



Intensive (Online) Program “The Future of Sustainable Banking and Finance (IP FSBaF)”
Intenzivní (online) program „Budoucnost udržitelného bankovníctví a financí (IP FSBaF)”

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The necessity for change following the global financial crisis (2007–2008), sparking the Great Recession, in the area of ethics after excessive risk-taking and unethical behavior by banks was the introduction for organizing a truly international program for students in Business Studies. Together with universities in Spain (Universidad Zaragoza, CEU San Pablo –Madrid), Czech Republic (VSFS Prague), Poland (University of Economics Katowice), Belgium (HO Gent), Germany (Heilbronn university of applied science) and the Netherlands (Inholland University of applied science) an intensive program was developed.

This year, together with 7 different universities, the “The Future of Sustainable Banking and Finance” program was – after 8 years – converted from a physical international teaching program to a fully online teaching program. The challenge faced was not only to convert the program, but also to make the program more challenging in order to hold the attention of students because of the distance living in different countries.

In the design, a heavier emphasis was now given to the preparation phase in order to allow the students to acquire more substantive knowledge that could be taken on to the intensive three-day program. In the preparation phase, the students immersed themselves in the themes. The exciting thing about the structure of the program this year was that the preparation phase, unlike in previous years, also took place entirely internationally. In previous years, the preparation phase could be done at a national level, but due to the Covid situation, we have now opted for a completely international mix.

In this phase, students have been able to delve into the themes (Rating, Taxation, Corporate Governance, Fintech, Financing SME and Social Responsible Investments (SRI)) with minimal supervision. The sessions were accompanied by an introductory game and a lesson in cultural differences. As a result, there was greater understanding from the start of the need to bridge differences (such as available working hours that differ per country). At the end of the preparation phase, each theme group had drawn up a discussion paper that was used as input for the in-depth study of the intensive three-day.

On the basis of interfaces between the six themes, intensive work was done on in-depth issues over three intensive days. These issues were discussed in discussion groups at the end. Students showed their developments in writing a policy document on decision making within financial institutions, articulate factors for success when working with people from differing cultures and trained intercultural sensitivity by reflecting on intercultural collaboration. An exciting form of education in which experiences were shared between international students. Next year we will undoubtedly use a mix of the experience gained in a real blended education program.