

ERASMUS+ JEAN MONNET PROJECT

Cooperation of Universities and Employers for Quality and Relevance of Education

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Experience Report



The Experience Report contains a list of regional and international conferences, roundtables and seminars attended by Project team (the staff of International Analytic Centre, SPbSUE) in the framework of implementation of *Erasmus+ Jean Monnet Project “Cooperation of Universities and Employers for Quality and Relevance of Education”*.

All events were dedicated to different dimensions of University-Employers cooperation, trends in education and business as well as development of international dialogue and collaboration.

The main purpose of the Experience Report is to analyze the experience and knowledge acquired by Project team during participation in events corresponding to the Project’s theme. It also has an aim to disseminate materials to increase awareness of target groups about modern state of cooperation between universities, business and policy makers.

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The Series of Open Lectures

“ICT in Education and Sustainable Development Goals: Innovation for Quality, Openness and Inclusion”

The Series of Open Lectures “ICT in Education and Sustainable Development Goals: Innovation for Quality, Openness and Inclusion” was held at the State University of Aerospace Instrumentation (SUAI) from **5th to 6th of September 2016**. The Lectures were organized by the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education (UNESCO IITE) in collaboration with the SUAI. The main objective of the course was to address current challenges in the use of ICT on the way towards equitable quality education and lifelong opportunities for all.



Leading international experts in the field of open learning and ICT in education made the following presentations:

- **Dr. Dan Wagner** (UNESCO Chair in Learning and Literacy; Director of International Literacy Institute; Professor of Education at University of Pennsylvania, USA) “Serious inclusion: The role of ICTs to reach the new SDGs”
- **Airina Volungeviciene** (President of European Distance and eLearning Network; Head of Innovative Studies Institute and Associate Professor,

- Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania) *“Opening up of organizations through ICT and different paths of technology integration into organization”*
- **Tapio Varis** (Professor Emeritus of Professional Education, UNESCO Chair in Global E-Learning, University of Tampere, Finland) *“Challenges of electronic environments to learning and education”*
 - **Gard Titlestad** (Secretary General, International Council for Open and Distance Education, Norway) *“SDG: Ensuring access and enhancing the quality of education”*
 - **Vladimir Tikhomirov** (President of International Consortium “Electronic University”; President of Eurasian Open Institute; Head of the Expert Council for ICT applications in education under the Committee of Education, State Duma of the Russian Federation, Russia) *“Strategic use of ICT in universities as a main tool for improving the access and quality of education”*
 - **Alexander Nikitin** (Assistant Professor, Head of the Laboratory for Computer Graphics, Virtual and Augmented Reality, Department of Computer Networks and Systems of St. Petersburg State University of Aerospace Instrumentation, Russia) *“Innovative products as the engine of new educational programs for sustainable development”*
 - **Jian Zhong Cha** (Professor at Beijing Jiaotong University; Chair Holder and Chairman of the Board of Directors, UNESCO Chair on Cooperation between Higher Engineering Education and Industries, China) *“Supply-side structural reform for HR market and some roles of ICT in professional education”*
 - **Michael Meimaris** (Director of the New Technologies Laboratory in Communication, Education and the Mass Media, the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, University of Athens, Greece) *“Open*

Education and Quality: The need for Changing Strategies and Learning Experiences”

- **Christian M. Stracke** (Associate Professor for Open Education and Innovation, the Welten Institute of the Open University of the Netherlands, the Netherlands) *“Innovative educational technologies, methodologies, practices and content (OER and MOOC)”*
- **Svetlana Knyazeva** (Chief of the Section Digital Pedagogy and Learning Materials of UNESCO IITE, Russia) *“Open Educational Resources in English-speaking and the non-English speaking countries: challenges and opportunities for distribution and use”*



International Workshop-training
“Recognition of Non-formal and Informal Learning”

The workshop took place on the **21-22 of September, 2016** at Moscow State University of Geodesy and Cartography. The key speaker and moderator of the workshop **Dr. Schmidt** from European Universities Association gave definition of informal and non-formal learning, described various approaches to validation, certification and recognition of knowledge, skills and competences, acquired outside of formal education system.

The importance of visibility and portability of such learning outcomes in the lifelong learning system, in the labor market and in the community was stressed out. Special attention was paid to certification and validation systems of France, Sweden and the Netherlands.

The issue of validation is not new in Russia either: project VALERU provides a methodological basis for validation of non-formal and informal learning in Russian HE, based on European approaches and well-grounded in the Russian HE system and the demands of the Russian labor market. It is implemented in order to integrate learning outcomes from non-formal and informal education as invaluable resource in the context of fast-changing needs of the labor market and the development of life-long learning in general. It raises awareness among government, citizens, HEIs, companies for the importance to integrate non-formal and informal education learning outcomes in HE in order to ensure the growing demand of highly qualified, skilled and relevant personnel.

Saint-Petersburg International Labour Forum

The first Saint-Petersburg International Labour Forum was organized on the **15-17 of March, 2017** by the Government of St. Petersburg, St. Petersburg State University and Roscongress and supported by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Russian Federation.

The Forum addressed the issues related to the human capital development and aimed at elaboration of an integrated strategy for enhancement of human resources of the Russian Federation on the basis of advanced research and global best practices.

The Forum included several international conferences: Global Tendencies of Social Development and Changes in Labour: New Challenges for Education and State Governance; Labour Protection; Personnel for Arctic Region: Perspectives and Technologies; Innovation and Intellectualization of Labour; Labour and Society in the XXI century; Labour Mobility and Migration.

The Forum addressed the issues of professional education and professional standards, postindustrial economy and regulation of labour relations, modern technologies and new skills, employability, unemployment and self-employment.

The representatives of large corporations announced the newly appeared requirements for their employees in the light of technological and social progress. Together with HEIs they tried to answer the question of breaching

the gap between educational programs and workplace needs. Besides, the question of implementation of occupational standards in Russia and the reaction of employers and HEIs were studied.



Practical Conference

“Interaction of HEI and business: attraction and development of young specialists”

The Conference was organized on the **30-th of March, 2017** by Saint-Petersburg International Business Association (SPIBA) and Higher School of Management of Saint-Petersburg State University.

The main issues in focus were: labour market for young specialists, development of cooperation between business and HEIs, peculiarities of the new professional generation, breaching the gap between education programmes, expectations of young specialists and demands of employers.

One of the two round tables was dedicated to HR strategies in attracting young specialists, the role of HEIs-business cooperation in providing relevant workforce for existing positions, short-term and long-term prognosis of emerging jobs and new tasks and adaptation of study programmes, measures to reduce time-lag in response of educational programmes to employers' demands.

The second round table discussion related to the matters of professionalism, talent search and acquisition, in-company education and staff development, best practices of on-the-job training and upbringing of qualified personnel inside a company, experience of coordination of formal education and training programmes provided by companies. The most interesting report was dedicated to the usage of online-platform to attract an interdisciplinary team of students to solve specific problems of business in the field of technologies.

International Seminar

“Modern approaches in training and software of higher education”

The Seminar took place on **March 30-31, 2017** at Belarusian State University and was dedicated to the questions of implementation of the competence approach in higher education system of Belarus and the European Union, as well as modernization of the teaching system and teaching methods.

The Seminar was attended by 120 participants, including representatives of universities of Belarus, Finland, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Spain.



The welcome addresses were given by the Head of the Higher Education Department of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus **Mr. Sergei Kasperovich**; the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Belarus **Mr.**

Andrea Viktorin; director of the Council of Europe Information Point in Minsk
Ms. Larisa Lukina. 9 Belarusian universities – participants of the FOSTERC project presented their experience in the field of competence approach implementation.

In the framework of the Seminar participants had an opportunity to share their vision about quality of education as well as difficulties appearing in the way of communication process with stakeholders and curriculum design with learning outcomes.



The event was led in the framework of implementation of Erasmus+ project “Fostering Competencies Development in Belarusian Higher Education”, FOSTERC.

The main aim of the Project is to strengthen the use of innovative principles and approaches to teaching and learning in Belarusian HEIs for the improvement of graduates’ learning outcomes based on competencies. The consortium for project implementation includes 15 partners from Belarus, Spain, Lithuania, Poland, Finland. The coordinator of the project is the

Polytechnic University of Valencia (Spain). The project corresponds to the priorities for the development of higher education in the Republic of Belarus, specified in the State Program “Education and Youth Policy” for 2016-2020.

Thematic week events “Staff. Career. HR”

On the **5-7-th of December, 2017** a number of conferences and events was organized within the framework of the thematic week “Staff. Career. HR” at the Centre for Import Substitution and Localization. IAC staff took part in the events programme.

The official opening of the Thematic week began with welcome address of the Chairman of the Committee on Labor and Employment of St. Petersburg **Mr. D.S. Cherneiko** and First Deputy Chairman of the Committee for Industrial Policy and Innovation of St. Petersburg **Ms. I.V. Skladchikova**. A concert and a photo exhibition “Museum project «The World to the touch»” were a part of the opening programme.



The first round table attended by IAC staff was “Organization of internships for students. Case Yulmart”. About 30 participants discussed:

- experience in developing internships and practices for students and young professionals;
- networking as one of the forms of educational process in the preparation of a college graduate;
- internship as an element of systemic work for youth employment.

Employers were also invited to participate in the round table. Manager for the integration of the staff of Yulmart **Ms. Albina Gimaeva** told about the HR policy of Yulmart – one of the largest Internet companies specializing in the online sale of non-food items.

In her turn, Deputy Director for Personnel Development of Victoria-Okhtinskaia LLC **Ms. T.S. Podkopaeva** presented a report on the integration of the employer in the educational process, demonstrating a practical case. The speaker told about the ways of interaction between Okhtinskaia Hotel and one of the technical colleges – the sides have implemented a joint project concerning dual education. With the assistance of the hotel administration, a direction for training in the field of hotel service was opened in the college, where specialists were trained in two directions: “Reception service” and “Booking”. The preparation of the project went through several stages:

1. At the first stage, an analysis of existing curricula was carried out and new additions to the curricula were thought out.
2. At the second stage, own training programs were developed.
3. At the final third stage, the synthesis of the curricula of the hotel and college was made.

The purpose of this joint work was: the involvement of students in the work process; getting specialists ready for work immediately after training; formation of professional skills among students, etc.

Thus, college students have the opportunity to study theory in their educational institution, then go through an internship at the hotel and, finally, get a full-time job at the hotel.

Another speech was given by **Ms. I. Latypova**, director of the “Centre for Population Employment” in Norilsk. On the example of the Krasnoyarsk Territory, the role of the internship in the system of youth employment was demonstrated. As the speaker noted, Norilsk is a city with special, uneasy living conditions, so the personnel question in the city and the region is acute. It is important for the city to attract personnel constantly, especially in such fields as medicine and education. That is why there are special conditions for students involved in practice. Special conditions include the provision of accommodation, increased salary, guaranteed placement of children in a kindergarten, elongated vacation, etc. But despite such “bonuses” it is still not easy to attract young people to work and live in the region. That is why it is important to create a long-term personnel strategy for the development of the region.

The next roundtable was dedicated to the “New opportunities in solving questions of HR policy at St. Petersburg enterprises within the framework of public-private partnerships involving industry clusters of St. Petersburg and the Centers for Qualification Assessment”.

At the roundtable **Ms. L.V. Nekrasova**, expert of the specialized organization for working with clusters of JSC “Technopark”, Cluster

Development Center of St. Petersburg, told about cluster space in St. Petersburg and forms of cluster initiatives support.



Other speakers (**Ms. S.P. Kozlova**, General Director of the Komsomolskaya Pravda Plastics Processing Plant; **Ms. N.V. Avdeeva**, General Director of the Agency for the Development of Human Capital in the North-West Federal District of Russia; **Mr. B.O. Stroganov**, Head of the Department of Specialized Programs of the Employment Agency of the Krasnogvardeysky district; **Ms. O.A. Ivashchenko**, Head of the Centre for Special Training of the Regional North-West Cross-sectoral Certification Centre; **Mr. M. Rapoport**, Technical director of the Centre for Skills and Competencies in the Hospitality Industry) discussed such questions as:

- models of staffing of science-intensive industries;
- regional segment of the national system of professional qualifications: projects and development prospects;

- role of professional associations of employers in the development of the food and hospitality industry.

Conference

“Employers and teachers. Reality and prospects”

On the **7-th of December 2017**, the staff of the IAC SPbSUE visited the conference “Employers and teachers. Reality and prospects”. The organizers of the conference were the hotel “Okhtinskaia” and St. Petersburg Technical College. The key issue of the conference was the interaction of educational institutions and employers on the example of hospitality and tourism spheres. The conference consisted of three modules.

The first module was devoted to the application of occupational standards on the example of hospitality sphere. The employees of hotels and educational institutions shared their opinion about the topic, as well as representatives of the Committee on Science and Higher Education of St. Petersburg, the Committee on Labor and Employment of St. Petersburg, Agency for the Development of Human Capital of the North-West Federal District. European experience in the issue was presented by **Ms. E.V. Viktorova** (director of IAC SPbSUE, project coordinator), **Ms. E.V. Vasileva** (Director of the International Centre for Scientific Research and Projects of SPbSUE), **Ms. M.L. Gunare** (Director of the Tourism and Hospitality Program of the Baltic International Academy, Latvia). All participants of the discussion agreed that teachers and employers have the same interests, so they should work together to improve the curriculum and students’ professional skills.

The topic of the second module was “Innovation. Technologies. Instruments. Exchange of successful practices”. In this module, presentations

were made by representatives of the HoReCa sector and teachers of higher and secondary educational institutions.

In the third module experts talked about theoretical knowledge and practical experience. Among speakers there were teachers and students of the St. Petersburg Technical College, as well as **Ms. N.V. Kudryashova** (general director of LLC “Bureau of career guidance”) and **Ms. E.V. Luzina** (post-graduate student of SPbSUE). This module was extremely useful and interesting, because it gave students an opportunity to share their views on the issue.

International Seminar

“The quality of higher education in Belarus through the eyes of stakeholders”

On the **21-st-22-nd March, 2018** an international seminar “The quality of higher education in Belarus through the eyes of stakeholders” was led at Belarus State Economic University. The co-organizer of the seminar was BSRUN. The seminar was dedicated to different views on the role of higher education in Belarus in the preparation of graduates for professional work, as well as approaches to teaching and learning in Belarusian universities.

The seminar became a part of the FOSTERC project which is very important in the context of a new educational paradigm requiring rethinking of the content, methods and outcomes of learning process. In this regard studying of foreign experience is relevant.



A big interest was aroused among representatives of the scientific and pedagogical community, experts in education, innovative educational technologies. The event united more than 80 representatives of Belarusian

universities and their foreign partners as well as representatives of the National Office of ERASMUS+ in the Republic of Belarus, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, EU project “Employment and Vocational Education and Training in Belarus”.

The welcoming speeches were given by BSEU Vice-rector **V.A. Khmel'nitskii**; Chief specialist of the Higher Education Department of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus **T.N. Mariiko**; Head of the Delegation of the EU to the Republic of Belarus **A. Viktorin**; Senior Advisor to the Secretariat of the Council of the Baltic Sea States **A. Brandt**; BSRUN President **K. Hypponen** and FOSTERC Project Coordinator **A. Garcia-Aracil**.

The issues discussed at the joint event are relevant in the context of internationalization of education. BSRUN experts demonstrated best practices of cooperation between Belarusian universities and Network participants, contributing to effective entry of Belarusian higher education in the EHEA.

I. Paakkanen and **M. Leino**, representatives of the University of Turku (Finland), demonstrated convincingly that mobility is a catalyst for education internationalization. **A.E. Karlik**, head of the Chair of Economics and Management of Enterprises and Industrial Complexes of SPbSUE (Russia), outlined the cooperation of SPbSUE with Belarusian universities in the scientific sphere as a tool for increasing efficiency of economy of the Union State. **I. Baumane-Vitolina**, representative of the University of Latvia (Latvia), demonstrated the innovative approach to the higher education of universities of Latvia and Estonia. **S. Maskevich**, director of the International Ecological Institute named after Sakharov (Belarus) presented new educational projects focusing on development of international cooperation. A report prepared by expert **H. Schomburg** (Germany) about international experience in the field of

graduates' career development was also highly appreciated by participants of the seminar.



Of particular interest was the report of **M. Bass** (University of Valencia, Spain) and her colleague **J. Gines Mora** (Oxford University, UK) stating the results of the survey that identified the bottlenecks in graduates training from the viewpoint of competencies formation. In turn, the representatives of the Belarusian universities – partners of the project gave a detailed analysis of the stakeholders' views on quality of training graduates in the country.

In the framework of the seminar a working meeting of the project was also held with the aim to discuss the issues of developing a student-oriented model of training based on the survey data. In future it is planned to develop a plan of implementation of this model and begin a piloting procedure.

The 7-th International University-Business Forum

Organized by the European Commission, the seventh edition of the University Business Forum took place on the **6-7 of April, 2017** in Brussels and brought together around 400 representatives from higher education institutions, large companies, SMEs, relevant European organizations and associations, as well as national, regional and local authorities from Europe and beyond.



It was a unique opportunity to share and discuss experiences, compare examples of good practice. The Forum addressed topics related to: modernization of education, relevance and skills, evolution and innovation, smart specialization and regional development, state of university business

cooperation in Europe, changing face of higher education institutions, new trends in entrepreneurship.

An interesting research was made and presented by Todd Davey, professor at the Munich Business School. The research included the study of barriers and drivers in the way of University-Business cooperation in Europe. It revealed three main groups of barriers: usability of results; funding barriers; relational barriers. The first group includes such barriers as: the focus on producing practical results by business; the need for business to have confidentiality of research results, business fear that their knowledge will be disclosed. The second group includes: lack of external funding for UBC; lack of financial resources of the business and HEIs funding for UBC; current financial crises. The third group includes: business lack awareness of HEI research activities; the limited absorption capacity of SMEs to take part in effective cooperation with HEIs; difference of motivation and values between HEI and business; bureaucracy in HEIs; lack of personnel with scientific knowledge within business; difficulties in finding the appropriate collaboration partner and others. Todd Davey emphasized that funding barriers are the biggest barriers for UBC, assessed by both sides.

The drivers for UBC were mentioned in the research as well. They were divided into two parts: relationship drivers and business drivers. Relationship drivers are: existence of mutual trust; having a shared goal; understanding of common interest by all stakeholders; cooperation as effective means to address societal challenges and issues. While business drivers are: employment by business of HEI staff and students; interest of business in accessing scientific knowledge; flexibility of business partner; access to business-sector research and development facilities and others. The importance of drivers facilitating the cooperation are perceived similarly by both sides.

The Project experts took part in four workshops:

- University-Business Cooperation and Regional Innovation
- Innovation Competencies
- The Current State of UBC in Europe
- Good Practice in European UBC – Case Studies



It was emphasized on the Forum that in conditions of the knowledge-based economy development the most important form of UBC is cooperation in R&D. Besides, it is necessary to develop entrepreneurial and innovative skills in the younger generation.

The focus was made on the international dimension of cooperation as well. In this context a special meaning is gained by Knowledge Alliances (associations of universities and business from different countries and regions) created in different areas of expertise and funded within EU programme. In particular, an exhibition of Knowledge Alliances was organized in the framework of the Forum. It allowed participants to become more familiar with this topic.

Quarterly meetings of **Employers' club**

A Quarterly meeting of Employers' club guest and members alongside with the Human Capital Development Agency in the North-West Federal District of Russia was held on the **18-th of May, 2017**.

The main issue under consideration was the issue of implementation of occupational standards. **Alexandr Korkin** (Pepeliaev Group) presented a report on the topic: "When are occupational standards required? The first judicial practice". **Vera Minina** (St. Petersburg State University) made a presentation on the topic: "Occupational standards and professional education in the field of human resource management: opportunities for professional development. Case of St. Petersburg".

The next Quarterly meeting was organized on the **5-th of October, 2017** under the topic "Work with talents inside and outside the company". The speakers touched upon different aspects of work with potential personnel in their reports, ways of search for personnel on the basis of cooperation between universities and employers:

- **Svetlana Kataeva** ("AVRIO Group Consulting") - "Evaluation of candidates at the selection stage. Experience of a recruiting agency".
- **Oksana Shishkina** ("220 Volt") - "Evaluation of candidates at the selection stage. Experience of an employer".
- **Gulnara Salikhova** ("Lenta") - "Talent management system in "Lenta": identification, evaluation, development, rotation, reserve, ROI".

- **Lidiia Savenko, Ekaterina Solomatina** (“IKEA Parnas”) – “Talent management based on corporate values”.



Project coordinator **Elena Viktorova** took part in both meetings of the Employers’ Club and made presentations on the harmonization of professional and educational standards, as well as cooperation between universities and business in search for qualified personnel.

VI-th scientific practical forum

“Strategic partnership of universities and enterprises of high-tech industries”

The VI-th scientific practical forum “Strategic partnership of universities and enterprises of high-tech industries” was held on the **15-th-16-th of November, 2017** at LETI-University. Among the organizers there were: Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation; St. Petersburg Administration; Council of Rectors of St. Petersburg; Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of St. Petersburg; St. Petersburg Association of Enterprises of Radio and Electronics, Instrument Engineering, Communications and Information Telecommunications; Cluster of high technology and engineering; PJSC “Svetlana”; Russian North-West section IEEE”; OJSC “Transfer” (scientific and practical magazine “Innovations”).

The programme of the forum included the XVI-th All-Russian scientific-practical conference “Planning and providing training for the industrial and economic complex of the region” (November, 15-16), as well as the conference “Synergy-2017” and youth sessions.

During the XVI-th All-Russian scientific-practical conference, project coordinator **Elena Viktorova** made a presentation “Analysis of university and business cooperation models in Europe” where she told as well about the project of the IAC SPbSUE on cooperation of universities. The report was included in the collection of articles published by the end of the conference.

Other topics discussed during the forum were: current requirements of the labor market; quality of targeted training of highly qualified specialists;

strategic partnership of universities and enterprises; types of cooperation between universities and employers; public and professional accreditation of educational programmes as a tool for assessing the quality of higher education by the employer community; certification of specialists; employment and professional adaptation; experience of interaction of Russian universities with foreign companies and universities.



Conference

“Safety. Labour protection and HR – BOTIK-2017”

A specialized conference and exhibition “BOTIC-2017” was held on the 16-th of November, 2017 at the Agency for Strategic Initiatives “Tochka Kipeniia” and was dedicated to issues of safety, labor protection and personnel. The organizers were: Committee on Labor and Employment of St. Petersburg, Committee on Science and Higher Education, State Labor Inspectorate, Social Security Fund, EMERCOM of Russia, Human Development Agency. About 400 participants attended the event including specialists in the field of labour protection.



At the conference the following issues were discussed: compliance with labor legislation, departmental monitoring of compliance with labor

legislation, problems of applying the results of a special assessment of working conditions, problems of investigation and qualification of accidents at work, etc.

One of the sections was devoted to the issue of occupational standards implementation and independent assessment of qualifications. **Valentina Mitrofanova**, Acting Chairman of the Council on professional qualifications in the field of personnel management, told about the new practice of occupational standards implementation. A particular attention was paid to the implementation of the standard “Specialist in the field of labor protection” and its requirements.

Project Coordinator **Elena Viktorova** took part in this section, made a presentation and told participants about the IAC SPbSUE project, which also touches upon questions of correlation between occupational standards and skills mapn the context of cooperation between universities and employers.

International conference

“Business and University cooperation: fostering entrepreneurship and innovation in higher education”

An international conference “Business and University cooperation: fostering entrepreneurship and innovation in higher education” took place on the **27-th of June, 2018** in Brussels, Belgium at the Microsoft Innovation Centre. The conference summed up the results of the three-year implementation of the project “empl-oi”, which is related to the Project implemented by IAC SPbSUE. IAC SPbSUE staff participated in the conference which turned out to be very interesting and valuable.

The target audience of the event was university teaching and administrative staff, entrepreneurs, policy makers, experts from the field of education, entrepreneurship and business.

The conference consisted of several presentations and two panel discussions. Professionals, experts, academics, students, and policy makers shared their visions and experience to the questions of employability, modern teaching methods, development of entrepreneurial skills and other relevant questions of University-Business cooperation.

Tim Bastiaens, treasurer of Erasmus Student Network (Belgium), opened the conference, welcomed the participants, wished a fruitful discussion and said some words about ESN and its mission – to support and develop international mobility of students.

After that, the floor was given to the lecturer of University of Nice (France) **Vikrant Janawade** who presented a report “A roadmap to develop

entrepreneurial skills for university students". In his speech, Vikrant Janawade, first of all, presented the "empl-oi" project. This conference was a part of this project. He showed the main outputs, key results and achievements of the project. In more details the speaker told the participants about entrepreneurial skills which graduates shall have (self-confidence, positive attitude, open-mindedness, ability to work in a team, a knowledge of several languages, being analytic and critical). He also emphasized the evolution of academic structure and system in whole (external factors of this evolution: political, technical, economic and social internal factors: making the university organizational system more professional, exploitation of new teaching methodologies via digital tools, following a new vision of "entrepreneurial education").



Then **Igor Kalinic**, the visiting senior research fellow at the Centre for International Business, University of Leeds (UK) made a presentation about term of entrepreneurship, defined it as an individual's ability to turn ideas into action which includes creativity, innovation, risk taking, ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives. Besides, he highlighted the role of universities and public institutions in fostering entrepreneurship (entrepreneurial education which includes case-studies and interactive teaching, pseudo-real simulations, internships, etc.) The situation in Europe in

the field of entrepreneurship and some challenges (difficult access to finance and markets, the fear of punitive sanctions in case of failure, administrative red tapes, etc.) were also characterized.

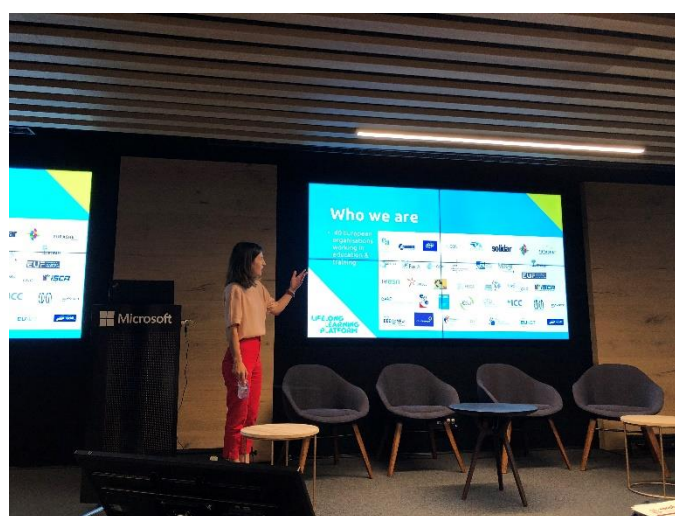
The theme of entrepreneurial competences was continued by **Osvaldas Stripeikis**, director of the Centre for Enterprise practice, Vytautas Magnus University (Lithuania). During his speech he was talking about entrepreneurial competences development platform which gives good possibilities to a fruitful cooperation between business and young generation of graduates. Besides, he said some word about the Centre he works at, which aims to develop entrepreneurial competences by using experience-oriented method and consulting the students to prepare and implement their personal development plans.

A series of presentations of the first part was concluded by the speech of **Bogdan Buczkowski**, the lecturer of University of Lodz (Poland). The title of the report was “Social entrepreneurship in education and practice”. The emphasis was given to an open online-course on social entrepreneurship of University of Lodz. The course aims at the deepening the knowledge about entrepreneurial skills in the context of social entrepreneurship. Besides, the statistical data based on the students’, academics’ and company representatives’ feedbacks about this course was presented.



The second part of the conference was opened by **Rosanna Spanò**, assistant professor of Federico II University of Naples (Italy) who presented a report: “Education and entrepreneurship. Mapping the territory towards an action plan”. In the speech the general conclusions about entrepreneurial skills and a big interest of academy and business to it were made.

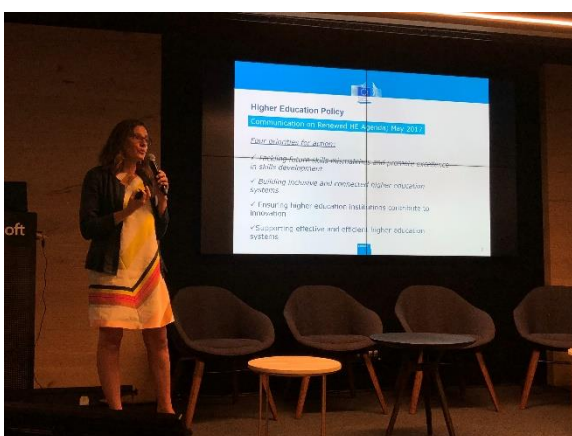
In her turn, **Brikena Xhomaqi**, the director of Lifelong Learning Platform (Belgium) told the participants about the role of LLL in conditions of changing educational system according to the demands of modern society. The main goals, mission and objectives of the platform were highlighted in the presentation: building inclusive and democratic educational systems; widening access to quality education for all citizens; increasing the relevance of education in modern societies.



After that there was a panel discussion with a leitmotif question concerning international mobility. The speakers (**Ignacio Bravo** - professor at University of Alcalá, Spain; **Tijana Stojanovic** - vice-president of ESN, Belgium; **Igor Kalinic** - visiting senior research fellow at the Centre for International Business, University of Leeds, UK; **Giedre Belazariene** - head of HR at FESTO company (manufacturer of industrial equipment and automation systems), Lithuania) discussed how to equip university students with the right

set of skills. It was mentioned that students should try to be creative, innovative, competitive and agile, be able to create business plans and understand market trends, understand how different business sectors work. The participants of the panel session marked unanimously that the skills are important but for the qualitative relationship between students and companies it is important for both parts to see and share the same future and have an empathy to each other.

The third and the final part of the conference was opened by **Maria Palladino**, the policy officer of EC - DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (Belgium). Her presentation was dedicated to the question of UBC. The main priorities of European Higher Education Policy were presented: tackling future skills mismatches and promote excellence in skills developments; building inclusive and connected higher education systems; ensuring higher education institutions contribute to innovations, etc. The emphasis was given to the demonstration of different possibilities in the framework of Erasmus+ Knowledge Alliance (Erasmus+ KA2) and HEInnovate which is a tool for self-assessment of innovation capacity of an individual/group (open to all HEIs).



In his turn, **Steven Price**, the executive director of the European Institute for Industrial Leadership (Belgium) made an attempt to indicate why industry leaders need entrepreneurial skills, how the development and assessment of

these skills may be organized and what the role of universities in helping future leaders to develop them is. In the report the role of such entrepreneurial skills was mentioned: leading a team, motivating other people, effective, networking, influencing, skills of resource management, and creative problem solving, resilient and so on. All these skills, as it was mentioned, future entrepreneurs and leaders may gain in student societies or participating in different student activities.

Then **Amelie Bigorgne**, co-founder of COOPETIC (France) made a presentation about COOPETIC which is an organization which has a purpose to help entrepreneurs in the fields of communication, media, web and audiovisual sphere to cooperate. COOPETIC aims at research and innovations and offers unique possibilities for entrepreneurial cooperation.



At the end of the conference a panel discussion with the topic: “Paving the way for stronger university-business cooperation” was led. The speakers (**Marie Montaldo** – policy and research officer at the European University Foundation, Belgium; **Joachim Wyssling** – project manager of European

University Foundation, Luxembourg; **Giedre Belazariene** - head of HR at FESTO company, Lithuania; **Osvaldas Stripeikis**, director of the Centre for Enterprise practice, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania; **Amelie Bigorgne**, co-founder of COOPETIC, France) and all participants of the conference discussed European experience of UBC and came to the conclusion that myths about universities as rigid organizations with boring professors and business as a bag of money exclusively profit-oriented have to be broken while the future cooperation of universities and business have to flourish. It was stressed that UBC should close the gap between business expectations concerning graduates' competences and graduates' real skills.

It is important to take into account that UBC is a highly relevant question because HEIs have responsibility towards their students in terms of their future in their professional life, however, the skills gap and mismatch existing between the labour market needs and university curricula cannot be addressed by universities alone.

In conclusion the results of the conference were summarized. The participation in the event gave an opportunity to discuss how to intensify university-business cooperation, improve practical and transversal skills and foster graduates' employability. The event was also a place for networking among participants, allowing them to showcase their ideas and experience and establish a good cooperation.

In the framework of the conference IAC SPbSUE staff took part in discussions and learned European experience in the field of UBC. The relevance of the questions under consideration was highlighted as well as its correlation with the questions addressed during events of Erasmus+ Jean Monnet Project "Cooperation of Universities and Employers for Quality and

Relevance of Education". With the aim to spread information about the Project and its result information leaflets were disseminated among participants of the conference.

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**Cooperation of Universities and Employers for Quality and Relevance of
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