

Innovative Teaching and Learning of European Studies (INOTLES)

Mid-term external evaluation report

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Executive summary

It is beyond doubt that INOTLES is addressing one of the most acute needs in teaching European Studies (ES) in the Partner Country (PC) universities that is the introduction and implementation of innovative teaching methods, advocating thus for active learning and interactive classrooms. It is also evident from what has been implemented so far that the partners from the European Union (EU) promulgating the use of simulations, PBL and distance/e-learning in teaching are centers of excellence of these innovative teaching methodology approaches. Their substantial theoretical and practical knowledge on the subject matter meets the interests and excitement of academics from PC institutions eager to get guidance and implement the new methods in their classrooms.

Many positive results could be accounted for even to date. The systematic trainings held by EU partners are maybe one of the most prominent achievements which already started to translate into PC participants experimenting and implementing with the new methods. However, there are still only a handful of academics active in project activities. On the long run, they (and EU partners) will have to incentivize more of their colleagues teaching ES or related disciplines in the PC partner universities. The potential and opportunities offered by the three methods and the INOTLES network in general is huge. Taking advantage and making use at the largest scale possible of the significant knowledge made available to PC participants would be crucial.

The success of planned outputs like content revision of five courses, compilation course curricula that will be taught jointly by all or successful setting up of Centers of European Studies is still yet to be seen. However the processes already started entail that the network has a high potential to achieve most (if not all) the objectives set forth by the project.

In order to reach the highest impact possible there are a couple of issues I felt should be highlighted. Some of them like a leaner communication structure or a more active use of the web-based tools (i.e. Intranet) by the participants are of a technical or management nature but they could assist a smoother project implementation. Others like the peer review of more syllabi/ content of the courses taught by PC or 'e-classroom visits'/real-time peer feedback by EU (and PC) partners on the implementation of newly learnt teaching methods could strengthen the results achieved so far. They would translate into updated modern curricula at PC where courses are taught using innovative methods and approaches. A third type of recommendation targets the prospective setting up of CES at an earlier stage than envisaged, in order to ensure effective, well-functioning, sustainable entities (even if they are planned to be integrated into already existing structures) by the end of the project.

A summative evaluation of the outputs, the intended and unintended outcomes and the degree to which objectives were achieved will be offered in the final evaluation report at the end of the project.

Context of the project with an external eye

The Tempus project called Innovating Teaching and Learning of European Studies (INOTLES) targets a specific section of the curricular reform process of teaching, namely the introduction of modern ES teaching techniques at six higher education institutions in Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine. It aims at this output by providing a thorough and systematic capacity development plan to a group (creating a critical mass) of academics teaching ES at these universities. Besides introducing innovative teaching methods it also has the expectancy of a horizontal national spillover effect of this innovative pedagogy.

Before reflecting on the achievements and challenges of the INOTLES project itself it is worth to take a glance at the macro-context of higher education and academic carrier in these countries but also to the institutional context to see the general trends and specificities that may affect implementation.

General context¹

Higher education systems in this region are still extremely slow in crafting and implementing reforms. Many of the subject areas still rely on traditional curricula that emphasize passive rather than active learning. The reform process has been on the agenda for more than twenty years now and the conditions in some of the countries (including the three targeted by INOTLES) improved significantly after the transition from socialism. However the burdensome bureaucracy of the HE system in general and public universities in particular still discourages many attempts to deeper curricular reform or disheartens academics to initiate change. Moreover, from the individual faculty perspective these countries' unreformed higher education systems mean extremely high teaching loads, low remuneration and poor working conditions when it comes to infrastructure, equipment and teaching resources. On top of it, academics teaching at universities often have to undertake more than one job to make ends meet.

The progress in the three countries' higher education is a slow but a gradual process. The new governments in Georgia and Ukraine create new opportunities and hope for higher education reforms.² Even though at present e-learning/ distance learning if connected to higher education qualification or diploma is not officially recognized as a form of education by the national authorities, these methods could be well used by academics as a tool in their classrooms complementing the traditional face-to-face classes.

¹ The assertions in this section derive from my experience of having worked with higher education institutions in the FSU region on the reform of their curricula and teaching methodology in fourteen disciplines of social sciences (including disciplines like Political Science, International Relations, Law/ Human Rights, Sociology) for the past eight years. Issues like the high teaching load, poor remuneration were also confirmed by one PC representative in the responses to the questionnaire sent out in the framework of the external evaluation process.

² The fact that former rector of National University of Kiyv Mohyla Academy became Minister of Education in Ukraine and the former Director of the Academic Fellowship Program became Deputy Minister of Education in Georgia raised hope that higher education reform will go on. This was confirmed by numerous interactions and feedback from academics outside the framework of the current project INOTLES. Additionally, the new progressive Law on Higher Education in Ukraine passed in July 2014, sets the stage for a comprehensive reform of the sector.

Institutional context of teaching European Studies in Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine

The institutional context even in the most advanced universities in Ukraine, Moldova or Georgia is very different from the western universities. As EU partners pointed out it is “important ...in teaching innovation to understand the contextual factors ... as those factors shape every effort and need careful consideration.”³ Without the aim to provide an exhaustive list I would highlight some aspects of the institutional context I came across in my interaction with EU and PC participants that could support or impede project endeavors.

- *Rigidity of national HE governance system occasionally balanced by flexibility of the institutional governance:* As EU partners rightfully noticed though academic freedom seems not to be an issue at this stage, institutional (and state) governance is still very centralized at all PC partners. Thus PC concerns at first stage might not be about innovation techniques but resources for renovation, and equipment. The rigid governance structure represents a barrier in bigger reform agenda like the endeavor of setting up a new MA in ES i.e. at Batumi University. This however is not an INOTLES objective. All the above might be counterbalanced by the flexibility of the university administration open to improvement of the quality of ES at their institution. As reported by PC, replacement of old ES courses with new ones, revision of syllabi, or introduction of new methodologies has been endorsed by university administration. Moreover in some cases the university administration encourages academics to implement new teaching methodologies.
- *Interest for innovation in teaching:* As EU partners confirmed there is a high interest in innovative teaching methodologies. As they sensed PC countries are aware of the potential of the new methodologies. The challenge however is the uncertainty over the correct implementation of the innovative pedagogies. All my PC interlocutors confirmed that to overcome the anxiety and insecurity a systematic approach would be needed. (As discussed later, PC interlocutors confirmed that INOTLES can provide the right solution to the above through the systematic methodology offered by EU partners.)
- *Relatively high openness of ES faculty:* Most of my PC interlocutors confirmed that their colleagues teaching ES are open and keen on learning new methodologies and moving towards active learning. However, as one PC reported, there seems to be a divide between more junior and senior faculty, the latter being more reluctant in taking part project activities targeting innovative methods. This aspect will be confirmed or denied by the degree of the horizontal spillover effect reached by the end of the project period.
- *ES a new subject area in the region:* Based on the earlier experiences in working in the region, I consider that European Studies has a major advantage over the other more traditional subject areas. Given that it is a relatively new discipline in the three countries the MA curricula may rely on EU country models⁴ and thus courses are more up to date and do not follow a traditional pattern encountered in some other disciplines of Social Sciences. In addition most academics who teach European Studies in PC have already had exposure to Western values of teaching

³ EU partner’s feedback to the questionnaire.

⁴ MA in European Studies at Cahul State University follows a pattern of a Spanish University; the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy has a joint MA in German and European Studies with Jena University, Germany.

(innovative techniques and content) and are keen on further developing both the content and methodology of their courses.

- *Difficulties caused by national legislation on procurement:* As PC feedbacks also pointed out the legal regulation of procurement in PC represents a challenge in purchasing equipment related to the project activity i.e. equipment for the Centers of European Studies (CES). National Tempus Offices could provide an insight into how this problem was handled in case of other Tempus projects from the same countries.

Introduction of external evaluation and methodology

In accordance with the initial plans two evaluation reports will be conducted during the duration of the project. The present report provides an overview of the processes and the state of the art as it is after the trainings in WP 3 were concluded and the work in WP 4 (the actual implementation) is in full process. It will provide highlights from WP through the eye and judgements of EU and PC participants (and external evaluator) and will offer recommendations based on the observations.

The second (final) report will be a summative overview of the whole project with a special emphasis to what extent the outputs, outcomes and objectives set forth in the initial plan were achieved. A more detailed overview of the plans for the second external evaluation report will be provided in the last section of this report.

For the sake of having a focused and in-depth view on the developments so far I went through all the *materials and deliverables* to date: 1) looked at the outputs materials and ppt presentations of the literature review, needs assessment, survey on pedagogical tools and methods in ES; 2) in the framework of WP3 surveyed all the training materials posted on youtube⁵, watched the webinars conducted, examined the e-learning platform and the interaction of parties; 3) considered the developments of the project's webpage, wiki and followed the dynamics of the interaction on the intranet; 4) scanned the minutes available from the project and management meetings.

In addition to the above, primarily qualitative data was collected, through *questionnaires with open ended questions*, backed up by semi-structured *interviews*. Questionnaires were sent out to work package leaders and coordinators from PC. Interviews were organized with the work package leaders and coordinators from the PC universities who responded by the initially set deadline.⁶ (For more information on the questions included in the different questionnaires and questions guiding the interviews please see Annex 1.)

Travel to the region and to the training's site was not undertaken.

⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLcIRg7XW9v4xnir2axZSyWIDHxDdtqDF>

⁶ Answers to the questions were received from all WP leaders; follow-up interviews were held with three of them; answers from six PC participants were received; interviews were held with four of the respondents.

Achievements and challenges⁷

Looking at the overall picture it is obvious that the partnership between the six eastern partners and the three universities that are centers of excellence in the various innovative teaching methodology approaches (e-learning, problem-based learning and simulations) concluded so far all the activities envisaged. All that was proposed was achieved without major disruption in the flow or delay in the deliverables. The outputs so far demonstrate the EU partners' substantial knowledge, the high level of skills and competence in the subject area and the enthusiasm and active involvement of a core group of interested academics from PC.

WP1 – Management

There was one issue raised by my interlocutors (both EU and PC) regarding communication. Browsing through the minutes of the Project Board meetings (PBM) and the Quality Assurance Manual it is evident that main project communication channels were developed as early as the projects started and possibility of regular feedback was created⁸. However, both PC and EU partners mentioned that sometimes the communication/ information exchange between the WP leaders and university coordinators did not always reach the target group or did not lead to academic staff getting information on various activities or deadlines in a timely manner. For the future, a leaner communication structure could be considered. All the participants (i.e. the five academics involved per university, five students per university) should receive the same information directly from the WP or activity leaders. Coordinators from the universities may assist with clarifying or interpreting information in case it is needed. Alternatively, the project's Intranet platform could be used and all academics involved from PC could be provided access to the parts of mutual interest.

WP2 - Review of the state of the art in teaching methods in ES

Providing a clear overview to all participants on the state of the art of the teaching methods through a thorough literature review, survey of pedagogical tools and methods used in teaching ES was the first step of the systematic approach to gradually familiarize academics from PC with new innovative methods. As communication shows each member of the consortium contributed to the activities and results. The needs analysis of the ES disciplines shed a light on the state of the art at the departments in PC and made planning of upcoming activities answer the real needs. The dissemination conference in Brussels provided an active forum for confronting opinions and having debates on the subject matter. As the WP leader also admitted the first block had to be organized quickly in order to be able to keep the schedule and build on the results with the activities of WP3. It was probably one of the most focused periods of the project activities where all involved participated actively. It is worth to emphasize that the WP planning document (setting out all roles, responsibilities and timelines very clearly) was introduced that helped planning and implementation at this very first stage of the project. The WP leader and also PC participants confirmed that the detailed and guiding instructions conveyed through this document were very helpful. WP planning document was kept as a good practice by the other WPs to follow.

⁷ The present document comprises observations made until the date of submitting the report to INOTLES, June 6, 2015.

⁸ As confirmed by the Project Board Meeting minutes. More details on how the communication channels were envisaged can be found in the Quality Assurance Manual.

WP3 – Training and supporting the trainers

The main focus of WP 3 included trainings on innovative methods for academics (five academics/ PC) with the prospect of them becoming future trainers, and orientation meeting/ training sessions on technical assistance in the development of e-learning modules for supporting IT staff. The trainings of the academic staff were rolled out through employing both synchronous and asynchronous tools. The main directives and lessons learnt from the various trainings, demonstrations and report presentations (of the pedagogical training groups in Tbilisi in January 2015) regarding all three methods is planned to be integrated in a Training handbook⁹. This Handbook will try to support a horizontal spillover effect of the project by assisting participant PC members in providing trainings to their colleagues.

All PC confirmed in their answers that learning about the innovative pedagogies is one of the main positive result of the project to date. The interviews besides reiterating the above, pointed out the high quality, systematic structure and professional way the trainings were conceived and organized. As two PC interlocutors mentioned during the interview, before the trainings they have been familiar to some extent with the three methods even before, or might have even used them in their classroom but as they admitted they “didn’t know what the rules were”¹⁰. The archive of the training sessions account for the same as PC mentioned: a good balance of theory and practice in all training sessions. Additionally, it was appreciated that all activities in WP3 was preceded by very clear instructions and guidelines. When asked all of the interviewed confirmed that they already use or started experimenting with the new methods in their classrooms.

The positive comments and enthusiasm above were not fully corroborated by the group dynamics at the webinar sessions or feedback given on the e-learning website (eumodules.eu) set up by EU partners. Both the archived synchronous and asynchronous components of the training account for a highly active and reflective core group of approximately a dozen of participants discussing, debating or giving feedback to issues raised. Some of the trainers also admitted that there were a handful of people active in the training period but probably more could have been achieved if more of the participants could have been motivated to engage more actively. Based on the feedback of EU partners it was difficult to motivate PC to engage especially in case of the asynchronous method.

As the interviews revealed, the reasons are multifold and could range from the lack of confidence, sometimes maybe even low interest in using innovative tools (especially in case of more senior academics) or language barrier, to the online trainings being perceived too intense (with weekly tasks, deadlines). While most of the interlocutors appreciated “demonstrating ‘live’ the teaching methods” (through the use of the tools/techniques they would use in teaching), in one instance it was pointed out that some of more senior colleagues would have preferred face-to-face trainings due to anxiety caused by possible/experienced technical difficulties.

As EU partners reported, there was a slight preference for simulations and PBL over EL/DL in PC. The legal regulations that still don’t recognize e-learning or distance learning are an additional impediment in the popularity of this method. Additionally, EL/DL was viewed by PC as the most complex and time-

⁹ I have not received the draft version of the Handbook yet.

¹⁰ PC interview

consuming method that requires adequate internet connection and knowledgeable technical support. Shortage of one or more would induce more reluctance towards e-learning.

Based on the feedbacks received from both sides the impression is that a solid base has been created for further action. A core group of active participants has started already experimenting with the new methods in the classroom. However, in the near future it will be crucial to build on and provide assistance, (even face-to-face) support and real-time feedback to PC colleagues using the new methods learnt. To this end classroom visits by peers but, if possible, also virtual classroom visits by EU partners should be considered.¹¹ This approach could answer what two PC respondents considered as one of the weaknesses of the project – the absence of more online sessions and/or face-to-face trainings that would enable them to learn from their mistakes.

It should also be noted that the project planned for basic equipment purchase for CES and this does not include equipment for teleconferencing. Trying to fit this within the project budget would be important.¹² Besides enhancing the networking between peers and students it would be instrumental in offering real-time feedback by EU (and PC) partners.

The training offered to IT personnel was not at the core of the questionnaire or interview. However in one case it was brought up by PC and characterized as too general, too short as a result of which IT still might not have the competence to provide the proper technical assistance.

WP4 - Restructuring the Curriculum

The joint development of ES courses¹³ represents an important moment when the emphasis is not only on the methodological aspect but the content of the course. An intranet, a common platform was set up in order to ease peer interaction. The work is still going on and according to the plans the outputs will be presented and discussed at the mid-term dissemination conference in Chisinau, Moldova on June 19-20, 2015.

Four PC respondents mentioned this course revision/ new course development component as one of the positive aspects of the project. PC respondents valued efforts directed to the updating the content of the courses and confirmed that this (together with the implementation of the new methodologies) will lead to courses targeted by INOTLES becoming more focused and of a higher quality¹⁴.

The impression one could get from browsing the Intranet (the main platform supporting the work in WP4) is that of a discrepancy between the highly rated importance of content revision and the dynamics of peer contribution. PC respondents confirmed that there is some interaction on the courses through

¹¹ In this effort language barrier would not be an issue, as some colleagues at EU partners are fluent in both Russian and Romanian.

¹² Regrouping the budget in order to allow more equipment purchase for CES was pointed out also by the NTO in Moldova in their monitoring report sent to EACEA.

¹³ The project proposed to develop/ revise five ES courses: Research Methods; EU policy-making; EU law; blended learning course on EU institutions; EU external relations and jointly develop and teach a sixth one, EU institutions and decision-making.

¹⁴ One of the respondents even pointed it out that this component provides a valuable assistance in the preparations for the new MA in ES at the university.

other means (email, skype) but this remains highly invisible to the external eye to date. The advantage of doing peer-review/ commentary on a platform able to preserve history, the changes implemented or makes access to previous documents' and comments is not utilized. Moreover as the revision of course content was perceived as an important one, the Intranet could be used for the peer review/ revision of the other courses taught by the PC participants.

When referring to peer-review and commentary I feel that one of the important unintended outcomes has not been given enough attention yet. The network created has the potential to become a professional social network of teaching/research in ES. The knowledge and further contacts and networks of both EU and PC participants could enable reaching out to a wider number of academics and universities than planned. The courses revised together could provide the basis for a larger peer interaction in the future. However for this there is a need for more determination and vigorous presence of all parties on the intranet (and wiki).

Turning back for a moment to the feedback of my PC interlocutors, the fact that PC could assume responsibility for coordinating some of the subgroup activities in WP 4 was appreciated and perceived as a motivating challenge. Two out of six written feedbacks mention this as one out of the three positive aspects of the project. This definitely improved the feeling of ownership by PC. (The lack of feeling ownership of project activities by PC was named as a possible challenge by one EU partner.)

WP5 - Dissemination

All events planned took place and were valued by participants. Looking at dissemination (events, participation at events, publications) at large is not the purpose of this evaluation given that a more comprehensive picture could be offered at the end of the project. The role of the e-tools in dissemination is covered in section on WP6.

Nevertheless, I would provide a few highlights I came across in the answers received. Probably, participants may find it difficult at times "to work on the publications ... and disseminate results via website"¹⁵ at the same time given already heavily loaded schedule of the project. However a fertile soli seems to await the dissemination efforts of all sides. It was confirmed that the project and outputs received an increased interest from the EU and PC formal and informal academic networks already. One PC also confirmed that the project catalyzed colleagues to start the work on publishing articles on innovative teaching.

It was also encouraging to hear that some PC plan for organizing 'open lessons'/ public courses/trainings on the new methods for interested colleagues. Horizontal spillover within the same department/ university or even other universities could be an important outcome of the project. A more systematic approach on this might also be discussed by the partners at one of the face-to face events.

¹⁵ EU partner's feedback to questionnaire.

WP6 – Exploitation

All e-tools for learning and communication were set up as planned. As mentioned above some might not have been used to their full potential. The web portal, wiki, and also intranet have the capacity of enriching the existent resource and enlarging the network if used properly.

In the report compiled by WP leader is mentioned that the first year of project activity attracted 400 users in total to the project's web portal and wiki. A strategy for attracting more users could be the subject of further discussion in order to ensure that the website remains 'active' after the project is concluded. It would be good to introduce a systematic monitoring of activities and dynamics through page views/ contributions offered by i.e. Google Analytics to be able to analyze users' behavior¹⁶.

Establishing Centers of European Studies:

An active, well-functioning network of CES integrated in the national and international educational network would support the exchange of the experience with leading foreign universities on the subject matter and would significantly contribute to the improvement of national ES curricula. Through using the innovative teaching methods CES could spearhead a complex approach where learners would receive up to date knowledge from academics and practitioners and develop relevant skills and competencies in preparation to enter the labor market as highly qualified professionals.

The feedback received confirmed the high expectations that precede the setting up of CES in each country. Three of PC respondents considered setting up CES as one out of the three positive aspects of INOTLES. Interviews confirmed however that there is some hesitation related to where the process is at present. In most of the cases the infrastructure, the place that would host the CES has been settled informally, but no concrete steps were taken for pushing for a functional unit yet. Additionally, there are certain bureaucratic difficulties related to equipment purchase, especially in Georgia. In spite of the difficulties it would be important to craft self-sustainable, functional and active centers and to do all this within the framework of the current project in a timely manner¹⁷.

¹⁶ At present the most popular search engine (Google) listed INOTLES webpage on the 5th place when searching on European + Studies + innovative + teaching. This could be considered as a positive acknowledgement of the extent the site is used. However more analysis of users' behavior is needed in order to draw conclusions.

¹⁷ Thinking of a short term business plan for CES for a medium period could be planned for.

Recommendations

Though more suggestions might have emerged from the previous lines I would like to point out the ones I consider the most important.

1. *Communication*: Given the concerns raised by academic staff about not getting timely information on various activities and/or deadlines a more horizontal or direct communication between the WP/activity leaders and participants should be considered for the future project work.
2. *Centers for ES*: The implementation of the CES concept itself seems to be at a very early stage. Though in some cases there are some concrete plans on how to institutionalize it, how to get additional funds or what the activities of CES (in addition to trainings) would be, it is still not clear how and when they would be operational. From the perspective of sustainability the consortium should reflect on whether setting up CES at an earlier stage and allowing them to operate at least one year within the INOTLES project's framework is feasible. There is a risk that if CES are set up and made operational by the end of the project they would turn into passive resource centers after the project ends.

E-library purchase: The original proposal envisaged the purchase access to JSTOR for the CES. However given the nature of the European Studies this should be reconsidered. JSTOR is only an archive with 3-12 years delay in providing current full-text. Instead, subscription to other e-journals (i.e. EBSCO) that able to provide users with current full-texts without a delay should be considered¹⁸.

3. *Content review*: Many of the participants from PC pointed out as a positive output the full review of the five courses developed together. However the dynamics of peer reviewing the posted syllabi is still very low. A systematic approach (i.e. sub package leaders appointing peer reviewers) might assist the process. Moreover, those interested should be encouraged to post other courses they teach and solicit peer feedback from colleagues from both the PC and EU countries whenever needed. It could also be discussed whether these peer-reviewed syllabi could create the basis of a future Open Course Ware¹⁹ on the projects website. This could be a further motivation or service provided to new users who register to INOTLES website.
4. *Using web-based project tools (Intranet, website) more*: As pointed out earlier some of the activities expected to take place on e-platforms are transposed to emails, or skype. This way the archiving function of the i.e. Intranet is not used and the potential of losing some of the information is higher. Most of the activities and communication should take place on the

¹⁸ EBSCO besides providing an archive (i.e. Harvard Law Review back to 1875) the prior focus is on making current full-texts available. The majority of full-text is without any delay (e.g. in Academic Search Complete there are 4,539 peer-reviewed full-text journals with no delay) or have a delay of 1-12 month in average.

¹⁹ In order to process with this the legislation and property rights on course syllabi should be clarified.

intranet in order to be able to track history of interaction, documents, feedbacks. Transforming the project's e-platforms into a professional social network and planning for a systematic increase of users²⁰ (i.e. through offering them peer-review services or on-line training possibilities in different languages²¹) would increase the potential of good networking even after the project would end. To be able to better analyze the users' behavior regular monitoring tools (i.e. page views via Google Analytics) could be also considered.

5. *Classroom visits and peer feedback*: Most of the PC faculty involved in the project have already started or will start implementing the new teaching methods acquired or further developed with the help of the partners from EU. The real-time peer feedback at this stage would be important both from the perspective of successful implementation of the new methods and academics gaining confidence in applying these methods. Peer classroom visits and peer feedback among the faculty who directly participates at the project activities should be encouraged. Additionally, 'classroom visits' by partners from EU using tele-conferencing, or other e-tools could be implemented.

²⁰ A first wave of users could be the faculty teaching ES who are not directly involved with the project; a second wave could be faculty from other subject areas related to ES. In case an extension of users would be envisaged a plan of action should be compiled comprising on services the e-network could offer to new users.

²¹ This recommendation builds on the assumption that academics involved in the project from PC would be able to deliver on-line trainings by the end of the project.

Final external evaluation report - plans

The final external evaluation is planned to result in a summative report. It will probe deeper into the degree the project outputs and objectives are achieved and will try to give a prospective view of some of the intended and unintended outcomes.

To this end it will involve the following groups: faculty who actively participate in the project; other faculty (who are not direct or active participants but teach ES courses), students²² (at least the five students/ PC participant who will convene to test the jointly developed course), faculty from PC university partners teaching other disciplines like: PS, IR, Law, Public Administration²³.

The major questions the final evaluation report will focus on:

- To what extent has the structure of the curriculum and the content of the courses ES faculty (both faculty who actively participated in the project and their colleagues) teach has changed at PC partners
- To what extent has the teaching practice, methodology of faculty teaching ES at the PC universities has changed
- Is there a horizontal spill-over effect in introducing innovative teaching methods/ content to other faculty teaching ES and/or other subject areas that contribute to the overall ES thematic area
- How are these changes perceived at the level of students; what are the skills and competencies they think they acquired through the new approach of their professors
- How are CES and their role in spreading knowledge on ES perceived by faculty and students

Short of visiting each institution the evaluation will apply questionnaires to the different groups, will analyze related documents like students' evaluation, will organize online interview sessions and if possible focus groups at the events I will take part in the second half of the project.

²² In order to garner student feedback with minimal bias about how (and which) academics impacted them, more students (not only the five participating in the INTOLES event) would be asked for feedback.

²³ Given the interdisciplinary nature of ES and the fact that ES in most of the PC partner universities are embedded in other departments it is assumed that the participation in the project of some of the faculty teaching ES might have a horizontal spill-over effect.

Annex 1.

Questions to receive written feedback from EU participants:

1. If you were to look with hindsight to the past period of the project/ your WP what would you have done differently? If you knew all the information you know today what would you have done differently and why?
2. What are the challenges in the WP you lead that may hinder the smooth progress in the upcoming few months left from the project?
3. What are the strengths that you think will help you overcome the perceived challenges (you may refer to strength inside the project/ network and outside of it/ from the macro levels: i.e. university, national etc.)

Questions to receive written feedback from PC participants:

1. In your view what are the current challenges in your country/ university/department (if any) with regards to the smooth implementation of the INOTLES project?
2. Please list and provide short justification for three things you find as the positive outcome of the project as implemented so far. Please be as concrete as possible.
3. Please mention at maximum three points/ aspects that you think should have been dealt with differently/ you would deal with differently if it was happening now. Please provide short justification. (In other words: If you knew all you know today on these issues what would you have dealt with/ approached in a different way.)

Interview questions guiding the semi structured interviews with PC participants (not all covered with each interviewee):

1. Which department is ES part of (is it a standalone entity)?
2. How many teach ES courses? How many have western degrees?
3. What is the state of the Institute/ Center for European Studies in the country? What are the expected difficulties? When do you think it is going to be operational?
4. How do they see the involvement of staff in the project? Which are the major obstacles?
5. Which trainings did you take part in? Which webinar? What was good and bad about the whole training process?
6. What were the selection criteria for the 5 staff members who participated in the training activities of WP3?
7. Have you already organized trainings for your colleagues? When do you plan for it?
8. Describe the current situation of the official recognition of Blended/E-learning in your country.