
**DEVELOPING PERSONNEL'S
INTERNATIONALIZATION COMPETENCES THROUGH
STAFF MOBILITY**

Case Hyria



Master's thesis

Business Management and Entrepreneurship

Visamäki, autumn 2015

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VISAMÄKI

Business Management and Entrepreneurship

Author

Ilona Frisk **Year** 2015

Title of Master's thesis Developing personnel's internationalization competences through staff mobility – Case Hyria

This Master's thesis project is commissioned by Hyria Education. Hyria Education is a multidisciplinary educational institute providing Vocational Education and Training. It operates in the Hyvinkää – Riihimäki region. The aim of this thesis is to explore whether and how the personnel's internationalization competences can be developed through staff mobility. The commissioner have long and proofed traditions in student mobility, but as the operating environment changes, there is now an apparent need for staff mobility as well. Hyria Education wants to be ready to meet the requirements of work life as it becomes more globalized and to support the internationalization at home of its VET learners. This requires new skills and competences from the staff.

The main research question to be answered in the Master's thesis is: How to develop personnel's internationalization competences through staff mobility? In order to answer this question the internationalization competences first needed to be defined and then inspected whether they can be acquired through the staff mobility.

The contribution to the Hyria Education was to make a suggestion of a new staff mobility process including guidelines for individual staff members and to create a clear procedure for the staff mobility in the Hyria Education organization. The procedure is created based on the findings made in literature and earlier research as well as on the results of conducted unstructured interviews. The project in whole is a qualitative driven mixed methods research that includes both primary and secondary data.

The thesis project was successful and a suggestion for the new staff mobility procedure is represented in the report. However, the new procedure is not yet tested. Before taken to full use, the procedure still needs to be added with detailed forms and other supportive materials.

Keywords Vocational Education and Training (VET), Internationalization competences, Staff mobility

Pages 62 p.

VISAMÄKI

Business Management and Entrepreneurship

Tekijä

Ilona Frisk

Vuosi 2015

Työn nimi

Developing personnel's internationalization competences through staff mobility – Case Hyria

TIIVISTELMÄ

Opinnäytetyö on tehty Hyria koulutuksen toimeksiannosta. Hyria on monialainen oppilaitos, joka tarjoaa ammatillista koulutusta Hyvinkään ja Riihimäen alueella. Opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena on tutkia voiko henkilöstön kansainvälisyysosaamista lisätä henkilöstöliikkuvuuden keinoin ja millä tavoin. Toimeksiantajalla on pitkät ja tunnustetut perinteet opiskelijaliikkuvuudessa, mutta toimintaympäristön muuttuessa on tullut ajankoh- taiseksi kehittää nyt myös henkilöstöliikkuvuutta. Hyria haluaa vastata kansainvälistyvän työelämän tarpeisiin ja tukea opiskelijoiden kotikan- sainvälistymistä. Tämä vaatii myös henkilöstöltä uutta osaamista.

Päätutkimuskysymys on miten henkilöstön kansainvälisyysosaamista voi- daan kehittää henkilöstöliikkuvuuden avulla? Jotta kysymykseen on voitu vastata, on työssä ensin selvitetty mitä kansainvälisyysosaaminen on ja sit- ten tutkittu voidaanko osaamista lisätä henkilöstöliikkuvuuden kautta.

Opinnäytetyön kontribuutio toimeksiantajalle on ehdotus uudesta henki- löstöliikkuvuuden mallista. Malliin on sisällytetty suuntaviivat prosessien toteuttamiselle yksilötasolla sekä prosessikuvaus henkilöstöliikkuvuuden toteuttamisesta organisaatiotasolla. Malli perustuu kirjallisuudesta ja ai- emmista tutkimuksista tehtyihin havaintoihin sekä osana opinnäytetyötä tehtyihin haastatteluihin. Kokonaisuutena tarkasteltuna opinnäytetyö on kvalitatiivisesti painotettu Mixed Methods –tutkimus, jossa on käytetty niin sekundaari kuin primaariaineistoa.

Projektin lopputuloksena onnistuttiin luomaan uusi henkilöstöliikkuvuu- den malli, joka on esitelty raportissa. Mallia ei kuitenkaan vielä ole päästy testaamaan. Ennen kuin malli voidaan täysin ottaa käyttöön, sitä varten on vielä laadittava lomakkeistot ja muu täydentävä materiaali.

Avainsanat Ammatillinen koulutus, kansainvälisyysosaaminen, henkilöstöliikkuvuus

Sivut

62 s.

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1 INTRODUCTION

In today's world globalization and internationalization of companies are growing trends. More and more people have international tasks in their jobs and many employers work for multinational companies. For vocational education and training this trend sets new requirements in teaching. Teachers need to be able to teach students skills that they will need in multicultural and multinational work environments as well as in order to internationalize. (Koramo 2012, 5.)

Hyria Education is one of the leading vocational educators in Finland. It was rated as the third best secondary level vocational education institute in Finland by the Finnish National Board of Education in 2014. As part of its strategy Hyria Education wants to concentrate in internationalization.

During years Hyria Education has executed multiple international projects in student mobility. The organization is well experienced in these activities. Also to support these, the organizational structure as well as clear process are carefully planned and working. It has become time to take the next step.

This spring 2015 Hyria Education applied for Erasmus+ VET Mobility Charter which is an accreditation for organization's international activities. In Finland this accreditation is awarded by the Center for International Mobility CIMO. CIMO is an independent agency operating under the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture and it is responsible for example for the Erasmus+ which is a European Union's education and youth programme (CIMO 2015).

The seven year programme Erasmus+ is planned to boost skills and employability, as well as modernising Education, Training, and Youth work. It will offer possibilities for education, training and youth institutions to establish multinational cooperation between European countries. The programme also aims to modernize national education, training, and youth systems. The programme combines seven earlier EU programmes and provides funding for partner organizations according to its rules. (European Commission 2015.)

Getting this charter would help Hyria Education to even better execute its international projects and to provide more possibilities for students and the personnel to learn abroad. Part of this application process the institute needs to improve its organization and activities in staff mobility. As it is however, there is not that much information about the staff mobility opportunities provided within the organization. Also the process needs to be clarified.

1.1 Objectives and research questions

The goal of this Master's thesis is to find out is it possible and how to improve personnel's internationalization competences through staff mobility activities. In order to that, it is important to define what the internationalization competences that are required from a vocational institute's personnel are and how the organization can support and encourage its personnel to participate in the mobility activities. It is also to be explored how the impact of the mobility activities can be improved on the European, regional and individual level and how the outcomes of the activities could be disseminated.

The main research question to be answered in the Master's thesis is: How to develop personnel's internationalization competences through staff mobility? This question will be answered by creating a model for staff mobility activities that support the development goal. In this Master's thesis the model will be presented in the form of new staff mobility procedure for the stakeholder Hyria Education.

In order to answer the main research question, following sub questions are to be solved:

1. What are the internationalization competences that the staff of Hyria will need?
2. Can the personnel gain the internationalization competences through staff mobility activities?
3. What are the measures the organization should take to support the development of these competences?
4. How can the organization encourage staff members to participate in staff mobility activities?

The contribution to the Hyria Education is to plan staff mobility process including guidelines for individual staff members and to create a clear procedure for the staff mobility in the Hyria Education organization. This might include suggestions for the organizational structure as well as process descriptions.

1.2 Key concepts

There are three key concepts that form the framework of this Master's thesis. These concepts confine the theoretical background of the development project to be pursued. The project in whole however concentrates in developing human resources of the stakeholder.

The field of operation is Vocational Education and Training (VET). In Finland the Vocational Education and Training takes place after compulsory basic education. It is considered upper secondary education and is an alternative or parallel choice for general upper secondary education. Within the field of VET, the learners can be either young or adult learners. The young VET learners usually study at educational institutions. The adult VET learners can also choose competence-based

qualifications or apprenticeship training, when the learning has closer connection to the working life. The completion of vocational qualification gives eligibility for higher education. (Finnish National Board of Education 2015.)

The term internationalization competences has multiple definitions. In this Master's thesis it will be later discussed in detail. In short, the internationalization competences can be defined as skills and competences that support internationalization of an organization and are needed when working in international environment or team. (van der Werf, 2012, 97 - 98; Jonsson & Almerud 2010, 3; CIMO 2014, 3)

The staff mobility has two parts: the staff and the mobility. The concept of mobility includes of course the aspect of moving in geographical space. On the other hand it can be seen also from the angle of moving in the social space. As goods, capital and work force flow around the world, it can be concluded that the whole society is in the move. However, the mobility as a concept can be built on three dimensions: movements, networks and motility. (Canzler, Kaufmann & Kesselring 2008, 3.) In this thesis project the staff mobility is referring to any professional or education and training related mobility, conducted by a staff member, from home organization to a hosting organization abroad for a determinate period (European University Association 2014). The intention is to provide opportunities for staff members to undertake a learning or professional experience in another country (European Commission 2014, 15). The staff mobility activities are open for all members of the staff.

2 STAFF MOBILITY ACTIVITIES AS DEVELOPMENT TOOLS OF INTERNATIONALIZATION COMPETENCES

In this thesis project the literature review concentrates in the demand and possibilities of mobility activities as well as what can and need to be learned through participating in these activities. The literature review is supposed to be a solid background when creating a new procedure for Hyria Education's staff mobility activities.

The literature review is a key in the context building process. The review is not supposed to be only a summary of the literature related to the research issue, but a critically evaluated solid background for the whole research project. By selecting the literature that is valid for the research questions it is possible to not only strengthen the existing assumptions, but also to be able to recognize the most important viewpoints and aspects that they include. (Hesse-Biber 2010, 36 - 37.)

As much of the literature review work is in case of a quantitative driven mixed methods research conducted in the early stage of the project, in case of a project driven by qualitative methods the literature review may change and further develop during the project. The theoretical background is taking shape as the empirical qualitative research goes on. (Hesse-Biber

2010, 39 - 40.) The literature review is not supposed to be a wide selection of existing information, but filtered review of the sources considered having value in lighting the research problems on hand (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2010, 258). This literature review is built part by part from point of view of the operating environment of Hyria as well as from earlier research conducted in this sector.

As one of the most important parts of the thesis project's framework, the internationalization competences are discussed and defined based on the recent research. The literature is first reviewed from the point of view of the competences required from the staff. Then the organizational level is explored through Hyria Education's own strategic plans and goals as well as by taking a look to the history of internationalization and mobility in Hyria.

2.1 VET internationalization

As today's business environment is getting more and more globalized because the growth of population as well as technical improvement, the workforce is changing. The millennials that are entering to the working life are no longer looking for lifelong careers, but experiences. Traditionally the older generations have been searching for secure career opportunities. The millennials want to be creative and to have greater experiences. (Global Human Capital Trends 2014, 3.) Also companies that operate internationally are changing. Traditionally internationalization has been seen as business of large enterprises. Due to facilitating better communication technologies and globalization it has become possible to companies of all sizes (Cavusgil, Czinkota & Myers 2009, 68).

The globalization is possible today for technological advances. These advances especially in communication, information transportation and manufacturing technologies has made it possible for also little born globals to internationalize there activities from the very beginning. For example today e-business, which did not even exist earlier, is leading especially small companies to international markets. The electronic business removes barriers like time differences and geographical distance. (Cavusgil et al. 2009, 23 - 26.) However, the technological development has not shown to reduce the importance of personal relations and physical stays abroad. They still seem to be crucial for establishing international collaboration between organizations, although the advanced technologies have brought in possibilities for virtual internationalization. (Adick, Maletzky & Pries 2014, 230.)

Another of the megatrends today is the changing demographics. When the people in developed countries are getting older and retire, the labour market tends to attract young people from the countries where the population is growing through higher birth rate and from where young people leave in order to find a job in some other country. The governments in the countries where the people are aged need to invest on youth development like vocational education for creating long-term employability. The employ-

ment of young people, need to be secured and the youth needs to be well educated. (Future State 2030 2014, 16.) On the other hand, on the European level where less young people enter to the labour markets, the importance of relevant and sufficient training becomes more and more important (Collins 2014, 13). The Vocational Education and Training has become important also in international cooperation as due to the latest economic development the governments have put more effort on supporting labour market oriented skills development (Maurer & Gonon 2014, 16). The internationalization of Vocational Education and Training has become a rising trend in Europe. As a vocational educational institute gets internationalized they actually impact the surroundings of it. It is a way to affect the whole area and since so, the internationalization of VET institutes has become important. (Vestager 2000, 7.)

In order to response to the challenges that the new trends bring along, the companies need to develop leaders on all levels and not only that, but they need to develop global leaders locally. Personnel on all levels of the organization need to be ready for the rapidly moving workforce. (Canwell, Dongrie, Neveras & Stockton 2014, 30.) Staff mobility would be one option to create possibilities to the staff to acquire internationalization competences (European Commission 2014, 15). However in some cases it has found to be hard to find staff members willing to participate in mobility projects. This challenge can be confronted by making the mobility possibilities more flexible in the means of their contents and duration. (Adick et al. 2014, 230.)

Due to the internationalization, the staff of educational institutes needs new skills and competences. The skills and competences can be called internationalization competences. The term includes many interests. However, the internationalization competences can be defined as skills and competences that support internationalization of an organization and are needed when working in international environment or team (van der Werf, 2012, 97 – 98). In the terms of the Vocational Education and Training the most important defining factor is the student and what skills and competences the educational institution should be able to provide to a student. From this aspect the knowledge and competence base of the educational institutes' staff needs to be built on the demands of teaching and training abilities. The personnel of an institute need to be able to support and enhance the studies of the students on their way to employment. This does not only mean the teaching personnel but also the other staff members that play important roles in enabling the students to learn. (Koramo 2012, 5; Rauner, Heinemann & Maurer 2013, viii.)

The vocational education's objective is to create competence and ability to act in the work life or professional context. The education often consist of school based education and practical training as a form of work placement period. School based types of vocational education are followed by a phase of on-the-job-learning. Work placements are usually integrated also into the curricula of full-time vocational schools. (Rauner et al. 2013, viii.)

2.1.1 The Copenhagen process

The European Union has started its own process to develop vocational education in Europe. The process is called the Copenhagen process and it was started 2002. The goal of the process is to improve vocational education's capacity, quality and appeal on the European level. One of the tasks of this process is to enhance the mobility possibilities of VET learners and the ones who already have a secondary level vocational qualification. The larger goal of the Copenhagen process is to support the development of the European wide job market. All the European Union member states as well as the labour market organizations are involved in the process. (Ministry of Education and Culture 2015.)

The purpose of the European cooperation is to improve the transparency and the comparability of the vocational qualifications. In order to do that the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training ECVET has been launched. Also there is a common framework the European Qualification Framework EQF that improves the possibilities to compare qualifications completed in different European countries. In the comparison helping tools are also the Europass Certificate Supplements that are meant to international use and in which the particular qualification and competences required for it is described in a standard way. The quality of the vocational education and training in Europe is assured by European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training EQAVET. All of these tools are developed in the Copenhagen process. (Ministry of Education and Culture 2015.) The objectives of the Copenhagen process for the season 2010 – 2020 are set in the Brygge communiqué (Ministry of Education and Culture 2015).

2.1.2 Erasmus+

For the years 2014 – 2020 the European Commission has launched the Erasmus+ Programme for the fields of education, training, youth and sport. It is put together to support the European 2020 strategy which key challenges are expected to be socio-economic changes and which aims to enhance jobs, growth, social equity and inclusion. It is a funding instrument for these sectors and objectives. (European Commission 2014, 9.)

According to European Commission (2014, 9) good and functioning education and training system will prevent premature school leaving and reduce the amount of low-skilled adults. The two groups are in threat of becoming social marginalized and unemployed. As the technologies change and need to be used more and more and the competitiveness of the businesses in EU needs to be improved through innovation and talent the education system also needs to further develop. The education and training system in the EU needs to be flexible in the terms of letting the people actively participate in the society's activities and achieve personal goals and at the same time provide them with skills and knowledge needed in the working life. Also the increasing of the social capital of youth and supporting its possibility to participate in the democratic life in Europe are seen future

challenges that are to be faced in the near future. The educational system must be prepared and ready to adapt and response to these changes. The Erasmus+ Programme is one of the European level tools in for that. (European Commission 2014, 9.)

One of the The Erasmus+ Programme's goals is to strongly support the implementation of the EU transparency and recognition tools for skills and qualifications. For the Vocational Education and Training the particularly important tools are the Europass, the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET). (European Commission 2014, 11.) The Erasmus+ Programme also supports the multilingualism of the Europe by providing opportunities for the participants to improve their language skills. Promoting linguistic diversity and language learning is one of the key objectives of the whole programme. (European Commission 2014, 13.)

In order to achieve the goals the Erasmus+ Programme provides funding for different organizations within its frames. One of its key actions enhances mobility activities for the learners and for the teaching as well as other staff of education institutions. The purpose of these mobility activities is to add professional experience or undertake learning abroad. (European Commission 2014, 15.) In the field of Vocational Education and Training as well as Adult Education the mobility activities can include mobility projects for the learners and for the staff (European Commission 2014, 28).

The specific skills in which improvement the above mentioned key action is contributing are defined as the key competences and skills that are relevant in the work life that create value to a cohesive society. This is mainly to be achieved by strengthening the collaboration of the field of education and training and the work life as well as by offering more chances for mobility actions. Also quality improvements, innovation excellence and internationalization on the institution level are supported through enabling transnational cooperation between the stakeholders. The Erasmus+ Programme also supports EU's linguistic diversity and cultural awareness by supporting teaching and learning activities. (European Commission 2014, 28.)

2.2 Internationalization competences of Vocational Education and Training institutes' staff

When going through earlier research conducted in the field of Vocational Education and Training institutes' staff and their internationalization skills there was surprisingly little to be found. It soon became clear that the base of this thesis work needed to be built on the basis of the students' needs. In this field the defining factors have been global megatrends and especially the needs and expectations of the students' future employers. Within the latter defining factor the current time seems to be a beginning of a new era. The era of traditional definition of internationalization skills is about to end and new era of wider selection of skills and competences related to internationalization has just begun. There are three major sources that

point in to this direction. The first one is conducted in Finland by CIMO and Nordic think tank Demos Helsinki (2014) and the second one is put together by the British Council with Booth Allen Hamilton and Ipsos Public Affairs (2013). As the first mentioned is concentrating in the impacts of education and training and comparing them with the opinions of employers the research of the British Council is more from the point of view of the work life. The third one of these sources is a research of Svenskt näringsliv and Internationella programkontoret put together by Fredrik Jonsson and Mikaela Almerud. Their project handles employers' points of view regarding employees' international experience. In the time line the third mentioned Swedish research is the earliest one out of these three. Jonsson and Almerud (2010, 3) have managed to find only one earlier research project from this point of view. This is a Finnish research by Irma Garam and Cimo from the year 2005. Also a lot of exploring work was done during this thesis work, in order to find more reliable sources, but it seems that these three projects are the most recent and largely approved sources within this field.

2.2.1 International experience from the point of view of employers

The first research around the theme of internationalization skills and the demands of the work life is conducted in Sweden 2010. Jonsson and Almerud (2010) performed a survey about how the employers see the internationalization skills and what are the needs and expectations. By the time of the research, it was decided in Sweden that the international aspect in studies should be enhanced. The researchers questioned the assumption that increased amount of student mobility would automatically lead to better quality and answer the demands of new, rapidly changing working life. (Jonsson & Almerud 2010, 3.)

The research pointed out, that when the employers recruited new people; they appreciated the applicants' international experience gathered for example through their student mobility experiences. Still they made the decision of hiring someone based mostly on the qualifications and job related experiences. However, it was discovered that the employers actually appreciated skills that can be gathered through participating in mobility experiences. It was seen quite hard to actually define the internationalization or intercultural skills. Whether it was a private sector operator or a public body that answered the research questions, the three most appreciated factors when recruiting new people were good references, good recommendations and work experience that is suitable for the job. (Jonsson & Almerud 2010, 12.)

It became clear for the researchers that the employers saw the internationalization skills as they traditionally are seen. They included language skills, intercultural competence and tolerance in the term internationalization skills. When on the other hand the employers were asked if certain skills were developed during mobility periods such as student exchange, most of them answered that the skills that developed significantly or at least developed during such period were more. Skills such as communica-

tion skills, ability to adjust and social competences were expected to develop almost as much as the skills in the traditional skill set. Also competences like effectiveness, ambition, initiative, responsibility and problem solving skills were expected to be grown. These skills and competences were also highly appreciated by the employers. Whether the employer put a lot of weight on the international experience, none of the employers told that they would choose an applicant without international experience above the one who has that. (Jonsson & Almerud 2010, 19 - 22.)

This Swedish research shows that the concept of internationalization skills is changing from the traditional skill set of language skills, intercultural competence and ability adjust to something that is not yet very well defined. The employers actually appreciate skills that they also think are to be gained and developed through international experience, but that they do not recognize as international skills. The researchers also came to a conclusion that the skills that the employers especially appreciate could be developed through on the job learning when a student as he or she studies, also learns about the working environment and is able to obtain key competences through everyday life. (Jonsson & Almerud 2010, 19 – 25 -27.)

2.2.2 Culture at work

In 2013 the British Council has done research about internationalization skills at workplaces. The report of the project is called Culture at work – the value of intercultural skills in the workplace. For the research over 300 HR managers were interviewed from nine different countries. Through the research it was discovered, that the modern increasingly globalized and competitive workplaces as employers set great value on the intercultural skills. According to this research the employers valued the ability to understand different cultural contexts and viewpoints, respecting other people and foreign language skills. Also the employees with these skills showed to benefit the companies with their abilities to bring in new customers, work within diverse teams and supporting the companies' good brand. When recruiting, the companies looked for skills and competences such as strong communication skills, ability to work with foreign language and cultural sensitivity. (British Council, Booz Allen Hamilton & Ipsos Public Affairs 2013, 3.)

In the research the main focus was in how the employers rated the skills and competences of the workforce. In order to do that the 367 interviewed employers were asked to define the skills what they thought were related to intercultural competences. Within these skills the employers mentioned first the traditional international skills' set of language skills, intercultural communication and acceptance of cultural differences. Yet the employers also mentioned demonstration of respect to others, continuous learning ability, ability to work in diverse teams and openness to new ideas, tolerance of ambiguity, ability to build trust, to listen and to observe as well as awareness of one's own culture. (British Council et al. 2013, 10.)

When the employers were asked to compare the intercultural skill set with other technical and soft skills they surprisingly perhaps, rated highest demonstrating respect for others. Also building trust and working effectively in diverse teams were rated above the formal qualification to the job. Even the openness to new ideas was rated as high as the job related qualifications. (British Council et al. 2013, 11.)

The HR managers that were representing the companies in this research saw the connection associated the intercultural skills strongly with business benefits. Especially in private sector, the employees were considered to have impact in building good brand and bringing in new customers. Also the employees with intercultural skills were appreciated for their ability to work in diverse teams and to keep them working efficiently. Building trust and the skills to communicate with oversea partners we also appreciated. (British Council et al. 2013, 12.)

When asked about the educational system and its ability to satisfy companies' intercultural needs the answers did vary depending of a country. The employers' top eight suggestions to education providers were to teach communication skills, to require or at least to encourage learning of foreign languages as well as studying abroad, to develop international research partnerships, to teach leadership skills, to encourage classes on international subjects and to bring in international students. Also research participants from all countries except South Africa expressed that increasing amount of studying abroad would create more value to the employer. The research shows that the companies and education providers should collaborate more and develop teaching and training to better answer the demands of changing work life environment. (British Council et al. 2013, 17 - 19.)

2.2.3 Hidden competences

One and in Finland probably the most known research about the international competences and what they are today, is the research done by CIMO together with Nordic think tank Demos Helsinki. They have conducted a research project about international competences in 2013. The report is called Hidden competences and it concentrates in the opinions of students and employers and how they estimate the need of internationalization competences (CIMO 2014, 3).

During the research it became obvious that the expectations and opinions of the employers and the students varied. When the students expected to benefit about the internationalization competences in the work life, the employers did not rate high or recognize the competences gained through mobility experiences. Only half the employers that participated in the research rated these competences important. Within the organizations that only operated within the country of their origin just over 10% mentioned the importance of international skills. The employer who was involved in international markets valued the internationalization competences more. (CIMO 2014, 5, 17 - 19.)

After looking deeper in the survey results the researchers found out though, that there were lots of similarities with what kind of skills the employers appreciated when employing a new staff members and the skills acquired through the mobility experiences. The key-finding of the research project was that the internationalization competences were hidden. The competences gained during a work or a study period abroad were not expressed or recognized as they should be, especially when considering the growing amount of European and global co-operation. (CIMO 2014, 5.)

At the same time that internationalization competences are not properly discovered the importance of mobility within education and training is accepted to be important. It has become even more so when the megatrends of today are globalization, changing demographics, resource scarcity and technological change. Also as mentioned before, many European level developing programmes and strategy papers set the European level collaboration as one of their key actions. (CIMO 2014, 5 - 6.)

The number of learning mobility experiences has grown during the time. Significant investments have been made in order to promote these actions for the mobility experiences have been found beneficial. According to the research report (CIMO 2014, 6) there are several studies that show improvement in the students' language skills as well as in their intercultural skills. The participants are found more tolerant and broad-minded after their experiences. (CIMO 2014, 6.)

The above mentioned language skills, intercultural skills, broad-mindedness and tolerance are traditionally defined internationalization skills. In this research of CIMO and Demos Helsinki (2014), the researchers managed to find out that there are more skills gained through mobility experiences that remain hidden for possible employers. The research showed that also productivity, resilience and curiosity should be recognized as internationalization competences. Particularly from the point of view of VET, all skills that benefit the possible employer and can be learned during the time of studying need to be discovered for due to the megatrends there will not be a job in the future that would not be affected by them. (CIMO 2014, 6 - 9.)

Already today, the traditional internationalization skills, language skills and intercultural understanding, are more or less part of almost every job description. For employers in interconnected economic structures the new set of the internationalization competences are perhaps even more important than the traditional. The first step in engaging these new skills is to define them, which obviously is harder than it was with the traditional skill set. Extremely important this is for the young people and the students that are about to apply for the job market. The second step is to recognize the importance internationalization competences in all levels in the working life as whole and not only for example within the school system. (CIMO 2014, 12 - 13.)

As the traditional set of internationalization skills are to be seen on the top of the ice berg, there are plenty of skills that form the competences yet to be better defined below the water line. Factors such as global value chains, virtual degrees, social media and online gaming and interaction, individuality, identifying global problems and global demand frame the new environment of operations that has urge of competent work force. (CIMO 2014, 16.)

The employers who did value the international experience also seemed to value networking ability, creativity and interest in new things a lot. The appreciation of international experience was found to have a linkage with these competences in recruitment process. In this research the traditional understanding of international experience was defined to include language skills, wide networks in the field of experience, understanding of international business, ability to work with multiple people and the concrete experience of living abroad. The new set of competences related to international experience according to the research consists besides the traditional set of experiences from the ability of thinking outside of a box, multidisciplinary networks, skills acquired through free-time activities, ability to work with multiple groups of people regardless language and location as well as ability and will to follow global media. (CIMO 2014, 21.)

Although the employers in the research did not value international experience as one, it became clear that the abilities the employers did value were also competences that can be achieved through international mobility. When the attributes were grouped, three new competences were found. According to the research the traditional internationalization competences can be added with productivity, resilience and curiosity. (CIMO 2014, 21 - 26.)

As a result of the research it was seen important that the educational institutes involve even more than earlier in to the international activities. The researchers encourage the educational institutes to engage more thoroughly in a dialogue with the employers and try to promote the visibility of the hidden international competences. Also the educational institutes should further develop their student mobility activities and enhance their staff's opportunities to build their knowledge and competence base in this sector. The students need guidance and tools to fully benefit of their mobility experiences and to make their competences visible. Regard to this the staff need to be able to improve their own competences and to be able to gain experience in international environment. (CIMO 2014, 31.)

The above mentioned three researches are all pointing to the direction of a wider set of internationalization competences. The competences are traditionally defined as language skills, intercultural skills and a skillset that can be described as tolerance. In today's world the employers on the international or at least European job-market however appreciate a larger set of competences and skills that also can acquired through mobility experiences. These competences that by CIMO (2014, 25 – 26) determined to be productivity, resilience and curiosity, should also be regarded as interna-

tionalization skills from now on. Based on these research projects, the added competences actually are the ones that the employers appreciate more compared with the traditional internationalization skills. Based on these conclusions this wider set of internationalization skills is the one that should be provided to a VET learner by a vocational education institute. Obviously, this means that the staff of an institute should hold these competences. If continued further, this circle of conclusions also means that the staff should be able to attend in international activity and have opportunities for mobility experiences.

2.3 Staff mobility and its impact

As in this thesis project the staff mobility is referring to international mobility that has professional or education and training related objectives and is conducted by a staff member internationally, it is important to look into its impact (European University Association 2014). The overall goal of staff mobility is to provide opportunities for personnel to undertake a learning or professional experience in another country (European Commission 2014, 15).

The mobility itself is traditionally seen as moving from a place to another. On the other hand the actual moving has loosed its importance in the terms of virtual mobility as the communication due to the advanced technologies enable social interaction without physically being in the same place. Also since the mobility has the social dimension, the mobility cannot only mean motility. (Canzler, Kaufmann & Kesselring 2008, 13 - 14.) Whether the mobility is seen as movement between certain specified countries or overall openness to any country, it always includes transnational orientation which is connected to social and geographical places (Adick et al. 2014, 231).

The mobility, overall and on corporeal-level, includes the factor of being present as well as being absent. This facilitates face-to-face meetings and spreading of ideas as well as building relationships. This can cause however the unequal situation where others have more possibilities for mobility than others and become more attractive partners if not organized thoroughly. (Canzler et al. 2008, 14 -16.) On the other hand these experienced staff members can spread their knowledge on the all levels of the company. Spreading the knowledge requires though, that the company actually has developed structures and methods to get this tacit knowledge to use. (Adick et al. 2014, 255 - 256).

From the point of view of staff development within the educational sector it is seen important that the personnel get experiences also outside of the home institution in order to improve their competence base. For example Hopkins, Harris and Singleton (2013, 78) have pointed out that workshops and other school-based activities are not enough, but the personnel would also need experiences such as on-the-job-learning periods. However they also point out that the experiences shall be conceptualised and taken to use through implementing them as principals and skills. Otherwise they re-

main on the level of applied awareness. (Hopkins, Harris & Singleton 2013, 78 – 79.) Due to its nature in the further education, the teaching personnel should be able to facilitate the students to make connections between what they learn in the classroom and the work life. They themselves need to know how to link their expertise to the teaching and curricula. (Huddleston & Unwin 2013, 122.)

One of the very rare papers about the impact of international staff mobility in education is written by Anna-Leena Riitaoja 2007 and supported by CIMO. Riitaoja has conducted a research concerning staff mobility and its impact within educational sector, including Vocational Education and Training. In the research project the mobility activities are inspected from the point of view of teaching personnel, how the personnel think that their organizations support the mobility and what are the benefits and the impact of staff mobility. (Riitaoja 2007, 5.)

When looking into the results of VET sector only, over 80 percent of mobility experiences lasted less than a week. The data was first collected in the year 2005 by the Finnish National Board of Education. (Riitaoja 2007, 37 - 42.) The most common content of the mobility periods within this sector at the time of Riitaoja's research was a study visit to another educational institution. A little less number of the mobility periods included developing tasks or tasks related to students' on-the-job-learning periods. An interesting finding of Riitaoja (2007, 46) was that as the number of the periods one attended increased the content of the period more likely included tasks related to international collaboration projects. This aroused a question whether the amount of the mobility experiences and the contents of one are related. Riitaoja (2007, 46 – 47) leaves the question open. The most of the mobility experiences were funded by the European Union through its different programmes (Riitaoja 2007, 49).

According to Riitaoja's research (2007, 52 - 54) the top three reasons for one to participate in a mobility project were strengthening the international contacts of one's own department, supporting student mobility and getting to know other cultures and countries. Almost as high positions as those, did hold experiencing multicultural and international working and teaching environments, getting to know other country's educational system and teaching culture as well as taking advantage of an interesting opportunity. Also significant reasons for participation were finding new ideas to one's own teaching and its contents, getting a chance to benchmark and developing international activities in one's own department of education. Only after these reasons to participate, the participants mentioned networking and strengthening own intercultural skills, developing language skills, increasing respect of the educational department of one's own and breaking one's own daily routines. The least important reasons to participate were found to be career and salary related reasons or interest to develop the routines related to skills demonstrations. (Riitaoja 2007, 52 - 53.)

When the participants were asked about the benefits of the mobility experiences an interesting experience and an opportunity to develop one's own

cultural skills and competences were rated highest. Altogether the benefits were grouped in four dimensions. The first dimension was supporting the own organization's and the foreign organization's collaborative projects and activities. The dimension includes factors such as the mobility period has supported the organization's international contacts and individual networking, the mobility experience has supported the pedagogical development in one's department, the mobility experience has increased the organization's international conspicuousness and it has supported student mobility as well as international collaboration. (Riitaoja 2007, 57 - 58.)

The second dimension consisted of factors related to the hosting organization and the benefits in their development work. Factors that were included in this dimension were for example supporting the hosting organization's pedagogical development and development of their processes. The dimension also included cooperative international projects and activities. The third, fourth and fifth dimensions of the benefits of mobility experiences were about career opportunities, increased competences and personal interests of the participants. Added intercultural and language skills as well as knowledge about the requirements of industries and working life were mentioned. (Riitaoja 2007, 58.) The intercultural skills were not specified at this point.

From the point of view of developing staff mobility, it was interesting, that the most important source of information about staff mobility possibilities was found to be the international office or person responsible for international activities in one's own organization. Also the information delivered by one's colleagues and supervisor were on high positions. After the own organization the next important foundation of information was CIMO. Other public sources were, according to Riitaoja's research (2007, 60) rarely used. Later in the mobility process, the importance of guidance from own organization even increased. The support of one's own supervisor and management was in significant role and negotiations of leaving for a mobility period were conducted with them. (Riitaoja 2007, 61.)

After the mobility almost all of participants in the Riitaoja's research (2007, 61) had reported their mobility equally orally and in written. Most of the participants reported their experiences to their supervisors, students and also often non-formally to their closest colleagues. It was rare, that the participants would have reported his or her experiences more as a form of a written bulletin. A little over half of the responds reported the experience within their own department, around a third also reported the experience to the founders. To the whole organization about their experience reported only a quarter of participants. At its best the dissemination of the results and outcomes had an effect on the pedagogical development of the whole sending organization. Dissemination to the larger audience such as work life partners happened very rarely. (Riitaoja 2007, 61- 62.)

When asked about the enhancing factors of successful mobility experience, 90 percent of the respondents in Riitaoja's research (63, 2007) regarded practical arrangements, flexibility of the sending organization

when organizing one's tasks and including the mobility experience to one's working hours as important or very important. Almost as many mentioned support from the organization as well as own supervisor and possibilities for new international contacts as important enabling factors. What is to be noticed was the low appreciation of pre-departure coaching and the participant's opportunities to decide the contents of the period by him or herself. Persons from the different interest leaving for a mobility period at the same time as groups, was also regarded as unimportant from the point of view of the participants. (Riitaoja 2007, 63 - 65.)

The biggest problem the participants saw in leaving for a mobility experience was organizing one's own tasks. It was found hard to organize the tasks so that one could have concentrated fully in the mobility experience, but one had to take care of the tasks even during the period or face a pile of undone work after the return. Applying for funding was also seen quite complicated and time requiring. The other reasons for not to participate or regard participation problematic were family reasons, insufficient funding, matching the goals of one's own work and the mobility period as well as problems in collaboration during the planning. Lacking language skills was regarded almost as negligible. (Riitaoja 2007, 67 - 69.)

The respondents were also asked for suggestions about the future development of the staff mobility activities. The most comments were about funding and resources. They were experienced as insufficient. Also informing staff better about the possibilities offered was seen important as well as more efficient ways of dissemination of the experiences. The participants wished, that larger number of staff members would participate in the mobility activities either through encouraging new applicants or making the mobility experiences a part of everyone's work description. New forms of mobility or combining the existing ones as well as clarifying the targets of the staff mobility and increasing its continuity were seen as development actions that should be taken by the organizations. (Riitaoja 2007, 71 - 73.)

Unlike on the level of higher education, on the secondary vocational level international cooperative projects were not regarded as highly important. Instead, the vocational sector appreciated most study visits to other educational institutes and mobility activities related to student mobility, especially students' international on-the-job-learning. Within the VET sector, the staff seems to appreciate work practice programs, but those actually do not become reality in as many cases. From the point of view of the respondents, the amount of the work practice programs could be increased. Developing own organization's internationalization was appreciated more within the VET sector than within any other educational sector participating in the research. The mobility experiences are regarded as developing projects of the whole educational institute more often than only as experiences of an individual. (Riitaoja 2007, 116 – 120; 128.)

2.4 Internationalization and mobility in Hyria

Hyria Education was founded in 2009. The organization was established as a result of a merger of five different educational institutes that after the merger became one. Due to this fact, the internationalization and mobility activities in Hyria also begun in the autumn 2009, although the institutions existed earlier had their own projects on this branch. Today in Hyria the international aspect and collaboration is defined as one of the six critical success factors (Hyria 2014, 7).

The factor of internationalization in Hyria is specified with five themes. Those themes are 1) strong partnerships in goal-directed international operations, 2) international student and staff mobility, 3) study programme and modules conducted in English, 4) promoting companies' internationalization and 5) developing multiculturalism. (Hyria 2014, 7.) The strategic goals are further opened in the internationalization programme.

There is also another critical success factor defined in strategy for the years 2014 – 2017 that is important from the point of view of this thesis project. In Hyria the competence of its staff is seen crucial to the organization as well. The competent staff factor is as well specified with five points that are 1) on-going and target-oriented developing and securing of the personnel competences, 2) personnel that supports the strategy of education and training, 3) stabilizing the mentoring activities, 4) rewarding from good results and 5) taking care of the staff's wellbeing as well as their commitment to the organization. (Hyria 2014, 7.) Among others the above mentioned critical success factors create good possibilities to develop personnel's internationalization competences.

2.4.1 The programme of international activities

Based on the strategic outlines, the success factor of internationalization is clarified in the programme of international activities of Hyria. The programme is ment to be a supporting tool for the students, the teaching staff, the management, the international operators and the HR department of Hyria. It is also intended to support Hyria's own as well as network based projects and work life partners, not forgetting the funding organizations. In the programme the strategic outlines are concretized and developed further as instructions and targets of Hyria's international activities. (Korteharju 2013, 3.)

In the programme Korteharju (2013, 4) uses the description of the internationalization competences defined in the research Hidden competences of CIMO and Demos Helsinki (2014). The research is represented earlier (2.5.3) in this thesis work. According to that the internationalization competences are the traditional internationalization skills, language skills and intercultural understanding added with productivity, resilience and curiosity (CIMO 2014, 21 - 26). Korteharju uses the definition of Mattila (2012) and describes the educational institutes' internationalization activities as a pyramid of four parts of international mobility, international regional and

national projects, international activities in the own organization and on the individual level (Korteharju 2013, 5 – 6.)

As, according to Korteharju (2013, 6) Hyria is growing to be a strong and international educational institute, the goals of internationalization are wide. In order to reach the goals, the internationalization is to be taken as a part of curriculum, teaching and training, work life collaboration and everyday life of the organization. This means that the every member of the staff is needed in order to make this vision to come true.

The history of internationalization in Hyria is long. Some of the departments have participated in the international activities already decades. These departments have strong networks, but the departments that are just starting their activities still need support in finding partners and developing their activities. It is an organizational level goal to include international activities in all study programmes. Also the integration of common European instruments such as EQF and ECVET has begun. (Korteharju 2013, 7.)

In Hyria's internationalization programme, there are four key development areas. The first of them is student mobility which already have long traditions within the organization. The second one is staff mobility, which is under development in this thesis project. The staff mobility also have a strong connection to the other two areas, internationalization at home and internationalization as a tool of operations and competence development. Staff mobility can be seen as a tool to develop staff's competences to support internationalization at home. It also supports and offers opportunities to network and build multinational collaboration through which the development of operations and competence becomes possible. (Korteharju 2013, 7 - 10.)

The strategic instruments of measurement of internationalization are formed on statistics. The realization of mobility targets is measured by the numbers of students and staff members sent as well as the numbers of those coming in. Also the study periods and training activities executed in English are counted. Besides these clearly measurable numbers the impact not showing in this statistics is recognized. This recognition includes assessment of the mobility processes, courses, events and achieved measurable competences as well as interpersonal activities. (Korteharju 2013, 12.)

The latest processed statistics are presented in the table 1. The table shows that from the year 2009 to the year 2013 the number of staff mobility experiences has grown. In year 2014 the number of experiences decreased a little although remained above the number of the experiences in 2012. The peak in the year 2013 can be explained by an individual project involving several staff members.

Table 1 Statistics of staff mobility 2009 – 2014 (Korteharju & Frisk presentation 1.3.2015.)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Staff mobility activities all in all	36	56	54	92	125	96
Teaching activities	2	3	3	7	10	9
Work practice programs	-	-	-	-	1	-
Study visits to partner institutions	10	5	6	9	32	19
Seminars and conferences	1	5	4	6	7	6
Network- or project meetings	16	15	12	14	11	8
Training	2	-	3	4	1	3
Work life partners	-	-	-	-	3	4
Others	5	28	26	52	60	47

What is noticeable in the table 1, is the almost complete lack of work practice programs. During the operating years of Hyria Education, only one work practice program has been executed. This can be considered as one of the main development areas especially when taking to notice that Hyria encourages its personnel to participate in work practice programs. According to Hyria’s strategic targets and the staff training plan the work practice programs are one of the key activities in 2015 (Hyria 2015, 10). If compared with national numbers from 2014 in Finland, the same phenomenon exists. Out of VET sector’s 1639 staff mobility experiences listed in CIMO, only 8% were work practice programmes. (Korkala 2015, 24)

The most popular activity, according to table 1, has been study visits to partner organizations. This can be explained by the need to acquire new partners for student mobility and strategic partnerships. Hyria’s work life partners are included in the mobility activities quite recently. This collaboration with domestic partners is seen worth development.

On the VET sector in the whole country the biggest number of staff mobility experiences is mobility experiences that are related to development or cooperation projects and they are mostly carried out by other than teaching staff (Korkala 2015, 24). This is also the case in Hyria (Korteharju & Frisk presentation 1.3.2015). Most of the participants have been administrative personnel, although their mobility has supported the organization’s pedagogical development. (Korkala 2015, 24; Korteharju & Frisk presentation 1.3.2015.)

On the whole, Hyria's staff mobility has clearly developed during the operating years 2009 – 2014, but still needs to be developed further, in order to reach the strategic goals on all levels. It is also important to encourage even more staff members to participate in the mobility activities. Although the statistics in the table 1 show, that for example during the year 2014, 96 mobility experiences were executed; the number does not illustrate how many staff members actually were involved. Out of that number 93 were listed in Cimo as short-term (less than 5 days) or long term activities (Korkala 2015, 39). Still 93 listed mobilities during the year 2014 is quite a large number even on the national level.

Since the international activity is recognized as a strategic success factor in Hyria and the activity also is significant and increasing, there is a clear need to develop the factor in whole. Based on the numbers and facts represented development is especially needed within the staff mobility sector. By further research and development work, a new staff mobility procedure is to be created.

2.4.2 Personnel survey 2013

A personnel survey of international aspects was conducted in Hyria at 2013. By that time the Erasmus+ programme did not yet exist and the mobility possibilities were slightly different than they will be in the future. The survey was done by online questionnaire and pointed to the whole personnel of Hyria. The results have been originally collected by Elina Virtanen in 2013. Altogether 104 answers were collected. The biggest group of respondents was teaching personnel (60%). (Virtanen 2013.)

When asked about English language skills and how much or often the respondent uses the language, only around ten percent told that they use the language rarely. The similar amount told that they use the English language very much. That leaves around 80% respondents that use English language outside and in their work. 60 percent of the teaching personnel told, that they use English material such as literature in their work. The average level of English language skills appraised by the respondents themselves, was 3,26 with the scale of 1 – 5. Almost 50 percent of teaching personnel responded that they are able to teach in English. A little over 80 percent of the respondents in this group told that their English level is adequate to participate in lessons held in English. In the group of other than teaching personnel the level of the language skills was 3,24 and most of the respondents also told that they use English at least a little. 20 percent out of other than teaching personal told that they use English material in their work. The respondents were also asked to name other languages they speak. The level of these language skills nor the frequency of using them was not asked. The languages mentioned were all European languages including Russian. Over a half of all the respondents hoped for more opportunities to participate in English language courses. The number was almost 90 percent within the management. (Virtanen 2013.)

Approximately half of the teaching personnel that participated in the survey told that they have international contacts. Within the group of other than teaching personnel the percentage was only 16. The contacts were both job related and personal. Most of the job related contacts mentioned as examples were gathered through mobility activities. Also some teaching personnel mentioned that they have international contacts due to their previous jobs. (Virtanen 2013.)

For the question “How do you take into account internationalization in your work?” the answers were given in the form of free text. The answers are presented by Korteharju (2013) as they were written on the online questionnaires. To clarify the matter the answers are further processed to categories. The amount of answers is not taken into consideration, but the categorization is done by themes the answers represented. There were seven themes to be found. The answers where the teaching personnel told about their own international experiences about professional differences and cultures within the field of experience to their students formed the theme one. The second theme was formed by putting together the answers that were related to students' international on-the-job-learning or other student exchanges and coaching the students before, during and after their mobility experiences. The third theme could be found within the answers of personnel teaching immigrants or otherwise international students like exchange students at Hyria. The fourth theme was purely answers about teaching foreign languages. In to the fifth theme were put the answers about delivering information about international conferences and events in the area of expertise. The sixth theme included keeping in contact with international partners and the seventh formed of answers where the teaching personnel included international media and global news into their teaching. The group that included most answers appeared to be the theme two; answers related to out-going student mobility. (Virtanen 2013.)

75 percent of the respondents within the field of teaching told, that they would apply for staff mobility experience, if possibilities existed. Out of these respondents 85 percent would be ready to apply for personal grant. Out of other than teaching personnel only 25 percent would apply for mobility, but all of them would be ready to apply for a personal grant. 25 members of the teaching staff reported that they have earlier attended to staff mobility activities. Out of those persons that attended to mobility activities over 40 percent participated in visits to international partners and around 25 percent in meetings regarding cooperative international projects. Also the percentage of unspecified other reasons was significant (25). The respondents were able choose multiple reasons, so the numbers represent frequency of how often the reason appeared when the maximum number (100%) can exist for each reason separately. Language courses and work practice programmes were never attended by the respondents. Also only five to fifteen percent of the respondents had participate in continuing training or teacher exchange. Little over fifteen percent of the respondents that had participated in a staff mobility experience listed a conference participation or coaching on-the-job-learner abroad as reasons. The biggest reasons for other than teaching personnel to attend a mobility

experience were attending to a conference or to visit an international partner organization. 40 percent of the respondents within the group of teaching personnel told that they have executed a work related trip abroad during the existence years of Hyria. Either students or personnel had participated in the mobility experiences from a respondent's department in 45 percent of cases. Out of 42 respondents of other than teaching personnel 27 had not executed any work related trips abroad during the operating years of Hyria. (Virtanen 2013.)

The respondents were also asked to comment the possibilities for student exchange in their study area. The answers were given in the form of free text. It was not seen relevant for this Master's thesis to inspect them especially. It was noticeable though, that many of the respondents thought that the possibilities offered for students were good and opportunities for student exchange or work placement existed. On the other hand some respondents told that they do not have any idea or knowledge about the mobility possibilities offered or even whether they are offered in Hyria. (Virtanen 2013.)

The answers for the question about teaching staff mobility possibilities, was also given as free text. The mobility activities were considered important, but it seems that there was not much information provided about the possibilities. The nearest colleagues were considered as source of information about funding possibilities. Support for filling in the application forms for funding was wanted. It was mentioned, that finding information and applying for funding needed own initiative. (Virtanen 2013.) The personnel was also asked to answer questions related to hosting international guests at Hyria, but this question was not considered relevant for this Master's thesis.

Following questions in the survey were about how well the personnel know different subjects relevant to Hyria's internationalization activities. First two subjects were EQF and ECVET (Virtanen 2013). The personnel's knowledge of these two was quite limited, but since 2015 the ECVET is integrated in the curriculum also in Hyria. Since so, it is possible that these answers do not apply anymore. The next subjects were about different funding possibilities for staff mobility. Answers to them show low conspicuousness (Virtanen 2013). The funding programmes specified in the questionnaire have changed since 2013 so it is seen irrelevant to further inspect this from the point of view of different programmes either.

The teaching personnel was next asked to mark three most important reasons for participating in mobility activities from a list provided. Most marks (31) got the opportunity to establish or maintain international relationships and networks. Possibility to improve one's language skills got almost as many marks (30). Development of one's professional competence received 29 marks and personal development 25 marks. Besides the unspecified alternative "other" that got only one mark, less marks got marketing own organization (7). Between 12 and 16 marks got three sub-

jects: promoting collaborative project, getting familiar with a new culture and getting an experience of surviving. (Virtanen 2013.)

In the end of the survey, there were two questions requiring free text answers. The questions were about the opinions the respondents had about the international activities in Hyria over all and how and whether the activities are showing in one's work. The answers were quite fragmented, but there were three themes that appeared. The existing organization was seen well working, for there was one person coordinating all the activities and representatives in departments. On the other hand in some answers it was mentioned that the respondent had not any knowledge of international activities at all. The information delivered about student was considered sufficient and easy to find, but there was clear lack of information about staff mobility. Some respondents told that the international activities are not part of their work at all. At the same time, one respondent wrote that international activities should be included in everyone's tasks. (Virtanen 2013.)

Even though the number of respondents in the survey was quite high, over 20 percent of the personnel had sent in their answers, it is not clear whether the respondents represent the staff in whole. It is possible, that the respondents are the ones that are interested in international activities or have participated in the activities already. The results must be examined with carrying this in mind.

2.5 Conclusions about internationalization competences and mobility

Based on these research results, target programmes and requirements of founders a framework for activities that should be undertaken in Hyria Education's new procedure of staff mobility can be formed. Also the competences that the staff should gain and be able to teach further to the VET learners become clearer. The key findings are represented in the figure 1 below.

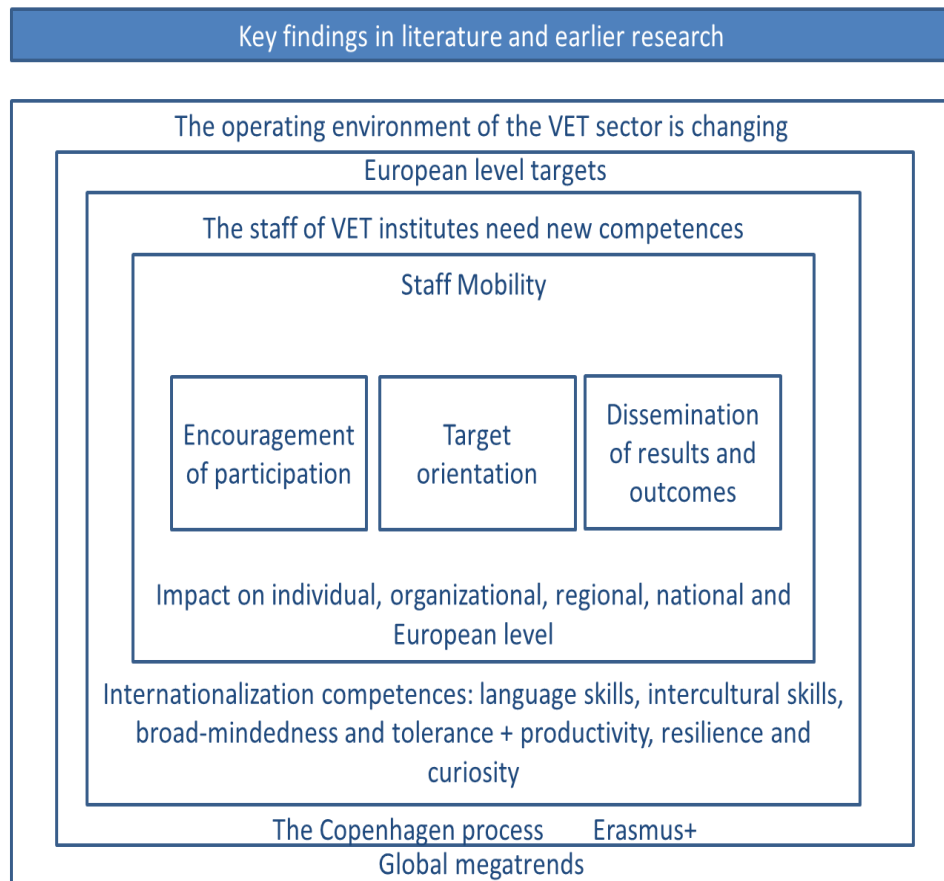


Figure 1 Keyfindings in literature and earlier research

The operating environment of the VET sector appears to be changing. The global megatrends affect the vocational sector in the form of changing work life and international job market. There are also targets and goals set on the European level in order to standardize vocational qualifications. This was found to set new requirements for the staff of VET institutes.

The staff should be able to develop their language skills, intercultural skills, broad-mindedness and tolerance. Also they should be able to participate in activities that increase their productivity, resilience and curiosity. The staff should be provided with possibilities to network and participate in work of multidisciplinary and diverse teams. Based on what is discovered in the research projects represented above, these possibilities, competences and skills can be added through international mobility experiences. Although this requires that the mobility experiences are not only executed but also well processed in order to bring the new competences up to the level of skills and to avoid the situation when they remain on the level of awareness.

Based on the earlier presented research projects, it seems to be important to inform the staff well about the mobility opportunities and encourage them to participate. Also there should be enough personnel involved in the international activities, so that the information is easily available to all members of staff and the staff can get support in the early stage of mobili-

ty project. These measures play critical role when ensuring the equality of the whole personnel.

The mobility activities need to be well planned and target oriented in order to be attractive and they should support the everyday work. For the vocational orientation the most interesting forms of mobility appear to be experiences related to student mobility and on-the-job-learning. Also the work practice programmes need to be promoted and well supported within the organization. However the international activities in whole should have the organization's and its management's support they should be included in the organizations business strategy in order to succeed.

According to the above represented results of the personnel survey in Hyria 2013, one thing on the organizational level becomes clear: there is not enough information about the international activities and especially about the staff mobility opportunities provided. Also it became obvious that the process needs to be clarified and support for application process is needed. Many of the respondents would like to participate in mobility activities and are ready to take measures in order to make that possible, but the options are not well known. The greatest reasons for participating were found to be international contacts, language skills and professional as well as personal development. However, a significant part of the personnel mentioned that somehow the internationalization is part of their work, whether it is due to the student mobility, immigrants or otherwise in the field of one's expertise. There were not findings about whether the organization supports one's efforts towards internationalization.

3 METHODOLOGY

In this Master's thesis the methodology is based on the theory of mixed methods research. This was chosen for the reason that the research questions are practical of their nature. The Master's thesis in whole is a development task that would not be covered by using only a qualitative or a quantitative method. For understanding the phenomenon it was seen important to look into the matter from different point of views that altogether would form the framework and lead to deeper comprehension of the issue on the way to the final conclusions.

3.1 Mixed methods research

Mixed method research was first introduced in the field of social sciences. It was important to the scientists to look into enough indicators that took into consideration different kind of background variables that were not interpretable by on a qualitative or only a quantitative method. The mixed method research consists of different methods that can include both qualitative and quantitative methods. The intention is to answer in a particular question. (Hesse-Biber 2010, 2 - 3.) The mixed methods research does not force the researcher to choose between a quantitative and a qualitative ap-

proach or method, but leaves a possibility to include the best or the most suitable parts of each to the research design (Bainbridge & Lee 2013, 16).

The mixed methods research is often considered from the theory-centric point of view. In this study Hesse-Biber's (2016, 10 – 11) interpretation of comprehensive way of using the methods is adapted. The theory-centric way of conducting research is driven by the methods that lead to the research question. The data is gathered from this angle and then further processed through methodology. In comprehensive mixed methods research everything begins with paradigmatic viewpoint that often naturally exist. From this viewpoint builds the ontology that reflects the researcher's assumptions and leads to epistemology. The phenomenon under research is studied through philosophy of knowledge building. The methodology is then build by answering questions such as "who can know?" (Hesse-Biber 2010, 11 – 12.)

Although based on the methodology the research question shall be formed after also taken to consideration the stakeholder's interest, serendipity, economic factors and of course the review of literature (Hesse-Biber 2010, 11 – 12). This comprehensive way of constructing the research question seems to fit very well with purpose of the thesis which is to develop Hyria Education's processes of the staff mobility and by that add the personnel's internationalization skills. The methodology then is not purely qualitative or quantitative but a mix of them. If explored from the angle of methodologies this creates problems in the dualism between the two. It is however to be noted that the methods are to be used in the framework of methodologies. When conducting a mixed methods research the researcher needs to be conscious about this in order to remain objectivity. (Hesse-Biber 2010, 12 - 13.)

In this Master's thesis this seems to be the implicit way to conduct the research since as usual for comprehensive mixed methods researches the stakeholder's interests form one of the factors that in the end affect research question. This is because of the nature of the whole project which is to develop further the processes of the stakeholder. Although the reliability of the study is strongly based on the literature, serendipity and economic factors such as financiers' requirements also steer the process of forming the framework and the research questions.

Quantitative data can, according to the theory, be used as a solid base for further developing of qualitative methods (Hesse-Biber 2010, 6). In this case the information gathered through literature review is used to develop the theme interviews. This in the other words means that the unstructured interviews are planned based on the findings made after reviewing literature. (Hesse-Biber 2010, 14). The actual quantitative data in this case is secondary data and the qualitative part of the research consist of unstructured interviews. The research designed after the alignments of a parallel mixed methods research where the two sides of the project, qualitative and quantitative are conducted separately and then after listing the findings the results are to be analysed through triangulation. Moreover the both parties,

although conducted separately are equal. (Bainbridge & Lee 2013, 27; Hesse-Biber 2010, 70.)

Triangulation of methods is commonly seen as one of the reasons why mixed methods research should be used. This is the first reason to use the method. Secondly not only that is important, but also the complementarity should be considered. When triangulation offers better creditability of the results and conclusions the complementarity helps to find better understanding about the whole social story. This will be done by combining qualitative and quantitative methods. The third reason for choosing the mixed methods research is development. The results gained by one method are used to develop the other further. (Bainbridge & Lee 2013, 26; Hesse-Biber 2010, 3 - 5.) The fourth reason to conduct mixed method research is initiation (Hesse-Biber 2010, 6). From the first moment with this project it was clear that new questions and development targets will and have occurred. Initiation of another research or further development will be required later. The fifth reason for conducting mixed methods research is expansion (Hesse-Biber 2010, 6). As it will be stated later, Hyria is looking for greater impact of the staff mobility and at least when continuing further with that matter specific background information is required. Producing exact information with deep understanding of the researched phenomenon will then help with the future efforts (Hesse-Biber 2010, 6).

In this thesis project the literature review and results of a quantitative survey that is handled as secondary data as well as the information gained through the unstructured interviews are used to create deeper understanding of the phenomenon and to help developing a new procedure for the staff mobility in Hyria. The main reason of implementing a mixed method research is then the expansion. Through expansion orientation should more improved and rounded understanding of the phenomenon to be gained (Bainbridge & Lee 2013, 26).

3.2 Unstructured interviews

The interviews for this thesis were conducted in order to gather information about how persons who have participated in mobility activities have experienced them? To create a new procedure for the staff mobility in Hyria it was crucial to discover how the participants have experienced the staff mobility process in their organizations and what in their opinion were the outcomes? At first the question who would know about this matter was asked. It seemed wise not to interview Hyria's staff members for there has not been a procedure of this kind for staff mobility. The earlier processes were constructed according to the different funding instruments and their requirements and in that purpose functioned well. In this point it seemed better to look for persons who had experienced a mobility activity in an organization that has somehow similar operating environment or that has similar procedure of student mobility that Hyria would have in the future. It was soon noticed that the best equivalence was to be found in the universities of applied sciences. For the reference one institution of vocational education and training was chosen as well, but since the procedure

for student mobility in Hyria reminds the models used in the world of universities of applied sciences the interviews were also mainly conducted in that world.

Unstructured interview was chosen as a method within this mixed methods research, for it was important to discover information about how persons who have participated in a staff mobility activity have experienced the process. An unstructured interview is often valid when the interest is in individual experiences. The unstructured interview as a method allows the interviewee to tell about the experiences without structured questions limiting or inhibiting diversity of the answers. (Gillham 2005, 45 – 46.) Also it was seen important to further deepen some of the findings made by analysing the secondary data.

In an unstructured interview only the themes are decided beforehand. The interviewee can then freely tell about the individual experiences. The interview then reminds more an open conversation than a highly structured interview. The themes or the questions of the interview are not in the fixed order and the interviewee can freely lead the discussion. (Brewerton & Millward 2001, 70; Gillham 2005, 45 – 46.)

As typical to the mixed method research the interviewees were selected based on the question “who can know?” (Hesse-Biber 2010, 12.) In this particularly case the question was formed “who can know about staff mobility processes in practice?”. The aim of the thesis is to develop a new procedure for the staff mobility in order to encourage the staff to participate actively and to achieve greater impact through the mobility activities. For this purpose the selective question was further adjusted to the form “who has experienced the staff mobility process?”. Since in Hyria there was not earlier well-functioning procedure for staff mobility it was clear that the interviewees were to be found from outside of the organization.

The model of international activities in Hyria comes from the world of universities of applied sciences. This was the main reason to choose the interviewees from that world even though Hyria itself acts on the secondary level of education. For comparative data one of the interviewees represented secondary level institution. The request for interviews was sent to the institutions. The institutions then suggested persons that were known of having experience of staff mobility experiences and the selection of the interviewees was done by their recommendations.

Finding the interviewees was quite difficult since not too many persons wanted to be interviewed. After all, five persons agreed to be interviewed. For the thesis is not only based on the data gathered through the interviews this was considered to be an adequate sample.

From all together five persons, that were interviewed for this Master's thesis four were currently personnel of two different universities of applied sciences. One of the interviewees was employed by a vocational education

institute. All of the interviewees held at the time the interviews took place, teaching positions.

Interviewee A, was at the time of the interview holding a position of a Principal Lecturer at a university of applied sciences. He had participated in three mobility projects in UK, Russia and Germany. There were already plans about him going to Czech Republic.

Interviewee B, C and D were Senior Lecturers in universities of applied sciences. Interviewee B had participated in mobility activities in Portugal, Canada and Germany. The next, already planned experience would take place in Russia. Interviewee C had been to Germany and the Netherlands. There were not any determinate plans for him to participate in mobility activities in the near future. The interviewee D had been to France and the Netherlands. She was planning a new mobility experience during the following autumn, but the destination was not yet defined.

The interviewee E was a Vocational teacher in an institution for vocational education and training. He had participated in mobility projects in Denmark for six different times. He was also the only interviewee whose mobility activities have been funded by the United Nations. All the other interviewees' mobility experiences were funded by different programmes of the European Union or the European Commission.

As explained earlier, the interviews were unstructured interviews. They were conducted during the spring semester 2015. Three of the interviews were performed face to face with the interviewees. The remaining two were done by telephone.

The interview were concentrating on three themes, all under the umbrella of the interviewees' personal experiences of the whole staff mobility activity process. The first theme was "before the mobility", the second was "during the mobility" and the third "after the mobility". Within every theme the interviewee was free to speak around the theme as she or he pleased, but the conversation was steered to the original theme when needed. The first theme was mainly about how the process begun, who took the initiative and what measures needed to be taken prior departure. The theme "during the mobility" the central point was in what kind of programme was organized or was any, and how the interviewee experienced it? The third theme concentrated in the process of coming back and how the possible learning outcomes or other results were disseminated in the respective organization or even other levels of the operating environment.

3.3 Secondary data

Already existing data and data collected by other researchers that is used to fulfil the primary data collected is called secondary. As obvious the secondary data not always can be used in the same form, but the data can be analysed again. Sometimes it is even possible to find answers to the re-

search questions or at least to part of them by analysing secondary data. This can be rational from the economic as well as resource aspect. (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2010, 186 – 187.)

In this case secondary data is used because relevant data already existed. The data was collected through a personnel survey conducted in Hyria 2013. A questionnaire based survey is a typical quantitative method. In this kind of survey same questions are asked from a large number of respondents. The survey is often used in order to collect evidence for a theory. Based on the results, hypothesis can be made about whether an assumption is correct or false. (Ojasalo, Moilanen & Ritalahti 2009, 95.)

The advantage of a questionnaire based survey is that a large amount of data can be collected. On the other hand the weakness of the method is that it usually gives superficial information and it is impossible to ensure if the respondents have answered the questions sincerely. Also the methods of analysis can compromise the results. (Ojasalo et al. 2009, 95.)

From this survey conducted in Hyria, which was made by an online questionnaire to all the staff members, the already collected results were evaluated and used as comparative data. This secondary data was considered valid and it already gave some answers in preliminary research questions. This survey was considered reliable for over 20 percent of the personnel were participating in to it (Virtanen 2013). The actual results were considered uncompromised for the analysis was made transparently. It was possible to see how many respondents answered and to which question. The collected data is gathered together by Elina Virtanen (2013). The data is gathered to a Power Point presentation, but not analysed further. The results however were presented to the management of the after the survey. Currently the presentation is to be found in Hyria's archives in Power Point form that includes even direct citations from the answers.

3.4 Triangulation

Triangulation is used to improve comprehensiveness and accuracy of the research results by combining several data sources or by combining different methods (Bainbridge & Lee 2013, 16). In a parallel mixed methods research as this Master's thesis, the triangulation is used to corroborate the qualitative part's findings. The research is conducted in two separate parts and the triangulation takes place in the phase of analysing results. (Hesse-Biber 2010, 70.)

The challenge with the triangulation that takes place in the phase of analysing the results is that an opportunity to compare findings of qualitative and quantitative parts is missed. In order to get full advantage it is crucial to first list the findings of the both parts of the research and then perform the triangulation based on them. (Hesse-Biber 2010, 69.) The true value of the triangulation is expected to become reality as the results from quantitative and qualitative parts of the research differ. This should help to find more wide and rich understanding about the matter under examination.

(Bainbridge & Lee 2013, 26) The results after triangulation are to be used when creating the new procedure of the staff mobility for Hyria.

3.5 SWOT

In order to further process the findings after the triangulation, it was decided that a SWOT analysis shall be conducted. The SWOT analysis is a method largely used in business planning. It is a risk assessment method which helps to discover strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities of certain activity or area (Hopkin 2012, 157).

In SWOT analysis the activity under planning is examined by for aspects the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The strengths include the resources and assets do exist and would enable the planned function or activity. The weaknesses on the other hand are the limitations that exist. The opportunities and the threats are more external conditions. The opportunities can help in achieving the goals set and the threats are the situations and conditions are unfavorable for the process. (Perdicoulis 2011, 38 – 40.)

In the analysis the known facts and existing information is classified in four columns. The analysis require quite detailed information. It stops in classification of the information and basically provides a list of existing conditions. This can be considered as a limitation of this method. (Perdicoulis 2011, 38 – 40.) In this case, the list of conditions and speculated outcomes however is considered to be useful and sufficient for the planning of the new procedure for staff mobility. It is used simply to organize the information and data collected through other methods.

The SWOT analysis in this case was performed simply based on the findings made through triangulation of collected data. The findings were put in the form of single words or short statements and then positioned in the four columns according to what they represented. The SWOT was performed for finding out how a specific finding would affect to the staff mobility operations of Hyria Education.

4 STAFF MOBILITY EXPERIENCES AND NARRATIVES

The unstructured interviews produced five individual narratives. The narratives were analysed and classified according to the three themes: before the mobility, during the mobility and after the mobility. The results are here represented according to the themes.

4.1 Before the mobility

In all occasions the interviewees told that their participation in the mobility activities was of their own initiative. Interviewees B, C and D told that their organization strongly supported them to participate. In the home or-

ganization of the interviewee D the international mobility activities are part of the strategy and strongly supported. Also the interviewees A and E had very positive response for their suggestions of participating. Being so, it seems that the organizations support mobility.

Although the interviewees felt that their home organizations had a positive attitude on mobility, they in some statements doubted the motivations of the organizations. The interviewee A's opinion was that the management of the organization is looking for maximum number of mobility in order to get better funding. He actually said that even though the motivation towards mobility is personal, the activities are not particularly encouraged by the organization except when looking for funding by being able provide good statistics. The interviewee B told that her organization supports mobility strongly. She also thinks that it is mainly due to organization's funding. The interviewees A and B do not work for same organization. However none of the interviewees felt that they would have been forced to participate in a mobility projects.

According to the interviews it can be assumed that the organizations had a positive attitude towards the mobility. However, the participation was mainly of participant's own initiative. The participation demanded quite a lot effort from the participant, for example in the form of exploring funding possibilities. The interviewee A told that the latest mobility experience he participated in was the first one funded by the Erasmus+ Programme. The possibility for funding was explored by him. It became obvious that there were not available supportive measures except after the decision was made. That and the fact that the interviewees suspected the motives of the management of their organizations, point to direction that the mobility process is not finalized and possibly not target-oriented at least from the point of view of organizational development or talent management.

There was also another kind of statement regarding to the supportive measures taken by the organization. The interviewee B participated in a mobility activity for the first time because it was possible to go as working pair. Having a mentor helped and made it easier to go and conduct the tasks that were assigned to be done during the mobility. She considered that to be one of the biggest reasons that encouraged her to take the decision of going. This shows that the organization is willing to encourage new staff members to participate. A model of conducting a mobility experience as a working pair can be regarded as a possibility to exploit the activity.

After making her own decision to go, the interviewee D was advised to choose a subject according to her own ambitions and skills. After doing this she had a meeting with the international coordinator of the organization and together they decided the hosting organization to be. Also in case of the interviewee B the organization's international coordinator helped to find the host. The selected target country was a decision of the international coordinator. The interviewee C had chosen the partner organizations himself. According to the organization's regulations, one is allowed to

make the choice if the hosting organization and the purpose of the mobility activity are in line with the organizational goals. Also the choice is to be made based on the participant's personal needs and skills. According to the interviewee C, the personal contribution often is within the participant's area of expertise. According to interviewee C's experience, the purpose of the mobility activities usually is to get familiar with a new partner organization and to build personal relationships between the staff members. It is also possible to visit the existing partners in order to support student mobility possibilities and to execute study modules together. The interviewee has participated in both kinds of activities. In the case of the interviewee D, after the decision was made in the sending end the possible host or hosts were contacted and depending about their activity the right partner was chosen. This final decision is strongly depended on the organizational goals and desires of the both parties. The partners that were rarely or not yet visited were recommended by the organizations in order to strengthen the organizations' relationship.

Based on these statements organizational targets exist and are mainly due to enhancing student mobility. Interviewee C mentioned also the cooperation in executing study modules together. This would be an opportunity also to promote internationalization at home. On the individual level the target setting is not that clear, it seems that the organizations have not specified targets from the point of view of human resource development and it is not clearly stated what they expect their personnel to learn through the mobility experiences.

The interviewee D said that a lot of working hours are spent in preplanning of the mobility activity. Finding a suitable time for both parties and making the travel arrangements are the most time demanding things. Also a lot of time is spent to fill in the forms that are needed for the funding and for the sending organizations own processes. The mobility agreement itself actually takes only around five minutes, which in the interviewee D's opinion tells much about its contents and usefulness. The interviewee thinks that it is only a formality without any practical benefit. The traveling is also to be planned according to the organization's instructions. The mobility activity's planning in the organization of the interviewee D starts a year before departure in order to plan the participant's annual working plan and curriculum. All the mobility activities are first accepted by the participant's supervisor. Due to the organization's regulations one week is reserved for the participant to prepare teaching materials for the mobility period's teaching tasks. In the reality, the interviewee told, the time spent in this is more likely two weeks. This means that the participant needs to use her time outside of working hours to prepare her activity. The comments reflect the fact the planning of an experience shall be started in a good time. When the mobility periods are conducted by teaching personnel it becomes highly important to start planning before the curricula are set.

Also in the interviewee B's opinion the process was challenging. It began two months prior the mobility. Communication was not easy with the

hosting organization and the time almost ran out. The Erasmus+ funding processes were conducted in a hurry, but this was not only due to the sending organization, but also due to the unclear program says the interviewee B. Both, the interviewee D's and the interviewee B's opinions indicate the amount of forms and documents required, but also they support the earlier assumption of mobility activities not being target-steered. The mobility agreement seems to remain a dead letter. The apparent threat is that the process includes too many stakeholders, for also the interviewee C had similar experiences about the two parallel processes, the one for funding and the one for the sending organization. This raises a question whether the processes of the sending organization and the founder can be embedded. The participant would not have to make double applications or travel plans in order to fulfil requirements that at least partially are the same in both cases. However the home organization of the interviewee C has clear instructions how to fill in the needed forms. In the forms the purpose and the goal of the mobility activity are defined and also it is checked that the planned mobility activity fills the criteria for funding.

The interviewee A thinks that the main purpose of the activities is to internationalize, but this mainly becomes reality only on the individual level. On the micro-level the purpose is not travelling, but still it is not the dissemination of the learning outcomes either. On the individual level the mobility experiences have widened one's perspective to the world. According to the interviewee A's experience the mobility has had mainly the theme of travelling. In all the cases, it was clearly pointed out that the supervisors approve the mobility. Although so, this leaves open whether the supervisor at this point sets targets for the employee's professional development and is the mobility period going to be part of one's individual development plan which obviously would be an advantage.

The interviewee A was able to present factors that hinder participation in mobility activities. According to the interviewee A, the biggest reason of his colleagues for not going is that the mobility requires being away from home. This is not possible or at least not possible when the mobility experience is a long-term activity for the family reasons. This of course is something that the employer cannot change, but it arises an idea of offering possibilities for the personnel to choose between short-term or long-term activities.

The interviewee A also thinks, that complementarity of the exchanges is somewhat troublesome. The management of his organization wants complementarity. In the participants opinion this requires personal connections and relationship. This does not happen when the mobility experiences are one-off events. On the other hand he thinks that in the departments giving international education the mobility already disturbs teaching since the personnel travel that much. All the staff members are not participating equally. Some of them should be encouraged to participate and the others' participation should be limited says the interviewee A. The interviewee A himself is not interested in hosting complementary guests. He thinks that due to resource reasons keeping up several partnerships is not possible.

This comment is to be noticed if and when complementarity is expected. It also supports what was found out earlier, that the planning of the mobility period needs to be started early and put in the participant's annual working plan.

The case of the interviewee E was slightly different to the others. Before the mobility the interviewee E had participated in the course he later held in Denmark himself. After that, his mobility activities have been similar to each other and the agreement of participating is done separately every year. The interviewee E had earlier knowledge about the contents of the course, but did not receive enough information about the practical arrangements upfront. Also he was not fully aware about the budget of neither the mobility experience nor the target organization. The lack of background information and being unfamiliar with the target organization then became an issue during the interviewee E's first exchange.

Although the interviewee B's mobility activity was quite different to the interviewee E's, she also felt disappointed with the pre-departure coaching. The interviewee B found problematic that there practically was not coaching organized before the departure. She would have liked to have information about what kind of gifts, hand-outs, roll-ups or other material her organization wished her to take with her. Also the information about the Erasmus+ process was insufficient.

It seems that the interviewees B and E did not expect coaching in cultural matters and they neither needed language training, but they would have liked to have more information about practical matters. As simple as it seems, the practical matters become reality during the mobility period and difficulties due to them may occur. This is especially to be noticed when sending participants for their first experience.

4.2 During the mobility

Within the theme of During the mobility, the interviewees told about the duration and the contents of their mobility experiences. It was noticeable that most of the experiences lasted less than a week, although many of the interviewees told that for example work practice programmes do exist in their organizations.

The mobility activities in the interviewee C's organization last approximately five days of which two are mainly intended for the travelling including perhaps some get-together in the first evening. The remaining three days are reserved for teaching tasks and fieldtrips as well as study visits to the companies in the region. The participant gets a chance to meet work life partners from one's own area of expertise. The interviewee C for example had visited local wine yards for his area of expertise is restaurant and tourism business. The mobility periods of the interviewee D had similar duration. The interviewee D thinks that five days is a good duration for a mobility activity if cooperation between the two organizations exist and the purpose of the visit is to deepen that. If on the other hand the meaning

of the activity is personal professional development, five days is too short period of time, she says. That kind of goal would demand three to six months of time. Work practice programmes exist on paper, but are not largely used in the interviewee D's organization. In the organizations of interviewee's A and B the situation was pretty much similar to these represented examples of the interviewees C and D.

Again the project of the interviewee E was slightly different. The project the interviewee E participates every year as a teacher contains several parts. Firstly it includes one week preparation trip to one of the projects that is supposed to be introduced during the course. Secondly one more week of preparation takes place directly before the actual course. The course that the interviewee E teaches in lasts four weeks. Also there is later in the end of each year a one week continuing course. The interviewee E's mobility experiences contain mainly teaching tasks performed either individually or together with another teacher.

The contents of the course and the lessons the interviewee E should teach have always been clear. Every year there might be some additional parts to teach as well that might come on the interviewee's responsibility, but those are decided together and do not cause problems. As the interviewee E is quite familiar with his tasks and knows beforehand what is going to happen during the mobility, he does not find many problems in the contents of his mobility periods.

The interviewee A points out that the mobility experience that includes teaching tasks, whether it is about hosting or going abroad oneself, needs to match with the current study period or module. Usually his experiences have included six hours of teaching tasks and still lasted several days. In many cases the interviewee A has conducted the teaching assignment by using old existing material. Sometimes it suits better, sometimes it does not. He wishes that the assignments could be more workshops or laboratory works of their nature.

The interviewee B's task during the mobility was to introduce her organization to the hosting partner. This was the first connection between the two organizations and the meaning was to establish personal relationship. Students have visited the receiving organization before. In this time, there was at the same time an international week organized in the receiving organization. The interviewee conducted data collection about the other educational institutes that were presented at the event. The interviewee B taught her own subject for couple of hours and besides this she introduced her own organization. The introduction took place in the classroom and at a desk in the lobby. All this took approximately five hours a day. During the experience there were also meetings with local colleagues and the dean.

The interviewee D has executed mobility activities where there have been many meetings with local colleagues and the dean of the hosting institution. The programme has not been too tight and a lot of time has been

spent for non-formal get-togethers. Also during these two mobility periods the interviewee D has been able to visit companies and projects of her own interest. Some ex tempore programme has also taken place. This was possible for there was not that much the planned programme. Only the teaching hours and some working lunches were scheduled upfront. The rest of the time the interviewee D could spend in travelling according to her own interest. As the interviewee D, the interviewee C also has had chances to visit local companies in the target countries. He wishes more collaboration with the actual working life and with the work life partners. The interviewee thinks that the sending organization should oblige the hosting organization to provide more of this kind of possibilities. The interviewee D saw it very important that the target country could provide something that supported her own professional development and her own interests. From this point of view, the mobility period in the Netherlands has been the best of those she has participated in. There were many meetings organised as well as some teaching tasks, but also some time was reserved for free time activities.

Sometimes the interviewees A and C have had a chance to visit also other educational institutions operating in the same area with the hosting organization. The both interviewees found also this quite useful as they got to see more options and ways to conduct the teaching mission. This has been useful from the pedagogical point of view. With the interviewee C's organization's two partners in the Netherlands is now as an outcome of the mobility activities two common study modules planned. This he found very positive for the main purpose of the staff mobility activities has been to enhance student mobility.

The examples show that the focus of staff mobility is in building and strengthening relationship and cooperation between sending and hosting organizations. The aim of cooperation seems to be enhancing student mobility. However, the mobility also offers the staff possibilities to improve their professional competence and to broaden their own experience base of mobility projects in whole. About the schedules of the mobility periods the comments supported plans that included non-formal program as well as were not too tight. On the other hand it was considered important that the timetables were well planned in good time prior the departure.

The non-formal programme, according to the interviewee A, should be independent rather than organized, because this forces the participant to explore more things of interest by oneself. The organized programme outside of teaching tasks mainly consists of dinners and similar activities. According to the interviewee A's own experience organized programme usually takes place on two days out of four. The interviewee A has often spent his days in the hosting organization library exploring their materials. This he found positive. Sometimes interesting discussions have taken place, but this often requires earlier established relationship. Some of the hosts have not been interested at all, says the interviewee A. The interviewee had a strong feeling that the personal relationships are needed and also they need to be kept up. This requires resources.

Half planned is half done, as the interviewee C said. According to his experiences a well before hand planned programme is the key to the successful mobility activity. The collaboration with the hosting organization needs to be seamless. According to the interviewee, the mobility periods often take place in the places that are visited earlier. This is especially because of the interests of the both sides. For example the subject of the lesson held by the interviewee B was decided just a week before it took place. The programme was not clear when the working pair as they were, left Finland. This according to the interviewee B is not that typical though. According to her earlier experience, the programme has been decided in good time.

The schedules of the mobility periods that the interviewee C has participated in have usually lasted. There have been some chances in the time tables, but usually not any big ones. Still the interviewee C points out that participating in a mobility project is demanding and the participant must be able to adjust to sudden changes and different environments. The attitude of the participant is what makes the difference he says.

Although many positive things, the interviewee A said that he often does his own everyday work tasks such as reads his emails during the mobility and since so, is not able to fully concentrate into taking everything out from the experience. This is obviously a problem. Also other interviewees had similar point of views. Although the calendar is cleared for the actual mobility period, there are still tasks that need to be taken care even during the time spent abroad.

4.3 After the mobility

Of the third and the final theme, after the mobility, all of the interviewee's had quite negative thoughts about how the outcomes of the mobility projects were disseminated and taken to use by the organization. The interviewee A had a very strong negative opinion about how the reporting happened after one returned. According to the interviewee A the report does not provide any interesting information for other members of staff. The results are not disseminated well and the gained knew knowledge is not taken to use. He said that earlier in his organization the travel stories were published, but not anymore.

The interviewee B had similar thoughts with the interviewee A. Her experiences were reported in a web portal of the European Commission. Through this, the participating organizations can collect statistics and receive feedback. The interviewee B did not consider this very useful though. In her own organization the interviewee B reported the experience in a web tool from where the other staff members of the organization can read about her experience.

After arrival the interviewee C and D have given a short presentation about the mobility activity to their own teams. According to the interview-

ees more weight should be put on this in the organization's staff mobility process. The mobility experiences of these two interviewees were also to be reported in the web based system of the financier. Also the travelling were to be reported according to the home organization's normal travel instructions. The actual dissemination of the outcomes only happened within one's own team and without a formal presentation.

The interviewee E told that on the organizational level the sending organization has not shown any specific interest in the interviewee E's new knowledge and skills. A report was to be written after the experience and it was also disseminated within the organization by the method that the interviewee still is not aware of. He only knows this, because he has received feedback from his colleagues participating in mobility projects. The colleagues have told him that they have read the reports.

The interviewee E has reported development suggestions for the process and for the contents of the course, but he has not been contacted about them. He is not aware about further development measures taken by the organization based on his or other participants' suggestions.

Despite this, the interviewee E has been able to introduce his new knowledge and skills in his own work after returning. He sees that the gathered cultural skills and the added cultural intelligence have helped him especially in solving challenging situations. In the interviewee's home organization large part of the students are immigrants and he finds the cultural intelligence crucial in his everyday work. His self-confidence has grown as well.

The interviewee E has learned a lot about pedagogical approach to the course planning and has used the methods learned in his own curriculum and lesson planning projects. He has supported his colleagues with this information and taught them things he learned during the mobility. As well as the interviewee E the interviewee B says that pedagogical development was acquired through the mobility. She and the interviewee D had similar opinions in the individual level benefits. On the personal level the interviewee D made useful observations for example about the students and the studying culture. The interviewee C says that the participation to the mobility activities does not directly show in his teaching, but it shows as expansion of one's world view. Also the interviewee C thinks that he understands better other cultures and is more open to them. He sees that his self-esteem has strengthened and he is more confident for example to teach in a foreign language. The interviewee A thinks that his work would not be that different whether he participated in international activities of this kind or not. The interviewee A admits though that on the individual level internationalized perspective is gained and unconsciously it probably shows in one's teaching.

The interviewee C points out that the mobility activity is a big thing for the participant. He thinks that one of the important things after the mobility activity is the non-formal sharing of experiences. Giving a presentation

to others helps one to structure one's own experience. The interviewee D also was happy to recommend mobility activities to others. She thinks that participating widens one's perspective to the world and adds cultural skills. In her opinion the best way to participate is to travel alone. Travelling alone provides more opportunities to meet and to get to know new people. Travelling in a group does not necessarily encourage to contact other people and to spend time with them, but instead allows one to spend time with travel companions.

The interviewee D thought the greatest benefits of the mobility periods were to oneself. After participating in the mobility activities it has been easier for her to look things from the point of view of the exchange students, the ones who left for an exchange period and the ones that were hosted during their time in the interviewee's home organization. The interviewee D also told that the organization did benefit of the mobility activities as the collaboration of the two parties was strengthened and some common study modules were planned. She saw it important that the relationship between the partner organizations is not only built on one person but as many staff members on the all levels of the organizations should participate in the mobility projects so that the collaboration would actually happen on the organizational level.

Of the benefits on the organizational level the interviewees B and C shared the opinion. The interviewee B summarized the outcomes so that cooperation was started and planned. Continuity of it is expected. In the future the organizations plan to organize teacher exchange of five teaching days as part of the module. The interviewee C said the same, but for the further development of the international partnerships certain contact points should be set so that the cooperation between the partners goes on even the person changes. The interviewee C wishes that planning future projects and deepening of the collaboration would more be taken in to consideration already straight after one's arrival so that good opportunities would not just be left hanging in the air. The interviewee C thinks that especially further development is needed with the arrival procedure of the organization. The three mobility experiences the interviewee A has participated in did not lead to continuous cooperation or relationship.

In the interviewee C's organization's procedure the last steps are a feedback discussion with the international coordinator and filling in the report questionnaires for the funding organization as well as reporting to the organization's own system according to the travelling regulations of the organization. He finds it important also to look into the goals set prior departure and see if they were reached. Also in the case of the interviewee B the final step of the experience was a feedback conversation with the international coordinator.

In the future the interviewee A would like to participate in long-term activities, but in practice this might be very difficult to organize for personal as well as organizational reasons. The interviewee A sees the benefits of the short-term activities quite questionable. In his opinion the international

activities have not become part of the everyday function of his organization. The whole thing was concluded by the interviewee C who said that the idea of the mobility period is not going and being abroad, but what are the consequences of the mobility activity.

Based on these experiences, it can be said that the dissemination of the outcomes and results of the mobility activities have great importance. Most of the participants thought that the greatest benefits of the mobility periods remained on the individual level and that the organizational level was rarely reached otherwise but through non-formal reporting to the nearest colleagues. Also the participants themselves felt, that reporting helps in organizing the learning outcomes. The structured reporting tools were not appreciated a lot and the usefulness of them appeared to be quite low.

4.4 Discoveries of the interviews

The purpose of these interviews was to discover how persons who have participated in mobility activities have experienced them? The discoveries will later be compared to the secondary data gathered. This information is then to be used in the process of creating the new model for the staff mobility in Hyria.

It became very clear, that the initiative to participate in a mobility project is mainly taken by the participant. The encouragement from the organization is important and in most of the cases it showed to be the final trigger for one to actually start the process. All the interviewees underlined the importance of valid information about the possibilities offered by the organization being accessible. The interviewees wished for even more information and more detailed information about the practical matters than they in their cases had. What was surprising was, that the participants were ready to investigate the funding possibilities and to find out how to fill in the necessary forms, but they wished to have more overall information about how to prepare themselves on the concrete level for example what kind of hand-outs they should take with them and so on.

The interviewees also appreciated the fact that a clear and detailed programme was planned and delivered beforehand. Most of them thought that it was important to be flexible and that the programme can be adjusted during the mobility experience, but they hoped the framework to be decided prior-departure. In two cases the interviewees had participated in a mobility experience that's programme was mainly decided during the exchange and even though they afterwards felt that they got much out of it and the programme turned out to be relevant they wished they would have known its contents before and would have been able to prepare themselves.

During the mobility the most useful experiences seemed to be related to non-formal programme or the so called side-effects of the actual teaching assignments. Things such as discovering the differences between the study

cultures and cultural power distances of the two countries were considered enriching. Also the possibilities to visit work life partners and local companies were seen very interesting. Many of the participants really looked forward to build stronger collaboration internationally. As a concrete example of this, common study periods were planned and to be executed.

The participants' opinion was that from the point of view of getting familiar with new surroundings and meeting new people it was best to travel alone. Although at least one of the interviewees said that she would not have taken the initiative to leave without knowing that she would travel as a working pair with a more experienced colleague. At least when participating for the first time, it was good to have someone who could help the participant to get the most out of the experience.

All the interviewees said that they have received very useful competences and intercultural skills through the mobility. After the mobility they all thought that their ability to look the world from a different angle was increased. On the other hand, they all thought that the organization had not taken their skills into full use and the results and the findings were not disseminated within the organization. This lack of dissemination was to be found in all the background organizations of the interviewees.

5 STAFF MOBILITY PROCEDURE

The contribution of this project is a suggestion of creating a new procedure for staff mobility in Hyria. The procedure is meant to support the staff mobility process of the organization. In order to create the procedure the findings made by triangulating the data collected are further processed by conducting a SWOT analysis.

In order to create the new procedure of staff mobility for Hyria, it was seen necessary to further process the findings by conducting a SWOT analysis. Through the analysis it is possible to clarify the findings and clarify their position and effect to the new procedure, which is to be created. For the SWOT analysis the findings represented above are defined and put in to the four columns of SWOT, the strengths, the weaknesses, the opportunities and the threats.

Table 2 SWOT analysis about Hyria's staff mobility activities.

SWOT: Staff mobility in Hyria	
<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will to develop Existing strategy Resources Funding Strong connection with the work life 	<p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pedagogic development Internationalization of the organization Improvement of the staff's internationalization competences Internationalization at home Organizational, regional and even European level impact
<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient information Unclear procedure Undefined goals of mobility periods 	<p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not meeting the funding criteria Not being able to disseminate the results Not meeting the requirements of the work life

As represented in the table 2, one of the strengths of Hyria in the sector of staff mobility is the organization's strong will to develop the mobility activities. Hyria has an already existing strategy in which the internationalization is defined as a success factor in which the organization is willing to put effort. Also there are quite sufficient resources pointed to the international activity. The resources might need to be further adjusted according the needs of staff mobility, but there is however, a solid resource base already.

The weaknesses, also presented in the table 2, are undeniable. According to the research results, the informing the personnel about the mobility possibilities, is at present insufficient. This is largely due to the change of funding instruments and informing the staff has not even been possible for the organization. Although so, it is clearly one of the factors that hinder staff members' participation. For the new Erasmus+ programme, there is not existing staff mobility procedure, excluding the overall travel instructions and occasional grant announcements. The goals of staff mobility periods are not yet very well defined, unlike the goals of the international ac-

tivities in whole. Altogether these factors cause the situation where the same persons attend to mobility activities time after another, but do not actively encourage the new possible candidates that might also need or want to participate.

If the staff mobility activity would be well organized and target oriented, there are many opportunities to take. Through the mobility experiences the internationalization competences of the staff can be added. These competences are needed in order to build a learning environment that provides the VET learners with possibilities to internationalization at home. The staff needs these competences also when supporting student mobility and when working in a multicultural environment. Through the staff mobility pedagogical development within the organization is possible. The international networks and collaboration can be established and strengthened if the staff mobility activities succeed. By disseminating the outcomes and results impact on the organizational, regional and even European level can be achieved.

If however, the activities do not succeed there are threats that can become reality. One of the biggest threats obviously is losing the outside funding by for example not meeting their criteria. This is why the staff mobility procedure needs to be carefully formed and executed. The possible impact can remain quite small, if the outcomes are not properly disseminated. If this happens, the intention of the mobility activities as knowledge building instruments disappears. Also if the expectations and requirements of the work life are not met and the staff mobility activities remain on the level usual travelling, the whole operation becomes meaningless.

As the aim in Hyria, is to develop personnel's internationalization skills through staff mobility, it is crucial that the procedure support all the expected opportunities. The procedure needs to be built on the solid base, taking the existing conditions into consideration. By carefully planned procedure the threats should be avoided and even if not, they should be recognized rapidly. The procedure should produce enough information to the organization so that the possible shortcomings can be noticed and the organization is able to adjust its operations when needed.

It is built on the findings made earlier. As one of its most important functions, is to prevent the threats found in the SWOT analysis becoming true and also to help the organization and its staff to take all the benefits that the mobility activities have to offer.

The new procedure is built on the same structure that is used in the student mobility procedure of Hyria. This model is selected in order to make it easier for the personnel to follow the process as they already are familiar with the student mobility procedure. The model also seemed to fit quite well to the requirements set for the new staff mobility procedure. In the procedure the phases follow each other within the process in chronological order, which also should make it easy to follow. There are six phases in the new procedure of the staff mobility:

- announcing and delivering information
- application and selection
- pre-departure coaching and preparation
- beginning of the experience
- reporting, coaching and evaluation during the mobility
- after returning.

In the phase of application and selection the need of mobility as well as the goals of it are to be determinate. The mobility experience will be planned to match with the personal objectives of the participant. It will also be planned to be part of one's individual development plan. In the second phase, the phase of pre-departure coaching and preparation, the practical issues regarding to the experience of the participant are to be planned. The participant prepares oneself for the mobility experience by for example learning the elective language and getting familiar with the Finnish educational system as well as the strategic goals of Hyria. Also the practical issues shall be taken care in this point. The third phase, beginning of the experience, includes the execution of the mobility. During the mobility the participant reports through writing a blog and conducts the determinate development tasks. Returning to home country is the phase four. The participant returning disseminates the new knowledge and competencies acquired as well as other results and outcomes for example in his or her own department and to the work life partners. Besides this the participant has to report the mobility experience and give feedback. Based on the feedback the staff mobility processes will be further developed and adjusted if needed.

The new procedure for staff mobility is created in order to encourage staff members and work life partners to participate actively to the international mobility activities. It is constructed on the specific needs of Hyria. The tables used to describe the processes are drawn based on the findings of this Master's thesis and existing regulations from the funding organizations as well as Hyria Education's own existing instructions. All the grants for the staff members, whether they are from different mobility projects and programmes or otherwise in budget, are awarded according to a certain procedure that is established to improve the quality and effectiveness of the activities.

The procedure in short will later on be published in the intranet of Hyria so that it will be easily available for all the staff members. All the forms and documents will be described and provided in detail at one place. In the future it needs to be considered whether there should be one or two persons coordinating all of these activities, but at least at this point the coordination will most probably be taken care of by the international team. This can be considered as the first phase of the procedure: announcing and delivering information.

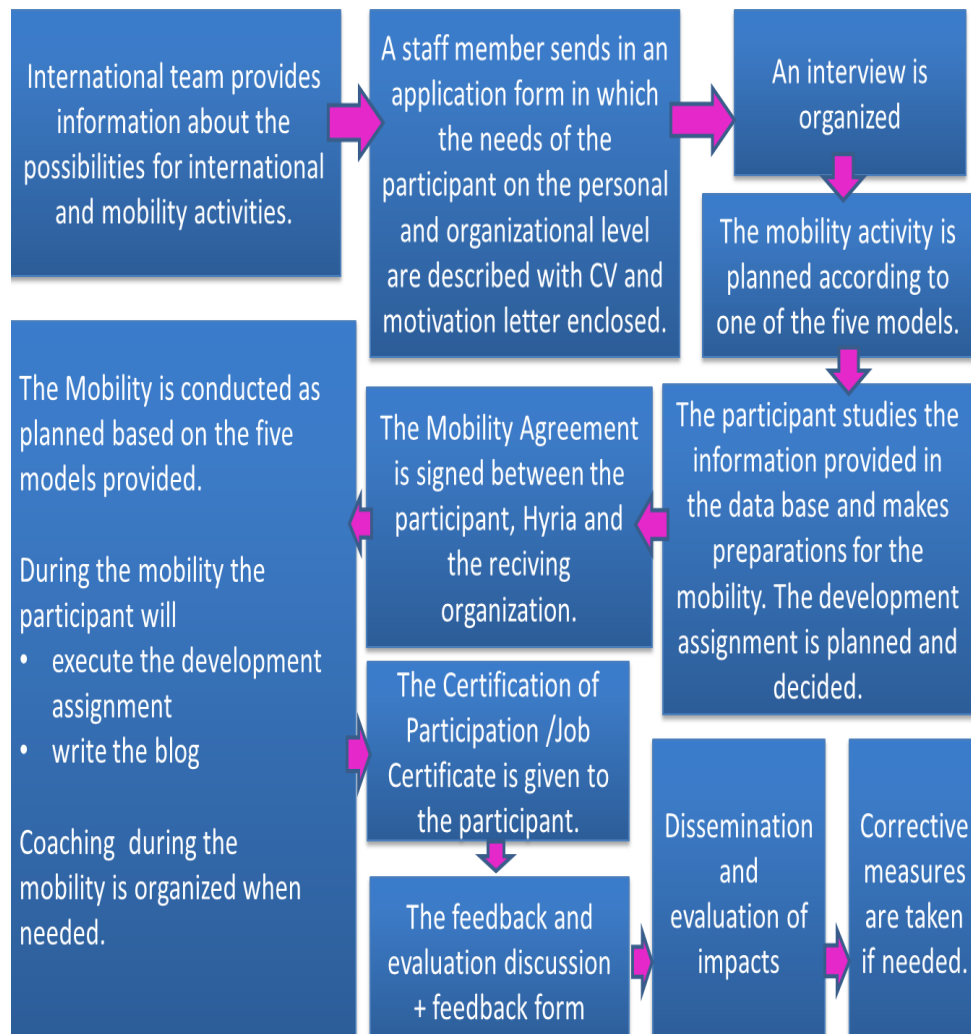


Figure 2 The procedure of staff mobility in Hyria.

5.1 Application and selection

The application and selection phase is the first one of the staff mobility procedure. The selection as well as the application both start from the initiative of the participant, but in the collaboration with the department she or he is representing. All the forms and instructions for the application are to be published in the intranet of Hyria. Also informing staff about the mobility possibilities will mainly happen in this forum or at the organization's events.

All the grants will be awarded by application. There will be a form for this purpose, also published in the website. In the form the applicant should express his or her motivation towards the activity and explain shortly how it will help him or her to improve his or her internationalization competences. If possible, the mobility activity should be planned in one's development discussion with one's supervisor and it should be a part of one's individual plan of development.

Because the mobility activities have to be planned carefully and in good time together with the receiving organization, there will be a deadline for the applications. This deadline will be four months prior the planned departure. The four months is chosen, because of the timetable of a school year. Since the length of one term is around 4 to 5 months it would be problematic, if a teacher's mobility activity would be planned at the time when all the curricula for the term already are set. The four months should give enough time for not only to the Heads of Education to plan their departments teaching hours, but also for the international team and for the receiving organization as well as the participant him- or herself to go through all preparative measures.

In the application phase the participant should also prepare a CV and a personal motivation letter in English or in other relevant language. In these documents the participant should express his or her motivation to the partner organization abroad and also one should be able to describe one's earlier experience and professional skills as well as personal objectives. These documents will be used when choosing a suitable partner for the particular activity.

After receiving the application together with the participant's CV and personal motivation letter the international team or the persons in charge for the staff mobility activities shall organize an interview for the applicant. This interview will be more like a discussion of its nature and will be conducted in order to assure that both the participant and Hyria as a sending organization have similar expectations for the activity. The most significant criteria for awarding the grant are the participant's own motivation and personal needs.

5.2 Pre-departure coaching and preparation

Since Hyria as an organization is looking for maximum impact from the staff mobility experiences, the experiences should be thoroughly prepared. In the new procedure there are five possible ways to carry out an experience. A staff member can choose the one that suits best not only to organizational objectives but also to his or her own ambitions. The intention of a mobility period is to provide new expertise, knowledge and skills to the participant. For the staff members are in an important role to promote student mobility and enhancing internationalization at home, it is crucial that they gain enough possibilities to develop their own internalization competences. The models represented in the figures 3 – 7 are created to help a staff member to apply for a grant from Hyria's mobility project and prepare the contents of the coming mobility period. The idea of creating these models is originally from the International Relations Coordinator of Hyria Education Tanja Korteharju, but they are formed as results of this Master's thesis.

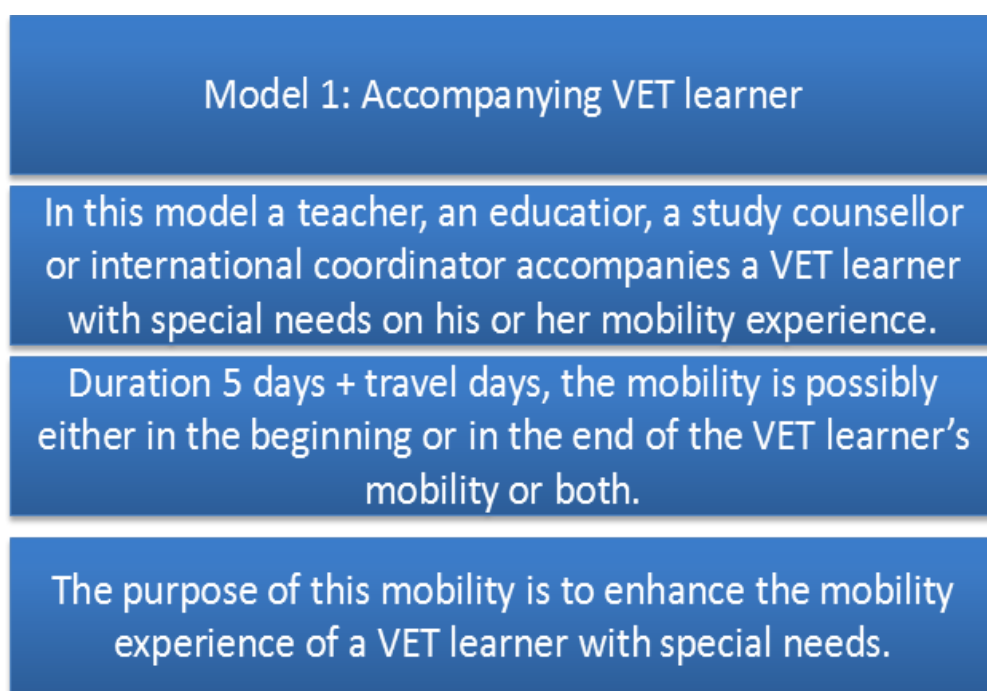


Figure 3 The planning model 1 of the personnel mobility.

In a figure 3, the first model for a mobility period is explained. This model is created in order to support student mobility. It is seen crucial in Hyria that also the VET learners with special needs or fewer opportunities are able to participate in mobility activities. In this model a staff member can accompany a student leaving for a mobility period. A staff member can attend to this activity if he or she has previous experience of mobility activities. The staff member acquires experience about student support in international environment.

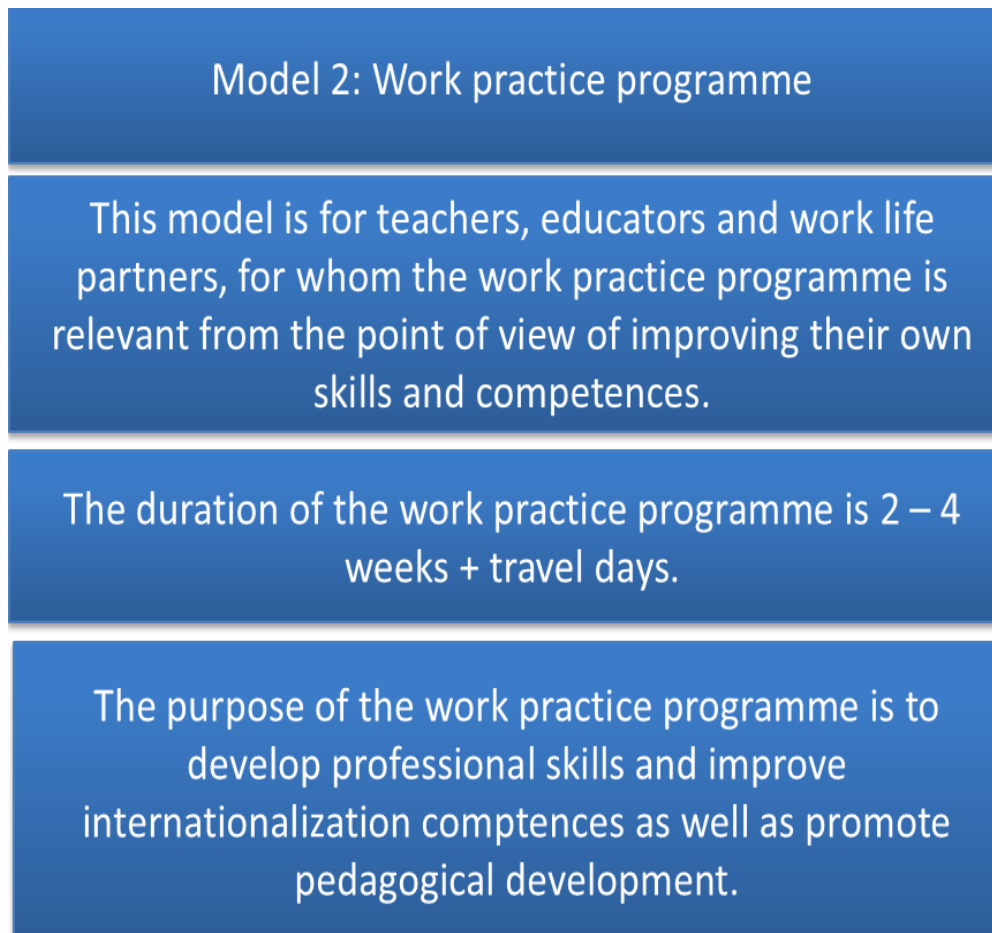


Figure 4 The planning model 2 of the personnel mobility.

As the model presented in the figure one, was created in order to support student mobility, the model 2 (Figure 4) is purely a staff mobility activity. The work practice programmes are planned in order to support an individual's professional skills and competences. The model 2 is open for the teaching staff as well as Hyria's work life partners who are involved in international mobility activities for example by providing work placements for in-coming international students.

Model 3: Study visit to an educational institute or a company, that hosts or could host VET learners' work placements or acts or could act as a partner organization.

This model is mentioned to international coordinators or working pairs.

A working pair can be formed by

- Two members of staff, out of whom the other one has earlier international experience and acts as a mentor for the other one.
- A staff member and a work life partner.

The international coordinators can participate individually.

The duration of the study visit is 3 – 4 days + travel days.

In the first place this model is a tool for international coordinators. With this model it is also easy to promote international activities to new participants. The purpose is to disseminate information about mobility possibilities, to enhance work life partners' participation and to find new partners for the student mobility. It is also possible to develop the existing partnerships.

Figure 5 The planning model 3 of the personnel mobility.

The model 3 – study visit (Figure 5) - is meant for all staff members, but especially for the international coordinators. It is supposed to be tool for the international coordinators as they try to find new partners and work placements for the VET learners. Also the study visit suits well for the staff members that are participating in a mobility activity for the first time. They can leave together with a more experienced colleague. A working pair can also consist of a staff member and a work life partner. The aim of

sending this kind of working pair, is to promote the mobility activities to the working life partners and potential employers of the VET learners in order to make the internationalization competences achieved through mobility experience more visible.

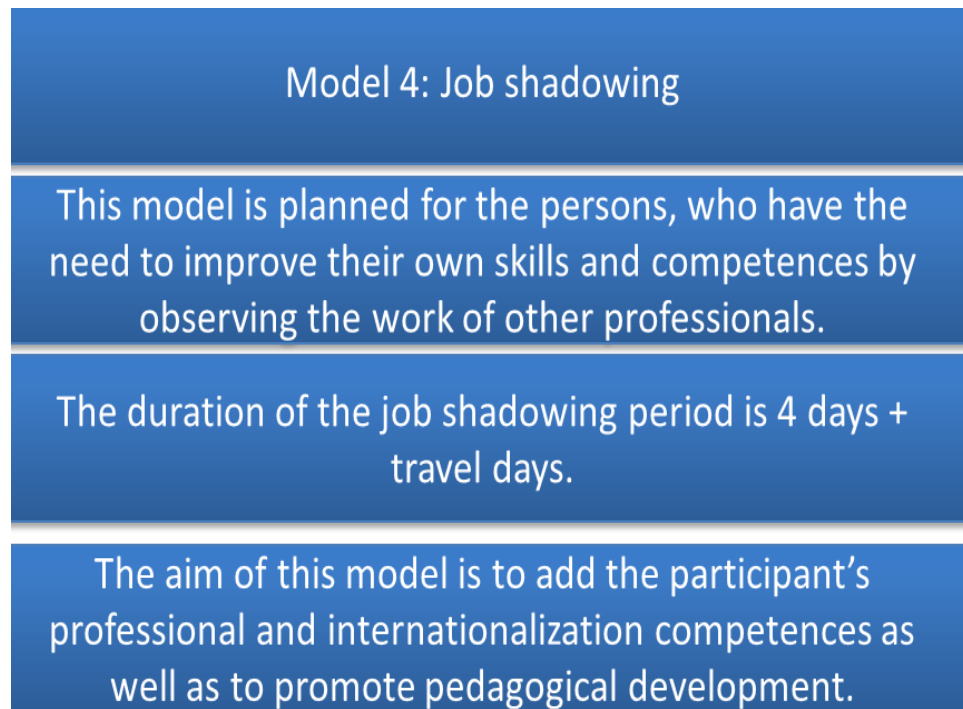


Figure 6 The planning model 4 of the personnel mobility.

Job shadowing is the model number 4 in the new procedure of staff mobility (Figure 6). This activity is meant for all staff members also within the administration. Many of the planned models concentrate in the teaching personnel and their skill development, but the staff in whole need these competences in order to promote pedagogical development of the organization. The member states of European Union are currently entering to the common European Qualification Framework and within the VET sector starting to measure their qualifications by using common European ECVET points instead of earlier credits. It seems obvious that for example in this situation the student administration staff have a lot to benchmark and to learn from each other. This activity is also meant to support these actions.

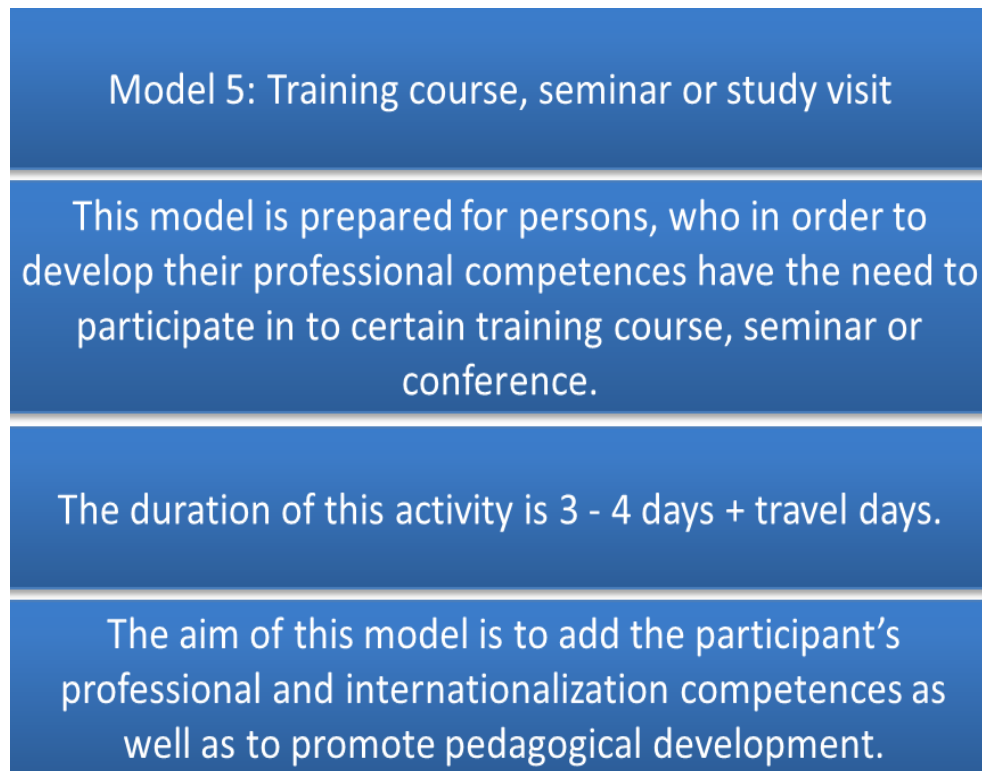


Figure 7 The planning model 5 of the personnel mobility.

In the figure 7, the model 5 – training course, seminar or study visit – the aim is to provide the staff with opportunities to attend professional events internationally. As the job market gets more and more globalized, the personnel also need to have up-to-date information about their area of expertise. This sometimes requires going abroad in order to attend the relevant events.

After the model of the mobility experience is chosen, the planning of the contents continues based on it. The reasons for choosing the specific model shall be stated. The model should support the targets and aims decided in the phase of application and selection.

Preparation for the mobility activity includes coaching before the departure. This however, received low appreciation from the participants earlier in this thesis work. Anyhow, it seems necessary from the point of view of the organization to organize some prior-departure coaching. For this purpose a data base or a web learning environment will be published. Main things that will be explained are the basics of the particular mobility project, basic information about Hyria and its international activities and strategic goals. Also there will be information about how to organize the practical matters such as accommodation and transport as well as how to improve one's language skills if needed.

About every mobility a Mobility Agreement or a document with similar contents, depending on the funding will be entered into. This agreement includes three bodies: the participant, the sending organization and the receiving organization. In the agreement the duration and the specific pro-

gram and objectives of the activity are described in detail. Also a contact person or a mentor in Hyria will be pointed to the participant. This person will keep contact with the participant and offer coaching during the mobility experience when needed. With this agreement all the three bodies involved in the mobility experience commit to the execution of the activity.

5.3 Beginning of the experience

When the mobility experience begins, all the details will be once more discussed together with the participant. The contact person in Finland and the participant together will agree about the means of communication and coaching during the mobility. It is important for the outcome that the participant is able to start conducting the planned development task or tasks as the mobility begins.

In this phase it is also important that all the practical matters are prepared well. These include the accommodation, contact information in the case of emergencies and what is important the economic factors. The salary and salary related questions of course, need to be discussed earlier, but there things like payments to the hosting organization as well as to the accommodator that need to be dealt with.

5.4 Reporting, coaching and evaluation during the mobility

During the mobility, the participant shall report his or her experiences and learning outcomes by writing a blog. The blog will be published in the intranet of Hyria and possibly also on the company's website or in the social media. A permission for publishing needs to be asked from the participant in written. The publishing of the blog will be done in order to disseminate the results, the gained information and good practises of the mobility projects.

If during the mobility the participant visits companies that act or could act as receiving organizations (employers) for VET learners' work placements, he or she should analyse the company a little. For this purpose there will be a form provided, so that the participant can observe and make notes about the company and whether it is suitable for the VET learners' mobility activities. Also it needs to be explained what kind of tasks the company could offer to a VET learner and from which study field they are prepared to receive learners. All the information that needs to be collected will be explained in detail in the form that will be provided to this purpose.

All the mobility activities should include a development task or assignment. Since in Finland and in Hyria the ECVET system is quite well studied and the implementation of it is in the good go, one of the important tasks for all the participants of the staff mobility activities is to spread these know-how. One should have enough knowledge about the system and also be able to share their skills and knowledge with the foreign part-

ners. Other possible development tasks conducted during the longer mobility periods should be linked to personal development objectives as well as pedagogical development.

For the development and other possible tasks the participant will receive coaching during the mobility if needed. The contact person in Hyria is available as agreed in the preparation phase. The participants that have not got earlier experience and are travelling as working pairs with more experienced partners, will also be coached by the mentor.

All the participants will receive a Certificate of Participation when they return. In the certificate will be marked the duration of the activity as well as shortly described the content of it. The certificates will be signed by the representative of the receiving organization abroad. These certificates the participants can use later when they need to describe their skills and competences. Also they can be used as confirmation documents for the founders.

5.5 After returning

After returning the mobility experience will be evaluated together with the contact person. The development tasks as well as other functions should provide an outcome that would be disseminated after the participant returns. One preferable way to do that is to organize a small-size return seminar for the participant's own department and invite work life partners as well as representatives from the international team or other staff members of Hyria in.

Feedback from the participant will be collected about all the mobility experiences. The mobility activities that are awarded from the Erasmus+ projects need to be reported by using the Mobility tool+ –portal after coming home. About the mobility activities that are funded by other means the feedback is to given in form of a report. All of the feedback is processed by the international team or the person in charge of the particular mobility. In case corrective measures to the process are needed, the international team will organize them without delay.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE ASPECTS

This Master's thesis project was conducted between the spring and autumn 2015. At this time, it has been important for the stakeholder Hyria Education to improve their mobility activities, especially in the sector of staff mobility. In the spring 2015 Hyria handed in an application for Erasmus+ VET Mobility Charter. For this purpose as well as in order to reach the strategic goals of the organization, a suggestion for a new staff mobility procedure was created as a contribution of this thesis project. The created new procedure cannot be seen as the procedure of Hyria, but it is a purely a suggestion for the organization's own development work within this area.

In the beginning of the project the goal for this Master's thesis was set. It was to find out how to improve personnel's internationalization competences through staff mobility activities. At first the operating environment was to be defined. The field of operating was already quite clear, for Hyria operates in the field of vocational education and training. This brought in the European and world wide aspects to this project as well as the aspect of the work life.

After looking into earlier research as well as the operating environment of Hyria Education, it seems clear that the internationalization is inevitable. Hyria Education has taken the step already in the area of student mobility as there is a centralized, clear and well-functioning procedure. As mentioned before internationalization is also a success factor defined in the strategy of the organization. It has become the time to develop personnel's internationalization competences and create a centralized procedure for that. In this thesis project the target was to find answer to the question of how to improve personnel's internationalization competences through staff mobility activities.

In order to find out how and whether the staff's internationalization competences can be developed through staff mobility activities, it became crucial to define what the internationalization competences that are required from a vocational institute's personnel are and how the organization can support and encourage its personnel to participate in the mobility activities. From this field interesting findings were made, since it soon appeared that the definition of internationalization competences is currently under progress. The traditional skill set is about to broaden. Quite yet the competences added to the traditional skill set of language skills, intercultural skills, broad-mindedness and tolerance, are not defined largely. For example the employers do not often recognize all the competences and skills gathered during international experience. There were only a few research projects to be found about the added skills. In this case, the traditional skill set however, was added with productivity, resilience and curiosity. Also it was seen important that the staff will be provided with possibilities to network and participate in work of multidisciplinary and diverse teams. The staff mobility activities should provide these possibilities. The interviews conducted for this thesis project showed that the participants also felt that they had received new competences through their mobility activities. They pointed out new competences such as working in diverse teams and multicultural environments and facing cultural differences. It also became clear that the competences can be developed through staff mobility

As Hyria's staff need to be able to provide the VET learners skills and competences their future employer would appreciate, it is crucial that the staff is able to participate in mobility activities and improve their own internationalization competences through the mobility. In order to establish learning environment that promote internationalization at home, the staff need to have internationalization competences. These competences can almost only be added through the mobility. Due to this, the contribution to

Hyria Education shall be a new procedure for staff mobility. The procedure includes tools for the organization to support and encourage the staff to participate in the mobility activities. By the time it seems that the staff members of Hyria Education are willing to participate, but are not aware of the possibilities.

Some of the mobility possibilities for the staff of Hyria Education are funded by the Erasmus+ programme. The programme is provided by the European Commission and it aims to the larger impact of mobility on the European level. This interest of the stakeholder was considered also in the new procedure created for Hyria. The impact requires dissemination of the learning outcomes acquired through the mobility activities. The both of them, the secondary data explored as well as the interviews conducted, pointed out, that the dissemination plays important role in the process.

For the process of creating new procedure for staff mobility in Hyria, persons who had participated in mobility activities were interviewed. This was done mainly in order to find out what the personnel's expectations for mobility projects could be and what they find to be hindering factors in the process. Since the staff mobility has not been systematically organized in Hyria Education yet, the interviewees were selected from similar organizations. In order to get perspective of Hyria Education to this matter, secondary data from the personnel survey from 2013 was used as comparative data. It was also investigated, how the impact of the mobility activities can be improved on the European, regional and individual level and how the outcomes of the activities could be disseminated. The dissemination is important for the organization's development and it promotes international activities also to those staff members who do not participate in mobility activities.

In to the new procedure, measures were planned in order to enhance internationalization at home and also to bring in new participants. Although it was shown, that travelling alone provides best opportunities for networking and learning to know new people, it is also shown that having a travel partner lowers the step to participation. There should be possibilities for staff members participating for the first time, to travel with a more experienced colleague. Leaving for a mobility experience for the first time should be supported also because it is seen important to encourage the whole staff to participate and not only to provide possibilities to those who already have international experience.

The staff mobility activities need to be well planned and target oriented, in order to become attractive for the staff. The survey, the interviews and earlier data all showed that the personnel expect to benefit from the mobility activity. The participants expect especially to acquire international networks and develop their professional competence as well as broaden their world view. They feel that after the mobility they can better face the challenges in a multicultural environment and support both in-coming and outgoing exchange students. Hyria Education should be able to help the participants in planning of the mobility period from a very phase. This means

that support needs to be offered already when a staff member comes up with an idea of participating. Enough information in a useful and easily available form needs to be provided. There also needs to be personnel attached to these supportive tasks.

The interviewees in this research as well as respondents in the earlier surveys conducted nationally and in Hyria Education, all underline the fact that a mobility activity should have useful contents. The strong connection between VET institute and the working life is also to be considered when planning the possible forms of the mobility activities. Enriching experiences have occurred within the non-formal program of the mobility periods, so the activities should also have room for that.

According to the findings the five models represented in this thesis report were created in order to support the personnel's mobility activities and to bring them to the more target oriented level. In the procedure a lot of pressure is put also to the reporting of the experiences. This is not only done for the dissemination purposes, but also in order to gather enough data about the experiences. This data shall be used for the further development of the suggested process.

In order to answer the main research question about developing personnel's internationalization skills, there were four sub questions first to be answered. As an answer to the sub question 1, what are the internationalization competences that the staff of Hyria Education will need? The answer was found to be, that the competences are similar to those Hyria Education needs to provide their students with. These competences were language skills, intercultural skills, broad-mindedness and tolerance added with productivity, resilience and curiosity. During the project it did become clear that those competences are to be gained through staff mobility. This was also an answer to the sub question 2, can the personnel gain the internationalization competences through staff mobility activities? What becomes to the sub question 3, what are the measures the organization should take to support the development of these competences, it was investigated thoroughly and answered by planning the new staff mobility procedure. In the procedure it is taken care about supportive measures that are needed as well as the step of participation is made as low as possible. This is done for example by creating the process simple and by allowing the first timers to travel with a more experienced partner. At the same time this partially answered also to the sub question 4: How can the organization encourage staff members to participate in staff mobility activities? Besides earlier mentioned, this is also taken to notice in the way by adding staff mobility directly to the staff member's annual working plan.

The main research question to be answered in the Master's thesis was: How to develop personnel's internationalization competences through staff mobility? In order to answer this question, the knowledge gained by answering the sub questions was brought together and a suggestion in a form of the new procedure for Hyria Education's staff mobility was created and represented. The procedure consist a process flowchart, in which

the whole process was described. The suggestion also included five different planning models to be used in the preparation phase of a mobility experience.

At this point, the new procedure is not yet tested. This is obviously next step that the organization needs to take. Also there will be still great work ahead, when all the needed forms are designed and the instructions and coaching material is created. It will also be interesting to follow or even conduct further research about the internationalization competences and skill creation.

The whole thesis project took time and as it now is finally in its end, it is already published that Hyria Education did receive the Mobility Charter it applied for in the spring. The staff mobility is included. The suggested procedure for staff mobility is to be developed further, but it is a part of the Hyria Education's mobility operations and is now to be used as a base for the staff mobility activities. From at least the point of view of the Master's thesis this is positive feedback.

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