

## Return of the PhD course in Molde

Written by Marc Sevaux

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On March 12-16, the Molde University College, Norway, organized a doctoral course in Local Distribution Planning. Before that event, EU/ME has decided to sponsor two PhD students. One of them was Diego Cattaruzza. You can read here a short report of his own experience.

During the week from Monday 12<sup>th</sup> Mars until Friday 16<sup>th</sup> Mars, I followed the course Local Distribution Planning at Molde University College, Norway.

The course was organized in five lessons, each of them given by a different speaker on a different topic related to distribution planning and vehicle routing problems.

The first lesson was given by Professor Geir Hasle. He illustrated how VRP is treated when considered in practice, outlining particular constraints that should be taken into account because of customer requests.

The second lesson was about metaheuristic approaches for solving VRPs and the lecturer was Professor Lars Magnus Hvattum. He gave different examples of simple and effective metaheuristics, pointing out the characteristics a good heuristic method should have.

In the third day, an overview on Column Generation was given. Profesor Johan Oppen did a classical lesson on the topic, showing practical cases where exact methods could be used.

For the fourth class, the Professor was Teodor Crainic. He introduced the cooperative computation, outlining the main characteristics of those methods, showing the different ways to implement parallelism and the benefits of using that approach.

The last day was about Stochastic VRP and the Professor was Michel Gendreau. It was shown where uncertainty could arise and different approaches that could manage it were introduced.

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The whole course was very interesting and well organized. It was really useful to have an overview on different topics related to the subject of my thesis and it was a good opportunity to extend my knowledge in the area.

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