

WP5 Quality Assurance Committee Report, October 2018

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Monitoring report on partner self-assessment reports (Annex R)

The second partner self-assessment reports were due for submission on 30th September 2018. Reports were requested early to enable review prior to the Chania partner meeting. 12 partner reports were received; representing all partners.

In general, partners reporting working well on the project and felt that in the past few months many activities have been realised. Some key issues that arose included:

- High awareness of their responsibilities
- Good progress towards realisation of activities – although it was noted that in some cases activities have been delayed – i.e. the accreditation process
- No changes to the planned contributions were noted.

Monitoring report on self-assessments from Work Packages (Annex Q)

The second assessment reports for Work Packages were due for submission on 30th September 2018. Reports were received from ongoing WPs prior to the meeting and they all clearly focussed on the activities of the WP and so the issues of understanding the purpose of these reports have been resolved.

Summary of findings:

WP 1: Completed.

WP2: Progress is generally in line with the stated objectives with only one activity 2.5 delayed because of the changing of legal status of one WB partner (VSUP to UBL) which has delayed the equipping of the laboratories. The aim was to complete this imminently (i.e. by end September 2018). Task 2.4 Providing of students' internships positions is still ongoing. During this period TCASU, UBL and KPA have signed agreements for internships with companies.

WP3: Completed.

WP4: Feedback from the training events was presented at the Chania meeting (see report below), these were considered to be very successful. However, there is a real risk of some of the future activities from WP4 being delayed due to a delay in the accreditation process of the Masters' Curricula, which is partly out of the project's control. This was a key point for discussion at the Chania meeting.

WP5: The first QAC report was written following the Messina meeting and discussed and agreed at the relevant meeting. Quality reporting was undertaken by all partners, both on partner contributions (Annex R) and by work package (Annex Q). An Internal Quality Evaluation was also undertaken in Sept 2018 utilising Annex T questionnaires and an Internal Quality Report provided – reported below. External quality evaluation

was also realised and reported in Summer 2019 – this was reported in the Chania meeting and a response to this document planned.

WP6: Only one significant comment was made – this was to encourage more materials to be delivered from the HEI websites. This was noted and discussed at the Chania meeting and all partners committed to aiming to improve this.

WP7: Progress on the completion of staff and student SMSs is still quite slow, although all partners remain committed to the realisation of these aspects of the project. This was again a key item for discussion at the Chania meeting and a plan for moving forward on this aspect of the project was made. This continues to be monitored very closely. Additionally, a key risk for the project is the realisation of the accreditation of the Masters' curricula (work task 7.2) which was discussed and plans made at the Chania meeting (although it was recognised that realisation of this task is in part outside of the control of the project).

WP8: Strong leadership from the coordination partner remains with tasks and requirements being clearly communicated to all partners. All necessary tasks have been realised and fulfilled within this challenging role. As stated previously, WP8 remains effective in keeping the project on track and ensuring the efficient delivery of outputs.

Internal Quality Review (reporting from Annex T and Annex U)

In general the partners reported very favourably about the project, its organisation and implementation – with few significant issues or comments raised. 76 questionnaires from individual respondents were returned during July and August 2018 (in comparison to 66 in 2017). The overall average response to all statements was 4.67/5 in close comparison to the 4.63 scored in 2017. All averages were in the Excellent category – with a range of between 4.03 and 4.89. If we consider the relative scoring of the statements and focus on those which still scored well, but less highly.

- Responses suggested that partners knew less about other partners' tasks – natural finding but maybe for consideration increasing information about all tasks;
- "Project is well presented in the media" – although still averaged 4.49, this was lower than other statements;
- SMS Implementation – averages for the three statements all improved from 2017 – and now all in the excellent category, But these are still lower than results from other categories. Participation in SMS, Realise that this may be a bit delayed – strategy for improvement; But also whether all read the question as applicable – lowest response rate

A full report (Annex U) provides more details of the internal quality review from September 2018.

External Quality Review

The External Quality Review which was delivered to the project on 31st August 2018. This was discussed in length at the QAC meeting in Chania, 2018. The following bullets highlight some of the key points discussed:

Commendations:

- In general, there are some points of commendation and the report details the projects achievements to date;

- Very detailed and comprehensive descriptions of the project, its aims and the process of realisation;
- Praised the relevance of the project for addressing real and timely issues;
- Highlights that they believe that the project is on track for meeting the objectives on time;
- High level and comprehensive reporting and all realised activities are well documented and shared on the project website;
- All the public documentation is transparent on the web site which is commended as being very functional and regularly updated;
-now to discuss some of the recommendations – discuss whether these are within the scope of the project and how to address them;
- Project – has add-on project values. WB partners creating International Relations Offices and associated documentation.

Recommendations:

- No evidence/activities outside the project scope to raise awareness level of relevant institutions and initiate project changes in local and national governments towards managing natural disaster risks;
- Influencing practice – project should also realise or initiating a new strategy or procedure on risk management, by introducing project concepts/expertise to be built into national strategies and action plans;
- A final dissemination event – include a more general audience (e.g. other WB universities/countries) to ensure a wider promotion of the project and its achievements. To improve regional co-operation/visibility;
- Dissemination activities should also be used to motivate prospective students – e.g. open dates/promotional activities to raise awareness of the new programmes;
- Some material is only available in Serbian – translating into English would increase the visibility of the project results.
- **Consideration of project impact:** To measure impact – suggests we need to compare before and after – but that data is lacking. Therefore recommendation is to undertake a questionnaire among relevant stakeholders to evaluate their level of preparedness – then a second one to evaluate the enhanced competencies through practical training and seminars;
- **Curricula content:** Add to content in the curricula addressing how to realise resilient communication services protecting end-user applications in the case of disasters; Recommend to put an accent on human initiated disasters, not just natural disasters;
- **Procedural/project management:** Recommend reporting on the selection criteria/methodology of selection for all participants within the realised activities – in order to communicate whether the main target audience is clear and has been recruited; Recommended a more systematic and documented way of reporting that the quality management strategy has been delivered; - link to Quality Control Plan – WP5.2; Equipment – detail needed about what has been purchased and information about the distribution of handbooks
- **Sustainability:** More effort should be made to enable work positions for prospective students – increase motivation, and therefore, sustainability of the programmes. Suggest that this can be achieved through the initiation of a development strategy which would organise administrative/institutional support of managing the natural disaster risks; Action plans needed to ensure financial sustainability and maintain that the university will continue to finance and organise the Masters curricula/trainings after the end of the project;

A formal written response to the External Quality Review will be drafted in the coming months.

Self-evaluation reports of trainings for citizens and public sector, Kurt Glock and Gabriella Farkas

Reported on the 6 (out of 7) proposed training sessions. Each session was reported to have an average of 33 participants with a total of over 200 participants trained. Participants were from a range of the following organisations: National Assembly, Municipalities, Commissariat of Refugees and Migration, High Schools, Technical Colleges, Universities, and Fire Brigades. Participants were evaluated using an evaluation questionnaire which covered the following overarching topics: Evaluation results of the general organisation of the trainings, General participant expectations and an Evaluation of the trainer. The average evaluation scores were very positive with scores ranging in the very good and excellent categories.

QAC – October 2018