

SHORT-TERM SCIENTIFIC MISSION

BRIEF

Action number: CA 17132 “European Network for Argumentation and Public Policy Analysis”

STSM start and end date: 2022-09-13 – 2022-09-23

Grantee name: Laetitia AULIT

Home Institution: Université catholique de Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium

Host Institution: Università della Svizzera italiana, Lugano, Switzerland

Research interest:

Laetitia Aulit is currently doing doctoral research at Université catholique de Louvain on the linguistic analysis of mitigation and intensification strategies in written and oral online interactions on Spanish traditions that have led to societal controversies. Specifically, her research focuses on the way speakers express their stance and argumentation in citizens’ online discussions (in digital press forums and on Twitter) on three traditions, as well as in focus groups that bring together different actors involved in the celebration, organisation or promotion of a specific tradition. In the context of her research, she has published articles on mitigation and intensification in online interactions on the controversial Moors and Christians festival.

STSM Summary:

The main purpose of this STSM was to give the applicant the opportunity to benefit from Professor Sara Greco’s expertise in argumentation in conflict situations and to adopt a more theoretical and critical perspective on what happens at the argumentative level in her corpus of written and oral online interactions about controversial traditions. During the STSM, the applicant presented a seminar based on her research, she had meetings with Professor Sara Greco and other researchers from the Institute, and she focused her work on two aspects: understanding the key concepts of the pragma-dialectical theory and reconstructing critical discussions based on the identification of “issues” in her corpus.

The first results show some interesting findings that enrich the analysis of mitigation and intensification in these types of discourse. These results will be included in the applicant's doctoral dissertation. Moreover, these preliminary findings enable her to identify interesting phenomena that could be the subject of further reflexion and specific papers, e.g. the presence of prolepsis as a mitigation strategy in argumentation or the reformulations of standpoints. The discussions and meetings with Professor Sara Greco helped the applicant to include a more argumentative perspective in her research, in combination with the analysis of specific linguistic strategies. These interactions established links with the type of qualitative argumentative analysis carried out in Working Group 1 and brought a new type of data on public argumentation concerning societal debate.

In addition, this STSM strengthened the existing collaboration between the host, an experienced academic, and the applicant, a doctoral researcher, and encouraged new meetings and contacts with other researchers from the Università della Svizzera italiana.