



## NEWSLETTER



**EVENT IN FOCUS: OH WAIT – WE HAVE TWO OF THEM THIS YEAR!  
AREN'T THEY A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO SUMMARIZE KEY ACHIEVEMENTS  
OF OUR SECOND-YEAR WORK?**

### *Conference on peculiarities of student – supervisor interaction*

The conference devoted to familiarizing all parties involved in the first virtual mobility – namely students, teaching and administrative staff, with the concept of virtual mobility and the details thereof, was held just before the first mobility run – from May 21<sup>st</sup> until May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2018. More precisely, the main goal of the event was to get everyone involved better acquainted with the key points: framework of the first virtual mobility and collaboration format between students and their supervisors. Last but definitely not least, we saw this conference as an excellent opportunity for an open dialogue with our students in order to get the firsthand information about their very own views and expectations regarding virtual mobility. The conference was hosted by University of Novi Sad and the coordinator, Hamburg University of Technology, provided our already fantastic hosts with their valuable support and contribution.



First day of the conference, which was mainly focused on teaching staff, served to tackle some of the most interesting issues, such as: what makes virtual mobility unique compared to other forms of e-learning, specific role of the teacher in virtual mobility, quality and evaluation of the project work and many others, with a special focus on the accreditation of virtual mobility programs.

On the second day, the accent was predominantly on students who were first given a warm welcome. Afterwards, students had an opportunity to get familiar with the details of the whole virtual mobility format through a joint, combined lecture of EU universities, divided into specific topics and presentations which were designed to clarify all the details regarding the expected results, interaction between fellows and supervisors, the offered video lectures, tasks and topics for the joint student projects, the requirements and assessment methodology of joint projects. Students were encouraged to express both their opinions and doubts, to engage in an open debate and ask all the questions that arose during the presentations.

Finally, students took the floor and a round of their presentations followed. Young representatives of all Serbian and Ukrainian partner universities presented themselves, their backgrounds and their own views and expectations from the program. The event was concluded with a round table discussion on needs and expectations from the virtual mobility which really grew in a lively and constructive debate.



## Highlights

- *Students had a chance to meet each other, bond and socialize during the tour around the beautiful campus in Novi Sad and then later in the evening.*
- *As an example of a spin-off lecture, participants in the conference had a chance to attend and enjoy an up-to-date interactive lecture “Marketing” given by a guest lecturer, Associate Professor at the Faculty of Economics in Belgrade (Serbia) and expert in the field – a real treat for teaching staff as well in terms of modern presentation techniques.*
- *Results of the survey “Needs, wishes and requirements for virtual mobility students”, conducted earlier in the course of the project among 254 respondents from 4 Ukrainian and 3 Serbian universities, were presented to participants and served to ignite a round table discussion. The survey showed rather poor familiarity of students with the virtual mobility concept and revealed that they mostly see it as a complement to physical mobility. Luckily, we had a chance to promote this relatively new concept in the best light during the first virtual mobility run that followed!*

## Coaching seminar before mutual cross-country mobility run

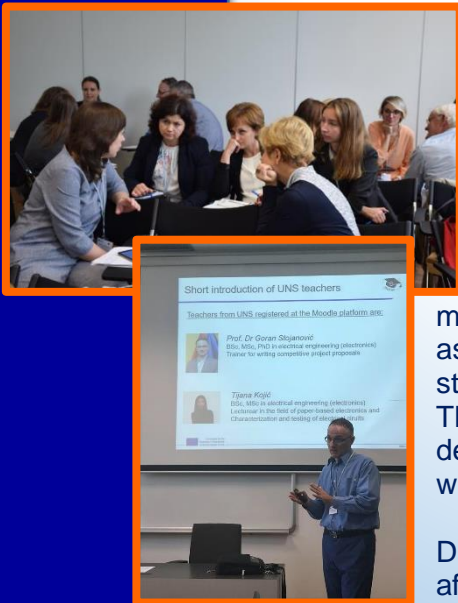
The second “event in focus” of the second project year was held from October 10th until October 12th, 2018 in Milan, Italy, and was hosted by our only Italian partner on the project – Politecnico di Milano, again with the precious support from the project coordinator, Hamburg University of Technology. The main, overall goal of this conference was to share experience and feedback from the first virtual mobility run among the partners in order to introduce enhancements to the program and make best of it in the future. Particular attention was given to the role of supervisor.

The conference was initiated with this particular issue: teaching staff from EU partner universities, who acted as supervisors in the first virtual mobility run, first presented and analyzed their experience and the challenges they faced in order to later come up, through an open discussion, with helpful advice for their Serbian and Ukrainian colleagues who were to be supervisors in the upcoming second round of the virtual mobility.

The seminar continued in the same direction, touching upon other important matters such as evaluation criteria and assessment of students’ performance, as well as expectations from the virtual mobility with an accent on the specific skills that both students and teachers are expected to gain from taking part in this type of mobility. The concluding round of presentations on the first day of the conference was dedicated to the future virtual mobility supervisors – teachers from partner universities who presented contents of their spin-off lectures and tasks for students’ joint projects.

Day two brought no less work and equally important topics to be covered! Therefore, after the block dedicated to the methodological framework for mobility programs, partners moved on to another crucial issue: sustainability itself. Consortium agreed that most probably the availability of the valuable learning materials produced during the course of the project long after its completion, as well as a strong foundation for this kind of mobility which is to be continued and built upon, will be the ones to secure its sustainability in the first place.

Furthermore, what doesn’t deserve to be left out is definitely the exchange of ideas and experience among partners from HEIs in the field of employability-oriented strategies, but also results of the survey conducted among all the involved parties in the first virtual mobility with the aim of identifying and introducing possible improvements. Last but not least, in order to make timely and quality



preparations, partners discussed in detail another burning issue: the upcoming blended mobility for PhD students, with special attention devoted to the research areas to be offered, the format itself and the optimal features of the call for applications that would secure best possible response from the students' side.



### Highlights

- *Representatives of Politecnico di Milano, as the institution with the reputation of an expert in the field of e-learning materials and MOOCs, held a workshop on what makes a successful video course and what is the optimal format of it. Real knowledge and skills of tomorrow, aren't they?*
- *Methodological framework for students' mobility programs was presented to the consortium, together with practical recommendations provided in it with regards to: guiding virtual mobility, organizing and maintaining the process of internationalization through facilitation of various students' mobility initiatives, initiating future programs on different levels and better preparation and adaptation to international students' mobility.*
- *Visit to the outstanding attraction of Politecnico di Milano, the unique in the world Wind Gallery, really spiced up our stay in Milan! Thanks to our great hosts, we had a chance to see from the front row some of the cutting-edge technologies and get to know some innovative research projects.*
- *We were lucky to visit another famous thing on our host's campus – their International job fair in all its greatness!*

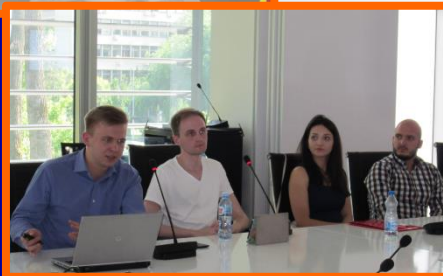


## **WE SAVED BEST FOR THE END! THE ABSOLUTE STAR OF THIS YEAR'S WORK: FIRST VIRTUAL MOBILITY RUN – SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED!**

The first virtual mobility took place for the whole month of June 2018. The call for applications was open for all master, third- and fourth-year bachelor students from our Ukrainian and Serbian partner universities. All students fluent in English and interested in enriching their academic and life experience by taking part in mobility were strongly encouraged to apply and try their luck, while the priority was given to students who were for any reason unable to embark on real mobility experience.



Virtual mobility within MILETUS project was designed and implemented as project-based learning in which students get to work together in small groups on joint projects with innovative scientific topics. Each group in the first mobility round was made of four people from different countries, different institutions and from different study fields, which provided participants with unique international experience and interdisciplinary dimension of looking at the same problem from diverse perspectives. What is more, each group was supervised by a teacher from one of our EU partner universities. In the first round of mobility, ten groups of four were formed, four of them under the supervision of Hamburg University of Technology, while Politecnico di Milano and Aalborg University supervised three groups each.



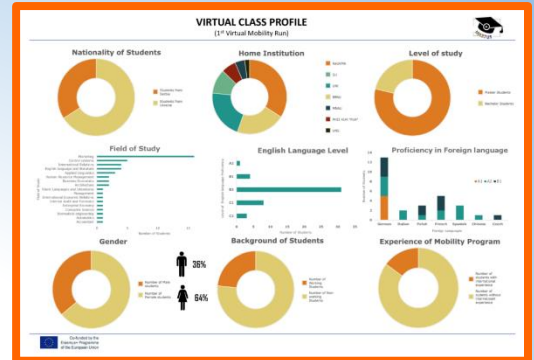
In order to prepare virtual mobility participants for the upcoming challenges, both social and academic, at the very beginning, students were required to complete a course of internationalization – the one focused on soft skills helping them to overcome social and cultural barriers that might appear while working in a multinational team, and a research methodology course to introduce them to the relevant tools of research process and finally prepare them for successful research project writing. The courses and the program in general were placed on Moodle platform, and participants could refer to the helpful short 'virtual buddy' videos

at any point of the course, which were provided on the MILETUS project website. Judging by some very positive comments from the students, they liked the first stage of the course.

The second stage was all about applying the acquired knowledge for solving practical problems. Students chose the topics they were most interested in and, with the support of supervisor, organized everything among themselves from roles and responsibilities in a group to the research methodology and objectives. Some of the up-to-date topics which attracted students' attention were "Bribery in public sector", "Animal testing in cosmetic industry" and "Best practices for sustainability and drivers/barriers connected to the implementation". The final task for every team was writing a joint project which was then evaluated by the supervisor and the participants who completed all stages of the program successfully were granted certificates.

Upon completing the program, students were strongly encouraged to provide their honest feedback which will be valuable for the project team to improve mobility programs and make best of them in the future.

We thank all the participants for their contribution and we hope for ever better results with every new mobility run!



**MILETUS IN THE VIRTUAL SPACE:  
STAY UP-TO-DATE WITH THE LATEST NEWS FROM THE PROJECT!**



***Make sure to visit our new improved project website!***

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