ONLINE EDUCATION: TEACHING IN A TIME OF CHANGE

• Paper / Proposal Title:
Bridging the 'mobility gap' in Europe through Internationalization at Home: A Case Study of an International Online Micro Masters Programme

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• Abstract (300 words):
This study evaluates internationalisation at home (IaH) as a means for bridging the 'mobility gap' in countries, which are outside the core of Europe. It draws on the experience of two six month long international MicroMasters programmes, which were conducted jointly within the virtual campus of four higher education institutions (University of Istanbul in Turkey, Institute of Communication Studies in North Macedonia, DOBA Faculty of Applied Business and Social Studies in Slovenia and Vytautas Magnus University in Lithuania) in the period between 2018 and 2021. Relying on insights from a survey questionnaire (Students: N=153) and representative semi-structured interviews (Students: N=17; Lecturers: N=9), it applies the Updated Kirkpatrick Model in order to assess the utility and effectiveness of IaH in a previously unexamined context. It argues that, by effectively delivering IaH, the MicroMasters programmes have contributed towards addressing the 'mobility imperative' in countries that fall outside of the core of Europe. As a result they represent examples of the ways in which online education can be used as a tool for
bridging the inequality gap in the provision of a more equally distributed internationalised higher education across Europe.

Keywords: Mobility gap, virtually mobility, online education, MicroMasters, international higher education, internationalisation at home, Kirkpatrick Model.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

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Pedja Ašanin Gole is a Senior Lecturer in strategic, crisis and digital communication at DOBA Faculty of Applied Business and Social Studies Maribor, Slovenia (fully online study), and Guest Lecturer at Institute of Communication Studies Skopje, North Macedonia. He has more than 30 years of practical experience in the field of public relations in the public and private sector in Slovenia and abroad. Among other things, he was a Director of communication and strategic marketing in the Motorway Company in the Republic of Slovenia during the planning and implementation of the biggest Slovenian investment project – the accelerated construction of motorways, and Strategic communication advisor to the President of Republic of Macedonia. His research field is related to the new institutional aspects of strategic communication, issues management and governance.