



Tempus

sinc@he

**SINC@HE**

**Support and Inclusion of students with disabilities  
at higher education institutions in Montenegro**

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2<sup>nd</sup> External Evaluation Report

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## List of Abbreviations

<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>HEI</b>	Higher Educational Institution
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technologies
<b>M</b>	Month
<b>ME</b>	Montenegro
<b>QCM</b>	Quality Control Management
<b>TEMPUS</b>	The trans-European mobility scheme for university studies
<b>WP</b>	Work Package

## Executive Summary

The main goal of this External Evaluation report is to assess whether the objectives of the SINC@HE project for the second period of its execution (M13-M20), described in the project proposal, have been achieved through the means proposed. After providing the external evaluation methodology and the project description, the external evaluation findings are presented together with the deliverables achieved. Moreover, the corrective actions according to the evaluation are given along with the indicators of progress defined in the Logical Framework of the project. The majority of the activities of the SINC@HE project have been realized according to project plan, are in line with its aims and objectives outlined in the original application, but four deliverables have been delayed and three have to provide additional information. The recommendations raised in my first report concerning the quality of the deliverables have not been applied. Recommendations are provided again aiming to the improvement of the deliverables.

## External Evaluation Objective

The main goal of this External Evaluation report is to assess whether the objectives of the SINC@HE project for the second period of its execution (M13-M20), described in the project proposal, have been achieved through the means proposed. Specifically it will evaluate the extent the project's activities and deliverables are in line with the aims and objectives, as well as with regards to expected results and planned activities, outlined in the original application. Linked to that this evaluation seeks to assess as to whether all project activities have been realized according in due course and to certify that no delays have occurred with a negative impact on the project results. Finally, this External Evaluation report aims to conclude with a feedback on the deliverables and recommendations on potential improvements.

## External Evaluation Methodology

In order to carry out the External Evaluation the author was given full access to all relevant external and internal documents and on the contents of the project's website <http://sinche.uom.gr/>. Documentation comprises above all relevant documents including the original project proposal, as part of the official grant agreement, progress reports and deliverables. Several telephone, e-mail and teleconference communication contacts were realized with the project manager Professor Lefkothea Kartasidou. In order to monitor and control all activities for the 2nd project year the author visited the partners at Podgorica and Kotor (Montenegro) from 10 to 14 June 2013. I had the opportunity to meet and discuss on the SINC@HE project with a number of project participants. Moreover, I was able to inspect all special and general equipment and also discuss with all partners issues concerning Training (WP5), (WP4) Establishing support services and capacity building for university students with disabilities. According to my experience on accessibility I made some suggestions for the improvement of planned services.

To provide a context for reporting the evaluation findings, first the SINC@HE project aims and approach will be summarized, along with a list of its WPs, activities and deliverables.

## Project Description

Project SINC@HE: **“Support and Inclusion of students with disabilities at higher education institutions in Montenegro”** has been designed to improve the quality and relevance of support and inclusion of students with disabilities in Montenegro. The main objective of the project is to create the conditions and standards that will assimilate the quality of inclusion of students with disabilities in EU HEIs and will be harmonized according to EU practices and policies. Developed standards would be incorporated into existing legal and sublegal acts at the national levels and at the HE institutional levels. A long term objective of the outcomes will be to strengthen the open society values regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities in HEIs. In order to provide a solid base for the implementation of newly developed inclusive

standards the SINC@HE project will build necessary capacities through establishing of a framework for improving the support, inclusion and quality assurance at HEIs. This framework will be incorporated in HEI regulatory documents. HEIs have to keep the academic and non academic staff well informed and trained on the needs of students with disabilities. Thus, the SINC@HE project will provide extensive training for all levels of staff involved in support and inclusion of students with disabilities in HEIs.

The specific objectives of the project are:

- To improve university regulatory frameworks, guidelines and recommendations to allow full support for disabled students in ME higher education institutions.
- To improve institutional capacities through providing special equipment, support services and staff training for teaching students with disabilities.
- To establish Student Advisory Offices at each partner university for counseling, guidance, tutoring, relationships and psychological support.
- To raise awareness and motivation on inclusive education and to increase the number of prospective students with disability.

The SINC@HE project is coordinated by the University of Macedonia (Thessaloniki, Greece) along with the following 10 partners: University of Warsaw (Warsaw, Poland), University Macerata (Macerata, Italy), Arcola Research LLP (London, United Kingdom), the Slovenian Association of Disabled Students (Ljubljana, Slovenia), University of Donja Gorica (Podgorica, Montenegro), University Mediterranean (Podgorica, Montenegro), Institute for Education and Rehabilitation of persons with hearing and speech disorders (Kotor, Montenegro), Association of youth with disabilities of Montenegro (Podgorica, Montenegro), Ministry of information society and Telecommunications (Podgorica, Montenegro), Institute of Information Technology (Podgorica, Montenegro) and the Faculty for Management Herceg Novi (Igalo, Montenegro).

The content of the SINC@HE project is organized in ten WPs that follow a logical development of the main idea of support and inclusion of students with disabilities in HEIs. The WPs are classified in five types: development, quality control, dissemination, exploitation and management. Table 1 presents the titles, duration and the type of each WP.

The data in Table 1 indicate that only six WPs (WP4, WP5, WP7, WP8, WP9 and WP10) are active in the reference period (M13-M20) of this External Evaluation Report. Thus, WP1, WP2, WP3 and WP6 will be excluded from the further discussion in this report. Workpackage WP4 has been planned to be completed in the reference period.

Table 1  
WorkPackages of the SINC@HE project  
(active WPs in the period M13-M20 are in bold)

WP	Title	Duration	Type of WP
1	<i>Background analysis for inclusion of students with disabilities in HE</i>	<i>M1-M4</i>	<i>Development</i>
2	<i>Improvement of institutional frameworks for inclusion of students with disabilities</i>	<i>M4-M10</i>	<i>Development</i>
3	<i>Definition of support services for students with disabilities at HEIs</i>	<i>M4-M6</i>	<i>Development</i>
4	<b>Establishing support services and capacity building for university students with disabilities</b>	<b>M6-M18</b>	<b>Development</b>
5	<b>Training of university staff for working with disabled students</b>	<b>M13-M23</b>	<b>Development</b>
6	<i>Piloting and evaluation at partner universities</i>	<i>M24-M36</i>	<i>Development</i>
7	<b>Quality control and monitoring</b>	<b>M1-M36</b>	<b>Quality Control</b>
8	<b>Dissemination and raising awareness</b>	<b>M3-M36</b>	<b>Dissemination</b>
9	<b>Exploitation of results</b>	<b>M1-M36</b>	<b>Exploitation</b>
10	<b>Management of the Project</b>	<b>M1-M36</b>	<b>Management</b>

The WPs of the SINC@HE project are further analyzed in a number of activities. Each activity corresponds to at least one deliverable with the same title. The deliverables are classified in five types: report, methodology, learning resources, events and other products. Table 2 presents the titles, duration, expected delivery date and type of the deliverables for the reference period M13-M20.

Table 2  
Deliverables/activities of the SINC@HE project for the period M13-M20

Reference number	Title of Delivery / Activity	Total Duration (weeks)	Expected Delivery Date	Type
4.1	Development of ICT support services for student with disabilities	40	M18	Learning resources
4.3	Establishment of the network of Student advisory offices at each partner	15	M18	Learning resources
4.4	Upgrade university websites for guidelines on studying with disability	15	M18	Methodology
5.1	Analyzing training needs for each partner institution involved	8	M14	Report
5.2	Basic Training on inclusive practices and support services for SwD	12	M15, M18, M20	Training and Report on Training
5.3	Advanced training on inclusive practices and support services for SwD	12	M15, M18, M20	Training and Report on Training
7.1	Internal quality monitoring and control	72	M36	Report
7.2	External quality monitoring and control	12	M20	Report
7.3	Inter-Tempus coaching	2	M13	Report
8.1	Creation of the project website	18	M13-M20	Other products
8.2	Raising awareness and motivation among current and prospective disabled students	18	M13-M20	Events: Conferences and Seminars
8.3	Media promotion of new university capacities for education of disabled students	6	M13	Other products
8.4	Dissemination conference with stakeholders	3	M13	Events: Conferences and Seminars
9.1	Establishing of inter-university peer support	36	M13-M20	Other products
10.2	Project coordination meetings	6	M13, M18	Methodology



The duration of the SINC@HE project is 36 months. This External Evaluation Report refers to the second year of its execution (M13-M20). Another External Evaluation Report is expected for the next year of the project.

## External Evaluation Findings

Table 3 presents the achieved deliverables of the SINC@HE project for the first year of its execution. Based on the information one can obtain from the reports themselves, the following data for each deliverable is shown: actual delivery date, version, number of pages and partner(s) involved in the authoring of the deliverable.

In total 13 deliverables have been produced (including the current report), out of the 14 expected,

- Deliverable 5.3 have not been produced yet.

On the produced deliverables I have the following concerns:

- Deliverable 4.1: The Development of ICT support services for student with disabilities are not included in the report.
- Deliverable 4.3: It not clear if the Establishment of the network of Student advisory offices at each partner has been achieved. The provided resolution does not include the necessary signatures of the legal responsible of each partner.
- Deliverable 4.4: What are the specific international guidelines that have been followed? The Measurements of the web sites' accessibility be well-known checkers are not included. Table 1 (section) is not included in the report. Implementation is given only for the website of UNIM.

In practice, Deliverables 4.1, 4.3 and 4.4 are considered as not have been produced yet and it is expected that they will be delivered in delay.

- Deliverable 8.1: The developments/changes/improvements in the website for the period M13-M20 is not included. Some indicative statistics on hits are only included.
- Deliverable 8.2: The activities on raising awareness are not described for the period M13-M20. A webpage is given (but not in English).
- Deliverable 8.3: The activities on media promotion are not described for the period M13-M20.

For the Deliverables 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3 I am proposing to prepare a small report to indicate the activities realized in the period M13-M20.

Most of the manuscripts of the deliverables do not provide information on:

- a) the actual delivery date,
- b) the version,
- c) the partners participating in the production of the deliverable
- d) references to previous deliverables or to the literature.

Furthermore, the documents of the deliverables do not follow a unique template.

The available documents of the deliverables are not provided in a full accessible electronic format. The value of all the deliverables would be strengthening if they include a section with references to the literature or the information resources.

The above remarks on the quality of the deliverables were raised in my previous report [1], but unfortunately they have not been taken into consideration.

The website <http://sinche.uom.gr> provides detailed and in depth information on the SINC@HE project. Its main menu include: a) project overview, b) project objectives, background, description and dissemination, c) the list of the participants along with their profiles and contacts, d) the activities of the project (workpackages and deliverables), and e) the three year workplan. Moreover it includes a calendar, photo gallery from the meetings, download area, links and site map.

Table 3  
Deliverables for the period M13-M20

Ref. No	Delivery Title	Expected Delivery Date	Actual Delivery Date	Version	Pages	Delivered by the partner(s)	Type
4.1	Development of ICT support services for student with disabilities	M18			5	University of Mediterranean	Learning Resources
4.3	Establishment of the network of Student advisory offices at each partner	M18			4	University of Mediterranean	Learning Resources
4.4	Upgrade university websites for guidelines on studying with disability	M18			11	University of Mediterranean	Learning Resources
5.1	Analyzing training needs for each partner institution involved	M14			19	Association of Youth with Disabilities of Montenegro	Report
5.2	Basic Training on inclusive practices and support services for SwD	M15, M18, M20	13 Nov 2013	Final	11	Association of Youth with Disabilities, University of Macedonia	Training
5.3	Advanced training on inclusive practices and support services for SwD	M15, M18, M20				Association of Youth with Disabilities of Montenegro	Training
7.1	Internal quality monitoring and control	M36		Final	26	University of Macedonia	
7.2	External quality monitoring and control	M20	30 Nov 2013	Final	16	G. Kouroupetroglou	Report
7.3	Inter-Tempus coaching	M13	13 June 2013	Final	5	University of Macedonia	

8.1	Creation of the project website	M36	13 March 2013		10	University of Macedonia	
8.2	Raising awareness and motivation among current and prospective disabled students	M36				Association of Youth with Disabilities of Montenegro	
8.3	Media promotion of new university capacities for education of disabled students	M13	7 March 2013		3	Association of Youth with Disabilities of Montenegro	
9.1	Establishing of inter-university peer support	M36		Final	3	University of Donja Gorica	
10.2	Project coordination meetings	M13, M18		Final	4	University of Macedonia	

The management of the project by the coordinator partner was very effective and successful. Also, the internal QCM team was very efficient.

## Indicators of progress

According to the Logical Framework Matrix indicators such as increased number of students with disabilities enrolled in university by 2014 have to be taken into consideration in order to evaluate to what extent the project objectives have been achieved. Thus, it must be marked that during the period M13-M20 of the second year 28 students with disabilities from ME Institutions were involved in the dissemination activity (see Table 4).

Table 4  
Involvement of students with disabilities

Dissemination Conference 2013	
Current HE Students with Disabilities	15
Students with Disabilities from IERK	7
High School students with disabilities	6
Total	28

Moreover, 5 individuals with disabilities were involved as trainers in the training activities of the consortium (see Table 5).

Table 5  
Trainers with disabilities from the Consortium

Partner	Type of disability of the trainer
1. UW	Visual Disability
2. UW	Physical Disability
3. FMHN	Mobility Disability
4. DSIS	Mobility Disability
5. DSIS	Visual Disability

It is important to focus that during the period M13-M20 the focus of the project was on training. In total 252 academic and non academic staff was trained (see Table 6). Moreover, I would like to mention that the consortium partners provided further training through the Moodle Learning Management System [2].

Table 6  
Indicators of Training

Trainees during the training period	
<b>Basic Training</b>	
Teaching staff	30
Non teaching staff	58
Students	4
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	24
Female	68
<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>Advanced Training</b>	
Teaching staff	45
Non teaching staff	85
Students	4
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	50
Female	84
<b>Total</b>	<b>134</b>
<b>Trainees with the Moodle</b>	
Non teaching staff	10
Teaching staff	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>252</b>

## Final Remarks and Recommendations

In conclusion, the majority of the activities of the SINC@HE project for the period M13-M20 have been realized according to project plan, are in line with its aims and objectives outlined in the original application, but a number of deliverables have to be produced again with an acceptable content.

Finally, the following recommendations are given aiming to the improvement the quality of the project.

### Recommendations:

- Provide the final Deliverables 5.3, 4.1, 4.3, and 4.4.
- For the Deliverables 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3 prepare a small report to indicate the activities realized in the period M13-M20.
- Include in the website of the project the presentations and educational material of Deliverables 5.2 and 5.3.
- For each deliverable:
  - Provide a delivery date in the first page of each report.
  - Indicate the type of the report: final, intermediate, preliminary, etc. or alternatively its version.
  - Provide the names of the author(s) of each deliverable as well as the corresponding affiliation.
  - Use a unique template for the manuscript of all reports.
  - Include a section with References and other literature resources at the end of each report.
  - Provide the document of each deliverable in a full accessible electronic format.

## References

- [1] G. Kouroupetroglou: 1st External Evaluation Report of the Project “Support and Inclusion of students with disabilities at higher education institutions in Montenegro”, 30 Jan. 2013
- [2] The MOODLE Learning Management System <https://moodle.org/>