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D 7.1. DEVELOPMENT OF STEPS PROGRAMME PLAN WP7 - STEPS PROGRAMME DELIVERY



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Deliverable 7.1. Development of STEPS programme plan

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Approved on behalf of STEPS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The implementation of the MSc STEPS study program in the partner countries is the result of essentially all previous tasks and activities of the project. The MSc STEPS study program was delivered during the project lifetime. All additional measures have been taken to improve its quality, using the experience of key consortium partners, including the leader of this WP work package with all its tasks and activities.

1 GUIDELINES

- Briefly describe the Development of STEPS programme plan at your University,
- Briefly describe the promotion and presentation of the MSc STEPS study program and its courses in terms of informing the general public and providing guidelines for potential candidates. Describe the procedure for admission and enrollment of students in the MSc STEPS at higher education institutions in partner countries,
- Briefly describe the work, compliance and availability of research laboratories and ICT centers formed within the STEPS project in terms of work with students - exploitation of equipment and software by students, planning and implementation of research projects, and work on master's theses and doctoral dissertations at partner universities countries,
- Briefly describe the connection between the Career Office and the MSc STEPS (students), describe the information and opportunities offered - planning for professional practice, internships, scholarships and exchange opportunities for students at higher education institutions in partner countries,
- Briefly describe the quality assurance mechanisms of the MSc STEPS on your HEIs related to student feedback, and the self-evaluation of teaching and research staff (may overlap with activities 6.1),
- **Please provide all documents related to the MSc STEPS programme plan at your University (scanned PDF file), depending on your internal procedures, with translation of the document or document title.**
Supporting documents for the STEPS program plan can be, for example:
 - ✓ *Documents/procedures related to the promotion of the MSc STEP Study Program, information, enrollment and admission of students to the MSc STEPS study program (e.g. material related to the promotion of the MSc STEPS, competitions and reports on student enrollment, ranking list of admitted students, etc.),*
 - ✓ *Documents/procedures related to compatibility and availability of STEPS equipment and laboratories for students, documentation related to the planning and implementation of research projects, documents and procedures of master theses and doctoral dissertations. (e.g. documents related to laboratory procedures, documents related to projects in which STEPS equipment / laboratory was used, master's thesis procedures: applications, reports, commissions of master's theses and doctoral dissertations, etc.),*
 - ✓ *Documents/procedures related to the Career Office, Internships, scholarships and student exchanges (e.g.: scholarship agreements, exchange agreements and reports, plans for internships and internships, scholarship and student exchange plans, etc.),*
 - ✓ *Documents/procedures related to the implementation of quality assurance mechanisms (e.g. results of MSc STEPS student surveys, self-evaluation reports of teaching/research staff, self-evaluation reports of the MSc STEPS study program, etc.)*

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1. *Aims and objectives of STEPS project*

The main objective of the project is the implementation of a modern MSc programme on “Sustainable food production systems”, compliant with the Bologna convention. Food culture and sociology, agriculture and rural development, food engineering, quality and safety, environmental footprints, economics, management and governance will be combined in a flexible and modular educational programme, designed and developed in the light of the European initiative for the transition to circular economy.

Partner countries HEIs will be supported in order to help them provide an education aligned to the needs of the labour market and society. Laboratories will be equipped with experimental devices, computers and software. Scientific staff of the HEIs involved in the consortium will have the opportunity to enrich their scientific background and be familiarized with modern educational methodologies and ICT tools, in order to practice student-based approaches, and provide teaching based on learning outcomes.

3 STEPS PROGRAMME PLAN IN PARTNER COUNTRIES HEIS

In accordance with the obligations anticipated by the WP7, especially task 7.1 *Development of STEPS program plan*, higher education institutions in partner countries conducted activities related to the promotion of MSc STEPS study program, information provided to the potential students, and enrollment and admission of applicants. After that, at the beginning, during and after the end of the teaching process at MSc STEPS, activities were carried related to compliance, availability, and exploitation of STEPS equipment and laboratories by students for the purpose of planning and conducting research projects, master's theses and doctoral dissertations, as well as conducting activities for careers offices, internships, scholarships and student exchanges. Also at partner countries HEIs, mechanisms and quality assurance activities were established, which included surveying MSc STEPS students in order to obtain feedback on the study program, teaching process and engaged teaching/research staff, and conducting a self-evaluation process related to accreditation of study programs including 6.1 activities. These activities with accompanying documentation are described in more detail in the following chapters in relation to each partner country separately and each HEIs individually.

4 STEPS PROGRAMME PLAN IN ALBANIA

4.1. STEPS programme plan at the Agricultural University of Tirana (AUT-P1)

The development of “The STEPS” program has started a long time ago, to fulfill all the deliverables, and results of the WP7, respecting the paragraph of the Guideline of the STEPS projects for this step. For this purpose, till the beginning, the AUT-EUT team has done some meetings with the business in Albania, mainly the food sector, to present the projects and to see the necessity that the businesses have for student qualification in the field of sustainability. The visits were made to the “Miell Tirana” Factory, “KMY”, meat processing factory, Albanian Agribusiness Council. etc. To promote and inform the student about the opening of the Master of Science ‘Sustainability in Food Production System’, the Faculty of Biotechnology and Food and mostly the STEPS team started to be the promoter of this project. In May 2019, at the Career Fair, hold at Agricultural University of Tirana, organized by the Career Office, where a lot of businesses can present their product and services and the students take some knowledge from these industries, create contacts, give their curriculum, so in the future they can be part of these companies. In this work fair, even the faculties have their place so even the businesses can create contacts with the faculties. At the fair, a part was also for the presentation of the new study program where a lot of students took information regarding, the opening of the new study Master program, the curricula, some modules, why it is important, where they can work, etc. (photo at the link: Career Fair May 2019). A workshop also was done in May 2022, to inform the student about the possibility of opening a new study program, the importance of this master's in work performance, what are the advantages of the joint Master's where the students can work after their studies, etc. During the workshop, the presentation of the curricula was done, the way how it is going to work the communication with two universities, the thesis subject, the format of the diploma, etc. photo on the link- G Drive

After the application, validation, and acceptance of the candidate that fulfills the requirement of the Regulation of this Study program, on November 2022, the Master of Science “Sustainability in Food Production System” has begun its journey at the Agricultural University of Tirana and European University of Tirana. All the academic staff involved in this Master has created an account in the LMS to upload all the didactic material, lectures, ppt, photo illustrations, videos, etc. To fulfill all the subjects in the different syllabi, the academic staff will be able to use the equipment and laboratory device. The students will have the possibility to carry out some analyzes with the laboratory device or to make some simulations with the software device. Also, all the equipment and laboratory devices will be used by the students with the help of the academic and non-academic staff to prepare the master’s thesis research. All these are of great value for AUT and EUT because the students can apply all their theoretical knowledge in practical ones.

Career & Alumni office in AUT, created in 2013, serves as a coordinator and intermediary link, of the theoretical and practical shaping of students and support in facing the labor market to help them to find a job regarding their study profile. Career & Alumni office is directly responsible for the implementation of every function that focuses on the career development of UBT students. The main purpose of the Career & Alumni office is to inform and orient AUT students during their studies, to advance a successful career, create opportunities for the implementation of internships, various pieces of training, participation in conferences, workshops, seminars, to facilitate contact with the labor market as well as tracking their further progress. It is directly responsible for the implementation of every function that focuses on the career development of AUT students. Provides information and guides students regarding various pieces of training, scholarships, etc.

The Career Office in the AUT follows the students during their studies and after graduation. It has a database with all the students that were part of the AUT and follows them after graduation to help them to find a job regarding their study profile. (<https://ubt.edu.al/en/career-center-and-alumni/>).

Also to promote better the University and its study program, an Alumni association has been created in AUT where are part former students of AUT are to expand this network. They will help in activities of an informative nature, exchange/transfer of experience, or even entertainment or supporting the AUT. (<https://ubt.edu.al/themelohet-alumni-ubt>). The STEPS students will be supported and advised by the Career office to prepare their CVs, set their skills, prepare them for the labor market, and interviews and also will be part of the large database of AUT alumni which will help them to stay in contact with the University and also find the best job that will be suitable for them. For promoting the project and the Master of Science Sustainable Food Production System, for future collaboration, the STEPS team has attend an around table with SME and other stakeholder, UNDP, FAO, young innovator etc, to share knowledge, best practice and to develop new strategies on Sustainable development goals, SDGs, that are objective of green agenda strategy of EU.

All the students in AUT (also the STEPS students) can apply for student exchange which will be a good experience to open other possibilities in the research or work process. In this regard, some tentative were made with Montpellier University, because they have a Master in Sustainable Food Production. Also our students can be part of the exchange program between partners countries where this Master is apply according to the Regulation of this Master.

The staff that is involved in this Master Program, has begun its exchange, where for example Prof.Dr.Renata Kongoli is part of the invited professor at the “Haxhi Zeka” University. Regarding the quality assurance mechanism, the Faculty of Biotechnology of Food has a Commission of Curricula and Quality assurance which will prepare a report for the self-evaluation when this program will go under the accreditation process. And on this purpose, some questionnaires will be delivered to the students, at the end of the first year to evaluate the study program, the lesson material, the practical part, the use of the equipment, etc.

4.2. STEPS programme plan at the European University of Tirana (EUT-P2)

EUT and AUT are offering a joint study programme and the procedures described in the section 4.1 STEPS programme plan at AUT are similar to the procedures followed by EUT. The delivery of the STEPS programme plan at the European University of Tirana is subject to the same procedures and mechanisms for ensuring quality assurance, as all the other study programmes offered by EUT. EUT devotes a particular importance to internal quality assurance, to ensure that its activity is in accordance with the provisions of applicable legislation, the Statute, and other internal regulatory acts, as well as the vision, mission and strategic objectives of the Institution. The internal quality assurance system operates through the following structures: 1. Internal Quality Assurance Commission (IQAC) and 2. The Standards and Quality Office (SQO). Quality assurance is accomplished through the involvement of academic and support staff, monitoring activities carried out by management structures, SQ-Office, IQAC, asking for students’ opinion, advising with representatives from the labour market, cooperation with Higher Education Quality Assurance Agency in Albania (HEQAA) and other state structures. The national framework has been designed with a view to conducting self-evaluation and external evaluation of Albanian higher education institutions. In this framework, all EUT study programmes are subject of periodical accreditation from ASCAL (Higher Education Quality Assurance Agency).

One of the quality assurance instrument, that is conducted at the end of the semester is the students' evaluation for the course and lecturer - Students evaluate course content in terms of usefulness and efficiency, pedagogical method, reading materials, teaching skills of the lecturer/assistant lecturer.

The teaching process is based on different modes of delivery and on a variety of pedagogical methods to stimulate critical and analytical thinking in students. It involves lectures, seminars, lecture/seminars, laboratory work, practical work, course work, midterm exams, final exams and diploma thesis.

EUT consistently applies pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student "life cycle", from information and admission, to progression, recognition and certification. Academic offer, information on criteria, documents and admission procedures are published online (<https://uet.edu.al/en/master-shkencor/>), mass media information campaigns (<https://liberale.al/uet-master-i-ri-ne-sistem-e-qendrueshme-te-prodhimit-te-ushqimeve/?fbclid=IwAR2Fnogphn8Nv1scXH-R9k0eLDXPY0tn9d2WGrdAnL3w9rLo10EPp4r5Vnk>), and advising service provided to students at EUT premises. Information activities for prospective students are coordinated by the Career Advising and Students Support Office, in cooperation with Departments and management authorities and is supported by the Communication and Public Relations Office.

5. STEPS PROGRAMME PLAN IN KOSOVO

5.1. STEPS programme plan at the University Haxhi Zeka (UHZ-P3)

In order to achieve the objectives and tasks of Deliverable 7.1 as foreseen by the project proposal, University of Peja "Haxhi Zeka" has collaborated with Universum College, who are the principal university in carrying out the legal and logistical procedures of the joint master of science. In order to provide a better description and understanding on how this program is carrying out in Kosovo, it is important to understand the form of accreditation given to both institutions. The accreditation process in the Republic of Kosovo is regulated by the Higher Education Law No.04/L-037/2011, Administrative Instruction 15/2018 on Accrediting Higher Education Institutions in the Republic of Kosovo, as well as other provisions which regulate the quality of education as well as the recruitment processes within each institution. Unlike in most countries where the MSc. STEPS is going to be offered, the process of accreditation in Kosovo is very specific because the application process and hiring of the staff begins at least twelve months before the lectures begin (<https://unhz.eu/course/fakulteti-i-agrobiznesit/>). Thus, in order to comply with the accreditation process, University of Peja "Haxhi Zeka" in Peja and Universum College conducted numerous meetings with the Kosovo Accreditation Agency in order to develop a program that has an impact on the sector. Additionally, University of Peja "Haxhi Zeka" and "Universum College" conducted meetings with representatives from the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI), to resolve the hurdle of offering a joint program between a private and public institution. An important aspect of the accreditation in Kosovo is that two institution cannot develop the same program and accredit separately (according to Kosovo Accreditation Agency, MSc STEPS could not been accredited separately at University of Peja "Haxhi Zeka" and Universum College (<https://unhz.eu/course/fakulteti-i-agrobiznesit/#>)). Institutions must decide who is going to spearhead the accreditation process and be the carrier of the process - in this case University of Peja "Haxhi Zeka" was chosen to lead the process). The information provided above is the basis for the Deliverable 7.1, as it encompasses they modality on how the program was developed, promoted, delivered and assessed by the students and stakeholders.

University of Peja “Haxhi Zeka”, on December 23, 2020 a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between both institutions. As it is stated specifically in the MoC, students from both institutions are registered through University of Peja “Haxhi Zeka” (<http://steps-project.eu/>). If students would like to continue only with the technical stream during an academic year, then, UC academic staff deliver the majority of management courses (elective and core) at University of Peja “Haxhi Zeka”. D7.1 Development of STEPS program plan, started in a timely manner to implement all activities within this task. Following such a concept and a logical sequence of events before the establishment and launch, that is, during the development of the MSc STEPS program, members of the UHZ STEPS team started working on its promotion and informing potential students (<https://unhz.eu>). Nexhdet Shala and Renata Kongoli Live on Radio Peja. Radio Peja, <https://onlineradiobox.com> related to the announcement and imminent launch of a new study program in the field of sustainable food production systems with the aim of introducing it to the public and attracting potential students. Similar activities with the aim of announcing the imminent launch of the MSc STEPS at UHZ continued during the month of May 2021 <https://unhz.eu/rektori-i-universitetit-haxhi-zeka-ne-peje-prof-dr-armand-krasnigji-merr-pjese-ne-dita-fushore-e-grurit/>. After the establishment and launch of the MSc STEPS study program, and the announcement of the competition for the enrollment of students, there followed an intensification of promotional activities that lasted until the moment the competition ended and classes began (https://unhz.eu/faculty_department/stafi-administrativ-fakulteti-i-agrobiznesit/). “MSc Sustainable Food Production Systems - STEPS teaching process had begun, during which activities related to compliance, availability and exploitation of STEPS equipment and laboratories by teachers, laboratory assistants and students started. In the first year 2021/22, 25 students were registered, as well as in the year 2022/23, 25 students were registered. The equipment was especially exploited in courses that, in their indicative content and methods of teaching and learning, contain laboratory and software-based exercises and projects (Lecture and laboratory exercises during the first semester of the MSc STEPS; <https://unhz.eu/course/fakulteti-i-agrobiznesit/#>). Also, the equipment is being used in full capacity for the purpose of planning and carrying out research projects and master's theses. Thus, new STEPS equipment was acquired at UHZ and was largely used, in the near future, an even greater use of this equipment is expected in the production of master's theses, the applications of which are in the preparation and adoption procedure. Now the second year of studies will be continued in the Faculty of Agribusiness (<https://unhz.eu/studentet-e-fakultetit-te-agrobiznesit-certifikohen-nga-pemishtja-e-boost-berries/>). Career offices at the University of Haxhi Zeka operate as Alumni Association of the University of Haxhi Zeka. It is a voluntary association open to individuals who have completed a Bachelor's, Master's degree at the University of Haxhi Zeka and who, through their membership, want to remain in contact with the institution at which they have spent a significant part of their professional life. Regular membership is open to every graduate who has completed the 1st, or 2nd cycle of studies at the University of Haxhi Zeka (<https://unhz.eu/sesion-informues-per-trajnimin-falas-ne-video-editing-universiteti-haxhi-zeka-07-qershor-1100/>). Honorary and associate memberships are open to all individuals who have contributed to increasing the reputation of the University of Haxhi Zeka, promoting the goals and tasks of the University and Alumni Association, and who, through their actions, are ready to support the work of the Alumni Association (<https://unhz.eu/alumni-unhz/>). This association is open and available for students to be informed about internships, scholarships and additional opportunities and job fairs. Accordingly, graduated MSc STEPS UHZ students will be included in the Alumni Association of the University of Haxhi Zeka in order to be guided and assisted in their careers after graduation (<https://unhz.eu/course/fakulteti-i-agrobiznesit/#>). First of all, this refers to internship opportunities, practical help for students to be ready to enter the labor market, help students prepare a resume at the beginning of the job search, choosing a career, help students find the best jobs that match their degree and set of personal skills (<https://unhz.eu/course/fakulteti-i-agrobiznesit/#>).

Students will also have the opportunity to share their experiences during their studies, work on networking with other students from the field of Sustainable Food Production and the industry in this sector. (<https://unhz.eu/konkurs-plotesues-per-pranim-te-studenteve-te-rinj-ne-studimet-master-per-vitin-akademik-2022-2023/>). When it comes to internships, scholarships, student exchanges and additional opportunities at UHZ, the Office for Research and International Relations also exists and is active. Cooperation with Universities and other Institutions <https://unhz.eu/zyra-per-bashkepunim-nderkombetar/#>, Considering that international study experiences are important - not only for a personal development and intercultural experience - but also for the latter application in the career, this segment of internationalization was understood as an imperative in the strategic documents of the University (<https://unhz.eu/38197-2/#>). The University is seriously working to increase the incoming and outgoing mobility of students, researchers and teachers, as well as of non-teaching staff. When it comes to creating conditions for increasing the mobility of students and staff of the University of Haxhi Zeka, cooperation has been established with institutions within the Erasmus+ (<https://unhz.eu/mbeshtetje-financiare-per-projekte-hulumtuese/>). As part of the complete implementation of task 7.1 Development of STEPS program plan, quality assurance mechanisms and activities were established, which primarily included surveying MSc STEPS students to obtain feedback on the study program, teaching process and engaged teaching/research staff. Accordingly, evaluation surveys for MSc STEPS students were conducted and subsequently analyzed at the Agribusiness Faculty of the University of Haxhi Zeka (Chapter 7; Attachment: Report of the quality assurance team on the evaluation surveys conducted). Also for the purpose of carrying out the self-evaluation process of the MSc STEPS study program, and in connection with its accreditation, a self-evaluation team was formed (Chapter 7; Attachment: Decision on the appointment of the MSc STEPS self-evaluation team). This team prepared a draft self-evaluation report with all attachments (<https://unhz.eu/rezultatet-e-provimit-pranues-ne-master-2022-2023/>). The report is currently being evaluated by the Center for Quality Assurance and Internal Evaluation of the University of Haxhi Zeka.

5.2. STEPS programme plan at the Universum College (UC-P4)

In order to achieve the objectives and tasks of Deliverable 7.1 as foreseen by the project proposal, Universum College has collaborated with University of Peja “Haxhi Zeka”, who are the principal university in carrying out the legal and logistical procedures of the joint master of science degree between both institutions. In order to provide a better description and understanding on how this program is carrying out in Kosovo, it is important to understand the form of accreditation given to both institutions. The accreditation process in the Republic of Kosovo is regulated by the Higher Education Law No.04/L-037/2011, Administrative Instruction 15/2018 on Accrediting Higher Education Institutions in the Republic of Kosovo, as well as other provisions which regulate the quality of education as well as the recruitment processes within each institution. Unlike in most countries where the Msc. STEPS is going to be offered, the process of accreditation in Kosovo is very specific because the application process and hiring of the staff begins at least twelve months before the lectures begin. Thus, in order to comply with the accreditation process, University of Peja “Haxhi Zeka” in Peja and Universum College conducted numerous meetings with the Kosovo Accreditation Agency in order to develop a program that has an impact on the sector. Additionally, University of Peja “Haxhi Zeka” and “Universum College” conducted meetings with representatives from the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI), to resolve the hurdle of offering a joint program between a private and public institution. The above-mentioned meetings with representatives from the government were very important as they allowed us to develop the joint program plan and helped the institution develop a basis for the mutual agreement.

An important aspect of the accreditation in Kosovo is that two institutions cannot develop the same program and accredit separately (according to Kosovo Accreditation Agency, Msc. STEPS could not be accredited separately at University of Peja “Haxhi Zeka” and Universum College. Institutions must decide who is going to spearhead the accreditation process and be the carrier of the process - in this case University of Peja “Haxhi Zeka” was chosen to lead the process). The information provided above is the basis for the Deliverable 7.1, as it encompasses the modality on how the program was developed, promoted, delivered and assessed by the students and stakeholders. In this case, it should be noted that UC is responsible for prompting the program and supporting University of Peja “Haxhi Zeka” in delivering the program during the first year of studies.

Having decided to develop a joint degree with University of Peja “Haxhi Zeka”, on December 23, 2020 a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between both institutions in order to regulate the educational and technical aspects of the cooperation, especially the delivery mode, staff, payment (Universum College is a private institution, and does not receive funds from the government, thus, tuition fees are important to support the sustainability of the project in the future. Additionally, tuition fees are important because of the recruitment plan, which attracts students from different areas of Kosovo, thus, it was important to inform them about the difference between tuition fees at a public university and a private higher education institution), recruitment process, etc.

The recruitment process at Universum College began in June 2021, always coordinating with representatives from University of Peja “Haxhi Zeka”. From June 2021 - September 2021 for the academic year 2021/2022 and from May 2022 - September 2022 for the academic year 2022/2023, the advertisement of by Universum College was conducted using different channels. For the advertisement in all national TV channels, the following video was used: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4cC8l-t7ITc>.

The program is promoted through our website (<https://universum-ks.org/msc-zhvillimin-e-qendrueshem-te-sistemit-te-prodhimit-te-ushqimit/>), where interested students could communicate with admission officers directly through our website chat. Additionally, the program was promoted through our social media: <https://www.facebook.com/universumcollege/posts/10160485466597244/>. As it is stated specifically in the MoC, students from both institutions are registered through University of Peja “Haxhi Zeka”. Those who are interested in the management stream partake in lectures organized by Universum College during the 2nd year of studies. If students would like to continue only with the technical stream during an academic year, then, UC academic staff deliver the majority of management courses (elective and core) at University of Peja “Haxhi Zeka”. Such is the case with professors from UC who are currently lecturing as part-time staff at University of Peja Haxhi Zeka.

The rest of the information regarding the implementation of Deliverable 7.1. are going to be provided by University of Peja “Haxhi Zeka”, as the current batch of courses is currently being delivered at there.

6. STEPS PROGRAMME PLAN IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

6.1. STEPS programme plan at University of Bihać (UNBI-P5)

For the purposes of implementation the STEPS program development plan at UNBI, and to fulfill and finalize all deliverables, results and outcomes of the work package WP7, the UNBI STEPS team, following the guidelines of the STEPS detailed project description that refer to 7.1 Development of STEPS program plan, started in a timely manner to implement all activities within this task. Following such a concept and a logical sequence of events before the establishment and launch, that is, during the development of the MSc STEPS program, members of the UNBI STEPS team started working on its **promotion and informing potential students**. Thus, already at the beginning of 2020, TV promotional activities were carried out ([TV Promotional activities STEPS; TV report on cantonal TV - January 9, 2020](#)) related to the announcement and imminent launch of a new study program in the field of sustainable food production systems with the aim of introducing it to the public and attracting potential students. Similar activities with the aim of announcing the imminent launch of the MSc STEPS at UNBI continued during the month of May 2020, by initiating and organizing TV reports on regional television news programs ([Promotional activities MSc STEPS; TV report on cantonal TV / MSc STEPS launch announcement](#)). After the establishment and launch of the MSc STEPS study program, and the announcement of the competition for the enrollment of students, there followed an intensification of promotional activities that lasted until the moment the competition ended and classes began. Accordingly, during the month of September 2020, members of the UNBI STEPS project team were hosted in a live show on the Cantonal television RTVUSK ([Promotion of the STEPS project and the new study program via TV live broadcasting](#)), and informative meetings with potential MSc STEPS students ([Promotional activities STEPS – Meeting and presentation of MSc STEPS to potential students](#)) during which the new MSc STEPS study program at UNBI was presented, and promotional materials were distributed.

After completing the application, enrollment and admission procedures of MSc STEPS UNBI students ([Biotechnical Faculty, University of Bihać organised a reception for the first generation of students of the second cycle degree programme \(MSc\) “Sustainable Food Production Systems”](#)), the MSc STEPS teaching process had begun, during which activities related to compliance, availability and **exploitation of STEPS equipment and laboratories** by teachers, laboratory assistants and students started. The equipment was especially exploited in courses that, in their indicative content and methods of teaching and learning, contain laboratory and software-based exercises and projects ([Lecture and laboratory exercises during the first semester of the MSc STEPS](#)). Also, the equipment is being used in full capacity for the purpose of planning and carrying out research projects and master's theses. Thus, new STEPS equipment was acquired at UNBI and was largely used for the application and implementation of several research projects such as „[Modeliranje masno-kiselinskog sastava junećeg mesa putem ishrane](#)“ i „[Uticaj načina izolacije bioloških aktivnih tvari biljaka na funkcionalnu aktivnost biljnih pripravaka](#)“, and conducting research for several master's theses of MSc STEPS students. In the near future, an even greater use of this equipment is expected in the production of master's theses, the applications of which are in the preparation and adoption procedure. It is not unimportant to mention the use or use of the potential of this equipment during the accreditation of the laboratory of the Faculty of Biotechnology UNBI and obtaining the ISO/IEC 17025 standard (Standards for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories), which is currently in progress.

Career offices at the University of Bihać operate as [Alumni Association of the University of Bihać](#). It is a voluntary association open to individuals who have completed a Bachelor's, Master's or Doctorate degree at the University of Bihać and who, through their membership, want to remain in contact with the institution at which they have spent a significant part of their professional life. Regular membership is open to every graduate who has completed the 1st, 2nd or 3rd cycle of studies at the University of Bihać. Honorary and associate memberships are open to all individuals who have contributed to increasing the reputation of the University of Bihać, promoting the goals and tasks of the University and Alumni Association, and who, through their actions, are ready to support the work of the Alumni Association. This association is open and available for students to be informed about internships, scholarships and additional opportunities and job fairs. Accordingly, graduated MSc STEPS UNBI students will be included in the Alumni Association of the University of Bihać in order to be guided and assisted in their careers after graduation. First of all, this refers to internship opportunities, practical help for students to be ready to enter the labor market, help students prepare a resume at the beginning of the job search, choosing a career, help students find the best jobs that match their degree and set of personal skills. Students will also have the opportunity to share their experiences during their studies, work on networking with other students from the field of Sustainable Food Production and the industry in this sector.

When it comes to **internships, scholarships, student exchanges** and additional opportunities at UNBI, the [Office for Research and International Relations](#) also exists and is active. Considering that international study experiences are important - not only for a personal development and intercultural experience - but also for the latter application in the career, this segment of internationalization was understood as an imperative in the strategic documents of the University. The University is seriously working to increase the incoming and outgoing mobility of students, researchers and teachers, as well as of non-teaching staff. When it comes to creating conditions for increasing the mobility of students and staff of the University of Bihać, cooperation has been established with institutions within the Erasmus+ ICM program, and with many universities from Turkey within the Mevlana exchange program. In addition to these two programs, the exchange of students and teachers is also enabled through the CEEPUS III network and the freemover program, as well as the UNET network; through programs funded by the United States Embassy in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Fulbright and Global UGRAD); through CMEPIUS scholarship Slovenia. In accordance with all of the above, it is important to point out that MSc STEPS UNBI students constantly have the opportunity to actively participate in practice, scholarship and student exchange programs.

As part of the complete implementation of task 7.1 Development of STEPS program plan, **Quality assurance mechanisms and activities** were established, which primarily included surveying MSc STEPS students to obtain feedback on the study program, teaching process and engaged teaching/research staff. Accordingly, evaluation surveys for MSc STEPS students were conducted and subsequently analyzed at the Biotechnical Faculty of the University of Bihać (**Chapter 7; Attachment: Report of the quality assurance team on the evaluation surveys conducted**). Evaluation survey was conducted on the LMS STEPS platform created on Massive Open Online Courses - MOOC ([Studio Home | STEPS - Studio steps-project.eu](#)). Also for the purpose of carrying out the self-evaluation process of the MSc STEPS study program, and in connection with its accreditation, a self-evaluation team was formed (Chapter 7; Attachment: Decision on the appointment of the MSc STEPS self-evaluation team). This team prepared a draft self-evaluation report with all attachments. The report is currently being evaluated by the Center for Quality Assurance and Internal Evaluation of the University of Bihać.

6.2. STEPS programme plan at University of Sarajevo (UNSA-P6)

In order to define the plan for the development of the STEPS program at UNSA and fulfill and finalize all obligations based on 7.1. deliverables, and outputs and outcomes of WP 7, the UNSA STEPS team took into account the guidelines of the detailed description of the STEPS project (technical description of the STEPS project) related to D 7.1. One of the first tasks the UNSA STEPS team had after the formalization of the STEPS Master study at UNSA was to **promote the study and inform potential students**. Since the conditions of the Covid19 pandemic prevailed, all promotion was carried out through online communication. All teachers who taught at the 1st cycle of studies (Baccalaureate level), 6th semester, were asked to inform students about the new master's program, and an online promotion was organized for all interested students, which was previously announced through an official invitation published on the faculty website. Similar activities were held for the second and third generation of enrolled students, with the fact that for the third enrolled generation, the promotion was physically held in the Faculty building. The promotion of the new master's program was also carried out by other means, mostly by individual lobbying of teachers (STEPS team) on occasions and places where it was possible.

After the completion of the application procedure and registration of MSc STEPS UNSA students, the Faculty of Agriculture and Food Sciences of the University of Sarajevo held an online reception for the first generation of students of the II cycle of study (MSc) "Sustainable Food Production Systems" with welcoming words from the dean and vice-dean for teaching. This started the process during which activities related to **compliance, availability and exploitation of STEPS equipment and laboratories** by teachers, laboratory associates and students were started. Unfortunately, due to the Covid 19 pandemic, the use of equipment on the relevant courses was only possible for the second enrolled generation, since classes in 2020 and the first half of 2021 were mostly conducted online. When it was possible to hold classes in the physical facilities of the faculty, then exercises were performed in subjects which, in their indicative content and teaching and learning methods, contain laboratory and software exercises and projects. Also, the equipment was used to its full capacity for the planning and execution of research projects and for the first enrolled generation to prepare master's theses. Thus, at UNSA (Faculty of Agriculture and Food), the first student with a master's degree graduated (Ajna Serdarević), who, using the equipment acquired by the STEPS Erasmus project, completed and defended her master's thesis entitled "Changes in the concentration of sulfur dioxide in table white wines under different conditions of temperature and of aeration during storage". In the near future, an even greater use of this equipment is expected in the production of Master's theses, the application of which is in the preparation and adoption procedure. The general assessment of the teaching staff working on teaching at the STEPS master's study is that the acquired equipment is of very high quality and that it has significantly expanded the possibilities of performing laboratory exercises at UNSA.

The **Alumni Association** operates at the Faculty of Agriculture and Food Sciences of the University of Sarajevo, as a voluntary association open to individuals who have completed bachelor's, master's or doctoral studies at the Faculty and who wish to remain in contact with the institution where they spent a significant part of their professional life through their membership. Regular membership is open to every graduate who has completed the 1st, 2nd or 3rd cycle of studies at the Faculty of Agriculture and Food Sciences. Honorary and associate membership is open to all individuals who have contributed to increasing the reputation of the Faculty, promoting the goals and tasks of the University and the Alumni Association, and who are ready to support the work of the Alumni Association through their actions.

This association is open and available to students to learn about internships, scholarships and additional opportunities and job fairs. Accordingly, MSc STEPS UNSA graduates plan to be part of the Faculty's Alumni Association to be guided and assisted in their careers after graduation. First of all, it is about internship opportunities, practical help for students to be ready to enter the labor market, help for students to prepare their resumes at the beginning of the job search, career choices, help for students to find the best jobs that match their degree and personal skill set. Students will also have the opportunity to share their experiences during their studies, work on networking with other students in the field of Sustainable Food Production and industry in this sector. It should be added that the Faculty organizes Career Days every year, and at the last one held in 2022, the STEPS project and the Master's study Sustainable food production systems were promoted.

When it comes to **internships, scholarships, student exchanges and additional opportunities** at UNSA, the Office for Research and International Relations exists and is active. Given that international study experiences are important - not only for personal development and intercultural experience - but also for later application in a career, this segment of internationalization is understood as imperative in the strategic documents of the University. UNSA is working seriously to increase the incoming and outgoing mobility of students, researchers and teachers, as well as non-teaching staff. Thus, within the first generation enrolled in the STEPS master's study, one student (Maid Hasičić) spent the second semester in Poland as part of a student exchange.

As part of the full implementation of task 7.1 Development of the STEPS program plan, **quality assurance mechanisms and activities** were established, which primarily included surveying MSc STEPS students to obtain feedback on the study program, teaching process and engaged teaching/research staff. Accordingly, evaluation surveys were conducted for MSc STEPS students, which were then analyzed at the Faculty of Agriculture and Food, University of Sarajevo (see Google drive attachment).

7. PROCEDURAL DOCUMENTS RELATED STEPS PROGRAMME PLAN IN PC HEIS

1. All the documents related to the STEPS programme plan at the AUT can be found on the following link:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1NknMiuSljM3lckmpx9Z_NnD2d0IHpFei?usp=share_link
2. All the documents related to the STEPS programme plan at the EUT can be found on the following link:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1nBQ-8vzBUon6Daj2YExriQWqBEUs_fvA?usp=share_link
3. All the documents related to the STEPS programme plan at the UC can be found on the following link:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1FY0XtmdSP5BPPqQVcwvps_MQeXf5cKBq?usp=share_link
4. All the documents related to the STEPS programme plan at the UHZ can be found on the following link:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1GAMiyUO7sNkOnoLhj_l3jNdPPKWu6-j3?usp=share_link
5. All the documents related to the STEPS programme plan at the UNBI can be found on the following link:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1xyU8wNTQxkpv7BBPUBm3EOkhjXNMxwOK?usp=share_link
6. All the documents related to the STEPS programme plan at the UNSA can be found on the following link:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1_ara3QAhihAisEjelhnPqORN1WtpvKyn?usp=share_link

8. CONCLUSIONS

As a result of all the previous tasks and activities of the Erasmus+ CBHE MSc STEPS project, all HEIs of the partner countries in the project consortium implemented the MSc STEPS study program. According to the submitted information, all HEIs of the partner countries have prepared all the necessary documentation and services for the admission of students, as well as guidelines, descriptions and presentations of STEPS programs and courses. The scientific, technical and administrative staff were informed in time about the start and duration of the courses, and accordingly all the infrastructure and equipment were ready for support in the implementation of classes and use by students. Here it is important to mention two types of laboratories (D5.2) formed at all Partner countries HEIs. As stated in the report, promotional activities were carried out at all Partner country HEIs. Also, already existing Career offices provide opportunities for students to inform about internships, scholarships, additional opportunities and job fairs. Based on the project proposal, quality assurance mechanisms were established in terms of feedback from students (survey) and self-evaluation. These activities were certainly realized as part of the accreditation of the MSc STEPS program at all HEIs and represent part of D6.1., and according to national regulations and regulations are considered mandatory in the accreditation process in partner countries. Indicators of the progress of this Deliverables that can be found in the results (Deliverables) of other, previously realized WPs are shown mainly in the form of the number of applications and participants, the number of courses that are conducted at each HEI, taking into account the specific implementation of the courses, the level of realized student expectations, the level usage - usage of the LMS platform, their performance in terms of projects, exercises, etc.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

Using the experience gained during the duration of the project, it is recommended to all Partner countries HEIs in which the MSc STEPS study program is implemented to take all measures to improve and maintain its quality and to continue the successful implementation of its plan with all initiated and realized activities related to the promotion, exploitation of equipment, work career offices and quality mechanisms.