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# PODCAST - MARKETING TLU'S BA & MA STUDY PROGRAMMES

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## **Prospective**

The main aim of the project has been to increase international students' interest towards Tallinn University bachelor's and master's study programmes taught in English with the goal to receive more international applicants in the future. The idea was to approach the marketing of TLU study programmes in a contemporary and creative way to attract more attention but also to provide current students' perspective – something that is not always so easily accessible.

## **Actions taken**

Two podcast episodes were created, whereas one of those is targeted towards bachelor's level students and the other towards master's level students. As we decided to reflect on current students' perspective, the participants of both podcast episodes were the group members, who reflected on their study programmes and personal experience. Prior to recording, both secondary and primary research was conducted, this included the marketing approach of other nearby universities, approaches to podcast and public sector marketing as well as reaching out to prospective students with a survey to get their opinion about the most relevant topics they would like to hear about. We also recorded a short clip guiding prospective students of how to use TLU website to access important information for them.

## **The team**

The team was small, consisting of 7 members in total. Katariina Kalda as the supervisor took the role of group driver by being responsible for main idea generation and project plan, including assigning of deadlines as well as organising the weekly meetings and podcast recording session and providing feedback and new ideas throughout the course of the project. Most of the tasks were conducted collaboratively in a group and the responsibility was shared between all members of the group. All group members were responsible of pitching in to the reports and presentations as well as the podcast script and were required to participate in the podcast recording. Yelizaveta and Veronika took the responsibility of editing the podcast scripts as well as the sound recordings. Veronika as student ambassador and content creator was also in contact with TLU marketing team to distribute our contents on TLU official pages. Elise and Andres researched relevant marketing strategies and Andres also created short teaser clips from our podcasts which could be shared online. Tomoe was responsible of competitor research by exploring other nearby universities and how they have conducted their marketing efforts to approach international students. The initial poll to receive student's responses and social media strategy were collaboratively put together by the larger group.

## **Longevity**

Attracting more international students to Tallinn University has been continuous effort of the university hence providing new ideas, approaches, and resources of how to approach this issue is useful and can be used not only short term to attract students for the following academic year, however it could also be expanded by adding new podcast episodes and more information as well as the materials created throughout this project could be distributed in the future. In this case, we decided to record podcasts so that prospective students would gain more information about the student life at TLU directly from its students. This included information about the students' study programmes and subjects as well as previous background, reasons why they decided to study certain subjects as well as some difficulties they might have endured during application process and recommendations. We also made sure to reach out to prospective

students and created a poll to ask for their opinion directly and based on that, the podcast content was created.

## Stakeholders

The activities of this project are firstly aimed at helping prospective students by providing them additional information, especially when it comes to opening about the current student's life and allowing them to gain a little more personable access to this information through podcast episodes where current students themselves share their thoughts and experiences. However, on the other side as one of the goals of the project is to aid increase the number of international applicants at TLU, the actions taken during the project should also help Tallinn University and its marketing team as the podcasts and other created and distributed through social media should create additional interest towards the university and could be used in future marketing activities if needed.

## Collaboration with Stakeholders

During the project's activities, the prospective students were reached out to through TLU Instagram page so that we could establish the most important topics and interest points, however it was also an opportunity for prospective students to ask any questions directly from current students, encouraging them to continue doing that. Additionally, our podcast episodes, teasers and social media posting materials were shared with the TLU marketing department to make sure they would be published on all TLU official social media and podcast hosting platforms as well as making sure the marketing department can benefit from the created materials in the future and continue attracting international students.

## Annex A – Podcast and Public Sector Marketing

Podcasts can be seen as an effective and reliable form of audio or channel that is mainly consumed by 18-25 years old, at least monthly. Promoting a podcast requires great planning and probably at least one pre-recorded episode for a series of teasers in different forms. Some great ideas to work with the teasers are: social media posts giving a glimpse about what will be discussed in the podcast, newsletter information regarding the podcast, a blog post for a small teaser of what's to come that can be shared both in social media pages/groups and in a newsletter for international students, creating small teaser videos from the first episode about what's to come, but not sharing the whole story, CTA's as landing page, newsletter sign up or a reminder, translating or summarising audio into a blog post or social media content.

In addition, TLU is a public organization and hence the marketing is different from private sector marketing. The public sector marketing is a mix of marketing and public management and the exchange and social relationship between parties is important, as are they constrained or free. Student can be seen as a *beneficiary* and university as a *provider*. A key point is whether the university has a low or high level of differentiation compared to other similar service providers and whether the student has a low or high risk of involvement in the exchange and relationship. We have so far concluded that the university's differentiation level is low, and beneficiary's involvement level is high, hence our option is *relational marketing* where relational aspects are important. The podcast as a tool was suitable in this case because of its reliability and audience engagement, among other aspects.

## **Annex B - Questionnaire and Associated Social Media Posts for Prospective Students**

Thank you for participating in our survey! This questionnaire is for **prospective international students** interested in Tallinn University's study programs taught in English. The questions have been created by a group of current students who seek to generate more interest in the programs offered by the institution. We are mostly interested in understanding how the university can provide further information about its programs and which is the best method or medium to efficiently solve these doubts.

## **Annex C - Report Based on Prospective Students Survey Results**

To gain a greater understanding of what prospective students are interested in when applying for Tallinn University's English language study programs and which questions and doubts they may have, our group launched a social media outreach campaign, which ran from the 18th to the 23rd of October 2021 and consisted in the following two activities:

1. A virtual questionnaire
2. A "takeover" of Tallinn University's Instagram account

The answers provided in both scenarios were meant to be analysed and later used to inform the podcast structure and the main discussion. What follows is a description of each activity — the questionnaire and the Instagram takeover — the results, and the conclusions the group reached.

## **Annex D - Podcast Episode Script BA**

**(Host)** Hey! Welcome everyone to the very first episode of this podcast: TLU Internationals Talks! My name is Katariina and I'm a Communication Management master's student here at TLU and I will also be your host for today's episode. I hope you will enjoy it! I'm sure you've been wondering what we will be talking about here so let me in you on that... Today I have 3 fellow students here with me who are currently studying at bachelor's level study programmes taught in English. They will be opening up a little bit about their experience as international students throughout the study period they've spent at TLU and tell you more about their favourite bits about their course. So, without further ado let me introduce you to Elise... (greeting the audience) Yelizaveta... (greeting the audience) and Veronika... (greeting the audience)

## **Annex E - Podcast Episode Script MA**

**(Host)** Hey! Welcome back to the second episode of TLU International Talks! My name is Andres, I am a Psychology bachelor's student at Tallinn University, and I will be your host today for the next 15 minutes or so. Last time you got to hear a little info from Bachelor students at Tallinn University and their experience applying and studying abroad. This time we get to look at master's study programmes and the experience of two wonderful current students. As you can see Katariina is in a different role today sitting on the other side of the table along with Pierangelly. Our guests will talk about the Communication Management MA program and Literature, Visual Culture & Film Studies MA program. So hello girls!

## **Annex F - Practical Guide to Navigate the TLU Website Recording Script**

In this short episode, we give you an overview of navigating the TLU website – where to find information and what you need to do. Please remember, if you cannot find the right information you are looking for, you are always welcome to contact our admissions office by writing to us at [admissions@tlu.ee](mailto:admissions@tlu.ee).

## Annex G - Marketing Approach of Other Universities

As seen in the cases of five universities researched, all universities have unique ways of reaching out to international students through online platforms and social media. From what we have observed in the practices of other universities, we provide below some of the suggestions that the Tallinn University (TLU) may be able to consider:

- i. **Create dedicated website for international degree students**
- ii. **Improve overall design and presentation of TLU website in English**
- iii. **Create videos or podcasts from the viewpoint of students to be posted on the TLU website**
- iv. **Consider academic podcast for long-term engagement with communities, students, and beyond**

### Project Action Plan

Activities	Deadline	Student(s)
Marketing Strategy/Theories – Look into marketing theories that we could base our approach on when wanting to reach our target market of international students  Written together as a report	20 <sup>th</sup> September  4 <sup>th</sup> October	Elise & Andres
Finding Out International Students' Perspective – What would they like to hear about? Creating a poll  Write up a short blog post explaining the project and inviting current international students to take part of answering a questionnaire  Conclusion of results (students' responses)	20 <sup>th</sup> September  27 <sup>th</sup> September	Veronika & Pierangelly  &  Tomoe
Research what approach other universities in the area (Estonia or neighbouring countries) have taken to marketing their programs to international students	20 <sup>th</sup> September	Tomoe
Think about a topic specific to your study programme & your journey as a student that could be shared during podcast – Crossmedia	4 <sup>th</sup> October	Yelizaveta & Veronika
Think about a topic specific to your study programme & your journey as a student that could be shared during podcast – Politics & Governance	4 <sup>th</sup> October	Elise
Think about a topic specific to your study programme & your journey as a student that could be shared during podcast – Literature, Visual Culture & Film	4 <sup>th</sup> October	Pierangelly
Think about a topic specific to your study programme & your journey as a student that could	4 <sup>th</sup> October	Katariina

be shared during podcast – Communication Management		
1 <sup>st</sup> Podcast (Bachelor’s Programs) Interview Preparation (the interviewer prepares questions) and speech for introductory part of the podcast the initial draft version 2 <sup>nd</sup> Podcast (Master’s Programs) Interview Preparation (the interviewer prepares questions) and speech for introductory part of the podcast the initial draft version	4 <sup>th</sup> October	Katariina Andres
Script talking about personal experience as an international student at TLU and explaining the application process a bit further as well as fees etc. and where to turn to for relevant information	11 <sup>th</sup> October	Tomoe
Full script for podcast episodes to edit and put together	25 <sup>th</sup> October	Yelizaveta & Veronika
Podcast Recording Session at BFM	26 <sup>th</sup> October	Everyone
1 <sup>st</sup> Episode & Website Instructions Sound Editing 2 <sup>nd</sup> Episode Sound Editing	3 <sup>rd</sup> November 17 <sup>th</sup> November	Veronika & Yelizaveta
150–400-word short report explaining how your study program relates to this project and why would it be important to consider certain aspects derived from your discipline and how your specific skill set helped you to fulfil the tasks of the project	10 <sup>th</sup> November	Everyone
Teaser Sound Clips & Quotes from Podcast Episodes BA & MA	24 <sup>th</sup> November 1 <sup>st</sup> December	Andres
Media Strategy - Distribution of podcast episodes & additional social media coverage Media Distribution Report	24 <sup>th</sup> November - 8 <sup>th</sup> December	Pierangelly, Elise, & Veronika Yelizaveta
Self-reflective report	1 <sup>st</sup> December	Everyone (except Katariina)
Final report & Presentation to be completed	8 <sup>th</sup> December	Everyone
Presentation Day	15 <sup>th</sup> December	Everyone

## Media coverage

In total we have covered 5 platforms:

TLU official YouTube channel where our podcasts have been uploaded.

- <https://www.youtube.com/user/TallinnaYlikool/videos>

TLU official SoundCloud channel

- <https://soundcloud.com/tallinnaylikool>

TLU Student podcast channel where our podcasts were also uploaded.

- <https://open.spotify.com/show/0TRMsX71Y5zwClgqNq907y>

TLU official Instagram account which mentions our episode in their stories with the links to listen to them.

- <https://www.instagram.com/tallinnuniversity/>

Our own Facebook page for distribution which we have created on our own with all the additional necessary information and our own posts.

- <https://www.facebook.com/TLUinternationaltalkspodcast>

**Facebook page** — [Tallinn University - International Talks Podcast](#) — was created in order to operate as a “home site” for the podcast. The purpose of this page is to raise awareness of the podcast and invite prospective students to listen to the episodes. The page was created in late November and gathered the following statistics between the 23rd of November and 5th of December:

Page views: 118

Page likes: 30

Post reach: 80

Post engagement: 100

Videos views: 60

Page followers: 30

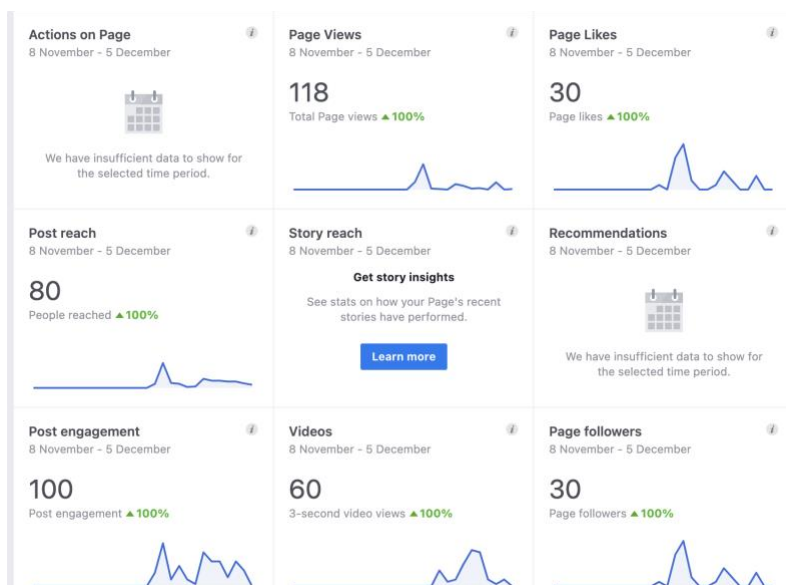


Figure 1. Page summary

Published	Post	Type	Targeting	Reach	Engagement
06/12/2021 14:41	 Snowy weekends in Tallinn, Estonia What do international students			20 	4 2 
04/12/2021 19:40	 What is it like to pursue a Master's degree at Tallinn University? In			16 	0 3 
03/12/2021 23:31	 What is your course like? What's the busiest - the 1st or the 2nd			15 	3 3 
03/12/2021 15:22	 Every year, Tallinn University (TLU) welcomes more than 300			19 	1 3 
02/12/2021 9:54	 TLU's International Talks podcast is now available on YouTube. Go			21 	1 5 
01/12/2021 9:12	 What is Crossmedia? What can you expect from this study program?			17 	3 5 
30/11/2021 22:11	 Tallinn University in numbers! TLU offers education and research in the			23 	2 5 
29/11/2021 22:19	 "Why did you choose to study at Tallinn University?" In TLU's			16 	1 6 
29/11/2021 14:48	 TLU's International Talks podcast is now available! In our first			21 	5 5 
26/11/2021 21:40	 How did our students find out about Tallinn University? How did their			19 	3 5 
24/11/2021 21:03	 Thinking about a Bachelor's or Master's studies abroad? Perhaps			55 	5 9 

Figure 2. Summary of posts



**Instagram story.** We have kindly asked permission to mention our two episodes of podcasts in the official Instagram page of the university in order to raise awareness of the podcast. The bachelor's story has a reach of 617. Master's story reached 573. And the clicks per story that forwarded to the podcasts were 12 for Bachelor's and 11 for Master's.

Figure 1, 2, 3, and 4. Reach of the posts.

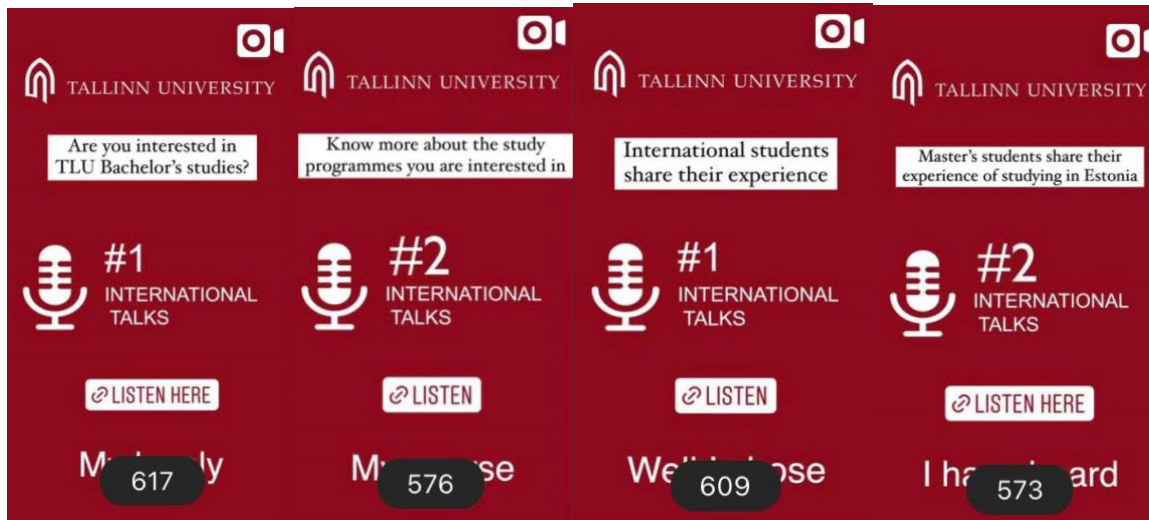


Figure 3. Instagram stories views.



Figure 4. Link Clicks.

## YouTube channel

We have also asked to add our podcasts episodes to an official TLU YouTube channel in order to raise awareness. The Bachelor's podcast has gained 58 views and 7 likes by the 9th December. Master's episod has reached 40 views and 2 likes by 9th December.

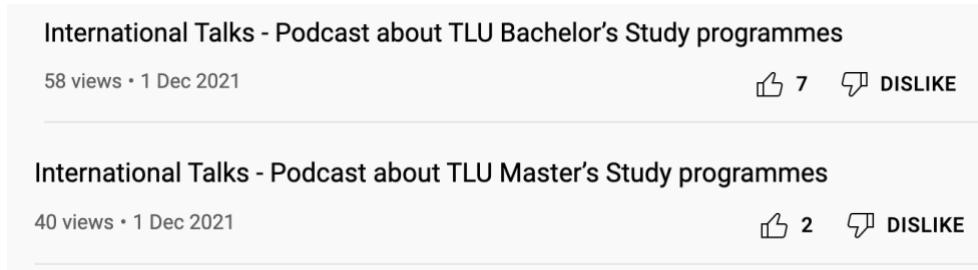
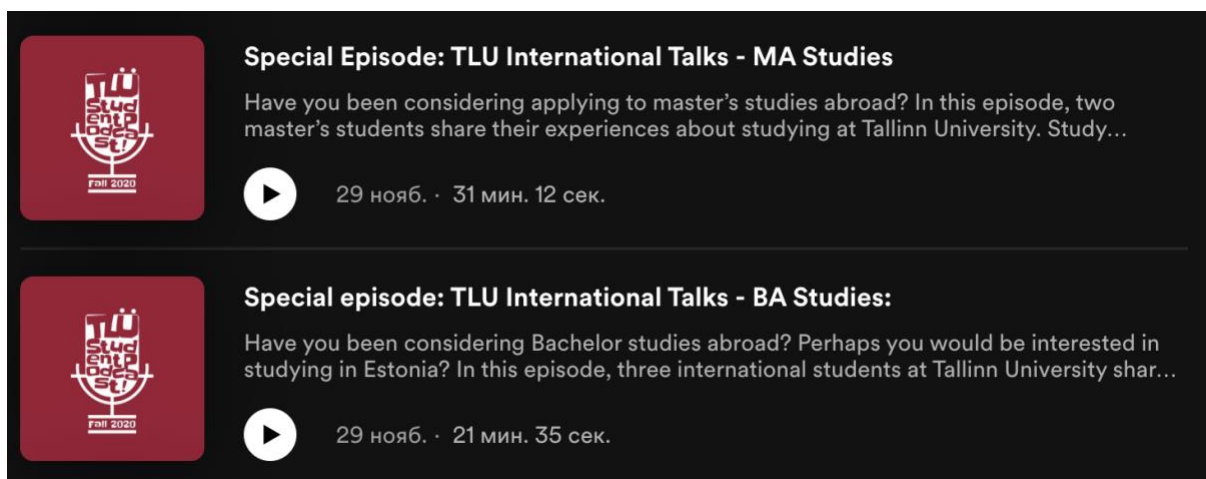


Figure 5. YouTube views and likes.

**Spotify TLU Student Podcast** channel where both BA studies and MA studies episodes reached 8 plays each.



We have distributed our podcasts to the platforms with the most potential for high awareness, which were the official media channels and pages of Tallinn University, and also made our own Facebook page in order to give out more information about the episodes and the project itself.

## Self-reflection report about the learning experience of each team member

### Elise Ruotsalainen

This project has provided me new knowledge regarding the area of podcasts (marketing, preparation, distribution etc.), overall. It was very interesting to be able to share my experiences of my own study program and to be able to promote it, too. Even though the actual knowledge I've gathered during studies, of the fields of politics and international relations haven't played a role, I think I have been able to use other supporting skills gained during university studies. Such skills are for example the ability to look for academic materials for theory basis, to write academically appropriate texts and reports and to combine theoretical approaches in practice.

### **Andres Reitsnik**

As a local student the project has given the opportunity to get a glimpse into an international student's point of view for applying in a foreign university and the experience of studying abroad. Also, it lets me collaborate with fascinating people from different parts of the world. During the project I got to practice being an interviewer and to participate in recording a podcast for the first time. For the preparation phase we had to draft the marketing approach and find according to research that would be fit for promoting a podcast. By various tasks leading up to the podcast I got to know how a proper podcast structure and background should be. Furthermore, I had the chance to learn much more about international students' experiences in Estonia.

### **Tomoe Watashiba**

The project has given me the opportunity to contribute from the perspectives of a current international student. During this project engagement, I have been able to utilize my analytical and investigative skills cultivated through my legal studies. My experience in systematizing and conceptualizing various aspects and views to produce credible suggestions for future improvements has also helped me to contribute to writing reports and making recommendations.

### **Pierangelly Del Rio Martinez**

First and foremost, the project has given me the opportunity to expand my knowledge on podcast creation — a field that is related to my current career (content creation). Furthermore, I have been able to contribute by drawing from the skills I have developed whilst studying Literature, Visual Culture and Films Studies. For example, I have applied my writing skills and experience in copywriting to create a survey aimed at prospective students and an accompanying social media post to generate interest in the podcast. Moreover, my writing and research skills contributed to the creation of the podcast as, similarly to my peers, I created a script that discussed my experiences as an international student at Tallinn University.

### **Veronika Yashkina**

As Crossmedia student, I got substantial knowledge about podcast recording, scriptwriting, marketing. I have worked on many student projects in different roles: actress, 1st AD, video editor, backstage photographer, project, or social media manager, which I hope helped my team to achieve our result. My key responsibilities were to analyse the target audience regarding their preferences and interests. This was done via TLU Instagram profile, where we put a feedback blog on Instagram stories so that prospective students could ask questions. Also, I was responsible for podcast scriptwriting and editing. As a Student Ambassador, I have some connections in the TLU Marketing Department which was helpful for distribution. My educational profile demonstrates my international orientation, which is quite useful when working with university marketing. I believe that our team achieved the goal and completed all tasks because of a clear action plan, close-knit group work, and good internal communication.

### **Yelizaveta Pustozerova**

Crossmedia in two words is the media world. If you are not sure what specific field in media you want to study, this program is for you. Throughout the studies, you have a great chance to try yourself in business, creative, analytical and any other possible aspects of media, and if you want to study further by the end of the graduation you are now able to see the whole picture clearer of what you want to try out more. I have been able to improve my knowledge in scriptwriting, video editing, recording, sound, social media management, and etc, and I hope I helped my team to reach our goal with all the experience I have. My main goal in the project

was to help with scriptwriting and podcast recording and editing. Despite the knowledge I shared I also got a chance to improve my skills in communication.

### **Katariina Kalda**

Taking part in the LIFE project has been an interesting experience for me, especially as I took the responsibility of being a sole supervisor of the project. This has overall been a very positive experience and through conducting the work, I realised even more how comfortable I feel in taking a leadership role by taking responsibility for the success of the project and driving things forward when obstacles or difficulties arise. I feel lucky that I was able to choose my group members who have been skilled and motivated to offer their own ideas and take on tasks that were necessary for the success of the project but that I myself was less proficient in. I am thankful of having such a great team and do feel that we can be proud of ourselves for having accomplished the goals of this project with almost no external help. However, I am also aware that some things could have been improved on with additional time and effort, for example the recording process itself could have been more planned and we were also unable to fulfil the initial idea of video creation. I do believe however, that considering our small group size, time constraints and little experience, the best possible result was accomplished.

## **ANNEX A - PODCAST AND PUBLIC SECTOR MARKETING**

### **Podcast marketing and structure of a podcast**

Podcast is a specific form of audio that is produced usually in series, on a platform such as Spotify or iTunes. Hence, podcasts can be seen as a *channel* (of their own kind) or as a *format of audio*. Podcasts can be seen as a different way of marketing, as “stepping out of the mainstream” when considering the way, they are consumed. This also relates to their level of impact, as they seem to be effective in their form. Still, podcasts have been less familiar tool for marketing, because of the false image of demanding more ability from their creators such as recording skills or usage of audio equipment. Anyhow, the consumers’ use of podcasts has been growing for a few years now and as a tool for marketing, this seems interesting because the usage of some social media platforms (such as Facebook) has been declining instead (Roger & Rowles 2019, 3-6).

When examining the listeners of podcasts, it has been stated that most listeners are 18- to 34-year-olds, whereas almost half of them listen to podcasts at least on a monthly basis. An average person listening to podcasts listens to seven episodes per week and more than three out of four listeners listens to the whole episode at once. When looking at the experiences of podcast consumers, it was found out that podcasts have been experienced to be a more reliable source of information, which arises from the feeling of intimacy (human voice). They can be seen as a unique way of producing specified information, which has a great opportunity for audience engagement. The most popular types of podcasts belong to categories of “News and Politics”, “Business” and “Science and Media” (Roger & Rowles 2019, 4-6, 12-13).

The podcasts usually follow a certain structure and include distinctive features too. It always begins with an *intro* that has distinctive music as a standard feature, name of the podcast and a possible slogan. It also should include the name of the episode (“the headline”) and the subject, briefly. Next, it is moved on to *the main content*. It too has frequented features that are typical

to the specific podcast or it can have a coherent interview. When the topic changes, the listener should be able to realise this. Usually this is executed with some music in between that are called jingles. Finally, the podcast always ends with *outro*. It can include the distinctive music, thanks for listeners and a “call to action” (CTA) meaning what should listeners do next. The CTA can for example suggest the listener to go see more information from some specific website or share the episode in social media platforms (Kortesuo 2019, 147).

## **Marketing of public organizations**

Marketing, in its core, is about *exchange*, from one party to another, about *the social relationship* between these parties and about *instruments and processes* of the exchange. When it comes to the public sector, marketing is sort of a mix of marketing and public management, hence it has features from both (marketing-based features combined to political decision making). When considering public sector marketing, there are three aspects to be noted. First, marketing should be broadly defined and include specifically what kind of exchange has been done, between different parties (the social relationship). Second, all public services may be included in public sector marketing, except those that don't fulfil the criteria of exchange or the social relationship, such as exchange is not voluntary or relationship is constrained (for example actions of police). Lastly, the tools of marketing must be relevant to achieve the goal. If the exchange and the relationship between parties are fully free, then the public service party may act almost as a private sector party would, in the existing legal context (Pasquier & Villeneuve 2012, 16-18, 21-23).

To continue, there are three different concepts the public sector organization has to pay attention to:

1. “Differentiation in the offer of (its) services”. For the university this would mean for example paying attention to marketing of its course offerings in the legal context.
2. “Differentiation of price”. This means that the pricing of provided goods and services must also follow the legal basis and for example a socio-economic criterion.
3. “Differentiation in access to the service”. This can for example relate to taxation.

(Pasquier & Villeneuve 2012, 23)

In a public organization's marketing, the suitable form of marketing can be measured by analysing *the involvement level of the beneficiary* and the *differentiation of a public organization*. The beneficiary means the person purchasing the service from the public organization, for example a parent who is looking for a suitable school for her child or in this case, a prospective student considering studies at university. The risks of the exchange for the beneficiary are measured as *low or high risks of involvement*. Hence, in other words, what is the level of personal involvement of the beneficiary, in the exchange. The differentiation level can be measured in the same kind of way, either low or high. The differentiation (of the organization) means what is the level of which the organization can differentiate itself from

other similar service providers. For example, obligatory basic public-school services can only be differentiated a little from each other (Pasquier & Villeneuve 2012, 23-24).

If the involvement level of the beneficiary is low and the differentiation level is low too, 'restricted marketing' is an option. If the involvement is low but the differentiation is high, then the content and offer of exchange are highlighted. If both factors are high, the option is called 'full marketing'. If the beneficiary level is high but the differentiation level is low, relational aspects of marketing are highlighted (Pasquier & Villeneuve 2012, 23).

In this case, the beneficiary is a prospective student. And, in this case, the beneficiary's level of involvement is perhaps high. If you think about the differentiation level of Tallinn University, compared to other similar service providers (for example TalTech or University of Tartu), it would most likely be low. The university can differentiate from other universities of course until some point but we still see the differentiation level rather low. When beneficiary level (personal involvement) is high and the differentiation level is low the relational aspects in marketing are important, as was mentioned above. Hence, this is something that we should note in our project of podcast marketing.

There are few characteristics in relational marketing, which are as follows: there are several target-groups that cannot always be differentiated from each other, relationship between parties is not commercial, personal involvement is strong most of the time and negotiations are collective (Pasquier & Villeneuve 2012, 27). If we accept that relational aspects are important in the case of TLU's podcast marketing for prospective students and think about podcasts as a form of marketing (reliability, audience engagement, feeling of intimacy), it could be concluded that podcast marketing serves our goal well.

## **Marketing strategies for a podcast to international students**

Reaching out to multicultural students is a difficult job for any university. There is always the question of how to make a certain university attractive to people from different cultures. The keyword is different, so there cannot be a single approach that works with every culture. What are the options for marketing strategies for international students?

### **International students**

Of course, it is tempting to reach out to multicultural students by simply translating the school's web page and social media platforms into various languages, but that might not be enough. Differences among international students aren't found in language. They come in cultural cues and that's where marketing differentiation should focus (Lavidge, 2021).

Reasons why students decide to study abroad can vary widely. Some wish to settle for a career in a certain country, others wish to learn new skills that they can take back to improve conditions in their own hometown. They might also just want to have learning experiences they wouldn't otherwise (Lavidge, 2021).

Once they settle in a new environment there is the question where to reach them and which channels are they going to use to get their information.

## **Possibilities for promoting a podcast to international students**

Although few schools are taking advantage of podcasting, there are hundreds of podcasts created each day, so it's important to have a robust marketing strategy to stand out. While promoting a podcast, it is crucial to get the word out on as many different platforms as possible. Common channels include social media and email. Social media is a great way for prospective international students to get a glimpse into the school's campus life and see what the current international students are up to. It isn't too difficult to periodically create social media posts (Education Marketing Solutions, 2020).

One great way to get the word out is by creating a "teaser" episode, which could be a snippet of the first show that has been already recorded. This is also a great way to test out each of the distribution platforms to make sure everything is properly set up before the official launch. Another optional glimpse into what the podcast will be about is to create a separate blog post for the podcast's progress and to give an idea what it will be about. It is also a great idea to share the podcast and its progress in the communities that have been created for international students (Education Marketing Solutions, 2020).

Furthermore, creating a teaser from the first episode of the podcast, sharing something very engaging in a short-video format is a great way to start. It shouldn't tell the whole story, as this will take away the excitement of the release, but it should create enough interest for the person to click on the reminder of when the first episode will launch.

A crucial part of the marketing is creating call to action (CTA) for everything the podcast creators will share regarding marketing. All posts, blogs and trailers should have a CTA that will bring the user into some kind of a timeline of when the launch of the first episode is going to be and on what platform. Additionally, it should have reminder option to sign up for the notifications regarding the podcast. It could be a separate newsletter or a landing page, but that would make it much simpler to keep the engagement the podcast creators have managed to achieve.

Another idea would be to get into the university's newsletter for international students. Of course, to be successful in a newsletter, the podcast needs to have a great visual art for attracting people to click and a teaser for the engagement to follow.

Finally, a great idea to promote a podcast for those who cannot listen at the time or just prefer to read is transcribing the audio. A lot of highly successful podcasts offer a full transcript of the entire show. And this makes it easier to share glimpses into social media or a blog. If the podcast chooses to have a landing page it is also great for the SEO of this certain page (Lee, 2021).

## **Conclusions**

Podcasts can be seen as an effective and reliable form of audio or channel that is mainly consumed by 18-25 years old, at least monthly. Promoting a podcast requires great planning and probably at least one pre-recorded episode for a series of teasers in different forms. Some great ideas to work with the teasers are:

- Social media posts giving a glimpse about what will be discussed in the podcast;

- Newsletter information regarding the podcast;
- A blog post for a small teaser of what's to come that can be shared both in social media pages/groups and in a newsletter for international students;
- Creating small teaser videos from the first episode about what's to come, but not sharing the whole story;
- CTA's as landing page, newsletter sign up or a reminder;
- Translating or summarising audio into a blog post or social media content.

In addition, TLU is a public organization and hence the marketing is different from “basic” private sector (profit seeking) marketing. The public sector marketing is a mix of marketing and public management and the exchange and social relationship between parties is important, as are they constrained or free. Student can be seen as a *beneficiary* and university as a *provider*. A key point is whether the university has a low or high level of differentiation compared to other similar service providers and whether the student has a low or high risk of involvement in the exchange and relationship. We have so far concluded that the university’s differentiation level is low, and beneficiary’s involvement level is high, hence our option is *relational marketing* where relational aspects are important. The podcast as a tool was suitable in this case because of its reliability and audience engagement, among other aspects.

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## **ANNEX B - QUESTIONNAIRE AND ASSOCIATED SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS FOR PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS**

### FACEBOOK POST

Hi there!

 Thinking about studying in Estonia?

You are more than welcome to join Tallinn University! You probably have lots of questions before applying. So feel free to **fill in this brief survey** to help us improve your experience at TLU.

The questions have been created by a group of current students who seek to generate more interest in the **English language programs** offered by the university. We are mostly interested in understanding how TLU can provide further information about its programmes and which is the best method/medium to efficiently solve these doubts.

Thanks for your time! We hope to see you at our university ❤️

<https://bit.ly/39eFiGG>

Questionnaire for prospective students (IDEAS):

#### DESCRIPTION:

Specify is for international students (English programs). Email address, age, and confirmation that they are international students.

Link to form: <https://bit.ly/39eFiGG>

### **PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS**

Thank you for participating in our survey! This questionnaire is for **prospective international students** interested in Tallinn University's study programs taught in English. The questions have been created by a group of current students who seek to generate more interest in the programs offered by the institution. We are mostly interested in understanding how the university can provide further information about its programs and which is the best method or medium to efficiently solve these doubts.

Please fill this brief survey and let us know your thoughts (your answers will be anonymous).

- What's your name?
- What's your age?
- What's your email address (optional)?
- Are you a prospective international student? This means that you are thinking about studying at Tallinn university or have thought about it.

- What level of higher education are you currently pursuing? (BA/MA/PhD)
- What attracted you to Tallinn University? Options: a particular study program, academic reputation, location, research facilities, fees, available scholarships, extracurricular activities, Other.
- Which of the following factors is most important for your educational experience? Intellectual challenge, work-study-personal life balance, socializing, further academic progression, creating connections between your course and your specialty, widening your job options, Other. \*we can make them rank these options\*
- What study program(s) of Tallinn University are you interested in?
- What attracted you to this particular program? For example, was it an interesting module, the lecturers, or something else?
- On a scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest), how satisfied are you with the amount of information found online about Tallinn University?
- On a scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest), how satisfied are you with the amount of information found online about the study program(s) you are interested in?
- Is there a question or doubt about your chosen study program that you have not been able to solve? Which one is it?
- In your opinion, what is the best medium to find valuable information about your chosen study program? \*we give them options or make them rank the options\* (University Brochure, Podcast, Facebook live session, Online website, Open Day event, talking to previous/current students, Other)
- Besides Tallinn University, have you considered or are you currently researching other higher education institutions? Please share the names.
- In comparison to the other academic institutions you have researched, do you believe that Tallinn University provides satisfactory information about its study programs? Why or why not?

Link to Questionnaire: [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1y1R\\_-vhvCZij\\_t4FEI3NpA4vbJ6NjVdrm1uxCRMLSMI/edit](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1y1R_-vhvCZij_t4FEI3NpA4vbJ6NjVdrm1uxCRMLSMI/edit)

## Instagram Story

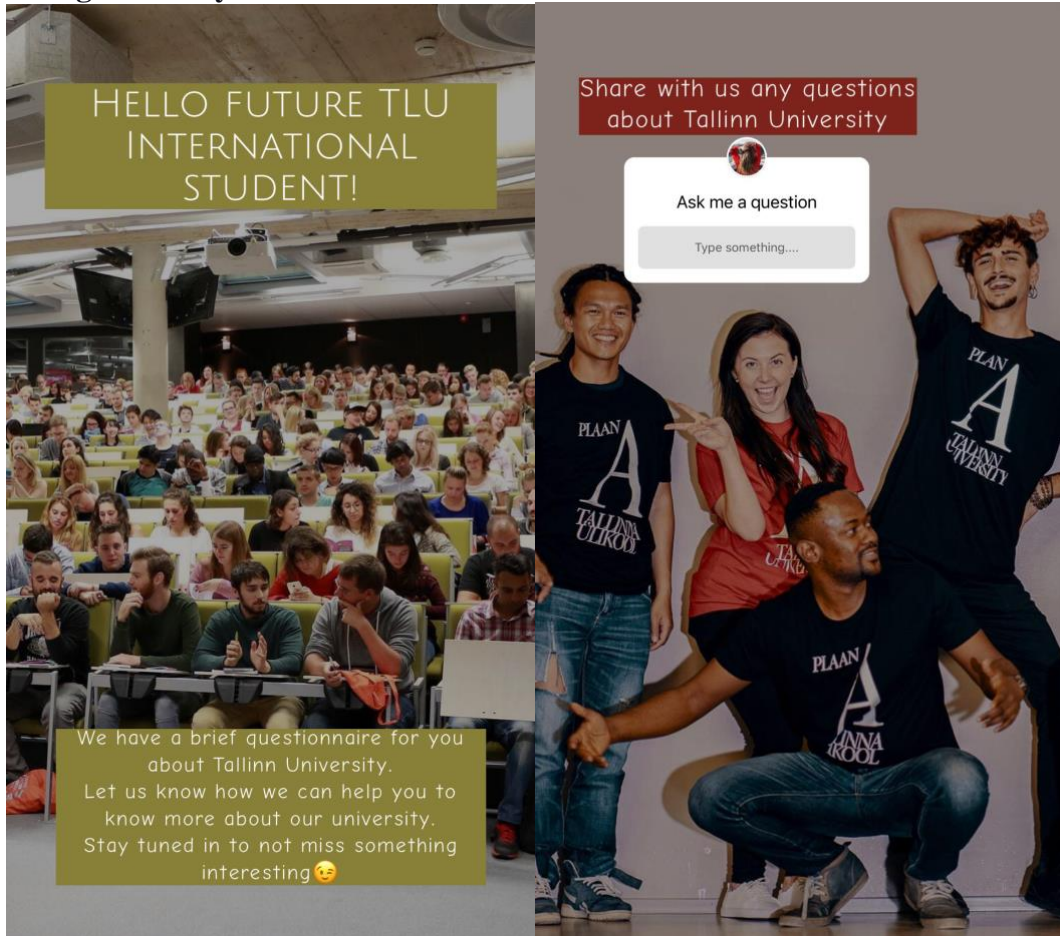


Figure 6. Instagram story visuals

### Copy for a post/message

Hey!

Are you looking for a university to study in Estonia? Do you want to study at Tallinn University?

You are more than welcome to join our great university team! We are sure that you have a looooot of questions before applying. It's okay, don't worry, we are here to support and help you. If you feel that you would like to ask something or give some feedback - please spend 10 mins on this brief questionnaire that can help us to improve your first experience with TLU and answer your questions.

This questionnaire is for **prospective international students** interested in Tallinn University's study programs taught in English. The questions have been created by a group of current students who seek to generate more interest in the programs offered by the institution. We are mostly interested in understanding how the university can provide further information about its programs and which is the best method or medium to efficiently solve these doubts.

Thank you for your time! We hope to see you at our university ❤️

### **Where to share the questionnaire:**

- Personal account (Instagram stories)
- TLU account (Facebook and Instagram stories)
- Facebook groups
  - International Degree Students at Tallinn University
  - Tallinn 2021 - International & Erasmus Students
  - ESN Tallinn University International Club 2021/2022
  - Expats & Foreigners in Estonia
  - Expats in Tallinn/Estonia
  - Tallinn | Girl Gone International
- Ask International friends to share
- WhatsApp chat for International Students

## **ANNEX C - REPORT BASED ON PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS SURVEY RESULTS**

To gain a greater understanding of what prospective students are interested in when applying for Tallinn University's English language study programs and which questions and doubts they may have, our group launched a social media outreach campaign, which ran from the 18th to the 23rd of October 2021 and consisted in the following two activities:

3. A virtual questionnaire
4. A "takeover" of Tallinn University's Instagram account

The answers provided in both scenarios were meant to be analysed and later used to inform the podcast structure and the main discussion. What follows is a description of each activity — the questionnaire and the Instagram takeover — the results, and the conclusions the group reached.

### **1. The virtual questionnaire**

The virtual questionnaire was created on Google forms — it contained fourteen questions in various formats, including multiple-choice, checkboxes, linear scales, and the possibility to submit short and long written answers. The questions inquired about the elements that attracted the participants to Tallinn University and its study programmes, and whether they were satisfied with the amount of information available online. Some of the questions included, "What study program(s) of Tallinn University are you interested in?"; "What attracted you to this particular program?"; "On a scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest), how satisfied are you with the amount of information found online about the study program(s) you are interested in?" and "In your opinion, what is the best medium to find valuable information about your higher education study programs?" amongst others which were relevant to the discussion.

In total, 26 participants filled in the survey. Out of this sample, 20 were "prospective students" — defined within the questionnaire as someone who is thinking about studying at Tallinn University, is in the process of enrolling, or has considered it — whereas the remaining 6 were not prospective students, therefore were exited from the virtual file before making it to the questionnaire. Therefore, our group chose to focus exclusively on the 20 respondents and were able to gather the following data.

#### **1.1 General information and educational experience**

The average age of the participants is 23 years of age, with 15% being 23 years old and 20% being 26 years old. A great majority of participants, 70%, are interested in pursuing a bachelor's

degree, while 25% wish to study at a Master's degree level and only 5% are focused on Ph.D. studies as indicated by Figure 1.

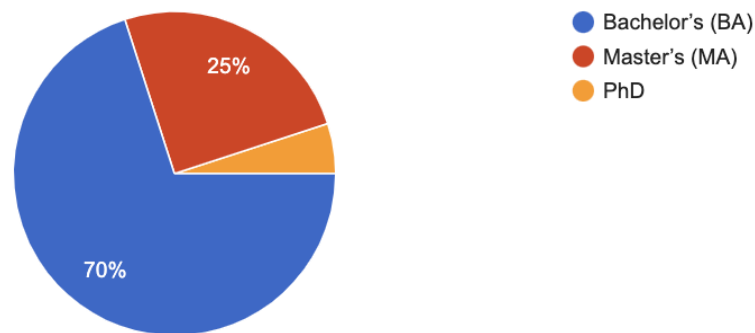


Figure 7

Participants were then asked which factors attracted them to Tallinn University and were given the possibility to pick multiple options. For 90% of the participants, the most motivating factor was a particular study program, while 65% are driven by the location, which is the city of Tallinn. Other important factors are fees, chosen by 50% of participants, and the University's academic reputation, chosen by another 30%. As shown in Figure 2, options such as available scholarships, research facilities, and extracurricular activities proved less relevant.

What attracted you to Tallinn University?

20 responses

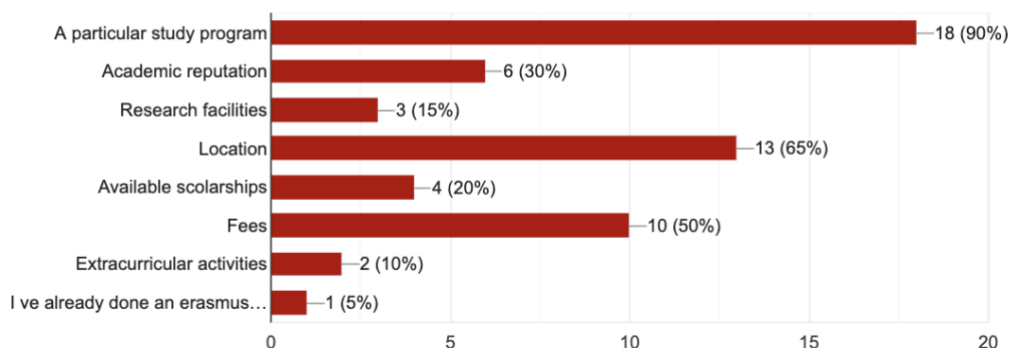


Figure 8

Subsequently, participants were asked to choose the most important factors that influence their educational experience. Like the previous question, participants were able to make multiple selections. Work-study-personal life balance was the most important factor, chosen by 90% of participants. Creation connections between their course and specialty resulted in the second most prominent factor, with 70% votes. Academic progression gathered 55% of votes and socializing 50%. Widening their job opportunities and the intellectual challenge were less popular options with 45% and 35% of votes respectively as shown in Figure 3.

Which of the following factors is most important for your educational experience?

20 responses

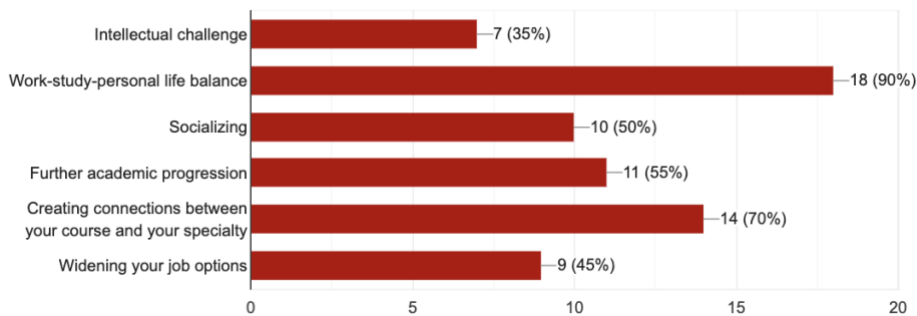


Figure 9

## 1.2 Study programs

The following questions were focused on the study programmes of interest. Firstly, participants were asked about which study programme offered by Tallinn University caught their interest. This question drew a wide diversity of responses, with nearly every participant choosing a distinctive study programme. However, after analysing the sample, it was possible to observe that most of the participants (45%) were interested in programmes offered by the university's Baltic Film, Media, and Arts School, with Crossmedia being the most popular programme. In addition, the School of Governance, Law and Society, and the School of Digital Technologies were also popular, each one generating 15% of the interest. The Law programme was the second most popular choice after Crossmedia.

When asked what attracted them to their chosen programme — whether it was a module, the lecturers, or any other factor — the participants who were interested in Crossmedia alluded to the programme's structure and modules, describing it as “flexible”, “modern”, and “versatile”. Overall, 12 out of the 20 participants mentioned that they were attracted to a certain programme because of the structure and modules. Some responses included:

*“The flexibility of the degree and diversity of topics we will focus on, its modernity.”* — Prospective Crossmedia student.

*“Would like to do something that can create convenience for people. This subject involves design and psychology, which are my interests.”* — Prospective Human-Computer Interaction student.

*“It provides a creative module which includes scriptwriting and direction and that is something I want to pursue. It's broad and yet particular and excludes the hassles of learning other aspects of film which I can learn on my own”* — Prospective Audiovisual media student.

## 1.3 Information

The next round of four questions aimed to inquire about the participants' satisfaction with the amount of information found online; any doubts about their programme they may have and the most effective method for sharing information. Firstly, the participants were asked to rate the amount of information found online about Tallinn University. On a scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest), the participants were mostly satisfied, with 50% selecting 4 out of 5. Only 25% of participants had a less optimistic outlook, having chosen 3 out of 5 as seen in Figure 4.

On a scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest), how satisfied are you with the amount of information found online about Tallinn University?



20 responses

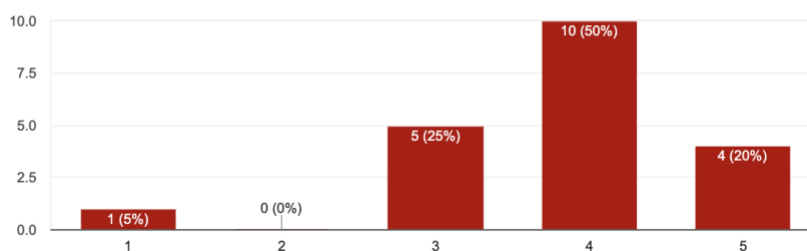


Figure 10

The following question was structurally similar to the previous one, the main difference being an emphasis on the study program of interest. As such, the answers were relatively similar — 50% of participants were satisfied with the amount of information found online about their study programs, choosing 4 on the satisfaction scale. Only 30% gave a less favourable response, choosing 3 out of 5.

Subsequently, the participants were asked to write down any questions or doubts about the study programmes which they had not been able to solve up to the day of filling in the questionnaire. After analysing the diverse responses, the group was able to divide the information into four different categories: the application process, work-study-balance, the study program itself, and life after studies. Some of the questions have been included below:

### 1.3.1 Application process:

*“I have doubts about the acceptance of the program that I have studied in my country before.*

*Am I able to apply before graduating next year?”*

*“I want to learn more about the interview. Is it too difficult and what kind of questions am I going to be asked? Are there any samples from previous interviews?”*

### 1.3.2 Work-study-balance:

*“Is it possible to work while studying? How much homework/projects do we have?”*

### 1.3.3 Study program:

*“For me, it would be important to check the new list of courses in the School Digital technologies offered in the spring semester as soon as possible.”*

### 1.3.4 Life after studies:

*“Is it possible to stay in Estonia and easily find a job after graduating? Does the university help us find jobs?”*

Afterwards, participants were asked to point out which is the best medium to find valuable information about higher education programs. They were given the following options: university brochure, website, Facebook live, podcast, open doors day, talking to current or former students, and Other. Even though the group expected respondents to demonstrate an interest in the podcast option, this was not the case as no respondent chose this option. As seen in Figure 5, a great majority of 60% indicated that a website is the most effective medium to find information, whereas 25% chose “talking to current or former students” and a remaining

15% chose “open doors days”. It is possible to conclude that a significant percentage of prospective students find the experiences of current and former students valuable. The podcast, which centres on the experiences of a group of current students, thus will be helpful.

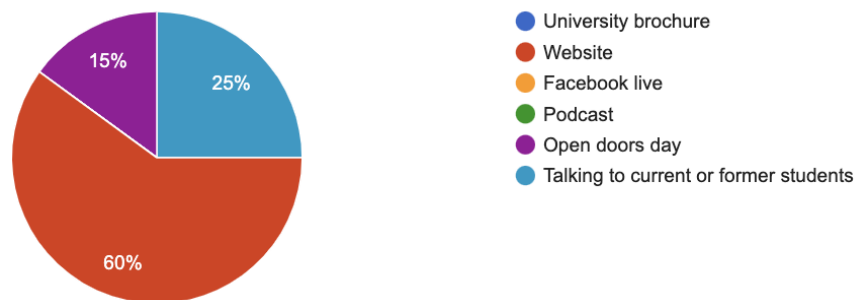


Figure 11

## 1.4 Other institutions

The final questions focused on other higher education institutions. The participants were asked if, in addition to Tallinn University, they were interested in any other institution. This was the case for 11 out of the 20 participants. More specifically, 3 participants are interested in Tartu University and other 3 mentioned the Estonian Academy of Arts (EKA). There was also a slight interest in academic institutions located in neighbouring countries, with participants mentioning Riseba and Helsinki University.

In comparison to these academic institutions, most of the participants believe that Tallinn University provides satisfactory information about its study programs. Even though two students had doubts, they were quickly solved by contacting the members of the Academic Affairs Office. By contrast, 7 participants — 35% percent of the sample — expressed less satisfaction with the amount of information they were able to find online about their respective study programs. The participants who were specific about their dissatisfaction stated that the website should include more information related to: the progression after graduation and the job market prospects; available lectures for the following year; in depth information about the interview process and how to balance personal life with university life. Hence, one could observe a connection between these doubts and the four different categories which were mentioned in the previous section: the application process, work-study-balance, the study program itself, and life after studies.

## 2. Instagram takeover

One of the methods of the target audience research was a question block on the official Instagram page of Tallinn University. Our team posted 4 Instagram stories (Figure 6) to promote the questionnaire and get additional questions from the prospective students.



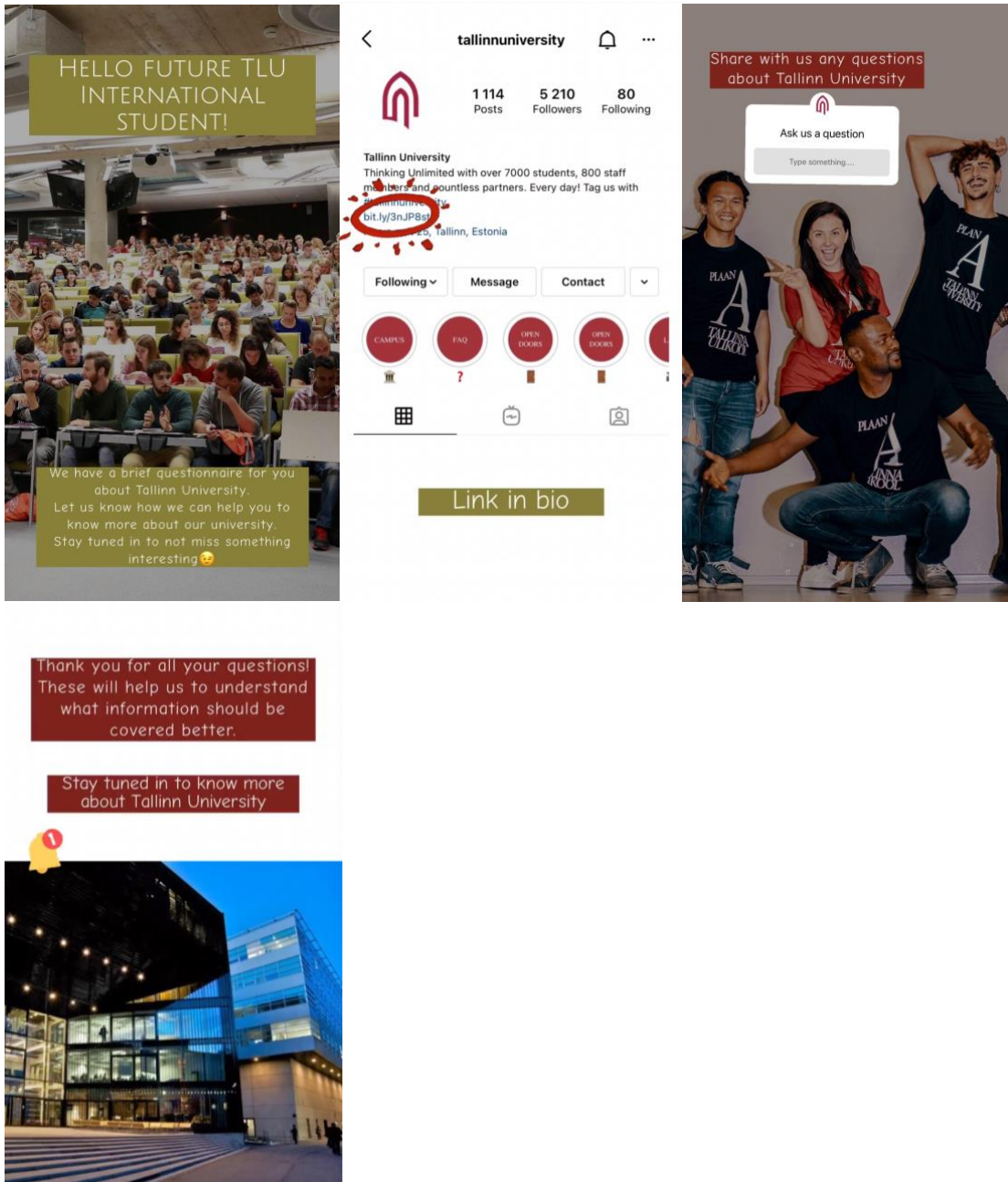


Figure 12

Instagram stories were available for 24 hours and they were noticed by 736 viewers. As a result, we got 7 questions:

1. Do you accept from Iran in master's programs?
2. Is there a free entry to the gym for Erasmus students?
3. Are the classes online now for all courses?
4. Where is the law faculty inside the campus?
5. What is the total cost for language school?
6. Do you offer Data Science programs? And are there any scholarships?
7. Is it already possible to apply for 2022?

Taking into consideration these questions, it is possible to point out 3 main topics that prospective students are interested in:

- application process.
- costs & scholarships,

- university life.

Tallinn University has its own website with all the important information.

Therefore, it can be concluded that not all prospective students are aware of the Tallinn University website, or the website does not provide clear information.

Having analysed these research results, we can conclude that it would be a good decision to mention the Tallinn University website in the podcast that we are planning to produce.

### **3. Conclusion**

From the results of this outreach campaign, following conclusions have been drawn to be reflected in the podcast production and overall discussion of effective marketing of Tallinn University's English language study programs.

#### **3.1 Podcast structure: contents, target audience and the medium**

As the significant percentage of prospective students find the experiences of current and former students valuable, our group concludes that the production of podcasts with personal experience stories of a group of current students enhances Tallinn University's outreach and marketing efforts.

To reflect respondents' overarching interests in key areas such as the application process, work-study-balance, the study program itself, and life after studies, the contents of the podcast will touch upon those elements from each presenter's perspective. For example, the presenter can provide a broad overview of the study program they are enrolled in and describe what an exemplar week's schedule would look like, including their academic engagements and work. Some discussions of the attractiveness of the program itself and the future prospects in terms of a career could also be included, as well as sharing of a personal story of a life in Tallinn given that prospective students have shown interests in the city of Tallinn and its social life. The presenter can also briefly talk about where the relevant information on application can be found in the website, should the listeners be interested in applying to Tallinn University.

In the podcast production, the main target audience will aim at those in their early twenties both for the bachelor's and master's programs given that the information is most likely to be sought after by this age group. As such, the stories told by the presenters as well as the languages used in those stories will consider the elements of casual and friendly talk - most ideally creating a "talking to current students" atmosphere.

The key medium for this podcast to be installed will be Tallinn University website, possibly under the category of each study program since the website is the most important medium of accessing information for most prospective students. However, the same contents can be shared through social media outlets such as Facebook or Twitter so that the contents will gain the attention of the widest possible audiences online.

#### **3.2 Other items to consider for effective marketing**

These outreach results have shown that although most respondents find that sufficient information is attainable online, there has been some indication that some readers of Tallinn University's website find it difficult to access the right information that they are seeking after. As the main medium of information gathering for prospective students is shown to be the website, it is critical that Tallinn University ensures that the information is well organized and easy to navigate so that prospective international students can find the right information instinctively without much browsing.

To do this, creating a dedicated website for international students where all relevant information is amassed or improving overall design and presentation of the website itself so

that viewers would have easy navigation and pleasant experience may prove to be effective, as discussed and suggested in the other part of our report under "Research on other universities." We also recommend creating a FAQ section for most frequently asked questions by international prospective students that the Academic Affairs Office, such as application process, details of interviews, visa applications, working while studying, scholarships and others.

## **ANNEX D – PODCAST EPISODE SCRIPT BA**

**(Host)** Hey! Welcome everyone to the very first episode of this podcast: TLU Internationals Talks! My name is Katariina and I'm a Communication Management master's student here at TLU and I will also be your host for today's episode. I hope you will enjoy it! I'm sure you've been wondering what we will be talking about here so let me in you on that... Today I have 3 fellow students here with me who are currently studying at bachelor's level study programmes taught in English. They will be opening up a little bit about their experience as international students throughout the study period they've spent at TLU and tell you more about their favourite bits about their course. So without further ado let me introduce you to Elise...(greeting the audience) Yelizaveta...(greeting the audience) and Veronika...(greeting the audience)

**(Host)** Elise can you tell us a bit about yourself, the course you are studying and where you come from?

**(Elise)** Hi, I'm Elise, I am from Finland and I'm studying in the bachelor's programme of Politics and Governance, for the third year. I will graduate next Spring, in 2022.

**(Host)** And what made you decide to come to study at Tallinn University?

**(Elise)** I chose Tallinn University mainly because of the interesting study opportunities and because I wanted to study abroad. Also, Tallinn was rather close to my home at the time. So, I was able to travel easily back home to Finland every once in a while even though I mainly lived in Tallinn.

**(Host)** Yelizaveta and Veronika, you are both in the same course, right? What are you studying?

**(Lisa)** Hey, yes! We are both third year Crossmedia students.

**(Host)** Sounds cool! Would definitely like to hear more about it. And what about you girls, where are you from and what made you choose Tallinn University?

**(Veronika)** Well hello, I'm from Ukraine. Honestly speaking, when I was looking for the university, I wanted to find something abroad but at the same time not so far from home. Estonia was a good option for me. Once some representatives from Estonian universities came to Kyiv and they had presentations about universities. It was the first time for me when I understood that I wanted to study at Tallinn University. The presentation and representatives were super good. The important thing that also had an impact on my decision was the Erasmus opportunity. And luckily Tallinn University has it. Trust me, Erasmus is cool. I took Erasmus+ Traineeship opportunity this summer and it was one of the best experiences.

**(Lisa)** I am from Kazakhstan from Almaty city. I started my Bachelors in finance in my home town but through the first year found out it was not for me and that I wanted to study outside Kazakhstan. My lovely classmate told me about the ad she saw on Instagram for Tallinn university and I got super interested after reading the description for the program, so I applied.

**(Host)** Oh right, cool! And what about the other students in your course, are they also international students and do you know how many students are there in your course?

**(Elise)** Our studies are fully in English and I have classmates basically from all around the world. I don't know the exact number of students in my programme because we had mutual courses with law students and sociology students in the beginning and not that many meetings or lectures with only the students in my group.

**(Veronika)** When I came to university I was 17 years old. Many classmates were shocked at how I got to university at that age. Actually, nothing special, it's just the difference between the high schools' rules in Ukraine and other countries. Despite my age, I was able to communicate and have fun with my classmates. We became a good International Crossmedia team very quickly. We have Estonians, Finns, and some people from Russia, Brazilia, Lithuania, Poland and Kazakhstan.

**(Host)** So we have quite different study programmes here Politics and Governance and Crossmedia. I'm sure our listeners would like to hear what kind of subjects you get to study within this programme. Can you tell me a bit more about your major, Elise?

**(Elise)** We have 4 different modules to choose the two majors: politics, governance, economics and international relations. I am studying politics and international relations and my specific interests are political philosophy, international security, foreign policy and political history. I'm also interested in the issues related to indigenous people, EU politics and environmental politics which basically form the basis of my upcoming thesis as well. In the module of politics, we have studied very widely different aspects and layers of politics. To mention a few examples, we have studied politics in different regions and countries world-wide, different types of political parties, voting behaviour, political ideologies and -philosophy and we have also very broadly focused on civic society. In international relations, we have studied a lot of history: for example the formation of states, democracy and diplomatic relations. We have learned about international security issues, great power -politics and widely about different international organizations.

**(Host)** And what about Crossmedia programme, how is that built up?

**(Lisa)** Crossmedia is a good opportunity to understand what is it you truly desire in the context of your future work. Of course, to choose Crossmedia you already need to have a passion for the media sphere.

However, the media is a huge world where you can be whoever you want - creative or business soul, writer or speaker, dreamer or analyst. You never understand what you want without trying it. Crossmedia program at Tallinn University covers a lot of media aspects, such as marketing, scriptwriting, technical side, storytelling, entrepreneurship and even VR and Computer Games. It helps you to choose your dream work. Undoubtedly, unforgettable new experience and knowledge come after every group work. Group work is one of the key skills that you have to

achieve during your studies. Crossmedia program is an opportunity to get a lot of new international connections. You are always motivated by professionals who teach you.

**(Host)** What made you choose your respective study programmes and do you have any recommendations for students who have not chosen their study area yet?

**(Elise)** I wanted to study politics and international relations because I wanted to learn how the current world has formed and sort of, how is it managed. I have always been very interested in history and different cultures so I thought this could be a good way to deepen my knowledge and I've got to say that this has been probably the best choice I've ever made. I have studied business administration before and even though it may sound completely different compared to my current studies, I have actually benefited from them as well. For example, some compulsory studies of economics are similar to what I have studied before and hence I've been able to transfer my previous studies to my current study programme too. I would like to encourage anyone interested to apply. If you are yet unsure about what you would like to study exactly, it is possible to change the programme yet later on and of course, you can also study courses outside your own study programme as elective courses. Personally, I think I have gotten so much more out of these studies here than I would have, in my home country, because I've been able to get connected with people from different countries and cultures, which has taught me a lot. And, I've been able to live abroad, again, on my own which has been very encouraging. Even though Estonia would be totally unfamiliar to you or quite familiar already, as it was for me, I promise you'll get used to local habits, weather, people and so on, and learn a lot of new aspects you didn't know about Estonia before.

**(Veronika)** As Lisa already said before, Crossmedia is a good way to start your media studies. After high school graduation I knew for sure that I wanted to connect my life to media sphere. But media is a word with a very wide meaning. You can relate to media being behind the camera or in front of it, doing creative or business stuff. Difficult to choose and that's why it is worth to try everything. For people who just in their beginning of their choice, I would recommend one primitive but important thing – listen to yourself. Your future is your choice. Start with something that you really like. Maybe it is worth to start with something wide to understand what your real passion is and then focus on more concrete skills for your Masters. If you have the possibility to study abroad - do this! Don't be afraid of trying and going out of your comfort zone.

**(Lisa)** I didn't know which specific area of media I wanted to study. I liked making photos but I also liked doing videos and I also like social media, so Crossmedia at that time seemed the middle ground for my struggle. It includes so many different aspects of media, and I think that's what a person needs for the bachelors phase in their life, so you can get deeper and then know where you want to proceed to become a professional for your further studies or work.

**(Host)** What are your favourite things about studying at TLU or maybe even at Tallinn and Estonia in general?

**(Elise)** I gotta say that I like the atmosphere in the university, in general. I also think that I've gotten so much help and support from the university staff and my fellow students have been very nice too. The university is in such a good location and it has been easy to travel there from home and from the harbour. As a city, I like Tallinn very much, because it's small enough but there's plenty of things to do. Especially, I love the restaurants in Tallinn!

**(Veronika)** Simple thing: I am happy to study with the people I study with; I am happy to have the opportunity to learn from teachers who are professionals in their field; I am happy to get new knowledge and practice it; I'm just glad to be where I am now. The most unforgettable moments during my studies are the group work on different projects. My favorite one is when we needed to shoot the video for one course and all our Crossmedia group became a one production team. We had so much fun together and it was a really very friendly atmosphere where everyone could help each other and support if it was needed. The important thing to mention is our team gatherings. Sometimes it was even with the head of our program and our study counsellor Siiri, who helps and saves us basically every time when we need this. We became one big family for those meetings, we were laughing, playing, eating. The emotions were so sincere... I see how hard it would be for me to say goodbye to the university in a half a year, what it would be like to say goodbye to friends, professors and, in general, the walls of this institution. Yes, studying is exhausting and you don't always agree with everything and not always everyone agrees with you. But what a thrill comes when you hand in something and understand that everyone who was with you, the whole team, have done their best. You see this final result and immediately forget about everything that was before and want to create further (and for those who are in the sphere of creativeness, it is very important). All these difficult moments bring people together and build a great team.

**(Lisa)** Frankly enough, I really like the scales of the city. Tallinn is not small but not a big city either. It suits me so well, even though I prefer more sunlight. I also like that there are quite a bit of international students coming I really like different cultures and leaning languages so I find it a great opportunity for me to know more!

**(Host)** Was there something that you found surprising about coming to study here that you had not expected at first?

**(Elise)** Well, I've been positively surprised how easy the life has been in Tallinn, overall. I didn't really have a lot of expectations before I came here and I would suggest to arrive open-minded. If something comes up, there's always help available as the university has supported us so well. They've provided instructions and help regarding anything from visa issues to actual study-related issues and everything in between.

**(Veronika)** Yes, I knew that living in another country would be a great life experience but I didn't even think that university would teach us not only typical things to know for your future career but also we learn to be humans. I can say only about the Crossmedia Programm but the studies here is the example of real life situations. There will always be falls, that it is always very important to remain a human in all situations in all fields of life. The unforgettable phrase for me is the words of one of the professors who taught me: "In the majority of the situations in your life, you can't just give up and leave, like leaving a project at the university. You can't run away from all challenging situations."

**(Lisa)** Something I didn't expect to find in Estonia so many Russian speaking people. I was actually pleasantly surprised by that, because when you change the country of living it's quite challenging in all life aspects, and that there are so many Russian speaking people helped me quite a lot I should say.

**(Host)** And what is your schedule like, maybe you could describe one of your ordinary weeks?

**(Elise)** At the beginning, we had lectures around three to four days a week and plenty of independent work in addition. Still, I have been able to work alongside the school for almost three years now, so don't get scared, it's not like school every day from the early morning to midnight. I think the most important thing is to plan yourself a solid schedule to follow, then it's easier to balance between lectures, independent tasks and possible work. Now that we're studying third year, our schedule is very different. There's more independent work, as many of us are writing thesis and there's not that many lectures or seminars anymore. Of course this depends a lot: for example I only have a few courses left for the last year, because I have studied some second-, and third year courses beforehand, during my first and second year of studies.

**(Lisa)** Oooh... well... third year of studies doesn't have a typical student's schedule I would say. Now our lives are like thesis, thesis, meeting with a supervisor, sometimes studies, thesis, thesis. But if we talk about first and second years, they are full of different projects and interesting things to do. It wasn't difficult to follow the schedule. Sometimes we had 1 class per day, sometimes 3 per day. But you always have free time and a nice weekend.

**(Host)** And what is the favourite part of your study programme?

**(Elise)** I think the best parts are the amazing teachers we've had and how well this study programme has answered to my personal expectations. To be honest, this has been even better than I expected!

**(Veronika)** My favorite part is the combination of theory and practical classes. I would say that maybe even I would like to have more practical stuff but still it is fine. It is cool when you can experiment with your gained skills and work with a team on something new and interesting.

**(Lisa)** I like how practical it is, in many cases you don't go to usual lecture to write in your note book but rather you go to find out something to use it in practical classes. We have a lot of projects and group works which I think is a great experience for your future work and projects. You also get to know people in your field which is super useful and also very helpful.

**(Host)** Maybe also something that would be good to know is that what did you find the most difficult about coming to study at TLU? If there was anything like that at all.

**(Elise)** Difficult to say...I don't think I've had any specific difficulties. Of course there's always something little I guess. Perhaps in my case, the most overwhelming thing was travelling between Finland and Estonia as I did it even every week, or every other week. It was exhausting sometimes but well, then came the COVID and I gave up my apartment here and returned to my other home, in Finland. Now I've been just glad to travel back to Tallinn!

**(Veronika)** I don't even know what to say. It is not difficult part but still – be ready to study and communicate. In the beginning, it is difficult to understand what is happening actually, hahah.

**(Lisa)** Well for me probably was getting the visa, I would say it was super difficult it's just a lot of paperwork, time management, traveling and just stress in general. And probably as Veronika said I didn't understand what was going on in the beginning, it was quite a mess, luckily I got to know a guy from a second year of my study program who helped me through it.

**(Host)** Do you think that your course will provide you good work opportunities in the future whether that would be in Estonia, in your home country or elsewhere internationally?

**(Elise)** Our study programme includes traditional studies and a bachelor thesis too but we also have a compulsory internship in our programme. I think that we have very broad work opportunities regarding the internship and jobs overall, after studies. I would be interested in working in different ministries, embassies and international organizations but I would also be interested to see a more “grass roots level” kind of work, such as working for municipalities or city governments. So yes, I think that the work opportunities are very broad and it is possible to work basically all around the world.

**(Lisa)** I can't say for sure if all my classmates know who they want to become after graduation. It is just because we had a lot of stuff to learn. We studied basically everything that can be somehow related to the media in both creative and business fields. Now everyone needs to summarize all experience we had to focus on more concrete things. As it is written on the TLU website, after the Crossmedia program you can find employment as a Media Strategist and Producer; Social media manager; Creative Director for media, marketing and advertising companies; Interactive Media Commissioner (TV industry); Audience analyst.

**(Veronika)** Yeah, but even with so wide range of things to study, we have an opportunity (more like a compulsory opportunity, hahah) to have an internship. You can choose by yourself what you want to work with, but it should be related to the University program you are studying at. I think it is a good way how the student can get work experience and improve communication skills.

**(Host)** In the end do you think you made a good choice by deciding to study at TLU?

**(Elise)** Well, yeah, as I said before, this has been simply the best choice I've ever made.

**(Veronika)** I would not change anything, I guess I made the best decision for myself three years ago.

**(Lisa)** I can surely say it was a right decision. I've met so many cool people, got a lot of good new friends experiences and opportunities.

**(Host)** Oh, such an inspirational discussion we had today... Have a nostalgia about my Bachelor studies after it. Thank you, girls, for such a good conversation I hope that your last year as Bachelor students will be fun and productive.

**(Elise, Lisa, Veronika)** Thank you

**(Host)** Dear listeners! I hope that you enjoyed this episode of the podcast with real insights and stories about how your study and life would look like at TLU. Now it is time for you to think and prepare yourself to be a part of the TLU family. We would be happy to help you to know even more about the university life and our study programs. If you have any questions or concerns, please write a comment and we will try to help you as soon as possible.

**(Host)** Don't forget to visit our website [tlu.ee](http://tlu.ee) and social media such as Instagram and Facebook. If you have any specific questions about concrete study programs, please don't



hesitate to contact our Study ambassadors who will consult you. You can find their contact on Tallinn University website [flu.ee](http://flu.ee) in 'Ask our students and alumni' section!

**(Host)** Thank you for listening! Stay healthy and happy! Bye!

## **ANNEX E - PODCAST EPISODE SCRIPT MA**

**(Host)** Hey! Welcome back to the second episode of TLU International Talks! My name is Andres, I am a Psychology bachelor's student at Tallinn University, and I will be your host today for the next 15 minutes or so. Last time you got to hear a little info from Bachelor students at Tallinn University and their experience applying and studying abroad. This time we get to look at master's study programmes and the experience of two wonderful current students. As you can see Katariina is in a different role today sitting on the other side of the table along with Pierangelly. Our guests will talk about the Communication Management MA program and Literature, Visual Culture & Film Studies MA program. So hello girls!

**(Kat)** Hello!

**(Pier)** Hi!

**(Host)** Kat, you are from Estonia, but this is your first experience studying in an Estonian university, before that you were studying and living abroad in the UK for 8 years. Tell us a little about yourself and where have you been studying before?

**(Kat)** Well, so I was living in the UK and actually managed to attend a few universities there haha. I was initially studying in Aberdeen, Scotland but it wasn't quite my thing so I decided to change and move 1000 km away to pursue a bachelor's degree at Brighton University in the south-east coast of England where I received my business degree. I later also received a postgraduate certificate in Southampton so as you can imagine I have my fair share of different experiences with UK universities.

**(Host)** After studying in the UK, what made you come back to Estonia and choose to apply for a master's programme at Tallinn University?

**(Kat)** So yeah I did study for most of the time I was in the UK but not for the entire 8 years. Towards the end of my stay in the UK I also started a career in recruitment, but that was unfortunately cut short by covid pandemic. Although initially I only planned to stay in Estonia for a long holiday during the worst outbreak, I ended up staying a lot longer. Also as the job market situation was not the best in 2020 at least when it came to recruitment so I started thinking about a possible new career path and thinking what else I would like to do. As I was inclined towards the media and communications field and master's degree studies had been at the back of my mind for a while, I landed in BFM studying communication management.

**(Host)** Pier, you are from Colombia and you have been studying also in the UK. Tell us a little about yourself please

**(Pier)** So I'm an international student and I'm currently in my second year at Tallinn University as a Literature, Visual Culture, and Film Master's student. Before moving to Estonia I completed a bachelor's degree in English and Creative Writing at Manchester Met University

in the UK. I've always loved reading and writing since I was a child, so that's what inspired me to study this Bachelor's degree. Then, I moved to Estonia to work as a full-time writer, but I wanted to continue studying and get a master's degree in something related to my field.

**(Host)** Very interesting. I would like to hear more from you both about what are the courses you are studying in TLU right now? Kat you can go first.

**(Kat)** My Communication Management program provides knowledge on multiple very useful areas within the field of communication and also when it comes to thesis you can kind of choose the area based on what you are most interested in and what you feel you are the best at. Subjects around media studies are included, including media management, transmedia and social media – more particularly actually how it affects the society. Besides that the course provided theoretical knowledge with subjects around public relations and communication theory as well as with some more practical information related to strategic aspects of communication. At last, perhaps I should mention that there is also a heavy focus on intercultural and international communication throughout different subjects of this course. I have actually found several subjects very interesting and somehow feel very engaged and motivated in learning more and wanting to dig deeper, perhaps even to continue my studies or research further in the future. From the start, I have felt the most connected to topics around international communication (for example international PR) and also intercultural communication. These were the topics I already had some previous knowledge about and now studying in this course, even a stronger interest in me has been created. What I can bring out from here are the topics related to cultural identity, culture shock, including reverse culture shock and acculturation. Probably because of my personal experiences I have started to further think about these topics especially when it comes to someone's identity and how being in different cultural environments can affect that. At the same time, it is very interesting for me to see people who have moved to countries outside of their birth country and like how some people adapt to new cultures easier, even to an extent when they take on a new identity and some are rather more connected to the identity associated to their birth country and less so taking on customs and behaviour of new place.

**(Host)** What about you Pier, what did you find interesting so far about Literature, Visual Culture & Film Studies?

**(Pier)** Overall, the course lasts two years and it's pretty intense, to be honest, but in a good way! Every semester, you have to take a total of thirty credits, which is about five different modules. So, if you are a first year student, you'll take compulsory modules like Key Concepts in Cultural Theory, Narratology, Word and Image, basic Estonian, and the Literature, Visual Culture, and Film seminar. So, as you see, a pretty mixed semester, with plenty of opportunities to learn more about literature, films, art and the relationship between these disciplines. It can be quite intense in the first semester, but it gets a bit less so in the following semesters. Another highlight of the course is that it is done in partnership with the EKA, the Estonian Academy of Arts. So the modules that focus on visual culture such as Word and Image, Key Concepts in Critical Theory and Visual Culture, and Visual literacy are taught by EKA lecturers. You get to go that school, meet classmates that are pursuing a degree in the art field, and basically immerse yourself in this highly creative atmosphere that's different from Humanities, but still so interesting. To me it has been enriching because I knew so little about art, its history, philosophers, and theories. And, while I'm not close to becoming an art curator, I have amassed lots of knowledge in a span of one and a half years. It's amazing!

(Host) Both of you mentioned the difference of people as a thing that makes your studies interesting, which is quite cool! Pier, how would you compare Estonians to people from your country, Colombia?

(Pier) My country is really big, bigger than Estonia. So people are really different in each region. I would say that people from the capital city, Bogota, are really different from people from the coast-side, where I live. So, if I have to compare Estonians with people from my region, I would say they are extremely different. For example, in my city, people are super extroverted and very affectionate with each other. And that's great. But, sometimes, because they are so extroverted, they kind of forget about personal space and privacy. In Estonia there is nothing like that and it has been really refreshing for me. People are polite and respect your privacy. I have heard somewhere that Estonians are cold and reserved, but that has not been my experience. I've met Estonians that are really friendly and sociable. Of course, I've met others that are a bit more reserved but that's something I understand and empathise with.

(Host) What about the difference between Estonians and British people, Kat? And why did you decide to be a part of an English program instead of Estonian?

(Kat) If we're talking about cultural differences then yes, there are quite a few actually, but at the same time it was rather easy for me to get used to the way of life in the UK so I guess some things are actually rather similar too. I would say that the main difference I can feel is regarding social life, people are kinda more active on that side and it's very easy to build new connections and yes people talk a lot more! I guess people kinda seem more outgoing and confident in general, whereas here people tend to be more reserved.

To be honest, by now English has become my first language and because of that it made sense for me to choose a study programme taught in English rather than Estonian. As I returned to Estonia just a few months before starting to study at TLU, I guess I was also keener on studying with international students rather than Estonians as in a lot of ways things were very different for me in here and I thought in some ways I could relate a bit more to international students rather than locals. Maybe another reason why I actually was leaning towards an English language programme were also the prospective job opportunities it would bring along as there would be more international opportunities.

(Host) Now I would like to know, how did you end up studying in Estonia, Pier? How did you find Tallinn University?

(Pier) I was already living in Estonia before starting my studies. So I started looking for any available options in Tallinn. A Google search led me to Tallinn University and the Literature, Visual Culture and Film Studies programme. The name itself caught my attention. As I said before, I love reading and anything that has to do with literature, but I also love watching films and that's my second favourite activity after reading.

And, while I didn't know much about visual culture, I was really interested in learning more about it. So, I said "why not?" It's basically three disciplines in one package.

(Host) Was the applying process difficult? What did you have to do in order to apply here, Pier?

(Pier) I think the application process was straightforward. The website tells you everything you need to do to apply. For my master's, for example, I had to submit several documents to the

Dream Apply platform — an English language certificate, my bachelor's degree graduation certificate, a writing sample from my previous study programme and a personal statement saying what was my research interest. Then, I had to wait for the Academic Affairs Office to review my documents. Then, I moved to the second stage of the application process, which was an interview with a group of processors. To that point, it was fairly easy and a good experience overall. But, then I had to send my documents via postal service and this particular part of the process was made difficult by the Covid-19 situation. It was late 2020 and the postal service was a bit slow, plus there were several new restrictions in the country. I definitely had many obstacles and the communication with TLU wasn't the best. But I kind of get it because it was the first time the university was dealing with such an unparalleled situation. Luckily, at the end of the day, I was able to start my studies without any further problems.

**(Host)** I'm sure many of our listeners would like to know about the process of moving to Estonia. What did you have to do and how did you settle in, Pier? Did you come alone?

**(Pier)** I actually moved to Estonia one year before starting my studies. I came with my husband and we both started working for a startup company. First, we came here and because we are Colombians, we are able to stay in the Schengen area for ninety days. Then, during these initial two months, we applied for a temporary residence permit. We had to go to the police border guard with our documents to officially request the permit and begin the process — this is basically the same process for international students who aren't European Union citizens. Of course, in that case, the university sends a document to the police border guard notifying them that you have been accepted there. The temporary residence permit was issued after two months. Then, we registered our residence to the Police and started settling in properly.

**(Host)** Let's talk a little about your schedule at school, Kat. Do you find it time consuming or rather easy to get by?

**(Kat)** So my course is a 2-year master's programme, I have already completed the first year so not much more left here now haha, mainly just the most difficult part of writing up my thesis. But basically my course has cyclical studies and the subjects run in blocks. I have to say that in terms of the number of courses the first year was definitely busier, especially at certain times, like for me the Spring semester was very busy in regards to the amount of credits I had back then. The final year has less courses but at the same time of course the final thesis which is a little over 25% of the entire course load is the main focus.

I think my course is quite well-built for those who also work at the same time as we generally have a 4-hour class 1 or 2 times per week starting from 16:15 and then Fridays we could also have 1 or 2 daytime classes. Also, as the studies are cyclical and subjects run in blocks there are some periods when it's like more quiet and you might even get like a week or 2 off in the middle or at the end of the semester. In Estonia, there is also another great thing introduced by the government called paid study leave. That will allow you to take time off for study purposes in addition to your annual leave without having to worry about losing out that much on your pay. I think that can sometimes really make things easier as well.

**(Host)** In the time of Covid-19, has the international study program been more enjoyable or would you rather be physically present?

**(Kat)** To be honest, I think overall I have benefitted quite a bit from the distance learning as I soon landed a full-time recruitment job and having the opportunity to attend classes and also working from the comfort of my own home has allowed me to do so much more than I would

have normally been able to. For example during spring semester instead of the normally required 30 credits I took 41 as I decided to pursue an additional B2 course in Spanish to finally get my certificate. At the same time I also managed to work pretty much full-time.

For sure some things are very different, for example I only have like 5 coursemates as a very high number of international students were not able to enroll due to restrictions in 2020. I would appreciate having more students in my course adding new perspectives and ideas during discussions but at the same time we are a rather close knit group and I guess it has been easier to organise online seminars for such a small group.

I think it would have also been a great experience if I had a chance to attend classes at the university throughout my degree studies, meeting new people and perhaps the social side would be more exciting but at the same time, currently I have been able to also focus on my career and this has been a very exciting and fulfilling journey too. I feel very happy that I have been able to perform very well both in my work but also in studies and doing that all simultaneously. Previously I always had to choose which one to pursue, it wasn't really possible to do both at once.

**(Host)** What about your classmates, are they also international students or are there some local people as well, Pier?

**(Pier)** Like I was telling you before, my circumstances were a little different because of the whole COVID-19 situation. So, many people couldn't start their studies that year and had to postpone them. That's why there were only 5 people in my study programme. There was a guy from Finland, a girl from the UK, two girls from Estonia and myself. Of course, we weren't only five people in the classroom because we attended seminars with the 2nd years. So it was always a group of about twenty people from many different countries around the world and a couple of local people. It's the same right now. We are a big group of mostly international students, erasmus students, and a couple of Estonians learning together.

**(Host)** Let's hope that in the next year students will have more international groups. But for now, let's talk about your future. What career options does your course provide? Are you planning to work in your selected field, Kat?

**(Kat)** Right, I guess we'll see about that after I have graduated haha. There are actually a lot of opportunities in the field of communication. For example related to marketing, public relations, internal organisational communication and so on. There are a lot of companies in both the public and private sector in need of communication managers. In fact, as I work in recruitment and HR, my current role involves a great deal of communication in the form of employer branding and internal communication. I could already say that the fact that I am studying communication management at master's level combined with my recruitment experience has given me new opportunities and I have received more job offers. I do think that in my future career I would like to focus even more on communication. I am especially interested in the fields of public relations, crisis communication and political communication. Let's see what the future holds!

**(Host)** Do any of you plan to study more, maybe apply to a certain PhD programme? If so, where do you think you'll be studying, here in Estonia?

**(Pier)** When I was doing my Bachelor's degree, I definitely wanted to do a Master's degree and then a PhD programme. Right now, I'm not so sure. On one hand, I'm very passionate about my research speciality which is cultural memory studies, and I think there's so many

excellent case studies out there and contributions I would like to make to the field. But, on the other hand, I would also like to take a break from studies, and focus on my current, non-academic career. So, who knows? I'll keep my options open, that's for sure.

**(Kat)** So I have considered continuing my education and pursuing further degree studies, maybe even a PhD. In fact, studying towards my current degree in communication has actually increased my interest in it and made me think of possibly continuing at PhD level. As I do have a variety of interests, I'm also considering to study a new discipline altogether and perhaps linking it to my current studies. But for now, all I want to do is to finish my current degree. Even if I do decide to continue with studies later on, I think I would need a bit of a break first.

**(Host)** How would you describe your time here in Estonia - are you happy with your choice, would you recommend Estonia and TLU for prospective students looking to apply to a master's study program abroad?

**(Kat)** I'm very happy that I decided to pursue communication management studies here at TLU. I have felt very engaged throughout the studies and it has created further interest in me to explore further. This has been not only due to the subjects but also the professors who are themselves very knowledgeable and engaged in their field. I can actually say that from the 4 universities I have studied at, I've had the best experience studying at TLU and as I previously mentioned Estonia is rather student friendly when it comes to the working environment too due to the additional study leave you can take. I would definitely recommend TLU!

**(Pier)** I just have to say that I love Estonia. I fell in love with the country and I would recommend it to anyone who would like to visit for their holidays or for a longer period of time. There's just so much to see, beautiful nature everywhere, rich history and wonderful cultural traditions. You don't get bored here and there's always a new place to discover. In that regard, I'm happy with the choice I made. And yes, I'm also satisfied with Tallinn University. You have the opportunity to learn a lot and meet new people. I also think that the study fees are reasonable in comparison to my previous University, which I loved, but I always thought that the fees international students had to pay in the UK were excessive. In that aspect, TLU is much more flexible and offers plenty of scholarships to help you out.

**(Host)** Wow, it's cool that you liked not only the university where you are studying but also the country! Do you have any final words you'd like to say to people looking to study for master's program abroad?

**(Pier)** I recommend doing a thorough research. Sometimes, you are so excited to study abroad that you just jump straight into the first option you find. Take time to analyse all the factors that make for a good educational experience abroad, including the country you're going to be living in, the University's academic reputation, the application process, the accommodation, how the university is willing to help you with all of that, the fees, and academic progression, of course. I also recommend looking for expat communities. There's always someone who can answer your questions, questions that not even the university's website can answer. Wherever you go, there's a network of expats willing to help and support you.

**(Kat)** I would also like to say that when choosing a master's study program, take a bit of time to think what really interests you. Maybe you have some secret interests you have not acted upon before. It is generally fine if you have not studied the discipline before, but it would be beneficial to have some touchpoints, like some connections between your previous studies,

experience and knowledge and the new studies you are planning to pursue. In my personal experience, this is really something that can take you further and benefit you a great deal in your career after you've graduated, but also to keep you motivated during your studies.

**(Host)** Thank you Kat and Pier for talking about your experience as prospective students in TLU and I hope the listeners found it useful for making their decisions.

**(Pier, Kat)** Thank you!

**(Host)** If you want to know more about what is required to apply into TLU you can look at the study courses for master's on [tlu.ee](http://tlu.ee) or reach out to our supportive units such as Student Ambassadors. Thank you all for listening and we wish you luck on your journey as a prospective student.

## **ANNEX F - PRACTICAL GUIDE TO NAVIGATE THE TLU WEBSITE RECORDING SCRIPT**

Hello listeners! We hope you have been enjoying our podcasts with real insights and stories about how your study and life would look like at TLU and the beautiful city of Tallinn, Estonia. And by now, we hope you are very keen on discovering more about how to apply and what to prepare to be a student of TLU.

In this short episode, we give you an overview of navigating the TLU website – where to find information and what you need to do. Please remember, if you cannot find the right information you are looking for, you are always welcome to contact our admissions office by writing to us at [admissions@tlu.ee](mailto:admissions@tlu.ee).

To start, for the ease of navigation, unless you are familiar with where to look exactly within the TLU website, we recommend you check the “Contact Us!” page first, where the information that is highly relevant for prospective students are all gathered together.

This is how you get to this page - When you visit the TLU website, on the top right-hand side of the main website, there is a tab called ‘Admissions,’ and when you move your mouse pointer underneath this tab, it collapses and there, on the bottom of the page, you will see a category called ‘Contact us!’

In this ‘Contact Us!’ area of the page, there is a list of links curated for prospective students – such as application deadlines, application processes, which includes country specific requirements, step-by-step guide and application fees and tuition fees, as well as English language requirements, Bachelor's and master's programs instructed in English, and scholarships. From this page, you will be directed to specific pages – it is a good gateway to find more detail information in TLU website.

Now, once you know where to start, then you can dig further into more details, such as accommodation, health care, insurance or other information related to living in Estonia. For this information, look for a page called ‘Practical Matters’ which is located underneath the main category of both ‘Studies’ and ‘Admissions.’ The ‘Studies’ page is important if you are incoming or outgoing exchange students and if you are looking for an information related to Covid-19 measures at TLU.

And of course, if you are not sure which programs to pursue and what sort of careers you may have in future with a potential degree, there is a 'Digital Career Advisor' under the main category of 'Admissions' – this will assist you to identify your interests, and based on you interests, it will suggest the programs that may be suitable for you.

Please give it a try and see what the TLU can offer!

And finally, if you are interested in knowing more about TLU, its history, organization, campus, people etc., 'About us' page will give you a good picture of who we are – you can watch Tallinn University's introductory video called 'PLAN A for those who want to lead an intelligent life' and imagine your exciting new life at TLU.

Once again, if you are new to TLU website, start from 'Contact Us!' page, and from there, you will be directed to many more information that will open up a new avenue for the start of a rewarding life at TLU.

For those of you who have listened to our podcasts, we thank you so much for your interests, and we hope you will soon be part of us at TLU. TLU sincerely welcomes you all and we look forward to seeing you soon!



## **ANNEX G - MARKETING APPROACH OF OTHER UNIVERSITIES**

### **1. Research on Other Universities**

To better understand what other neighbouring universities are doing in terms of marketing their English-based programs and attracting international students online, we have investigated five different universities. The selection of universities is based on the geographic location, relative size of the international student population, the number of English-based programmes and similarities in long-term strategic goals. The information gathering has been conducted in the form of desk-top research through accessing information only available online.

#### **i. University of Tartu (UT)**

UT is a leading research and training institute in Estonia and has around 13,000 students, including around 1,700 international students from 90 countries.<sup>1</sup> On average, 10-12% of the student population is categorized as international students at UT. It has 55 bachelor's, 71 master's and 33 doctoral study programmes available in the academic year 2020/2021, including 27 programmes in English.<sup>2</sup> Its strategic plan emphasizes its focus on excellence as the international university through attracting more international students and academic staff as well as to increase international cooperation and partnerships in the future.<sup>3</sup>

UT provides well-sourced and extensive information in English through its website, and it has a dedicated webpage where university's internationalization principles can be easily accessed.<sup>4</sup> UT also provides a specialized information website for international students and staff relating to starting a life at the UT,<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> University of Tartu, "The University in figures" < <https://www.ut.ee/en/university/general> > accessed 17 September 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid (n 7).

<sup>3</sup> University of Tartu, "University of Tartu Strategic Plan A2025" < [https://www.ut.ee/sites/default/files/www\\_ut/ulikoolist/tu\\_onepager\\_en\\_a25mm.pdf](https://www.ut.ee/sites/default/files/www_ut/ulikoolist/tu_onepager_en_a25mm.pdf) > accessed 17 September 2021.

<sup>4</sup> University of Tartu, "International" < <https://www.ut.ee/en/international> > accessed 17 September 2021.

<sup>5</sup> University of Tartu, "International Students" < <https://www.ut.ee/en/welcome/international-students> > accessed 17 September 2021.

on top of the degree courses taught in English under ‘admission’ website.<sup>6</sup> It is also notable that UT provides, through its top page directed to a specific site, the measures taken at the UT relating to Covid-19 and important information for international students coming to study.<sup>7</sup> It is helpful that the information sought after most often given the current state of public health emergencies is very visible and readily available.

In terms of reaching out to international audiences, UT uses social media outlets such as Facebook<sup>8</sup>, Instagram<sup>9</sup>, Twitter,<sup>10</sup> and LinkedIn which provides blog posts, pictures of events, and short videos, and it also reaches out to audiences in Russian and Chinese by using outlets such as VK or Weibo.<sup>11</sup> In addition to social media outlets, UT provides videos on YouTube<sup>12</sup> and Bilibili (Chinese)<sup>13</sup>, having also its own media called “University of Tartu Television” which broadcasts lecture recordings and recording of official events at UT.<sup>14</sup>

## ii. Tallinn University of Technology (TalTech)

TalTech is the engineering and IT science and education university in Estonia, and has the highest number of foreign students (16%) and lecturers (17%) compared to any other Estonian university.<sup>15</sup> TalTech has four schools with 4 bachelor’s and 18 master’s programmes available in the academic year of 2020/2021 that are taught in English.<sup>16</sup> As part of the effort to attract more top researchers as well as students from all around the world, its strategic plan emphasizes becoming a leader in the areas of engineering and economic

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<sup>6</sup> University of Tartu, “Courses Taught in English” < <https://www.ut.ee/en/courses-taught-english>> accessed 17 September 2021.

<sup>7</sup> University of Tartu, “Covid-19 Updates” < <https://www.ut.ee/en/admissions/coronavirus-covid-19-faqs-international-students-travelling-estonia> > accessed 20 September 2021.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/tartuuniversity>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.instagram.com/unitartu/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://twitter.com/unitartu>

<sup>11</sup> University of Tartu, “Social Media & Videos” < <https://www.ut.ee/en/welcome-web/social-media-videos>> accessed 17 September 2021.

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/unitartu>

<sup>13</sup> <https://space.bilibili.com/1543250166/>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.uttv.ee/esileht?keel=eng>

<sup>15</sup> Tallinn University of Technology, “our story” < <https://taltech.ee/en/our-story>> accessed 17 September 2021.

<sup>16</sup> Tallinn University of Technology, “Programmes Taught in English” < <https://taltech.ee/en/our-story>> accessed 17 September 2021.

education and innovation and entrepreneurship research in the engineering sciences and smart technologies.<sup>17</sup>

TalTech provides general information on admissions and student life that would be relevant to international students in English, but more focus seems to be on the research and cooperation website where the current information on leading research projects and cooperation can be viewed. Although there is no dedicated website for international students or academic staff, the English version of the website provides clear and concise information catered for English speaking audiences.

Social media outlets such as Facebook<sup>18</sup>, Instagram<sup>19</sup>, Twitter,<sup>20</sup> and LinkedIn<sup>21</sup> as well as YouTube<sup>22</sup> are utilized extensively to provide information in both English and Estonian. One of the key features of TalTech communication strategy may be to utilize Podcasts via Soundcloud or Apple Podcast to communicate their current activities and academic perspectives to audiences in Estonian.<sup>23</sup> Although the traction seems relatively low at this moment and the number of episodes is around 30, it is meant to reach out to prospective students as well as researchers interested in learning about TalTech.

### **iii. University of Latvia (UL)**

UL is the largest comprehensive university in Latvia, with around 15,250 students studying under 13 faculties, 3 colleges, and 17 scientific institutions.<sup>24</sup> Although the official language of UL is Latvian, most courses are conducted in English or in combination with Latvian or any other relevant languages both at the bachelors' and masters' level.<sup>25</sup> UL's strategy 2021-2027 states its mission as contributing "to the global science, higher education, knowledge, technology

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<sup>17</sup> Tallinn University of Technology, "Strategic Plan of Tallinn University of Technology 2021-2025" <<https://taltech.ee/en/about-the-university/strategic-plan>> accessed 17 September 2021.

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/TalTechUniversity/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.instagram.com/taltechuniversity/>

<sup>20</sup> <https://twitter.com/TallinnTech>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/school/taltech---tallinn-university-of-technology/>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/user/Tipptegijad>

<sup>23</sup> For Apple podcast, see <https://podcasts.apple.com/ee/podcast/taltechi-podcast/id1509633928>

<sup>24</sup> University of Latvia, "About UL" <<https://www.lu.lv/en/about-us/about-ul/>> accessed 17 September 2021.

<sup>25</sup> University of Latvia, "Study Programmes" <<https://www.lu.lv/en/admission/study-programmes/>> accessed 17 September 2021.

transfer and innovation,” and with this mission, it strives to be “a university of science of a high international standing.”<sup>26</sup>

All relevant and necessary information is translated into English on the UL website and most documents available online have Latvian and English translation side by side. There is a website specifically addressed to international students, with information such as courses, grants, immigration requirements, and others.<sup>27</sup> One of the key and helpful sources of information for international students may be the “Practical Hand-book for International Students” which is a comprehensive guide containing some basic information about Latvia and living in Latvia in addition to UL specific information.<sup>28</sup> Although the amount of information available online is not large compared to other universities, the way information is provided is rather concise and clear, which makes it very easy for readers to navigate and acquire necessary information online.

Social media outlets such as Facebook<sup>29</sup>, Instagram<sup>30</sup>, Twitter,<sup>31</sup> and LinkedIn<sup>32</sup> as well as YouTube<sup>33</sup> are utilized extensively to provide information both in Latvian and English.

#### **iv. Vilnius University - Lithuania (VU)**

VU is considered as one of the oldest universities in Central and Eastern Europe,<sup>34</sup> and currently has a student population of about 23,000, of which around 1,400 are international students.<sup>35</sup> Study Programs are mostly taught in English at the bachelors’ and masters’ levels, and through the websites, readers can have a very clear understanding of the types of programmes offered, tuition

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<sup>26</sup> University of Latvia, “Mission, vision values” < <https://www.lu.lv/en/about-us/the-university-of-latvia-brand/mission-vision-values/>> accessed 17 September 2021.

<sup>27</sup> University of Latvia, “Exchange Studies” < <https://www.lu.lv/en/gribustudet/arzemju-studentiem-eng/exchange/>> accessed 17 September 2021.

<sup>28</sup> University of Latvia, “Practical Hand-book for International Students” < [https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user\\_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Gribu\\_studet/handbook\\_3\\_lab.pdf](https://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/LU.LV/www.lu.lv/Gribu_studet/handbook_3_lab.pdf)> accessed 17 September 2021.

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/latvijasuniversitate/>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.instagram.com/universitate/>

<sup>31</sup> [https://twitter.com/universitate\\_lv](https://twitter.com/universitate_lv)

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/school/latvijas-universitate/>

<sup>33</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/user/universitate\\_lv](https://www.youtube.com/user/universitate_lv)

<sup>34</sup> Vilnius University, “History” < <https://www.vu.lt/en/about-vu/history>> accessed 17 September 2021.

<sup>35</sup> Vilnius University, “Facts and Figures” < <https://www.vu.lt/en/about-vu/facts-and-figures>> accessed 17 September 2021.

fees, and the medium of instruction.<sup>36</sup> VU does not have a dedicated website for international students except for the Erasmus+ and Exchange Studies, but the information necessary to apply to VU and living in Lithuania is provided in each section of the study program.

Strategic Action Plan for 2021-2025 contains international aspirations such as “research of a high international level” under the “creating the society and state” goal and “interdisciplinary and international research and studies” under “collaborative” goal.<sup>37</sup> With these, VU is aiming to increase its recognition and comparative assessment of its research and education, as well as internationality of studies provided by VU.

VU’s website in English is very easy to navigate with simple yet well calibrated information for readers. Because it is well organized and designed, it is easy to find information without much effort, and access to all documents is possible in both English and Lithuanian. It should be noted that a very attentive tag has been created on the top page of the general website so that the visitors could easily be directed to the site where all relevant information related to Covid-19 can be found, ranging from arriving at the university, online teaching, student affairs, and others.<sup>38</sup>

Social media outlets such as Facebook<sup>39</sup>, Instagram<sup>40</sup>, Twitter,<sup>41</sup> and LinkedIn<sup>42</sup> as well as YouTube<sup>43</sup> are utilized extensively to provide information in English as well as in Lithuanian.

#### **v. University of Helsinki (UH)**

UH is the largest and oldest academic institution in Finland, with a total of 31,600 students, and of which 6% (1,941) are international degree students in

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<sup>36</sup> Vilnius University, “Study Programmes” < <https://www.vu.lt/en/studies/bachelor-and-integrated-studies/study-programmes>> accessed 17 September 2021.

<sup>37</sup> Vilnius University, “Vilnius University Strategic Plan 2021-2025” < <https://www.vu.lt/en/about-vu/documents#strategic-planning>> accessed 17 September 2021.

<sup>38</sup> Vilnius University, “COVID-19: Information for Students and Employees” < <https://www.vu.lt/en/covid-19> > accessed 20 September 2021.

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/VilniusUniversity>

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.instagram.com/vilniusuniversity/?ref=badge>

<sup>41</sup> [https://twitter.com/VU\\_LT](https://twitter.com/VU_LT)

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/school/vilnius-university/>

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/user/UniversitasVilnensis>

2020.<sup>44</sup> UH has 11 faculties as well as several research institutes and multidisciplinary research networks and units.<sup>45</sup> UH has an extensive array of programs that are taught in combination of English, Finnish and Swedish at bachelor and master level, and at the master's level, it has 36 programs that are taught fully in English.<sup>46</sup> In its strategic plan 2021-2030, UH sets its goal to be “one of the world's leading universities” with a national and international recognition which is to be achieved through “research and teaching for the benefit of the global community.”<sup>47</sup>

Access to information in English can easily be found on the UH website as it is well translated and catered for English speaking audiences. The amount of information attainable in English is also extensive. A website specifically created for students seeking international masters' degrees taught in English is well designed and provides a ‘one-stop’ portal hub for all relevant information that would be sought by international students when considering the application.<sup>48</sup> In addition, UH also offers a wealth of information regarding why UH would be the good option for international students in its website called “For international students,”<sup>49</sup> with information such as “10 reasons to study with us,”<sup>50</sup> “Studies available in English,”<sup>51</sup> “Chat with our Students”<sup>52</sup> or

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<sup>44</sup> University of Helsinki, “University in Helsinki in numbers” < <https://www.helsinki.fi/en/about-us/basic-information/university-numbers> > accessed 17 September 2021.

<sup>45</sup> University of Helsinki, “Faculties and Units” < <https://www.helsinki.fi/en/faculties-and-units> > accessed 17 September 2021.

<sup>46</sup> University of Helsinki, “Applying to international masters’ programmes” <<https://www.helsinki.fi/en/admissions-and-education/apply-bachelors-and-masters-programmes/apply-international-masters-programmes>> accessed 17 September 2021.

<sup>47</sup> University of Helsinki, “Where will we be in 2030?” < <https://www.helsinki.fi/en/about-us/strategy-economy-and-quality/strategic-plan-2021-2030/where-will-we-be-2030>> accessed 17 September 2021.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid (n 31).

<sup>49</sup> University of Helsinki, “For international students” <<https://www.helsinki.fi/en/admissions-and-education/international-students>> accessed 17 September 2021.

<sup>50</sup> University of Helsinki, “10 reasons to study at the University of Helsinki” < <https://www.helsinki.fi/en/admissions-and-education/opiskelu-ja-opiskelijaelama/10-reasons-study-us> > accessed 20 September 2021.

<sup>51</sup> University of Helsinki, “Studies Available in English” < <https://www.helsinki.fi/en/admissions-and-education/international-students/studies-available-english> > accessed 20 September 2021.

<sup>52</sup> University of Helsinki, “Chat with our students and read their blogs” < <https://www.helsinki.fi/en/admissions-and-education/opiskelu-ja-opiskelijaelama/chat-our-students> > accessed 20 September 2021.

“Student Life in Helsinki.”<sup>53</sup> Social media outlets such as Facebook<sup>54</sup>, Instagram<sup>55</sup>, Twitter,<sup>56</sup> and LinkedIn<sup>57</sup> as well as You Tube<sup>58</sup> are utilized extensively to provide information in English, Finnish and Swedish. UH does not seem to provide podcasts for recruiting purposes, but for sharing of ideas and academic works at UH, some of the departments use podcasts for reaching out to wider audiences in English, such as “Helsinki China Podcast”<sup>59</sup> or “EXALT Podcast.”<sup>60</sup>

## 2. Conclusion and Suggestions

As seen in the cases of five universities researched, all universities have unique ways of reaching out to international students through online platforms and social media. From what we have observed in the practices of other universities, we provide below some of the suggestions that the Tallinn University (TLU) may be able to consider.

### v. Create dedicated website for international degree students

Currently, TLU does not have a dedicated ‘one-stop’ type of website where all relevant information is amassed for international prospective students. Amount of information provided seems to be quite abundant, but those bits of information seem to be scattered under various categories, which sometimes make it difficult to navigate. Even if the information may be duplicated or repetitive, gathering relevant information in one site – ideally on the top page of the English version of the website – and placing a heading stating “international students” may make it instinctively easier for international students to know where they should look for the right information.

Drawing from the case of the University of Helsinki, the contents of the website may also include ‘reasons to study at Tallinn University,’ ‘studies available in

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<sup>53</sup> University of Helsinki, “Student Life in Helsinki” < <https://www.helsinki.fi/en/admissions-and-education/international-students/student-life-helsinki> > accessed 17 September 2021.

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/HelsinkiUniversity>

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.instagram.com/universityofhelsinki/>

<sup>56</sup> <https://twitter.com/helsinkiuni>

<sup>57</sup> <https://fi.linkedin.com/school/university-of-helsinki/>

<sup>58</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/user/universityofhelsinki>

<sup>59</sup> <https://open.spotify.com/show/4ipNMbhoVe9abOFI64OLNc>

<sup>60</sup> <https://soundcloud.com/user-12248734>

English,' or student blog posts, podcasts or videos where prospective students can be well informed of a life at the Tallinn University.

**vi. Improve overall design and presentation of TLU website in English**

The way the website of TLU is designed and presented may be reconsidered so that the information may be concise yet easy to navigate. It is the view of this investigation that all the universities researched seem to be rather limiting the amount of information provided in a page – that is, limiting the number of words to be posted in a certain page – so that visitors can have a bird's eye view of where to look and what to know concisely. In addition, should the visitors so require, further information can be accessible in document formats in English (sometimes side by side with local languages) without causing the trouble of downloading.

We can conclude that most websites are well designed in terms of how they present the information so that readers can understand which categories to look further into instinctively. It is also important that fonts used by universities researched are also very easy on eyes and not mixed. As the results of our outreach campaign have shown, issues with navigation are commonly felt by prospective students and Tallinn University's website may be rearranged by considering the examples of other neighboring universities. It is a subtle difference however, given that international students usually 'shop-around' different institutions and visit many sites before applying, and sometimes, potential students are not used to reading lots of texts, how the website is designed, and the information is presented may make an important difference.

**vii. Create videos or podcasts from the viewpoint of students to be posted on the TLU website**

Although some blog posts and official promotional videos have been shared in social media platforms of the researched universities, we have found that there has not been much done officially from the perspective of students. This is precisely what this project has attempted to do, and we can say that our podcast production may prove to be one of the unique endeavors. After the production of our podcasts, it is highly recommendable that Tallinn University will keep track of how much traction that the podcasts will get and explore whether it is worth



continuing and expanding to other programmes that are not covered under this project.

**viii. Consider academic podcast for long-term engagement with communities, students, and beyond**

Although University of Tartu and University of Helsinki have been the only ones that are producing academic podcasts amongst the universities researched, we recommend that the Tallinn University or its most popular schools such as Baltic Film, Media and Arts School, the School of Governance, Law and Society, and the School of Digital Technologies, also considers exploring the possibilities of reaching out to wider audiences through academic podcasts. Use of podcasts in higher educational institutions has become more prominent in recent years, and targeting for long-term engagement with some insights and useful ideas or information could prove broadening the outreach and visibility of Tallinn University as a whole in both local and global scales.<sup>61</sup> The quality of each study programme as well as the excitement and fascinating aspects of being part of Tallinn University could be communicated through the eyes of professors, lecturers or researchers – in combination with student podcasts, we believe that the effectiveness of marketing English-based programmes will enhance in the long run.

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<sup>61</sup> Heather G. Dotchel, “11 Must-Listen Higher Ed Podcasts” (24 June 2020) < <https://voldedu.com/marketing-branding/11-must-listen-higher-ed-podcasts/>> accessed 20 September 2020.