



Co-funded by the
Tempus Programme
of the European Union



TEMPUS PROJECT PRESENTATION

Project title:
**BUILDING CAPACITY OF SERBIAN AGRICULTURAL
EDUCATION TO LINK WITH SOCIETY**
Acronym: "CaSA"

Part 3. COURSES AND NaRA

**544072-TEMPUS-1-2013-1-RS-TEMPUS-SMHES
(2013 – 4604 / 001 - 001)**

Sub programme:
Structural Measures, Action Higher Education and Society

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INTRODUCTION

This is a presentation of the CaSA project and the role it plays in linking research and innovation with knowledge improvement in agriculture. CaSA is a national project, coordinated by The University of Belgrade, Faculty of Agriculture.

It belongs to the TEMPUS sub-program Structural measures and the Action Higher education and society. These two benchmarks point out what are the main objectives of the project: to improve quality and availability of vocational agricultural education; to strengthen competences of educators; to create a National Repository for Agricultural Education (NaRA) [3].

Basic course is strengthening links between higher education (HE) and society by building capacity of Serbian:

- University teachers from Faculties of Agriculture (FA)
- Agricultural secondary school (AMS) teachers
- experts in Extension services (ES)

to improve teachers' competences in pedagogic skills and provide in-service vocational training courses.

Specific objectives of the project are:

- SO1 - Improvement of quality and availability of vocational agricultural education
- SO2 - Strengthening of professional and pedagogical competences of educators
- SO3 - Creation of the "open source" repository for educators in the area of agricultural education

Creation of a National Repository for Agricultural Education (NaRA) - a repository for online courses and teaching resources to ensure project sustainability and networking of all stakeholders in agricultural education.

There are 13 partners contributing to the project, 10 Serbian and 3 EU partner institutions. Serbian partners are 5 agricultural faculties from Belgrade, Novi Sad, Kragujevac, Novi Pazar and Sremska Kamenica, as well as Association of Agricultural Middle School in the area of agriculture, food processing and food production, Institute for Science Application in Agriculture responsible for in-service training of agricultural advisors, 2 NGO training organization (Education Forum and Balkan Security Network) and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia. EU partners are universities from Timisoara (Romania), Maribor (Slovenia) and Foggia (Italy)

All project activities are grouped into 11 work packages.

The project lasts for 3 years (01/12/2013 - 30/11/2016) and aims to build the capacity of main holders of Serbian agricultural education: university teachers, teachers in agricultural middle schools and agricultural advisors working in extension services.

The CaSA project's main achievement will be the creation of a NaRA, available as an electronic platform that should enable the sustainability of the project and connection of stakeholders involved in all levels of agricultural education and training in Serbia. This repository will include: information necessary for teaching traditional courses as well as online courses for professional development of Agricultural Middle Schools and experts in extension services; databases of results obtained by research; selected and recorded classes of interactive teaching; selected parts of courses realized and/or developed within the project, prepared in the form of online video tutorials and posted together with additional teaching contents; and other relevant contents added to the repository based on authorized decisions of the NaRA Advisory Board.

All project participants have agreed and signed the Constituent agreement on project implementation and NaRA management.

COURSES AND NaRA

Those issues were structured through a lot of activities in different work packages. In the following part are presented the activities, including planned and realized deliverables.

WP 1 - Creation of the Repository

WP leader: Cosmin Salasan, USAMVBT, Timisoara, Romania

A1.2. Creating and maintenance NaRA

From its establishment NaRA will become a National Repository for Agricultural Education, and will be maintained as such during project duration and beyond. Creation and maintenance of the repository will be under the responsibility of project coordinator.

Intensive activities on NaRA organisation, its structure and functionalities were carried out. After several meetings organized with staff of the IT Centre of UB, NaRA domain was registered in July 2014 www.nara.ac.rs.

Decision on NaRA structure was finally decided as follows: Moodle + DSpace software integration as suggested by IT Center of UB. A plug-in was created for connecting Moodle software as an LMS with a DMS such as the already widely used DSpace. The meeting for the Constitution of the NaRA Advisory board was held on February 11 2015 in UB.

WP 4 - Modernization of teaching contents

WP leader: Snežana Tanasković, UNIKG, Čačak, Serbia

A4.3. Development of classical (f2f) vocational courses for AMS teachers and agronomists in extension service

30 University teachers (8 from UBFA, 7 from UNS, and 5 from UNIKG, SUNP and EDUCONS each) will develop classical vocational courses.

A4.4. Development of web based vocational courses

30 University teachers (7 from UBFA, 8 from UNS, and 5 from UNIKG, SUNP and EDUCONS each) will develop online vocational courses.

Both courses are actually registered and courses outlines are under review by EF, commented and corrected by UT before sending the translation to EU partners for review by July 2015.

WP 7 - Pilot implementation of vocational courses

WP leader: Ljubinko Jovanovic, EDUCONS, Sremska Kamenica, Serbia

A7.1. Implementation of classical pilot vocational courses

Classical vocational courses will be held in HE Institutions. 30 AMS teachers and 30 agronomists from ES will take classical vocational courses at 5 Universities.

Implementation of classical pilot vocational courses - foreseen for November 2015 – November 2016.

A7.2. Implementation of pilot web based vocational courses

Web based vocational courses will be offered and taken by 30 AMS teachers and 30 agronomists from ES.

Implementation of pilot web based vocational courses – foreseen for November 2015 – November 2016.

WP 8 - Quality assurance control of project activities

WP leader: Sofija Pekić Quarrie, SUNP, Novi Pazar, Serbia

A8.4. QA of vocational courses – peer review by EU Partners

EU partners will peer review vocational courses and prepare reports with suggestions for courses improvement. When needed the extended abstracts of the courses and methodology used will be translated in English by UT – courses creators.

This is the project major task in 2015. At the Cacak workshop and SC meeting a form of 2 pages courses registration was agreed and workshops with UT at each University were held. Courses registration 2 pages abstract are currently reviewed by EF (“extra” proposal activity agreed among partners to be done before translation and review by EU partners).

A8.5. Development of questionnaires for vocational course evaluation

Questionnaires for vocational courses evaluation will be developed by experts from BSN.

Development of questionnaires for vocational course evaluation by BSN – foreseen for October, November 2015.

A8.6. Analysis of course feedback questionnaires from pilot implementation of vocational courses

Course feedback questionnaires from pilot implementation of vocational courses will be analysed by BSN experts, and report and conclusions prepared.

Analysis of course feedback questionnaires from pilot implementation of vocational courses by BSN – foreseen for February – November 2016.

WP 10 - Exploitation of project results

WP Leader: Predrag Pudja, UB, Belgrade, Serbia

A10.1. Reaching agreement between faculties' managements on: maintenance of NaRA, recognition of teachers work in courses preparation, availability of NaRA content, and courses commercialization

The Agreement reached between managements of the faculties on: maintenance of NaRA, recognition of teachers work in courses preparation, availability of NaRA content, and qualifications commercialization will be prepared during the kick-off meeting, after discussions of all project partners, including EU partners that will contribute to agreement preparation and consensus of Serbian Universities.

After being commented, and improved in communication with all beneficiaries the NaRA Constituent agreement was signed gradually by all project partners.

A10.2. Defining procedures for intellectual property rights of courses creators

Procedures for intellectual property rights of courses creators will be adopted. Previously the draft of procedures will be prepared, discussed and modified where needed.

From the first draft presented at the Kickoff, until Cacak workshop Procedures for Intellectual Property Rights were made available for comments, improved and Revised IPR adopted at the Cacak workshop and SC meeting.

A10.3. Preparation for accreditation of vocational courses for AMS teachers

Vocational courses for AMS teachers prepared for accreditation according to the methodology prescribed by the Institute for Education Improvement.

Preparation for accreditation of vocational courses for AMS teachers is foreseen for November 2015 – January 2016.

A10.4. Preparation for certification of vocational courses for ES experts

Vocational courses for experts from ES prepared for certification at the Ministry of Agriculture.

Preparation for certification of vocational courses for ES experts will be realized November 2015 – January 2016.