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Erasmus Mobility Report: Alsace/Vosges

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Erasmus Mobility Report: Alsace/Vosges

Prepared by Diarmuid Murphy SCAFT



Exterior shot of the School

Context

This visit was made under the Erasmus Mobility + Programme and was a reciprocal visit following Mr. Ghislain Didier's visit to SCAFT in 2016. The Host Institute were Maison familiale Rurale in Saulxure-sur Moselle in the Vosges Mountains in Alsace in Eastern France

The Maison familiale Rurale organisation has 507 residential schools in France which currently serve 83.000 students from secondary level through to degree level. The organisation is partially funded through the *Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Agroalimentaire et de la Forêt*. (French Ministry of Agriculture). The school in Saulxure-sur Moselle specialises in education for the Tourism/ Hospitality and Catering sector.

Activities

The main activities were as follows:

On Tuesday afternoon on my arrival, I contacted my hosts and then visited some of the local artisanal food producers and their retail outlets, these included a *Charcutiere* and a local *Brasserie*. This was followed by dinner during which we discussed the French apprenticeship system.

On Wednesday I joined a practical class of first-year apprentices who were preparing Lunch for the training restaurant, and then had lunch with the lecturing team.



Dessert being prepared using the regional speciality; Mirabelles



Pork cheeks being braised in stock and local *Pinot Noir*



Pinot Noir



Pied du Cochon



The training restaurant before service



Students and staff at Lunch

On Wednesday afternoon I visited the Kirsch museum in the nearby Haute-Saône region. The trip was made with two lecturers from the school and ten students.





Modern bottles of Framboise, Mirabelle & Kirsch



Interior shots of the production area and storage attic

(N.B. Frank, I sent Diarmuid Cawley a more extensive photo file with comments attached, as this is his area of special interest)

On Wednesday evening I had dinner with the school's governing council and some of the lecturing staff, included in the group was Mme. Fabienne Dersoirs the co-ordinator of all the local Erasmus activities and a long discussion ensued regarding mobility and Ireland as a destination for mobility programmes. The school are very active in the Erasmus Mobility + Programme and had a lot of interesting points.

On Thursday, I lectured a class of young Chefs on the influence the French Revolution had on the early development of the Restaurant industry, this included a Q & A session afterwards. The lecture was well received by all. I spent the rest of the day visiting a local cheesemaker who makes amongst others the famous AOC accredited *Munster* cheese. The broad discussion covered Ireland's very healthy current artisan cheeses industry and its lack of impact in terms of exports and availability outside Ireland, this is mirrored with the producer in question as he says his AOC cheese can be purchased all over France and further, but his non – AOC cheeses are only sold in the Vosges region.





Points of Interest to SCAFT

The main points of interest to SCAFT were as follows:

1)

Erasmus Mobility is a huge aspect of MFR's strategy, when I enquired about the programme it transpired that despite being a small school they have existing Erasmus relationships with the following countries:

Sweden

Holland

Luxembourg

Ireland

Germany

Malta

Belgium

In addition they have former relationships with:

Portugal & U.K.

A school as small as this have to rely on the commitment of their lecturing staff and there is no doubt that they are delivering at a very high level for their school with regular Erasmus visits for both staff and students.

I believe a school with our resources could easily deliver similar results for our student body, I know you have planned to address this with the timetabling of a dedicated faculty member to look after this and I am sure it will be a success.

2)

The apprenticeship scheme in France is a long established, the *Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle* or Vocational Training Certificate is the oldest vocational diploma, created in 1911. It certifies an initial level of qualification, it awards its holder with a skilled worker or employee qualification. Aimed at the acquisition of practical knowledge, it allows immediate entry into the work place. The CAP covers over 200 specialisms for artisanal trades, production and services. A part of initial vocational education, it is taken over two years after the last year of *collège* (lower secondary). The ultimate aim is entry into the workplace. But it also makes it possible to obtain the *Baccalauréat professionnel* (Vocational baccalaureate)

after a period of further study. This certifies the aptitude of the holder to exercise a highly qualified professional activity. In initial vocational training, this diploma is taken over three years after the last class of collège (lower secondary) or over two years after the *Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle* (Vocational training certificate). The ultimate aim of the Baccalauréat professionnel (Vocational baccalaureate) is entry into the workplace. But, like any French baccalaureate in France, it gives the right to access higher education.

I mention this because of our own efforts to establish apprenticeship programmes, and to that end my colleagues in France are sending me on some documentation currently used in their programmes.

Conclusions & Recommendations

This trip was an excellent opportunity to see the French apprenticeship system at work and as such it provided valuable insights into the methodology and processes used, my personal opinion is that the documentation used in the French apprenticeship system is similar to the internal/external verifier system used in the U.K. on the NVQ programmes, I have had experience teaching students on these programmes and can say that they are an excellent tool for assessing practical progress. The NVQ system seems to be assessed under the City & Guilds umbrella at the moment and can offer much in the way of guidance for our own developing apprenticeship programmes.

I am of the opinion that as a school, it would serve us well to examine both the Erasmus Mobility programme and the French apprenticeship programme (CAP) in depth as there is much we could gain from both. I will be happy to discuss these matters further at your leisure.

Diarmuid