



# Newsletter

## STINT

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## Greetings

Dear Erasmus+ STINT partners,

In this newsletter you can find the latest update regarding the Erasmus+ STINT project and some general issues. The newsletter will be distributed to all project partners periodically. The format of the newsletter will be developed and adjusted to our needs and technical abilities. Its content will be based mainly on the partners' contribution. Therefore, I call all of you to share knowledge, experiences, and questions related to the project.

Please send your short articles to: Nenad Markovic, MSc,  
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Please see *Articles* on page 2

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## About STINT

STINT emphasizes problems which are related to non-conformities of procedures for recognition of qualifications in accordance with international documents within EHEA. Existing legislation in B&H concerning recognition of foreign qualifications hasn't been completely harmonized with Lisbon Recognition Convention. Without harmonized recognition procedures mobility of students, teachers and nonteaching staff can't be realized on the appropriate way. In comparison to internationalization recognition mechanisms represents the cornerstone of the internationalization of HE and mobility. The project activities will be focused on institutional and national strengthening of internationalization and recognition mechanisms. Projects outputs are oriented on detail analysis of current state in B&H, strengthening of HEIs through developing and implementing strategies and indicators for internationalization, improving national recognition model, improving HEIs capacities (human and physical), developing of criteria for assessing internationalization and theirs incorporation in existing criteria for accreditation of HEIs.

Please see *Articles* on page 3

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*"The content of the Newsletter STINT will be based mainly on the project partners' contribution."*

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*“International cooperation, multilateralism is indispensable.”*

*- Hans Blix*

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Expected impact of the project is modernization of HE system in B&H as well as strengthening of HEIs capacities for internationalization. Established and harmonized B&H recognition system should contribute to creating linkage between Lisbon Recognition Convention and EHEA Mobility Strategy 2020.

Wider objective

- Strengthening and Improving of Internationalization process of B&H universities

Specific objectives

- Evaluation of current situation in B&H about internationalization system, recognition mechanisms and identification areas for changes and improvement
- Development institutional internationalization strategies and indicators, and recognition model
- Modernization of each B&H university through strengthening international and students' offices, implementation of pilot activities and trainings of human resources of B&H partners
- Development of criteria for assessing internationalization on the university and study program level.

## Why STINT?

Bosnia and Herzegovina joined Erasmus + in 2014 as reaction to requests of the academic community, society, students, youth and other stakeholders to be part of EHEA. The fact is that the student mobility is the main point of all coming activities and that the recognition procedures aren't in accordance with international documents within EHEA. This was the main reason why the consortium wants to undertake this project. Bosnia and Herzegovina signed and ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention in 2003, but the legislation concerning recognition of foreign higher education qualifications in Bosnia and Herzegovina hasn't been completely harmonized with the Convention yet neither the recognition procedures at higher education institutions are completely unique and harmonized with the Convention. The Consortium is also aware of the facts that without harmonized recognition procedures there isn't student and teachers mobility at appropriate way. Fair recognition is now acknowledged to be the cornerstone of the internationalization of higher education and of student mobility. Bosnia and Herzegovina doesn't have Recognition Manual which should be direct and practical response to the challenges and expectations raised by politicians, policy makers, students, parents and employers. The aim of Recognition Manual should be ensuring that coherent institutional policies on recognition are based on the Lisbon Recognition Convention, which is UNESCO's and the Council of Europe's legally binding text concerning the recognition of foreign qualifications.



*Introduction picture of the STINT project during Kick-off meeting*

Emphasis on the internationalization and recognition of qualification should contribute to implementation of criteria for evaluation of foreign higher education qualifications that should be applicable in the recognition procedure with the purpose of employing, continuation of education, taking into consideration of higher education diversity, type of study, study program content and teaching methods. On that way, the cooperation B&H partners with EU countries partners should be stimulated, the continuation of study would be facilitated and the comparison of study courses, ECTS and qualifications should be facilitated.

Given that the accession to EHEA is the main aim for a long time in B&H, there wasn't enough importance because real problems have never been perceived. They are key factors which slow down accession to EHEA. This project is trying to focus on national and institutional priorities.

This project will have to solve problem of positioning of international offices of B&H universities in the whole structure. These offices together with students offices will be strengthen on different ways.

Recent conducted accreditation process of HEIs in B&H addressed internationalization, as well as research, as the biggest problem in B&H. The creation of criteria for assessing of internationalization should contribute to the orientation of HEIs on the implementation of internationalized strategies and indicators that could point out on international character.

One of the main goals of internationalized higher education is to provide the most relevant education to students, who will be the citizens, entrepreneurs and scientists of tomorrow.

Main reasons for internationalizing an institution are, in order of importance, to:

- improve student preparedness,
- internationalize the curriculum,
- enhance the international profile of the institution,
- strengthen research and knowledge production,
- diversify its institution and staff.

With the infusion of internationalization into the culture of higher education, students and educators can gain a greater awareness of the global issues and how educational systems operate across countries, cultures and languages.

The involvement of governments in internationalization is therefore twofold: supporting the expansion of internationalization and safeguarding its quality. Government policy plays a key role as it can facilitate the internationalization of HEIs. National higher education internationalization strategies or policies can impact national competitiveness through attracting international research initiatives, corporate partnerships and facilitating the mobility of student and faculty talent.




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*“Why do you go away?  
So that you can come  
back. So that you can  
see the place you came  
from with new eyes and  
extra colors. And the  
people there see you  
differently, too. Coming  
back to where you  
started is not the same  
as never leaving.”*

*- Terry Pratchett*

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## 8.1. Kick-off meeting

At the University of Gent (Belgium), from 24-27. January 2016. the kick-off meeting was held within the “Erasmus+ Capacity Building in the field of higher education“ project “Strengthening of Internationalization in B&H Higher Education“ (STINT). All project partners were participated to this kick-off meeting (16 partners), over 30 participants.

After opening words, the project as a whole was presented by the project coordinator. This was followed by presentations of all project partners and their identifications in the project. The organizational structure was proposed and accepted by all project partners.

After, the grant agreement was presented by the project coordinator, as well as the guideline for the contract realization. All work packages are presented in detail, through the possible physics, activities, tasks, methods of implementation and budget.

The Communication Management Plan, Dissemination and Sustainability plan, Risk Management Plan, Conflict Resolution Template, Quality Policy Paper, Evaluation form were presented in detail. All of these plans are designed to enable effective project implementation.

Kick-off meeting is magnified by visiting representative of the city of Ghent, who presented international cooperation of the city of Ghent.

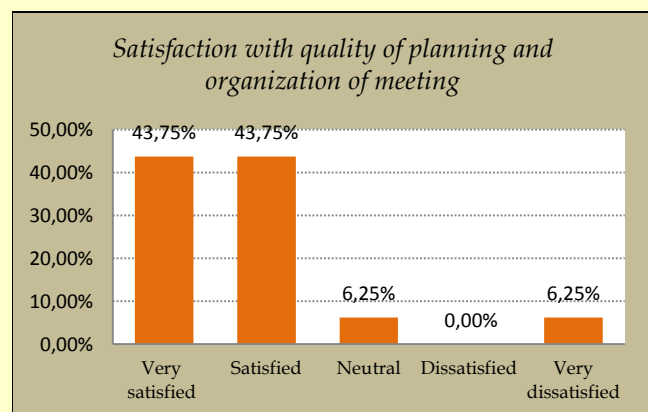
For more details (agenda, presentations, pictures, report), please visit the project web page:

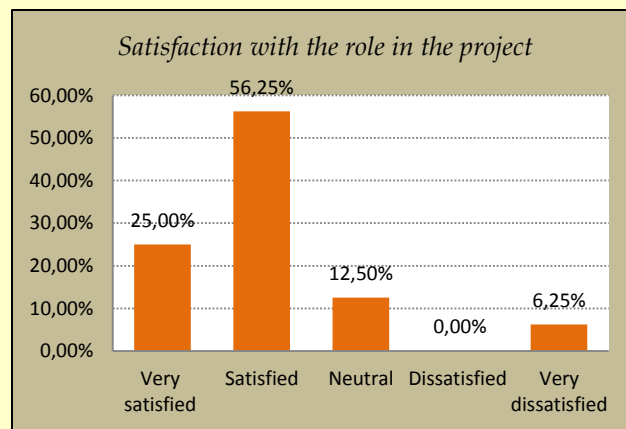
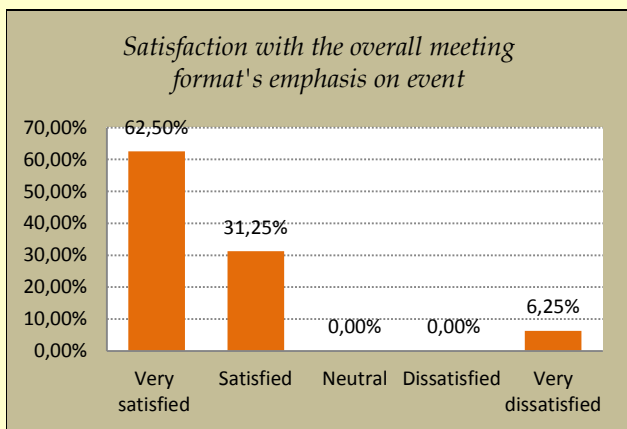
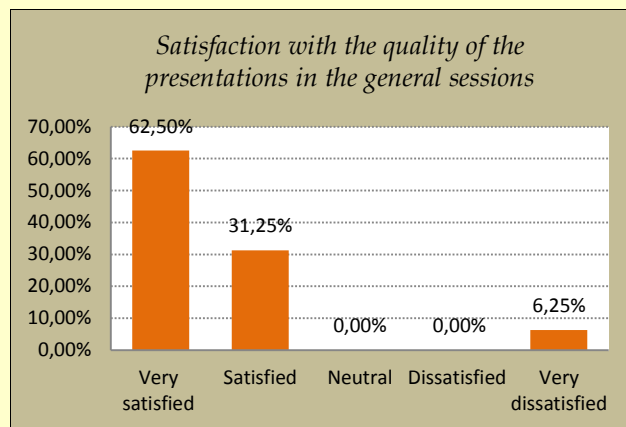
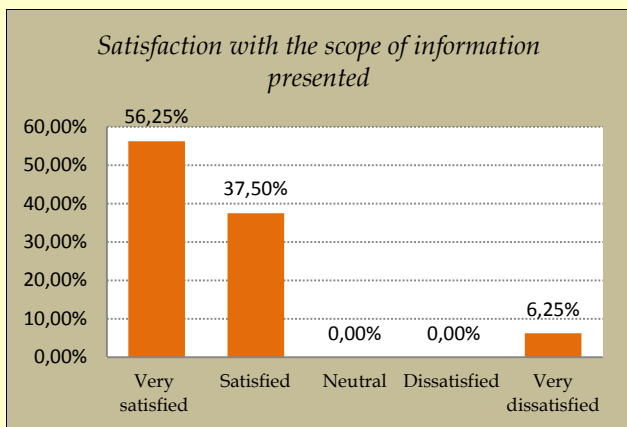
<http://www.stint-project.net/pages/events#kick-off>.



### Evaluation of the kick off meeting by project participants

Total number of records in the survey was 16.





## 1.1. Analysis meeting

In Banja Luka, from 7-10 March 2016. the project's 1.1 activity "Analysis of current situation about internationalization and recognition mechanisms" was realized. The meeting was organized first day in the capacities of Government of Republika Srpska (administration center) and second day at the University of Business studies. Total of 27 participants from 15 different project partners were participated to the meeting. Only representatives of University of Bihac didn't attend to the meeting because of justifiable reasons.



The main aim of this activity 1.1 was exchange of experiences and good practices with EU partners and particularly review of current situation at all partner's institutions related to internationalization and recognition mechanisms. In accordance with the agenda after welcomed words and work package explanation, the keynote presentations were followed. In this part of the agenda presenters were prof. dr Andre Govaert, prof. dr Florin Ioras, prof. dr Monica Vieira and prof. dr Dejan Bokonjić. They presented internationalization in general and current trends of internationalization.





Press conference was organized with a lot number of present media organizations. Statements for media organizations were given by prof. dr Andre Govaert (project coordinator KU Leuven), prof. dr Dejan Bokonjic (national coordinator University of East Sarajevo) and MA Jelena Starčević (host Ministry of Education and Culture of Republika Srpska). Through this way all relevant media in Bosnia and Herzegovina informed about this project, key consequences on higher education in B&H and especially on students and teaching staff.

The meeting was continued with presentations of all public universities and ministries as well as agencies regarding analysis of current state in internationalization. Then, representatives of EU partners presented the same things as B&H partners related to internationalization and recognition mechanisms.

In the second part of the day keynote speakers were Jelena Starcevic and Dzenan Omanovic that presented Recognition of Foreign Qualifications and Implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention in Bosnia and Herzegovina. After these presentations, all universities presented their situations in the recognition area.



At the end of the first day all participants agreed that current situation in the area of internationalization and recognition mechanisms in Bosnia and Herzegovina higher education is presented in detail by all public universities, ministries and state agencies. All partners provided a clear overview of the current situation in terms of qualitative and quantitative measures on the state of internationalization and recognition mechanisms. Beside detail presentation the emphasis was on the exchange of experiences and good practices with EU partners. Through this first day an initial comparative analysis between the project partners was made.

On second day, meeting was started with presentation of Tourist board of Banja Luka. During this meeting the emphasis was on presentation all important elements that partnership agreement will have in the future. Focus was on travel costs, costs of stay, equipment costs, and subcontracting costs. Leader of WP6, IPP, prof. dr Monica Vieira presented satisfaction of project partners with the kick off meeting in accordance with electronic evaluation survey established at the kick off meeting. Nenad Markovic, UES, presented risk management plan and key risk events in accordance with evaluation by project partners done at the kick off meeting in January 2016. The project web page was also presented.

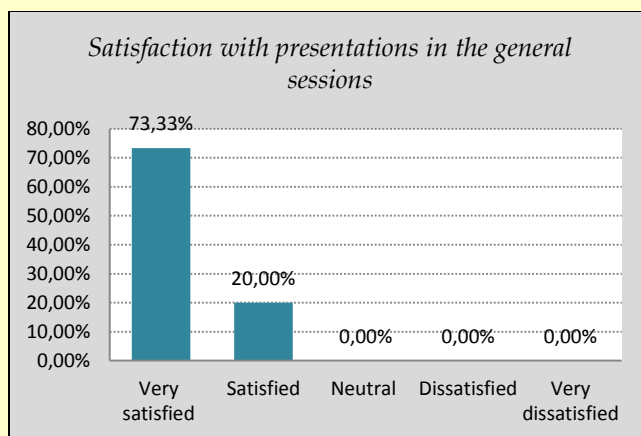
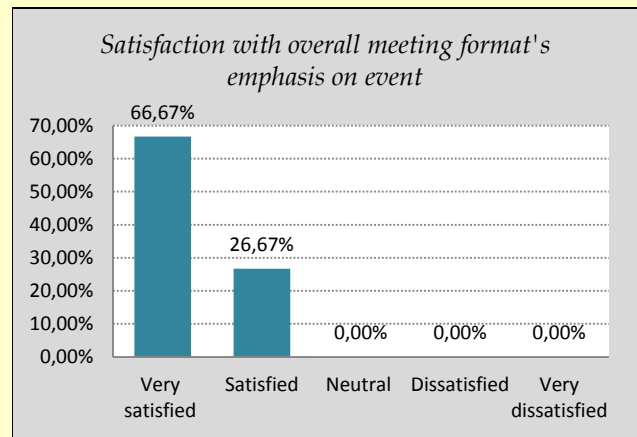
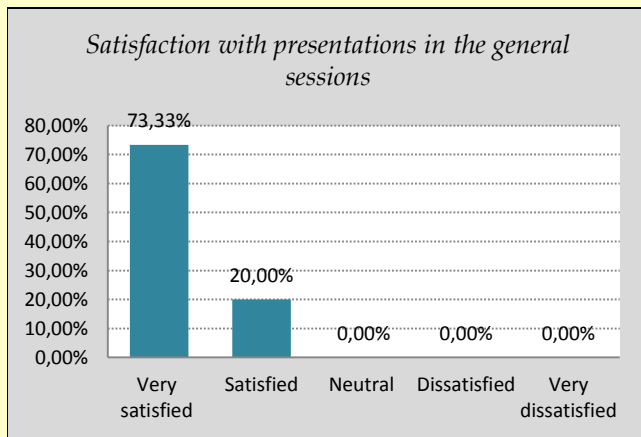
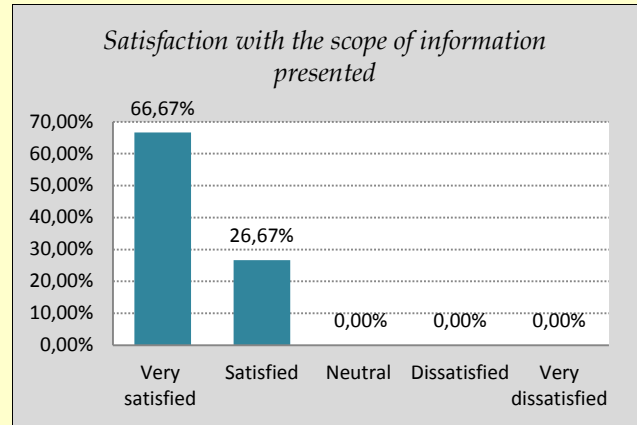
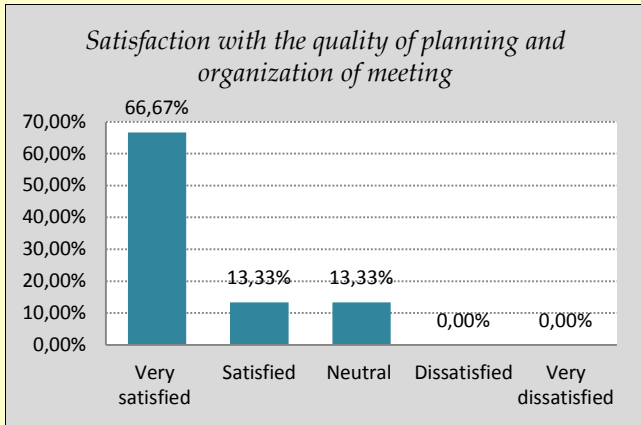


Prof. dr Dejan Bokonjić presented current situation with realization of tasks from the kick off meeting. Project partners worked in small groups. One group discussed about questionnaire for recognition mechanisms and other group discussed about questionnaire for internationalization (students and institution).

For more details (agenda, presentations, pictures, report), please visit the project web page

<http://stint-project.net/pages/events#banjaluka2016>.

Evaluation of the 1.1. Analysis meeting by project participants



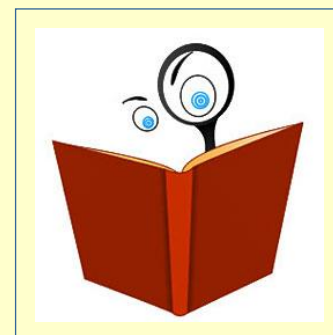
## Glossary of internationalization

As one of the first project's activities, a glossary of internationalization was done in cooperation with all project partners. This glossary will be support to the project partners that intends to use many different words in theirs regularly functioning in the internationalization area. Also, this glossary will be the road to strengthening and improving internationalization process in B&H higher education.

You can find glossary of internationalization at the project web page

[http://stint-project.net/files/glossary\\_internationalisation.pdf](http://stint-project.net/files/glossary_internationalisation.pdf)

Glossary for recognition of qualifications will be ready soon...



## VAT exemption

By EACEA, our project got the information about VAT exemption.

*“Within the framework of an Erasmus+ Capacity Building project all equipment purchased and any provision of services in a non-EU Member State can be exempt from taxes (including VAT), duties and charges, if a Common Framework agreement (Financing agreement in the case of the Partner Countries in the Western Balkans) has been signed between the European Commission and the country concerned.*

*The present certificate cannot be used to purchase equipment or services exempt from taxes (including VAT) within the European Union. However, equipment purchased within the EU with a view to being immediately exported to Partner Countries in the framework of the Erasmus+ Capacity Building programme may be exempted from taxes (including VAT), duties and charges in accordance with the normal rules.”*

National coordinator - University of East Sarajevo, organized two months ago procedure for obtaining of VAT exemption. All documentation was properly submitted to EU Delegation in B&H, and after VAT exemption is received.

All information about VAT exemption you can find at the project web page

<http://stint-project.net/pages/management-vat-exemption>





## Risk analysis



During the first and second meeting the risk analysis of possible risk events was done. Risk assessment was normally performed by the use of tools such as team brainstorming, analysis of historical data, distribution of questionnaires, analysis of questionnaires and using risk map.

Qualitative risk method is applied in order to present the Risk Index (RI) values that can be calculated and arranged in a prioritized list.

The value of the risk index is calculated by multiplying the probability (P) value by the Impact (I) value:

$$\text{Risk Index} = \text{Probability} * \text{Impact}$$

The method of evaluation was based on three steps: an evaluation of the probability of the event to occur, an assessment of the impact, and an arithmetical calculation of the risk index values. During the kick-off meeting all project partners evaluated risk events and after calculation the following table is obtained.

Table 1. Probability & Impact Assessment table

N°	Risk Event	Probability	Impact	Risk Index
1	Project cash flow	Medium (3)	Moderate (3)	3 * 3 = 9
2	Financial difficulties in European Partners' institutions.	Low (2)	Light (2)	2 * 2 = 4
3	Insufficient infrastructure for Int. Rel. offices in B&H universities.	Medium (3)	Moderate (3)	3 * 3 = 9
4	Organizational changes in partner institutions.	High (4)	Moderate (3)	4 * 3 = 12
5	Poor cooperation between the EU professionals and the B&H university staff.	Low (2)	Light (2)	2 * 2 = 4
6	Conflict between the different managers of the work packages.	Low (2)	Light (2)	2 * 2 = 4
7	Erroneous managerial decisions.	Low (2)	Moderate (3)	2 * 3 = 6
8	Poor cooperation and information exchange between partners.	Low (2)	Moderate (3)	2 * 3 = 6
9	Change in the partners' preferences for implementation.	Low (2)	Light (2)	2 * 2 = 4

Table 2. Risk Map

Impact	5					
	4					
	3		7, 8	1, 3	4	
	2		2, 5, 6, 9			
	1					
		1	2	3	4	5
		Probability				

The risk management team (project consortium) prepares plans to avoid significant project performance deficiencies due to risk occurrences in accordance with evaluated key risk events in table 5. The team monitors each of the high-risk index events and the medium-risk index events.

During internal and external controls special attention will be dedicated to impact of risks and their avoidance for all project activities.

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