COST Action IC1205 on Computational Social Choice: STSM Report

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Home institution: University of Nicosia
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Host: Professor Dr. Peter B. Sloep
Host institution: Centre for Learning Sciences and Technologies (CELSTEC), Open Universiteit Nederland (http://celstec.org/)
Host country: The Netherlands
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I completed a Short Term Scientific Mission at the Centre for Learning Sciences and Technologies (CELSTEC), Open Universiteit Nederland (http://celstec.org/).

Initially I met with my host, Professor Peter B. Sloep, and talked about the research that his group is carrying out at the moment, as well as the research problems that I am currently addressing. We identified some common ground in the area of recommender systems and learning.

I got the chance to spend time with Dr. Hedrick Drachsler, who recently co-authored a book on "Recommender systems for learning" (N. Manouselis, H. Drachsler, K. Verbert and E. Duval, 2013) and whose Ph.D. thesis was also very related to this topic. Professor Sloep and Dr Drachsler are advising a Ph.D. researcher on the topic of Social Trust-aware recommender systems. I met this researcher (Mrs Soude Fazeli) and talked extensively about the motivation behind their work, the logic of the algorithm, test results, accuracy, pros and cons, etc. We exchanged ideas on future steps and I participated in her periodic progress report meeting with her advisors. We plan to keep in touch given that we are investigating related problems.

I also met Dr Rory Sie (LOOK Scientific Centre for Teacher Research / OUNL), who works in the area of Recommender Systems and has also participated in the development of a system based on social networks with which teachers can receive recommendations concerning other teachers to learn from. We exchanged ideas on the various recommendation techniques used and identified a possibility that some part of that system might be suitable for adoption by a system that I am involved in.

I gave a talk about my research at the Mobile Media research group meeting, headed by Prof. Dr. Marcus Specht. There I met the group members, learnt about the projects they are involved in and arranged to invite Dr Marco Kalz to give a talk at our University in Cyprus, while coming for the EC-TEL 2013 conference in September. Furthermore, with Marcus Specht we also talked about how to best set up a research lab, given that this is something that I am currently doing.

Finally, I also had meetings with Dr. Peter Van Rosmalen and Dr. Wolfgang Greller to learn about the research questions they are currently investigating and exchanged ideas on various topics.

Overall, the STSM was a very useful experience. I met very important researchers in the field and got the chance to exchange ideas and develop new ones. I foresee that some of the above mentioned meetings are going to develop into collaboration opportunities.