



APPRAIS

**governAnce, quality, accountability: a Piloting Reform
pRocess in kurdistan region of Iraq**

Virtual WPs Sessions

Date: 8-9-10 March 2021

MINUTES





Project :	APPRAIS « governAnce, quality, accountability: a Piloting Reform pRocess in kurdistAn region of Iraq »		
Event Title: Virtual WPs Sessions			
Date of the meeting :	8-9-10 March 2021	Time :	9 :00 am – 12 :00 pm
Minutes by :	Silvia Marchionne Martina Zipoli	Venue of the meeting :	Zoom Platform
Objective of the meeting:			
<p>These three days on the WPs are part of the kick-off activities of the project, whose purpose is to enter into details of the work plan for each WP and agree on roles, responsibilities, tasks and expected outcomes, as well on timeline among all the partners.</p> <p>After the WP presentation by the leader and co-leader of each WP, partners had time to discuss, to rise questions and thus to start to share their experience among each other and so to start to work all together as APPRAIS partnership.</p> <p>The first day has been focused on WP1 and WP2; the second day on the following WPs: WP3, WP4 and W5. Finally, in the last day the transversal WPs have been tackled such as WP6 on Quality, WP7 on dissemination and WP8 Management.</p> <p>All the partners were present and from the UNIMED Staff, Dr. Marcello Scalisi welcomed the participants and gave his greetings; Ms. Silvia Marchionne, Project Manager and project coordinator of APPRAIS introduced the purpose of these three days sessions and the importance to go through each WP to better gain knowledge of the project. The UNIMED staff has been also represented by Ms. Martina Zipoli, Project Manager and by Dr. Marco Di Donato, Project Manager. On the third day, March 10th, Orlando Luca, Financial Manager of APPRAIS project was also present.</p> <p>In annex I, there is the agenda of the three WPs Sessions and in Annex II the group pictures.</p>			
Summary of the main points of the three WPs Sessions and next steps:			





First day 8 March 2021

WP1 - Update of Need Assessment

The Work Package 1 Update of Needs Assessment has been presented by Ms. Silvia Marchionne from UNIMED, in collaboration with Ms. Martina Zipoli from UNIMED and by Dr. Rund Hammoudi from the University of Duhok as leader of the WP1.

It was highlighted the aim of the WP which is to assess and analyse the needs of KRI universities, so to identify gaps and priorities in governance, quality assurance practices and credit recognition, and build the roadmap of the WP2 as well as the capacity building foreseen in WP3 and WP4. The needs assessment allows to identify the gap between the status quo and the set goals. The following actions of the project will work to fill this gap. A presentation of the foreseen tasks is delivered, sharing details for each task and what is expected by Partners. First activities of the WP1 are the desk research, consisting in reviewing literature on the topic and by making use official published data, national reports and previous expertise and the Governance Glossary, that is making understandable to everyone concepts and terminologies of governance, quality assurance and Bologna process among consortium institutions. Some examples are provided in the ppt presentation (shared in the google drive) on the 4 items that will be included in the desk research, which are the following ones:

- 1) Collection of secondary sources on the issue of HEIs state of the art in KRI;
- 2) Collection and Translation of national legislation: HE Ministry laws, national reports and data;
- 3) Identification and studying of good practices (for example from past EU projects or other international projects on the topics (e.g., UNESCO)
- 4) Study on international rankings

The glossary explains the specific terminology and concepts on University Governance, Quality Assurance, Recognition of credits for learning mobility in order to make understandable to everyone the used language and to have all the same level of knowledge on the main topics of APPRAIS. The WP Leader and the co-leader will guide partners in achieving the tasks foreseen in this WP1,

All the partners will have to contribute in the WP1 in particular: EU partners (Pisa, Evora, Oslo, Murcia & UNIMED) will collaborate to the definition of the Governance Glossary.

All the KRI Universities and the Ministry will collaborate with Duhok University in the Desk Research. A proposed schedule with 4 working groups has been presented (see the WP1 presentation) and after discussion all the partners agreed on the proposal of workload distribution and tasks.

Ms. Zipoli presented then the self-evaluation that will be performed by KRI universities through an evaluation tool that will later studied by the two leaders of WP1 and then presented to all the partners.

The self-evaluation will allow to better identify needs, weakness and constraints but also to be aware of priorities and strengths of each KRI university involved in the project. The results from the desk research and self-evaluation will be further discussed, finalised and validated during three field visits conducted by UNIMED staff to the three Kurdistan provinces: in Erbil at Salaheddine University (Salaheddine University, Charmo University and the Ministry); in Sulaymania at Sulaymania University (Garmian University, Halabja University and Sulaymania University); and in Duhok at Duhok University (Zakho University, Duhok Polytechnic University and Duhok University).

In terms of WP1 deliverables, the first draft version of the WP1 Report is foreseen by 31 May 2021, which will include desk research and the governance glossary. The results from the self-assessment by the HEI will be provided by 31 July 2021. Finally, the final report of the WP1, is foreseen by 31 October 2021 (included desk research, self-evaluation and field visits reports). All the partners will contribute to the final report in reading, reviewing and giving feedback. UNIMED and University of Duhok will contact in the next days the partners to start concretely working on the first two tasks of the WP1: desk research and glossary which are for the next two months the priority tasks.



WP2 - Definition of a roadmap for a better university governance and implementation of Bologna process at KRI HEIs

Prof. Soumodip Sarkar and Prof. Carlos Godinho from the University of Evora, presented the WP2 on the Definition of a roadmap for a better university governance and implementation of Bologna process at KRI HEIs. They have just repeated the main objectives of WP2:

- Develop a specific roadmap (an action plan) for better university governance and implementation of Bologna process at KRI HEIs
- Basis for the definition of the institutional KRI HEI's strategic plans (WP5)
- Provide information on the needs for the training during the capacity building action.
- Workshop in Pisa (Italy) to present and finalize the roadmap

In October 2021 the WP2 will then start its job to produce as a deliverable a roadmap which then foreseen to include:

- Guidelines to adapt and fit methodological techniques to local context
- Define the content of the training scheme
- Adapted to the local, cultural and institutional needs and strategies
- Base for the guideline handbook for strategic plan

The WP2 will start its activities immediately after the WP1 that will inform the WP2 and will serve as the basis for the WP2 development. The presentation on WP2 then has been followed by the presentation of the particular case of University of Charmo as co-leader who presented the Bologna process implementation at Charmo University. Challenges, problems, main issues have been presented by Dr. Ameen Omed about the Bologna Process in Charmo HEI: ppt presentation is in the shared folder of the APPRAIS.

Further details on the WP2 will be then shared with the partners in future meetings.

Closure of the first day

The first day concluded with the active participation of all the partners and with the proposal of the Dr. Muhammad Hussein from the KRI Ministry of HE to organise a workshop with all the Presidents of the Kurdish Universities on the concept of institutional autonomy and to present then the APPRAIS project. This will give visibility to the project and will put the basis for the discussion among the partners on one of the university governance dimensions which is autonomy (institutional, organisational, academic and financial) and the relationship between the Ministry and the universities.

Second day 9 March 2021

WP3 - Strategic Planning, Management and Quality Assurance: Capacity Building Action

WP3 was introduced by Dr. Karzan Khidhir from the WP co-leader, Sulaimani University which presented the main features of the WP, the timeline and the overall goal of the work package.

Then Dr. Marco Abate from the University of Pisa, leader of WP3, presented the operative plan of the WP3. They underlined that the capacity building will come after the first two project milestones, namely the analysis of the state of the art and the needs of the KRI universities, and the definition of the areas and themes to be addressed in the training. The training will focus on strategic planning, QA, effective management, including topics such as accreditation and evaluation of programs, research, teaching and services; university's outreach; stakeholders' participation and so on. The training will be conducted via frontal lectures, comparative analysis of case studies, exchange of best practices, open discussions among participants. A training week will be held in presence in Oslo to provide a solid understanding of quality governance, strategic organisation and quality assurance procedures from the point of view of the governing bodies. Particular attention should be directed in defining the learning content of the training week in Oslo, since many topics should be addressed and Partners should benefit by being all together to



maximise exchanges. Then, local trainings will be arranged in each Kurdish university. The local training is planned for 3 days and the WP Leader draw attention on the fact that it is important to carefully organize the session and carefully select topics, to make the best out it and carefully select participants in order to involve the correct staff members in each Kurdish HEIs. The aim is to transfer knowledge, skills and BP to 10 staff members from each HEI. Finally, a full day harmonisation training in Sulaimani will be arranged to capitalize on the local trainings, inviting representatives from the Kurdish HEIs to share the experiences, lessons and good practices. After the training, field visits to Europe are foreseen, to see the day-by-day management of universities.

At the end of the presentation, a first comment by Dr. Rund was shared: she underlined how the training will be designed upon the inputs of WP1 and showed her availability to jointly discuss what to prioritize in the analysis of needs to facilitate the design of the CB action. A proposal from Dr. Saeed from Salahaddin University to involve also the Head of the QA office in the training week in Oslo, due to the important role of QA staff members in the project implementation. In that regard, also Maria Jesús Periago from the University of Murcia underlined that attention must be directed to the selection of participants in relation to the selection of contents for the training. Silvia Marchionne from UNIMED confirmed that we can also work on the budget, within the possible limits, to involve additional staff members in the training sessions and especially in the training week in Oslo.

WP4 - Bologna process implementation at KRI Universities: Recognition of credits and learning mobility

Work package 4 was introduced by the co-leader, the University of Zakho, presenting the experience of the university in implementing the Bologna Process, specifically in the use of ECTS and learning mobilities. The experience of the University of Zakho may help other Kurdish partners in the implementation of the Bologna principles. After, Maria Jesús Periago from the University of Murcia, introduced the WP activities, which aim to provide an efficient support for the implementation of the Bologna process in KRI universities, particularly related to the recognition of credits and learning mobility. The learning mobility is a main component of Bologna process, and with the activities of this WP, APPRAIS project will try to facilitate or improve the exchange of students in the KRI universities in the mobility programme, for both outcoming and incoming students. Among the activities foreseen, fields visit to Murcia and Rome. In this regard, the issue of Visa must be addressed very soon to allow Kurdish partners to travel to Europe.

The staff at the IRO in Murcia, in particular Antonia, gave already to the Iraqi Partners an overview of their core activities and tasks to facilitate internationalization, and proposed to share with colleagues their successful practices but also the mistakes made and how to overcome them, so that their experience would be beneficial for others to implement learning mobility and ECTS.

Partners discussed then the MOOC foreseen in WP4: The University of Murcia underlined the importance of contribution by all European HEIs and that we need to start soon to think about how to design the learning content (as soon as needs are mapped in WP1), the course structure and the platform to use (Moodle may be the preferred one but other complementary spaces, i.e. the project website, may be used to disseminate training contents). Last task of WP4 is to draft a Good Governance Handbook. In this sense, the different levels of the Bologna process implementation in the KRI Universities have to be taken into consideration, as it is necessary to described the different steps in the Handbook.

Dr. Mohammed Hussein Ahmed from the Ministry of HE and SR in the Kurdistan region of Iraq underlined the importance of implementing the Bologna process in the Kurdistan universities, to raise the level and the number of learning mobilities. Kurdish universities are not new to the process so the project builds on few advancements already implemented but most importantly on the strong will on behalf of the Ministry and the HEIs in implementing the Bologna process principles.

WP5 - Restitution and harmonization phase towards a Shared Strategic Plan for University Reform

WP5 was introduced by Dr. Hawkar from the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research of the





Kurdistan region of Iraq. WP5 starts with a workshop at the Ministry premises in Erbil, in cooperation with the University of Garmian as WP co-leader. This cross-presentation workshop aims at presenting training results and generate complementarities and synergies at regional level. All universities will be invited to attend the workshop and start with the harmonization phase: Training of trainers will take place in Kurdish HEIs, with the logic of cascade effect, using the material developed in WP3 and WP4. At the end of the harmonization phase, a Shared Strategic Plan for University reform will be defined and validated by the leadership of each university and by the Ministry. This strategic plan will be based on the planned roadmap defined in WP2.

Third day 10 March 2021

WP6 – Project Quality and Evaluation

The third day started with the presentation on the Work Package 6 Project Quality and Evaluation by Dr. Nabil A. Fakhre from Salahaddin University presented. Attention has been directed on the meaning of performing a quality assessment, on quality standards, and on the activities to be performed: quality planning, monitoring of processes, evaluation of outputs. During the project a Quality Plan will be drafted, a Quality Committee will be formed, reporting at set times on the quality assessment performed. All Partners are required to take part in the quality monitoring of the project, agree on quality criteria and methods, identify procedures and perform tasks.

The WP6 leaders will send in the next days a communication to all the partners in order to build up the Quality Committee where each partner will be represented by two persons: one main focal point and a second person who can follow up activities in case the main referent is not available. Some suggestions have been given by the WP6 leader and by UNIMED: The Quality Committee should be composed of experts in quality assurance, in management, in administration, in Bologna process. As much as the committee represents the multidisciplinary of the staff, this will guarantee the efficiency of the job to be performed by the Quality Committee to follow up the WP6 leaders to accomplish monitoring, quality control and evaluation.

UNIMED which owns the sub-contracting for the external evaluation, will work to set up a ToR for the selection of the external evaluator who will conduct the external evaluation.

WP7 - Dissemination and Exploitation

Dr. Muhammad Duhoki from Duhok Polytechnic University, leader of the WP7 presented the activities under the WP7, with the collaboration of UNIMED as co-leader. The aim of dissemination and exploitation is to ensure the visibility and communication of its actions and results vis-à-vis the main target groups as well as towards all those stakeholders who can be positively impacted by the exploitation of the same results. Sharing results, lessons learned and outcomes and findings beyond the participating organizations will enable a wider community to benefit from the APPRAIS results. Duhok Polytechnic University presented the dissemination and exploitation activities, which are very interrelated to communicate with the target audience, make results visible, engage stakeholders and facilitate further use of the project outputs. WP 7 foresees the creation of a project logo and visual identity, a dedicated website, promotional materials and social media pages. Further dissemination activities will be scheduled to coincide with major events and thematic conferences organized by the partner institutions, other university networks in Europe and beyond. All Partners are required to actively contribute to dissemination activities.

A dissemination plan will be drafted very soon by the WP leader and shared with all the partners.

UNIMED owns the budget as sub-contracting for the website and dissemination and will then draft a TOR for this purpose, in collaboration with DPU. Among social media, partners agreed to open a Facebook page dedicated to the project. It has been underlined the importance to publish in the institutional website of



each partner a reference to the APPRAIS project and the link to the formal website when available and to re-publish news. Also, traditional media as radio, newspaper, tv should play an important role at local level when events are organised in KRI. The Ministry agreed to support all the partners to give greater visibility to the project and exploit as much as possible the results of APPRAIS, beyond the project and current partnership.

WP8 Management

The third day of the meeting was concluded by a focus on Work Packages 8, meaning on Project Management on behalf of the UNIMED Team. Ms. Silvia Marchionne from the UNIMED team gave a special focus on the operative management of the project, introducing the management bodies, the distribution of responsibilities among Partners and the communication arrangements for the project.

A google group has been set up for all the partners representatives (apprais@googlegroups.com) where general information on the project activities addressed to all the partners will be then shared with all. This Google group by now included mail addresses from the Assembly of Partners and from Scientific Committee, for the moment we have included all to avoid missing information among partners. We will then evaluate if it is the case to create another google group for a restricted group.

The project management handbook will be drafted by Silvia Marchionne and Martina Zipoli and will be shared internally after Easter, around mid-April, for internal approval and then should be also shared with all the partners.

Orlando Luca from the UNIMED team presented all the aspects related to the financial and administrative management of the project, going in details on the budget headings, the documents required to Partners, the financial reporting schedule, presenting the Partnership Agreement and the centralized financial management model proposed by UNIMED to manage travel and cost of stay expenses, among other things. Indications on the payment modalities is also introduced, together with a focus on the reserve fund. Orlando will send in the coming weeks some financial documents to all the partners, in particular the budget file of the staff cost to each partner with the templates of the supporting documents for the staff cost reporting: timesheet and joint declarations.

The management session has raised many questions on behalf of the participating institutions, especially regarding financial and administrative issues. UNIMED has clarified doubts, renewing the availability for further clarifications and/or bilateral dedicated meetings.



Annex I

AGENDA

Virtual WPs Sessions

Monday 8th March 2021

9.00-12.00 CET

11.00-14.00 Iraq time

8.00-11.00 Portugal time

09.00-09.15 **Greetings and introduction to the WPs Sessions**
By UNIMED Team

WP1 – Update of Needs Assessment

09.15 – 10.00 ***Presentation on WP tasks, deliverables, timeline and work plan***
University of Duhok & UNIMED

10.00-11.00 **Questions and answers on WP1**

WP2- Definition of a roadmap for a better university governance and implementation of Bologna process at KRI HEIs

11.00-11.20 ***Presentation on WP tasks, deliverables and timeline***
University of Evora & Charmo University

11.20-11.50 **Questions and answers on WP2**

11.50-12.00 **Wrap up and closure of the first WPs Session Day**





Tuesday 9th March 2021

9.00-12.00 CET

11.00-14.00 Iraq time

8.00-11.00 Portugal time

WP3 - Strategic Planning, Management and Quality Assurance: Capacity Building action

09.00-09.20 *Presentation on WP tasks, deliverables and timeline*
University of Pisa & Sulaymania University

09.20-10.00 **Questions and answers on WP3**

WP4 - Bologna process implementation at KRI Universities: Recognition of credits and learning mobility

10.00-10.20 *Presentation on WP tasks, deliverables and timeline*
University of Murcia & Zakho University

10.20-11.00 **Questions and answers on WP4**

WP5 - Restitution and harmonization phase towards a Shared Strategic Plan for University Reform

11.00-11.20 *Presentation on WP tasks, deliverables and timeline*
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research KRG & Garmian University

11.20-11.50 **Questions and answers on WP5**

11.50-12.00 **Wrap up and closure of the second WPs Session Day**



Wednesday 10th March 2021

9.00-12.00 CET

11.00-14.00 Iraq time

8.00-11.00 Portugal time

WP6 – Project Quality and Evaluation

09.00-09.20 ***Presentation on WP tasks, deliverables, timeline and work plan***
University of Salaheddine & University of Halabja

09.20-10.00 **Questions and answers on WP6**

WP7 – Dissemination and Exploitation

10.00-10.20 ***Presentation on WP tasks, deliverables and timeline***
Duhok Polytechnic University & UNIMED

10.20-11.00 **Questions and answers on WP7**

WP8 - Management

11.00-11.20 ***Operational, administrative and financial management***
UNIMED

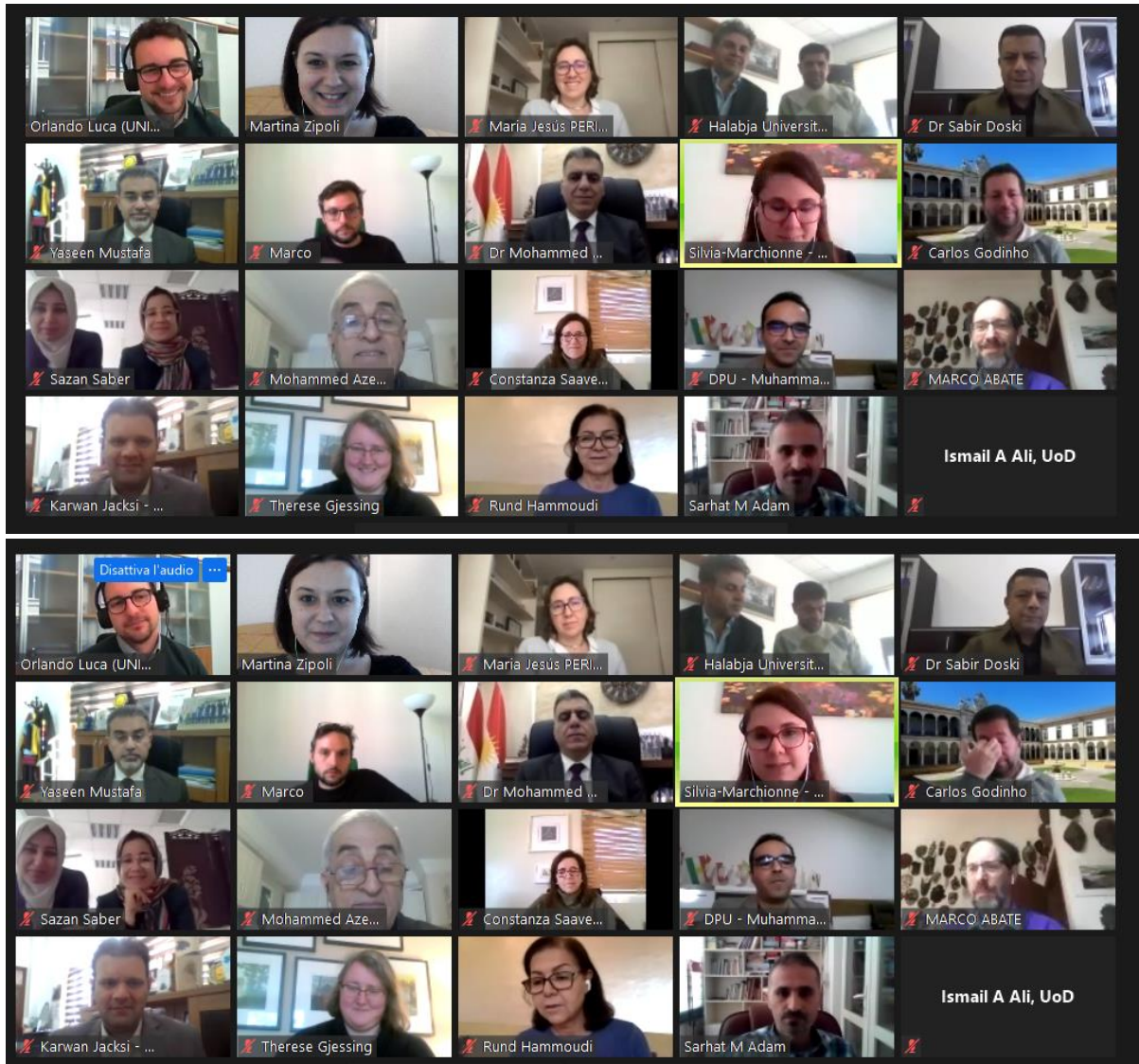
11.20-11.50 **Questions and answers on WP8**

11.50-12.00 **Wrap up and closure of the third and last WPs Session Day**



Annex II

Group Photos



APPRAIS
governAnce, quality, accountability: a Piloting Reform pRocess in kurdistAn region of Iraq

