

VIP@work

vocational internship placements

VIP@work - NEWSLETTER 1

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Persistently high youth unemployment and the education-employment skills mismatch have spurred governments in European countries to undertake VET reform to increase the quantity and quality of internships and apprenticeships. In many countries this has generated an excess supply of students looking for an internship but low employer demand.

VIP@work – Vocational Internship Placements @ work – seeks to address this issue by building the capacity of business support organisations to develop support structures which will facilitate small businesses to become internship employers. Business support organisations are the ones in contact with potential internship providers on a daily basis and can encourage them to get involved in internships for the benefit of their own organisation!



VIP@WORK PROGRESS

VIP@work is a two years international project under the Erasmus+ programme. Year one has now passed in which VIP@work partners shared knowledge and experience in the field of internships. It can be concluded that internships can take different forms amongst countries. Some systems are also more developed in countries than others. However, everybody agrees that work-based learning and the connection between education and business is of vital importance to prepare future employees for the labour market.



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WHAT TO EXPECT?

VIP@work aims to develop materials and tools that will encourage business support organisations to increase their role in the field of internships. To achieve this we will develop the following outputs:

1. REGIONAL INTERNSHIP PARTNERSHIPS BLUEPRINT

This will be a practical blueprint for business support organisations describing step-by-step how to set up an integrated regional network of internship stakeholders on both the education and business side. This blueprint will help business advisors to play their part in the matter and encourage them to contribute to improving the quality of the regional internship system. With the use of the blueprint, Inqubator Leeuwarden (The Netherlands), ADR Nord-Est (Romania), Eurocrea Merchant (Italy) and Momentum (Ireland) will set up a Regional Internship Partnership.

2. INTERN INTERM PACKAGE

This will be training material and practical tools for business support organisations (intermediary organisations – INTERMs) to optimally inform and engage small businesses regarding internships. This output will learn them how to become effective Internship Intermediaries and will build their capacity to provide the information, guidance and training to small businesses. One of the practical tools in this output will be infographics showcasing relevant information about internships in a certain country. Check out the infographic for The Netherlands [here](#).

3. WIN-WINTERNSHIP COURSE FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

This will be an online course to ensure small businesses will understand the full benefits an internship can have for them and for the intern. The course will contain training modules and practical tools to equip small businesses to become internship employers. The online course will start with a self-assessment for the businesses to find out how ready they are to mentor an intern.

4. INTERNSHIP DESK SET-UP HANDBOOK

An Internship Desk is a physical and permanent information point at business support organisations where entrepreneurs can access up-to-date information, guidance and training on internships. These Desks will be established by Inqubator Leeuwarden (The Netherlands), ADR Nord-Est (Romania), Eurocrea Merchant (Italy) and Momentum (Ireland). A handbook will be developed that provides a step-by-step plan including experiences and lessons learnt on how to set up this Internship Desk.

5. ONLINE PLATFORM & COMMUNITY

This will be the centre of the project where all outputs will be published. Furthermore, the platform will provide the opportunity to discuss and share experiences in the field of internships.



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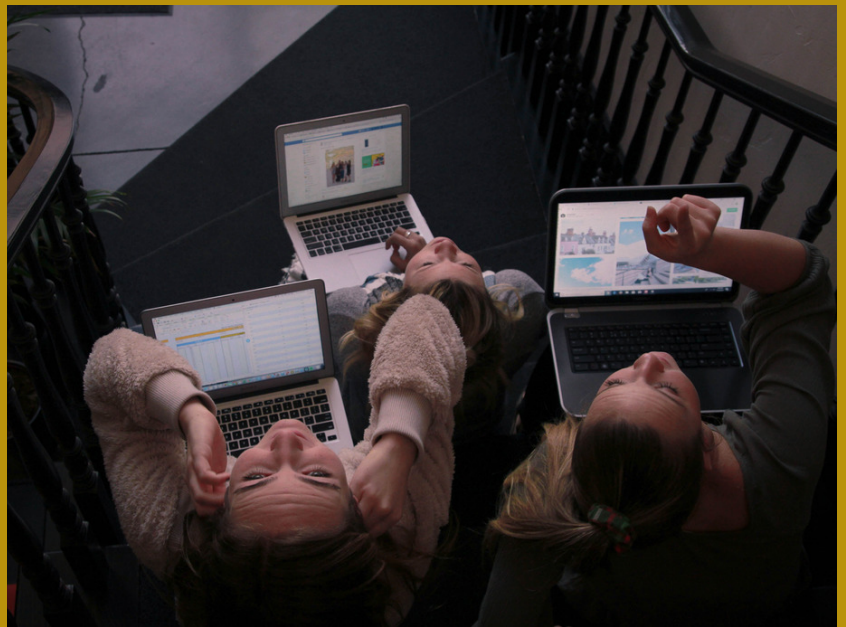
TEST OUR RESULTS!

In the beginning of next year the final drafts of the results will be ready. The next step is then to test them with the target group.

Are you a business support organisation and do you want to increase your knowledge and expertise in the field of internships?

Or are you a small business that considers to hire an intern?

Please let us know!



WHERE DID THE PARTNERSHIP MEET?



Partners met 3 times in the first year of the project to share knowledge and experience but also to brainstorm about the project objectives and results. The kick-off meeting was organised in Leeuwarden, where project coordinator Inqubator Leeuwarden and partner organisation Friesland College are located. Partners received a tour at the Friesland College and students from the same organised a workshop about internships.



ADR Nord-Est from Romania was host of the second meeting. In Piatra Neamt, partners paid a visit to a textile company that supports dual learning. In addition, stakeholders from education and business were invited to the meeting to learn about other internship systems.



About two weeks ago partners gathered for the third time. During this meeting in Milan, partners showed and discussed the first drafts of the project results. Also a teacher and two students joined the meeting and shared their experiences with internships at their school.



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WHY INTERNSHIPS?

Don't know the benefits of internships? We talked to several students and businesses so read on!

For the business

The main benefit was the re-distribution of workload, so that the senior team members could raise the quality of their work, as well as the possibility of trying a new method for training a new resource.

- SME manager from Italy

The first few weeks of transition were challenging as we were very busy and had to take time to orientate our new intern. It was worth it though as she is still with us, 6 years later!

- SME director from Ireland

The results are better. There is more time to deliver high quality products and we have other outlooks on how our work can be done.

- SME owner from The Netherlands

For the student

I would definitely recommend this type of learning to my colleagues since this is the best way to get hands-on experience from early on in your profession.

- student from Romania.

An organisation that has an intern is making sure that the future employees of any sector, are well educated and have enough experience to do their job the best possible way.

- student from The Netherlands

I felt I would get a more valuable internship in a small business, I would be an intern but I would be an important member of the team from the outset. In a small business, everyone is crucial to its success.

- student from Ireland

I had the opportunity to grow, learning several things working side by side with my colleagues, being able to help them out in an ever-efficient way.

- student from Italy

Are you interested in the VIP@work project? Do you want to get involved? Please let us know! You'll find national contact details at the bottom of this page upon clicking on partners logo!

PARTNERS

