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## Report on Monitoring visits by externally appointed peer review and representatives of TEMPUS office

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**Project task:**

**6.3. Monitoring reports**

Description of project task:

External quality control and monitoring of the main project activities and results will be assessed through accreditation process performed by competent authorities and through monitoring visits by externally appointed peer review. Monitoring reports will contain information about timely termination and the quality of conducted activities, the quality of obtained outcomes, as well as about the corrective measures that should be undertaken, if necessary.

Description of outcomes:

In opinion of the evaluator, the evaluated partner correctly assumed and implemented the projects activities, and they proved enthusiasm into following the goals of the project. By running the project, there were achieved a number of subsidiary positive results, as are: gaining the experience for staff and students for future projects and partnerships, increasing the visibility as a valuable potential partner and developed the research logistic.

Based on site visit to the University of Kragujevac, Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism in Vrnjačka Banja and on discussion with staff involved into the project, the following statements can be formulated:

**Consideration of the Activities in WP1: Comparative analyses of the current Tourism study programs in the EU and Serbia**

There was conducted a detailed analysis, which revealed that, in Serbia there are a total of 18 HEIs accredited study programs in tourism. The analysis also found that there is a total of 33 study programs with an enrollment close to 2,800 students. There was, also, observed the current situation at the Higher Schools of Professional Studies and Faculties across Serbia.

Regarding the study programs in the EU, the analysis looked for certain educational standards for tourism and related disciplines. The idea was that, by using such standards, to be able to improve the consistency of quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area, to strengthen the procedures for facilitating the recognition of qualifications and to facilitate towards the mutual recognition of study programs among Serbian and the EU HEIs that have study programs in tourism. Overall, the activities and resources involved into WP1 were correctly dimensioned and the results were consistent, being a convincing base for the following WPs.

**Consideration of the Activities in WP2: Modernization and harmonization of existing undergraduate and development of new postgraduate study programs**

The WP2 was correctly constructed, starting from what the employers' needs are. In order to do so, I was conducted an analysis of qualified workforce requirement in the field of tourism in Serbia. Taking into account all above mentioned elements, it was run the complex process of modernizing and harmonizing study programs of the partner HEI at the undergraduate level, to at least 50% of courses offered at different partnering HEI. In average, there were added about 11 courses at each partnering institution in order to attain that goal, resulting in a developed curriculum at three HEI that each had at least 21 courses in common. Another important fact is that the harmonization was deeply carried on, by having the common courses placed at the same year of study in order to allow

easier student mobility throughout their studies. All study programs were successfully accredited by Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in 2015.

Overall, expected results of WP2 were accomplished and the result are beyond the initial expectations, at the moment the program of study is more attractive for students, the experience gained will be used for the reaccreditation of study programs in the next 12 months and, finally, the university will be able to accredit PhD level of study.

### **Consideration of the Activities in WP3: Staff training and development of teaching resources**

During the project, there were conducted sustained efforts for increasing the teaching capabilities, both in terms of human resources and of logistics. During the WP2, on the process of compatibility of curricula, the exchange of information among the HEI contributed to the accumulation of academic knowledge and abilities, mainly – but not only, for similar topics. Also, during external visits to partners of the project, the involved team shared experiences with more experienced teaching staff, both in field of education and research.

As result of the project implementation, there were accumulated significant and relevant teaching resources, TCI, books, teaching materials.

Overall, expected results of WP3 were accomplished according to the project objectives and consist a valuable basis for future development.

### **Consideration of the Activities in WP4: Development of lifelong learning (LLL) courses for tourism employees**

At the Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism in Vrnjačka Banja University of Kragujevac, there were organized three courses for employees in the tourism industry in Serbia.

The first course was entitled „Innovative health tourism products – Basis of competitiveness of a health tourism destination“ (March 2015), with 69 participants (including representatives from

hotels, travel agencies, tourism organizations, and other relevant institutions from the tourism industry) aimed to increase knowledges of the employees in the tourism industry about destination competitiveness and how it can be achieved.

The second course was entitled „Branding tourism potentials of Serbia“ (March 2016), with 92 participants (including representatives from hotels, travel agencies, tourism organizations, and other relevant institutions from the tourism industry), aimed to raise attention of participants about many tourism potentials that Serbia has and how these can be branded.

The third course was entitled „The contribution of agritourism to rural development“ (September 2016), with 63 participants (including representatives from tourism organizations, individuals who are interested in developing agritourism and from other relevant institutions from the tourism industry), aimed to present the current state of Serbian villages from different perspectives, potentials and challenges for rural development.

Overall, it can be stated that the objectives were fulfilled and, even more, these courses helped establish a closer cooperation with the representatives of the tourism industry, which will ensure the flow of valuable information and knowledge between the Faculty and organizations in the tourism industry.

#### **Consideration of the Activities in WP5: Improvement of higher education interaction with stakeholder and professional network**

Running the WP5 of the projects has positive results in increasing the visibility of the university, and specially of the study program, among stakeholder and professional network in a significant manner. The participants to the three organized courses for employees in the tourism industry in Serbia (WP4), among them being representatives from tourism organizations, individuals who are interested in developing agritourism and from other relevant institutions from the tourism industry gained valuable information about the potential of the faculty and of competences of its graduates. There were, also, developed, a significant number of collaborations with companies from tourism

industry for practical training of the students, being a good start point for finding relevant jobs for graduates.

Overall, the WP5 was correctly conducted and, at the moment, the established partnerships have the potential to develop into new projects, more complex, as are the consulting (already started) and/or research ones.

#### **Consideration of the Activities in WP6: Quality control and monitoring**

The quality assurance was continuously controlled and monitored during project time. Beside this monitoring visit, there were conducted another 3 visits from National Erasmus+ office in Serbia, all of them being ended with a positive report of the quality of the activity organized by faculty in frame of the project.

Overall, it can be stated that WP6 secured its objectives, assuring a high-quality management of the activities and involved resources.

#### **Consideration of the Activities in WP7: Dissemination of project activities and outcomes**

The activities carried on, as the result of the project were constantly disseminated to all interested parties. There were prepared dissemination materials for media, including TV appearance.

Overall, the WP7 had the expected results, dissemination activity being well organized and the target group was correctly selected.

#### **Consideration of the Activities in WP8: Sustainability**

Sustainability of the results is assured by the results obtained, by the relationships created, by the competence gained and by the teaching materials realized and/or purchased which will still be used once the project is done. The faculty made efforts for accreditation of the program study at bachelor level, master level and doctoral level, as an additional pillar for sustainability assurance in terms of students' attractiveness.

Overall, there are strong reasons to believe that the general objective assumed in frame of the project will continue not only to exist, but to develop into the future.

**Consideration of the Activities in WP9: Management**

The management activity of the project was correctly run by faculty, the decision process was adequate and the tasks were clear and correctly understood and assumed by the team. There were no significant deviances from the task, budget and results.

Overall, it can be presumed that the suitable managerial activities of the project lead were a good explanation for the valuable results of the project.

**Overall considerations:**

In opinion of the evaluator, the evaluated partner correctly assumed and implemented the project activities, and they proved enthusiasm into following the goals of the project. Finally, it can be emphasized the fact that, by running the project, there were achieved a number of subsidiary positive results, as are: gaining the experience for staff and students for future projects and partnerships, increasing the visibility as a valuable potential partner and developed the research logistic.

The above-mentioned comments were presented to and discussed with to the staff of University of Kragujevac, Faculty for Hotel Management and Tourism in Vrnjačka Banja.

