



TANDEM

TANDEM PROJECT OVERVIEW

TANDEM stands for talent and extended mobility in the European innovation union.

The 2 year project (October 2012 - 2014) combines Dual Career (DC) and Recruiting Offices with the Euraxess Service Centres (ESC). The team members from different academic institutions in Europe will strengthen ESC activities by adding a complimentary focus on DC and integration solutions.

TANDEM will:

- Analyse basic requirements for the successful implementation of DC and integration initiatives.
- Develop a systematic and modular approach to DC services.
- Provide insight on brain circulation by determining if DC and integration initiatives can influence this aspect positively.

TANDEM Team:

- Centre for Research and Technology Hellas/ CERTH (Greece)
- ETH Zurich (Switzerland)
- Slovak Academic Information Agency/SAIA (Slovak Republic)
- University of Copenhagen (Denmark)
- University of Tartu (Estonia)

IDENTIFIED COUNTRY ISSUES ESTONIA

In 2013, around 60 international employees and their partners living in Estonia responded to the Tandem survey. The focus of the survey was to explore obstacles and strengths international researchers and their families face, while living and working in Estonia.

* Points below are a summary of key responses from the survey

- **Language and Culture** issues rank as a major obstacle faced by 45% of internationals. It was pointed out that there are not enough language and culture courses and the ones that exist are not flexible (usually no distance learning, week-end learning, no summer courses, no Skype courses).
- **Housing** is another obstacle faced by 18% of respondents. It was said that not enough information on housing and accommodation was available.
- **Administrative and Bureaucratic Issues** are the next big obstacle that 13% of foreigners face, the biggest problem is that information is not available in a desired language.
- **Employer and working environment** related problems were mentioned by 13% of respondents. It was said that some of the information at work is only in Estonian and that foreign employees are not included in the decision-making processes.

Recommendations

- Based on the results of the survey, the TANDEM project developed a modular system which allows Universities and research institutions to introduce new measures (or adapt existing measures) to reduce obstacles and create an easier transition for internationals and their families in each specific country.
- The strength of the modular system is that it is adaptable to each institution's mobility situation. Each institution will have to make a self-evaluation of it's current needs and services so that, the offered modules can be used in an efficient and useful way.
- The TANDEM project defined a set of modules (BRICKS) that includes both DC and integration measures which institutions can work with. The modules are further defined by adding several criteria (e.g. resources, target group, importance).
- Each institution will be able to introduce and use these modules based on the measures which fit their specific country situation.
- Example of modules: Welcome Package, CV check, Information in English, Support with Visa, Buddy System, Promotion of Euraxess Job Portal, Language Training, Volunteering, Newsletter etc...

Action Plan

The survey showed that in Estonia, the main issues international researchers and their families face during the first months of arrival, can be divided into three categories:

1. *Practical issues (administration, housing, information available in English, etc.)*
2. *Social issues (networking, finding friends, etc.),*
3. *Cultural issues (language, cultural differences, etc.).*

To tackle these issues the following modules will require special attention to ensure improvements:

1.
 - Assistance with practical and administrative issues
 - Websites (how to...) and forms in English
 - Support with Visa/Permit/Contract
2.
 - Welcome event
 - Social/Spouse programme, mentor system
 - Social media groups/networking
3.
 - Language training
 - Cultural awareness training

More information about TANDEM:

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