



Erasmus+

Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices sub-programme

TECHNICAL REPORT form

Programme	Erasmus+
Sub-Programme	Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices
Action	Capacity Building in higher education
Sub-Action	Joint Projects
Call for Proposal	EAC-A05-2017
Project number	598176-EPP-1-2018-1-LT-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP
Agreement/decision number	20183309
Project Title	Internal quality assurance system for agriculture and biosystem engineering related HEI of Algeria
Language used to complete the form	

Contractual Data

Dates and Beneficiaries

Dates

Project Start: 15/11/2018	Project End: 14/11/2021
Activities Start:	Activities End:
Project Duration(months): 36	

Beneficiary Data

Role	PIC	Name	Country
Co-Beneficiary / Partner	909622448	ECOLE NATIONALE SUPERIEURE DE BIOTECHNOLOGIE	Algeria
Co-Beneficiary / Partner	918441688	ECOLE NATIONALE SUPERIEURE DE L HYDRAULIQUE	Algeria
Co-Beneficiary / Partner	917355482	ECOLE NATIONALE SUPERIEURE AGRONOMIQUE	Algeria
Management Contact Person	999590627	VYTAUTO DIDZIOJO UNIVERSITETAS	Lithuania
Coordinating Organization / Beneficiary	999590627	VYTAUTO DIDZIOJO UNIVERSITETAS	Lithuania
Co-Beneficiary / Partner	999857280	EESTI MAULIKOOL	Estonia

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Project Summary and Horizontal Issues

Project Description

English - 1	<p>The project reflects the priority of Algerian Government to implement the quality assurance system in higher education. This system was not in place till now. The HEI's are having as a target to set up their institutional quality assurance systems and to put in place all necessary measures.</p> <p>The main objective of this project is to enhance the management, governance and innovation capacities, as well as the internationalization of HEIs. Project is national joint project. Three Algerian HEI's in the field of agriculture and biosystems engineering, as beneficiary partners, in collaboration with partners from Lithuania and Estonia will work on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- offering new institutional capacity in internal quality assurance system (IQAS) within recipient HEI. This system will be developed by local Algerian experts previously trained in European partner institutions, thus the ownership of results will be ensured;- transfer of European experience for local staff during training sessions in European universities and following update of skills in real case situations in implementing and testing the IQAS at home institutions;- Algerian partner institutions will get the guidance and piloting in preparing self-evaluation reports and will go through external pilot evaluation by an European evaluation institution with the following sharing of experiences and lessons among partners and other stakeholders;- exploitation of project results will include transferring of project recommendations to national policy makers in higher education contributing to the national policy and methodology of quality assurance in HEI in Algeria. <p>Long term project impact on participating HEI's , other stakeholders (including other HEI's), also on national quality assurance policies in higher education in Algeria is envisaged.</p>
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Horizontal Issues

Previous recommendations/follow-up

Evaluation Report remark: The proposal does not provide details on the means employed at the national level towards the implementation of quality control in higher education institutions.

- The details will be provided in second part of project implementation.

Evaluation Report remark: Risks such as the non-commitment of the national experts in the implementation of the project are insufficiently considered. Mitigation measures, such as activities aimed at establishing contacts with national authorities in order to adopt the appropriate national legislation and provide the framework of the proposal, are not described.

- The details will be provided in second part of project implementation.

Evaluation Report remark: No structured financial sustainability strategy is provided.

- The structured financial sustainability strategy is based on the interests of Algerian higher education and governmental institutions, which will support the later improvement of quality management on institutional level.

Transversal issues

The project addresses transversal issues relevant for the EU and Algeria, ex. involvement of female Algerian participants is important for gender balance; improvement of quality management at Algerian institutions will contribute to sustainable development, unemployment, social cohesion in the country.

Involvement of people with fewer opportunities

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Award Criteria

Assessment Criteria

Relevance of the project

Relevance to the objectives

The higher education in Algeria follows major international trends. The Algeria is experiencing:

- Progressive growth of student numbers;
 - Diversification of teaching expected through the training offerings whose design is the initiative of institutions in relation to the user sectors;
 - Opening towards other sources of financing, including policy of encouraging HEI to valorise their products and to diversify their financial sources;
 - Existence of a high unemployment rate for graduates and the lack of studies on needs and requirements of the labour market and the professional future of graduates;
 - Increased requirement of quality and relevance in higher education by the community, public authorities and the economic environment.
- Apart from the massification and the lack of supervision and financial means, the main obstacles in improving the quality of higher education lie in the mismatch between education programs and the socio-economic needs.

Quality assurance has become key issue for higher education in the last two years in Algeria. Managers of higher education systems are concerned about quality and how to put in place appropriate quality assurance mechanisms. The Ministry of Higher Education in Algeria is concerned by the quality issues and about the outputs of higher education institutions and the suitability of graduates to meet the needs of employers. Quality and accountability thus have become key elements in the efforts of the responsibilities of the higher education to become and remain internationally competitive in a world where interdependence in trade is rapidly growing.

The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research created the national Committee for the Implementation of the Quality assurance in the Higher education-CIAQES (May 31st, 2010). It has been in charge of thinking about the system of quality assurance, Its elaboration and its implementation. The road map of the CIAQES elaborated in 2016 contained a set of actions which have to endow the sector of a system of quality assurance. The Algerian Higher Education Ministry has engaged a new auto-evaluation process since 2016 consisting on an evaluation system to report on internal efficiency and external education effectiveness, in relation to universities missions and objectives, and in relation to quality of student preparation for employment. The evaluation system needs to be consolidated and strengthened through the establishment of the national evaluation committee. In addition, it must be based on a reliable information system extended to professional circles, and the professional future of graduates, former students and other instruments to be identified, which have become indispensable for measuring the learning effectiveness.

A Commission for Implementation of a Quality Assurance System in Higher Education Institutions (CIAQES) attached to the General Secretariat of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research is responsible for promoting any action to improve higher education in Algeria and support institutions in the implementation of their quality approach. The training of resource persons in the field of quality is a flagship activity of its missions.

The project implementation completely pass above strategy of the Algeria to implementing the quality assurance in higher education system.

EU Education, Cooperation & Development policies

Synergy of the project is reached by involving partners from different European regions to prepare and transfer internal quality assurance system for agriculture and biosystem engineering based higher education institutions in Algeria. All partners are in cross-linked cooperation in a frame of ERASMUS mobility, which enables easy and reliable communication among the partners and distribution of roles in the project partnership.

Studies, which meet the requirements of the Bologna process in Algeria are in early development stage. The knowledge and experience of the VMU and EMU in ECTS implementation process and other reforms based on Bologna process will be remarkable there. It could be strengthen by VMU, which has a long tradition in active participation in the Bologna process by developing indicators for qualitative internationalization in higher education.

Quality of the project implementation

Description of the implemented activities

During the first year of the project we realised different project activities:

- The WP1 included state-of-the-art situation analysis at each partner institution;
- Project kick-off and coordination meetings including GA in Algerian partner institutions (ENSA, ENSH and ENSB) in March 2019 and September 2019 (WP5);
- Training visits of total of 18 Algerian experts (as planned) for the preparation of Internal Quality Assurance System(IQAS) in Lithuania (VMU) and Estonia (EMU) in June 2019 (WP2);
- Visit of 4 Lithuanian experts in Algeria and meeting with ENSA, ENSH and ENSB experts for local training and advice (as planned) in September 2019 (WP2);
- Several project video-conferencing meetings in February, May, November, December 2019 for technical coordination and expert advice;
- Preparation of internal quality management documents at Algerian partner schools started smoothly, however due to pandemic crisis elsewhere the delay will be in of 4 months (WP2);
- The only activity of equipment acquisition, as planned in the project is about to be completed with a delay of a 14 months (WP1).

The detailed description of implemented activities is presented in attached Table of achieved results.

Due to global pandemic crisis part of activities will be delayed (details presented in Table of achieved results). The project management is requesting the project prolongation up to 6 months with the new end date of 14/05/2022. Due to the pandemic force majeure situation the mobility plans are especially hindered. We are requesting to replace up to 27 mobilities under WP3 by the distance training of Algerian experts. That will enable the implementation of measurable achievement indicators and project results.

Taking that into consideration we are requesting exceptional right to move the amount of part of mobility costs ($27 \times (360 + 8 \times 120) = 35.640$ EUR) to the staff costs. The justification for this is that the distance training will require additional expert resources both from teaching side, also from trainees' side. This will be addressed separately.

Quality assurance

Quality assurance is generally considered as part of quality management which focuses on providing confidence that quality requirements will be fulfilled. It is achieved with the help of audit control internal mechanisms internal to the consortium for the deliverables, appropriate corrective and preventive actions and a set of quantitative quality measures.

Internal Reviews: The Internal Review includes review with respect to two aspects: technical and quality. The WP leaders and the Project Manager are responsible to conduct internal technical reviews to the deliverables before reporting, while the quality review is conducted by the Project Manager. The Project Manager is responsible to assign two (2) additional reviewers in each deliverable.

Technical aspects of the project documentation will be reviewed in order to ensure that all technical information is consistent to:

- Current state-of-the-art and recent technological and methodological level
- Project objectives, previous project results and specifications

From a quality point of view, the project documentation will be reviewed against the following criteria:

- Format of the document according to the document template.
- Consistency with previous relevant documentation.
- Identification and correction of typing/ syntax mistakes, etc.

In case of IQAS, the respective review will be conducted during the testing procedures. The Project Manager is responsible for the verification and validation of the testing results signing a testing report.

Visibility

The dissemination channels and tools for enhancing dialogue and networking will consist: contacting relevant media at local or national level; information sessions, training, demonstrations, peer reviews; assessing the impact on target groups; involving other stakeholders in view of transferring results to end users/ new areas/policies. It includes a project website (<https://zua.vdu.lt/en/project/quals/>), adding a banner with a link to project card within the Erasmus+ Project Platform on the project website, with uploading the final project results at the end of the project.

Equipment

The only activity of equipment acquisition, as planned in the project is to be completed with a delay of 14 months. The public procurement procedures have been implemented by our Algerian partners under our guidance, some of them had to be repeated to correspond to the Algerian public procurement legislation and to be eligible for payment under procedures of project Grant Agreement. It took a bit more time as planned not only because of local peculiarities of purchasing procedures in Algeria, but also because of pandemic crisis and quarantine elsewhere including Algeria which stopped functioning of most of public institutions and hindered work of private supply companies. We expect this activity to be completed with a delay of 14 months but finally it will depend on the release of activities after pandemic crisis in Algeria. This risk is however beyond our competences, but all partners are taking necessary efforts to diminish this risk to the maximum possible.

Expected delay due to pandemic crisis for final equipment installation of up to 14 months (new end date suggested 30/11/2020).

The project includes activities relating to curriculum development

- Yes
- No

Teaching / Training Activities

- Yes

Mobility for Teaching, Training and/or project research activities

Training visits of total of 18 Algerian experts for the preparation of Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) in Lithuania (VMU) and Estonia (EMU) in June 2019. More details provided in Annex C (Table of achieved planned results)

No

Quality of cooperation

Project management

Project Coordinator from VMU is responsible for the overall administrative, financial, scientific and organisational management of the project and will be a contact point for the European Commission. The project manager is designated by the coordinating partner (VMU) and assumes responsibility for the overall project academic implementation and achievements, planning the overall project execution, chairing, supervising and supporting plenary meetings, meetings of project's committees and other events, maintaining all project monitoring plans for effort, budget, tasks and issues and ensuring the accomplishment of the objectives. Each partner appointed Institutional Coordinator, responsible to project coordination at institutional level, working closely with project coordinator and project manager.

The project management structure comprises two decision-making bodies, the General Assembly and the Executive Board. The General Assembly decides on issues related to the content, finances, intellectual property rights, publishing and exploitation of project results and evolution of the consortium based on EC suggestions. It consists of one representative of each participating organisations, named as Institutional coordinator and is chaired by the Project manager.

The Executive Board assisted by the Support Team, is the operational management body of the project responsible for efficient implementation of the project. Executive Board decides on possible changes to the Consortium plan, timing, schedules, dissemination channels and tools, publication of project information materials, reports, financial management, etc. Executive Board consists of the Coordinator & WP's leaders with the Project Coordinator being chairman. It includes inputs from the staff such as administrative manager, public relations manager and financial manager.

Communication is ensured by the coordinated actions, exchange internal documents, meeting minutes, drafts of reports, dissemination material, etc. Exchange of information mainly occurs by e-mail and various other file transfer means. A cloud-based project document repository is available in Google Docs system. Skype, Messenger and/or teleconferencing facilities is used for online meeting purposes among the partners based on the project WP needs. Electronic signing will be used where possible to avoid sending of hard copies of documents.

No communication problems occurred yet and no conflict prevention and resolution measures was required yet.

Involvement of partners and stakeholders

In order to achieve its goals in an efficient and effective manner, QUALS is organised in 5 Work Packages (WPs). WPs are further divided into Tasks. Each WP and Task is led by the partner most competent in the domain area concerned: WP1 is coordinated by ENSH (AL), WP2 by EMUA (EE), WP3 by ENSA (AL), WP4 by VMU (LT) and WP5 by ASU (LT). The institutions coordinating WP will appoint a dedicated Work Package Lead those responsible for a whole WP) appoint a Task Leader per Task, according to the project management plan. WP leaders and Task leaders are responsible for coordinating efforts in the WP and Task level accordingly. The Project Manager is taking the overall lead of the project activities, facilitates and supervises the achievement of project results.

Management of the grant

Legal representative of coordinating institution signed the grant agreement with EC. At the time of signing in November 2018 it was Aleksandras Stulginskis University (ASU). ASU signed according partnership agreements with all project partners in December 2018. Partnership agreements included all financial management details agreed by the project partners. After restructurisation of ASU and joining the Vytautas Magnus University (VMU) all project responsibilities including project coordination was taken by VMU.

The project coordinator represents the project consortium signing the grant agreement with EC, coordinates the project activities and its financial support according to the plan in terms of time, resources and project objectives according to the description of the project. In order to do this according to the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness the main rules and procedures for the beneficiaries' collaboration was fixed in the beginning of the project. The documentation, including reporting templates, communication standards and flows was settled and is realized.

The requests for payments to the partners and first transfers to the project partners was realized in time frame of grant agreement. The project beneficiaries are contributing to administrative and financial management activities by providing individual financial statements and contributing to the periodic reporting.

The summary of work carried out, the progress of each work package, the resources (including financial) spent is documented for reporting period in Project Interim Reports.

As the pandemic crisis hindered the activities related to mobilities and equipment delivery to beneficiaries the interim Technical Report by the agreement of EACEA was postponed till the 31/08/2020. Due to the above situation the TR and financial statement is not followed by the request for second pre-financing payment as the expenditures did not reach 70 % of first pre-financing. This request is expected later by October 2020.

IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Awareness raising, dissemination, sustainability and exploitation of the project results

To effectively disseminate results, an appropriate process at the beginning of the project was designed, which covers why, what, how, when, to whom and where disseminating results takes place, both during and after the project period. Exploitation is transferring successful results to appropriate decision-makers at local and national systems, and convincing individual end-users to adopt and/or apply the results. Results should be sustained after the project has finished. Main outcome-Project outcomes available to policy makers. For example in cooperation with Education Ministry of Algeria the project activities and results have a dissemination and exploitation to other HEIs of Algeria as well as to national policies as a good practice.

The dissemination channels and tools for enhancing dialogue and networking consist: contacting relevant media at local or national level; information sessions, training, demonstrations, peer reviews; assessing the impact on target groups; involving other stakeholders in view of transferring results to end users/ new areas/policies. It also include a project website (<https://zua.vdu.lt/en/project/quals/>), adding a project card in VMU projects platform (<https://www.vdu.lt/cris/cris/project/pj00254/common.html>), with uploading the final project results at the end of the project.

For example after the project activities during 2018 and 2019 the following dissemination channels were used:

- Project information on web-site: <https://zua.vdu.lt/en/project/quals/>
- Articles in newspapers (Journée D'études Sur La Réutilisation Des Eaux Épurées En Irrigation, 25/09/2019, Deficit Hydrique, 23/10/2019);
- Articles in info-bulletins of Algerian institutions (INFO-ENSH: No 11 November-December 2018, No 13 Mach-April 2019, No 16 September 2019);
- Interview for Algerian TV on 24/03/2019.

The results and impacts are discussed amongst project partners and corrective actions are discussed and suggested for further activities of the institutions.

The project outputs is being used by the beneficiary institutions as a whole and stakeholders, like other HEI in the region, sector, public, media, associations, policy makers. Most of project results (outcomes) will be used by the beneficiary HEI, i.e. their teaching and research staff, administrations, by regional and national stakeholders, including Ministry of Education, regional administrations, other HEI. The project exploitation measures includes delivering of results to stakeholders to reach them and impact their policies and actions.

The participating institutions have the plan to attract further funds to modernise their academic infrastructure and curriculum in order to allow the accreditation of study programmes and of institutions at the national level when the national accreditation system is in place as it is planned to do in coming years. The partners have plan to continue collaboration in these further applications, which might be based on previous project results. The continuing collaboration will be assured using international offices at partner institutions. The ERASMUS plus mobility of students and staff will be also exploited to use full capacity of institutions to use mobility and transfer credits. The external stakeholders (media, public, national policy makers) are reached periodically via local Algerian partners in order to measure impacts and level of exploitation of results.

Statistics and Indicators

Type of equipment:

- books and pedagogic material
- audio-visual equipment
- Computers and software
- lab material
- Other

For Curriculum Development projects

Yes

Level of new/updated courses:

- Short cycle
- 1st Cycle (e.g. Bachelor)
- 2nd Cycle (e.g. Master)

- 3rd Cycle (e.g. Doctoral)
- Vocational Education and Training

Type of recognition:

- HEI Degree
- National degree
- Multiple Degree
- Joint Degree

Volume (in ECTS) of new/updated courses

The new study programme includes:

- Placements/internships for students
- Career orientation service
- Career development measures

Number of learners / trainees enrolled (per intake / course delivery)

Type of skills/competence developed:

- Transversal/behavioural skills
- Technical /academic /scientific / research skills
- Linguistic competences

% of the new curriculum taught in foreign language of the the total of new curriculum developed by the project

For Training/Mobility Activities

Number of partner country "HEIs' students" trained

Number of partner country "HEIs' academic staff" trained

Number of partner country "HEIs' administrative staff" trained

Number of partner country "non-HEI individuals" trained (priv. sector, NGOs, civil servants, etc.)

IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Impact at individual level

Extent of attention given to vulnerable groups

Number of direct beneficiaries in the Partner country(ies) per year: academic staff from HEIs

Number of direct beneficiaries in the PCs (/year): administrative staff from HEIs

Number of direct beneficiaries in the PCs (/year): HE students

Number of direct beneficiaries in the PCs (/year): non HE individuals

Impact at institutional level

Extent of impact at institutional level: for instance new courses / strategies (policies, regulations) / services (units, centres)

Potential of planned project measures to contribute to new national cooperation activities in the Partner countries HEIs as a result of the project (Memorandum of Understanding /research projects / joint publications /participation in networks or associations etc.)

Potential of project to contribute to new international cooperation activities in the Partner countries HEIs as a result of the project (international agreements / Memorandum of Understanding / research projects / joint publications / participation in networks or associations, etc.)

Impact on the HE Sector

Potential of project to contribute to

new (/updated) national or regional policies / laws / regulations in HE

Potential of project to contribute to the establishment (/ further development) of external bodies (/associations /agencies)

to a small extent

Potential of project to contribute to improve the excellence / competitiveness / attractiveness of the Higher Education institutions

to a very high extent

Innovative character of the planned results (i.e. the courses developed; the new tools, services, procedures delivered; the strategies implemented for reaching the target groups; etc.)

to a high extent

Impact on the society as a whole

Potential of the project to pay particular attention to least developed countries

to a high extent

Potential of the project to engage Partner Countries HEIs in new means of cooperation with employers and other stakeholders (e.g. NGOs, associations, etc.)

to a small extent

Measures contributing to improving lifelong learning approaches in the Partner Country HEIs

to a high extent

Sustainability

Institutional support for Partner Country HEIs to sustain project results

to a high extent

Measures to collect Sources of financial (/logistic) support for sustaining the project results from:

- Partner HEIs
- Public authorities in Partner countries
- NGOs
- Private sector
- European Union
- Other

QUALITY OF PARTNERSHIP & COOPERATION

Involvement of students in the project implementation

to a small extent

Involvement of non-educational stakeholders in the project implementation

to a small extent

RELEVANCE in relation to project objectives

To what extent the project contributes to the policy objectives of the Partner Countries

to a very high extent

Project potential to promote EU's horizontal policies

- Agriculture, fisheries and foods
- Business
- Climate action
- Cross-cutting policies
- Culture, education and youth
- Economy, finance and tax
- Employment and social rights
- Energy and natural resources
- Environment, consumers and health
- External relations and foreign affairs
- Justice, home affairs and citizens' rights
- Regions and local development
- Science and technology
- Transport and travel

Meetings, Training and Mobilities

Meetings, Trainings and Mobilities

Estimated dates of consortium meetings until the end of the projects

Venue country	Venue city	Date of Meeting
Lithuania	Kaunas	20/09/2020
Estonia	Tartu	04/04/2021
Algeria	Constantine	10/10/2021

Training and Mobilities

Event	Purpose	Type of participants	Gender	Number	Country of Origin	Country of destination	Duration (in weeks)	%compared to objectives
1	Training	Academic staff – administrative	Number Male	10	Algeria	Lithuania	1	100
1	Training	Academic staff – administrative	Number Female	3	Algeria	Lithuania	1	100
2	Training	Academic staff – administrative	Number Male	4	Algeria	Estonia	1	100
2	Training	Academic staff – administrative	Number Female	1	Algeria	Estonia	1	100
3	Training	Academic staff – administrative	Number Male	2	Algeria	Algeria	1	100
3	Training	Academic staff – administrative	Number Female	1	Algeria	Algeria	1	100
4	Workshop	Academic staff – administrative	Number Male	5	Algeria	Algeria	1	100

Attachments

Type of File	Name of the File
Budget Table	
Declaration of Honour	
Table of achieved results	
Dissemination/Exploitation Plan	
Quality Assurance Plan	
Request for Payment	

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