

DOCUMENT TYPE External document

PLACE University of Split | Split |  
CROATIA

TIME June 18-22, 2017



**FINAC**  
FINancial management,  
Accounting & Controlling  
in public administration

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

### STUDY VISIT AT UNIVERSITY OF SPLIT

### DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

### TO BE ADOPTED AT THE 2<sup>nd</sup> STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Prepared by: Sladjana BENKOVIĆ & Nela MILOŠEVIĆ | University of Belgrade | SERBIA

*This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.  
This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any  
use which may be made of the information contained therein*

## MINUTES

### Introduction

---

The first Study visit, hosted by University of Split, was organized 18<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2017 and held in Split, Croatia.

The Study visit meeting was chaired by **Sladjana BENKOVIĆ**, project coordinator, and **Ivana BILIĆ**, partner institution coordinator.

All project partners received the documents included and referenced in these minutes and were notified about all matters discussed prior to the meeting.

The list of all participants at the meeting can be found at the end of the document in [APPENDIX 1](#).

### Agenda

---

The Study visit had the following agenda:

- [1] Establishing the quorum
- [2] Welcome note by project and partner institution coordinator, Why FINAC Matters?
- [3] Where we are after six months project duration?
- [4] Discussion about Dissemination and Sustainability plan
- [5] Steering Committee meeting #1
- [6] Information about legal and financial issues
- [7] Meeting of Albanian and Serbian institution representatives
- [8] Pitching Research –Professor Robert Faff presentation
- [9] Regulating public administration financing in Croatia – Presented by Jelena Petrov
- [10] Challenges of financial control in Croatia's public administration – Presented by Antonia Eremut Erceg
- [11] Challenges of Public Financing in Split Dalmatia County – Presented by Krešimir Budiša
- [12] Results and challenges regarding financial management knowledge & qualification structure of the employees in Albania & Serbia (WP.1)
- [13] Challenges of conducting research regarding financial management knowledge & qualification structure of the employees in Albania (WP.1.)
- [14] Future steps in next 6 months
- [15] AOB (Any other business)

## I work day

### Session 01: Establishing the quorum

---

The list of attendees is available at the end of this document.

#### **Session 01 conclusions:**

Representatives of each 12 consortium partner institutions participated in the first Study visit to EU partner institution - University of Split.

### Session 02: Welcome note by project and partner institution coordinator, Why FINAC Matters?

---

Project coordinator, **Sladjana BENKOVIĆ**, opened the meeting with a welcome speech addressing all the participants. She thanked the partner institution coordinator for the hospitality and all efforts that Ivana BILIĆ had made to host consortium representatives. After that **Ivana BILIĆ**, on behalf of partner institution - University of Split, welcomed all participants and wished them successful and fruitful work during first Study visit to Faculty of Economics, University of Split.

Vice rector for Education of University of Split, **Rosanda MULIĆ**, welcomed the participants on behalf of host institution and presented the key information about University of Split, partner project institution.

Vice Rector for International Cooperation of the University of Belgrade, **Ivanka POPOVIĆ**, greeted the participants and expressed gratitude for hospitality on behalf of project coordinator institution.

Dean of Faculty of Economics, University of Split, **Maja FREDOTIĆ**, welcomed the participants on behalf of host institution and presented the key information about Faculty of Economics. She presented the results which Faculty of Economics has obtained in previous period and pointed out that there are numerous opportunities for cooperation within regional projects, such as FINAC.

#### **Session 02 conclusions:**

The representatives of project consortia have been informed about the partner institution and the content of the first Study visit within the project.

### Session 03: Where we are after six months of the project duration?

---

Project coordinator, **Sladjana BENKOVIĆ**, presented results of the project activities in previous six months of the project duration and introduced the content of the work packages. She emphasized the importance of the project deliverables. Additionally, she indicated the importance of following timeline for implementation of the project work packages.

#### **Session 03 conclusions:**

The representatives of project consortia were informed about project results and accomplishments.

*This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.  
This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein*

## Session 04: Discussion about Dissemination and Sustainability plan

---

Project coordinator, **Slađana BENKOVIĆ**, presented Dissemination and Sustainability plan, which has not been finished yet, and pointed out that it will be changed during the project duration whenever the need emerges. The idea is that this plan should contribute to visibility and sustainability of the project. Some partners gave very useful ideas that already can be incorporated in Dissemination and Sustainability plan.

### **Session 04 conclusions:**

The representatives of the project consortia were informed about the role of Dissemination and Sustainability plan and some of them gave constructive ideas which can contribute to the higher project visibility.

## Session 05: Steering Committee meeting #1

---

All partner institutions had representatives who participated in the first Steering Committee meeting, where whole Agenda has been adopted without any complaints or reservations. The Agenda from the first Steering Committee meeting can be found in [APPENDIX 2](#).

### **Session 05 conclusions:**

The project consortia representatives agreed on project results and reports presented by the project coordinator and opened room for further collaboration.

## Session 06: Information about legal and financial issues

---

The project secretary, **Aleksandar JOVIĆ**, informed all partners that the first funding instalment has been transferred to all partner institutions. Moreover, all partners delivered supporting documentation regarding costs for the first 6 months of project duration, which was prepared by their institutions. In addition, **MSc. JOVIĆ** informed partners that he will prepare a guidebook in order to increase quality of project's financial management and financial control, till 15<sup>th</sup> July, 2017. This guidebook will be developed according to propositions and instructions issued by EACEA.

### **Session 06 conclusions:**

Financial issues and supporting documentation are managed according to EACEA recommendations, budgetary constraints and time framework. In an upcoming month, project secretary MSc. Aleksandar JOVIĆ will prepare guidelines which will improve the quality of project's financial management and financial control.

### Session 07: Meeting of Albanian and Serbian institution representatives

---

The first day morning session was closed with the meeting where Albanian and Serbian institution representatives shared their opinions about the project. During the meeting representatives were talking about complexity of accreditation activities, and highlighted the importance of creating teams, that will be involved in activities of accreditation Master Curricula Program with regional partner institutions, in the near future. It was also concluded that the coordinator will have numerous meetings during July and August 2017 with regional university representatives in order to define the content of Master Degree Programs, that have to be complementary in each regional country. Additionally, project coordinator **Sladjana BENKOVIĆ** has informed present representatives of partner institutions that activities in terms of equipment and literature purchasing will start on 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2017. Bidding procedure for equipment purchasing is different within regional countries, but it has to be conducted at the same time.

**Session 07 conclusions:**

Regional partner institutions will be focused on activities connected with the accreditation of Master Degree Program and equipment purchase in the next 6 months.

### Session 08: Pitching Research – Lecturing of Professor Robert Faff

---

During the study visit at University of Split, the representatives of partner institutions had a great opportunity to enjoy the lecture of Professor Robert Faff - full professor of Financial management at Queensland University, Australia. Professor Faff advised how to present results, which we will have after reporting on Work package 1, at the best possible way, and how it could contribute to higher visibility of the project as well.

**Session 08 conclusions:**

Presentation "Pitching research" was very useful for higher visibility of the project. It is very important to know what a reader expects and what is in focus among professionals. Professor Faff gave great comments and shared the presentation materials with participants of project partner institutions.

**MEETING MINUTES****II work day****Session 09: Regulating public administration financing in Croatia –  
Lecturing by Jelena Petrov**

---

**Mrs. Jelena PETROV** has a great experience in project management and financial management of EU grants, especially in terms of public administration development. During the presentation Mrs. PETROV explained most common mistakes and challenges that are present in practice, giving great, vividly described, examples.

**Session 09 conclusions:**

Know-how and independent institutions, which could offer tips and professional expertise, are crucial for managing the project in the best possible way, especially in terms of financing. In addition, that is the right way for improving financial performances and control, and decreasing financial loss.

**Session 10: Challenges of financial control in Croatia's public administration –  
Lecturing by Antonia Ermut Erceg**

---

**Mrs. Antonia ERMUT ERCEG** gave a great presentation indicating what managing projects looks like in the municipality of Solin. Mrs. ERCEG has great experience in financial management of local municipalities and she has pointed out problems regarding paying employees in public administration, who, beside their primary jobs, are very often involved in projects that are not primarily in their job description. Additionally, Mrs. ERCEG emphasized high levels of employees' turnover which is one of the main problems in public administration.

**Session 10 conclusions:**

Although Croatia is a member of European Union, there are still problems in terms of procedures of paying employees in public administration as well as high level of employees' turnover. This fact gives space to improvements and sharing good practice at regional level.

**Session 11: Challenges of Public Financing in Split Dalmatia County –  
Lecturing by Krešimir Budiša**

---

**Mr. Krešimir BUDIŠA**, as consultant at the regional level, has a great experience in managing and conducting projects for public administration. Thanks to his broad experience, Mr. BUDIŠA opened a discussion about density of population, approaches to taxation in Croatia, problems of revenues and subsidies. He went through legal and financial consequences of the project and pointed out that same

*This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.  
This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein*

**MEETING MINUTES**

solutions can be applicable for Croatia. It would be beneficial to put some of those suggestions in the context of regional countries, such as Albania and Serbia.

**Session 11 conclusions:**

The representatives of project consortia were informed about issues of budgeting and taxation in Croatia, with lots of good suggestions on how those issues could be solved and avoided in regional countries. Additionally, Mr. BUDIŠA stressed the importance of clearly defined strategy for developing public administration on the national and regional level, which will contribute to more balanced development of the country.

**III work day****Session 12: Results and challenges regarding financial management knowledge & qualification structure of the employees in Albania & Serbia (WP.1)**

---

The third day of the Study visit meeting started with presentations conducted by Mrs. **Žaklina VESELINOVIĆ** and Mr. **Dejan STANKOVIĆ**. The presentation topics covered the content of questionnaire as well as the results gained after collecting data for WP1 in cooperation with partners from the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, the Ministry of Finance, Human Resources Management Service of the Republic of Serbia and regional partners from University of Tirana. The main goal of the questionnaire was to map current level of knowledge and competencies of financial managers, accountants and controllers within public sector. After presenting the first preliminary version of results, partners from the Education Policy Centre responded on numerous questions regarding challenges, which they had during conducting a research, and how data could be used for designing trainings and Master programs in regional education institutions.

**Session 12 conclusions:**

The acquired results were presented and partners had a chance to discuss main issues regarding financial management, accounting and auditing in public administration. Educational Policy Centre will prepare reports till 25<sup>th</sup> September, 2017, which is in line with the timeframe.

**Session 13: Challenges of conducting research regarding financial management knowledge & qualifications structure of the employees in Albania (WP.1.)**

---

Significant input during the third day came from professors **Husein MUCEKU** and **Arlinda YMERAJ** who indicated some critical issues in public administration of Albania, particularly in the field of financial management, accounting, controlling and auditing. It was interesting to hear that the same issues appear in Albanian public administration as in Serbian public administration, particularly employees' turnover and problems in financial reporting, which are topics that should be addressed in future trainings, developed for internal auditors in public administration.

*This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.*

*This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein*

**MEETING MINUTES****Session 13 conclusions:**

Challenges in public administration in both regional countries are similar. Therefore, it is very important to recognize and address them in an adequate way in order to define adequate steps for the future. As the project's final goal is designing and accrediting five new Master Degree Programs and three short-term trainings in both regional countries, it is extremely important to know in which direction and what kind of knowledge those programs and trainings should provide for employees in public administration.

### Session 14: Future steps in next 6 months

---

Coordinator professor **Sladjana BENKOVIĆ** has informed partners about future steps and timeframe regarding implantation of project activities in next six months. Those activities include:

- WP.1 Issuing 4 reports
  - Report on financial management knowledge of employees in public administration in Albania & Serbia
  - Report on qualification structure in public administration in Albania & Serbia
  - Report with recommendations regarding harmonization of national strategies with EU directives
  - Report on professional capacities employees at regional partner universities
- WP.2 Purchasing of equipment and literature at regional universities & Organizing Study visits at USGM & MBU
- WP.3 Developing and designing Master Degree Programs according to internal university capacities and project goals
- WP.5 Designing and delivering a 2-day training in Serbia and Albania - BMU Hosted by PhD. **Giuseppe GROSSI**, professor of Public Management and Accounting at Kristianstad University, Sweden; organizing lectures for colleagues from regional countries at University in Belgrade (second week of October 2017)
- WP.6 Evaluation of events that will be organized
- WP.7 Issuing 2 more Newsletters to boost project progress, promoting trainings that will be organized for employees in public administration
- WP.8 Reporting about project activities
  - Guidebook for financial issues (prepared by project secretary **Aleksandar JOVIĆ**)

**Session 14 conclusions:**

Coordinator professor **Sladjana BENKOVIĆ** has indicated steps that partners have to take in order to fulfill obligations allocated by project. She stressed the importance of anticipating and predicting possible obstacles and taking actions on time. Additionally, she shared with all the participants the Homework proposal in [APPENDIX 3](#).

### Session 15: AOB (Any other business)

---

At the end of the first Study visit at University of Split, all partners have expressed great satisfaction with organization and content of the first study visit. It was concluded that we have to continue with such a high level and quality of activities.

*This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.*

*This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein*

**MEETING MINUTES****Session 15 conclusions:**

The Study visit at University of Split is rated very positively . Best regards to the host institution.

## APPENDIX 1: ATTENDEES

*This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.  
This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any  
use which may be made of the information contained therein*

**APPENDIX 2:**

DOCUMENT TYPE	<b>External/internal document</b>
PLACE	<b>University of Split   Belgrade   SERBIA</b>

**Financial Management, Accounting & Controlling curricula development for capacity building of public administration****AGENDA OF STEERING COMMITTEE #1**

*This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.  
This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein*

**FINAC Steering Committee meeting No. 1**

University of Split, Faculty of Economics, 19 June 2017. 11:00 - 11:30

**Chair:** Professor Sladjana Benković, Ph.D., Project Coordinator (University of Belgrade)**Co-chairs:** Professor Ivana Bilić, Ph.D. Coordinator of University of Split**AGENDA**

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Time (estimated)</b>	<b>Input prepared by</b>	<b>Voting</b>	<b>Reference documents</b>
1	Establishing the quorum	2 min	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	Adoption of the Agenda	3 min	UBG	Yes	Draft Agenda
3	Adoption of the minutes from constitutional Steering Committee meeting	5 min	UBG	Yes	<i>Minutes from constitutional Steering Committee meeting</i> <a href="http://www.finac.org.rs/site/results">http://www.finac.org.rs/site/results</a>
4	Adoption of Report on the implementation of the 1st 6 months activities (adoption)	3 min	UBG	Yes	None (oral report)
5	Adoption of Study visit protocol	3 min	MBU	Yes	Workspace WP.2.0. <a href="http://www.finac.org.rs/site/workspace">http://www.finac.org.rs/site/workspace</a>
6	Adoption of Dissemination and sustainability plan	3 min	UBG	Yes	Dissemination and sustainability plan <a href="http://www.finac.org.rs/site/results">http://www.finac.org.rs/site/results</a>
7	Adoption of legal and financial plan	10 min	UBG	Possible	None (oral input)
8	AOB (any other business)	3 min	N/A	Possible	N/A

**APPENDIX 3:**DOCUMENT TYPE **Internal document**PLACE **University of Split |  
Split | CROATIA****Financial Management, Accounting & Controlling curricula  
development for capacity building of public administration****HOMEWORK TILL THE 2<sup>rd</sup> STEERING COMMITTEE**

*This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.  
This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any  
use which may be made of the information contained therein*

## **PROPOSAL 1: Homework – partner responsibilities until the 2<sup>nd</sup> Steering Committee meeting (27. September 2017)**

Adoption at the 1<sup>st</sup> Steering Committee meeting of the FINAC project (19. June 2017)

Proposal submitted by: UBG

### **WP.1 Current capacity of public administration employees**

---

<b>CEP</b>	<p><b>Finalise reports under WP.1.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Report on financial management knowledge of employees in public administration in Albania &amp; Serbia</li> <li>▪ Report on qualification structure of the employees in public administration in Albania &amp; Serbia</li> <li>▪ Report with recommendations regarding harmonization of national strategies with EU directives</li> <li>▪ Report on professional capacities employees at regional partner universities</li> </ul>
------------	---

---

### **WP. 2 Knowledge exchange at the EU partner institutions**

---

<b>UBG &amp; USGM</b>	2.1. Organising visit to Università degli studi “Guglielmo Marconi”
<b>All universities</b>	2.2. The beginning of the activities of purchasing equipment and literature

---

### **WP. 3 Developing and designing Master Degree Programs according to the internal university capacities and project goals**

---

<b>UBG, CEP and Ministry</b>	Recognizing capacities and developing Master Degree Programs which are examples of good practice. The beginning of preparation for purchasing equipment and literature.
------------------------------	---

---

*This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.  
This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein*

## WP. 5 Designing and developing short term trainings

<b>BMU</b>	Work on activities of designing 2-day training that be held in Serbia and Albania during November 2017.
<b>UBG, UNIST &amp; MU</b>	Contacting of PhD Giuseppe Grossi professor of Public Management and Accounting at Kristianstad University, Sweden in order to organize lectures (second week of October 2017)

## WP.6 Quality control & monitoring

<b>UNIST</b>	The second report preparation which follows the Study visit to UNIST
--------------	--

## WP.7 Dissemination and exploitation

<b>UBG, MPALSG &amp; UKG and all partner institution</b>	Issuing 1 more issue of the project Newsletter with purpose of increasing project visibility Promoting trainings that will be organizing for employees in public administration
--	--

## WP.8 Project management

<b>UBG</b>	Guide for financial issues
------------	----------------------------