

D5.1 Report on virtual placements organised for VALS pilots

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Project Partners:

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I. Introduction

This report describes how virtual placements have been organized within the VALS project, what kind of decisions have been taken and some updated data about the placements.

This report is organized in three main sections:

- Planning the Placements and the Semester of Code in the VALS project and the description about the pilots and placements
- Universities involved in the pilots now and projections for the future
- Data about the placements

2. Planning the Placements and the Semester of Code in the VALS project

The VALS partners took some important decisions about the pilots and the placements, and how they should be developed, in the first months of the project. These decisions influenced the initial timing and the schedule for the pilot tests, as well as how the project meets certain inherent features of the various educational systems in the European Union.

As the VALS partners agreed during the Cyprus meeting (Larnaca, July 2014 http://polis.grial.eu/pluginfile.php/20736/mod_resource/content/1/VALS_Cyprus_Minutes.pdf), the option of performing only one round of pilots (only one opportunity to involved projects, students and universities) was a potential threat to the success of the project. The differences between the educational systems and between individual degree schedules in each country and university, were identified as a major problem in planning one round of projects proposals and student applications. It was very hard to plan dates that fulfilled the requirements and timing of each real case.

For this reason, all the partners agreed to split the pilot into two phases as follows:

- First phase: This first phase was intended mainly to test both the Innovation Process Model and the Virtual Placement System. Moreover, there were many Universities for whom this first phase fitted perfectly, because they have a timeline in which students' final project subjects and the registration of research topics, was at the beginning of the academic season. The time frame for project registration was between September-October 2014. The frame for students' applications for projects was between October-November 2014, and the timeline for developing the project was fixed between the student and the Company/Foundation that proposed the placement.
- Second phase: This phase was intended to use the knowledge achieved in the first iteration of the Semester of Code, improving the virtual placements and the process followed to create the placements. This also fitted with many other Universities schedule for placements and their academic timeline.

In the Bolton meeting (Bolton, United Kingdom, September 2015 http://polis.grial.eu/pluginfile.php/25081/mod_resource/content/4/VALS_Bolton_Minutes.pdf) partners agreed to try a new approach offering a new round for placements (3rd round) but in this case with open timelines for the application for projects process as well as for the placements execution.

3. Universities and Higher Education Institutions involved in the Semester of Code

As well as the universities present in the project consortium, other universities were contacted to be involved in the pilot phase (in the first or second iteration of the pilots). Below are listed the universities that were involved in the various rounds of the Semester of Code, and the universities contacted for the second or other future rounds.

Universities that were involved in the first round of the Semester of Code (in addition to the VALS partners) <http://vps.semesterofcode.com/institutes/browse>:

- University of León (Spain).
- Technical University of Catalonia – Barcelona Tech (UPC, Spain).
- Paris 8 (France)
- Frederick University (Cyprus)
- Open University of Cyprus (Cyprus)
- Faculty of organizational sciences, University of Belgrade (Serbia)
- University of Nicosia (Cyprus)

Universities that were involved in the second round of the Semester of Code (and which were not involved in the first round) <http://vps2.semesterofcode.com/institutes/browse>:

- Università Ca' Foscari Venezia (Italy).

Universities that were involved in the third round of the Semester of Code (and not involved in the first or second rounds) <http://vps1516.semesterofcode.com/institutes/browse>:

- University of Ferrara (Italy).

Universities contacted but not involved in the Semester of Code:

- Technical University of Porto (Portugal)
- University of Castilla La Mancha (Spain)
- Ostfold University (Norway)
- University of Córdoba (Spain)
- University of Zurich (Switzerland)
- Université Paris-Sud (France)
- Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (Spain)
- Telecom ParisTech (France)
- University of Deusto (Spain)
- Hellenic American College (Greece)
- Pontifical University of Salamanca

4. Data about the first round of the Semester of Code

In the first edition of the Semester of Code there were many projects and Companies/Foundations contacted and involved actively in the development of the first iteration of the pilots. There were 64 organizations involved: (<http://vps.semesterofcode.com/organisations/browse>), which have submitted 237 projects (<http://vps.semesterofcode.com/projects/browse>) and placements proposals into the Virtual Placement System of the Semester of Code.

The dates established for the first round of the Semester of Code were:

- Organisations (companies/foundations) application: August 1- September 17, 2014
- Student applications (and their universities): September 17 – December 15, 2014
- Placements development: January 14, 30 August 2015.

The data about students involved in the first round are:

- 12 proposals submitted by students:
 - 4 open (not finally submitted by the student)
 - 1 preselected (accepted by the company but not finally by the student)
 - 7 active proposals. Students started the placements (not necessarily finished them).

5. Data about the second round of the Semester of Code

In the second round of the Semester of Code there were 67 organizations involved (<http://vps2.semesterofcode.com/organisations/browse>), which submitted 291 projects (<http://vps2.semesterofcode.com/projects/browse>) and placements proposals into the Virtual Placement System of the Semester of Code.

The dates established for the second round of the Semester of Code were:

- Organisations (companies/foundations) application: January 1 - January 13, 2015
- Student applications (and their universities): January 15 – April 1, 2015
- Placements development: April 25 - September 30 2015.

The data about students involved in the second round were:

- 24 proposals submitted by students:
 - 1 open (not finally submitted by the student)
 - 7 published (not resolved –accepted or rejected- by the companies)
 - 10 active proposals. Students started the placements (not necessarily finished them).
 - 2 rejected by the company/foundation/project
 - 4 archived: discarded by the students after get accepted other proposals.

6. Data about the third round of the Semester of Code

In the third round of the Semester of Code, which is currently active, there are 67 organizations involved (<http://vps1516.semesterofcode.com/organisations/browse>), which have submitted 49 projects (<http://vps1516.semesterofcode.com/projects/browse>) and placements proposals into the Virtual Placement System of the Semester of Code.

In the case of this third round of placements within the scope of the Semester of code, the dates are totally open; there are no predefined timeline and dates. In this case, the project application process by student, the proposals submission by companies or the signup of new academic institutions are no restricted by time, and each one can participate in any moment.

Because this third round of the Semester of Code is currently active, data about participation is not yet available. Some students are interested, but applications for placements for the moment have not yet been received.