

eduGI.net – report June 2003

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eduGI.net was initiated by ifgi in October 2001, funded by the University of Münster until March 2003. The report summarizes the results according to the eduGI.net objectives. And it suggests options how to proceed.

Objective 1 Enhance students mobility

The mobility measures base on the EC ERASMUS program. The eduGI.net partners signed a multi-lateral agreement for 2002-06 enabling ERASMUS funding. In addition, all partners agreed on a students exchange in ongoing research projects. Project work will be certified by the sending institutions as regular courses in their respective program of studies. The project work can be done in English language, which avoids language barriers.

The following mobility measures have been or will shortly be executed:

Sending university	Receiving university	Number of students	Time
U Lisbon, TU Vienna, NTU Athens, U Zürich, U Klagenfurt, U Zaragoza, U Warshaw, U Concepción (Chile), U Cagliari (Italy)	U Münster	10	Summer School 2002
U Münster	Jaume I	2	Winter semester 2002/03 summer semester 2003
NU Lisbon	U Münster	2	Summer semester 2003
U Münster	NU Lisbon	2	Winter semester 2003/04
Jaume I	U Münster	1	Winter semester 2003/04
U Harakopio	TU Vienna or U	2	Winter semester

	Münster		2003/04
U Münster	U Utah (ISAP program)	3	Spring semester 2003
U Pernambuco, U Concepción, INPE, TI Toluca, Jaume I, UN Lisbon, U Münster	Jaume I, UN Lisbon, U Münster	14	Summer semester 2004

Conclusions and further cooperation

The students' feedback showed that the mobility measures are appreciated. For the students, international experience is valuable for their careers. Universities profit by personal contacts and supporting their respective efforts in internationalization; e.g., receiving foreign students enhanced the motivation of ifgi students for communication and courses in English language. Especially ifgi students profited by the agreement of working in ongoing research projects. The four ifgi students, received by Jaume I and NU Lisbon, can only participate in the exchange program due to avoiding language barriers by English communication in the projects.

We suggest a further enhancement of mobility measures. We think a more intense advertisement for the eduGI.net exchange at every partner university should be sufficient for this purpose.

Objective 2 Enhance teachers mobility

The teachers' mobility within eduGI.net also focuses on the ERASMUS program. In addition, U Münster executed a bilateral ISAP project with U Utah.

The following mobility measures have been or will shortly be executed:

Sending university	Receiving university	Number of teachers	Time
TU Vienna, U Zürich, U Harakopio, Intergraph Europe	U Münster	5	Summer School 2002
U Münster	U Klagenfurt	2	Winter semester 2001/02
U Klagenfurt	U Münster	1	Summer semester 2002
U Münster	U Klagenfurt	2	Summer semester 2003

U Harakopio	U Münster	1	Summer semester 2003
TU Vienna	U Münster	1	Summer semester 2003
U Münster	U Klagenfurt	1	Winter semester 2003/04
U Utah (Isap program)	U Münster	1	Summer semester 2003
U Münster	U Utah (Isap program)	2	Winter semester 2002/03
U Utah (Isap program)	U Münster	1	Winter semester 2003/04
U Pernambuco, U Concepción, INPE, TI Toluca, Jaume I, UN Lisbon, U Münster	Jaume I, UN Lisbon, U Münster	7	eduGl.LA Summer school and training program, summer semester 2004

Conclusions and further cooperation

The program sponsors teaching units with a minimum of one week and eight lessons, which proved to be an ideal time for visiting a foreign university. The effort for preparing lessons is low, because teaching similar courses as at home will be a new and welcome course of the receiving university. Besides international experience, teachers and institutes profit by establishing personal contacts for educational and research purposes.

The mobility measures are organizationally assured until 2006 by a multi-lateral agreement. We suggest a further enhancement of mobility measures. We think a more intense advertisement for the eduGl.net exchange at every partner university and using the "exchange bursary" should be sufficient for this purpose.

Objective 3 Execute summer schools/training programs

The first eduGl.net summer school was hosted by U Münster in 2002. Fifteen students of nine countries and seven teachers of five countries participated. Students evaluated the summer school with 1, 5 (on a scale from 1 = very good to 5 = bad). Teachers' feedback supported the students' evaluation results.

In 2003, eduGl.net joined forces the Vespucci Summer School (www.vespucci.org). eduGl.net supported the Vespucci initiative, and, in return, received discounts for participating students.

Conclusions and further cooperation

The first eduGl.net summer school was successful. Students and teachers appreciated the pilot summer school. In addition, the summer school turned out as a pool of communication and contacts and resulted many initiatives for further work. Thus, an eduGl.net summer school could be the most convenient and effective means for enabling future cooperation.

The Vespucci summer school targets somewhat different objectives: a high-level research environment, where eduGl.net networking can hardly be realized.

Subject of further discussion is the future of eduGl.net summer schools. Gl summer schools serve a limited market. Continuing with both could cause a decreasing interest, participation and quality. Combining both initiatives is an option, but could cause problems because of different objectives and audience.

Objective 4 Harmonize curricula, credit transfer systems

Curricula and credit transfer systems differ widely. Even the European "standard" ECTS (European Credit Transfer system) differs widely, e.g., one ECTS credit point varies from 10 to 40 hours of students' workload. The common issue of all partners is the quantification of workload, which enables the transformation of "standards" and the vice-versa certification of students' courses.

The interest of cooperation in curriculum harmonization focused on the German speaking partners. Due to political constraints, they have to introduce bachelor and master degrees shortly. The discussions with these partners gave some input to the bachelor and master programs currently introduced at U Münster. Due to national and local constraints, a wider cooperation could not be realized.

Conclusions and further cooperation

Due to the partners' interest and constraints, we currently do not suggest further actions. There might be an option for participating in the ERASMUS World program, due January 2004. The program funds multilateral master programs of at least three European partners in combination with mobility measures with Latin-America, Africa, or Asia. The program is well funded and prestigious. However, it requires vice-versa certification of Master programs and degrees.

Objective 5 Exchange of teaching modules

U Münster had presented a draft proposal for the EC program ERASMUS-MOD. The partner interest was low. At AGILE 2003, U Münster presented a paper (Brox, C., 2003) "Discussion Paper: Exchange of internet-based GI teaching modules", AGILE conference 2003. <http://www.agile-online.org/>. Based on this paper, a sub-working group of the AGILE Education WG was created. The goal is to apply for an EC project for European exchange of e-Learning modules.

Conclusions and further cooperation

Currently, we do not suggest further actions in eduGI.net.

Objective 6 Enhance cooperation of European and non-European GI institutes

U Münster initiated an extension of eduGI.net towards Latin-America and USA. The cooperation of three eduGI.net partners (U Jaume I, NU Lisbon, U Münster) and four Latin-American partners (U Concepción, Chile; INPE, Brazil; U Pernambuco, Brazil; IT Toluca, Mexico) was approved in a one-year kick-off project within the EC ALFA program (see www.eduGI.net/eduGI.LA/). Project start is Jul 1, 2003. Objectives are similar to the ones of eduGI.net.

From August 2002 to May 2003 U Münster executed an ISAP project with U Utah, USA. Contents were students and teachers mobility measures, as well as initiating an organizational framework for future cooperation. One of the outcomes was a draft proposal and a consortium of three eduGI.net partners (NTU Athens, TU Vienna, U Münster) and five US partners (U Maine, U Buffalo, U San Diego, U Minnesota, U Utah) for an EC/US Cooperation project. The application failed in March 2003 due to organizational impediments of the US partners. An application in March 2004 is foreseen.

Conclusions and further cooperation

The interest of eduGI.net partners in international contacts and cooperation is high. However, impediments even of funded projects are high. International cooperation needs resources of personnel, which is not sufficiently covered. It faces organizational impediments, e.g., the minimum exchange of five students in the EC/US cooperation program. And it requires financial resources, e.g., the 25 % network contribution with ALFA and EC/US cooperation.

The ALFA project contains a deliverable of a follow-up proposal. That could either be a follow-up ALFA project or a proposal for ERASMUS World. The ALFA partner consortium is ideal for an application in ERASMUS World and the funding is attractive. But it faces organizational impediments, e.g., the development of a common master program.

U Münster will keep track on the applications in ERASMUS World and EC/US cooperation. In addition, the option of a research workshop organized by U Utah/U Münster currently is evaluated.

We suggest to the partners looking for additional funding opportunities for international cooperation.

Objective 7 Create an organizational framework for cooperation

Until March 2003, the organizational framework consisted in coordination by U Münster, funded by U Münster. Network meeting took place during other events (AGILE conference, summer school). From the beginning, eduGI.net targeted additional funded project for cooperation in GI Science education. During this period, eduGI.net targeted the following options:

- ?? Students mobility, based on ERASMUS multi-lateral agreement (successful)
- ?? Teachers mobility, based on ERASMUS multi-lateral agreement (successful)
- ?? ALFA project (successful)
- ?? EC/US cooperation project (partly successful, application targeted in March 2004)
- ?? E-Learning project (not successful, U Münster will keep track on it within AGILE education working group)

Conclusions and further cooperation

The ERASMUS program provides a long-term organizational framework for students and teachers mobility measures. Effort is low. As for required actions, we think a more intensive advertisement sufficient.

For some of the eduGI.net partners, ALFA provides a medium-term framework for cooperation. Options are a prolongation of ALFA, the EC/US cooperation program, and ERASMUS World.

However, after the initiation period funded by U Münster, new organizational and funding models have to be discussed. One action is to screen national and international funding opportunities, inform vice-versa about planned and ongoing projects and initiatives, and ask partners for participation. It is a subject of discussion, if eduGI.net needs formal ways for communication and cooperation in future, e.g., email-list or meetings as side-events of conferences and workshops.

Conclusions

eduGI.net pushed the work on the seven objectives to their organizational and financial limits. Within all objectives we have reached preliminary results and conclusions. Students

and teachers mobility measures got a sustainable basis. Cooperation in curriculum harmonization and ECTS is finished for the moment. Exchange of e-Learning modules and international cooperation with non-European partners is running or initiated. An extension of eduGl.net to Latin-America is running (ALFA), to US is initiated (EC/US cooperation program).

Subject of further discussion is the future of eduGl.net summer schools and – after termination of U Münster funding - the future tools of communication and cooperation.

Action items

Our suggestions for partner actions are:

- 1 Advertisement for students mobility
- 2 Enhanced use of "Exchange bursary" for teachers' mobility
- 3 Discuss future eduGl.net summer schools
- 4 Screen funding opportunities for international cooperation and suggest new ideas for cooperation
- 5 Discuss organizational framework of further network cooperation and communication