



WP6

Sustainability plan

(draft version)

Lead Organisations of WP6: UNSA

Participating Organisation: UB; UNS; UNI; UBL; UNSA;
INSZASUM; BOKU; UNSCM; UNIRC; FRI-BAS

Deliverable 6.1

Title : **Sustainability plan**

Participating Organisation: UNSCM; UB; UNS; UNI; UBL; UNSA;
INSZASUM



PROJECT INFO

Project title	Soil Erosion and Torrential Flood Prevention: Curriculum Development at the Universities of Western Balkan Countries
Project acronym	SETOF
Project reference number	598403-EPP-1-2018-1-RS-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP(2018-2579/001-001)
Coordinator	University of Belgrade; Serbia
Project start date	November 15, 2018
Project duration	36 months
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DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

Ref. No and Title of Activity	6.1. Sustainability plan
Title of Deliverable:	Sustainability plan
Institutions:	University of Sarajevo P5 (UNSA –B&H)
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Web page	http://sfsa.unsa.ba/v2/
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Status of the document:	draft
Document version and date	v.01 20/12/2019
Dissemination level	Internal

Project number: 598403-EPP-1-2018-1-RS-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP (2018 – 2579 / 001 – 001)

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1. INTRODUCTION

The main goal of the Sustainability plan of the SETOF project (Erasmus+ Grant Agreement No. 2018-2579/001-001) is to describe actions and overall approach to ensure sustainability of SETOF project outcomes after the project ends. It includes information of project outcomes, conditions, and recommendations for their exploitation. Main tool for effective exploitation is visibility of the project results.

The Sustainability plan aims at presenting steps and actions for exploitation of project outcomes developed by the consortium within the SETOF project. All activities are based on team efforts and involve all relevant members of the consortium.

This document relates to Work Package 6 Dissemination & exploitation of project results coordinated by work package leader University of Sarajevo (UNSA) and Work Package 5 Dissemination & exploitation coordinated by work package leader University of Niš (UNI).

1.1. Sustainability of the project

The SETOF project is sustainable when it continues to provide benefits to beneficiaries and other constituencies after the official termination of project. Activities of the project are planned in way that participating universities from Serbia and Bosnia are able to carry out the main achievements of the project independently by themselves.

The sustainability of the project will be ensured with the following outcomes:

Preparation

- defining the current state of soil degradation/soil erosion and torrential floods in Western Balkan countries;
- at least one new accredited master study program in field of soil degradation/soil erosion and torrential floods prevention and control;

Development and implementation

- at least 7 improved existing bachelor and master programs;
- at least 9 new subject
- at least 18 modernized existing subjects by introducing new teaching units;
- at least 12 retrained teaching staff members with up-to-date knowledge in soil degradation/soil erosion and torrential floods prevention and control to teach on the new master programmes,
- introduced new laboratory equipment, library and software necessary for the continuation of the new master programmes.
- training programmes in soil degradation/soil erosion and torrential floods prevention and control (in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina) with training materials for engineers, public sector and citizens developed and conducted,
- at least 120 engineers in enterprises and Chamber of engineers
- at least 13 communities will be involved in trainings

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The SETOF project is aimed to benefit students, teaching staff, engineers and public sector in field of soil degradation/soil erosion and torrential floods prevention and control.

Consistent dissemination and exploitation activities, with regular quality control for ensuring the set quality standards of SETOF project outcomes, will maximize the SETOF project effects throughout its lifetime and imply with strong sustainability capacity.

Dissemination activities support sustainability by ensuring:

- visibility of the SETOF project inside (at partner institutions) and outside (at stakeholders institutions) of consortium,
- interest for new master study programme from students and professionals in the field of SETOF,
- support from the SETOF HEIs authorities, policy makers, labour market and other relevant stakeholders, and
- awareness among wider community.

Sustainability will be ensured by following actions:

- sustainability of financial and administrative project aspects,
- continuation of developed SETOF master curricula,
- continued cooperation with project partners through student and staff mobility, research cooperation and possible joint degrees and new projects,
- continued cooperation with stakeholders in the field of soil degradation/soil erosion and torrential floods prevention and control at national and regional levels.

1.2. Definitions

In the current project, dissemination is defined as “a planned process of providing information to key parties on the quality, relevance and effectiveness of the results of SETOF project. It occurs as and when the outcomes become available.

Exploitation means “making use of and deriving benefit from an outcome. In the context of project outcomes it primarily involves the two processes of 'mainstreaming' and 'multiplication'.

Mainstreaming is the planned process of transferring the successful results of project to students, university teachers, forest enterprises and appropriate decision-makers in regulated local, regional, national systems.

Multiplication of project is the planned process of convincing individual end-users to adopt and/or apply the results of programmes and initiatives.



1.3. Exploitation strategy

Significance of exploitation activities for a project is outlined in Erasmus+ projects guidelines:

Having a strong plan for dissemination and exploitation from the beginning of a project is a key priority and should form an integral part of the CBHE throughout its lifetime. The objective of dissemination and exploitation is to maximise the impact of project results by optimising their value, strengthening their impact, transferring them to different contexts, integrating them in a sustainable way and using them actively in systems and practices at local and international levels.

Erasmus+ Programme Capacity-Building projects in the field of Higher Education (E+CBHE) Guidelines for the Use of the Grant, 2016

The SETOF process of exploitation is planned as an efficient transfer of project's results to the scope of SETOF target groups, ensuring that they will be actually used both within the lifetime of the project and after. Maximizing the potential of all SETOF project activities resulting in high quality of project results, will enable the aim of exploitation - to convince target groups to use main project deliverables at different levels during and beyond project lifetime.

We have core target groups

- university training teaching staff (in- service and pre-service)
- wider university staff not only those involved in forestry
- students
- engineers, practitioners from forest enterprises
- associated partners
- local and higher level state administrations
- ministries of education.

Therefore, exploitation is complementary with dissemination activities. They are distinct but closely related to one another in achieving that goal. Exploitation is necessarily related to the actions that will bring project visibility, transferring on that way projects' deliverables to end-users – they can access it, use it and ask for support through open channels for communication after the project end.

Exploitation is substantially associated with the sustainability of the project after its conclusion since exploitation measures will ensure using and possibly transferring to other contexts (i.e. other sector, regions, educational areas, national policy) of project results. Exploitation mechanisms will include:

- positive reputational effects for the participating organization through the increased institutional rate related to development of new and up-to-date master curricula and teaching environment,
- increased awareness of soil degradation/soil erosion and torrential floods prevention and control among responsible professionals in public bodies, and
- increased influencing on policy and practice through addressing responsible Ministries.



1.4. Expected impact of the project

Effects of conducted SETOF activities with produced results on involved participating organizations, students, teaching staff, appropriate soil degradation/soil erosion and torrential floods prevention and control practices and systems, will determine impacts of the SETOF project in whole. Feedback about effects obtained from end users, stakeholders, students measured by surveys will determine impact level of the SETOF project which will be in a direct proportion with project sustainability.

Impact of the SETOF project will be realized at several different levels.

At local level, all target groups will be reached by dissemination tools such as delivering promotional materials to students and citizens, website, social and digital media. This kind of informing will arise the awareness about the importance of improving knowledge and skills in soil degradation/soil erosion and torrential floods prevention and control. Teaching staff will be in direct contact with the representatives of local public sector in field of forestry, agriculture and water management to analyse their needs for improvement of current system of soil degradation/soil erosion and torrential floods prevention and control, transfer acquired latest knowledge and sign protocols for students' internships. Students will be reached through the call for enrolment at newly developed master curricula. Substantial project effect will be achieved by students' involvement in gaining theoretical and practical knowledge in soil degradation/soil erosion and torrential floods prevention and control that can be applied immediately after the graduation.

At institutional level each of the WB partner HEIs will enrich their educational potential by implementation of new master study programmes, improved teaching staff skills through acquiring up-to-date knowledge and adopted new pedagogical methods in teaching and learning, upgraded laboratories with appropriate hardware and software infrastructure for analysis and simulation natural disasters and the new library units.

At national level at WB partner countries, the cooperation will be settled between HEIs and representatives of national bodies and agencies for agriculture, water management and forestry also for environmental protection for developing the system and establishing institutional, organizational and personal conditions of soil degradation/soil erosion and torrential floods prevention and control.

The global policy in the of field soil degradation/soil erosion and torrential floods prevention and control requests national efforts, but efforts are particularly necessary and productive at the regional level for efficient prevention and reducing consequences. Therefore, realized networking between WB partner HEIs within project framework will have strong impact on strengthening common responses to the challenges in the field of soil degradation/soil erosion and torrential floods prevention and control.

At European level, WB partner HEIs will benefit the rich experience of EU HEIs in the field of soil degradation/soil erosion and torrential floods prevention and control forming new master curricula. Students from WB HEIs will be included in realization of mobilities between WB. The teaching staff will be involved into the teaching trainings into EU partner countries through the study visits. The EU teaching staff and students will be also in position to apply their knowledge to the specific cases in WB region, enriching in that way their experience.

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1.5. Overview of short term and long term impact indicators

Impact assessment evaluates project deliverables i.e. measure progress and quality level of final achievements. Questionnaires, observations, assessments and analysis developed under quality control WP4 will be used to measure project impact.

In the following tables the short and long term impact indicators of the SETOF project are presented:

Short term impact	Target groups/potential beneficiaries	Quantitative indicators	Qualitative indicators
Improved study programmes	Students	Number of students enrolled (40)	Increased interest in enrols
Trained staff	Teaching staff participating in project activities	Number of staff trainings and study travel (15+2+3+2+3)	Teaching materials
Establishing links and dialogue	HEI's and research institutions	Number of institutions (10)	Increased capacity of institutions
Increasing the level of knowledge	Employed graduate students (engineers)	Number of organized training (7)	Evaluation of the knowledge level
Establishing coordination	Local government	Number of organized workshops and meetings (13)	Evaluation of abilities of local government

Long term impact	Target groups/potential beneficiaries	Quantitative indicators	Qualitative indicators
Developed study programmes	Students	Number of students enrolled	Increased interest in enrols
Trained and competent teachers	Teaching staff participating in project activities	Number of staff trainings	Teaching materials, books
Long term cooperation	HEI's and research institutions	Number of joint projects	Increased capacity of institutions
Maintenance of knowledge level	Employed graduate students (engineers)	Number of continuous organized training	Evaluation of the concept of sustainability level of knowledge
Established coordination	Local government	Number of organized workshops, meetings and trainings	Evaluation of abilities and training level of local government



2. SUSTAINABILITY APPROACH

The central objective of the sustainability plan is to maintain the main project outputs (master programme and educational trainings) and intangible outputs (gained knowledge, experience and skills by students, teaching staff and participants, improved awareness, networks established) about soil degradation/soil erosion and torrential floods prevention and control after the end of the SETOF project funding. Develop high quality project results is major factor that can ensure sustainability.

All project outcomes need to be continuously disseminated by the SETOF project web site, partners and by students. An important aspect of our dissemination strategy is to engage all of the associate partners and to make use of their dissemination and exploitation potential.

The following are crucial points for achieving SETOF project sustainability:

Modernization of on-going bachelor and master programme

- improvement in the level of knowledge of graduates in field of soil degradation/soil erosion and torrential floods prevention and control;
- increase of interest for the master programme in soil degradation/soil erosion and torrential floods prevention and control depends on the knowledge gained during bachelor studies;

New master programme

- the attractiveness and up-to-date of the master programme based on EU best practices to the main target groups, i.e. students and professionals of the soil degradation/soil erosion and torrential floods prevention and control;
- the accreditation of the master programmes in Western Balkan countries which will confirm quality standards of national study programmes;
- the funding of the master programme will be achieved by incorporating such program into the national system of financing; self-financing students will secure revenues that will be reinvested in favour of the students;
- the permanent management of the master programme and the maintaining connections with the WB partner HEIs;

Educational trainings for engineers and employees of the local community,

- the quality of educational trainings is based on created survey of local self-governments on undertaking measures for the prevention of torrential floods. public sector, study visits and analysis of courses best practices in EU countries;
- the long-term training sustainability by possible accreditation as life long learning courses in field of soil degradation/soil erosion and torrential floods prevention and control for engineers and employees of the local community;
- the permanent improvement of training materials.

Sustainability of the new master programme and improved on-going bachelor and master programmes will be based on the following principles:

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- SETOF project attractiveness through communication, study programme quality, curricula evaluation and update, students' employability, employers' awareness;
- SETOF project operational capacity through the cohesion and involvement of the partner HEIs and a stable project environment, i.e. WB partner HEIs will maintain the formed laboratories and the new teaching environment and provide dedicated staff and a regular financial resources.

Trainings for forestry engineers, practitioners and public sector will be free of charge during the project lifetime and after the project they will be organized and realized in line with the needs of bodies (municipality, ministry, enterprises) connected to soil degradation/soil erosion and torrential floods prevention and control and financed from funds.

The priority work domains and main challenges related to academic sustainability are summarized in the table below:

Sustainability principles	Priority work domains	Related challenges
SETOF project attractiveness	Students' recruitment and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Attract students from the WB HEIs, ➤ Increase the number of candidates and the number of students enrolled up to the number agreed. ➤ Increase the number of students selecting elective subject developed under SETOF project.
	Study programme quality, evaluation and adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have the course results evaluated by the main stakeholders (students, academic staff, employers), ➤ Develop SETOF community around students, alumni, partner HEIs and professional organizations, ➤ Promote students' employability and stay in line with the job market expectations, ➤ Guarantee quality assurance of SETOF study programmes.
SETOF project operational capacity	Consortium cohesion and organizational capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Secure the continuous accreditation of the programme in each WB country, ➤ Maintain a strong cohesion and long-term stable relationship between partners, ➤ Guarantee master programmes operational and organizational efficiency supported by HEIs management
	Funding stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Providing financial resources for regular admission to the next generation of the master students, ➤ Providing funds for field research, laboratory and final work.

2.1. Students' recruitment and communication

The success and sustainability of the study programme is mostly based on the number and quality of students enrolled.



The challenges are the following:

- Increase the number of students choosing elective subjects on bachelor and master level modernized or developed during SETOF project;
- Increase the number of candidates and ensure the diversity of candidates' origin;
- Increase the number of enrolled students based on settled requirements.

The objectives are:

- Increasing the number of students enrolled will ensure the financial stability of the study programme;
- Increasing the number of candidates will enable the WB HEIs to reach a higher selection rate (number of students admitted/number of candidates) to ensure the students' quality;
- Increasing the diversity of students' origin will help maintaining the international and cultural dimension of the study programme;
- Attract students from the consortium partner HEIs and from the consortium countries. This will enable the mobility of the students among the HEIs, and guarantee the involvement of each partner HEIs.

The following table presents main action steps in detail:

Action steps	Responsibility	Timeframe	Resources needed	Progress monitoring - Key indicators
Yearly evaluation of the dissemination and communication actions made by the partner HEIs. Based on this evaluation, discussion and agreement on the future communication actions	PMU	Between April and November each year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Analysis of the source of candidates' awareness of the new study programme ➤ Feedback on the fairs where SETOF study programmes will be promoted by each partner HEI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of candidates ➤ Number of admitted students ➤ Origin of candidates ➤ Origin of admitted students ➤ Number of visitors at the student' fairs ➤ Number of students' visit to the website and bounce rate ➤ Number of students from each SETOF partner country ➤ practically
Keep SETOF website regularly updated as it is the first source where students has found information on the new study programmes	PMU	Regularly during and after the project lifetime	Information from partners on their communication actions	

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Organize special promotion activity at each WB partner HEI	Each partner HEI	Between April and November each year	Updated promotional materials regarding study programmes	verified knowledge which will be acquired under new master program will be.
Dissemination through trainings in the forestry companies engaged in the design and implementation of works in flood prevention.	Each partner HEI from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina	Between April and November each year	Training materials Updated promotional materials regarding study programmes	
Build on the students' feedback on the study programme and jobs occupied, to improve the programme's attractiveness (students written testimonies, videos, participation of students and alumni to promotional activities, etc.)	Each WB partner HEI	From 2021 after the first graduation of students	Students' interview Students' video Students' alumni	

2.2. Study programme quality, evaluation and adaptation

The objective is to make sure that the study programme meets the requirements of the main target audience, i.e. students and employers. The consortium will work in a view to continuously improve the study programmes. This will increase the attractiveness of the study programme and support realization of the students' recruitment.

The challenges are:

- To have the ongoing study programmes modernization evaluated by students and academic staff, and employers
- To have the study programme content and structure evaluated by the main stakeholders (students, academic staff, and employers) and adapted in order to meet the requirements of these stakeholders.
- To develop SETOF community around students and alumni.
- To promote students' employability and stay in line with the job market expectations.
- The SETOF HEIs have to evaluate the matching between the study programme's outcomes and the evolution of the employers' needs.
- To guarantee quality assurance of SETOF study programmes.

The following table presents main action steps in detail:

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Action steps	Responsibility	Timeframe	Resources needed	Progress monitoring – Key indicators
Evaluation of the study programmes modernized under SETOF project by engineers and academic staff	Quality Assurance Committee	After adaptation of changes in syllabus	Self-evaluation forms for students and summarise responses in Self-evaluation report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of correspondents ➤ Further adaptation of the study programme ➤ Number of visits to the Facebook page ➤ Number of new alumni ➤ Number of the employed ➤ Number of relevant connections made with professional organizations
Evaluation of the New master study programme by the students	Quality Assurance Committee	At the end of each semester	Self-evaluation forms for students and summarise responses in Self-evaluation report of master curriculum	
Evaluation of students' capacities by the professors	Academic coordinators at each WB partner HEI	At the PMU meetings	Feedback from the academic coordinator at each WB partner HEI	
Evaluation of students' capacities by the professional organizations hosting the master's theses	Primary thesis supervisor	At the PMU meetings	Feedback from the primary thesis supervisor	
Develop and adopt any necessary amendment or improvement to the study programme based on these evaluations	PMU	At the PMU meetings	Prior work on amendment and improvement	
Create a students' community around SETOF study programme	Project coordinator, Academic coordinator at WB partner HEIs	From autumn 2020	Facebook page	
Create an alumni community and use it as a channel for further students' employability	Project Coordinator	From 2021	Online directory or LinkedIn group (to be defined), Employability survey	
Create a community of professionals, members of chamber of engineers etc, around the study programme	PMU	From autumn 2020	Provide online newsletters on the key news of the sector	
Develop links with the commissions for accreditation and quality assurance in each of WB partner country	Each WB partner HEI	From autumn 2020	Standards and guidelines for quality assurance	

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2.3. Consortium cohesion and organizational capacity

The capacity to operate the SETOF study programme strongly depends on the Consortium cohesion and the organizational capacity.

It includes three main challenges:

- Securing the accreditation of the study programme and prospect for student employability.
- Maintaining a strong cohesion and long-term stable relationship between partners.
- Guaranteeing master programme operational and organizational efficiency during and beyond of the funding.

The following table presents main action steps in detail:

Action steps	Responsibility	Timeframe	Resources needed	Progress monitoring – Key indicators
Check and share any modification of procedures for programme modernisation and other study programmes	Administrative coordinators at each WB partner HEI	Regularly from autumn 2019 on; Annual review at each SC meeting	Information from websites of HEIs about bachelor and master program procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Accreditation maintained ➤ Report of the SC ➤ Questions raised, problems identified and solved
Check and share any modification of accreditation scheme and criteria in the WB partners' country	Administrative coordinators at each WB partner HEI	Regularly from autumn 2019 on; Annual review at each SC meeting	Information from websites of commissions for accreditation and quality assurance on any modification to be given to the project coordinator in order to take any necessary actions within the Consortium or at national level	
Evaluate the efficiency of SETOF project organization in line with the Project management guidelines	SC	Biannual at the SC meeting	Analysis of the operation and activities of each committees, identification of any overlap or problems	
Identify any question or problem within the Consortium	Project coordinator; All partner	Regularly from autumn 2019 on; Annual review at each SC meeting	Regular bilateral SC conferences, feedback from all partners on any problem arising from the project realization. Regular information from the SETOF appointed persons at each partner HEI.	

2.4. Financial sustainability of the SETOF study programme

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Financing of modernized bachelor and master programmes will be made through inner system of financing of study programmes on HEIs in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The most challenging tasks after the project ends will be to:

- Provide the national financing for the study programme's after its accreditation and ensure the attractiveness of program from the self-financing students.
- Provide additional financial resources for the study programmes and for the HEIs from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is necessary to propose suitable scholarships from public or private sectors in soil degradation/erosion and flash flood control for students with different financial capacity.
- Provide additional national and international financial resources for training of employed engineers and staff through workshops and trainings, by future projects. Since flash floods occur on watercourses whose management is the responsibility of local governments, seeking for funding will be made through local municipalities and communities.

Action steps	Responsibility	Timeframe	Resources needed	Progress monitoring – Key indicators
Use part of the modernized bachelor and master programme content to develop training for companies or other professionals in field of civil engineering, hydrotechniques..	Relevant services/departments at Serbian and Bosnia and Herzegovinian partner HEIs offering these services	From 2020	Labour market and information from forestry and civil engineering, hydro techniques, environmental protection organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of calls and sources for student scholarships ➤ Availability of information about scholarships on the web site; ➤ Number of students that have benefit from EU programme scholarships
Search for scholarships from companies interested in the study programme	Academic coordinators at at Serbian and Bosnia and Herzegovinian partner HEI	From 2020	Information on the interested companies for giving financial support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of companies providing financial support for students ➤ Number of students that have benefit from companies' scholarships
Search for scholarships from EU funds for international students	Academic coordinators at each partner HEI	From 2020	Information on the existing scholarships from EU programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of developed vocational trainings



3. NEW STUDY PROGRAMME FOLLOW-UP

The study programme resulting from achieving SETOF project objectives that are in line with socio-economic needs and the labour market have prospect to be sustainable. This fact have to be accessible to all interested future students through the SETOF promotional follow-up activities – to be aware of various jobs available to them in their future career. It is teachers' responsibility to maintain master study programmes up-to-date. Continuously transfer of knowledge, practices and technology in field of prevention and control of soil degradation/erosion and flash floods.

Requirements of potential employers in this field on labour market will need to be monitored regularly in the future by the study programme teams to support changes in curricula content.

The WB partner HEIs will need to ensure that relevance, contemporaneity and quality of the new study programmes by implementing regular Quality Control and Assurance measures resulting with an annual review of course content, learning resources and teaching methods.

The conclusions of the annual reviews should, as a matter of good practice, be posted on the SETOF web site for the benefit of current students and as reassurance for prospective students and the wider professional community.

Sustainability will be achieved through intensifying and enlargement of cooperation with other HEIs, the maintenance of existing international networks and continued engagement with local employers. Special importance is given to regular contact with local employers to share insights into their many common challenges. Students could usefully be encouraged to address small current problems in professional practice during their studying and preparing master thesis.

During the first few years after the conclusion of the project, the course teams should seek to involve their national ERASMUS+ Coordinators in monitoring issues relating to the sustainability of the study programme.



Project task in regard to academic programmes

Activity	UB (Belgrade)	UNS (Novi Sad)	UNI (Niš)	UBL (Banja Luka)	UNSA (Sarajevo)
New MSc programme in SETOF field	One new MSc program Soil erosion and torrential flood prevention. Start date: September 15th 2020	-	-	-	-
New subjects	15 MSc subjects	1 BSc subject 1 MSc subject	1 BSc subject 1 MSc subject	-	1 MSc subject
Academic staff involved	15	2	3	2	3
Students involved	40	-	-	-	30
Innovated programmes	-	Two BSc and two MSc programmes innovated.	Four BSc and one MSc programmes innovated.	1 BSc subject 1 MSc subject	Two BSc and two MSc programmes innovated.
Innovated subjects		5	3	?	3+6
Students involved					60+30

Project task in regard to life long programmes in SETOF field

Activity	UB (Belgrade)	UNS (Novi Sad)	UNI (Niš)	UBL (Banja Luka)	UNSA (Sarajevo)
Number of trainings for companies and forestry engineers					
Number of engineers					
Number of companies organisations					

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