

STATUS-REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF WP 6.2. - AUT

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The overall goal defined in the DualAFS is: (i) strengthening practical skills of graduates through a better integration of theoretical and practical curricula of the university studies, (ii) earlier integration of the students into farm/agrifood work life, as well as (iii) the development of lifelong learning (LLL), extension and technology transfer mission ("Third mission") of universities toward agriculture, livestock and food.

I. The specific objectives of DualAFS are as follows, with the item mentioned under point "3" belonging to WP 6.2:

- 1) Two new piloted Bachelor curricula: -Dual Bachelor curricula on Livestock and Animal-source Product Safety (LAPS), at AUT; -Dual Bachelor curricula on Agribusiness, at UNIKO;
- 2) Strengthening of practical training in current BA curricula in agribusiness, animal production and food safety at UP and UMIB, respectively;
- 3) *Developed capacities and offers in departments and HEIs of Partner countries for Life-long Learning (LLL), resp. installed working units responsible for LLL, further training, extension and knowledge transfer;*
- 4) Developed e-learning tools for knowledge transfer.

The objectives of the project will be achieved through several key activities and outputs, three of which (specifically identified by the letters "g", "h" and „i“) belong to WP 6.2:

- a) 2 new piloted Bachelor curricula in Agriculture (1 BA in LAPS at AUT, 1 Agribusiness at UNIKO);
- b) Strengthened practical training in current Bachelor curricula in Agriculture (Animal husbandry, Agribusiness) and animal-source food safety in all 4 HEIs of AL and XK;
- c) Upgraded/ trained teaching staff and the staff for practical training in the company for the implementation of Dual studies;
- d) Developed support measures (incentives) for better access of students from rural areas and farms to the Dual study;
- e) Upgraded teaching infrastructure (equipment for labs and e-learning, etc.) for the implementation of the Dual study curricula;
- f) Development of regulatory framework (university regulations, administrative orders, etc.) on cooperation between universities and WL partners in AL and XK for practical training part of Dual studies;
- g) *Development of Life Long Learning (LLL) in all 4 HEIs of AL and XK;*

h) Developed e-learning tools for knowledge transfer and for LLL;

i) Development of regulatory framework proposals for the transfer of technology and knowledge and for the provision of consultancy/extension services from universities of AL and XK to the agricultural and food sector.

Specific objectives are:

a) To offer training courses in different forms, short courses, summer courses and long term courses, according to the request of the interested partner from private and public sector, i.e. public advisory service, private sector professionals, farmers and professionals of other companies involved in animal production (e.g. feed industry);

b) Offering services in the form of extension service, consulting and other services such as feed analysis and ration calculation/optimization, etc., depending on the request of livestock farmers, other companies related to livestock production, and the public sector (extension service agencies, regional agricultural and food safety departments).

How is this implemented and what is the contribution of DualAFS in this regard?

All these specific objectives are implemented by DAS, alone or in cooperation with other departments and units of AUT. For the organizational coordination of all these activities, the DAS appoints a responsible unit.

What activities of the Dual AFS help build the capacity to implement and achieve these goals?

The following activities serve this purpose:

1) Adapting or creating the legal regulations;

2) Learning about the experiences of other countries' universities, especially Finland and Germany, in this area;

3) Creating the necessary infrastructure to offer the services as well as digital infrastructure for online training and consulting;

4) Training of the lecturers of the DAS;

5) Collaboration with the practice companies and other companies and public institutions that will be the future "beneficiaries" of these services offered by DAS and AUT. Practically, these will also be WLP for the implementation of in-farm/company training of students of the Dual Bachelor in LAPS.

II. Status of implementation of WP 6.2.

Activity 1: Adapting or creating the legal regulations.

1.1. All the legal framework for the specific objectives of WP 6.2 in AL is already in place.

The Law on Higher Education (80/2015) defined in Article 25/9: „The department can provide services to third parties, as well as carry out other activities, according to the legislation in force and the rules set out in the statute and other acts of the higher education institution“.

Further Law on HE (80/2015) stipulates in Art. 81/1 and 2:

„1. Higher education institutions may offer continuing education study programs as a form of lifelong learning. These programs serve to supplement, deepen and consolidate knowledge and can be offered as qualification and retraining courses, summer schools and similar activities. Continuing education study programs help individuals increase their qualifications and professional skills.

2. The structure of these programs, their duration and credits are determined independently by each responsible basic unit, in cooperation with the line ministries, if they have competence, according to the legal framework for regulated professions, and are made public by the main unit. „

The Statute of AUT (Approved by Order of the Minister of Education and Sports, no. 279, date 28.7.2021) includes the „third mission“ as part of mission of AUT. defines the Mission of AUT as follow:

Specifically, the Statute defines the mission of AUT as follows:

„

1. The Agricultural University of Tirana has For mission:

a) To create, transmit, develop and protect knowledge through teaching, research and *services*, as well as to train senior specialists and prepare young scientists in the field of agriculture, economics and rural development, environment and natural sciences , veterinary medicine, forest engineering, agricultural biotechnology and genetic resources;

c) To provide opportunities for society, to benefit from *lifelong higher education in its areas of expertise*;

2. In its long-term vision, the Agricultural University of Tirana at all three levels of higher education, aims to become the largest excellent center of university education, research and *training of professionals/experts in the field of agriculture, in terms of the development of modern agriculture and the guarantee of healthy and quality food.*

4. UBT is an institution of higher education, whose main goal is the advancement of science in the field of agriculture, agricultural technology and higher education through their coordination and a long-term vision. *UBT promotes and enhances its role in the*

development of agriculture, through the transfer of technologies, knowledge as well as through agricultural extension services. ,,

Based on the Law on HE (80/2015) and the Statute of AUT, the Department has the right to provide activities in the form of LLL and other services.

Specifically, the Statute defines the mission of AUT as follows:

“Article 9:

1. The department at UBT is the basic unit for the development of teaching and teaching-research work of the main unit and:

f) Can provide services to third parties, as well as carry out other activities in accordance with the legal framework in force and the rules set out in the UBT regulations.

/ k) The right arises to be organized in teaching groups and permanent or temporary groups of scientific-research character. These groups have at least five effective members as DeUBT academic staff.

2. The functioning of Department is defined in its regulation. ,,

All the explanations given above on the legal and sub-legal framework, show that there is a complete legal basis for the provision of the third mission at the Department level, namely the provision of services to third parties, LLL and extension service.

The ability of a university to achieve its mission and objectives according to law and statute, is periodically assessed through institutional accreditation. AUT has currently received institutional accreditation for a period of 5 years (2021-2026).

Based on Article 81 of Law 80/2015, AUT regularly offers short-term training, vocational training courses and services to "third parties", through cooperation projects with public institutions and private sector partners. According to this article of the law and the above articles of the Statute, AUT, as a university, its faculties and departments, have the right to offer short-term training courses, the programs of which are approved by the department and the faculty and end with training certificates that are signed, according to occasionally, by the dean and / or rector of the university. In the case of long training courses, the approach unit, i.e. the department, faculty or university, approves a course program at the university and applies to the responsible ministry the relevant field for approval (in the case of AUT the ministries responsible for agriculture, food and environment). Regarding the services for "third parties" and consulting activities, departments and faculties of AUT, have the right to approach, with the approval of the bodies of AUT, respectively the Rectorate and the Administrative Board of UPT. Law 80 AL5 creates full space of financial autonomy, so that the university (in this case AUT) to provide such services at its own cost or with special projects, and use the income generated by these services, for the needs of the university development, to cover the necessary expenses as well as for the remuneration of the staff that participates in the realization of these services.

This legal provision is complete for the implementation.

This provision is also reflected in the DAS regulation and all modalities related to this activity of the DAS are explained in detail.

The DAS was restructured shortly before the start of this project. Taking into account also the submitted DualAFS application, a Unit of the Department. i.e. Teaching-Research Group on „*Animal Husbandry and Extension service in Animal Production*“ (*Grupi Mesimor-Kerkimor „Mbareshtrimi i kafsheve & Ekstensioni ne blegtori“*) has been established. This unit will be responsible for coordination of all activities of the DAS and for the cooperation with the practice and state institutions described as the objectives "a" and "b" within the WP 6.2.

Activity 2: Learning about the experiences of other countries' universities, especially Finland and Germany, in this area.

The experiences of the partner universities, i.e. NGU and Savonia University of Applied Sciences, will be studied in more detail. In addition, all teachers will include this focus in their training plan and will be informed about it during the mobility activities at the partner universities. In addition, the HEIs from AL and XK will learn about the experiences of HEIs from other countries.

Activity 3: Creating the necessary infrastructure to offer the services as well as digital infrastructure for online training, LLL, consulting, etc.

Under this project, the following capacities were created to support the implementation of WP 6.2. objectives at AUT, namely:

- a) Creation of a coherent digital infrastructure serving for on-site and online training;
- b) Creation of laboratory equipment, especially in the field of animal nutrition and feed evaluation (NIR instruments), which will serve for both training of professionals and provision of services to interested partners from private companies and governmental institutions in the field of animal production.

This laboratory and the digital infrastructure for DAS have already been installed.

Activity 4: Training of the lecturers of the DAS.

The training of the DAS lecturers planned within the framework of this project, is aimed both at increasing the level of teaching, especially the practical training of students in the new Dual Bachelor in LAPS, and at carrying out activities of all forms of LLL, counseling and also professional services for practitioners.

Activity 5: Cooperation with the practice companies and other companies and public institutions that will be the future "beneficiaries" of these services offered by DAS and AUT.

The implementation of the newly organized dual bachelor's degree program in LAPS has as its main focus the implementation of practical training of students, which requires as its main prerequisite close cooperation and direct participation of WLP from private companies and state institutions in the field of agriculture and animal production and food safety, in the realization of practical training of students. This close cooperation between the university and WLP should be a "win-win" cooperation. As a quid pro quo of the University for the contribution of the WLP to the practical training of students, the University's provision of LLL, consultancy, services and other similar services will be based on the needs and requests of private enterprises and governmental institutions in the field of agriculture, animal production and food safety.

This close cooperation between the university, the WLP and also the state must be further developed, including in the form of agreements and contracts and other necessary regulations and also funding incentives.

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