

# TRANSMOD

*Inter-institutional cooperation project supported by a grant  
from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway*

## New Tools for the Integration of Transversal Skills in Modern Teaching Practice

## Phase 1 Documentation and Mobilities

## Phase 2 Detection and Assessment of Actual Needs

July 1<sup>st</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014

### Activity A1 – Documentation

The researchers of the TRANSMOD team documented themselves on transversal skills from online and offline sources. Moreover, the Romanian team undertook mobilities at the Romanian Academy Library in Bucharest in order to have access to materials (journals, handbooks) and gain knowledge in the field of transversal skills (definition, examples, good practices, implementation guidelines), and therefore improve their own understanding of the issue.

While in Bucharest, the team from the University of Craiova also discussed with professors from the Bucharest University of Economic Studies, the University Politehnica of Bucharest, the University of Bucharest, as well as with researchers from the European Institute of Romania.

August 1<sup>st</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014

### Activity A2 – Virtual and Actual Mobilities

The team members continued their documentation activities in the field of transversal skills, with a view to identifying good practice cases for the integration of transversal skills in modern teaching practice.

The researchers drew up a draft of the questionnaire which would be administered to peer teachers. This draft was discussed during the transnational mobilities undertaken in the last week of August. Two members of the Romanian team visited Bifröst University in Iceland and another two went to Nesna University College in Norway.



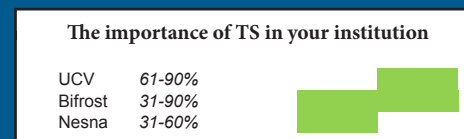
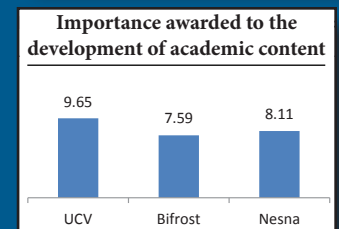
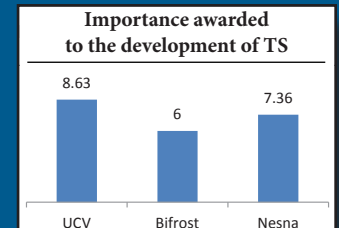
September 1<sup>st</sup> - October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014

### Activity A3 – Questionnaire-Based Preliminary Research

The research team presented the final version of the detailed questionnaire on transversal skills. The purpose was to gain an accurate insight on how transversal skills are actually viewed and implemented in the three higher education institutions involved in the TRANSMOD project (the University of Craiova, Nesna University College and Bifröst University).

This included 32 questions, dealing with aspects such as the respondent's academic background, the respondent's background on transversal skills, the general and specific development of transversal skills and the assessment of such skills. The questionnaire was provided in English and Romanian, and was published using Google Forms. Answers to the questionnaire were provided both online and in hard copy (the hard copy answers were subsequently digitalized and input to Google Forms as well).

The answers to the questionnaire highlighted both convergences between the Romanian university and the Nordic universities – for instance, the development of critical and creative thinking is prioritized in all institutions; most teachers in all HEIs award a degree of autonomy of 31-60% to their students; the use of genuine examples in teaching is preferred in the three HEIs – as well as significant differences in teaching paradigms – a higher importance awarded to the development of academic content in Craiova; compulsory titles and bibliographies for projects, compulsory methods of analysis in Craiova, while such aspects are left at the students' choice in Bifröst and Nesna, etc.



## Phase 2

### Detection and Assessment of Actual Needs

## Phase 3

### Drawing Up the Good Practice Guide

November 1<sup>st</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014

#### Activity A4 – Joint Online Workshop

All the members of the project participated in the workshop and shared ideas and opinions on the following aspects:

- Discussion on the results of the TRANSMOD Questionnaire

An outline of the questionnaire results was presented, which showed the primary indicators obtained by means of statistical processing and interpretation. The main purpose was to emphasize the similarities and differences between the three partner universities in terms of knowledge, implementation and evaluation of transversal skills.

The UCv team explained that in some cases there was a lack of internal consistency and coherence in the answers of teaching staff, and that this will also have to be discussed when enlarging upon the questionnaire results.

Project members agreed that the outline is very useful in order to decide upon the actions that have to be taken in the future.

- General organisation of the Project Conference of April 2015: dates, contents, etc.
- Discussion on the Good Practice Guide: structure, contents, etc.

The project manager proposed a draft structure of the Good Practice Guide. The general principle is to have the Good Practice Guide conceived and structured as a joint scientific publication, with everyone's name appearing only one time (on a single contribution), so that it can also be helpful for individual research paths. Jointly authored contributions are also welcome. The text of contributions should be ready before the Project Conference, so that they may be discussed them and make all required clarifications with that opportunity.

- Discussion on the possibility to ensure the project's sustainability with the submission of other project applications
- Presentation of the project website, logo and poster.



December 1<sup>st</sup> 2014 - March 31<sup>st</sup> 2015

#### Activity A5 – Drawing Up the Good Practice Guide

The researchers from the University of Craiova met on a weekly basis and a constant communication was ensured with partners from Bifröst University and Nesna University College. The researchers mutually consulted one another on the content of their own contributions (in order to achieve consistency, to avoid overlapping and, in general, to foster the homogeneity of the resulting volume) and appreciated that they got relevant and useful feedback.

Discussions during this period also focused on the organisation of the international seminar of April 2015 and on the structure of the Good Practice Guide that would be published upon the completion of the project. Several draft structures were proposed and successively improved, until a final version was agreed.



## Phase 4

### Results Validation and Final Design of the Guide

April 2015

#### Activity A6 – Joint (International) Seminar

The Joint International Seminar took place on April 28 and 29 at the University of Craiova and its primary aim was to reunite all the members of the project, summarize the intermediary results and obtain the final versions of the materials for the Good Practice Guide.



**April 28** witnessed the presentation of the scientific contributions to be integrated in the Good Practice Guide. The first two presentations referred to the TRANSMOD project and its partial outputs.

The other 14 presentations focused on concrete aspects of the deployment of transversal skills in teaching practice, in subjects such as literature, pedagogy, terminology, interpreting, international business, finance, management, compared linguistics, civilisation, etc.

The activities performed on **April 29** included two working sessions and a conclusions session.

Patrick Murphy (Nesna University College, Norway) developed a workshop with students of the Faculty of Letters of the University of Craiova.

The task implied the use of an authentic document, so that the researcher might compare the answers provided by Romanian students to those of Norwegian students and, thus, complete his contribution for the Good Practice Guide.



## Phase 4

### Results Validation and Final Design of the Guide

A second session took the form of a round table with students of the University of Craiova, who discussed with project members on the implementation of transversal skills. The students were highly interested in the topic, expressed their opinions and provided cases of “good practice” (classes and activities in their years of study that helped them develop transversal skills).



The seminar ended with a conclusions session, where the members agreed on the structure of the Good Practice Guide and talked about possibilities to pursue the project (thus ensuring its sustainability).

On both days of the event, the programme was unitary (no parallel sessions), so that all the participants may attend all the discussions and presentations and, thus, ensure a consistent agreement on the evolution of the project.

May 1<sup>st</sup> - June 30<sup>th</sup> 2015

#### Activity A7: Final Formatting and Publishing of the Guide

The submissions were received by the editorial team. Translation was provided for all submissions, so as to have a volume in English and one in Romanian language. All the submissions were rigorously reviewed, proofread and edited by a team of specialists. The contributions to the guide deal with a wide array of topics, with transversal skills acting as the leading thread.



The contributions to the guide deal with a wide array of topics, with transversal skills acting as the leading thread. Besides the project-centred presentations, the guide includes contributions that may be suggestively summed up as Good Practice ... in Practice. Among the theory-oriented articles, some focus on the transversal skills required for finance, management and marketing students, while others deal with teaching methods such as intercomprehension or project-based learning. The concrete examples of good practice include techniques such as the use of authentic texts, real life situations, geocaching, outdoor teaching or project-based learning in classes on foreign languages, literature, terminology and interpreting.

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