

# INTERNATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILLS EUROPE

June-July 2019

**Dear Partners and Colleagues,**

The project “INTernational ENTrepreneurship Skills Europe” (INTENSE) was launched in September 2016. With this, our penultimate newsletter, we would like to inform you of its progress over the past few months.

We continue to look forward to working with you!

## **INTENSE – INTernational ENTrepreneurship Skills Europe**

- Project Background and Main Outputs

### **Project Activities**

- Presentation of Final Student Recommendations for SMEs @ HTW Berlin
- Full Run @ TUAS

### **Dissemination Activities**

- Sparkasse Client Event: 4<sup>th</sup> International Client Day, Potsdam
- Project Conference @ EFOS Osijek
- How can students boost their international experience? @ HU

## INTENSE – INTernational ENTrepreneurship Skills Europe

### Project Background

In September 2016 the Erasmus+ project “INTENSE – INTernational ENTrepreneurship Skills Europe” was launched. The project will run for a period of three years with a total budget of 405.991,00 EUR. INTENSE is an international project, implemented by the University of Applied Sciences (HTW) Berlin, Germany (project lead), the University of Applied Sciences (HU) Utrecht, Netherlands, University of Applied Sciences (TUAS) Turku, Finland, University Colleges Leuven Limburg (UCLL), Belgium, and the Faculty of Economics (EFOS) Osijek, Croatia.

### Project Summary and Main Outputs

INTENSE aims to promote the collaboration and innovative practices between Higher Education Institutions (HEI) and European Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME) in order to stimulate entrepreneurial behaviour, innovation skills and the internationalisation of students, HEI staff, and SMEs. As a result, it will increase the employability of HEI students and staff. The INTENSE project focuses on developing and implementing a teaching module on the internationalisation of SMEs for HEI students. Mixed teams of students, SMEs, and HEI staff from five EU countries help SMEs to internationalise their businesses and raise awareness for the importance of internationalisation in globalised work and learning environments. The project builds on previous experiences of the project partners and fosters an exchange of best practices between the partner HEIs.

### Project Components:

- Building a bridge between Higher Education Institutions, students, and entrepreneurs/SMEs
- Provide cross-border support to SMEs through student consultancies
- Making use of and further e-learning and blended learning
- Enhancing innovation, internationalisation, and entrepreneurial competences

### Outputs:

- Teaching module on the internationalisation of SMEs, including teaching manual
- INTENSE Tool Kit for SMEs
- Scientific publications on the INTENSE learning model
- Measuring innovation competences with the help of the FINCODA Barometer
- INTENSE policy recommendations

### Communication Channels:

- Website: <http://intense.efos.hr>
- Facebook: [www.facebook.com/Intenseproject](http://www.facebook.com/Intenseproject)
- Twitter: [@projectintense](https://twitter.com/projectintense)
- LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/13501961>

## Project Activities

### Presentation of Final Student Recommendations for SMEs at HTW Berlin

As the Semester at HTW Berlin drew to a close, it was time to come together for the presentation of the final results to the German companies by the student consulting teams of the semester. The final event was held on the 20th of June 2019 at the East German Savings Bank Association (OSV) in the heart of Berlin. The participants gathered in a bright and spacious room overlooking Berlin and refreshments were provided for everyone. INTENSE Project Manager Prof. Veit Wohlgemuth kicked off the afternoon when he welcomed all attendees and provided a brief overview on the agenda. Prof. Wohlgemuth also gave the audience some insight into the progress of the student consulting project this past semester and an overall current overview of the INTENSE Project. Next up were the student consulting teams with their presentations on the findings and recommendations, based on the research they have conducted over the past months. In total, three student teams delivered some very insightful and informative presentations on the prospect of internationalisation concerning the companies “VERMDOK”, “GWA” (Gesellschaft für Wärme und Auflagetechnik mbH), and “Newsenselab GmbH” for its first product, the “M-Sense” app. Following each presentation, each team had the opportunity to take questions and was able to talk about their personal experience working on the consulting projects as a team.

Following the student pitches, Veit Wohlgemuth wrapped up the event and the attendees were free to stay and mingle over coffee and tea, whilst enjoying the view over Berlin.



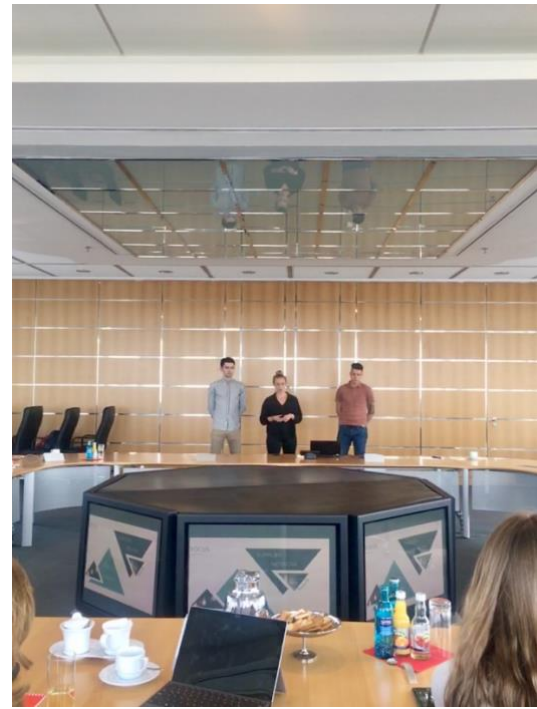
Student consulting team presenting its findings on M-Sense



Attendees getting together after the presentations



View over Berlin from the room in which the final event took place



Student consulting team presenting its findings on GWA

## Full Run at TUAS

The core of the INTENSE project is innovation, entrepreneurship, and internationalisation. One result of the project is publicly available teaching material that has been produced together with the partner universities. A part of this material is also the case studies that the participating students wrote related to the company assignments. Another result is the SME Toolkit that helps the SMEs when they start to plan internationalisation. This toolkit can be found on the INTENSE webpage and it is called Entrepedia: <http://intense.efos.hr/>

The full run of the INTENSE project was held in autumn 2018 in all five participating universities. Every partner had several company assignments from local companies. The student groups that worked with the assignments for these companies also helped the partner university students with their assignments. During the full run, the competences of the students and teachers were also measured with the FINCODA Innovation Barometer Assessment Tool. Part of the students also had a chance to participate in a 5-day face-to-face meeting in Berlin, where they worked together on the company assignments and gathered important information related to this project. At TUAS, we had a group of 26 Finnish students from four different degree programs: Business Logistics, Industrial Management and Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, and Sales. The students worked with assignments from five Finnish companies, but they also helped two Croatian, one Belgian, one German and one Dutch company to get market information on Finland. The basic process of the full run is described in Figure 1.

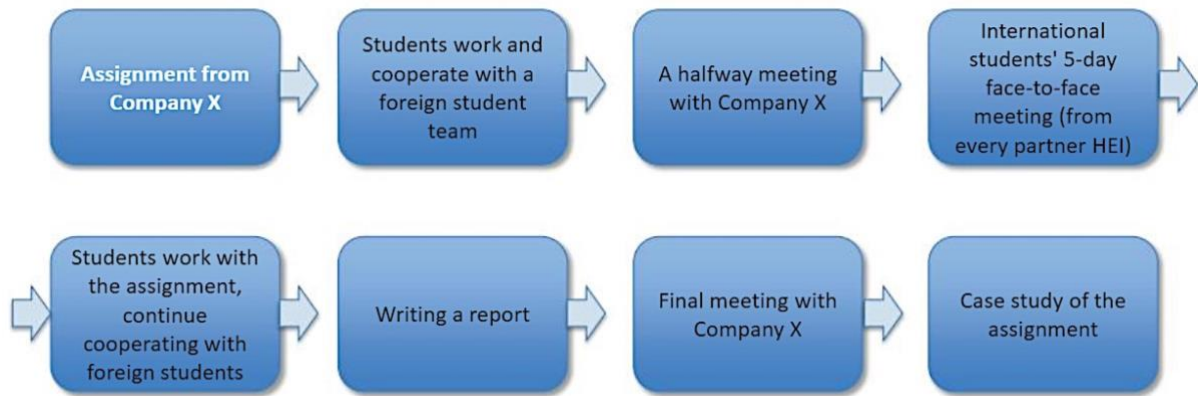


Figure 1

One of the Finnish companies that gave an assignment to the students was *Laitilan Wirvoitusjuomatehdas Oy*. The company is located 60 kilometres north of Turku. Since 1995, the company's business idea has been to make drinks of unparalleled quality and imagination. Their mission is to produce Laitila beverages to such a high standard that they will fulfil the customers' and consumers' desires for quality and imagination and meet government requirements. At the moment, the company produces beers, ciders, long drinks, sparkling wine drinks, and soft drinks. One of its products is the "Kukko" (Finnish for 'Rooster') beer that received the international gluten-free product trademark in 2005. The company's main research question for the student team was to study the markets of gluten-free products and especially beers in Germany. The contact person of the company was Export Sales Director Marko Mikkola.



Marko Mikkola, Export Sales Director of *Laitilan Wirvoitusjuomatehdas Oy*

I interviewed Marko Mikkola after the full run and wanted to know his opinion on the INTENSE project. His feedback was positive. He mentioned that he has got useful information related to the gluten-free in the German market. The company participated in the Grüne Woche Fair in Berlin in January 2019 and Marko Mikkola mentioned that the idea was triggered by this this project. The fair took place at the same time as the INTENSE consulting project and the theme was the same as in the company assignment. Now the company has begun to make plans for how to enter German markets with gluten-free Kukko beers; and thanks to this project, activities will start earlier than was planned.

Marko Mikkola also mentioned that we had a very concrete approach to this assignment and it was a positive thing. He also said that the company could participate in this kind of project in the future. The implementation was well organised as there was not too much strain on the company and there was a suitable amount of meetings with the company. During the international student week in Berlin, we also marketed its products together with 13 Finnish students when we had an Intercultural Evening event.



Finnish student consulting team and lecturers at the International Student Week Berlin held at HTW Berlin

Article written by Helena Rantanen, Senior Lecturer at TUAS

Article published

[https://issuu.com/turunamk/docs/journal\\_of\\_excellence\\_in\\_sales\\_1\\_20\\_c74b66c3500242?e=10981831/69524496](https://issuu.com/turunamk/docs/journal_of_excellence_in_sales_1_20_c74b66c3500242?e=10981831/69524496)

## Dissemination Activities

### Sparkasse Client Event: 4<sup>th</sup> International Client Day, Potsdam

On Thursday, June 6<sup>th</sup>, members of the HTW INTENSE Programme attended the Eastern Germany Sparkasse Association International Client Day. Many of Sparkasse's SME clients from around Brandenburg were in attendance and HTW Berlin had the privilege to discuss the INTENSE programme with numerous business leaders. The main item of attraction to the SMEs was the Cross-national Student Consultancy. Business cards were exchanged, and follow-up meetings have been successful in recruiting new, interested SMEs to partake in future INTENSE consulting projects. In fact, one company from the event has already signed up to participate in the Cross-national Student Consultancy Project for the upcoming semester.



INTENSE Project Coordinator Ryan Pearce  
and student assistant Maria Hollborn

### Project Conference at EFOS Osijek

On Wednesday, June 12, 2019, at the Faculty of Economics in Osijek, the final conference of the Erasmus + funded INTENSE project (International Entrepreneurship Skills Europe) was held. The project aimed at promoting the internationalisation of small and medium-sized enterprises and the development of students' entrepreneurial skills. In addition to the students and professors of the Faculty of Economics in Osijek, four other European universities participated in the project: University of Applied Sciences (HTW) Berlin, Germany, the University of Applied Sciences (HU) Utrecht, Netherlands, University of Applied Sciences (TUAS) Turku, Finland, University Colleges Leuven Limburg (UCLL), Belgium.

During the project presentation the following project results were presented: an Internationalisation Guide, Steps Towards Internationalisation, INTENSE Tools for SMEs, the INTENSE Teaching Manual and Recommendations for the internationalisation of SMEs. The final conference of the project brought together representatives of all partner organisations, students, teachers, and external stakeholders: entrepreneurs, representatives of small and medium-sized enterprises, representatives of local and regional government, and also participants of the International Erasmus Week at the University of Josip Juraj Strossmayer in Osijek.

As an important part of the conference, one of the Cross-national Student Consultancy teams presented its consulting report for the internationalisation of Agristar (a tea producer from Osijek, Croatia).

After the conference, project partners held a project meeting during which the task for the finalisation of this project were given.



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union





Attendees at Project Conference



INTENSE Project Manager Tine Lehmann of HTW Berlin presenting the INTENSE Toolkit



The INTENSE Team; Professors from HTW Berlin, UCLL, HU, EFOS Osijek, TUAS



## Tasting beer and boosting your international experience?

How can students boost their international experience? Well, there are various ways to do this, travelling is for sure the most popular one amongst students. However, the five INTENSE Project partner institutions offer another way, through education.

First of all, the educational institutions are offering the students state-of-the-art education, courses on entrepreneurship, and internationalisation. Students apply theoretical concepts in case studies. However, the most challenging and unique opportunity for students in this programme is to work for real life companies in international student teams. How is this organised?

Each university proposes a few consulting projects, in which companies ask for advice on their internationalisation strategies. To make it clear, here are a few examples:

- How can a Dutch cookie brand expand its market into Finland?
- What are the options for a Finnish butterfly feeder in the Netherlands?
- Are there partners in the German market for a Dutch consulting firm?
- What is the best way for a Belgian beer brand to enter the German and Dutch markets?
- What are the possibilities for Croatian shoes to get a foot on the ground in the Netherlands?



Photo: Shutterstock

Students are delighted to work for a beer brand or a cookie brand. In addition, of course the projects start with tasting the products. Students from two countries work together on the project. For example, a team from Belgium works together with a Dutch team on the beer project. An important aspect of the project is to get in touch with potential distribution partners. Students need to visit beer shops, specialty beer stores and specialty beer bars. Not a bad job for a student. This fieldwork is combined with research on the amount of beer consumed, the trends within the specialty beer market, and the competition in the specialty beer market. An important element is to find out what trade shows are relevant for the beer company. The efforts from both the Belgian and the Dutch students result in a specific advice on how the beer brand could enter the Dutch market.

What really adds value to this project was the project meeting that we organised in Berlin. All five universities were present, during a full week in Berlin, at HTW with several student teams. Students could physically work together and continue the work that they started virtually. According to the students, that really made a huge difference. Luckily, we also had a few companies present at the meeting. Tutors from the universities were guiding the student work.

The participating companies' reactions are very positive: the students provide hands-on relevant information, they come with a concrete list of potential partners, they contribute to the internationalisation strategy and most of all, they are very creative in finding vlogger and social influencers that could promote the companies abroad. The student reactions were not any less enthusiastic: "I never expected that I could come up with real suggestions for the company and I

was very happy that the company proposed me to continue working for them”. The project is a great occasion to network and to create a European network between students, lecturers, tutors, and SME entrepreneurs.



Photo: Shutterstock

What else does the INTENSE Project consist of? To increase entrepreneurial, internationalisation, and innovation skills of SMEs, the INTENSE partners also developed an entrepreneurial toolkit for SMEs. SMEs are not only able to receive tailor made advice on their internationalisation policy from student teams; they can also use a Toolkit with information, links, and tools related to internationalisation. In order to offer state-of-the-art teaching material to students, the five educational institutions exchange and develop teaching material on internationalisation. The INTENSE Project is an open source programme, promoting open access. This means that the project outcomes can be utilized free-of-charge by any interested university.

Article written by Annette Ammeraal, Senior Lecturer at HU Utrecht

Article published

[https://issuu.com/turunamk/docs/journal\\_of\\_excellence\\_in\\_sales\\_1\\_20\\_c74b66c3500242?e=10981831/69524496](https://issuu.com/turunamk/docs/journal_of_excellence_in_sales_1_20_c74b66c3500242?e=10981831/69524496)