



Deliverable 8.2d Internal Evaluation Report (1st year)

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Executive Summary

This report briefly presents the results of the Quality Assurance Plan, including its development and realization, achieved by the end of the first year of project implementation.

In the first part of the report, the main mechanisms and instruments developed at the beginning of the project and used for monitoring project progress and evaluating project results and outcomes are presented in brief, since most of them are analyzed extensively in the Quality Plan (D8.1). Those include:

- Organization of the Internal and External Quality teams;
- Development of the Quality Assurance Plan (D8.1);
- Preparation of questionnaires used for the internal evaluation of project deliverables;
- Preparation of questionnaires used for the internal evaluation of project meetings;
- Preparation of questionnaires used for the external evaluation of project results by external experts;
- Preparation of questionnaires used for the assessment of the degree that project results meet stakeholders expectations and measuring impact;
- Elaboration and sharing the responsibility of deliverables review within the Consortium;
- Evaluation of the Study Visit organized in Bucharest;
- Evaluation of the activities carried out during the trip to Peja/Kosovo;
- Evaluation of the activities carried out during the trip to Sarajevo/Bosnia-Herzegovina;
- Evaluation of project progress in terms of activities performed and deliverables submitted;

In the second part of the report, project internal evaluation results are presented.

Reports focusing on the implementation of the Quality Plan and the monitoring of the project progress are available to the members of the consortium, the External Evaluation team and also, EACEA, Commission services and project reviewers.

PART A. QUALITY EVALUATION MECHANISMS AND TOOLS

1 Organization of the Quality Team

The internal Quality Team (QT) was organized just after the kick-off meeting of the project. All Consortium members are represented in the QT with one representative and one deputy per partner. The members of the QT along with contact information are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Quality Team Members

n°	Partner	QT members
1.	Agricultural University of Tirana (AUT)	Luziana Hoxha (Lecturer) <i>Deputy: Enkeleda Berberi (Lecturer)</i>
2.	European University of Tirana (EUT)	Kebjana Haka (Project Manager) <i>Deputy: Lutjona Lula (IR Office)</i>
3.	“Haxhi Zeka” University (UHz)	Arsim Elshani (Professor) <i>Deputy: Ibrahim Hoxha (Professor)</i>
4.	University College(UC)	Qendresa Kukaj (Lecturer) <i>Deputy: Uresa Vllasa (Lecturer)</i>
5.	University of Bihac (UNBI)	Jasmina Ibrahimpašić (Associate Professor) <i>Deputy: Suzana Jahić (Associate Professor)</i>
6.	University of Srayevo (UNSA)	Dragana Ognjenović (Associate Professor) <i>Deputy: Milenko Blesić (Professor)</i>
7.	Ministry of education, science, culture and sport of Una-Sana Canton (MESCS USK)	Albijana Trnavci (Secretary) <i>Deputy: Adnan Kreso (Deputy Minister)</i>
8.	Czech University of Life Sciences Prague (CULS)	Lukas Zagata (Associate Professor) <i>Deputy: Jakub Husak (Assistant Professor)</i>
9.	University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine in Bucharest (USAMVB)	Gheorghe Valentin Roman (Professor) <i>Deputy: Temocico Georgeta (Institutional Project Manager)</i>
10.	Agronomic University of Athens (AUA, former TEISTE)	Catherine Marinagi (Professor) <i>Deputy: Giannis Tsoulfas (Assistant Professor)</i>
11.	Research Innovation and Development Lab Private Company (ReadLab)	Petros Chondros (R&d Manager) <i>Deputy: Alexandros Vouros (Research Associate)</i>

The role of the QT is important considering the implementation of the project activities with respect to the quality level of project activities, the corresponding deliverables, the meetings and the events organized during the project lifetime. QT assists the Management Team (MT) in order to

- Establish a standardized process for deliverables submission, review and delivery;
- Prepare the questionnaires used for the internal and external evaluation of project results;
- Spread the responsibility of the deliverables review process within the partnership;

- Monitor the implementation and the success of the process;
- Monitor the quality of the deliverables submitted;
- Monitor the quality of the implementation and the overall progress of project activities and tasks with respect to the workplan and expected outcomes/outputs.
- Collect and process questionnaires delivered to Consortium members participating in project events;
- Disseminate the results of the internal evaluation of project meetings/events internally, highlight main findings and propose and discuss improvements

2 Development of the Quality Assurance Plan

Quality Assurance Plan (QAP) includes all the relevant information regarding the progress monitoring and the quality evaluation related issues that will be implemented during the project lifetime. The overall aim is to establish mechanisms and apply tools that will be used for increasing the quality of the implementation of project activities and tasks and also for increasing the impact of the project internally – with respect to experiences gained by Consortium partners – and also, in relation to students and stakeholders expectations. A critical point is the sharing of a quality culture within Consortium, by involving all partners in the review processes and promoting the ownership of project results.

Quality assurance mechanisms and tools are related to the following issues/elements:

- Project Meetings;
- Deliverables submission and review procedure;
- Project outputs/outcomes;
- Progress monitoring;
- Risk Management;

Additional issues/elements are related to the preparation and the implementation of the MSC programme itself, according to the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

Critical issues are also related to the measurement and the increase of the impact of the project as well as the sustainability of the MS programme and the exploitation of project results beyond the project lifetime.

2.1 Project Meetings/Events

Project meetings are evaluated based on the following elements:

1. Organizational aspects are used for measuring the satisfaction of the participants with respect to:
 - Organization of the agenda and the implementation of preparatory activities;
 - Venue and facilities;
 - Logistics and accommodation;
 - Relevance of visited places with respect to the project activities/objectives;
 - Quality of study visits tours with respect to the project activities/objectives.

2. Individual components of the meeting/events are used for measuring participants satisfaction related to the:
 - Quality and scope of information presented;
 - The degree to which the meeting/event helped reaching project objectives;
 - The level of participants involvement to discussions and decision making;
 - The treatment of difficulties;
 - as well as the of participation
3. The degree to which the meeting/event reached the expectations of the participants and the overall satisfaction of the participants are measured separately.

In questionnaires, additional space is used for stating the strengths and the weaknesses of the meeting/event as well as for proposing ideas for improvements.

The exact form of the questionnaire used for evaluating the quality of project meetings/events is included in the Annexes of the Quality Assurance Plan (D8.1)

2.2 Deliverables submission and review procedures

A standardized process for deliverables submission and reviewing is included in the Quality Plan. The process is summarized in the table below.

Table 2. Quality Team Members

Step no.	Action	Owner/From	To	When
1	Submission of deliverable for review	Deliverable responsible	QT	15 days prior to contractual delivery date
2	Assign Reviewers	QT	2 project members	As soon as possible after action no 1
3	Submit evaluation	Reviewers	QT	1 week after action no 2
4	Conflict resolution	QT	4 th reviewer	1 week after action no 3
5	Submit new version of deliverable	Deliverable responsible	Internal space or QT	2 days or 1 week after step 4
6	Review new version of the deliverable	QT	Deliverable responsible	1 week after action no 5
7	Submit final version	Deliverable responsible	Internal Space	2 days after action no 6
8	Inform project MT if deliverable is rejected for the second time (not obligatory step)	QT	Management Team (MT)	2 days after action no 6

2.3 Evaluating project results/deliverables

A summary of the quality factors and criteria used for evaluating project results is presented below. More details and analysis can be found in the Quality Assurance Plan (D8.1). The key points to be taken into consideration in the review process include contents thoroughness and correspondence to project and programme objectives, relevance and response to user needs, Quality of presentation of achievements and quality of achievements. Specific quality factors are considered, which are furthermore mapped to a number of criteria. The latter are included in the form of questions. A summary of factors and criteria is presented in the table below:

Table 3. Quality factors and criteria

Quality Factor	Criterion	Description
Correctness	a. Completeness	a. The degree to which main project results provide full implementation of the functions envisaged in the project plan.
	b. Consistency	b. The degree to which main project results provide uniform design and notation.
	c. Accuracy	c. The degree to which main project results provide the required precision with respect to real life sectorial requirements.
Usability	a. Simplicity	a. The degree to which the project implements project results in the most non-complex and understandable manner.
	b. Virtuality	b. The extent to which the target group does not require knowledge of the physical, logical, or topological characteristics of the project results.
	c. Learning Curve	c. The extent to which the project provides familiarization of functions and operations of project results to its target group.
Accessibility	a. Permeation	a. The extent to which project achievements are successfully disseminated to the intended target community.
	b. Virtuality	b. The extent to which end-users do not require any special knowledge (physical, logical, or topological characteristics) in order to make use of the project results.
Portability	a. Independence	a. The degree to which project results are non-dependent to fast changing factors (such as technology, geography, economy).
	b. Standardization	b. The extent to which project results conform to standards (or EU/national guidelines) that maximize portability
Expandability	a. Augmentability	a. The degree to which the results described in the outcome can be expanded within the target sector
	b. Modularity	b. The degree to which parts of the outcome can be used independently
Interoperability	a. Commonality	a. The extent to which project results utilize interface standards for data representations

	b. Contribution to standards	b. The extent to which the outcome can potentially contribute to existing or new standards
Profitability	a. Productivity b. Cost vs Benefit	a. The extent to which project results demonstrate an improvement in the productivity of those who use it. b. The degree to which the benefits of using the project results out-weigh the costs (e.g. time spend for training).
Timeliness	Performance to time scheduled	The extent to which Project Activities are delivering results according the established schedule.
Future Business potential	a. Stakeholder satisfaction b. Sustainability c. Impact	a. The extent to which sectorial stakeholders are satisfied with project outputs. b. The likelihood of benefits produced by the project to continue to positively affect the stakeholders after project completion c. the effect of project results to wider sectorial objectives

The above criteria are mapped to specific questionnaires delivered to Reviewers responsible for the review of the deliverable/output. Grading is carried out by using a scale ranging from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent), while a final, overall assessment is applied by using four options, including “Accept as is”, “Accept with minor revisions”, “Accept with major revisions” and “Reject”. The exact form of the questionnaire is included in the Annex of the Quality Plan (D8.1). About status

2.4 Project progress and monitoring

Project progress will be measured by using the indicators presented in the Logical Framework Matrix (LFM). The sum of indicators per work package is presented in the table below:

Table 4. Progress indicators

Outputs and outcomes	Indicators of progress
WP1 Connection of STEPS with the world of work, the social and the economic environment	
D1.1 Assessment and analysis report on stakeholders needs D1.2 Survey of STEPS relevant programmes D1.3 Best practices of MSc programmes D1.4 Report on the mechanisms for continuous stakeholders input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organizations contacted (over 200) - Questionnaires delivered, acquired and processed (200) - Interviews of key stakeholders (over 40) - Visits and round tables for stakeholders (over 30) - Variety of diverse opinions expressed - Relevant MSc programmes analyzed (over 100) - Best practices reported (25) - Stakeholders convinced to engage with project activities - Standard mechanisms established for continuous contribution and communication

WP2 STEPs structure and courses design	
D2.1 Design of the MSc programme D2.2 Selection of teaching staff and organisation in working groups report D2.3 Study visit report D2.4 Design of STEPs Courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Faculty members joining the study visit (over 25) - ICT-based teaching/learning environments utilised/demonstrated (over 10) - Courses designed based on ECTS (all) - STEM subjects and innovative concepts included/analysed in the content of courses - Quality of scientific and educational approaches demonstrated/discussed, analysed and adopted
WP3 Professional development of scientific courses	
D3.1 Assessment of training needs reports D3.2 Training seminars/guest lectures D3.3 Continuous support and improvement of scientific background and teaching capacity of scientific staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scientific staff participation in seminars and lectures (over 40) - Level and quality of collaboration and synergies developed between consortium partners - Scientific articles prepared/published (5 per year and per HEI)
WP4 STEPs development	
D4.1 LMS platform D4.2 STEPs courses D4.3 Digitised educational material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality of the educational platform (Design and appropriateness of the educational environment) - Quality of educational material and tools - Level and quality of collaboration between consortium partners
WP5 Development of infrastructures	
D5.1 Teaching/learning environment D5.2 Research labs D5.3 Experiments/ simulations and training material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experimental devices/software licenses purchased (over 15) - Experimental/software-based exercises and projects by utilising new equipment - Quality and relevance of experiments/simulations
WP6 STEPs application for accreditation	
D6.1 STEPs application for accreditation	- Accreditation of the STEPs programme
WP7 STEPs implementation	
D7.1 STEPs programme implementation plan report D7.2 STEPs programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students joining the MSc programme (25 per HEI) - Students' expectations achieved - Students' performance
WP8 Quality plan and evaluation of project progress	
D8.1 Quality plan D8.2 Internal evaluation reports D8.3 External evaluation reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No of internal evaluation reports - No of external evaluation reports - Internal quality evaluation of deliverables
WP9 Dissemination/Exploitation	
D9.1 Dissemination/exploitation strategy report D9.2 Web site D9.3 Social media profile and dissemination material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Volume and quality of dissemination activities/material - Stakeholders present in workshops, laboratory demonstrations (at least 50 per workshop) - Stakeholders presence/involvement in open

D9.4 Workshops D9.5 Laboratory demonstrations D9.6 Career office development/enhancement D9.7 Dissemination/exploitation reports	discussions, face to face meetings, round tables - Stakeholders expectations achieved by workshops - Volume and quality of data collected and processed during after workshops/demonstrations/meetings - Internships/scholarships organised Memoranda and contracts signed and co-funding schemes identified - HEIs perception in the society at large and enhancement of their role in reforms in education and social and economic development
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3 Development of the Quality Assurance Tools

The following tools/questionnaires have been developed in order to be used for the evaluation of project/results. Questionnaires are all included in the Annexes of the Quality Assurance Plan (D8.1):

- Evaluation of STEPs deliverables/outcomes based on multiple quality criteria. This is achieved via the Deliverable Evaluation Form (ANNEX I, D8.1: Annex I).
- A partner questionnaire survey upon project meeting/event completion in order to capture partner expectations and goals vs actual results achieved during the meeting/event including study visits and training seminars. This is achieved by the project meetings/events Evaluation Form (D8.1: ANNEX II).
- An expert interview/questionnaire that will capture the degree of satisfaction related to STEPS deliverable and development. It will take place at the middle of the project and near the end of the project (D8.1: ANNEX III).
- A stakeholder questionnaire survey after each project session where tangible project results are presented. This is focused on events or meetings where stakeholders are engaged such as info days that will take place in the Partner Countries (D8.1: ANNEX IV).
- A questionnaire survey that will be used for the internal evaluation of the project (D8.1: ANNEX V). This form will circulate inside the Consortium (Quality Team Members) on a periodic basis. Results will be included in the annual Quality Evaluation reports.

4 Reviewers assignment to deliverables

A standard procedure for the internal evaluation of project deliverables has been included in D8.1 Quality Assurance Plan. In order for the process to be implemented, reviewers have to be assigned to specific deliverables. A list with project deliverables has been circulated within the Consortium, with the aim to assign two reviewers per project deliverable. The full table of project deliverables along with partners responsibilities in terms of review are presented in the following table. Forms/questionnaires used for the internal evaluation of project deliverables are also include in the Annexes of the Quality Assurance Plan (D8.1):

Deliverable	Title	Leader	REVIEWERS
D1.1	Assessment and analysis report on stakeholders needs (R)	UET	AUT, CULS
D1.2	Survey of STEPS related programmes (R)	UET	UHZ, AUA
D1.3	Best practices of MSc programmes (R)	UET	UC, USAMVB
D1.4	Report on the mechanisms for continuous stakeholders input (R)	UET	UC, AUT
WP2	STEPS structure and courses design	USAMVB	
D2.1	Design of the MSc programme (R)	USAMVB	UNSA, UNBI
D2.2	Selection of teaching staff and organisation in working groups report	USAMVB	AUT, UNBI
D2.3	Study visit report (E)	USAMVB	ReadLab
D2.4	Design of STEPS Courses (R)	USAMVB	AUT, UNBI
WP3	Professional development of scientific staff	UHZ	
D3.1	Assessment of training needs reports (R)	UHZ	UNBI, UET
D3.2	Training seminars/guest lectures (E)	UHZ	ALL PARTNERS
D3.3	Continuous support and improvement of scientific background and teaching capacity of scientific staff	UHZ	ALL PARTNERS
WP4	STEPS Development	UNSA	
D4.1	LMS platform (S)	READLAB	TEISTE, AUT
D4.2	STEPS courses (TM)	UNSA	ALL PARTNERS
D4.3	Digitised educational material (TM)	AUT (subcontraction)	AUA, READLAB, AUT
WP5	Development of infrastructures	UNBI	
D5.1	Teaching/learning environment (R)	UNBI	UC, UET
D5.2	Research labs (R)	UNBI	UNSA, UHZ
D5.3	Experiments/ simulations and training material (TM)	UNBI	UNSA, TEISTE
WP6	STEPS application for official accreditation	MESC USK	
D6.1	STEPS application for accreditation (R)	MESC USK	UC, AUT
WP7	STEPS implementation	UNBI	
D7.1	STEPS programme imlementation plan report (R)	UNBI	AUT, MESC USK
D7.2	STEPS programme	UNBI	AUT

WP8	Quality plan and evaluation of project progress	ReadLab	
D8.1	Quality plan	ReadLab	ALL PARTNERS
D8.2	Internal evaluation reports	ReadLab	CULS, AUT
D8.3	External evaluation reports	ReadLab	CULS, AUT
WP9	Dissemination/Exploitation	AUT	
D9.1	Dissemination/exploitation strategy report	AUT	READLAB
D9.2	Web site	AUT	ALL PARTNERS
D9.3	Social media profile and dissemination material	AUT	ALL PARTNERS
D9.4	Workshops	AUT	ALL PARTNERS
D9.5	Laboratory demonstrations	AUT	ALL PARTNERS
D9.6	Career office development/enhancement	AUT	ALL PARTNERS
D9.7	Dissemination/exploitation reports	AUT	ALL PARTNERS

5 Organization of the External Quality Assurance Team

The external quality team was contributed by all partners of the Consortium. Two persons per partners were proposed. Members of the external quality team could have a fully academic profile while the presence of market experts, industries representatives, experienced managers involved in food production systems is also important. Members are summarized in the table below.

Table 5. External Quality Team members

Partner No	Partner Name	Name	Position	Organisation
1	Agricultural University of Tirana	Vlash Mara	Professor	Agricultural University of Tirana
1	Agricultural University of Tirana	Nazif Tivari		Agricultural University of Tirana
2	European University of Tirana	Ketrina Mijo Cabiri	Director of Office for Project Development and Partnership, Lecturer	European University of Tirana UET
2	European University of Tirana	Dardane Nuka	Lecturer	European University of Tirana UET
3	UHZ	Adem Dreshaj	Asoc. Professor	UHZ
3	UHZ	Afrim Selimaj	Asoc. Professor	UHZ
4	Universum College	Armend Berisha	Lecturer	Universum College
4	Universum College	Rrezeart Dema	Lecturer	Universum College

5	UNBI	Asima Topić	Stakeholder - dipl.ing	d.o.o Bihać Brewery
5	UNBI	Husejin Keran	University professor	University of Tuzla
6	UNSA	Elvis Ahmetovic	University professor	University of Tuzla
6	UNSA	Miljan Cvetkovic	University professor	University of Tuzla
7	MESCS USK	Genc Trnavci	University professor	University Of Bihac
7	MESCS USK	Dijana Dedic	Senior Advisor	Develp. Agency of Una-Sana Canton
8	Czech University of Life Sciences Prague	Karel Nemejc	Assistant Professor, Director of IEC	Institute of Education and Communication (IEC), CULS
8	Czech University of Life Sciences Prague	Petr Valasek	Vice-chairman of Internal Quality Assurance Bboard	Czech University of Life Sciences, Vice rector
9	USAMVB	Temocico Georgeta	University professor	University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest. Chief of Projects Management Department
9	USAMVB	Emil Georgescu	Researcher	National Agricultural Research and Development Institute of Fundulea
10	AUA	Anastasios Magoutas	Associate Professor	UniAthens
10	AUA	Nikolaos Rachaniotis	Assistant Professor	UniPiraeus
11	ReadLab	Dimitris Karadimas	Co-Founder, Engineer	Pikei solutions
11	ReadLab	Dimitris Tzempelikos	Project Manager	Municipality of Aigaleo

PART B. RESULTS

1 Task schedule monitoring

A summary of Task schedule monitoring is presented in Table 6. The table indicate the status of project activities as well as their progress with respect to time planning.

Table 6. Task schedule monitoring

WP no	Task description/Leader	Status			Workplan -based monitoring	
		To be started	In progress	Concluded	On-time delivery	Comments
WP1	Connection of STEPS with the world of work, the social and the economic environment (UET)					
T1.1	Assessment and analysis of stakeholders needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T1.2	Research on STEPS related programmes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T1.3	Review of best practices on linking MScs with business, social and economic environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T1.4	Development of mechanisms for continuous stakeholders' input	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Continuously updated during the project lifetime
WP2	STEPS structure and courses design (USAMVB)				<input type="checkbox"/>	
T2.1	Design of the MSc programme	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T2.2	Selection of faculty staff and organization of working groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T2.3	Organization of study visit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T2.4	Design of the MSc programme courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
WP3	Professional development of scientific staff (UHZ)					
T3.1	Assessment of training needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T3.2	Organization of training seminars/guest lectures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T3.3	Continuous support and improvement of scientific background and teaching capacity of scientific staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
WP4	STEPS Development (UNSA)					
T4.1	Development of the LMS platform (*ReadLab)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T4.2	Development and harmonization of STEPS courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T4.3	Conversion and digitization of educational material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

WP5	Development of infrastructures (UNBI)					
T5.1	Development of teaching/learning environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T5.2	Development of research labs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T5.3	Development of experiments/simulations and training material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
WP6	STEPS application for official accreditation (MESC USK)					
T6.1	Preparation of documentation for STEPS application	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
WP7	STEPS implementation (UNBI)					
T7.1	STEPS programme implementation plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T7.2	STEPS programme implementation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
WP8	Quality plan and evaluation of project progress (ReadLab)					
T8.1	Organization of internal and external quality teams and development of the quality plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T8.2	Quality monitoring and evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T8.3	External evaluation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
WP9	Dissemination/Exploitation (AUT)					
T9.1	Development of dissemination/exploitation strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T9.2	Web site development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T9.3	Development of social media profile and dissemination material	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T9.4	Organisation of workshops	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T9.5	Organisation of laboratory demonstrations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
T9.6	Career offices development/enhancement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

2 Task progress based on indicators

A summary of task progress with respect to specific indicators included in the work plan are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7. Task progress monitoring based on indicators

No	Task Indicators	Status			Comments
		Not reached	Partially reached	Reached	
WP1	Connection of STEPS with the world of work, the social and the economic environment (UET)				
I1.1	Organizations contacted (over 200)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
I1.2	Questionnaires delivered, acquired and processed (200)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
I1.3	Interviews of key stakeholders (over 40)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
I1.4	Visits and round tables for stakeholders (over 30)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
I1.5	Variety of diverse opinions expressed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
I1.6	Relevant MSc programmes analyzed (over 100)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
I1.7	Best practices reported (25)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
I1.8	Stakeholders convinced to engage with project activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
I1.9	Standard mechanisms established for continuous contribution and communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
WP2	STEPS structure and courses design (USAMVB)				
I2.1	Faculty members joining the study visit (over 25)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
I2.2	ICT-based teaching/learning environments utilised/demonstrated (over 10)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
I2.3	Courses designed based on ECTS (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
I2.4	STEM subjects and innovative concepts included/analysed in the content of courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
I2.5	Quality of scientific and educational approaches demonstrated/discussed, analysed and adopted	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
WP3	Professional development of scientific staff (UHZ)				
I3.1	Scientific staff participation in seminars and lectures (over 40)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Task in progress
I3.2	Level and quality of collaboration and synergies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
I3.3	Scientific articles prepared/published (5 per year and per HEI)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
WP4	STEPS Development (UNSA)				
I4.1	Quality of the educational platform (Design and appropriateness of the educational	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

	environment)				
14.2	Quality of educational material and tools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Task in progress
14.3	Level and quality of collaboration between consortium partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Task in progress
WP5	Development of infrastructures (UNBI)				
15.1	Experimental devices/software licenses purchased (over 15)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Task in progress
15.2	Experimental/software-based exercises and projects by utilising new equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
15.3	Quality and relevance of experiments/simulations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Task in progress
WP6	STEPS application for official accreditation (MESC USK)				
16.1	Accreditation of the STEPS programme	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tasks not planned for the 1 st year of the project
WP7	STEPS implementation (UNBI)				
17.1	Students joining the MSc programme (25 per HEI)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tasks not planned for the 1 st year of the project
17.2	Students' expectations achieved	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tasks not planned for the 1 st year of the project
17.3	Students' performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tasks not planned for the 1 st year of the project
WP8	Quality plan and evaluation of project progress (ReadLab)				
18.1	Internal quality evaluation of deliverables	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
18.2	No of internal evaluation reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
18.3	No of external evaluation reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tasks in progress
WP9	Dissemination/Exploitation (AUT)				
19.1	Volume and quality of dissemination activities/material	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
19.2	Stakeholders present in workshops, laboratory demonstrations (at least 50 per workshop)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tasks not planned for the 1 st year of the project
19.3	Stakeholders presence/involvement in open discussions, face to face meetings, round tables	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
19.4	Stakeholders expectations achieved by workshops	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Workshops not planned during the 1 st year of the project
19.5	Volume and quality of data collected and processed during after workshops/demonstrations/meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Workshops and demos not planned for the 1 st year of the project
19.6	Internships/scholarships organised	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tasks not planned for the 1 st year of the project
19.7	Memoranda and contracts signed and co-funding schemes identified	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tasks not planned for the 1 st year of the project
19.8	HEIs perception in the society at large and enhancement of their role in reforms in education and social and economic development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

3 Deliverables control

A summary of deliverables along with their status and on-time delivery is summarized in Table 8.

Table 8. Deliverables status

WP no	Task description /Leader	Status			Workplan -based monitoring	
		Submitted	Under review	Available	On-time delivery	Comments
WP1	Connection of STEPS with the world of work, the social and the economic environment (UET)					
D1.1	Assessment and analysis report on stakeholders needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D1.2	Survey of STEPS related programmes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D1.3	Best practices of MSc programmes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D1.4	Report on the mechanisms for continuous stakeholders input	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
WP2	STEPS structure and courses design (USAMVB)					
D2.1	Design of the MSc programme	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D2.2	Selection of teaching staff and organization in working groups report	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D2.3	Study visit report	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D2.4	Design of STEPS Courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
WP3	Professional development of scientific staff (UHZ)					
D3.1	Assessment of training needs reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D3.2	Training seminars/guest lectures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Task in progress
D3.3	Continuous support and improvement of scientific background and teaching capacity of scientific staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Task in progress
WP4	STEPS Development (UNSA)					
D4.1	LMS platform	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D4.2	STEPS courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	not listed in 1 st year deliverables
D4.3	Digitized educational material	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	not listed in 1 st year deliverables
WP5	Development of infrastructures (UNBI)					
D5.1	Teaching/learning environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	not listed in 1 st year deliverables
D5.2	Research labs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	not listed in 1 st year deliverables
D5.3	Experiments/ simulations and	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	not listed in 1 st year

	training material					deliverables
WP6	STEPS application for official accreditation (MESC USK)					
D6.1	STEPS application for accreditation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	not listed in 1 st year deliverables
WP7	STEPS implementation (UNBI)					
D7.1	STEPS programme implementation plan report	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	not listed in 1 st year deliverables
D7.2	STEPS programme	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	not listed in 1 st year deliverables
WP8	Quality plan and evaluation of project progress (ReadLab)					
D8.1	Quality plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D8.2	Internal evaluation reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Task in progress
D8.3	External evaluation reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Task in progress
WP9	Dissemination/Exploitation (AUT)					
D9.1	Dissemination/exploitation strategy report	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D9.2	Web site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D9.3	Social media profile and dissemination material	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D9.4	Workshops	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	not listed in 1 st year deliverables
D9.5	Laboratory demonstrations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	not listed in 1 st year deliverables
D9.6	Career office development/enhancement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D9.7	Dissemination/exploitation reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

4 Events

During the whole life of STEPS project are going to be organized 9 (nine) project meetings. A full list of the meeting is given in the table below. Project meetings will offer participants with the opportunity to plan and analyze tasks, discuss critical issues related to the implementation of project tasks and deliverables and perhaps more importantly, develop synergies and collaborate as well as exchange views and practices. During the first year of the project, four meetings were organized according to the workplan. The fifth meeting is planned for Bihah (Bosnia-Herzegovina). A draft form of the agenda of the meeting has been already circulated to the partnership.

Table 9. List of project meetings

No	Task Meeting City and Country / Host Organization	Status			Combined with other deliverables / Comments
		Not Organized	Planned	Organized	
D10.4.a	Tirana/Albania (AUT)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
D10.4.b	Bucharest/Romania (USAMVB)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	D2.3
D10.4.c	Peja/Kosovo (UHZ)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	D3.2.a
D10.4.d	Sarajevo/Bosnia- Herzegovina (UNSA)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	D3.2.b
D10.4.e	Bihac/Bosnia- Herzegovina (UNBI)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	D3.2.c
D10.4.f	Pristina/Kosovo (UC)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	D3.2.d,9.4.a,9.5.a
D10.4.g	Tirana/Albania (AUT)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	D3.2.e,9.4.b,9.5.b
D10.4.h	Sarajevo/Bosnia- Herzegovina (UNSA)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	D9.4.c,9.5.c
D10.4i	Tirane/Albania (AUT)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

5 Evaluation of the STEPS meetings/events

During the first year of the project, apart from the first, kick-off meeting of the project, three meetings/events were organized. A review of the aim of those meetings is given below, along with some of the most important findings, based on the feedback of the participants.

5.1 Study Visit in Bucharest

The study visit was held at the University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine in Bucharest, Romania, in the main building (59 Marasti Blvd.), in the University Campus and, at Moara Domneasca Training and Experimental Farm of USAMVB. The event took place between 5-8 June 2019, from 9:00 to 18:00.

The aim of the event was to:

- Transfer the knowledge on scientific, technical and organizational aspects, which will boost the level of education and the capacity of partner countries;
- Inspire with new ideas, but also, to offer the opportunity to discuss and make an exchange of academic cultures and perspectives;
- Analyze how best practices can be adapted to the MSc program that will be developed during the STEPS project;
- Provide participants the opportunity to get to know and compare with their own experience, the strategies and practices for the organization of teachers training initiatives in Romania;
- Disseminate project activities to all interested actors that can find information about the project and its achievements, even after the completion of the project and to bring them forward for public discussion in the relevant communities of interested actors.

The number of participants ranged between 46 (1st day) to 51 (2nd day) and 50 (3rd day). The agenda, the list of participants, the material presented by Consortium partners along with a small gallery, the minutes of the event and the corresponding deliverable (D2.3) are found in the google drive used for communicating/exchanging documents (STEPS/WP2 USAMBV lead/D2.3).

The visited places, facilities and labs, offered the opportunity to the participants to experience on their own the organizational management, the educational strategies and practices employed by USAMVB. The participants had the chance to visit:

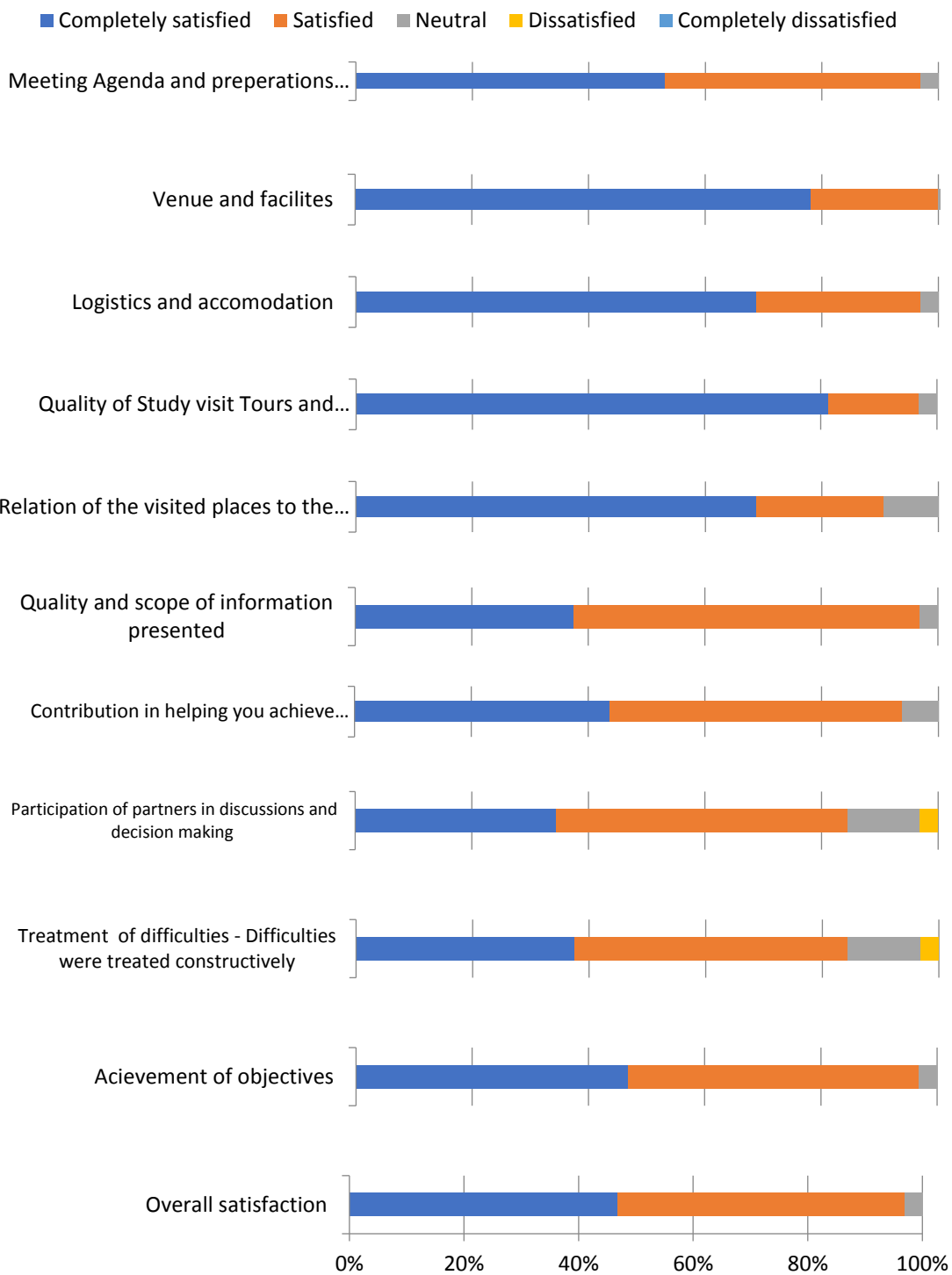
- The Moara Domneasca Farm where procedures of Production, Processing and Utilization (Marketing) were demonstrated.
- The Soil Fertility and the Field Crop museums
- The Research Center for the study of Food Products Quality and The Laboratory Field Crops Quality where the participants had the chance to walk through an impressive set of specialised and synchronous devices. The visited labs provided insights and ideas related to the objectives, including the design and flexible use of space maintaining student safety during lab experiences, methodologies for understanding the complexity and ambiguity of empirical work, etc.
- The USAMVB Greenhouses which serve as a main point for MSc and PhD students towards familiarization with new technologies and innovative crop systems methodologies.

The event contributed also, as anticipated, to the design of the STEPS Program through exchange of insights and experiences with a view to identify how interrelated scientific topics can be combined under a modern, unified MSc Programme. Design aspects of the STEPS MSc programme structure were discussed and analyzed. A roadmap was also discussed in order to design STEPS by utilizing a well-defined, unique template (Deliverable 2.4).

As a part of the STEPS internal quality procedure the participants were asked to assess the USAMVB study visit in terms of:

- Preparations made for the organizational of the Study visit including Agenda items;
- Venues and facilities;
- Logistics and accommodation;
- Quality of study visit tours and information presented;
- Relation of visited places to the STEPS objectives.

The following figure summarizes the responses of the participants. In general, the partnership had an opportunity for open discussions and establish a fully working environment with positive attitude and willingness to contribute to the successful implementation of project tasks. Accreditation procedures were highlighted as the most important risk. Regarding internal processes, the active involvement of all the partners to decision making was also highlighted while considering future improvements, additional time for round tables and workshops was suggested along with better preparation of the agenda, by taking into consideration the needs and the expectations of the partnership.



5.2 Meeting in Peja/Kosovo

The Peja events (D3.2a, D8.2c, D10.4.a) were held as three days event in Haxhi Zeka University of Peja, on 11-13 September, 2019. Thirty three (33) persons traveled to Peja. The aim of the event was to:

- Present in detail the progress of project progress related to WPs 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9 and 10;
- Regarding WP2 in particular, on-going activities including the design of the MSc structure as well as the design of courses were extensively discussed;
- Discuss important issues relating also upcoming activities related to the WPs that are in progress as well as all those of all the other WPs;
- Provide participants and external audience with the opportunity to participate in open lectures, given by scientific staff on critical topics with respect to the objectives of the STEPS project and the courses planned;
- Organize study visits to factories, discuss, compare and share experiences.

The work done in WP1 was analyzed. Needs analysis has been finalized. Results will be taken into account considering the design of courses.

At this stage, the most important work package is WP2, which focus on the design of the structure and the courses of the MSC programme. Issues discussed include the the procedure that has to be followed in order for the courses to be contributed by all partners, the structure and content of course descriptions etc. Extended open discussions among partners were also used for analyzing technical issues, such as the number of core and elective courses, and more critical ones, such as the form of the programme which could be Joint per country.

Regarding WP3, seven (7) open lectures were organized. Topics included:

- “Social and cultural context of food (social pillar of sustainability)” - presented by Prof. Michal Lošťák, (CULS);
- “The use of ICT solutions in lab courses” - presented by Prof. Catherine Marinagi (AUA);
- “Practices for students engagement - Enriching the learning experience in managerial courses” - presented by Prof. As. Giannis Tsoulfas (AUA);
- “Prevention of pollution in food industry” - presented by Prof. Zlatan Saric, (UNSA);
- “Sustainable food and environment perceptions” - presented by PhD. Elena Kokthi (UET);
- “Developing an integrated syllabus using XXI skills” and “Developing teaching resources to keep students awake” presented by Mr. Uran Raci (UC);
- “Experiences with studying master on Food systems” – presented by Dr. Toma Uhnak (CULS)

Regarding WP4, the development of the LMS platform was also presented. Technical issues related to the digitalization of the teaching/learning material were discussed.

Regarding WP7, the accreditation procedure was discussed. It remains the most significant risk and the major concern of the Consortium.

Regarding WP8, the internal evaluation results of the study visit in Bucharest were presented. Strengths and weaknesses were also reported, according to participants’ feedback questionnaires. Partners will need

to propose two persons per institution in order to participate in the external evaluation team. The profile of external team members could be fully academic while the presence of market experts, industries representatives, experienced managers involved in food production systems is also important.

Regarding WP9, the presence of the STEPs project in the social media was demonstrated. Career offices have been established in the Albanian Institutions while additional actions were discussed, including the “Agreement on educational, scientific and technical cooperation between STEPS Partner”.

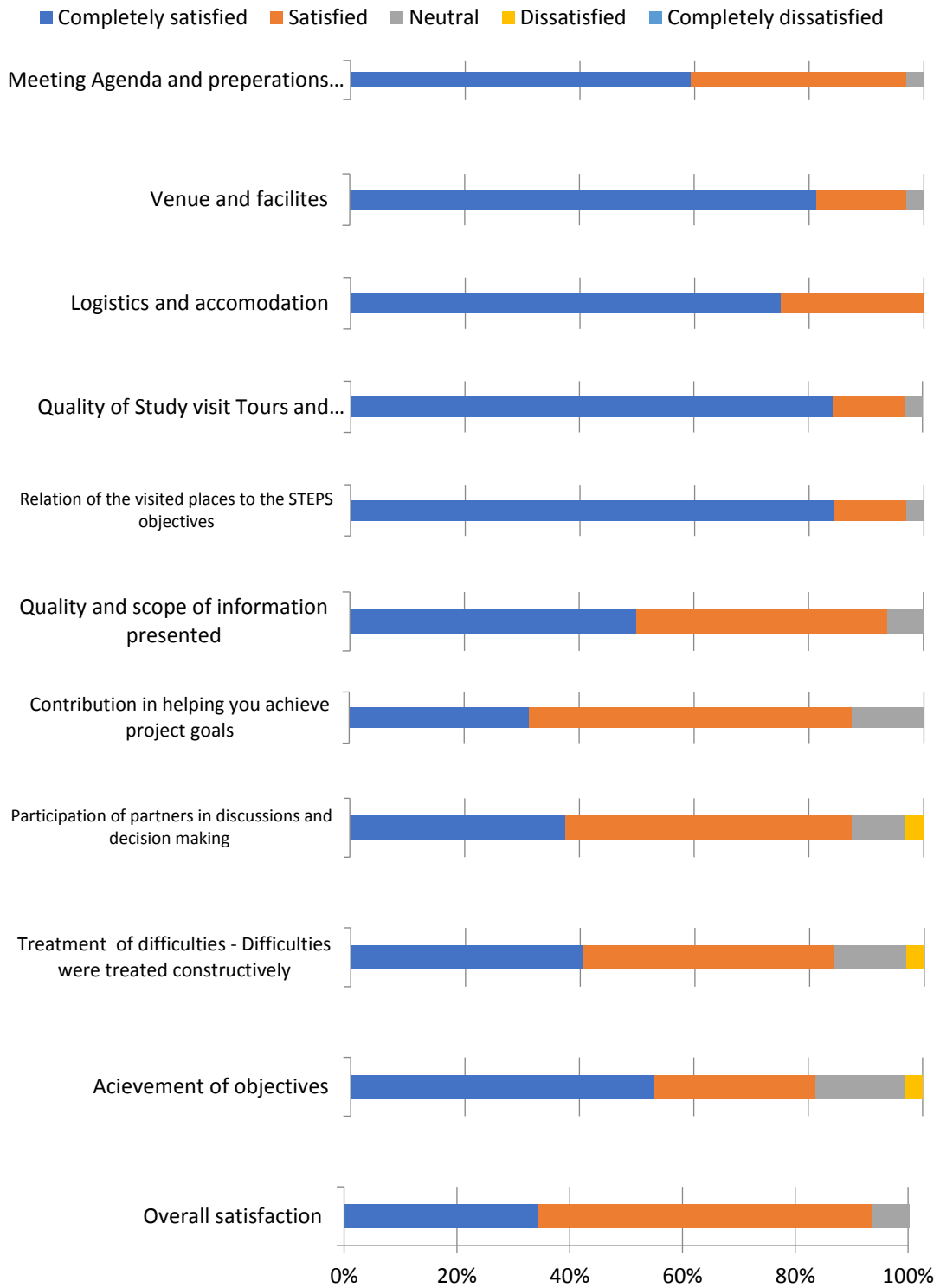


Figure 2. Internal evaluation of the activities organized in Peja.

5.3 Meeting in Sarajevo/Bosnia-Herzegovina

The Sarajevo meetings/events (D3.2a, D8.2c, D10.4.a) were held as three days event on 10-13 December, 2019. Forty two (42) persons participated in the events. Partners had the opportunity to discuss project progress and analyze critical issues towards the successful implementation of the project. More specifically:

- All partners presented their first year progress in relation to the ongoing activities of the STEPS project. WP leaders discussed the status of the deliverables and their availability considering the review process.
- Project activities have been analyzed. The status of tasks and deliverables were presented by WP leaders while extended discussions focused on future planning.
- Open lectures were organized. Two critical topics have been addressed, i.e.
 - o “Teaching Environmental Management at post-graduate level: transferring best practices (ReadLab)
 - o Legislation and standards regarding organic agrifood products (USAMVB)
- Study visits were organized at the Mill and Bakery Industry Company.
- At the final day of the event, the Coordinator summarized the outcomes of the events, discussed future activities, responsibilities and deadlines. Issues related to the technical management of the project were also analyzed. Guidelines were given in order for the partners to collect and send all the supporting documents, including financial reporting for the first year of the project.

The most important outcome of the Sarajevo meetings was the organization of working groups and the work done in small groups of scientific staff with similar (or coincident) experience towards the design and the development of the STEPS programme and courses. More details of the methodology followed and the specific results reflected on the design, the structure and the development of the catalog of courses that will be included in the MSc programme can be found in the corresponding deliverable (D2.4).

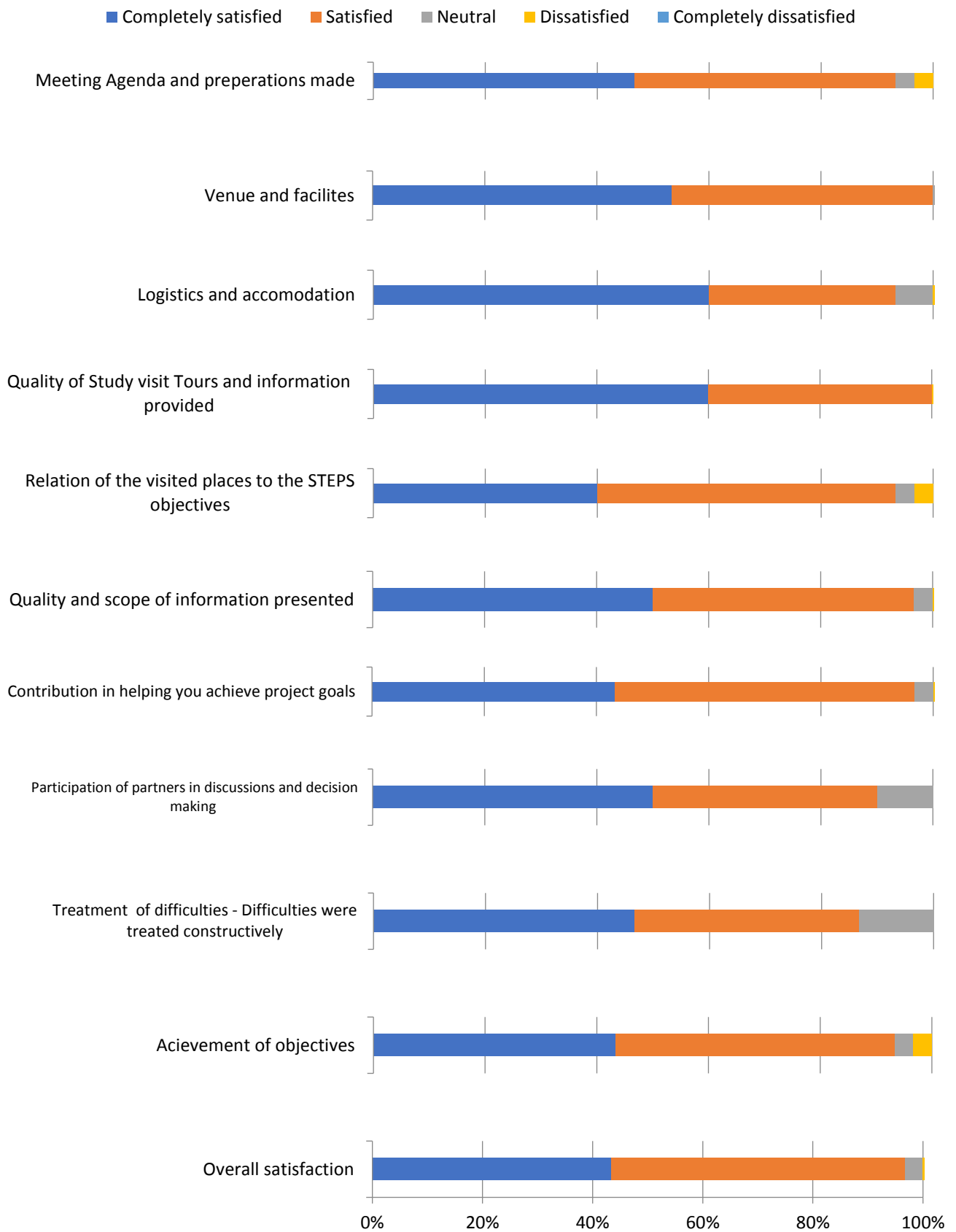


Figure 3. Internal evaluation of the activities organized in Sarajevo.

6 Current State

During the first year of the project, all partners contributed towards the successful implementation of project activities, according to the specific aims and objectives of the STEPS project. A brief analysis per work package of the status of on-going and planning of future activities is presented in the following.

- WP1. Connection of the MSc programme with the world of work, the social and the economic environment.

Activities have been finalized. All partners worked according to the work plan, taking into consideration the indicators of progress in terms of the number of relevant MSc programme analyzed, stakeholders participation and involvement in needs analysis and reporting the needs and the expectations of local societies as well as the European planning for Western Balkans countries. Partners have also created long lists of stakeholders contacts that will be used for continuous linking of the MSc programme with the world of work and the society at large. Particular efforts focused on the interrelation of need analysis results with MSc programme and courses design. The corresponding deliverables are available.

- WP2. STEPS structure and courses design

STEPS Msc programme structure and courses design activities are in progress. Critical issues related to the profile and the structure of the MSc programme have been addressed. The number of students, the mix of resources, the linking with labs and equipment were also discussed. Working groups with faculty members of all partners are now organized. The two main groups are distinguished based on their expertise in engineering and management related courses while additional subgroups were organized in order to discuss the outline of courses. A unique template was used by all faculty members for design of the individual courses. By the end of the first year, some Western Balkans partners presented draft versions of the MSc programme structure and courses design, so that after a critical review they get in position to apply for accreditation.

- WP3. Professional development of scientific staff

The importance and the benefits of the open lectures organized during the first year of the project have been highlighted during the corresponding events. A large number of scientific staff of WB and European partners participated in the events. At the sidelines of the events, teaching staff discussed about the harmonization of courses design, highlighted the need for updating teaching practices based on existing experience and also modern challenges and novel ways of teaching. Partners agreed on more intense collaboration between members of the Consortium with relevant expertise and scientific interests with the aim to plan and prepare joint publications and research activities.

- WP4. STEPS Development

The design of the LMS platform and the specifications of the teaching/learning material were clarified in order to proceed with the digitization of the educational material when courses are developed. Partners are organized in working groups and according to the design of courses will now work together in order to

prepare the educational material of MSc programme courses. Specific deadlines have been discussed so that the material is prepared and included in the platform on time.

- WP5. Development of infrastructures

Equipment-purchase related activities are in progress. Most of the partners with food-engineering expertise have already a clear plan on what is going to be purchased and how the purchased equipment should be used in labs and research activities. Considering management courses and research, it was also suggested to purchase specialized software used for addressing sustainability issues. Partners have now deeply understand the importance of using the available budget effectively so that the purchased equipment is used for the development of both the learning environment in classes and also the development of the two types of STEPS labs, i.e. the Food Quality and Control lab and the Food Production Systems Management lab. During the second year of the project, partners should be able to demonstrate how the newly installed laboratory equipment will be used for improving the level of education offered to students as well as their capacity to perform research and organize and participate in joint projects and activities.

- WP6. STEPS application for official accreditation

Accreditation is one of the critical milestones of the STEPS project and partners have started to discuss and analyze the needs and their planning from the first day of the project lifetime. This is definitely encouraging, since accreditation mechanisms are not always clear and needs to be discussed with the corresponding ministries and authorities at the different countries. Particular efforts have been made by all partners with the aim to clarify processes and documents needed. By the end of the first year of the project, all partners are committed to contact official authorities, prepare the material needed and apply submissions according to the work plan but also, taking into consideration the time needed by the authorities for reviewing the submissions, so that the MSc programme starts also according to the work plan of the STEPS project.

- WP7. STEPS programme delivery

STEPS MSc programme is planned to be implemented during the third year of the project lifetime. All partners have identified the importance of being ready on-time and work together in order to be able to implement the educational programme according to the timelines stated in the proposal.

- WP8. Quality plan and evaluation of project progress

Quality evaluation procedures have been supported by all the partners of the Consortium. A quality plan was presented by the WP leader at the beginning of the project. The internal Quality Team was organized with representatives and deputies by all the partners. Partners proposed also persons with significant experience and strong scientific background for the External Quality Team. Meetings/events have been evaluated by using questionnaires filled by the participants just after the corresponding meetings/events. Results were analyzed and presented by the WP leader, in order to inform the Consortium about participants' perception and proposed improvements.

- WP9. Dissemination/Exploitation

Under the leadership of the Coordinator, partners have all contributed to increase the visibility of the STEPS project and form the background for the exploitation of the results beyond the project lifetime. A dissemination/exploitation strategy report has been prepared where all the instruments and the planned activities were analyzed. The STEPS logo has been agreed by all partners at the very beginning of the project. By the end of the first year of the project, the STEPS website and social media profiles are online while the number of hits is monitored. Efforts are made in order for the STEPS project to stand close to the society by using the media and also by organizing small-scale events within and outside universities. During the first year of the project, STEPS partners have also participated in a number of scientific conferences while the list of stakeholders is long enough, so that a critical number of stakeholders is expected to be also involved in upcoming dissemination/exploitation activities, including open lectures, laboratory demonstrations and workshops. A full list of dissemination/exploitation related activities can be found in the annual Exploitation/Dissemination report (D.9.7).

- WP10. Management and Coordination

During the first year of the project, the Coordinator established transparency within the Consortium and ensured well-organized meetings and explained well technical management procedures within the Consortium. The Coordinator offered significant guidance to Western Balkans partners in order to prepare the necessary documentation regarding financial reporting and technical issues. The Coordinator established a communication platform at the very beginning of the project with the aim to share and review documents. The platform is contributed by all partners with the WP and task leaders being responsible for uploading documents. Regular communication is performed by using emails and face-to-face meetings. Additional skype meetings are planned to be organized, considering for example meetings between teaching staff with similar scientific background that have to discuss extensively the content and the form of the educational material of the MSc programme.

7 Internal Evaluation of the STEPS project

Internal evaluation has been performed by all persons involved in the project meetings. Internal evaluation was based on questionnaires presented in the Quality Plan Report (D8.1). The leader of the Quality assurance activities (ReadLab P.C.), under the supervision and in close collaboration with the project Coordinator, was responsible for circulating questionnaires, processing data and including the most important results and findings in the present report.

Internal evaluation was organized based on three main pillars, i.e.:

- Management and Communication;
- Implementation and Cooperation;
- Networking and dissemination/exploitation activities.

For each of the above pillars, a series of questions have been utilized to address specific issues, related for example with the distribution of work and the cooperation of partners with respect to specific tasks and activities, the efficiency of the communication channels and the flow of information as well as the level at which stakeholders are engaged with the project activities and target groups are reached. The exact form of the questionnaire used for internal evaluation is presented in the Annex of this report. As already mentioned, feedback was provided by all the persons involved in the project, including professors, project managers, postdoc researchers and students. With the aim to acquire the most conservative views regarding project overall progress, quality of tasks/activities and results, including dissemination/exploitation activities, feedback to questionnaires was submitted anonymously by utilizing Google-forms application. Results are presented in Figures 4, 5 and 6, which address management, implementation and networking related issues, respectively.

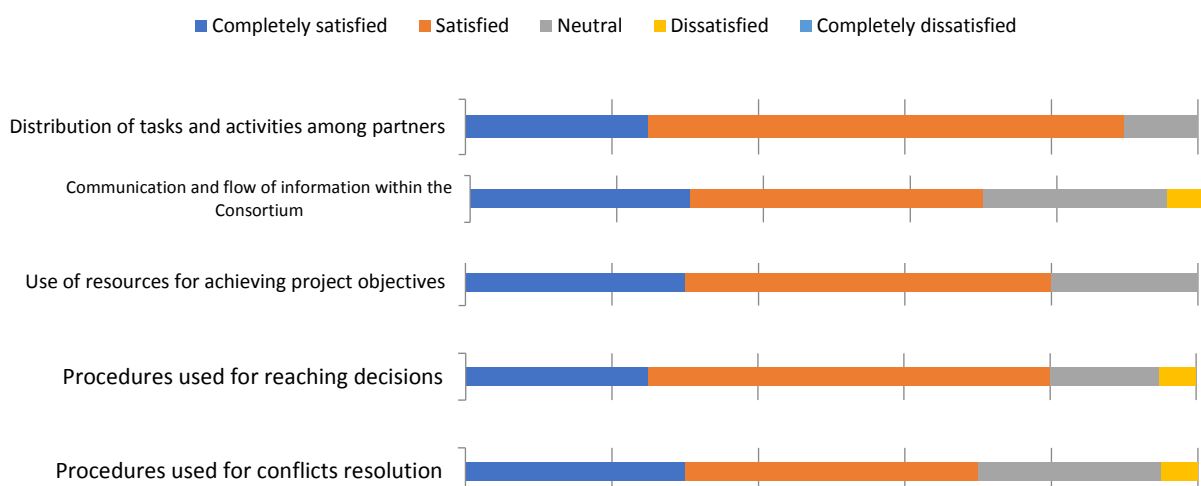


Figure 4. Internal evaluation of Management and Communication related issues.

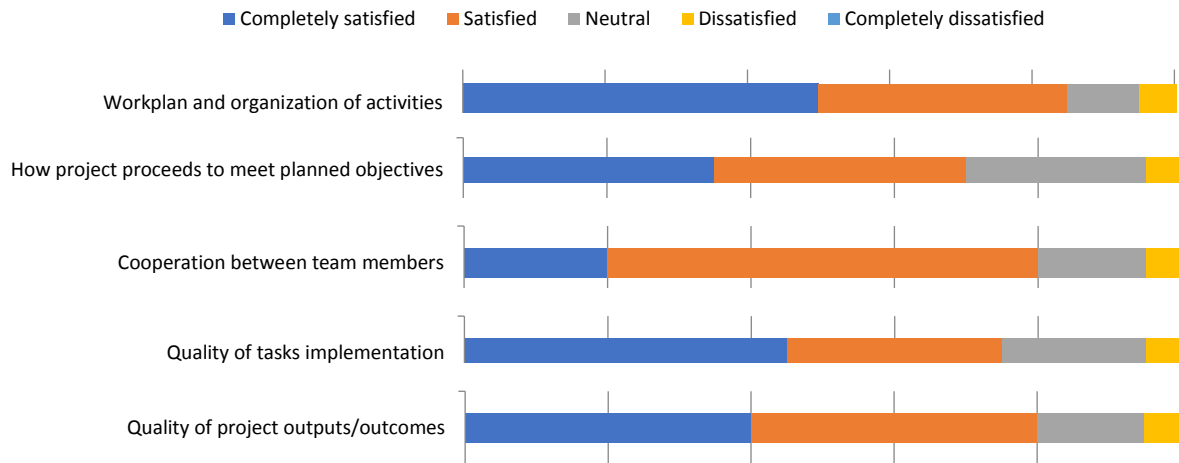


Figure 5. Internal evaluation of Implementation and Cooperation related issues.

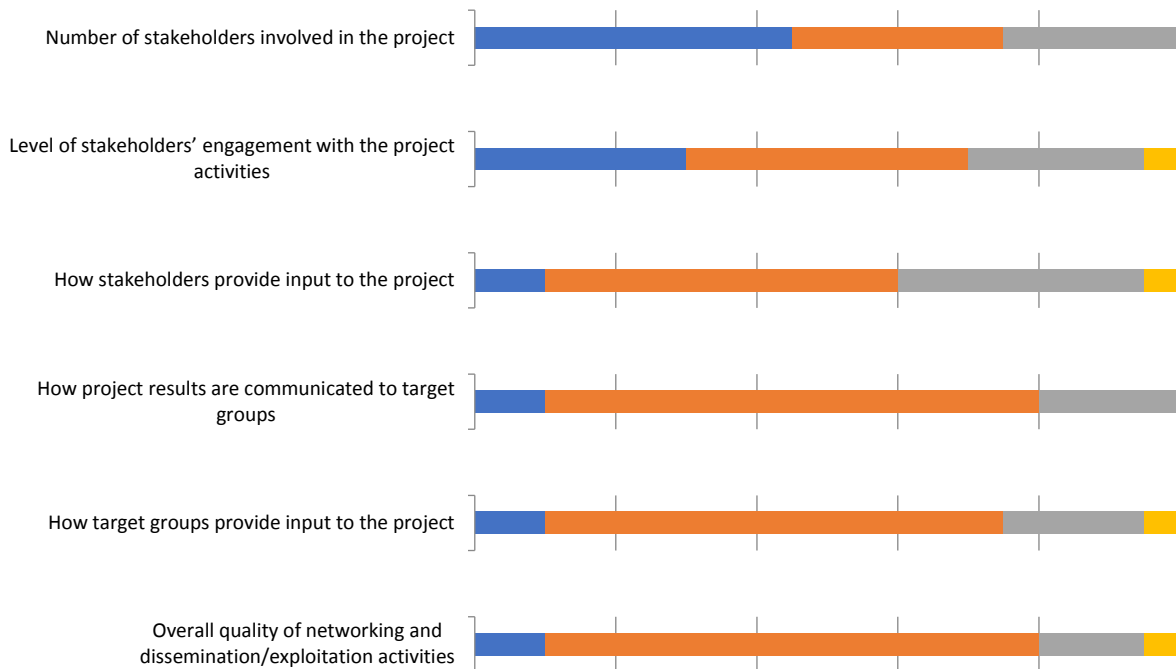


Figure 6. Internal evaluation of Networking and Dissemination/Exploitation related issues.

8 Conclusions and suggestions for improvements

Internal evaluation of project offered the partners with the opportunity to express their views regarding the three main pillars mentioned above. Most of the partners used the additional space in questionnaires with the aim to provide more detailed feedback, highlight issues that need to be improved during the second year of the project and provide suggestions on how the consortium could respond in order to maximize the added value of the project results and outcomes.

With respect to Management and Communication, partners highlighted the efforts towards continuous communication; however, they also admitted that all partners should be encouraged so that they are actively involved in decision making. Some partners discussed also ways of cooperation so that meetings become even more efficient. Additional organizational work could be used for preparing more focused activities during meetings while minutes and conclusions could be reviewed by partners by the end of meetings. In some cases, considering for example critical milestones of the project such as the design of courses, the option for organizing additional skype meetings was also discussed.

With regard to project implementation, establishment of mechanisms for better work planning and active participation of all the members of the consortium in specific tasks according to their expertise and the opportunities offered by the project was discussed. In addition, respect of deadlines and improvement of the quality of project deliverables have been also addressed.

Regarding dissemination activities, the need for more active participation and involvement of stakeholders in project activities and meetings/events was highlighted as the most critical issue towards the exploitation and sustainability of project outcomes and outputs.

ANNEX A. Internal Project Evaluation Form

Date of submission					
Internal Project Quality Criteria	Completely satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Completely dissatisfied
A. Management and Communication					
<i>How satisfied are you with:</i>					
The way the activities and tasks are distributed among partners?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The communication and information flow within the consortium?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The use of resources for achieving project objectives?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The procedures used for reaching decisions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The conflict-resolution procedures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Please provide feedback for improving management and communication related issues</i>					
B. Implementation and Cooperation					
<i>How satisfied are you with:</i>					
The work plan and the organisation of the activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The way the project proceeds to meet the planned objectives?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The cooperation among team members?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The quality of tasks implementation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The quality of project outputs/outcomes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Please provide feedback for improving implementation and cooperation related issues</i>					
C. Dissemination/Exploitation					
<i>How satisfied are you with:</i>					
The number of stakeholders involved in the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The level of stakeholders' engagement with the project activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The way stakeholders provide input to the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
With the way project results are communicated to target groups?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
With The way target groups provide input to the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
With the overall quality of networking and dissemination/exploitation activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>