

EXTEND

Quality Report #2

Deliverable 4.1 -
Internal monitoring
and quality control,
1st year of the
Project

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Quality Report #2 WP4

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Abstract	This document presents the second Quality Report for the EXTEND Project covering the first 12 months of the project.
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1. Introduction

This document is the second Quality Report for the EXTEND Project. It is based on the presentations delivered at the Bucharest Project Meeting in June 2018; and at the Khujand Project Meeting in October 2018 and covers the first 12 months of project activity. It updates the first Quality Report presenting data on questions that have been asked on more than one occasion.

2. Activities Undertaken

During the second 6 months of the Project Warwick were more able to fully engage in the face-to-face elements of the project so were able to participate in Bucharest. This afforded the opportunity to not only have the Evaluation Working Group meet for the first time, but also to start to reinforce the pragmatic quality ethos of the Work Package 4 contribution to EXTEND.

A data collection instrument was developed based on that prepared for the initial meeting in Moscow in December 2017. Being further along with the project, although some baseline questions were retained, additional questions were added thus increasing the size of the questionnaire to 4 pages.

The timing of the questionnaire was also changed following the Bucharest meeting. Previously the instruments had been administered directly after the meeting, thus capturing initial impressions of the event. For the Bucharest meeting in June 2018, the questionnaire was not circulated until September 2018, a little over half way between Bucharest and the subsequent meeting in Khujand in October 2018. This was done because often when leaving meetings such as the EXTEND Project Meetings, participants are filled with optimism and the fresh nature of the new knowledge can influence the responses received. Following Bucharest the time delay was introduced to promote reflection on the part of the participants and thus attempt to gain a more honest and reflective response to the questions posed.

This same approach was employed for the Khujand meeting evaluation. This extended into February 2019, just prior to the Riga Project Meeting in March 2019. This data will form part of the third Quality Report.

3. Results

Clearly with a 4 page questionnaire the amount of data collected was considerable, especially since it was a mix of rating questions and free text questions. This report will draw out the key points and explore what this means for the project.

Overall 19 responses were received across all partners.

The first data below (Figure 1) suggests that for the most part the participants felt that the meeting objectives were met well

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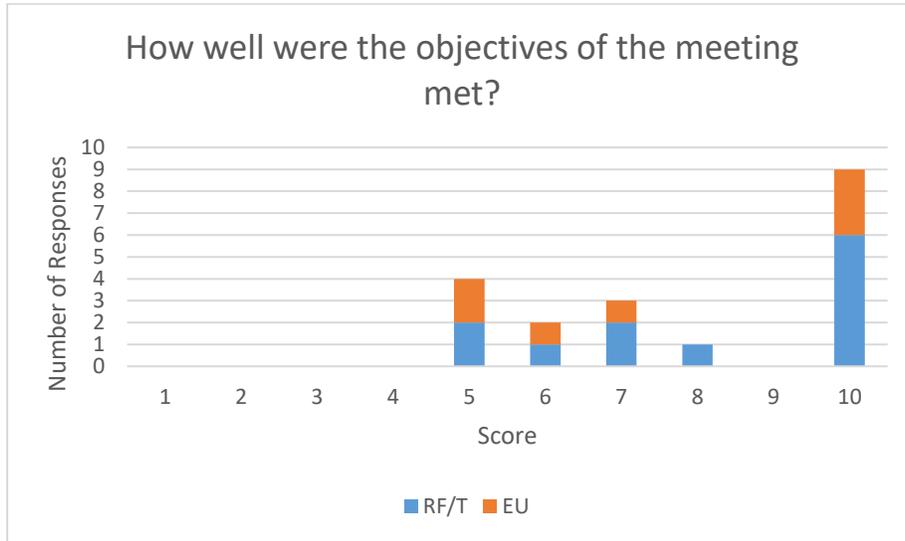


Figure 1 – Objectives

Figures 2 and 3 relating to Project Aims and an individual’s Contribution to the project present a similar level of confidence on the part of participants.

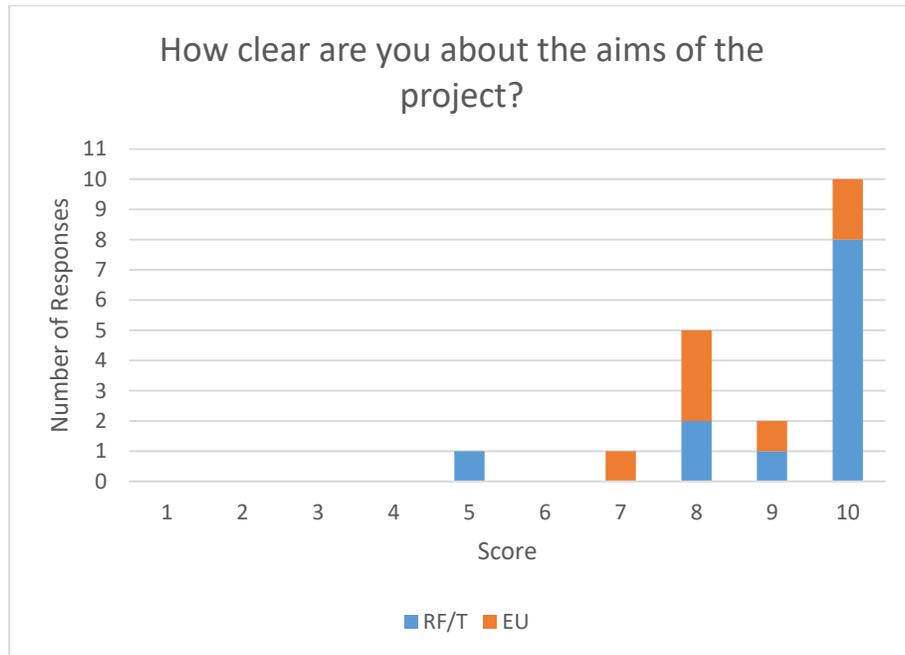


Figure 2 – Project Aims

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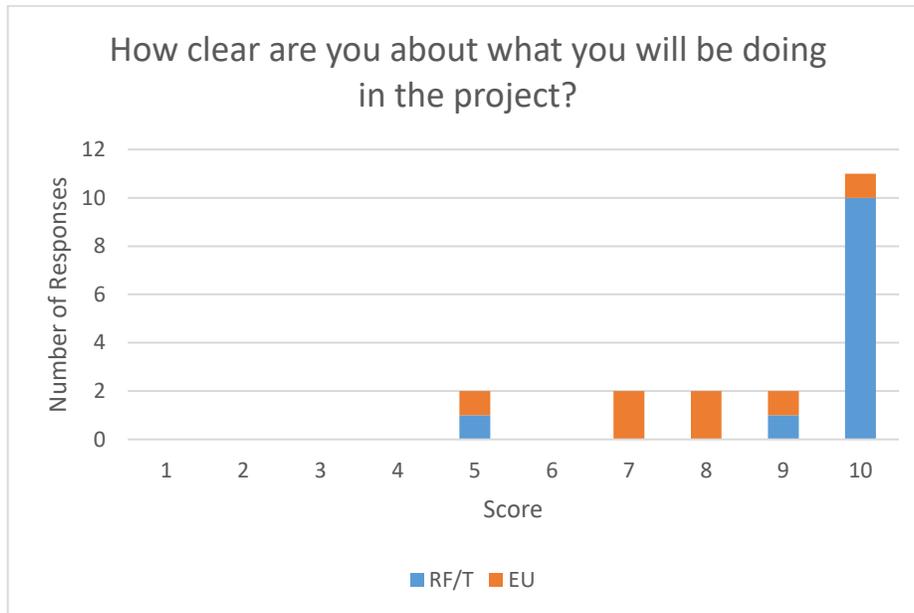


Figure 3 – Contribution

It is these 3 questions that have been asked since the start of the project, so it is helpful to consider the results in order to ascertain the direction of travel. This is presented in Figure 4.

Question	Moscow December 2017	Saransk February 2018	Bucharest June 2018	Direction of travel
Meeting objectives met	9.46	9.57	7.95	-
Project aims are clear	9.23	-	8.95	-
I am clear about what I will be doing	8.38	-	8.84	+
Respondents	13	23	19	

Figure 4 – Comparison Table (Scale 1-10, 10 = Strongly Agree, 0 = Not agree at all)

When considering the clarity of vision for the individual EXTEND Centres, the data suggests that there is still some work to be done as the data is quite spread out (Figure 5).

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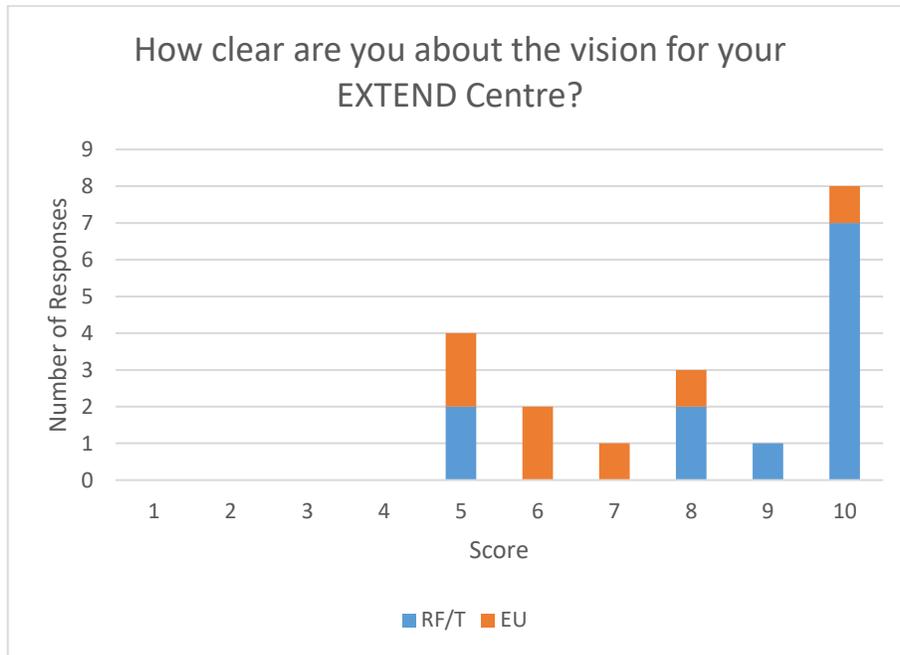


Figure 5 – EXTEND Centre Vision

When asked about the clarity of understanding as to how the visions are to be realized, the data shows a greater degree of uncertainty on the part of the Project participants (Figure 6).

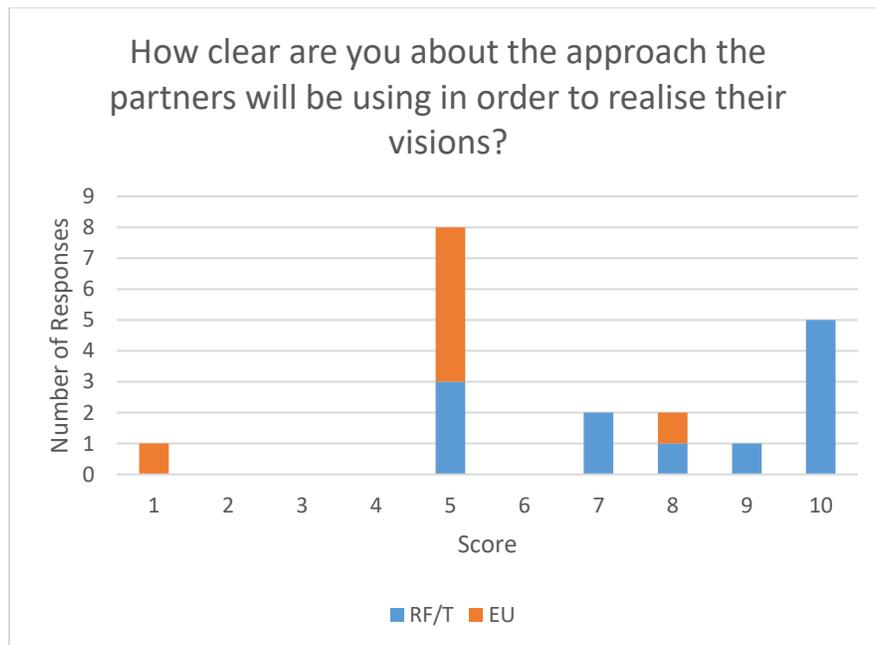


Figure 6 – Vision Realisation

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Supporting this vision creation and realization is the input from the 4 EU partners involved in the project. Given the different expertise of the different partners this input has covered a range of subjects and been delivered in a range of different formats.

Figure 7 suggests that the material and knowledge that has been delivered has, for the most part, been of value to the participants from the Russian federation and Tajikistan.

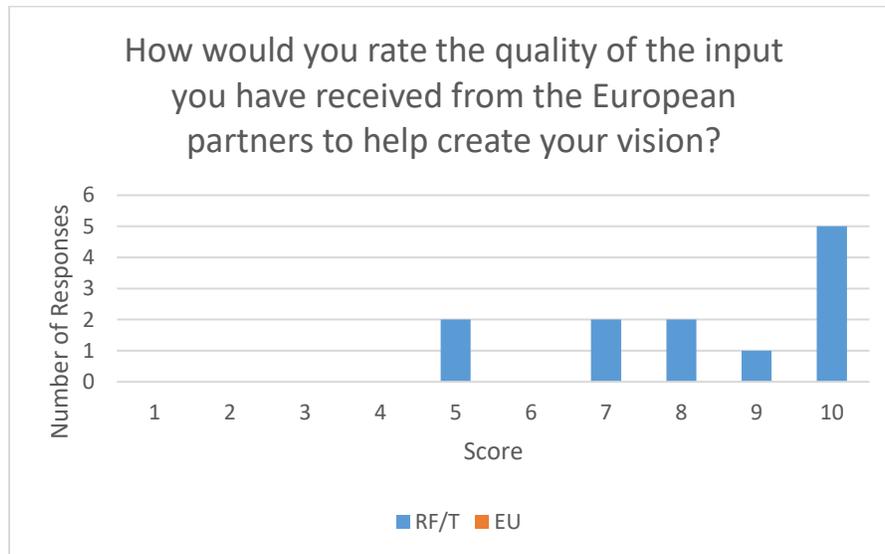


Figure 7 – Value of EU partner Input

The areas where perhaps there is more work to be done, relate to communication and the overall co-ordination of the work taking place. Communication both within the project and out to the external world received a wide range of responses, generally positive but certainly indicative of the need for more work (Figures 8 and 9).

In support of the preceding numerical data, the following analysis of the free text comments received as part of the data collection exercise is presented.

As the data shows the value of the face-to-face meetings has been very much about exchanging knowledge and ideas in the field of Engineering Education Practice and, in the context of the Bucharest Meeting, Teacher Professional Development.

Despite the fact that the Bucharest Meeting saw the introduction of a mentoring relationship between the EU partners and the Russian Federation and Tajik universities, the articulation of the EXTEND Centre vision in each case was still proving to be a challenge. Taking this one step further, the implementation plan and associated rationale for the plan were also in need of further work. This is perhaps understandable, but conversely, almost one year into the project, the vision and implementation plans become imperatives for each EXTEND Centre institution.

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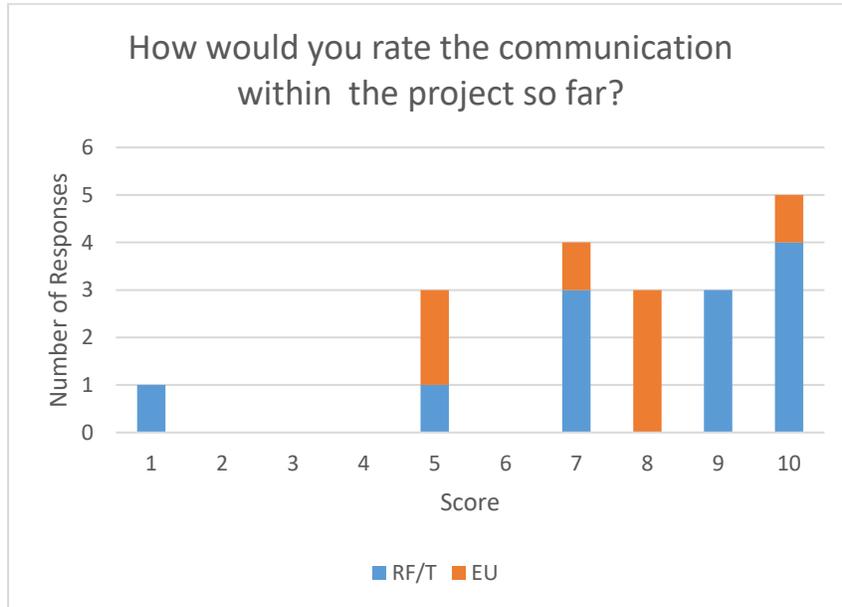


Figure 8 – Internal Communication

Similarly the Co-ordination question responses suggested that there is a need to consider some improvements (Figure 10).

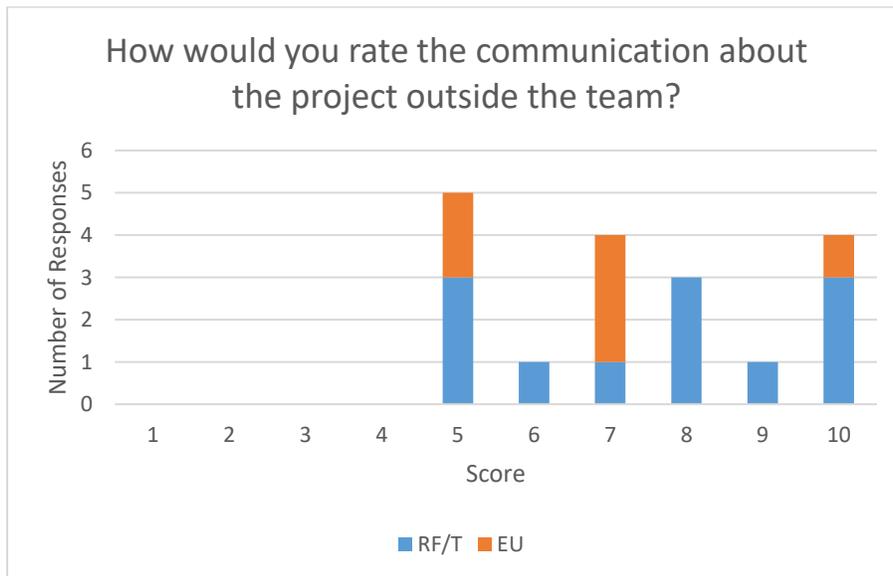


Figure 9 – External Communication

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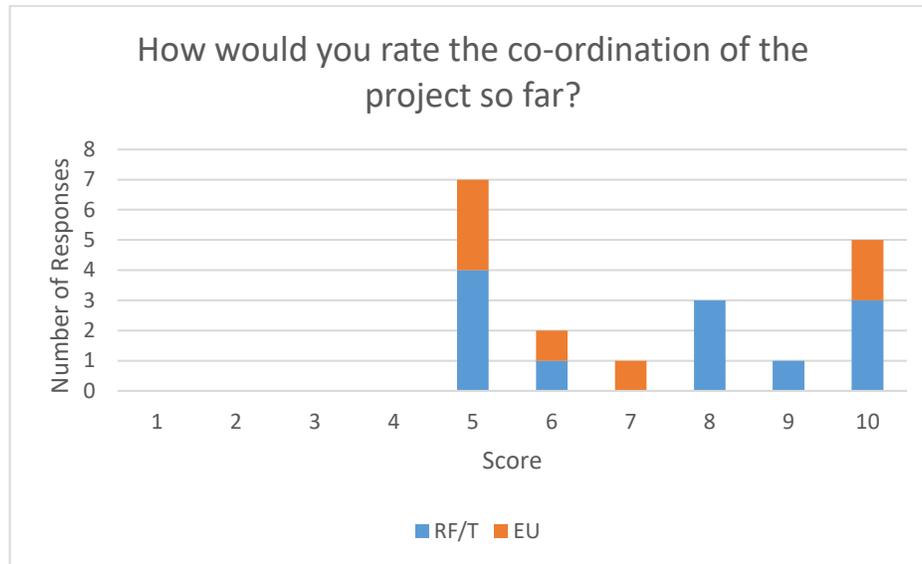


Figure 10 – Co-ordination

Continuing this line of thought, several participants expressed the need for a clearly articulated USP (Unique Selling Point) or value proposition for the individual EXTEND Centres to be created. It was felt that this would then help to provide a better focus and direct the work. Practical issues like financial support, equipment purchases and senior management support all started to appear in the questionnaire responses. It was also at this point that some partners started to ask questions as to how the sustainability of a Centre can be assured.

Improvements in the project co-ordination process, communication and the completion of deliverables were all voiced as concerns. This was not surprising as several partners were struggling as a consequence of not having received project payments. It was suggested that a risk management process should be implemented to aid the future progress of the project.

Looking forward to the next meeting in Khujand, the desire to overcome the ‘operational issues’ was strong. Alongside this very pragmatic position, there was also a strong desire to start to explore the detail of the EXTEND Centres beyond the equipment purchased. The development of study programmes, the finalization of teacher competences and a move to create clear, well considered implementation plans were all viewed as priorities.

4. Discussion

As has already been suggested there is clearly a good rapport between the different partners.

The Mentor approach has significant potential and is starting to work in some cases based on a ‘pull’ model for the most part. The questionnaire responses suggest that the potential of the project is becoming increasingly apparent to most partners.

The difficulties with the partner agreement, payments and equipment purchases are starting to become an unhelpful distraction and risk getting in the way of realizing the EXTEND Centre visions.

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This would certainly benefit from a stronger understanding of the responsibilities with the project and the individual institutional teams.

Another practical point raised in this round of data collection was a need to be clearer about the format, approval, storage and accessibility of documentation associated with the project.

It became clear that in the work to date there had been a negative impact as a consequence of the initial focus on the Perceptions Survey (1.3) at the expense of other deliverables. This suggested that the Khujand meeting needed to take action and ensure that deliverables were being completed in order.

In considering the longer term evaluation of the EXTEND Centres, it was identified as being important to capture the rationale for the equipment purchase choices as it is different for each university. This had not been fully articulated to this point.

The EWG met for the first time in Bucharest and essentially ratified the approach being taken in WP 4, although the group needs more scheduled time together in future meetings. The External Quality Control Team, although discussed with the wider Project Team, still needs to be constituted for its first deliberations in 2019.

5. Conclusions

This report details the second round of the Quality Work Package data collection and has identified that, despite working well together, there are some challenges remaining. These take two forms – the ‘operational challenges’ for all of the partners and the need to focus on what each EXTEND Centre is going to look like and seek to achieve. Resolving the first and giving serious energy to the second are the next steps in the project process.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Survey Tool for Bucharest – EU Partners (June 2018)

 Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union 	Bucharest Meeting
	3-9 June 2018
	<i>Name:</i>
	<i>Institution:</i>
Date of completion:	
EU Partners	
<p>Please complete a separate form for each individual attending the Meeting in Bucharest</p> <p>For each question where you are asked to provide a score, please add comments to justify the score if you feel it appropriate</p>	
How clear were the objectives of the meeting? (10 – very, 5 – somewhat, 0 – not at all)	
How well were the objectives of the meeting met? (10 – fully, 5 – partially, 0 – not at all) If you give less than 10, please indicate what objectives were not achieved	
How clear are you about the aims of the project? (10 – very, 5 – somewhat, 0 – not at all)	

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<p>How clear are you about what you will be doing in the project? (10 – very, 5 – somewhat, 0 – not at all)</p>	
<p>How clear are you about the partner visions for their EXTEND Centres? (10 – very, 5 – somewhat, 0 – not at all)</p>	
<p>How clear are you about the approach the partners will be using in order to realise their visions? (10 – very, 5 – somewhat, 0 – not at all)</p>	
<p>How would you rate the co-ordination of the project so far? (10 – excellent, 5 – acceptable, 0 – poor)</p>	
<p>How would you rate the communication within the project so far? (10 – excellent, 5 – acceptable, 0 – poor)</p>	
<p>How would you rate the communication about the project outside the Team? (10 – excellent, 5 – acceptable, 0 – poor)</p>	
<p>How effectively do you feel the Project Team is working together to achieve the EXTEND Centres goal? (10 – very, 5 – somewhat, 0 – not at all)</p>	
<p>How would you rate your contribution to the meeting? (10 – excellent, 5 – ok, 0 – poor)</p>	

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Please identify what you feel you could have done better	
Please identify the positive features / outcomes of the Bucharest meeting for you	
What was not so good about the Bucharest meeting for you?	
What has been the most valuable input you have received so far in the project?	
What additional input / guidance do you feel the partners may still need in order to help them realise their vision for their EXTEND Centre?	

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What problems / challenges do you foresee in the next year concerning the project?
If there is one thing that we need to address as a priority to make the project better, what should it be?
What contact have you had so far with your mentees?

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What expectations do you have for the next project meeting in Khujand?
Any other comments you would like to offer

Thank you for taking the time to complete this evaluation.

Please return your completed form to Robin Clark at r.clark.6@warwick.ac.uk
and Kathleen Choudhary at k.v.choudhary@warwick.ac.uk

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Appendix B – Survey Tool for Bucharest – RF / Tajik Partners (June 2018)

 Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union 	Bucharest Meeting
	3-9 June 2018
	<i>Name:</i>
	<i>Institution:</i>
	<i>Date of completion:</i>
Russian Federation and Tajikistan Partners	
<p>Please complete a separate form for each individual attending the Meeting in Bucharest</p> <p>For each question where you are asked to provide a score, please add comments to justify the score if you feel it appropriate</p>	
How clear were the objectives of the meeting? (10 – very, 5 – somewhat, 0 – not at all)	
How well were the objectives of the meeting met? (10 – fully, 5 – partially, 0 – not at all) If you give less than 10, please indicate what objectives were not achieved	
How clear are you about the aims of the project? (10 – very, 5 – somewhat, 0 – not at all)	

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<p>How clear are you about what you will be doing in the project? (10 – very, 5 – somewhat, 0 – not at all)</p>	
<p>How clear are you about the vision for your EXTEND Centre? (10 – very, 5 – somewhat, 0 – not at all)</p>	
<p>How clear are you about the approach you will be using in order to realise your vision? (10 – very, 5 – somewhat, 0 – not at all)</p>	
<p>How would you rate the quality of the input you have received from the European partners to help you create your vision? (10 – excellent, 5 – acceptable, 0 – poor)</p>	
<p>How would you rate the co-ordination of the project so far? (10 – excellent, 5 – acceptable, 0 – poor)</p>	
<p>How would you rate the communication within the project so far? (10 – excellent, 5 – acceptable, 0 – poor)</p>	
<p>How would you rate the communication about the project outside the Team? (10 – excellent, 5 – acceptable, 0 – poor)</p>	
<p>How effectively do you feel the Project Team is working together to</p>	

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achieve the EXTEND Centres goal? (10 – very, 5 – somewhat, 0 – not at all)	
How would you rate your contribution to the meeting? (10 – excellent, 5 – ok, 0 – poor) Please identify what you feel you could have done better	
Please identify the positive features / outcomes of the Bucharest meeting for you	
What was not so good about the Bucharest meeting for you?	
What has been the most valuable input you have received so far in the project?	

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What additional input / guidance do you feel you still need in order to help you realise the vision for your EXTEND Centre?
What problems / challenges do you foresee in the next year concerning the project?
If there is one thing that we need to address as a priority to make the project better, what should it be?
What contact have you had so far with your mentors?

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What expectations do you have for the next project meeting in Khujand?
Any other comments you would like to offer

Thank you for taking the time to complete this evaluation.

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and Kathleen Choudhary at k.v.choudhary@warwick.ac.uk