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Knowledge FOr Resilient soCiEty

K - FORCE

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K-FORCE

WP5

IMPLEMENTATION OF PHD PROGRAMME

Report on 1st Cohorts' Progress and Satisfaction of Students and Staff

Deliverable 5.4

Prepared by:

University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Technical Sciences, Serbia
European Youth Parliament Serbia, Serbia

Edited by:

Danilo Laban, European Youth Parliament Serbia

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In order to continuously improve the quality of studies and accelerate data processing, WBC HEIs conduct the students' surveys. The surveys are conducted in accordance with the Law on Higher Education and accreditation standards. Polls are completely anonymous.

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INTRODUCTION

The overall broader objective to which K-FORCE project contributes is to build a sustainable educational foundation in Disaster Risk Management and Fire Safety Engineering (DRM&FSE) field in Western Balkan Countries (WBC) and ensure national professional resources and regional capacity for resilient society. As one of the key elements to achieve this and the subject of WP5: Implementation of PhD Programme, a new PhD Programme is being implemented at the University of Novi Sad (P1). The standard coursework at P1 is complemented by guest lectures during the year, given by teaching staff from other HEIs partnering on the project.

As prescribed by Activity 5.4, a Report on 1st Cohorts' Progress and Satisfaction of Students and Staff is produced as Deliverable 5.4. The aim of this report is to provide inputs from the participants of this newly developed PhD which will be used for its continuous improvement and the improvement of its curriculum. The surveys are to be conducted according to the Laws on Higher Education and accreditation standards. All polls are to be filled out completely anonymously. The report is to consist of five different surveys:

- Survey for the evaluation of the study programme,
- Survey for evaluating the teaching staff,
- Survey for evaluating the individual courses,
- Survey for the evaluation of the work of the HEI and its services and bodies and
- Survey for evaluating the guest lectures.

EVALUATION OF THE PHD PROGRAMME

The PhD Programme in Disaster Risk Management and Fire Safety Engineering has been launched in 2019 at the University of Novi Sad in 2011. This programme is one of the key outputs of the K-FORCE project, and as such was developed with contribution from the other HEIs which are participating in the K-FORCE project. The standard coursework, which is organized similarly to other PhD programmes at the University, has been supplemented with guest lectures which were organized within the K-FORCE project. These guest lectures were organized at the University of Novi Sad and were held by teaching staff from Aalborg University, University of Banja Luka, University of Žilina and University of Tirana.

Student enrolment

The competition for student enrolment in the developed PhD programme was announced in October 2019 (link). Based on a decision from the University Council dating from 17.07.2019. all enrolled students' tuition fee has been waived for the first year of studies. In addition to the competition text, a research list of 20 PhD thesis proposals was presented to potential applicants (Deliverable 2.5 of the K-FORCE project). The competition ended successfully with 12 students enrolled in the new PhD programme. Most of these students have come from different educational backgrounds and with different levels of industry experience, giving a truly interdisciplinary group. This group represents the first cohort of students attending the new PhD programme and thus the subject of this report.

University surveys

The University of Novi Sad regulates the list of surveys given to its students during the academic year by its internal rules and documents. These prescribed University surveys fall in line with the surveys required to put together this report and are thus used accordingly. Four different types of surveys are given to students at different segments of the academic year.

For this report, the survey which was used to evaluate the first cohort progress and satisfaction was the Survey on the functioning of the University, Faculty and its and bodies. The students fill it when they have completed the academic year and they qualify for the enrolment to the next one. In the survey they are given the opportunity to grade different aspects of the programme and name the professor(s) and teaching assistant(s) they were most and least satisfied with. They also evaluate the work of Faculty leadership, the presence of teaching tools at the Faculty and the supply and functioning of the Faculty library. The survey is filled out online, via the student web service.

SURVEY ON THE FUNCTIONING OF THE UNIVERSITY, FACULTY AND ITS AND BODIES

The contents of the mentioned survey are given below in English and in the same form that they are presented to PhD students. Most of the questions are designed to be answered by selecting a grade from 5 to 10, using the description below. If it is not otherwise indicated, the question is answered with text, for example writing down the name of the professor. No questions are mandatory, therefore the student can choose which questions to answer.

Grade scale   *5 – very poor*
              6 – poor
              7 – satisfactory
              8 – good
              9 – great
              10 – excellent

General questions

1. *How satisfied are you with the quality of the teaching on your study programme?*
   (5/6/7/8/9/10)
2. *Has your programme director provided sufficient information about all aspects relevant for students?*
   (yes/partly/no)
3. *Are you satisfied with the interaction between students and professors?*
   (yes/partly/no)
4. *How would you rate the willingness of the professors on your study programme to cooperate?*
   (5/6/7/8/9/10)
5. *How would you rate the willingness of the teaching assistants on your study programme to cooperate?*
   (5/6/7/8/9/10)

Name two professors with whose teaching and commitment you are most satisfied with

Professor (course):
Why:
Professor (course):
Why:

Name two teaching assistants with whose teaching and commitment you are most satisfied with

Teaching assistant (course):
Why:
Teaching assistant (course):

Why:
Teaching assistant (only if they were not found in the list above):
Course (only if the teaching assistant was not found in the list above):
Why (only if the teaching assistant was not found in the list above):

Name two professors with whose teaching and commitment you are least satisfied with

Professor (course):
Why:
Professor (course):
Why:

Name two teaching assistants with whose teaching and commitment you are least satisfied with

Teaching assistant (course):
Why:
Teaching assistant (course):
Why:
Teaching assistant (only if they were not found in the list above):
Course (only if the teaching assistant was not found in the list above):
Why (only if the teaching assistant was not found in the list above):

Name two courses you found most difficult to pass

Course (from courses you have passed):
Why:
Course (from courses you have not passed):
Why:

Name the course you found easiest to pass

Course:
Why:

Faculty equipment and services

1. *How would you rate the teaching equipment present at the faculty? (5/6/7/8/9/10)*
2. *How would you rate the work of student organizations at the faculty? (5/6/7/8/9/10)*
3. *How would you rate the work of the Student Vice Dean (Dejan Nacic)? (unknown/5/6/7/8/9/10)*
4. *How would you rate the work of the President of Student Parliament (Stefan Janjic)? (unknown/5/6/7/8/9/10)*

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5. *How would you rate the work of the Student Registry Office?*
   (5/6/7/8/9/10)
6. *How would you rate the work of the faculty library?*
   (5/6/7/8/9/10)
7. *How would you rate the work of faculty publishing?*
   (5/6/7/8/9/10)
8. *How would you rate the work of faculty marketing services?*
   (5/6/7/8/9/10)
9. *How would you rate the faculty website?*
   (5/6/7/8/9/10)
10. *How would you rate the work of the Dean (prof dr Rade Doroslovacki)?*
    (unknown/5/6/7/8/9/10)
11. *How would you rate the work of the Vice Dean for Teaching (prof dr Dragisa Vilotic)?*
    unknown/5/6/7/8/9/10)
12. *How would you rate the work of the Vice Dean for International Cooperation (prof dr Darko Stefanovic)?*
    (unknown/5/6/7/8/9/10)
13. *How would you rate the work of the Vice Dean for Finances (prof dr Vladimir Katic)?*
    (unknown/5/6/7/8/9/10)
14. *How would you rate the work of the Vice Dean for Investments (prof dr Srdjan Kolakovic)?*
    (unknown/5/6/7/8/9/10)
15. *How would you rate the hygiene and cleanliness of the faculty?*
    (5/6/7/8/9/10)
16. *How would you rate the interior of the faculty?*
    (5/6/7/8/9/10)
17. *How would you rate the exterior of the faculty and its surroundings?*
    (5/6/7/8/9/10)
18. *How would you rate the classrooms and amphitheatres at the faculty?*
   *(5/6/7/8/9/10)*

End of studies

1. *Give a general grade for the entire study programme.*
   (5/6/7/8/9/10)
2. *I feel I have sufficient theoretical and practical knowledge to work in the industry field.*
   (5/6/7/8/9/10)
3. *I feel I have sufficient theoretical knowledge to continue my education.*
   (5/6/7/8/9/10)

SURVEY RESULTS

The survey was answered by a total of 7 students, where the lower number can be explained by the difficult circumstances for organizing studies in the spring o 2020 due to the COVID-19 epidemic. None the less, these answer were collected and analysed as follows.

The general questions in the survey received very high grades. In order to assign a numerical value to the answers in questions 2 and 3, the answer 'yes' was treated as a 10, 'partly' as a 7 and 'no' as a 5. The conclusion is that the level of teaching and the willingness of the teaching staff to cooperated was perceived as very high.
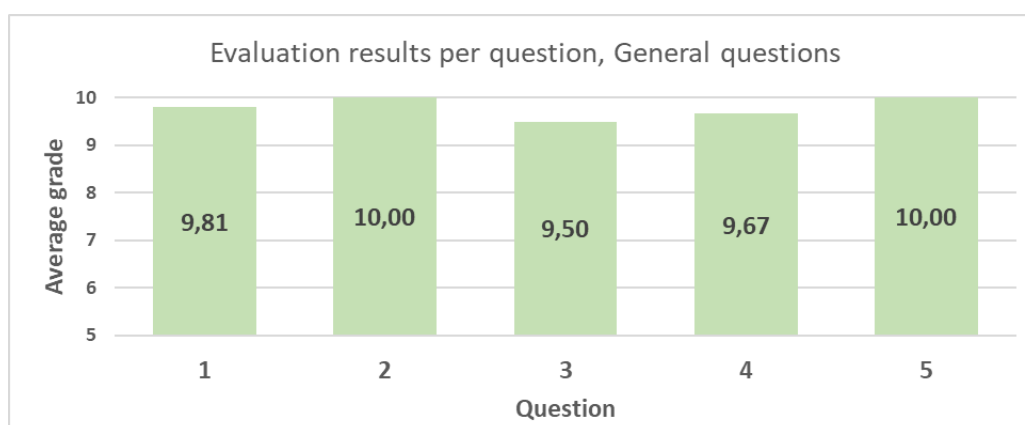

The questions referring to the professors and teaching assistants were answered in text. All participants named at least one professor they are most satisfied with, whereas only one student named a professor they are least satisfied with. The professors mentioned under most satisfied include Mirjana Laban (for the extra effort and support given to students and professionalism), Teodor Atanacković (for the relationship towards students and support given), Slobodan Morača (for a cooperative attitude), Bogdan Kuzmanović (for expertise in the subject) and Vlastimir Radonjanin. The professor mentioned under least satisfied was Mladen Pečulija (for not being responsive).

The questions referring to the teaching assistants most satisfied with were answered by 3 participants and mentioned Stefan Cvetićanin (for the availability and cooperation with students, as well as expertise in the subject) and Tanja Novaković (for the dedication). No teaching assistants were named as least satisfied with.

The questions about the course found most difficult to pass were answered by 2 participants and both responses include the course 'The methodology of writing a scientific paper'. The reasons given include the complex literature in the course and the philosophical approach in the course. Another course that was mentioned was 'The process, principles and techniques of scientific research' due to the lack of time allocated to the course. Only one response was received for the course found easiest to pass and that was 'Selected

chapters of qualitative risk assessment methods', due to the availability of the literature for the course.

The questions on the faculty equipment and services were answered by all survey participants. The responses are indicated below with the average grade for each question. Questions 3, 4 and 10 to 13 had 'unknown' as an offered answer as well since they are about the work of certain functions of the University or Faculty. Questions 10 and 12 had two grade responses whereas the others had only one. Therefore, the grade for questions 3, 4, 11 and 13 is not indicated and it can be considered that the participant were not familiar with the work of these functions. In general, the faculty equipment and services were rated either as excellent or great.
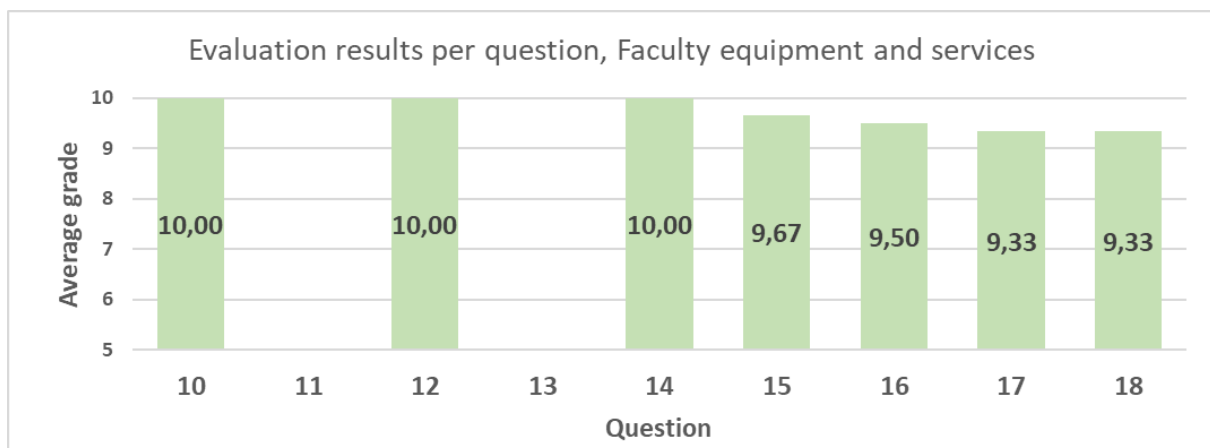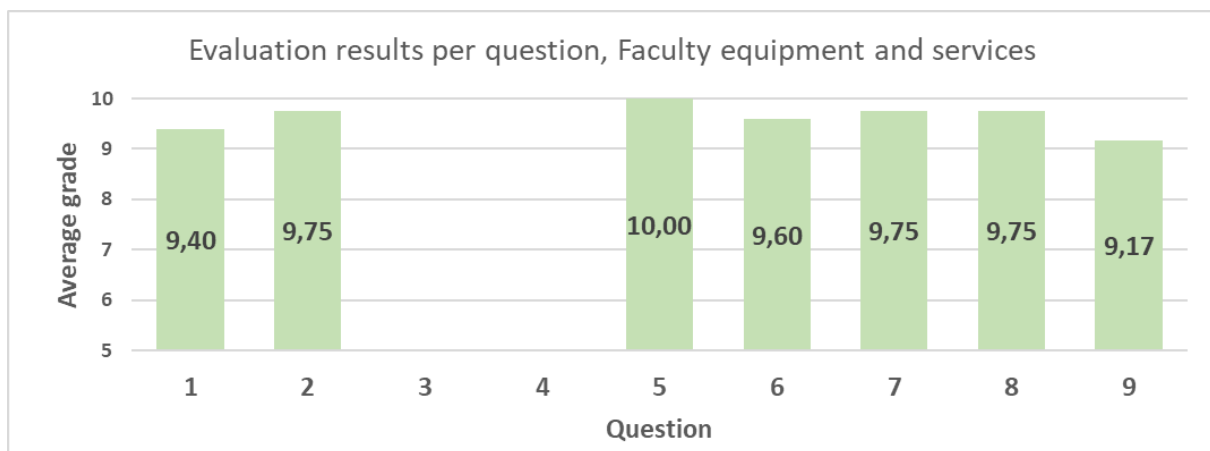
The questions concerning the end of studies give a general grade for the entire PhD programme of 10.00. The participants' perception of having sufficient theoretical and practical knowledge to work in the industry or to continue their education was rated as great with 9,25 being the average grade for both questions.

These final grades correspond to the general opinion and grades given in the previous questions and sections.

EVALUATION OF GUEST LECTURES

Apart from the regular lectures, the PhD students at the University of Novi Sad had the opportunity to attend eight organized guest lectures, as part of the K-FORCE project and their curriculum. These guest lectures were organized within the Special Mobility Strand of the project and Guest lectures foreseen in WP4. Since the guest lectures were organized in the last two years for master students in the scope of SMS, K-Force Consortium decided to redirect the founds for additional guest lectures for PhD students. However, those lectures were open for public and also Master students and other students from UNS and VTSNS as well as teaching staff were attended. The evaluation was done in accordance with the K-FORCE Quality Assurance and Monitoring Manual and included evaluations from students and professors present, as well as from the guest lecturers themselves. The list of the guest lectures evaluated is given in the table below.

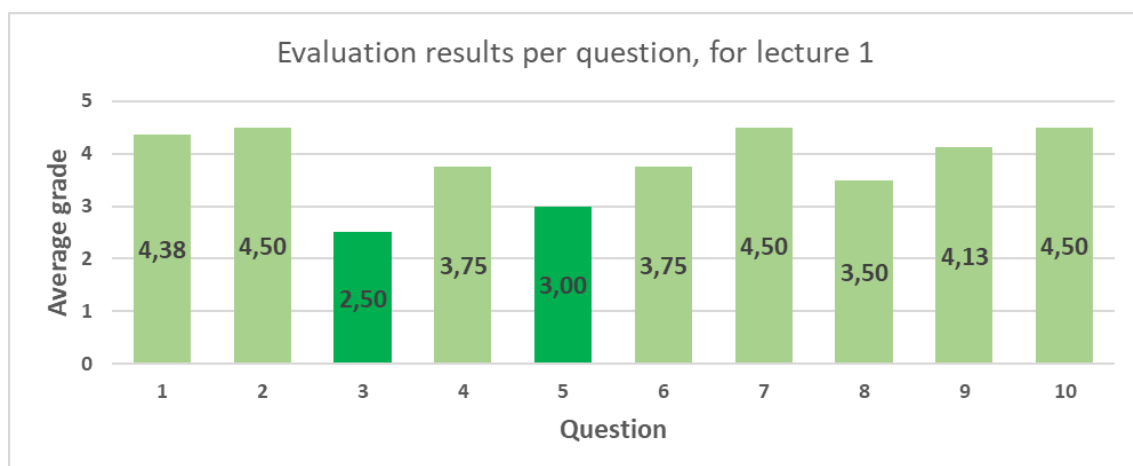| lecture number	date	place	lecture topic	lecturer	number of participants
1	22.02.2020.	Faculty of Technical Sciences, UNS	Reliability Analysis techniques	Juan Gonzalo Sepulveda Astudillo, Ms. Sc. Civil Eng, PhD Fellow *Aalborg University*	8
2	25.02.2020.	Faculty of Technical Sciences, UNS	Qualitative and Quantitative Statistical Methods in Risk Management	Assist. Prof. Snježana Maksimović, PhD *University of Banja Luka*	9
3	25.02.2020.	Faculty of Technical Sciences, UNS	Building Physics for Energy Efficiency	Assoc. Prof. Biljana Antunović *University of Banja Luka*	10
4	03.03.2020.	Faculty of Technical Sciences, UNS	Dust Explosions in Industry	Doc. Bc. Ing. Miroslava Vandalickova, PhD *University of Žilina*	13
5	03.03.2020.	Faculty of Technical Sciences, UNS	Occupational Health and Safety in Rescue Services	Doc. Bc. Ing. Linda Osvaldova, PhD *University of Žilina*	13
6	10.03.2020.	Faculty of Technical Sciences, UNS	Research in Disaster Risk Management Field	Prof. dr Elona Pojani *University of Tirana*	12
7	10.03.2020.	Faculty of Technical Sciences, UNS	Insurance and Disaster Risk Management	Prof. dr Gentiana Sharku *University of Tirana*	9
8	12.03.2020.	Faculty of Technical Sciences, UNS	Risk Management and Risk Perception	Prof. dr Perseta Grabova *University of Tirana*	4

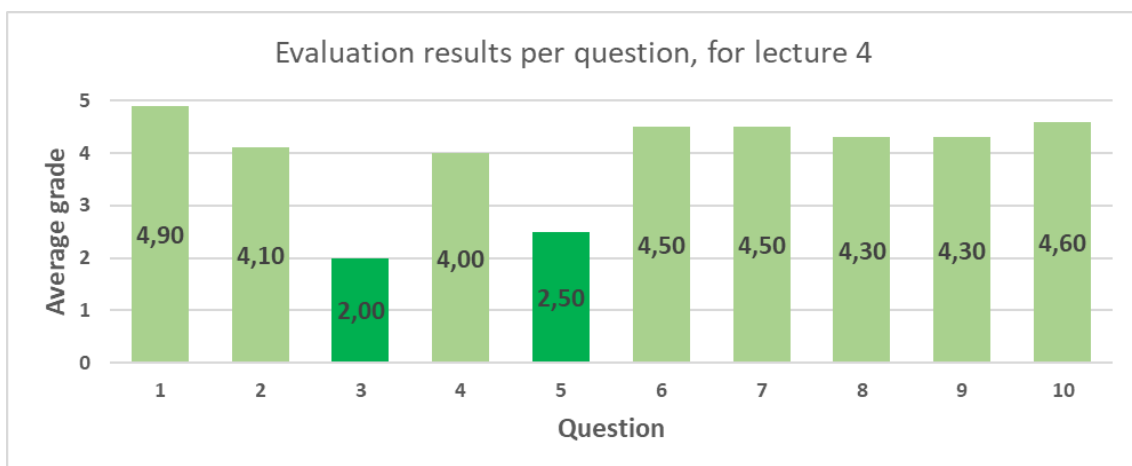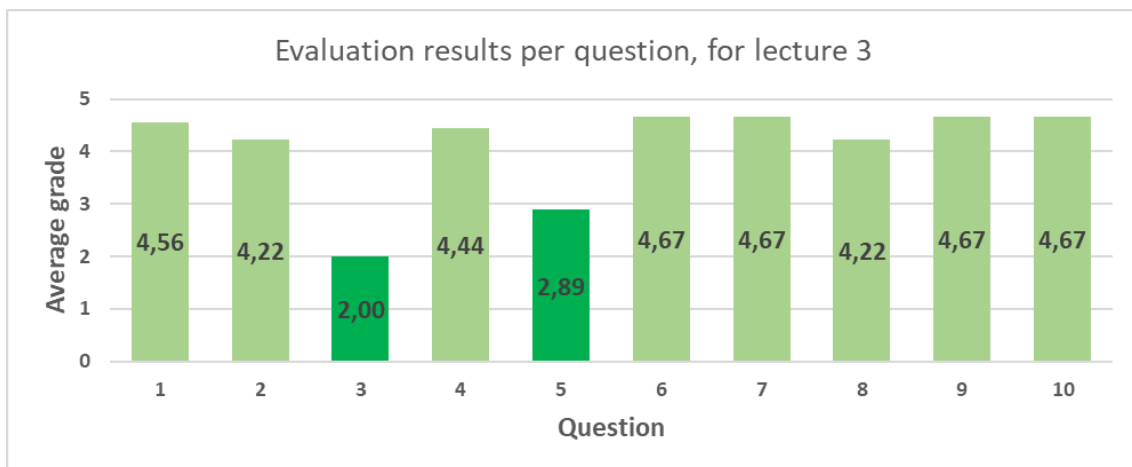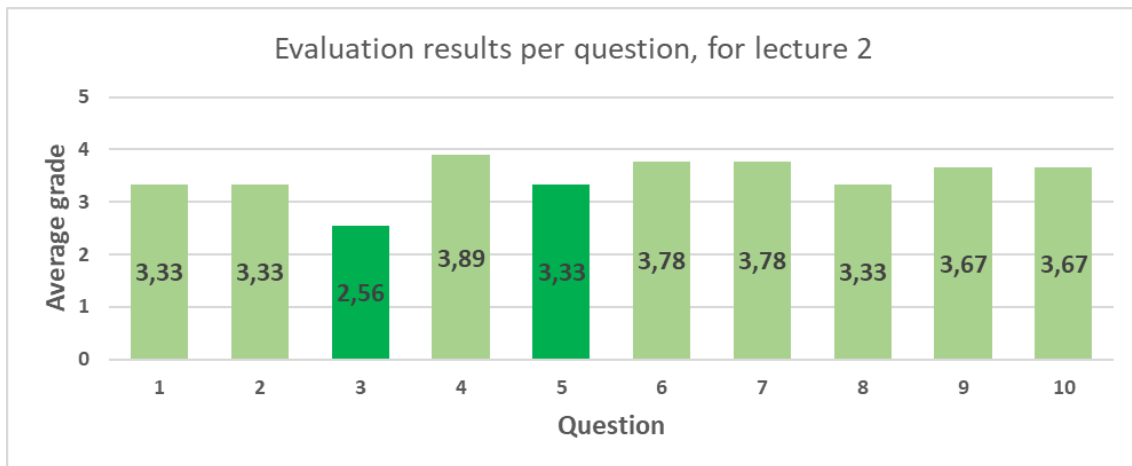# EVALUATION DONE BY STUDENTS

The questionnaire **given to students** to **evaluate the guest lecture** contained 10 statements to which they responded with their degree of agreement, on a scale from 1 to 5, with 5 meaning "I strongly agree" and 1 meaning "I strongly disagree". The questions are as follows:
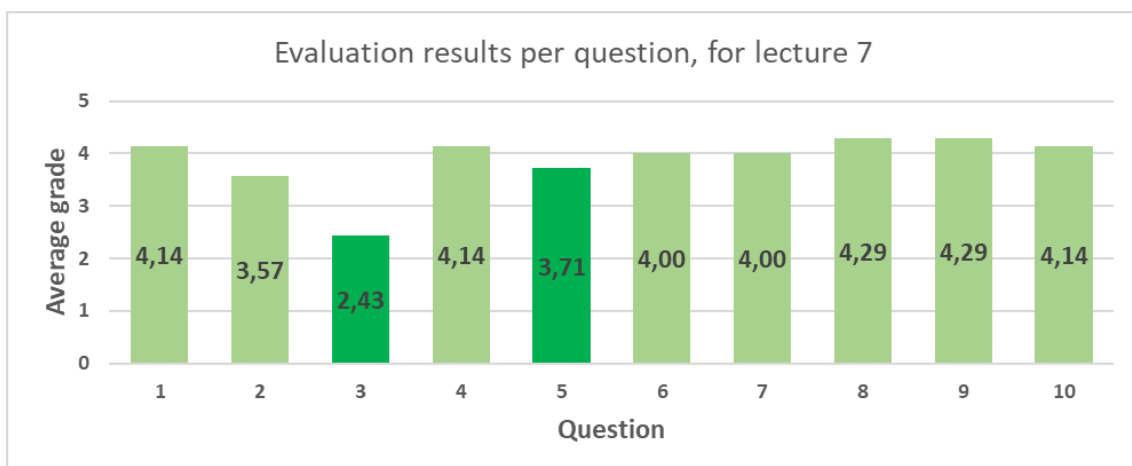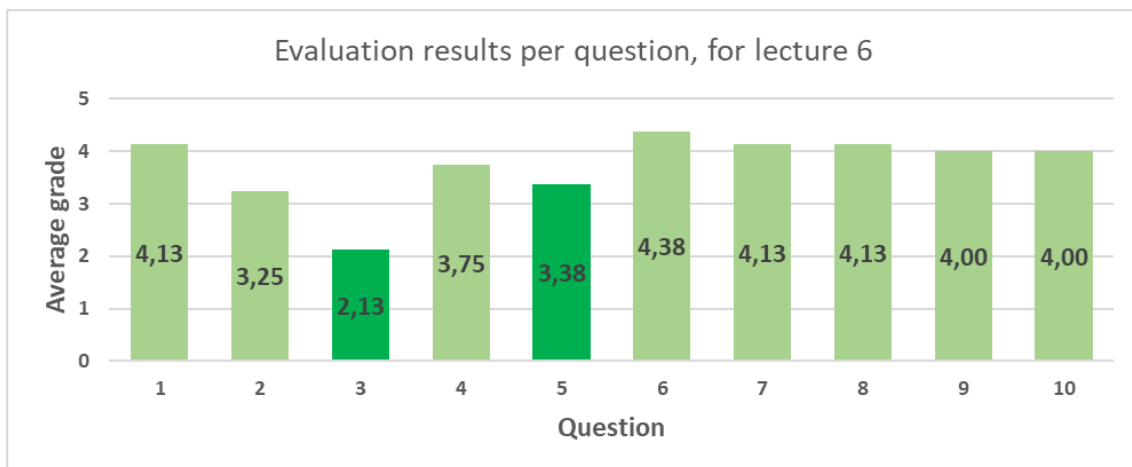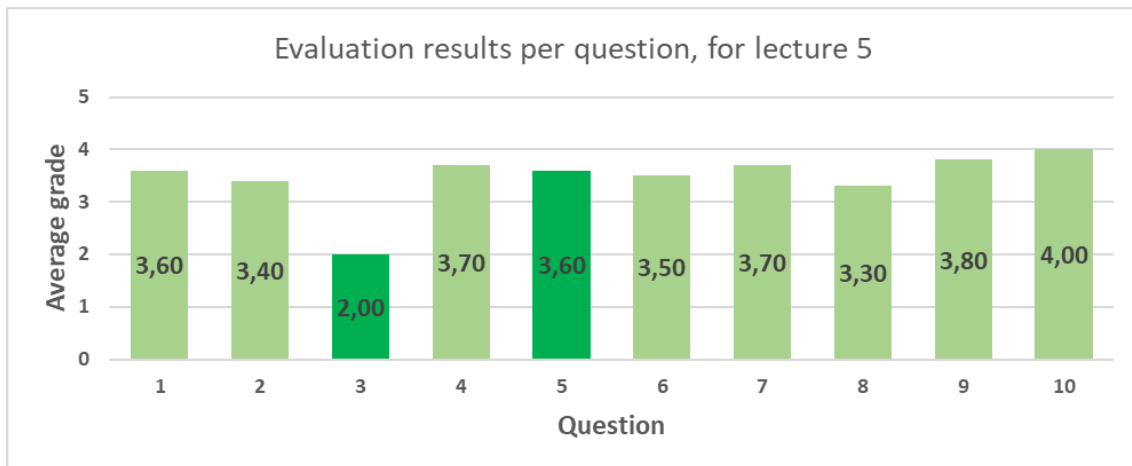
1. *The lecture topic was interesting to me.*
2. *The lecture topic was intellectually challenging.*
3. *The lecture topic was very difficult for me.*
4. *The lecture content fulfilled my expectations.*
5. *The lecture was overwhelming and strenuous.*
6. *The lecture presentation was interesting.*
7. *I am satisfied with the dynamics and duration of the lecture.*
8. *I will be able to use in practice what I have learned.*
9. *Overall, I would like to give this grade to the lecture.*
10. *Taking into consideration all this, I would like to give this lecturer this grade.*

The responses of all the students attending each individual lecture are displayed in graphs below with a grade average. The lectures are marked by the lecture number and follow the guest lecture table given above.

It should be noted that some questions were repeated with different phrasing and that questions 3 and 5 (marked with a darker shade of green on the graph) were phrased negatively. Negative phrasing implies that a lower grade corresponds to a higher degree of satisfaction. This was done to serve as an honesty and concentration check, and resulted in some responses being excluded from the analysis.

Evaluation results per question, for lecture 2

Evaluation results per question, for lecture 3

Evaluation results per question, for lecture 4

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Evaluation results per question, for lecture 5

Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Average grade	3,60	3,40	2,00	3,70	3,60	3,50	3,70	3,30	3,80	4,00

Evaluation results per question, for lecture 6

Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Average grade	4,13	3,25	2,13	3,75	3,38	4,38	4,13	4,13	4,00	4,00

Evaluation results per question, for lecture 7

| Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Average grade	4,14	3,57	2,43	4,14	3,71	4,00	4,00	4,29	4,29	4,14

Evaluation results per question, for lecture 8

As can be seen from the graphs, the level of satisfaction among students was consistently high, rating the overall lecture and lecturer with a grade of 4 or above, with only one exception – lecture 2 which was rated with 3,67. Overall, the lecture were not perceived as difficult but slightly intellectually challenging. One possible area of improvement for future lectures is the applicability of the material to practice, which was still rated high at 3,92 on average, but was also rated the lowest compared to other parameters. The summary of all lectures using a non-weighted average can be seen in the graph below.

Evaluation results per question, for all lectures
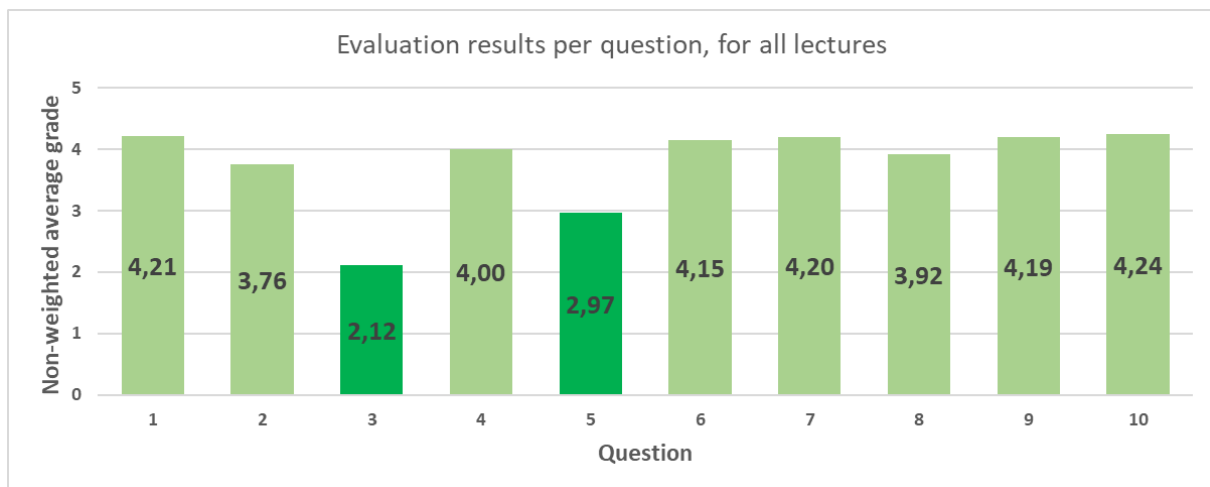
EVALUATION DONE BY GUEST LECTURERS

Another questionnaire was also **given to guest lecturers** to **evaluate the participants and organization of the lecture**. The questionnaire contained 12 statements to which they responded with their degree of agreement, on a scale from 1 to 5, with 5 meaning "I strongly agree" and 1 meaning "I strongly disagree". The questions are as follows:

1. *The content of the lecture is relevant to the field of DRM&FSE.*
2. *The discussions were relevant for the participants.*
3. *I enjoyed the cooperation and interaction with the participants.*
4. *The participants had relevant knowledge in this field.*
5. *The goal of the event has been achieved.*
6. *The overall organization was professional.*
7. *The methods of work were suitable for the topics and for the participants.*
8. *The event time management and length were appropriate.*
9. *The venue and facilities were appropriate.*
10. *My expectations about this event were met or exceeded.*
11. *The goal of the event has been achieved.*
12. *My general mark for this event.*

The accumulated responses of all the 8 lecturers are displayed in the graph below.
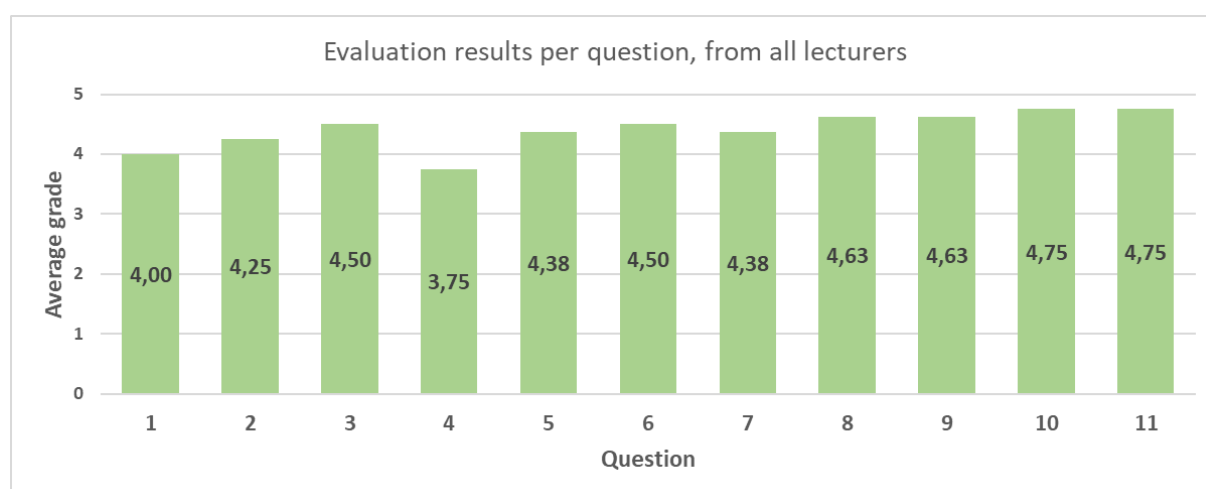
Overall, a high degree of satisfaction from the guest lecturers was achieved. The goal of the event was achieved and the organization was deemed very good. The interaction with the participants was very satisfactory, with additional written comments that the participants were active and flexible. The lowest scores were registered for their relevant knowledge in the field i.e. for the lecture.

To conclude, the guest lecturers marked the overall event with an average grade of 4.63. Written comments for further improvement included a suggestion that the participants receive the lecture material beforehand.