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FINAC

FINancial management,
Accounting & Controlling
in public administration

Financial Management, Accounting & Controlling curricula development for capacity building of public administration

STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT

Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic

February 11-14, 2018.



FINAC
FINancial management,
Accounting & Controlling
in public administration



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1. Rationale

According to the *ERASMUS+* project application and proposed *Quality Control and Monitoring Plan* adopted at the Kick off Meeting, held on November 24-25, 2016 in Belgrade, Serbia, the University of Split, as the Lead Partner for the Work Package 6 – Quality Control, has performed internal evaluation of the Steering Committee Meeting as an activity in the process of assuring and improving the quality of *the FINAC* project. This report summarizes the findings of the meeting evaluation.

According to the *Quality Control and Monitoring Plan*, internal evaluation was applied on two main aspects of the project: (1) event evaluation and (2) project evaluation. After 4th Steering Committee, in Brno, after the meeting all participants were requested to fill in the form answering a set of questions related to project aims and objectives, project activities and deliverables, project dissemination activities, and current experience in project management, communication and conflict management, partnership and project sustainability in a first year and a half of project implementation. In this moment, according to the project timeline, this evaluation is performed on the bases of feedback from representatives of the partner institutions provided in the evaluation form fulfilled at the end of Steering Committee Meeting in Brno.

2. Steering Committee Meeting (SCM) – Brno, Czech Republic

This project, as it is usual was started with Kick off meeting in Belgrade, November 2016, where all project partners were present, and project Steering Committee was established. Since then project partners continued with regular operations, and fulfilling project activities according to the proposed timetable and responsibilities.

Project 4th SC meeting was at Agenda on the 1st day of Brno Study visit, organized by Faculty of Economics and Organization, Brno, Czech Republic. Steering Committee Meeting evaluation is based on evaluation form fulfilled by attendees of the project meeting, who are the members of the study visit in Brno, which held February 11-14, 2018.

Evaluation is based on the perception of participants and is subject to personal assessments. The forms were prepared by University of Split, Faculty of Economics (hereinafter, UNIST-EF) and fulfilled after the SC meeting. Evaluation forms were collected by the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Organization Sciences (hereinafter, project leader UBG-FON).

After collection of the evaluation forms, project leaders UBG-FON archived original forms in digital format, and send it to UNIST-EF project partner responsible for Quality Control and Monitoring WP6. UNIST-EF develop data base which contains systematized data related to the participants' marks, comments and suggestions. Data base was established and archived at UNIST-EF in order to produce evaluative report, and copy was delivered to the UNIBG-FON with the aim to assure project leader to have all collected data in data basis. For this time evaluation was collected through the hard copy survey, even though project partners agree to use on-line event evaluation form for the forthcoming events, we still try to motivate and control that our SC meeting participants fulfill forms at the end of the meeting in hard copy version.



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Even though the questionnaire is a short one it covers different dimensions of realization related to the SC meeting: *Role of the partner institution in FINAC, Implementation of the project activities/deliverables; Dissemination; Project management activities; Partnership and Project sustainability, additional suggestions.*

Furthermore, partners agree that previously mentioned questions represent essential part of each SCM evaluation; some additional questions may be added for the future SCM, in line with project agenda and the development phase of the project implementation.

Table 1 Event details

No.	Meeting	Date	Place	Evaluation	No. of fulfilled forms
1	Steering Committee Meeting	February 11, 2018	Brno, Czech Republic	yes	12

3. Steering Committee Meeting evaluation results

Based on the answers collected we made analysis of each aspect of the project: 1) The role of partner institution in the FINAC project; 2) Implementation of the project activities and deliverables; (3) Dissemination; (4) Project management activities; (5) Partnership; and 6) Sustainability; and (7) Any additional suggestions and comments. Results for each of them could be found in the tables and graphs below.

3.1. The role of your organization in the FINAC project

The role of each project partner was examined through 3 open questions so the answers will be presented in Table 2 and Figures 1 – 3.

1.1. Do you think that all aims and objectives defined by Agenda of Steering Committee can be accomplished by your project team?

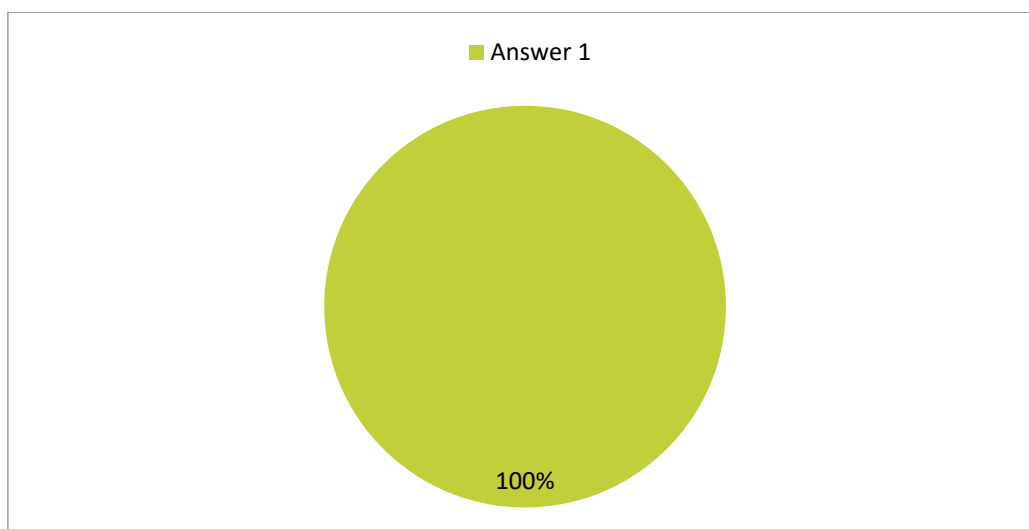
Four answers were offered to participants as its follows: (1) I think all aims and objectives can be achieved within the project team_____; (2) I think it is difficult to achieve all aims and objectives, because_____; (3) I think the aims and objective cannot be achieved, because_____; (4) I am not familiar with the project aims and objectives, therefore I cannot judge if they cannot be achieved or not.



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Figure 1 Do you think that all aims and objectives defined by Agenda of Steering Committee can be accomplished by your project team?



All of the project partners, represented by its Steering Committee representatives agree that all aims and objectives defined by Agenda of Steering Committee can be accomplished by project teams. All of them, precisely 12 who fulfilled this evaluation form choose the answer: 'I think all aims and objectives can be achieved within the project team.'

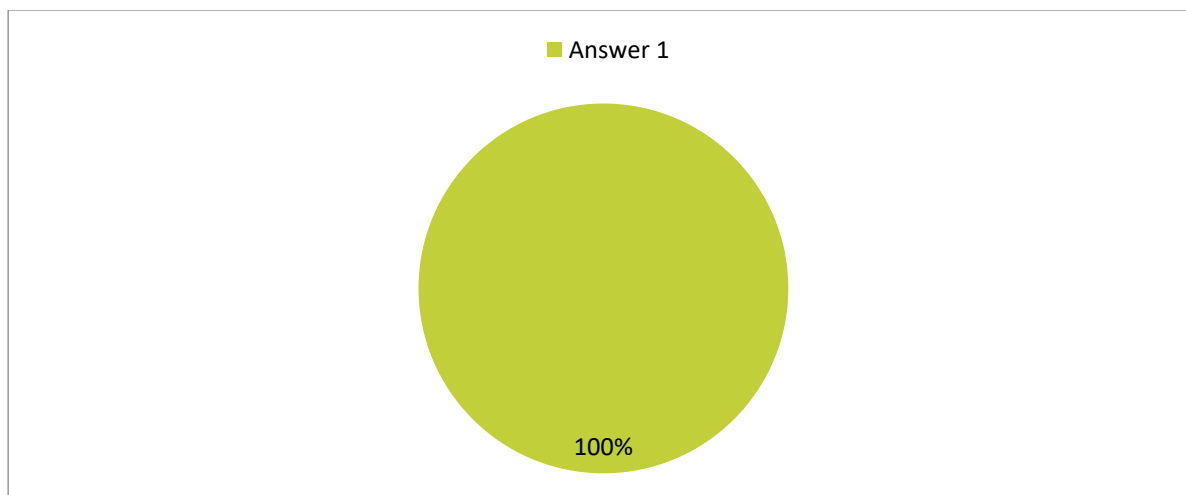
Two additional comments were added: 1) From the current engagement of all partners it can be identified that the terms will be respected; 2) I am ok with statement. Those comments are in line with previously marked answer 1); what confirms that partners strongly believe all aims and objectives will be achieved on time.

Second question in this section has been related to the institution role:

1.2. Are you clear about your institution's role, the activities and responsibilities you have to carry out in the project?

Three answers were offered to participants as its follows: (1) Yes, I know exactly what my institution is expected to contribute to the FINAC project. I am familiar with the activities I have to carry out _____; (2) I am not so sure about my institution's role in the project and the activities I have to carry out, because _____; (3) I don't know which role my institution plays in the project and which activities are to be carried out, because _____.

Figure 2 Are you clear about your institution's role, the activities and responsibilities you have to carry out in the project?



From the results presented in Figure 2 it is evident that all SC meeting participants chooses answer 'Yes, I know exactly what my institution is expected to contribute to the FINAC project. I am familiar with the activities I have to carry out.' and showed an extremely awareness of its future contributions and 'to do activities' for this project!

Two additional comments were added and served as confirmation of previously mentioned answers: 1) As a representative of USH, Faculty of Economy, Steering Committee I am clear; 2) I am ok with statement.

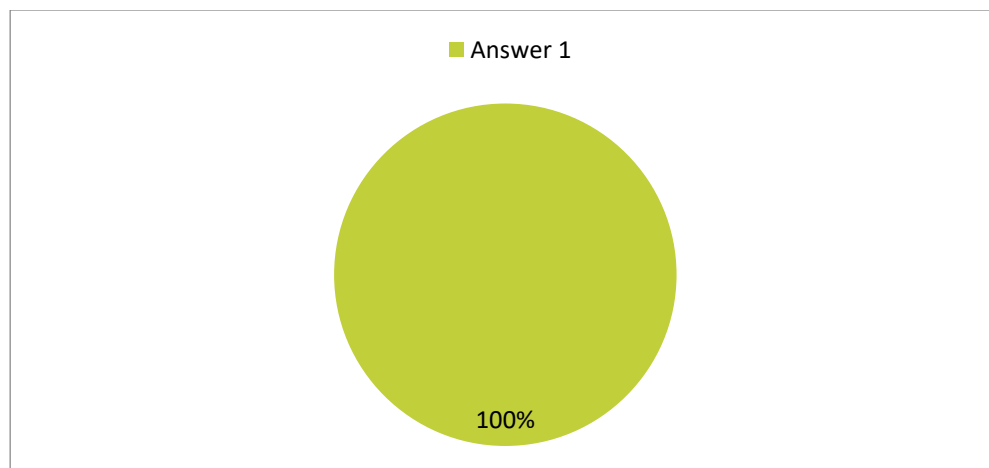
Third question in this section were related to the project structure:

1.3. How do you evaluate the work process of FINAC project, i.e. the structure/the sequence of the various tasks?

Answers were provided as follows: (1) The project has a clear structure. The workflow follows a logic sequence _____; (2) The work process is not quite clear to me because _____; and (3) I disagree with the work process because _____.

As it is presented in Figure 3, all SC meeting participants chooses answer: '1 - The project has a clear structure. The workflow follows a logic sequence.' Regarding to the answer it is possible to conclude that all SC meeting participants confirmed clear structure and the logic of the project workflow. Furthermore, only one additional comment was added: 1) I am ok with statement.

Figure 3 How do you evaluate the work process of FINAC project, i.e. the structure/the sequence of the various tasks?



3.2. Implementation of the project activities and deliverables

This part of the questionnaire has been directed to indicate current state and potential problems regarding the implementation of the project activities and ability of the project partners to deliver expected deliverables.

First question in this section was:

2.1. Please indicate at least three obstacles that you had when implementing project activities in the first project year.

All answers regarding the problems faced by project partners are presented in table 2, it is obvious that different partners have different perspectives, regarding to the specific situation and role that each particular institution have in this project. Also, different country representatives or different experience in this particular type of the management of ERASMUS+ projects may reflect these answers.

As it is possible to see from the results presented in the Table 2, it is evident that different project partners sees different situation as a kind of obstacle in this project. Precisely, only 3 participants of 4th SC meeting find no obstacles at; out of 10 who add additional comment. Seven participants in this evaluation find some obstacles in project implementation, and those obstacles are related to the particular situations or country, and do not represent any 'general' obstacle for FINAC project. Results provided by SC members were presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Please indicate at least three obstacles that you had when implementing project activities in the first project year

Participant	Answer
1	Missing of byla WS



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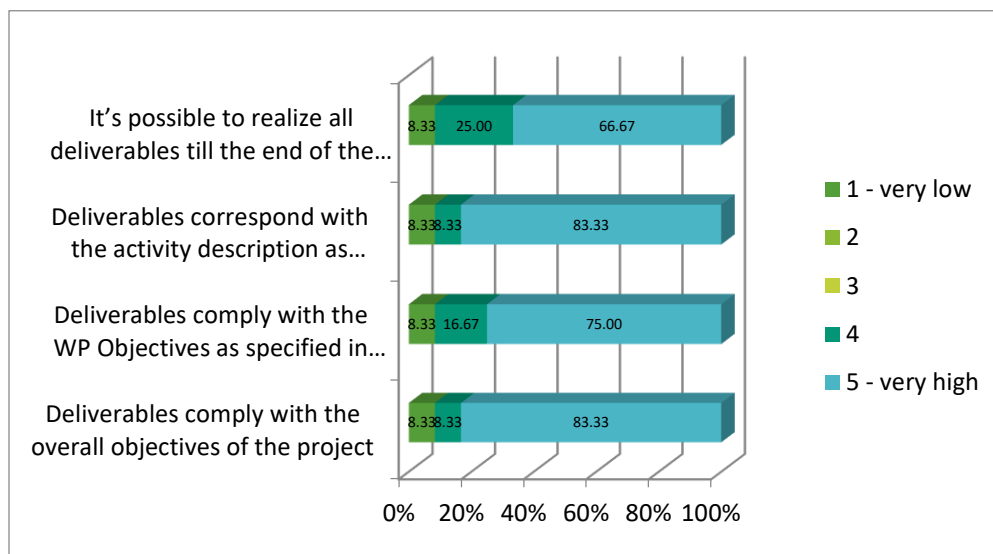
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2	Preparation of documents for paying equipment and communication with suppliers
3	Preparation of documents for accreditation of study programmes.
4	Funding of study visit (no funds in budget)
5	List of participants often amended
6	None, no obstacles
7	There have been no obstacles of any significance
8	Alignment of obligations at my faculty with project activities (sometimes)
9	No ones in particular
10	The only obstacle so far is ongoing process related to the taking of because for the Master program by Albanian Ministry of Education. This is related to some changes on the Albanian legislation as far as education is concerned.

Next question in this section were related to the project deliverables:

2.2. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree to the statements below by marking the appropriate answer

Graph 1 - Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree to the statements below by marking the appropriate answer regarding activities/deliverables of FINAC project (1 – very low to 5 – very high).¹



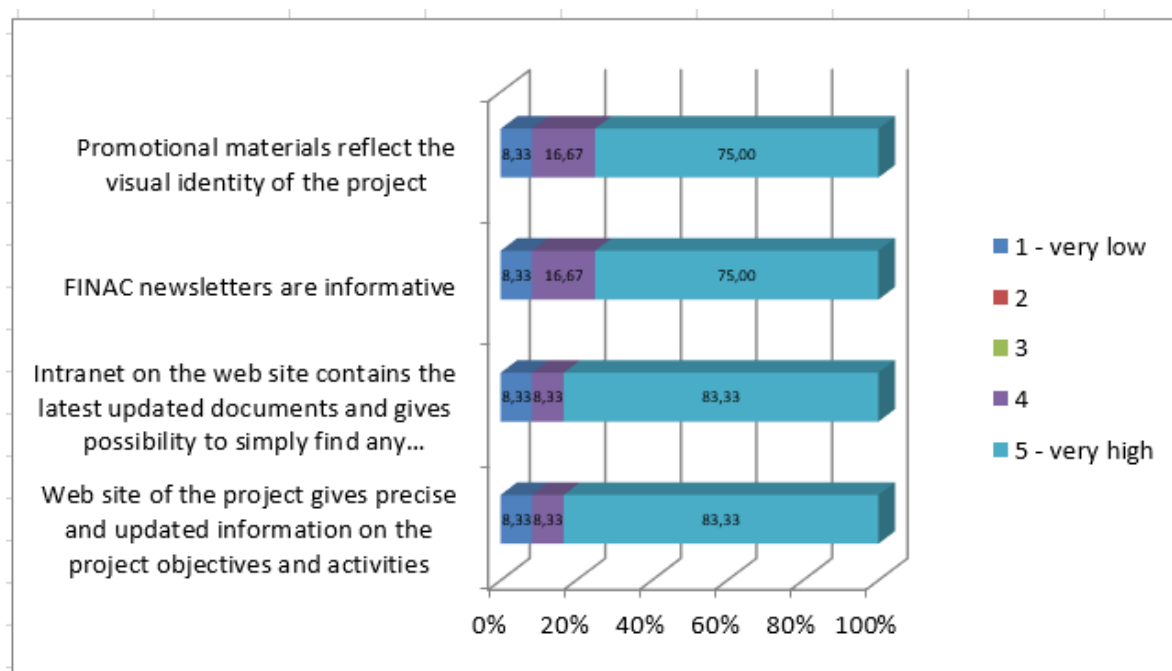
It is obvious that most of all SC members see it is possible to deliver all project activities and task during the project tasks. Also, they see deliverables appropriate, in a line with project proposal, previously defined WP and project objectives.

¹ Only 1 member of SC meeting chooses answer 1 – very low for all questions. So the most dissatisfaction about the project workflow is single opinion is dedicated to only one member of SC.

3.3. Dissemination

In the next step of this questionnaire SC members answered the questions regarding the dissemination possibilities and activities during the course of FINAC project.

Graph 2 Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree to the statements below by marking the appropriate answer regarding project dissemination activities (1 – very low to 5 – very high).



SC members mostly rated dissemination possibilities as high and very high for all question.

3.4. Management of the project

In this section SC meeting participants were asked about the current state of the management of the FINAC project.

First question was as it follows:

4.1. Are you familiar with the project's management activities till the next Steering Committee?



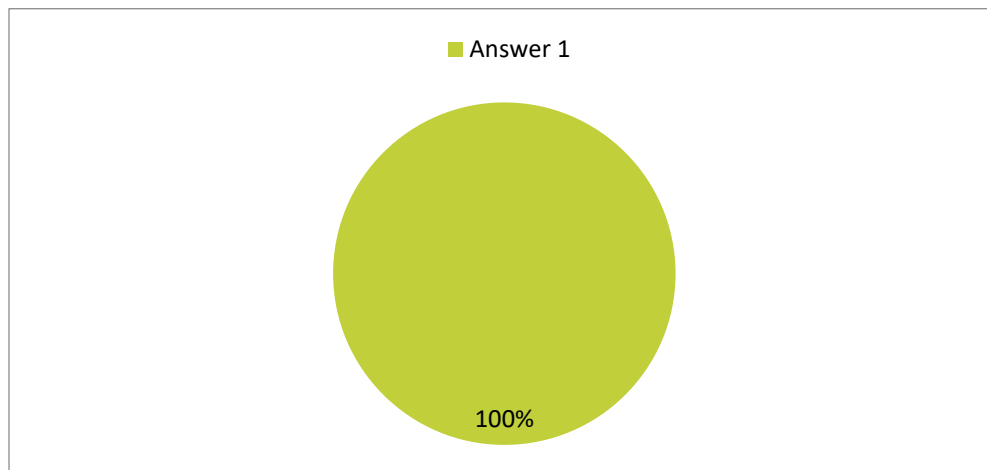
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Provided answers were: (1) 1. The project management activities are clear to me. I know who is responsible for the technical and financial parts of the project realization and who is in charge of the various work packages.; (2) The project management activities are not quite clear to me because_____.; and (3) I am not familiar with the project's management activities at all because_____.

Regarding to the respondents' answers presented in the Figure 4 it is obvious that are all SC meeting participants are completely familiar with the project management activities till the Steering Committee coordination meeting which is on schedule for June 6 – 10, 2018., will be organized by University of Belgrade, Serbia.

Figure 4 Are you familiar with the project's management activities till the next Steering Committee?



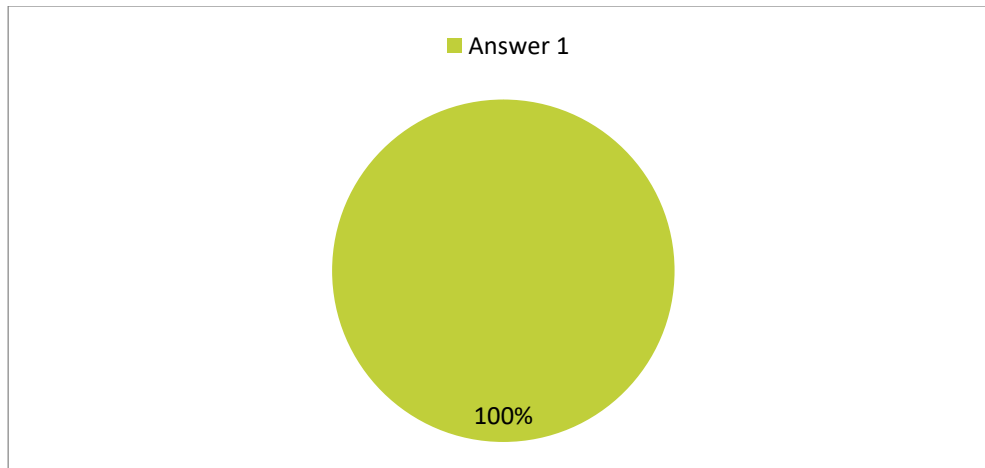
Only one additional comment was added: 1) I am ok with statement!

Second question in this section has been about regarding financial and contractual aspect of the FINAC project.

4.2. Are you informed of all financial and contractual aspects of the project activities in upcoming period?

Answers were provided as it follows: (1) I am completely familiar with all these aspects_____.; (2) I need some clarifications on financial/budgetary issues, that is_____.; and (3) I need some clarification on contractual issues, that is_____. The answers are presented in Figure 5.

Figure 5 Are you informed of all financial and contractual aspects of the project activities in upcoming period?



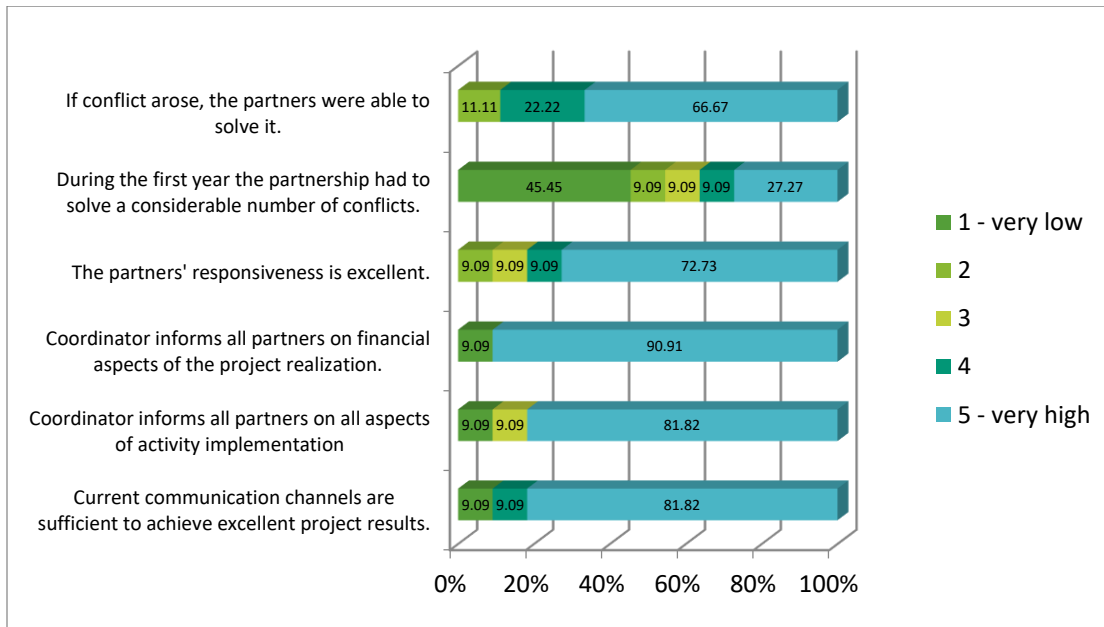
All of the SC members are completely clear with the financial and contractual aspects of the project (Figure 5).

Only one additional comment was added: 1) I am ok with statement!

The third question in this section has been related to the Communication and conflict management within project Consortium (Graph 3).

Most of the partners are agree that FINAC project operated at the very high (5) level of excellent communication and with the high potential to resolve any conflict if there is a need for it. Only 2nd question may be more clearly elaborated, formulated in this way may cause confusion within the respondents, due the fact that this consortium did not face any conflict during the course of this project. As it was all the way with this internal control surveying, it is obvious that partners choose different answers for question 'During the first year the partnership had to solve a considerable number of conflicts'. We have this question in the case some conflict accrued, but so far this project is 'conflict free' so the respondents choose different answers to express that.

Graph 3 How do you agree about below mentioned questions regarding the project communication and conflict management (1 – very low to 5 – very high).

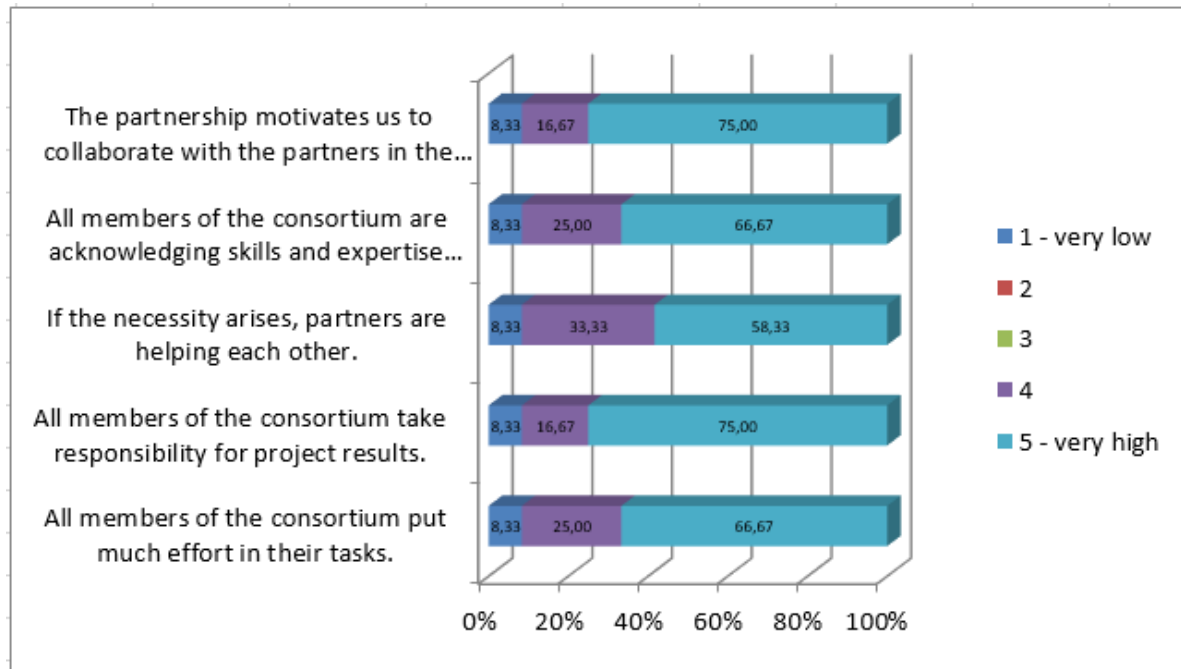


As it is possible to be seen from graph 3, project partners are very satisfied with project communication and project management.

3.5. Partnership

According to the results presented on Graph 4 it is obvious that most of the SC members sees FINAC consortium as a powerful network of knowledge and experience. Furthermore, the most interesting part is about the responsibilities and efforts in their task within FINAC consortium. It is obvious that all SC members chooses the highest grade for that purpose 5 (very high) or in only one to three respondents per question chooses answer 4 (high).

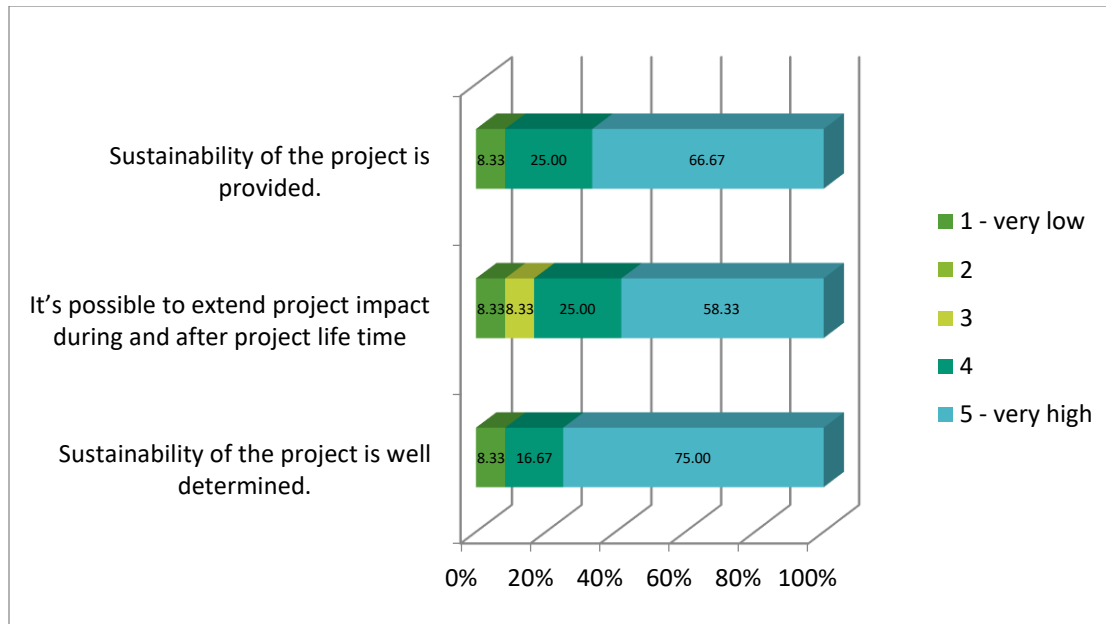
Graph 4 SC members answers regarding to the power of partners networking and cooperation



3.6. Sustainability

Last section has been related to the SC meeting expectations regarding to the sustainability of this project, with the provided answers as it follows: (1) Sustainability of this project is provided.; (2) It's possible to extend the project impact during and the after project lifetime.; and (3) Sustainability of this project is well determined.

Graph 5 SC members attitudes toward sustainability of FINAC project



Results presented on the Graph 6 revealed that all SC members' sees FINAC as a very sustainable project over the time. Furthermore, all of the respondents marked all of the proposed questions with 5 (very high). From those answers we can see that all project consortium members see this project as very sustainable one.

And last, but not least all participants got a chance to provide project management and project partners with any additional comments regarding FINAC project and its implementation and management in 1st project year.

Table 2 Additional comments by SC participants

Participant	Comment
1	We should start using Research Gate as a channel for dissemination.

Research Gate as channel of dissemination is already established, so we strongly believe this respondent will see it from this report. Also, it is recommended to inform all project members about all project communication channels with the aim to remind them to join all channels and keep in touch with project and its activities.

4. Summary

The evaluation of the Brno Steering Committee meeting for *Erasmus+ FINAC* project given in this report was based on the evidence on the activities conducted and analyzed data related to quality of activities and overall 4th SC members meeting, rated by all the participants.

The overall picture shows that the quality of the of FINAC project management and its activities is located at the level of high or very high out of grades defined from: 1 (very low) to 5 (very high) which is the result we can be absolutely satisfied with.

The evaluation results show that SC members from all project partners rated current experience of FINAC project and its management in terms of:

Role of the partner institution in FINAC, Implementation of the project activities/deliverables; Dissemination; Project management activities; Partnership and project Sustainability, additional suggestions.

According to the all results presented in this report it is obvious that overall project management activities after the 1st year and half of FINAC project implementation is at an excellent level, what need to be continued in upcoming activities and years of the project.

Ivana Bilić & Marko Čular
University of Split, Faculty of Economics
Split, February, 21, 2018.



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Annex 1 Event attendance list and SC evaluation form

No.	Name	Organization	Signature	Permission ² signature	E-mail address
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					

² I confirm with my signature that project organizers and project partners are allowed to use event photos for project promotion activities



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STEERING COMMITTEE EVALUATION FORM

Evaluation form of Study visit to

Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic

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Dear FINAC project Steering Committee members,

The evaluation form below serves as one of the tools of internal evaluation of Steering Committee meetings of FINAC project. We kindly ask you to provide us with the required information which will allow us to assess the structure and content development of the project, and if needed, provide further indications for improvement of the project workflow.

Be aware that some questions are the same due the time, intentionally, with the aim to measure the quality of project management and project risk implementation project work packages during project realization.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

I Role of your partner institution in the FINAC project?

1.1. Do you think that all aims and objectives defined by Agenda of Steering Committee can be accomplished by your project term?

Please mark the statement that applies and possibly provide explanations on your answers.

1. I think all aims and objectives can be achieved within the project team.

2. I think it is difficult to achieve all aims and objectives, because:

3. I think the aims and objective cannot be achieved, because:

4. I am not familiar with the project aims and objectives, therefore I cannot judge if they cannot be achieved or not.



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1.2. Are you clear about your institution's role, the activities and responsibilities you have to carry out in the project? *Please mark the statement that applies and possibly provide explanations on your answers.*

1. Yes, I know exactly what my institution is expected to contribute to the FINAC project. I am familiar with the activities I have to carry out.

2. I am not so sure about my institution's role in the project and the activities I have to carry out, because:

3. I don't know which role my institution plays in the project and which activities are to be carried out, because:

1.3. How do you evaluate the work process of FINAC project, i.e. the structure/the sequence of the various tasks? *Please mark the statement that applies and possibly provide explanations on your answers.*

1. The project has a clear structure. The workflow follows a logic sequence.

2. The work process is not quite clear to me because:

3. I disagree with the work process because:

II Implementation of the project activities/deliverables



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2.1. Please indicate at least three obstacles that you had when implementing project activities in the first project year.

2.2. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree to the statements below by marking the appropriate answer. (From 1 – Strongly disagree to 5 - Strongly agree)

Deliverables comply with the overall objectives of the project	1	2	3	4	5
Deliverables comply with the WP Objectives as specified in the WP description.	1	2	3	4	5
Deliverables correspond with the activity description as specified in the Application Form.	1	2	3	4	5
It's possible to realize all deliverables till the end of the project	1	2	3	4	5

III Dissemination

3.1. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree to the statements below by marking the appropriate answer. (From 1 – Strongly disagree to 5 - Strongly agree)

Web site of the project gives precise and updated information on the project objectives and activities	1	2	3	4	5
Intranet on the web site contains the latest updated documents and gives possibility to simply find any information concerning the project	1	2	3	4	5
FINAC newsletters are informative	1	2	3	4	5
Promotional materials reflect the visual identity of the project	1	2	3	4	5

IV Project management activities

4.1. Are you familiar with the project's management activities till the next Steering Committee?
Please mark the statement that applies and possibly provide explanations on your answers.

1. The project management activities are clear to me. I know who is responsible for the technical and financial parts of the project realization and who is in charge of the various work packages



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2. The project management activities are not quite clear to me because:

3. I am not familiar with the project's management activities at all because:

4.2. Are you informed of all financial and contractual aspects of the project activities in upcoming period? Please tick the statement that applies and possibly provide explanations on your answers

1. I am completely familiar with all these aspects

2. I need some clarifications on financial/budgetary issues, that is:

3. I need some clarification on contractual issues, that is:

4.3. Communication and conflict project management

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree to the statements below by marking the appropriate answer. (From 1 – Strongly disagree to 5 - Strongly agree)

Current communication channels are sufficient to achieve excellent project results.

1 2 3 4 5

Coordinator informs all partners on all aspects of activity implementation.

1 2 3 4 5

Coordinator informs all partners on financial aspects of the project realization.

1 2 3 4 5

The partners' responsiveness is excellent.

1 2 3 4 5

During the first year the partnership had to solve a considerable number of conflicts.

1 2 3 4 5

If conflict arose, the partners were able to solve it.

1 2 3 4 5

V Partnership

5.1. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree to the statement below by marking the appropriate answer. (From 1 – Strongly disagree to 5 - Strongly agree)

All members of the consortium put much effort in their tasks.	1	2	3	4	5
All members of the consortium take responsibility for project results.	1	2	3	4	5
If the necessity arises, partners are helping each other.	1	2	3	4	5
All members of the consortium are acknowledging skills and expertise of other project members.	1	2	3	4	5
The partnership motivates us to collaborate with the partners in the future projects.	1	2	3	4	5

VI Project sustainability

6.1. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree to the statements below by marking the appropriate answer (From 1 – Strongly disagree to 5 - Strongly agree)

Sustainability of the project is well determined.	1	2	3	4	5
It's possible to extend project impact during and after project life time	1	2	3	4	5
Sustainability of the project is provided.	1	2	3	4	5

VII Any additional suggestions or comments?

Thank you for your time

Team of UNIST
Responsible for FINAC project control



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