

MARDS Consortium Meeting
University of Vienna
11 – 12 December 2019

Minutes, second day, 12 December 2019

Present:

Prof. dr Radovan Stojanović, University of Montenegro
Ms Jela Radović, University of Montenegro
Dr Lucas Zinner, University of Vienna
Mag. dr Christian Kolowrat, University of Vienna
Mag. Lisette Schmidt, University of Vienna
Mag. David Zuser, University of Vienna
Prof. dr Matjaž Debevc, University of Maribor
Prof. dr Jernej Turk, University of Maribor
Prof. dr Melita Kovačević, Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Zagreb
Prof. dr Alexandra Bitušikova, Matej Bel University
Kamila Borsekova, PhD, Matej Bel University
Prof. dr Milica Vukotić, University of Donja Gorica
Dr Sandra Tinaj, University of Donja Gorica
Prof. dr Brilanda Bushati, University of Shkodra “Luigj Gurakuqi”
Prof. dr Arjeta Troshani, University of Shkodra “Luigj Gurakuqi”
Dr Alma Afezulli, Polytechnic University of Tirana
Ms Uriana Thanasi, Polytechnic University of Tirana
Ms Rezarta Sinanaliaj, University of Vlora
Prof.assoc.dr Elenica Pjero, University of Vlora
Prof. dr Betim Cico, Metropolitan University of Tirana
Prof. dr Ozcan Asilkan, Metropolitan University of Tirana
Ms Tanja Radusinović, Chamber of Economy of Montenegro

Second day started with the presentation on “Managerial issues” and tasks to be done in the second year of the project. It is stated that during the second year more work will be done in home institutions and first year was dedicated to trainings and various events. **In order to get second installment from EACEA we must submit mid-term report and collect all the documents from partners before that. Second installment will probably arrive until the end of May. When the report is approved by EACEA, UoM will receive 40% of money but partners will get now 25%. This will happen only if we prove that**

we spent at least 70% of the first installment of overall consortium. We should receive all the documents from the partners before 15 February 2020.

Tasks to be done before second year of the project:

- **Till middle of January 2020 documents to be sent to responsible bodies (prof. Afezolli, prof. Lapa, prof. Cico, prof. Troshani is responsible for this task);**
- **Till middle of January 2020 to update EACEA on situation with PhD studies in Albania and how to overcome this problem (prof. Troshani, prof. Lapa, prof. Afezolli is responsible, and prof. Cico decided not to interfere anymore with PhD studies in Albania);**
- **Till middle of February to complete the procedure with equipment (prof. Troshani, dr Tinaj, prof. Afezolli, prof. Lapa, prof. Cico is responsible for this task);**
- **Till the end of December 2019 to propose Sustainability strategy (prof. Cico, dr Tinaj, dr Zinner, prof. Kovačević, prof. Stojanović is responsible for this task); experts will improve this strategy until the end of January 2020);**
- **Till the end of February 2020 to organize two dissemination events for industry in Albania (prof. Cico together with PRIDE network);**
- **Till middle of January 2020 to progress with Accreditation process in Montenegro (dr Tinaj, prof. Stojanović);**
- **In January 2020 to organize meeting in Albania (prof. Troshani);**
- **Till middle of March participants must complete IMR (prof. Bitušikova)**

We came back again to the topic of PhD studies in Albania. Recommendations for improvement of PhD studies in Albania is finished and it was sent to the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth of Albania by University of Shkodra. Question from experts is what we expect from this document. Coordinator explains that we will propose MARDS methodology for adopting, we propose measures to improve existing policy on PhD Studies. Hopefully, Ministry will accept these measures and offer scholarships.

It is agreed that sending e-mails to the Ministry is not productive, therefore we must offer concrete product and ask for a meeting in Albanian Ministry which will be attended by project coordinator together with representatives from Albanian universities, as well as some of our experts. We should have constructive dialogue with them, in order to see what we can expect and what is required.

Final product in Albania will be a book including Curricula, Measures for improvement of PhD Studies and two reports prepared in the first year of the project. Everyone agrees that core problem of PhD application is Curricula book and that maybe one meeting could be dedicated to it. Deadline for this book is in M6 of the second year. UNISHK will prepare it with the help of other universities, and will get advice and suggestions for improvement by the experts. Prof. Kovačević explains that everything should be prepared step-by-step and we must have clear strategy, planning and actions to be taken. Prof. Troshani is not clear about the model to be proposed to the Ministry. Prof. Kovačević says that every law

gives directions and Albanian partners should find a way to read between the lines and see what could be produced.

Next issue was Quality control for next year. In January or February two quality experts must be engaged and they will finish two months after. Quality Control Committee will define Terms of reference and tender will be launched by the Steering Committee. Members of the Committee responsible to select two external experts are prof. dr Nikolić, prof. dr Debevc and dr Zinner. Final version of the Call for external evaluators will be done by the University of Maribor and sent to all the partners. Every partner institution should publish this call on their website, especially on the website of PRIDE.

We continued with the topic of dissemination. Website of the project contains all information about dissemination but it is agreed that we can improve this activity. University of Metropolitan and PRIDE are responsible for creating and distributing dissemination material, as well as to organize events with stakeholders, e.g. a conference in Albania. Prof. Cico proposes that every university should have a link to MARDS project on their website.

Tasks within this WP:

- Metropolitan University should prepare booklet for dissemination;
- Chambers of Commerce of Montenegro and Albania should establish a network of companies that support PhD education in Montenegro and Albania;
- Metropolitan University, University of Donja Gorica and Chambers of Montenegro and Albania to establish sustainable scholarships in both countries; to make a call to support the project and prepare the list of companies, Ministries, maybe hotels.

Management of the project is done by administrative assistant on a daily basis. Every three months we should have a meeting in Albania. Annual Steering Committee meeting is planned for M24 in Banska Bystrica but it is agreed that it is better to have it in Podgorica or Shkodra, in order to provide on-site inspection. EU partners are expected to push up the process of PhD Accreditation.

Approval of reports:

- **All agreed on Coordinator's report on progress of the 1st year;**
- **All agreed on reports of each partner;**
- **All agreed on Committee for engaging external experts;**
- **All agreed on plan for next year.**

This meeting was concluded by dr Zinner who agreed with prof. Kovačević that these meetings should be more constructive and focus more on the content. He suggests to the partners to be more precise and clear about their mission, commitments, to put more energy and identify where they want to contribute, to identify people who will contribute, and to come to the Ministry with something

concrete. He also suggests to focus on the research more clearly as in both countries there are research strengths and that a cross-border research program could be established, which will serve as a concrete outcome to present to the Ministries.

Conclusions:

- **To update EACEA on PhD situation in Albania till 13 January;**
- **To work seriously on Curricula book and Accreditation process;**
- **UoM and UNISHK to prepare books including Proposal for improvement of PhD studies and two reports done by experts;**
- **All documents for mid-term report to be send to project coordinator till middle February;**
- **Second installment will be received after approval of mid-term report (probably in May);**
- **Partners will receive 25% of the second installment, according to the partnership agreement;**
- **Meeting between project coordinator and Albanian partners to be organized in January;**
- **Meeting with Albanian Ministry to be organized and attended by project coordinator, rectors or other staff from Albanian Universities, and EU experts;**
- **To launch a Call for external evaluator and to publish it on each partner's website;**
- **To work more on dissemination.**