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OA3.1.3 – Recovery Plan of Multidisciplinary Projects and Internships (MP/I)

Developed by UVIGO, UDELAR,
IFG, IFAM, IFSUL and IPP
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1. INTRODUCTION

LAPASSION (Latin-America Practices and Soft Skills for an Innovation Oriented Network) is a project from the program Erasmus+ within the line KA2 – Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices – Capacity Building in the field of Higher Education (reference 585687-EPP-1-2017-1-PT-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP). It involves partners from Portugal, Finland, Spain, Brazil, Uruguay and Chile. LAPASSION consortium has as motivation to create a unique solution to address different problems affecting youth in HEI, helping students to obtain a better training in terms of innovation, soft skills, and internationalization. This solution is obtained by LAPASSION MP/I (Multidisciplinary Projects/Internships) for students' teams to help them to co-create, and co-develop projects proposed by enterprises and other organizations, or to accelerate innovative ideas in an international context involving students from several countries.

The aim of LAPASSION is to increase the innovation culture of HEI and the connection with Enterprises/Organizations (E/O) with impact in Employability, and Internationalization. This aim is pursued by implementing multidisciplinary projects/internships(MP/I) for co-creation, co-development, and acceleration of innovative ideas, integrated in the educative project of the involved institutions. MP/I will be implemented by means of students' teams involving students with different backgrounds, different graduation levels, and from different countries, and solving challenges posed by E/O.

1.1 Consortium of LAPASSION

LAPASSION is a consortium with 15 partners, including 13 Higher Education Institutions (4 from Europe and 9 from Latin America), 1 Association of Enterprises from Portugal, and 1 Council of the Federal Institutes from Brazil. The list of the partners is the following:

- Polytechnic of Porto (IPP, Portugal)
- Tampere University of Applied Sciences (TAMK, Finland)
- University of Vigo (UVIGO, Spain)
- University of Salamanca (USAL, Spain)
- Federal Institute Riograndense (IFSUL, Brazil)
- Federal Institute of Triângulo Mineiro (IFTM, Brazil)
- Federal Institute of Goiás (IFG, Brazil)
- Federal Institute of Maranhão (IFMA, Brazil)
- Federal Institute of Amazonas (IFAM, Brazil)
- University of the Republic of Uruguay (UDELAR, Uruguay)

Technological University of Uruguay (UTEC, Uruguay)

Foundation of Professional Institute (DUOC, Chile)

Catholic University of Chile (PUC, Chile)

Association of Enterprises of Portugal, Commerce and Industry Chamber (AEP, Portugal)

Council of Federal Institutes of Brazil (CONIF, Brazil)

IPP is the coordinator institution of the project.

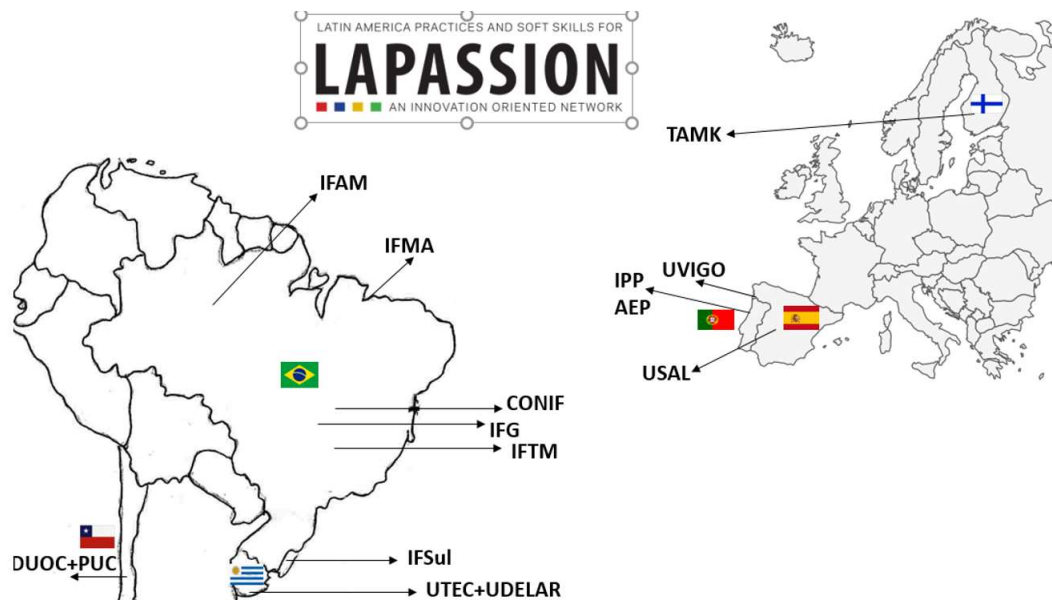


Figure 1 - LAPASSION partners in Latin America and Europe

1.2 Workpackages of LAPASSION

LAPASSION involves the following Workpackages:

WP1 – Preparation and Training for Multidisciplinary Projects/Internships (MP/I)

WP2 – Development of MP/I

WP3 –Quality Planning & Control (QP&C)

WP4 –Communication Plan, Dissemination and Exploitation Strategy

WP5 – Management

Work package WP3 is focused on the Quality Control of LAPASSION in two different aspects: the Quality of Students Teams'projects; and the Quality of the project LAPASSION. This report delas with the first part and refers to the Recovery Plan of MP/I.

2. RECOVERY PLAN OF MP/I – EXPECTED SITUATIONS

The activity A3.1 states for ensuring that MP/I are really planned, monitored, and controlled. For example, how the team of the students will organize the activities (who will be developing each part of the project; who is reporting what; schedule of the project; etc). Connections with WP1, and WP2 are necessary. QP&C meetings occurred in the last week of MP/I development in order to be possible to see some demonstrations of projects.

It was important that the specific MP/I development were monitored continuously, or in specific checkpoints to verify if it is everything was according the expected. All this part is strongly connected with A2.1, but with A1.2 as well since Supervisors need to be aware of the monitoring and control.

The world is not perfect; thus some exceptions and unexpected events may occur. The Recovery Plan (O3.1.3) exists for this purpose. Some exceptions were related with the assumed preconditions (eg. delay in the arriving of some international student for a specific team, or some specific student has not the expected technical skills, or some equipment/component/material is not available). The adaptation procedure to these unexpected events were considered in the Recovery Plan. The worst thing is to do nothing and to conclude in the last week of the MP/I those results were not obtained due to some exception detected in the first week. Little changes in the MP/I may occur, or more substantial changes. In the limit the team may have to change to another project (so some free projects will be necessary). Recovery Plan can be updated during LAPASSION project, in order to cover more situations.

During all the project the Recovery Plan has been adopted to deal with the expected situation. However, as we will see in the next section some unexpected situations appeared and the recovery has to be handled in real-time when the pandemic crisis appeared with the projects LAPASSION@Goiania in the first week and the project LAPASSION@Manaus in the second week.

For LAPASSION@Santiago it was necessary to handle two situations. First UVIGO was not able to select students in due time. The fact that the LAPASSION@Santiago edition has started early in the project (month 6) created some difficulties for institutions to select students, but with the exception of UVIGO the other institutions were able to

select students. Fortunately IFMA has decided to send 4 students in spite of the previewed 2 and IFG has decided to send 3 students in spite of 2. UVIGO assumed to send 2 more students in 2019, for the edition of São Luís. The second problem with the edition of LAPASSION@Santiago was the difficulty to select 22 students from Chile. The selection of local students was usually a problem since students have their own activities in the Programmes. So just 16 Chilean students were selected in spite of 22. Thus a project planned for 44 students (22 from Chile and 22 from abroad) started with 39 students (16 from Chile and 23 from abroad). This was not considered a major problem, even because LAPASSION@Santiago was the edition in which more students were expected. LAPASSION@Santiago was developed with great success so the adopted measures were considered adequate.

The same problem of difficulties in selecting local students happened in LAPASSION@Uruguay. Just 15 from the 20 students expected from Uruguay were selected, mostly due to the difficulty of UTEC since the project was centred in Montevideo and UTEC has not students in Montevideo. Thus, a project planned to start with 30 students has started with 25 students. Like in Santiago the project was completed with great success, so the adopted measures were considered adequate. Concerning the global project LAPASSION the partners have decided to look more carefully for the situation and try to overcome the problem trying to involve more students in other editions of students' projects.

LAPASSION@SãoLuís reversed the trend to have less students than expected. Planned to have 24 students the project started with 29 students, being the difference obtained by the participation of 1 more local student (17 in spite of 16), the 2 students of UVIGO missing in LAPASSION@Santiago, and 2 students from other Federal Institutes (Alagoas and Pernambuco) that are not partners of LAPASSION. This acceptance of students of other Federal Institutes (supported by these Institutes and not by LAPASSION) was something envisaged in the perspective of involving these institutions for the future sustainability of the project.

LAPASSION@Uberaba was executed completely as planned, with 24 students (16 local and 8 from abroad).

LAPASSION@Manaus was planned for 30 students and started with 32 students, one less from IFAM (19 in spite of 20) but more 3 from other Federal Institutes (1 from Amapá and 2 from Pará). LAPASSION@Goiania started with 26 students in spite of 30, less 7 from IFG (13 in spite of 20) but with 3 more from other Federal Institutes (Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, and Espírito Santo). Both editions started with the existing students, in Manaus started on the 2nd of March 2020, and in Goiania on the 9th of March, but this was a small problem compared to what was to come, as we will see in

the next section.

3. RECOVERY PLAN OF MP/I – UNEXPECTED SITUATIONS

As we know today, the coronavirus pandemic impacted the world and changed our way to live. It is important to remember the context of the pandemic. At the end of 2019 and beginning of 2020 the occidental world was surprised by the evolution of the pandemic in China. At the beginning of March 2020 the evolution of the pandemic started to be dramatic in Europe, namely in Italy, and after in Spain. Most of the European Universities have decided to stop the presential classes and adopt e-learning. The suspension of the classes in Brazil was decided at the middle of March, as well. The same happened in Chile and Uruguay. However, they were not really prepared for online training of students, namely due to the social conditions of many students. It took several months to adopt to e-learning in Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay.

When the decisions to stop the classes were taken in the Federal Institute of Amazonas (IFAM) LAPASSION@Manaus was in the third week. When the decisions to stop the classes were taken in the Federal Institute of Goias (IFG) LAPASSION@Goiania was in the second week. At the week following these suspension LAPASSION started in online/distance mode, and important to say that LAPASSION was the only academic activity happening in IFAM and IFG, and probably in all network of Federal Institutes in Brazil, on these weeks after the suspension of the classes.

On the 2nd of March 2020, LAPASSION@Manaus started, with 32 students engaged in the challenge of Socio-Environmental Technologies for the Sustainability of the Amazon. At the weekend of the first week, they visited Tumbira community, a Brazilian indigenous community reserve (figure 2).



Figure 2 – LAPASSION@Manaus students during the Tumbira reserve immersion

On the 9th of March 2020, LAPASSION@Goiania started, with 26 students engaged in the challenge of “How to contribute to an Inclusive and Sustainable Society?” (figure 3).



Figure 3 – LAPASSION@Goiania opening ceremony

Fears about the coronavirus were in the thinking of everybody during these first weeks. At this moment the projects for Pelotas, and Santiago (the second edition) were postponed. The fear of some student ill with a virus killing so many people, flights being cancelled, supermarkets with limited access, canteens and restaurants closing, this was the situation. But students of LAPASSION@Manaus and LAPASSION@Goiania were there, in the middle of the coronavirus storm, away from their homes and countries,

and without protection of home health systems. LAPASSION partners decided that the safest was try to return students to their home countries as soon as possible. It was an huge and stressing operation, but fortunately it was successful. But students assumed all a compromise, they decided to go till the end of the projects and adopt technology for that purpose (figure 4).



Figure 4 – LAPASSION@Goiania last presential moment and compromise to continue

Motivation of students for the new mode of actuation (online/remote) was important. One of the used techniques was motivation students to students (figure 5).



Figure 5 – LAPASSION@Manaus students produced short videos to motivate each other

The Recovery Plan adopted from one day to another implied several actions that we can list below:

- Suspension of in-person activities in the LAPASSION space
- Loans from notebooks to students who did not have computer or notebook suitable for remote access
- Face-to-face meetings of student teams were restricted to a maximum of four people, in an uncrowded place, and with the necessary health care
- Suspension of cultural activities provided for in the schedule
- Remote mentoring activities for mentors
- Meetings with partners (counterparts), application of questionnaires only by remote means
- Partial weekly presentations, with collective guidance, also developed remotely
- Final project presentation, called Demo Day, also by remote means.

As a major concern was to keep motivation high, coordination made a movement with the students to send a short video, about 30 seconds, demonstrating how they were at home, and with a message for the other students. For example, in LAPASSION@Manaus students introduced images of good moments lived between them in the immersion in the Tumbira community in Amazonia and the first three weeks from LAPASSION@Manaus, a motivational video was created and publicized among them, with a very positive effect. Figure 5 presents examples of excerpts from student videos.

Considering that when the pandemic crisis appeared LAPASSION@Pelotas and LAPASSION@Santiago did not started yet it was decided to cancel both editions.

Due to the uncertainty it was decided to ask for the extension of the project for one more year, what was authorized by EACEA Agency.

As we know the pandemic situation extended for all 2020 and 2021, being not solved when this report is being written. Thus two decisions were made at the beginning of 2021:

- To organize just one edition in Pelotas, since in Santiago it has already been organized in 2018, trying to involve more students
- To assume LAPASSION@Pelotas will run in remote/online mode

Due to the different calendars of students it was considered that LAPASSION@Pelotas would start on September 1st 2021. Considering that the editions of LAPASSION projects for students take 10 weeks this give us the 5th of november as the last day of LAPASSION@Pelotas, 20 days after the end of the international Project (14th of October). But this was not a main problem since no costs for students mobility were expected nor other kind of reported costs (staff and subcontracting). Anyway a Pre-Demo Day was held on October 14 to celebrate the Project success and all the resilience of involved students and professors.

Despite these trouble times, it is also important to compare the number of expected students and the real number of students. Since LAPASSION@Santiago (2nd edition) has been cancelled we have to compare the 24 students expected in Pelotas and the 24 expected in Santiago. Fortunately, we had 52 students for this remote/online edition of LAPASSION@Pelotas. And if we sum the number of students from all editions we achieve 226 students, very close to the 230 planned in the Project proposal (98.3%).

4. CONCLUSION

The Recovery Plan and the real-time remedial actions adopted in LAPASSION allowed to handle expected and unexpected situations. The most critical problems were derived from the coronavirus pandemic crisis that impacted LAPASSION@Goiania and LAPASSION@Manaus during the first weeks of these editions (second and third week) converting projects planned to be completely developed in presential mode to remote/online mode. The impact in the financial part was considerable, but the institutions preferred to deal with this impact as cofounding (this will be reported in the recovery plan of the LAPASSION project in output result OA3.2.3 – Recovery Plan for LAPASSION).

A total of 226 students were involved in LAPASSION Multidisciplinary projects for teams students, in a total of 7 editions (8 were expected) with 39 projects (28 expected). But we must consider that beyond the 7 editions of LAPASSION projects for students there are more 11 editions of LAPASSION inspired projects for students involving other 211 students in 52 projects.

	Editions (sets of projects)	Projects	Students
LAPASSION proposal	8	28	230
LAPASSION funded execution	7	39	226
inspired but not funded by LAPASSION	11	52	211