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## **Soulbus-e-Coach: An e-learning Multicultural Coaching Program for Teachers and Mentors in the Field of Education, Rehabilitation, and Health and Social Care**

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### **Abstract**

*International placement is a critical element of professional learning. During 2013-2015, the representatives of Finland, Croatia, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Estonia and the USA collaborated in the project called Soulbus. One of the aims of the project was to develop a web-based e-coaching program (Soulbus-e-Coach) to enhance cultural competencies of teachers and supervisors who work with foreign exchange students. This paper describes the developmental process including the theoretical framework, the two pilots, and the final product that incorporates the suggestions from these pilots. The Soulbus-e-Coach is available for use by any party involved in training international students. It can make a significant contribution to increasing multicultural competence among mentors and teachers, thereby enhancing the experience of practical placement for international students.*

**Keywords:** *Soulbus, Soulbus-e-Coach, e-course, multicultural competence*

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Internationalization is one of the priorities in higher education in Europe. It enhances study opportunities for students in foreign countries and prepares them for working in multicultural environment. This is why it is important to have educational programs to help students' supervisors in their work with people of different cultural backgrounds. This article provides an overview of the Soulbus-e-Coach program which was developed within the project Building Social Capital by Improving Multicultural Competence in Higher Education and Labour Market (Soulbus) co-financed by the Council of Europe.

European higher education in the world strategy (European Commission, 2013) aims to ensure that graduates of universities in Europe obtain internationally acknowledged competencies which are required for work all over the world. For this purpose, universities must develop international curricula, digital learning materials, including open web-based courses, enhance language skills. Europe continues to be attractive for learners participating in mobility as 45 % of them choose the former as their mobility destination. The number of students is estimated to increase from the current 4 to 7 million by the end of the decade. ET 2020 (The Council of the European Union, 2009) emphasizes that studying in a foreign country (in Europe and elsewhere) should be a rule rather than an exception for students and teachers. This requires high quality study and creating opportunities for teachers and mentors to receive professional development. In the study process, it is crucial to enhance cultural awareness, strengthen partnerships and Europe-wide cooperation, facilitate mutual learning and exchange of good practices and dissemination of results. As a result, graduates' professional competitiveness improves through education and training to meet the current and future challenges in the labor market.

Student mobility is a growing phenomenon in higher educational institutions in Europe and completing one's practical training in a foreign country is a study opportunity. To help teachers best support the increasingly mobile student bodies that they teach, in 2013, representatives of 5 countries (Finland, Croatia, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Estonia) started their cooperation in the project directed at enhancing competence of teachers' and supervisors' who work with foreign exchange students, and developing cooperation between practical training bases and higher educational institutions. The project *Building Social Capital by Improving Multicultural Competence in Higher Education and Labour Market* (Soulbus), which was developed with the support from the EU lifelong learning program, lasted two years. Experts from the US were involved in the project as consultants. The second outcome of the project was to establish a solid dialogue between higher education institutions (HEI) and labor market to improve collaboration in curriculum development and to build and support social capital between HEI and labor market. Project partners decided that each HEI would include a healthcare institution from their home country, and countries with more experience in supervising foreign exchange students would share the latter and their observations with less experienced partners, which would facilitate learning from each other and exchanging good practices. The HEIs and their working life partners involved in this project were following: JAMK University of Applied Sciences and Multicultural Center Gloria, both located at Jyväskylä, Finland; Lahti University of Applied Sciences and Harjulan settlement, both located at the Lahti, Finland; The College of Nursing Jesenice and University Clinic of Respiratory and Allergic Diseases Golnik (Slovenia); Saxion University of Applied Sciences and Care group Solis (the Netherlands); University of Zagreb and Centre for Education "Goljak" Zagreb (Croatia); Tartu Health Care College and Tartu University Hospital (Estonia). The consultants were from School of Social Work, San José State University, San José, CA, USA.

Supervising foreign exchange students requires cooperation between supervisors in the practical training base as well as the educational institution, and also professionalism as well as cultural awareness and language skills. Clinical practical training supervisors' multicultural awareness as well as competence requires constant development and support in order to enable them to provide students with knowledge and skills needed for work and to prepare them for lifelong learning and continuous self-development (Taylor et al., 2011). Although the importance of cultural awareness in clinical supervision is always emphasized, and language is considered to

be a barrier, working specialists may not always acknowledge the meaning of cultural competence and the term may remain vague (Berger, Conroy, Peerson, & Brazil, 2014).

Soulbus project partners developed a web-based course for supervisors and mentors. The E-learning program consists of two parts. Part A is similar for all countries and helps supervisors to unravel the essence of multicultural competence. Part B was developed by partners based on their experience and needs. The project is completed and both parts of the course are available for all who wish to use them. Each country worked out a plan how to integrate the course in curriculum development activities and use in training for supervisors and mentors locally and internationally.

Teaching and mentoring foreign students requires intercultural competence. For the creation of the e-course that focuses on improving teachers and mentors multicultural competence, several sources in addition to professional expertise were used. The main question was: what does multicultural competence consist of? For example, Campinha-Bacote (2002) has developed a model of cultural competence in health care delivery. In her model, the cultural competence is seen “as the ongoing process in which the health care provider continuously strives to achieve the ability to effectively work within the cultural context of the client” (Campinha-Bacote, 2002, p. 181). The model integrates five aspects related to this process: cultural awareness, cultural knowledge, cultural skill, cultural encounters, and cultural desire. In the context of social work curriculum, Drabble, Sen, and Oppenheimer (2012) worked out five elements of transcultural perspective: (1) cultural knowledge; (2) power, privilege, and oppression (aspects of social structures, which need to be challenged in social work to increase social justice and to empower disadvantaged individuals and groups); (3) positionality and self-reflexivity; (4) respectful partnership (with the clients); and (5) cultural competence. In their study carried out among practitioners and graduate students in social work, Green et al. (2005) understood multicultural competence to consist of cultural literacy, cross-cultural knowledge, skill in direct practice, and the social worker's self-knowledge (including their cultural limitations).

The main source for defining multicultural competence in Soulbus programme was the work of Kosteljik, Julsing, and Versteeg (2006). They listed six international competencies:

1. cultural empathy – the ability to empathize with the feelings, thoughts and behaviors of members of groups with a different cultural background;
2. open-mindedness – having an open and unbiased attitude towards members of a group with other cultural norms and values;
3. social initiative – the ability to make contact with people from other cultures;
4. flexibility – the ability to switch from one mode of behavior to another, depending on what is desired or appropriate in a particular context;
5. emotional stability – the ability to deal with psychological stress when coping with different cultural and interpersonal situations;
6. self-efficacy – represents the level of confidence, which is operationalized by looking at the extent to which a person “dares” to lecture one hour in a foreign language.

Drawing upon the brief review of literature above, we combined elements of various conceptual frameworks to develop a more comprehensive conceptual model for teaching multicultural competencies in practical training supervision.

Soulbus-e-Coach was mostly developed by the Soulbus teams of Saxion University of Applied Sciences (Saxion) and care group Solis (located in Deventer, the Netherlands). The

course consists of two parts: Part A (general part) and part B (tailored part). Part A is about the multicultural competence in general. It is meant for all who want to take the course and it is not focused on a specific country. Part B was developed by each of the Soulbus consortium member institution to be suitable for the local situation. While part A is the same for all, there are 6 (according to the number of consortium member pairs: a HEI and its working life partner) different part Bs to fit the local situations.

The teachers and mentors who participate in the Soulbus-e-Coach, can obtain credit points for completing the course. Both parts of the course give 5 ECTS<sup>1</sup> each, which makes 10 ECTS in total. Those who want to take the course, but are not interested in obtaining the credit points, can do so without the requirement of doing various mandatory assignments.

Soulbus-e-Coach is based on previous Soulbus case studies carried out in the consortium members' countries. The aim of those case studies was to find out the current situation in relation to the multicultural competence of teachers and clinical mentors in five partner countries - Slovenia, Croatia, Finland, the Netherlands and Estonia. The case studies used semi-structured group interviews with teachers, mentors and students (both local and international), 43 persons in total. The questions used in the interviews were based on multicultural competencies. Based on the analysis of those interviews, a case studies repository was created where the local issues related to multicultural competence were listed.

The part A of Soulbus-e-Coach focuses on six international competencies listed by Kosteljik et al. (2006) that were mentioned above: open-mindedness, social initiative, flexibility, self-efficacy, cultural empathy and emotional stability. They were renamed "indicators," because they show how multiculturally competent a person is. Those indicators were analyzed in the occupational context of education, rehabilitation, and health & social care. Therefore indicator-charts were created to give an overview of how those indicators relate to those professions (knowledge, skills, applications etc. related to those indicators in the occupational context). The indicators are based on Kosteljik et al. (2006) descriptions of "international competencies," and they are modified to fit the context of teaching and mentoring international students (see table 1).

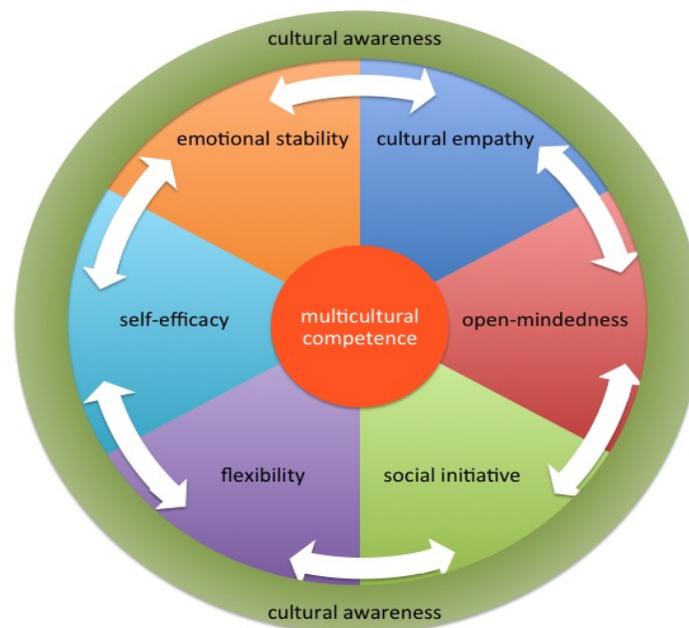
**Table 1:** Six indicators of multicultural competence and their description in the Soulbus-e-Coach

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Description in the Soulbus-e-Coach</b>
Open-mindedness	performing work with an open mind towards students and trainees with a different cultural background and values
Social initiative	the ability to make contact with students with a different cultural background
Flexibility	the extent to which a person can cope with changes in circumstances and think about problems and tasks in novel, creative ways (in the context of teaching or mentoring students with different cultural background)
Self-efficacy	the level of confidence in one's ability to complete tasks and reach goals in teaching or mentoring students and trainees with different cultural background
Cultural empathy	understanding the feelings, thoughts and behaviors of students whose ethnicity and/or culture differs from the teacher's or mentor's

<sup>1</sup> ECTS stands for European Credit Transfer System that is widely used in European HEIs as it helps to compare the workload of study programs and courses between different education institutions. This comparability facilitates the student mobility between those institutions. The exact workload can slightly vary in different countries, generally ranging between 25-30 hours of work. For further information, see for example: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/ects/ects\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/ects/ects_en.htm)

In addition to the six topics dealing with the above indicators, there are three broad chapters on culture, multicultural competence, and cultural awareness. The chapter on culture was written because it provides a solid starting point for the program. It indicates the environment of the program. The chapter on multicultural competence was written because of the direction of the program and because it steers us towards the final outcome. Cultural awareness stresses the importance of being aware of one's own culture and how it conditions our thinking and behavior. Therefore, it is a conditional factor and it influences the improvement of all indicators and competence. The topics of part A constitute a “pizza” that can be seen in the following figure 1.

**Figure 1: The model of multicultural competence in Soulbis-e-Coach**



As shown in figure 1, the six indicators make up multicultural competence that is symbolized as the bull's-eye of the model. It marks the main goal of the Soulbis-e-Coach: to become multiculturally competent. Cultural awareness is the outermost circle of the model as the conditional factor.

The course's didactical build-up followed the expert knowledge of Saxion team as well the 4C-ID literature<sup>2</sup>. Users can read materials (both those in the course pages, and those that are linked to the course, for example, articles, etc.), watch videos, do tests and complete assignments. Some assignments involve forum discussions (virtual discussions and/or physical meetings). The assignments have to be uploaded to a portfolio. The portfolio is meant for

<sup>2</sup> “4C” stands for “four components” and “ID” for “instructional design.” Those four components of this instructional design model are following: learning tasks, supportive information, JIT (just-in-time) information, and part-task practice. (Hoogveld, Janssen-Noordman, & van Merriënboer, 2011)

“personal gathering of proof” and for possible grading, in case the course is used for official recognition.

The part B of the Soulbus-e-Coach program focuses on local problems related to multicultural competencies and it is directly related to the results of the case studies mentioned earlier in the article. The goal of part B is to improve the local situations and to increase the multicultural competence of teachers and mentors. Part B shows 6 examples of national/local application. Future users may use these examples, or can design their own application. Therefore, we have used in each example a methodical structure, which can help future users to solve their own typical problem or challenge.

The structure of part B was suggested by Saxion and consists of four components: case study, problem description, methods and approaches, and reflection. Every consortium member pair (HEI with its working life partner) tailored their own part B based on those components. The problems related to the multicultural competencies yielded by the results of local case studies were identified. One or more main problems were selected to be solved by the Soulbus-e-Coach program. Subsequently, the approaches and methods for solving those specific problems were developed. Finally, we developed the tasks the course participants can undertake to reflect on their activities and learning outcomes by using the approaches and methods pointed out above. Part B may include similar elements as part A: reading materials, videos, assignments, etc.

Reflection was done in the methodical structure to provide future users with a logical link between the more practical part B and the more theoretical part A. We hope to show which main topics from part A came into play in the solution of the local challenge or problem in part B. This offers motivation to study the theoretical part.

In the following paragraphs, we will look more closely at the process of how part A of the e-course was piloted and what improvements were made based on the feedback from the pilots.<sup>3</sup> Part A of the course was piloted twice by the member organizations of Soulbus consortium. The participant organizations worked in pairs (HEI and its working life partner). Every pair selected a person (a course instructor) who led the pilot in their institutions. The team leader of Saxion sent e-course materials and instructions how to upload them into CourseSites<sup>4</sup> by Blackboard to the course instructors. This platform was chosen because of (1) Saxion uses Blackboard and there are people who are experts in creating educational platforms on Blackboard; (2) CourseSites is free of charge to use, which is vital for further use after the project; (3) CourseSites is easy to use and does not need that many instructions (enabling dissemination); (4) CourseSites enables forum discussion, which is crucial in e-learning; (5) CourseSites has the portfolio-function, also connected to (6) grading system, which can be important for future users. The course instructors uploaded the course, so it could be ready for piloting. The same procedure with improved materials (following the feedback from the first pilot) was carried out before the second pilot as well.

Every pair of participant institutions invited 5-8 volunteers among their institutions' teachers and mentors to pilot part A. Participants of the second pilot could be either the same persons as in the first pilot, or different. There were three possibilities how to pilot part A: a

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<sup>3</sup> Part B was piloted as well: every consortium member pair (education institution and its working life partner) worked with another pair giving feedback to each other's e-courses. Based on the feedback necessary changes were made for the final versions.

<sup>4</sup> CourseSites is a free online learning platform where e-courses, or virtual parts of courses can be created and maintained. It is powered by Blackboard technology. CourseSites can be found at <https://www.coursesites.com>

piloteer could pilot the whole part A of the course, or certain parts, or certain themes. Before the pilots started, every consortium member pair shared the roles for every participant of the pilot, and it was supervised by Saxion so all the contents of part A could be solidly covered by the pilots.

According to project plan, it was agreed that feedback of the e-Coach program pilot part A would be gathered after both pilots using an e-questionnaire filled out by the pilot participants. The content of the feedback questionnaire was planned by the members Soulbus group at the Saxion. The e-questionnaire was designed in the Finnish Soulbus group at Lahti University of Applied Sciences (Lahti UAS), who was in charge of quality assurance of the Soulbus project. The e-questionnaire was created and analyzed with the Webropol software. The e-questionnaire was sent to all known participants of the e-Coach program pilots, 40 participants in total. The number of respondents was 34 in the first feedback and 31 in the second, respectively. However, the exact respondent rate is unknown because there were some respondents who were not on the original list of the e-questionnaire receivers. Nonetheless, respondent rate seems to be quite high, approximately 80 per cent, in both surveys.

The e-questionnaire dealing with the first pilot included 22 questions of which three were background questions, nine were 5-point rating scale (very dissatisfied, fairly dissatisfied, neither dissatisfied nor satisfied, fairly satisfied, very satisfied) and eleven open-ended questions. The 5-point rating scale questions dealt with the *general impression, the level of language, the pedagogical set-up, the use of forum discussion, the literature, the assignments, time and study load, tests and videos*. Furthermore the respondents could comment on the pilot in general and make suggestions for improvements.

The e-questionnaire for the second pilot was slightly adjusted from the first one. In addition to original questions respondents were now asked to evaluate their experiences in regard to the use of the forum discussion in a more detailed way. There were two additional questions dealing with the use of portfolio and grade center which were not used in the first feedback questionnaire.

Of the respondents in the first pilot, three persons tested the whole program, one person tested the program from the technical point of view, while 28 pilot group members tested parts of the program. Two respondents did not report what they piloted. In the second pilot four persons tested the whole program, 19 persons tested parts of the program and eight persons tested the program either from the technical, linguistic or pedagogical point of view. For the people who tested only parts of the program, the selected parts were chosen with the co-operation of the main planners of the e-Coach program in the Netherlands and local pilot coordinators.

The feedback information was filtered on different items: country, parts of pilot, HEI or working life partner, and was read by 4 Saxion/Solis project participants separately. They marked all points of attention (positive and negative). Based on separate reading and marking of all the feedback, the group Saxion/Solis discussed overlapping findings, resulting in points of improvement and maintenance. All 4 Saxion/Solis project participants studied the feedback for the specific subjects (topics and themes) separately, whereas they have made a special effort and paid attention to the design of the program. Based on the separate study of these different subjects, the group discussed eye-catching findings, resulting in points of improvement and maintenance. Confronting feedback (some were very negative and some were very positive on the same subjects, like English language and scientific level of sources) was discussed in the steering group meeting, to decide upon the final level of the Soulbus-e-Coach program (it was decided to be Bachelor level program). All 4 Saxion/Solis project participants separately

improved their part of the program, taking into account all the feedback. Two Saxion “end editors” looked through all parts of the program to improve equality and quality all over.

In this section, we discuss the pilot group members’ feedback provided on the general impression, language and pedagogical issues of the e-Coach program. We chose the selected themes because they cover mostly the pedagogical and multicultural content of the e-Coach program. We do not discuss the respondents’ experiences and suggestions on technical issues of the e-Coach program. However these experiences were considered while making improvements to the e-Coach program. Moreover, we discuss briefly our experiences of a local tailored part of the e-Coach program.

The respondents’ group of the e-questionnaire for the first pilot consisted of 22 persons from HEIs and 12 persons from among working life partners representing every participating country. The average figure for the general impression of the first pilot version was 3.54 (neither dissatisfied nor satisfied) graded by 31 respondents. The comments of the respondents varied to a large extent. The general impression was satisfactory but it still needed changes. The site was considered to be user-friendly but also the structure needed to be improved. The diversity of the assignments, for example, watching short videos, received positive feedback. The material in terms of 5 ECTS workload was perceived to be too much.

The quality of English language of the program was graded by 21 respondents to be average 4.0 (fairly satisfied). For most of the respondents, the language was of appropriate level. There were recommendations to make understanding easier by correcting the spelling mistakes, grammar mistakes, and also by clarifying some terms. Written English was felt to be easier understood than the level of English language of some videos. Comments on the educational/pedagogical set up were graded by 32 respondents, average 3.43. (neither dissatisfied nor satisfied). Respondents gave two kinds of feedback: 1) The educational/pedagogical set up was already well done and clear; 2) The educational/pedagogical set up needs still changes. The changes recommended were the following: fewer assignments, easy structure in online platform, smooth navigation, and more concrete things to develop guidance and quality of training are needed.

Based on the feedback from the first pilot, the following changes and improvements were made:

1. The texts of the course were rewritten to be more unified in language, because the course was comprised by different authors, which sometimes resulted in differences in the linguistic, writing and spelling styles. The scientific level of sources for each part of the program was more unified as well, because previously some parts had more references to scientific articles and had longer articles than others. The references were rewritten to follow the same style. The structure of each chapter was made similar.
2. The e-course layout was made more attractive and coherent.
3. Instructions for the users were much more elaborate.
4. Each subject was separated from each other in a more structured and hierarchical way.
5. Sources like literature, videos and tests got more embedded in the content, more specific for a specific subject and more accessible and easier to find.
6. Study load was divided better between the different parts of the program.
7. Assignments got more embedded in context, more detailed and clear and were split in portfolio-use and forum discussion-use.

8. Special attention was paid to developing forum discussion (virtual discussion or physical meetings), grade centre (to be used for grading) and creating portfolio (gathering proof of study progress).

The respondents of the e-questionnaire for the second pilot consisted of 24 persons from HEIs and 7 persons from working life partners. The general impression of the pilot 2 version was graded by 31 respondents to be average 4.15 (fairly satisfied). This result is higher compared to the result in the pilot 1. The respondents commented on the program to be more user-friendly than the first version. Still there were comments that the material in terms of 5 ECTS workload was too much. Navigation was also considered too complicated.

The quality of English language of the program was graded by 31 respondents to be average 4.44 (fairly satisfied). The average figure has increased compared to the pilot 1 feedback. Although the result is closer to 5 (very satisfied), there are still some comments to be noticed. To a large extent the text material was considered to be too academic. Using more graphics would have made it easier for the reader. The readability was experienced to be satisfactory.

The questions on the educational/pedagogical set up were graded by 30 respondents, average 4.12 (fairly satisfied). This result is higher compared to the result in pilot 1. The content was said to give an overall and multidimensional view on multiculturalism. The theoretical part with scientific articles was said to suit better for the HEI members than for the working life partners.

As a summary of the changes in feedback between pilot 1 and pilot 2, the most obvious change was the increase of the positive answers in open questions. The participants were more satisfied with the content, instructions, and language. Still there were suggestions for improvements.

Based on the feedback from the second pilot, following changes and improvements were made:

1. The number of assignments for forum discussion was reduced.
2. Referencing was improved.
3. All links to videos, books, articles and websites were unified and can be opened easily.
4. Topic on emotional stability was changed enormously.
5. The opportunity to adapt the program to special needs of future users was added.
6. Language was improved.

Next we are going to discuss the experiences of the pilot work in more detail. A good example would be the work done in Lahti, Finland, where the pilot group consisted of seven (7) participants from working life and HEI partners. Working life members represented mainly managerial posts in daycare, settlement work, and elderly care. An international coordinator and senior lecturers participated in the pilot from Lahti UAS. Even though the participation of the very target group, nurses, physiotherapists, kindergarten teachers and supervisors, could have given even more insight into the use of multicultural supervision online program, the multiprofessional group, that actually took part in the pilot, was very committed and performed well.

The general impression of both pilots and piloting a local tailored part was positive. The Lahti group experienced the second pilot also as more useful in terms of requirements, content, structure, pedagogy and language.

At the beginning of the first pilot there were questions concerning the content and demands of the program. What is the specific content you are supposed to study for 5 ECTS?

What are the requirements concerning time, academic and language level? Are there extra resources to manage it all? Making study plans individually was considered positive by the participants, which enabled everyone to concentrate on smaller or larger parts of the online program.

Direct online connection to the Dutch Soulbus program manager supported also the starting phase. Using pilot group for face to face meetings turned out to be a positive solution. This enabled local technical support from Lahti UAS for all, shared study plans, better time management and clearer work division between the participants and the local instructor. Group meetings included sharing, and applying the online content to multicultural supervision purposes. The Lahti pilot group had several two hour sessions during the first and the second pilot alongside individual work. The pilot group process was intense, the meetings were at their best - inspiring and educative. The discussions dealt with multicultural issues like challenges of racism and populism. One's own cultural and professional stereotypes were laughed at and serious profession specific questions were tackled. At the minimum the group meetings secured the ongoing studying progress with completed assignments.

The pilot of local tailored part was based on face to face group work. The process was intensive and based on the locally tailored needs of the Soulbus repository results. Clear structuring and good communication have played a key role in the pilot work. According to Lahti experience, group work can produce added value in an online program process. Furthermore individual online working was rather inactive and remained a major challenge.

## **Discussion and conclusions**

Taylor et al. (2011) show that supervisors' learning needs in regard to cultural competence may be similar in different countries. Also, case studies carried out in the consortium members' countries showed that even countries with substantially different supervising experience pointed out similar issues (for example, communicating with foreign exchange students in a foreign language and issues pertaining to organizing of the practical training). In some cases, the primary issue for the interviewees was not multicultural competence, but the use of a foreign language (similarly with Berger et al. (2014) study). This is one of the issues the Soulbus-e-Coach program and piloting its part A aided with; it helped the participants to broaden their understanding of the importance of multicultural issues in the supervising process.

The value of Soulbus-e-Coach program is directly related to internationalization and curriculum development of institutions of higher education (HEIs). First and foremost, readiness to supervise the practical training of students with various cultural backgrounds and cooperation between HEI and practical training base will be improved. The completed program will be integrated in HEIs' curriculum development and used and developed in order to enhance teachers' and supervisors' multicultural competence. As the program structure allows it to be used in parts, the former may be used successfully in teaching students on different curricula. HEIs have worked out detailed plans for integrating the Soulbus e-Coach program in supervisors' and mentors' training and bachelor and master's level curricula, and in the future, organizing the program for students as part of a compulsory subject or a selective course. The program will also be offered in open colleges for professionals working in health and social care, whereas it is possible to develop the program further and offer to professionals in other fields.

One of the outcomes of the project was to establish a solid dialogue between HEIs and labor market to improve collaboration in curriculum development and to build and support social

capital between HEI and labor market. Project partners will continue with cooperation after the project has been completed. Joint international e-learning courses are developed, new student and teacher mobility contracts were entered into, and new joint projects will be undertaken. Project partners, HEIs and employers will continue regular work meetings to develop foreign exchange students' practical trainings (organization and supervision). Nationally and internationally, partners will continue to head developing interorganizational cooperation to reach mutual understanding, work towards a common goal at HEIs, hospitals and beyond.

The completed project focused on enhancing foreign exchange students' supervisors' and mentors' cultural competence and, thus, promoting cooperation between institutions. During project activities, the consortium reached an understanding that, in the future, there is a need for increasing the efficiency cooperation between foreign exchange students' supervisors and mentors on a national and also international level.

JAMK University of Applied Sciences is hosting the program and they are managing its distribution. The overview of the content of Soulbus-e-Coach program is available at <https://oppimateriaalit.jamk.fi/soulbusecoach>

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