

Empirical studies in COST TU1305

Quantitative study

Social Networks, Social Media usage and Travel Behaviour among students in EU countries

Two empirical studies that have been carried out within the Action:

A quantitative study based on a web-based survey developed within the working groups regarding “*Social Networks, Social Media usage and Travel Behaviour among students in EU countries*”. The survey was distributed at 23 universities in 20 countries in different languages. The analysis of the 8250 responses is currently in progress.

A qualitative study based on the qualitative method developed within the working group. The study “*Mobile communication, friendship and everyday communication*” includes 20 in-depth interviews from 6 countries, and the analysis of the interviews is in progress as well.

The outcomes of these studies generated several publications in high ranked journals. A technical report based on the quantitative survey, proposing ways to collect travel behaviour data, will be published as well.

Quantitative study:

Methodology

The Survey questionnaire was formed in a joint work of WGs meetings and on-line discussions.

Several methodology decisions were made:

- Survey among Millennial students at all levels (age 18-35)

- No. of observations in each university: at least 300 completed questionnaires
- Time of survey: Spring 2017
- Survey format: on-line questionnaire.

The major part, of finalizing the survey questionnaire, was done from November 2016 (London meeting) until April 2017.

A call was sent to all Action's MC and Substitutes members, asking to take part in the survey. Those who express their will to participate signed an ethical declaration, before receiving the questionnaire papers. Part of the researchers decided to have the questionnaire in English, the others went through Translation procedure.

The Translation procedure, was based on the procedure done in WHO including:

- Forward translation
- Review
- Back translation
- Pre-testing / pilots
- Final version

Based on the pre-testing comments, we had several rounds of fine tuning until getting into the final version of the survey in English and 9 other languages.

The main topics of the survey are as follows:

- Socio-demographic information
- Off - line social networks: size, connections and distribution of close friends and acquaintances.
- On - line social media network : size, interactions
- Travel behaviour related to group social activities / leisure events
- Social media usage related to social activities/ leisure events
- Nature and strength of relationship within social activities participants
- Evaluation of personal measures and cultural differences

The online survey was coded into Qualtrics platform in all languages. Links and QR codes for the relevant languages were sent to researchers for distribution in

the university. As planned it was distributed during spring period, from May to July 2017.

Survey participants

The questionnaire was distributed in 23 universities in 20 countries in English and 9 other languages.



Survey participants – English version

9 countries, 11 Universities

- ▶ Austria: Boku University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences
- ▶ Cyprus: Cyprus University of Technology
- ▶ Italy : Bicocca - University of Milano
- ▶ Italy: Politecnico di Torino
- ▶ Malta: University of Malta
- ▶ Netherlands: Eindhoven University of Technology
- ▶ Netherlands: Radboud University, Nijmegen
- ▶ Germany: Technical University of Munich
- ▶ Greece: University of Thessaly
- ▶ Croatia: University of Zagreb
- ▶ Estonia: University of Tartu



Survey participants – Translated version

11 countries, 12 Universities, 9 languages

- ▶ Belgium : University of Liege
- ▶ France : Institut Pierre Louis d'Epidémiologie et de Santé Publique
- ▶ Luxembourg: University of Luxembourg
- ▶ Hungary: Budapest University of Technology and Economics
- ▶ Israel: Technion - Israel Institute of Technology
- ▶ Lithuania: Mykolas Romeris University, Vilnius
- ▶ Poland: Krakow university of Technology
- ▶ Portugal: Instituto Superior Técnico, University of Lisbon
- ▶ Serbia: University of Belgrade
- ▶ Slovakia: University of Zilina
- ▶ Spain: Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
- ▶ Spain: University of Granada

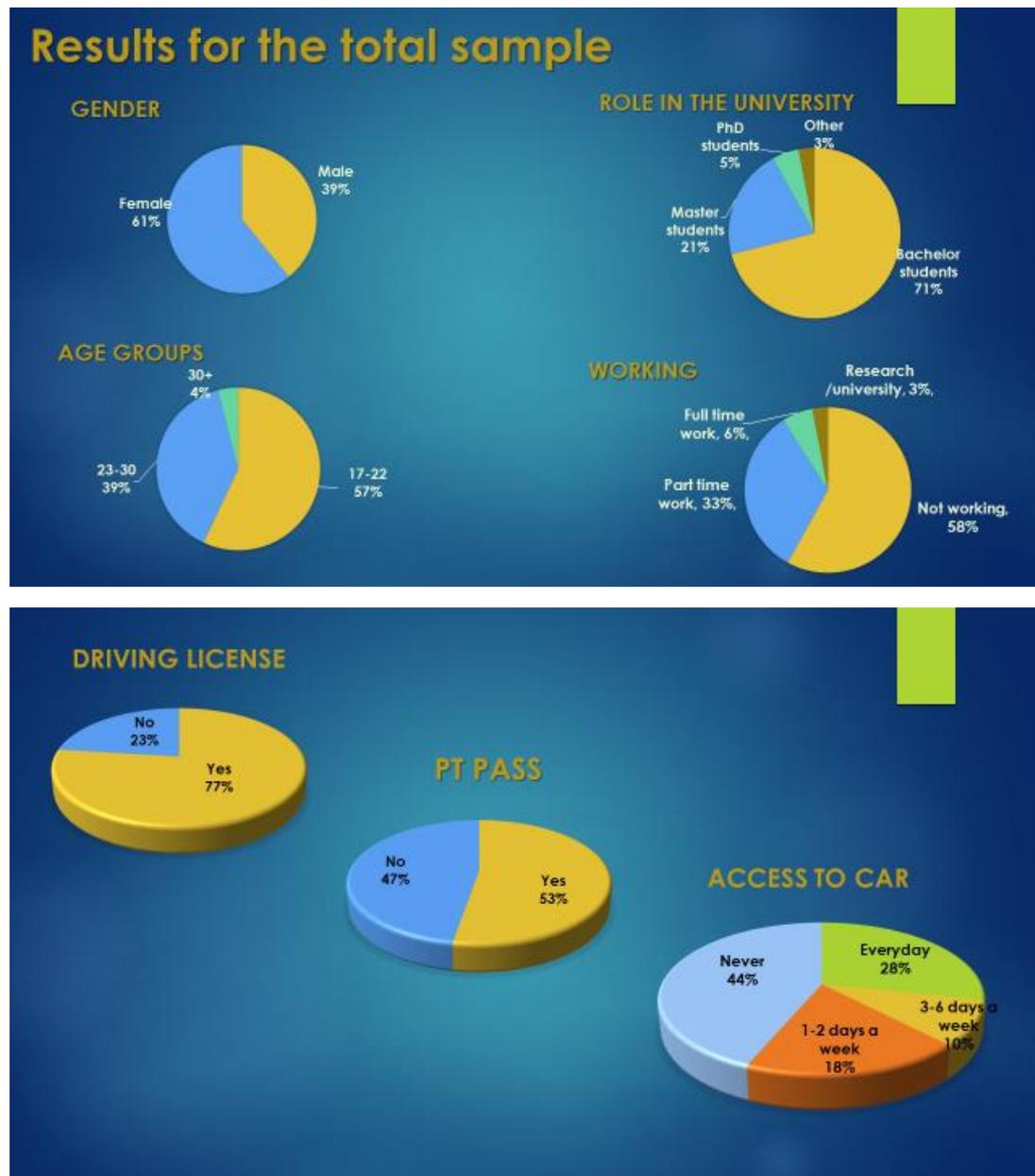
Analysis – 1st phase

On mid-July 2017 the on line questionnaire was closed with a high level of participation in most countries.

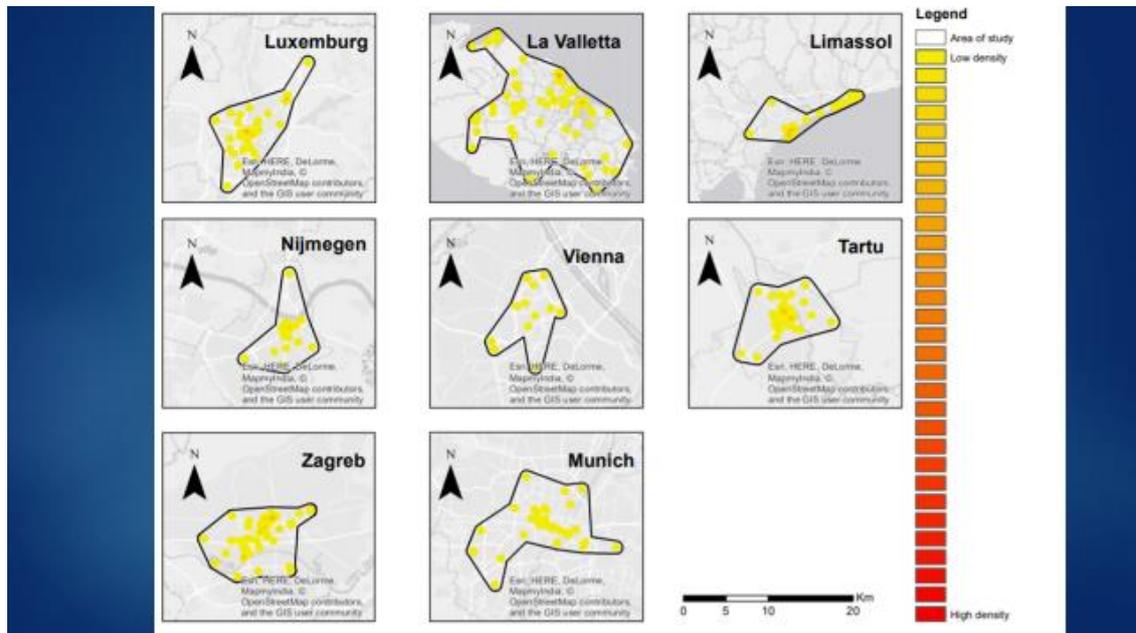
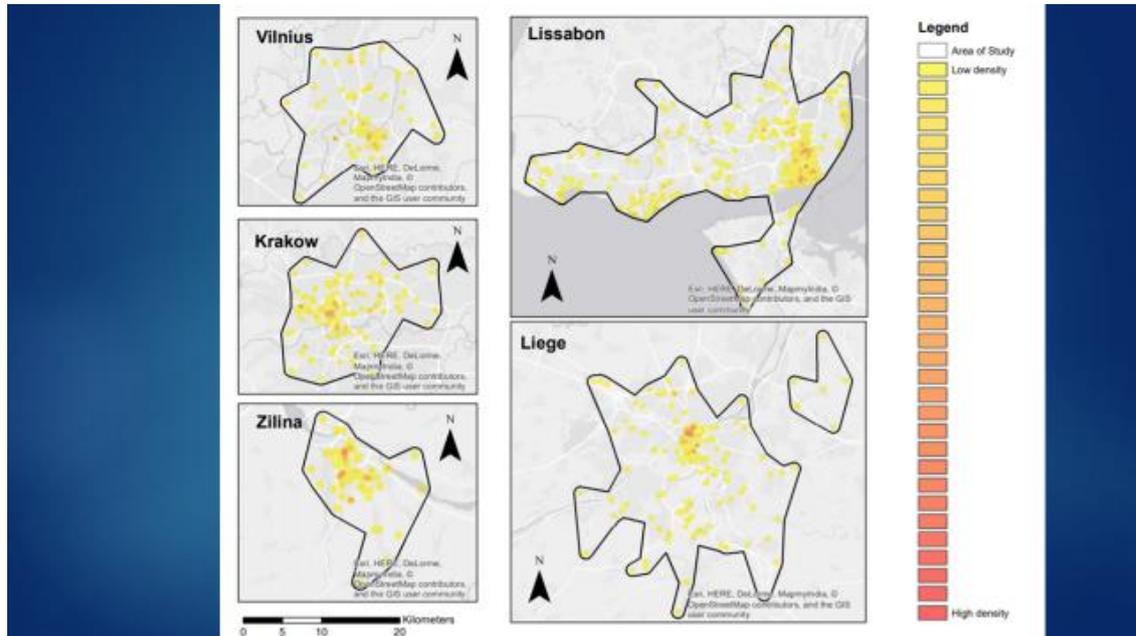
The first task of the analysis process was creating a workable file. For this, we created a complied file from all questionnaire versions, it included 9282 participants. Cleaning this file from missing values and decision on the base unit for verification as “university” took some time. At the end of this process we ended up with 8250 valid answers.

Today we are in advance stage of data analysis.

Here are some results describing the participant’s characteristic:



First results from the spatial analysis done to describe the social activities distribution in different cities:



Open source database

The idea of creating an open source database was idea of the working group. It was presented in the MC meeting in Milano and accepctd by MC members.

To create an open source data base we need approval of each participant who provided the data to include it in the open source database (on each phase).

The survey database will be open in 4 phases :

- Phase 1 : Each one's receives his own database - after publication of a joint paper (estimation October 2018).
- Phase 2: Open only to researchers who participated in the survey - 1 year after phase1 (estimation October 2019).
- Phase 3: Open to COST TU1305 MC & Substitutes only – 1 year after phase 2 (estimation October 2020).
- Phase 4: Open source completely to everyone – 6 months after phase 3 (estimation Spring 2021).

The open source database use will require a citation of the *Technical Document* and to the first published paper.