Report

on implementing the module
"Social Security Law in the European Union"

within the project
"Social Security Law in the European Union"
(project number: 101047555; project acronym: EUSOSEL)

under the ERASMUS+ Programme
(call: ERASMUS-JMO-2021-HEI-TCH-RSCH; topic:
ERASMUS-JMO-2021-MODULE)

at Penza State University
(Penza, Russian Federation)

Funded by
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The **Work Package 1 (Teaching and Learning)** covers teaching and learning on EU social security law for specific target groups. The WP1 was launched from the Task 1.1 – Developing and teaching the module "Social Security Law in the European Union" for Bachelor law students.

According to the Communication Plan developed within the EUSOSEL project, the project team designed and published the electronic leaflets on the module in Russian and English and posted them on the project website (the module leaflet (in Russian) can be found at https://ims.pnzgu.ru/files/ims.pnzgu.ru/pages/erasmus/eusosel/liflet_eusosel_ru_modul.pdf; the module leaflet (in English) can be found at https://international.pnzgu.ru/files/!international/pages/erasmus/eusosel/liflet_eusosel_en_modul.pdf).

The students were informed about the opportunity to study the newly developed module during the **mentor classes**, in the university **digital learning environment** (https://moodle.pnzgu.ru/), on the **project websites** (in Russian – https://ims.pnzgu.ru/international_cooperation_ims/projects_ims/eusosel and in English – https://international.pnzgu.ru/international_cooperation/international_projects/eusosel) and via the **project social media accounts** (Facebook – https://www.facebook.com/people/Eusosel-Pnzgu/100077290235613/, Instagram – https://www.instagram.com/eusosel.pnzgu/, Telegram – https://t.me/eusosel). The information about the module was also delivered to the students through the **regular classes** by the teaching and administrative staff of the Institute of Law (Penza State University), who were informed about the newly developed module during the meetings of the Institute of Law Council and departments meetings, as well as through the university internal communication system Directum and via the electronic leaflets sent to the e-mails of the Institute of Law. As a result, a large number of students of the Institute of Law showed interest in studying the module, namely 64 students submitted the applications.

64 Bachelor law students of the Institute of Law (Penza State University) were registered for the module (Rectors' Order no. 0013/d dated 31 January 2022).

The module "Social Security Law in the European Union" (54 academic hours) was launched at Penza State University on 1 February 2022. The period of study within the module was defined **from 1 February 2022 to 30 June 2022**.

To implement the module "Social Security Law in the European Union", the project team developed the syllabus in Russian (56 pages) and translated it in English (52 pages). When producing the syllabus, the project team took the personally designed training materials and the training materials from the open databases. The full list of these materials was given in the syllabus in the section "Essential readings". The online versions of the syllabus in Russian and in English were published in the university digital learning environment (http://moodle.pnzgu.ru/course/view.php?id=76302) and on the project website (syllabus in Russian – https://ims.pnzgu.ru/files/ims.pnzgu.ru/pages/erasmus/eusosel/syllabus_eusosel_ru.pdf; syllabus in English – https://ims.pnzgu.ru/files/ims.pnzgu.ru/pages/erasmus/eusosel/syllabus_eusosel_en.pdf).

During the lectures, the engagement and interaction with students were ensured through the new presentations designed in Russian and devoted to the topics within each submodule. The presentations were published on the project websites (in Russian – https://ims.pnzgu.ru/international_cooperation_ims/projects_ims/eusosel/teaching_learning_materials; in English – https://international.pnzgu.ru/international_cooperation/international_projects/eusosel/teaching_learning_materials) and in the Telegram account.

To disseminate the designed teaching and learning materials, students' projects and other relevant information, the Russian and English versions of the project website were created (in Russian – https://ims.pnzgu.ru/international_cooperation_ims/projects_ims/eusosel and in English – https://international.pnzgu.ru/international_cooperation/international_projects/eusosel), along with the social media accounts in Facebook and Instagram (Facebook – https://www.facebook.com/people/Eusosel-Pnzgu/100077290235613/, Instagram – https://www.instagram.com/eusosel.pnzgu/). The Facebook and Instagram accounts had technical challenges in the Russian Federation since March 2022, so the project team decided to create an account on Telegram (https://t.me/eusosel).

The news articles about the module implementation were regularly released on the project websites in Russian and English (in Russian – https://ims.pnzgu.ru/international_cooperation_ims/projects_ims/eusosel/eusosel_news, in English https://international.pnzgu.ru/international_cooperation/international_projects/eusosel/eusosel_news) and in the Telegram account.

The module was delivered in the format of **blended learning**: before 1 March 2022 – online on the Zoom platform, after 1 March 2022 – offline in the classrooms of the Centre for Teaching and Learning Erasmus+ and Institute of Law (Penza State University).

Within the module, the project team delivered **54 academic hours**:

– Anna Aleksandrova, PhD in Legal Sciences, Associate Professor of the Department of Legal Disciplines, taught 36 academic hours;

– Anastasiia Ryzhova, PhD in Legal Sciences, Associate Professor of the Department of Legal Disciplines, taught 18 academic hours.

When studying the module, the students explored the following aspects:

– **Submodule 1.** European Union: origin, institutional basis, legal frameworks (8 hours). Topics: History of European Integration. Key documents: Treaty Establishing the European Coal and Steel Community 1951, Treaty Establishing the European Economic Community 1957, Single European Act 1986, Treaty on the European Union 1992. Treaty of Lisbon 2007 and its reforms. Major EU institutions;

– **Submodule 2.** Aims and objectives of the EU in the social sphere (6 hours). Topics: General characteristics of social development in the EU member states. European social policy: formation, focus, aims, objectives. Correlation of economic and social dimensions in EU institutions;

– **Submodule 3.** Mechanism for implementing EU competence in the social sphere (6 hours). Topics: Capacity of EU institutions and bodies in the social sphere. Promoting social dialogue. Role of the European Commission. Financing of EU social policy. Activity of the European Social Fund;

– **Submodule 4.** Evolution of EU social security law (8 hours). Topics: Principles of social policy in EU underlying documents. Social Action Programme 1974. Community Charter of the Fundamental Social Rights of Workers 1989. Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union 2000. Current priorities for improving social security in the EU;

– **Submodule 5.** Concept of the Social Constitution of the EU and the European Pillar of Social Rights (6 hours). Topics: Social Constitution of the EU: aims, objectives and content. Initiative of the European Commission on creating the European Pillar of Social Rights. Content of the European Pillar of Social Rights. Building the EU social space;

– **Submodule 6.** Sources of EU social security law (6 hours). Topics: International instruments as social security law sources. System of EU social security law sources. Underlying documents of the EU. Charters. Directives, White and Green Papers in the EU. Social agendas, strategy and policy documents;

– **Submodule 7.** Models of social protection in the EU member states (8 hours). Topics: Evolution of social protection systems in the EU. Basic models of social protection: Bismarck Model, Beveridge Model. Features of social security law in modern Western, Eastern and Northern Europe. Development trends of social law in the EU member states;

– **Submodule 8.** Coordination of social security systems in the EU (6 hours). Topics: Role of EU institutions and bodies in coordinating social protection systems. Pension regulations in the EU member states. Management of social benefits to citizens in the EU member states.

Student-centred teaching and learning was implemented within the module. The innovative methods were employed to engage students in learning and foster the transferability of skills (critical thinking, brainstorming, project-based learning, etc.). The academic performance of students was assessed in the formative and summative ways to identify knowledge and skill gaps.

The module contained a comprehensive set of assignments for students to complete while studying each submodule, in particular preparing projects for the submodules 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 and carrying out a comparative legal analysis for the submodules 6, 7 and 8. The students reported on the assignments in the form of the presentations. Some student presentations are placed on the project websites (in Russian – https://ims.pnzgu.ru/international_cooperation_ims/projects_ims/eusosel/teaching_learning_materials; in English – https://international.pnzgu.ru/international_cooperation/international_projects/eusosel/teaching_learning_materials). All student presentations are posted in the university digital learning environment (https://moodle.pnzgu.ru/).

Within the module, the students prepared the joint projects in the field of EU social law together with law students from Kutafin Moscow State Law University and Ogarev Mordovia State University.

The analysis of the assignments performed by the students showed that on successful completion of the module they were able to (**learning outcomes**):

– identify the main stages of forming EU social security law;

– define the role of EU social security law in the system of European and international law;

– characterise aims and objectives of the EU in the social sphere;

– interpret mechanisms of implementing EU competence in the social sphere;

– illustrate the principles of the Social Constitution of the EU and the European Pillar of Social Rights;

– summarise the current state and development prospects of EU social security law;

– classify and employ the sources of EU social security law;

– systematise the models of social protection in the EU member states;

– compare and analyse the provisions of social security law in the EU and the RF.

The content of the module, learning and teaching methods aroused interest among the students. This was reflected in student attendance of the lectures and seminars (see Annex 1 for the **presence lists** developed within the project).

In order to evaluate the quality of the delivered module, the project team designed the **satisfaction questionnaire for students**, which included four parts: Module content, Module structure, Learning and teaching practices, Overall impression and assessment. The students were invited to complete the questionnaire on a no-name basis during one of the final classes.

In total 64 completed satisfaction questionnaires were submitted (see Annex 2). The students were asked to rate the answers according to the scale "strongly agree", "agree", "neither agree nor disagree", "disagree", "strongly disagree".

The **first part** of the satisfaction questionnaire focused on assessing the following aspects connected with the module content:

– The aim and objectives of the module were clear beforehand;

– The content of the module was well structured;

– The module workload and requirements were appropriate for my degree programme;

– The duration of the module was sufficient;

– The lectures and seminars complemented each other;

– The module materials (presentations, handouts, etc.) were helpful and informative;

– The recommended reading lists were valuable;

– There was enough time for discussion.

The analysis of this part showed that the students were satisfied with the module content. The obtained results indicated the following averages: 81% of the students answered as "strongly agree", 16% as "agree" and 3% as "neither agree nor disagree".

Under the **second part** of the satisfaction questionnaire, the students assessed the structure of the module in details and allocated the answers according to the following aspects:

– The module was organised in a manner that helped me understand the underlying concepts;

– The module increased my interest in this study field;

– The module gave me confidence to do more advanced work in the study field;

– The reading lists were appropriate to the aim and objectives of the module;

– The module assignments (case tasks, projects, etc.) facilitated my learning;

– My learning was fairly assessed;

– The grading practices were clear and fair;

– The module environment felt like a welcoming place to express my ideas.

The students positively evaluated the structure of the module. According to the filled-in questionnaires, they especially recognised the fair assessment of their knowledge and the grading practices. On average, 76% of the students "strongly agreed" and 20% "agreed" with the questionnaire items. 4% of the students avoided deciding ("neither agree nor disagree").

In the **third part**, the students assessed the learning and teaching practices. They rated the following statements:

– The teachers were well prepared for classes and were available for communication;

– The teachers used class time effectively and encouraged my engagement in discussion;

– The teachers were easy to understand;

– The teachers effectively organised and facilitated learning activities;

– The teaching methods aided my learning and stimulated my interest in the study field;

– The teachers provided helpful feedback;

– The teachers cared about my academic progress and successful completion of the module;

– The teachers created a welcoming and inclusive learning environment.

The analysis highlighted that the students praised the learning and teaching practices of the project team. The questionnaire demonstrated that 86% of the students marked the answers as "strongly agree", 13% as "agree" and only 1% as "neither agree nor disagree".

The **fourth part** of the questionnaire was devoted to the general impression. The students were invited to decide on the following statements:

– I would recommend this module to other students;

– This module met my expectations for the quality of the Jean Monnet Module;

– The module has high educational and scientific impact;

– The module is useful in progress toward my degree.

Having analysed the questionnaires, the project team saw that the overall impression and assessment were favourable for the module. In general, the viewpoints averaged 75% for "strongly agree", 20% – for "agree" and 4% – for "neither agree nor disagree". Only 1% (one student) voiced the negative viewpoint (without comments).

The analysis of the satisfaction questionnaires showed the students' demand for more time to discuss and express ideas. The project team planned to pay attention to these aspects when implementing the module.

The **transcripts of records** were developed by the project team and awarded to all students, who studied the module. In total, 64 transcripts of records were issued (see Annex 3). The grades and scores were assigned depending on the student's participation in discussions, preparation of the projects, implementation of the comparative legal analysis, etc.

In total, **61 students successfully completed the module**, including 49 students with the "excellent" grade and 12 students with the "good" grade (information about the grading scale is provided in the transcript of records). Three students, who attended the classes, but did not do the module assignments, got the transcripts with the "unsatisfactory (failed)" grade.

The project team also decided to issue the two-language **certificates** on the successful completion of the module "Social Security Law in the European Union". The draft for the certificates was designed using the visualisation components (EU emblem, programme name, project logo, etc.). Based on the transcripts of records, 61 certificates of the established form (in Russian and English) were issued to the students (see Annex 4).

The report on the module delivery was presented at the meeting of the University Council and approved by its members on 1 July 2022 (record no. 20).

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