The European Virtual Seminar on Sustainable Development

Joop de Kraker

31 January 2017, Maastricht
Presentation

• What is EVS?

• Success factors of EVS

• Policy recommendations
What is EVS?

• An international Masters course: 9 countries in Europe
What is EVS?

• An international Masters course: 9 countries in Europe

• A jointly offered, ‘networked’ course: 10 universities

• A multi-disciplinary course: >5 disciplines
EVS Partnership

- Open Universiteit, The Netherlands - Environmental Sciences
- Karl Franzens Universität Graz, Austria - Geography
- Charles University Prague, Czech Republic – […]
- University of Antwerp, Belgium - Environmental Science
- University of Bucharest, Romania - Applied Geo-biology
- University of the Aegean, Greece – Environmental Science
- University of Maribor, Slovenia – […]
- Universidade Aberta, Portugal - Environmental Citizenship
- Universität Oldenburg, Germany – Water & Coastal Management
- FernUniversität Hagen, Germany - Environmental Science
What is EVS?

• An international Masters course: 9 countries in Europe

• A jointly offered, ‘networked’ course: 10 universities

• A multi-disciplinary course: >5 disciplines

• A course on Sustainable Development & Europe: 6 study topics, related to EU SD Strategy

• A collaborative learning course: students work together in teams
EVS: Major goals

• Understand the concept of sustainable development and apply it to a major issue in a European context

• Collaborate with students from other disciplines, countries and cultures, using internet technology
EVS: Structure

• Students chose from a list of topics in sustainable development
  – climate adaptation, nature conservation, waste management, etc.

• Students (4-7) are grouped in multidisciplinary, international teams

• Each (virtual) team is supported by a tutor and a topic expert

• Each team:
  – Determines a research question
  – Develops a research proposal
  – Conducts research (case study approach with mostly secondary data)
  – Writes a research report
  – Prepares a PPT presentation

• Period: October – March (5 months), 5 EC
Project-based learning

- Sustainable development issue
- EU SDS and policy goals (climate, nature, waste, …)
- Performance member states, best practices
- Recommendations

Exploiting student group diversity in knowledge & views

Discipline A
Discipline B
Discipline C
Discipline D

Country A
Country B
Country C
Country D
What is EVS?

• An international Masters course: 9 countries in Europe

• A jointly offered, ‘networked’ course: 10 universities

• A multi-disciplinary course: >5 disciplines

• A course on Sustainable Development & Europe: 6 study topics

• A collaborative learning course: students work together in teams

• A web-based (virtual) course: social network platform
What is EVS?

• An international Masters course: 9 countries in Europe

• A jointly offered, ‘networked’ course: 10 universities

• A multi-disciplinary course: >5 disciplines

• A course on Sustainable Development & Europe: 6 study topics

• A collaborative learning course: students work together in teams

• A web-based (virtual) course: social network platform

• A successful course: >15 years (running since 2001) 60 students enrol per year, 600 graduates
Success factors EVS

- Real added value
- Smart organisational model
- Trust & friendship
- Continuous revision and innovation
- Institutional support + accreditation
Added value of EVS

• **Students**
  – Access to expertise at other universities
  – Truly international and multidisciplinary learning experience
  – Development of new (collaboration) competences

• **Staff**
  – More attractive and higher quality course
  – Knowledge exchange, research, innovation
  – Reputation building (best practice)
  – Gateway to funded projects

• **Institutions**
  – More attractive and higher quality study programme
  – Reputation building (accreditation)
  – Cost-effective production & exploitation
"The collaboration in EVS is a small example of the collaboration which is needed in Europe." (student)
Added value of EVS

• **Students**
  – Truly international and multidisciplinary learning experience
  – Development of new (collaboration) competences
  – Access to expertise at other universities

• **Staff**
  – More attractive and higher quality course
  – Knowledge exchange, research, innovation
  – Reputation building (best practice)
  – Gateway to funded innovation projects

• **Institutions**
  – More attractive and higher quality study programme
  – Reputation building (accreditation)
  – Cost-effective production & exploitation
EU Projects with EVS
Added value of EVS

- **Students**
  - Truly international and multidisciplinary learning experience
  - Development of new (collaboration) competences
  - Access to expertise at other universities

- **Staff**
  - More attractive and higher quality course
  - Knowledge exchange, research, innovation
  - Reputation building (best practice)
  - Gateway to funded projects

- **Institutions**
  - More attractive and higher quality study programme
  - Reputation building (accreditation)
  - Cost-effective production & exploitation
EVS organisational model

• **Distributed responsibilities**
  - Local selection & enrolment
  - Local accreditation (credits can vary)
  - Integration in degree programs (compulsory or optional)
  - Joint teaching
  - Joint student grading and course evaluation

• **Sharing resources**
  - Students, staff time, staff expertise
  - No dependence on external funding

• **Flexible partnership with stable core**
  - No need to participate each year
  - Participation level may vary
EVS organisational model

- **Distributed responsibilities**
  - Local selection & enrolment
  - Local accreditation (credits can vary)
  - Integration in degree programs (compulsory or optional)
  - Joint teaching
  - Joint student grading and course evaluation

- **Sharing resources**
  - Students, staff time, staff expertise
  - No dependence on external funding

- **Flexible partnership with stable core**
  - No need to participate each year
  - Participation level may vary
EVS organisational model

- **Distributed responsibilities**
  - Local selection & enrolment
  - Local accreditation (credits can vary)
  - Integration in degree programs (compulsory or optional)
  - Joint teaching
  - Joint student grading and course evaluation

- **Sharing resources**
  - Students, staff time, staff expertise
  - No dependence on external funding

- **Flexible partnership with stable core**
  - No need to participate each year
  - Participation level may vary
Trust & friendship

• Annual EVS Staff Meetings
Continuous revision and innovation: VLE
Continuous revision and innovation: LA

Activity and Performance Dashboard
Group: NAT – Innovation in European Nature Conservation Policy

Platform activity
Performance

Cumulative activity
Periodic activity

My activity
Me
Group

Responsiveness
Presence

Initiative
Cumulative activity
Group
Me
Caroline van der Laan
Erica Moseh
Melissa Kiegerl
Institutional policy (recommended)

- Acknowledgement of added value international course
- Accreditation & incorporation of international course
- Subsidiarity as leading organisational principle
- Rooted in known needs of teachers & students
Thank You!