

Building Social Capital by Improving Multicultural Competence in Higher Education and Labour Market (Soulbus)

Tartu Health Care College was founded in 1811 as a midwifery school. By today, the College is a leading institution providing health care education in Estonia. The school offers education in nursing, midwifery, radiography, bio-medical laboratory science, physiotherapy and environmental health curricula. The school has 3 vocational curricula (care worker, emergency medical technician and babysitter). The College is a national school funded directly from the national budget. The school admits students from all over Estonia. Currently the number of students is about 1200.

According to our College Development Plan 2010-2015, one of our strategic objectives is internationalisation. Also, we are participating actively in different international mobility programmes, for example Erasmus, Nordman Network, etc. Tartu Health Care College has participated in Erasmus programme since the academic year of 2004/05. Foreign students have been able to do their practical training in Tartu Health Care College since 2004/5. In 8 years, we have sent 134 students to foreign exchange. Most of our students use the opportunity offered by the programme for doing their practical training.

By now, the interview with the focus group has been carried out for the training programme composed in the Soulbus project. Three lecturers and three practical training site supervisors participated in the interview, also two students in their third year of nursing studies who had been in Latvia and Finland as foreign exchange students for the purpose of doing their practical training.

The result of the Soulbus is closely connected with internationalisation and curriculum development. First and foremost, our expectations focus on the following: improved willingness to supervise foreign exchange students of a variety of cultural backgrounds, increased cooperation between the College and practical training sites.