




WBCInno

**ANNEX G: External Monitoring Report
No.3, 21.10.2014**

Project Acronym:	WBCInno
Project full title:	Modernization of WBC universities through strengthening of structures and services for knowledge transfer, research and innovation
Project No:	530213-TEMPUS-1-2012-1-RS-TEMPUS-JPHES
Funding Scheme:	TEMPUS
Coordinator:	UKG – University of Kragujevac
Project start date:	October 15, 2012
Project duration:	36 months

1. Information on the external monitoring visit	
1.1 External monitoring visit No	3
1.2 Location of visit	University of Kragujevac, Serbia
1.3. Date of visit	September 11 - 12, 2014
1.4 Visit completed by	 Vera Markovic, external expert for quality control
2. Introduction	
<p>This report provides an external evaluation of the Workshop “Building researchers’ capacities in the area of knowledge transfer, research and innovations”, held within the frame of the WBCInno TEMPUS project at the University of Kragujevac, Serbia, on September 11-12. This workshop was the first one in the series of five workshops planned to be held as Activity 6.5 of the Workpackage 6: “Designing of dissemination and awareness raising mechanisms and the involvement of public and private stakeholders in Triple helix model of innovation”. The workshop was also combined with the Activity 3.3, “Capacity building trainings of BI and STP staff”.</p> <p>The evaluation of the workshop is based on several inputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the insight into all workshop materials – those sent electronically to the prospective participants, as well as hard-copy published materials available at the workshop - the personal attendance of the external evaluator at the workshop - discussions with workshop speakers and participants - the analysis of questionnaires - the reporting about the project results on the WBCInno web site. <p>The aim of this report is to provide the project coordinator, the consortium and, especially the leader of the activity with an external view of the event and to emphasize strengths and weaknesses that could be taken into account at organizing next four workshops.</p>	

3. Description of the event

The workshop was held at the Rectorate of University of Kragujevac, which gave the opportunity to use very good facilities and technical support to the event. At the workshop, there were 53 participants in total, including the project partner representatives and speakers. Most of participants were teachers of the Faculty of Engineering in Kragujevac, Faculty of Mathematical Sciences and Mathematics in Kragujevac and Faculty of Technical Sciences in Cacak. A group of students, predominantly of the Faculty of Engineering in Kragujevac, attended also the event.

As it was planned by the application, all WB and EU project partners were also invited to attend the workshop, some of partner representatives were also workshop speakers. The workshop was preceded by a two-day training event on development of business incubators and science and technology parks in the Western Balkan Region, organized in the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia, where EU project partners were also present and had the role of speakers. Therefore, both events were organized in a cost-effective way regarding the travel expenses of EU partners.

The workshop agenda was prepared carefully in order to involve important aspects related to knowledge transfer, research and innovation. On the first day, after the opening and introductory speeches given by the project coordinator, Prof. Dr. Vesna Mandic, the examples of good practice regarding the knowledge transfer and commercialization of results were presented by EU partner representatives (Dr. Mark Jones from the University of Brighton, Mario Fallast from the Graz University of Technology, Olga Frances from the Innovation Unit, Science Park of the University of Alicante, Regina Grussenmeyer from the Hamburg University of Technology and Ines Marinkovic from the Centre for Social Innovation Vienna).

The focus of the second day was on the innovation management issues, the collaborative software platform, IPR protection and mechanisms of university support to innovation and business initiatives, whereby the speakers were Prof. Vesna Mandic and Jelena Jevtovic from the University of Kragujevac, Zoran Torgašev from Intranee Solutions and Daniela Zlatić Šutić from the Intellectual property office of the Republic of Serbia.

4. Analysis of participants' feedback

The workshop attendees were asked to fill-in questionnaires in order to provide the organizers with a participants' feedback. On the basis of collected questionnaires, a statistical analysis of participants' answers was made. The number of collected filled-in questionnaires was 30, which is a quite large number from the statistical point of view.

First set of 5 questions was related to the participants' general satisfaction about several aspects of the workshop: the event administration, program structure, venue/facilities, presentations and discussions. The participants were given the possibility of assessment with following grades: "most satisfied", "satisfied", "moderately satisfied", "rather dissatisfied" and "not at all satisfied". The most responses were in the category "most satisfied" (the highest mark), ranging from 77% for the event administration to 87% for the venue and facilities. Smaller number of respondents assessed above mentioned aspects with "satisfied", and a few answers concerning program structure and presentations were "moderately satisfied". There were no "rather dissatisfied" and "not at all satisfied" answers.

By the second set of 11 questions, the deeper insight into the participants' impressions about the workshop was made, and categories of answers were: "strongly agree", "agree", "neutral", "disagree" and "strongly disagree". Almost all respondents (93%) strongly agree that the overall organisation of the workshop was professional and that they will recommend this kind of events to colleagues. Similarly, respondents strongly agree (90%) or agree (10%) that the style and level of communication between organisers and participants was very professional. High percentage of "strongly agree" answers was also obtained for the claims that the workshop time management was always to participants' fullest satisfaction and that they enjoyed the cooperation and interaction with the other participants (80% and 77%, respectively). Approximately equal number of answers "strongly agree" and "agree" was obtained in the case of following claims: "The information I got will be of immediate use to me", "This event covered to a very high extent the topics I have expected", "The discussions were relevant for the participants" and "The methods of working were suitable for the topics and for the participants". Finally, for the claims: "My expectations about this event were met or exceeded" and "The materials distributed are useful and informative", the distribution of grades "strongly agree", "agree" and "neutral" was 44% : 43% : 13% and 43% : 40% : 17%, respectively. Generally speaking, the respondents assessed the particular workshop aspects as very good. Out of 30 filled-in questionnaires, there were no answers "disagree" and "strongly disagree" within the second set of questions.

Third set of 7 questions was related to the regional university innovative platform. The participants had possibility to assess the importance of proposed strategic measures. Defining of priority research areas of university and capitalizing the knowledge and research potential was assessed as most important measure (77% answers were “crucially important” and 23% “very important”). Also, commercialization of research results and their transformation to innovation, as well as development of co-operations between universities and enterprises were evaluated mostly as “crucially important”. The other measures were considered approximately equally as “crucially” and “very” important, or, to a lesser extent, just as “important”. No single measure was assessed as “little important” or “not important at all”.

The respondents gave very positive comments regarding the workshop contributions and activities, evaluating lecturers as excellent, and highlighting that the direct communication with EU experts and University representatives was of great importance. The issues like promoting the collaborative platform, and a systematic approach to connect academic community with entrepreneurship with the assistance of business incubators, were particularly emphasized by respondents.

Some useful remarks were also given by participants through the questionnaires, primarily to include companies, entrepreneurs and start-ups, to expand the promotion to the faculties as well, to organize such events more often, etc.

5. Overall evaluation and suggestions for the improvement

Overall impression based on different inputs is that the workshop was well organized and useful for participants.

It can be concluded that the preparation of the workshop was carefully and well done. The first announcement about the workshop was sent to the prospective participants well in advance (two weeks before the event). The target groups involved teaching staff, researchers and students of the University of Kragujevac, as well as other higher education institutions. The number of participants (53) fits the number of attendees planned at the beginning of the project for workshops. However, in external evaluator’s opinion, the promotion among students (particularly at the Master and PhD level) could be enhanced in order to attract this target group to participate in the events of similar type to a greater extent.

The agenda was made with the aim to cover different topics, from the overviews of knowledge and technology transfer mechanisms and experience at partner EU universities, to more practical issues related to building researchers' capacities for knowledge and technology transfer. The evaluator's impression is that the speakers put much effort to prepare presentations of high quality providing the useful information for participants. Most of presentations were followed with fruitful discussions, which demonstrated high interest of workshop participants in these subjects. In addition to presentations and discussions, there were also the printed materials.

Having in mind that a two-day workshop cannot cover all relevant issues in the area of knowledge and technology transfer, some new topics could also be considered for the next workshops, particularly those expected to fit the attendees' needs to the greatest extent. Specific trainings could be included as well. In addition, involving some of successful companies, entrepreneurs and start-ups in future similar events would be very useful.