

4.3 PREVIEW Report on Remote Internship experience in Spain

Promoting Resilience and Employability in uniVersity PREVIEW

**ERASMUS + Call 2022 Round 1 KA2
KA220-HED - Cooperation partnerships
in higher education**

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This Project has received funding from European Union under
the Grant Agreement n. 2022-1-IT02-KA220-HED-000088742

Project Information	
Project Acronym	PREVIEW
Grant Agreement Number	2022-1-IT02-KA220-HED-000088742
Project Full Title	Promoting Resilience and Employability in uniVersity
PREVIEW Report on Remote Internship experience in Spain	
Dissemination Level	PR
Type of Document	Report
Contractual date of delivery	31 August 2025
Deliverable Leader	USAL
WP Leader/Task Leader	USAL
Keywords	Internship experience, remote internship, toolkit
Abstract	This report presents the PREVIEW project's achievements in WP4 activities and results. This is one of the main project results, enabling to support all the people involved in a remote internship program, particularly after the project's ending. The Report on Remote Internship experience offers an overview of the aggregated results enabling to assess the overall impact summarizes the strategy and concrete actions related to the communication and dissemination of the Preview project results.

List of Beneficiaries		
N.	Partner Name	Short Name
1	Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche	CNR
2	Università degli Studi di Sassari	UNISS
3	Academia de Studii Economice din Bucuresti	ASE
4	Universidad de Salamanca	USAL
5	Mediterranean Pearls APS	MEDPEARLS
6	Asociatia de Dezvoltare Intercomunitară Harghita	ADIHARGHITA
7	AlterContacts	ALTERCONTACTS
8	Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University	NEVU

List of Acronyms and Abbreviation

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Acronym	Description
HEI	Higher Education Institution
C&D	Communication and Dissemination
MP	Mediterranean Pearls APS
WP	Work Package
EU	European Union
HR	Human Resources
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
P.A.	Public Administration
KPI	Key Performance Indicator

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1. Description of the project

Students graduating today with business degrees will be working in careers yet to be created, and many already in the workforce will transition from collocated to remote work. How do educators, and individuals, prepare them for what lies ahead?

The Project PREVIEW based even on lessons already learnt in the context of the COVID-19 crisis aims at meeting to this new scenario for the education system by developing innovative and more inclusive pedagogical and apprentice model in designing and managing internship and other university activities to support the ecosystem actors (students, university tutors and company tutors) in developing and upskilling knowledge and skills according to the scenario and organization model occurred by the digital age.

PREVIEW has as its main objective to increase the capacity and readiness of Partners involved as well as students and universities and industries staff to manage an effective shift towards digital education required by the organizational changes as consequence of remote working explosion.

The Consortium has identified the tourism and cultural heritage sector as a pilot area. Therefore, the project aims to focus also on skills development for remote working, to provide students with further employability skills to increase their professional success in a labor market shaped by digital transformation. As piloting action, PREVIEW focuses on the tourism field and aims at providing outputs easily transferable to all fields.

The Project support the use of digital technologies for teaching, learning, assessment and engagement. Particular attention on promoting gender equality and addressing differences

in relation to the access and use by underrepresented groups. Furthermore, it addresses the:

1. Development of disadvantaged rural and urban areas since remote internship could help students from rural areas and with economic limitation to live, a work experience in interesting and stimulating context as well as could contribute to increased participation in university life disadvantaged groups, regardless of their socio-economic background. To this regards UNISS and ASE are Universities that involve student from these areas;
2. Open and distance learning priority since the project envisages MOOC and innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for internship experiences;
3. New learning and teaching methods and approaches since the project focuses the development, testing and implementation of flexible learning pathways and modular course design (online and blended) and appropriate forms of assessment, including the development of online assessment and innovative pedagogies model such as collaborative online learning or the use of co creation approach such Service Design Methodology.

The partnership consists of Universities, research centers, developmental agencies:

- CNR (ITALY)
- UNIVERSITA DEGLI STUDI DI SASSARI (ITALY)
- ACADEMIA DE STUDII ECONOMICE DIN BUCURESTI (ROMANIA)
- UNIVERSIDAD DE SALAMANCA (SPAIN)
- NEVSEHIR HACI BEKTAS VELI UNIVERSITY (TURKEY)
- MEDITERRANEAN PEARLS APS (ITALY)
- ASOCIATIA DE DEZVOLTARE INTERCOMUNITARA HARGHITA (ROMANIA)
- ALTERCONTACTS (HOLLAND)

1.1 Preview specific objectives

The Preview Project aims to:

- Design and test a new University curriculum by including innovative Remote Internship.
- Promoting a smooth shift in the University Partners from the in person internship program to a virtual program in the fields of tourism and cultural heritage.
- Involving at least 100 students or graduates (at least 16 of them with economic and geographical limitations) participating in remote internship experiences in the field of tourism and cultural heritage.
- Providing at least 50 education operators (teachers, trainers, university and company tutors, etc) with a much higher level of digital skills to usefully manage blended internship experiences as well as blended learning.
- Involving at least 80 education operator in the Learning activities involving at least 150 students in the MOOC on remote skills.
- Facilitating access to international work experiences despite economic and geographical limitations, disabilities, learning difficulties and disadvantages.
- Establish a strong partnership among University and Tourism and Cultural Heritage business associations in order to exchange expertise in different fields and to improve the quality of remote internships.
- Support enterprises involved in the project in transition to remote working.
- Improvement of knowledge about new methodologies, tools and technologies as educational means for supporting teachers and students to develop digital and soft skills and competences.
- Stimulating virtual forms of collaboration and communication among students, university teachers and company representatives.

2. Introduction

The WP4 activities test and assesses multimedia learning resources and PREVIEW HUB resources to facilitate the implementation of effective remote internship experiences.

Effectiveness of internship PREVIEW outcomes is verified and measured by defining training resources on procedures and tools, mainly addressed to admin staff, university tutors and tutors at the hosting organization.

Learning resources for interns and trainees have been created with the aim of strengthening their:

- digital competences – to face the digital transformation of the labour market;
- transversal competences specific to online working – e.g., self-organisation, online communication, problem-solving, etc.;

2.1 WP4 activities and results

According to the Project, the WP4 foreseen the definition of the following Deliverables:

- 4.2 PREVIEW Report on Remote Internship experience in Italy
- 4.3 PREVIEW Report on Remote Internship experience in Spain
- 4.4 PREVIEW Report on Remote Internship experience in Romania
- 4.5 PREVIEW Report on Cross Cultural Internship experience

The Reports for Italy, Spain and Romania **share the same structure** of the 4.5 PREVIEW Report on Cross Cultural Internship experience.

All Deliverables must be based on data available from administrative information and on surveys defined for Students, University staff and Companies.

2.2 Preview Internships in Spain (USAL)

At the University of Salamanca (USAL), particularly within the Tourism Degree at the Ávila campus, the PREVIEW Internship program aimed initially at facilitating remote internships, with hybrid internships (combining remote and on-site experiences) becoming the preferred option by both students and participating companies. The program was actively promoted among students and companies, with substantial efforts made by the USAL team to raise awareness and foster interest.

Initially, 34 students showed interest in participating in hybrid internships involving 25 potential institutions. However, despite the initial high level of interest, actual participation was notably limited due to multiple factors. One significant issue was the declining number of enrolled students in the Tourism degree at the Ávila campus, which amounted to only 90 students in total for the academic year 2023-2024, <https://indicadores.usal.es/portal/estudiantes/evolucion-de-matricula/evolucion-de-la-matricula-de-grado/> (including all the years, not only in the last ones ready to hold the internships). Additionally, scheduling difficulties emerged when management issues prevented the internships from beginning in January 2025 as initially planned, shifting the pilot period to February–April 2025, a less convenient timeframe for many students.

Despite the extensive promotional and coordination efforts made by the USAL team, ultimately only 6 students were able to participate. These students undertook internships in 4 different institutions. The total number of operators involved was 17, including 6 academic tutors, 6 company tutors, 4 company coordinators, and 1 university coordinator.

The USAL team demonstrated considerable commitment and perseverance to the PREVIEW program; however, the limited student availability, primarily related to the relatively small number of Tourism degree students at the Ávila campus and scheduling constraints, posed significant challenges to achieving higher participation rates during this pilot period.

Students were initially contacted via direct communication from academic coordinators and through informational sessions organized at the Ávila campus. Companies were approached using existing collaboration networks from previous internship agreements with USAL, supplemented by outreach through direct contact via phone and email. The recruitment and final agreements encountered some challenges, primarily related to coordinating suitable internship periods due to administrative delays in confirming the starting dates.

2.3 Internships activities

The internships at USAL, within the PREVIEW program, involved practical training experiences aimed at enhancing student competencies and facilitating their integration into professional environments within the tourism sector. Students engaged in tasks combining remote work and on-site experiences, supervised by both academic and company tutors.

Before starting the internships, administrative tasks included signing agreements between the university and participating institutions, defining internship periods, allocating academic and company tutors, and coordinating the initial briefing sessions for students and staff.

One main difficulty encountered was the administrative delay in the consortium, initially planning internships to start in January 2025 but postponing them to February–April 2025, which impacted student availability. Given that curricular internships are usually planned at the beginning of the academic year, this delay was perceived by some students and companies as a lack of commitment, complicating student participation further. The solution adopted involved intensive coordination and communication efforts between USAL, students, and companies to adjust dates and maintain student engagement despite these unforeseen challenges. While it is true that the number of people interested in internships was high at the beginning, this sudden decline could not have been foreseen. Due to deadlines, other degrees could not be included in the internship.

3. Internship data

3.1 Introduction to surveys

As part of the evaluation activities foreseen in WP4, a set of structured surveys was distributed among the main stakeholders involved in the PREVIEW internship experience in Spain, including:

- Company mentors (ex-ante and post-internship): assessing expectations, preparation, satisfaction, and perceived outcomes.
- Students: instruments aimed at evaluating their motivations, perceptions, skill acquisition, and satisfaction with the hybrid internship model.

The company surveys were divided into two phases:

- Ex-ante surveys, completed prior to the internship, aimed to gather expectations and perceived priorities regarding support, communication, learning opportunities, and the value of hybrid modalities.
- Post-internship surveys, conducted after the internships, evaluated satisfaction, skills development, integration in the organisation, usefulness of digital tools, and recommendations for future implementations.

The student surveys were distributed across five phases: pre-internship expectations, MOOC feedback, mid-internship perceptions, post-internship evaluation, and self-assessed competencies.

All surveys consisted mostly of Likert-scale questions (1–5), enabling comparative analysis across time, along with some open-ended questions regarding expectations, benefits, and suggestions for improvement. All surveys were conducted in Spanish.

3.2 Data analysis

The analysis of the PREVIEW internship experience at the University of Salamanca is based on the quantitative and qualitative results obtained from structured surveys completed by students and company mentors at three key stages: before, during, and after the internship. All questionnaires were conducted in Spanish and included a combination of Likert-scale items and open-ended questions, allowing for both statistical aggregation and thematic insights. No sociodemographic data (such as gender, age, or study year) were collected in the student or mentor surveys. This decision was made to ensure the anonymity of participants, given the very limited number of students (n=6) and company mentors involved

in the pilot. Including such data could have inadvertently allowed the identification of individual respondents, especially in the context of a small academic programme like Tourism at the Ávila campus. Prioritising confidentiality was essential to foster honest and unbiased feedback.

Before the internship

Students reported high motivation levels, with strong expectations to develop transversal skills such as teamwork, digital competencies, and communication abilities. Their average responses across items related to learning expectations ranged from 4.0 to 4.8 (on a 5-point scale). However, some responses reflected moderate uncertainty regarding their understanding of the platform and internship goals.

Company mentors, in their pre-internship surveys, also expressed positive expectations. Most highlighted the importance of student autonomy, the ability to adapt to remote or hybrid working conditions, and clear communication. The overall averages for mentor expectations exceeded 4.5, demonstrating strong commitment to the pilot.

During the internship

Student feedback during the internship phase showed a generally positive perception of the hybrid experience. Scores remained high (mostly between 3.8 and 4.6), with notable appreciation for the support received from tutors and the adaptability of companies to the hybrid format. However, several students pointed out challenges in coordination and a lack of clarity in their assigned roles within the companies.

After the internship

Final evaluations from students demonstrated a high level of satisfaction with the internship outcomes. Post-internship surveys showed consistent improvement in students' self-

assessed competencies—particularly in digital skills, problem-solving, and remote communication. Many students also felt that the internship had contributed positively to their professional development and employability prospects.

Mentors' post-internship responses also confirmed the overall success of the pilot. They reported strong satisfaction with students' performance (mean values around 4.7), especially valuing their attitude, responsiveness, and contribution to team tasks. Some difficulties were noted regarding the technical usability of the PREVIEW platform and the short duration of the internships, which limited deeper integration into company dynamics.

Comparative analysis of student feedback

To gain a clearer understanding of how students' perceptions evolved throughout the internship experience, a comparison of mean scores was conducted across three phases: before, during, and after the internship. This analysis included key items such as expectations, communication, role clarity, learning opportunities, and supervisory support.

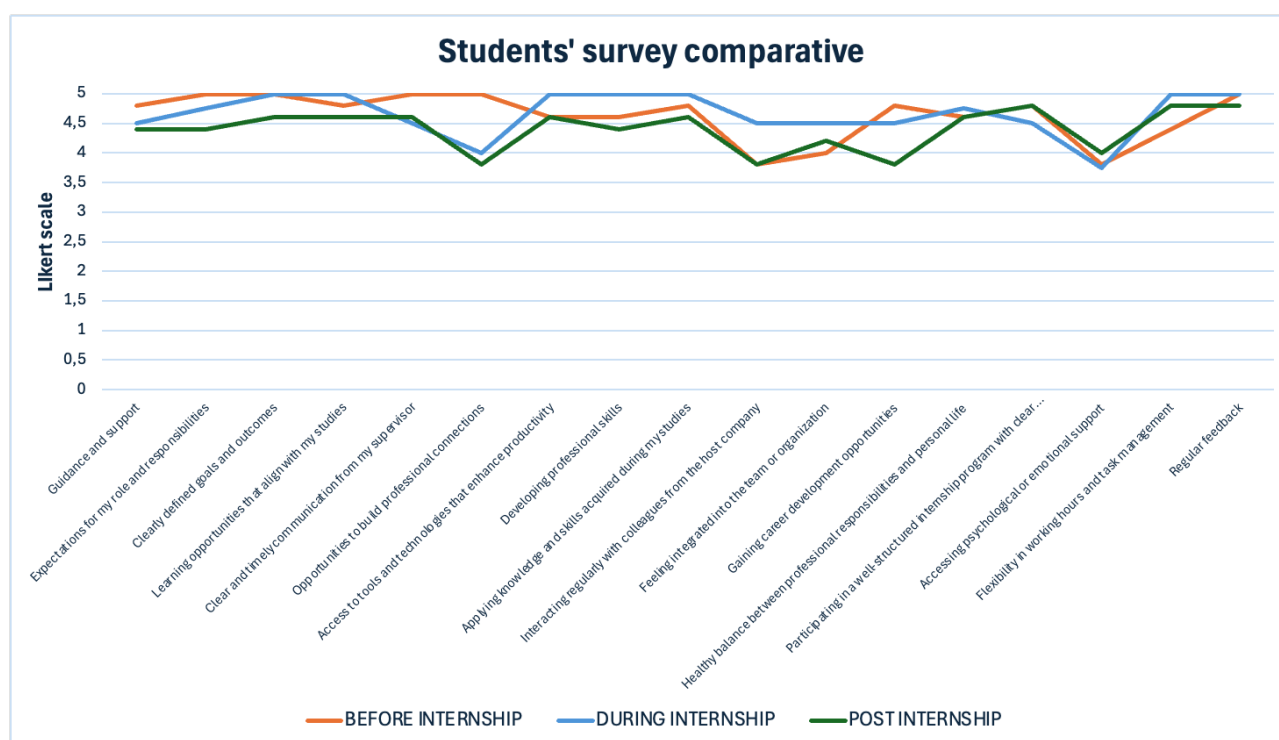
The results reveal a consistently high level of satisfaction across all phases, with most dimensions maintaining average scores above 4.5 out of 5. Some of the most notable findings include:

- Consistency in expectations and goal clarity: Students rated the definition of their roles and goals with the highest possible score before the internship (5.0), and these ratings remained stable or slightly improved during and after the internship.
- Learning opportunities: This dimension also scored 4.8 before the internship and increased to 5.0 during, suggesting that real-world experience met or exceeded expectations
- Communication and support: Both guidance and supervisor communication

maintained strong ratings, slightly decreasing after the internship but still averaging above 4.5.

- Opportunities to build professional connections—an important dimension of internships—received decreasing scores over time, indicating that while students initially had high expectations in this regard, the actual experience did not fully meet them. This suggests that the hybrid and partially remote nature of the internships may have posed challenges in fostering meaningful networking or team integration.

These results indicate that the internship model offered through PREVIEW managed to maintain student motivation and meet initial expectations across the experience. The stability and slight improvement in scores over time demonstrate the positive impact of the model on student learning and satisfaction.



Overall, the internship model was positively assessed by all groups. While logistical and technical aspects presented some barriers, the learning outcomes and collaborative experiences were broadly appreciated. The results highlight the strengths of the PREVIEW model in terms of learning and support, while also pointing to areas—such as professional networking—that could benefit from targeted improvements in future iterations of the program.

Evaluation of the PREVIEW MOOC

As part of the internship preparation, students at the University of Salamanca completed the PREVIEW MOOC, designed to provide foundational knowledge on hybrid and remote internships, as well as to introduce them to the PREVIEW platform and digital tools.

The student evaluation of the MOOC was overall positive. Most participants considered the contents relevant and aligned with their needs at the start of the internship. The average ratings for the clarity of explanations, structure of the modules, and usefulness of resources ranged from 4.0 to 4.7 on a 5-point Likert scale.

Students especially appreciated the flexibility of the format and the self-paced structure, which allowed them to balance the course with their academic and personal commitments. The sections covering digital communication, remote collaboration, and expectations in hybrid internships were identified as particularly helpful.

However, some students reported difficulties in navigating the platform or accessing certain materials. A few respondents also indicated that they would have benefited from more real-life examples or case studies linked to the tourism sector.

In summary, the MOOC effectively supported students' onboarding to the PREVIEW internship model, helping them to clarify expectations, build digital readiness, and approach

the hybrid context with more confidence. Enhancements in user experience and sector-specific content may further increase its impact in future editions.

3.3 SWOT

Based on the surveys completed by students and company mentors, as well as the internal coordination experiences at USAL, the following SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis summarises the key aspects of implementing the PREVIEW internship pilot in Spain.

Strengths

- High satisfaction among participants: Both students and mentors rated the hybrid internship experience positively, highlighting skills development and valuable engagement.
- Flexible hybrid format: The possibility to combine remote and on-site work was well received and allowed for broader inclusion.
- Commitment from university staff and mentors: Despite logistical challenges, the dedication of academic and company tutors enabled the pilot's success.
- MOOC as a preparatory tool: The PREVIEW MOOC was perceived as useful and accessible, helping students to better understand expectations and tools.

Weaknesses

- Very small sample size: Due to the low enrolment in the Tourism degree and changes in planning, only 6 students participated, limiting the scope and representativeness.

- Scheduling constraints: The delayed confirmation of internship dates created uncertainty and reduced student engagement.
- Role ambiguity: Some students reported unclear tasks or insufficient integration into company workflows.
- Technical usability issues: A few mentors noted difficulties with the PREVIEW platform, especially regarding communication and coordination tools.

Opportunities

- Expand to other academic programmes: Applying the model to degrees with higher student numbers could increase impact and transferability.
- Improve digital platform and onboarding materials: Refining the technical tools and providing more context-specific examples could enhance user experience.
- Strengthen institutional engagement: Earlier coordination with companies and tighter academic calendars could boost participation.
- Promote soft skills development: The hybrid model offers ideal conditions to strengthen transversal competencies like autonomy, communication, and adaptability.

Threats

- Risk of low commitment perception: Delays or lack of continuity may undermine trust among stakeholders.
- Mismatch with company practices: Some companies may be reluctant to adapt their workflows to external platforms.

- Internship timing conflicts: Rigid academic calendars and limited internship windows reduce flexibility for both students and hosts.
- Participant demotivation in small-scale pilots: Low participation may limit networking opportunities and peer learning dynamics.

SWOT ANALYSIS

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STRENGTHS

- High satisfaction among participants
- Flexible hybrid format
- Commitment from university staff and mentors
- MOOC as a preparatory tool

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WEAKNESSES

- Very small sample size
- Scheduling constraints
- Role ambiguity
- Technical usability issues

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OPPORTUNITIES

- Expand to other academic programmes
- Improve digital platform and onboarding materials
- Strengthen institutional engagement
- Promote soft skills development

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THREATS

- Risk of low commitment perception
- Mismatch with company practices
- Internship timing conflicts
- Participant demotivation in small-scale pilots

4. CONCLUSIONS

The PREVIEW internship pilot at the University of Salamanca (USAL) offered valuable insights into the implementation of hybrid internship models in a real academic context. Despite the limited number of participants—mainly due to the low enrolment in the Tourism degree at the Ávila campus and unforeseen scheduling delays—the experience was overall positive and constructive for all stakeholders involved.

Students reported meaningful learning outcomes, especially in digital competencies, communication, and problem-solving. Company mentors highlighted student engagement and the added value of hybrid collaboration. The PREVIEW MOOC contributed positively to student preparedness, and the hybrid format was perceived as flexible and adaptable to different institutional realities.

Nevertheless, the experience also revealed structural challenges, such as the difficulty of aligning academic calendars with internship logistics, and the need to improve digital platforms and onboarding processes to ensure smoother coordination and better role definition.

The USAL team showed strong commitment throughout the project, from promotion and student recruitment to support during the internships. While participation numbers were modest, the quality of the experience and the lessons learned provide a solid foundation for future scaling and improvement of the PREVIEW model, both within USAL and across other university programs.