
Final Report of the Quality Control Committee

Done by: Quality Monitoring Committee

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Quality Monitoring Committee:

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- Andrej Škraba, University of Maribor (co-chair)
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1. Overview of the Project

The main aim and objective of the MARDS project were:

- To reconsider the existing national policies/standards for doctoral studies in Montenegro and Albania and their compatibility with EU practices
- To develop and propose a new model of doctoral studies in Montenegro and Albania, adapted to the acquired experiences over past decades and current and future countries' needs
- To propose a sustainable method of financing doctoral studies in two countries on national levels
- To establish two Joint Doctoral Schools "Natural sciences and Technology for Sustainable Development" with place in Montenegro (Podgorica) and "Economy and Tourism for Sustainable Development" with place in Albania (Shkoder) as the recommendable examples of cross-border PhD programmes
- To establish a sustainable cooperation with EU partners and established Doctoral School in order to maintain developed standards.

Project team included the following partner organisations:

- P1: University of Montenegro – UoM
- P2: University of Vienna – UNIVIE
- P3: University of Maribor – UM
- P4: Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences (ERF) University of Zagreb (UNIZG)
- P5: Matej Bel university – UMB
- P6: University of Donja Gorica – UDG
- P7: University of Shkodra „Luigj Gurakuqi“ – UNISHK
- P8: Polytechnic University of Tirana – PUT
- P9: University of Vlora – UV
- P10: Metropolitan University of Tirana – UMT
- P11: Ministry of Education of Montenegro – MoE
- P12: Ministry of Science of Montenegro – MOSM
- P13: Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth of Albania – MESY
- P14: Chamber of Economy of Montenegro – CEM
- P15: Association for professionals in doctoral education – PRIDE
- P16: Union of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Albania – UCCIAL

The summary list of Work packages and activities is provided in Table 1:

WP1/PRE	Monitoring and analysing of national systems and policies of doctoral education in Montenegro and Albania and comparing with EU practices
A1.1	Evaluation of the existing doctoral education policy and standards in Montenegro and Albania and comparing with EU practices
A1.2	Organization of a Conference on doctoral education in Montenegro and Albania
A1.3	Recommendations and purpose of basic legal documents on university and national levels
WP2/DEV	Training of Montenegrin and Albanian academic staff and professionals/administration in doctoral education
A2.1	Training of academic and professional staff on EU practices on doctoral education
A2.2	Creating a Guidelines and recommendations for WB academics and professionals in doctoral studies
WP3/DEV	Establishing a new model of funding doctoral studies on national levels
A3.1	Evaluation of models for funding doctoral studies in Montenegro and Albania
A3.2	Adoption of bylaws on funding doctoral studies in Montenegro
A3.3	Adoption of bylaws on funding doctoral studies in Albania
WP4/DEV	Establishment and start-up of Joint Pilot Doctoral Schools
A4.1	Development of the Curricula for joint Doctoral Schools
A4.2	Equipping the laboratories and other infrastructure at partner universities
A4.3	Accreditation of the Doctoral Schools
A4.4	Enrolling the first generation
A4.5	Programme implementation
WP5/QPLN	Quality plan
A5.1	Internal Quality Control
A5.2	External Quality Control
WP6/DISS/EXP	Dissemination of the project
A6.1	Creation and updating project web site
A6.2	Creating and distribution of dissemination documents
A6.3	Organizing dissemination conference with stakeholders
A6.4	Organizing MARDS Doctoral Colloquium "Science, Technology and Services for Sustainable development"
WP7/DISS/EXP	Exploitation and Sustainability of the project results
A7.1	Regular meetings about MARDS flow with stakeholders
A7.2	Universities - stakeholders networking in Montenegro and Albania
A7.3	Establishment of sustainable scholarships in Albania and Montenegro
A7.4	Promotion of Doctoral School in Region
WP8/MNGT	Management of the project
A8.1	Daily management of the project
A8.2	Precise guidelines for management of the project
A8.3	Regular meetings of project bodies
A8.4	Reporting (progress, quality, financial)
A8.5	External financial pre-audit

Table 1: Workplan with packages and activities

2. Deliverables and their Evaluation

Deliverables of the project according to the work packages are compiled in the following list. There are eight major sets of the deliverables. The major effort from the consortium was put on the deliverable under WP-4 “Establishment and start-up of Joint Pilot Doctoral Schools”. Here the main issue was preparing the programme according to the legislative rules in higher education of the Republic of Albania. Quality control committee provided timely indication about the issue, which was resolved in due time.

- **WP-1. (PRE) Monitoring and analysing of national systems and policies of doctoral education in Montenegro and Albania and comparing with EU practices**
 - D1.1. Report on the “state of the art” in doctoral education in Montenegro and Albania and comparison with EU practices
 - D1.2. Proceedings from conference about doctoral education in Montenegro and Albania
 - D1.3. Legal documents to be send to responsible bodies for adopting
- **WP-2. (DEV) Training of Montenegrin and Albanian academic staff and professionals/administration in doctoral education**
 - D2.1. Report on academic and professional training of WB staff, academic and professional personell
 - D2.2. Guidelines and recommendations for WB academics and professionals in doctoral studies
- **WP-3. (DEV) Establishing a new model of funding doctoral studies on national levels**
 - D3.1. Report on appropriate funding doctoral studies in Montenegro and Albania
 - D3.2. Obligatory decision on adopting MARDS's methodology on funding for Montenegro
 - D3.3. Obligatory decision on adopting MARDS's methodology in Albania
- **WP-4. (DEV) Establishment and start-up of Joint Pilot Doctoral Schools**
 - D4.1. Curricula book for Joint school suited in Albania (Shkoder)
 - D4.2. Curricula book for Joint pilot school in Montenegro
 - D4.3. The report on MARDS's equipment resources
 - D4.4. Final version of accreditation application
 - D4.5. Decisions on accreditation
 - D4.6. The list of enrolled students
 - D4.7. The records on implementation flow
- **WP-5. (QPLN) Quality plan**
 - D5.1. Quality plan adopted
 - D5.2. Internal quality assurance reports delivered
 - D5.3. Tender for subtracting external QC experts
 - D5.4. External quality control and monitoring
- **WP-6. (DISS/EXP) Dissemination of the project**
 - D6.1. Setting up and maintaining the project web site
 - D6.2. Dissemination material created and distributed

- D6.3. Dissemination events with relevant stakeholders organized
- D6.4. MARDS doctoral Colloquium organised
- **WP-7. (DISS/EXP) Exploitation and Sustainability of the project results**
 - D7.1. Sustainability strategy adopted
 - D7.2. University – stakeholders network created
 - D7.3. Doctoral scholarships provided
- **WP-8. (MNGT) Management of the project**
 - D8.1. Overall project management
 - D8.2. Project coordination meetings
 - D8.3. Periodical and Final reports.

Deliverables under WP-1. Monitoring and analysing of national systems and policies of doctoral education in Montenegro and Albania and comparing with EU practices

Report on the “state of the art” in doctoral education in Montenegro and Albania and comparison with EU practices was compiled and was provided in timely manner in order to jump start the project. The conference on the topics of doctoral education in Montenegro and Albania was carried out at the University of Maribor. Proceedings have been printed by the Maribor University Press: <https://press.um.si/index.php/ump/catalog/book/509>

Regarding the D1.3. “Legal documents to be send to responsible bodies for adopting”, the corrective action was proposed by the consortium partners with positive results. One can conclude, that the D1.3 was resolved on the last day of the project i.e. on 14.11.2022 (see Appendix A).

Deliverables under WP-2. Training of Montenegrin and Albanian academic staff and professionals/administration in doctoral education

Report on academic and professional training of WB academic and professional personnel as well as Guidelines and recommendations for WB academics and professionals in doctoral studies were provided. Besides, the webinar was conducted entitled: “Doctoral Education – 15 years of reform after Salzburg”.

WP-3. Establishing a new model of funding doctoral studies on national levels

The deliverables under the WP-3 were one of the most challenging since the project have ambitious plan to influence the national policies in the field of higher education. Nevertheless, in general one could conclude, that the significant steps were provided. The deliverable D3.1. “Report on appropriate funding doctoral studies in Montenegro and Albania” was compiled. Regarding the obligatory decisions on funding and implementation of the doctoral studies in republic of Albania could be considered as “pending”. Nevertheless, the deliverable could be considered as fulfilled due to the fact, that two doctoral study programmes have been launched.

Deliverables under WP-4. Establishment and start-up of Joint Pilot Doctoral Schools

As mentioned, the deliverables under WP-4 were the most challenging. The curricula books for the Joint school suited in Albania (Shkoder) and D4.2. Curricula book for Joint pilot school in Montenegro were prepared. This deliverable can be considered as complete from the Montenegrin side by launching the Doctoral programme in Sustainable development in 2021: <https://www.mards.ucg.ac.me/PhD/>

The part from the partners from Albania could be considered as successfully completed by launching the call for enrolment. However, first implementation of the studies is expected in year 2023. Considering the legislative issues the deliverable under WP-4 could be considered as successfully completed.

Deliverables under WP-5. Quality plan

Initially the D5.1. “Quality plan adopted” has been prepared and adopted by partners. Internal quality assurance reports were delivered to the consortium. In 2019 the external QC experts were selected after the public Call. External quality control and monitoring was provided from 2019 by experts Prof. Dr. Mile Dzelalija and Prof. Dr. Yannis Manolopoulos.

Deliverables under WP-6. Dissemination of the project

Dissemination of the project could be considered as exemplary. Early on, the web site of the project was set up and maintained. The dissemination of the material was timely produced and distributes. Numerous of dissemination events with relevant stakeholders were organized. Important for the doctoral students of the 1st year of doctoral studies in Sustainable development was the organization of the 1st MARDS doctoral colloquium with great attendance. The issues of the project sustainability were considered with the main stakeholders in Montenegro. The issue of the Sustainability could be considered as pending for the Albanian partners, however, one could expect that there would be no issues regarding the Sustainability since one could anticipate rather significant demand for PhD studies in Republic of Albania. The issued call (see Appendix A) will likely attract significant number of potential students.

Deliverables under D7.1. Sustainability strategy adopted

The doctoral program in Sustainable Development was fully integrated in the University of Montenegro. Excellent relationship with the University of Maribor was established. According the enrolment and demand from prospective students, the support for sustainable provision of the program will be provided from the University of Montenegro as well as the Ministry of Education. For the PhD program “Economy and Sustainable Tourism” at the University of Shkodra, the sustainability strategy might be considered as adopted since the Call for the enrolment has been issued (see Appendix A).

Deliverables under WP-8. Management of the project

Overall project management was provided by University of Montenegro. One could emphasise excellent management of highly demanding MARDS project by project coordinator Prof. Dr. Radovan Stojanović. Early on, the administrative support was provided by engaging the expert in the field of international project management Mr. Vladan Perazić. The coordination meetings were timely performed and were well attended by the project members. The periodic and final reports were provided to the public via the MARDS Project web page.

3. Concluding Remarks

The MARDS project was very ambitiously conducted in the period of Covid-19 pandemics addressing not only the principles and methodological issues of PhD studies in Montenegro and Albania but also the issues of government policies. The main outcomes of the project are:

- PhD study programme in Sustainable Development launched at the University of Montenegro with international partners. First generation of students have already completed their first academic year.
- Issued call for enrolment at the PhD program “Economy and Sustainable Tourism” at the University of Shkodra, Albania.

By mentioning tangible outcomes one could conclude that the project achieved its’ main objectives providing the significant step forward in the important field of PhD education in WB countries. The project will provide the guidelines for further development in this area in accordance to the Salzburg principles of PhD studies.

Prof. Dr. Matjaž Debevc
Chair of the Quality Monitoring Committee

Appendix A

Call for the enrolment at the PhD program “Economy and Sustainable Tourism” at the University of Shkodra



REPUBLIKA E SHQIPËRISË
Universiteti i Shkodrës “Luigj Gurakuqi”

Rektori

Nr. 3544 Prot.

Shkodër më 14.11 2022

URDHËR

Nr. 86, datë 14/11/2022

PËR HAPJEN E PRANIMEVE NË PROGRAMIN E STUDIMIT TË CIKLIT TË TRETË DOKTORATË NË “EKONOMI DHE TURIZËM I QËNDRUESHËM”, NË UNIVERSITETIN “LUIGJ GURAKUQI” SHKODËR

Mbështetur në Ligjin Nr. 80/2015, “Për Arsimin e Lartë dhe Kërkimin Shkencor në Institucionet e Arsimit të Lartë në Republikën e Shqipërisë”, Vendimin e Këshillit të Ministrave, Nr. 112, datë 23.02.2018 “Për përcaktimin e kritereve për fitimin e gradës shkencore “Doktor” dhe të standardeve shtetërore për fitimin e titujve akademikë “Profesor i Asociuar” dhe “Profesor”, Udhëzimin Nr. 1, datë 14.1.2020 dhe Udhëzimin Nr. 7, datë 31.3.2021, për “Dokumentacionin dhe procedurat për hapjen, riorganizimin dhe mbylljen e Institucionit të Arsimit të Lartë, degëve të tyre, njësisë kryesore dhe programeve të studimit si dhe për ndarjen ose bashkimin e Institucioneve të Arsimit të Lartë”, Rregulloren e Studimeve të Doktoratës në Universitetin Luigj Gurakuqi, si dhe në zbatim të Urdhrit të MAS, Nr. 174, datë 4.4.2022, “Për hapjen e programit të studimit të ciklit të tretë Doktoratë në ‘Ekonomi dhe Turizëm i Qëndrueshëm’, në Universitetin ‘Luigj Gurakuqi’ Shkodër,

URDHËROJ:

1. Hapjen e pranimeve në programin e studimit të ciklit të tretë Doktoratë në ‘Ekonomi dhe Turizëm i Qëndrueshëm’, në Universitetin ‘Luigj Gurakuqi’ Shkodër.
2. Aplikimet e kandidatëve për studimet e ciklit të tretë “Doktoratë” në ‘Ekonomi dhe Turizëm i Qëndrueshëm’, në Universitetin ‘Luigj Gurakuqi’ Shkodër, do të kryhen nga data 14.11 2022 deri më datë 24.12. 2022.
3. Ky urdhër hyn në fuqi menjëherë.

