Erasmus +, KA2: Strategic Partnerships,
Project: „The system of support for academic
teachers in process of shaping soft skills of their
student"
Agreement no: 2018-1-PL01-KA203-050754

Module II: Teaching innovation

In the module, we present and discuss innovation as well as the approaches that might add the awareness of innovation to students' mindset. Besides, we present some specific techniques that might be used for the teaching of innovation and the ways of thinking that result in innovation, new product or service development.

The module presents detailed information in the areas of:

- **Innovation – definition and background**

Innovation is usually treated as an entrepreneurial trait. However, innovativeness is more than entrepreneurship, more than entrepreneurialism as well. Students should know that innovation does not necessarily mean that one must become an entrepreneur Innovativeness is more than just entrepreneurship and we should not be afraid of being innovative

While creativity is about having an idea, innovation is the development and successful exploitation of great ideas. In general, we talk about four types of innovation: Product innovation, Process innovation, Marketing innovation, Organizational innovation. Besides, social innovation has become an important issue. It is about new roles, relations, norms, and values.

Innovation process starts from some previous experience, however, there should be a need or challenge as the trigger leading to the incubation phase. After the insight, when the idea is born, it should be evaluated and then elaborated, transformed into something of value, such as a new product, service, business concept.

- **Teaching innovation aspects**

A new set of conditions known as VUCA - Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity calls for new approaches in teaching. Educators can teach mindsets and skillsets to better prepare students for such environments. Resilience, lifelong learning and adaptability, problem-solving and heuristic and iterative methodologies are important skills needed due to new circumstances in societies and economies. Organizations aiming to create new value for their customers need employees with a set of skills that include collaboration, empathy, practical problem solving, social responsibility, multidisciplinary approaches, inventive use of technologies, adaptability and design thinking coupled with business rationale.

- **Techniques that may be used for innovation teaching**

Brainstorming is a group idea generation technique, developed in late 1930 by Alex Osborne which was followed by hundreds of other idea generation techniques now known as ideation techniques. Today several new techniques can be used in different sessions according to the

**Erasmus +, KA2: Strategic Partnerships,
Project: „The system of support for academic
teachers in process of shaping soft skills of their
student"
Agreement no: 2018-1-PL01-KA203-050754**

creative task. Brainwalking and brainwriting for example are close »cousins« of brainstorming. At our consulting and educational work, we can use random or focused ideation techniques. Random techniques, such as randomly picking a word from the dictionary, or going to the museum while searching for an idea, can occasionally bring breakthroughs but often they can as well be a waste of time.

In addition to basic brainstorming, one can choose among four classes of focused and customizable ideation techniques to tackle different creative challenges such as questioning (e.g., questioning assumptions, twenty questions, problem redefinition), metaphorical and linguistic techniques (e.g., category analogues and idea hooks, headliner, company takeover, semantic intuition), visual techniques (e.g., picture prompts, magazine rip and rap, collaging, positioning continuums), and wishing, role-play, and fantasy techniques (e.g., wishing, day-in-life, worst idea).