



CLGE Students' Contest 2013 – 2014

IMPROVING YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN SURVEYING PROFESSION

Category: Students' and youngsters' engagement

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Abstract

Over the base of the paper JOINING EUROPEAN FORCES “NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US” written by Eva Maria Unger and Paula Dijkstra, winner of the 2013 CLGE Student contest in the “Students' and youngsters' engagement” category, this paper wants to contribute to the development, focused on national associations, of the three pillars in the mentioned winner paper: Represent, Link, Act.

Through these ideas, this presentation wants to homogenize, as much as possible, the youngsters policies in the different EU countries to improve the communication, the international engagement and the practical collaboration, by being a real support for the European Young Surveyors Networks developed by FIG young representatives.

Introduction

According to the third category in the CLGE Students' Contest 2013 – 2014, this paper aspires to get response to the students' engagement and youngsters' attraction for the surveying profession. The present document wants to define practical instruments that could be useful for implementation in national associations.

The very first step in the youth engagement process is to evaluate the national university structure. We can talk about Mono-University in countries where surveying education is centralised or next to it; and Multi-University when there are several institutions providing surveying high education (BE). This becomes important because Mono-University brings the possibility of presential development, whilst Multi-University creates a much more dispersed group of professionals.

Logically, every tool proposed in this document must be developed having this criteria on mind and, in order to help, it will be displayed in both ways when possible.



Some of the ideas in this paper are not original, but it is interesting to share and spread the word about them in order to look for an homogenization, helping to an easier development of the european young projects.

Active young professionals

The only way to make younsters active in the long-term, is to involve them in the political and decisional life whitin national associations: because membership requires compromise and participation. This could be difficult for the very first years of membership, because of the lack of understanding about the association works and the low impact tools on their hands. Hence, some developments are presented here to facilitate the youngs' participation.

Pre-member: This is not an original idea. In point of fact, it is already on use in some national associations, like the Spanish geodetic surveyors association (*Colegio Oficial de Ingenieros Técnicos en Topografía*).

Every national association has its own membership requirements but, sometimes, potential member do not fit all of these formalities (yet) even when it is almost for sure that they will do in a near future. These "short term future members" could be accepted in some specific conditions.

Spanish national association, for example, accepts, as pre-member, every student on their last year of university formation. The pre-member figure is transient, expires when the student gets his degree and becomes a professional and grants access to a specific and reduced number of services.

This approach, although it is a success case, could be improved: Students could be accepted during his whole student life, because **every student is a potential future professional**.

The main inconvenient is that it becomes harder to control, because in the original idea young professional stays as pre-member only during a maximum period of a year (the university's last year). But there are two solutions:

1. The national association could set an "age limit" beyond which no member could remain as pre-member.
2. The national association could check, every year, if the pre-member is still a student.

The pre-member figure could also be used as a way to approximate to the university students organizations: some universities have a very intense students activity which can be connected to the professional association activity and integrated on it.

The pre-member should be promoted as much in nationals association as in universities so, in Multi-University countries it could be a much more expensive program than in Mono-University countries. In Multi-University countries it is also important to avoid unbalancing during promotion activities and, in case of promotion by regional boards or when this



development is derived directly to universities, this program should work better if supervised by a national board.

All the pre-members in the different national associations are, by nature, also members of the Euro Young Surveyors Network.

Young chair: Again, not an original idea. CLGE already applies it, but it is a “must have” on national associations. To create a proper network, supported by national boards, that creates real contact between different countries and contributes to bring European professionals closer, the young professionals should be represented in the government board; and the young chair is the way.

The young chair should be a quota position which can only be occupied by a young surveyor (as FIG defined or national specific). It could be a voice but not vote condition, but making young professionals more active and responsible grants the future of the association.

The young chair initiative is not dependent on the university structure, but if there are various boards (national, regional and / or local) it will be better to implement as much as the national association can.

If a NATIONAL young chair exists, he or she should be automatically appointed as Euro Young Surveyors Network NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE, stimulating the activity in a European Network and guaranteeing a solid representation.

Increasing values

A primary point of intervention to ensure and consolidate the future of the national and international surveyors associations is to create a sense of loyalty in young professionals, and the basic policy to attract and fidelize young members is making the membership valuable.

To act over these young professionals is perceptive to properly establish the ‘active young professionals’ tools, before or simultaneously to the development of the following strategies, because it is necessary to have a good and active young professionals base.

Mentoring: This kind of assignment is already used in some corporations and chambers of commerce. Through mentoring, associations could create a knowledge relationship between their members. It is not a job contract, but a way to reach the mentee’s professional objectives: the mentees propose these objectives and, through a set of personal meetings, discussions and guidelines, the mentor improves the mentee’s professional development using his experience and knowledge.

Although mentoring could be also understood as a loyalty tool, the experienced youngsters, who have also been mentees in past, can assume a mentor compromise, keeping alive his



implication (another long-term “active young professionals” tool) and being an essential part of the new members' first steps.

Communications / announcements: All the previous activities have no purpose if national associations can not reach the young professionals. As explained in the pre-member paragraph, the young professional (or at least “potential young professionals”) are in universities, so it is necessary for national associations to be visible and take part, as much as they can, in universities' life.

This objective can be successfully achieved through the creation of a newsletter or special advertisements sent periodically to the university and published in the national association webpage (creating a special subpage for young professionals will improve the necessary segmentation). This publication could include national news (association activities, government services, etc), European news (CLGE, Eurogeographics, ESA, other national associations, etc) or international news (FIG YS, UN-Habitat, GLTN, etc).

The main idea of a newsletter is a simple one-page publication with a bunch of national news (specific in every country) gathered by a national representative (i.e. universities activities or public agencies events) seasoned with some European news (common in the whole CLGE range) gathered by the CLGE responsible (i.e. CLGE Students' Contest or First Step initiative)

Job guidelines: The more obvious need on a new professional career is the job guidance. Nowadays it is not possible nor realistic to try to compete with international internet platforms for job searching but, as groups of professionals with specific knowledge, the national associations could establish job guidelines to quickly set up the career of young surveyors: from entrepreneurship handbooks to first job searching, public appointments, specialising studies for those who choose to continue in academic, etc.

This goal can be reached by the edition of specific documents and also involving the mentioned mentors (see “Mentoring” above) in its redaction.

Events: every professional needs to be in a continuous formative process but especially on young professionals who, sometimes, does not know how to create an own professional structure (relationships, enterprises, resources, etc). This point could be approached by supporting young events: from practical courses to informal meetings, from direct organization to simple funding or assistance.

Choosing to be surveyor

A good point of beginning for the high school decisional process is to create educational material, both funny and related to the profession, which can be distributed to national or local education responsables. In addition, this material could also have an extra attractive for



education professionals by including points that reinforce other areas, like focus, concentration or teamworking.

Obviously, it is impossible to reach every high school in Europe, but government education institutions are a much easier goal. Whatever it is, these policies could be developed jointly by CLGE, national associations (as future professionals members receptors) and universities (as immediate students receptors).

Obviously, the following approaches are basic ideas that can be developed and perfected by education professionals in order to stimulate the pedagogical issues.

Geocaching (sports): kids can make a simple sketch of their high school and mark some points that must be reached by their classmates: they can draw outdoor and indoor parts, distribute checkpoints and hide instructions for the next one, etc. This kind of exercise contributes to a healthy behaviour and improves schematic design capacities and teamworking.

In a higher scale format, the schoolkids could geocache different urban items, like blue park, monuments or libraries, using a local map and developing spatial abilities like choosing best route, map legend identification, etc.

Measure your classroom with standards (Mathematics): Measure squares, circles and triangles could be a boring task. So much better is to measure the high school classroom using specific guidelines, like the "CLGE measurement code for the floor area of buildings". Students can measure, collect data and estimate areas by using more or less complicated formulas.

Build your own groma (Technologies): Groma is one of the easiest Roman instruments to construct and not a useless tool. Once built, students could align the classroom tables check halls perpendicularity, etc.

Using free internet tools (Geography): Knowing the population geography could be done through maps and cartography. There are so many possibilities and they can't be listed, but the practical use of these softwares has been demonstrated in initiatives like the one developed in Spain by high school teacher Isaac Buzo Sánchez on a GIS online platform:

- Exercise about multinational enterprise (INDITEX) activity location:

<http://www.arcgis.com/apps/PanelsLegend/index.html?appid=41aa6770df774f0c9a102e381abe4c16>

- Exercise about urban evolution:



<http://www.arcgis.com/apps/PublicGallery/index.html?appid=5e2d9b77c6054773b2e057a598638897>

What could CLGE do?

By inspiration on the 2013 winner paper, this last paragraph wants to define the ways in which CLGE could help in the implementation process of the related ideas.

- **Inform** all the CLGE members about these ideas and tools.
- **Coordinate** the development among the interested national associations by, for example, setting deadlines for the establishment of the different initiatives.
- **Stimulate** the European Network by supporting virtual meeting points or gathering young interest information.
- **Collaborate** with other professional organizations worldwide for a global network.

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