



Tempus project- 517200-1-2011-1-BE-TEMPUS-SMGR

Establishing and capacity building of the Southern Serbian Academy and the National Conference for Vocational Higher Education (ECBAC)

REPORT ON THE 5th MEETING HELD ON 12th-13th MARCH, 2013 IN ČUPRIJA

The fifth meeting within the implementation of the TEMPUS ECBAC 517200 project entitled ***Establishing and capacity building of the Southern Serbian Academy and the National Conference for Vocational Higher Education***, was held in Čuprija, 12th - 13th March, 2013. The host of the meeting was High Medical School of Professional studies from Čuprija. The meeting was attended by the representatives of Kaho Sint Lieven from Belgium (Andre Govaert and Geert De Lepeleer), IPP from Portugal (Mónica Vieira and Sergio Pires), as well as Schools of Higher Professional Education for Preschool Teachers in Kruševac (Zoran Vasić, Aleksandar Vasić and Ivan Tomić), Pirot (Danijela Vidanović, Sanja Kovačević, Aleksandar Spasić, Mirjana Stanković-Đorđević, Emilija Popović), College of Agriculture and Food Technology from Prokuplje (Saša Petrović, Nikola Stolić, Ivica Stančić and Slavica Šuković), College of Textile from Leskovac (Đorđe Miltenović and Nebojša Ristić), School of Higher Chemical Technology from Kruševac (Dragan Nikolić, Mladen Nikolić, Nebojša Arsić, Vesna Milovanović, Branko Grubić and Slađana Savić), High Medical School of Professional Studies in Čuprija (Ljiljana Milović, Tatjana Simović, Dragan Antić, Đorđe Stevanović, Milan Sretenović, Gordana Knežević, Svetlana Miljković, Nikola Krstić and Danilo Strugarević), The School of Higher Technical Professional Education from Niš (Dejan Blagojević, Aleksandra Boričić, Radomir Cekic, Goran Milosavljević and Danica Milošević), and School of Higher Applied Professional Education from Vranje (Nebojša Dimitrijević, Gordana Bogdanović, Zoran Janjić and Nenad Janjić), as well as the representative of the Health Center in Čuprija (Ivana Nikolić and Slaviša Malenović). The meeting was not attended neither by the representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science although they were sent an invitation as for the previous meetings, nor by the representatives of VLHORA, Belgium. The representatives of the Conference of Academies of Career studies were also present during the meeting. They had a separate meeting with the project coordinator Mr. Geert De Lepeleer and Mr. Dejan Blagojević, the director of the School of Technical Professional Studies from Niš in order to discuss the potential membership of the Conference of Academies of Career studies in the ECBAC Tempus project and to indicate the importance of its support in the process of building the Academy of Vocational studies and its capacities.

After the welcome speech of Mr. Geert De Lepeleer, the attendants were greeted by Mrs. Ljiljana Milović, the director of the High Medical School of Professional studies from Čuprija.

The report from the previous meeting held in Pirot on 16th and 17th January, 2013 was approved of unanimously.

Then the three schools gave their presentations on the mission, vision, strategic goals and the SWOT analysis. These were the schools from Čuprija (High Medical School of Professional studies) and Kruševac (School of Higher Chemical Technology and School of Higher Professional Education for Preschool Teachers).

Presentation of the realistic framework of the cooperation between the eight Southern Serbian institutes of Higher education was given by Mr. Dejan Blagojević. In order to reinforce, improve the existing capacities and build the new ones of the colleges within the ACAS, strengthen the position of each institution, contribute to a better recognition of the vocational higher education in the Republic of Serbia, create more efficient services for the teaching staff and students it is necessary to enable the integrative functions in the areas of quality policy , international cooperation, student organisation, student service and IT service. Since it is not possible for the time being to establish one centralized unit, then the members of the ACAS should work on building unique platforms for quality improvement, development and establishing of international cooperation, development and improvement of the student services and the cooperation of the student parliaments. The idea is to form the bodies and responsible teams which would work on establishing these platforms. Advisory and consultative roles of the bodies have also been defined.

The representatives of the National Conference of Academies of Career Studies were not present in the meeting room, although they were the guests of the hosting school. Their presentation was not heard.

Meeting participants were later divided into two groups in order to discuss the practical development of cooperation between the ACAS members.

The preparations for the meeting in Porto have been started but the names of the trainees were not decided upon this occasion. The agreement was reached to select the trainees by the next meeting in Porto.

The first day of the meeting ended with a presentation on the project management by Mr. Geert De Lepeleer. This presentation gave the overview of the activities completed so far and pointed to the state-of the art of the project implementation, but it also stressed the importance of preparing a good interim report to be sent for assessment by 15th April, 2013.

The second working day started with the presentation of the results of the work groups and the continuation of the discussion on the reached conclusions.

Since this meeting was partly devoted to organizing and establishing of the ICT network for the ACAS members, useful presentations on the ICT management were prepared by the EU partners as examples of good practice for the future Academy ICT service. The presentation on the use of ICT in the government of institutes of higher education was given by Mr. Geert De Lepeleer. After this presentation of the Belgian ICT system, another presentation with the same topic was given by Sergio Pires on the use of ICT in IPP Porto. Both presentations gave a useful insight in the ICT system management and offered two examples of establishing an ICT network, which can be used by the Serbian ICT experts in the process of establishing the service for ICT in Serbia, within the Academy of Vocational Studies.

Participants of the meeting could also hear a Serbian proposal of the use of ICT in the cooperation of the Higher Education of Southern Serbia, which stressed the need of implementing such a system for a more efficient cooperation between the members of the ACAS. The ideas on the equipment needed and the system organization were presented and a general agreement on the process of implementation was reached. Also the idea is to create data bases, applications and web portals for students and teachers, which would make keeping records much easier. The conclusion is that one of the potentials of the ICT service should be to enable video-conferencing and distance learning, to create intranet and the e-library. This presentation was followed by the discussion in the work groups.

By the same principle, used the previous day, the participants were divided in the work groups and they started to elaborate on the quality framework on the use of ICT in the Higher Education of Southern Serbia. These two groups were formed among the ICT experts from the schools in Serbia whose presence was

welcomed on this particular occasion since the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the possibilities of the ICT system. The conclusion was reached that for the ICT system it is necessary to specify the adequate hardware and software. For example, it was suggested that two servers are needed, one primary and one which will serve as the back up for the system. Also, the idea is to create different applications like information system of the colleges and the web portals for students and teachers. Moreover, the proposal was given to connect the system to the AMRES network.

It was agreed that the next working meeting should take place in Porto on the 28th and 29th May, 2013, which would be a great opportunity to discuss the results of the interim report, analyse it and take further necessary steps in the project implementation.

In the appendix, there is a short overview of the results of the work groups reached during the two working days of the meeting.

ECBAC 517200 project consortium
Ćuprija, March 2013

RESULTS OF THE WORK GROUPS

The first work group gave its solutions for the practical aspects of cooperation development. This group thinks that the international operation service should consist of three members (two employees and a student) whose sole duty would be to coordinate the work of the Academy at the international level. The service would be responsible for implementation of different international projects like Tempus or IPPA projects, teacher and student mobility programs (Leonardo Da Vinci, Erasmus Mundus, Jean Monnet), or the new one YES EUROPE. The service would be responsible for organizing staff and student mobility, harmonising study programmes, for organising research and project development, video conference lectures, preparations of the students for mobility in the form of language courses and trainings, tracing international projects and training in project development and participation.

As far as the student service is concerned, it would also have three members whose sole duty would be to take care of the information flow, fees, study programmes, data bases and paperwork. This service would provide information flow among the members of the Academy, provide documentation necessary for the student mobility, archive the entire paper work relating to the student data base, prepare regular statistical reports and unify procedures regarding exams, lectures and calendar.

The second work group discussed the possibility of quality improvement at the vocational colleges. In order to improve the teaching process, it is necessary to take into consideration educational needs of students, employer demands, and educational competencies of teachers. Quality improvement commission which should consist of the Presidents of the Quality Commission of each school and the representatives of the Student Parliaments should be formed. There should be an operational body to execute the procedures and the Board of directors and the Council to make the final decisions. Attention should be paid to the modern holistic approach, strategy of joint representation in the media, professional training and education of teaching and non-teaching staff, joint participation in projects and labour market, more efficient use of the resources, equipment, facilities, human resources, IT knowledge, communication and time, and improvement of visibility of our organisation. Tools (formative and summative surveys) for quality improvement should be defined.

The second group also discussed about the Student Parliament. In opinion of this group, the role of the student parliament is to improve the teaching process and to promote higher education. Working body of the SP should consist of the representatives of the Student Parliaments of each school. The rule book on decision making and operational activities should be defined. The student parliament should take part in the School Councils and the School Boards. The role of the SP should be to contribute to student mobility, to represent the students in the local community and the labour market, to work on career planning, to raise the awareness of the Parliament role, and take part in joint activities (journals, video and TV programmes, volunteering, sport activities, technical support, participation in projects and their development).