

**MATCHSI Press Release 1: November 2016**

The **MATCHSI** project was officially launched in Braga on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November at the 1<sup>st</sup> Transnational Project Meeting. **MATCHSI** stands for '**Matching the Needs and Expectations of Trainees & Companies Hosting for a Successful Internship**'. The idea for **MATCHSI** comes from research and the observation that the quality of the information collected from the trainees, the vocational education training providers and host companies, particularly small and medium sized businesses, before transnational work placements and then subsequently shared is not always in sufficient depth or as relevant as it could be.

This leaves a significant gap between the expectations and objectives of the different stakeholders involved in the process. In practice this means that trainees find themselves in host companies that cannot provide the work-based learning that they require and that host companies often have trainees that do not have the required technical and practical knowledge to be able to contribute effectively. This in turn can dramatically reduce the many benefits of this type of mobility experience resulting in disappointment and even disillusionment amongst those involved. **MATCHSI** aims to fill this gap.

The **MATCHSI** project brings together eight partners from seven EU member states and aims to fill this gap by producing multi-lingual, user-friendly and adaptable **Toolkit to match the needs and expectations of trainees and host companies**. The toolkit will facilitate the identification, the collection and the transmission of all the relevant information. These innovative, up to date resources will be compatible with and complement the already existing tools and methods developed and promoted by the EU, such as Europass CV. They will notably allow more accuracy in the development of the learning objectives in an ECVET perspective.

The toolkit will be tested on a control group of 80 trainees who will undertake **80 transnational work placements** of 3 to 26 weeks in duration and also by the project partners through their networks for additional work placements to be managed during the life span of the project. A significant number of these placements will involve young people who would not typically take part in transnational mobility, including those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. It is expected that **MATCHSI** will feature up to 1,000 transnational work placements, involving up to 50 educational establishments and VET providers, up to 350 host companies and up to 30 additional interested parties, such as local public administrative bodies.

The partners will also undertake in-depth research in each partner country and produce a multi-lingual **compendium of good practice for transnational work placements**. The bringing together of these resources from seven European countries in one place should make the information easier to find and encourage improvements in the quality of collaborative work between VET providers, mobility service providers, businesses and other stakeholders and perhaps even the development of new cooperative approaches and solutions.

European Placement Network is the lead partner and will oversee the management of the project through a steering committee and sub-working groups. **All resources and materials produced through the project will be freely consultable and downloadable via a dual-purpose website and will be available in the seven languages of the project.**

**MATCHSI** aims to increase the impact of transnational work placements, leading to added value on a trainee's CV and thereby improving employability by helping to develop the skills required by businesses. It is hoped that this in turn will contribute to improving the quality of the labour force and helping to promote economic development within the European Union.

Another anticipated long-term benefit of the **MATCHSI** project is to facilitate stronger partnerships between the educational and business sectors by increasing the involvement and ownership of host companies in the work-based learning process.

The renowned scientist Laurence Bragg said in 1958, '**The important thing is not necessarily to discover new facts, but to develop new ways of thinking about them**'. This is what we aim to achieve through the **MATCHSI** project.

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