

# NEWSLETTER



Issue 2 | December  
2021

Erasmus+

## THE SMARTI PROJECT

SMARTI is an Erasmus+ CBHE project implemented by the consortium of 4 European, 5 Russian and 6 Armenian partners under the coordination of Technische Universität Dresden (Germany). The project is aimed at the promotion of excellence of education in PC by the development and the implementation of a comprehensive pedagogical Modules English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) curricula for in-service Armenian and Russian teaching staff and trainee teachers using an ECTS/Tuning Modular design for teaching academic content in English in Russia and Armenia, which will be developed via a network of EMI Centers.

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## News about Project Activities

### *Hybrid kick-off meeting at KFU, Russia*

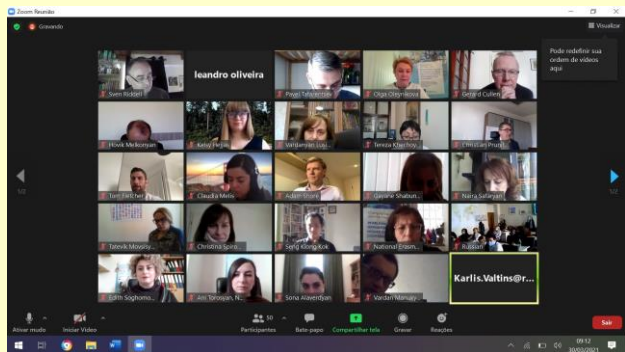
On March 30 - April 01, 2021 the SMARTI kick-off meeting took place hosted by Kazan Federal University (KFU), Russia. The event was organized in a blended format: Russian project partners met onsite in Kazan while European and Armenian colleagues joined the meeting online on Zoom platform. Over 70 representatives from 11 consortium members, NEO Russia, NEO Armenia, SMARTI associate partner have become the participants of the hybrid event.



The meaning of the first meeting within the framework of any international multilateral project is hard to overestimate. It is true for SMARTI project as well even though many consortium members had known each other and been collaborating before the project was launched. In the course of the kick-off meeting, partners got to know each other through presentations and personal discussions, outlined the project goals and objectives specifically for their home organizations, defined the first steps of project realization. The latter was especially important since project workplan and timeline had to be adapted to new reality under COVID-19 pandemic.



The kick-off meeting agenda has been fulfilled and objectives achieved: all partners presented their organizations and introduced project teams, workpackage leaders outlined the WP activities and timeline, emphasized the WP main features and partners' involvement. As planned, the event fostered all project-related activities at SMARTI partner organizations.



More information at <https://smarti-erasmus.eu/smarti-project-kick-off-meeting/>

Available at <https://smarti-erasmus.eu/smarti-national-awareness-day-2021-in-russia/>

### RU National Awareness Day

On June 3-5, 2021 SMARTI National Awareness Day (NAD) took place within the framework of the conference “Digital Change in the ELT Community” organized by National Association of Teachers of English (NATE), associate partner of SMARTI project. The event was hosted by National University of Science and Technology “MISIS”, Moscow, and brought together 648 participants from 25 countries and 207 Russian cities, both online and offline.

RU National Awareness Day was held in 2 stages: first, representative of SMARTI RU coordinator Mordovia State University (MRSU) Olga Safonkina spoke about the project to NATE Board. Her presentation “SMARTI: Dissemination and Sustainability with NATE” clearly defined National Association of Teachers of English as one of the key actors in terms of project dissemination and sustainability since NATE holds vast networking possibilities in reaching non-partner stakeholders.

The second stage was held online on Zoom Platform. On behalf of all RU SMARTI partners, the representative of Kazan Federal University Evgeniya Bulina made the presentation “Relevance of EMI for Higher Education in Russian universities” and outlined the benefits of upcoming EMI centers at RU universities, partners of SMARTI project. The presentation audience have become academic staff from Russia, Estonia, Finland, and the USA.



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Presentation made by:

Bulina E.N. (Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russia), Burenina N.V. (Ogarev Mordovia State University, Mordovia, Russia), Gvozdeva M.S. (Petrozavodsk State University, Petrozavodsk, Russia), Panko V.M. (Irkutsk National Technical University, Irkutsk, Russia), Zvezdova A.B. (Russian Register, Saint Petersburg, Russia)



## RELEVANCE OF EMI FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN RUSSIAN UNIVERSITIES

Erasmus+ SMARTI  
Support for Innovative Methodology, Approaches and Tools for Teaching through the Medium of English in order to improve Educational Yield, Sustainability and Internationalization [SMARTI]



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## **NEO Russia monitoring**

Since the beginning of the project, National Erasmus+ Office (NEO) Russia has carried out two monitorings of the project: the preventive monitoring and the early project monitoring.

The preventive monitoring session took place on March 17, 2021 on Zoom platform and brought together all Russian SMARTI partners. Mrs. Olga Oleinikova, NEO Russia, gave very valuable and timely comments and recommendations regarding the project implementation: strong focus on Bologna process and European Higher Education Area (EHEA) issues, student-centred approach, EU qualification framework and standards, Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA (ESG). She emphasized the importance of the research of broad EU experience, joint publications with EU and Armenian partners, focus on innovations, digitalization and new educational formats. Mrs. Oleinokova gave also some practical recommendations like the purchase of the equipment during the first year of the project.

The second monitoring visit took place online and addressed the following aspects:

- Project management (adopted management model, communication channels, conflict resolution procedures, etc.).
- Quality assurance strategy (QA strategy, internal and external quality assurance, criteria for peer review of the deliverables, etc).
- Dissemination (dissemination strategy, project web-site, etc.).
- Development of curriculum (ESG and ECTS Guide use by curriculum design, application of learning outcome approach and student-centered methodology by the development of the curriculum structure and modules, composition of the teaching and learning packages, etc.).

After the monitoring, NEO Russia developed recommendations regarding the improvement of QA and dissemination activities, which have been fully implemented by now.

### ***Hybrid partner meeting and training at GSU, Armenia***

On October 06-08, 2021 Russian project team participated in Hybrid Combined Annual Steering Group Meeting & Training Day. The event was held in a hybrid format: Armenian colleagues as well as representatives of SMARTI coordinator Technical University of Dresden (TUD), staff from Riga Technical University (RTU) and a number of Russian partners met in person at Goris State University (GSU), Armenia while other partners joined the event online.

During the meeting, the partners discussed the results of NEO Russia monitoring visit, the outputs and outcomes of WP1 "Preparation", the specifics of organizing future international conferences as well as partners' arrangements concerning EMI centers launch. Within the framework of the meeting, a special training session was organized for dissemination officers of project partners to boost the dissemination processes within SMARTI.

Mrs. Olga Safonkina, representative of SMARTI RU coordinator shared her impressions: "It was a wonderful event, the importance of which cannot be overestimated in the context of forced online communication. I would like to express my gratitude to the host country for their hospitality and wish that as many events as possible within the framework of the project take place in person."



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More information at  
[https://smarti-  
erasmus.eu/hybrid-  
combined-annual-  
steering-group-meeting-  
training-day-6-8-october-  
2021/](https://smarti-erasmus.eu/hybrid-combined-annual-steering-group-meeting-training-day-6-8-october-2021/)



## News about EMI Centers

All RU partners have started the procedure of EMI centers launch at their universities. The main task so far is to outline the vision of the centers to define their place in the structure of the universities and ensure their active - or even proactive - contribution to the internationalization of partner HEIs. It is crucial to involve university top management and - if applicable - external stakeholders into this process. In the nearest future all RU partners will develop draft strategy of EMI centers' establishment and functioning and discuss it with SMARTI coordinator.

### SMARTI Knowledge

#### RU desk and field study

The D&F study was a focused research undertaken within WP1 "Preparation" in order to get a profound knowledge on EMI-related issues in Russia and Armenia, so that all future project activities are successfully aligned with objective needs of partners and target audience.

The field study acquired a form of a complex survey aimed at university academic and administrative staff and students. The questionnaires requested a wide variety of statistical data: nomenclature (types of EMI programs), formal indicators (number of programs, courses, staff involved etc.), opinion (estimation by target audience), ranking and so on. WP1 team gathered the most actual and precise information on what had been going on in the sphere of EMI at RU HEIs. The raw data became a subject of a detailed analysis which not only brought clarifications and explanations for the statistics, but also came up with a set of focused recommendations on how to fine-tune future project activities in accordance with the survey results. The field study main and follow up surveys involved up to 3000 respondents (academic and administrative staff, students) from 32 Russian HEIs, 19 cities and 18 regions of Russia.

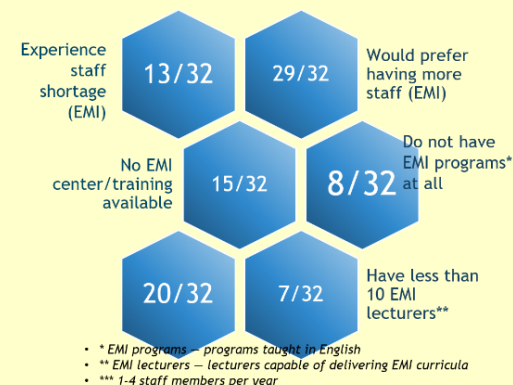
Figures below present the general indicators obtained via the field study.

The desk study component in its turn implied an excursus into the area of academic publications, related projects and other sorts of relevant materials to be considered in this context. The main task of this endeavor was to identify a correlation between already existing scientific materials and the 9 Modules of SMARTI project as a mechanism of boosting positive changes into the sphere of EMI.

In this context, the WP1 team with the help of all the Russian consortium members found 133 related publications. After a semantic analysis, key topics were identified and compared with content of the Modules. As a result, the WP1 team came up with 5 bibliography lists pertaining to particular Modules. This was a very helpful step in terms of gathering back-up materials and keeping the initially planned project publication agenda up-to-date.



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**Command of English:**

- 31/32 HEIs — B1-C2
- 1/32 HEI — A1-A2(!)

**Compliance with ECTS:**

- 8/32 HEIs do not have any courses/programs aligned with ECTS

**Perception of EMI:**

- 0/32 HEIs consider EMI to be only a matter of language



## Quality SMARTI

### IEWG Meeting

On November 10, 2021 Internal Evaluation Working Group (IEWG) held the online meeting regarding the current state of affairs of SMARTI QA issues. IEWG has outlined a very intense agenda to fulfil in the near future:

- Evaluation report for the Hybrid Combined Annual Steering Group Meeting & Training Day at Goris State University that will incorporate the analysis of questionnaires in QuestionPro system and interviews with the participants.
- QA report on the self-assessment of desk and field study elaborated by Russian and Armenian partners.
- Survey on the inventory of the best practices presented during the training at Goris State University with the aim to identify the benefits of the information provided by University Catholic of Portugal.
- QA report on the workpackage 1 “Preparation”.
- Progress report on SMARTI project implementation covering two reporting periods (April - July, May - November).

Another area that IEWG will address in the upcoming future is related to EMI centers accreditation. This topic will be closely discussed during the special meeting.

### **SMARTI project presentation**

#### Presentation to the EU Delegation to Russia

On September 22, 2021 SMARTI project team at Petrozavodsk State University (PetrSU) presented the project to the EU Delegation to Russia represented by Ivana Norsich, Deputy head of the Delegation, Laurent Bochereau, Minister-Counsellor, Head of Science and Technology and Other EU Policies, Anastasia Zelenko, staff of Press & Information division.

Aleksei Kupriakhin, PetrSU project team member, introduced “SMARTI” to the audience providing the delegation with a concise description of the project, its main goals and activities. Apart from general project-related information, the presentation dwelled upon work package activities which had already been implemented. Thus, a brief introduction of WP1 results was made. As a joint achievement of University Catholic of Portugal (UCP), PetrSU and Armenian National Agrarian Univerisyt (ANAU), the research within WP1, being crucial for facilitation of EMI-related issues awareness, is going to form a solid ground for implementation of WP2 “Development”. The results of the research will be used to fine-tune the activities planned and align them with actual needs of partners and target audience.



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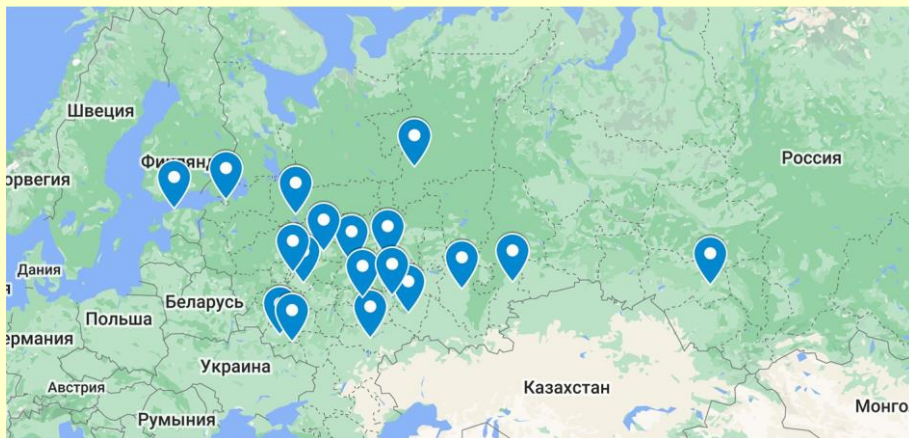
### Presentation at the NATE Umbrella Convention

On October 29-31, 2021 the XXII NATE Umbrella Convention “Rethinking ELT in Russia: Theory and Practice” was organized by the National Association of Teachers of English (NATE). The conference was held in a blended format and was attended by 150 teachers from 18 cities from Russia and Europe.

The SMARTI project on behalf of the Russian partners at the Umbrella event was represented by Olga Safonkina, Associate Professor of the Department of English Philology, Faculty of Foreign Languages, Mordovia State University (MRSU). She presented the report “English as a medium of instruction (EMI): results and conclusions of the field study in Russia”.

In her presentation, Olga spoke about the results of the survey of students and teachers of Russian HEIs in the field of teaching special disciplines in English. The survey was organized and analyzed by SMARTI partner Petrozavodsk State University within the framework of SMARTI preparation workpackage.

Olga Safonkina commented: “First of all, I would like to thank all the Russian partners who took part in this survey. Special thanks to colleagues from Petrozavodsk State University who collected and processed these data. Umbrella conference gave me the opportunity to share the results of this survey to the wider audience. Cooperation with the National Association of Teachers of English is a unique chance to be heard throughout Russia due to the huge territorial coverage of this organization”.



### Presentation at KILS

On November 18, 2021, SMARTI project was presented at the annual Kazan International Linguistic Summit “Linguistic Diversity in the Global World” (KILS, 15 - 19 November 2021), organized by Kazan Federal University, the Institute of Linguistics of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and the Institute of Linguistic Research of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The online event brought together 32 well-known scientists from 11 countries and more than 500 participants from around the world.

Within the Summit Session “Modern tendencies in foreign languages teaching” the representatives of SMARTI consortium from KFU Evgeniya Bulina and Natalia Krivosheeva made the report “The perspective of English as a Medium of Instruction in Russian Universities” where they presented the results of the field and desk study performed under SMARTI provided by Petrozavodsk State University (PetrSU). The survey revealed the opinion of RU students on such issues as the quality of EMI courses, problems and drawbacks, and the role of an EMI lecturer in Russian universities. The presentation audience was academic staff, linguists and students from Azerbaijan, Russia, UK, and other participating countries.

The representative of another SMARTI partner, Liverpool John Moores University (UK), Dr. Casey Beaumont was an invited guest at the Session where she made her presentation “Rosetta Stone for English language development”.



More information about the event could be found at

<https://event.kpfu.ru/rus/event/6835/>

<https://kils.kpfu.ru/ru/conference/programma-kils-2021-18-noyabrya-2021-goda-chetverg/>



## Meet SMARTI Partners

### Ogarev Mordovia State University (MRSU)

Ogarev Mordovia State University was founded in 1931. It is a classical university with over 20,000 students which means it pays equal attention to both Humanities and Science. In 2010 the Russian Government awarded MRSU the status of National Research University.

MRSU incorporates 17 academic departments, 7 research institutes and 2 affiliated campuses, fully-fledged research infrastructure, E-Learning Centre. In 2012 MRSU was awarded the Recognized Excellence Level by the National Quality Award for Higher Education.

The latest edition of the Top University Rankings (QS) ranks it 189th out of 300 Eastern European and Central Asia universities. Among Russian universities, it ranks 45th and 20th among classical Russian HEIs.

### MRSU SMARTI project team



Natalia Burenina,  
PhD  
Project  
coordinator



Olga Safonkina, PhD  
QA officer



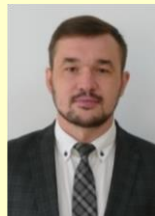
Sergey  
Cerkovnov  
Publicity officer



Ksenia  
Irgizova  
Project  
administrator



Dr. Andrey Makeev  
Subject teacher  
(power  
engineering)



Anatoliy Lysiakov,  
PhD  
Subject teacher  
(power  
engineering)



Mihail  
Rozhkov, PhD  
English language  
instructor



Anastasia  
Ermoshkina  
Aida action Group  
member (social  
media)



### SMARTI Consortium

#### Coordinator



#### Partners





### Petrozavodsk State University (PetrSU)

Petrozavodsk State University is a flagship university of the Russian Federation. In this special status the university serves as a driver of socio-economic development of the region (Euroregion Karelia) and identifies the innovative agenda. PetrSU comprises 11 educational institutes including Engineering, IT, Pedagogy, Medicine, Biology, Economics and Law etc. (about 7000 undergraduate and graduate students, over 2000 part-time students and about 1600 faculty and staff). PetrSU includes 5 innovative parks (IT, Bio-medical, Engineering, Humanitarian, Pedagogical, Youth), 3 scientific research institutes, 5 institutes on integrated inter-disciplinary research, the Publishing House, the Scientific Library and more than 40 international, regional and university innovation centers.

PetrSU is a member of U-Arctic, actively participates in North2North, Visby, Erasmus+, FIRST + (Finish-Russian Student and teacher exchange), Stipendium Hungaricum and other programs. Annually over 200 students and university teachers participate in academic mobility. There are over 500 international students from over 60 countries. Within the last 3 years their number doubled.

### PetrSU SMARTI project team



Marina Gvozdeva  
Project  
coordinator



Galina Parikhina  
QA officer



Aleksei Kupriakhin  
Publicity officer,  
project  
administrator



Elena Tikhomirova  
English language  
instructor



Dmitry Korzun  
Subject teacher  
(IT)



Aleksei Rogozin  
Technical support

### SMARTI Publications

**RELEVANCE OF EMI FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN RUSSIAN UNIVERSITIES**  
Bulina E.N., Burenina N.V., Gvozdeva M.S., Panko V.M., Zvezdova A.V.  
// XXVI Conference of National Association of Teachers of English in  
Russia "Digital change in the ELT community" June 3-5, 2021, Moscow,  
Russia Conference Proceedings.



### Upcoming Events

- ESP training at P4/UCP, Portugal
- ESP home multiplier training at RU and ARM partners
- EMI training at P2/LJMU, Great Britain
- Set up of EMI Centers at RU and ARM partners
- QA and dissemination activities

Available at  
<https://nate.misis.ru/>





## SMARTI social media



Facebook: [smartiproject](https://www.facebook.com/smartiproject)



Twitter: [SMARTI](https://twitter.com/SMARTI)



Youtube: [SMARTI Project](https://www.youtube.com/SMARTIProject)



ResearchGate: [SMARTIresearchGate](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/SMARTIresearchGate)



VK: [https://vk.com/smarti\\_russia](https://vk.com/smarti_russia)



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## SMARTI Consortium

### Coordinator



### Partners

