**Tempus project *Master program in Educational leadership* (EdLead)**

**Project kick-off meeting minutes report**

**Jagodina, 16-17 December 2013**

**DAY 1**

Attendance list:

* University of Kragujevac (UKG), P1, Serbia (Jelena Teodorovic, Violeta Jovanovic, Ilijana Cutura, Nenad Vulovic, Biljana Stojanovic, Ivan Ilic, Verica Babic, Branka Arsovic and Lidija Zlatic)
* University of Belgrade (UB), P2, Serbia (Danijela Petrovic, Svetlana Cizmic, Ivana Petrovic, Milanko Cabarkapa)
* University of Novi Sad (UNS), P3, Serbia (Olivera Knezevic Floric, Sladjana Zukovic, Stefan Ninkovic)
* University of Nis (UNI), P4, Serbia (Jelena Maksimovic, Jelena Petrovic, Marina Matejevic, Zorica Markovic)
* Institute for Educational Research (IPI), P5, Serbia (Slavica Sevkusic, Dejan Stankovic)
* Netherlands School of Educational Management (NSO), P6, The Netherlands (Huub Friederichs)
* University of Jyväskylä (UJ), P7, Finland (Mika Risku, Seppo Pulkinen)
* University of Szeged (SZTE), P8, Hungary (Vilmos Vass)
* Universitatea Alexandru Ioan Cuza (UAIC), P9, Romania (Ovidiu Gavrilovici)
* Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MEST), P10, Serbia (Slavica Jasic)
* Head Teacher Association of Primary Schools of Novi Sad (HTAPSNS), P11, Serbia (Lidija Rakita, Zoltan Ardjelan, Nedeljko Djoric)
* Association of High School Principals of Novi Sad (AHSPNS), P12, Serbia (Stanko Matic, Vesna Bursac)
* City municipality of Zvezdara (CMZ), P13, Serbia (Sonja Stamenovic, Vesna Petrovic Urosevic)

Meeting was opened by the Dean of the Faculty of Education in Jagodina, Prof. Sretko Divljan, Project coordinator, Prof. Jelena Teodorovic and the Vice dean for international cooperation, professor Nenad Vulovic. During the introduction, Prof. Teodorovic reminded everyone how the project started, and how the partners were connected in various ways before the project. Also, it was pointed out that the field of educational leadership has been well researched, and that it has proven to be the second largest factor impacting student achievement, next to teacher quality. On the other side, Serbia hasn’t done much to educate its principals. There are not enough systematic courses for their professional development, nor quality criteria that principals have to satisfy to become principals. Thankfully, Serbian policy makers recently started to pay attention to education leadership training, mainly because of three things:

1) National strategy on education that recognizes the importance of instructional leadership,

2) Law on the Foundations of the Educational System that stipulates licensing exam for the principals,

3) Adoption of the *Standards for Competencies for principals* by the National education council of Serbia in February 2013.

It was concluded that the project was right on time and it is expected that vast amount of research findings on educational leadership should be incorporated in the process of designing the Educational leadership master program in Serbia. Examination of successful preparatory programs in other countries will also be used with those findings. Then, the main goals and work packages were presented through a powerpoint presentation[[1]](#footnote-1).

**The main goal** of the project is the development and implementation of a joint, modern, interdisciplinary 60 ECTS Master program in Educational Leadership, including professional development (PD) courses, that will address Serbian Standards for Competencies for principals, Law on the Foundations of the Educational System and Strategy for Development of Education. The program will be modular and practice-oriented, and will increase competencies of aspiring educational leaders, school principals and middle management, as well as of school boards and employees in local, regional and national educational authorities.

The project also has **an additional goal**: establishment of an Educational Leadership Network for exchange of experiences, discourse on educational leadership, identification of issues in educational leadership in Serbia, and formulation of recommendations for their improvement.

The second session on the first day started with a more informal introduction of the partners. Then, the nine work packages were presented in more detail. Lead partners for specific work packages got necessary information about activities within work packages and their role in it. Division of the work was based on capacities and abilities of the partners.

**WP 1 (DEV): Needs analysis and review of state of art**

**Prof. Teodorovic put forth that the master programme should be both research and practice based. The *analysis of needs* of 120 Serbian principals and education public servants will be done by the Institute for Educational Research, which is the lead partner for WP 1, with the help and advice of other partners who feel they can help. The initial plan for this activity was that 100 participants get the questionnaires and about 20 be enrolled in focus groups research. Activity starts in January since at the end of May reporting on the needs of Serbian principals is planned. The second activity that goes in parallel with the first activity is a review of current research about educational leadership and the review of the existing effective educational programmes, which also need to be done by the end of May. After these activities are done, the crucial meeting is planned at NSO. At the next consortium meeting proposed at Netherlands at late June 2014 partners will do all the necessary preparation of concept and the structure of the program. Main outcome of the meeting will be draft report containing concept and structure of the Master program and PD courses (target groups, learning outcomes, competencies, number and order of courses, core / module / elective, ECTS, etc).**

*After the discussion, the second part of June and potentially July is proposed as a time for visit to NSO. As Huub suggested the visit can be tailored to people’s needs. It is expected from the visitors to make proposals for the training at Netherlands.*

*As it stands in the proposal and as everyone agreed, the core research for WP 1 will be located in IPI, as the most efficient way for using resources. IPI has the team of 5 people who will be the core crew for research of state-of-art in educational leadership, exemplary programs and needs analysis. One person from IPI will be the contact person for WP1 so ideas can be disseminated to and from the partners efficiently. Research core group (IPI) will gather, and use the literature needed for research. Dejan Stankovic was elected as a representative and contact person for the delivery of the WP 1.*

*Vilmos Vass suggested that the core group for conducting the research should find a way for different partners to jump in and ensure smooth process of research and one of the suggestions was to create an action plan for research.*

*Ovidiu Gavrilovici suggested that all partners get draft of the components of the research, summary of the work or questions related to research with timelines and deadlines. This will give the project partners the feeling that all the partners are involved as one community.*

*After the questions of foreign partners, Prof. Teodorovic cleared up that Standards of competences for principals are the same for the principals for primary and secondary school and that they are rather universal. They are being translated into English and will be sent to partners subsequently.*

*Mika Risku emphasized that leadership is seen as a highly contextual, so researchers have to analyse every context where the principals work and determine how leadership is seen in Serbia. Research can never capture the routine of everyday, internal pressures and needs. Practitioners, especially principals are the one researcher should listen. Especially, foreign partners should be aware of Serbian context. Principals are not the only stakeholders in the process; researchers need to know more about competences from parents, counsellors and representatives of municipality. One of the primary goals of research group in Serbia should be to have the created national research knowledge translated in English. Research has to be doable and feasible, not based on existing models from the EU. Needs analysis study should be translated to English.*

*Jelena Teodorovic said that it would be up to the Institute of Educational Research (IPI – lead partner for WP1) to create the reviews based on the hallmarks from the state-of-art literature and examples of good practices. IPI expertise in translating what is found in research into real life policies in Serbia is highly proven. Jelena hopes that the research will successfully determine non-negotiable things and be able to find a balance between the needs of practice and theory. Master program will not be built just for academic purpose it will be constructed for people in practice with flexible learning pathways and variety that will match principal’s needs. Program will be competence and demand driven master program: academic but useful in practice.*

*Ovidiu Gavrilovici added that gathering literature and need of analysis can be something that the projectcan can give to the EU. Literature can be also seen as a context not as a source.*

*Vilmos Vass added that demand driven approach can find a balance between academic and professional sphere. It is very important to analyse competence deficit and practical needs and find a balance between competence master program and practice oriented program. Experience based on one previous HUNSEM project can be used to make not only competence based master program but competence and demand driven MA program.*

*Jelena pointed out that the communication with the Ministry of education is recognized as the most important since the Ministry is a key stakeholder. Jelena also mentioned some of the open questions: Will there be a license exams for principals; Are they going to be principals for 8 years or that can be changed? Future principals will have to be prepared to pass the licence exam so program has to be useful and relevant. Licencing exam is included in the Law. Currently working group of the Ministry is writing the by-law how the licencing exams will look like. Jelena believes that out program can influence and, in a certain way, guide the very busy Ministry of education.*

*Mika replied that program has to be academic in a way that program should combine theory, practice and human being itself with the contexts. Important question for him is whether in this programme we are waiting what the ministry to decide on issues regarding educational leadership or we are trying to influence on the ministry (like current activities in Finland with the proposal that leadership training has to be included in teacher training and remove the boundary of pre service and in service training). In Finland leadership is found like a resource!*

*Slavica Sevkusic pointed out one risk that has been proven in previous years in Serbia: Research findings are not always recognized by the Ministry. Research group should find a way to cope with this. Research group should inform the EU partners of state of the art in Serbia because EU experts might have different expertise which doesn’t have to intersect with Serbian expertise. Principals are also not only stake holders in the process; we need to know more from the parents, local and regional authorities, Ministry….*

*Jelena suggested the option of doubling the questionnaires (from 100 to 200) and do the research not only with principals, then with regional school authorities and the people from municipalities. Help of the Ministry of education is expected in gaining access to various people for the research purposes.*

*Ovidiu Gavrilovici asked whether the quantitative and qualitative data and the existing literature can be accessible for everyone in the project in English and how the interesting information will be immediately promoted and shared during the research activity.*

*Regarding what was said, Huub Friedrich suggested to try a specific virtual learning community system where anyone can upload resources. Another possibility is to use European policy network on School Leadership (*[*http://www.schoolleadership.eu*](http://www.schoolleadership.eu)*) as one of possible solutions.*

*Jelena added that potential use of e-learning platform for quick sharing is welcome because communication strategy in the project was marked by the EACEA as somewhat conservative (Skype, meetings….).*

*Sofija Dukic from the TEMPUS office suggested that materials for the website should be attractive and carefully selected from the contents from the necessary internal platform. She emphasised that many projects have a lot of findings and materials on those internal platforms but not on the publicly available website. Partners should be aware of another type of public, not only research community.*

*Mika Risku suggested that Serbia should have national platform on Educational Leadership that will show European commission about expected changes within the field of EL because the year 2014 is the year of national networking.*

*Ovidiu Gavrilovici shared the experience that every project creates certain platform which is not always useful. His suggestion is to identify and use already active and existing platforms if they exist and link it to some of the needs of dissemination.*

*Vilmos Vass said that learning together is important and that picking a good platform for communicating and sharing information is very important.*

**WP 2 (DEV): Syllabi, materials, methods, equipment**

**Once the structure of the program is finish in the summer, development of syllabi in the second part of the year will happen. Jelena pointed out that we will need to address certain questions: If the practical placement is planned what is that practical placement going to look like? What materials will be used? What equipment will be used for which courses? Jelena also added that it is very important that all the partners are involved in answering similar questions because of the coherence of the program. Along with the development of the syllabi, teaching methods and materials will be discussed. The next meeting will be held in Szeged to present the draft syllabi and comment on them. It will also include professional development of Serbian academic staff and a Steering Committee meeting.**

*Jelena added that before the implementation of the master program, each Serbian university has to be content with the program. There are many open questions that need to be sorted out before accreditation of the programme and its implementation. Details are very important, especially administrative details (Where will the students be enrolled? On how many universities and in what kind of joint program?). Each university has to think about in detail what they want from this project, and first questions will be: how many people will be trained from the university and what modus of the program is financially feasible for each university in the long run. Jelena suggested that the best idea is that one coherent program is made for the entire country.*

**WP 3 (DEV): Training of trainers**

**Training will be held abroad, as professional development, and also in Serbia. 25 teachers, future professors of the program will be trained, but also there is a room for 50 people – 25 from regional authorities and 25 principals. Because this MA program as an outcome has a development of the base of potential mentors for future principals there is likely going to be two types of training: one for people who will teach and other for people who will be mentors. The training goes in parallel with the development of syllabi, teaching methods and teaching materials form October 2014 to May 2015. Training has to correspond to the needs, syllabi, teaching methods… The selection of teaching staff will also occur at the beginning of this process. There is a possibility that someone who isn’t directly in the project can be proposed as a teacher. Also, IPI staff can hold some PD courses. In June 2015 there will be a consortium meeting in Jyvaskyla to address, fine tune and finalize any remaining issues regarding training and courses, and it will also include professional development of Serbian academic staff and a Steering Committee meeting.**

*Jelena Teodorovic added that because of the need to learn and be trained how to make the best program, program cannot be based only on professor’s existing preferences and comfortable. People who are going to be trained have to be ready to be uncomfortable with leaning of new things, and shaping their skills in order to teach others.*

*Jelena added that the project will have to cover the rest of the Serbian regions and train a wide geographical distribution of principals and regional school authorities, because two of principals institutions are coming from the same region.*

*Jelena also pointed out the importance of future defining of criteria for selection of mentors and crafting strategy for that activity. Help of the Ministry of education, municipalities and school authorities representatives is expected. One of the suggestions was that interviews should be set up with the candidates that are proposed or applied by the regional school authorities. The other way is to have an open application. We need to decide whether there will be two types of training, one - training of mentors and second - training of people who will teach courses.*

**WP 4 (DEV): Implementation of the master program and PD courses**

**WP 4 starts with the development of the criteria for the student selection on September 2015. Implementation of the MA program and PD courses will start from October 2015. During the studies students will be exposed to foreign expertise at the seminars and workshops of EU academic staff. Those seminars will be scheduled later on starting from November 2015. 20 best students will get internships at EU partner institution.**

*Jelena added that at many universities in Serbia students get selected based on their General Point Avarege from the previous studies. Previous experience from the joint program Master in education policy can be used so that extracurricular activities, work experience and initiative of the candidates should be highly considered in the selection of the students.*

**WP 5 (DEV): Education Leadership Network**

**Jelena reported that WP5 is planned to start in the later part of the 2014, just to start off with some knowledge after the review of the successful leadership practices is done.**

*WP5 is for the people who are most enthusiastic and devoted. Not all partners have to be involved in every single aspect of the program. The main goal is to be making the recommendations for various levels of school authorities and ministry of education. Topics wider than just preparation of educational leaders (those that pertain to their selection, recruitment, re-election, salaries, etc) will be discussed.*

**WP 6 (QPLN): Quality plan**

**Both formative evaluation and external evaluation of the project will be done. Hungarian partner, SZTE, will do formative evaluation as a lead partner in this WP because of their expertise in that area. Continuous feedback is expected. Also QA of the project will be checked. Sean Ferrick from EQAVET will evaluate all aspects of this program.**

**WP 7 (DISS): Dissemination**

**Web site will be created for the project. Brochures for the MA program and PD courses will be produced. Creation and distribution of user friendly handbook Best practices in Educational Leadership will also be done.**

*Jelena Teodorovic put forth that project should be present at every possible conference, round table and dissemination event there is in next 3 years in Serbia, besides organizing some of our own, since Serbian universities, Ministry, IPI organize a lot of conferences. Also along the way it has to be decided whether the brochures of MA program and PD courses are going to be made separately or as a one brochure****.*** *Jelena Teodorovic added that the final project conference will not be organized by UKG, but that UNS will organize the final conference.*

**WP 8 (EXP): Exploitation**

**Master program will be accredited and PD courses will be registered, so that they can become institutionalized.**

*Jelena Teodorovic pointed out that accreditation of the MA program can be the task with the heavy administrative documentation and that scheduled preparation and submission of the accreditation documents to Serbian Accreditation Commission for March 2015 may be too late. Therefore, certain agility in producing the structure of the program and the syllabi (at least in the form required by the Accreditation Commission, which is not too detailed and is one page long per course) is needed by October 2014. The detailed preparation of the syllabi for the program can proceed after the accreditation documentation is submitted.*

*Jelena pointed out that Serbian partners should be familiar with the new bylaw in Serbia that recognizes university training as professional development courses. So far, in Serbia PD courses had to be registered as 2-3 day seminars of in-service training. However, the 2013 Handbook on professional development allows universities to register university courses as PD courses. People who have written the rules have not worked out the details of how these university courses will be exactly recognized (how many points they will carry for participants, etc) , so it is necessary for us to keep asking about this.*

**WP 9 (MGMT): Management**

*Jelena Teodorovic announced that meetings of academic partners for coordination and management purposes is needed at the start of the project. It will be up to universities partners to decide what kind of the joint program is needed, because there are many possibilities.*

*Jelena Teodorovic suggested the idea for organizing meeting between project coordinators and financial personnel from the rectorates in order to ensure good cooperation. Jelena will initiate the meeting of the project contact persons and financial personnel from the university.*

**DAY 2**

**Project and financial management**

**Participatory decision-making will be done in the project through Steering committee comprised of one representative from each institution. Steering committee will check how the work goes and ensure smooth decision making process. In order to do that first progress report is scheduled for June 2015, four internal reports are also scheduled for transparency purposes. Steering committee can propose changes but UKG, as ultimately responsible for the project, will have to make sure that they are in line with the proposal aims and budget.**

**As soon as the Grant agreement is received and sent to all the partners, it is highly recommended by EACEA and by University of Kragujevac that all the partners sign a Partnership agreement. Partnership agreement will include all the aspects necessary for the management and implementation of the actions and define roles and responsibilities of each of the parties. The partnership agreement needs to be signed by the legal representatives of the institution.**

**List of the steering comity members are elected:**

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| University of Kragujevac (UKG), Serbia P1 | Jelena Teodorovic |
| University of Belgrade (UBG), P2, Serbia | Danijela Petrovic |
| University of Novi Sad (UNS), P3, Serbia | Olivera Knezevic Floric |
| University of Nis (UNI), P4, Serbia | Jelena Maksimovic |
| Institute for Educational Research (IPI), P5, Serbia | Slavica Sevkusic |
| Netherlands School of Educational Management (NSO), P6, The Netherlands | Huub Friederich |
| University of Jyväskylä (UJ), P7, Finland | Mika Risku |
| University of Szeged (SZTE), P8, Hungary | Tibor Barath |
| Universitatea Alexandru Ioan Cuza (UAIC), P9, Romania | Ovidiu Gavrilovici |
| Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MEST), P10, Serbia | Ljubisa Antonijevic |
| Head Teacher Association of Primary Schools of Novi Sad (HTAPSNS), P11, Serbia | Zoltan Ardjelan |
| Association of High School Principals of Novi Sad (AHSPNS), P12, Serbia | Stanko Matic |
| City municipality of Zvezdara (CMZ), P13, Serbia | Sonja Stamenovic |

*Jelena pointed out that UBG has a slightly bigger budget from the rest of the Serbian universities because the server that is needed for the video conferencing (the archiving part) has to be purchased. The rest of the budgets are assigned to the partners according to activities that will be done.*

*Jelena pointed out that people from municipalities and Ministry cannot get staff costs, only costs from traveling and per diems. By the TEMPUS office suggestion, the budget for the ministry and municipality should remain at UKG, because it’s much easier that UKG pays travel and stay costs than to transfer the funds directly to these institutions.*

*Jelena Teodorovic said that, based on the example of the good practice, every partner institution will receive funds for 6 months activities. After 6 months every partner will have to supply all the necessary documentation to get another 6 months installment. In order to keep track of spent funds, coordinators will prepare the excel sheet for the six month report that will be used for reporting. Partners should make sure that all the bills, supporting documents are scanned and kept, and that accounting is impeccable. Also, filling out time sheet for keeping track of workload of people is needed.*

*Jelena Teodorovic explained that for the kick off meeting all the partners will be provided with the hotel bill because UKG will pay the bill and then that amount will be deducted from the budget of every partner. For future travels each partner should have its own budget.*

*The equipment will be bought in the first part of the project because of the way payment are arranged from the Brussels.*

*Jelena further explained that by TEMPUS it is the institution which has to provide for the venue costs and premises. If there is a need for the venue, the written permission from the Brussels is required. That type of costs will be from the budget of the partner institution in which the meeting is held.*

*Jelena pointed out that indirect cost cannot be used for co-financing and cannot exceed 7% of total direct eligible costs of the project. Considering that UKG Rectorate took a larger share of the indirect costs, as it is the coordinator of the project, the other partners have indirect costs as around 4 % of the direct costs for their institution. For 10% that needs to be co-financed the institution needs to submit the supporting documentation. Staff costs should be calculated on the basis of the tasks performed and not on the status of the person.*

*Jelena pointed out that only for Serbian partners the maximum daily reference rate for staff cost is somewhat higher than the regular daily rate that they receive through their salary. Salary rates of the people in the project are going to applied. Jelena pointed out that the staff costs are kept lower from the ceilings for Serbian institutions - 60e per day for academic and 40 e per day for administrative tasks. Instead of calculating various different salaries for each person within each institution, it is suggested from the Tempus office that each of Serbian rectorates provide a paper saying whoever works in the project earns the same (within institution’s regular salary rate), so people will get paid at uniform rate.*

*Sofija pointed out that this is the only project from Serbia where the money for the budget proposed wasn’t deducted by the EACEA.*

*Jelena pointed out that for paying out the staff costs the proof of payment is important document that is easily forgotten , unlike the rest of needed documents (Convention for staff cost provided by the Brussels, and the employment contact). Once the person has the contract and it is paid from the institution, it has to obtain the bank transaction or any other document that demonstrates that the payment has been processed. Jelena suggested collecting these types of documents immediately after a certain activity has taken place*

*For traveling costs every person will need to submit every bill, but when people are paid per diems for stay costs, they do not have to submit any bills. However Jelena advised that it would be better to keep every possible bill.*

*Jelena pointed out that the coordinator may, in agreement with partners, adjust the estimated budget by transfers between categories of direct eligible costs, provided that the transfer between headings does not exceed 10% of the amount of each heading of estimated eligible costs for which the transfer is intended.*

*When the thematic journal issue, for example, is used for the dissemination and it has the topic of Educational Leadership, and it is entirely paid from the project, then logo of the TEMPUS should be stamped on the book. However, further clarification is needed in terms of using TEMPUS logo and perhaps some other logos (e.g., Ministry of education) when Ministry of education funds are used for co-financing in the project (can money given to the partner institution by the Ministry, for example, be considered co-financing?) In Serbia, Ministry funds the universities and institutes in great deal.*

*Jelena suggested that each institution from the beginning make a plan where co-financing will come from and plan ahead. Jelena suggested to two principals associations that they need to figure the best way to have 10 % of co-financing in the projects. For the foreign partners good idea should be to talk with the Tempus office in home country and ask for advices to check procedures of Co-financing that can be done through various categories, for example salaries and publishing.*

*Sofija pointed out that there are many rules which are referring to management isues and that all the partners should be aware of them, not only the UKG. Planning and finding an optimum way to distribute activities is need. If some task isn’t finished or delivered by one institution the project coordinator can delegate the task to be performed by another institution and that planned money can be transferred to that another institution. Sofia suggested that money should be spent from the beginning of the project. Tempus office will visit UKG twice, first monitory visit will be in the spring 2014, and the second advisory visit will be done when the project is in its later phase.*

*Jelena Teodorovic pointed out that all the payments in dinars have to be converted by the conversion rate of 114,014 dinars per euro. This rate will be applied for all the future payments (until the second transfer from EACEA) in the project independently of official rate changes.*

*Sofia suggested via short TEMPUS ppt:*

*-that partnership agreement should have concrete tasks, especially for non-academic partners in the project.*

*- that it is very important that both sustainability and dissemination WP start at the early phase of the project.*

*- and that are partners should be advised to be aware how are they representing themselves in the contexts of the project.*

The meeting concluded with UKG being responsible for working on and distributing the Grant agreement, Partnership agreement, financial forms and templates (TEMPUS, but also project-made), and the minutes of the meeting. IPI will start working on WP 1 and will contact partners for what it needs in that regard.

1. The powerpoint presentation has been delivered to the participants in both the written form, during the meeting, and in an electronic form, after the meeting. It is an integral part of these minutes. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)