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Modernization and harmonization of Tourism study programs in Serbia <i>544543-TEMPUS-1-2013-1-1-RS-TEMPUS-JPCR</i>	
Work package 8	EXP 8.2 Implement employer/professional body/student support committees to help sustain student recruitment

Implement employer/professional body/student support committees to help sustain student recruitment

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In the framework of Tempus project Modernization and harmonization of Tourism study programs in Serbia *544543-TEMPUS-1-2013-1-1-RS-TEMPUS-JPCR*, HBSL has signed 37 agreements on business-technical cooperation. These business entities are a great support to HBSL when it comes to student recruitment as it is with them that HBSL's students do their professional practice and find employment after they graduate. Moreover, stakeholders enable HBSL's marketing team to perform marketing activities on their premises (organization of presentations, putting up posters, distribution of leaflets and other HBSL's promo materials). Besides stakeholders, other bodies (Student parliament and HBSL Alumni organization) help sustain student recruitment.

The basic task of **HBSL's Student parliament** is to protect and support HBSL students' rights and to work on advancement of quality of teaching process. Student parliament has a very important role in creation of better recruitment conditions by organizing a greater number of actions for improvement of students' position. Student parliament, together with other School bodies, permanently works on betterment of study conditions at HBSL, making it a more attractive higher education institution. In addition, HBSL Student parliament is responsible for organization of cultural, sports, informative and other events at HBSL.

HBSL's Alumni organization is a product of actual need for a formal organization whose members (former students of HBSL) will have means to inform themselves on School activities and important events. Alumni organization enables HBSL's graduates of different generations to come together and support School as an institution (in cooperation with current students and HBSL's teaching staff).

Each year, during the summer semester, HBSL organizes a manifestation called **Open Doors Day**. On that day, HBSL, together with its Student Parliament, Alumni organization and stakeholders, welcomes hundreds of high school students from central, western, eastern and southern Serbia.





This event is a chance for HBSL staff to familiarize high school students with its study programs and plans, study conditions and programs of professional practice (domestic and international programs).

This manifestation catches the attention of local media which can be seen on the following links:

TV K-1 features on Open Doors Day at Higher Business School of Professional Studies, 14.04.2016

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zLC1g4RdOIQ>

Daily newspaper "Dnevnik Juga" report on Open Doors Day at HBSL, 14.04.2016.

<http://dnevnikjuga.rs/najnovije-vesti/item/1103-visoka-poslovna-skola-leskovac-organizovala-dan-otvorenih-vrata>

News report - Danilo Kocić from Leskovac Media Center, on Open Doors Day at HBSL, published on 18.04.2015.

<https://novinardkocic.wordpress.com/2015/04/18/visoka-poslovna-skola-strukovnih-studija-dan-otvorenih-vrata/>

Mentor work

During 2015, as part of Tempus Project „Modernization and Harmonization of Tourism study programmes in Serbia“, Higher Business School of Professional Studies has reaccredited study program Tourism and Hospitality (undergraduate vocational studies) and for the first time, accredited study program Management of Food Technology and Gastronomy. Study program Business Economy and Management (postgraduate vocational studies) has been accredited in 2016., so that first generation of students on this study program has been enrolled in the school year 2016/2017.

In accordance with innovative approach to education and based on Tempus Project MHTSPS, HBSL has introduced student-mentor work. The aim of mentor work is constant communication between students and mentors, from the enrolment to graduation day in order to develop a positive student attitude towards acquisition of new skills and knowledge and continuous development. Mentor work included formation of mentor groups, appointment of mentors and organization of mentor meetings. One mentor group was made up of 25 students max. Mentor work meant dealing with “burning” issues in relation to study process, professional practice programs (national and international) and dealing with problems that students might have had. Mentors had to conduct a students’ performance analysis in order to keep track of their results.

Table 1, 2, 3 and 4 contain information on mentor groups for each study program accredited during the Tempus project „Modernization and Harmonization of Tourism study programmes in Serbia“, number of students for each mentor group and the names of their mentors.

Table 1.

Study program: TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY – I YEAR		
Mentor group	Number of students	Mentor
TU 1	25	Kristina Spasić, M.Sc.
TU 2	25	Maša Kulić, M.Sc.
TU 3	25	Marko Krstić, M.Sc.
TU 4	25	Marko Janačković, M.Sc.
TU 5	25	mr Dragana Randelović
TU 6	7	mr Žaklina Anđelković

Table 2.

Study program: MANAGEMENT OF FOOD TECHNOLOGY AND GASTRONOMY I YEAR		
Mentor group	Number of students	Mentor
MTHG 1	25	Lazar Krstić, M.Sc.
MTHG 2	25	Toma Dašić, M.Sc.
MTHG 3	16	Momčilo Conić

Table 3.

Study program: TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY – II YEAR		
Mentor group	Number of students	Mentor
TU 1	25	Ivana Jovanović, M.Sc.
TU 2	25	Predrag Stamenković, M.Sc.
TU 3	25	Dragana Ilić, M.Sc.
TU 4	24	Ljubica Janjić Baduli, M.Sc.

Table 4.

Study program: MANAGEMENT OF FOOD TECHNOLOGY AND GASTRONOMY II YEAR		
Mentor group	Number of students	Mentor

MTHG 1	25	Slavica Popović, M.Sc.
MTHG 2	24	Jelena Nikolić, M.Sc

In the past four years, between 78 and 132 students enrolled at study program Tourism and Hospitality.

Table 5. Number of enrolled students per study year – study program Tourism and Hospitality

Study year	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
I year	78	98	99	132
II year	64	58	74	67
III year	67	57	53	63

Table 5 offers overview of number of enrolled students per study year for study program Tourism and Hospitality in the past four years. The presented data show a constant increase in the number of 1st year students enrolled at study program Tourism and Hospitality. Owing to the marketing activities performed in the implementation of Tempus Project MHTSPS and popularization of this study program (school year 2016/2017), we filled the quota for 1st year (132 students).

Study program Management of Food Technology and Gastronomy was accredited for the first time in the study year 2015/2016, so that first generation of students for this study program was enrolled in the school year 2015/2016.

Table 6. Number of enrolled students per study year – study program Management of food technology and gastronomy

Study year	2015/16	2016/17
I year	49	66
II year	/	32
III year	/	/

Table 6 offers overview of number of enrolled students per study year for study program Management of food technology and gastronomy in the past 2 years. Data show an increase in number of 1st year students (school year 2016/2017 to school year 2015/2016.). Owing to the marketing activities performed in the implementation of Tempus Project MHTSPS and popularization of this study program (school year 2016/2017), we filled the quota for 1st year (66 students).

During 2015/2016 and 2016/2017 school years, a number of mentor meetings were organized where each of the mentor performed his/her duties. The initial mentor meeting was a chance for students to meet their mentors and be encouraged to contact them in person, by phone or e-mail for all questions, doubts or problems that they might have as HBSL students.

During mentor work, mentors witnessed the following:

- A certain number of 1st year students faced problems with understanding (passing) certain subjects (Mathematics for economists, Business statistics,

Accounting, Foreign language in tourism). Mentors suggested organization of additional study sessions and subject professors and teaching assistants agreed to organize them in order to solve the problem.

- Mentors noticed that a certain number of students enroll at HBSL in order to realize their rights to health care insurance, family pension, alimony, etc. This is one of the reasons why the number of 2nd and 3rd year students is smaller than that of 1st year. Another reason is that some of the students find employment during their studies and are thus unable to harmonize their work and study obligations.

Based on what we have experienced so far, we can conclude that program of mentor work has achieved its goal. This kind of student-work has enable HBSL staff to have a better insight into problems that students face during their studies and to create an institutional framework to solve these problems. Moreover, mentors have insight into students' performance and are thus able to make timely decisions and help solve problems by suggesting appropriate solutions.