ERASMUS+ CBHE PROJECT

**Fostering Internationalization at Montenegrin HEIs through Efficient Strategic Planning – IESP**

Project no. 609675-EPP-1-2019-1-ME-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP

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# The IESP consortium

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***Summary***

"Know-how transfer related to internationalization of research and innovation" *online* training was organized at the premises of the Université Côte d’Azur, Nice, France represented by the coordinator Srđan Redžepagić, Full Professor of Economics, aiming to provide necessary information to Montenegrin HEIs' young researchers (PhD students) on know-how process in internationalization of research and innovations. This tailored training hosted by Mohamed Arouri, Full Professor of Economics, Finance & Management at the Université Côte d’Azur, has addressed four topics, as follows:

* TOPIC 1: International research and innovation cooperation: What is international research and innovation cooperation, and how it is `measured`? How is it working in terms of EU funded programmes and projects? Examples of good practice given by EU universities;
* TOPIC 2: Competitive bids preparation and implementation;
* TOPIC 3: Innovative activities: what is innovation? Significance of IP protection and patenting process, especially international, role of researchers in the innovation process;
* TOPIC 4: Communication and presentation skills for the purpose of extending research cooperation internationally (i.e. outside conferences and conference presentations).

During the intensive 7-day training, the attendees had the opportunity to get familiar with:

* Benefits of international research and innovation cooperation;
* Examples of international research and innovation funding;
* Project preparation and funding programs such as H2020, project planning;
* Competitive bids preparation, implementation and examples of good practices given by EU universities;
* How to write a research proposal with details of each component;
* Intellectual Property Rights and research integrity;
* Open Access and Open Innovation and International Knowledge Transfer;
* Team building and management including: planning a new position, the recruitment process, advertising the position, finding the right collaborators;
* Assumptions on costs reporting (direct incurred costs, directly allocated costs, indirect costs, budget categories, in-kind contributions, review and reporting, audit) with appropriate examples and case studies;
* Risk management strategy including: risk management process, risk analysis, risk evaluation;
* Innovative Activities: IP, patenting process and know-how transfer related to internationalization of research and innovation including Intellectual Property Management (IPM) and International Knowledge Transfer (IKT);
* Utility model, industrial design, trademark, copyright;
* Communication and presentation skills including: marketing your research to your stakeholders, presentation skills and dissemination strategy and good practices;
* How to choose a Journal for international publication with the emphasis to its promotion and demonstrating the research impact (*h-index*), commercializing.

Representatives, young researchers from Montenegro actively participated in the training. They were engaged to prepare and present case studies related to their PhD topic, thesis, and their field of interest for each afore mentioned training topic. Prepared works were discussed after the presentation with host, Prof. Arouri and he gave brief overview, comments on strengths and weaknesses of presented works.

**1. *Internationalization of research: theoretical approach***

This report contains conclusions of the internal written reports of the candidates that attended the training [1-11]. The overall comment of young researchers (PhD students) was that the internationalization of research has increasingly become an area of focus for higher education institutions (HEIs) but has received less scholarly attention in the study of internationalization in higher education [12]. The national and institutional strategies should be directed to the internationalization of research to define the way that should be followed. However, after the realized training, the factors affecting international research have been recognized. One of the most important facts is that the participation of each young researcher can lead to cognition of the different research opportunities and funding programs.

It is widely accepted that internationalization is only related to the international mobility of students, and HEIs developed strategies of internationalization in response to student-related concerns and transnational education [12]. In the last decade, significant changes to the HEIs are reported since the focus of the internationalization has transferred to the research work of the academic staff. The whole process started with the generally conclusions that researchers have their network of other scholarly colleagues, so they do not need any kind of additional support for the international research activities.

However, during the young researcher training, the participants got familiar with the research collaboration that serves the knowledge dissemination mission of their faculties or the whole university. It impacts the positive effect on the researchers’ productivity, the quality of research, and the improvement of research excellence. Therefore, the internationalization of researches focuses also on diversified funding, recruitment, collaboration with stakeholders, dynamic relationship with government and industry, etc [12].

Referring to recent trends in research management, obtaining funding, or to publish a research work in the international journal represents a very competitive process especially to the patent for an invention or innovation [13]. The young researchers learned some best practices in international research & innovation funding in order to understand the main components of a good research proposal that meets international standards (Fig. 1). The main objectives reported on this topic are:

* International research & innovation cooperation;
* International knowledge transfer;
* Intellectual property management & Patenting process;
* Competitive research proposal preparation – Best practices & international standards;
* Define a research question;
* Literature & Methodology;
* Innovation, expected results and dissemination;
* Team building and international networking;
* Budget and reporting;
* Risk management;
* Communication and presentation skills.

There is a pervasive assumption of a positive connection between the internationalization of research and development and innovation, meaning the ability to innovate in an international trade environment will be beneficial for all. The question is: “Is the innovation performance of the universities related to their internationalization?” A higher internationalization of research could lead to higher innovation rates. Also, Greater innovation facilitates research internationalization as lead innovators have the advantage of globally competitive product portfolios. Benefits of international research are [13]:

* Access to knowledge;
* Open up markets;
* Sharing expertise;
* Improve research quality;
* Science diplomacy;
* Higher global profile.



Fig. 1. What is “International Research?” - adopted from [13]

* 1. **Challenges**

It is challenging for each university or faculty to seek greater international engagement in their research. Otherwise, the universities and faculties are facing with the outbound migration of professionals (“brain drain”) in one side, while in the other, the internationalization leads to the decreasing use of local languages in research. In international cooperation, to avoid any kind of problems related to the inequality of partners, a key input is to enrich the research process and elevate quality (by bringing diverse perspectives) [12].

Finally, at the institutional level, while the idea of internationalization of research is often considered important, the extent to which it is integrated into institutional mission and strategy is often problematic. Large research collaborations addressing complex problems (and therefore involving researchers from diverse disciplinary backgrounds and a variety of stakeholders) also require a significant, and sometimes cumbersome, administrative framework [12]. The work of the administration engaged in the internationalization of the university or a faculty should be precisely set up. This can be taken in the case of Montenegrin partner universities within the IESP project and their future international steps.

**2. *Internationalization of innovation***

Having in mind current trends in HE, innovation is required by increased internationalization. It is a consequence of the internationalization that enhances additional innovation and seek the opportunity to gather further knowledge. Such knowledge enhances competitiveness and innovative output through the ability to adapt and apply locally-relevant knowledge.

There are various phases in the innovation process. However, the innovation brings the recognition of change, planning and decision making, initiative and implementation of the planned actions, and institutionalization. This last phase is treated as a critical one because innovation in HEIs at the end takes place between colleagues. In addition, in the area of internationalization, the stage of institutionalization is critical, particularly due to the fact that internationalization in many cases has been a reactive response of institutions to external policies formulated at the supranational level, making them heavily dependent on external funding and subsidies [14].

It is accepted the opinion that the outcome of the internationalization process is dependent on the characteristics of the innovation. First, to provide the successful internationalization, the innovation has to fit the HEI context in which it has to evolve. Secondly, the actors involved in the internationalization process have to perceive the innovation as having a relative advantage, compared with the pre-adoption stage. Some EU programs provide two different types of activities such as mobility grants and institutional grants. The first type of activities includes teaching staff mobility, study visit, curricular development, etc. Institutional grants are the subject of different institutions that includes university cooperation project and similar initiatives. Today, the attention is paid to the specific types of study visits, distance learning, cooperation with the industry sector, the launching of start-ups and spin-offs, etc. Obviously, the respected level of innovation is expected in all these activities [14].

As indicated in [14], internationalization causes innovation in HE, although it primarily takes the form of piecemeal changes or innovative enclaves within HEIs. On the other hand, questions concerning the influence of internationalization on the role of national governments, and on the use of policy instruments, for example, funding, planning, evaluation and regulation, should be addressed. Also, the consequences for internal management of HEIs, including internationalization office, for the relationship with wider institutional change, and the use of new technologies represent a challenge to all Montenegrin partner universities in the project.

***Conclusion***

The general conclusions are related to gaining knowledge in the areas of application for various international projects as well as strengthening the international connection between young researchers in Montenegro. The training together with intensive partners’ virtual meetings, and exchanges of the opinions were extremely interesting, easy to understand, and some unknown terms were always explained through some examples. The point is to involve all participants in the process of internationalization in the communication and thus enabled the transfer of different experiences among them that led to the acquisition of new knowledge. Only through the evaluation of examples and good practices in a systematic and dedicated way, the described recent trends in international research policy and innovation cooperation should be addressed.

This was one of the great opportunities to rethink our institutional and personal capacity to apply international actions and to strengthen the connection between different young researchers (PhD students) who are working in Montenegro. The deliverable in the project provided specific recommendations to know-how transfer related to the internationalization of research and innovation.

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