

Midterm Evaluation Erasmus + National Report - Republic of Macedonia

Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Macedonia

Jordanco Poposki, MSc – Advisor in the Department of Higher Education

E-mail: jordanco.poposki@mon.gov.mk

Telephone number: +389 76 446 176

28.06.2017, Skopje

Summary	3
1. Introduction	4
Main conclusions	7
Conclusions per evaluation criterion	8
Recommendations.....	9
2. Aim of the midterm evaluation	10
2.1 Evaluation criteria	10
2.2 Methodology	11
2.2.1 Questionnaires	11
2.2.2 Interviews and questionnaires	12
2.2.3 Number of responses to submitted questionnaires	13
3. Evaluation results	14
3.1 Effectiveness	14
3.2 Efficiency	22
4. Relevance	26
5. Internal and external coherence and complementarity	27
6. European added value and sustainability	28
7. Sustainability	30
7.1 Negative aspects	32
8. Conclusions and recommendations	32
8.1 Conclusions per evaluation criterion	33
8.2 Efficiency	34
9. Recommendations	35
Annex 1 - Questionnaire 1	37
Annex 2 - Questionnaire 2	40
Annex 3 - Questionnaire 3	42
Annex 4 - Questionnaire 4	45
Annex 5 - Questionnaire 5	47
Annex 6 - Questionnaire 6	52
Annex 7 - List of Abbreviations	53

Summary

This National midterm evaluation of Erasmus+ in the Republic of Macedonia has been prepared by the Ministry of Education and Science. The aim of this midterm evaluation is to gain insights into the implementation and impact of the Erasmus+ programme, based on findings regarding the decentralized actions funded through the National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility under the current programme as well as its predecessors. The evaluation also proposes suggestions for the improvement of Erasmus+ in the future programming period. The results of this evaluation as well as the evaluations of the other Members States will feed into the final report to be submitted to the European Parliament, the European Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions by the end of 2017.

This evaluation is based on a variety of methodologies such as: analysis of relevant documents from National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility, as well as evaluations of predecessor programmes, interviews with various stakeholders, such as authority from the National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility and other employers and of course with as many other people who are directly and indirectly familiar with the Erasmus+ program in a different way, conversations with a different people etc.

With a letter no. 11-10060/1 dated July 8, 2016, sent to Ms Chiara Gariazzo-Director of the European Commission, the Ministry of Education and Science nominated for coordinator for the National Report for Mid-Term evaluation of Erasmus +, Ms Aspasija Hadzisce - Advisor in NQF Unit and Representative of the National Authority for Erasmus +.

After that, the Ministry of Education and Science adopted a Decision on adoption of the Erasmus Methodology for Mid-Term Evaluation + verified in the archive under no. 11-17083/1 dated 23.12.2016 as well as the Methodology itself certified under no. 11-17083/2 dated 23.12.2016.

However, because of the procedure of retirement on Ms Aspasija Hadzisce, for new coordinator for the National Report for Mid-Term Evaluation of Erasmus +, was selected Mr. Jordancho Poposki, with number on the letter. 11-1604/1 of 07.02.2017.

1. Introduction

The Erasmus+ programme was launched by the European Union in 2014 to support internationalisation within the Education, Youth and Sport fields and stimulate life long learning through formal and informal learning. Erasmus+ integrated several predecessor programmes into a single programme for more user friendliness, increased flexibility and better link between Education, Training and Youth.

1. The Key Objective of Erasmus+

The key objective of Erasmus+ is to contribute to tackling socio-economic challenges that Europe is facing and to support the implementation of the European Commission's agenda for growth, jobs, equity and social inclusion. Erasmus+ is expected to contribute to the achievement of:¹

- A. The objectives of Europe 2020 (European growth strategy in the field of employments, social equality and inclusion) including the education objective;²
- B. The objectives of ET2020 (Strategic framework education and training);
- C. The sustainable development of partner countries in the field of higher education;
- D. The overall objectives of the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018);
- E. The objective of developing an European dimension in sport in particular grassroots sport, in line with the EU work plan for sport;
- F. The promotion of European values in accordance with Article 2 of the Treaty on the European Union.³

In the Republic of Macedonia, the Erasmus+ programme is executed by the National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility. This National Agency is supervised by the National authorities which in our case in Republic of Macedonia is Ministry of Education and Science.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/programme-guide/part-a/objectives-and-important-features/general-objective_en.

² The headline education target is to reduce early school leaving to less than 10% and increase attainment in tertiary education to at least 40% by 2020.

³ The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.

ERASMUS+ OFFERS PROGRAMMES THROUGH THREE KEY ACTIONS:

1.1 Key action 1 - MOBILITY OF INDIVIDUALS

This Key Action supports:

- ❖ **Mobility of learners and staff:** opportunities for students, trainees, young people and volunteers, as well as for professors, teachers, trainers, youth workers, staff of education institutions and civil society organisations to undertake a learning and/or professional experience in another country;
- ❖ **Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees:** high-level integrated international study programmes delivered by consortia of higher education institutions that award full degree scholarships to the best master students worldwide;
- ❖ **Erasmus+ Master Loans:** higher education students from Programme Countries can apply for a loan backed up by the Programme to go abroad for a full Master Degree. Students should address themselves to national banks or student loan agencies participating in the scheme.

1.2 Key action 2 - COOPERATION FOR INNOVATION AND THE EXCHANGE OF GOOD PRACTICES

This Key Action supports:

- ❖ **Transnational Strategic Partnerships** aimed to develop initiatives addressing one or more fields of education training and youth and promote innovation, exchange of experience and know-how between different types of organisations involved in education, training and youth or in other relevant fields. Certain mobility activities are supported in so far as they contribute to the objectives of the project;
- ❖ **Knowledge Alliances** between higher education institutions and enterprises which aim to foster innovation, entrepreneurship, creativity, employability, knowledge exchange and/or multidisciplinary teaching and learning;
- ❖ **Sector Skills Alliances** supporting the design and delivery of joint vocational training curricula, programmes and teaching and training methodologies, drawing on evidence of trends in a specific economic sector and skills needed in order to perform in one or more professional fields;
- ❖ **Capacity-building** projects supporting cooperation with Partner Countries in the fields of higher education and youth. Capacity-building projects aim to

support organisations/institutions and systems in their modernisation and internationalisation process. Certain types of capacity-building projects support mobility activities in so far as they contribute to the objectives of the project;

- ❖ **IT support platforms, such as eTwinning, the School Education Gateway, the European Platform for Adult Learning (EPALE) and the European Youth Portal**, offering virtual collaboration spaces, databases of opportunities, communities of practice and other online services for teachers, trainers and practitioners in the field of school and adult education as well as for young people, volunteers and youth workers across Europe and beyond.

1.3 Key action 3 - SUPPORT FOR POLICY REFORM

This Key Action supports:

- ❖ **Knowledge in the fields of education, training and youth** for evidence-based policy making and monitoring, in particular:
 - Country-specific and thematic analysis, including through cooperation with academic networks;
 - Peer learning and peer reviews through the open methods of coordination in education, training and youth.
- ❖ **Initiatives for policy innovation** to stimulate innovative policy development among stakeholders and to enable public authorities to test the effectiveness of innovative policies through field trials based on sound evaluation methodologies;
- ❖ **Support to European policy tools** to facilitate transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications, as well as the transfer of credits, to foster quality assurance, support validation of non-formal and informal learning, skills management and guidance. This Action also includes the support to networks that facilitate cross-European exchanges, the learning and working mobility of citizens as well as the development of flexible learning pathways between different fields of education, training and youth;
- ❖ **Cooperation with international organisations** with highly recognised expertise and analytical capacity (such as the OECD and the Council of Europe), to strengthen the impact and added value of policies in the fields of education, training and youth;

- ❖ **Stakeholder dialogue, policy and Programme promotion** involving public authorities, providers and stakeholders in the fields of education, training and youth for raising awareness about the European policy agendas, in particular Europe 2020, Education and Training 2020, the European Youth Strategy, as well as the external dimension of European education, training and youth policies. These activities are essential to develop the capacity of stakeholders to actively support the implementation of policies by stimulating the exploitation of the Programme results and generating tangible impact.

KA1 and KA2 are used in both the education and training, and youth sector. Actions under KA3 are only open for the youth sector. For the education and training sector, these actions are organized centrally at the level of the European Commission.

Main conclusions

- **Erasmus+ is a highly relevant programme**, contributing to the objectives of the Erasmus+ programme as well as the objectives of the broader EU policy agenda regarding education and skills development (Europe 2020 and ET2020);
- **Erasmus+ is expected to have a broader societal impact in the long run, as individual effects;**
- **The level of applications is still low, although from year to year this aspect is improving.** However, the general conclusion is that those institutions/organizations that have already applied or passed the process are much better off with the administration than others.
- **The quality of the applications has increased** and the high standards in turn lead to quality improvements within the applying institutions;
- **In some sectors, the allocated funds are almost fully utilized**, unlike, for example, in higher education, where there is also unused allocations;
- A substantial share of the interviewed institutions experience quality improvements due to participation in the programme, **indicating sustainability of the programme Erasmus+;**
- **Erasmus+ is effective in reaching its objectives**, mostly regarding individual outcomes such as development of skills and competences.

Conclusions per evaluation criterion

Effectiveness

The way Erasmus+ is executed contributes to a large extent to the intended outcomes in the Republic of Macedonia, regarding achieving the programme's specific objectives. Erasmus+ contributes to participants' knowledge and skills, student mobility and mobility of academic staff, administration, than internationalization, lifelong learning, quality improvements and a more innovative culture at institutional level.

Of course, **one of the weaknesses when talking about mobility is that it is interest to visit the region and the neighboring countries**, on the one hand, and on the other, that very few administrations are involved in mobility (most often used by students or teachers). As Erasmus+ only commenced three years ago, the programme does not (yet) have a large societal impact, although it is expected to have a broader societal impact in the long run as individual effects translate into societal effects.

Efficiency

The intended outcomes were achieved against reasonable costs, although the administrative burden for applicants remains high. The Information Technology tools caused efficiency losses at the commencement of the programme and are still cause of a large administrative burden for applicants as well as the National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility. **Applicants are generally, satisfied with support provided** by the National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility. Equal application procedures apply to large and small organizations, which affects the accessibility of Erasmus+ for small organizations.

Relevance

Erasmus+ adequately links to the needs as identified in the Republic of Macedonia. It is a highly relevant programme, and caters to the needs of participants in the different sectors, as well as different institutions. The objective of life long learning is least salient to applicants and participants of Erasmus+.

Internal and external coherence

The activities within Erasmus+ are coherent and there are hardly overlaps or inconsistencies with other programmes. Some programmes are connected to each other quite well and to complement each other. Since there are hardly any other programmes that offer similar activities as Erasmus+, institutions have become largely dependent on Erasmus+ as a basis for their internationalization activities, mobility etc.

European added value and sustainability

Erasmus+ contributes to effects on the European level. Programme Erasmus+ in Macedonia contributes to a large extent to the Erasmus+ general objectives. Many projects would not have been possible without funding through Erasmus+, and the programme offers a good financial basis for internationalization projects. There is still a **larger demand for funding of high quality applications than available**, especially for KA 101 - mobility of teaching staff in school education, KA 102 Mobility of students and staff in vocational education, as well as KA 105 - Youth Mobility. Of course, sustainability requires continued attention.

Recommendations

➤ ***Stimulating cross-sectoral projects***

The National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility could more strongly promote collaboration between different sectors and stakeholders, development and possibilities of cross-sectoral projects. Furthermore, a dedicated budget for cross-sectoral projects may generate more possibilities for these types of projects.

➤ ***The budget***

Additionally, our recommendation is increasing the budget for KA 101, KA 102, and KA 105, and to remain at the same level or reduced by a certain percentage, the **budget for Higher education institutions and institutions**, at least in the next 1-2 years.

➤ ***Increasing accessibility of the programme***

In order to make it more attractive for newcomers to apply, a separate, simpler application procedure, taking into account proportionality regarding applications, may help reduce the administrative burden that discourages newcomers from applying.

➤ ***Reaching lower opportunity youth***

Increasing awareness among lower opportunity youth may be done by adjusting the way of approaching them. National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility can further encourage and support projects that include youth or students with fewer opportunities or with special needs.

➤ **Increasing visibility and knowledge sharing**

In order to increase the European added value of Erasmus+, institutions as well as local authorities and businesses should be encouraged **more to share knowledge regarding their own project results**. In this section we recommend compulsory dissemination of the participants, especially to persons who could be future users of the services.

2. Aim of the midterm evaluation

The results of this evaluation and the evaluations of the other Member States, will feed into the final report to be submitted to the European Parliament, the European Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions by the end of 2017. The aim of this midterm evaluation is to gain insights into the implementation and impact of the Erasmus+ programme and the results achieved in the Republic of Macedonia, based on findings regarding the current and predecessor programme(s) regarding the decentralized actions implemented in country. The evaluation also proposes conclusions and suggestions for improvement of the Erasmus+ programme for the remaining and orientations for the future programming period, for the European Commission as well as the Republic of Macedonia.

2.1 Evaluation criteria

Effectiveness: To what extent does the way Erasmus+ is executed contribute to the intended outcomes in Republic of Macedonia?

Efficiency: Are the intended outcomes achieved against reasonable costs in the Republic of Macedonia?

Relevance: Does Erasmus+ adequately link to the needs as identified in the Republic of Macedonia?

Internal and external coherence and complementarity: Are activities within Erasmus+ coherent? Is there any overlap or are there inconsistencies with other programmes in the Republic of Macedonia?

European added value and sustainability: To what extent did Erasmus+ in the Republic of Macedonia contribute to effects at the European level and to what extent are the effects sustainable?

2.2 Methodology

In order to provide relevant data for the preparation of the Report, the following methods will be used:

- Data analysis for Erasmus +, Life long Learning and Youth in Action programs;
- Questionnaires delivered to evaluators of applications, users and participants in Erasmus + (heads of institutions/organizations and individuals) and others. We have questionnaires for different categories, institutions of persons to which questionnaires were sent, or interviews were organized;
- Interviews with representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science, National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility, and other national institutions and organizations in the field of education, training and youth;
- Using analyzes made by the National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility for various aspects of the implementation of Erasmus+;
- Analysis of selected examples of relevant project outcomes; etc.

2.2.1 Questionnaires

Important information was obtained through the questionnaire that was created for specific target groups. It was made an online questionnaire for different users, example, so we had six types of questionnaires:

1. Questionnaire for the National Authority and for high level officials of the national institutions; (Attached - Annex 1)
2. Questionnaire for the staff members of the National Agency for European Educational Programs and mobility - Heads of departments, heads of units etc.; (Attached - Annex 2)
3. Questionnaire for the external evaluators; (Attached - Annex 3)
4. Questionnaire for the external experts; (Attached - Annex 4)

5. Questionnaire for the beneficiaries of the programme; (Attached - Annex 5)
6. Questionnaire for the Erasmus+ coordinators of the higher education institutions. (Attached - Annex 6)

For that purpose, a special e-mail erasmus@mon.gov.mk was created in the Ministry of Education and Science, and it was put into operation in order to obtain more accurate responses from the institutions, schools, non-governmental organizations university and other stakeholders. Completing the questionnaire was anonymous, and performed in the period 15.02.2017 until 15.04.2017. After which it was accessed to a phase that meant processing data.

This was the e-mail that was sent to all target groups:

Dear,

As a full participant in Erasmus +, the Republic of Macedonia participates in the process of mid-term evaluation of the program, for which it is necessary to prepare a National Report on the situation and submit it to the European Commission.

It is in this direction that the Ministry of Education and Science, as the National Authority for Erasmus +, approaches data collection and initiation of research in order to quantify and qualitatively evaluate the program.

To this end, we have prepared a questionnaire, in which we will best understand the existing situation, strengths and weaknesses, lessons learned and good practices, as well as provide a realistic analysis of the achieved results at the National level.

On the basis of the above, we ask you as soon as possible, and by 15.04.2017 at the latest, complete the survey posted on the following link

Thanks in advance for your time

With respect

Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Macedonia

2.2.2 Interviews and questionnaires

We have conducted a few interviews with several stakeholders, such as individuals who are involved in the policy making around Erasmus+ or the implementation of the programme. During a interview the activities and the outcomes, efficiency, coherence and effectiveness of activities were discussed. The interviews contributed to information on the effects at the institutional level.

Interviews were of particular benefit to us, because part of the results we received from the questionnaires was insignificant and insufficient. For example, the questionnaire intended for the Ministry of Education and Science was responsible only for 2 people, although results from at least 15 people were expected to be directly or indirectly familiarized with the Erasmus + program.

I would also like to point out the answers to the questionnaire from the employees of the National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility. Namely, although the questionnaire was submitted to the employees, from all levels, we still received answers from 6 employees. Every honor of the respondents, as well as the quality of the answers in the question, however, the number of answers received was quite unsatisfactory for us.

However, we must mention that during the preparation of the questionnaires (in English and Macedonian language), as well as the collection of responses there after, we had unselfish assistance from the employees of the National Agency, primarily from the IT department.

That is why, through interviews, conversations, correspondence through e-mail, we managed in some way to compensate for the lack of answers to the questionnaires, although as a conclusion we can conclude that it was insufficient.

2.2.3. Number of responses to submitted questionnaires

Below is given the number of answers to our questionnaires.

- Number of answers to the questionnaire for the National Authority and for high level officials of the national institutions - 2;
- Number of answers to the questionnaire for Questionnaire for the staff members of the National Agency for European Educational Programs and mobility - 6;
- Number of answers to the questionnaire for the external evaluators; - 17;
- Number of answers to the questionnaire for the external experts - 9;
- Number of answers to the questionnaire for the beneficiaries of the programme - 188;
- Number of answers to the questionnaire for the Erasmus+ coordinators of the higher education institutions - 19;

The results of the responses to the questionnaires intended for different categories of users are inserted in the text of this evaluation.

3. Evaluation results

Since it is too early to evaluate the long-term effects of Erasmus +, the country should also analyze the effects and impact of the shares that, similarly, continue within Erasmus +. ***The Republic of Macedonia will include in the Report the effects of the preparatory phase for full participation in EU programs in the field of education, training and youth (Life Long Learning and Youth in Action).*** Their implementation started in 2008 and continued in 2011, after the period of suspension from mid-2010 to August 2011.

Also, since the National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility provides statistical data annually, here in the report we will not use a standardized statistical annex. Program statistics will be used for a kind of illustration, or as a basis for specific comments in the answers to the questions.

3.1 Effectiveness

Effectiveness refers to the extent to which expected effects have been obtained and objectives have been achieved. We assessed whether the Erasmus+ programme and its predecessor programmes contributed to reaching the objectives

3.1.1 Question 1 – Realisation of Erasmus+ specific objectives

To what extent did the Erasmus + program and its predecessors contribute to the reaction to the specific goals of Erasmus + in the Republic of Macedonia? Is there a difference between the areas? Where relevant, give your assessment for each specific goal and specify specific data and examples where there is a possibility for that.

Answer: Most interviewed organisations and institutions (in both education and training and youth) indicate that Erasmus+ is an effective programme to reach its objectives:

- It contributes to students and youth’s knowledge and skills (key competances and skills);
- Internationalisation of youth and education institutions and organisations;
- Contributes toward wider linguistic diversity and intercultural awareness;
- Quality improvements; and

- More innovative culture at organisational level.

However KA1 and KA3 are generally believed to have a greater effect at the individual level as individuals develop their knowledge and skills, while KA2 has a larger impact at institutional or organisational level throu.

Almost everyone interviewed youth organizations and educational and training institutions stated that Erasmus+ contributes to their internationalization as the programme enables them **to establish strategic partnerships with institutions abroad, expand their international collaborations and enable staff, students or young people to cross borders.** These effects were also found for the Life Long learning and Youth in Action.

A lot of the interviewed higher education and adult education institutions believe that Erasmus+, in comparison to its predecessor programmes, **focuses more on quality instead of quantity and a high number of participating students and young people.** The current application procedure encourages applicants to write better-quality applications and stimulates them to deliver high quality projects. For instance, the requirement for submitting a development plan for KA1 applications encourages organizations to think about a strategic long-term quality approach towards Erasmus+ projects according to both education and youth organizations. Education and youth organizations believe the increased focus on quality has benefitted their applications as well as the quality of their projects. The National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility confirmed that the quality of most applications is improving year by year.

3.1.2 Question 2 – Realisation of the EU objectives in the Republic of Macedonia?

To what extent did the progress in the realization of the specific objectives contribute to the realization of the general goals of Erasmus + in the Republic of Macedonia?

Answer: Erasmus+ programme in Republic of Macedonia contributes to a large extent to the Erasmus+ general objectives. This programme contributes to the mobility objective of ET 2020 and its other objectives, and can also contribute towards some of the Europe 2020 objectives even though the strategic objectives of both strategies differ.

➤ Erasmus+ general objectives

Erasmus+ programme and projects contribute to a large extent to the Erasmus+ general objectives. Erasmus+ programme in the Republic of Macedonia contributes

to the general objectives of improving knowledge and skills of students and youth, enhancing labor market opportunities and improving language skills. Quality or innovation in both education and training institutions and youth work has been enhanced. Although we have to Note that Erasmus+ projects have limited possibility to impact national or regional policies.

➤ **Erasmus+ programme and ET 2020 strategy**

The objectives of the Erasmus+ programme are more aligned with the ET 2020 strategy than the Europe 2020 objectives. Both Erasmus+ and ET 2020 aim to improve knowledge and skills, stimulate life long learning, stimulate the mobility of students, encourage equity, and improve quality of education and training. Therefore, Erasmus+ can be a means, together with other policies and programmes, to contribute towards the strategic objectives of ET 2020. Erasmus+ is used where possible in order to increase its impact on the ET 2020 objectives by, for instance, sharing best project examples and outcomes to be able to strengthen other Erasmus+ projects and outcomes. As a large part of Erasmus+ includes the mobility of students and youth, Erasmus+ contributes to achieving this goal.

3.1.3 Question 3 – Influence on policy developments

To what extent did Erasmus + actions influence the development of education and training policies, youth and sport in the country? Which actions were most effective in doing so? Are there differences between different areas?

Answer: The Erasmus+ programme complements the objectives regarding internationalisation and mobility in education, as well as the need to collaborate more on the topic of youth and develop local initiatives to support youth. Erasmus+ projects however hardly impact national or local policy developments, unless policymakers or local authorities are involved. Erasmus+ affects educational institutions' and organisations' internal innovation, quality, internationalisation and mobility policies.

➤ **Influence on policy developments in the domain of education and training**

Erasmus+ is found to affect institution's internal policies regarding internationalization, mobility and innovation. Especially among non-higher education institutions, it was mentioned that Erasmus+ contributes to a more strategic internationalization and mobility approach. Most educational institutions also indicate that Erasmus+ contributed to a more innovative culture within their institution as they

think in new directions. It also provides them with opportunities to learn from other institutions.

Individual Erasmus+ projects in the sector of education and training are not believed to have a large impact on national or regional education policy developments. However in projects where a municipality is involved, Erasmus+ is believed to influence local policy developments.

➤ *Influence on policy developments in the domain of youth*

It is commonly believed that KA3 can impact local policy development. Youth participants for instance, mentioned that they believe that they were taken seriously by policymakers and that their ideas will be taken into account.

Several youth organizations mention that Erasmus+ professionalized their work as it supported them in developing a strategic, long-term approach towards quality and internationalization. This provided learning opportunities throughout the application and implementation process, which benefitted the quality of their work.

In the last few years, we have positive examples where young people of different organisations are involved in the policies of creating various strategies that have links with them, that they are more often called for consultations, and that they actively participate in public debates. All this is the result of their strengthened resources and capacities, primarily due to their participation in various projects that are linked through Erasmus+.

3.1.4 Question 4 – Approaches to enhance the effects of Erasmus+

What specific approaches (such as co-financing, promotion or others) have you taken in order to try to enhance the effects of Erasmus+ in the country? To what extent have these approaches been effective? Can any particular points for improvement be identified?

Answer: Several promotion methods are used to raise awareness of Erasmus+, such as information events and making use of websites and social media. They aim to boost participation and through this, enhance the effects, which seems to be effective.

According to the answer from an employee of the National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility to one of the questions, *“The National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility uses different channels for support and information to beneficiaries and potential applicants.”* The National Agency website is frequently up-dated with diverse calls, results, guides, novelties,

success stories etc. Within the satisfaction survey the National Agency conducted, almost 30% of the respondents (beneficiaries and potential applicants) visit the National Agency website on regular basis. Almost 62% of all respondents use internet media, indicating very high influence of these tools. Of course, other means for information are not to be neglected. **Good experiences, positive practices, gained knowledge of colleagues and friends are rated as very motivating, as well as the presence on the info-days organized by the National Agency.**

Related to the usefulness of concrete sources of information, consequently, the majority of respondents value the information received by electronic (social) media. However, following the cross-analysis of several tools, we concluded that very high 82% of the respondents claimed that the most useful information was received from the direct contact with the National Agency staff. The beneficiaries and potential applicant's value the direct contacts the most, whether in direct meetings or info-days, where they can personally ask questions and debate.⁴

3.1.5 Question 5 – Effectiveness of Kas

Do you consider that certain KAs of the programme are more effective than others? Are there differences across fields? What are the determining factors for making these actions of the programme more effective?

Answer: There are differences in effects across different actions. This is most likely to be determined by the different objectives rather than to conclude why being more effective than the other. **In general, Action - KA1 and Action - KA3 are found to have more effects on individuals and Action - KA2 more on organizational or sectoral level.**

It is difficult to assess which key action is the most effective in addressing the national and Erasmus+ objectives. The various actions contribute to different effects as they have different objectives. The both programmes had similar impacts such as, internationalization, mobility, development of language skills etc. Staying abroad for a longer period is believed to have a larger impact than staying abroad for a short period. Hence, educational institutions at different levels believe that the effects for staff are less obvious as they usually go abroad for a short period of time.

3.1.6 Question 6 – Effectiveness of programme integration

⁴ An interview with an employee of the National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility.

To what extent has the integration of several programmes into Erasmus+ made the programme more effective in the Republic of Macedonia? Do you see scope for changes to the structure of Erasmus+ or its successor programme that could increase effectiveness?

Answer: Definitely, the Erasmus+ programme contributed to increased internationalization of different types of institutions. In many cases, especially for example in the field of adult education, the institutions have little or no possibility to gain international experiences. By enrolling into Erasmus+, they are able to share experiences and exchange good practices with colleagues, leading with improved instruction curricula, new and tailor-made learning opportunities, and more quality educational supply. It is almost in all cases that once the institution enters into the program and implements at least one project, the interest to enroll further on continues the following years, by proposing new projects, new ideas, and new partnerships.

Besides, the brand name of 'Erasmus' is well known and it is believed that therefore, more people and organizations are familiar with Erasmus+ now.

➤ **Better quality projects**

Stakeholders in Education and Training and Youth, believe that the integration of predecessor programmes into Erasmus+ contributed to better quality applications and project implementation.

➤ **Increasing opportunities for collaborations**

Stakeholders from both Education and Training and Youth stated that Erasmus+ provides opportunities for collaborations that were not possible under its predecessor programmes, such as the possibility to apply for funding for strategic or sectoral partnerships under KA2, and according to the answers from the questionnaire, these opportunities are very much appreciated.

According to the feedback from our beneficiaries, the Erasmus+ programme is seen as a tool for accessing diverse opportunities for professional development of staff involved in education and training, which in many cases are unavailable at national level.

At the same time, it is evident that Erasmus+ mobilizes the awareness of the managing and instruction staff on the new mechanisms for fund raising in schools in accordance to the module of developed educational systems in Europe.

For us, it is very important to highlight the fact **that the projects are not seen exclusively as unique mobility's, on contrary, in more and more cases the projects are seen as development processes and strategic orientation** of Macedonian educational institutions towards European values aiming in increasing the number of participants into the mobility's for exchange and development of joint educational programs and teaching methodology.

➤ **Limited budget and knowledge on opportunities for adult education**

While the integration of Youth in Action and Life long learning into Erasmus+ is generally regarded as a positive development, some organizations noted that with the integration the budget distribution towards adult education is comparatively small. **Many education and training institutions do not seem to be aware of opportunities for adult education projects**, and sure that the definition of adult education is not well known among organizations, and the target group for adult education seems to be unclear as well.

3.1.7 Question 7 – Size of the budget

Is the size of the budget adequate and proportionate to the purpose for which the Program has been established? Is allocation of funds by areas and stocks appropriate in terms of the level of their effectiveness and usefulness?

Answer: Funding possibilities for Erasmus+ are widely appreciated by both the education and youth sector. The number of applications exceeds the available funds for KA1 and KA2, as those are a very popular key action. According to us funding for KA3 is found to be appropriate in this period.

In general, education institutions and youth organizations are happy with the funding they can obtain via Erasmus+ as the current budget for Erasmus+ is higher for most sectors than its predecessor programmes. Although budgets for Erasmus+ have increased, the number of good quality applications exceeds the available funds for KA1 and KA2. The budget for KA3 has not yet been fully exhausted due to a lower number of good quality applications than budget available. For first two actions the budget is insufficient as the number of applications far exceeds the available budget. It is very important the fact, that increasing the awareness of life long learning is one of the programme's objectives, but institutions noted that there is limited funding available for adult learning, and according to us, here should be some intervention.

3.1.8 Question 8 - Challenges in implementation of Kas

What challenges and difficulties do you encounter in the implementation of various Erasmus + actions? What changes should be introduced in Erasmus +, or in the course, in order to overcome the stated challenges and difficulties?

Answer: Evaluating applications and making grant decisions, **than, providing support, guidance and advice during project implementation.** Of course, we need to mention difficulties connecting with Monitoring and inspecting projects being implemented (during and at the end of implementation).

The current application procedure includes a few obstacles for project implementation, including forecasting the number of participants, defining effects beforehand, and disseminating results. When implementing projects, a few obstacles can be observed. Education institutions and youth organizations find it difficult to establish far in advance how many people will participate, while they need to indicate this in the application form. Additionally, institutions and organizations find it challenging to define in advance what the expected outcomes and impacts of a project are, especially for KA2 projects as the outcomes of partnerships are more difficult to assess.

➤ **Distance bands**

The definition of distance bands stimulates development of regional projects. For example, if traveling from Macedonia, the majority of the countries belong to the distance band 500-1999 km. ***This means that for the project coordinator it is more cost-effective to choose project partners from “closer” countries, so that the travels are cheaper.***

Many potential beneficiaries were contacting us before deadlines, on how they can cover the travel cost of the partners coming from neighboring countries. Especially, because Macedonia is quite a small country, and Skopje as a capitol city, has almost with all major regional cities a distance band bellow 100 km.

As a solution for this problem, we would add a travel cost for all trips (national and international) start from 20 km., or example breaking down the distance-bands.

3.1.9 Question 9 – Dissemination of Erasmus+ results

To what extent do the approaches and tools used to disseminate and use the results of Erasmus + and the programs that preceded Erasmus + have helped their effectiveness in the country? Where do you see opportunities for improvements?

Answer: Higher and VET education institutions have more financial and human resources available to disseminate Erasmus+ results. In the other hand, Youth organizations and primary and secondary schools indicate they have insufficient possibilities to disseminate Erasmus+ results.

The budgets for Erasmus+ projects do not include separate funding to promote the results of a project. But some educational institutions and youth organizations mentioned this funding is not sufficient for them to cover costs of dissemination of results. Due to fewer available financial and human resources available in primary and secondary schools and youth organizations, many of them experience more difficulties in disseminating their project results than higher education and VET institutions who have more resources available for this.

3.2 Efficiency

3.2.1 Question 10 – Organisation of execution of the programme

To what extent is the system of cooperation and the division of tasks between the Commission, Executive Agency, European Investment Fund, National Authorities, Independent Audit Bodies and Erasmus+ Committee efficient and well-functioning from the point of view of the country? What are the areas for possible improvement or simplification in the implementation of Erasmus+ or a successor programme?

Answer: In general, collaborations between the national authorities, National agency, educational institutions, youth organizations and other stakeholders are found to be efficient. National Authorities and National agency are in regular contact to discuss challenges and improve their practices. The Employees in National agency in Republic of Macedonia also frequently discuss with National agencies in other countries on what they can learn from each other.

In general, collaboration between the National Authorities, National agency, and project stakeholders such as educational institutions and youth organizations, are generally operates well. The Ministry of education and science is involved in Erasmus+ and the National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility indicates they have a good working collaboration. As a problem it is mention that a few people who are working on that field, or in generally lack of human resources.

National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility meets with National agencies of other countries to learn from each other. National authorities and National agencies plan to intensify their cooperation for the future. The

communication and cooperation with relevant stakeholders is being strengthened and is efficient, such as collaborations with National Agencies in other countries. The collaboration with the European Commission is also well appreciated by the national authorities and national agencies as feedback is, when possible, taken into account.

3.2.2 Question 11 – Efficiency of programme integration

To what extent has the integration of several programmes into Erasmus+ resulted in efficiency gains or losses for the implementation of the programme in the country, at the level of the National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility and on the beneficiaries' and participants' level? Do you see scope for changes to the structure of Erasmus+ or its successor programme that could increase efficiency? Are there differences between levels of education?

Answer: The number of applications arriving is higher and it talks about good communications between National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility and grant beneficiaries. **The application procedure remains overly complex and time-consuming.** However, there are several issues with IT tools for institutions and organizations, which are connected with the application procedure is, and is experienced as a large administrative burden for applicants. As a result, National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility needs to spend a lot of time and effort in explaining both the IT tools and the application Procedure.

The National agency has adopted a beneficiary-friendly approach, which in years has brought very positive feedback from beneficiaries. When one project is being implemented on long-term run, we try to enhance “*partnership*” relations with all grant users, as an only tool which assures quality and guaranties maximum impact. In the initial phase, when the grants are being awarded, there is usually a period of adaptation of our grantees to the procedures and expectations of the projects are very high. Role of National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility in this process is to guide them into establishing solid administrative base for the projects, building them in the process of adaptation to new procedures and highlighting the importance of project outcomes instead of project administration. The initial phases are usually marked with more often meetings, monitoring visits and direct contact with all grant beneficiaries in relation to their needs. This creates an image that the NA employees are available and supportive, building mutual trust on long run. Once the self-confidence is strengthened, these relations become natural, and in many cases beneficiaries themselves request meetings even when no issues are being open, simply just to share experiences of the recently realized mobility or published intellectual output.

Applicants (beneficiaries) find that the integration of Life long learning and Youth in Action into Erasmus+ has several benefits in comparison to before.

3.2.3 Question 12 – Efficiency of implementation of Kas

Do you consider that the implementation for certain KAs of the programme is more efficient than for others? Are there differences across fields? Which good practices from the more efficient actions of the Program should be transferred to other actions?

Answer: Institutions and organizations did not indicate many differences in efficiency of implementation between the different actions. **Although In general, innovative projects usually receive more points.**

Both educational institutions and youth organisations did not indicate any explicit differences in efficiency of implementation of KAs. KA2 is regarded to be more difficult to implement and less flexible. Also, the financial responsibility for foreign partners leads to higher administrative burden than for other actions. Regarding KA2 applications, several institutions mention that they strategically consider in which country to submit their application as increasing their chance of being awarded funding.

This particular field is area of expertise for external assessors, and they have a major role. On the point of view as NA staff, they always advice the potential applicants to follow the rules in Programme guide. Mostly the project`s quality depend of the connection between narrative part and objectives provided by each field.

3.2.4 Question 13 – Administrative burden

To what extent did the system of simplified grants reduce the administrative burden for NAEOPM and the beneficiaries/participants in the Program? Are there any differences between stocks and areas? What elements of the Program could be changed in order to further reduce the administrative burden, without unjustifiably compromising the results and impact of Erasmus +?

Answer: Focusing towards on-line procedures will reduce the administrative burden. **The complexity of the application and justification procedure is believed to have a negative effect on the accessibility of Erasmus+ among small(er) organizations and institutions, or newcomers.** The administrative burden is also large for individual participants.

The e-tools should be definitely be synchronized both from the beneficiary aspect and from the NA aspect. The idea is one information (regardless of which type) to be entered once and then automatically shared among tools. For example,

the beneficiary should be able to submit final report in one tool, both the narrative and financial part, as well as the results, so that the reporting follows the process of implementation of project activities chronologically. Instead of beneficiary doing it personally, the tools should be able than to filter the information which is to be published as a result for dissemination or technical information important for grant management and its closure.

3.2.5 Question 14 – Adequacy of IT tools

To what extent are the IT tools provided by the Commission adequate for the efficient management and implementation of the programme in the Republic of Macedonia? Do they answer to your needs? Give specific examples where they can be improved. Is the set of IT tools appropriate or should it cover more/less elements of the programme implementation?

Answer: Mostly positive feedback, but it's up to our effort to explain and get closer the IT tools to the beneficiaries. Tools are seen as a good way to avoid paperlogy and especially effective method to start reporting process since the project commences. Especially important for KA2 project which last longer, this functionality enabled the beneficiaries to enter data chronologically, as events happen, so that no important information is lost after 2 or 3 years of implementation. However, beneficiaries often feel confused about incompatibility of tools, for example, at final reporting stage, they should submit narrative part in MT+, additional documentation in hard copy to National agency (where it is the case) and results in EPRP.

Most of them find them easy to work with, even due some of the beneficiary's share that they spent many hours in registering the information in Mobility tool.

The National agency and educational institutions and youth organisations mentioned there were significant problems with the IT tools (excepcialu in 2014 year) at the start of Erasmus+ as the tools were not available in time and had many bugs and therefore did not work properly. Reducing overlaps would make the tools less time-consuming. Second, the language used in different tools is not always clear, can be misunderstood and result in mistakes while a simplification of language can help applicants, participants as well as staff from National agency.

3.2.6 Question 15 – Availability of resources for implementation

To what extent is the level of human and financial resources that is available for the implementation of the programme in the Republic of Macedonia adequate? What steps did you take to optimise the efficiency of the resources deployed for the Erasmus+ implementation in the country?

Answer: The application procedure is regarded to be very time-consuming to complete, which causes challenges for small or volunteering organizations. The support provided by National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility in the application phase is much appreciated although some institutions have a need for more detailed feedback on turned down applications, with purpose to improve their future application next time.

In general, the level of financial resources for educational institutions and youth organizations is regarded to be sufficient. The administrative burden of completing the complex application procedure can result in challenges for non higher education institutions and youth organizations, especially those that are small and do not have many employees or rely on volunteers. In the other hand, higher educational institutions are more professionalized in this respect and have one or more (external) people working specifically on applications for funding. **A few youth organizations, VET schools and universities would like to receive more detailed feedback on turned down applications to be able to improve their future application.** But they are aware that National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility has limited human resources to expand their assistance.

4. Relevance

4.1 Question 16 – Relevance of objectives

To what extent do the Erasmus+ objectives continue to address the needs or problems they are meant to solve? Are these problems still relevant in the context of the Republic of Macedonia? Have the needs or problems evolved in such a way that the objectives of Erasmus+ or its successor programme need to be adjusted?

Answer: In general, **interviewees indicate that the Erasmus+ objectives are very relevant for institutions working with them.** Consequently, the objectives of institutions and projects are usually well aligned with the Erasmus+ objectives. In several cases, Erasmus+ and its objectives stimulated institutions and organizations to think their own objectives and policies, resulting in more strategic approaches towards the Erasmus+ objectives, such as internationalization, innovative practices, or more mobility. The education and training objectives are more focused on employability and gaining knowledge and developing skills for the labor market, while the youth sector is more focused towards inclusion, sport, communication and diversity.

4.2 Question 17 – Relevance of objectives for specific target groups

To what extent are needs of different stakeholders and sectors addressed by the Erasmus+ objectives? How successful is the programme in attracting and reaching target audiences and groups within different fields of the programme's scope? Is the Erasmus+ programme well known to the education and training, and youth communities? In case some target groups are not sufficiently reached, what factors are limiting their access and what actions could be taken to remedy this?

Answer: In generally, answers are yes. The target groups within the Erasmus+ programme are adequately informed about calls and project opportunities. **National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility regularly updates web page and staff is available for any information as well for consultation.**

The National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility implements variety of methods for information and promotion, but as well they are very open for organization of individual meetings, different types of tailor made trainings and advice sessions.

5. Internal and external coherence and complementarity

Internal and external coherence and complementarity refers to the extent to which Erasmus+ offers a coherent programme regarding its different actions and whether there is overlap between Erasmus+ and other programmes in the Republic of Macedonia.

5.1 Question 18 – Coherence of Kas

To what extent are the various KAs that have been brought together in Erasmus+ coherent? Can you identify any existing or potential synergies between actions within Erasmus+? Can you identify any tensions, inconsistencies or overlaps between actions within Erasmus+?

Answer: There are synergies between KA1 and KA2 projects. **For example, through the mobility of students, in the same projects the students have gained experience in the area of car-mechanics, worked with contemporary equipment, accepted new innovations etc.** These will allow higher level of realizing of the practical training in the school, adapting and expanding the curriculum with the new innovation in the area of car-mechanics, better connections with the social partners, etc. In the same moment, these will allow cooperation in KA2 projects, for example the project named “*Cooperative and work integrated curricula*”, which we realize in the moment, through which the aim is how to raise the

level of the realizing the practical training in the school and also in the country, better connection with the social partners (services).

The coherence of the Erasmus+ programme is clear and logical. There are inconsistencies in some actions, regarding length of training programmes and budget differences.

There are not so much differences in mobility projects between “Erasmus+” and Leonardo da Vinci programs.

The coherence between the KAs is considered to be clear and logical. Actions are perceived to connect to each other quite well and to complement each other. The way in which KA1 and KA2 complement each other, leads to opportunities for cooperation between long-term network partners. Inconsistencies are mainly found in details between KA1 and KA2. **For example, length of training programmes, and in KA1, training programmes should last at least two days, whereas in KA2, they should last at least five days.** Other inconsistencies arise from budget differences between different parts of a programme, while it is often not clear to institutions or organisations what these differences are based. The budget for internships abroad is lower than for studying abroad while this is not always justified as internships are not always paid. In addition, the reimbursement for travel costs varies between KA1 and KA2, without a clear rationale.

5.2 Question 19 – Complementarity with other programmes

To what extent does Erasmus+ complement other national and international programmes available in the Republic of Macedonia? Can you identify any tensions, inconsistencies or overlaps with other programmes?

Answer: There are hardly any alternatives for Erasmus+. The alternatives are usually more specific or have a different target group. Of course, **according to us, Erasmus+ is perceived to be more accessible.**

6. European added value and sustainability

6.1 Question 20 – Additionality

To what extent do Erasmus+ and its predecessor programmes produce effects that are additional to the effects that would have resulted from similar actions initiated only at regional or national levels in the Republic of Macedonia? What possibilities do you see to adjust Erasmus+ or its successor programme in order to increase its European value added?

Answer: Erasmus+ Programme aims at helping to ensure that borders are not barriers, connecting Europe, bringing Europeans closer together, helping to solve common problems, facilitating the sharing of ideas and assets, and encouraging strategic work towards common goals. **All this demonstrates European added value, such as:**

- ✓ Connectivity;
- ✓ Active citizenship;
- ✓ Mobility of individuals;
- ✓ Sharing of ideas;
- ✓ Cooperation;
- ✓ Sharing the assets;
- ✓ Language skills;
- ✓ Opportunity to work;
- ✓ Social inclusion.

⇔ *What do you see as the (European) added value of the Erasmus+ Programme?*

Besides the regular effects of Erasmus+ into supporting cooperation, reforming educational systems and connecting the education to the job market, in many cases the Erasmus+ programme has proven to be essential in achieving personal and professional targets of involved persons. Supporting the language skills and the opportunity to work and function in international teams usually are very big achievements for some involved persons. The opportunity to attend mobility for a practice which is unavailable at national level at long run has very positive effect in increasing the employability of students, and creates new image of especially VET as a first choice education. What is more, young people participating in Erasmus+ projects develop a feeling of what it is like to be European and are more open to other cultures.

Example, vocational education is usually associated with the vocational schools. Vocational education of students and staff can be provided by consultancy companies and other entities too. This fact should not be neglected. These entities are more open, flexible and can give significant contribution to development of vocational education in the country. Therefore in evaluation of applications/proposals they should have the same treatment as vocational schools.

⇔ *Do you think the added value of the programme is sufficient? How could it be increased, if applicable?*

- To increase the flat rates especially for the smallest countries.

- ⇔ *In general, what – in your opinion – does the programme positively affect for individuals and institutions?*
- Yes, in Macedonia example, has positive admission to the programme Erasmus+ for individuals and institutions.
 - In 2016 the National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility has conducted detailed survey on the impact of Erasmus+ on the professional and personal development of staff involved in education, training and youth. The main findings from this survey related to this question indicate that all respondents claimed very high 80% of their level of satisfaction concerning the development of their personal and professional skills (with major focus in increasing the development, managerial and leadership skills, as well as ICT skills). Concerning the working environment, 87% of all respondents claimed that the mobility initiates certain modifications in daily work, with the higher incidence in VET.
 - ***A lot of positively affects in mobility projects, such as:***
 - ❖ Professional development and international experience;
 - ❖ Higher quality of practical training in the school;
 - ❖ Better prepared worked forces for the car-services;
 - ❖ Better collaboration with the social partners (car services);
 - ❖ Marketing and better enrollment of the students in the school;
 - ❖ Promotion of the schools, car services - participants in the projects, abroad;
 - ❖ Collaboration in another international projects abroad;
 - ❖ Better collaboration between the school and partner from abroad.

7. Sustainability

Stakeholders indicate that applications focus more on the project period and less on the long-term idea behind the project and how it can continue afterwards. Furthermore, there is little attention to knowledge sharing of project results, dissemination etc. However, quality improvements for institutions and organisations occurring as a result of participation in Erasmus+ projects, offer a clear indication of sustainability of the effects of Erasmus+ programme, because the effects remain to affect institutional quality and internationalisation policies.

7.1 Question 21 – Budget increase

To what extent will Erasmus+ be able to absorb the sharp increase in the budget that is foreseen in the coming years up to 2020 in the Republic of Macedonia in an effective way?

Could the programme use even higher budgets in an effective way? Do you see challenges to effectively use more money for particular actions or fields of the programme?

Answer: Definitely, it would increase the impact of the programme. Additional funding means more mobility's abroad, more joined projects and more exchange of experiences. Increasing the number of possibilities would also mean higher level of internationalization of involved institutions, but as well increased outreach, by giving the opportunity for diverse social partners to enroll. **Example, adult education mobility funds are extremely low; it can cover 1 or 2 projects per year.** Bearing in mind the overall distribution it cannot be resolved at this point. In couple of years with increase of overall funds, this can be resolved.

Also, within the Erasmus+ programme, funds for vocational education are limited. Lack of financial resources is particularly evident for cooperation projects. Increased financial support will allow more projects to be approved and more activities to be implemented.

In addition, funds for mobility's of staff are also limited. Staff in vocational agricultural and tourism schools need more trainings/mobility's to provide quality education. This is because the contents of vocational competence are more mutable than, those of, for example, general education.

Further, gaps between Macedonian students and students from other EU counties are bigger in sectors from vocational education than in general education.

Finally in era of intensive developments of information technologies on-line upgrading in general education is more feasible and easy to get than vocational education. Students from vocational schools need to work in order to develop specific skills and competences.

It's evident that the quality behind the projects are getting increased through years. **Meaning that in our youth unit we're receiving a lot of qualitative projects without opportunity to get awarded because of the available budget.** The ratio of awarded projects through the year is variable from 0.1 to 0.3. This ratio could have negative influence over applicants which will results with decreased application submitted or decrease the quality. Especially under KA 205 limited budget could affect low quality on intellectual outputs risking the quality of the innovation within the projects.

And, at the end, the biggest shortage in funds, in my opinion, is being located in adult education mobility's. On contrary, the need for support in this manner is

more than evident. Adult education institutions in many cases lack international contacts and their self-confidence to enroll into international activities is very low. The increased budget would offer more institutions to start developing their European strategic goals and would encourage others to enroll into the programme.

In general the number of good quality projects that are rejected due to budget constraints is high so no issues of a decrease in quality are expected. Budget increase needs to go hand in hand with a clear objective to make the spending more effective. For example, **the additional budget can be deployed for specific purposes such as dissemination and increasing the impact of a project, or offering opportunities for participation to a larger number of participants.**

7.1.1 Negative aspects

Increase in budget can be effectively absorbed as the number of good quality applications exceeds the budget possibilities. The another problem is of concern, that after following a budget increase would be have the lack of sufficient working force to handle the extra work resulting from an increase in applications.

8. Conclusions and recommendations

In this national midterm evaluation of Erasmus+ we have applied a variety of methodologies in order to gain insights into the implementation and impact of the Erasmus+ programme. Here, there is some offer recommendations for improvement for the remainder of the programme and the future programming period.

The programme, we have evaluated among five evaluation criteria:

- **Effectiveness:** To what extent does the way Erasmus+ is executed contribute to the intended outcomes in the Republic of Macedonia?
- **Efficiency:** Are the intended outcomes achieved comparing with the costs in the Republic of Macedonia?
- **Relevance:** Does Erasmus+ adequately link to the needs as identified in the Republic of Macedonia?
- **Internal and external coherence and complementarily:** Are activities within Erasmus+ coherent? Is there any overlap or are there inconsistencies with other programmes in the Republic of Macedonia?
- **European added value and sustainability:** To what extent did Erasmus+ in the Republic of Macedonia contribute to effects on European level and to what extent are the effects sustainable?

Overall, we have to conclude that Erasmus+ is a highly relevant programme in Republic of Macedonia. It is effective in reaching its objectives, for Education and Training and Youth, mostly regarding individual outcomes such as development of skills and competences. It also contributes to the implementation of the broader European Union policy agenda regarding education and skills development in Europe. Erasmus+ is expected to have a broader societal impact in the long run, as individual effects translate into societal effects. Integration of the predecessor programmes has led to some efficiency gains, mainly on the level of execution of the programme and visibility. The quality of the applications has increased and the high standards in turn lead to quality improvements within the applying institutions. Sustainability of the programme could be improved, because there is limited focus on long term effects of projects. The budget increase for the remainder of the programme period is welcomed by all parties, and is expected to result in more quality applications.

8.1 Conclusions per evaluation criterion

8.1.1 Effectiveness

Since the start of the programme in 2014, the number of applications has increased, and with that also the quality of most applications. **This is mainly due to efforts from the National agency in supporting applicants to write good quality applications.** Actions KA2 is perceived as a valuable and effective addition to the new programme, but the main issue is that the programme budget is relatively low.

8.1.2 Achievement of specific objectives

Erasmus+ is effective in achieving its specific objectives. **Erasmus+ program it contributes to students' and youth's knowledge and skills, internationalization of youth and education institutions and organizations, quality improvements and more innovative culture at organizational level.** The awareness of life long learning is greater among staff than among students. Participation of staff in Erasmus+ as well as participation in adult education in itself is examples of lifelong learning.

Societal impact is hard to assess at this point, because the programme Erasmus+ only commenced three years ago, but Erasmus+ is expected to have a broader societal impact in the long run as individual effects translate into societal effects.

8.1.3 Individual effects – Knowledge and skills development

Erasmus+ affects the cultural awareness, multicultural aspects of living, subject matter knowledge and language skills of students and the personal development, cultural awareness and social and civic skills of youth participants. Most participants believe that the knowledge and skills gained under the Erasmus+ programme add value to their CVs and increases their career prospects.

8.1.4 Institutional effects – Improved quality and internationalization

Erasmus+, in comparison to its predecessor programmes, focuses more on quality instead of quantity and reaches a higher number of participating students and young people. The revised application procedure for Erasmus+ with a larger focus on quality resulted, in general, in better quality applications and projects.

8.2 Efficiency

8.2.1 Programme level

The integration of different programmes into Erasmus+ is mainly perceived to have been a good development. The collaboration between National agency, Ministry of education and sciences and other stakeholders is good. **But while one of the key objectives of the integration of Youth in Action and Life long learning was to increase efficiency, youth and educational institutions believe the administrative burden for National agency, applicants and participants is still very high.**

8.2.2 Project level

The financial resources that educational institutions and youth organisations receive from Erasmus+ are generally found to be sufficient to reach the programme's objectives. Most organisations and institutions have sufficient human resources to implement a project, but not for the application procedure (especially non-higher educational institutions and youth organisations). Equal application procedures apply to large and small organisations, which affects the accessibility of Erasmus+ for small (volunteer-led) organisations, as well as newcomers.

Employees of the National Agency, as well as applicants experienced many problems with the IT tools at the start of the programme. These problems have been tackled, **but the IT tools are still cause of a large administrative burden.**

8.3 Relevance

The objectives of Erasmus+ are regarded as relevant by all stakeholders. It is felt that the objective of life long learning is least addressed by Erasmus+. Erasmus+ supported institutions in developing more strategic approaches or innovative practices. **Erasmus+ is able to respond well to the needs of the different sectors.** Additionally, Erasmus+ is not widely known within the primary and secondary education sectors, while internationalisation is considered to be of large importance for these sectors, considering that they are the largest education sectors, offering the foundation for future education.

8.4 Internal and external coherence and complementarity

The coherence between the KAs is considered to be clear and logical, with little overlap between the KAs. The way in which KA1 and KA2 complement each other provides opportunities for cooperation between long-term network partners. It is not always feasible for institutions that implement projects within several KAs.

8.5 European added value and sustainability

The added value of Erasmus+ is the international collaboration opportunities that it offers, which stimulates internationalisation, innovation and quality improvements. It is found that too little attention is paid to long-term effects of projects in the application phase and to knowledge sharing of project results. **A budget increase would be welcomed by the stakeholders in both the youth and the education and training field, as the number of good quality applications now exceeds the budget possibilities.** A matter of concern of an increased budget would be the lack of sufficient administration to handle the extra work resulting from an increasing number of applications.

9. Recommendations

9.1 Stimulating cross-sectoral projects

There is a widespread belief that cooperation between sectors and institutions or organizations can enlarge the effectiveness of Erasmus+, but currently a limited number of KA2 projects are being financed due to budget limitations. That fore an increase in budget for KA2 is therefore desirable. A dedicated budget for cross-sectoral projects may generate more possibilities for these types of projects.

Encouraging collaboration between different sectors and different stakeholders can increase the impact of Erasmus+ programmes, for example through reaching for youth projects through educational institutions. As there is limited awareness among

institutions and organizations that they can establish collaborations between the different sectors, or between different education levels, it is recommended that the NAs promote this more strongly or make these possibilities more visible.

9.2 More attention to lifelong learning

The awareness of the importance of life long learning seems to be hardly influenced by Erasmus+ at the moment. In order to increase the effectiveness regarding this objective, life long learning should gain more attention and collaboration with the private sector (businesses and companies) could be encouraged as is currently being done in the VET education sector.

9.3 Increasing accessibility of the programme

In order to make it more attractive for newcomers to apply, a separate “*easily*” application procedure, taking into account proportionality of applications (smaller projects are more likely to have smaller impact), could help reduce the administrative burden that currently discourages new applicants and smaller organizations from applying. In the first step, new applicant can submit a “*light*” application, which can lead up to a “regular” application in the following call.

9.4 Increasing visibility and knowledge sharing

Participant’s awareness of possible impacts of Erasmus+ needs to be enhanced. Now applicants focus is often on the opportunities for funding and less on the implications of the mobility experience. Hence, to achieve sustainable learning effects, more attention could be paid to the impacts of Erasmus+, by having participants spell out their expectations on impact of their participation as well as paying attention to mobility experiences a year or more after the mobility experience has taken place.

Several stakeholders indicate that to increase the European added value of Erasmus+ it is important to improve the knowledge sharing between projects and countries. In addition, knowledge sharing at the start of a programme instead of the end might improve the outcomes of projects.

Institutions and organizations, as well as local authorities and businesses, should be encouraged more to share their project results internally. Also, evaluating project results in light of the institutions internationalization policies could help in establishing sustainable effects.

Annex 1 - Questionnaire 1

EVALUATION OF THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME Response sheet of the Ministry of Education and Science

Common part

The interview is carried out as part of the preparation of underlying materials for the Erasmus+ evaluation report. The European Commission assigned the different areas and questions. Member States are supposed to process and return them in 2017. Respondents to the questions mainly include the national agency (National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility), and the national authority (Ministry of Education and Science). Responses will be used for the preparation of background materials. Everything is anonymous and the responses will not be used for any other purposes.

Position:

Area:

Length of employment at the Ministry of Education and Science:

1. What is your personal opinion on ERASMUS+? Is it a part of your work at all? Is it significant compared with other parts of your work?
2. In your opinion, does the implementation of the Erasmus+ Programme affect the situation in the fields of education, youth and sports in the Republic of Macedonia? Can you provide examples?
3. The objectives of the ERASMUS+ Programme are rather ambitious. Do you think that the budget of the Erasmus+ Programme is proportionate to the objectives it pursues?
4. In your opinion, does the distribution of financial resources among the different sectors (education, training, youth and sports) and activities correspond to the degree of their effectiveness and usefulness? Do you think that your area deserves more attention?
5. In your area, does the Ministry of Education and Science contribute to strengthening the programme's effects/impacts beyond its duties as a responsible national authority?
6. In your area, are the effects of the programme strengthened through another programme/national policy/strategy?
7. Do you receive sufficient, clear and timely information and guidance about the ERASMUS+ programme?
8. Do you work directly with the National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility (NAEOPM)? How satisfied are you with the work of the NAEOPM?

9. What is your opinion on the integration of the former sub-programmes into the single ERASMUS+ programme? Can you give some advantages and disadvantages that you see?

Specific part

1. Has the setting up of the Erasmus+ Programme affected the situation in the fields of education, youth and sports?
2. To what extent does the Ministry of Education and Science co-finance selected activities from the state budget?
3. Do you think that the Ministry of Education and Science as the responsible authority contributes sufficient to covering the costs of programme administration?
4. In your view, how well does cooperation between the Ministry of Education and Science and the European Commission (or the EACEA) work? (E.g. in promoting the programme, announcing calls, disseminating results.)
5. Do you receive sufficient, clear and timely information and guidance from the EU level?
6. How successful has the Ministry of Education and Science been in keeping the Commission informed about the programme's implementation and in complying with prescribed reporting deadlines?
7. How does the cooperation between the National Agency and the Ministry of Education and Science? In what activities do they complement or duplicate each other?
8. Did the integration of the former programmes into E+ affect communication (the relationship) between the Ministry of Education and Science and the National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility?
9. In your opinion, how did the integration of the previous programmes affect the overall management structure of the programme in the Republic of Macedonia?
10. To what extent has the integration of the programmes reduced the administrative burden at the level of the Ministry of Education and Science as the national authority?
11. Do you think it is possible to further integrate some activities? In your opinion, what would be the result of such integration?
12. In the implementation process, are there overlaps between the activities or competencies of different entities? (Ministry of Education and Science, National Agency, committees, Council)
13. What IT tools provided by the Commission do you use in managing E+?
14. In your opinion, which IT tools are indispensable to the efficiency of the programme's management?

15. How do you think IT tools facilitate or impede the work of the programme's administrators on the one hand and beneficiaries on the other?

16. Do you have information that there are problems with some IT tools or their support?

17. What do you see as the (European) added value of the Erasmus+ Programme?

18. Do you think the added value of the programme is sufficient? How could it be increased, if applicable?

19. In your opinion, what does the programme positively affect in general? (individuals, institutions, processes)

Annex 2 - Questionnaire 2

EVALUATION OF THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME **Response sheet of the National Agency for European Educational Programs and** **Mobility** **Heads of departments, heads of units**

The interview is carried out as part of the preparation of underlying materials for the Erasmus+ evaluation report. Responses will be used for the preparation of background materials. Everything is anonymous and the responses will not be used for any other purposes.

Name and surname (optional):

Position:

Area:

Length of employment at the National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility:

Please answer the following questions as precisely as possible, indicating **concrete examples** (if possible):

1. How is the promotion of the programme done and what effect do you think it has? What type of promotion is the most effective – i.e. addresses potential applicants?
2. Does the National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility organise activities that strengthen the effects of the programme (meetings of beneficiaries, round tables etc.)? What is the feedback like? What would you recommend to improve the situation?
3. How often does the National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility organise events in order to promote, present and discuss the programme's results?
4. What kind of publication/dissemination of the programme's results appears to be the most effective?
5. Do you think that the integration of the programmes contributed to increasing or reducing international mobility/cooperation? Why?
6. How did the integration of the programmes affect communication (the relationship) between the National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility and grant beneficiaries?
7. In which areas (mobility/cooperation) do beneficiaries perceive a lack of financial resources? How would they be affected by increased financial support for specific activities? Please give examples.
8. Do you think that the planned increase in financial resources will, in turn, increase the programme's effect in each area (mobility/cooperation)?
9. What challenges or obstacles do you encounter at various stages of programme administration?
 - a) Publishing calls and information about grant support, promoting and advertising the programme
 - b) Submitting and keeping records of grant applications
 - c) Evaluating applications and making grant decisions

- d) Providing support, guidance and advice during project implementation
 - e) Monitoring and inspecting projects being implemented (during and at the end of implementation)
 - f) Disseminating the results of implemented projects.
10. Can you identify any adverse consequences within the process of programme administration? (An example was the reimbursement of transport costs only if the distance was at least 100 km – this may have resulted in reducing cross-border cooperation).
 11. What changes would you suggest in order to remove these obstacles?
 12. What makes some projects/applications more successful than others? (I.e. why the project/application received a positive evaluation, why it received more points)
 13. What elements of the programme should be changed to reduce the administrative burden in future?
 14. What feedback has been received from beneficiaries regarding the IT tools?
 15. Do you think that the target groups are adequately informed about calls and project opportunities?
 16. Are there synergies between the different KAs? (Especially between mobility and cooperation.) Please provide real-life examples where one activity initiates another.
 17. Are there concurrent (complementary, synergistic) activities focusing on education? (Comenius, Erasmus, Erasmus Mundus, Leonardo da Vinci, Grundtvig and Youth in Action)
 18. Do you see untapped potential for cooperation between certain activities or areas?
 19. What do you see as the (European) added value of the Erasmus+ Programme?
 20. Do you think the added value of the programme is sufficient? How could it be increased, if applicable?
 21. In general, what – in your opinion – does the programme positively affect for individuals and institutions?

Annex 3 - Questionnaire 3

EVALUATION OF THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME EXTERNAL EVALUATORS

The interview is carried out as part of the preparation of underlying materials for the Erasmus+ evaluation report. Responses will be used for the preparation of background materials. Everything is anonymous and the responses will not be used for any other purposes.

Name and surname (optional):

Area:

Please answer the following questions as precisely as possible, indicating **concrete examples** (if possible):

1. How long have you been evaluating projects of Erasmus+ and/or its predecessor programmes (Lifelong Learning Programme, Youth in Action etc.)?
 - Less than 2 years
 - More than 2 years.

2. Within which sector or sectors do you evaluate projects at the National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility?
 - School education sector
 - Vocational education and training sector
 - Higher education sector
 - Adult learning sector
 - Youth.

3. Do you work or, if relevant, have you worked as an evaluator outside Erasmus+ as well? (Another programme, a grant or subsidy scheme etc.)
 - YES
 - NO.

4. Can you say what, in your opinion, makes the supported projects successful?

	Very important	Rather important	Rather unimportant	Unimportant
Purposefully justified budget				
Clearly defined goals				
Long-term sustainability				
Previous experience				
Concreteness of the project				
Method of implementation				
Organization management support				

Other (please write):				
-----------------------	--	--	--	--

5. What are the most common errors or deficiencies in the applications evaluated?

6. When evaluating projects, do you as an evaluator encounter any problems?

	Definitely yes	Rather yes	Rather not	Definitely not
Large administrative burden				
Technical problems				
High time intensity				
Problems in the evaluation system				

7. If yes, what changes would you suggest in order to eliminate these problems?

8. In your opinion, to what extent is the quality of and the need for the projects taken into account in their evaluation?

	Definitely yes	Rather yes	Rather not	Definitely not
Quality of project				
Need for the project				

9. In your opinion, could a potential increase in financial support result in an increase in the programme's effects within each area?

- YES
- NO
- I DO NOT KNOW, I CANNOT TELL

10. In your opinion, what activities and processes does the programme positively affect?

	Definitely yes	Rather yes	Rather not	Definitely not	I do not know, I cannot tell
Addressing current needs and problems in the field of education and training					
Addressing current needs and problems in the field of youth					
Improving quality in education and training					
Increasing creativity and innovation in education					
Addressing current needs and problems in the field of education and training					

Addressing current needs and problems in the field of youth					
Other (please write):					

11. Do the supported activities help address the strategic objectives of the Macedonian educational system?

	Definitely yes	Rather yes	Rather not	Definitely not	I do not know, I cannot tell
Improve the quality of education					
Improve the quality of providing key competencies and skills					
Improve the level of internationalisation					
Increase cooperation with the labour market					

12. What is your perception of cooperation with and support from the Centre for International Cooperation in Education?

- Very good
- Rather good
- Rather poor
- Very poor
- I do not know, I cannot tell

13. Do you think this cooperation can be improved in any way? If yes, please say specifically how.

Annex 4 - Questionnaire 4

Questions for experts (eTwinning, EPALE, ECVET etc.)

1. In which organizations do you work and for how long have you worked there?

Name of organization: _____

- Less than 2 years
- 2 to 5 years
- More than 5 years

2. What is your personal perception of Erasmus+?

- Very positive
- Rather positive
- Rather negative
- Very negative
- I do not know, I cannot tell

3. In your opinion, what activities and processes do Erasmus+ or any of the accompanying educational networks positively affect?

	Definitely yes	Rather yes	Rather not	Definitely not	I do not know, I cannot tell
Addressing current needs and problems in the field of education and training					
Addressing current needs and problems in the field of youth					
Improving quality in education and training					
Increasing creativity and innovation in education					
Improving the continuing professional development of the staff in the educational institutions					

4. In your opinion, do the supported activities help address the strategic objectives of the Macedonian educational system?

	Definitely yes	Rather yes	Rather not	Definitely not	I do not know, I cannot tell

Improve the quality of education					
Improve the quality of providing key competencies and skills					
Improve the level of internationalisation					
Increase cooperation with the labour market					
Contribute to the improvement of the policies related to the professional development of staff and students in education and training					
Provide instrument for recognition and visibility of the acquired knowledge during the participation projects and mobilities					

5. In your opinion, could a potential increase in financial support result in an increase in the programme's effects within each area?

- Yes
- Nno
- I do not know, i cannot tell

6. What do you personally see as the greatest benefit of Erasmus+?

7. What do you personally see as the greatest weakness of Erasmus+?

9. Do you believe that you have sufficient level of knowledge skills to actively participate in Erasmus+, and accompanying education networks, and how Erasmus+ has contributed to improvement of these skills?

8. What do you see as the European added value of Erasmus+?

Annex 5 - Questionnaire 5

QUESTIONS FOR THE BENEFICIARIES OF THE PROGRAMME

Initial notice:

This questionnaire is part of the preparation of background materials for preparing the Macedonian national report to the mid-term evaluation of the Erasmus+ Programme implemented by the European Commission. The evaluation of Erasmus+ will be based on national reports from the various programme countries and outputs from an independent evaluator selected by the European Commission.

The questionnaire is completed anonymously and your answers will only be used for the purpose outlined above.

1. What is the type of your institution?

- Kindergarten
- Primary schools
- Secondary schools
- VET school
- University
- Enterprise
- Research centre
- Local or regional authority
- Non-profit organisation, foundation
- Informal group
- Another type of institution

2. How many employees does your institution have? (*Approximated as FTE*).

- 1 – 5
- 6 – 15
- 16 – 50
- 51 or more

3. Is this the first time your institution is implementing a project within the Erasmus+ Programme (*or the previous programmes Lifelong Learning Programme, Youth in Action, Socrates, Leonardo da Vinci*)?

- YES
- NO

4. Have you noticed that the previous programmes (*Lifelong Learning Programme – Comenius, Leonardo da Vinci, Erasmus, Grundtvig and Youth in Action...*) have been merged into the Erasmus+ Programme?

- YES
- NO

5. What were the implications of merging the programmes for your institution?

- Rather positive- (e.g. *Reduced administrative burden, better orientation in the programme, cost savings, better access to information*)
- Rather negative - (e.g. *Increased administrative burden, poor orientation in the programme, increased costs, poor availability of information*)
- I do not know, I cannot tell

6. Which projects are more important for your institution, mobility projects (KA 1) or cooperation projects (KA 2)?

- Rather mobility (KA 1);
- Rather cooperation (KA 2);
- Both are equally important;
- I do not know, I cannot tell;

7. Have you encountered obstacles in any of the following phases of project implementation?

	Definitely yes	Rather yes	Rather not	Definitely not	I do not know, I cannot tell
Submission of project application					
Implementation of specified					
Project financing					
Dissemination of project results					

8. Is the amount of the grant awarded to implement the project sufficient for your institution?

- Definitely YES
- Rather YES
- Rather NOT
- Definitely NOT
- I do not know, I cannot tell

9. Does your institution implement projects in the field of **education and training**?

- YES
- NO

“A breakpoint” – in the case of a negative response, the following question does not display

10. Please assess whether the following characteristics have improved for your institution in connection with the implementation of an Erasmus+ project:

	Definitely yes	Rather yes	Rather not	Definitely not	I do not know, I cannot tell
The quality of education					
The quality of providing key competencies and skills					

The teaching of languages					
The level of internationalisation					
Cooperation with the labour market					
The attractiveness of your institution within the region					
The attractiveness of your institution within the Republic of Macedonia					
The attractiveness of your institution within Europe					

11. Does your institution implement projects in the field of **youth**?

- YES
- NO

“A breakpoint” – in the case of a negative response, the following question does not display

12. Please assess whether the following characteristics have improved for your institution in connection with the Erasmus+ Programme:

	Definitely yes	Rather yes	Rather not	Definitely not	I do not know, I cannot tell
The level of key competencies and skills of young people					
Linkage between the youth field and the labour market					
Cooperation with other organisations active in the youth field					
Collaboration with formal education organisations					
The level of competencies of youth workers					

13. Do you use (or are you planning to use) an online database of the results and outputs of Erasmus+ projects? (*The “Erasmus+ Project Results” European dissemination platform*)

- Yes
- No
- I do not know, I cannot tell

14. Do you use best practices and good practice examples at the national/international level? (*From a database of results, conferences, seminars etc.*)

- Yes (*Filter: if yes, please give at least one example*)
- _____
- No
- I do not know, I cannot tell

15. Does your institution have problems with electronic tools for submitting applications and reporting?

- Definitely YES
- Rather YES
- Rather NOT
- Definitely NOT
- I do not know, I cannot tell

If yes, please indicate specific problems that you had _____

16. Thanks to the implementation of a project within Erasmus+, did your institution successfully participate in additional international activities and establish additional international cooperation?

- Yes
- No
- I do not know, I cannot tell

17. Did your institution (or a part of it) also implement a project under any of the following subsidy programmes?

OP Education for Competitiveness (OP EC)	YES	NO
OP Human Resources Development (OP HRD)	YES	NO
Regional Operational Programmes (ROPs)	YES	NO
Visegrad funds	YES	NO
EEA and Norway Grants	YES	NO
CEEPUS	YES	NO
AKTION (Austria)	YES	NO
SCIEX-NMSch (Switzerland)	YES	NO

18. Do you believe that, in the Republic of Macedonia, the Erasmus+ Programme contributes to:

	Definitely yes	Rather yes	Rather not	Definitely not	I do not know, I cannot tell
Addressing current needs and problems in the field of education and training					
Addressing current needs and problems in the field of youth					
Improving quality in education and training					
Increasing creativity and innovation in education					

19. Please indicate which setting of conditions you would prefer in the next generation of the programme (after 2020):

Maintaining a single integrated programme (such as the current Erasmus+ Programme) for the field of education and youth.	YES	NO
Maintaining project financing (settlement) based on lump-sum contributions.	YES	NO

Allowing proposals to be submitted only by organisations (not individuals).	YES	NO
Maintaining a schedule of calls for proposals that is similar to that in the current Erasmus+ Programme	YES	NO
Integrating the programme with other European activities (eTwinning, Epale, Euroguidance etc.)	YES	NO
Increasing the financial resources allocated for grants in the Republic of Macedonia	YES	NO
Within evaluation, introducing the possibility to take into account national priorities	YES	NO
Within evaluation, introducing the possibility to give preference to first-time applicants	YES	NO

20. Do you have any other comments or observations regarding the administration of Erasmus+ or the functioning of the national agency (National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility)?

Annex 6 - Questionnaire 6

EVALUATION OF THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

This questionnaire survey is implemented as part of the preparation of underlying materials for the Erasmus+ evaluation report. In early 2016, the European Commission assigned individual areas and questions and Member States are supposed to process and return them in 2017. Respondents to the questions include both the implementation structure – i.e. the national agency (NATIONAL AGENCY FOR EUROPEAN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES AND MOBILITY) and the national authority (Ministry of Education and Science), and the beneficiaries and other selected stakeholders.

Your responses to the questions are anonymous and the responses will not be used for any other purposes.

1. Does your University / HEI actively promote Erasmus+? In what ways?
2. Does your University / HEI have sufficient interest in mobility within Erasmus+ on the part of students? If you are aware of any motivating/demotivating factors, please name them.
3. Does your University / HEI have sufficient interest in mobility within Erasmus+ on the part of employees? If you are aware of any motivating/demotivating factors, please name them.
4. Does your University / HEI have a system in place for selecting mobility participants? How is the system set up?
5. Does your University / HEI support student or teacher mobility implemented within the Erasmus+ Programme also from other sources, i.e. do you use the ZERO GRANT option?
6. Does your University / HEI have a system in place for recognizing credits obtained as part of student mobilities? How is the system set up?
7. In addition to student and employee mobilities, does your University / HEI use other options of the Erasmus+ Programme (e.g. cooperation projects, centralised projects etc.)?
8. Do you have any other comments (opinions, problems, observations) regarding the implementation or impacts of the Erasmus+ Programme? Do you consider it significant?

Annex 7 - List of Abbreviations

- ❖ ECVET – European Credits system for Vocational Education and Training;
- ❖ EQF – European Qualifications Framework;
- ❖ ESF – European Social Fund;
- ❖ EU – European Union;
- ❖ HEI – Higher Education Institution;
- ❖ KA – Key Action;
- ❖ LLL – Lifelong Learning Learning;
- ❖ NA – National Agency;
- ❖ NAEPPM – National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility;
- ❖ MoES – Ministry of education and science;
- ❖ SHEI – State higher education institutions
- ❖ PHEI – Private higher education institutions
- ❖ RM – Republic of Macedonia;
- ❖ TCA - Transnational Cooperation Activities;
- ❖ VET – Vocational education and training.