

## **Long Program description**

*Red de Hispanistas de Europa Central* has as a central goal the increasing of the quality of the educational activity in the field of the Hispanic Studies. It brings together specialists in Hispanic and Latin American Studies from 22 departments of 11 CEEPUS countries, who share the same ambition: to heighten the weight of their field of study not only in the academic area, but in the entire cultural context of their countries. For this reason, all the participants of this network consider that is of vital importance to elevate the level of the educational work in every department of Hispanic Studies. This aim was in fact the very motor of the creation in 2010 of the CEEPUS network *Red Regional de Hispanistas de Hungría, Rumania y Serbia*, which changed its name in 2013 into *Red de Hispanistas de Europa Central* because of its enlargement.

The CEEPUS program proved to be extremely useful for our purpose, because we took advantage of the mobility activities (undergraduate and graduate students, PhD students and teachers) in order to invigorate and improve our educational work, research and editorial activity. It is to say that the Spanish Departments in this region used to be smaller and often with less tradition in comparison with the English, German or French Department, even so, in the present international context and with the rise of the importance of the Spanish language in the world, we witness an even greater demand for a degree in Spanish Studies.

During our ten year collaboration, we consider that the development of Hispanic Studies in the region has been significant. The mere fact that we entered in contact and started to assiduously collaborate for exchanging better practices in our teaching activities and in our scientific research and publications unquestionably improved the performance of our departments. The successful combination between teaching, research and networking is one of our biggest achievements. The thematic Spring School organized each year (except for 2020, because of the pandemic situation) at the University of Pécs puts into practice this combination, because it brings together several generations of Hispanists: undergraduate students, PhD students and teachers. The meeting of teachers and students from several departments of our region stimulates the desire to realize academic placements within the CEEPUS network, whereas the PhD Students Forum can serve as a basis of a Joint PhD program.

### **1. Context and Aim of the Educational Process. The Role of the Mobilities.**

The network's thematic focus remains the relation of the Central European space with the large Hispanic area (Spain and Latin American countries), which is studied from different points of view: cultural, linguistic, literary, etc., and we emphasize an interdisciplinary approach in all our activities. Questions regarding migration for economic or ecological reasons, populism, xenophobia, political corruption, "walls" or "fences" against the immigrants etc. are inevitably referred to in our classes, conferences and discussions with students and colleagues, because we observe these similar phenomena in both parts of the world and we want to understand the common features and the distinctive nuances. We also consider that it is important to comprehend the history of these spaces in order for us to have a better perspective on the present and we are convinced that literature has an inestimable value from this point of view, because it has the capacity to disclose the human time in its particularities. On the other hand, we also encourage the research of the traditional relation between the CE and Hispanic countries, especially the cultural exchanges (translations, broadcasting of movies or movie series, music etc.) including diplomatic and political exchanges, as we prepare our students for becoming translators, teachers of Spanish language, editors, cultural agents, as well as working in consulates, embassies and in international organizations and missions. We consider that it is

very important to maintain a strong relation with the labour market and to prepare our students for a wide variety of specialized jobs in the future. The placements carried out by the teachers and students within the framework of our CEEPUS network are invaluable from this point of view.

## **2. Innovative Strategies for Teaching and Research Promotion**

**2.1.** One of our goals from the beginning of our collaboration was to increase the quality of our educational activity and, accordingly, we stimulated teaching mobilities as an opportunity to put in practice innovative teaching strategies.

-Each series of modular lectures is always preceded by sending a package of electronic resources to the hosting department that can address students' needs in the future. We use multi-media teaching/learning methods and we encourage the interactive approach. Our aim is to share this material in order to benefit the greatest number of our students. The pandemic experience of 2020 and 2021 was in this sense very instructive, because all of us were forced to upgrade our ability to use the virtual platform and to better organize our work on-line.

-A part of our team participated in an experimental workshop organized at the Pazmany Peter University of Budapest in March 2019. The papers were sent one month before by the teachers and they were presented not by the author, but by another colleague. The students assisted the presentations and actively participated in the subsequent exhaustive discussion. Our colleagues from Pazmany Peter based their courses dedicated to Latin American Contemporary Literature on a part of these papers which are archived in a google drive.

- The course "Hispanismo en Europa Central", held at the Masaryk University since 2020 has an innovative syllabus thanks to the heterogeneity of its teachers. Students are familiarized with a variety of state of the art academic topics under one standardized model, significantly widening their scope of what Spanish studies is.

### **2.2. We encourage the correlation between teaching and research.**

In fact, a lot of our students found their research topic thanks to the meeting with a CEEPUS teacher. In fact, we decided to collaborate to a larger extent and encourage joint coordination of bachelor thesis and MA dissertation. One first experience in this direction took place on the Spring semester 2021: a teacher from the Péter Pázmány University (Dóra Bakucz) participated in the defense of a BA Thesis at the Masaryk University

We also focus on involving our MA students in international research teams, for example for complex tasks such as compiling a complete bibliography of translations from Spanish to CEE languages and of works of textual criticism related to Spanish and Latin American works.

This emphasis put on the practical skills of translating, editing, writing and reading literary works in order to foster the alternative professional profiles in the involved students was the point of departure of our Erasmus+ Project (KA220-HED-000023037) "LITPRAX – Literature in praxis: Professional challenges of reading, translating and editing in digital age". This project, coordinated by the University of Ljubljana, and developed in cooperation with the University of Timisoara, University of Novi Sad, CSIC of Spain and the Publishing House Malinc of Ljubljana, was approved in November 2021 and it will be carried out with the collaboration of the entire network.

### **2.3. The activities developed at the Spring School in Pécs are also marked by this pursuit of improvement.**

There are three kinds of conferences: for teachers, for PhD students and for undergraduate and graduate students. These conferences don't overlap each other in time, thus giving the possibility to listen to the exposés of each category of participants and to realize the intended crossover of the generation.

At the same time, this Spring School has special guests, not only from the academic area, but also from other fields. The meeting of students and teachers of Hispanic Studies with the Diplomatic Corps of Spain and Latin American countries is already a tradition.

The practical workshop, for example, about creative writing or research techniques, is successful among the students, as well as the master classes held by one of the teachers of our network or by guest professors from other countries.

### **3. Implementation of Joint Degree Program**

During our ten year collaboration, we have made several attempts to implement a Joint MA Program.

In 2011/12 we organized a Postgraduate Program at the West University of Timisoara (90 ECTS) in which twelve professors of our network came to offer compressed courses for the students of this university. The students were evaluated by the teachers, wrote a final dissertation and received a diploma issued by the West University of Timisoara. Unfortunately, next year we received the status of Umbrella Network and the flow of the mobilities slowed down, so we couldn't continue with this initiative. This Postgraduate Program was designed to prospect the educational offer/demand issues for elaborate an adequate Curricula for a Joint MA Program.

Since 2014 a Joint MA Degree named *Latin American Studies* has been accredited at the University of Koper in collaboration with the University of Pécs, University Megatrend of Belgrade and Instituto Ortega y Gasset from Madrid. This joint program, which has a special focus on items as political thought, ideologies, history of ideas etc., is valuable for all young Hispanists from the region, and the CEEPUS grants would be of real help in order to benefit from this MA, unique in the region. The difficulties linked to its implementation have caused the delay in the initiation of the current program. As a consequence, even though this Joint Program can be functional and entices students from this region, due to some organizational problems at the University of Koper, it didn't in fact start to function. But despite all this, since the University of Pécs participates in a Master Joint Degree similar to the one we plan, this Master can be used as an inspiration for our own curriculum.

In fact, we were still determined to implement a Joint MA Degree and we started again with a pilot project at the University Masaryk of Brno. This project was centred on the introduction in the BA and MA Curricula of a course named "The Hispanic Studies in Central and Eastern Europe" and it was scheduled for the Spring Term by four teachers of our network, who proposed four blocks of three lectures each. Unfortunately, only the first of the lectures could be delivered before the outbreak of the pandemic: "Contemporary Argentinian Literature" (Dora Bakucz, Pazmany Peter University of Budapest). In Spring Term 2021 this pilot course was continued with the original three interventions plus a new one:

- "The theme of the maternity and paternity in the contemporary Latin American literature" (Ilinca Ilian, West University of Timisoara)

- "The Drama Practice as Learning Tool for Foreign Languages" (Gemma Santiago Alonso, University of Ljubljana);

- "Linguistic-cultural and cognitive approach in the Phraseology" (Andjelka Pejovic, University of Belgrade);

- "The Phraseology: translation and creative transformations" (Veselka Nenkova, Paisii Hilendarski Plovdiv University).

Because of the pandemic situation, we were forced to give these classes online, but even in these conditions, the pilot course was successful and the students appreciated these exchanges.

For 2022-23 four other members of our network will teach in this course:

- "Violence on women in contemporary argentine prose" (Vedrana Lovrinović, University of Zadar).

- "Latin America through its literature" (Domingo Lilón, University of Pécs).
- "El prólogo ficcional y la articulación de la novela como género literario" (Ignac Fock, University of Ljubljana)
- "Crónicas y cronistas" (Zsuzsanna Csikós, University of Szeged)

The course offers 5 ECTS and the evaluation consists in a review of a book proposed by one of the teachers in the bibliography that they previously sent to the students. The course was included in the Curricula of the Spanish Department of Masaryk University of Brno: <https://is.muni.cz/predmet/phil/jaro2021/SJ1B041?lang=en;setlang=en>

This pilot course has three main objectives:

- to carry out a regular collaboration between the universities of our network within the framework of the official Curricula;
- to present to the students the current development of Hispanic Studies in Central and East European countries;
- to test several teaching strategies for adapting the educational process to students of other countries. Especially this item we consider it very helpful in order to adequately elaborate a Joint Program Degree.

Each year there are other teachers in charge to propose and hold this series of classes and those professors interested to collaborate in this pilot course have to present their proposal in the Fall Term.

Alongside this pilot-course, one of the results of the LITPRAX Project consists in the curriculum of a course which offers an overview of the literature written in Spanish in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and presents the practical elements of literary reading and production. The course curriculum prepared by LITPRAX will be shared with the 23 departments of the CEEPUS network and its adoption will be stimulated by the members of LITPRAX in one of the meetings of the Project (ME3), organized especially for the members of the CEEPUS network. The representatives of these universities will be asked to foster accreditation processes of R1 in their own institutions in order to increase the number of academic HE centres where the course will be taught. Likewise, this course will be incorporated to the framework of the programme "Hispanism in Central Europe", initiated by the Masaryk University of Brno and which constitutes the core of a common Joint Master carried out within the framework of the CEEPUS program.

The preliminary administrative works have advanced in the Jornadas Iberoamericanas meeting (Pécs, November 2021). The possible organization of the Joint Degree curriculum will be elaborated between February and May 2022 and presented and discussed in the next Jornadas Iberoamericanas at Pécs.

#### **4. Spring School**

In the last six years we established a central annual event where students and teachers from the network meet and share their research. To this end a spring school in Pécs was created in 2014 called *Jornadas Iberoamericanas* of Pécs which evolved over the years. In 2020 we were forced to cancel it, because of the pandemic situation, but in 2021 we organized it again, in November, with the topic "The Effects of the Global Pandemic Situation. Special Focus on Latin American Countries". We plan to organize it in 2022 too, as usual, in May, and the topic of debate will very probably be "The Aftermath of the Cold War in Latin America, Central Europe and abroad".

Intensive courses, roundtables and workshops for both professors and students are being held within *Jornadas Iberoamericanas* and all activities offer credits to students (3 ECTS). All courses are held in Spanish, and the students are evaluated on the basis of the presentations and papers delivered during the spring school. *Jornadas Iberoamericanas* of Pécs

will be co-organized, as in the previous years, by the Pazmany Peter University of Budapest and this year a new co-organizer joins the team: the University of Szeged.

## **5. PhD Joint Program**

An important aim of the network is to focus on specific collaborations at the PhD level and on the facilitation of obtaining co-tutorship for PhD students from the network. There are several universities that have doctoral schools in Hispanic Studies (the Eotvos Lorand University of Budapest, the University of Zagreb, the University of Ljubljana, Jagellonian University in Krakow, etc.). Aside of these institutions there are several habilitated professors in the network that can coordinate PhD research.

We have already started to collaborate for the evaluation of PhD theses: the professors of our network participated in the Doctoral Thesis Tribunal in the departments of other countries (for example, a professor from Belgrade evaluated a thesis of Ljubljana, etc.). Several PhD students have taken advantages of the CEEPUS mobilities for carrying out placements in the other departments of the network.

A number of research directions that we want to commonly achieve have been highlighted and they are being proposed within the doctoral schools from the network's universities. These directions are:

- to study the relationship between Hispanic countries and the countries from the former communist block between the end of the Second World War and the present day;
- to thoroughly study the Diaspora from Central and Eastern European countries in Spain and Latin America;
- to deepen comparative literature studies that focus on CEE and Hispanic writers;
- to develop a common work on the Hispanic avant-garde, placing emphasis on the relation to the avant-garde from Central and Eastern Europe;
- to make a comparative study of the translations from Hispanic literature between the countries represented in the network.

## **6. Annual Meetings**

During these ten years of collaboration the coordinators of the CEEPUS units frequently met in the colloquia, at congresses organized by various departments of Hispanic Studies of the CEEPUS area, and at the Summer School in Pécs. In each occasion they found a space for monitoring the activity of the network and plan further activities.

In September 2019 the coordinators of the CEEPUS units joined again at the University of Timisoara for an administrative meeting whose principal aim was to assess the evolution of our network and to try to find the solution to elevate its score (*i.e.* obtain again the status of Normal Network). In 2020, because of the pandemic situation, we used the virtual platform for better monitoring the performance of our network. The biggest achievement was the implementation of the pilot course “The Hispanic Studies in Central and Eastern Europe” at the Masaryk University of Brno. In 2021 (13-15 of Novembre) we met again in the colloquium *Encrucijadas* organized by the University of Szeged.

## **7. Achievements**

### **7.1. General Achievements**

#### **1. Membership**

-In 2010, we had 6 member Universities from 3 countries. During the years, several departments adhered to our network and now we have 22 member Universities from 11 countries;

#### **2. Spring School**

-Since 2014 we organize a regular Spring School in Pecs which also serves as a regular annual meeting;

### 3. Academic journal

-In 2021 we reached the twelfth issue of our journal *Colindancias – Revista de la Red de Hispanistas de Europa Central*, which is indexed in important databases. For more information: <https://colindancias.uvt.ro/index.php/colindancias>.

### 4. Academic meetings and joint publications

-A report on our network activity has been published in 2016 in the Spanish journal *Letral*: Andjelka Pejovic & Ilinca Ilian Țăranu, “La red profesional regional de hispanistas en la internacionalización de la educación superior”, *Letral*, nr. 17 / 2016, Universidad de Granada, p. 96-108, ISSN: 1989-3302. <http://revistaseug.ugr.es/index.php/letral/article/view/5447/5106>

-Our common research was presented at the panels organized in the FIEALC Congress in 2017 organized at the Megatrend University of Belgrade, the LASA Congress which took place in Barcelona in 2018 and at the FIEALC Congress organized at the University of Szeged in June 2019.

-Several articles and dossiers which reflect our common work were published in prestigious journals since 2016. Some examples:

Dossier “Cruzando el puente plateado: las relaciones entre América Latina y el Bloque del Este” (*Revista de Letras*, Sao Paulo, vol. 57, 2 / 2017);

Pejović, Andjelka; Barbara Pihler Ciglič. “Acerca del continuum fraseológico”. *Verba Hispanica*, XXV, 2017: <https://revije.ff.uni-lj.si/VerbaHispanica/article/view/7597/7233>;

Dossier “El Boom latinoamericano detrás de la Cortina de Hierro” (*Cuadernos del CILHA*, Mendoza, Argentina, 1 / 2018);

Dossier “Symposion - La recepción de la novela corta latinoamericana en el espacio de Europa Central y del Sureste” (*Colindancias*, 9/2018: <https://colindancias.uvt.ro/index.php/colindancias/issue/view/14/showToc>).

Dossier “Problemáticas de la otredad en la literatura hispánica: fronteras, (des)igualdades, identidades” (*Verbum - Analecta Neolatina* 22 Nr. 1 / 2021: <https://verbum.ppke.hu/index.php/verbum/issue/view/37>).

Dossier “F(r)icciones culturales entre América Latina y el Bloque del Este/Balcenes durante la Guerra Fría” (Approved for next issue, volume 22 / 2021, of *Hispanic Research Journal*, Great Britain).

Dossier “Contacts and exchanges between the Central/Southeastern European and Latin American literatures during the Cold War” (*Ars & Humanitas*, Ljubljana, volume 16 / 1, 2021).

Dossier “Significados y experiencias de la ma/paternidad en la literatura hispanoamericana” (under evaluation in the academic journal *Universum* from the University Talca, Chile).

-In 2021 three professors of the Szeged University proposed the panel *Relaciones birregionales. Los estudios latinoamericanos en Hungría y en Europa* for the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the CEISAL Congress (Helsinki, June 2022: <https://www2.helsinki.fi/en/conferences/ceisal-2022>). This panel was accepted and about ten members of our network will participate in it.

## 7.2. Special achievements during the academic year 2021/22:

-Approval of the Erasmus+ Project KA220-HED-000023037 “LITPRAX – Literature in praxis: Professional challenges of reading, translating and editing in digital age”, coordinated by the University of Ljubljana, and developed in cooperation with the University of Timisoara, University of Novi Sad, CSIC of Spain and the Publishing House Malinc of Ljubljana;

-Collaboration of the members of several departments of our network (Ljubljana, Belgrade, Bucarest, Iasi, Timisoara, Szeged, Brno, etc.) in the European project “The Spanish in Southern Europe” and “The Spanish in Central Europe”;

-Even in the context of the pandemic situation, we managed to attract a large number of students for the CEEPUS Mobilities, given that the majority of the students in Hispanic Studies prefer to go to Spain, in general with Erasmus scholarship.

We are pleased to point out that the University of Pécs was awarded in 2021 with the EAIE Award for Excellence in Internationalization for the online short-term programs developed and managed by the International Center. [<https://tk.hu/new/15801/the-university-of-pecs-receives-the-most-prestigious-european-internationalisation-award>] We are proud to have contributed, in some measure, through the activity of our network, to obtaining this prestigious international award.

## **8. Milestones**

### **8.1. Regular milestones:**

- to create a well-balanced Traffic Sheet between student and teacher mobilities. Deadline: 15 of April 2021;
- to encourage the students to apply for CEEPUS scholarships in order to leverage the opportunities offered by our network. Deadline: 30th of October 2022. In this order, we created a promotional platform at <https://redhispanistaseuropacentral.wordpress.com/> and <https://www.facebook.com/RedHispanistasEuropaCentral/>;
- to encourage the participation of students in the Spring School *Jornadas Iberoamericanas* in Pécs through CEEPUS mobility grants.

### **8.2. Specific milestones:**

- to assess the success of the pilot project course held in Fall Term at the Masaryk University of Brno and to continue this project for the next academic year at the same university;
- to implement and cooperate with the entire network for carrying out the Erasmus+ Project “Literature in praxis: Professional challenges of reading, translating and editing in digital age”;
- to continue the design of the Joint Program “The Hispanic Studies in Central and Eastern Europe” based on the pilot project course held at the Masaryk University of Brno.
- to publish two more books in the co-editorial project “Pontes Philologici”: *Estereotipos y prejuicios en/sobre las culturas, literaturas, sociedades del mundo hispánico*, edited by the University of Belgrade; Gemma Santiago Alonso, *La enseñanza / aprendizaje del artículo en español: adquisición, conceptualización y procesamiento*, edited by the University of Ljubljana.