



Gender Equality and Diversity Management: a Case Study of the ERASMUS Mundus Project EMMA

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International student and staff exchange programs foster cultural and educational acceptance of foreign values. They are almost unanimously perceived as a positive tool for personal and career development and strongly supported by different policies. Yet for relatively small universities who before entering into such programs draw staff and students from a culturally homogenous pool, integrating groups of students and teachers with different cultural, religious and gender-specific values proves to be a challenge.

Assuming that the diversity level of students and teachers in European universities – with respect to their national, cultural, religious and educational background – is going to rise over the next decades one very important question with regard to the sustainability of study programs and the educational process in general, besides the quality of the content provided, are the approaches and methods used to integrate these values.

The paper at hand aims to present the challenges which were met by the host university, as well as the approaches and methods, which were used both in the educational process as well as within the extra-curricular activities in order to facilitate a common understanding framework regarding values, such as respect both on a professional and personal level, equal treatment of women and men, acceptance of culture-specific work and solution approaches as well as the inclusion of different education systems and backgrounds into a heterogeneous group. Beyond classic tools like project work in inter-disciplinary and inter-cultural groups for academic purposes, the paper takes a look at how including exchange students and staff into the local community changes both groups in perception, leading to a strong group identification with the host university and the education received.