



ERASMUS+ PROJECT

Re@WBC

Enhancement of HE research potential
contributing to further growth of the WB region



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Annex B to QC Manual - Word document template

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Enhancement of HE Research Potential Contributing to Further Growth of the WB Region
Re@WBC**

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A1.1 Mapping research potential at WBC universities

First step in developing HR strategies of the WBC universities was to establish the state of the art in human resources capacity and management, while considering actual capacity to perform research, trends in building up this capacity, as well as situation concerning alignment to the basic principles of the HR management in R&D organizations. For that purpose UNI has developed the questionnaire which was aimed to be filled by the universities.

Questionnaire was designed on basis of the experience and expertise in the area of HRS4R evaluation for European Commission, coordination of process of UNIS HR strategy development, participation in the work of the different EC initiatives in researchers' mobility and career development, such as SGHRM and EURAXESS and participation in different regional and European projects related to researchers mobility and career development, such as SER-MORE, WEB-MOB, WebInUnion and others. The questionnaire addressed the topics of research potential¹ (including gender balance), employment and career development, ethics, working conditions, accountability and public responsibility, training (including PhD training mentoring and supervision) and research projects and collaboration.

	PhD candidates	Teaching assistant with PhD	Assistant professors	Associate professors	Full professors	Total
University of Belgrade	681	1110	1208	971	1347	5317
University of Kragujevac	392	28	247	191	198	1056
University of Novi Sad	719	172	771	456	654	2772
University of Tirana	465		54	120	137	776
University of Vlora	51		59	26	6	142

Table 1. Number of researchers in different positions at the WBC²

The partners were invited to nominate contact persons who were responsible for managing the desk research activities required for filling the questionnaire.

All WBC universities have submitted the filled questionnaires. For most of the universities, a few iterations in which the results were clarified and elaborated in more detail, were required. The filled questionnaires provided by Universities of Sarajevo, East Sarajevo, Kragujevac, Novi Sad, Tirana and Vlora are evaluated as high quality contributions. Universities of Belgrade and Montenegro have submitted the filled questionnaires, but with limited usability for the development of HR strategies.

This task is considered as completed. All contributions of the different partners involved in the task are delivered.

¹ Main indicators were identified as: number and distribution of researchers among scientific areas and positions, number and distribution of PhD students among scientific areas, age structure. Other indicators were used, as provided in the associated Questionnaire.

² Full summary reports are provided at the PPT presentation with title "Meet the partners" held at the Coventry study visit, by Milan Zdravković

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A1.2 Mapping HR management strategies at EU universities

Based on the desk research questionnaire developed in T1.1, similar document was prepared in which specific questions related to key issues in HR management in WB countries were asked to EU partners. That document was basis for planning the study visits, in specific - the selection of key topics.

EU partners (Torino, Liege and Coventry) organized study visits in which best practices in HR management were presented to WB partners representatives, on the selected topics.

University of Liege has organized a study visit which focused mostly at the different issues of research ethics and PhD programme implementation. Some of the important good practices that gained a lot of attention of the participants were: Training of young researchers in ethics; Annual Ethics Day; University of Liege Open Repository & Bibliography; Database of research grants, including financial, HR and legal aspects; Interface centre for knowledge transfer; Promotion of transversal skills as part of PhD programme; Evaluation of the doctoral education system; and Supervisor training.

University of Torino highlighted the programmes related to funding inbound and outbound mobility, implemented by the university, namely, joint projects for the internationalization of research and Visiting Professors projects.

University of Coventry study visit was focused mostly at the PhD training and evaluation.

Based on the presentations and discussion during the study visits to EU universities, a list of good practices, viable for resolving some of the issues in HR management in WB universities was prepared by UNI. The list served as an input document for the definition of the action plan for resolving HR issues in WB universities.

The document presented the collection of good practices for addressing the key principles of the Charter & Code, classified in four groups: Ethics and professional responsibility, recruitment, working conditions and training. The document aimed to serve as a guideline for the preparation of the action plans, related to the HR strategies of the WBC universities. The collection of good practices was not exhaustive. It was made to serve as an exemplary reference in the process of the action plans developments, as indicated above. The selection was made by a desk research – insight into some reference documents/reports developed by or on behalf of the European Commission (such as - (Vitae, 2013), HR Strategies for Researchers: A review of the HR Excellence in Research Award implementation activities across Europe; and (DGRI, 2014) DG Research and Innovation, 2014, Researchers' Report); and during the study visits to the EU partners.

This task is considered as completed. All study visits were organized and as an added value of the activity, a best practice catalogue was delivered.

A1.3 Comparative (gap) analysis

The filled questionnaires were considered as the final outcome of the desk research activity (T1.1).

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However, since the filled questionnaires were only reflecting a perception of the HR issues, by the management of the university, it was decided that it was necessary to implement a wider organizational survey which will collect also opinions of the researchers working in the WBC universities, and especially, PhD students.

Survey was prepared by UNI, in English, Serbian Latin and Serbian Cyrillic. Survey was based on the C&C, desk research questionnaire (facilitating the gap analysis) and experiences in implementing the earlier survey for UNIS researchers. Survey was created by using Google Drive platform and shared with contact points (see T1.1). All contact points were invited to make the translations to their national languages. Thus, several other language versions were produced: Albanian, Bosnian and Montenegrin. UNIS provided invitation letter in English language. If necessary (low response or non-representative structure of respondents, lack of young researchers, PhD candidates), WBC partners were invited to send reminders.

Also, WBC partners were invited to submit comments on the survey and make necessary changes. Finally, WB partners were asked to elaborate on the methodology for sending invitations and expected number of potential respondents. Then, custom surveys for individual universities were created and prepared for sending invitations to researchers.

Organization	Number of respondents	Number of PhD students
University of Montenegro	125	26
University of Novi Sad	246	75
University of Vlora	76	26
University of Tirana	154	45
University of Sarajevo	288	125
University of Kragujevac	170	75

Table 2. Response to the researchers survey³

Survey for researchers provided also an opportunity to submit open text answers. In that way, very valuable individual contributions were collected.

University of East Sarajevo recently implemented Charter and Code survey among researchers, which was used for the preparation of the internal analysis document for them. Thus, they did not participate in this sub-activity in a full. However, per suggestion of UNI, that survey was implemented again, but only among PhD students, as they were not invited to participate at the first place

Based on the desk research (filled questionnaires, T1.1) and researchers' survey (T1.2), UNI has prepared an internal analysis report for the following WBC universities: Novi Sad, Vlora, Tirana, Sarajevo, Kragujevac and East Sarajevo. It was decided that University of Montenegro and Belgrade did not provide sufficient data in order to make possible the development of gap analysis.

³ University of East Sarajevo data is not present in the summary table because of the different methodology used (see below)
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The task is not considered as completed. University of Belgrade and Montenegro are yet to submit the improved desk research questionnaire, so the gap analysis is made possible.

A1.4 Developing action plans for bridging the gaps

First, during the comparative analysis (T1.3), UNI has provided to each of the WBC universities the list of generic action areas, related to the topics and issues which were identified to require attention. The generic action areas were proposed based on the experience in HR management and especially, evaluation of the HRS4R process in the higher education establishments in Europe.

Second, UNI also developed a collection of good practices (namely, the proposed actions, targeting at different groups, from government to individual researchers) for addressing the key principles of the Charter & Code (T1.2).

Finally, UNI provided guidelines for the development of the action plans to WBC universities. Those guidelines included principles of responsibility and planning (related to clear definition of the departments, persons and working groups, responsible to implementing actions in a specific time-frame), progress tracking (related to a need to explicitly define indicators which will be used for measuring the progress of the actions' implementations) and accountability (related to a need to acquire formal endorsement of the top university management of the action plans).

These three inputs served as a background for the development of the action plans, which was carried out by the WBC universities. In specific, following universities have developed the action plans: University of Sarajevo, University of East Sarajevo, University of Novi Sad, University of Kragujevac and University of Vlora. University of Montenegro and University of Belgrade did not produce the action plans during the first interim period of the project. Specific measures were taken to revise the process; namely, after the contacts with respective universities' managements, made by UNI, new contact persons were assigned and the work on the development has already started.

Being the final outcome and most important deliverable of the project, Universities of Novi Sad, Kragujevac, Sarajevo, East Sarajevo and Vlora, compiled official HR strategies and submitted it for evaluation to the European Commission, in the frame of HRS4R process, at mid November 2016. Recently, first results of the evaluation have arrived. University of Kragujevac was awarded with the HR Excellence in Research label by the EC. Universities of Novi Sad, Vlora and Kragujevac were invited to implement minor changes to the strategies. University of Sarajevo was invited to implement major changes and resubmit. UNI has already provided guidelines for addressing the requested changes and the process of revision is ongoing. Re-submission is expected to happen by May, 2017.

The task is not considered as completed. University of Tirana, Belgrade and Montenegro are yet to prepare the action plans.



A 1.5 Purchasing ICT equipment for HR offices and centers

The need to equip HR offices of the WBC participants with the necessary ICT equipment defined the equipment acquired. Through the regular tendering procedure, the following type of equipment was procured : monitors, storage servers, all-in-one PCs, laser B/W printers, all-in-one printers, wireless microphones, scanners, laptops, video beams, interactive boards, and other smaller pieces necessary for day-to-day administrative work.

Present state of activities for purchasing of ICT equipment

Country	Tendering documentation prepared	Tender published	Vendors selected	Equipment delivered
Serbia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Montenegro	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Albania	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

The deadline for the execution of this task was 14.1.2017.

Also, the same task covers purchasing of service for plagiarism detection. This service will be used by Ethical Committee members, supervisors, journal editors and reviewers, with the purpose of reducing instances of plagiarism.

Present state of activities for purchasing of service for plagiarism detection

Country	Tendering documentation prepared	Tender published	Vendors selected	Service available
Serbia University of Nis	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Serbia University of Belgrade	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Serbia University of Novi Sad	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Serbia University of Kragujevac	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Montenegro University of Montenegro	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bosnia & Herzegovina University of Sarajevo	Yes	Yes	No	No
Bosnia & Herzegovina University of East Sarajevo	Yes	Yes	No	No
Albania University of Tirana	No	No	No	No
Albania University of Vlora 'Ismail Qemali'	No	No	No	No

All purchased equipment has been installed at HR offices and/or other university offices which cover similar activities. Part of the hardware is distributed among the administrative, teaching and technical staff actively involved in the realisation of the project. Pictures of installed equipment are available on the website of the project. [LINK!](#)



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Following ERASMUS+ rules, the unified procurement of ICT equipment and services was launched for each country.

Most universities have purchased the IT equipment (mostly hardware) in accordance with the project plan. The University of Novi Sad requested amendment lists of IT equipment, and it got permission from the project officer.

In order to define right specification for purchasing service for plagiarism detection, needs analysis in different universities was conducted. The analysis showed that the greatest need for the detection of plagiarism is related to the verification of doctoral dissertations and scientific papers submitted for printing in journals published by universities. It is concluded that using such service for plagiarism detection academic integrity can be significantly improved. Based on this need, specification of functionality of service for plagiarism detection, as well as minimal submission per year per university were defined.

The functionality specification was sent to all participants in order to organize separate (by country) unified joint procurement and thus obtain a better price.

The Call for the first tender in Serbia, together with accompanying documents, was published on 1st July 2016 on the university web site (<https://www.ni.ac.rs/dokumenti/category/198-nabavka-opreme-za-potrebe-erasmus-projekta-rewbc>).

Because of the many questions of the bidders, the tender commission decided to revise the text of the tender documentation. Revised version of tendering documentation was published on the same web page on 8.7.2016.

Tender was successful for all lots concerning ICT equipment, but not for lots concerning purchasing of plagiarism detection service.

The tender commission has made a decision on awarding the contract which was published on university web site on 29 July 2016. Suppliers that were awarded contracts have delivered equipment on time.

In order to purchase missing service for plagiarism detection second call for tender was organized for Serbia (<https://www.ni.ac.rs/dokumenti/category/210-nabavka-usluga-detekcije-plagijata-za-potrebe-erasmus--projekta-rewbc>) on 22.11.2016. This time we received a sufficient number of bids. Based on the bids received for plagiarism detection service, the tender commission has made a decision on awarding the contract.