

[National Assembly for Wales](#)

[Enterprise and Business Committee](#)

[Inquiry into EU funding opportunities 2014–2020](#)

Evidence from The European Centre for Training and Regional Co-operation
(ETARC) – EUO 02

ECTARC's involvement in LLP and Europe Direct from 2003 – 2014

We have been involved in the LLP (Life-long learning programme) since 1988, formerly Petra, then Leonardo. Since 2003 we have sent approximately 100 participants per year from Wales with funding from the EU Leonardo programme which we have successfully bid for each year and the Welsh Government have provided the co-funding to cover ECTARC's administration/marketing and participants preparation costs of £100,000.00 per annum. The programme involves a thirteen week period abroad, three weeks of language tuition followed by a 10 placement in a field of work connected to their studies in Spain, Italy France or Germany. We recruit, select and send a cohort of participants in January, April, June and September and manage the programme from inception to completion. We recently undertook a tracking survey with ex-participants to ask some detailed information on Where are you now? Did Leonardo contribute to your current employment etc., with some interesting results. We have also carried out a number of case studies which have provided invaluable information for ourselves and the funding bodies. (copy attached)

Three years ago Leighton Andrews, Education Minister visited ECTARC and was most impressed with the work that we are doing and the commitment by the employer engagement and beneficiaries to this project. He mentioned the fact that under the WG current spending review it was going to be difficult to continually co-fund this project and that ECTARC should be looking to be part of a bigger initiative like the HEFCW GO Wales programme. I would agree that the project fits very well into a Graduate work placement international programme, which is designed to support the deployment development and retention of graduates high level skills, knowledge and innovative potential in businesses in Wales. We believe it is particularly important to the economic, social and cultural development of Wales that individuals here in Wales have the opportunity to access this programme. We consider that the benefits are very clear in terms of personal and language development and employability. GO Wales already has at its core a long standing and well respected placement programme, and ECTARC could provide the international dimension to the programme. The EU Life-long learning programme is an important means of strengthening and improving the offer for graduates in Wales, further enhancing their employability and improving their skills sets in line with employers' expectations.

A meeting took place between a Welsh Government official, HEFCW and ECTARC to discuss the potential and it was agreed that HEFCW would draw up a contract to support the

programme for one year initially with domestic funding of 100K, providing ECTARC were successful in drawing down the EU funding in May, 2011. The funding was confirmed by ECORYS the National Agency in November 2011 and ECTARC was also awarded a Mobility Certificate (one of only five in the UK). A contract was awarded by HEFCW to ECTARC to cover the co-funding element of the project for a period of three years.

It is interesting to note that for the 120 funded places per year we have approximately 350 applications per year.

Welsh partners.

Our partners in Wales, include all the HE's, the Erasmus Coordinators, or Heads of Language Depts., and Careers Wales; GO Wales Co-ordinators, HEFCW. The PDA Team (City and Guilds Professional Development Award) Swansea University.

International partners

We have established partners with the Generalitat de Catalunya, ONECO Seville, Spain G.E.B. Berlin, Albeit und Leben Hamburg, Germany, INSUP Bordeaux, AEF Academia di Firenze, Florence.

500 Europe Direct Centres across Europe.

The total amount of funding received from the EU Life-long Learning programme from 2003– 2014:

£2,800,969.29

The total amount of co-funding received from WG/HEFCW:

£981,280.54

which has enabled almost under 1000 recent graduates from Wales or studying in Wales to benefit from a 13 week language and work experience programme in either Spain, France Italy and Germany.

Other European Funding

We were granted a contract to host a Europe Direct Centre in 2007 – 2014.

We have received **£192,446.66** in funding from the EU

And co-funding of **£135,456.00** from local authority contributions

Future We intend to make an application for the new Erasmus + programme in March, under KA1 Mobility for 120 Individuals in the HE sector including recent graduates. It is our intention to apply for a Mobility Placement Consortium with other HE institutions, focussing on STEM and Entrepreneurship graduates. Co-funding for the project is currently being

explored, (as the WG have decided at a meeting in December with HEFCW that they had no more co-funding available for ECTARC) without this element it will be impossible to run the project as the funding in the Erasmus + programme is far less than the LLP programme.

The sustainability of the project is only possible with co-funding from another source.

A copy of our latest newsletter and tracking survey attached.

Sharon Thomas
Executive Director
ECTARC – The European Centre for Training and Regional Co-operation
Parade Street
Llangollen
Denbighshire
North Wales LL20 8RB
www.ectarc.com

21 January, 2014