Internal Quality Assurance report

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**Strengthening Teaching Competences
in Higher Education
in Natural and Mathematical Sciences**

Co-funded by the
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Introduction

Activities 2.2 and 2.4, related to the preparation of material for pedagogical, psychological, and methodological (PPM) training courses and wider integration of information technologies in teaching and learning were prevented by the sudden onset of COVID-19 pandemic. For EU experience collection, the first visit to specialized departments at UGENT was planned (all expenses paid) and stopped by COVID. Pressured by the burden of the pandemic, new obligations and new working conditions, teachers from partner institutions have postponed all activities for the fall of 2020.

No one expected that the corona outbreak would last so long, and therefore activities were postponed. The first project activity since the beginning of the pandemic was a meeting of the project team.

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Report - UNI

For more than 15 years, the Faculty of Sciences and Mathematics of the University of Niš (FSMUNI) has signed an agreement with Microsoft that allows students and staff to use Microsoft Office 365 and some other Microsoft software. This includes Microsoft Teams as well, but it was not used until the beginning of the Covid 19 pandemic. However, since the very beginning of the Covid 19 crisis Microsoft Teams began to be used at FSMUNI as the primary online learning platform. FSMUNI also has a license for the Zoom platform, which is also used by some teachers, as well as the free Google Meet platform.

Integration of online technologies during the Covid 19 pandemic

Summer semester 2019/2020

The summer semester of the academic year 2019/2020 began in mid-February 2020 and was initially taught in the classical way, with the use of technical aids. However, on March 15 the Government of the Republic of Serbia introduced a lockdown, as well as a decree which suspended classical teaching in primary and secondary schools and universities, and all schools and faculties were forced to completely switch to online teaching. FSMUNI management decided to continue the teaching and learning process online, Microsoft Teams was chosen as the primary platform through which online teaching and learning was conducted at the faculty, but teachers and teaching assistants were left free to use some other platforms, and they were also used Zoom, Lifesize, Google Meet, Cisco Webex, TeamViewer and others. FSMUNI purchased the Zoom license, while the Lifesize subscription was paid for through the TeComp project. In cooperation with Microsoft Development Center Serbia, training was held for the use of MS Office 365 (with emphasis on Teams, Forms, Skype, etc.) and other platforms for remote work, intended for teaching and administrative staff of FSMUNI. A guide for using the MS Teams platform was also developed.

Lockdown was revoked on May 7, 2020, after which theoretical classes were still held online, while practical exercises in laboratories were held face-to-face (of course, in compliance with the prescribed measures for protection against Covid 19 infection). As the study programs of FSMUNI are not accredited for complete online learning (such accreditation is done according to a special procedure and special conditions must be met), the faculty did not have the right to conduct online exams during the lockdown, but some pre-examination obligations included online testing. After revoking the lockdown, all exams were conducted face-to-face, including exams that were not held during the lockdown

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Report - UB

The University of Belgrade consists of more than 30 faculties, and the Faculty of Biology, the Faculty of Physics, and the Faculty of Mathematics participate in the TeComp project.

Integration of online technologies during the Covid 19 pandemic

Summer semester 2019/2020

All university teachers were forced to implement modern technologies and tools in their classes and awareness of the necessity of enhances teaching competences and skills became an imperative at the University of Belgrade.

As far as the Faculty of Biology is concerned, teachers have had Google Classroom and other Google platforms at their disposal for many years, the use of which has significantly intensified since the beginning of the COVID-19 virus pandemic and the general transition to online teaching.

The Faculty of Physics educates students through four study programs, General Physics, Theoretical and Experimental Physics, Computer and Applied Physics and Meteorology. Each program has two levels, undergraduate and master. In the transition period, until the covid pandemic situation, the teaching staff had the opportunity to use the Moodle platform. The pandemic period has increased interest in the use of digital learning and teaching platforms, as well as packages for creating educational content for students. Google Classrom found to be the most used platform.

Faculty of Mathematics was introduced to this project first through several online workshops and later two on-cite workshops. All the workshops were very well organized, with lots of tools and useful tips. Use of online tools was in the focus of most of lectures. Online lectures that came with Covid pandemic, gave us an opportunity to analyze dangers of multitasking and an opportunity to extensively use constructive approach when working with students

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Report - UNS

From the University of Novi Sad, The Faculty of Science participates in the TeComp project.

Integration of online technologies during the Covid 19 pandemic
2nd semester 2019/20

During the lockdown, in the second semester of 2019/2020, from 16th March 2020, all classes in all study programs were organized online. During the 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 school years, some of the classes were organized face-to-face in some periods with low pandemics. But still, the teaching of the majority of courses was organized online.

For the communication of students mostly Moodle platform was used in the majority of courses. With the start of the pandemic, all courses at the Faculty of Science are implemented in Moodle. Besides Moodle, like some other universities at the TeComp project, the Faculty of Sciences, UNS has had access to Microsoft Office 365 for staff and students during the project duration, which includes the Microsoft Teams platform as well. Besides Moodle and Microsoft learning tools, we have mostly used other platforms intensively during the pandemic situation, such as Webex (purchased under another Erasmus+ project PPMA), Zoom, Google Classroom, Google Meet and others.

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Report - UNIKG

At the end of May coordinator for UNIKG is changed, due to retirement of prof. dr. Srećko Trifunović. New coordinator is Slađana Dimitrijević, already TeComp team member.

Faculty of Science, University of Kragujevac, has provided access to Microsoft Office 365 to staff and students for the past several years. That includes the Microsoft Teams platform as well. Besides Microsoft learning tools, Department for Mathematics and Informatics incorporated Moodle platform in its portal. Both e-learning environments were available for more than 7 years, but their usage became intensive and more systematic after March 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic reached Serbia

Integration of online technologies during the Covid 19 pandemic
2nd semester 2019/20

During the lockdown, from 15th March to 6th May 2020, all classes in all study programs were organized online. This means that approximately 1200 students participated in distance teaching and learning. There was not some strict rule on which platform or which way of communication with students to practice; the choice was to professors and students. The most frequently used tools were Moodle, MS Teams, Google classroom, GitLab, Slack, Skype, Zoom, Big Blue Button, and Viber. Most classes were conducted online in real-time, where direct interaction with students was enabled and encouraged. Depending on the different situations with equipment and internet connection availability and quality, some professors created video lectures and published them on LMS, MS Teams, Google classroom, or Moodle. Consultations were organized in real-time (Zoom, MS Teams, Big Blue Button, Viber) and through asynchronous communication tools (forums, chats, e-mail). Faculty of Science does not have accreditations for online examining, but on some courses, additional periodic online student evaluations were organized in order to keep students focused and improve their engagement. After the end of the lockdown, only the most important experimental exercises were organized at the faculty's laboratories.

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Report - ECUG

Integration of online technologies during the Covid 19 pandemic
2nd semester 2019/20

"Eqrem Cabej" University of Gjirokastra, has provided access to Microsoft Office 365 to staff and students for the past two years. That includes the Microsoft Teams platform as well. Besides Microsoft learning tools, Faculties have also used other platforms intensively during the pandemic situation, such as Zoom, Google Classroom, Google Meet, Whatsapp, etc. Although in unusual circumstances, facing a new reality for Albania, educators and students worked hard to take full advantage of the new and unique opportunity of online learning.

Integration of online technologies during the Covid 19 pandemic

2nd semester 2019-2020

"Eqrem Cabej" University of Gjirokastra has regularly offered only in-person programs for its 1400 students enrolled in all study programs. Online teaching has not been a practice before the pandemic situation. Found unprepared in conditions of total isolation, unable to train teachers and students to teach and learn online, during the second semester of the academic year 2019-2020, the Senate decided that the staff would use the online platform they considered the most appropriate to deliver lectures, seminars, laboratory work or other practical works. During the online learning, the conditions in which the students studied were taken into account. Since not all students had access to the internet, the lecturers not only conducted online lectures but they recorded and uploaded instructional videos on various online platforms such as Google Classroom, Google Meet, Zoom, MS Teams, Skype, Whatsapp, etc. Forums, emails and chats were used to encourage students' participation and engagement in the learning process. The evaluation process was also conducted online with the help of the features that the online platforms offer. Clean Score, a platform used in the framework of a project financed by AADF, was also used widely for the summative assessment. In this way the students were acquainted with the results in real time and in a transparent way

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Report - UNIKO

"Fan S. Noli" University in Korçë has made it possible for all Faculties to provide online teaching platforms starting with the 2019- 2020 academic year. The Faculty of Natural and Human Sciences of Korçë University, has always used email as a tool to communicate and share study materials with the students. Following the Covid-19 pandemic situation several platforms became popular amongst the different departments of our faculty. Moodle, Google Classroom, Google Meet, WhatsApp, Zoom, Skype, eduMEET etc. were some of the platforms used at the beginning of the pandemic. By the end of the pandemic, MS Teams was the only platform used by all University. The last academic year (2021- 2022), some teachers got to know and try out a new teaching platform thanks to the TeComp Project, LearningKey.

Integration of online technologies during the Covid 19 pandemic
2nd semester 2019- 2020

During the lockdown, from 16th of March to 29th of May 2020, all classes on all study programs were organized online. There was not some strict rule on which platform to use or how to communicate with the students. It was up to each professor to choose what was more appropriate for their course. The most frequently used tools were Moodle, Google Classroom, Google Meet, WhatsApp, Zoom, Skype. Lectures were mostly conducted online in real-time (on Zoom, Google Meet etc.). Sometimes they got recorded and then published on Google Classroom, or send by link via email.

The Faculty of Natural and Human Sciences mentions online teaching as a teaching method in its regulations. But, same as all Albanian Universities, Korça University does not have accreditations for online examining. Therefore, most of the exams in June 2020 were held in the auditorium. However, during the online teaching additional assessment tasks were organized in some courses. This had the intention to stimulate students to attend online classes and to make them more active. These tasks improved students' engagement and helped their exam results. Also, two weeks before the exams (1st to 12th of June) courses for the revision of the knowledge gained during the online course were held on site for some courses in our faculty. During the same two-week period, some of the laboratory classes were conducted with the students in the laboratories of the faculties.

University of Niš

The TeComp Consortium