



Enjoy "The ESN Galaxy", by the ESN Webteam (about 600 words).

ESN Galaxy

What is ESN? So short a question, so difficult an answer, as any ESN active knows. Well, it is a huge network, for sure: dozens of countries, hundreds of sections, thousands of members; but numbers are far insufficient to describe it. Not that words can enjoy a much greater success: volunteers, students helping students, national representatives, fostering mobility; but still not enough to convey the meaning. The Erasmus Student Network is so rich and diverse because every country, every section, every member can interpret it its way and give its peculiar contribution to it. Is it thus impossible to tell the external world what ESN is in concrete, beyond numbers and words? No, because all of us belong to the ESN Galaxy.

The <http://galaxy.esn.org> website displays a big map of Europe with balloons for every section in the Galaxy (potentially every ESN section): by clicking on a balloon you can see the next planned events in that section, links to "more information" pages, local news, local partners and contact details. The "20 Erasmus" project experiences are also displayed in the map, with links to the individual student exchange stories. Everything in one interactive page, that can really give an idea of how varied and lively ESN is to the outside world. Perfect for potential partners, perfect for showing to your University offices and prospective members what ESN concretely is.

And good for ESN too! We are scattered throughout Europe and even for a section of ours it may be hard to know what activities are being organised by the nearby sections; many valuable ideas and tips that would be nice to implement are lost due to lack of information. With the ESN Galaxy we become a real network, with fast and automated information flow between sections and a graphical, intuitive, representation of what ESN is and does.

It is absolutely effortless for a section to join the ESN Galaxy: just install ESN Satellite, the free section website template developed by the ESN Webteam and available at <http://satellite.esn.org>. You will get a nice website, packed with features (news with comments, events calendar, partners list, customizable photo gallery, private areas for registered users) that you can individually activate/deactivate depending on your needs; moreover, ESN Satellite is very easy to administer, so that ordinary, non-technical section members can update the website in an extremely intuitive way; in the end, ESN Satellite will make you part of the ESN Galaxy: you can enable it to automatically transmit news, events and partners to the ESN Galaxy, so everything will appear there with absolutely no need of work but the initial registration! Even non-Satellite websites can be configured to appear in the ESN Galaxy as long as you make specific RSS/iCal feeds available and contact webteam@esn.org for activation details.

The ESN Galaxy will also enable better and more effective communication from the International to the local level: ESN Satellite can optionally be enabled to automatically display a box with the latest news from ESN International, so that, if you wish, information about important ESN projects like the ESN Survey can appear on a dedicated box on your homepage without any intervention from you!

The ESN Galaxy is under active development and the webteam is extending it beyond the initial idea: among the latest integrated features we have the ability to filter content by type and country, to better serve the needs of National Boards. And we can implement your ideas too, just let us know!

See the Galaxy and learn how to join at <http://galaxy.esn.org> .

