

OVERALL REPORT BASED ON QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSES

- Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia-

In total 190 questionnaires were filled in:

- 44 from Albania
- 70 from Bosnia and Herzegovina
- 27 from Macedonia
- 12 from Montenegro
- 37 from Serbia

There were representatives from 12 universities (from various faculties), several Ministries and Agencies. Lecturers at Universities constitute majority in the sample, together with department heads, deans and vice-deans (62.7%), but there were also ministers and deputy ministers, secretaries general, rectors, deputy rectors and vice-rectors, members of different agencies and bodies, student representatives and representatives of administrative staff. There were persons who hold their positions from several weeks to 31 years ($M = 4.18$).

On a scale from 0 to 5, participants rated following FEATURES OF UNIVERSITY in a following way:

<i>Features</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Support (%)*</i>
1. Comprehensiveness	3.99	1.13	71.2
2. Autonomy	4.51	0.75	92.0
3. Being integrated	3.86	0.18	68.6
4. Highest quality of research and teaching	4.72	0.59	94.6
5. Right to award PhD degrees	4.61	0.78	92.0
6. Being non-profit	3.27	1.35	48.6
7. Responsiveness to social needs	4.39	0.78	86.2
8. Accessibility	4.26	0.96	82.4
9. Strong partnership with the 3rd sector	4.07	1.21	73.4

*percent of rates 4 and 5 counted together

Most valued general PRINCIPLES concerning HE are:

- *The development of higher education should be informed by a strategic and long-term vision (M = 4.79, SD = 0.50)*
- *Quality assurance and improvement, external evaluation and accreditation are all areas of Regional importance to higher education institutions (M = 4.64, SD = 0.79)*
- *Public management and governance of higher education has to be fully professional (M = 4.60, SD = 0.89)*

The least valued PRINCIPLES are:

- *New models for financially autonomous, professionally governed and managed non-state higher education institutions and bodies have to be introduced, e.g. foundation owned HEIs and bodies (M = 3.59, SD = 0.90)*
- *An adequate distance between higher education institutions and ministries have to be made through neutral expert intermediary bodies (M = 3.92, SD = 1.07)*

Almost two thirds of the participants believe that AUTONOMY should be on both university and faculty level (62.9%), whereas 31.2% believe it should be on university level and 5.9% – on faculty level. Regarding LEGAL STATUS, 47.3% believe it should be associated to university, while 46.8% state it should be associated to both university and faculty and 5.9% - to faculty.

Regarding the FUNCTIONS that should be assigned to University, Faculty or both, participants responded in following way:

<i>Functions</i>	<i>Percentages</i>		
	<i>University</i>	<i>Faculty</i>	<i>Both</i>
1. Enrolling students	32.3	40.7	27.0
2. Employing staff	30.7	24.3	45.0
3. Deciding on the content of study programmes	23.9	32.5	43.6
4. Issuing diplomas/degrees	54.7	6.4	38.9
5. Negotiating with government for funding	64.2	4.7	31.1
6. Having development fund	38.1	9.0	52.9
7. Having international relations office	46.7	6.6	46.7
8. Having quality assurance office	46.8	7.9	45.3
9. Having student support services	12.6	46.8	40.5
10. Having information system	34.7	8.4	56.8

11. Having students organizations	27.0	12.2	60.8
12. Creating proposals of the content of study programmes	5.4	69.4	25.2
13. Approving the content of study programmes	42.3	18.1	39.6

In the following table it could be observed that participants are dissatisfied with university information system in the country. Discrepancy between desired and current state regarding qualifications of university administrative staff and efficiency of university information system is high and statistically significant.

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Importance that key members of university administrative staff have MA/PhD in relevant areas	4.25	0.92
Level of satisfaction with university administrative staff	3.13	1.18
Importance that university has an efficient and comprehensive information system	4.78	0.47
Level of satisfaction with university information system	2.95	1.33

Regarding the weak points of university administrative staff, participants highlighted that it is unprofessional, inefficient, slow, uninformed and unmotivated for professional development. Some participants mentioned that there is, in general, lack of people engaged in administration. Some of the comments that illustrate dissatisfaction with administrative staff are: *“Importance of skilful and competent university administration is not recognised yet at universities in WB region. Therefore, during the last 10-15 years universities employed number of non-academic staff that doesn’t meet professional requirements of modern and flexible university management.”* or *“Administrative staff is not motivated to meet the new international trends in field of project management in high education system. Almost all research or other international projects in high education are based on some kind of Grant agreement. Management of these types of the projects is new trend in world economy.”* or *“Administrative staff is too bureaucratic and usually answers in a way “how something cannot be done” instead of “how something can be done”. Very often, the administrative staff has low level of office management and IT skills. They do not know the good practices and international experiences related to university administrative staff duties and achievements.”*

Regarding organization of information system in order to be more efficient, 39.9% of the participants would support central information system, whereas 32.2% believe it should be coupled network of faculty information systems and 27.9% would opt for something else.

After Analyses of variance (ANOVA) it was obtained that there was statistically significant difference between levels of satisfaction of participants coming from different countries regarding both university administrative staff and information system ($F = 8.13, p < .001$; $F = 20.25, p < .001$). Participants from Macedonia are most satisfied with their administrative staff ($M = 4.19$) and information system ($M = 4.79$), whereas persons from Bosnia and Herzegovina are most dissatisfied with administrative staff ($M = 2.79$) and persons from Serbia are most dissatisfied with university information system ($M = 2.44$)

Regarding NON-STATE OWN INCOME that should be allowed to university, participants answered affirmatively for:

- tuition fees – 83.1%
- administrative fees – 49.7%
- consultancy fees – 77.8%
- earnings from their own assets – 66.7%
- interest from financial investments – 35.6%
- donations – 91.0%
- publishing – 82.5%
- commissioned projects – 87.3%
- other party funding – 31.7%

In the following table results regarding importance of FEATURES of an INTEGRATED university are presented:

<i>Features</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Support (%)</i>
1. To have central information system	4.61	0.79	93.1
2. To have central services	4.28	0.87	85.7
3. University being only legal entity	3.42	1.58	53.5
4. Rector being appointed by advert and having full power	3.81	1.26	65.3
5. Deans being appointed by rector	3.12	1.61	42.7
6. AS being well qualified and competent	4.56	0.77	90.7
7. AS playing important role in decision making	3.55	1.09	55.3

8. Students unions - single university legal entity	4.23	0.83	80.0
9. Students services - part of central university services	4.21	0.83	81.1
10. Central management with the recourses	4.09	1.10	76.3
11. Financial and ownership autonomy	4.44	1.03	90.9
12. Rector has effective decision power	3.90	1.04	71.1
13. Centralized university decision making	3.34	1.30	44.1
14. Central developmental fund	4.29	0.94	72.2

When results from different countries were compared (ANOVA), statistically significant differences on items 3, 4, 5 and 10 were obtained. Participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia expressed different opinions regarding *University being only legal entity* – mean value for Bosnian sample was $M = 2.97$, while for Macedonian sample $M = 4.41$. Regarding importance of feature *Rector being appointed by advert and having full power*, there were differences between Bosnian ($M = 3.52$) and Albanian sample ($M = 2.73$), on the one hand, and Macedonian sample, on the other hand ($M = 4.74$). On the item *Deans being appointed by rector* mean values for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania and Macedonia are $M = 2.56$, $M = 2.00$, $M = 4.32$, respectively. Last item where difference appeared is feature *Central management with the recourses* – again statistically significant difference emerged between mean value in Bosnian sample ($M = 3.81$) and Macedonian sample ($M = 4.60$).

On the scale of 0 to 5, participants rated the level of UNIVERSITIES in their countries BEING INTEGRATED in following way:

- 3 (about to be integrated) – 34.6%,
- 4 (fairly integrated) – 29.7%
- 1 (loosely coupled) – 15.1%
- 5 (fully integrated) – 11.4%
- 2 (functionally integrated) – 8.6%
- 0 (totally disintegrated) – 0.5%

After Analyses of variance (ANOVA), it was obtained that there is statistically significant difference between perceptions of university being integrated among participants from different countries ($F = 9.987$, $p < .001$). Participants from Macedonia attributed the highest levels of integration to their universities ($M = 3.67$), followed by Montenegro ($M = 3.58$) and Albania ($M = 3.56$), whereas participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina rated their university being integrated with $M = 3.03$ and participants from Serbia – $M = 2.22$.

What is preventing universities to reach higher level of integrity is “*vanity of university staff*” and “*personal interests*” (some people and faculties want to preserve privileged position), as well as poor information system and political interests.

Regarding ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES of integrated university, 33.3% stated that they see some disadvantages, 24.0% that they don’t see them, whereas 42.7% opted for “don’t care.” Concrete disadvantages that were mentioned are: lack of freedom in decision making process at university units, inertness and inefficiency; whereas some of advantages are: greater mobility, faster exchange of information and opportunities for better scientific cooperation. One of the participants described the current state of affairs in following way: “*Centralization of power and money, relatively small number of persons will be included in decision making process, faculties as real centres of education/research might lose (or even be restricted) their interests for further development. All these disadvantages occur only if the University is integrated in a wrong way and by applying top-down approach. Otherwise, integrated University decreases the administrative costs and easily generate state funds.*”

When asked to rate the level of integration of an university with following features: *single legal entity; rector office has effective power; ministry negotiate with rectors office only concerning university funding; no proper information system in place; no proper central services, no qualified administrative staff supporting central services.* 32.9% answered with rate 2, then 31.8% - with rate 3, per 15.3% with rates 1 and 4 and 4.7% with rate 0 (meaning totally disintegrated).

Importance of listed FEATURES of university AUTONOMY:

<i>Features</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Support (%)</i>
1. Right to restructure themselves internally as they see fit	4.46	0.77	89.7
2. Right to negotiate common positions, projects and programmes with sister institutions, nationally and internationally.	4.51	0.76	94.1
3. Right to employ their own staff	4.42	0.86	84.6
4. Right to vary salary scales and similar remuneration according to institutional needs	3.99	1.08	73.6
5. Right to retain earnings from their own assets or from donations	4.48	0.76	88.2
6. Right to have predictable long term funding framework with multi-year financial planning	4.47	0.81	86.6
7. Right to set up holding companies (alone or with external partners	3.56	1.22	54.0

8. Right to have diversified funding and particularly access to private funding	4.04	1.00	73.6
9. Right to have budgetary autonomy	4.41	0.94	84.9
10. Right to have ownership autonomy	3.80	1.35	68.5
11. Right to have access to private funding	4.16	1.09	73.0
12. Right to withdraw from the state status if they want to	2.82	1.52	33.7
13. Right to define their own strategic and long-term vision	4.61	0.78	93.0
14. Right to respond effectively to increasing domestic and international competition	4.56	0.78	89.2
15. Right to decide about curricula	4.65	0.67	94.6
16. Right to decide about research subjects	4.62	0.73	94.1
17. Right to determine tuition fees	3.76	1.23	67.6
18. Right to have its own developmental fund	4.18	0.90	79.4
19. Right to have classified internal information	3.61	1.15	54.8

Interesting results were obtained after comparison of values (ANOVA) attributed to features of autonomy by participants from different countries. Statistically significant differences appeared between Serbian and Macedonian sample on the item *Right to retain earnings from their own assets or from donations* – for Serbia $M = 4.17$ and for Macedonia $M = 4.85$. Concerning item *Right to have predictable long term funding framework with multi-year financial planning*, mean value for Albania was $M = 4.19$, whereas for Macedonia $M = 4.89$. Difference also emerged after analyses of item *Right to set up holding companies (alone or with external partners)* – mean value for Bosnia and Herzegovina was $M = 3.13$, while for Macedonian sample $M = 3.96$. Next difference appeared on item *Right to decide about curricula* between Bosnian ($M = 4.40$) and Albanian sample ($M = 4.84$). Last obtained difference relates to the item *Right to decide about research subjects* – mean value for Bosnia and Herzegovina was $M = 4.35$, while for Macedonia $M =$

Concerning the appointment of university leadership, members of university boards and staff, the participants' preferences are:

- rector should be elected from and within the staff (31.7%)
- deans should be elected from and within the staff (44.0%)
- university personnel should be hired by a body appointed by rector/dean (65.9%)
- posts and tenures in the university should come under legislation on labor contracts (75.3%)
- the board of trustee/governors should be chaired by rector (55.0%)

51.1% of the participants stated that they were familiar with the concept of BUFFER BODIES. In the table evaluated FUNCTIONS of buffer bodies are presented:

<i>Buffer bodies could</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Support (%)</i>
Provide detailed steering of HE system, broad policy framework	3.72	1.12	65.5
Facilitate strategic development of the HE sector	3.90	1.12	67.4
Safeguard and promote university autonomy	3.67	1.26	56.7
Provide for a separation of functions	3.86	1.17	65.5
Safeguard and promote academic standards	4.05	1.20	79.3
Limit bureaucratic control and micro management	3.87	1.30	70.1
Limit direct political involvement in HEIs	4.10	1.27	87.2
Prevent inappropriate use of power	4.16	1.03	79.8

Participants expressed the highest level of TRUST in not-for profit buffer bodies (M = 3.78), then in state buffer bodies (M = 3.12) and for-profit buffer bodies (M = 2.72).

Professional potential of HEA with no permanent staff was estimated as low (M = 2.76). Mean value for the question “whether there is conflict of interests if all HEA members are academics employed at HEIs” was M = 2.82 (0 meaning “clear conflict of interest” and 5 “no conflict of interest”)

Almost all the participants believe that regional cooperation offers possibilities for further professionalization and could enhance internal structural reform, that „creation of various and simultaneous cross-border institutionalized frameworks for regional cooperation could help in further convergence to EHEA“ and that “cultural diversity in a region could be used to speed up the European convergence”.

There are 92.9% of the participants who believe that the title/name of university should be legally protected.

More than one third of the participants state that PRIVATE HEIs are TYPICAL for Western European countries (36.0%). There are 26.2% of those who think they are common

in Western European countries, 18.9% – in countries with long lasting experience in market economy, 17.7% - in all these countries, and 1.2% of those who believe they are typical for neither of these countries.

Regarding INTERIOR ORGANIZATION of private university, it should be decided by the law (51.7%) or the owner (25.0%). For 76.2% of the participants private HEI means for-profit HEI.

Out of 190, 53 participants answered it wouldn't be possible to further develop HE without involved private finance because *“Governance doesn't have enough money for investing in HE and research”, “Public budgets are not sufficient for increasing needs”, “Continuously increased requirements in higher education cannot be covered from the state/public level only, especially in our region keeping in mind the general economy of countries in the region.”* In opinion of some of them, private financing would enhance cooperation with other sectors and groups of the society (there is a constant need for knowledge transfer from universities to economy and adjusting to changing market conditions) and would introduce enriched approach of education (more modern, usage of case studies, literature from other European universities, interaction between professors and students etc.). However, many participants expressed negative attitude toward private HEIs, pointing to their lower criteria needed to pass exams, lower quality and exclusively profitable interests. 50 participants (usually those who expressed negative attitude toward private HEIs) stated it would be possible to further develop HE without involved private finance through implementing good information system, efficient administration, European and other good funding research project and transparency of money investments. Other participants (14) who answered this open-ended question expressed ambiguous attitude.

The highest level of TRUST participants have toward state universities (M = 4.32), then toward not-for-profit universities (M = 2.71) and for-profit universities (M = 2.33). Accordingly, majority expressed PREFERENCE for state university (42.0%) and university of excellence (40.9%).

Regarding the concept FOUNDATION-OWNED UNIVERSITIES, 51.1% of the participant stated they were familiar with that concept. 46.5% don't know whether they could be private and 53.2% don't know whether they could be for-profit.

Half of the participants (48.2%) believe it would be advisable to introduce further instruments for QA of private universities apart from accreditation. 65.1% of the participants

would support implementation of non-state agencies/bodies with advisory powers throughout the higher education sector and 69.5% would support introducing non-state professional accreditation/QA agencies/bodies in the higher education system. They would have most TRUST in professional non-state and non-profit agencies (M = 4.16), comparing to professional for-profit (M = 2.90) and non-professional state (M = 2.72) agencies/bodies.

Regarding CERTIFICATES that could provide more confidence concerning the quality of HEI, majority of participants would opt for international accreditation certificate (79.9%) and appearance in any of influential global rankings of HEIs (62.9%). Majority (62.9%) would support usage of RANKINGS of HEIs for helping to decide how to allocate financial resources – as one of the participants wrote: *“Yes, the rankings of universities should be used to help decide higher education policy and allocation of scarce financial resources, especially because these rankings use various determinants, such as number of students enrolled, universities’ assets available (finances, real estate, possessions), employment ratio after graduation etc.”*