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FINAL QUALITY REPORT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. INTRODUCTION..... | 3 |
| 2. FINAL EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT | 5 |
| 2.1. PARTNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE PROJECT..... | 5 |
| 2.2. TECHNICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT | 8 |
| 2.3. WEAKNESSES AND STRENGTHS ANALYSIS | 10 |
| 2.4. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS..... | 13 |
| 3. RESULTS OF THE PROJECT ACTIVITIES EVALUATED | 14 |
| 3.1. INTRODUCTORY SEMINAR (WP1) AND KOM | 14 |
| 3.2. PRACTICAL MISSIONS (WP1)..... | 15 |
| 3.3. 1ST TRAINING MODULE: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGREEMENTS AND NETWORKS AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES (WP2)..... | 16 |
| 3.4. 2ND TRAINING MODULE: ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT OF IRO (WP2)..... | 17 |
| 3.5. 3RD TRAINING MODULE: ACADEMIC TEACHING AND RESEARCH COOPERATION RELATED TOOLS, METHODOLOGIES AND BEST PRACTICES (WP2)..... | 17 |
| 3.6. ONLINE WORKSHOP ON FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES AND PROJECT PREPARATION (WP2)..... | 18 |
| 3.7. VIRTUAL WORKING GROUPS MEETINGS (WP3.1) | 19 |
| 3.8. SEMINARS: BOOSTING RESEARCH CAPACITIES (WP3.3) | 19 |
| 3.9. FACE-TO-FACE MOBILITIES (WP3.7) | 19 |
| 3.10. FINAL CONFERENCE AND CA & CHINA CONVENTION (WP5.2 & WP7.4) | 19 |
| 3.11. REGIONAL ROUNDTABLE (WP8.1) | 20 |
| 3.12. PARTNERS MEETINGS (WP9)..... | 23 |
| 4. FINAL EXTERNAL EVALUATION | 24 |
| 5. CONCLUSIONS..... | 63 |



FINAL QUALITY REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

With a duration of three years and nine months due to an extension (from January 2019 until October 2022), UNICAC project aimed to increase the potential for knowledge transfer and international and cross-regional cooperation of HEIs in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and China, through a set of capacity building activities for International Relations Offices (IROs) in partner countries High Education Institutions, thus contributing to better international networking, enhancement and better exploitation of their potentials for cooperation in Teaching, Learning and Research (T/L/R) linked to the development of the New Silk Road and improving the conditions of the academic community and society in both regions.

The WP6, regarding the Evaluation and Quality Assurance, was conceived as an integral part of the project in order to ensure that objectives were met in the most effective way and that results were relevant, and to assess project impact among the different target groups. This WP provided a set of measures that were intended to assess the quality and analyse the impact of the project through several tools, such as:

- Collection of feedbacks and an assessment of the satisfaction of the beneficiaries of the training activities and the participants to the face-to-face events using a standard survey template;
- Observation of technical activities of the project with the purpose of evaluate the development of the project and the specific activities.

On the other hand, in the first months of the project, as envisaged in the proposal, it was prepared a Quality Control Plan detailing the various indicators and results to be achieved, as well as a set of questionnaires and other assessment tools to use throughout the project.

This Evaluation Report aims to collect the main results of the evaluation activities implemented during the project's lifetime (i.e., of 15th January 2019 to 14th October 2022).

These results are based on the comments obtained through the satisfaction questionnaires distributed among participants and beneficiaries of the different activities carried out, as well as the Final External Evaluation Report.

Furthermore, it has been considered appropriate to assess the actions of the whole project, for that reason it has requested each partner institution to assess the coordination of the project and of the various technical and cross-cutting activities, as well as communication and relationship among the members of the consortium.



It is also important to mention the efforts made by all the partnership to advance in all project activities despite the challenging situation of the COVID-19 global pandemic, which has specially affected most of partner countries of the project. Therefore, there are several activities that have been postponed.



2. FINAL EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

This section details the results of the evaluation questionnaire of the whole project.

To that end, INCOMA, coordinator of the evaluation activities and quality control, has prepared an online questionnaire that has been shared among partners by the online platform Microsoft Forms, with the aim of obtaining a response by institution (<https://forms.office.com/r/g4p3ct84V9>). There have been 12 responses from a total of 11 partner institutions. All partner institutions have participated in this survey.

The survey has three main sections. In the first paragraph have been collected impressions of the partners about the consortium and the management of the project, through the analysis of their agreement or disagreement with a set of statements

The second paragraph has addressed the technical activities of the project, as well as cross-cutting activities (dissemination and quality control), also through the agreement or disagreement to the indicated statements.

Finally, it has been included an analysis of weaknesses and strengths related to the project, which will provide a clearer strategic vision of the project and point out ways for improvement.

Once partners had responded to the questionnaire, we have analysed the results, which are presented below.

2.1. PARTNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE PROJECT

- **Coordination and management of the project**

In general, the coordination and management of the project have been valued positively by all institutions. In that regard, partners are totally or partially in accordance with the feasibility of the objectives of the project, and the adequacy of the workplan to these objectives.

Most partners consider that activities have been implemented according to the chronogram, although there is a percentage of participants that think that it could have been better adapted to the dates established in the chronogram. However, they consider it “sufficient”.

In relation to the work methodologies and management of the project, most respondents considered is appropriate or very appropriate and just 8% think that it was just sufficient.

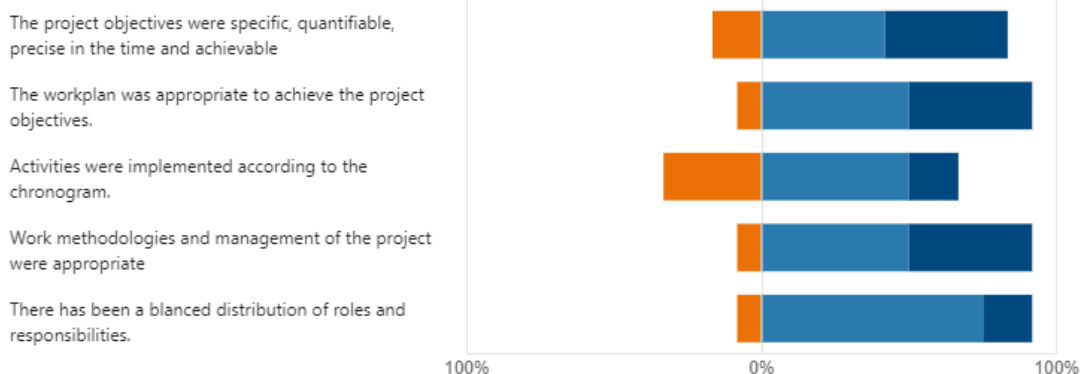
Additionally, the same number of respondents answered that there has been a correct balanced roles distribution and responsibilities within the project lifetime.



2. How do you evaluate the overall project coordination and management?

[Más detalles](#)

■ Insuficient ■ Sufficient ■ Good ■ Very Good



• Partnership and its implication within the Project

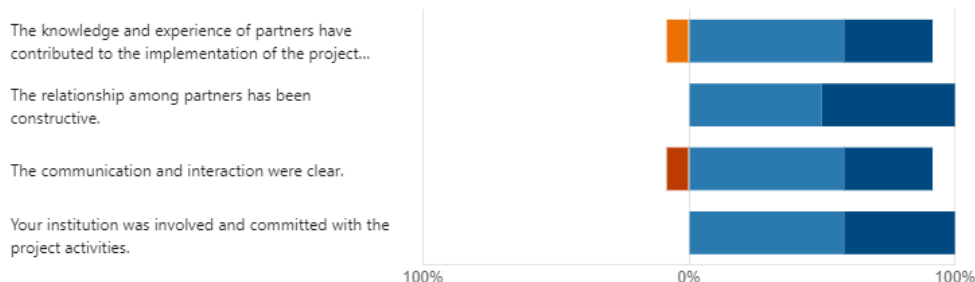
While most partners considered that the knowledge and experience of other partners has contributed significantly to the implementation of project activities, all the institutions indicate that they have been involved or very involved with the activities of the project and consider that there has been a constructive relationship among partners. Moreover, although the communication and interaction were quite clear for all respondents, around 8% considered it insufficient.

To conclude, it could be stated that the implication of all partners within the project was very positive or positive.

3. What's your opinion about the partnership and its implication during the project lifetime?

[Más detalles](#)

■ Insuficient ■ Sufficient ■ Good ■ Very Good





- **Internal communication**

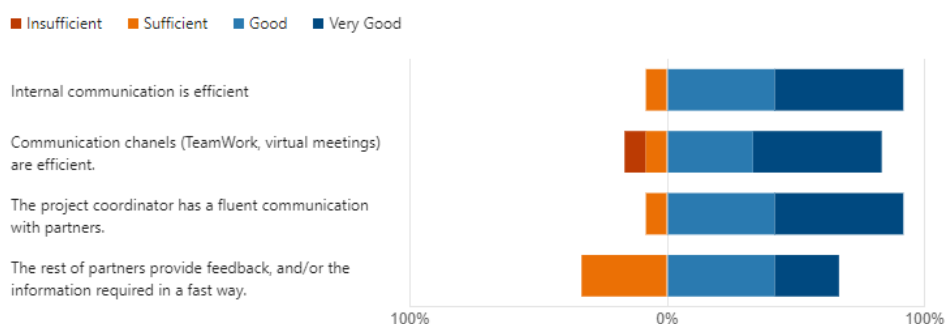
While most partner institutions of the Consortium has valued positively the different aspects approached, it is important to highlight certain points that can be improved in order to achieve a better assessment.

Although the communication channels were efficient for all respondents, near the 8% considered it as insufficient.

Most partners consider that the coordinator has had a fluent communication with them. Anyhow, the partners' feedback, the partners' rapidity in giving the information is a more controversial issue, as around 30% of them think that the rest of partners provide feedback, and/or the information required just in a sufficient way.

4. How would you evaluate the internal communication within the partnership?

[Más detalles](#)





Additionally, 12 people added some comments to this section:

5. Do you have any comment about the overall project management and coordination?

12 Respuestas

| | | |
|----|-----------|---|
| 1 | anonymous | It has to be offline since it is face to face meeting. |
| 2 | anonymous | Everything was alright given the circumstances such as the COVID pandemic |
| 3 | anonymous | no |
| 4 | anonymous | Thanks to Incoma - you made great job! |
| 5 | anonymous | I think it is efficient. |
| 6 | anonymous | no |
| 7 | anonymous | Overall project management and coordination was clear and supportive |
| 8 | anonymous | The overall quality of the project coordination and management is excellent. W.P. are coordinated by the consortia members, technical project implementation and management professionally done by the Incoma, and overall coordination from the US side is good. Partner meetings (online and offline) are helpful in proper management, adjustment and amendments to the project. |
| 9 | anonymous | The expected plan and planning of the whole project are clear, but the understanding of the cultural background between various parties is not enough. |
| 10 | anonymous | Good to have incoma supporting the whole coordination of the project |
| 11 | anonymous | No. I think the mangement is efficient. |
| 12 | anonymous | Despite the difficulties that we have faced at the beginning of the project due to covid-19, which forced us to carry out some of the activities virtually, the project management and coordination has been carried out satisfactorily |

2.2. TECHNICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

- **Specific technical activities**

Most of partners has valued positively the technical activities implemented during the project. However, it is important to highlight the existence of divergent opinions in some aspects of the implementation.

In relation to the time devoted to each activity this has been considered as good or very good, but around 30% considered it as “sufficient”. Nevertheless, most respondents assessed positively the time dedicated to each activity and the support provided by activities’ coordinators.

However, 30% consider only “sufficient” the distribution of tasks’ balance.



6. Please, evaluate the specific technical activities:

[Más detalles](#)

■ Insufficient ■ Sufficient ■ Good ■ Very Good



- **Transversal activities (dissemination and quality control)**

Beyond the technical activities of the project, UNICAC also provided a set of cross-cutting actions that aim to disseminate the project and ensure the quality of the results achieved. For that reason, partners were asked to express their different points of view.

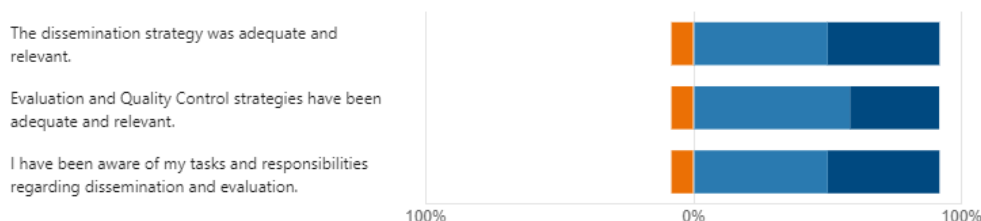
Most respondents considered very adequate and relevant the dissemination strategy, although around 8% of them valued it as “sufficient”. Likewise, all partners answered that the evaluation and quality control strategies were adequate or very adequate and relevant.

Furthermore, almost all respondents declared to be aware of their tasks and responsibilities related to the evaluation and quality control of the project.

7. Please, give your opinion about the dissemination and quality control activities

[Más detalles](#)

■ Insufficient ■ Sufficient ■ Good ■ Very Good



Additionally, partners added the following comments to this section:



8. Do you have any comment about the overall technical implementation of the project?

12 Respuestas

| ID ↑ | Nombre | Respuestas |
|------|-----------|---|
| 1 | anonymous | good |
| 2 | anonymous | The technical implementation has been successful as far as partners are concerned, but there have been some issues regarding some countries regulations on COVID-19, such as China. |
| 3 | anonymous | Everything is good |
| 4 | anonymous | Teamwork was a mess |
| 5 | anonymous | It is suitable for our cooperation |
| 6 | anonymous | no |
| 7 | anonymous | Overall technical implementation of the project was perfect and convinient |
| 8 | anonymous | At some points keeping communication ongoing with all partners was difficult, because of internet restrictions, or limits. |
| 9 | anonymous | For the mutual communication between different members, the technical support is relatively sufficient, but for the financial technical support is relatively poor. |
| 10 | anonymous | Satisfied. First time involved within KA2 for our department |
| 11 | anonymous | I think the zoom connection is stable, so it's suitable for our program. |
| 12 | anonymous | The fluid communication between the partners and the tools used, such as online training platforms, have greatly facilitated the technical implementation of the activities |

2.3. WEAKNESSES AND STRENGTHS ANALYSIS

The inclusion of this kind of analysis in the evaluation questionnaire in the final project evaluation will allow INCOMA to assess what has been the strengths of the project and which opportunities it has for the future and get a wider vision of the project development.

Below, we present the results obtained:



9. Please, tell us your opinion about UNICAC weaknesses found during the project lifetime:

12 Respuestas

| ID | Nombre | Respuestas |
|----|-----------|--|
| 1 | anonymous | Covid-19 |
| 2 | anonymous | It has been a big challenge for the consortium to develop some activities due to the different COVID regulations, different online programmes we could use, so on. |
| 3 | anonymous | small financial issues |
| 4 | anonymous | Some partners activity, but this was understandably because the difficulties due Covid19 |
| 5 | anonymous | We should have more academic contents |
| 6 | anonymous | . |
| 7 | anonymous | Chinese partners has missed many activities because of their political issues, visa procedure was complicated |
| 8 | anonymous | Some partners had moderate engagement into project activities. |
| 9 | anonymous | The support for financial issues such as budget is relatively weak. |
| 10 | anonymous | The coordination of Sevilla not always very good. 11 partners challenging but not easy to manage |
| 11 | anonymous | I think we should add more academic contents. |
| 12 | anonymous | Once again, it is necessary to highlight the problems detected due to the impossibility of carrying out some of the activities in person, as foreseen in the proposal. |

Eventually, most respondents consider that the restructuring of the activities thanks to the extension has been productive and necessary:



11. Finally, do you consider that the restructuring of project activities and project extension has been useful? Why?

12 Respuestas

| ID ↑ | Nombre | Respuestas |
|------|-----------|---|
| 1 | anonymous | yes, because of the Covid-19 we couldn't achieve project activities |
| 2 | anonymous | Yes, because thanks to the extension we could develop more face-to-face activities. |
| 3 | anonymous | Yes, otherwise we couldnt participate in the mobility |
| 4 | anonymous | Yes |
| 5 | anonymous | yes. because it has been improved by real situations |
| 6 | anonymous | more time to make the job |
| 7 | anonymous | We had enough time for staff and students mobility and online courses. |
| 8 | anonymous | UNICAC has been extended till October, 2022. Hopefully after removal restrictions on international travel in Europe and Central Asia, we could complete foreseen short-term mobility of the UNICAC between the Central Asian universities and to the EU partner universities. Unfortunately, due extension of the COVID-19 measures in China, Central Asia and EU universities could not make mobility to Chinese partner universities, same participants from Chinese universities could not take part in the mobility. In addition to mobility, the recent activities implemented Library Exchange at the US, partner meeting at the LAUREA, Joint-International Conference at IET TSUC have been successfully implemented. |
| 9 | anonymous | If you only consider the current situation in your own country, but do not pay attention to the different situation in other countries, then the whole sound plan will not be fully respected. |
| 10 | anonymous | Yes for sure. Mainly to allow international mobilities |
| 11 | anonymous | Yes. Beacuse the reconstruction of the project is more effective for us to strengthen the connection. |
| 12 | anonymous | Undoubtedly, because they have made it possible to achieve the objectives set out in the proposal |



2.4. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In general, the management and coordination of UNICAC project and its several cross-cutting techniques and activities have been evaluated in a positive way. However, partners have expressed different views with respect to certain aspects.

The extension of the project has been extremely useful to be able to carry out many of the activities that could not be done in person due to the pandemic.

All in all, despite external difficulties such as the pandemic, some connection problems in remote areas, and differences between COVID regulations in different countries, the partners are satisfied with the final results.



3. RESULTS OF THE PROJECT ACTIVITIES EVALUATED

This section contains the main conclusions and the data of the evaluation activities implemented during the first half of UNICAC.

It should be noted that INCOMA, coordinator of the activities of evaluation and quality control, has prepared a separate report after the implementation of each of the activities detailed here, based on participants' answers and that includes statistical information, model surveys used and when applicable the survey's links to the responses.

As foreseen in the Quality Control Plan prepared at the beginning of the period of implementation of UNICAC, several assessment and control tools have been used.

3.1. INTRODUCTORY SEMINAR (WP1) AND KOM

The UNICAC kick-off meeting was held on March 25th-26st, 2019 in Seville. The evaluation is based on the feedback of participants from 10 different partner organisations that attended the meeting. In order to guarantee an efficient and comparable evaluation, INCOMA created a standardised questionnaire, assessing the specific components of the meeting as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the project.

The survey created was analysed by INCOMA, as partner in charge of WP6- Quality Control Plan. A total of 14 responses were obtained out of a total number of 18 participants in the meeting.

The organization of the first meeting of the project UNICAC was considered and evaluated in a very positive way, as well as the progress made so far. In the first place, the adequate support provided by the hosting partner and a correct assistance regarding logistic aspects - for example providing the agenda beforehand- were highly appreciated. Anyway, it is advisable to give some time to participants so they can have the possibility of discussing the activities and results.

The consortium and its high motivation were highlighted as the main strengths of the project. It is worth mentioning the importance that partners give to the internationalization of higher education institutions, in spite of the fact that it requires a strong cooperation of internal awareness but will be compensated with the high motivation of the partners.

On the other hand, the use of the TeamWork intranet is seen as something to be improved, because of the lack of knowledge about how to work with it. This fact is not an impediment, but will require a greater effort of coordination and collaboration of the activities and the participants throughout the project.



In addition, it would be important in the future to keep contemplating complementary social activities so participants can interact outside the context of work. This will foster the interpersonal relations and contribute to the improvement of the communication among partners.

Regarding the presentation of the project and the partners, most of the participants agreed on the fact that it was clear and provided detailed information on aspects such as budget, next steps of the project, allocation of WP or project strategies.

Analysing the results of the questionnaire, some difficulties arise in relation to communication issues. Therefore, we recommend paying attention on this issue in order to improve this aspect, for example supporting partners on Teamwork platform usage or emphasizing collaboration and discussion among the institutions.

3.2. PRACTICAL MISSIONS (WP1)

The Practical mission in US was held on March 27th, 2019 in Seville. The evaluation is based on the feedback of participants from 9 different partner organisations that attended the activity. In order to guarantee an efficient and comparable evaluation, INCOMA created a standardised questionnaire, assessing the specific components of the activity as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the project.

The survey created was analysed by INCOMA, as partner in charge of WP6- Quality Control Plan. A total of 14 responses were obtained.

It is important to note that UNICAC project foresaw the organisation of practical missions to all European partners, however, the lack of time and availability of project partners to stay in Europe during more than one week made that the partnership agreed that the practical mission to UNITO and LAUREA would be carried out in the next months. Unfortunately, the global pandemic made the partnership to reschedule those activities.

The organization of the Practical Mission in US within WP1 in UNICAC project was considered and evaluated in a very positive way, as well as the progress made so far. In the first place, the adequate support provided by the US, acting as hosting partner.

The vast majority of the participants in the survey considers very good (78.57% - 11 participants) the organization of the Practical Mission held in US. However, 2 respondents considered this matter as sufficient. In relation to the logistical and practical aspects have been mainly rated also as very good by 13 participants (92.86%)

Almost all participants agreed that the agenda of the activity was very good (with a percentage of 71.43%), as well as the contents of the session were valued in the same way.



Additionally, more than half of the participants agreed that the duration of the sessions/visits was good (64.29%). On the other hand, the achievement of the activity's objectives, as well as the identification of aspects for improvement at respondents' institution were stated as very good (64.29% and 57.14% respectively).

The SWOT analysis shows a very positive evaluation of the activity, as well as, of the KOM and that confirms that it constitutes an opportunity to create a network of stable cooperation and consolidate other initiatives among the different partners.

3.3. 1ST TRAINING MODULE: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGREEMENTS AND NETWORKS AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES (WP2)

This is a summary of the evaluation of the 1st Training Module: International Cooperation Agreements and Networks and Funding Opportunities, that was held in the premises of IET in Khujand (Tajikistan) and was guided by LAUREA. This training took place between 16 and 20 September 2019.

The evaluation is based on the feedback of participants from 8 different partner organisations that attended this activity. In order to guarantee an efficient and comparable evaluation, INCOMA created a standardised questionnaire for all training modules, assessing the specific components of the activity together with a qualitative analysis.

The survey created was analysed by INCOMA, as partner in charge of WP6- Quality Control Plan. A total of 12 responses were obtained.

The first Training Module about International Cooperation Agreements and Networks and Funding Opportunities was considered and evaluated in a very positive way, from an organisational and technical perspective. Nevertheless, some aspects such as the adaptation of training contents to the participants' need, or the level of improvement of personal and technical competences must be improved.

From the qualitative point of view, in general, participants highlighted as positive the possibility to learn more in deep about internationalisation, Strategic Plans of Universities; the importance to learn from each other and know about other's Universities experience, and the professionalism of LAUREA trainers. Although there were some issues to improve such as making a more practical training; and distributing the training contents in advance in order to prepare before the seminar and properly participate.



3.4. 2ND TRAINING MODULE: ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT OF IRO (WP2)

This is a summary of the evaluation of the 2nd Training Module: Organisation and Management of IROs, that was held in the premises of NUUZ in Tashkent (Uzbekistan) and was guided by UNITO. This training took place between 18 and 22 November 2019.

The evaluation is based on the feedback of participants from the different partner organisations that attended this activity. In order to guarantee an efficient and comparable evaluation, INCOMA created a standardised questionnaire for all training modules, assessing the specific components of the activity together with a qualitative analysis.

The survey created was analysed by INCOMA, as partner in charge of WP6- Quality Control Plan. A total of 7 responses were obtained.

The second Training Module about Organisation and Management of IROs was considered and evaluated in a very positive way, from both an organisational and technical perspective.

From the qualitative point of view, in general, participants highlighted as positive that during the training they had the opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences with other partners, communicate and enhance the ability of cooperate; and also the quality of presentations and the working groups created.

It has been signalled that the working documents should be distributed before the training in order to be prepared in advance. Some of the competences which could be improved in other training are the development of more training and learning skills and working on organisation of international networks.

3.5. 3RD TRAINING MODULE: ACADEMIC TEACHING AND RESEARCH COOPERATION RELATED TOOLS, METHODOLOGIES AND BEST PRACTICES (WP2)

This is a summary of the evaluation of the 3rd Training Module: Academic Teaching and Research Cooperation related tools, methodologies and best practices, that was held in the premises of NPU in Xi'an (China) and was guided by US. This training took place between 16 and 20 December 2019.

The evaluation is based on the feedback of participants from 8 different partner organisations that attended this activity. In order to guarantee an efficient and comparable evaluation, INCOMA created a standardised questionnaire for all training modules, assessing the specific components of the activity together with a qualitative analysis.



The survey created was analysed by INCOMA, as partner in charge of WP6- Quality Control Plan. A total of 15 responses were obtained.

The third Training Module about Academic teaching and research cooperation related tools, methodologies and best practices was considered and evaluated in a very positive way, from an organisational and technical perspective.

From the qualitative point of view, in general, participants highlighted as positive the organisation of a roundtable that gave the opportunity to exchange different point of view and better know each other. It is still necessary to organise more practical activities and send the agenda and contents beforehand in order to prepare them in advance. Participant partners expected to acquire more speaking and researching skills, and from the logistics point of view, to receive more precise information.

3.6. ONLINE WORKSHOP ON FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES AND PROJECT PREPARATION (WP2)

This is a summary of evaluation of the Online Workshop on Funding Opportunities & Project Preparation organised by INCOMA as part of the WP2.5 on 3 June 2020. It was organised through the online platform Zoom and a total of 25 people from all partner Universities participated in this workshop.

It was organised as an additional activity to the workshop that was planned in WP2.5 to be organised by INCOMA in Torino, together with the 4th Training Module. It was already scheduled for mid-May 2020, but it was impossible to organise it due to the pandemic of COVID-19. Therefore, the partnership decided to postpone the onsite activities and organised online workshops, seminars and activities to continue working in the planned objectives.

The evaluation of this workshop is based on the feedback of 6 participants. The survey created was analysed by INCOMA, as partner in charge of WP6- Quality Control Plan.

In general, all participants who answered the questionnaires were quite satisfied with the workshop organised, mainly regarding the contents and the profile of the speaker. Nevertheless, it will be necessary to improve some issues like the duration of the workshop and tackle other topics such as the role of International Departments in the implementation of international projects, coordination, management and financing, research projects or how to design a good Erasmus project for future workshops or seminars.



3.7. VIRTUAL WORKING GROUPS MEETINGS (WP3.1)

The received feedback was limited to 6 participants. The meeting sessions were mostly graded as good or very good, giving partner country universities opportunities to study and plan the internationalisation of their teaching/learning/research strategy. For the future, more partner involvement and real co-operation possibilities as well as joint activities of research and mobility are desired, and as technical tools, Zoom and Padlet worked out well.

Three points were made concerning the improvement of the first, unfinished draft of Best Practices Manual: To include the best practices of EU Universities, to mention collaborators' names with the institutions and to improve the design of the draft.

3.8. SEMINARS: BOOSTING RESEARCH CAPACITIES (WP3.3)

The Seminar organised by P3 and P7: *UNICAC Seminar Boosting International RDI Disseminating and exploiting the UNICAC results with the regional and local RDI community*, has been assessed by 15 people. The overall evaluation has been extremely positive, with some comments about the impact on their knowledge, the improvement of internationalisation, and boosting research cooperation.

3.9. FACE-TO-FACE MOBILITIES (WP3.7)

In general, face-to-face mobilities have been positively evaluated, such as the ones developed by P7, with 14 answers that assess them extremely well, or the one developed by P6, with similar results.

The project has been very well evaluated on the comments with open questions and both students and staff have been satisfied.

3.10. FINAL CONFERENCE AND CA & CHINA CONVENTION (WP5.2 & WP7.4)

The Final Conference was organised together with the China and Central Asia Convention in September 2022 in Tashkent.

Some participants evaluated the events through this online survey distributed by INCOMA:

<https://forms.office.com/r/5gfMjesVLb>

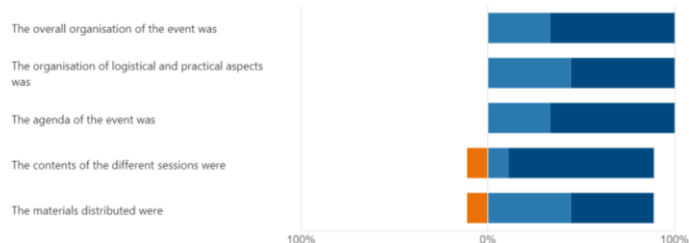
The organisation of the event was assessed in a very positive way by respondents, just 11% considered it only "sufficient".



2. For each statement, please mark with an X the most appropriate answer according to your opinion.

[Más detalles](#)

■ Insufficient ■ Sufficient ■ Good ■ Very Good



On the other hand, all respondents agreed that the activities developed and the results achieved through the UNICAC project so far are “very good”. In addition to this, most respondents considered the project and its objectives and the methodology used “very good”.

3. Please also give us your opinion about the UNICAC project.

[Más detalles](#)

■ Insufficient ■ Sufficient ■ Good ■ Very Good



As a conclusion, the UNICAC project and network were presented and very well assessed by the participants to the events.

3.11. REGIONAL ROUNDTABLE (WP8.1)

This Regional Roundtable was held online on the 28th of October of 2021 and the topic was the Effects of the situation in Afghanistan on Central Asia. Participants of the Regional Roundtable had the opportunity to listen to various talks about different topics. First, a talk about “The fragility of women rights under the Taliban in Afghanistan” was held and afterwards there was discussion on how the situation in Afghanistan will affect security in the Central Asian region.

After the coffee break, participants listened to a talk on how the situation in Afghanistan will affect universities from a students’ perspective. Hereafter, the impact of the Afghanistan crisis in Central Asia’s tourism development was discussed. At the end of the Regional Roundtable, a talk about the relations between Uzbekistan and Afghanistan (yesterday and today) was given.



In sum, around 70 participants attended the online Regional Roundtable on the effects of the situation in Afghanistan in Central Asia.

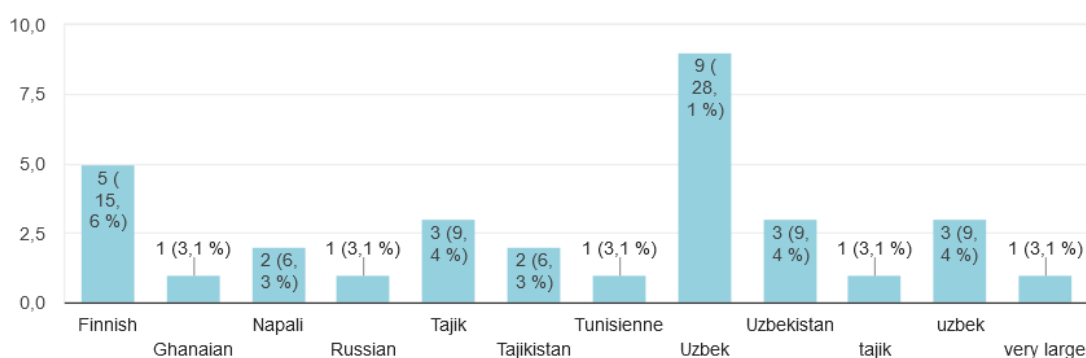
The evaluation is based on the feedback of participants that attended the event. To guarantee an efficient and comparable evaluation, INCOMA created a standardised questionnaire, assessing the specific components of the meeting.

The survey created was analysed by INCOMA, as partner in charge of the Quality Assurance Control. A total of 32 responses were obtained.

Participants were from different countries such as Finland, Ghana, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, or Tunisia. 19 respondents indicated their gender as female, while 13 participants indicated they were male.

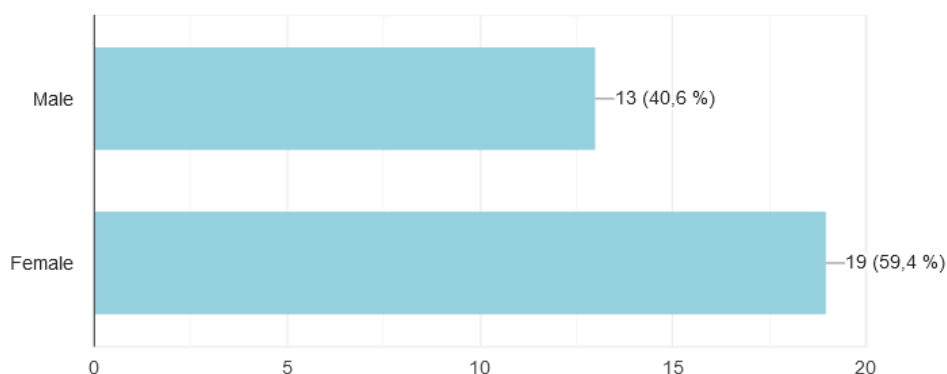
Nationality

32 Antworten



Gender (optional)

32 Antworten

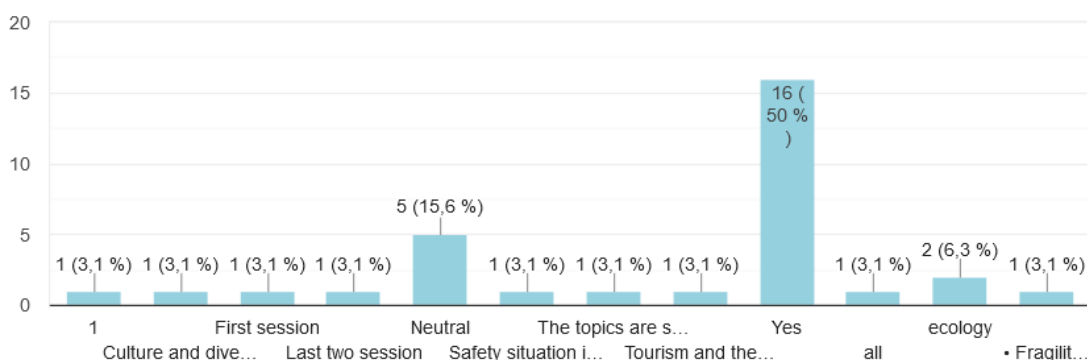




Furthermore, participants were asked about which of the sessions they found most interesting. From the results obtained it can be concluded that all sessions were interesting for the participants since many different topics were mentioned by them. In particular, participants mentioned the session on the fragility of women rights, the talk on tourism and the session on the safety situation.

Which session did you find more interesting?

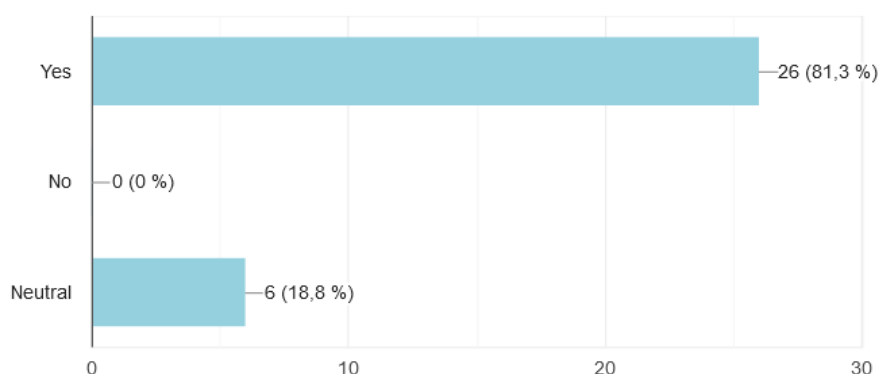
32 Antworten



Moreover, participants of the Regional Roundtable had to evaluate if it was easy for them to follow the presentations given to which the clear majority responded yes (81,3%). 6 participants responded neutral.

Has it been easy for you to follow the presentations?

32 Antworten



Lastly, participants were asked which topics they would like to see addressed at future UNICAC project roundtables. The following suggestions were obtained:

- Women rights



- Radical religion views and how to prevent it
- Uzbekistan
- Climate change
- Post pandemic improvements
- Gender equality in higher education
- Remote laboratory
- Poverty in the world
- The impact of international projects at HEIs and the role of IRO in enhancing the capacity of academic staff of HEIs
- Cooperation among member countries
- Internationalization of research, scientific and academic cooperation between universities
- Artificial intelligence
- Education for girls
- Topics about solving the problem of retraining specialists in their industry and their employment in their areas
- Tourism, trade, geopolitics
- Refugee and immigrant situation in different partner countries
- Effective cooperation
- External and internal project audit
- Network opportunities, collaboration after UNICAC, UNICAC sustainability

To sum it up, participants evaluated the Regional Roundtable event in a clearly positive way. They found the topics discussed very interesting and it was easy for them to follow the different sessions. Especially the various suggestions of topics for future events in the last question shows the engagement of the participants with the project. For future events it can be taken into consideration to include the suggested topics such as radical religion views, refugee situation, poverty, or education for girls in the partner countries of the project. In regard to the organizational aspects of the project's topics such as external and internal project audit or UNICAC sustainability can be considered to be discussed in future events.

3.12. PARTNERS MEETINGS (WP9)

Thanks to the flexibility of the COVID-19 measures, it was possible to hold a second face-to-face meeting between the project partners in Vantaa, Finland, on 24-25 May 2022.

This meeting was particularly relevant, as so far we had to communicate online, and served to define the pending tasks of the project and set the way for a successful completion of the project.

The meeting was hosted by Laurea University and consisted of two sessions in which all relevant aspects of the project were discussed.



Attendees: University of Seville, Laurea University of Applied Sciences, University of Turin, Tashkent University of Information Technologies, National University of Uzbekistan, Khorog State University, Institute of Economy and Trade of Tajik State University, and INCOMA attended face-to-face, while Xinjiang University, Northwestern Polytechnical University and NORTHWEST A&F UNIVERSITY had to attend online, as the COVID-19 measures to travel still had high-impact in China.

The overall assessment was very good, with some comments on how to improve the projects activities and organisation, and suggestion on the communication between partners.

And these were the questions: <https://forms.gle/Gfi7g5UcSAj5M74T9>

4. FINAL EXTERNAL EVALUATION

FINAL EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

12/10/2022

1. INTRODUCTION

This is the external evaluation report of the “UNICAC - University Cooperation Framework for Knowledge Transfer in Central Asia and China” project (598340-EPP-1-2018-1-ES-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP), implemented within the scopes of “KA2 – Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices” strand of Erasmus+ programme Capacity Building in Higher Education initiatives. Initially planned to last 36 months, from 15th January 2019 to 14th January 2022, the project will finish on 14th October 2022, due to extension. The project brought together 11 partners from 6 countries.

The report focuses on evaluating the achievements, deliverables and outcomes as determined by the goals and objectives of the UNICAC project.

UNICAC project aims to enhance the potential for international cooperation among HEIs from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and China through a set of capacity building activities for IROs, thus contributing to better international networking and better exploitation of their potential cooperation in Teaching, Learning and Research. Project actions addressed the internationalisation of Central Asian and bordering Chinese universities; modernisation of the International Relations Offices of participating institutions; promotion of an international network of cross-regional cooperation focused on teaching and research among universities; strengthening knowledge sharing on teaching, learning and research matters; creating an innovative cross-regional (among Central Asian countries/institutions and bordering Chinese regions related to the New Silk Road) and international (Europe-Central Asia) mobility framework for students, academics, researchers and university staff.



The main deliverables were set as:

- Training programmes for International Relation Offices;
- Strategic Plans of Internationalisation;
- Transnational network for cross-regional and international cooperation;
- Mobility flows between participating universities;
- Equipment purchase, creation of IRO webpages, library access etc.

UNICAC project has made news and deliverables available online through the project web site (<http://www.unicac.eu>).

The project has been a response to the key developments and tendencies in internationalisation of higher education in participating countries. Uzbekistan's Government sees enhanced internationalisation of higher education as a tool for increasing the quality of education, international reputation, reduction of poverty, better gender balance in society etc. Specific features of the increase of higher education in Tajikistan is caused by internationalisation according to the Bologna Process and other globalization agendas; the establishment of international HEIs under bilateral government agreements, and significantly increasing HEI programmes and enrolments in far-flung regions of the country - especially in programmes related to industry and technology. Internationalisation of higher education in China has had considerable achievements, and has contributed to the current transformation of the Chinese system into one of the largest and arguably most promising ones in the world.

2. PROJECT CONTEXT

The UNICAC project in general, and its aims and objectives in particular, are in parallel with the higher education internationalisation processes. We are witnessing accelerated and growing importance of internationalisation at all levels of education. Besides, there is a clear trend towards more internationalisation of higher education, one that covers a broader range of activities and is more strategic in its approach. Its importance is growing everywhere as a response to the challenges that universities and countries face. All reports call for greater effort towards internationalisation in the belief that it can make a difference and bring about necessary change. There is a trend towards more national strategies for internationalisation. Governments see it as part of a bigger strategy to position their country, improve economic standing, reinvigorate the higher education system or bring about necessary change.

There is much discussion about internationalisation of the curriculum (rather than strategic plans of internationalisation) and the need to pay greater attention to developing an international dimension for all students. In some countries, the question has not yet been addressed as a strategic priority, while in others it is understood as teaching in another language, predominantly English, or offering joint and/or double programmes. Such programmes are clearly growing in number and importance in many countries as a key tool for internationalisation, despite the many legal, financial and quality assurance constraints that still prevail.



There is also a clear growth of transnational education with a range of different models developing out of the opportunities offered to different national systems from their historical ties, languages offered or the presence of diaspora. Host countries are often interested in opening up their system to foreign providers as a means to cope with higher education demand and/or to accelerate the pace of reform. On the other hand, digital learning and in particular MOOCs have been at the center of many higher education debates, and yet the question can be asked whether HEIs seek to develop digital learning as part of their internationalisation strategy.

In this sense, the UNICAC project is a noteworthy one, due to significantly small number of capacity building projects in the Central Asia and China, funded by the European Commission. Some of the projects (searched at <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu> with the key word “internationalisation”), with the participation of Uzbek and Chinese HEIs can be listed as:

- 561624-EPP-1-2015-1-UK-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP – IMEP: Internationalisation and Modernisation of Education and Processes in the Higher Education of Uzbekistan;
- 573655-EPP-1-2016-1-ES-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP – WELCOME: Towards incoming international university communities;
- 598874-EPP-1-2018-1-BE-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP – LEAD: Enhancing Academic Leadership and Governance of Chinese and European Universities in the Context of Innovation and Internationalisation.

There was no EC CBHE project on internationalisation performed with the participation of Tajik HEIs, neither with UZ, TJ, CN participation in one consortium, financed by Erasmus+ programme.

3. EXTERNAL EVALUATION

The project foresees an external evaluation by an independent expert with technical expertise and experience in the project topic and evaluation. The external evaluator was subcontracted based on the publication of the Terms of Reference that included specific information regarding the objectives, criteria, questions and indicator required for the evaluation.

External evaluation was focused on the technical evaluation of activities, results (intermediate and final results) and impacts of the project as well as insights, feedback about the direction of the works and recommendations for improvement.

For external evaluation online tools (emails, videoconferences) were also used and the expert has also participated in key activities and meetings.

Baseline surveys formed part of the evaluation, and pre- and post-implementation questionnaires were administered to participants to understand the level of change achieved in the project.

3.1. EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND EVALUATION PURPOSES



External evaluation produced the followings:

- Two reports: first 18 months, January 2019 – June 2020, second 18 months, July 2020 – January 2022 – based on OECD DAC model.
- 1 interim survey
- 1 final survey
- Analysis of workpackage indicators
- Overall evaluation

In general, external evaluation aimed to know:

1). Accounting for Results

- Have programmes achieved their objectives? Can we demonstrate that the programme caused the result? Who were the programme beneficiaries & how did they assess its results?

2). Better Management and Delivery

- How well-managed was the project? Were resources well-targeted and efficiently spent? Did delivery/implementation proceed as planned? Were mid-course corrections needed and why?

3). Learning and improvement

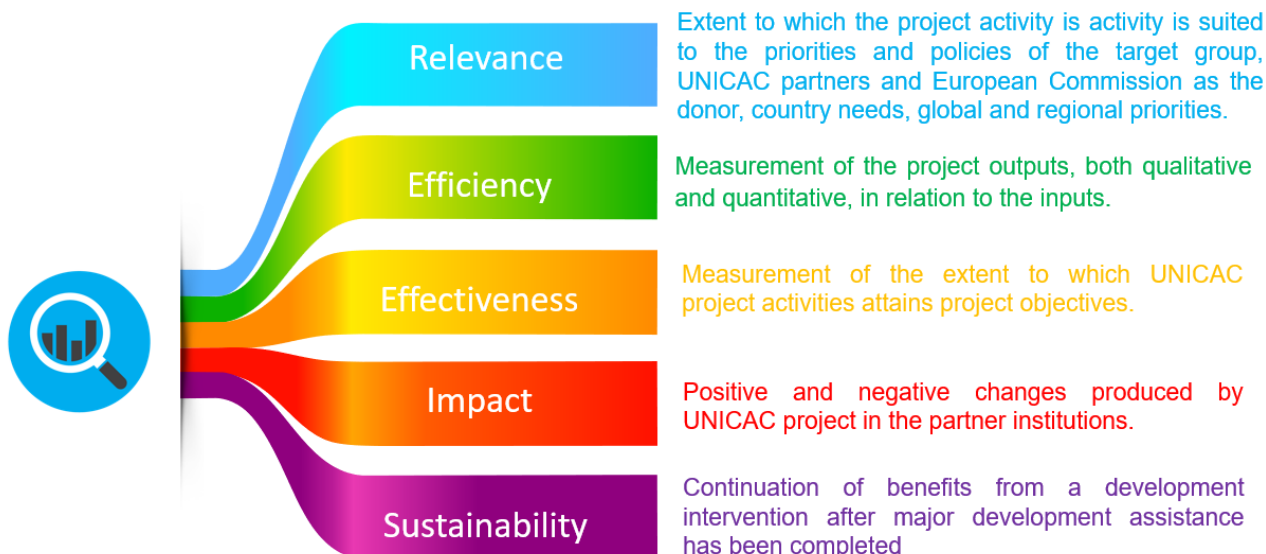
- How well-managed was the project? Were resources well-targeted and efficiently spent? Did delivery/implementation proceed as planned? Were mid-course corrections needed and why?

4). Capacity development and strengthening

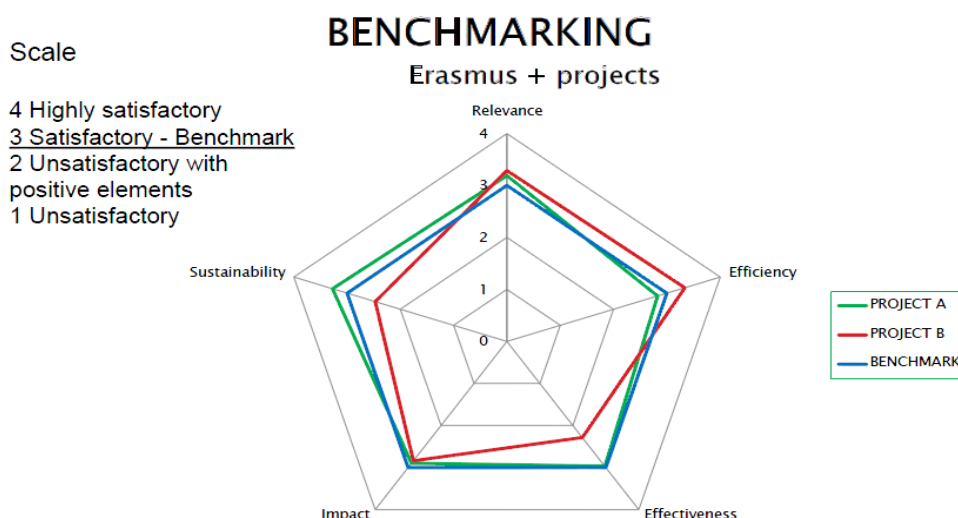
- Has the project helped create new capacities and networks? Will new capacities continue to generate the kinds of results that the project intended? If there is little evidence of sustainability, why is this?

3.2. METHODOLOGY OF EXTERNAL EVALUATION

As the main evaluation method, the one of Development Assistance Committee of OECD was used.



The external evaluation also planned to make the benchmarking with other EU projects in the region.



Evaluation indicators for the UNICAC project were set as follows:



| Mark | Quantitative | Qualitative | Explanation |
|------|--------------|-------------|---|
| A | 4 | Very good | Situation is considered very satisfactory, well above the average and a potential reference as a good practice. The recommendations focus on the need to adapt these good practices in other operations |
| B | 3 | Good | Situation is considered satisfactory, but it can be improved. The recommendations are useful, but not vital for the operation. |
| C | 2 | Fair | Some points need to be reviewed, otherwise the overall performance of the project could be affected. The necessary improvements do not require a major revision of the main operational strategy. |
| D | 1 | Poor | There are serious failures, which if not corrected, can lead to the failure of the project operations. Major adjustments and a revision of the strategy is needed. |

The next chapters of the final external evaluation report are composed of:

- the analysis of the 2 reports using the OECD DAC method;
- the analysis of interim survey;
- the analysis of final survey;
- the analysis of implementation of workpackages.



3.3. ANALYSIS OF THE REPORTS USING OECD DAC MODEL

The first method used for the external evaluation of the UNICAC project was based on **OECD Development Assistance Committee method** and composed of 5 pillars: Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impacts and Sustainability.

Two reports were prepared using this method. First interim external evaluation report covered the project activities of the first **18 months, January 2019 – June 2020**. Second report covered the project activities of the **second 18 months, July 2020 – January 2022**.

In this final report, the two aforementioned reports are merged and brought in one, evaluating the latest level of the project implementation.

For the preparation of the current report, main reference documents (guidelines, application form, contract, logical framework matrix etc.) were collected and analysed, questionnaires, interviews were fulfilled.

1. Relevance

Relevance refers to the extent to which the project activity is activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, UNICAC partners and European Commission as the donor, country needs, global and regional priorities.

Project aims and objectives **continue to stay fully in line with the Erasmus+ programme objectives**.

Contribution to programme objectives. Internationalisation is a priority for all partner countries represented in the project.

Uzbekistan - Uzbekistan's Government sees enhanced internationalisation of higher education as a tool for increasing the quality of education, international reputation, reduction of poverty, better gender balance in society etc. Country has changed the process of recognition of qualifications and diplomas, obtained from universities that were in top 1000 list in World University Rankings by Quacquarelli Symond (QS), Times Higher Education and Shanghai Ranking. The Concept of Development of Higher Education in Uzbekistan until 2030 was adopted in 2019, with specific attention to internationalisation. Over the next decade, Uzbekistan aims to transform the system of higher education into the educational hub that implements international education programmes in Central Asia. Uzbekistan's Government has put some steps ahead during the project lifetime, as more autonomy was granted to 35 public universities, including NUUz and TUIT. Universities that were granted financial and academic autonomy, now possess more financial and regulatory means to develop internationalisation. As known from press-releases, news and reports, it is clearly seen that now autonomous universities have started to allocate significant funds for developing internationalisation.

Special attention is given to gender balance in higher education. In 2021, for example, 2000 girls from underprivileged families were granted government funds to pursue an undergraduate degree. Recently, a national programme for supporting women's education for 2022-2026 had been adopted.



The programme envisages providing girls with interest-free loans for university fees for up to seven years as well as establishing new universities and technical schools just for women. In addition, master's degree programmes are now free of charge for women at public higher education institutions in Uzbekistan. The "El-yurt umidi (Hope of the Nation)" foundation will allocate funds for 60 girls and women annually to get a university degree abroad – 50 at the undergraduate level and 10 at the master's level.

Tajikistan - Specific features of the increase of higher education in Tajikistan is caused by internationalisation according to the Bologna Process and other globalization agendas; the establishment of international HEIs under bilateral government agreements, and significantly increasing HEI programmes and enrolments in far-flung regions of the country - especially in programmes related to industry and technology. The Tajikistan government has set a clear vision for the future of higher education as a tool for human capital formation to further economic growth in a changing world. The National Strategy for Education Development - 2020 aims to modernize the existing contents of higher education towards more professionally-oriented skills to better meet labor market demand and to build Tajikistan's capacity. With a view to developing the higher education system and integrating into the European Higher Education Area, the government is currently focusing on joining the Bologna Declaration.

A recent study of higher education in Tajikistan identified some main themes: bridging the gap created by conflicts that happened two decades ago, reconnecting with the world, importing prestige of international education and integrating into the international academic community. Overall, we authors found that most respondents saw higher education internationalisation processes in a positive light.

China - Internationalisation of higher education in China has had considerable achievements, and has contributed to the current transformation of the Chinese system into one of the largest and arguably most promising ones in the world. China has reached another phase of global engagement and internationalisation in higher education, a new form of internationalisation in the making, shifting from a one-way import of foreign (Western) knowledge into China to a much-improved balance between introducing the world to China and bringing China to the world.

Since the launch of the One Belt and One Road Initiative (BRI) in 2013, the internationalisation of China's tertiary education has entered a new stage. Central to the BRI is investment and strategic planning for talent cultivation, knowledge production, and transmission. BRI redirects, reinforces, and intensifies China's strategic planning and actions for internationalising its education. It adopts a policy analysis approach and reviews three key aspects of development and shifting emphasis of internationalisation under the impact of the BRI: international education networks along the Six BRI Economic Corridors, vocational colleges as new players in international education, and promotion of the Chinese language as a new global language.

So, the **UNICAC project has a real straightforward relation with the priorities of Erasmus+ project** in general and with national priorities in particular.



Management Performance. Different working groups and a balanced distribution of the responsibilities and roles has contributed to the smooth and flexible transfer to online working mode in the initial months of the COVID pandemic. INCOMA platform is staying as the main tool for document sharing and communication. The website of the project (www.unicac.eu) is operational.

Technical Implementation Report of UNICAC project was evaluated by EACEA. It was qualified as “Good” (the project progresses in accordance with its original work programme and timetable but some improvements could be made; the report gives clear information on all or nearly all of the evidence needed.).

Project members have set detailed Evaluation and Quality Control Plan. As quality coordinators, INCOMA has prepared and sent the Quality Plan to all partners. Quality strategy was explained at Kick-off meeting and partners have several templates of quality questionnaires to assess the quality of the project activities they have to carry out in their universities. Reminders are sent on regular basis. It should be noted that this plan has specific parts on evaluating management performance. There is a rule of collecting feedbacks after each of the project events, like training modules.

Project members are performing their tasks as set in Evaluation and Quality Control Plan. Reminders are sent on regular basis. It should be noted that this plan has specific parts on evaluating management performance. There is a rule of collecting feedbacks after each of the project events, like training modules.

The project has its Dissemination Plan and a Summary of Dissemination activities in order to explain all partners the actions they are obliged to organize and also the kind of dissemination activity that can do on a voluntary basis. Several reminders have been done in order to gather all the evidences related with dissemination activities.

Management performance of the project is adequate for the realization of expected outcomes. Issues arising within the project are discussed with all partners and decisions are taken collectively. SurveyMonkey and GoogleDocs tool are widely used for collaborative action planning.

We underline the importance of communication between the project partners, so **the use of INCOMA-type platform can be recommended to other projects** in Central Asia. Management performance of the project is adequate for the realization of expected outcomes. Issues arising within the project are discussed with all partners and decisions are taken collectively. SurveyMonkey tool is widely used for collaborative action planning. COVID-19 had a very large extent affected the development of onsite activities. Project partners had to go online for project meetings.

Project participants had mentioned that *“INCOMA provides timely and necessarily technical support for smooth implementation of project activities”, “it would be useful to periodically receive summary on updated chrono-gram showing the specific tasks, deliverables and expected deadlines”, “The role of INCOMA is fundamental to help the coordination and the support of the project”.*

In general, the **management performance of the project is assessed as positive.**



Development of national benchmarking. The external evaluator is a constant participant of the Erasmus+ projects and is aware of the overall picture of Erasmus+ projects and results in Central Asian Regions. We think that the UNICAC project has put a strong step forward in promoting efficient tools of higher education internationalisation processes in the region. While there were some national and regional projects in the past year, that were aiming mostly development of internationalisation in higher education (IMEP, CACTLE, HIEDTEC, UZDOC etc.), 2021 and 2022 CBHE results reveal that UNICAC is still staying as the only project fully oriented to enhancement of internationalisation, as well the only project in this field, with participation of Chinese universities. This makes UNICAC project unique and important for Central Asian universities, taking into account China's active intervention in international educational processes within the frameworks of One Belt-One Road initiative.

Results of UNICAC can become a role model for building cooperation links with Chinese universities.

2. Efficiency

Efficiency refers to the measurement of the project outputs, both qualitative and quantitative, in relation to the inputs. In this sense, efficient use of grant, efficient organisation of mobilities and activities and contribution of mobilities to project objectives are assessed.

The use of project grants complies with the project aims and activities so far. All beneficiary universities have purchased and installed equipment.

Project partners are provided with **clear explanation of usage of grant funds**, requirements for supporting documents by the project grantholder – University of Seville. As much as known to the external evaluator, all supporting documents of the grant usage are being provided timely to the Grantholder.

Except online trainings during the peak of COVID pandemic, on-site trainings and mobilities were timely organised in Finland, Spain, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. China is still staying closed for international mobilities within the project. Mobilities were organised timely and costs were covered by the project. All mobilities have contributed to the project objectives.

Achievement of the objectives can be monitored and followed via INCOMA platform in Teamwork and also reflected on the project website.

The project team has appointed a person, who is responsible for solely financial management issues, which enables smooth and transparent flow.

Chinese partners had some difficulties with equipment purchase, which is not related with project management, but with specific financial regulations at home universities and COVID pandemic.

3. Effectiveness

Effectiveness refers to the measurement of the extent to which UNICAC project activities attains project objectives. In evaluating the effectiveness of the project, it is useful to consider to what extent were the objectives achieved or what were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives.



Organised online and on-site training modules were prepared by the European partners. Learning needs were identified through questionnaires sent by the work package coordinator and the Quality coordinator to participating partners. To ensure the quality and usefulness of the training materials another questionnaire to check and assess more in depth their initial expectations and current IRO organisational issues (both positive and negative, including main constraints and opportunities) were proposed to trainees. All meetings and trainings were followed by feedbacks of the participants. At the end of each training, participants are asked to fill the final assessment questionnaire to check the compliance level between their initial needs and the training contents.

Staff selection for the trainings were done by Central Asian partners in different ways. For example, at TUIT, staff selection was done by the project coordinator according to the topic of the training, while in Chinese partners selection process was organized through application process.

EU partners have internally selected the persons to compose the staff project on the basis of their previous expertise and skills on IRO issues and on EU project management.

Partner universities could enhance their internationalisation structures. For example, TUIT has significantly increase the staff number employed for better internationalisation. Namely, a specific department was created to work in international projects, led by project member.

With the contributions from all partner HEIs, the project has produced a practical toolkit on organization and management of IROs which represent an ongoing tool to be continuously updated and improved along the project.

4. Impact

Impact refers to the positive and negative changes produced by UNICAC project in the partner institutions. The assessment is concentrated on both intended and unintended results and includes the positive and negative impact of external factors, such as changes that facilitate the strengthening of EU-Partner country cooperation.

Communication and questionnaires with the project partners within the scope of both External Evaluation Report underline that all partners have experienced positive impact at their universities.

All partner universities accept that prepared Strategic Plans of Internationalisation will have long-lasting impact. All partners noted that the Plans are in line with their university development plans.

Some partners (i.e. TUIT) underlined that permanent meetings and training modules have brought to new ideas on multilateral cooperation, better understanding of internationalisation strategies and future plans that may lead to structural changes at home universities. For example, partners plan to create International Advisory Board within their network.

Chinese partner (NWAUFU) had noted some problems that occurred in the beginning of the project activities. They had some lack in covering overall objectives and completing them, which was not the case couple of months after project start. For Chinese universities *“improving or changing an official strategic policy always looks a time-consuming process”*. They had proposes that *“it can be discussed*



how to build up the internationalisation concept among most of the university staffs, or push them to study those good practices of internationalisation strategic in all partner units. Even though it is a small step to improve the strategic plan, but it will be easier to change the total internationalisation processes”.

One partner had noted that the unplanned before outcome for the UNICAC is the Canvas platform <https://canvas.LAUREA.fi/courses/2895>, which contributed to the virtual mobility for the consortium members, who will make available to take courses. Partner is sure that this platform will have wider impact if continued beyond the project lifetime.

We think that Strategic Plans of Internationalisation at partner universities will have a long-lasting positive impact, given the fact that they are prepared in line with project overall objectives, findings and recommendations.

5. Sustainability

Sustainability refers to the continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed and is concerned with the measurement of the benefits of an activity that are likely to continue after Erasmus+ grant has been fully used.

External Evaluator sees the assured sustainability of the UNICAC project will be achieved through the feasible activities planned and performed by now (Workpackage 8), namely:

- National roundtables, conferences, trainings in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and China;
- Adopted Strategic Plans for Internationalisation in partner HEIs;
- Financial and academic autonomy granted to Uzbek partner universities;
- Produced materials, most importantly the UNICAC Internationalisation Manual;
- Official approval of created International Relations structures;
- Cooperation agreements, mobilities, joint projects between the project partners;
- TUIT's participation in CBHE proposal on university autonomy;
- TUIT and IET TSUC cooperation agreements;
- Several Erasmus+ KA107 mobility proposals;
- NPU's MOUs with University of Sevilla (US) and IET TSUC.

We think that planned library exchange system, joint researches, joint PhD supervisions **will undoubtedly contribute to the sustainability of the project.**

Problems and risks

Surveys and interviews with the project partners revealed some minor problems and risks that exist or may arise. It should be noted that majority of the possible risks are already mentioned in the LFM of the project.

- A couple of partners evaluated the INCOMA Teamwork platform as technically massive and not always clear. Messages and files could be better tagged and archived regularly. Without tagging



with a name, it is risky not to see an important message.

- As project meetings went to virtual starting from Spring 2020, there were some problems with technical issues. There have been difficulties to find common virtual channels to all partners, so that everybody had an equally functioning access. This has affected the smooth implementation of virtual trainings during this spring.

- Some partners experienced unclear understanding of project tasks. They noted that communication within working groups should be improved and task expected from partners should be clarified better. In some cases, tasks were not exactly and distribution between EU and/or non-EU partners was not clearly understandable.

- There was lack of sufficient level of English knowledge of some staff from project partners.

- Chinese partners experienced problems with reaching wider audience for dissemination activities. News of the project are seen by readers ranging from 200 to 1-3 thousand people, but it is difficult to report dissemination links to local state news report platforms.

- For Chinese partner, it was difficult to attract volunteers to project activities.

- Chinese partners need more templates and instruction to follow some detailed activities. Also, they need some best practice manuals.

- Although there is a constructive relationship among partners, a few partners are not actively involved in virtual meetings so they have to improve their implication in UNICAC.

- Gender balance is respected in overall, but within the universities the balance is diverse.

- Respondents several times pressed on the thought that some partners, especially outside-EU are not equally active, which could make the project implementation more difficult.

- Respondents look positively for the post-project period, with the assumption that project sustainability will be ensured by all project members.

- The adoption of the SPIs at all universities is a good sign, but there is a risk of discontinuing the updating processes in post-project period.

- Respondents look forward for continuation of trainings and mobilities between the project members.

- Project partners experienced problems with delays in equipment.

- Some partners proposed to increase the frequency of coordinators meeting at least once per month. To consider short meetings to deliver the situation of project implementation. The external evaluator doesn't evaluate this as a problem of the project, but more likely to be individual approach of the respondent.

- China was still close for academic mobilities due to COVID restrictions.

All partners had underlined COVID-19 pandemic as the biggest unexpected risk of the project. This emergency obliged to rethink the mobility activities planned in the workpackages. To deal with this risk, the project partners are working to propose some alternative online trainings and experts' interventions and a possible peer to peer tutoring between some EU IRO staff and their colleagues from the partner HEIs.



Another main risk is regarded to the fact of adapting the same material to IROs with different level of expertise and experience. However, in order to deal with such risk, UNICAC project team has composed the working groups during the training with people coming from different institutions in order to favourite their reciprocal knowledge and balance the different levels of international relations development.

3.4. ANALYSIS OF THE INTERIM SURVEY

UNICAC partners were asked to fill the interim survey in July 2022, which covered the main milestones of the project and the partner's responses and assumptions.

1. Formal characteristics of the project

Partners were asked to provide the update of the timeline of project activities. Specific attention was given to the elaboration and implementation of the Strategic Plans of Internationalisation.

All partners provided full information about the meetings, roundtables, mobility periods, publications, dissemination materials etc. All partners fulfilled the planned activities in compliance with the updated workplan of the project. Namely, the followings were performed:

Elaboration of SPI, defining core strategies and policies, surveys among partner relevant structures, drafting an action plan, Participation in the series of seminar for IRO staff in EU and CA partners, contribution to the Practical Toolkit designed by UNITO. Trainers from LAUREA, US, UNITO have conducted series of seminars for PhD students. All partners organized seminars. For example, IET and KhoGU conducted series of seminars on "Curriculum China & Global Studies", "Internationalisation at SAA" and others with participation of 28 people from TET TSUC and local partners.

NUUz organized a series of successful seminars and workshops on "Strategies of internationalisation at NUUz", "International Cooperation Agreements and Networks Raising standards in T/L through international cooperation". LAUREA and US contributed effectively during seminars on "Development of Potentials for Internationalisation in Teaching / Learning", "Raising standards in T/L through internalization" and some others.

Chinese partners also underlined the impact of seminars held by EU partners.

The situation with the Strategic Plans of Internationalisation was updated by the project partners. In this issue, all Central Asian and Chinese partners have made progress and fulfilled the project objectives.

Some partners have underlined the fact of adopting SPI as a novelty and very useful result. For example, IET TSUC did not have an SPI before. The internationalisation action plan was part of the institutional strategic development plan. So, the new SPI for the IET TSUC has been developed, a document was build-up from scratch. There were 8 strategic goals for internationalisation defined, for each goal set an action plan. For this reason, a working group has surveyed all university beneficiaries.



A new SPI for the NUUz has been developed and signed. This plan consists of 3 parts: academic, scientific and international. They are updated for each academic year in accordance with new President Decrees and new educational reforms.

At TUIT, SPI at university level was prepared by the project team members and have been implementing through vice rector's management. During the project life time organizing new department of International projects have been initiated by project members at TUIT and this initiative was fully supported by the administration of the university.

Colleagues from Chinese partner XJU proposed that the process of education internationalisation is relatively backward. In order to lay a solid foundation for international education in Xinjiang in the future, it is necessary to improve the opening level of exchange student education. In order to improve the international cultural exchange programme of Xinjiang University to develop faster and better, this is the problem to be solved at present. XJU partners see the SPI as a solution and noted that this strategy has been fully prepared and accepted at university level.

All partners see the COVID-19 situation as the unexpected barrier. Due to the pandemic, the project has been extended with the intention that, at least in 2022, some activities will be carried offline. However, many of the planned activities for the second year were carried out online and the objectives are being achieved, although in a different way than originally established. UNICAC project work packages also includes onsite activities, seminars and exchange student programmes were organized online by programme countries. During spring 2022, on-site mobilities were organised, although an online platform for off-site mobilities has also been set up. On the other hand, progress was being made on the two publications of good practices produced by the project HEIs.

2. Scientific and social relevance of the project

The partners were asked about the scientific and social relevance of the projects, review of the structures of the project courses, about their contribution to internationalisation at the university, number of people participated, ensuring the multidisciplinary competence of the lecturers, online webinars etc.

Project partners from CA and China clearly underlined the relevance of the project to the current conditions and tendencies. For example, NUUz accepts that UNICAC is very relevant to the objectives of the university to make NUUz the flag carrier of higher education in the country, improve the quality of education and train qualified personnel for relevant sectors of the economy, gradual introduction of the concept of "University 3.0", which provides the University for entering the list of top-500 university ranks, the integration of education, science, innovation and commercialization of research results. The main strategic goal of these tasks is to make the National University of Uzbekistan one of the world's elite and classical universities and a center of comprehensive research, as well as to instill in faculty and students a sense of leadership, corporate culture, competitiveness and victory.

All CA and China partners accept the virtual mobility offered in the framework of UNICAC as a good opportunity to experience international teaching and teaching in an international environment. All possible virtual mobility and offered courses by UNICAC consortia



<https://canvas.LAUREA.fi/courses/2895> have been posted on partner universities social media accounts and webpages.

Uzbek partners described Internalization courses of LAUREA University in July, 2021, as very useful to get acquainted with Finish education system and activities of International relations office. Exchange student platform were introduced by experts of LAUREA university. To globalize the university importance of International activities metrics and monitoring of the university were explained by demonstrating existing platforms at LAUREA university.

Chinese partner XJU thinks the courses contributed to the strengthening of the internationalisation in the university. The courses helped participants enrich their international professional knowledge, understand the scientific research methods.

The selection of lecturers for the courses were done based on experience and field of relevance.

According to the project work packages the tasks were distributed between projects participant HEIs, lecturers of responsible topic already was informed at the kick off meeting, based on the schedule participants are informed to attend on seminars trough UNICAC Teamwork platform. Most of the project members have knowledge on Internationalisation strategy and experience in the related department, so the quality of their lecture and their competencies were good enough to organize project workshops and seminars.

The webinars were mostly about the internationalisation of teaching, learning and research, PhD coaching, teachers and staff training etc. They are not directed to any specific course or field, they have general character as the fields of consortia members are different.

Sometimes online webinars had invited guest lecturers from programme country university, for example LAUREA university has invited some experts on internationalisation of university in their webinar.

Partners had interesting seminars with investigation of new ways of enhancing internationalisation of teaching, learning and research, during those seminars each partner university gives proof on their proposals to develop cooperation on teaching, learning and research, and shares their experience and knowledge on their activities in that direction.

Webinars that were being held in the framework of the project are held only between the partners, with the exception of the last one, held on 28 October 2021, which consisted of a round table on the effects of the situation in Afghanistan on Central Asia. This activity was organized within the framework of the UNICAC project, although it was not foreseen in the project. The event was attended by 70 participants.

The partners noted that the main problem with the virtual meetings and their organisation is the passivity of some of the partners, which can significantly hinderd the smooth running of the project.

3. Institutional sustainability of expected project results

This part of the survey was one of the most important as it defines the partners' devotion to ensuring



the sustainability of the project results, integration in the university policy, infrastructure installations, promotion of the project results and follow-up etc.

Partners see SPIs as a driver for the impact and sustainability of the project results, as they are being integrated in the university policies.

For example, at NUUZ and Tajik universities, the SPI core part and vision derive from the Institutional Strategic Development Plan, so it is aligned and relevant with university policy, and definitely Institutional Strategic Development Plan, which fully reflects that the university policy is relevant with regional and national policy. In the new SPI, partner universities do not plan to establish a new unit or department, but they are about to increase the number of staff engaged in implementation of internationalisation activities. It is also foreseen a different approach in project designing and implementation, assuring teacher and staff collaboration.

TUIT has significantly enhanced its internationalisation coverage during the project lifetime. TUIT became more active in implementing international projects. During the project time, a number of Erasmus+ CBHE projects were implemented as a partner university, and one new project is being implemented as a grantholder. The university's capacity on international projects is increasing, and has led to creation of new International projects department, running with group of young researchers and led by Prof. Ahmed Yusupov, a UNICAC project participant. The department is financially supported by university, the members of the department receive incentives from the university.

Chinese partners also underline that national policies vigorously support international cooperation and exchange projects, relying on advanced science and technology, integrating resources to achieve a win-win situation. At XJU, they have set up a team especially responsible for international exchange and cooperation projects, regularly sorting out materials and carrying out activities to strengthen international exchanges and cooperation as the goal. In the future, funds will be invested to ensure that the project can be well completed, which can largely ensure the embeddedness of staff in the department and the university. At XJU, they could optimize and improve the structure of the research group, drew lessons from foreign research models, divided the members into groups, and each group independently conducted research reports.

Partner universities reported that project equipment have been purchased and brought to university successfully on last academic year and installed on new department of International project room. In the future it will be used for the deployment of university activities related to international projects. But The COVID-19 pandemic caused inconvenience for delivery and delayed installation by several months.

All partners are successfully employing different means of promotion and dissemination. National dissemination meetings with local partners were organized. Webpages of the universities, their social media accounts have all the information about the project-related events. Also, IET TSUC represented the UNICAC consortium at Capacity Building for Higher Education Virtual Fair, organized by EACEA on 26-27 October 2021.

TUIT is using also social media accounts of its branches.



The project activities have provided several opportunities for the communication among national and international universities. These promoted the international cooperation abilities in the region.

4. External partners and exploitation initiatives

This part of the survey was created for gathering information about the non-academic partners and stakeholders, inter-university partners, supplementary activities foreseen, measures taken to formalise or institutionalise links with local non-university partners, measures put in place to enlarge the implementation of the project results beyond the consortium participants etc.

As the project objectives are mainly dedicated to the HEIs and their internationalisation processes, the results, outcomes, best practices book, Manual toolkit will be shared among the rest of the universities of partner countries. UNICAC has a mobility module, where students and teachers of the partner universities will be able to use this opportunity.

For example, NUUz could recruit more than 50 applicants, including teachers and students to apply for the UNICAC on-site mobility.

Further, the IROs of UNICAC partners will proceed with application evaluation according to internal procedures and will interview with the shortlisted.

The unplanned before outcome for the UNICAC will be a Canvas platform <https://canvas.LAUREA.fi/courses/2895>, which will facilitate virtual mobility for the consortia members, who will make available to take courses.

Chinese partners of the project could invite and attract external partners for their initiatives, including from other universities (Wenlei Sun, Jianxing Zhou and others). They also used the components of the project in publicity materials for the International Exchange and Cooperation Department. At XJU, a website has been set up to display the results of international cooperation projects, and it has been displayed on the official website of Xinjiang University, so that all interested people can learn about it. Through UNICAC project, the graduates could deepen their understanding of the culture and scientific research mode of different countries, cultivate the ability of communication and cooperation with foreign friends, and cultivate their practical ability in completing the project.

3.5. ANALYSIS OF THE FINAL SURVEY

Final external evaluation is based also on the survey, which was filled by all the partners. The final questionnaire used the questions to understand the overall perception of project activities by project partners, as well as some specific questions on technical issues.

First part of the survey covered the overall management of the project.

Overall management of the project

1. How would you assess the recent project development and update in the view of COVID-



19?

In general, the partners noted that the project management could successfully adapt to new conditions. Nevertheless, some partners saw considerable improvement after easing the COVID-19 measures, as partners became again were able to meet face-to-face, which made the communication easier.

One partner sees improvement of the management also after the change of the US project coordinator. In any case, they see the role of INCOMA as fundamental in achieving project results, coordination of the project and pushing the partners forward.

COVID-19 caused a delay in dates and events and due to extension of the project, the partners could carry out the mobilities, that were an essential part of the project.

Workshops and trainings planned in the WP 3.2 and 3.3 were conducted through ZOOM platform. Timeline for onsite mobilities was prolonged because of pandemic restrictions, however, all the planned mobilities finally were completed successfully.

After the removal of restrictions on international travel in Europe and Central Asia, project partners could complete foreseen short-term mobility of the UNICAC between the Central Asian universities and to the EU partner universities.

Nevertheless, it was difficult for some partners to develop all the activities because their countries have maintained some restrictions. Due to the extension of the COVID-19 measures in China, Central Asia and EU universities could not make mobility to Chinese partner universities, same participants from Chinese universities could not take part in the mobility. Under the strict quarantine measures of the Chinese government, all offline activities of Chinese partners in the whole project were cancelled. However, thanks to the efforts of all the partners involved, the project has continued to this day with a success through extremely frequent email exchanges and online meetings. Therefore, despite the great impact caused by the epidemic, the whole project was still pushed forward in strict accordance with the schedule and achieved the expected results.

2. In the context of overall implementation, have the initially expected results and outputs been achieved at your university? Please identify any hindrances in achieving the expected objectives.

Majority of the project partners noted that the expected results have been met, although the number of mobilities has been reduced due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

The main constraints concern the elaboration of the toolkit (WP2.7). For the coordinating partner (US) it has not been easy to collect interesting outputs from all partners (with some positive exceptions). Then, the final elaboration of it has been always postponed due to the parallel organization of others practical activities (seminars, workshops, etc.) with major deadlines etc.

Almost all Central Asian and Chinese partners stated delays in mobilities and equipment



purchase. For example, for TUIT there have been some difficulties, as holding some of the meetings online, in purchasing and delivering equipment in time.

IET TSUC states the overachieving some indicators. For example, according the WP 3.3., the initial plan was sending 8 students and 8 staff to the short-term mobility, in fact they could send 8 students and 11 staff. They organized 4 national roundtables (1 more than in plan), 3 internal meetings, 1 joint international conference.

3. Were there any risks associated with the project implementation (except COVID-19)? Have you applied any mitigation measures implemented for these risks?

The European partners stated a minor risk, which has been the coordination with Chinese partners, as it has been difficult to organise some activities.

One of the main risks may be the internal turnover and the lack of adequate staff to implement the project. Some partners solve this problem by including more staff in the UNICAC team.

Another risk was related with time shortage in applying for visas. However, NUUz and Sevilla university administrations entered into communication with the related embassies and the procedures went more smoothly.

Extension of the project minimized the risk of not achieving the project results.

Some risks were with the financing the activities, and many partners faced them. As the mobility of students and staff was the highest-cost activity, some universities didn't pay staff costs in full, and firstly allocated funds to mobility. Staff costs will be paid after receiving the last tranche within the project.

KHOGU experienced a problem with the Internet for almost a year. Because of this problem, KHOGU team missed a lot, even they could not reply to messages and complete forms. For solving this problem and to avoid the risk of delays, sometimes they had to move to another city.

Chinese partner stated that future risks may arise by increasing the number of people involved in the project.

4. Do you think the quality of the project coordination and management is adequate for achieving the expected results? If not, please explain why. What can be improved to make the coordination and management more effective?

The partners evaluated the quality of the project coordination and management positively and adequate. There have been several evaluations of the different activities, and INCOMA, as quality coordinators, have been following and assuring the project's performance.



2 partners propose that perhaps the project team should have held more face-to-face meetings, as it is a very effective tool for discussing and resolving any problem. 2 partners stated the need for increasing the number of coordination meetings, especially country partnership meetings.

INCOMA's role is evaluated as positive and adequate for completion of tasks, the INCOMA team kept sending questionnaires, asking for reports and evidences in compliance with the timelines indicated in the project.

2 weakness were noted. One partner claimed that sometimes they were waiting for a long time to receive a reply for their questions, mainly for the ones related with the financial management. Also, another partner proposed that it would be better, if the information on participants and activities could be managed and maintained in a unified and centralized manner after each event, for example minutes of each meeting could be made public.

5. Do you think the communication within the partnership was effective and clear? If not, please explain why. What can be done to improve the communication?

Although the partners stated overall effective and clear communication within the project, there are some points that needs attention.

Lack of Internet usage at some partners hindered the effective communication. Also arose the problems with usage of different platforms, which was inaccessible by some partners, Chinese mostly. It depends.

One partner noted that the communication was "better with and between some partners but sometimes unclear and confusing from US coordinator". Another partner stated that "because of the online relationship, some problems need to be confirmed multiple times".

The general communication platform - Teamwork workspace is accessible for everyone, for Chinese partners as well. Most of the online meetings, online seminars and conferences are organized in the Zoom meeting environment, which is available for China too.

Normally all the jointly events were harmonized with the timing zones, and every time the project members were making a doodle for setting up timing and date for the events.

6. Did you have a good understanding about the project (aims, objectives, procedures and your role in it)? If not, why? What could have been done to improve your understanding?

All partners express their good understanding about the project. Aims, objectives, procedures and the role in the project clear from the start of the project. All issues were clearly explained during kick off meeting.



One Chinese partner underlined that although they clearly knew the role of their university in the project, a great understanding came over time, as many goals were achieved.

7. Do you think the project activities and outputs address the right target groups? If not please explain why.

The project has reached out to teachers, researchers, staff, and students from the partner universities. This facilitated the fulfilment of the main objectives of the project.

NUUZ staff considers the goals and objectives of the project to be very suitable with the direction of development of Uzbek universities.

8. Do you think the content of the project outputs produced respond to the needs that the project aims to tackle? If not, please explain why. What measures can be taken in the future in other initiatives to better align the project outputs with these needs?

The content of the project results was quite accurate. On the one hand, it contributed to the improvement of the International Relations offices of the partner universities through the exchange of good practices, created a network of collaboration between the partner institutions, and gave the possibility to students, professors, and staff of the universities in the different countries to exchange knowledge.

The developed content of the project outputs responded to the needs of the target groups and fully reflects the project aims to tackle.

Main outputs as Strategic Plans for Internationalisation, Best practices book on Internationalisation of teaching, learning and research, Manual on IRO management, Seminars for IRO staff, Seminars for internationalisation of research and coaching of PhD, upgrading IRO's infrastructure, new designed IRO's website, Pilot testing of short-term mobility of students and teacher between partner universities, building up the network of UNICAC for future cooperation etc. are responding the project needs, directed to achieving the set project objectives and aims.

Still one partner is a bit skeptic and thinks that "the results obtained by the project correspond to the needs but it is not worth evaluating yet, because the skills prioritized by the projects need more practice beside the UNICAC project".

9. Do you think the project contributed to reaching the expected impacts on the stakeholders? How would you assess it?



Expected impacts on the stakeholders is assessed positively. Especially thanks to additional efforts, such as the Regional Roundtable on the impact of the situation in Afghanistan in CA & China, the participation in the Virtual Capacity Building Fair, the organization of the project conferences and internal workshops, etc. contributed to this task.

IET TSUC staff see a real impact on the stakeholders. IET TSUC restarted the internationalisation processes right at the starting of the UNICAC project. At 2019 there were only 3 Erasmus mobility projects and limited number of the partners, by the end of the UNICAC project the number of the projects leveled up to 11 ICM KA107 projects and wide geographic partnership in the Europe, Asia and USA.

KHOGU partner assessed this impact as average, as in their case only the university was interested in project activities.

10. Do you have any other ideas to maximise the post-project impact on stakeholders? If yes, what are those? How is the sustainability of the project outcomes secured?

Several ideas and proposals can be drafted from the partners feedback on maximizing the post-project impact on stakeholders.

The sustainability of the project will be ensured by the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding and the agreements between partner institutions. In addition, the partners have already expressed their interest in further collaboration between their universities in the future in order to keep exchanging knowledge and expertise. Thanks to the network developed during WP5, the project will ensure its continuation.

It would be very useful to hold informative sessions with the results obtained that could be attended by the stakeholder, once the project is finished.

Some partners propose preparing a proposal for the new call and joint application for some common initiatives of research (i.e. summer schools or others).

Creation of joint programmes and co-tutelle supervision of RnD students can be another possibility.

IET TSUC sees the post-project impact in building partnership outside the project. They have completed 2 projects with LAUREA and they have joint proposals with NUUZ.

Jointly publishing academic articles, discussing and organizing the declaration of new international cooperation projects are proposed as the most effective and powerful measures to continuously expand the impact of the project. "Therefore, after the project is over, it is not strictly according to the existing budget to calculate the expenses of all participating members, but to consider a certain follow-up budget, which will make these measures more effectively implemented".



11. What would you consider as the most successful results of the project? Why?

One partner stated that the best result has been the dissemination and sustainability efforts (WP7 and WP8) that partners have carried out, as they have all achieved a great impact. In addition, it is worth mentioning that, given the difficult global situation such as the COVID-19 pandemic, partners could manage to carry out face-to-face mobilities.

Another partner thinks the publication of the good practices in which the results of the training activities are included, is the best result, because it allows studying the material offered and the main conclusions of each one of them.

In the other hand, almost all partners consider the developed National Recommendations for International Cooperation in Teaching, Learning and Research in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and China, as well as Best Practices Handbook as the biggest project output. Moreover, the organized trainings and onsite mobilities made a big impact on the team's members.

TUIT staff could update the internationalisation structure and created the international project development centre.

Short term mobility of the students and staff is evaluated as the most effective way to bring and learn something new and widen the communication.

The establishment of a unified and mature international collaborative network is another successful result of this project. Using this network will help all members to better participate in future international cooperation activities.

12. What would you do differently, if you could restart this the project again?

Replies to this question varied widely. If the project could be restarted, the project partners would:

- organize more face-to-face meetings between partners;
- organize better coordination, select less partners, find some ways to motivate better all the partners;
- organize trainings on preparation of research projects;
- discuss the possibility of cooperation on joint training of R&D staff,
- alongside Chinese, consider one or two partner universities from Japan or Singapore;
- create better working group at KHOGU;
- organize more online courses;
- more actively advocate all cooperative members to participate in agricultural-related discussion topics. The impact of the epidemic on the global economy and daily life in the past two or



three years, especially the conflict in the Russian-Ukrainian war this year, has made people more soberly aware of how important the topic of agriculture should be.

13. What kind of additional support and resources (financial, technical, human resources, or other) could have been helpful to improve the provision of this project? Have the financial difficulties in the project been overcome to some extent?

Project partners evaluated the related issues as follows:

- The form of justification of expenses could have been a little more streamlined. On the other hand, the budget for Asian students to come to Europe was a bit too low to cover all the expenses.
- As a result of the conflict with Ukraine, many difficulties have arisen in transferring funds to partner countries, mainly due to intermediary banks.
- More funds for travels were needed, also due to the increase of the prices due to the COVID-19.
- Extra-funds for organizing conferences and events related to dissemination could have been helpful. The problems related to equipment purchase through tender didn't allow us to choose the particular equipment by ourselves.
- TUIT supported the use of university resources in the implementation of the project.
- More people could be involved. Due to the situation around the world, economic problems
- the money suggested for travel and accommodation is not enough anymore and also as we live in a remote area to get visa is very expensive for us most of the time we pay extra money.
- More technical input will be more conducive to the implementation of this project. Such technical investments include, but are not limited to, better computer hardware, online conference software platforms and other facilities, as well as more capital investments. In terms of funding, we have alleviated the problem caused by insufficient funding for this project to a certain extent by using the school's investment in internationalisation.
- We need to apply for the visa in China, which costs a lot.

14. Has the UNICAC project contributed to sustainable capacity building, knowledge transfer in partner countries as well as to the improvement of the scientific-technical potential?

The UNICAC project significantly contributed to sustainable capacity building, because there have been clear improvements in the international relations offices, the websites, the procedures, there have been different training sessions to build capacities in terms of international relations processes in the universities, and everyone has had the opportunity to see how work is done in the different partner regions.



As one of the stages of the project was devoted to developing research capacities (trainings “Teaching/Learning/Research”), doctoral students at the university participated in these activities obtained new knowledge and developed their research skills in accordance with European Standards and practices.

Knowledge transfer between truly international universities from Spain, Italy, and Finland put significant impact on the development of each partner university.

IRO's have upgraded its technical potential, videoconference rooms were established (this were foreseen in pre-COVID time), which were an actual intervention, because in the next 2 years, almost all activities went in online mode. In addition, computers and laptops, projectors were procured.

The contribution of the project to sustainability of capacity building and knowledge transfer also can be seen in the number of different agreements.

15. To what extent were the originally defined objectives of the capacity building realistic? To what extent do they still meet the most recent requirements and the most recent standard of knowledge?

One EU partner noted that they need to overcome the idea that the EU partners were the trainers of the central Asia partners, as they really learn from each other.

Originally defined objectives were formulated basing on the needs analysis and real needs of the participating HEIs. Therefore, they absolutely meet the most recent requirements and the most recent standard of knowledge.

One Chinese partner noted that the goals were set correctly, although not enough. Another Chinese partner also stated that the goals originally formulated for the project are still instructive to this day.

16. What factors were crucial for the achievement or failure to achieve the project objectives so far (indication of strengths and weaknesses, e.g. the monitoring and evaluation system)?

The quality control and evaluation of the project have kept the project on track. Moreover, the partners think it is worth mentioning the great professionalism and motivation of some partners such as IET-TSUC, which has gone beyond the assigned activities to disseminate the project.

According to the NUUZ staff, the most crucial factors were related to the pandemic restrictions: 1) isolation of Chinese partners during lockdown and after; 2) difference between a unit cost and real cost (travelling), 3) visa issues, 4) recent political conflicts in neighboring countries influenced the increase in tickets costs and big flow of tourists applying for a visa through the Embassies in Uzbekistan.

For the achievement of the project objectives, the decisive factors were the stacked work of individual partners, especially distinguished, Universities of Seville, LAUREA, INCOMA, TUES, TUIT,



NUUz, etc.

17. Additional comments/observations/recommendations

The partners made some additional comments and recommendations.

- While planning mobility activities, we could take into consideration other city events in order not to have problems with accommodation and transport;
- We would like to point out the need to continue cooperation in organizing mobility, to consider opportunities for joint study programmes and research projects, and to organize joint supervision of PhD students;
- The project was very interesting and taught us a lot, I think that we as an university acquired a lot of skills, although we thought we knew everything;
- It would be good to continue the project in this format or change it a little, but still continue, because the project is very stable. Much that was done during the project will be used after the end, which shows the sustainability of the project;
- It would be even better if the consortium consisted of more countries and organizations;
- A clearer project budget review system will be beneficial to the subsequent development of more in-depth international cooperation activities.

Questions about capacity building trainings

The second part of the questionnaire covered the information about capacity building trainings organised at partner universities.

The partners were asked about the number and the profiles of their colleagues from the university that have passed trainings within UNICAC project.

EU partners participated as trainers. The indicated number of participants from CA and China universities range from 2 to more than 70, including internal trainees. In average, at least 10-15 staff members from partner universities took trainings, organized by the EU universities.

The profile of the trained staff also shows wide variety. While the IRO staff comprise the majority of the trainees, there were also staff from faculties, different departments, as well as students. IET TSUC provided internal trainings, thus increasing the number of internally trained staff up to 72. NPU of China organized participation of significant number of research staff.

Increasing the number of the trained people, as well as their profile is crucial for the sustainability of the project.



Project partners were asked to evaluate **the quality of trainings**.

- The objectives of the trainings were clearly defined. 6 partners strongly agree, 1 partner agree.
- The project achieved its intended objectives related to trainings. 6 partners strongly agree, 1 partner agree. One partner noted that after participating in the trainings they started to understand more about the project objectives.
- The agenda items and topics covered were relevant. 6 partners strongly agree, 1 partner agree. One partner noted that the relevance was always respected.
- The content was well organized and easy to follow. 5 partners strongly agree, 2 partners agree. One partner noted that sometimes the content was difficult to follow but with the help of facilitators everything became clear.
- The trainers/experts or facilitators were well prepared and knowledgeable about the topic. 6 partners strongly agree, 1 partner agree.
- The materials distributed were useful. 6 partners strongly agree, 1 partner agree.
- The time allotted for the training was sufficient. 3 partners strongly agree, 2 partners agree, 2 partners disagree. The disagreement of the partners is based on the idea that trainings would be more efficient if training days were 2 or 3 days longer.

1. How relevant were the trainings to the objectives of the project:

6 partners – very relevant, 1 partner - mostly relevant.

The partners generally agree that the content and the format of trainings were very relevant to the objectives and logically organized in order to involve all target groups and cover all the planned topics. For example, as a result, the IR department of the NUUz was restructured and started to work more efficiently. One Chinese partner underlined that all of the trainings were about internationalisation through teaching, learning and research.

2. In your view, what were the trainings' results/achievements?

All Central Asian and Chinese partners expressed about enhanced skills and knowledge as a result of trainings. Also some EU partners noted that they acquired better knowledge of different and “new” countries for them. As normally they are more likely oriented to other UE countries, trainings were really an enriching experience for all of them.

NUUz staff see, among the main results the restructuring of the IR department and allocation of the responsibilities basing on the experience of European HEIs. Trainings for doctoral students provided the PhD and DSc students of the NUUz with the relevant information about modern trends in science and technologies, the ways of conducting the research gave the opportunity to meet European experts in their spheres that was followed by online coaching in PhD supervision, short-term



student and professor exchanges, and identification of joint collaborative projects.

The results of the trainings were also included in the development of National Recommendations for International Cooperation in Teaching, Learning and Research in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and China.

Partners accept the created network of project participants to become a solid basis for a cross-regional and international dialogue about international cooperation at universities.

The trainings helped to understand how the EU universities manage the internationalisation processes in different units and structures.

Chinese partners again underlined the role of the trainings in understanding the project aims and objectives. They also positively evaluated the learned techniques from the trainings, i.e. how to design agreements and memorandums of understanding, writing strategic plans of internationalisation etc.

Strengthened communication among partners was also another result.

3. What new skills and knowledge did you gain from these trainings?

The overview of the participants' feedbacks can be averaged in the following impressions that participants shared in their questionnaires:

- they learned how to make a good presentation for international audience;
- they understand more about university's general strategy and mission and their roles in cooperation with international partners;
- they got knowledge about networking, international networks and cooperation agreements as well as funding opportunities for cooperation programmes;
- they knew about mapping of aims and current status of the internationalisation of own higher education institution;
- they learned how to develop successful proposals and run an international project;
- they understand the role and professional background of IRO in Intercultural Communication in international projects for HEIs;
- they got knowledge about academic teaching and research cooperation related tools, methodologies and best practices;
- they learned how to improve the reciprocal knowledge, expertise, potential, and networking in the sphere of teaching, learning and research;
- they identified the main constraints, challenges, opportunities, and future perspectives of the IROs partners for own university;
- they exchanged the links with the socio-economic challenges in the regions involved (e.g., New Silk Road, potentials and opportunities, R&I);
- they got information about technical and financial management of European projects;



- they knew about Doctoral careers outside higher education on the examples of International good practices;
- Important skills were acquired by the project management team, planning and organization of the big international events, hosting international students and staff, budgeting, reporting, monitoring of the Erasmus+ CBHE projects;
- acquired skills in working online, creating new online programmes, conducting online seminars, designing sustainability plan, dissemination of the results, time management and others.

Chinese partner noted their better knowledge about Central Asian and European countries and skills in hosting an international conference.

4. Rate your level of knowledge of and skills in the topic prior participating in the trainings:

1 partner – very good, 1 partner - mostly good, 4 partners - somewhat.

3/4th of the partners noted that their knowledge and skills in the topic of university internationalisation were not at high level prior to the trainings.

For example, one partner replied that their university IRO staff was guided mostly by the old principles of such a university department, the main problem was that there were no direct focuses on the students, university rating, and curricula developed on the basis of internationally recognized HEIs.

One partner replied that although they had information on internationalisation in general before, but their practical knowledge was not enough.

One Chinese partner underlined that they were not familiar much about neither Central Asian education system nor Spanish.

5. Rate your level of knowledge of and skills in the topic after participating in the trainings:

5 partners – very good, 1 partner - mostly good.

Almost all partners think that their knowledge and skills were improved significantly after trainings. For example, “the updated IRO strategy helped the university to involve more international students and guest lecturers and work more efficiently with them because of the smart allocation of tasks”.

One partner replied as they have gained a lot from the trainings, but they haven’t yet used all what they had learned.

Chinese partner stated that after the training, they became more familiar with the Central Asian life and Spain’s difference with China.

6. How will you apply the trainings’ content and knowledge gained at your workplace? Please provide examples (e.g. develop new policy initiatives, organise trainings, develop work



plans/strategies, draft regulations, develop new procedures/tools etc.).

According to partners' feedback, they will employ the project and knowledge gained in different ways.

Partners see the most important application in preparation, revision and the update of the university strategy for internationalisation and climbing up in the world academic rankings.

Doctoral students and teaching staff will implement the knowledge and skills in their professional work: teaching methods, lesson plans, updated research methodologies.

IEC TSUC partners will pay special attention to the Erasmus+ programme. They are expecting to have more ICM KA171 and capacity building projects, so they will be directly using gained knowledge and skills in developing internationalisation at the university. Newly developed SPI within UNICAC will be serving us as a roadmap for their internationalisation development, elaborated books and manuals will be used to train newly hired staff, and to retrain staff.

Some partners will apply the gained knowledge in drafting strategic plans, developing university webpages and signing new cooperation agreements.

7. How could these trainings been improved? Please provide comments on how to improve the trainings, if relevant.

Two partners think the length of the trainings could be prolonged (at least 2 or 3 days added) in order to provide a better understanding of the discussed issues and practice them in the classroom as well.

The partners state that trainings could be improved if:

- presentations of trainers were provided before the start of the trainings;
- more details were put into agenda (aims and objectives);
- dissemination before and after the trainings was better;
- aims and importance of the trainings were explained better.
- trainings included more courses of professors.

[Website of the project](#)

The partners were also asked about the website of the project. In general, it received positive feedback.

- The language used is easy to understand and clear. 8 partners fully agree, 1 partner agree.
- The website navigation is easy and smooth. 7 partners fully agree, 2 partners agree.
- The overall design is attractive. 6 partners fully agree, 3 partners agree.



- The information is useful and recently updated. 6 partners fully agree, 3 partners agree.
- The language used is easy to understand and clear. 7 partners fully agree, 2 partners agree.

3.6. ANALYSIS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORKPACKAGES

The UNICAC project implementation plan consisted of 9 workpackages. In the project plan, all workpackages were defined in detail, with appropriate amount of workload and funds allocated for each of them.

Workpackages were distributed within project partners for implementation, monitoring and reporting purposes. Each workpackage had members from all partner universities, in order to allow and support the smooth and on-time contribution to the implementation.

| | WP | WP NAME | PARTNER RESPONSIBLE |
|--|-----|--|---------------------|
| PREPARATION | WP1 | Policy and Strategic Planning for Cross regional cooperation and Internationalisation in HEI | US |
| DEVELOPMENT | WP2 | Human Capacity Building - International Relations Staff | UNITO |
| | WP3 | Development of Potentials for Internationalisation in Teaching/Learning/Research (T/L/R) | LAUREA |
| | WP4 | Infrastructural Measures | IET |
| | WP5 | Cross-Regional Network for Internationalisation and Cooperation | TUIT |
| QUALITY CONTROL | WP6 | Evaluation and Quality Assurance | INCOMA |
| DISSEMINATION & SUSTANABILITY | WP7 | Dissemination | INCOMA |
| | WP8 | Sustainability | KHOGU |
| MANAGEMENT | WP9 | Project Management | US |

Execution of the planned activities within the frameworks of the project workpackages:



| WP | Tasks | Responsible | Comment |
|-------------------|---|---|--|
| WP 2.6 | Practical Training of IRO Staff in EU HEIs: 1 NUUZ, 1 TUIT, 1 NWAUFU to US 1 KhoGU, 1 IET to UNITO 1 NPU, 1 XJU to LAUREA | US, UNITO and LAUREA | Chinese partners couldn't assist face-to-face |
| WP 2.7 | Fine-tuning and publication of the Practical Toolkit – 100 ISBN copies. | UNITO and US | The publication is prepared and printed |
| WP 3.3 Seminar | “Boosting Research Capacities through IC” US: 2 experts to Uzbekistan UNITO & China: Laurea: 2 experts to Tajikistan | LAUREA, UNITO, US, all CA and China partners. | NWAUFU, NPU and XJU did it online with UNITO. The rest was face-to-face. |
| WP 3.4 | BPB based on the results of previous activities (publications) | LAUREA and all partners | Performed |
| WP 3.5 | National and Cross-Regional Recommendation for International Cooperation in T/L/R. | LAUREA and UZ, TJ and CN HEIs. | Performed |
| WP 3.7.1 | Mobility actions for students and professors. BLENDED. | All HEIs | A total of 40 students and 20 staff have participated in the face-to-face mobilities. It is less than the indicators, but more than expected (because of COVID, mobilities were canceled at the beginning) |
| WP 3.7.2 | Identification and proposal of 3 joint collaborative Projects | All partners | LAUREA is creating a document based with the ideas that came out during the meeting in Vantaa (May 2022), Performed |
| WP 4.1.2 | Setting up and upgrading of PC IROs webpages. 1 online workshop. | US (IT Services) | Performed |



| | | | |
|--------|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| WP 4.2 | Creation of libraries' Exchange system: 1 participant per TJ, UZ, CN HEIs travels to US. | US (Library Services) | Chinese partners couldn't travel |
| WP 5.2 | Joint International Conferences. | IET & TUIT | Chinese partners organized online |
| WP 6.3 | External Evaluation | INCOMA, all partners, external evaluator | Performed |
| WP 7.3 | 3 short internal information workshops. | UZ, TJ and CN HEIs. | Performed |
| WP 7.2 | Final Conference | TUIT, all partners | 22 September 2022 Performed |
| WP 8.1 | 3 National Roundtables in UZ, TJ and CN. | Coordinator - KhoGU. UZ, TJ and CN HEIs. | Performed |
| WP 8.3 | Official institutionalisation of the UNICAC Network through the signature of agreements by all Partners | Coordinator - KhoGU. All partners. | Performed |
| WP 8.4 | Collaboration agreements between partner HEIs. | Coordinator - KhoGU. All partners. | Performed, ongoing |

4. LESSONS LEARNED

The UNICAC project consortium composed of 11 institutions from 6 different countries with a vast experience in EU-funded and other international projects. This experience was useful in successful implementation of the project and reaching the aims and objectives. As much as known to the external evaluator, for the first time ever in Erasmus+ CBHE actions, this project brought together Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Chinese universities within the frameworks of internationalisation project.



The project consortium could build effective management and communication system. University of Seville with the support of INCOMA was in charge of defining and communicating the project management plan, including the procedures and formats to be used for monitoring and reporting purposes. University of Seville also worked on coordinating and valorizing the partners' efforts, controlling the budget concept and proposing the corrective actions in case of deviations.

The Consortium set-up a Steering Management Committee, consisting of one authorized member per partner that was defined to support and enhance cooperation and coordination processes.

INCOMA has periodically monitored the activities of the Committee to ensure its proper functioning.

In order to ensure the compliance of the activities in line with the budget and the time foreseen, partners produced periodic reports including the monitoring and collection of the cost advancement of partners.

Specially assigned financial manager was in charge of communicating with the National Agency, produce the templates for the reports, allocate the due payments to the partners and justify all project costs as established in the Erasmus+ Programme administrative and financial rules.

For the fluent communication partners have been communicating via TeamWork online platform. TeamWork also was used as web based working area where partners will upload evidences, results, agreements, reports and other documents relevant for the project.

In general, UNICAC project activities were performed **timely with the timeline, which was updated due to COVID pandemic**.

The mechanisms of preparation, management, quality assurance, dissemination **are suitable for this type of Erasmus+ projects**.

Objectives are feasible and **comply with the regional and national priorities**. The overall management can be evaluated **positively**. Coronavirus pandemic certainly brought some barriers, but the project management team has made sufficient efforts to move forward.

Financial issues are explained to partners in detail. Use of grant funds are **efficient and eligible**. Partners could purchase and install the planned equipment

Roles and tasks distribution is clear. Quality and Dissemination plans were elaborated and their **implementation is monitored** on regular basis. EACEA has evaluated the project as "good" based on the technical implementation report.

Website of the project (www.unicac.eu) provides extensive information and the paces of fulfilling the tasks. Teamwork platform is **very helpful tool and can be recommended** to other Erasmus+ projects in the region.

Main aims and objectives were reached **timely and in a planned manner**.

COVID-19 pandemic became the most influential risk of the project. But the project members could



smoothly transfer to online working mechanism, which significantly decreased the risks of the project.

UNICAC project members have **positively contributed to the research and public debates** on internationalisation. A clear example of this is the organization of round table on the situation in Afghanistan and its impact on regional political, economic and social policies.

Partners have **successfully organized** trainings and mobilities.

Strategic Plans of Internationalisation were **prepared and adopted** by the partner universities.

The project benefits of **good institutional support** at the partner institutions – however, some weaknesses were noted in the participation of certain partners.

Virtual and on-site meetings are held permanently to ensure the smooth flow of the project. Various **dissemination activities** were ongoing until the last days of the eligibility period.

Some risks that may hinder from the sustainable and successful post-project period can be listed as follows:

- adoption of Strategic Plans of Internationalisation and activities within SPI frameworks will be functional de-jure, but not de-facto;
- UNICAC Manual on Internationalisation will not reach wider target groups;
- communication between partners will decrease after the project;
- IRO structuring/restructuring will not be fulfilled until the end of the project;
- purchased equipment will not be used in internationalisation processes.

Using the OECD Development Assistance Committee methods for external evaluation, we evaluate the UNICAC project achievements with A-mark.

| Mark | Quantitative | Qualitative | Explanation |
|------|--------------|-------------|--|
| A | 4 | Very good | Situation is considered very satisfactory, well above the average and a potential reference as a good practice. The recommendations focus on the need to adapt these good practices in other operations. |



5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUSTAINABILITY AND CONTINUITY OF PROJECT RESULTS

The UNICAC project can be considered as successful when its impact can be measured by the sustainable value of the project results. It means the project partners may need to define a post-project sustainability plan for effective dissemination and exploitation activities.

Some dimensions of project sustainability are:

- Institutional stability at partner universities;
- Continued operation and maintenance of project facilities;
- Continuous flow of net benefits, i.e. in the form of trainings, workshops, seminars, round tables etc.;
- Equitable sharing and distribution of project benefits;
- Continued community participation etc.

Some examples of sustainability of the UNICAC project may be:

1. Usage of SPIs by other universities in the countries as a reference and successful example
2. Taking responsibility on promoting project results in post-project period
3. Promoting and implementing continuous quality improvement
4. Promoting commitment to the best practices
5. Integrating sustainability in all business plans

Based on the clear evidence of project achievements, existing problems, possible risks and threats, we consider that the following recommendations may contribute to the project success, its sustainability and continuity:

✓ We recommend to keep online and constantly updated the adopted Strategic Plans of Internationalisation. Updated SPIs should break down the barrier between internationalisation of research and education, at least at the institutional level, to enhance opportunities. Greater synergy will lead to a win-win situation for both. Based on the tendencies and importance of “Internationalisation at home”, which can be defined as the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments, internationalisation needs can be recognized at all levels and more attention should be paid to international and intercultural learning outcomes. All updates should promote and enhance policies and practices, majorly by incorporating quality in higher education processes, attracting international competencies, exporting domestic competencies abroad.

✓ Also taking into account the growing role of ICT, updated SPIs should reflect all aspects of the relationship between the institution’s internationalisation strategy and ICT, including pedagogical quality, adaptation of materials to the learning needs of the country, and the competency and capacity



of faculty hired to teach or to train online.

✓ Partners can initiate ongoing feedback programme about post-project performance, namely in internationalisation progress. For instance, as one of your goals may be to **raise awareness of the wider academia and society**, the following KPIs may be chosen:

- track number of **followers, reach** (i.e. how many people saw the posts), **mentions** or **shares** on social media or

- **attended events** where the project results are being promoted, and use attendance sheets or questionnaires to track how many attendees heard about the project results.

✓ We recommend the project consortium to consider organization of permanent roundtables on issues, related with international relations, internationalisation of education etc. The one organized on Afghanistan drew interest from many public, educational and research organizations.

✓ Whereas possible and if there is interest, partners may discuss the creation of joint degree programmes, joint PhD supervision and other joint initiatives. Joint or dual degree programmes in areas of specific institutional strength will enable the student mobility process to support larger institutional strategies for academic excellence.

✓ Continuous stakeholders engagement will be beneficial for the successful continuation of post-project activities.

✓ Partners should identify leadership and responsibility for the sustainability activities.

✓ It is recommended to prepare and publish UNICAC Roadmap for successful continuation. For example, the consortium can elaborate a schedule for online workshops or roundtables for the coming 3 years. Partners can deliver 1 workshop/training per 6 months.

✓ Networking between partners at local level should be strengthened. It is recommended that partners permanently send reports and information to local authorities in higher education. The final conference in Tashkent can be start of annual conference on internationalisation of education in Central Asia.

✓ Partner universities should keep alive the project network and signed memorandum of understandings so that there are opportunities for faculty and student exchanges for international study and researches. The exchange of knowledge, culture and education among universities can bring in a lot of consequences that the internationalisation of higher education system actually intends to achieve.

✓ Partners should disseminate the impacts of UNICAC, in particular in internationalisation, at recruitment fairs or include them on the agenda of fundraising events.

✓ Alumni of different international programmes and projects, in particular Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility projects should be involved in project events and working groups activities. It is recommended to foster connections among domestic and international students and value the inputs of international students on campus.

✓ All Partner Country partners should make sure that information about the project is also available on their websites, with contact information of the project team and a link to the project website. Also data should be permanently improved in order to inform policy-making by including



information about the impacts of the UNICAC project.

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5. CONCLUSIONS

Evaluation and Quality Assurance (E&QA) has been an integral part of the project in order to ensure that objectives were met in the most effective way and that results are relevant, and to assess project impact among the different target groups.

This has been done by focussing E&QA activities on two main dimensions. On the one hand, coordinated by INCOMA, WP6 aimed at ensuring control, namely by applying a monitoring approach, guaranteeing the correct fulfilment of project tasks and objectives, establishing procedures to face delays in the development of the outcomes or inappropriate partner performance (thus supporting project management and coordination). This has been essential during the pandemic, as many difficulties have been found to further develop the project.

On the other hand, WP6 also addressed project evaluation, aimed at assuring the effectiveness of project actions in terms of attainment of project goals, by focusing on project results, outcomes and impact and on the implementation of project activities, as well as the key drivers for the fulfilment of project impact.

Therefore, INCOMA has developed the Quality Plan at the beginning of the project, and has kept implementing follow-up tasks during all the projects' activities in order to ensure the quality of results and manage the risks that have been arising during the project's lifetime.

As mentioned before, at the beginning of project execution, INCOMA produced an Evaluation and Quality Assurance plan detailing all E&QA activities to be carried out and indicators to be achieved (based on the proposal), as well the necessary tools for its effective implementation (such as surveys and questionnaires) that have been applied during the project. It also included a more detailed contingency plan, which has been applied when necessary, for example with the impossibility of some partners to travel and develop mobilities.

INCOMA has permanently monitored the implementation of project activities in order to ensure the compliance with project indicators, such as number of participants, target groups, deadlines, and the established qualitative and quantitative indicators of progress (LFM). To this end, INCOMA has had some bilateral meetings with partners in order to make sure that everything was evolving correctly and providing solutions to the partners with more difficulties. Furthermore, internal evaluation has also included the collection of feedback on the quality of delivered trainings and services via direct questionnaires and surveys to participants that can be found within this report. Additionally, the project has also foreseen observation and onsite monitoring activities, participating in the activities and trainings in order to personally evaluate them, apart from the feedback obtained from participants.

Two external evaluation reports have been developed throughout the project by an independent expert who has been subcontracted: Abror Juraev. The reports include technical evaluation of



activities, results and impacts of the projects as well as insights and recommendations for improvement. This external evaluator has used on-line tools (e-mails, videoconferences) and has also participated in key activities and meetings, such as the Final Conference or the Regional Roundtable, among others.



ANNEXES

7.1. Questionnaire for the evaluation of training activities

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE EVALUATION OF TRAINING ACTIVITIES

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| ACTIVITY | |
| WP | |
| HOSTING PARTNER | |
| HOSTING COUNTRY | |
| DATE(S) | |
| PARTNER INSTITUTION | |

Your opinion is important for us. Please take a few minutes to complete this short questionnaire about the activity in which you just took part within the framework of UNICAC, in order to help us improve future training activities. Thank you!

1. For each statement, please mark with an X the most appropriate answer according to your opinion.

| Statement | 1 Insufficient | 2 Sufficient | 3 Good | 4 Very good |
|--|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| The overall organisation of the training period was | | | | |
| The organisation of logistical and practical aspects was | | | | |
| The agenda of the activity was | | | | |
| The contents of the different sessions were | | | | |
| The adaptation of training contents to my needs was | | | | |
| The materials distributed were | | | | |
| The improvement of my personal competences was | | | | |
| The improvement of my technical competences was | | | | |



2. In your opinion, which were the main strengths and/or the most positive aspects of the activity?

3. Which aspects should be improved in future activities according to your opinion?

4. Which personal and/or technical competences do you feel you need to further improve/develop?

5. Other comments, recommendations and/or suggestions for improvement.

Thank you for your cooperation!



7.2 Questionnaire for the evaluation of partner meetings

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE EVALUATION OF PARTNER MEETINGS

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| ACTIVITY NAME | |
| WP | |
| HOSTING PARTNER | |
| HOSTING COUNTRY | |
| DATE(S) | |

Your opinion is important for us. Please take a few minutes to complete this short questionnaire about the partner meeting in which you just took part within the framework of UNICAC, in order to help us improve future activities. Thank you!

Please mark with an X the most appropriate answer according to your opinion.

1. How do you evaluate the overall organisation of the meeting?

| 1 Should be improved | 2 Sufficient | 3 Good | 4 Very good | Non-applicable |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | | | | |

2. Please assess the different organisational aspects related to the meeting.

| Statement | 1 Insufficient | 2 Sufficient | 3 Good | 4 Very good | Non-applicable |
|--|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| The hosting partner provided adequate support | | | | | |
| I received enough information on logistic aspects (how to arrive, accommodation) | | | | | |
| The premises of the meeting were suitable for the occasion | | | | | |



| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| The agenda was sent beforehand and with enough time to prepare | | | | | |
| The meeting included social and cultural activities | | | | | |
| Participants had the opportunity to meet outside the working context | | | | | |

3. How do you evaluate the overall progress achieved?

| 1 Very low | 2 Low | 3 Average | 4 High | 5 Very high |
|---------------|----------|--------------|-----------|----------------|
| | | | | |

4. How do you assess the following elements of the project meeting concerning their use for the project?

| Aspect | 1 I disagree completely | 2 I partially disagree | 3 I am neutral about it | 4 I partially agree | 5 I agree completely |
|---|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Institutions were presented in detail | | | | | |
| The project overview was comprehensive | | | | | |
| The work plan was explained in detail | | | | | |
| The budget is clear to me and I am aware of financial questions | | | | | |
| The dissemination strategy is well designed | | | | | |
| The evaluation and quality assurance strategy is well designed | | | | | |
| I understand the main aspects related to | | | | | |



| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| coordination and project management | | | | | |
| Our tasks are clear to me and I understand what needs to be done in the coming months | | | | | |
| Debates were fruitful | | | | | |
| The time allocated to each WP was adequate | | | | | |

5. SWOT Analysis

Following the meeting, please state what you consider to be the project's **current** Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|---------------|------------|
| | |
| Opportunities | Threats |
| | |

6. Other comments, suggestions and/or recommendations for improvement.

Thank you for your cooperation!



7.3. Questionnaire for the evaluation of events

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE EVALUATION OF EVENTS

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| EVENT NAME | |
| WP | |
| HOSTING PARTNER | |
| HOSTING COUNTRY | |
| DATE(S) | |

Your opinion is important for us. Please take a few minutes to complete this short questionnaire about the event in which you just took part within the framework of UNICAC, in order to help us improve future activities. Thank you!

1. For each statement, please mark with an X the most appropriate answer according to your opinion.

| Statement | 1 Insufficient | 2 Sufficient | 3 Good | 4 Very good |
|--|-------------------|-----------------|-----------|----------------|
| The overall organisation of the event was | | | | |
| The organisation of logistical and practical aspects was | | | | |
| The agenda of the event was | | | | |
| The contents of the different sessions were | | | | |
| The materials distributed were | | | | |

2. Please also give us your opinion about the UNICAC project.

| Statement | 1 Insufficient | 2 Sufficient | 3 Good | 4 Very good |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------|----------------|
| The project and its objectives are | | | | |
| The activities developed thus far are | | | | |
| The results achieved thus far are | | | | |



| | | | | |
|-------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| The methodology used is | | | | |
|-------------------------|--|--|--|--|

3. Other comments, suggestions and/or recommendations for improvement.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Would you like to follow project activities? Please leave us your contact details and we will include you in our mailing list. Please remember to write your details **clearly and in caps lock**.

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Your name | |
| Your institution | |
| Country | |
| E-mail address | |

Thank you for your cooperation!



7.4. Questionnaire for the evaluation of WP3.1 Working Groups

<https://elomake.laurea.fi/lomakkeet/18430/lomake.html>

7.5. Questionnaire for the evaluation of the Interim External Evaluation Report

UNICAC Interim External Evaluation Report

Name of partner university, country: _____
Name and position of the staff, responsible for the questionnaire: _____
E-mail and phone number of the staff: _____



Please, type your replies in this
column, after the questions

| WP | WP name | Objects of evaluation | Means of evaluation (documents to be requested) |
|------|--|--|--|
| WP 1 | Policy and Strategic Planning for Cross-regional cooperation and Internationalisation in HEI | Publications Training in EU partners Materials for self-study Strategic Plans of Internationalization | In what extent did your university achieve the targeted indicators? Were Strategic Plans of Internationalization prepared? Are they approved by your universities? Do you think you could cover all targeted groups in your SPI? What risks did you faced / do you expect? |
| WP 2 | Human Capacity Building - International Relations Staff | Identified learning needs Selection of staff Training materials Training modules Practical Toolkit | How the learning needs were identified? How the staff selection was organized? Which training materials were prepared? What risks did you faced / do you expect? |
| WP 3 | Potentials for Internationalisation in T/L/R | Working groups Virtual working group meetings Seminars | How the working groups were organized? How many virtual meetings and seminars were organized? What risks did you faced / do you expect? |
| WP 4 | Infrastructural Measures | IRO webpages Library exchange systems | Please, send the links to pages of your university websites, where information about UNICAC is given. You can send external links, too, if such exist. What risks did you faced / do you expect? |

| | | | |
|------|---|---|---|
| WP 5 | Cross-Regional Network for Internationalisation and Cooperation | Joint international conference | How did you promote the conference? Do you think you could cover your target groups? What risks did you faced / do you expect? |
| WP 6 | Evaluation and Quality Assurance | Evaluation and quality assurance measures | Please, give short information about quality assurance mechanisms at your universities. What risks did you faced / do you expect? |
| WP 7 | Dissemination | Developed marketing materials Marketing strategies Newsletters Project webpage Internal workshops of partners | Please, give short information about dissemination strategy at your university. Did you elaborate specific dissemination plan? What risks did you faced / do you expect? |
| WP 8 | Sustainability | Organization of national roundtables Created IR structures Signed agreements | Are there any cooperation agreements signed with your project partners? What risks did you faced / do you expect? |
| WP 9 | Management | Project management structures Working groups Steering committees | Please, give your opinion about overall project management mechanisms? What risks did you faced / do you expect? What would you recommend for improvement? |