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# SumHEIs

## IO1. SWOT Analysis on Summer School Programmes in HEIs



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## INTRODUCTION

This document "Desk research and Best Practices research on Summer Schools" is developed in the framework of the Erasmus+ project **"SumHEIS - Summer School Development Programme for European HEIs"** (High Education Institutions) financed by the European Commission, Key Action 2 - KA203 - Strategic Partnerships for higher education (project reference number 2019-1-IT02-KA203-062984) and implemented by a consortium of 7 partners from 4 European countries – Italy, Greece, Latvia and Ireland.

This report – named "SWOT Analysis on Summer School Programmes in HEIs" - is the output of the Intellectual Output 1 of the project, and belongs to its preliminary/foundation phase. Despite all the knowledge and information the seven partners have in the context of the project's subjects, they also find it very important to update and access accurate information within the scope of the project. This paper is an initial cornerstone giving further directions and mainly contextualizing the next intellectual outputs.

This report derives from a dual focus: (a) desk-based literature review to identify existing Summer School initiatives, synergies, core features and dynamics identified by the partners, (b) best practices research on Summer School Development in each participating country. This report will present the synthesis of the findings from a SWOT analysis conducted with the responsible persons for the operation of summer schools in the relevant partner institutions representing all the Countries involved in the project (i.e. Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia).

### The SumHEIS project

The project aims to increase the number and the quality of Summer Schools offered by European HEIs, to train staff on how to design, develop, operate and manage Summer School programmes, to form material and guidance mechanism for HEIs that aim at establishing such programmes for the first time and form synergies and common Summer School programmes among HEIs. The project's main challenge is to design a "Model" Summer School Office as an innovative and prototype tool for the development of a successful summer school to be used by HEIs.

SumHEIS is structured around four (4) main Intellectual Outputs (IOs) and will include the implementation of one (1) Training Activity in Italy and four (4) Multiplier Events in each of the participants' partner countries, and it is going to address the following priorities:

1. Exploring the landscape of Summer School offer in Europe;
2. Increasing the number and quality of Summer School Programs in Europe;
3. Fostering open educational and innovative practices in a digital area;
4. Promoting internationalization;
5. Supporting and training academic staff in defining Summer School programs.

The project duration is 36 months from 01.09.2019 until 31.08.2022.

### Overview of Intellectual Output 1

The first intellectual output consists of three tasks (1) Desk Research on Summer Schools, (2) Best practices research, and (3) Handbook on Summer School Development.

The objectives that are planned to be achieved through the Intellectual Output 1 (IO1) of SumHEIS project are as follows:

- to identify exciting, both existing but also planned Summer School initiatives and synergies;
- to identify and analyze best practices on Summer Schools both in Europe and abroad in order to find key strength points and aspects;
- to highlight the areas challenges, future and existing opportunities and prospects, paving the way for future actions to follow;
- to establish - through the implementation of detailed desk research - a very analytical knowledge database that will provide a clear picture of summer schools in Europe

With the completion of this report, the first Intellectual Output is expected to be completed. The core results obtained with this analysis will be largely integrated into the best practices Handbook and it will provide a solid basis for the next IOs of the project.

The field research reported in this report was mainly performed between July and October 2020 (months 11 and 14 of the project). The consortium agreed on a common structured research approach that the four partners involved in the IO individually carried out in their institutions. After performing desk research (e.g. scientific literature<sup>1</sup>, institutional guidelines, grey literature, internal regulations, websites, etc.) (van Thiel, 2014), it also comprised structured interviews (Dearnley, 2005; Whiting, 2008) conducted with local subject experts (i.e. summer schools' organizers in the same institutions of the four project partners to this deliverable) which led to the production of 4 different pieces of research and SWOT analyses. Then those outcomes are analyzed and integrated and the results are presented in this document.

## How to read this report

PART 1 of this report presents the findings of a desk-research literature review, including summer school characteristics, parameters for implementing a summer school program, actors involved, motivations and strategies. The “scene” of summer schools in the four analyzed countries are reported in order to provide to the reader a broader overview of the state of the art in Europe. In fact, the variety of the countries involved in the effort (in terms of GDP, geographical location, history, cultural heritage, educational structures, etc.) can be considered as a significant sample for understanding the main features and challenges of European summer schools. PART 2 consists of a set of best practices in the knowledge area of summer school operation. PART 3 is a SWOT analysis of summer school programs based on the inputs provided by the four project partners involved. Finally, this report provides some conclusions and recommendations on how to create value and how to introduce and deliver successfully new summer school services.

## Definition of (academic) *Summer School*

In an initial phase of the project, partners agreed about the necessity to define what an academic summer school is, to separate it from the other types of summer school and map its key elements and characteristics. A definition is a crucial starting step in order to set a common ground of action and knowledge. The consortium had a prolonged discussion about the main features of an academic school. After this consultation and research processes, we agreed on the following extended definition of summer school. It is extended since it needs to capture and describe all the nuances related to the subject. To the best of our knowledge, it is the first attempt to define summer schools formally.

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<sup>1</sup> i.e. Google Scholar, SpringerLink Contemporary Journals, Taylor & Francis Social Science & Humanities Library, JSTOR

Summer school is a very broad terminology that can be used in multiple contexts and refers to different concepts. Generally, “*it can be defined as a course of lectures held during school and university summer vacations* (authors note: despite the word ‘summer’ in the terminology, they can take place during winter holidays and are called winter schools.: from now on with the term ‘summer school’ we always also refer to winter schools.), *taken as part of an academic course or as an independent course of study for professional or personal purposes*”<sup>2</sup>. Those programmes can be offered and sponsored by schools and universities or private organizations. As said, the term *Summer School* can refer to different educational activities depending on the context they are held. Summer Schools in **elementary** and **middle school** are special classes intended for remedial instruction during the summer holidays. However, for kids of that age, some non-related to school camps call themselves summer school. Generally, those are typical of the English-speaking world.

In **high school, college or university** "one or more classes taken during the summer that replace classes that were missed or failed [*remediation credit*], or make it possible for students to move more quickly towards a degree or graduation [*advancement credit*]"<sup>3</sup>. Those summer schools are typical in the USA. In addition to that, many educational institutions also propose short-term courses (e.g. few weeks), called summer schools, to attract international and local students which aim at gaining knowledge on specific subjects in addition to what is studied during the regular courses. These programs can also be focused on the immersive study of a language and are often integrated with social activities. In general, those are residential: the students reside in the location where summer school is held.

In **academia/university**, summer school can also indicate a kind of conference in which endorsed experts give seminars, presentation or classes on advanced topics in a field to professors, teachers, students (usually postgraduate) and other professional workers who want increase their knowledge and improve their skills. Similarly, to the previous group, those summer schools are addressed to a national and international audience, they require the payment of a fee, and comprehend accommodation for participants. Besides that, those summer schools differ from the previous because no credits are awarded and examinations are taken since there are not degree purposes. Moreover, those summer schools can take place in locations other than universities. Those activities usually occur during vacation periods, and, despite the word 'summer' in the terminology, summer school can take place during winter holidays, and they are called ‘winter schools’.

The scope of the SumHeis research project, and of this deliverable is to focus on the last groups, the university and academic summer schools; specifically, on the essential features that define those learning activities and what are their specific characteristics.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.lexico.com/definition/summer\\_school](https://www.lexico.com/definition/summer_school)

<sup>3</sup> <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/summer-school>

## PART 1 – Desk research to identify essential characteristics in existing summer school initiatives

### 1.1. Introduction

The large amount of information available on the Internet (most of the times not supported by manuals or guides), makes it difficult to systematize this knowledge and can often cause confusion in the potential users.

From this, it derives that a novice HEI or organization will find it hard to have access to coded and easy to use material, that will support them to ease their access on tools, best practices and methodologies on Summer School Programmes.

This project aims to fill this gap, by proposing a set of information and guidelines useful to design an ‘ideal’ Summer school, both from the administrative and from the information sharing and dissemination side.

This part of the deliverable focuses on a preliminary mapping of existing literature, successful stories, manuals and guides, the current situation in summer school services (actors, drivers, etc.), and on highlighting the areas challenges, future and existing opportunities and prospects, paving the way for future actions to follow.

Therefore, in this section, we attempt to provide a starting set of information about the main characteristics of today's summer schools. To do so, we, in this desk analysis, we tried to answer the following questions:

- Which are the features of an academic summer school?
- Why attend a summer school?
- Why organize a summer school?
- Which are the features of a successful summer school?
- Which are the challenges that organizers and participants could face?

The remaining of the section will provide the answers to those questions followed by a deep analysis of the summer schools “numbers” in the four partner countries in order to provide a complete snapshot on what is the current state and practice. Those answers are based on the common and recurrent items emerging from the desk researches of the four partners. The approach of having a divergent initial phase of data collection, followed by a convergent phase of data integration, allowed to consult independent sources of information without the risking the influence of any biased perspective on each other. In addition, the procedure not only provides an overview on what are the common summer school characteristics in those countries but, given the representativeness of countries’ sample, it also provides an overview on the state of the art in Europe.

### 1.2. Which are the features of an academic summer school?

Although Summer Schools lacked an established definition, as abovementioned, daily practitioners have a mostly clear idea of Summer Schools are. Given the complexity, this results in a variety of meanings and concepts attributed to Summer Schools. Thus, the partners first separately collected and then put together the following list of essential features that characterize Summer Schools that are commonly associated with them in the daily practice:

- ❖ They tend to be short-term programs, lasting from one to four weeks. Specifically, they have a specific starting and ending time for activities (or, if not, has a rationale for why starting and ending times need to vary in order to meet the need or achieve the goal)
- ❖ They are typically delivered during vacation periods such as summer, Christmas, Easter, etc. (although those might vary from country to country)
- ❖ The main activities are lectures, seminars, field visits and workshops
- ❖ The content of those activities focus on informing attendees of the state of the art and last academic updating on a specific topic as well as on providing knowledge (practical and theoretical), expertise and experience about a particular discipline
- ❖ Given this last point, summer schools tend to develop their activities based on innovative programs and perspectives. Subsequently, it is often accompanied by new types of learnings and teaching methods
- ❖ The activities are held by qualified teachers: experts and recognized academics or practitioners
- ❖ Summer Schools are usually addressed to a specific group of participants or community need
- ❖ Given the specificity of the content delivered, summer school have an international-oriented dimension. This means that the pool of potential attendee is not limited to the locals as well as the teachers might be external to the institution.
- ❖ Summer schools include networking and social moments
- ❖ They might also comprise excursions for purposes other than learning (e.g. campus visits, touristic tours,)
- ❖ Summer schools usually include formal recognition of the activities to participants in terms of credits or certificates.
- ❖ Generally, a participation fee is required to attend. Accommodation and meals might or might not be included.
- ❖ Summer Schools usually employs paid staff (in other words, is not an entirely voluntary effort) responsible for administration, implementation, and finances. The staff usually support the participants with practical issues such as VISAs, accommodation, transfer services, etc.

The features correspond to the need of making the summer schools more appealing and valuable for students. Those specifics can be summarized by the combination of the following three domain of necessity (Poderyte, 2020): education, entertainment and business. In fact, a Summer School attempts, in general, to share new valuable knowledge and education, promote international and cross-cultural experience, facilitate networking and entertainment, provide financial profit and market and promote the organizing HEI.

A particular close look to some peculiar features of Summer Schools' curricula is worth. In general, the curricula depend largely on the goals of the summer school. For university remedial Summer School, the curriculum is developed at a central office or school level based on conventional grade-standards (McLaughlin, et al., 2009). While for academic Summer School freedom is usually left to the academic staff organizing the event. What can be observed from the majority of summer



schools developed in the EU is a scheme including more or less the following characteristics reported in Figure 1<sup>4</sup>.

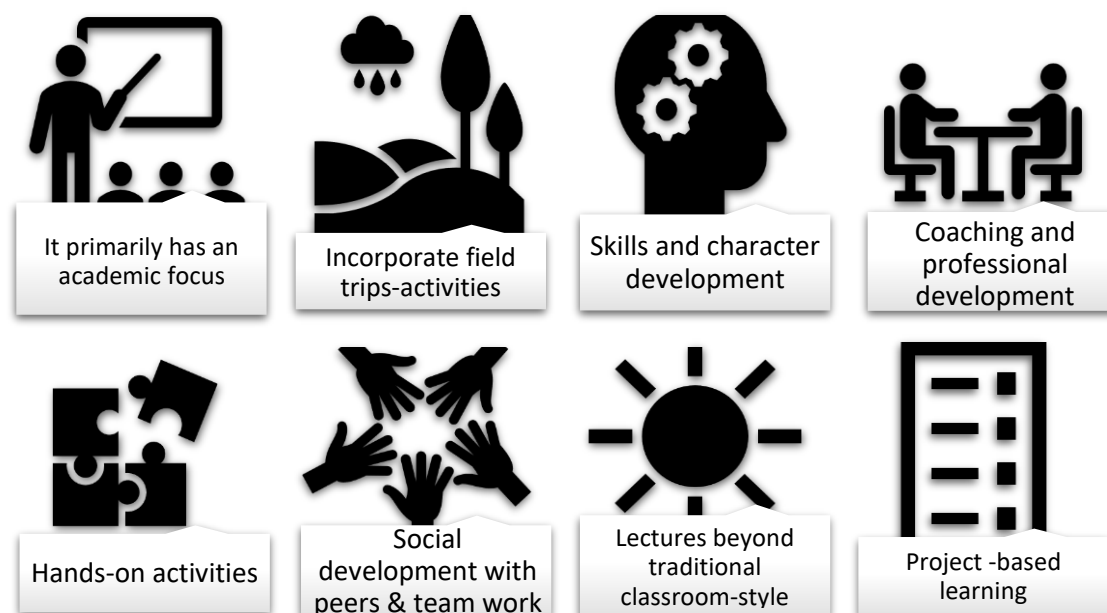


Fig. 1. Summer Schools' curricula main common features

The staff running a summer school program is normally academic and administrative from the organizing HEI. Table 1 below reports a division of the tasks performed in an academic Summer School by the two different types of staff. Although a clear separation of those two categories seems in place in terms of role, responsibilities, tasks and skills, it is not unusual to observe that professors (i.e. academics staff) are responsible for both the organization of the summer school and didactical aspects of it.

Table 1. Administrative and academic staff tasks

<i>Administrative Staff</i>	<i>Academic Staff</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Prepare, plan, manage and organize the summer school (Operational practices and procedures)</li> <li>▶ Communication and meditation actions</li> <li>▶ Registration of participants</li> <li>▶ Keep records and entry data</li> <li>▶ Find the sponsors, supporters</li> <li>▶ Communication strategy</li> <li>▶ Organizing trips</li> <li>▶ Behavior management</li> <li>▶ Expand the network of diverse partners</li> <li>▶ Find partners and community members (locals)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Scientific support</li> <li>▶ Design of curriculum</li> <li>▶ Define the learning outcomes</li> <li>▶ Teaching and learning activities</li> <li>▶ Offering Lectures &amp; classes</li> <li>▶ Strategies for working with youth</li> <li>▶ Content</li> <li>▶ Team building</li> <li>▶ Experiential learning, project-based classes, or place-based education</li> <li>▶ Encourage students' interest</li> <li>▶ Increase student's effort</li> <li>▶ Hands-on academic work</li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup> Bell, S. R., & Carrillo, N. (2007). Characteristics of effective summer learning programs in practice. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 2007(114), 45-63.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Evaluation strategy - Evaluate &amp; report outcomes (Lessons learned report, data from previous programmes)</li> <li>▶ Set KPIs</li> </ul>	
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This list of summer schools' essential features aims at complementing the definition provided in the introduction by adding more information and details. Those parameters are what typically set a Summer School apart from just a casual summer activity. The combination of both is expected to create a common ground that researchers and practitioners will use in the future.

### 1.3. Why attending a summer school?

Understanding the underlying motivations that prompt people to attend a summer school is crucial for Summer Schools' long-term sustainability. In fact, a misunderstanding about what potential participants look for might result in a failure. The reasons why participants attend those events are various and numerous. However, it is possible to group them in four overarching categories: the improvement of hard skills, of soft skills, networking and social aspects, more high-level motivations.

The improvement of hard skills is one of the main reasons. Specifically, who attends an academic summer school on a certain topic, expect to learn advanced material on that and strengthen their abilities. It is also an opportunity to explore the state of the art of a specific subject or to see how established experts deal with advanced topics or what they are currently working on. In addition, the intensity of the summer school allows a convenient learning-time ratio. In this respect, smaller classes offer the chance to interact directly with the teacher and ask them for detailed clarification or information. Besides that, attending a summer school taught in a foreign language might provide several benefits. It strengthens verbal and written language skills and also it enhances specific technical vocabulary.

Secondly, the soft skills improvements can be important in the potential participants' considerations. A self-confidence and self-reliance increase can be expected by participants in respect of the themes studied. Which in turns can evolve in a capacity to tackle more complex problems in that field and 'dream higher'. This can result in unlocking true personal potential.

Another group of reasons involve networking and social aspects, often on an international level. Summer schools offer a great opportunity for participants to network with colleagues, other experts and practitioners (also because some of them promote social events for participants). Besides the fact that those bonds can evolve in lasting friendships, they are very convenient from a professional point of view since they generate opportunities for collaboration. Working closely with other passionate people can also provide new points of views, appreciate cultural diversities and get to know the challenges other experts from other parts of the world face in a specific field.

There are other reasons for attending a summer school, which are high level. It can provide an important upgrade in a CV, especially from an academic point of view. It offers the opportunity to combine a learning experience with travelling and visiting new places. It also can serve as an inspiration: it provides the benefit of fresh new ideas and perspectives that can support the future work of the participants. Finally, having fun while deepening a topic of interest can be an important motivation for attending.

#### 1.4. Why organize a summer school?

The reasons and organizational approach of summer schools vary on strategical levels according to the goals of HEI and individual initiative of the summer school organizers. Like there might be many reasons to attend a Summer School, there may be several and diverse motivations pushing an HEIs to organize such a complex event. First, a successful Summer School can significantly contribute to the prestige and reputation of the institution organizing the event at a national and international level. In particular, the international dimension appears to be a fundamental goal pursued by HEIs. In fact, internationalization is one of the features and dimensions that characterized mostly the modern HEIs policy agenda at the global, European and national level (Asderaki, 2012). In this context, Summer Schools implementation is one of the HEIs' top internationalization strategies as it facilitates cross-border activities (Teichler, 2009) and the integration of a global dimension into the mission and operational processes of the HEI (Knight, 2004). Internationalization is expected to deliver several positive outcomes, for instance, increase the attractiveness and reputation of the HEI, increase the revenue and profit, create strategic partnerships and networks (Asderaki & Maragos, 2012). In this vein, networking can be an important reason also for the organizing institution and teachers: summer schools offer the perspective of engaging in talks with other experts and academics which can end up in the construction of new collaborations. Then, there might be financial considerations. The hosting HEI can make some profit and the teachers might receive a financial reward for their work.

Summer schools can be an extremely attractive instrument for international recruitment: the short period spent in a new university and country could trigger the desire in the participants to continue or start a new educational path in that environment. Thus, summer schools are considered as a great strategy in order for universities to attract and select students. Those are the reason why a summer school may be considered as an outreach program and vital in engaging, informing and motivating students to participate in higher education. It is important to highlight the European and the international dimension to the purposes of setting up a summer school. Summer schools could be a very nice starting point for young people getting to know Europe in general and their European culture and identity, but also to open citizens to a global dimension. Within the context of internationalization and globalization, students will have a further opportunity to broaden their horizons and gain the "global competence" as defined by PISA - OECD Education 2030 Framework. In general, mobility is important for students since it widens their geographical comfort zone and international understanding of traditions and prioritizations in other countries. In addition, this type of mobility also contributes to knowing more about the institution where the participant is from (comparison, evaluation, etc.). Such awareness and perspective might be very important in the job-seeking process.

Concerning the students, Summer Schools can be done equip students with skills and competences. The competencies an HEI might want to improve may vary a lot, from student academic preparedness and confidence to student understanding about pathways to enable lifelong learning, including courses, university, life and career options. In line with that, Prof. B. W. Strobel, from the University of Copenhagen, gets to similar conclusions<sup>6</sup>. He states that Summer Schools tend to be short and intensive courses with participants focused on a limited topic, making it easier to

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<sup>5</sup> Ramos, G., & Schleicher, A. (2016). Global competency for an inclusive world. *France: OECD 2*. OECD. (2018). *Preparing our youth for an inclusive and sustainable world. The OECD PISA global competence framework*. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/37ppQ8U>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.uni-hohenheim.de/fileadmin/einrichtungen/ells/Joint-programmes/IRO\\_Summer\\_School\\_MANUAL-Update-10-2013\\_01.pdf](https://www.uni-hohenheim.de/fileadmin/einrichtungen/ells/Joint-programmes/IRO_Summer_School_MANUAL-Update-10-2013_01.pdf)

convey and acquire information and skills. Moreover, the fact that students tend to spend more time together (e.g. meals, leisure time, travelling time if the location is off-campus, etc.) adds “intensity” to the group and seems to facilitate learning and improve motivation. If on the one hand, interactions with peers seem to benefit learning, on the other one, the limited number of students compares to average semester classes and combined with a dense lesson program (compared to a larger and more diffuse and fragmented course semester courses) can enable learning given the better focus of the participants for the whole period. Such contexts also make on-site visits and workshops easy to plan, organize and handle.

Summer schools also provide a very suitable context to experiment with new teaching and learning methods. There are often relatively few experienced students (e.g. 15-30), and the whole atmosphere is suitable for trying new and non-traditional teaching methods. Moreover, the discussions and interaction with expert students can serve as an inspiration also for teachers.

### 1.5. Which are the features of a successful summer school?

While for high school, college and universities there are some examples of well-recognized and appreciated by students summers schools with a relatively long tradition (e.g. LSE and Harvard summer schools), a rigorous set of guidelines and characteristics a successful academic summer school has to follow is lacking. The reasons identified for that can be several. First of all, to some extent, summer schools compete among themselves to attract students. Therefore they might be sceptical about diffusing their secrets of success. Second, what is a successful summer school? The one in which participants at the end are happy for the experience? The one in which participants are exhausted at the end given the hard work they did, which will reward them in the future? Or a summer school in which all the seats are booked? In the literature, it is unclear what precisely is a successful summer school because it is difficult to state what makes it successful. However, although a precise definition of successful Summer Schools is missing, it is still somehow possible to develop some ideas of what could be deemed as successful. In fact, it is possible to search for examples of events considered successful and look for common features. The analysis is conducted based on literature (e.g. Bell, et. al., 2007, McLaughlin, et. al., 2009, Vural, 2012) and web investigation and on the experiences and expertise of practitioners.

Some important aspects seem the following. First, a successful Summer School is the one that at the end is able to create an event “rich of people”, namely with a high turnout of participants, followed by a positive climate during the classes, and a high level and quality of interactions between the different actors of the event. Secondly, another specific of a successful Summer School seems to be the availability of funds and their usage to offer financial support to participants. Then, the content offered by the schools appears it should be robust, recognized, appreciated, and (if possible) innovative and research-driven (Bowes et al. 2013). In the same vein, the delivery of practical experiences as well as other any valuable experience for the development of the participants (e.g. networking moments in which people exchange contacts, field visits, trips, etc.) during the school plays an important role towards success too. Moreover, the longevity of the Summer School seems also to be a signal of successful. Of course, repeating the event in overtime is a signal of success *per se*. However, it seems that, in addition, long term and sustained Summer Schools (not just one of the event) triggers a virtuous feedback loop: the more a Summer School is repeated overtime, the more it refines what delivers and gets credibility and becomes known.

Overall, these characteristics indicate that HEIs successful Summer Schools are programs that bring together teachers and students, for appreciated learning activities, in a positive climate, in which new knowledge is promoted, and that is part of Summer Schools projects that last on the

long-term (Aitken, 2013). Those specifics belong to the sphere of the tangibles delivered by the school. However, there are two organizational areas in which ‘ingredients’ of success might be contained, according to the literature. Bell et al. (2007) report the organizational elements categorizing them under two main pillars, that occur in successful Summer Schools and divide them into two areas: (a) program’s approach to learning and (b) program’s infrastructure. Figure 2 below, reports in details those elements.



Fig. 2. Successful Summer School program’s approach to learning and infrastructure

The first pillar “Program’s approach to learning” is dedicated to the development of the young students that participate in the summer school programme, either professionally or personally. It is an approach that prioritizes the “learn how to learn” by motivating youth to learn and accelerating effectiveness of summer school programmes, by enriching academic knowledge with method of non formal learning (i.e. field trips) and the training in non academic skills (i.e. soft/intercultural skills) (Bell, et. al. 2007).

The second pillar “Program's infrastructure” is dedicated to the core operational functionalities of a summer school programme, embracing the capacity of all resources (human, financial, material, equipment) and the procedures of all summer school phases (initiation, preparation, practical arrangements, implementation and evaluation phase). All the characteristics of this pillar can add value towards a successfully implemented summer school programme, improving its quality level and supporting its sustainability.

From this analysis, it emerges that the participants’ satisfaction is of crucial importance for deeming an event as successful. This is unsurprising since they are the Summer School ‘clients’. Thus, their satisfaction is strictly connected to the motivations that prompt them to participate in a Summer School. In fact, a close examination shows that the successful elements, to a large extent, mimic

the participants' motivations to attend. In this perspective, the collection of feedback, not only from them but also from the other actors involved (teachers, staff, etc.) can be a correct method to evaluate the performance of an event. Therefore, evaluation is crucial towards the understanding of the success of an event. In the case of Summer Schools evaluation can be done following two main success directions:

1. business success – marketing added value (e.g., recognition, international contacts, attracted students, etc.) and financial value (e.g., self-sufficiency, profit, rational usage of free resources of infrastructure, etc.);
2. organizational success – participant satisfaction value, content and practical value, experience value (e.g., cultural, education, communication, etc.).

In respect of organizational success of the summer school, it is influenced by a variety of positive and negative aspects (Lakkala, 2018):

1. Positive aspects:
  - a. *Satisfactory teaching arrangements*: Mentions in this category are generally related to praising of the lecturers, quality of teaching, course design and organization as well as methods, materials, facilities and the atmosphere of the course;
  - b. *Expert knowledge and practices*: Evaluations in this category are addressed to excursions and field trips, a multidisciplinary approach to content, the contribution of expert lecturers as well as authentic assignments, practical content, research-based content, and academic contacts;
  - c. *Intercultural social interaction*: This category is related to the impact and benefits of social interaction, group work, and the multicultural and multidisciplinary composition of the participants;
  - d. *Interesting and useful content*: This category is applied to general positive mentions about the course content or its coverage and scope, and about the respondent's own content learning.
2. Negative aspects:
  - a. *Uninspiring knowledge and activities*: This category included mentions about narrow content focus or expertise of lecturers; low academic level; too much lecturing instead of practical work, and low course requirement levels;
  - b. *Heavy workload and time constraints*: This category relates to comments about not having enough time to complete the tasks; too many tasks and too much to do, and not enough time to participate in free-time activities;
  - c. *Unsatisfactory teaching arrangements*: Mentions in this category included criticisms about unclear assignments, poor lectures, poor course organization, not enough guidance, or poor accessibility to materials;
  - d. *Challenges with content learning*: Mentions in this category were related to difficult content of the course or reading materials; shortcomings in the respondents' own background knowledge, and difficult individual assignments;
  - e. *Challenges with intercultural social interaction*: Mentions concerned poor English language skills of the other participants and lecturers or difficulties related to group work.

Drawing a clear line between a successful Summer School and the best practices isn't easy since a straightforward definition of success is missing. Thus, we had to adopt an operational approach, instead than a theoretical one: the meaning of success was built by looking at common elements of what is considered successful events. For this lack of an agreed theoretical structure, someone might find that some aspects of this chapter fit better into the best practices section (Section 2) and vice-versa. Accordingly, we suggest this chapter has to be interpreted as a primordial list of elements that should emerge if a Summer School successful, while the best practices are the processes, strategies and methods that facilitate the accomplishment of organizing Summer Schools of success. Therefore, this chapter has to be read and intended as strictly related and dependent on the findings in Section 2 best practices.

In conclusion, there is a red-tape connecting participant motivation, best practices, and success in the Summer School environment. Best practices are the strategies that are necessary to set up a successful event, which, however, can be considered of success if they somehow match participants desires and necessities. Therefore, a solid understanding of the three components is of crucial importance if an HEI desires to organize successful events.

### 1.6. Which are the challenges that organizers and participants could face?

There are a number of challenges which can be faced both by participants and organizers. Indeed, in order to organize a successful summer school, it is important for organizers to comprehend such challenges.

First, the funds necessary for attending might be high for participants. This is why setting a fair price is crucial, otherwise, it discourages many potential attendees. Then, the location should be accessible and reachable relatively easily to everybody. This means organizing the summer school in countries accessible to international participants and in venues that are easily reachable for participants and lecturers.

The fact that not all the potentially interested participants get to know the existence of the summer school is also a great barrier. Therefore, one of the main challenges for setting up a successful Summer School is to attract and select participants and promote the summer school as much as possible.

Another set of challenges of the present times are related to the huge impact of COVID19 pandemic on the HEIs. Indeed, HEIs are forced to move Summer Schools online (whenever possible), which poses several technical and skill challenges (how to construct effective and enjoyable sessions? How to conduct those sessions? Should the curriculum vary? How to deliver hands-on/practical activities? Which web platform should be used? Etc.)

Similarly to the potential participants, summer schools might have issues in finding the funds necessary to support the event. Finding the right location with accommodations for participants' availability might be challenging. Finally, reaching all the potentially interested students might be hard.

The guidelines and outcomes of SumHeis project are expected to support and contribute to increase the quality standards of the summer schools offered and overcome those challenges, in particular the production of the handbook.

## 1.7. The scene in Europe

In this section, the Summer Schools' scene in the 4 partner countries is outlined. These descriptions offer the possibility of understanding how those countries deal with Summer Schools. Moreover, given the variability of the sample, those scenes can offer a satisfactory snapshot of what's happening in the European continent.

### 1.7.1. Greece

Primary data on Greek Summer Schools were collected from the ‘Summer Schools in Europe’ website<sup>7</sup>, hosted by the University of Utrecht. This website offers a broad and extensive collection of the Summer Schools in Europe. Based on this platform, some essential quantitative data have been collected, described and analyzed in order to better map and deeply understand the current situation in Greece. Based on those data, it is possible to make some interesting observation about the existent situation in Greece and the Greek experience in organizing and implementing Summer Schools.

More than 200 summer schools have been conducted in different cities and locations in Greece, which are taken place in both urban and regional areas. They can be held online and offline, while most of them take place during the summer period (July, August, and September). Until today, most of the summer schools conducted in Greece are offline (about 160). Only, 16 online courses have been identified during the period of June – August 2020. This clearly seems to be an implication of COVID19 pandemic. For the year 2020, 50 summer school programmes in total were planned to take place in different locations in Greece. In Figure 3, the total number of Summer Schools in Greece are reported distributed per year, from 2016 until 2020.

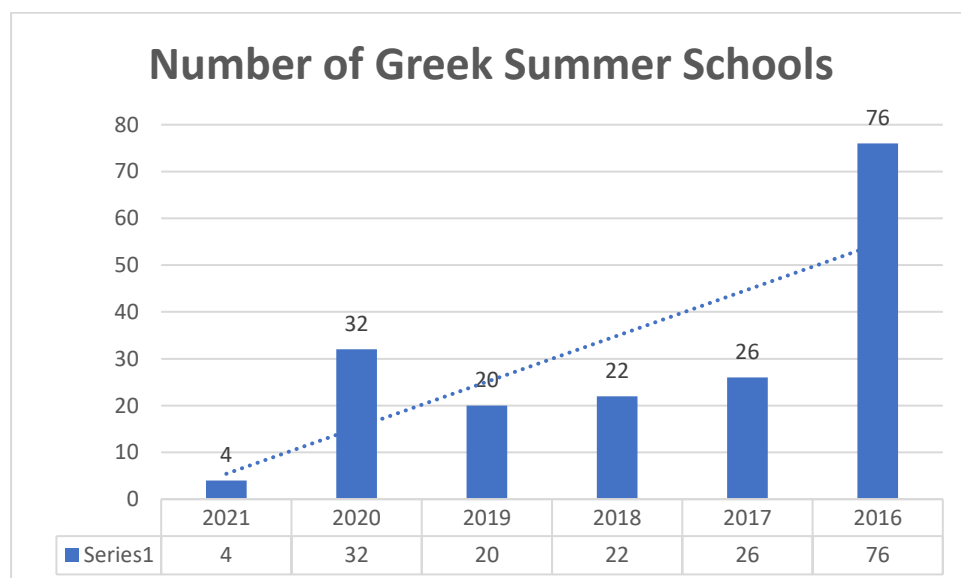


Fig. 3. Number of Summer Schools in Greece overtime

During the analyzed period 2016-2021, Summer Schools took place in different cities and regional areas in Greece. Among the top destinations, there were Athens, Thessaloniki, Piraeus, Crete and other islands (Fig. 4). In general, numerous summer schools can be spotted in islands or/and coastal areas. For example, in 2020, seventeen (17) summer schools out of thirty two (32) were planned to be held in islands, such as Naxos, Crete, Hydra, Corfu, etc.. This could be explained

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.summerschoolsineurope.eu/>



from the geographical morphology of Greek territory and from the fact that islands are combining academic, cultural and vocational aspects of a summer school. Plus, most historical and architectural sites and monuments are located in islands and excavations for students of Archaeology are being held there. In the following tables, there are more quantitative data about summer courses in Greece.

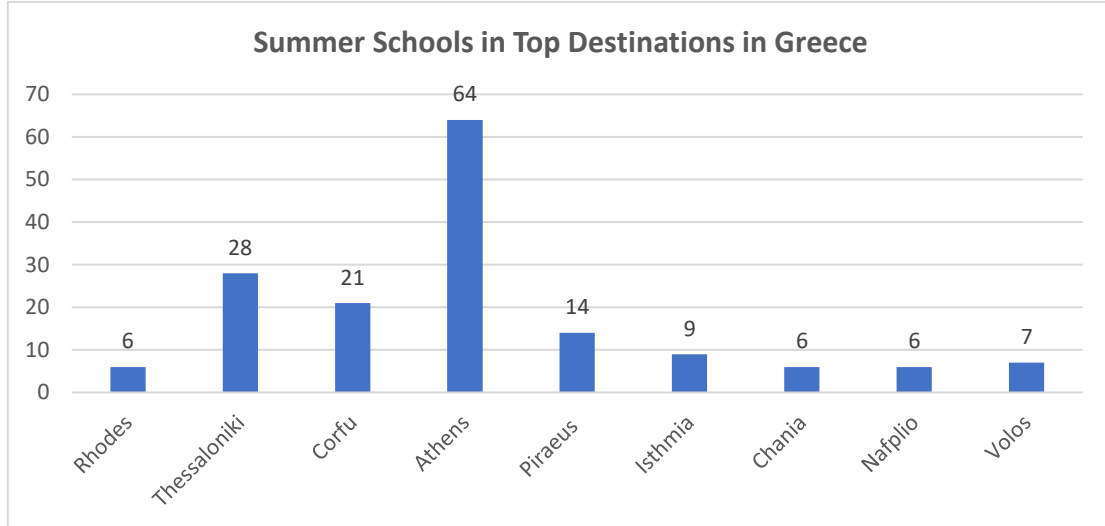


Fig. 4. Greek Summer School top destinations geographical distribution over 2016-20 period

Nevertheless that lots of summer programmes are being held in islands or coastal zones, the majority of Summers Schools in Greece are being carried out in central areas (Fig. 5 and 6), Athens, Piraeus and Thessaloniki are the largest cities of the country which include a large university campus, a great number of youth and students population and they have some of the most well-known universities which are able to attract both national and international students. The other important area of location of Greek Summer Schools are islands and coastal zones. It is known that Greece has many islands which are top destinations during the summer session and attract a lot of tourists. It seems that combining summer holidays, nature, and beautiful scenes of a Greek island and studying is a major strategy of the Greek summer school operators in order to attract students.

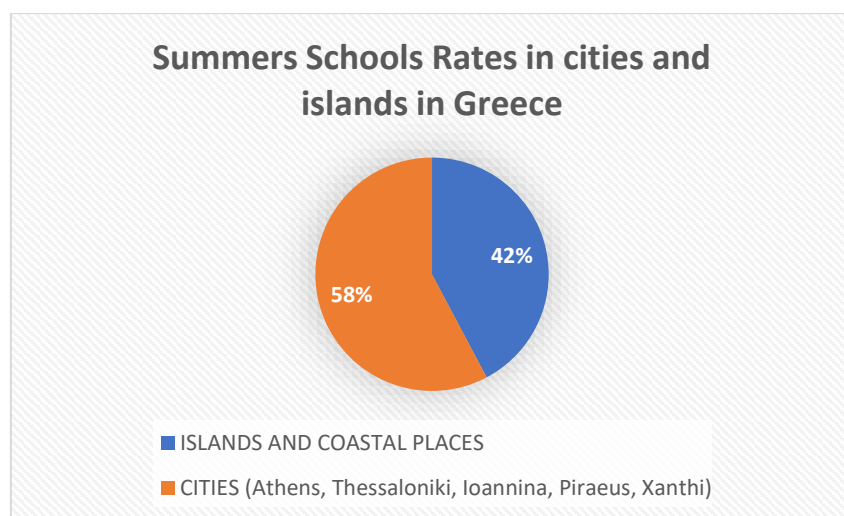


Fig. 5. Greek Summer School geographical distribution Cities VS Island and Coastal over 2016-20 period

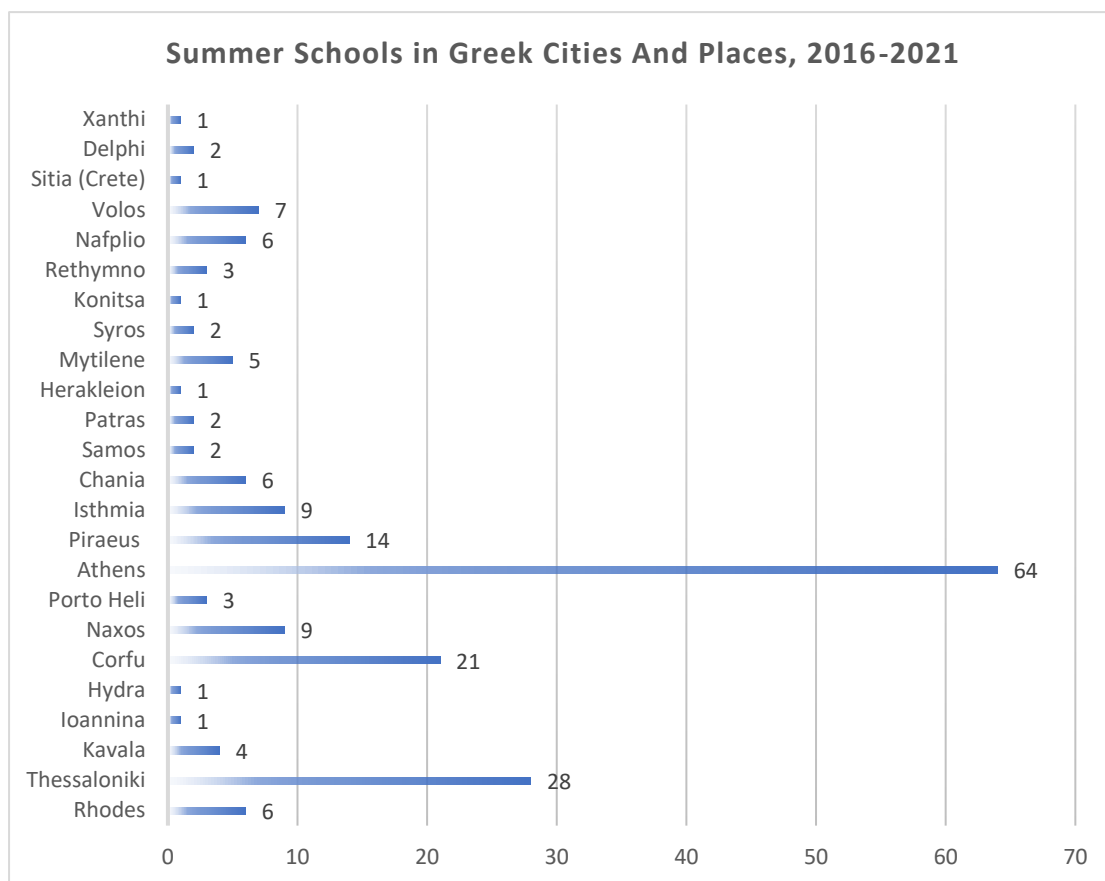


Fig. 6. Greek Summer School geographical distribution of locations over 2016-20 period

In Greece, summer courses are held in a variety of fields of studies, such as human sciences, cultural studies, computer sciences, engineering and environment (Fig. 7). Most of the Summer Schools are in education sciences, in languages, in social and cultural sciences, while only a few of them are in tourism and economics and there are no summer schools to the best of our knowledge in psychology, healthcare and gender studies.

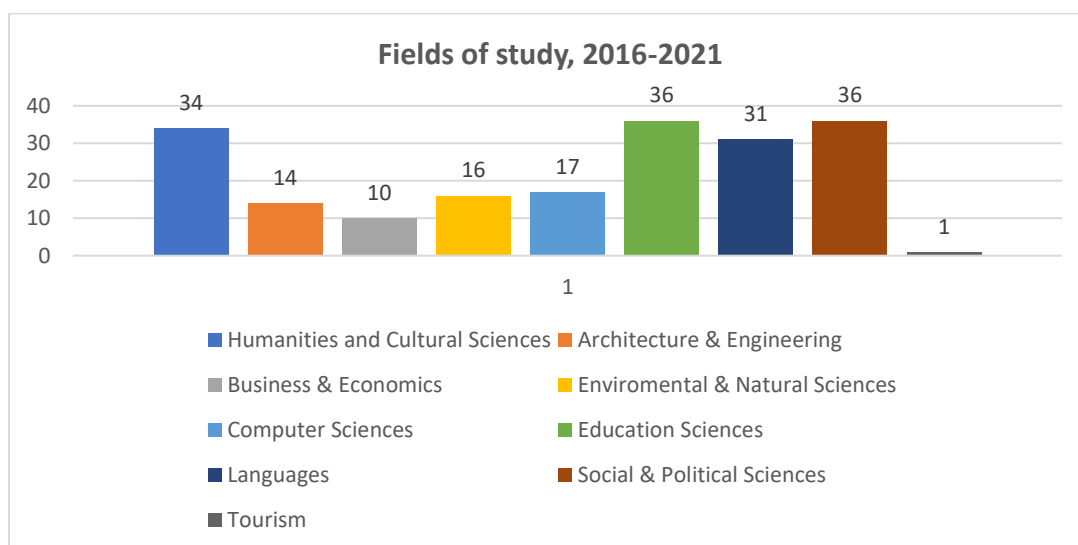


Fig. 7. Greek Summer School topics over 2016-20 period

Table 3 provides a closer look at the recent academic year 2019-2020. Based on these findings, it is noticeable that a special emphasis is given to the fields of ancient history, archaeology, classical studies, Greek culture and civilization in order to raise the awareness about the Greek language and culture.

Table. 2. Greek Summer School topics over 2019-20

Title	Field of Study	Location	University
<b>ATHENS BIOGRAPHY THROUGH THE CITY'S ARCHITECTURE</b>	Architecture	Athens	
<b>CULTTECH – CULTURAL HERITAGE MATERIALS AND TECHNOLOGIES PROGRAM</b>	archaeology, cultural heritage management, conservation, materials science and engineering	Kalamata	University of Peloponnese - Department of History, Archaeology and Cultural Resources Management
<b>MIGRATION AND ITS DISCONTENTS</b>	International and European Studies	Thessaloniki	University of Macedonia - Department of International and European Studies
<b>THEATRE AND SOCIETY- THINKING ABOUT THE MODERN THROUGH THE PRISM OF THE CLASSICAL</b>	theatrical and ancient studies	Athens – Nafplio – Epidaurus	
<b>SPATIAL DIGITAL HUMANITIES – DECODING THE SPATIAL CONTENT OF HISTORICAL REPRESENTATIONS</b>	Geography (digitization / interpretation / organization / presentation and visualization of historical data with the use of modern technologies (Geoinformatics, Web / mobile applications)	Athens	Harokopio University - Department of Geography
<b>THE MUSIC OF THE GREEKS – FROM THE HARP TO THE BOUZOUKI</b>	Ancient Greek & Greek music	Athens	
<b>PSYCHOLOGY OF COMMUNICATION</b>		Athens	Ecclesiastical Academy of Athens (A.E.A.A.) - Department of Pastoral Studies
<b>FROM MYCENAE TO MYSTRAS</b>	History & Civilization	Peloponnese	
<b>GREECE – CHINA – CLOSE DESPITE THE DISTANCE</b>	GREECE – CHINA – CLOSE DESPITE THE DISTANCE	Athens	
<b>THE NARRATION OF THE MYTH AND SPEECH OF THE CITY WITH THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE ARTS</b>		Athens	

In Greece, the public bodies responsible for the arrangements and conduction of Summer Schools are the Ministry of education in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Tourism. Summer Schools are held form a variety of type of organizations and collaboration between institutes, such as: faculties or laboratories in universities, private language schools, private training centers, academies (ex. Academy of European Public Law), networks of universities (between countries), and other educational organizations. The Ministry exercises control over institutions, formulates and implements legislation, and coordinates other services. A way of supervision is through official reporting.

The coordination of summer schools within the universities is being carried out by the Center of Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning (KEDIVIM) existing within each university. These centers are publishing calls for proffesors that are interested in organizing a summer school programme. Then, they approve and fund the programme. At the end of it, they are responsible for the recognition of it.

. However, it seems that it is a process completely dependent on the personal actions and initiatives of academic and administrative staff, personal channels and networks with academics from universities in Europe and abroad.

Another feature of Greek Summer Schools is that they might be focused on one discipline or they may be multidisciplinary thanks to the multiple collaborations, between staff from the same university, or from other Greek universities or even from abroad. So, there is no standard answer in question "by whom is a summer school organized?".

One of the key organizations playing an important role in Summer Schools' development and implementation is Study in Greece (SiG). SiG was initiated in December 2014 as a voluntary action by faculty members and university students from Greek public universities. It is a non-profit organization, representing all Greek HEIs, fully endorsed by the Greek authorities, consisting of members of the Greek academic community, faculty and students. One of its central purposes is to promote academic programs in Greece, aiding, guiding and supporting international students who wish to undertake all or part of their studies in the country. SiG general purpose is to create an educational and cultural bridge between Greece and other countries, and it aims to establish Greece as an international destination for education and research. SiG has designed a guide for 2019-2020 summer schools' catalogue (Fig. 8), presenting the opportunities for international students to visit Greece for a short-term study abroad program. From the catalogue: *"The programs offered draw from a wide variety of disciplines thanks to the multiple collaborations obtained. Some of the fields of study covered are architecture, classical philosophy, theatre, archaeology, history, art and ecology, often through an interdisciplinary approach, studied in relation to contemporary technologies and tools of the digital era. All programs draw from the Greek experience, either as a source of knowledge or as a lens through which the subject is examined."*



Figure 8. Study in Greece catalogue picture

SiG collaborates with the most well-known and considerable universities around the country, such as the National and Kapodistrian University (Athens), the University of the Peloponnese (Kalamata), Harokopio University (Athens), the University of West Attica (Athens), Mediterranean Agronomic Institute Of Chania, The National Technical University of Athens, The University of the Aegean (Lesvos), The Technical University of Crete (Chania), The Democritus University of Thrace (Komotini), The International Hellenic University (Thessaloniki), The University of Macedonia (Thessaloniki) and other institutes and academies.

In this context, a great example is offered by the Aegean University. It has been organizing Summer Schools in a systematic way since 2012 in some of the most beautiful islands of Aegean sea such as Lesvos, Chios, Samos, Rhodes, Lemnos and Syros, (Fig. 9). University of the Aegean Summer Schools consists of a portfolio of programs functioning in English usually at Bachelor, Master and PhD level within the fields of Humanities, Social Sciences, Environment, Science, and Business.

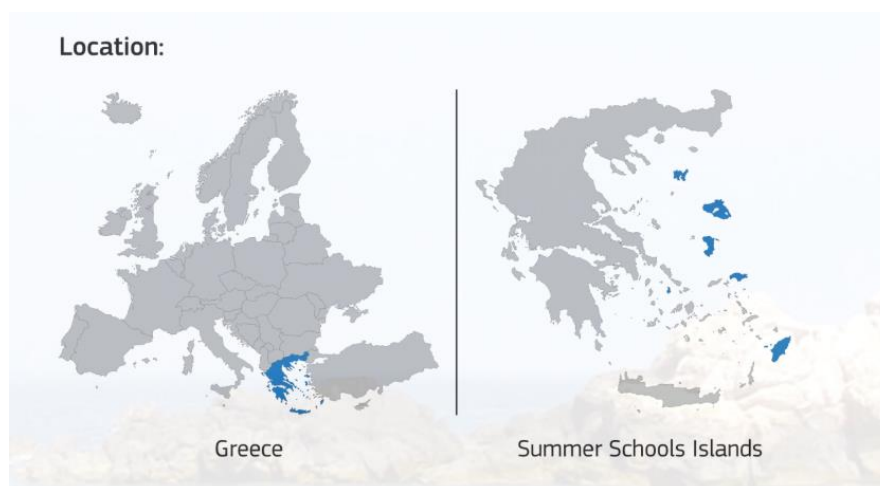


Figure 9. Summer School Locations of Aegean University

Since 2014, Aegean University has been running numerous summer school programs offered by the academic staff, and supported by researchers from other Greek research institutions and international guest lecturers from all over the world. The target participants are international students, junior and senior researchers and the general public. Class sizes range from 15-30 participants. Those Summer Schools tend to be characterized by the use of a large variety of teaching and learning methods, consisting of highly interactive activities (seminars, workshops, round tables, panels, hands-on activities, etc.) often animated by more than one lecturer. Accommodation, transfers, local information, and registration (including needs in visas and payment) are also provided to the participants. The quality is assured by a complementary process for the assessment and evaluation of each program.

### 1.7.2 Ireland

When one considers summer schools from an Irish context, one considers summer schools held in higher education institutions (HEIs) and Summer Schools associated with HEIs but not necessarily located within those institutions. The nature of Summer Schools in Ireland is to bring learning in diverse ways to groups of people who would not normally be part of a formal structure or, for whom the summer school is part of the formal structure and is given formal recognition via learning credits. Given this some summer schools are held to supplement or augment formal course delivery, there is an increasing diversity in the range and the nature of summer school offerings.

Ireland, (the Republic of Ireland), with a growing economy and advancing higher education system, has a long history of welcoming international students to its rich distinct culture and lively student scene. Whilst the Irish higher education system is largely modelled on that of the British system, all seven of Ireland's public universities rank within the world's top 700, are state-funded, and generally operate autonomously. Each university in Ireland offers a range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes across a wide spectrum of general study areas.

There are 11 Institutes of Technology (IoTs) nationally in the Republic of Ireland providing higher education and training programmes in areas such as business, science, engineering, linguistics and music, across certificate, diploma and degree levels. Additionally, there are Colleges of Education providing specialized training to aspiring school teachers, via a three-year Bachelor of Education and an 18 or 12-month postgraduate diploma. The list of HEIs is reported in Table 4 below.

Table 3. Summer School Locations of Aegean University

<p>Universities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Dublin City University</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">University College Cork</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">National University of Ireland, Galway</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Maynooth University</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Trinity College Dublin</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">University College Dublin</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">University of Limerick</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">TU Dublin</a></li> </ul>	<p>Institute of Technology (IOTs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Athlone Institute of Technology</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Cork Institute of Technology</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art and Design</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Dundalk Institute of Technology</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Institute of Technology Carlow</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Institute of Technology Sligo</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Institute of Technology Tralee</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Letterkenny Institute of Technology</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Limerick Institute of Technology</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Waterford Institute of Technology</a></li> </ul>
<p>Other Colleges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Royal Irish Academy of Music</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">St Angela's College</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">National College of Art &amp; Design</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Mary Immaculate College</a></li> </ul>	<p>Other Higher Education Institutions in receipt of public funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National College of Ireland <a href="http://www.ncirl.ie">www.ncirl.ie</a></li> <li>• Pontifical University of Maynooth <a href="http://www.maynoothcollege.ie">www.maynoothcollege.ie</a></li> <li>• St Patrick's, Carlow College <a href="http://www.carlowcollege.ie">www.carlowcollege.ie</a></li> </ul>

Third-party private colleges offer education and training in specialist areas such as vocational training, art and design, medicine, business studies, rural development, theology, music, and law. Qualifications are offered across vocational, certificate and degree levels.

Irish academic culture largely echoes that of the UK as noted above. Students are expected to independently work and maintain a sufficient academic standard. There is a focus on the approach modes to a subject rather than upon factual data, seeking to equip students with the tools to draw their own conclusions on what is taught. Assessment varies between areas of study but generally focuses on fewer, longer-form summative assessment rather than smaller modes of continuous assessment. Examinations are common, and often held at the end of semester one (mid-year) and again at the end of semester two (finals) with a pass grade of at least 40%.

For an overview of see the Higher Education Authority (HEA) Higher Education in Ireland: Key Facts & Figures 2017/18 Report<sup>8</sup>.

Higher education is provided in Ireland by higher education institutions (HEIs). The Irish national framework of qualifications (NFQ) ranges from level 1 to level 10. Primary education addresses levels 1 to 3, second level education addresses levels 3 to 6, further education and training (FET) and community education (CE) addresses levels 1 to 6, and higher education (HE) addresses levels 7 to 10. Higher education institutions (HEIs) or third level educational providers are tasked with providing higher education in Ireland as outlined in the following diagram. The diagram also summarizes the numbers and percentage of the Irish population who participate in higher education.

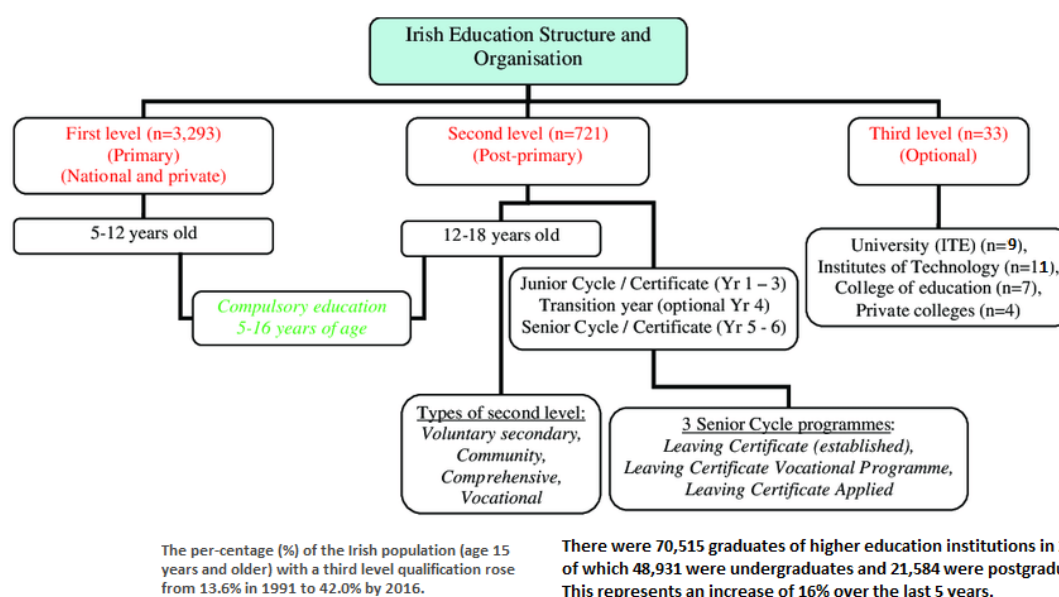


Figure 10. Irish education structure and organization

Every University holds more than one summer school each year addressing the needs of students completing formal courses, non-traditional students seeking short modules during holiday periods, and international students seeking to study in Ireland. Other HEIs such as institutes of technology (IOTs) similarly offer summer schools with the particular focus on technological learning and innovation. There is a growing trend among summer school organizers to locate in attractive settings and to engage academic, non-professional academic, academic communities of interest, and communities whose historical or cultural landscape is particularly relevant to summer school topics. Ireland has a range of summer schools focused on topical issues or historical commemorations that have gained notoriety and are highly valued.

Ireland also has a range of summer schools that focus on the Irish language and Celtic issues such as myths and legends. These summer schools range from learning the Irish language to examining the Irish languages' historical and cultural past, to addressing topical issues related to minority languages.

<sup>8</sup> <https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2019/01/Higher-Education-Authority-Key-Facts-Figures-2017-18.pdf>



Added to language learning, there are also summer schools in music and dance. Some of these summer schools have strong links with higher education institutions. Summer schools associated with sports, particularly Irish or Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) sports have grown significantly and attracted both national and international participants.

In 2020 the Covid19 pandemic has had a very serious impact on the organization and delivery of summer schools. Some summer schools that have been in existence continuously for long periods of time have been cancelled and their organizational structure has been severely impacted due to Covid19 pandemic impacts.

### 1.7.3 Latvia

According to the information provided by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia in 2020 in Latvia are registered 48 HEI – 6 universities, 21 high school and academia, 19 colleges, 6 university agencies and 2 branches of foreign universities<sup>9</sup>. Currently, there is no common registry or statistical source that combines or gathers information about the summer schools organized by Latvian HEI's. Mostly the information is gathered from the interviews with local stakeholders, internet resources (e.g., University of Latvia<sup>10</sup>, Riga Technical University<sup>11</sup>), intranet pages, blogs, etc. Information on some summer schools in Latvia is also available in the database run by the Utrecht University<sup>12</sup>, which has been already presented in the previous sections.

Summer schools are basically held on two levels in Latvia:

1. local level – for Latvian students, held only on the territory of the Republic of Latvia;
2. international level – for students from EU and non-EU countries, held on the territory of the Republic of Latvia and Northern Europe or Baltic countries.

Almost every HEI in Latvia is organizing at least 1 summer school every year addressing the interest of students to acquire international experience and practical skills as well as the interest of universities to promote their image abroad.

As it has been the first attempt to collect data on summer schools in Latvia, the statistical information should be seen as a preliminary effort. We found that in the period from 2016 – 2020 between 18 and 33 summer schools were organized yearly in Latvia, on both local and international levels, that the number of participants varies from 4 to up to 60 students, that the length of the Summer Schools varies from 1-3 days to 2 months<sup>13</sup>. The most active organizers of summer schools are summarized in Table 4.

Table 3. Most active organizers of summer schools in Latvia

Nr.	HEI
1.	Riga Technical University
2.	University of Latvia

<sup>9</sup> Ministry Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia, available in Latvian -

<https://www.izm.gov.lv/lv/augstakas-izglitiba-iestades>

<sup>10</sup> University of Latvia, available - <https://www.lu.lv/en/studies/more-than-studies/summer-schools/>

<sup>11</sup> Riga Technical University, available - <https://www.rtu.lv/en/internationalization/international-events/summer-schools>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.summerschoolsineurope.eu/search/country/latvia>

<sup>13</sup> Information is gathered from 21 high school and academia the web pages, using build-in search tools, key word – “summer school”, “vasaras skola”

3.	Daugavpils University
4.	Turība University
5.	Rezekne Academy of Technologies

Most of the summer schools take place in Riga, due to its central location, developed infrastructure, concentration of business organizations and availability of laboratories/innovation and other centers, where practical exercises can be arranged, while only a few of summer schools are organized in the regions of Latvia.

Each year about 7-8 summer schools organized by HEI's are supported by the special state grant of the State Education Development agency – called 'Scholarship for Summer Schools'. The organizers of the Summer Schools benefitting of those grants receive the compensation for the participant fee of the students and funds for academic and research staff (also in case of foreign personnel). However, to access those funds, the Summer School has to respect one of the following cases:

1. dedicates to intensive learning of the Latvian language;
2. promotes Latvian culture, history and education;
3. increase Latvia's recognition abroad and promotes cooperation between Latvia and other countries<sup>14</sup>.

On the organizational level summer school development and management is held using two basic models – centralized and decentralized. The description of these models is stated below in Table 4.

Table 4. Organizational Models for Summer Schools in Latvia

Centralized model	Decentralized model
Summer school organization process is held by centralized institution <sup>15</sup>	Summer school organization process is held by interested structural unit (brief support from centralized units)
Initiative goes both from HEI's staff and centralized institution	Initiative goes only from HEI's staff
Authoritarian decision making	Democratic decision making
Summer school is a part of HEI policy (i.e., marketing tool, international cooperation tool, etc.)	Summer school is driven by scientific interest and/or personal initiatives
Centralized planning, optimization, common usage of resources, common rules	Individual planning, individual resources, individual rules

<sup>14</sup> State Education Development agency -

[https://www.viaa.gov.lv/eng/scholarships\\_gov/scholarships\\_for\\_summer\\_school/](https://www.viaa.gov.lv/eng/scholarships_gov/scholarships_for_summer_school/)

<sup>15</sup> Centralized institution – department responsible for the organization of summer schools in HEI

The summer schools organized by the HEI's in Latvia are characterized by the relatively high level of organizational risk<sup>16</sup>, because most of summer schools are based on financial self-sufficiency principles and driven by single person initiative and responsibility.

In most cases, summer schools are using a mixed financial model that, in various proportions, consists of following financing sources:

1. participants fee;
2. state and private financing and scholarships;
3. EU and international project grants;
4. HEI's internal project grants;
5. self-financing (e.g., structural unit financing);
6. non-financial common usage resources (computing resources, premises and other infrastructure, stuff, etc.).

Finally, in 2020 the pandemic of COVID-19 impacted the organization of summer school in Latvia. Planned summer schools were partly or totally cancelled, partly held online, partly organized respecting epidemiological restrictions and risk management practices.

#### 1.7.4 Italy

The Italian higher education system is a binary system, divided into two large compartments, which differ institutionally and functionally: the University sector and the Higher Education for Fine Arts, Music and Dance sector (AFAM)<sup>17</sup>. The Italian university sector comprises higher education institutions divided thus in: public universities; legally recognized non-public universities; online universities; higher schools and institutions with special charters. In the UNIVERSITALY website<sup>18</sup> a detailed list of university institutions can be found.

The higher education offered by Italian HEIs is divided into 3 phases in line with the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area (QF for the EHEA)

- 1 First cycle - Bachelor's level - 3 years per 180 ECTS
- 2 Second cycle - Master's level - 2 years per 120 ECTS
- Long-Cycle masters degrees - 5-6 years per 300-360 ECTS
- 3 Third cycle - PhD and specializations schools per 3 years

Other official qualifications issued by recognized higher education institutions are specializations masters. Figure 11 visualizes this information. From this perspective, the Italian academic system does not officially recognize short intensive programs in this official framework.

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<sup>16</sup> Organizational risk is a potential for losses due to uncertainty at the top level of an organization that includes material strategic, reputational, regulatory, legal, security and operational risks

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.cimea.it/en/services/the-italian-higher-education-system/the-italian-higher-education-system-overview.aspx>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.universitaly.it/index.php/maps/>

Italian qualifications			CFU	Years
First phase	Laurea	Bachelor Degree	180	3
Second phase	Laurea magistrale	Master Degree	120	2
	Master universitario di I livello	1st level Specializing Master	≥60	
	Laurea magistrale a ciclo unico	Single-Cycle Master Program	300-360	5-6
Third phase	Dottorato di ricerca	PhD		3
	Specializzazione di II livello	Postgraduate diploma course		2
	Master universitario di II livello	2nd level Specializing Master	≥60	

Figure 11. Italian Higher Education System

However, Ministerial Decree n. 270/04, art. 3, comma 9 states that Italian HEIs “may activate, according to their own internal regulations, scientific specialization and lifelong learning courses”. This is the framework used by Italian institutions to set up Summer Schools. In this respect, Italian Universities have a long history in organizing short intensive programs: typing on google “summer schools in Italy”, the browser shows more than 2.800.000 results. At least 570 summer and winter courses were organized in Italy between 2015 and 2021. There is no national guidelines and databases, nor national accreditation agencies. HEIs can autonomously decide how to develop and manage that programs in basically two ways: centralized organization; decentralized/departmental organization. In Table 6, those two approaches are carefully described.

Table 6. Italian two ways of developing a Summer School

Centralized model	Decentralized model
Summer School organization process is held by a unique central university office	Summer School organization process is held by interested structural unit such as internal departments/labs of each HEI
Common guidelines and quality standard (teaching quality standards, duration, entry requirements, n. of ECTS, cooperation with international partners ect..) within the HEI	Each organizer can decide how to structure the programs

Summer school is a part of HEI policy (i.e. internationalization policy)	Summer school is driven by scientific interest and/or personal initiatives
Centralized planning, optimization, common usage of resources, common rules	Individual planning, individual resources, individual rules
Central support administrative office managing the activation of the programmes and their management (call for applications, selection, welcome, ect.)	Individual rules

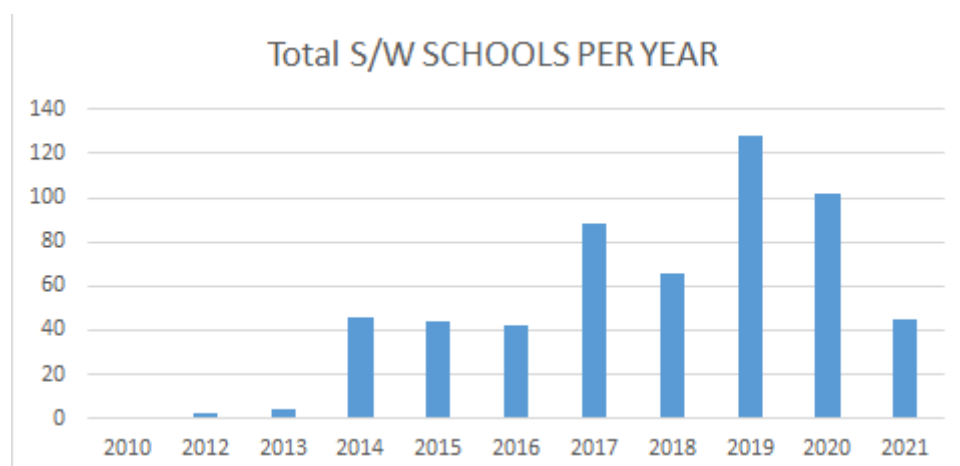
Again, the EU website Summer Schools in Europe<sup>19</sup>

provides valuable insights and both qualitative and quantitative data on the current overall situation in Italy. Those data have been collected and analyzed and the results are here reported.

Up to November 2020, 570 courses were found in different locations, 45 for 2021 (both organized in summer and winter semester). In 2021, 13% of the total are planned to be organized virtually, demonstrating that Italian institutions are not considering the online modality as the preferred one. Otherwise, in 2020, 104 programs were organized, of which 26% were totally online. In the past, only one Summer School was organized online, in 2015. This demonstrates that the pandemic crisis had a huge impact on the organization modalities, with an increase in online usage in 2020 and 2021. Indeed, the website used as data source states: “due to the covid-19 outbreak, higher education institutions are being forced to change or cancel their summer programs for 2020. Universities are doing their utmost best to ensure education online, but this is not always possible”.

Figure 12 reports the total number of Summer Schools in Italy divided per year between 2015 and 2021.

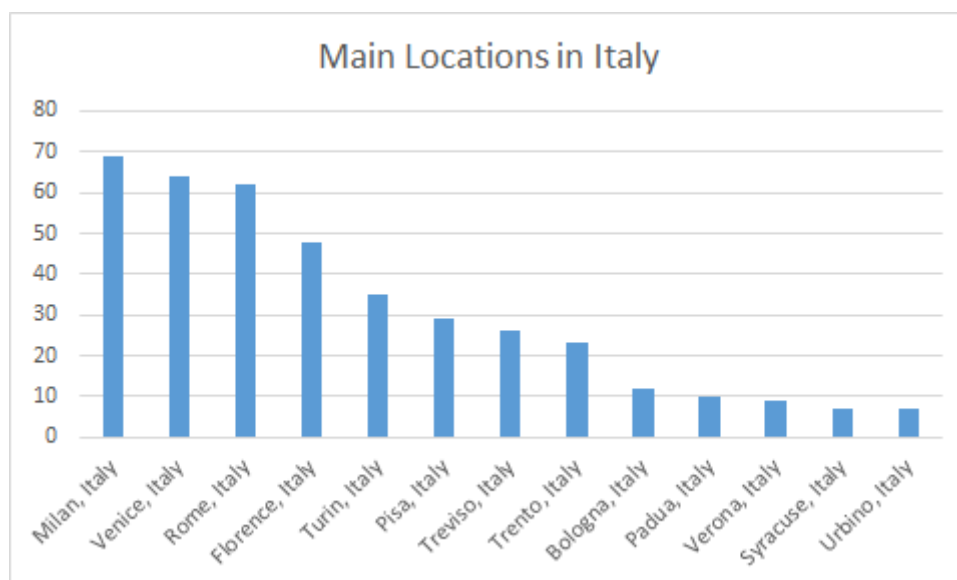
Figure 12. Italian Summer Schools distribution between 2015 and 2021



<sup>19</sup> <https://www.summerschoolsineurope.eu/>

Overall, during the analyzed reporting period 2015-2021, Summer Schools took place in different cities and regional areas in Italy. Among the top destinations, there were Milan, Venice, Rome, Florence, Turin. The main locations are the biggest and more international cities.

Figure 13. Italian Summer Schools locations between 2015 and 2021



In Italy, intensive courses are held in several fields of studies, such as arts and humanities, social and political sciences, economics and engineering and more than 92% are taught in English language. The Summer Schools' topic distribution is reported in Fig.14 below.

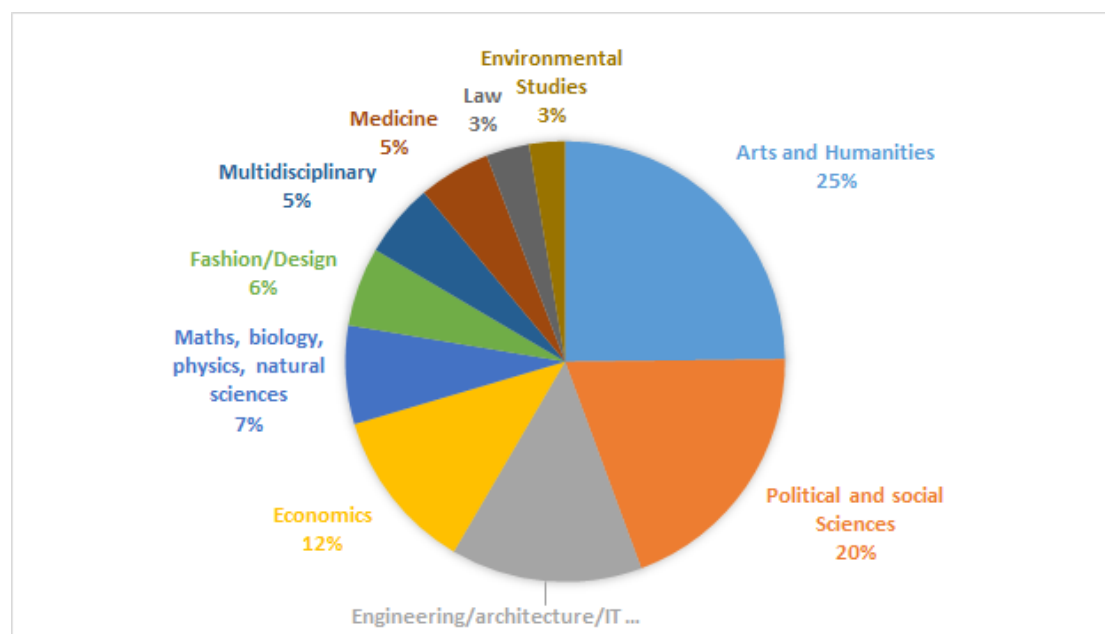


Figure 14. Italian Summer Schools topics distribution between 2015 and 2021

No central organization are responsible for the planning and recognition of intensive programs, but the Italian Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs work together for

facilitating the arrival of the students, especially from out of Schengen Area. Summer and winter schools are autonomously organized by different institutions:

- HEIs (within departments, labs, and faculties)
- public and private language schools
- public and private training and vocational centers
- international networks (i.e. the new European Universities)
- other organizations (i.e. tourist agencies<sup>20</sup>)

In this respect, most HEIs have central offices managing short programs. Most of them are directly managed by the international offices at central level.

A good example is the *Cattolica* University (Milan) summer programs that are managed and promoted<sup>21</sup> in the same way: same application procedures, tuition fees, and entry requirements as well as some services and facilities offered to all the attendees.

Finally, regarding the formal recognition of the events, there is no common rule. 57% of Italian summer schools award ECTS credits that students can spend at their home institutions

## PART 2 – Best practices research on Summer School Development in Europe and abroad

In this section, the best practices for organizing a successful Summer School are identified and analyzed. Those best practices are based on the insights gained in the first section of this deliverable and integrated with other desk-research and field-research (i.e. interactions with the stakeholders in each partner university) conducted separately by the SUMHEIs partners. Concerning the desk research, important additional sources of information, to the one used and presented in section 1, were the Manual For The Implementation Of Ells Summer Schools<sup>22</sup> from the University of Hohenheim and the section dedicated to the guidelines in the Summer School in Europe website<sup>23</sup> (which was already discussed in the previous sections). The rest of the sections is divided into short chunks containing hints and suggestions about what seem to be diffused best practices. Those ‘chunks’ aim to be simple and direct in order to be ready to be used and facilitate their usage as soon as needed.

### 2.1. Curriculum: using an innovative approach for valuable content

In order to set up a successful Summer School, it is crucial to start from the curriculum offered. In fact, everything revolves around the educational offer of the summer school. Thus extraordinary effort needs to be devoted to these tasks.

The recommendation is to select a topic and approach it in an innovative form. The topic should be relevant. This doesn’t mean to focus just on trending topics, but to deal with any topic in a

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<sup>20</sup> e.g. <https://www.gooverseas.com/study-abroad/student-tour>

<sup>21</sup> <https://formazionecontinua.unicatt.it/formazione-corsi-open?sede=all&tipologia=summer--winter-school>

<sup>22</sup> [https://www.uni-hohenheim.de/fileadmin/einrichtungen/ells/Joint-programmes/IRO\\_Summer\\_School\\_MANUAL-Update-10-2013\\_01.pdf](https://www.uni-hohenheim.de/fileadmin/einrichtungen/ells/Joint-programmes/IRO_Summer_School_MANUAL-Update-10-2013_01.pdf).

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.utrecht-network.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Summer-School-guidelines.pdf>

relevant approach, i.e. actual, useful and valuable. Elaborate clear, original, and creative programs. This shouldn't be done to the detriment of the learning experience. A balance between learning and interest and challenge, in respect of the participants, should be maintained.

Have an international-oriented mission, namely building a curriculum that attracts international participants (e.g. Summer School taught in English) and involve international teachers if possible and adds value. In this respect, finding a qualified and reliable partner and teacher is necessary to construct high-level content and deliver it. Consider adding practitioners to the teaching team, in order to offer a variation to the usual material presented. In general, the curriculum should keep in mind the motivations for which the students might apply to the Summer School (e.g. international experience and practical skills on the specific topics, and, for example, it is of secondary importance the obtaining of ECTS; for more see Section 1) while designing the Summer Schools.

The content that is planned to be taught in the school should be formalized in curriculum/syllabus. Transparency and clarity on goals and ways to achieve them are fundamental in this phase.

Summer Schools priority should be to facilitate as much as possible participants learning. Thus, the primary goal of the curriculum should be to provide accelerated learning, able to keep up with the quality of longer classes. Thus, ideally, the number of students should be relatively low (15-30), allowing to have classes of small sizes. This is extremely important. In fact, the need to keep summer school class sizes limited is hand-in-hand with the need to distinguish usual semester-teaching. One of the most common obstacles to successful individualized learning is broad class sizes; after all, teachers just do not have the resources or capacity to be in their classes everywhere at once. Capping the limited size of the summer school courses makes it easier for teachers and their students to have significant one-on-one interaction. Teachers get to know their participants, understand their knowledge differences and learning patterns, and build learning-motivating partnerships. Small classes facilitate the construction of interpersonal relations that further facilitates learning. In other words, summer programs typically have a high degree of contact between student and teacher. The student then feels freer to inquire and share his/her thoughts with questions. Additionally, if the topic, context and resources allow it, individualized learning can be achieved. It needs to be noted that during the summer course, blended and interactive learning that fulfil individual student criteria is as important as during the normal school year. From small-group tutoring to blended student classes, or from group ventures to 1:1 digital lessons, the best services provide a range of training methods and approaches to meet the existent diverse student learning preferences and cultural contexts. In the specific case that the Summer School has the goal to enhance skills deficiencies, it should guarantee a fair match between the curriculum and the required grade level. For one, a scaffolded RTI (response to intervention) strategy will improve student success and help close the gap in accomplishment. Built-in data collection of formative, interim and summative reviews are offered by commercial instructional solutions, so you can easily put students where they need to be and track development.

In this context, interactive learning plays a key role. First, it differentiates the experience from usual classes. Secondly, interactive sessions challenge participants learning and understanding. Third, it contributes to improving social and group skills. The list of interactive possibilities is very long, e.g. seminars, workshops, field activities, assignments, discussions, group exercises, role-play games, etc. An equilibrium between content and practical knowledge should be pursued.



Room for flexibility should be left in case the curriculum needs to be adapted to new discoveries, specific situations or participants request. Finally, prepare a portfolio with notes, research sheets, and other written work to give to the students.

## 2.2. Budget, pricing, and financial aspects: the importance of fairness and scholarships

In regards to the financial dimensions, the best practices available are fewer with respect to the curriculum. First and foremost, if a fee is set, set it at a fair price. It's very unlikely participants will attend a Summer School, which is perceived to ask more than it delivers. Offering financial support (e.g. scholarships) is a very good strategy to attract students. Moreover, it gives the possibility to attend also to students who couldn't afford it. Ultimately, this can result in an increased quality in the pool of potential participants.

After the curriculum development, the budget can and should be defined. One of the most challenging efforts is to estimate the available resources and seek all the possible sources of funding. The partners with whom we interact listed different sources to look at when the need for funding for an event:

1. participants fee;
2. state and private financing and scholarships;
3. EU and international project grants;
4. HEI's internal project grants;
5. self-financing (e.g., structural unit financing);
6. non-financial common usage resources (computing resources, premises and other infrastructure, stuff, etc.).

An additional strategy is also to suggest the Summer Schools potential participants, both students and staff, to check the possibility of using Erasmus teaching and staff mobility grants offered by their own Universities. These funds are usually used by academics and administrative staff for teaching or training activities and cover travel and subsistence costs. This would shift the funding burden partially to other players relieving the organizing HEI and at the time keeping constant the total budget available.

Finally, those tasks require a specific set of skills which are not easy to acquire. Therefore, specific staff devoted to such tasks is highly recommended. In particular in the cases in which the Summer School is only organized by academics, they should seek help and advice from experts on Summer Schools' financial matters.

## 2.3. Promotion: extended marketing and early start

One of the most challenging activities is to promote and diffuse the information about the planned Summer School to recruit participants and generate interest. First of all, already when designing the curriculum, the target audience should be identified. In other words, the potential pool of participants should be defined in advance. From the start, an international-oriented mind should be kept (i.e. thinking of services for internationals, language selection, promotion in English,

interests of internationals, etc.). Then a detailed marketing and promotional staff should be developed. Sometimes academics forget that marketing is important as its content for the success of a Summer School. Thus specific marketing skills should be available in the staff organizing the event. Collaboration between established communication offices in the HEI, with other HEIs, as well as contacting the right people (e.g. if a person holds a Summer School in a specific field it is very valuable to inform about that people and group who play a pivotal role in that discipline network) are necessary in order to identify the most relevant and effective dissemination channels. In fact, promotion of the summer school should see the involvement of different offices, as many as valuable. In this respect, a network-cooperation with other HEIs (e.g. with those having international agreements) that builds up channels of information/dissemination seems to pay off considerably. In this context, marketing should be done mostly on the web nowadays (and probably this is already happening). The Summer Schools in Europe website<sup>24</sup> is an important platform in which it is recommended to list the event. Specific attention to social media should be given. As a rule of thumb, it's recommended to be updated on what are the social media used by the youngsters: forgetting to get involved in that might be costly (i.e. not reaching a consistent portion of the potential participants). However, this is a rule of thumb because dealing with that improperly or using too much informal social media might decrease the Summer School credibility. Again, getting the inputs of an expert is the best way to deal with such a tricky task.

Finally, don't underestimate the importance of word of mouth. First, word of mouth plays an important role in the image of the HEI – if participants had a positive experience, besides making them potentially interested in moving to that specific HEI or country, and if they distribute positive feedback to their network they can push other people to attend that HEIs and even that specific Summer School in the future.

#### 2.4. Staff: motivated and skilled

As already mentioned in the previous paragraphs, having the staff with the right skills set is crucial. In fact, it's impossible to imagine to set up a successful summer school without the necessary academic and organizational skills. Therefore, the HEI should support its staff and train them. In this respect, international training seems to be quite effective (e.g. they allow to assess how others perform similar tasks and get insights to bring back home). However, besides the obvious and already mentioned skills, what other skills are needed? According to Bell, et al., 2007, among the top skills of summer school staff, there are critical thinking, proactivity, collaboration, planning and management, responsibility, ability to tackle problems and leadership. Additionally, the recent pandemic showed how important that the staff acquire a deep knowledge of the digital tools available and used. For example, an excellent command of the main digital platforms for video-meeting (such as Zoom, Google Meet, Teams) and their potentialities can make a remarkable difference.

Last but not least, finding enthusiastic and qualified coordinator and teachers is at least as crucial as having the right skills set. Enthusiasms contribute to overcome challenges and contribute to creating harmony and positive vibes among participants, an aspect which will contribute to forming their positive opinion on the experience.

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<sup>24</sup> <https://www.summerschoolsineurope.eu/>

## 2.5. Organization structure: adequate, prepared, clear and ready soon

The organization structure should be created early along with the curriculum, and then, once details are sorted, define the schedule and start taking pre-bookings as early as possible. As already introduced, it's important to keep in mind that organizing a summer school diverges from the normal academic activity: it requires creativity and business savvy. In general, the organization structure should as soon as possible find a reliable and qualified partner, teachers and administrative staff; arrange the Summer school organizing committee; prepare the program and schedule; define the admission requirements and the application procedures and deadlines; and define the logistics. In general, organization structure should be early committed to effective planning.

In this context, an important role is played by the summer school centralized office in the HEIs (if they are available). An ideal summer school centralized office should, to the extent possible, take care of these financial, promotional and administrative activities and leave to the academic staff the concerns about the content offer. Concerning the promotion of the Summer School, the centralized office should have a “well-oiled” approach, which would allow them to complete the tasks in the most cost-effective way. Examples of those activities are: supporting departments in creating a new website for each new Summer School; create dedicated promotional material such as digital and paper brochures and a presentation poster; plan a social media and email marketing campaigns; send the invitation to all University partners; if the summer school is regularly offered by the University should also be promoted in contexts such as international student recruitment fairs and online portals.

## 2.6. Support to participants: before, during and after the event

The support that a Summer Schools provide to the students is likely to have a strong impact on their decision to attend or not to the event. Support should be given before, during and after the event. Pre-event support consists of precise and timely information delivery, help with visa regulation and health insurances, arrival support, etc. During the event, support regards accommodation and food arrangements, travel arrangements, etc. Post-event support is mostly focused on helping in activities recognition and feedback collection.

## 2.7. During the event: preciseness, flexibility, engagement and harmony

Summer Schools should be precise, flexible, engaging and harmonious events. Thus, keep the schedule. Unexpected and undesired variations can create disruption and generate discontent among participants and external academic staff. Moreover, attending classes is necessary for students to complete the curriculum effectively, therefore, a single missing class due to unexpected schedule variations can make it hard to catch up on missed work, given the brevity of the school. In this respect, given the importance of learning, the schools should consider to have a precise formal or informal (depending on the context) evaluation or self-evaluation of the students. This would guarantee control over the learning process and the possibility of a timely correction in case problems arise. It should be highlighted that evaluation and assessment is mostly for the good of the participants and for allowing them to know how their learning process is proceeding.

Student motivation and engagement is important for the success of the learning experience. On the one hand, assigning ordinary (assignments, presentations, etc.) and extra-ordinary tasks (group

works, unusual assignments, etc.) as well as defining a delivery schedule can help students to be on track and complete the course on time. On the other, a system of compliments and rewards (also funny one (e.g. wall of fame, snacks, etc.) could contribute to keeping high motivation and engagement. In particular, the ‘fun aspect’ shouldn’t be overlooked from this perspective and also more in general. Don’t forget that Summer School might want to be more informal than traditional academic courses.

Since participants’ motivation is important to create a good learning environment, it’s important to create a positive and harmonious environment. Specifically, the Summer School should take care of the participants in and out of the school to the largest extent possible. Then a crisis management procedure should be available. Any type of crisis could happen during the event, from participants fighting to bureaucratic impediments, thus, the organizational structure should be present and ready to deal effectively with them.

Finally, flexibility should always be present to adjust to the particular need of the participants and academic staff.

## 2.8. Curriculum integration: networking and extra-activities

The formal curriculum should be integrated with entertainment and extra-activities. As presented in Section 1, some of the possible motivations of participants to attend the Summer Schools is to have fun expand the personal network. Therefore, networking moments should be included in the schedule (aperitifs, dinners, etc.). Similarly, the possibility of visits and travels should be offered if possible and feasible.

## 2.9. Evaluation: continuous feedback collection from everybody for a ‘double loop’ learning

The Summer Schools should develop a system of feedback collection to allow for timely adjustments and long-term improvements. Monitoring the students’ progress permits to understand how the School is going. If monitoring shows that there are problems in the learning process, it allows to support and intervene in favor of disadvantaged students. For example, it is possible to integrate with small-group works, provide specific instructions, consider extra support from instructors, peer coaches, tutors, or adopt new learning tools. In particular cases, real-time monitoring can provide valuable insights. Therefore, it’s recommended to have a form of regular assessment over the content of the class. This is to be intended as something complementary to the eventual final and standard exam at the end of the School.

Then an important role is played by students and teachers feedback on the Summer School. Part of the feedback should be collected in order to correct the specific unfolding of the Summer School held, and part should be directed towards improving the more general organization of the event. Attention should be devoted to developing a transparent and honest system of feedback collection, otherwise, it might be useless. More in general, an ideal system of feedback should be conceptualized as a double loop learning system (Argyris, 1976, 1980, 2002): a primary learning loop based on feedback collection to improve the performance based on the actual rules and methods of the organization structure, and a second learning loop that evaluates if the rules and methods of the organization structure can be improved.

## 2.10. Sustainability: longer (as much as possible) perspective

Last but not least, it appears to be valuable to attempt to make the Summer School sustainable. This means that, whenever possible, the HEIs should try to make the Summer School a repeated, established and well-known event over the years not just a ‘one-shot’ experience. To achieve this ambitious goal it’s important that the Summer School organizing structure approach the event organization with a long-term mindset. Within this set of challenges, it’s important that the Summer School becomes self-sufficient, i.e. it does not just depend on the will of others, and pursue a resource diversification structure, i.e. it does not depend only on the resources of one player (not only economical but also organizational or academic).

## PART 3 – SWOT analysis

This section reports the results of the SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) conducted by each of the 4 partners in their home institutions. The SWOT was conducted performing structured interviews with the responsible staff for Summer Schools in their home HEI. The questions used during the introduction are reported in Fig. 16. Then the results coming from the different sources were integrated here in order to provide an overview of what are believed to be the internal and external drivers in the Summer School environment by the practitioners all over Europe. The results are collected in subsection 3.1.

INTERNAL STRENGTHS	INTERNAL WEAKNESSES
What do your students love most?	Where do you lack efficiency?
What are you more efficient at?	Where are you wasting time and resources?
What can you do in less time?	What do your competitors do better?
What makes your Summer School stand out?	What are your top customer complaints?
Why your Summer School is better than the others?	Which aspect of your Summer School could use improvements?
What does your Summer School offer more than the others? (low price, high service, experience, location, etc.)	Which internal factors interfere in the development of your Summer School?
...	...
EXTERNAL OPPORTUNITIES	EXTERNAL THREATS
What is missing in our market?	What changes are occurring in our market's environment? COVID-19
What could we create or do better than a competitor?	What technologies could replace what we do?
What new trends are occurring?	What changes are occurring in the way we're being discovered?
What new technology could we use?	What social changes could threaten us?
What openings in the market are there?	Are there any threatening government policies or regulations?
Can we offer new services?	Who are your competitors?
Which external factors connected to COVID-19 can give you an edge in the development of your Summer School?	Which market areas are potentially dangerous for the field of Summer Schools?
How can the jobs revolution aid you in the definition of valuable Summer Schools?	Can COVID-19 negatively affect the development and the success of Summer Schools?
<b>New hot topic on which to focus/define (how external events –esp. related to climate change or similar issues) impact on the definition of the courses?</b>	
ACTION ITEMS & GOALS	
Which opportunities should we pursue? How can we use our strengths to help us succeed?	
Which weaknesses can be worked on to help maximize success?	
What strategies can we put into place to be prepared for threats?	
....	

Figure 16. Structured interviews questions

### 3.1. Integrated SWOT analysis

The results of the different SWOT analysis are integrated into Table 7 and 8.

Table 7. Integrated SWOT analysis

S	W
INTERNAL STRENGTHS	INTERNAL WEAKNESSES
<i>What do your students love most?</i>	<i>Where do you lack efficiency?</i>
International experience (e.g. Latvian culture, sightseeing), practical experience and activities, visits to SMEs and topic-related organisations.	Usage of HEI common resources – infrastructure, stuff, etc.
Overall level of teaching; composition of the topics within the program.	Larger communication of the information before the beginning of the summer school. Our administration, albeit extremely experienced, is understaffed as compared to what would be needed to reach the desired level of efficiency

<p>The Summer School is highly international both in terms of lecturers involved and, sometimes, in terms of students we are able to reach.</p> <p>Lectures' contents are considered innovative and of great interest to the specific audience of our Summer School.</p> <p>The period during which we usually organize it in combination with the topics we treat are considered as strategic for those students who have also decided to enroll to our master's degree in African and Asian Studies</p> <p>Fees are affordable for external attendees and the Summer School is free of charge for our master's degree perspective students We give students the opportunity to couple lectures in the history and politics of Africa and Asia to Arabic Language classes. The Summer School is therefore inherently interdisciplinary</p> <p>Interesting &amp; rich content of the lectures and extracurricular activities</p> <p>Reasonable tuitions</p> <p>Facilities</p> <p>Perfect weather in combination with Greek civilization and culture</p> <p>Students can choose in which of 7 campuses they want to have their lectures</p> <p>Organization, destination, interactive elements with environment</p>	<p>Administrative staff language skills are mostly limited to English speaking personnel. Additional support in interacting with French-speaking partners would be desirable to increase efficiency.</p> <p>The big disadvantage is that there are no private dormitories, but only shared rooms. This is a problem mostly for 18 years old students, who prefer to rent an apartment or a room in hotel. AMC attempt to solve it, but COVID19 crisis stopped the procedures.</p> <p>Another lack is that they wish to organize even more webinars.</p> <p>Lack of efficiency is spotted in organizational issues. More specifically, the provision of adequate dormitories. Another issue that is now going to be ameliorated, due to the experience gained through COVID-19 period, is the preparation of online programs</p>
<i>What are you more efficient at?</i>	<i>Where are you wasting time and resources?</i>
<p>Attracting students, teacher and practitioners; involvement in Latvian culture</p> <p>Convey many information on a variety of topics in a relatively little time.</p> <p>Good organizational capacity, strong teamwork and highly experienced administrative staff</p> <p>Strong international university partnerships with European and extra-European universities that are mobilized for the specific purposes of the Summer School and allows as to involve experienced, high level and international academic</p>	<p>Bureaucracy and formalities (procurement, reports, accounting and record keeping)</p> <p>Advertising and communication to attracts students</p> <p>Sometimes our academic staff end up complementing the administrative staff by taking over mostly administrative tasks</p> <p>No waste</p> <p>Mainly no waste of time and resources; maybe little time has been wasted on creating schedules based on time constraints of faculty members.</p>

<p>lecturers working in strong coordination with our academics.</p> <p>Good communication and dissemination through social media</p> <p>Good organisational capacity and high educated and experienced administrative and academic staff</p> <p>High level academic staff, strong technological infrastructure, administrative capacity</p>	
<i>What can you do in less time?</i>	<i>What do your competitors do better?</i>
<p>Providing international students (non-EU) with the appropriate study permits</p> <p>Gather information about teacher's background and abstract of the lectures</p> <p>Mobilizing a highly competitive and diverse team of international academics</p> <p>Implement communication strategies in order to attract a high level of students' participation (pop up tool in the website to help the visitor send an answer promptly)</p> <p>Establish collaborations and marketing tools for enhancing participation worldwide</p>	<p>Information dissemination about summer school, communication and marketing, branding and feedbacks on the quality of previous summers schools</p> <p>Presenting their program so as to highlight the main artistic figures and the goal of the summer school</p> <p>They advertise their initiatives mobilizing more resources, ultimately proving more effective in reaching out to a wider public</p> <p>Some competitors operate summer school only in one or two faculties. They choose a specific field and they invest only in that. This implies that they are more specialized in one academic area (mostly in Tourism), but AMC strategy is to offer summer schools in a variety of faculties</p> <p>They provide better organization. However, given that they focus mainly on this, they fail to adequately remain on qualitative academic standards as they invest on better dormitories, etc.</p>
<i>What makes your summer school stand out?</i>	<i>What are your top customer complaints?</i>
<p>Offers an experiential learning opportunity</p> <p>Offers a variety of learning modes</p> <p>Introduces culture and travel as part of the learning experience</p> <p>Content is increasingly recognized as credit (European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) bearing)</p>	<p>Weather (average summer temperature in 2020 17,2 C), accommodation features.</p> <p>Lack of time and excessive duration of the tutorials about the use of software and the objective limits we encountered in effectively organizing teamwork activities due to the necessary safety measures we had to introduce due to Covid-19 Pandemic</p> <p>The only complains were about the shared dormitories and some issues regarding the access in archaeological sites and museums with their students' cards from abroad universities. There are</p>



	<p>no complains about the operational capacity or professors' competences</p> <p>Lack of proper organization in terms of food, dormitories and excursions. No complains about the pedagogical and technological affordance</p>
<i>Why your summer school is better than others?</i>	<i>Which internal factors interfere in the development of your summer school?</i>
<p>Summer schools could be held internationally (e.g., in Latvia and neighbouring countries)</p> <p>Specific topics of students' interests</p> <p>Because it offers a friendly environment to get to work with people from different backgrounds</p> <p>It implements modern topic lectures, it addresses nowadays challenges and labor needs and equip students with skills and competences, create networks with foreign universities and specialized agencies. The facilities with the 7 campuses. Regarding shipping summer school, there is a special equip campus near the port of Piraeus.</p> <p>Educational activities are strongly related to cultural contexts</p>	<p>Organisational model, financing source, personal interest and motivation of organizers</p> <p>Poor communication and Scarcity of financial resources</p>
<i>What does your summer school offer more than the others? (low price, high service, experience, location, etc.)?</i>	
<p>Unique location and culture, skilled and qualified teachers and lecturers, a lot of connected opportunities (e.g., Latvian language, Latvian practitioners experience in various fields)</p> <p>Constant feedback on one's own work from peers, tutors and teachers, the opportunity to develop a personal multimedia project with the help of the whole staff</p> <p>Affordable tuitions or even gratuity for perspective students Internationalization through the academic staff involved</p> <p>Attention to providing students with methodological tools also applicable to other fields of studies (seminars on how to write a paper, provision of several moments dedicated to discussion and debate within a workshop-like environment)</p>	

Reasonable tuition, experienced staff, great summer location. It combines knowledge-based learning but also trips and excursion in historic sites of Greece, islands, and Mediterranean cuisine. It offers a variety of summer courses in different faculties, non-only one	
Low price, high service, experience, location, certification	
<i>Add anything you wish here:</i>	<i>Add anything you wish here:</i>
	<p>Is predominantly available to those who can pay</p> <p>Gives advantage to those who can attend</p> <p>Draws people away from their own social and cultural capital</p> <p>Can be used by parents as a summer holiday from their children on summer holiday</p> <p>The skills required for the organisation of Summer Schools is poorly recognised and valued</p>
<b>O</b>	<b>T</b>
<b>EXTERNAL OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>EXTERNAL THREATS</b>
<i>What is missing in our market?</i>	<i>What changes are occurring in our market's environment? (COVID19)</i>
<p>Summer schools related to IT (especially cyber security) and high technology field</p> <p>Education in a truly multimedia artistic environment, to cross the boundaries of the specific disciplines (music, video, programming etc.)</p> <p>More opportunities of high level and competitive trainings on innovative methods for teaching and disseminating contents by using digital platforms should be provided to academics</p> <p>Ways to address the close borders due to COVID19 implication and restriction in traveling.</p> <p>More cooperation and synergies with ex soviet countries, Africa and Asia countries</p> <p>More cooperation and international synergies</p>	<p>Summer schools are partly cancelled, partly held online, organization of summer schools is very difficult due to epidemiological restrictions</p> <p>Online lecturing and remote collaboration in all phases of creation and realization of a work are new experiences in many artistic fields, so this was a big experiment to see how an artistic workshop could work in a virtual environment</p> <p>Travel restrictions</p> <p>Higher competition with other private and public institution offering learning and training experiences both at the National and International Level due to increasing digitalization</p> <p>Global economy, Higher Mobility rates, Digitalization and COVID19 pandemic are some of the most important factors shaping the external scene in all sectors</p> <p>COVID-19 pandemic, global economy, global social instability</p>

<i>What could we create or do better than a competitor?</i>	<i>What technologies could replace what we do?</i>
<p>Internationally recognized experts and practitioners could be involved in summer schools</p> <p>Provide a space which is neither competitive in the art world nor completely detached from the society: we are in a space in-between that leave the students free to pursue their own interests and inclinations</p> <p>Leveraging on our status as a Public University so as to provide our expertise to a wider public by envisaging the creation of bourses for disadvantaged students</p> <p>Quality in Instruction, Equipment and Didactical Methodologies, Experiences Staff, Good Facilities and services for students, Networking, Use of the technological equipment</p> <p>Certificate, Quality in Instruction, Equipment and Didactical Methodologies, Experiences Staff, Good Facilities and services for students, Networking, Use of the technological equipment</p>	<p>Augmented reality, virtual reality simulation, online communication, distance learning</p> <p>Artificial intelligence and machine learning could theoretically replace human creativity and artistic creation</p> <p>OER, MooC, e-platforms, mobile application, distance learning</p> <p>AR/VR, mobile learning apps, MOOCs</p>
<i>What new trends are occurring?</i>	<i>What changes are occurring in the way we're being discovered?</i>
<p>Concentration on soft skills (creative thinking, teamwork, networking, etc.)</p> <p>Integration between art, technology, science, research.</p> <p>Emphasis on formative initiatives that can also be connected to mentoring and career guidance activities</p> <p>More horizontal learning approach as well as approaches oriented to the development of soft skills</p> <p>Inclusive education</p> <p>Promotion of formative activities informed by the concept of employability with an increasing attention to private stake holders' needs</p> <p>Focus on initiatives' sustainability</p> <p>Emphasis on soft skills instruction, mentoring and career guidance, non-formal education activities,</p>	<p>Implement more effective social media strategies.</p>

<p>recognition and validation of non-formal learning, inclusive education, connection with labor market</p> <p>Validation, emphasis on soft and digital skills instruction, mentoring, non-formal education activities</p>	
<i>What new technology could we use?</i>	<i>What social changes could threaten us?</i>
<p>Education technologies based on artificial intelligence, learning analytics based on big data analysis, Internet of things (5G)</p> <p>Immersive technologies for audio and video recording (ambisonics, 360° etc.)</p> <p>Social Media.</p> <p>E-learning and blended didactic.</p> <p>Online tools and ICT can be used for the designing of online summer school especially during COVID19 pandemic, webinars, communication tools</p> <p>Webinars, Social networks, communication platforms</p>	<p>Border closing (e.g., BREXIT), political instability, changes in the value of education, pandemics, transport issues</p> <p>Fear related to international mobility and personal contact</p> <p>Increasing and widespread delegitimizing of academic expertise in the public debate</p> <p>Poverty, health diseases, lack of democracy or human rights, less opportunities to travel and communicate</p> <p>Health diseases, financial difficulties, environmental problems, social instability.</p>
<i>What openings in the market are there?</i>	<i>Are there any threatening policies or regulation?</i>
<p>Wide opportunities for cooperation with non-EU countries</p> <p>Diffusion of surround and 3D systems for audio and video reproduction at consumer level</p> <p>Attractiveness for both private, governmental and non-governmental actors of the skills (both linguistic and research oriented) transferred to participants via our Summer School programme</p> <p>Strategic partnerships with ex soviet countries, Africa and Asia countries</p> <p>Strategic partnerships with international countries, especially of eastern world</p>	<p>Epidemiological regulations that will remain in force for a long time</p> <p>High costs of software for professional audio and video editing (and the lack of opportunities to have temporary education licences)</p> <p>Structural lack of resources and funding distraction towards the private sector to the detriment of Public University</p> <p>Greek laws regarding private HEIs operation and recognition of degrees, and employment rights in general</p> <p>Greek legislation on approving summer school programs.</p>
<i>Can we offer new services?</i>	<i>Who are your competitors?</i>
<p>Summer schools can develop a real innovative and business practices (real practice with real results)</p> <p>Immersive experiences for communication, branding, education</p>	<p>HEI's from Baltic and Northern Europe countries</p> <p>Art schools, Conservatories and music schools</p>

<p>Better services in terms of participants' accommodation would be a plus</p> <p>Yes, there are always improvements that can be implemented (for example, more ICT technologies in the curriculum, more activities, etc.)</p> <p>Distance learning, AR/VR, gaming, preparation</p>	<p>Other Universities offering similar Summer School programmes and Research Institutes massively investing in promoting Summer School programmes</p> <p>Private Colleges in Greece, but AMC is the biggest in Southern Europe not only in Greece</p> <p>Public Universities in Greece; UniWA is the third largest university in the country.</p>
<p><i>Which external factors connected to COVID-19 can give you an edge in the development of your Summer School?</i></p>	<p><i>Which market areas are potentially dangerous for the field of Summer School?</i></p>
<p>More important role of online communication leads to easier document circulation (e.g., electronic signatures, electronic document turnover, etc.)</p> <p>The lack of direct interaction and any inhibition to international mobility are weakened the effectiveness of networking and prevented collaborative work</p>	<p>Formal and non-formal online education</p> <p>Online education in the field of artistic creation, by emphasising the relevance of the technical skills at the expenses of personal relationships and networking</p> <p>Closing of national borders because it would not be possible to attract international students to participate in summer school programmes</p> <p>International market areas due to difficulties in traveling and social distancing during the pandemic</p>
<p><i>New hot topic on which to focus/define (how external events-esp. related to climate change or similar issues) impact on the definition of the courses?</i></p>	<p><i>Can COVID19 negatively affect the development and success of summer schools?</i></p>
<p>Cyber-security, actual EU issues, topics related to technologies (AI, etc.)</p> <p>Interaction between in presence and online communication in the consumption and participation in a work of art/installation</p>	<p>Fear of infection and epidemiological regulations/restrictions will stay in force for the long time</p> <p>It makes internationalization a challenge due to increasing travel restrictions affecting both academics from partner institutions and potentially interested people</p> <p>Yes, mainly by the closure of national borders</p> <p>Of course. People cannot travel, there are constraints placed by social distancing or quarantine</p>
<p><i>Add anything you wish here:</i></p>	<p><i>Add anything you wish here:</i></p>
<p>Summer Schools provide opportunities for greater social integration and cultural interaction</p>	<p>That the summer school model would become increasingly niche and elitist</p>

Summer schools provide opportunities to explore niche learning	That summer schools would be increasingly seen as an opportunity for profit from education
Summer schools can offer experiences that would not be gained in mainstream education	That, as international travel is increasingly convenient but vulnerable to threat, summer schools would be limited to student country of origin
Creative approach to Summer School model	That Summer Schools do not innovate
Re-fresh the skills of those who organize Summer Schools	
Design a skills qualification for Summer School organisers	

Table 8. Action items and goals

<b>ACTION ITEMS &amp; GOALS</b>
<i>Which opportunities should we pursue?</i>
<p>Implementation of new technologies and modern programmes, practical approach and innovation</p> <p>Strengthen any possible connections in the field of application of multimedia communication outside the art world (advertising, branding, education etc.)</p> <p>Lack of strong competition and opportunity of more innovation</p> <p>Entry in the market of winter schools</p> <p>Innovations and technological advancements can be the key</p>
<i>How can we use our strengths to help us succeed?</i>
<p>Concentration on soft skills, international experience and communication, unique culture, development of skills of summer schools' organisers</p> <p>Widen the network of the professionals involved in the program (artists, technicians, academics) and to broaden the spectrum of the practical applications of the multimedia products working on a shared project (i.e. with the collaborations with museums and galleries)</p> <p>Continuous increase of the competitiveness and attractiveness of our services</p> <p>Use of the Internet and e-commerce to attract more international students</p> <p>Establishment of computer-based approaches in summer schools, better organization in terms of dormitories, validation</p>
<i>Which weaknesses can be worked on to help maximize success?</i>
<p>Bureaucracy and formalities (time-consuming; massive amount of papers is produced)</p> <p>We can improve our communication and prepare a less tight schedule for the program, allowing the students more time to experiment and work on their own projects</p> <p>The creation of private dormitories and the incorporation of more webinars in the curriculum</p>

Organisation in terms of dormitory and faculty members' schedule (Ph.D. students assisting in tutoring process)

What strategies can we put into place to be prepared for threats?

Proactive strategy and development of modern approaches and content for summer schools; crisis management strategies

Collaboration and partnership with software house and programmers so to have common software for audio and video editing, improving the integration between real-world and virtual opportunities for collaborations between the students

Even more health and safety in the campus and more usage of new technologies

Establishment of computer-based approaches, information on hygiene rules

## CONCLUSIONS

In this deliverable, Section 1 describes what the characteristics of HEIs' Summer Schools are. The description is very extended since it attempts, as much as possible, to fill the knowledge gap due to the lack of a definition and description. Then, in Section 2, we developed a list of best-practices/guidelines which should help to set up a successful event. The reliability of the list derives by the method used: a combination of desk and field research which should guarantee a minimum quality on those claims. Finally, Section 3 report a SWOT analysis conducted locally in the universities partner of this project. Given that analysis is based on the direct experience of practitioners from 4 different European countries and that those countries can be considered as a representative sample of European HEIs (at least for a preliminary effort), the SWOT provides an updated snapshot of the state of the art of Summer Schools in Europe. Such state of the art comprises what are believed to be strengths and weaknesses perceived by practitioners, but also what are their concerns and hopes.

The general ideas emerging from this effort is that, first and foremost, Summer Schools should focus on the delivery of high-quality education through highest academic standards and that this content should be approached and taught in the most innovative ways as possible. This is the cornerstone of any successful Summer School. However, what are usually considered as side aspects, plays an important role too: extra-activities, attention to participants needs, financial contribution, networking moments, high-quality facilities and services, clarity in the certification of the activities upon program completion, local culture experience, etc. In this context, it is and it will always be important that Summer School organizers keep in mind what are all the motivations that push potential participants to consider to attend to a Summer School. Additionally, a *conditio sine qua non* for a successful event is an adequate communication capacity: if the event remains unknown among the pool of potential participants, most likely, it won't be a success.

Long-term and global trends (such as globalization, ICT, free mobility, economic crises, etc.) are affecting HEIs internationalization strategies, including Summer Schools. Thus, it's mandatory to keep an eye on those if we desire to understand the possible future of Summer Schools. At the same time, the long-term effects of COVID-19 pandemic aren't still completely known and understood.

Given those bases, future efforts towards an improvement of the European Summer School landscape, such as the SumHEIS Capacity Building program, should:

- Staff training on how to the internet and communication technologies
- Staff training on how to organize an event and how to handle the program. In particular, how to coordinate efficiently academic and administrative staff.
- How to develop a staff development plan (what are weaknesses? How can we improve them? See also *double-loop learning* in Section 2.9)
- How to build a net of support among Summer Schools. For example, facilitate a network that promotes experience and cultural exchange for HEI staff and summer schools' organizers
- Staff and professor training on how to the internet, communication, and, in general, modern technologies (e.g., virtual reality, augmented reality, distance learning, online communication) in the best way possible. In particular, on how to manage online learning/virtual classroom
- Professor training on soft skills, in particular on how to motivate and inspire students
- Create and expertise on what are appreciated side environmental and cultural activities



- Support the academic staff on how to create innovative curriculum offers (e.g. strongly connected to the actual demand and practical issues)
- How to share and promote Summer School programs among partner University
- How to develop guidelines and database for internal assessment and improvement. Moreover, how to share them to support others and facilitate country-wise and Europe-wise studies.

In respect of this last point, it seems crucial that the EU pursue the construction of a unique database on a web-platform reporting all Summer School in Europe (in this perspective the platform Summer Schools in Europe could be the starting point). First, to facilitate the matching of demand and supply. Second, to allow to perform more informed studies on what works and what doesn't.

Summer Schools landscape in Europe is very variegated. In fact, there are many educational approaches and organizational and financial models. There isn't a single formula working all over the continent. Therefore, each HEI should try to start from the insights and lessons listed in this document and then adapt them to their necessities. One of the most important goals of this effort is to provide a first set of guidelines that can support Summer Schools organizations. This was one of the most compelling knowledge gaps SumHEIs identified. Similarly, this work attempts to develop a comprehensive definition of Summer Schools since it was missing in the literature.

In conclusion, organizing a Summer School is hard and if the right support is missing, it might be even harder. This deliverable aims at supporting future Summer Schools organizers. However, challenges will remain and organizers should be capable of navigating through because Summer Schools still have room to grow and improve.

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