**Belgium: promising results for Erasmus Duaal**

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[**SYNTRA Vlaanderen**](https://www.syntravlaanderen.be/)**recently presented the results from its**[**Erasmus Duaal project**](https://www.syntravlaanderen.be/overzicht-erasmus-duaal)**: in the spring of 2018 and 2019, 96 Flemish dual learners from 14 Flemish schools did a two-week work placement in 9 different countries. In the same period, 32 pupils from abroad were welcomed in Flanders.**

[**Erasmus Duaal**](https://www.syntravlaanderen.be/overzicht-erasmus-duaal) is a rather atypical [**Erasmus+ KA1 project**](https://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/key-action-1). It attracts participants from various training programmes (such as hospitality and catering, care or construction) and from all over the country. Most of them do not know each other until they find themselves abroad together: their schools are not official project partners themselves, but they have an agreement with project promoter [**SYNTRA Vlaanderen**](https://www.syntravlaanderen.be/).

**Boosting professional and personal skills**

During their stay abroad, participants have an opportunity to develop specific professional and technical skills and generic work skills at the placement company, to improve their knowledge of a foreign language and to follow a sociocultural programme developed by [**SYNTRA Vlaanderen**](https://www.syntravlaanderen.be/)’s foreign partners. Learning often goes both ways: ‘The greatest experience was when I was able to teach the Estonians to make fries. When they were ready, a dozen people immediately gathered around the bowl of fries’ (Nick, Cook, Estonia). Back in Belgium, participants take on an ambassador role in their classroom, school or training centre, where they help promote the importance of the international dimension and international mobility in their own organisation and region.

**An empowering experience**

The feedback is very positive:

* the large majority of participants are (very) satisfied with their experience, and would participate in another work placement abroad in the future. They would also recommend participation to their peers;
* many find that the project has boosted their personal development: ‘I’ve learned how to stay organised in a foreign country where they speak a foreign language. Usually, around strangers, I’m a shy person, afraid to take up a leadership role. But now I was very willing to take the lead and guide my fellow Erasmus students. […]’ (Joyce, sales person, Scotland, UK);
* they also point out the opportunity to meet new people and to experience/explore other cultures and habits, while also working on team spirit within their own group. ‘I’ve tasted a bit of another culture. […] It’s an adventure I’ll never forget!’ (Lien, Care, Netherlands)

Almost all participants received an – often (very) positive – **[Europass mobility document](https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/documents/european-skills-passport/europass-mobility" \t "_blank)**, signed by the placement company: ‘This is an empowering experience for these young people, who really come into their own. And the Europass mobility document will be a great reference later in their careers.’ (Maarten, Flemish supervisor, Italy).

In the coming two years, 135 dual learners (including 20 with special needs) will have the opportunity to gain similar experience.