EMREX Stakeholder Forum - Minutes

Ministry of Higher Education and Science, 27 October 2015

Participants

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Agenda

1. **Business Case and Success Criteria**
2. **Communication and dissemination**
3. **After the Project**
4. **Next meeting**

Ad 1. Business Case and Success Criteria

Questions: Will EMREX provide:

- easier and faster administration of recognition?
- less paper?
- higher recognition rate of studies abroad?
- increased reliability of information about student records/less forgery?
- more transparent/easier mobility processes for the students?
- better service for the mobile student?
- increased availability of information about student records?
- increased quality of information about student records?
- money savings for the institutions?
- increased student mobility?

- ➢ Do you find all the benefits realistic? If not why?
- ➢ Which benefits are the most important?
- ➢ Can you provide suggestions for project improvements?

Comments during the discussion:

- Keep focus on administration
- EMREX will not make recognition any easier or the recognition rate higher. The recognition rate is already very high, and the recognition process is a professional process, where student representatives and academic staff are making an evaluation. Much recognition work is also done before the student is going abroad.
- Paperwork and the rest of the process should be easened – first and foremost in the way that it should be faster.
- EMREX should make the process more transparent for the students, but if it it is to be a success it demands a high rate of participation. At least half of the mobile students should use it.
- A solution where the institutions can initiate the transfer or at least be advised when the results are available, would be preferred.
- Quality will not be improved that much
- Money savings depend very much on the rate of participation.
- To save money, EMREX must be easy to integrate with the local solutions on top of the standard self-service system.
- EMREX will not improve mobility. Students want to go abroad for other reasons than a easy to use result exchange solution.
- Look and feel of the documents EMREX can deliver/create is important.

- EMREX will deliver more transparency
- EMREX will make things easier for the students as well as for the administrations.
- Funding relies on fastness
- Higher recognition rates should not be the main issue
- Forgery is not an issue and exchange programmes already minimize forgery
- The big benefit is to minimize administration
- The most important benefits are easier administration for both institutions and students
- To get real savings you should have more automatic recognition – translation of grades, coursedescriptions etc.
- Three years is a little bit short to realize all the savings

Summing up

Focus should be mainly on making the administrative procedures easier, much faster and with less paper and in this way deliver better services for the students.

Focus should not be that much on recognition rates and forgery, since recognition rates are already very high and forgery very low.

Ad 2 Communication and dissemination

Questions:
- How much should we focus on social media in this project?
- Should we enhance cooperating with other similar initiatives? Which?
- Who should the website focus on?
- Ideas for website improvements
- Other conferences to attend?
- Other important channels of communication we have missed?
- How about newsletters and dissemination packages – are they important?

Comments during the discussion:
- Social media is not that important right now, since the group of students is quite limited. We should wait with this
- Other important initiatives are Erasmus without Papers, FAIR, Egracon, OLA (online learning agreement)
- Website main target group are the HEIs. The students will go somewhere else for their information, primarily their home institution. Mainly for administrators. Could be a place where institutions should get their information.
- You have to make sure that people know that this system works.
- You have ministries in the project. Make use of them. It is the first time the commission will focus on the importance of involving the ministries in the project.
- A communication plan is needed. What is the most important thing to communicate right now?
- In Finland all HEIs have already heard about EMREX on many different occasions and are well acquainted with it
- NUAS has a very good communication group that could be addressed
- Conferences: Groningen, EUNIS, EAIE, ERACON, NUAS are all important

- Single HEI´s can also have arrangements that should be attended. For example Chalmers have an "International week" which is attended by people from the rest of Europe. Why don't take that opportunity
- National conferences with an international perspective are also being held and should be attended
- You should contact the universities directly and tell them what you have, and that you can make presentations.
- In 2017 you should attend national conferences in non-field trial countries to present your results.

Summing up

Focus should not be on social media, and the website should mainly be speaking to the HEIs. The ministries should be more directly involved in the communication, and the project should be advertised wherever possible – also on national conferences.
A clear communication plan is very much needed.

Ad 3 After the project

Questions:
- Who should the results be handed-over to?
  - Role of Terena or similar organization?
  - EU agencies?
  - Only for national use?
- Who should be in a future EMREX Steering Committee?
  - Should the committee be connected to some existing structure/organization?
  - Should there be a common support-function of some kind?
  - Should EMREX focus only on Europe?
- Do we see a need and any potential problems with co-operating with e.g. China or Turkey?
- Should EMREX also focus on other processes connected to the exchange of results – like applying for courses/studies?
- Erasmus without paper and similar projects
- Future funding?
  - An EMREX 2.0 project?
  - National funding?
  - Results integrated in other existing/future projects?
- Future organization in general?

Comments during the discussion:
- We need to involve all stakeholders. We should have a wider organization with a formal Steering Committee, EMREX and EWP should be kind of one system. EGRACONS will be integrated in EWP and also OLA.
- All these projects should be run by same group. No software can life by itself. You need someone responsible to have a system running.
- Good with cooperation between projects and a joint organization should have a good chance of getting money. You should present your joined efforts
- If you put them all together perhaps it depends on, that they all have success.

- We have all the right contacts, and know all the relevant projects
- It's not just a technical problem, it's also an organizational problem
- USA, Canada, New Zeeland are very relevant. This project stands and falls with the spreading of the project.
- If the scope is too wide from the beginning you will meet other difficulties, for example language issues
- The Chinese are already sending information in English to Austin Texas
- The scope should perhaps be more than just sending achievement records?
- Connecting Europe Facility could be a body that could take care of the future organization.

Summing up

Future Steering Committee/Organisation should be a part of a wider cooperation with other projects/initiatives like Erasmus Without Papers.

EMREX should be global or at least involve countries with whom European HEIs have much student exchange.

Ad 4 Next meeting

Next meeting will most likely be held early 2017. (To be planned later on.)