

Mitrovica Winter University

21st January– 4th February, 2011

EVALUATION REPORT

(Prepared between 1st February to 27th March 2011)

**By Ivana Lazarevic © 2011
External Evaluator**

I INTRODUCTION

The Fifth Mitrovica Winter University (MWU) was held between 21st January and 04th February 2011. Four days before the closure of the MWU, I was engaged for the second season to carry out the external evaluation and necessary field researches. The field researches were carried out between 1st of February until 4th of March¹.

II BACKGROUND

Comparing with other areas of ex Yugoslavia, higher education in Kosovo has always been in inferior position (lack of competent staff, living conditions and poverty among communities in general, political disputes, turbulent history etc. In such conditions, University of Pristina (established in 1969) and its students have been many times used as a tool for achievements of political goals. The present unsolved issue of Kosovo Status and huge ethnic divisions all over Kosovo, have a big impact on educational system as well.

Until 1991, the University of Pristina (UP) functioned as one University, although education was provided in both languages – Serbian and Albanian. In 1991, due to political circumstances, many Albanian staff came under pressure to disagree with the Serbian state system and leave university. The remaining Albanian staff left in protest and established an underground and parallel university. There were some negotiations between Serbian establishment and Albanian leaders during 1996, concerning the return of Albanian staff and students (Agreement, mediated by catholic NGO “St. Eudidjio and both signed by Slobodan Milosevic – Leader of Serbia and Dr. Ibrahim Rugova – Albanian leader.) By this agreement, Albanian staff and students returned to university facilities. Unfortunately, due to lack of will on both sides (Serbian and Albanian) and cases of institutional discrimination toward Albanians, this agreement did not make any significant success.

After the NATO intervention, Albanian staff and students returned to the University buildings. Serbian staff and students got expelled and established a university in exile with headquarters in Serbian town Vranje.

In the meantime, UNMIK together with some Serbian leaders was looking for a way to bring the university back and recognize it².

¹ Due to an extremely limited time frame, a number of interviews had to be done after the closure of MWU, while the short, four-day-time period during the MWU activities was entirely covered with meetings with Visiting professors and international and regional students and field visits.

² The UNSC 1244 Resolution dismantled the Serbian State administration in Kosovo and the University of Pristina (internationally known as Mitrovica University) is the State sponsored institution.

It suggested the name *Mitrovica University*, but the Serbian university had refused it, while insisting on the official name *The University of Pristina temporarily located in Kosovska Mitrovica*. Their official explanation was that the only legal university of Pristina was the one established by the Serbian State, so any change of the name would be interpreted as a support to their secession of Kosovo from Serbia.

Still, in early 2004, the University of Mitrovica seemed well underway to cooperate with the Kosovo and European educational system. March 2004 violence against K-Serbs halted this process. Due to replacement of UM rector and appointment of Prof. Dr. Papovic by Serbian Educational minister, UNMIK withdrew the accreditation and European University Association called upon its 700 members to boycott the UM until the matter would be resolved (Prof. Dr. Papovic was rector of University in Pristina in early 90's, when Albanian staff left the University). This has left the students and academic community of the UM fully isolated.

The accreditation is given back to University by UNMIK in 2007.

Pristina University Temporarily Located in Kosovska Mitrovica (Office for International Relation and Students Parliament) was for the first time the official key organizer of the MWU2011, supported by SPARK as its de facto key partner.

Mitrovica Youth Programme was established in 2006, by SPARK (ATA). It provides Mitrovica University students, with skills and competencies that are beneficial for their chances on labor market and provide a basis for regional integration. For fifth year now, this program has international character and provide trainings to students and professors in contemporary issues; furthermore it integrates them into regional academic and students networks. With such approach it prepares ground for the future regional collaboration.

III GOAL and OBJECTIVES

According to the SPARK *Terms of Reference* of the Evaluation of the Mitrovica Winter University 2011,

Strategic project goals are:

- To increase regional stability through facilitation of the recognition & regional integration of the University of Mitrovica in Southeast Europe and the EU

Project objectives are:

- Increase regional stability through integration of the University of Mitrovica in SEE and the EU;

- *Improve stability of Kosovo by improving relations between the K-Serbian and K-Albanian academic communities (staff and students) and between these and the wider SEE region;*
- *Accelerate the integration of the UM in the European Higher Education Area;*
- *Increase sustainability of the MWU by the further embedding it in the UM.*

IV ABOUT THE PROJECT

According to the available information, taken from the official web site of Mitrovica Youth Program <http://www.my-program.org/cms/en/uvod/> :

“ In 2011, University with Student Parliament and support from SPARK, will organize Mitrovica Winter University 2011. Program is aimed at introducing youth in Mitrovica (primarily students) to recent developments in the field of European Integration and Higher Education. The program will provide trainings to students and integrate them in regional and international academic and student networks.

The Mitrovica Youth Program consists of five elements, namely:

- *Mitrovica Winter University for 150 students (organized by SPARK, University and Student Parliament)*
- *Student Trainings (pre-MSU trainings) for 150 students (organized by SPARK and Jelena Anzujska)*
- *Module “European Integration and the Western Balkans” for 25 students (organized by Fractal)*
- *Bologna workshops for 40 professors and students (organized by SPARK)*
- *Regional Conference on Access to Higher Education (organized by SPARK and Jelena Anzujska)*

Mitrovica Winter University 2011

This winter, University and Student Parliament with support from SPARK will organize the Mitrovica Winter University. The Mitrovica Winter University 2011 (MWU) will be held in Mitrovica from 23rd of January till 4th of February 2011. Approximately 150 students can participate: 90 local students, 35 students from South East Europe and 25 from EU/other.

MWU 2011 offers 6 intensive, academic courses of two weeks taught by international professors together with local professors. Courses will be offered in the fields of political, cultural and social sciences. All courses will be taught in English, though for some courses translation into Serbian will be provided.

Participants who attend at least 80% of their classes and successfully finish the assignments and examinations will receive an official European (ECTS) certificate with app. 3 ECTS credit. There will be no tuition fees. Books, readers, accommodation and food will be provided free of charge for local and students from South East Europe. Travel costs will be remunerated.

International students do not pay tuition fees, accommodation and food can be provided at a modest price. International students should cover their own travel costs.

A recreational program will be organized for all participants, including public debates, excursion, sports tournaments, pool parties and great parties with live music.

Student's trainings

The NGO Jelena Anzujska, with assistance of SPARK, will organize pre-MWU trainings for students on practical topics such as communication skills and spoken English. In each training approximately fifty students can participate, for each training will be organized in two shifts (25

students will attend each training). This year pre-MWU Training will be organized on 23d and 24th of January 2011.

Bologna workshops

SPARK will organize annually two 1-day seminars for professors on Bologna topics. Official EC Bologna promoters will deliver the seminars. These seminars aim to provide knowledge to teaching staff about the European Higher Education Area and practical assistance on how to implement the Bologna Action Lines.

Module “European Integration and the Western Balkans”

This result will be delivered by Fractal and a group of alumnus from the 2007 and 2008 Module. It is based on the positive results of the module “European integration and Balkan/SEE”, which was part of the “Mitrovica Youth Program” in 2007. It will continue to focus on increasing awareness among students on the topics of EU integration and regional cooperation.

This activity is composed of three components:

- The first component consists of a module of twenty interactive lectures combined with training on academic writing (essays, analyses, case studies, research work, critical thinking).
- The second component consists of alumni network activities and additional lectures and training for alumni on EU topics and trainings on fundraising, presentation skills, project writing, phases of implementing and reporting of the project.
- The third component consists of Study visit to EU and other relevant institutions in the Netherlands and Brussels for best 6 module students.

Regional Conference on Access to Higher Education

The conference aims to bring together SEE university staff/management, policymakers and other relevant stakeholders in Higher Education to make recommendations on improving access for non-majority communities in higher education. On the basis of each conference a policy document will be written. The policy document will presented to all relevant stakeholders and all stakeholders involved will lobby for its implementation.”

V FINDINGS

Mitrovica Winter University was held between 23rd January and 4th February 2011³. It was organised by Pristina University in Kosovska Mitrovica support by SPARK NGO, Local NGO Jelena Anzujska and NGO FRACTAL. Over a two week course period, MWU offered six courses in different academic fields.

³ Although the Mitrovica University is planed to be traditionally summer event, it was postponed for the winter period 2011. Valentina Mikic , a student’s mobility coordinator, stated that the Summer University was postponed for the Winter University, due to the recomendation from the Rector’s Office.

MWU 2011 Courses

Nr. 1: Cultural heritage- Robert Mizzi, Marko Aleksic, Jelena Vukicevic
Nr. 2: Slavistic studies- Sanja Miketic, Dragana Isailovic
Nr. 3: Diplomacy and communication- Shak Hanish, Ivana Ariconovic
Nr. 4: European Integration and Western Balkans- Ekaterina Volkova, Dragana Milenkovic and Aleksandra Kosanin
Nr. 5: Marketing in Digital Age- Jasna Kamatovic, Natasa Milenkovic
Nr. 6: Sustainable architecture- Linda Hilderbrand, Dejan Cikara and Saja Kosanovic

According to the available SPARK/MU data base, the proportion of local, regional and international MWU 2010 students is attached in the following table:

Overview of participating students⁴:

Origin of student	#	Region description
Local	92	From inside Kosovo (Mitrovica/enclaves)
Regional, Southeast Europe / Stability Pact country	26	Serbia, Bosnia&Herzegovina, Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia, Bulgaria,
International	19	EU/Other (Germany, Netherland, Venezuela, Czech Republic, Russia, Finland)

In total, **137** students participated in MWU 2011, (applied 2140) of who **106** received certificates (including 5 students who did not pass the final exam but were issued participation certificate). Total of the drop-outs is 11.

The greater part of student participants originated from Kosovo (both from within and from outside Mitrovica). Another large part of the students came from the SEE region surrounding Kosovo (from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Serbia, Macedonia, Slovenia, etc.) A smaller number of students originated from countries outside the region such are Netherlands, Germany, Czech Republic, Venezuela, Finland, Russia, etc.

VI METHODOLOGY

Methodology that has been used in assessment was as follows:

6.1 Documentation reviews

6.2 Observations

6.3 Semi-structured interviews

Geographic classification (regioanal, SEE, local, international) are taken according to the SPARK/MU statistic overview.

6.1 Documentation reviews

I've reviewed following documentation that I've received from SPARK⁵:

- **MWU 2011 Information guide for Participants**
- **MWU 2011 Information and instruction for visiting professors**
- **MWU 2011 and MYP timeline**
- **MWU 2010 Evaluation report**
- **Project Proposal Mitrovica Youth Programme 2007-2008**
- **Sub-domain of University web-site <http://www.mlu.pr.ac.rs>**
- **Mitrovica Youth Program web-site: <http://www.my-program.org>**
- **SPARK web-site address: <http://www.spark-online.org>**
- **Brief event reports (made by SPARK staff)**
- **SPARK's facebook page**

6.2 Observations

Within the four day observing period, the following parts of MWU 2011 were observed:

- **6.2a 5 out of 6 courses⁶**
- **6.2b Closing Ceremony**
- **6.2c Field visit to accommodation and dining facilities**

Within the four days of observation, I visited several morning classes, where I briefly observed:

- the working level of student participation;
- level of involvement in subjects issues;
- language understanding;
- understanding of concept comprehended in courses;
- interaction between students themselves and student-professor as well;
- cooperation among professors, co-professors and teaching assistants,

⁵ Unlike last year, the following documents were missing: The final statistic of MWU2011; MWU2011 Questionnaire Survey Results, Students Value Winter University 2011.

⁶ Due to the above mentioned limited timeframe of the observation period, these visits were mainly targeting reaching the international professors and students shortly before their departure, rather than courses supervision.

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- working conditions in classrooms (heating, available equipment: projector, internet access, etc. and furniture).

Due to my involvement on extremely short notice, the events I missed to observe are:

- Welcome note and introduction event for professors and co-professors
- Preparatory weekend for professors
- Jelena Anzujska Communication skills and Team Building pre-trainings
- Opening Ceremony
- Security meeting
- Orientation meeting
- Debates
- Excursions
- Parties
- Sports tournaments

However, I was provided with some short notes taken during from those missed events⁷, prepared by SPARK/MU's staff (two notes sent to me by local staff Dragoljub Stasic and Marina Dogandzic). They are attached bellow in integral version:

“Public Debates

The first debate of the Mitrovica Winter University 2011 was dedicated to the topic of **“The Crisis of Globalism”**

About 40 students joined the debate that lasted approximately 2 hours. After the main presentations, students participated in the discussion very actively.

The professor for Journalistic and Communication, Mr. Zivorad Djordjevic teaching at the University of Belgrade and at the University of Pristina temporarily settled in Kosovska Mitrovica presented his thoughts.

The second speaker was Aleksandra Trifkovic, the teaching assistant at Mitrovica Winter University 2011, on Diplomacy and Communication course.

The moderator was Ivana Aritonovic, the local professor at Mitrovica Winter University 2011, on Diplomacy and Communication course.

The key concept was:

The meaning of the crisis of globalization

- Globalization and contemporary globalism (its purpose and foundations)
- The financial crisis is not the main or only cause of the collapse of globalism
- The expansion of the gap between enormously rich and the poor.

⁷ The events for which the reports were not submitted here are: Opening Ceremony, Jelena Anzujska pre-trainings, Excursions, Sport events, Cultural Events, Preparatory weekend for professors. I could not monitor those events because of my later recruitment as the evaluator.

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- Indications of psychological and social illness of individuals and society
- Loss of identity of individuals and nation – Schematism instead creativity
- Shaken globalism: what is the civilization of tomorrow “

“Debate: Politicizing of Cultural Heritage

Date: 1st February 2011

Place: Medical Institute, K. Mitrovica

Debate speakers:

Professor at the Cultural Heritage Course, Robert Mizzi from the University of Ohio started was first of speakers to introduce the audience with the subject.

Then Marko Aleksic, assistant at University of Belgrade continued with the subject.

Also, Jelena Vukicvec from local University presented a video introduction to the subject.

Around 30 students participated at the Debate. Opening words by debate speakers lasted for 45 minutes and then Questions and Answers lasted for another 45 minutes.

Debate moderator was Svetlana Djuric, logistic officer at MWU 2011.

Some of the key subjects discussed were:

- Case studies
- Cultural Heritage in the politics
- Good side of politicizing with examples
- Regional stories of politicizing Cultural Heritage “

6.3 INTERVIEWS

As mentioned, the interviews have been based on semi-structure methodology and guided by Strategic project goal and MWU2011 project objectives. Altogether, **25 interviews** were held and each lasted least for an hour. The interviewees are added bellow:

Overview stakeholders / partners interviews (N = 4)

#	Sex	Country of origin	Function
01.	Female	Kosovo/UNMIK	Partner's representative
02.	Female	Kosovo/UNMIK	Partner's representative
03.	Male	Kosovo/UNMIK	Partner's representative
04.	Male	Kosovo/UNMIK	Partner's representative

Overview staff interviews (N=2)

#	Staff member	Country of origin	Function at PWU
01.	Female	Kosovo/UNMIK	MU staff
02.	Female	Kosovo/UNMIK	MU staff engaged

Overview visiting and local professor interviews (N = 7)

#	Professor	Country of origin	Function at MWU
01.	Male	Serbia	Local Teaching Assistant
02.	Male	USA	Visiting professor
03.	Female	Kosovo/UNMIK	Local professor
04.	Female	Kosovo/UNMIK	Local professor
05.	Female	Russia	Visiting professor
06.	Female	Kosovo/UNMIK	Teaching assistant
07.	Male	USA	Visiting professor

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Student interviews (N =12)

#	Student	Country of origin	Enrolled in course #
01.	Female	Macedonia	European Integrations and Western Balkans
02.	Male	Serbia	European Integrations and Western Balkans
03.	Female	Czech Republic	European Integrations and Western Balkans
04.	Female	Germany	European Integrations and Western Balkans
05.	Female	Finland	Slavistic Studies
06.	Male	Kosovo/UNMIK	Slavistic Studies
07.	Male	Kosovo/UNMIK	Diplomacy and Communication
08.	Female	Kosovo/UNMIK	Diplomacy and Communication
09	Female	Kosovo/UNMIK	Marketing in Digital Age
10.	Male	Kosovo/UNMIK	Marketing in Digital Age
11.	Female	Serbia	Sustainable Architecture
12.	Male	Kosovo/UNMIK	Cultural Heritage

The majority of the interviewed students were randomly selected as a representative sample, due to the transparency reasons. The representative sample was based on variety in country of origin, courses and gender. Each interview lasted for approximately one and half hour. The interviews were taken at the university premises (during coffee breaks, dining place and coffee bars), SPARK premises, University premises and MWU partners premises.

6.4 Questionnaires

Until the closure of this report, I still have not been provided with the questionnaire results MWU2011.

VII CONCLUSIONS

Core program

7.1 COURSE PROGRAM - Course program was satisfactory, both in variety and in relevance.

7.1a Topics

The course program offered attractive and comprehensive topics, which accurately addressed the needs of MWU 2011 youth. Due to the multicultural and international character of this event, the challenge was to select those topics that would simultaneously reflect the needs of all local, regional and international students. In addition to earlier variety of the courses, which was confirmed again this year, three new courses were established: Slavistic Studies, Marketing in Digital Age and Sustainable Architecture, and the rest are Cultural Heritage, Diplomacy and Communication, European Integration and Western Balkans. Majority of the students already had some

pre-knowledge about the course topics, although had no opportunity, until then, to frame it into a whole. Students coming from inner Serbia or enclaves often don't have the opportunity to learn about any of actual topics such as for instance EU integration. They said that the topics reflected their needs. Nevertheless, they responded in the most positive ways to those courses not necessarily as per the topics, but as per the teachers they like.

Practical models that have been used during the courses helped students to acquire new concepts.

The course content available at:

<http://www.my-program.org/cms/en/mzu-2010/sadrzaj-kurseva/>

7.1b Teaching methodology

My impressions are based on brief visits to the course classes but at largest extent they are based on stories told by interviewed students.

Based on available data provided by SPARK, the recommended teaching methodology should have been the *student-centre learning approach*:

“Information and instruction for Visiting Professors MWU2011⁸”

Teaching methods

The organization recommends less traditional, more informal interaction between professors and students, as well as among students themselves. Therefore, highly interactive teaching methods, which stimulate critical thinking and promote discussion, have priority. The number of students participating in each course is limited to preserve interactivity among students themselves and between students and professors. When selecting your teaching methods, please take into account that advanced teaching equipment, such as (video) beamers, laptops etc., is not always available.

The methodology deferred to a great extent from course to course. International professors performed interactive ways of teaching, with an obvious aim to place learners (students) at the heart of the learning process and to meet their needs. They tried to engage students as much as possible, trying to motivate them through practical teaching. They were rather facilitators than mere presenters of information.

On the other side, local co-professors, in particular the older ones, expressed rather frontal, “ex-cathedra” way of lecturing with less initiatives in practical learning methods. Some of younger co-professors stated that it was a unique opportunity for them to be introduced with some new teaching methods, presented by foreign professors, and hear about the new concepts. In their words, it was a great challenge to take a part in it.

The reason of having combined methods in the courses might originate from the very beginning of the preparatory phase, when the two professors, selected for one course didn't coordinate ahead their joint engagement in MWU. One of the reason could be lack of coordination caused by time limited for preparation joint syllabus. Although the

⁸ SPARK document

Preparatory weekend was organized as a welcome and coordination event for professors for both local and international, some of them did not even show up.

This year, more interaction was evident in the courses and the students responded in a very positive way. Still there were some courses in which lectures were in focus, due to the demand of the content.

Teaching tools - All the professors had lap-tops and during the facilitation they had power point presentations and slide shows connected to projectors. The handouts were delivered to students. In classrooms, the blackboards were available too. In all course places, the Wi-Fi internet was available.

Some foreign students complained that the reading material for some courses, such was European Integration and Western Balkans, was published in Serbian Cyrillic letter which was not understandable to them. Also, some foreign teachers requested for the next year for the handouts to be translated from English in Serbian in order to be understandable to those Serbian speaking students who are not comfortable with English language. All of them agreed that the point of the handouts, regardless in which language in prepared is to be fully understandable to students.

7.1c Atmosphere- “The general atmosphere present in classrooms during the courses was positive”.

The students interest and inspiration very much depended on professor’s attitude and his/her way of teaching. In some courses, the professor lectured all the time, without any interaction with the students, even with the high quality of content, but the students would get bored and soon loose their interest in subject. Still, compared to the last year, it was present in far less extent.

On the other side, the interactive way of work resulted a high spirit and creative work atmosphere. There were various discussions, role play, group work, presentations, etc.

Language barrier often created negative atmosphere in classes. There were students who could not speak the language, even if they partially understood it, so they had a problem to follow the course actively. The assistance of interpeter often slowed down the learning process.

Due to the cold weather, students and professors were closed in their classrooms and often missed more practical learning outside. Nevertheless, the additional outdoor free time activities were widely visited and popular MWU students.

7.1d Ethnic Diversity

Ethnic diversity of participants was represented. Due to the current, many year specific political circumstances in Mitrovica, the ethnic diversity was at a satisfactory level in spite of the higher general standards for international camps and schools. Kosovo Albanian students were not represented as any such action to bring the Albanians students in the North would not only fail but it would hamper the entire project and cause potential riots in the Serbian community in the North.

7.1e Language Barrier

Language barrier still remains one of the major weaknesses for local Serbian students. Although the pre-university five-day English classes for the Serbian MWU trainees were organized, it was not sufficient to prepare the students for active participation in MWU English lectures. At what extent the language barriers were serious, was shown in a case when a lecture was delivered in Serbian language. This was additionally worsened by the complaints by the international students. Furthermore, they had a problem while listening the interpretation of the lectures in Serbian language as it made the entire learning and listening process very slowly for them which caused that they happened to be often not focused in the issue during the lessons.

7.1f Degree of implementation of ECTS

The European Credit Transfer System was designed by the European Commission with the principal aim of improving the quality of education. It facilitates student's mobility, introduces flexibility within curricula and standardises student assessment in the institutions of higher education in the member states.

The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) compatible to "Mitrovica Winter University System" credit was based on average number of working hours spent by students on the courses and encompasses classroom hours, private study and fieldwork.

Participants, who attended at least 80% of their classes and pass the appropriate assignments and examinations, received ECTS. Each certificate indicated the number of European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits to which the course is equivalent.

The grade given on the student's certificate indicated the success of the student. Grades indicating a successful completion of the course, with the percentage of successful students receiving this grade are: A: excellent (10%), B: very good (25%), C: good (30%), D: satisfactory (25%), E: sufficient (10%).⁹

During the interviews with some international students, I have learned that one of the biggest motivation for them to apply to MWU 2011 was an opportunity to get ECTS credits, which will be recognized by their faculties.

⁹ MWU 2011 Information for participants

They explained that in order to get 3 or 4 ECTS credits in their Faculties, normally, the student should follow and be regular for the entire semester.

On the other side, local students were not that much aware of ECTS significance. They were not even informed about the benefits.

During the interview with Student Mobility Coordinator Valentina Mikic, I was told that implementation of ECTS, specifically on MU is a long-term process that needs to be adopted and it is in processing.

7.1g SELECTION PROCEDURE

The available official data envisaged the following selection procedure for visiting professors:

“MWU 2011 Information and Instructions for visiting professors

Relevant registration details and your CV will be presented together with your course proposal(s) to the University and its local co-professors, who will make a prioritized selection of visiting professors. The MWU Committee will determine the courses organized per faculty, and thereby make the final selection of visiting professors. The MWU Committee is responsible for academic matters and consists of SPARK and the University. In principle, six visiting professors will be invited to teach.

5.2. Selection Criteria

The MWU Committee defines selection criteria. Generally speaking, course proposals matching one of the course suggestions provided by the local co-professors (based on their priorities and needs) have a substantial chance of being accepted. Furthermore, if no appropriate local counterpart, i.e. co-professor can be appointed for your course, the MWU Committee may prefer to select a different course / visiting professor, even though your application material might be of high quality. In sum, the most important selection criteria are:

- *PhD in one of the relevant academic fields;*
- *Current (or recent) experience of teaching in a university;*
- *At least three years of teaching experience in one of the relevant academic fields;*
- *A course proposal matching one of the course suggestions as indicated on the website;*
- *Good references from your (current) Head of Department. “*

I emphasize that I could not confirm whether the procedure was entirely followed due to my late involvement in the evaluation.

According to the compiled interviewees' statements, the selection procedure for visiting professors was coordinated by MWU Committee, consisted of SPARK members with engagement of Mitrovica University. Initially, the latter was requested to make a prioritized selection of visiting professors before the final selection. SPARK, however, completely coordinated this process. It means that after the announcement of call for applications, SPARK collected all the applications (proposals) and selected professors. Simultaneously, SPARK/MU together coordinated communication with the visiting and local professors. It mediated in the establishment of direct contact between them. Such coordination appeared to be insufficient even this year, which was the reason for SPARK and the MU to agree upon recruiting Course Supervisor for the following summer university.

Selection of co-professors and teaching assistants

In partnership between SPARK and Pristina University in Kosovska Mitrovica, the selection of visiting professors was carried out on the basis of joint decision making, while the selection of local professors was entirely transferred to MU.

In Valentina Mikic's words, Student Mobility Coordinator, local professors were in advanced position to be recruited.

It was obvious that majority of professors came from inner Serbia which could have been an advantage in diversity, if there hasn't been the lack of local professors¹⁰ engagement.

Like in any other year, some of the local professors were again participating in Mitrovica University courses.

Selection procedure of students

The selection criteria for students applying for MWU2011 courses was envisaged to be based on: Application form, Motivational letter, Course relevance (*"Students are only admitted to a course that is relevant to their studies at their home university, i.e. a course that fits into their study path ;"*), English language proficiency (*"All applicants who fulfil the selection criteria must do an English test. The test will be organised by SPARK after the application procedure in order to make a fair selection for participation in the MWU."*) and General Knowledge Test including specific theme.

Students themselves are satisfied with the selection procedure and consider it transparent enough. Despite examination of English proficiency and English pre MWU classes, some local students have difficulties to communicate and understand English language. Majority of local students show willingness to improve their proficiency in English language.

Some visiting professors were expecting that students would be selected for their courses based on their background knowledge in particular topics. They said that lack of student's background knowledge does slow down the course program at some extent.

7.1h EFFECTIVENESS OF PROMOTION OF MWU

The promotion of MWU2011 was envisaged to be done locally and internationally.

Each year, SPARK invests a lot in promotion, both financially and strategically. This year, Mitrovica University Student Parliament was entirely in charge of local promotion of MWU2011.

Based on statements of the interviewed stakeholders, the promotion of the MWU2011 was visible in general. At local level, it included posters, flyers, promo events such are

¹⁰ Majority of professors originally belong to Mitrovica University and live in Serbia and travel to Mitrovica once a week to give their regular lectures.

parties, promo desks on faculties, through partner's organization, online promotion such MWU face book page is and word of mouth, which proved to be most effective in area such is Mitrovica.

On regional and international level all went through the internet with a help of SPARK's Amsterdam office (with the support of the students sites), but one should not neglect the word of mouth of the students from previous years.

7.1i TEACHING FACILITIES

Unlike the last year when the MU was not responsible for providing the teaching facility, and the lectures were taking place at different locations which made the logistics more difficult, in this year the MU provided the proper teaching facilities which made the organization and logistics of the MWU far easier than in the previous year.

The lectures were delivered in the MU premises, at the Technical Faculty in the first week and at the Medical Faculty Institute in the second week. The premises were well equipped and furnished, in particular the Medical Faculty. The teaching equipment was available including video projectors and other follow up equipment. Students complained about lack of sufficient heating at the Technical Faculty while were extremely satisfied with the Medical Faculty. Help desks were installed at the hall of the Technical faculty and Medical Faculty and logistics was available 24 hours a day.

7.1j PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS (ACCOMODATION, FOOD, TRAVEL, INSTRUCTIONS...)

As usual, it was a challenge to make necessary practical arrangements due to the situation in North Mitrovica, but this year Student Parliament made good job and put lots of efforts in it to make students feel as good as possible. Majority of students and professors, realizing how hard it is to organize good travel, accommodation and food in Mitrovica for such an event and a big number of participants, reported that they were generally satisfied with all practical arrangements. Unlike last year, the food was worse in quality, some students and professors also complained there was no vegetarian menu.

The MWU 2011 participants were accommodated in local hotels (Sasa, Beli Dvor, Pizzeria No.1) and private accommodation and dined at Sasa hotel, in which most of the students participants were accommodated. Majority of students stated that the accommodation was acceptable in general, except some minor complaints about the lack of heating and hygiene.

Instruction's manual for students that I've reviewed (MWU 2011 Information for participants), and that each of students received at the very registration was very accurate, detailed, well structured and informative material.

7.1k DAILY COURSE LOGISTICS AND LOGISTIC OFFICERS

Daily course logistic worked very well and both professors and students were satisfied with logistic officers. This team of young and enthusiastic people showed a great interest in this event. Working round the clock, they contributed in a great part to a smooth flow of MWU daily logistic activities. Unlike the last year, the help desks were set up in one place where all the courses were organized.

7.2 PUBLIC DEBATES

The lectures were supported by various public debates. In total four debates were organized:

1. The process of globalization and globalism
2. Politicizing of Cultural Heritage
3. EU- Human Trafficking and Gender equality
4. Student's mobility presentation

Like in the last year the public debates were held only for the MWU participants and were not available to wider public and media. Some of them were well visited such were the Process of Globalization and Politicizing of Cultural Heritage. According to the SPARK's available data, about 40 participants took part in each. On the other hand some students complained that the time table of public debates was not available in advance.

Follow up activities: MWU partner NGO Fractal was responsible for organizing the Study visit to Belgium for best students. The event should be organized between 13th and 20th March 2011, but due to the travel document specific procedures, the study visit has not been carried out. As compensation, the selected students were joined to the program of Leadership Weekend, which was organized by SPARK and Fractal.

7.3 RECREATIONAL PROGRAM

The recreational program was consisted of excursions, sport events and parties. The students and some professors showed a big interest for Recreational program and it was well visited.

Majority of students stated that there was a good level of recreational program encompassed in MWU2011.

Some professors and students though have complained that there were too many night parties which distracted students from their daily obligations. This year, because of the winter period, the students expressed that they missed outside activities such could have been organized in summer.

Apart from parties, the students paid visits to monasteries and cities in Kosovo within Kosovo Tour - Visoki Decani Tour, Pecka Patrijarsija, Orahovac, Velika Hoca, Banjska etc.

7.4 INTRODUCTORY WORKSHOPS (Cooperation between implementing organizations)

Two days before formal opening of MWU, on 21st and 22nd of January 2011, Jelena Anzujska NGO launched the pre-training program *Team Building and Communication Skills* for MWU 2011 participants. This program has been organised for the fifth year now.

The courses were organised for 5 groups of MWU local, regional and international students. In total, there were about 100 participants, of who about 20 were the international students and they were part of an English speaking group.

The groups were trained by Aleksandar Weisner, Aleksandar Jankovic, trainers from Belgrade and Nikola Pajovic, trainer from Kosovska Mitrovica.

VIII PARTNERS' COOPERATION

The organizer of this MWU was the MU and it was strongly supported by its main partner SPARK, which was the original mission and goal of this project since the beginning of the organizing of the MSU.

The MU cooperated with the SPARK, Student's Parliament as its key partner, while SPARK cooperated with its other partners, too, Jelena Anzujska and FRACTAL.

For years, SPARK has invested many efforts in developing the partnership with local stakeholders. Partners' communication and cooperation for MWU 2011 five years later is well established and now after many years it has become traditional.

The coordination meetings between SPARK and its partners were held on regular basis months before the MWU 2011.

The crown of the SPARK's efforts to invest in its partners is the capacity building and determination of the MU who organized the MWU 2011.

IX SUSTAINABILITY OF THE MWU

Although the project foresaw the transfer of competencies and entire logistics and organization for the International Summer Universities to Mitrovica University, it has appeared not an easy task in practice. This year, as well, the main logistics and costs were provided by SPARK.

Sustainability of future events is an issue that has to be discussed more. The issues that can make the financial sustainability easier is the fact that foreign professors have accepted to come without being paid, while foreign students pay their costs.

Although there are certain professors or staff at the University in favor of taking over the competencies from SPARK, the University still shows no interest in playing the crucial role in organizing this international event.

X PROJECT GOALS

Increase regional stability through integration of the Pristina University in Kosovska Mitrovica in SEE and the EU

It is a great success that students from wider region travel to Kosovo, in particular to North Mitrovica, which still recently has been seen as one of most dangerous conflict zones in Western Balkans and interpreted as the most troubled spot. Students thus can meet each other from different countries and different ethnicities, including those from former conflict zones (Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina). On the other hand, local students had no opportunity to travel or meet other people, so they were often reserved, closed and mistrustful. The whole event is of the huge benefit for University in Mitrovica and the entire Mitrovica North community. The events such is the MWU 2011 can be interpreted as the best source of over bridging differences and the place for new friendships. It helps and facilitates networking, some formal cooperation between the University in Mitrovica academic community and academic communities in wider SEE and EU regions.

Improve stability of Kosovo by improving relations between the K-Serbian and K-Albanian academic communities (staff and students) and between these and the wider SEE region

At this stage, this is an ambitiously set goal for any organization which performs its work in extremely closed, pressured and doubtful community, which is the Serbian community in the north. There is still no official cooperation between the Serbian and Albanian community in Kosovo, in particular after the northern community officially boycotts Kosovo's institutions after February 2008. This is a very sensitive and

currently unachievable issue, including the representation of Albanian students at the MWU.

Anyhow, SPARK contributed a lot in the exchange of documentation between Serbian and Albanian academic community in Kosovo.

Accelerate the integration of the UM in the European Higher Education Area

It is obvious that MWU has greatly contributed to achieve this goal. The most important effect provided by MWU was opportunity for students to experience the ways of teaching methods used in European higher educational system and to meet and follow some themes that are poorly presented in their educational system (in Kosovo, Serbia and some other countries of ex. Yugoslavia). In addition, this was a rare opportunity for them to follow lectures in English language together with the students from other regions. This has become even a greater value if we consider that local students demonstrate a lower mobility than the international students, where Erasmus and other exchange schemes are available.

MWU's students could also get various information about the EU integration processes in relation with it.

The Pristina University in Kosovska Mitrovica in general is networked with other European universities and is developing various international and regional high education projects.

INCREASE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE MWU BY FURTHER EMBEDDING IT IN THE UM

It is obvious that the handover of competencies, logistics and realization of MWU to Mitrovica University is not an issue that could be processed smoothly. The reason for this is still insignificant interest of University to take a leading role in the process of organizing such international event as MWU is. However, there has been UM local staff that expressed the will to take over the competencies from SPARK.

The financial sustainability of MWU is one of most important elements in this process. Some positive steps that could make similar events more financially sustainable have been taken this year (foreign professors accepted to work free of charge wherein students from abroad have paid for their expenses). Nevertheless, this shall not be sufficient in a process of organizing future similar project and its sustainability. Therefore, sustainability of any event in future is an issue that requires much more attention and discussion.

XI THE KEY STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

STRENGTHS OF THE MWU

- **The Project (MWU) has been entirely transferred to the competencies of Pristina University in Kosovska Mitrovica**, so the University can claim the ownership and responsibility for the project onward.
- **The importance of the MWU for local students and entire community** (unique opportunity to become a part of international educational/academic community for a period of time, to host other cultures and fellow students and practice English and other languages)
- **Social capacity that SPARK has developed so far in specific Mitrovica community which was transferred to the Pristina University in Kosovska Mitrovica** (the earlier appraisals of the MWU and SPARK efforts as the most successful and significant international project/NGO in Kosovo by the achieved results and vision, but also as one that closest approached to some institutions in Kosovo that are extremely hard for cooperation)
- **Dedicated and capable SPARK/MU staff**

WEAKNESSES OF THE MWU

- **Lack of mature management skills, involvement and dedication by the University in Pristina (Mitrovica University).** The project has been mainly managed by the IRO and Student Parliament with the insufficient involvement and support of other high level segments from University. Some students, including international ones as well, teachers and some people from the community felt that the MWU was not entirely the MU's project, but rather it still belonged to SPARK, seeing the SPARK's staff all the time in facilitation and organization. Also, some international teachers said they had not met any of the MU higher representatives or teachers, in spite of their interest for exchange of experience.
- **The lack of coordination between visiting and host professors before the beginning of lectures.** In spite of the efforts by the MU and SPARK to enable

this communication to run smoothly, there remained problems as last year due to the lack of staff and time.

- **Poor knowledge of English language and comprehensive education of local students remains still the major weakness.**
- **The alienation of the MWU in the local community.** The project's management put insufficient efforts to publicly promote the values of the MWU within the community, in spite of the fact that there has not been so far any other event which could better promote the entire northern community to international academic society. In spite of the sensitive and specific situation in the north, the MWU should have been promoted far greater.
- **The visiting professors have not been provided with the students portfolios or at least the entire group background info.**
- **Stereotypical side events** (Some foreign students have complained that they were offered only insights into a culture and tradition of the Serbian people and believe that there should be more creative and variety in offering them an insight into this issue).

XII The key strategic RECOMMENDATIONS¹¹

- **Strengthening of the Mitrovica University's capacities.** Although this is a broad issue, very much depending upon the University management itself, the MU can contribute with some concrete ideas and actions:
 1. The installation of a separate MSU office within IRO which would resolve the problem of lack of staff and coordination
 2. Preparation for the MSU and MWU should take place much earlier than so far
 3. English language courses should last between 3 to 6 months, or select only those students fluent in English
 4. More transparent selection of local professors (according to the almost same or similar selection criteria for the international professors), engagement of competent local professors/trainers, who are willing to participate in co-teaching and fluent in English language too
 5. Establishing contacts with autonomous faculties with the coordination and cooperation with the Rector's office. That would enrich and improve the

¹¹ If I had more time to get involved with the MWU activities, I would have presented the technical recommendations as well. Nevertheless, for the future success of this project, here presented the key strategically recommendations.

involvement of the broader academic community and the University itself and it would bring a diversity and quality to the courses and entire project.

6. To support the University in logistics and ideas to pay visit as much as possible for various study trips and networking. Simultaneously, it should inspire and encourage the University to organize more meetings and host their colleagues and students from abroad and in particular to adopt a practice of vivid Internet correspondence and exchange of ideas with other international universities and professors. Here, in particular SPARK can mediate and connect the University with other NGOs and agencies in Serbia and abroad which promote the Bologna process.
 7. To insist on direct communication between the teaching pair (host and visiting professors). After recruiting a course coordinator, this could be done by requesting the submission of the joint report on communication and coordination activities, including the teaching syllabus, prior to the start of Mitrovica International University.
 8. Bring some freshness into the lectures with the case studies, field work
 9. To promote the MWU and MSU in community in the way it understands and accepts the importance and general benefits for the community (this would take a proper PR communication plan and lobbying activities)
 10. To draft the MWU/MSU Capacity Building Strategic Plan for the University, As such, it would encompass the true needs of the local business and academic community and contribute in its major part to the development and wellbeing of Kosovo Serbian community.
 11. A more comprehensive selection of students:
 - to select those familiar with the course subject;
 - if there are students that have lower background knowledge in relevant topic, SPARK and MU should organize extra (supporting) pre lessons to introduce new and contemporary concepts;
 - Motivate students who speak and can follow the courses lectures in English language as much as possible and,
 - For those with poor knowledge in English but great interest in participation, organize at least 3 month intensive English language course.
- **Professors need to get the students portfolios in due time**, which is at least ten days before the Opening Ceremony.
 - **A more creative planning of side events which would offer diversity.** Instead of primarily visits to Kosovo monasteries and parties, there may be other activities included as well, such is the Traditional Cooking Day, the Serbian Night (which already was organized), visits to geographic sites and former industrial complex remain, etc.

*Mitrovica Winter University
Evaluation report*