to enter.



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The Finnish education system is recognized as one of the best, although they are currently in the process of change the curriculum, which is why we are very interested to study its educational system and talk to the protagonists.

- *Ensemble Scolaire Jeanne d'Arc, Millau, France.*

In this case Paloma Silla also introduced us to Jacques Cohen, in charge of the twinning between the cities of Sangunt and Millau, in an activity at the Roman Theatre of Sagunt and he put us in contact with the French institution.

The institution has from kindergarten to high school and vocational studies, so we are very interested in studying the transition from their point of view as well as the studies of economics and entrepreneurship, in addition to the general theme of the management of schools.

- *Gymnasium-Skövde Västerhojd, Skövde, Sweden.*

In this case, it was the Valencia City Council who asked us to organize a student exchange with them and we added them as partners for our KA1.

This institution is a high school which also has a group of students studying in the Volvo, factory based in the city, and a vocational training school, Gymnasium Kavelbro, which works together.

That interested us a lot, we wanted to observe the contact with vocational training studies as a transition point between the two studies. And the educational organization, for example the school has five principals with an average of 250 students each in charge.

- *Theodor-Heuss-Gymnasium Schopfheim, Germany.*

We had already been organizing a student exchange with this school since 2004. It is a secondary and post secondary education school with very good music and



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sport programs. It receives students from the surrounding villages and its organization reflects that variety of ages and backgrounds.

Although we had much contact with the languages department, there was not much knowledge about the management system of the school and our relationship with the management team was limited to a protocol issue.

## **Impact?**

- *Direct:* All the leading team is involved in the KA1; with all four partners we have established some kind of exchange of students and one in five students in the IES Ramon Llull (and their families of course) and one in four teachers is directly involved in the international exchange of students.

- *Indirect:* As receiving partners we take advantage of the visits of our partners from other institutions conducting meetings (formal and informal) to exchange views and expertise on internationalization and management of schools. All students share class time when foreign students are at the school.

## **Dissemination**

Part of the spirit of the European projects is getting the most of spreading the experience and our project is present:

- At the school: posters, murals with pictures, information screen, magazine of the school, faculty meetings, ...
- The school's website
- On Facebook
- In the Press
- Blogspot



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- III Seminar of Principals of the Maritime Area
- Other schools, etc.

## **Sustainability?**

Another condition is aiming for the sustainability of the project and we have strengthened the Job Shadowings with exchanges of students and a sincere commitment to personal relationships. The educational institutions are made up of people with great experience and dedication which should be reflected in these projects.

Regarding the budget, it is clear that once the subsidy ends it is difficult to keep the European Job Shadowing. The idea is to try to include in the exchanges of students some working meetings of the collaborating teachers. Our exchanges include classes in the receiving school, so that in those periods of time teachers can meet the managers or teachers of the host school and maintain formal and informal meetings.

All teachers participating in the exchanges are deeply involved in the internationalization of the school, thus it is easier to get a double benefit from the activity.

## **Conclusion**

If you are planning to apply for a ERASMUS +, do it. Sometimes you will be very alone at the computer, emails will arrive in festive (our holidays do not seem to match any European country and it is very difficult to synchronize work time), the teaching staff may seem far from your worries, acronyms will multiply, the requirements may seem impossible, the preparatory work will never end, and the project can always be improved, but... it is worth the effort.





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The leading team wins in perspective, there is much to improve in our education system and the school management, but we have many good and exportable things, for example our ITACA application is very similar in other countries.

Participant teachers learn a lot about methodology and organization of the subjects and the classroom in a practical and direct way, it is not the same to learn about a new methodology or new software than to see it being used in a real class.

Students experience what European dimension of education means when they participate in the exchanges, but also when foreign teachers and students are here.

The families of the participating students also learn first hand a different educational reality and can appreciate the effort made by managers and teachers to organize and carry out the different projects, whether local, national or international.

Our advice is: have clear objective, look for partners in various European platforms, through the CEFIRE and other agencies, ask schools that have participated for help and go ahead. The reward is incredible.

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