Transfering best practices of doctoral training between EU, Russia, Belarus and Armenia

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MODEST (Modernization of Doctoral Education in Science and Improvement Teaching Methodologies) is a new capacity building project funded by the Erasmus+ programme. The project is coordinated by the University of Latvia. There are three other EU partners (from Finland, Poland and the United Kingdom) and a total of ten partners from three partner countries (Russia, Belarus and Armenia). Aims of the project include:

- To improve the structure and content of Doctoral Education and the internal capacities of services that manage doctoral studies by set up of Doctoral Training Centers (DTC) in partner universities in accordance with the modern European practices.
- To facilitate a successful adherence with Bologna process reforms and its instruments by the academic and administrative staff involved in doctoral studies and research management through the organization of special training sessions in Armenia, Belarus and Russia.
- To improve/increase the quality of international and national mobility of doctoral students of Armenia, Belarus and Russia for training and research based on development of double degree programmes and joint supervision.
- To ensure sustainability of DTC’s and their cooperation with European partners by establishing a sustainable professional network providing the use of participatory approaches and ICT-based methodologies.

The work is carried out in three phases: preparation, development, and dissemination & exploitation. In the preparation phase, a detailed analysis of organization of doctoral studies and research management structures is done in both EU and partner countries. The development phase includes preparation of training materials, a series of study visits and training sessions, and creation of DTC’s. The dissemination & exploitation phase includes open access learning material, dissemination conferences, publications and workshop/conference presentations, as well as events and open resources for stakeholders, policymakers, students and the general public. To partly serve similar purposes as MODEST, University of Helsinki and Russian State Hydrometeorological University have introduced a new project, PEEX-AC (PEEX Academic Challenge). The aims of PEEX-AC are to share knowledge and experience, to promote state-of-the-
art research and educational tools through organization of research training intensive course on "Multi-Scales and -Processes Modelling and Assessment for Environmental Applications", to improve added value of research-oriented education in Finnish and Russian Universities, and to boost the PEEX international collaboration. The MODEST and PEEX-AC projects serve as a great examples of transfer of good practices in higher education, especially on doctoral level, but they also create new connections for educational and scientific collaboration. From the PEEX perspective, MODEST is an important initiative strengthening connections between European universities and institutions in Russia, Belarus and Armenia. The project will continue until autumn 2022.