

Intellectual Output 2 Curriculum Proposal

Master Degree

CSB - Cultural Studies in Business
2 years – 120 ECTS



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Website: <https://www.culturalstudiesinbusiness.org/>

Email: csbproject.italy@gmail.com

Project Contractor: Sapienza University of Rome

Address: P.le Aldo Moro, 5 – 00185 Rome – Italy

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Acknowledgements

This Curriculum Proposal, defined as Intellectual Output 2 of the project is the result of the successful cooperation among partners representing 6 universities and a civil society organization working together in the K2 Strategic Partnership in Higher Education **CSB-Cultural Studies in Business (2018-1-IT02-KA203-048091)**:

1. Sapienza University of Rome (Italy)- Project Coordinator;
2. PVPU Euro College - Kumanovo (North Republic of Macedonia);
3. VGTU - Vilniaus Gedimino technikos universitetas (Lithuania);
4. University of Split, Faculty of Economics, Business and Tourism (Croatia);
5. UBI - Universidade da Beira Interior (Portugal);
6. University College Wisdom (Albania);
7. Associazione Jump - Gioventù in risalto (Italy).

Thanks to all Team Leaders, Deans of Faculties, Lecturers and other experts who contributed to design the present proposal.

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Introduction: the “cultural” perspective

The Curriculum proposal that we present here collects the results of two years of work of the CSB Project - **CSB – Cultural Studies in Business - Erasmus+ KA203 Strategic Partnership in the field of Higher Education - Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices**, with the aim of breaking down a consolidated paradigm in the economic sciences, oriented to a quantitative approach that excludes cultural studies from academic curricula.

Nowadays the economical processes in the world cannot be analysed without taking into consideration their relationship with politics, philosophy, religion, science and even art. In other words, the economical concepts must be reframed in relation with other theoretical positions that tend to produce a specific way of the ordering of the world. Economic science must be mediated by the humanities and by cultural studies.

On the theoretical level, one of the fundamental steps in the process that led to the formulation of this Curriculum was the identification of the "cultural perspective" that interests and distinguishes the project itself. From this point of view, a first methodological clarification should be made, which is indispensable for understanding the project's aims. In the realization of the different phases, a broad meaning of the notion of "culture" and "cultural studies" has been adopted, which goes beyond the circumscribed dimension, represented by the School of "Cultural Studies", also known as the School of Birmingham. It was therefore decided to adopt a multidisciplinary notion of "culture", which would allow for experimentation and disciplinary contamination and would be better able to adapt to the objectives of the project.

In the same way, we moved towards the identification of a notion of "business" that would allow reference to the general field of economic studies, business organisation, marketing and management. In fact, given the variety of the partnership, it was decided not to limit training interventions to a single area.

Already during the first "Training/Learning Week" held in Rome from 25 to 29 March 2019, participants were able to discuss the plurality of the concepts of "culture" that the social sciences and humanities put at the basis of the different possible disciplinary and interdisciplinary

perspectives, and therefore at the basis of the different research and teaching experiences in progress.

As example here following it's exposed a scheme:

A) Multidisciplinary. The Challenge of an Interdisciplinary Approach in Cultural Studies

Notions and Rationales	Core Disciplines	Fields and applications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local culture and Traditions Way of doing and Customs Differences and Diversity Majority and Minorities Languages 	Anthropology History Sociology Demography Languages	Cultural Heritage Ethnology Ethnography Fields research Empirical research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ideologies Common sense/Specialist's Public culture/ Mass media Public culture/ Educational Systems Knowledge's/Disciplinary 	Philosophy Anthropology Sociology Political science Communication	Globalization Social change Development ITC and Communication Education and Training
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutional cultures Organization's Professional's and skills 	Sociology Anthropology Psychology Communication	Social change and Development Languages and Communication Intercultural relations Education and Training
n. 13	n. 9	n. 12

Teaching economics in a "cultural perspective" means, first of all, to conceive a balanced educational offer in interdisciplinary terms and integrated with respect to the ability to offer a valid orientation in the contemporary scenario of studies and research.

One of the crucial aspects that emerged from the International Survey and in-depth analysis was the evidence of a weak interdisciplinary balance in the current HEI offer.

In short, in our academies we teach economics from a cultural perspective, but through curricula in which the core disciplines of culture are limited to a maximum of one or two subjects per year of study, often optional and with a number of final credits significantly lower than other courses.

Also in terms of human resources involved in teaching, it is often the classic or highly specialised (or mono-sectorial) and therefore less interdisciplinary training paths that lead the teachers involved in teaching contemporary economics in the classroom, although expectations are completely open and positive about the importance of the interdisciplinary approach.

The International Survey

The Curriculum proposal collects the results of the "International Survey" carried on to edit the ***"In-depth analysis of the status quo of Economic Studies in Europe"***, the Intellectual Output n° 1 of our project published on our website <https://www.culturalstudiesinbusiness.org/> .

This first stage has been preliminary to verify the state of the art of the university training offer in economic disciplines and to highlight any training needs not present in the current proposals both at private and public level.

The work carried out and tested by the seven partners aims to offer a realistic and innovative proposal to enhance the role of economics in social sciences with a strong interdisciplinary vocation.

The "In-depth analysis of the status quo of Economic studies in Europe" (I.O1) has been divided into the following steps:

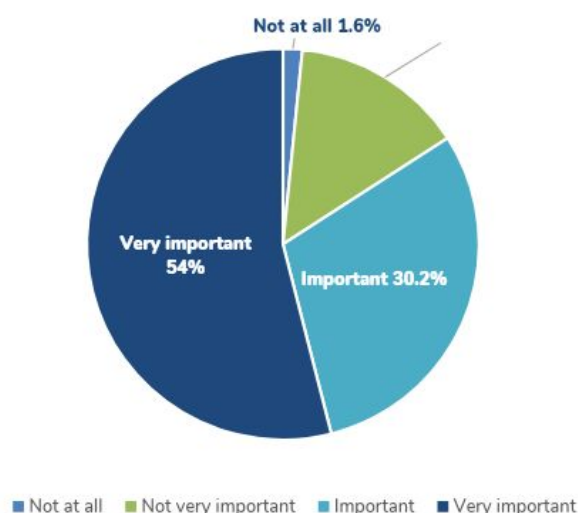
- **National Reports** on the state of the art of economic disciplines in the University systems of the six countries where partners are based (**Italy, Lithuania, Croatia, Portugal, The Republic of North Macedonia, Albania**).

- **International Survey**, conducted through an online questionnaire submitted to an **International Expert Panel (IEP)**, composed of experts from the Erasmus Program Countries (28), the Non-EU Program Countries (5), and the Partner Countries (limited to the area of the Western Balkans, involved in the project). The **IEP** was built by taking into account the experts’ features: their research activity, publications and the role in the economic field which enhances their position as experts for the case of the CSB survey, and almost all of them come from Universities, such as a part of them from the Think Tank satellite and the job world. **The IEP - composed by 275 personalities - is the result of a shared path with the partners, who gave their specific expertise as an important integral part of the project.**

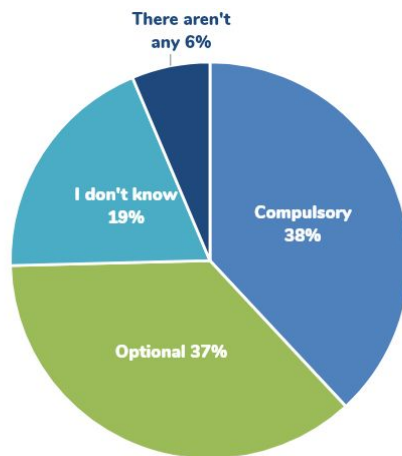
The panel of International Experts has been increased all along the project as part of another tool used to empower the mainstreaming called “Stakeholders map”.

Here we report some of the main findings:

A) - How much importance do you attach to interdisciplinary modules in economic/business courses?

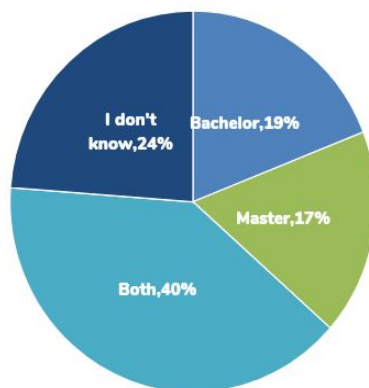


B) - Does your University provide courses in economics/business containing modules that refer to cultural studies (e.g. historical, sociological, anthropological, political etc.)?



■ Compulsory ■ Optional ■ I don't know ■ There aren't any

C) - In which curricula are included the modules/teachings concerning the cultural studies?



■ Bachelor ■ Master ■ Both ■ I don't know

The questionnaire proposed to the IEP previewed an open question on Economic/Business Teaching Activities in their country.

Here are the most significant answers:

“It is too theoretical and too focused on current market problems - without forecasting and teaching communication skills” (Poland).

“Although some universities still offer pluralistic curricula, the teaching of economics is slowly moving towards homogeneity and mainstream theories” (Italy).

“The increasing focus on HE in the UK is towards employability. This follows a raft of HEI reforms in recent years to inject market principles into HEI provision. Humanities and Arts are increasingly viewed as 'soft' degrees, with degrees in STEM subjects and business viewed as those which increase students' ability to get a job afterwards. In other words, the 'value' of degree programs is now viewed through the prism of post-degree wage. This has led to degradation in standards within business degrees as theoretical and empirically tough degrees are being replaced with modules designed to prepare students for the workplace” (United Kingdom).

“The main problem with economic education in my Country is that the students are not aware that they need to be well prepared not only in mathematics, but also in sociology, psychology or anthropology to better understand the economic human action” (Romania).

“It is in very bad shape since it is dominated by narrow-minded neo-classical professors while their critical opponents are mostly very weak in their formal abilities (Austria)”.

“Proliferation of private schools, mainly in the business area, lowered down the standards and quality of the education. However, there are lead universities (public in our case) that offer accredited quality programs. When it comes to interdisciplinary, business programmes focus mostly on (business) ethics and cross-cultural courses (Bosnia Herzegovina)”.

“There is a lack of understanding of the dynamics between theory and practice, and this is often reflected in poor teaching of the subjects. Furthermore, this hinders the opportunity to include more interdisciplinary topics into courses and teaching (Croatia)”.

The Pilot courses: the design

Moving from the results of the Output1, which gave to the partners a common framework of cooperation, the Coordination Team started a process that led to a pilot curriculum, designed according to the objectives indicated by the **Bologna Process** and in line with the goals of the **European Higher Education Area**.

According to the project design, each partner had to plan, organize and develop a “Short Pilot Course” of 48 hours (minimum 6 ECTS) to be experimented with a number of students (at least 20 students per partner) during 6 months along the University academic year 2019-2020.

Depending on each national university system, the ratio between ECTS and n° of hours can change.

Universities	ECTS/Hours
Sapienza University of Rome (Italy)	6/48 Hours
PVPU Euro College - Kumanovo (The Republic of North Macedonia)	6/48 Hours
VGTV - Vilniaus Gedimino technikos universitetas (Lithuania)	6/40 Hours
Faculty of Economics, Business and Tourism - University of Split (Croatia)	5/40 Hours
UBI - Universidade da Beira Interior (Portugal)	6/48 Hours
University College Wisdom (Albania)	4/45 Hours

In the design of the pilot course, the multidisciplinary nature of the partnership has been a strength in identifying an interdisciplinary training offer, but at the same time it has required a great deal of coordination between different disciplinary traditions and research methodologies.

The teams composed by senior Professors, lecturers and deans involved in project belong to different disciplinary fields:

economics, management, business, tourism, politics, sociology, anthropology and architecture.

According to the project the teams converge in the “CSB International Team of lecturers”. A dedicated page is on the project website.

The consortium of partners is composed in fact by six universities and a civil society organization and they represent a first starting group of pluridisciplinary university missions and vocations.

1. **Sapienza University of Rome (Italy) - Project Coordinator;**
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4. **University of Split, Faculty of Economics, Business and Tourism (Croatia);**
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Two other interesting aspects at the base of this proposed Curriculum are

- a. the geographical dimension: four universities are situated in European Member States and two in candidate members of the EU;
- b. the faculties involved:

- Political Sciences
- Economy, Business and Tourism
- Creative Industries
- Civil Engineering and Architecture
- Business, Finance and Administration

Partners designed finally six different pilot courses respecting the nature of each university, in base of the need for innovation compared to the current offer of pre-existing programmes and the composition of the project team.

Partners had different levels of previous knowledge on “Cultural Studies”; those more experienced trained the less experienced.

The issues that emerged were addressed by the partners during the **Transnational Project Meetings** (Rome, 6-7/12/2018; Kumanovo 10-14/4/2018; Vilnius 18-21/09/2019; Tirana, 17-18/01/2020), real moments of comparison of ideas and experiences to ensure the feasibility of the proposal. During the TPMs the partners defined the project phases and started the discussion on the Outputs and on the needed preparation to design an innovative proposal of a long term Curriculum.

In particular, the comparison on contents was then deepened during the **Training/Learning Weeks** in Rome, 24-30/03/2019 and Covilha, 17-24/11/2019. The one in Split has been canceled due to

Covid-19 pandemic but partners organized several alternative activities ensuring the foreseen exchange of know-how, materials and learning.

In Learning Mobilities in Italy and in Portugal it was possible to test the disciplinary areas that most corresponded to the final objectives of the project. During these weeks the partners shared frontal lessons, didactic methodologies, theoretical approaches, with the contribution of external guests and students. Through the partners' contributions, we proceeded to select the emerging topics that, after careful experimentation, could be included in the present curriculum proposal.

At this stage, it was decided not to limit ideas (and imagination), leaving ample space for "creative" proposals; as you will see, the options were subsequently reduced following the pilot courses experimentation.



The introduction of the pilot courses in the training offer followed the formal procedure foreseen by the individual Universities for the approval of a new teaching.

In two cases the iter was different

- La Sapienza University, as the process would have taken more time than the duration of the project, planned three editions of the Pilot Course assigning 3 ECT to a bigger number of students, experimenting, furthermore, slight different models and opening lessons to new external experts;
- UBI assigned to a team of lecturers belonging to the Faculty of Engineering, in specific to the Department of Civil Engineering and Architecture. They decided to develop a different proposal to innovate the course of drawing in the teaching of architecture.

A shared scheme has been followed in the design of the Pilot Courses:

- **Fundamental Disciplines**
 - Economics Disciplines
 - Socio-Anthropological Disciplines
- **Characterizing Disciplines.** The different settings of the individual degree courses made it necessary to allocate a certain number of ECTS to the characterizing activities, in order to meet the specific needs of the project partner universities. This aspect has become a strong point, because it has allowed a greater experimentation of the training offer.

The Pilot courses: the implementation

This phase has been the most dynamic and vibrant.

The pilot courses were held in the first and second half of the 2019/2020 academic year. A total of 212 students attended the courses, divided as follows for the individual locations:

Universities	Enrolled students
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Sapienza University of Rome (Italy)	39+29+33=101
PVPU Euro College - Kumanovo (The Republic of North Macedonia)	15
VGTU - Vilniaus Gedimino technikos universitetas (Lithuania)	28
Faculty of Economics, Business and Tourism - University of Split (Croatia)	20
UBI - Universidade da Beira Interior (Portugal)	30
University College Wisdom (Albania)	25
Total	204

In the second half of the year, due to the health emergency linked to the coronavirus pandemic, it became necessary to reorganise the conduct of the Pilot Courses in online mode on GoogleMeet and Zoom platforms.

To be underlined that the forced change of perspectives brought necessarily the whole university structures to adapt, lecturers and students to develop in parallel stronger communication and digital skills. From the other side, colleagues from different Countries could interact more and even invite each other to give lectures in their classes.

The use of alternative teaching methods (flipped classroom, digital communication, student project work presentation) was also increased, allowing for greater experimentation compared to the initial proposals.

The CSB “Enriched” Curriculum

At the end of the six experiments, a comparative analysis of the individual experiences (pilot, monitoring, evaluations) was carried out, highlighting the points of contact and the divergences linked to the specificities of the individual faculties.

Why “enriched”? The present proposal can be an “empowerment” of an already existing master degree curriculum in order to introduce innovation and a stronger Cultural Studies impact or it can be integrated as a full scheme in order to develop a new curriculum in those universities, where it does not exist as a course or as a study program.

This proposal represents the highest level of innovation for an Erasmus Strategic Partnership.

Partners are aware that in a two-year project it is unfeasible to develop, experiment and implement a curriculum from zero. The estimated period time should be between five and seven years.

The proposed structure

In the **economic disciplines** area, the most recurrent lessons are the following:

- a. History of Economic Thought 5
 - b. Global Political Economy 5
 - c. Business Models 4
 - d. Heterodox/Alternative Economics 4
2. In the area of Socio-anthropological disciplines the following teachings are provided:
- a. Economic Sociology 5
 - b. Anthropology (cultural/economic) 6
 - c. Sociology of consumption 6
 - d. Ethics and social responsibility

In the area of **Characterizing Disciplines** the individual universities/faculties have chosen to differentiate the teaching, **with different thematic priorities** that take into account the specificities of their locations.

1. The Sapienza University gave priority to themes such as *Sustainable Development, Peace Economics and Sociology of Economics*
2. The Euro College Kumanovo focused on the *fundamentals of Cultural Studies* giving a different key to the school in Birmingham, stressing the importance of *Cross-Cultural Communication* and the *impact of Culture* in developing business

3. The University of Split. Faculty of Economics, Business and Tourism privileged the topics of *Sustainable Business, Social Responsibility, Ethics and Cross Cultural Communication*
4. The Vilnius Gediminas Technical University (VGTU) of Vilnius fostered the topic of *Creativity and Creative Industries*
5. The Wisdom University College strengthen the topics of *Global Economy and Human Capital*
6. The University of Beira Interior empowered the connection between technical drawing in architecture and *Management in real estate and Business of Culture Heritage*.

Experimentation activated with Partner Pilot Courses: guidelines

General Objective: Promoting internationalisation, recognition and mobility, supporting changes and upgrade of university curricula towards more “Europeanization” and “Globalization” in line with Bologna principles and goals of the European European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

CSB Curriculum is based on three dimensions:

1. Multi-, trans- and interdisciplinary approach dimension;
2. The meeting dimension of Economics, Business with Social Sciences and Humanities disciplines;
3. Multilingualism (English language improvement and international communication), digitalization, empowerment of transversal skills in researching methods for innovative contemporary lessons

Teachers: 70% of teachers come from project partnership; 30% may be composed of experts involved in project activities (opinion leaders, CSOs guests, external colleagues); covering a good balance between Economic, Social and Humanities sectors.

Teaching Methods:

1. sharing of a database of materials (ppt, articles, researches reports, media materials etc....);
2. integrating formal and non-formal education.

Number of Students: at least 20 students per partner, during 6 months along the university year 2019-2020.

Monitoring and Evaluation Tools:

1. Questionnaire and certificate of attendance;
2. Mid-term and final test;
3. Project work of students and work in small groups.

Strengths and weaknesses: the Swot Analysis

Through the method of the SWOT analysis, the following commentary has been elaborated, including both, the starting hypotheses and the outcomes of the activities of Output n. 2 “CSB, Curriculum Proposal”:

Strengths. The strengths of the Curriculum reside:

- in the balancing of the university training offer among the disciplinary macro-areas, and therefore in the balancing of the training credits that can be provided in all the tested disciplinary sub-areas, including those that are specific or characterizing;
- in the overall articulation of the teaching staff. The exchange of experiences and the distribution of ECTS, allows a didactic cooperation between the teaching staff, respecting the different areas of training and academic experience.

Opportunities

- The use of innovative teaching methods both from the technological point of view and in the experimentation of cooperative learning models (from the teaching staff to the classroom as a whole).
- The flexibility of the programmed paths, which has allowed the activities to be carried out even in circumstances stressed by force majeure (COVID Edition). Maintaining the right balance between optional and compulsory offers.

Weaknesses

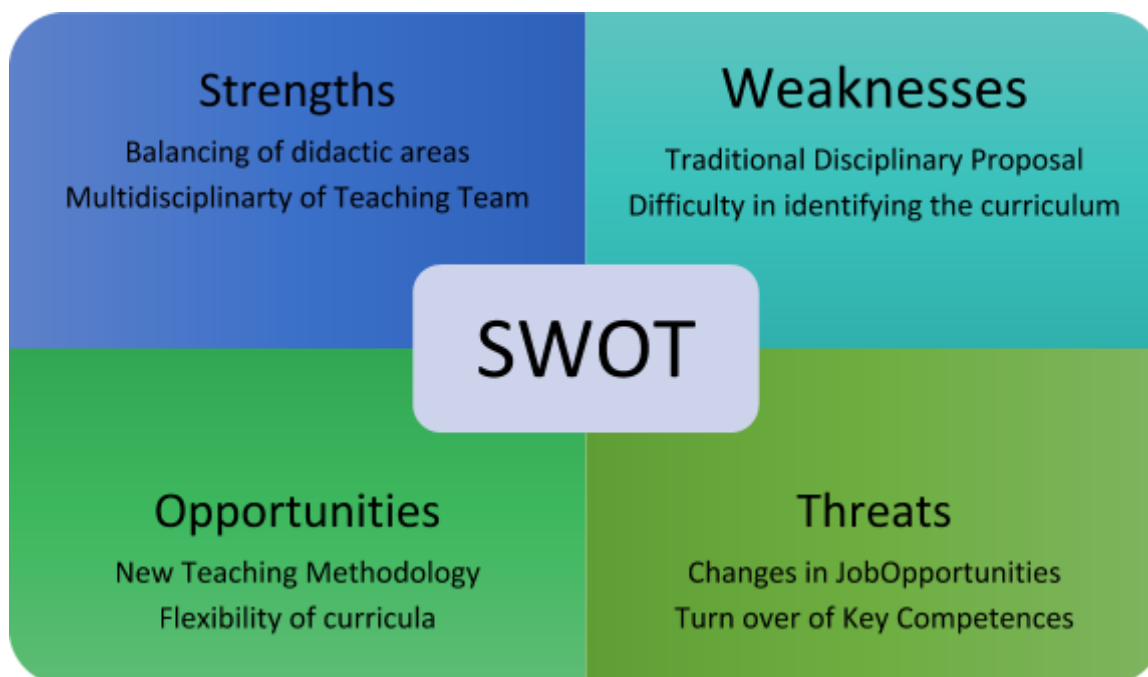
- The traditional division of the academic offer between Economic Policy Studies and Entrepreneurship and Trade Studies. For the specificity of the project also the

fragmentation of the cultural perspective between traditions of study and application even very distant from each other is a further obstacle. In particular the difference between the European tradition of Cultural Studies and the American one is particularly accentuated.

- All this means that the Curriculum is not immediately recognisable as a course of economic studies. On the merits, the reception of the proposal may suffer above all from the excessive rigidity of the reference schemes of the academies and ministerial authorities.

Threats

- In the acceleration of changes in the world of work and therefore in the evanescence of reasoning in terms of employment and job-opportunity.
- The weak consistency of the Key competences offered. The problem can be assessed in a different way, if considered from the point of view of insiders or stakeholders.
- Furthermore, Key Competences, as defined by the last Council Recommendation for Lifelong Learning (22/05/2018) imply very complex learning processes between formal, non formal and informal dimensions of learning; all European educators know, how much time is needed to build a solid competence-structure inside a single student.



The Partnership

1. Sapienza University of Rome (Italy)

- Description of institutional decision making to introduce the pilot course

In the Italian Academic Institution a new teaching activity needs to be approved by the Council of Department under proposal by the Council of the Master Degree involved in the activity. So we submitted the request to both the Institutions that approved the proposal in september 2019. According to the Italian Ministry of Education, it is not possible to foresee a new didactic activity on an experimental basis only for one year; each new activity should be guaranteed for at least two years, with the related regulatory requirements (exams, degree thesis, reference teacher, etc.).

For this reason we opted for the inclusion of the “pilot course” among the “elective activities”, to which we attributed 3 ECTS. So, we needed to repeat the pilot course twice in the academic year 2019/2020.

– Description of Pilot Course

The activities and human resources available for the CSB project are mainly inside the Department of Political Studies and the Department of Economic Studies of Sapienza University of Rome. Students, who can choose to attend the Pilot Course, are all in the traditional fields of Social Sciences and Politics (Economics, Law, Sociology, History and Anthropology). The Pilot course in Sapienza therefore must be able to offer a qualified possibility of theoretical and methodological study and a further possibility of innovative orientation towards the professional fields that the current courses already offered.

– Institutional Feedback (do you think to introduce the pilot course, to create a new degree/master degree)

As above mentioned, the introduction of a new curriculum is a long project that involves the whole academic staff and the Ministry. So we confirmed the introduction of the “pilot course” among the “elective activities” even for the academic year 2020/2021. Students’ feedback was good; they underlined that through the course they had the opportunity to learn about new approaches, literature and actual authors, not comprehended in the Master’s Degree they were attending, considered “old fashion”.

– SWOT Analysis of the pilot course

Strengths:

- The interdisciplinary approach in an academic context characterised by a prevalence of *mainstream* discipline.
- The opportunity to introduce in the teaching activities innovative methodology (flipped classroom, media education, student project work presentation)

Weakness

- The difficulty of positioning the course within the disciplinary schemes of the Italian university. This is a transversal offer that can be successful, but also risks being hardly recognizable.
- Teachers' inexperience in the field of cultural studies and their reluctance to join a transdisciplinary approach.

Opportunities

- The opportunity to introduce innovative teaching methods both from the technological point of view and in the experimentation of cooperative learning models among the teaching staff and students too.
- To open the way to new theoretical perspectives both in economic disciplines and in social too.

Threats

- The acceleration of changes in the work market and therefore in the evanescence of reasoning in terms of employment and job-opportunity.
- Competition from more traditional courses in study programmes, considered more capable of responding to the needs of the labor market.

2. PVPU Euro College - Kumanovo (The Republic of North Macedonia)

- Description of institutional decision making to introduce the pilot course

In today's dynamic society Higher Education Institutions must create, and use knowledge to improve the well-being of their students. Because we live in a time with increasing global competition, we certainly think that the future for students' career, is to have knowledge of more skills and become competitive on the market. For that reason, we decided to make an institutional decision and introduce the pilot course to our students. Our Academic council made a decision to have a call inside the Euro College for the students that want to attend lessons of Cultural studies in Business in the framework of the pilot course. For the students that decided to become part of the pilot course, we deliver certificates with credit value.

– Description of Pilot Course

The Pilot Course was designed with the basic idea in mind: to use the multidisciplinary approach that defines the Cultural Studies school of thought. More precisely, in the attempt to define business and economy from a completely novel perspective the course is supposed to fully embrace a liberal approach regardless of the fact that the individual modules and subject matters are part of different academic departments. To do so we had to employ the experiences taken from the disciplines of philosophy, anthropology, psychology, sociology and positive sciences among others. This seemed like an impossible task bearing in mind that Euro College faculty consists of lecturers excelling at the area of economics and law. The crucial difference that helped in the design of the curricula was the fact that Dr. Petrusovski Ljubisa has been lecturing Cultural Studies courses and seminars for the last 30 years, mostly in the informal way and only lately as part of the licensed BA and MBA Euro College courses. This summarizes the methodology used for the creation of the curricula. A combination of informal investigation presented only to devotees (artists and media workers in particular) that participated in the Cultural Studies courses throughout the last few decades paved the way for the very formal lecturing to the registered business degree students that faced the content that could at best be termed not quite suitable for a more orthodox business curricula. The experiences extracted from both groups has modelled the approach taken in the very construction of the modular structure and it emitted positive signals towards being even more radical as we believe our curricula clearly reflects. The subsequent meetings between the partners in the CSB project only proved our original intention right. More and more we became aware of the importance of the introduction of this tailor made curricula as a necessity and not an option for the European academics that still want to retain the minimal level of decency and dedication to their profession and research activities instead of slaving to their vested professional and ideological interests. This is the core of our honest approach to present to the students the reality of the modern economic world run by the inhuman forces of the capital that is destituting the life and the creative potential of man. The way out is to return to the roots and redesign the economy back to its original use: to serve humanity in the attainment of the good life.

– Institutional Feedback (do you think to introduce the pilot course, to create a new degree/master degree)

After finishing the pilot course, we received very good students' feedback from the lessons attended so the Academic meetings decided to create a new master program Cultural Studies in business. The study program will be extended into two academic years and the students will obtain 120 ECTS. Currently the team of lectures and managers are preparing the required documentation to be submitted to the Board of Accreditation, so that the Master Course in "Cultural Studies in Business" is nationally accredited, once this project finishes. This program is unique in the Republic of North Macedonia and there is a big interest of students interested in the field of economics and business studies. Results of the experimentation have been presented during the three Multiplier Events with important institutional feedback.

– SWOT Analysis of the pilot course

Strengths

- New view of the economy for the students as well as for the lecturers with multidisciplinary approach. The students realize that the economy is not just numbers and if they want to be successful, they must have knowledge from other disciplines like those offered in this curriculum.
- Possibility of students to adopt the necessary skills for their future careers is the other strength of the curriculum because if the students want to be competitive on the labor market they must have more skills to offer to their future employers not just encyclopedia knowledge.
- Multidisciplinary of Teaching teams are very important for the future students because they will be experienced to work in their future positions on the global market more efficiently. Multidisciplinary teaching team can exchange ideas, practices and methods and improve their experience

Opportunity

- One of the biggest opportunities for the students is skills development of the students, because in the global market, all of the employers seek employees that are more skills based and those students can learn different skills that can be put in practice.
- The most important part of having a successful curriculum is international collaboration. International collaboration gives the international dimension to the curriculum and the students can easily transfer to other universities or have their degrees recognized. In

addition, the international collaboration is important for teaching staff and exchange of their knowledge and their skills and method of teaching.

Weaknesses

- As one of the weaknesses identified is the lack of governmental funding. In the Republic of North Macedonia, there is a weak support for private higher institutions. The only funding is the European funding's.
- The second weakness identified is students' difficulty in thinking in English. For that reason, all the students have support with additional lessons of academic English language.

Threats

- The risk identified is the rate of unemployment. The Republic of North Macedonia is still fighting with the big rate of unemployment, and for that reason, this is identified as risk. However, with the skills acquired from this program of study we believe that the students will have a better chance to find an appropriate job for them.
- The next risk identified is the bureaucratic time for accreditation of programs. The Republic of North Macedonia is still in the process of reform in education and for that reason, we still have big problems with bureaucratic time for accreditation of programs.

3. VGTU - Vilniaus Gedimino technikos universitetas (Lithuania)

- Description of institutional decision making to introduce the pilot course

In the Faculty of Creative Industries, the pilot course has been introduced according to the order of dean assoc. prof. dr. Živilė Sederevičiūtė-Pačiauskienė. The pilot course has been integrated into other courses for the students of the study program "Entertainment Industries".

Contemporary universities not only have to give students education in their chosen fields of studies but as well enable them to be a responsible part of society, to help them critically evaluate various issues in the rapidly changing contemporary world, enable them to indicate and solve various problems in their life and professional development. The pilot course "Cultural Studies in Business" at Vilnius Gediminas Technical Universities addressed the topics of "Managerial

Communication”, “Creative Society”, “Social Responsibility”, “Everydayness Aesthetics”, “Cultural Studies” and “Leisure Studies”.

- Description of Pilot Course

Pilot course “Cultural Studies in Business” was introduced as a mandatory course for undergraduate (BA) “Entertainment Industries” students by Faculty of Creative Industries (group PINf-17/1, 3rd study year, 28 students).

Course was in total 40 hours, out of which 20 hours were lectures and 20 hours of practical work (seminars).

The program introduced contemporary issues in the field of cultural studies, helping students to evaluate critically various issues in the rapidly changing contemporary world, enabling them in problem solving and in planning their professional development.

The pilot course was bringing together the best experiences of professors in different although related fields. As the general introductory course “Cultural Studies” and other subjects in humanities (such as Ethics, Philosophy, Aesthetics, Creative Writing, Sociology etc.) are taught at university and in most cases are mandatory for freshmen, it was important to create a new course which would bring cultural studies and business together.

The pilot course was taught by four professors from the Faculty of Creative Industries including Prof. dr. Tomas Kačerauskas, assoc. Prof. dr. Jolanta Saldukaitytė, assoc. prof. dr. Živilė Sederevičiūtė-Pačiauskienė and assoc. Prof. dr. Viktorija Žilinskaitė-Vytė. All of these lecturers come from the project partnership. Each of them presented their own topics in the field of CSB. Beside this, a guest lecturer assoc. Prof. dr. Edvardas Rimkus was invited for the discussions about the relationship between technologies and culture. He does not come from the project partnership. In general, it is not a common practice for a course to be taught by few professors (although it does occur) but all coordination was smooth and clear.

In addition, the structure of the course was inspired and encouraged not only by close collaboration of local professors from Vilnius Gediminas Technical University (Vilnius Tech), but as well, and especially, by colleagues from partner universities. The critical approach to Cultural Studies in general was brought up by Euro College Kumanovo (North Macedonia) and La Sapienza University (Italy) while issues in business and economics were constantly raised by colleagues from Wisdom University (Albania) and University of Split (Croatia). In addition, professors from UBI University (Portugal) discussed many questions put in the context of contemporary art, culture and architecture.

Overall, the different experience, different approaches to the same questions, intense discussions during the multiplier events consistently led towards the concept of the course introduced in spring semester 2020/2021 at Vilnius Tech.

The course itself was very rich and broad. That was a big challenge for students as well. They had not only to get familiar with the material and topics presented by different professors but to see the different, complimentary as well as conflicting interpretations and approaches as well. Students were encouraged to form their own views and their own opinions. In this course, the enrolled students are from the study programme “Entertainment Industries” in Faculty of Creative Industries (group PINf-17/1, IIIrd course, 28 students). In the beginning, the meetings with students have been physical from 03.02.2020 to 27.02.2020. Later from 28.02.2020 to 29.06.2020 all classes had to move online (Zoom platform) because of the Covid-19. The course was mandatory, in total it had 40 hours, out of which 20 hours was lectures and 20 hours of practical work (seminars).

During the semester students performed their presentations. Course ended with the final exam, which included questions from each topic. At the end of the course, students were awarded with certificates and 6 ECTS.

- **Institutional Feedback (do you think to introduce the pilot course, to create a new degree/master degree)**

Overall, it was a positive experience for both professors and students. It is possible that the course will continue and might be introduced for other students as well. At this moment there is no plan to change the structure of the course but if necessary, it can be made longer or/and offered not only for the Bachelor students but also for Master’s level students.

- **SWOT Analysis of the pilot course**

Strengths

- Interdisciplinary approach (management, philosophy, sociology and communication)
- Many experienced lecturers from different scientific field instead of one lecturer
- Experienced teachers in the various fields
- Faculty’s strong international orientation and mobility;
- Relevant and diverse topics for students of entertainment industries.

Weaknesses

- Relatively low number of enrolled students (compared with not enrolled students of 1st and 2nd study year)
- The uncertainty during the exams because of many lecturers
- The elements of eclectics in the program of course

Opportunities

- Possibility of promoting CSB course at university level
- Increased interest of the students in the cultural courses
- Further internationalization of the Faculty using the Erasmus+ agreements
- Further collaboration with the partners

Threats

- Not enough interest of the students
- Problems related with Covid-19

4. Faculty of Economics, Business and Tourism - University of Split (Croatia)

- Description of institutional decision making to introduce the pilot course

According to University-level regulations, introducing new courses is considered as a minor modification to existing study programs. Minor modifications to the existing study program refer to content changes of the program up to 20% which do not change the essential study program, intended learning outcomes and their qualifications (professional profile); or items in the total amount of 80% of the ECTS credits of the entire program may not be changed in relation to the number of ECTS credits and the learning outcomes.

The decision on minor modifications and additions to the study program related to content changes of the program up to 20% of the approved content of the program from the moment of obtaining the allowance is made by the Faculty council. This decision is then submitted to the

University Commission. Decisions relating to minor modifications to the study program for the 1st year of study must be issued and published prior to the enrolment.

- Description of Pilot Course

Cultural Studies in Business was introduced as an elective course to graduate students of three master study programmes: Economics, Business and Tourism. Also the course was offered to incoming Erasmus students. The main objective of the course has been to introduce students to concepts of cultural studies as an alternative way of analysing and evaluating economic and business processes in contemporary society. In addition to the main objective, the course also had specific objectives:

- 1. Using an interdisciplinary approach (through the prism of other social and human sciences) in analysing economic and business phenomena*
- 2. Development of a cross-cultural mind-set among students*
- 3. Using new methodologies of teaching*

Course offered a unique blend of mixed disciplines which were not addressed in any previous course in the study programme. Students had a chance to attain learning outcomes from various topics: heterodox economic theories, behavioral and cognitive economics, sharing economy, formal and informal institutions, cultural analysis, socio-cultural identities in the marketplace, sociology of consumption, business ethics, social responsibility and sustainable business models.

- Institutional Feedback (do you think to introduce the pilot course, to create a new degree/master degree)

As of October 2019, Faculty of Economics, Business and Tourism (FEBT) holds a prestigious EPAS accreditation awarded by EFMD. Also, the FEBT is the first institution from the Republic of Croatia which systematically and periodically reports on its social responsibility activities through Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME), a Global Compact (UN) initiative. Both EPAS accreditation and PRME envision that HEIs that deliver study programmes in business should also focus on developing horizontal skills among students such as cross-cultural mindset, social responsibility, ethics and sustainability. CSB course helped us a lot in emphasizing these horizontal skills within our study programmes. By being cross-cultural in its nature, CSB was designed to equip students with social capital to manage their way in cross-cultural environments. This is seen

as an innovation in the study programme. According to student feedback surveys, both Croatian and international students were highly satisfied with the course, learning outcomes and the interactions in the course. However, we were also attentive on students' feedback on critical aspects that need to be improved. Therefore, we engaged in the curriculum redesign by offering new topics such as: cultural finance and cultural economics. In the academic year 2020/2021, the course will again be offered as elective to both domestic and incoming foreign graduate students. In the near future we hope that the CSB course will be a starting point of introducing new courses such as *Sustainable business models, Corporate social responsibility and Business ethics*.

– SWOT Analysis of the pilot course

Strengths

- Experienced teachers in the various fields of business and economics
- Faculty's vision, mission and core values are focused on curriculum innovation, alignment with business practice and horizontal skills
- Faculty's strong international orientation (highest proportion of incoming Erasmus + students at University of Split)
- Topics that address core business concepts through cultural studies ideology

Weaknesses

- Teachers are inexperienced in the narrow field of cultural studies
- The course is still elective
- Relatively low number of enrolled students (compared to other elective courses)

Opportunities

- Further internationalization of the Faculty through accreditations, MoU's, Erasmus+ agreements, international projects
- Increased interest of business and economics students for non-business skills such as: social responsibility, ethics, service learning
- Possibility of promoting CSB course through PRME network

Threats

- Decreased interest among students for studying business and economics

- Ongoing Covid-19 pandemic
- Competition from other elective courses in study programmes (students are still dominantly interested in core business/economics subjects)

5. UBI - Universidade da Beira Interior (Portugal)

- Description of institutional decision making to introduce the pilot course

The implementation of a Cultural Studies in Business course within the Architecture course may be based in two different alternatives. On the one hand, the creation of an optional curricular unit is foreseen, at the level of the 5th year of the Architecture Course, since it is a course with an Integrated Master.

This curricular unit may be proposed within a period of two years, since the course is currently undergoing a certification process and it will not be possible to include this curricular unit at this time.

For this reason, on the other hand, it has been decided to include the curricular premises of Cultural Studies in Business, within two existing curricular units. More specifically, drawing and urban design.

- Description of Pilot Course

In addition, and in order to complement the knowledge, workshops, lectures and international conferences were organized, where professors from other universities and professors belonging to the ERASMUS + Cultural Studies in Business project were invited, in order to further consolidate the several points of view and curricular subjects.

The themes related to Economic Management, namely architecture and architectural projects, in the life of the future architects, was and is a theme that aroused the interest of both students and some professors from the University of Beira Interior, who ended up by integrating these themes in some exercises of their subjects.

The work, carried out by the students, besides being presented in English language, was also the object of articles, in which themes related to the promotion of architecture and the business of architecture, led the students to understand the meaning of being managers of an office of architecture and at the same time being managers of the urban patrimony constructed.

These issues were and are constantly analysed and discussed within the curriculum units.

- Institutional Feedback (do you think to introduce the pilot course, to create a new degree/master degree)

It is our conviction to propose an optional curricular unit, within the course of architecture, where the themes highlighted with Cultural Studies in Business - pilot course, will be part of the curriculum of this new discipline, which will complement the course of architecture, linking it to real life and to the architect as a businessman.

- SWOT Analysis of the pilot course

Strengths

- It is innovative to include a discipline or know-how on Cultural Studies in Business in the architecture curriculum;
- It promotes students' self-confidence in coming to know how to manage their future offices and to know how to manage architectural projects.

Weaknesses

- Some teachers have not been satisfied with changing the way they teach;
- Some architecture teachers do not consider it important to include management and business issues within the architecture course, as these teachers are usually only theoreticians and never had professional practical experience in architecture.

Opportunities

- Architecture students will have the possibility to see architecture as a real form of business, and not just as something abstract based solely on concepts of creating architectural atmospheres;
- Future architects will have the opportunity to manage their professional lives in the field of architecture, based on the concepts of Cultural Studies in Business;

- It is an opportunity for the architecture course of the University of Beira Interior, to increase its formative offer, achieving a larger scope and attracting more students. Distinguishing it from other national courses.

Threats

- Finding teachers with know-how in architecture and management and business in order to achieve the objectives of the new discipline;
- Bureaucratic time for accreditation of a new optional subject.

6. University College Wisdom (Albania)

- Description of institutional decision making to introduce the pilot course

The whole procedure for the implementation of the pilot course “Cultural Studies in Business” is based upon the following steps.

Firstly, a requirement of the KA2 “Cultural Studies in Business” project was the offering of a pilot course for the students. The Team Leader, Lediana Beshaj proposed an elective course entitled “Cultural Studies in Business” to the Economics Department. Secondly, the department held a meeting and decided to propose it to the Board of Deans after compiling a draft proposal. Thirdly, the Board of Deans took a decision to approve the proposal and delivered it to the senate. Fourthly, the senate took a final decision on the 24.05.2019, pursuant to the Albanian Education Law and the article provided therein, as well as pursuant to the Statute of the University College Wisdom, article 23, point 5 and article 24, point 3, letter “k”, and also based on the Economics Department decision, prot no. 249, dated on 22.05.2019, sent the decision and the syllabus of this pilot course together with the curricula of the study program to the Ministry of Education and Sports, at the department of Curricula to be approved.

The Ministry of Education and Sports by letter no. 5787/1, dated on 12.06.2019, it approved the request for the execution of the Senate's decision, which was to offer an elective course entitled “Cultural Studies in Business”, which would be held in the second term/semester of the academic year 2019-2020. The pilot course started and it is part of the curricula of the Economic department. It will be forever offered as an elective course for the 2nd year students of the Business Management of the Bachelor level.

- Description of Pilot Course

The pilot course at University College Wisdom started in March 2020, respectively the second semester. It is now part of the curriculum as an elective course for the Business Management study program, even though it started as a pilot course. The course will be developed the second semester and will have 45 classes, of which 30 will be lectures and 15 seminars. The course will have 4 credits and it will be offered to the 2nd year students of bachelor attending the Business Management study program. This division of credits, lectures and seminars is based on the law, the regulation of the UCW and the study program plan. The lectures will be held by three different professors in order to match their expertise with the curriculum topics.

- Institutional Feedback (do you think to introduce the pilot course, to create a new degree/master degree)

It is one of the priorities of the University College Wisdom to bring the latest and the best novelties in the study program curriculum, taking into account the needs of the society and the market demands. It is also crucial to present and make changes in the curricula to ensure and enhance the students’ knowledge and capacities, but as well update the curriculum. Therefore, the whole staff is involved in finding extraordinary beneficial projects, which have to do with curricula and capacity building. Cultural Studies in Business is a perfect example of the project that the developing countries such as Albania need in order to learn from the European countries such as Italy. Thus, the University College Wisdom appreciates very much the fact that it is a partner in this endeavor because it will benefit from the knowledge of the knowledgeable and highly qualified professors from the 5 other universities being involved like: La Sapienza University in Italy, Euro College from North Macedonia, VGTU Vilnius in Lithuania, University of Split in Croatia, UBI university in Portugal.

Wisdom University College would like to offer a Master of Science study program titled 'Cultural Studies in Business', but it is an enormous engagement not because of the human resources, but because of the bureaucracies and the fees it has to cover. We would suggest a joint program with another university, which is part of the project.

– SWOT Analysis of the pilot course

Strengths

- It is a course, which is not offered by most of the other universities in Albania, so University College Wisdom is proud to have such a course;
- The topics it incorporates are suggested by prominent professors of various foreign universities involved in this project;
- It fulfilled one of the priorities of the Strategic Development Plan of the UCW 2018-2023 to enrich the curricula;

Weaknesses

- Professors hesitate to teach as they do not consider themselves experts in every topic included;
- The course is elective and it provides the students with 4 credits which is low compared with the mandatory courses;

Opportunities

- The course will continue to be part of the curricula of the Bachelor study program in Business Management, even after the project ends;
- The course might be offered as a mandatory in the next coming academic years;
- The course is promoted and other Albanian Universities might include it in their curricula;
- The course attracts students from the other study programs of the economic department and they can be encouraged to join;

Threats

- Students may not choose the course as it provides them with 4 ETCS because it is an elective course;

- It may not become a mandatory course with more credits and more hours of lectures or seminars due to the bureaucracies regarding the convert of an elective course to a mandatory one.

Curriculum Proposal

Master Degree in CSB - Cultural Studies in Business

2 years – 120 CFU

GENERAL SCHEME

Macro-Area	Area	Disciplines	CFU
Fundamental Disciplines	Economics Disciplines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● History of Economic Thought: critical perspectives (Classic and heterodox perspectives, Rethinking Capitalism) ● Finance and Economics: the global scenarios ● Macro and micro relationship. New perspectives and their critics ● Political Economy and Globalization ● Geo-economics/European Economics ● Circular economy: models and cases 	36

	Socio-Anthropological Disciplines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Anthropology: classical and contemporary approaches • Economic Anthropology: research fields and critical attitude • Sociology of Economics: classical and contemporary approaches • Sociology of consumption • Cultural studies and economic processes • Sociology of European integration: Policy and Culture 	36
Characterizing Disciplines		<i>Curriculum A</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable development • Sustainable business models • Ethics and social responsibility 	18
		<i>Curriculum B</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-cultural marketing • Cross-cultural communication • Creativity and Society (management of creativity and creative industries, urban creativity and social context) 	18
		Case Studies, Laboratory, Seminars	3
		Final dissertation	9
		TOTALE	120

FIRST YEAR SCHEME

Macro-Area	Area	Disciplines	CFU
Fundamental Disciplines	Economics Disciplines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History of Economic Thought: critical perspectives (Classic and heterodox perspectives, Rethinking Capitalism) • Finance and Economics: the global scenarios 	18

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Macro and micro relationship. New perspectives and their critics 	
	Socio-Anthropological Disciplines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Anthropology: classical and contemporary approaches Economic Anthropology: research fields and critical attitude Sociology of Economics: classical and contemporary approaches 	18
Characterizing Disciplines		<i>Curriculum A- I</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable development Sustainable business models Ethics and social responsibility 	9
		<i>Curriculum B - I</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross-cultural marketing Cross-cultural communication Creativity and Society (management of creativity and creative industries, urban creativity and social context) 	9
		TOTALE	54
SECOND YEAR SCHEME			
Macro-Area	Area	Disciplines	CFU
Fundamental Disciplines	Economics Disciplines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political Economy and Globalization Geo-economics/European Economics Circular economy: models and cases 	18
	Socio-Anthropological Disciplines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sociology of consumption Cultural studies and economic processes Sociology of European integration: Policy and Culture 	18

Characterizing Disciplines	<i>Curriculum A - II</i> 1. Sustainable development 2. Sustainable business models 3. Ethics and social responsibility	9
	<i>Curriculum B-II</i> 4. Cross-cultural marketing 5. Cross-cultural communication 6. Creativity and Society (management of creativity and creative industries, urban creativity and social context)	9
	Case Studies, Laboratory, Seminars	3
	Final dissertation	9
	TOTALE	120

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