INTEGRATED REPORT
CASE STUDY

Due to the nature of topic and the high degree of change necessary finding case studies became a rather sensitive area. It was definitely a challenge for the research team to find relevant case studies.

First a basic framework for case studies was develop to give a better guideline of the kind of information that has to be collected to be relevant for the VIRQUAL research. It was decided that both successful and failed projects should be considered because the case studies should give a balanced view of practical reality. The data sources were determined with the primary data sources being official project documentation, evaluation reports and dissemination materials and secondary data sources as being interviews with the key actors or with the target group of the project. The analysis should focus on analyzing strengths and weaknesses and their relevance for the VIRQUAL project. A structured list of parameters was proposed that is also reflected in the short overview of the case study results in the following table.

The following table gives a short overview of the case studies and its key parameters. The full detail case studies can be found in the annex.

This comparison shows that the project team gathered case studies of different type and nature. It is now possible to think about how to approach the topic in a more beneficial way and where to continue the research. The SWOT analysis allows us to follow up information about key factors, weaknesses and opportunities of the case studies in an efficient way.

Project	Re.Vica Project	E-MOVE	IBA/ING	ECODESIGN
Link	www.revica.europace.org http://virtualcampuses.eu	www.eadtu.nl/e-move/	http://iba.dit.upm.es	www.ecodesign.at/ulg
Time frame	Oct 07 – Oct 09	concluded Dec 2007	start 1997/1998, continuously running	Start summer 2004, held in the semester 2004/05 and 2005/06.
Type of project	Repository, Evaluation	Operational model of VM Documentation	Course for students	Blended Learning Course Continued education
Short project info	Repository and evaluation of cross-institutional Virtual Campus initiatives of the past decade within higher education at European, national and regional levels	Development, Testing and best practice of a coherent and operational model for the implementation of VM schemes in higher education	Online Course for students held by three Universities [UPC, UPM; UPV] about the topic Broadband Internet. The course is already running for 10 years.	Interdisciplinary course held at the Vienna University of Technolgy – multidisciplinary across departments and across university boundaries in cooperation with the ETH Zürich. One-semester postgraduate course for "Sustainable Product Development" held in German.
ECTS	Not applicable	Not applicable	6 ECTS	12 ECTS
Project goal	Identification of relevant parameters and success factors of Virtual Campuses within Europe and internationally	Identification of critical success factors of virtual mobility and development of recommendations and procedures for wide scale applications of VM	Design a cooperative and collaborative work environment for students and teachers of the telecommunications engineering studies	Incorporate all benefits of e-Learning with great content for professionals to stay up-to-date on a new topic in their field while working.

Main outcome	Comprehensive recent study available to the public since June 2009	Provision of a set of guidelines and tools available for developing and integrating a wide variety of VM study schemes in form of a library and information support based on 3 models of VM: the virtual stay abroad, virtual seminar, virtual campus	Ongoing successful course for students run and operated across three universities. Best Practice Example	The course is a great example of a highly interesting course at the top of industry needs implemented, using virtual mobility together with the advantages of occasional face-to-face meetings.
Strength	Incorporatation of input from all different interest groups: management bodies, relevant networks, students, policy makers and a range of experts at a global as well as European level.	Identification of barrier of VM: legislation and public perception, reluctance in adopting ECTS and the Diploma Supplement, study fees / missing subsidies, language skills, access to content and study material and provision of cross border student support	Experience with running online courses for students, content richness for the topic Understanding that institutional support is key factor for the success	Great content, learning environment, teaching method and course format. Excellent feedback from participants and their employers. All advantages of e-Learning were successfully integrated into the course.

Weakness	Qualification framework is not clearly taken into account	Further collection of information need to really understand the 3 models of VM and their key factors	Unexplained student absenteeism not yet analyzed in detail	Key issues that have not be taken into account are institutional agreements, credit transfers, legal issues, course fees and language requirement. Personal initiative could not overcome the lack of institutional support and financial support for a continuous operation.
Project relevance	Participating members and advisory board experts are key people in the field of e-Learning in the world Interesting for disseminating VIRQUAL project information		Example of institutional cooperation and collaboration for the benefits of students in the form of a successfully running course	The course project can be considered as a failure but is also an example of a high quality course. The reason are administrative shortcomings that go beyond the course content itself and lead to the fact that the course is not being offered any more.
Further action	Analyze the repository in more depth to extract key factors that can then be related to the EQF	Get more information about the key factors that can then be related to the EQF		

This comparison shows that the project team gathered case studies that are of different type and nature. It is now possible to learn about how to approach the research for case studies and identified key factors. It is possible to define how the research can be continued.

To give the reader a meaningful overview about the case studies that were collected the table included following factors as a describing parameter summarizing the information of the detailed case study.

First the basic data of the project is listed: project name and link for a fast web lock-up. Since we are working in the very fast changing environment of Virtual Mobility / e-Learning the time frame gives an indication how recent and therefore usable the project materials are for the VIRQUAL project. The short project info informs the reader about the project in only a few words.

The type of project characterizes the case studies based on their prevailing nature of the project in respect of outcome and usability for further research. This parameter is a very important one that is input for determining possible further actions for VIRQUAL. The values repository / evaluation, operational model of VM in the form of a project documentation and two online respectively blended learning courses occur. Since the case studies also include running online courses the number of ECTS given is stated.

Furthermore the parameters project goal, main outcome, strength and weakness outline the information of the case study in a few sentences. Finally the parameters project relevance and further action proposed what could be the next steps and how this information can further be used for VIRQUAL.

It is proposed that the Re.Vica Project and the E-MOVE case study should be looked at in more detail to furthermore extract key success factors from the already existing research. This is not only interesting but also required in terms of sustainability and re-usability of already undertaken research work.

ANNEX

Framework for case studies

Case selection criteria

Cases under study should be:

- Both successful projects and also the ones that can be considered as failures
- Highly relevant to at least one of the topics of the SIG. Namely, virtual mobility, EQF or ECTS in e-learning
- coherent with the policies of the EC
- preferably have connections with the topics of other SIGs

Data sources

Primary data sources:

- official project documentation (description of the project, reports, web site)
- external evaluation reports
- dissemination materials (articles & conference presentations)

Secondary data sources: interviews with the key actors, with the target group of the project, etc.

Guidelines for analysis

Special focus on:

- analyzing strengths and weaknesses
- added value to VIRQUAL

Suggested structure of the case study (3-4 pages):

- Basic data about the project: name, scope, partners, duration, financing body of the project, project web-site, contact person for further information
- Justification for case selection (correspondence to case selection criteria)
- The objectives of the project
- Main outcomes of the project (results and description in some detail)
- Project's strengths and weaknesses
- Applicability of the project to VIRQUAL
- Any other relevant information
- Conclusions