WP1, Activity 1.1

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF AUDIOVISUAL PRODUCTION AND CO-OPERATION MODALITIES IN PC AND EU

Introduction

In order to define lasting models of co-operation with non-academic media institutions (mostly broadcasting companies) and establish sustainable strategies, Work package 1 – Prerequisites for the production of student AV programmes includes providing analysis of AV production in PC and EU. Partners in the project, high education institutions and two non-academic institutions composed reports containing thorough analysis of their existing modalities of audiovisual production and co-operation with media outlets and enterprises. Reported modalities vary according to several factors – general type of the institution (artistic, technical or scientific), continuance and acquired experience in collaboration within professional environments, respective technological profile, etc. Reports include detailed descriptions of previous professional involvement in educational process, as well as activities planned for the future.

Partner country – Serbia, University of Arts (UA), Faculty of Dramatic Arts (FDU), Belgrade (Project coordinator)

In the domain of connecting theory and practice in order of establishing two way communication channel between institutions that are significant for completing the educational process in different aspects of audiovisual production, several modalities can be distinguished: internships and study visits, co-productions, educational programmes, technical support, presentation and promotion. The activities differ depending on the needs of specific faculty departments. Internships have always been an important part of the learning process. Since Faculty of Dramatic Arts is a state funded institution, the most appropriate media institution for effectuating internship programs is RTS, offering various options for specializing in different professional directions. Duration of internships depends on the curriculum specifics and the objectives of given study assignments, but the most frequent are two week and one month internships. The focus of internships in the domain of audiovisual production is on securing quality guidance through programming and production procedures in various programme and production sectors.

Students are encouraged to actively participate in the production of audiovisual content of different genres and formats (depending on the year of studies and obtained theoretical knowledge) as well as to shadow all technological steps in order to achieve necessary professional experience. Study visits are organized as a form of short term demonstration exercises focusing on very specific creative and technical curriculum topics.

Public service media outlet RTS and FDU have a long and fruitful co-operation in the domain of technical support. Production of students’ audiovisual works has been often facilitated and improved by technical help on several levels (equipment lending, technical expertise, etc.). Since 2006/07 school year FDU is offering a special educational programme in several departments (Film and TV Production, Camera, Editing, Sound Design and Management and Production in Theatre and Radio) that enables employees in media institutions to obtain a high education degree.
FDU has signed several protocols of co-operation with other broadcasting companies and cultural institutions that result in constant presentation of student productions in wider public scope. During previous school year (2012/13) students produced over 30 theatre productions and over 200 audiovisual works, including one long feature film. With the institutional support of FDU’s International Relations Office students are applying their work in various domestic and international theatre, film and audiovisual festivals, competitions and reviews, often bringing numerous awards and mentions.

**Partner country – Serbia, Academy of Arts, University of Novi Sad (AUNS)**

Within study programmes that are mainly directed towards audiovisual media (Directing, Camera, Editing, Light Design, Visual effects and Animation) students produce films (feature, documentaries and animated works) and radio dramas with assistance and guidance by the Academy staff. Additionally, performing arts study programmes offer constant possibilities for students to publicly present their work at the Academy, but also in various public places, concert halls and theatres throughout the city of Novi Sad and the region. On occasion, these performances are being recorded and subjected to postproduction process. The opportunity to present their work to prospective future employers and general public is of great significance to students.

Annual production volume of AUNS study programmes includes a minimum output of 3 animated films, 6 radio dramas, 26 student films, 1 popular music album, 15 additional various audiovisual works (depending on the assignment), 11 theatre plays and 60 concerts (of which 6-8 are recorded).

AUNS keeps extensive cooperation with other HEI institutions in the region, as well as participation in festivals and cultural events, underlining the importance of cooperation with Novi Sad Synagogue, one of the most prominent venues for concerts and performances. The Academy has signed cooperation protocols and agreements with Radio Television of Vojvodina, Serbian National Theatre, Shorts Film and Video Festival, “Mali Princ” Foundation, Novi Sad Cultural Centre, Matica Srpska, Fabrika (annual exhibition of student multimedia art), Music Youth of Novi Sad, Yugoslav Film Archive, French Cultural Centre and Vojvodjanka organisation.

**Partner country – Serbia, School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science Applied Studies (VISER), Belgrade**

Within the study programme of Department of Audio and Video Technology VISER has a structural division to two independent production fields that function more than less separately: audio production and video production. Both of them are developing substantial cooperation with all relevant institutions in their fields of interest.

Audio production segment of the department collaborates with some of the most important media outlets and institutions in respective area: Radio Belgrade, Studio B, Students’ Cultural Centre, Belgrade Youth Centre, EXIT festival, with a considerate range of musicians (classical, jazz, pop-rock, electronic, etc.). VISER has an internship agreement with Radio Belgrade and Studio B that enables students to practice their knowledge and skills in “real life” professional environment. VISER provides technical support in the Radio Belgrade broadcasts.

During the period of last ten years, at VISER audio studio more than 100 music albums were produced, as well as more than 20 artistic projects (9 international). Cooperation at international level is fully developed with Music Production and Sound Recording Departments of Boston Berklee University. Some of the projects (approximately two third of them) are realized as a practical segment of regular educational process within the course of Music Production, and some are independent projects that are supported by school management, since they were assessed as very beneficial to VISER students. Student Internet Radio is the latest audio production project that is fully supported by school management, starting in spring 2014, as a part of VISER contribution to audio production segment of Tempus project no.517022.
Video production segment of VISER study programmes includes full cooperation with all major television stations in Serbia (RTS, Prva TV, PINK, B92, Studio B) as students take active part in internship programs at those television centres. Strong links are especially established with RTS Science and Music Programming.

As a part of TEMPUS project 517022-TEMPUS-1-2011-RS-TEMPUS-JPCR Digital Television and Multimedia VISER completed realization of Regional HDTV studio. In all phases of this project direct collaboration with National Broadcasting Service was effectuated.

Video production study programme is focused on covering wide range of genres and formats, from promotional content as a part of various kinds of marketing communication, to documentaries. However, VISER video production is somewhat specialized in recording concerts and other sorts of live events, nurturing firm connections with some of the major festivals in Serbia (Belgrade Jazz Festival, Ring Ring festival, etc.)

Partner country – Bosnia and Herzegovina, University of Banja Luka, Academy of Arts

Since its foundation in 1999 The Academy of Arts has been using the established models as well as the experience of the Academy of Arts in Novi Sad and the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade. Structurally the Academy consists of 3 departments with corresponding study programmes: Dramatic Arts, Music Art and Fine Arts. Within the Dramatic Arts study programme the Academy educates actors, theatre directors, playwrights, screenwriters, film and television directors, cinematographers, editors, producers and animators. Students of Film and Television Directing, Camera and Editing work on six films as a form of joint projects (5 short features and 1 documentary) in the course of BA studies, two films (documentary, experimental or feature) in MA studies and graduation film at the BA studies. Students of Editing and Camera also have additional independent exercises.

In order to further professionalize their operating activities, considerate number of professional theatres, film productions, television and radio stations, cultural centres and other institutions has started to offer employment to graduates from the Dramatic Arts study programme. The opportunity to achieve advancement in these professions is a great one as well, since the number of educated experts in respective artistic and scientific fields is rather modest.

Representing a significant connection between relevant stake holders, the Academy of Arts focuses its main activities towards the process of revitalizing the artistic and cultural space in Bosnia and Herzegovina, thus re-establishing links broken following the tragic events in the region. This primarily relates to collaboration with relevant high education institutions in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, festivals and manifestations which brings artists from the region together again, but as well as through its own production and the organization of the events that reach beyond the local framework.

The Academy of Arts has a good and lasting co-operation with the Radio Television of Republic of Srpska (RTRS), and in the first years of its existence local television centres (RTRS, Alternative Television, and Independent Television) have made a great contribution in material and technical support with the objective to obtain the best possible quality and well trained human resources necessary for these broadcasting operations. Subsequently, the co-operation remained vivid only with the RTRS. The basic modality of co-operation in the past 13 years was reflected on the level of technical assistance of RTRS in the implementation of student assignments as well as in co-productions. Students of courses Television Technique and Technology and Editing attend a part of their classes at RTRS. The prospect of quality co-operation has risen since the production and technical improvements of the RTRS took place (Radio and television headquarters, purchase of modern HD professional equipment, digitalization, etc.). Co-operation with BHRT is still in its beginnings and has so far included presentations and promotions of students’ works in special programmes dedicated to the Academy of Arts.
Partner country – Bosnia and Herzegovina, University of Sarajevo, Academy of Performing Arts

The main objective of the Academy of Performing Arts is the continuous research and development of new pedagogic and artistic models in the fields of theatre, film, radio and television. In addition to the theoretical studies, a significant emphasis is given on achieving quality practical experience as a necessary educational segment. Founded in 1981, Academy consists of 5 departments with study programmes on undergraduate and graduate levels – Acting, Directing, Dramaturgy, Production and Management in the field of performing arts, and A/V Media. Academy teaching staff and students have been awarded with prestigious international and regional prizes for creative achievements in theatre and film.

Study curricula contain about 70% subjects of artistic and vocational character, half of which are the main professional art study programmes. Consequently, students produce their works in theatre, film productions, radio and television. In addition to its own technological potential Academy implements close co-operation with theatres, public service broadcaster and the independent theatre and film production companies.

Since its foundation Academy has established long term collaboration with Public Broadcasting Service media sector (BHRT – Radio Television of Bosnia and Herzegovina and FRTV – Radio Television of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), National Theatre, Youth Theatre and Chamber Theatre 55, as these institutions are co-founders of the Academy. Agreements signed with these institutions are still effective and are reflected in the support in production of student theatre, film and television exercises. Media institutions have a significant participation in co-producing student short features, as well as in training process that concerns production and technology aspects. During the course of the studies students have the opportunity to practice on several radio drama projects in BHRT and FRTV. Independent film and theatre productions (Refresh, Proba, Flash, Deblokada, East-West Centre) were co-producing partners for student graduate short features and full-length theatre plays.

Many graduate performances had taken place in mentioned theatres, and since 2010 a contract with SARTR (Sarajevo War Theatre) is also signed. At the Academy of Performing Arts, Open Stage Obala is created as a space in which educational process takes place, presenting students’ works as an appropriate venue for professional theatre productions and film screenings. It has 120 seats and technical resources necessary for various programmes.

Partner country – Albania, “Aleksander Moisiu”, University of Durres, Faculty of Information Technology (UAMD)

UAMD represents the youngest public university in Albania since it has started its academic activity in 2006/07 school year. In 2012, as a part of TEMPUS project UAMD started a new profile of studies with the opening of Multimedia and Digital Television study programme that has the imperative of establishing real and firm collaboration with media institutions. In January 2014, UAMD formalized the co-operation with Adria TV, local media outlet in Durres. Their next step is to sign a contract with Top Media, one of the most prominent media institutions in the country and the first Albanian channel to become available in 16:9 widescreen high definition for selected programmes. Up to the present, their collaboration has been of an informal nature, pursued through promoting the students’ work and their participation in Imagine Cup competition. On this occasion, media partners also had the important role of evaluating the students’ production output. Thus, one of the most convenient manners to link and combine art and technology is through video installation and exhibition in order to connect artists and students of Information Technology.

UAMD distinguishes two models of balancing theoretical knowledge with gaining necessary experience in practice. In the first, curricula are divided to theory and practice. While practice exercises take place in IT laboratories in the vocational school, university organizes theoretical lectures. Second model recognises the same division between theory and practice, with the difference being in organizing practical training within the premises of media institution. In this so
called “dual system”, students are to sign a formal contract with media enterprise which ensures for them not only constant practice opportunities, but to enter to the university as well. This model enables that after their three-year studies students obtain a degree and three years of work experience as well.

Partner country – Albania, University of Tirana (UT), Faculty of Economy, Department of Mathematics, Statistics and Applied Informatics

Faculty of Economy is the oldest institution of high education in Albania and it consists of 6 departments, one of which is the Department of Mathematics, Statistics and Applied Informatics. The primary aim of this department is to provide students with basic knowledge level necessary for their formation as applied informatics specialists in all areas of economy and industry. This study programme offers education in several fields of study: databases, programming, multimedia, computer architecture, operating systems, algorithms, data structure, etc.

The Multimedia course is focused on introducing students to computer applications that incorporate following multimedia elements: text, graphics, animation, audio and video. Mastering the combination of those elements in order to create an interactive content is one of the essential assignments of the course. From the start the educational process is based on working on group multimedia projects, since this field naturally demands organized teamwork approach. Students are required to offer technical support to the other project group members. Their tasks are related to following specialties: photography, animation, audio, video, content providing, etc.

Modalities of students’ involvement in audio and video production are categorized as: multimedia course projects, final year project (thesis), internship, working in media institutions and scientific work. In the course of multimedia project assignments students are asked to use various elements (A/V recordings, photo albums, animations) for their computer applications. Some of the students opt to present their final thesis in multimedia field by creating customized applications in various fields. On the master studies level students are obligated to have an internship of several weeks. They have the option of choosing the company themselves, or the department directs them towards the companies that are mainly operating in IT field, but not exclusively. The internship may include developed companies where the IT sector takes considerable role in operation. Depending on the needs of a selected company, students are assigned to different tasks. After the internship completion, students are required to write a report on the internship period. Some of the students decide to take practice in media institutions, as a first step towards future employment. When employed, they work full-time or part-time on different positions such as: production staff, audiovisual effects, creating music videos totally based in multimedia 2D animations, moderating radio content, performing in theatre and music shows, editing and maintaining websites, designing quiz shows, etc. Students also present their scientific papers concerning Multimedia Technologies and Services in the Conference on Information Systems and Technology Innovations, organized by the University.

As concerns important media collaborations, the Department has benefitted from the cooperation with Albanian Radio and Television. This public media institution has covered important parts of the ongoing University’s conferences and it represents a potential partner in this TEMPUS project.

It is necessary to note that all above mentioned collaborations and projects are not part of a signed protocol, contract, or similar agreement with media institutions, but rather individual or group initiatives. The only media partner that might be of assistance in realizing students’ projects is A 1 Report TV, which is one of the TEMPUS project media partners.
EU partner country – Slovenia, University of Ljubljana, Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television (AGRFT)

Within the AGRFT film and television study programme number of student projects differs every school year, depending on the number of enrolled students. In 2013/14 school year it is expected the production outcome of 5 short documentaries (15 to 30 min), 5 short features (15 to 30 min) and 4 TV dramas (30 min). Production teams are mixed since they consist of both students and film and television professionals. The projects are joined efforts of various departments that collaborate on them – directing, cinematography and editing. The school hires professionals in the case there is a lack of students to fill in the position in the production team.

Although the Academy is in the possession of pro-sumer shooting equipment, basic lightning, adequate editing and postproduction technical resources that suffice the production needs, the school policy is to gradually introduce the students into the professional environment. AGRFT collaborates with number of state and private owned companies from A/V field. Major projects are co-produced with the national broadcaster RTV Slovenia, and they are supported by Slovenian Film Centre as well.

AGRFT has signed an agreement about co-production and distribution of student works with RTV Slovenia. A certain number of students’ works is established and included in the RTV station’s work plan every year. The modalities of their support include shooting equipment, lights, costumes and props, transportation, film material, laboratory and professional staff. For the production of TV dramas they contribute with outside broadcasting truck with complete equipment and staff. Students’ films and television productions are regularly broadcasted on national RTV, as part of their program.

The support from Slovenian Film Centre is financial, since every year AGRFT participates in SFC’s call for co-financing of student production. Each selected project has the opportunity to be funded up to 15,000 EUR, and is included in the national film program, since the partial financing comes from a state agency. In these cases, the producer (AGRFT) is entitled to use the technical facilities of national film studio Viba film (shooting and sound equipment, lights, editing suite, etc) for free. Private A/V companies are often willing to collaborate on students’ projects in the form of donations of facilities.

As a part of active co-operation with high education institutions, AGRFT developed programmes and projects with other faculties of University of Ljubljana. On the project of Academic Television (AKTV) that consists of live studio production and pre-recorded journalistic reports, AGRFT collaborated with Faculty of Social Sciences. Undergraduate and graduate students participate in the production of one hour broadcast that is streamed monthly online. With the Faculty of Computer and Information Science AGRFT developed a program for computer animation and special effects, in order to form a hub for connecting creative potentials with new technologies, and attracting private companies and investments from the A/V field.

EU partner country – Slovakia, Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava, Film and Television Faculty (VSMU)

The Faculty of Film and Television is one of the three faculties of the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava. Outward communication with media and other institutions is organized on different levels – university level communication that is organized by the Rector and the Vice Rector for International Affairs, faculty level which is coordinated by the Dean and Vice Deans.

Crucial part of co-operation is the constant effort to promote faculty production in different distribution channels in Slovakia and abroad. VSMU tends to collaborate with all available television outlets in the country, but their main partner should be the state owned Radio and Television of Slovakia (RTVS), as one of the biggest employers of faculty’s graduates. Currently, the collaboration is realized through promotion activities, as a weekly broadcast of 40 minute programme introducing
the students’ works (fiction, documentary and animation) is in preparation. Also, a contract for a longer time period with RTVS concerning this promotion is to be signed. Given that some of the professors work in RTVS, as well as in the private channels, they occasionally conduct practical workshops at TV studios. The intention is to transform this type of informal education process into an official part of the study curriculum. As for additional channels of promotion and presentation, Channel TA3, as the only news station, was last year the broadcasting host for showcasing student documentary films.

There was an attempt to distribute 4 short films (put together in 120 minute format for distribution purposes) in commercial cinemas. It was the collection of the best graduate works, but after 4 months this format has not proven to be successful, since the majority of domestic films in cinemas suffer a very low visit rate.

A very important communication channel is Acko international festival of student films that is annually organized at the faculty by the students. The whole execution of the festival is highly professional, including a professional jury and master-classes by internationally renowned authors. It has 17 year continuity. Relatively young faculty event, Visegrad Film Forum is by far the most international character. As a networking and educational platform for European film and media students it has the objective to develop an educational base focused on specific filmmaking issues, to promote quality works of young filmmakers allowing them to introduce their projects and search for partners for international co-production.

The faculty also collaborates with various state institutions, seeking opportunities for students to shoot short films for them. This activity is included in study plans. Last year VSMU had a successful cooperation with Slovak Centre of Scientific and Technical information, as students of documentary directing created a series of portraits of important Slovak scientists, a project that was also aired on RTVS.

**Conclusions**

Although co-operation modalities in the field of A/V production between high education institutions and media institutions vary in character, proportions, continuity, intensity, and above all - impact on successful educational process and possible quality employment for future graduates, it is possible to differentiate several important elements that are common for all participating partners in StudAVP TEMPUS project. Those elements are following: internships, study visits and practical workshop models, co-production extent, technical support, presentation and promotion.

Internships, study visits and practical workshop models differ according to the functions they have in official study programmes, as well as the extent and the success of their incorporation in curricula. It is evident that there is a necessity of re-evaluating the role of internship programmes, in the sense that it is important to seek the most sustainable models according to the level of studies, complexity of the objectives of different assignments and the nature of the desired outcome for the students.

Establishing closer and better organized connections between theoretical and practical education arises as an inevitable imperative. Possible solutions might be found in the articulated balance between official and unofficial forms of conducting the internship activities. Official co-operation is often regulated by different protocols that could be additionally improved, while unofficial co-operation should be further supported in the future as long as it is in accordance with overall agreed strategy of co-operation. The role of media institution representatives in this process is crucial, since they have the greater influence on shaping the job market in A/V field, and their expertise can be considered as a valuable asset in the educational process as well.

It is also of great significance to precisely determine necessary internship periods depending on the objectives of the respective study programmes. UAMD’s “dual system” of very active and
formal participation of media institutions in high education could be considered as useful model to be further explored and adapted to the special needs of respective universities in partner countries.

Co-production extent in partner universities varies depending on existing models of media institutions involvement in including the students’ work in their regular programming and production procedures. One of the frequent challenges in this sector is developing continuous and lasting co-production output that would be beneficial to both universities and media. Co-operation strategies should include carefully planned and adapted mechanisms as a result of well structured system that is based on thorough evaluation of particular situation in every partner country in this regard. The well established model of Slovenian academy AGRFT’s co-operation with RTV Slovenia represent a solid reference point that could be applicable in partner countries. One of the formal prerequisites of the successful instalment of sustainable co-production models is drafting functional legal framework in form of protocols, agreements and contracts, which is the process that has already started in numerous cases.

Existence of some form of technical support from media institutions is present in every partner and EU country according to the possibilities of respective media outlets and that is the area that should be additionally broadened. Since the quality of the educational process in A/V field is largely based on usage of up-to-date equipment, the participation of media partners in this domain is very helpful, as most of the partner universities lack in keeping the pace with rapid technological change that require constant investments in modernizing the technical base in order to be competitive and relevant.

Presentation and promotion activities take place through different communication channels – festivals, events, special television programming, distribution attempts. Similar to co-production segment, it is observable that this area needs to be more thought-out and better organized on various levels, overall objection being increasing the public presence for students’ works. It is the segment that demands carefully structured marketing communication strategy in order to gain broader impact. In this aspect, it is of high importance to fulfil in whole the projects goal of creating an independent media communication channel over broadband Internet distribution – unique student audiovisual Internet portal.

Overall, it is possible to conclude that analysed modalities of co-operation in multiple aspects are solid, but certainly could be bettered, improved and increased in scale. In the course of StudAVP TEMPUS project the clear focus should be put on drawing up a well targeted development strategy that could result in common benefits from strong partnerships with media enterprises. In order to achieve that goal, it is possible that drafting standardized and sustainable procedures of co-operation can be one of the suggested directions of future activities. Existing models are good starting points that should be updated according to the current requirements of both media and education markets. This should be the first step in meeting the broader project objective of further improvement of student employability and social impact.

Comparative analysis done by , mr Vanja Šibalić, docent University of Arts in Belgrade Faculty of dramatic arts

Belgrade,15.3.2014.