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**Thematic Webinar in PROFFORMANCE+
on**

**Internationalisation in Higher Education: Empowering Innovative
teaching and learning practices across borders**

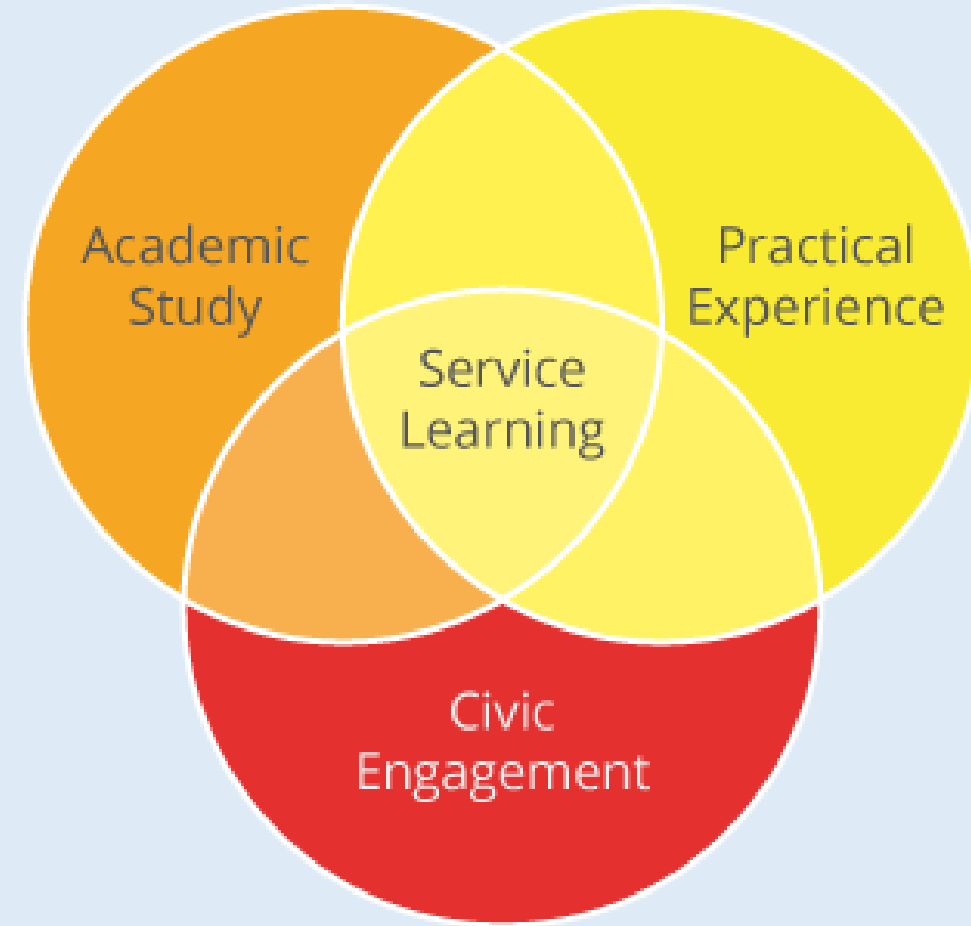
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Service-learning in EFL teachers' education

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What is Service-learning (SL)?

Service-learning is an academic tool that combines formal course-based instruction with the corresponding service activity in the community, addressing real-life community needs. Students gain further understanding of the course content and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility, through direct application of what they study in appropriate social contexts.



What did we do in this project?

- We were invited by UNICEF Serbia and NGO Indigo to join their project *Supporting the education of refugee and migrants' children in Serbia – E-learning response to COVID-19 crisis (2020-2022)*
- We designed an innovative cross-curriculum collaboration and joint implementation of SL in several elective ECTS-based courses (related to methodology of teaching, psychology and pedagogy) in the 4th year at the English Department. The voluntary SL (same for all courses, teaching English online to migrant children in refugee camps) enabled students to cover pre-exam and exam obligations through SL tasks. Also, the content covered by the trainings for SL includes the topics from all six courses, so the students gain more knowledge through this cross—curricular integration.



Methodology of project implementation

English department

- 4th year, 6 elective courses
- 3 professors, 2 senior lecturers
- Organized courses to include SL
- Provided initial training for technology, special teaching methodology, cross-cultural and social awareness
- Created syllabi for different EFL courses for migrant children

EFL student-teachers

- Got trained
- Made lesson plans
- Delivered online classes
- Provided initial and final testing of children
- Monitored by professors
- Cooperated with profs., CRM, among themselves
- Wrote weekly reports
- Attended coordination meetings

Migrant/refugee children in refugee camps in Serbia

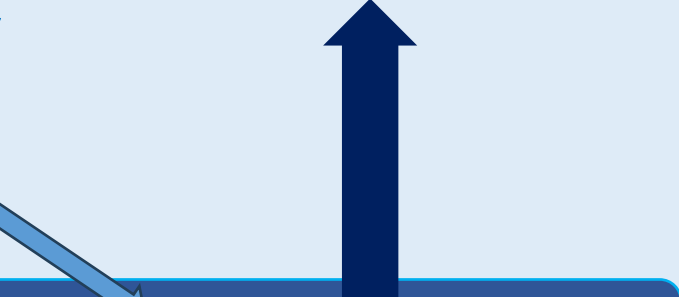
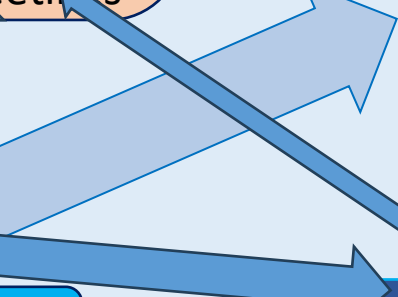
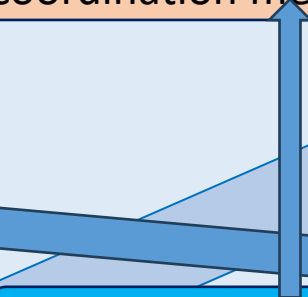
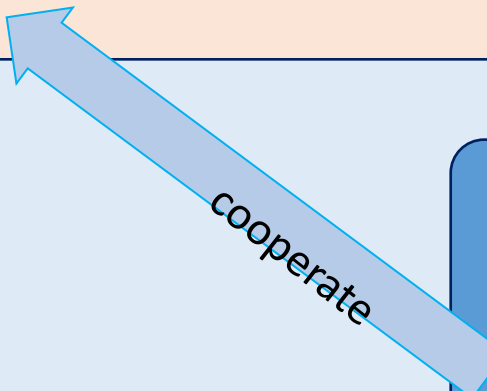
- Aged 6-16
- Mostly from Syria and Afganistan (2020), plus Burundi (2021), and Ukraine and ex-Soviet republics (2022)

UNICEF
NGO Indigo
Finance, organize

Akelius foundation
Greece

Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (CRM)
-provide local logistics, translators, children support

cooperate



How does it relate to the topic of this webinar – internalization?

- Collaboration between academia and a major international organization, to facilitate education and social needs
- Benefits for English Department students involved in an international project:
 - had a short international training (Akelius language platform, Greece)
 - had insight into UNICEF field work
 - the training from local professors included raising multicultural awareness both in this service-learning context and in general. This was reflected in respecting young learners' cultures both in creating teaching materials and class implementation. (Examples: different races represented in pictures, national food, special explanation of seasons and calendar, respect for various religious holidays, etc.)
 - increased their intercultural competences and international perspective of socially-relevant issues

Digression: internationalization at the Faculty of Philosophy, Niš

- Modest internationalization activities
- No joint-degree programs with foreign universities
- Relatively few incoming and outgoing (Erasmus) students and teachers
- No study programmes or courses in English or other foreign language (except at foreign language departments)
- **BUT:** internationalization present as part of the syllabi for several courses at several departments (social studies, psychology, literature, journalism...), and includes content related to multicultural and cross-cultural awareness raising and international communication
- Collaboration with UNICEF and this SL-based project provided a significant practical and international component at difficult times of online teaching during COVID-19 pandemics ('Internalization at home')

Main outcomes

- Improved quality of EFL students' education and increased their competences
 - Trainings/webinars for EFL students on developing teaching competences (pedagogic/psychological specificities of learners, teaching young learners/migrant children/ multicultural groups, creating lesson plans and teaching materials) and on developing digital competences in teaching
- Raised awareness at the institutional unit level of social issues & collaboration with socially responsible (international) organizations
- EFL students' developed professional, digital, social, multicultural awareness, reflection & self-reflection skills
- Migrant children developed English language (A1.1-A2-1) and basic digital competences

Adaptability and transferability to other disciplines

- Service-learning as a concept applicable in various academic disciplines (humanities, social and legal sciences, hard sciences, technical, medical, ...)
- Striving to establish collaboration of HEIs with reputable (international) organizations (socially responsible, educational, cultural, technical, businesses, NGOs...)
- Part of the training of students can be done by such external partners, to foster real-life communication, practical assignments, etc.

Thank you!

