



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 6th MEETING HELD ON 28th-29th MAY, 2013 IN PORTO

The sixth 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 Porto, 28th - 29th May, 2013. The host of the meeting was Instituto Politecnico do Porto in Porto, Portugal. The meeting was attended by the representatives of Kaho Sint Lieven from Belgium (Andre Govaert and Geert De Lepeleer), IPP from Portugal (Mónica Vieira), Aalen, Germany (Antje Discher), VLHORA, Belgium (Marc Van De Walle) as well as School of Higher Professional Education for Preschool Teachers in Kruševac (Aleksandar Vasić and Ivan Tomić), School of Higher Professional Education for Preschool Teachers in Pirot (Danijela Vidanović and Sanja Kovačević), College of Agriculture and Food Technology from Prokuplje (Nikola Stolić and Ivica Stančić), College of Textile from Leskovac (Đorđe Miltenović and Nebojša Ristić), School of Higher Chemical Technology from Kruševac (Mladen Nikolić and Vesna Milovanović), High Medical School of Professional Studies in Ćuprija (Dragan Antić and Gordana Knežević), The School of Higher Technical Professional Education from Niš (Dejan Blagojević, Aleksandra Boričić, Radomir Cekic and Danica Milošević), and School of Higher Applied Professional Education from Vranje (Nebojša Dimitrijević and Zoran Janjić), as well as the representatives of the National Conference of Academies of Career studies in Serbia (Bora Rodić and Ivana Đokić).

After the welcome speech of Mrs. Monica Vieira and Mr. Geert De Lepeleer, the report from the previous meeting held in Ćuprija on 12th and 13th March, 2013 was approved of unanimously.

Then, the three remaining schools gave their presentations on the mission, vision, strategic goals and the SWOT analysis. These were the schools from Niš (School of Higher Technical Professional Education) Leskovac (College of Textile) and Prokuplje (College of Agriculture and Food Technology).

Next presentation was the presentation of the general secretary Marc Van De Walle of the VLHORA organization in Belgium. This was followed by the presentation of the National Conference of Academies of Career studies in Serbia given by Mr. Bora Rodić.

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 first step is to sign a declaration on implementation of the common policy

for the four mentioned services. The idea is to form the bodies and responsible teams which would work on these services in the following way:

The body for **quality improvement** should be responsible for harmonization of statutes and rulebooks, establishing unique procedures on evaluation of teachers and their work and approving of the procedures for implementing corrective measures. Members of this body would be the presidents of the Commission responsible for quality policy in each of the eight schools.

The team for the **international relations** should be responsible for establishing international cooperation, signing cooperation agreements and preparing applications for the international projects.

The body responsible for **student organizations** will be formed and its responsibility would be to work on harmonization of procedures and the rulebooks of the Student Parliaments with the final goal to enable student exchange, provide joint student portals in the areas of student interest and make initiatives towards the labor market.

Body for the improvement of the **student service** work should be formed in order to improve the existing and introduce the new procedures in the work of these services. For that reason it is necessary to have unique information system.

According to the action plan given by Mr. Dejan Blagojević, the Quality assurance and IT bodies should be formed by October, 2013, while IRO and the Student service should be formed by December, 2013.

After this presentation, Mr. Geert De Lepeleer gave presentation on the project management. The meeting participants were informed that the interim report had not been assessed by the European Commission yet.

It was agreed that the eight people appointed for training should start with the training sessions from September. **The first training will take place in Gent, Belgium in the week of 16th September. The next one will take place in Aalen, in the week of 21th October, 2013. The last training is going to be organized in Porto, in the week of 11th November.** Also, it was agreed that Danica Milošević, the project secretary would visit KaHo university in August, 2013 with the purpose of helping with the project documents where corrections were to be made.

The mandate letter was sent to the National Conference of Academies of Career studies in Serbia since the project partners would like to accept the Conference as the new member on the project.

The first day of the meeting ended with the overview of the project activities done so far and the ones that have to be finished by the end of the project.

The second working day started with the work in groups in order to discuss the practical development of cooperation between the ACAS members. Afterwards the groups presented the results of their work, which are given in the appendix.

Then, the participants of the meeting saw a presentation on the evaluation of the previous meeting in Čuprija and they completed the evaluation questionnaire for the meeting in Porto. It was agreed that all the partners would get the presentation on evaluation of Čuprija meeting by e-mail.

At the end of the meeting, it was agreed that the next working meeting should take place in Niš on the 3rd and 4th October, 2013. The next two meetings after the one in Niš, will take place in Belgrade in November 26th-27th and Leskovac in January. The exact date of the last meeting is still to be determined.

ECBAC 517200 project consortium
Porto, May 2013

RESULTS OF THE WORKGROUPS

WORK GROUP 1:

The first work group, consisting of the directors of vocational colleges was discussing the role of the governing and supervisory bodies. In their opinion, the governing body should have 11 members: 8 directors, 2 student representatives and one representative of the Ministry of Education. The responsibility of the governing body would be to implement the policy in the four services, that is: quality assurance, international relations, student service and student parliament with the aim to contribute to development and improvement of higher professional education through cooperation of ACAS members, improve alumni competencies in accordance with the specific labour market demands and work on higher professional education recognisability. For that reason, cooperation with local authorities, future employers and entrepreneurs should be established. Another task of the governing body would be to suggest corrective measures and approve of the procedures for the four mentioned services.

All these practices of the governing body will eventually lead to higher level of student and teacher mobility and harmonization of the learning outcomes among the members of the ACAS.

The first step is to prepare the Declaration on cooperation of the eight colleges. School secretaries of the eight schools should be in charge of the Declaration preparation. They will also be responsible for the legal support to the governing body in the future.

On the other hand, Supervisory body should consist of the presidents of the School Councils in eight schools with the task to make sure that the existing Statutes are in accordance with the school legislative documents.

The Student parliament should consist of the eight students who are the presidents of the student parliaments of the eight colleges, members of the ACAS. Its task would be to protect the interests of students attending the eight colleges and propose the measures for the improvement of the studying conditions for students and the functioning of the colleges.

In order to establish such efficient bodies, it is necessary to have good IT service at the eight colleges. The equipment which will enable networking, video-conferencing and design of the Academy web site will be necessary for such a purpose.

Optimal functioning of the bodies will be ensured through the Declaration, approved and adopted procedures and preparation of the proposal for the Academy accreditation standards. It was agreed that the persons in charge for the Declaration would be the school secretaries who will establish the Declaration and start implementing it by the 1st October, 2013.

WORK GROUP 2:

The second work group discussed the responsibilities of the bodies for quality assurance, international relations and the student service by inspecting the mission, vision and the strategic goals of these bodies.

According to this group, the **quality assurance** body should be able to ensure the quality of study programs according to the Bologna declaration and make continual efforts to improve all the standards with the aim to provide students with the most effective way of studying. Students should gain high quality education and be prepared for future jobs and life. For this reason, improvement of the professional practice which will help students to start their own businesses is also very important. Of course, in order to create such opportunities for students, teaching staff must also improve itself in teaching methodologies and expertise, which should be in accordance with the requirements of the market. This board for quality control, improvement and assurance should consist of eight members, each member being the representative for QA in front of one school. The president of the board will be elected each year and will

be responsible for quality management, assurance and improvement, but also for sending a report to the Supervisory body twice a year. Corrective measures for the quality improvement will be proposed after each survey analysis. All the rulebooks of the eight schools will be unified in the segment of QA.

International relations office will be involved in harmonization of study programs with the ones in other institutions in the region and EU countries in order to ensure mobility of students and teachers and make conditions for participation in international and R&D projects. This body will be responsible for organizing video-conferencing lectures as well. The body will consist of two members who would be in charge of coordination of all the other members of the ACAS appointed for international cooperation. But the tasks of these body would also be related to ensuring student and teacher mobility, organizing summer internship programs, tracking international projects, and preparing documentation for the incoming and outgoing students for mobility programs as well as the documentation for the projects. All the rulebooks for the IR will be harmonized among the ACAS members. For this body, two computers, video conferencing equipment, a scanner, and a printer would be needed. Twice a year this body would submit reports to the Board of directors.

Student service should enable the most efficient way of studying for students by providing high quality service and responding to the students' needs. For that reason it must improve constatly in order to meet all the standards. Data of all the students will be collected in a unique database by this service, but also the service would keep records of the students' practice. The rulebooks of the student services will be harmonized at the level of the ACAS. One computer would be needed by each school for the student service as well as a software for on-line exam application and collecting student data. The body for student service would submit all the data to the board for Qality control when asked to do so.

To be able to perform all the above mentioned tasks, it is important that the eight colleges involved have a good system for information technologies, which will be able to offer high quality information data bases and enable fast and high quality information flow. Equipment will be needed to achieve this goal. The group suggested the following items: 8 servers –one for each institution, back up server, UPS, AMRES connections, video-conferencing system, Cobiss software, scanner, 8 laptops, 2 notebooks, one photo camera (DSLR). It was concluded by the group that all the rulebooks must be harmonized with special attention to the section on public procurement before obtaining the equipment.