



TEMPUS Programme

Higher Education Reform Experts Activity Report 2012



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TEMPUS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tempus promotes the modernisation of the higher education systems in the Tempus Partner Countries. Among other activities and in addition to funding projects, it supports and encourages local academic experts to share their expertise on EU higher education modernisation with higher education stakeholders in their countries outside the EU. Higher Education Reform Experts (known as HEREs) are usually Rectors, Vice-Rectors, Deans, Senior Academics, Directors of Study, International Relations Officers and students. They provide a pool of expertise, promoting and enhancing progress toward further modernization of the higher education sector.

HEREs have been very active in 2012. They enhanced their knowledge of EU higher education policy developments by attending a number of events such as **two international conferences** organised on *'Putting Bucharest's Conclusions on Track: The Expert's Role'*, held in Vilnius from 4 to 6 June and the conference on *'Research-based Education: Strategy and Implementation'* held in Budapest from 5 to 7 November. Some were even speakers at these events.

Study-visits were introduced for the first time in 2012 at the request of HEREs, to allow them to experience at first-hand, EU best-practice in higher education. The first was organised at the VUB and ULB in Brussels on *'University-Business Cooperation'*. The second was organised at the University of Vienna and the University of Applied Sciences, Vienna on the *'Diversification of Funding, Autonomy and Strategic Planning at Universities'*.

Following consultation and acting on feedback from HEREs, a number of existing instruments were refined in 2012 to respond better to the needs of HEREs. For example, in 2012 there was a move from regional networking events, to events tailored on a specific theme of interest to HEREs from all countries. Two of these **thematic seminars** were organised by UNICA for HEREs on *'University Business Cooperation'* held in Israel and on *'Research-Based Education at B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. Level'*, held in Armenia. On average 75 HEREs attended each.

As in previous years, HEREs had the opportunity to attend larger international events which were not specifically targeted at HEREs, such as the **two regional seminars** on the *'Management of Human Resources in Public Higher Education'* in Central Asia and the Western Balkans and the launch event of the EU-Southern Mediterranean Policy Dialogue in Brussels.

If very specific expertise was required, HEREs took advantage of the possibility to bring an EU expert to their country under the Tempus **technical assistance facility** and organised seminars, where the expert could share expertise through lectures and practical workshops.

In addition, the **virtual community**, managed by UNICA, has proved to be an invaluable source of information for HEREs and a platform to share expertise (<http://www.bolognaexperts.net>). The website also contains information on the content of the conferences and a considerable amount of informative background documentation regarding higher education reform. Specific workshops for new HEREs were held on the virtual community.

HEREs have put the knowledge learned in their conferences and seminars into practice upon return to their own countries. In approximately seven countries, HEREs organised **seminars to disseminate what they had learned at a HERE conference abroad**. In terms of peer-to-peer activities, they have organised a number of **training seminars and workshops** for higher education stakeholders. They have also organised specific training workshops upon demand on themes requested. HEREs helped **raise awareness** of the need to build bridges between the academic world and the world of work and on doctoral studies and the importance of research-based education, working with important stakeholders in these areas. They have also promoted the three-cycle system, learning outcomes and the ECTS-based system, as part of curriculum reform efforts.

HEREs also **worked very closely with the Ministry of Education**. They sat on working groups on different aspects of higher education policy. In certain cases, HEREs were called upon by the Minister to help draft new higher education legislation.

HEREs also organised **promotion activities** for the public at large. They participated in TV and radio interviews and wrote articles in academic journals and publications on higher education reform. Taking advantage of the Buddy System, the Virtual Community and international seminars, HEREs successfully collaborated with each other (as teams in their home countries and internationally) and this contributed to the growth of this international community of experts.

HERE activities are funded by Action 3 of the EU Tempus programme. During 2012, the Tempus programme financed HERE activities with on average 25,000 Euro per Partner Country (compared to 20,000 Euro in 2011). This funding came from the National Tempus Office (NTO) budget allocation and was managed by them. Each year, the NTO reports on activities against the plan. In spite of the fact that the HERE budget remains limited, the **impact** of HEREs in the Tempus Partner Countries **is increasing**, in comparison with previous years. Their **numbers are growing** in certain countries, they are becoming better known, as are the services they provide to the academic community. As their knowledge and expertise of EU higher education policies deepens, they are being increasingly called upon by their national governments to take part in policy working groups and the drafting of higher education legislation.

The results of the work carried out by HEREs in 2012 confirms that the HERE network constitutes **an efficient means of promoting the modernisation of higher education** in the Tempus countries outside the EU. HEREs play a crucial role in complementing Tempus projects and structural measures. Nevertheless, it has to be acknowledged that the level and nature of HERE activities are still heterogeneous in the Tempus Partner Countries. Certain HEREs and certain national HERE teams are more active than others. As a result, the work of HEREs has a greater impact on the reform processes of some countries than on others.

EACEA remains committed to further supporting HERE activities in the period 2013-2014. Indeed, **the role of HEREs will continue in the new 'Erasmus+' programme**, where HEREs will continue to benefit from training and networking opportunities and will be encouraged to continue the work they are doing in their home countries.

INTRODUCTION

Tempus supports the modernisation of the higher education systems in the Tempus Partner Countries by supporting projects initiated by higher education institutions and supporting academic experts in these Partner Countries outside the EU, who are knowledgeable about the higher education sector.

Higher Education Reform Experts (HEREs) are usually Rectors, Vice-Rectors, Deans, Senior Academics, Directors of Study, International Relations Officers and students. Some were also officials in Ministries or quality assurance bodies. They are selected and appointed by the national higher education authorities in their home countries, in consultation with the National Tempus Office, EU Delegations in that country and the EACEA in Brussels. The National Tempus Office in each Tempus Partner Country provides administrative and financial support to HEREs throughout the year.

HEREs are active in Central Eastern European, Central Asian and the Southern Mediterranean countries, as well as the Russian Federation and the Western Balkans. Since 2007, the National Tempus Offices (NTOs) have been developing the network of Higher Education Reform Experts (HEREs) throughout the Tempus Partner Countries. In certain countries, there is a growing demand to join the HERE team and the position of HEREs is highly coveted.

Each national team of HEREs consists of a minimum of two and a maximum of 19 members, depending on the size of the country and the number of higher education institutions there. Several countries increased their HERE teams, usually by one or two, in order to widen the fields of expertise and activities and to enlarge the geographic scope of the team. In 2012, there were between two experts (Tajikistan) and 19 experts (the Russian Federation) who were members of a HERE team in each Tempus Partner Country.

This report is based on the annual country report on HERE activities provided by the NTOs for 2012, the reports from the seminars which they attended, feedback EACEA received in meetings with HEREs and information posted on the HERE virtual community.

The aim of this report is to summarise the activities of HEREs in all countries where they were active in 2012. The first part analyses their participation in regional and international training seminars, on themes related to the reform of higher education policies and systems. The second gives a summary of the activities in their own countries, to implement and disseminate the knowledge they have learned in international seminars.

I. TRAINING ACTIVITIES FOR HERE TEAMS

The HERE events for 2012 consisted of two international training seminars (for which each Partner Country could send up to four experts), two thematic seminars, two study-visits and two regional seminars (on a Tempus study on human resource management). Some of these events also foresaw specific slots for HERE meetings, where they could discuss specific issues. Certain HEREs participated in other international seminars held in their own countries or in neighbouring countries where relevant for their role.

I.1. INTERNATIONAL SEMINARS

Two international seminars, organised by the Directorate-General for Education and Culture and the EACEA, took place in Hungary and Lithuania in 2012. They welcomed between 125 and 150 participants (EU-Bologna Experts, EU National Agencies and HEREs). One of the major achievements of the seminars was the creation and the strengthening of a feeling among all participants of being part of a larger international community of experts, continued via the virtual community, after each event.

a. Bologna Expert and HERE seminar on '*Putting Bucharest's Conclusions on Track: The Expert's Role*', Vilnius, Lithuania

The report presented at the Bucharest conference on the implementation of the Bologna Process showed that further efforts are necessary to build on the progress of the Bologna Process. The aim of the seminar was to look at the Bologna implementation from an institutional perspective and the Bologna expert point of view and discuss how to align national practices with the objectives and policies of the EHEA, while addressing those policy areas where further work is needed. The meeting based its works on the three main goals of the Bucharest Communiqué which sets out the priorities for the next three years: to provide quality higher education for all, to enhance graduates' employability and to strengthen mobility, in order to enhance learning.

50 Tempus HEREs attended from 24 countries. 100 LLP Bologna experts from 28 countries also attended which provided an excellent opportunity for the HEREs to network. There were 200 participants in total, including high level academics, professors and students.

HEREs were encouraged to play a role as facilitators, to contribute to putting the Bucharest conclusions on track. The conference included workshops, case studies, a buddy system and interview-style roundtables. An open space was created to allow experts to come forward with proposals, share good practice, promote peer learning and allow experts to initiate discussions on how to develop and implement the ministerial recommendations at HEI level and exchange views on the Bologna experts' and Tempus HEREs' role in this process.

Two discussion groups were held. The first concerned the major conclusions of the ministerial communiqué from Bucharest in May 2012, on the topics of qualification frameworks, quality assurance, recognition and transparency tools. The second looked at the main conclusions of the Bucharest Communiqué on the subject of 'mobility'. Experts from Russia, Egypt and Lebanon made presentations during the workshops.

The Tempus Unit organized an additional session exclusively for the 50 Tempus HEREs present. Klaus Haupt and Jacques Kemp introduced the 2011 report on HEREs activities, underlining best practice to be shared, positive initiatives taken by national teams, as well as some proposals to further improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the HEREs' teams work and its impact on the

Higher Education modernisation process in the Tempus Partner Countries. P10 also presented its 2012-2013 agenda for HEREs, briefed the audience about the state of play of the current Tempus programme (selection process for the fifth call, increased EU budget) and briefly introduced the Commission's proposal for the up-coming 'Erasmus +' programme.

A training session on writing and using learning outcomes was offered to HEREs. The module was given by EU Bologna experts, Declan Kennedy (University College Cork, Ireland) together with Anna Muraveva (Deputy Director, National Tempus Office, and Russian Federation). The training was definitely practical and pedagogical and combined the experience of the Bologna process developments and the so-called 'taxonomy of educational objectives' developed by Benjamin Bloom, University of Chicago (1913-1999) which provides a structure for writing learning outcomes through six successive levels of "knowing" (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation). The training was followed by a Q&A session and debate.

Examples of Follow-up by HERE Participants

In Georgia, Tinatin Zurabishvili (HERE) held a dissemination event following his attendance at the conference. It was hosted by the GIPA Media Centre in Georgia. He reported on the seminar results to higher education institutions and Ministry of Education and Science representatives.

HEREs from Tajikistan made a presentation during the 'Annual International Education Fair' on the results of the seminar and organised a training seminar for 30 participants on learning outcomes and students mobility for academic and teaching staff at the Tajik National University. The participants also discussed the comparability of EU and Tajik higher education systems and the application of Bologna principles, as well as the maintenance of diversity and national traditions.

b. Bologna Expert and HERE seminar on 'Research-based Education: Strategy and Implementation', Budapest, Hungary

The aim of the conference was to look at the synergies between faculty research and undergraduate teaching and explore institutional strategies to link teaching and research. The conference included three training sessions: how to develop research-based education in one's university, the different ingredients for research-based education and how they are implemented and the challenges and opportunities of implementing research-based education.

The conference was also used to test a new format, the Budapest Bologna Café. Each table was hosted by a volunteer Bologna or Tempus Higher Education Reform Expert who launched a discussion on a pressing issue related to higher education reform among the participants at the table. This provided opportunities for peer learning and expert discussions. Some hosts distributed hand-outs with supplementary background reading material for participants.

The following points were raised during the discussions:

- whether the priority for 'research-based education' should be about involvement in research or benefitting from research;
- should undergraduate students be exposed to research methods or should it only be for aspiring doctoral students i.e. an elite activity;
- how to develop a research policy that values employability, by requiring the students to identify research projects that are relevant to the needs of employers and link them to reward and recognition systems;

- how to develop a HR policy that measures the performance of staff, based on the curriculum that is reformed with embedded research;
- whether research-based education could be made into a quality framework for accreditation;
- the role of the different actors in the process; university management, professors, students, representatives from industry etc.

Two case-studies were also presented on the different ingredients necessary for research-based education. Conclusions were drawn on what the favourable institutional and cultural context should be, the resources needed and how best to promote research-based education.

Examples of Follow-up by Participants

After the conference, the HERE team in Kyrgyzstan organised seminars in four higher education institutions (Kyrgyz National University, Kyrgyz State Technical University, International University of Kyrgyzstan and Bishkek Academy of Finance and Economics) to disseminate the findings of the seminar. Each event was attended by a group of 30 participants.

In Tajikistan, the results and materials distributed at the conference were presented in four regional universities: Kulob State University, Kurgantube State University, Khujand State University and Tajik National University in Dushanbe.

HEREs also participated in other international seminars outside of their own country. For example:

- HEREs were selected by certain Ministers of Education to take part in a meeting held in Brussels to launch DG Education and Culture's Dialogue with the Southern Mediterranean, that took place in Brussels on 2-3 July 2013;
- Albanian HEREs participated in a European Commission, DG Education and Culture regional conference entitled "How Does Higher Education Remain Relevant in a Changing World", that took place in Dubrovnik in 2012.

I.2. EU STUDY-VISITS

The aim of EU study visits is to give HEREs the opportunity to analyse, in more depth, aspects related to the implementation of reforms in European higher education institutions and meet with all relevant actors involved in the processes and learn first-hand from their experience.

Two study-visits were organised for HEREs in 2012.

a. Study-visit on 'Diversification of Funding, Autonomy and Strategic Planning at Universities', Vienna, Austria

The aim of this study visit was to give insights into fundraising structures at universities, as a means to develop diversification of funding and to examine methods to establish priorities when designing a strategic plan within a national legal framework.

Thirty experts from fourteen different Tempus Partner Countries in four Tempus regions participated.

On the first day, HEREs visited the University of Vienna and on the second day, the University of Applied Sciences, FH Campus Wien. Experts from the two European universities presented

practical examples and case studies about financial sustainability, funding and allocation models, accountability and autonomy of universities. They discussed barriers to foster the diversification of funding and the ways to overcome them.

Items discussed also included the following:

- autonomy (modes, how to use it) and governance (who are the players); roles, responsibilities, mode of operation and division of tasks in the Rector's office;
- what are the barriers to fostering income diversification and how to overcome them Fundraising structures at universities and a means to developing the diversification of funding;
- designing a strategic plan and how to establish strategic priorities;
- what are the consequences for university-internal allocation of funds and the allocation of resources at the university;
- quality management and strategy, demand-driven curriculum development and infrastructure governance.

Important messages were underlined concerning academic freedom and autonomy of higher education institutions. The speakers insisted on organisational autonomy, personnel autonomy, and financial autonomy and on the necessity for universities to define their own objectives and measures. HEREs were encouraged to continue the debate back in their home countries.

Examples of Follow-up by HERE Participants

In Uzbekistan, the NTO submitted a report to the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education, making specific recommendations based on what was learned at the study visit, to promote the modernisation agenda.

b. Study-visit on 'University-Business Cooperation', Brussels, Belgium

The aim of this study-visit was to offer a platform to discuss issues related to cooperation between the academic world and the business sector. The study-visit provided background information, policy updates, examples of best practice and practical case studies.

The speakers and presenters included professors from VUB and ULB, higher education experts, technology transfer specialists, business start-up experts and career guidance officers.

The study visit started with general examples of university-business cooperation. The presentations analysed the Flemish higher education regulations and policies and the strategy of the VUB within this framework was presented. Some specific examples of best practice and case studies on university-business cooperation were given. The participants also had the opportunity to visit the career and the ICAB business and technology incubator. They also met with the Research Team and with young entrepreneurs.

Examples of Follow-up by Participants

In Georgia, Lali Bakradze (HERE) organised a seminar in Tbilisi State University to disseminate the findings and results of the study visit to higher education institution representatives and this led to discussions on how these could be implemented in Georgia.

In general, EACEA participants at the study-visit observed that bringing together a small group of experts, based on a common specific theme of interest and giving them the opportunity to have non-formal dialogue and exchange on the spot, provided a real added-value and motivated the

participants to get involved. These HEREs acted as messengers and multipliers in their own countries, debated with their peers about the study-visit's learning outcome and disseminated the results of the event.

I.3. THEMATIC SEMINARS

Two thematic seminars were held in 2012 in Central Asia and in the Southern Mediterranean, specifically for HEREs.

a. HERE Thematic Seminar on '*University-Business Cooperation*', Holon, Israel

Tempus HEREs from Israel took the initiative to organise a seminar on '*University-Business Cooperation*', at the Holon Institute of Technology from 14 to 15 May 2012.

The aim of the seminar was to discuss cooperation between the academic world and industry. The thematic seminar provided background information, policy updates, professional presentations and reviews of case studies. It included site visits to three universities located in Tel-Aviv: the Academic College of Tel Aviv-Yafo (MTA), Interdisciplinary Centre (IDC) Herzliya, Shenkar College of Engineering and Design.

The main themes discussed were:

- given that there is no unique model and many different policies and practices to promote cooperation between universities and businesses, what is the best way forward;
- research is the prime motor of innovation but how can a 'no rules' environment be created for it to flourish;
- how can universities best promote new talent and entrepreneurship;
- how best to bridge the gap between fundamental research and society;
- how can students be involved at an early stage in pilot university-business projects;
- the issue of fund-raising and the support provided by public and private institutions was also raised;
- how can universities converge to optimal solutions in global market;
- how partners could work together on real case studies to implement technology transfer.

Examples of Follow-up by Participants

In Turkmenistan, Mr. Charyyar Ashyralyyev (HERE) gave a presentation based on his participation in UNICA seminar on 8 June. 30 teachers from the Faculty of Agro Economics and Management at Niyazov Turkmen Agricultural University participated in this seminar. Mr. Charyyar Ashyralyyev distributed 8 presentations which were made during the seminar.

Six HEREs from Uzbekistan, who participated in site-visits as part of the seminar, initiated contacts with HEIs in Israel upon returning to Ukraine and identified areas for future possible academic and scientific collaboration. They discussed publication exchanges and submitting papers to journals and periodicals in Israel. Two dissemination seminars on the study visit were also organised for teaching staff and students of Namangan State University and Namangan Engineering Technological Institute on 6 June 2013.

b. Thematic Seminar on 'Research-Based Education at B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. level', Yerevan, Armenia

The second thematic seminar was initiated by HEREs in Armenia on the topic of '*Research-Based Education at B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. Level*', in Yerevan on 9 and 10 July 2012. The aim of this seminar was to look at the link between research and teaching throughout the academic cycle, while the added value of university education is research, how can a research mind-set be cultivated and integrated throughout the institution. During the event an Armenian HERE Aleksandr Hakobyan, conducted a presentation entitled "*Research Based Education: Student Perspective*", which was based on a survey he had carried out among students.

The themes discussed during the conference included:

- how to institutionalise research-based education;
- how higher education can meet the expectations of researchers;
- what are students' needs with regard to research-based education;
- how research and teaching can best be combined;
- examples of integrated modules of learning from Tempus projects;
- what competences marry research with education.

Examples of Follow-up by Participants

In Armenia, a follow-up to the seminar was organized in Yerevan for 92 representatives of the Armenian academic community. The event was held on July 11, 2012 at the American University of Armenia (AUA). Armenian HEREs provided an overview of the seminar. A presentation of AUA's experience in research-based education was also given. Participants included representatives from the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia, EACEA and UNICA, state and non-state universities and experts from the European Union and Tempus Partner Countries.

In Tajikistan, the results and materials of this thematic seminar were presented to regional and central universities in Tajikistan (Kulob State University, Kurgantube State University, Khujand State University and Tajik National University in Dushanbe). HEREs disseminated the materials of the seminar during practical sessions, to provide more up-to-date information on research-based education to academic staff and students. During the seminar, HEREs discussed the key issues and concerns related to the need for three levels of research-education, effectiveness and the improvement of knowledge at all levels. Best practices examples were disseminated.

I.4. REGIONAL SEMINARS

Two regional seminars were also organised by EACEA on 'human resource management in the Tempus Partner Countries'. These seminars were open to HEREs from each respective region.

The aim of these seminars was to discuss the findings of the Tempus study 'Human Resource Management in Public Higher Education in the Tempus Partner Countries', carried out by two independent external experts, Flora Dubosc and Maria Kelo, with a view to encouraging reflection and discussion on what improvements could be made in the countries concerned and how they could be implemented. The workshops covered the following themes; human resource management of 1) academic staff 2) administrative and technical staff, 3) Rectors and Deans and 4) human resource policies and reforms.

a. Tempus Regional Seminar on the '*Management of Human Resources in Public Higher Education in the Western Balkans*', Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

The event was attended by over 60 participants coming from six countries in the region. (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo¹, Montenegro and Serbia). The participants included representatives from the Ministry of education, Rectors, Chancellors, Deans, Professors, Programme Managers and administrative staff from universities, as well as many Higher Education Reform Experts from the region.

Items that came up often in the discussion included the lack of transparency in recruitment procedures, the lack of training opportunities, the insufficient attention paid to the development and motivation of administrative staff and the challenges created by the expansion of higher education and the lack of integration at the level of institutions.

A number of recommendations were made including making universities more entrepreneurial to effectively manage the increasing numbers of students, ensure a more transparent and open recruitment practices and promote quality assurance systems for human resource management. Other recommendations included improving research opportunities at international, European and regional level, offering training opportunities to younger academic staff and including the development of administrative staff in all national strategies for higher education. Systems of monitoring and evaluation should be introduced to promote a reward-based promotion system with measurable indicators, to ensure it is transparent. Participants were encouraged to disseminate the results of the study widely, to provide material for policy discussions at national level.

b. Tempus regional seminar on '*Management of Human Resources in Public Higher Education in Central Asia*', Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Approximately 80 participants attended from five countries in the region (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan). They included Rectors, Heads of Department, representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Education, Researchers, Administrators, Deans, ETF specialists, as well as HEREs.

Engagement in discussions demonstrated that the topic was relevant for higher education institutions in Central Asia. However, specific challenges were highlighted for this region including the lack of institutional initiatives, frequently changing national strategies and national regulations and brain drain. It was underlined that administrative and technical staff and their commitment and skills are crucial to the successful modernisation of institutions but that the recruitment, career management and working conditions of this category of staff are not sufficiently addressed.

¹ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

A number of recommendations were made by the working groups including the following; reduce workload and increase salaries of academic staff, improve the training and retraining of university teachers and create international exchange programmes to support and integrate an international component into the training and work experience of university teachers. Other recommendations included improving the availability and quality of equipment in institutions, encouraging staff to take foreign language training and setting up a framework for the development of human resources within institutions, including a reward scheme to incentivise teaching staff.

Examples of Follow-up by Participants

The seminar participants proposed to look into using the Central Asia Education Platform, which covers all levels of education, for exchange of good practice and experience between higher education leaders.

In Tajikistan, the results and materials of this seminar were presented to three regional universities and an article was published in the university newspaper “Ba Qullahoi Donish”. The seminar gave an excellent opportunity for representatives of institutions to exchange information and experiences on the ongoing developments in higher education.

I.5. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

HEREs could request (through their NTO), an EU expert to come and make a short training visit to their country, to share their expertise on a specific topic ('Technical Assistance facility'). In 2012, EACEA approved the requests for EU experts to carry out 16 such trainings in 9 Tempus Partner Countries.

Examples of Follow-up by Participants

Serbian HEREs drew on the expertise of Declan Kennedy who came to give a seminar on ‘Learning Outcomes of Preschool Teacher Training Programmes in Serbia’ on 9 March 2012 at the College for Preschool Teacher Education in Novi Sad. Some 40 representatives from 8 colleges and two faculties educating pre-school teachers from all over Serbia were present. The seminar succeeded in training participants to reflect critically on the official definitions of learning outcomes of the study programme for Preschool Teacher Training in Serbia, based on the expectations of labour market and also to propose improvements to the currently used learning outcome definitions.

Montenegrin HEREs organised training sessions by EU experts. The first two-day training was given by Prof. Luciano Sasson on the process of reaccreditation at the University of Montenegro. Representatives from all university units were present. All of them presented the state of play at their respective institutions, after which Prof. Sasson gave a presentation on quality assurance, giving an overview and real examples from the University of La Sapienza in Rome. The second day was more focused on the concrete solutions to some of the problems identified during the first day. The second training session was focused on the recognition of prior learning and flexible learning paths.

I.6 VIRTUAL COMMUNITY

The UNICA web-portal (www.bolognaexperts.net) was used as an important tool to support learning before, during and after each event. The UNICA-BES consortium has regularly uploaded information that might be of interest to HEREs (and Bologna experts), such as EU policy and strategy documents related to the Bologna Process and higher education reform. Relevant information for each event, such as the programme, background reader, relevant academic articles on the topic and practical information were all uploaded on the event web-page. Regular Flashnews messages were circulated among the community in order to inform them of the latest developments in the organisation of events. All seminar PowerPoint presentations and additional material of interest were automatically uploaded on the project's portal either during or shortly after the event had taken place. For all events, a follow-up group was created. Feedback from event discussion groups provided a useful means of implementing improvements for future events. Hands-on training on the virtual community was provided at the international seminar in Vilnius. As a result, the virtual community was used more frequently by HEREs in 2012 for discussion, exchange of views on higher education reform, sharing good practice and as a learning support tool. It helped create a 'community of practice' among HEREs, which continued after the events finished.

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF KNOWLEDGE ACQUIRED IN THEIR HOME COUNTRIES

HERE teams from the various Tempus Partner Countries undertook a range of training and lecturing activities to disseminate the expertise gained from international and regional training opportunities in their home countries in 2012. They also supported the work of the higher education authorities in their countries and engaged in outreach activities.

II.1. TRAINING SESSIONS GIVEN

a. Dissemination Seminars After Attending Events

HERE teams also carried out dissemination meetings following events they attended, to share the results with a wider group of stakeholders and stimulate reflection and debate on the outcomes.

Examples of Follow-up by Participants

In Tajikistan, following the EU and regional seminars organised by UNICA, HEREs organised information and dissemination seminars at central and regional universities on the Bologna process (practical training on ECTS, student and academic mobility, quality assurance and university governance, etc.). They distributed translations of the presentations, guidelines and other practical materials from the seminars among teaching staff and students of higher education institutions.

Other examples of this are given after each seminar in the first part of this document.

b. Training Sessions on Specific Bologna and EU Topics

HEREs also organised training activities to teach their audience about a particular development in EU higher education reform policy.

Examples of Specific Trainings

In Jordan, HERE's organised four seminars in different cities on 'The Bologna Process and the Latest Developments', 'Jordan-European Cooperation: Tempus, Erasmus-Mundus and other EC funded Programs', 'Learning outcomes as a Means of Enhancing the Quality of Higher Education' and 'Benchmarking and Quality Indicators in Higher Education'. Each seminar included presentations based on the interests of staff members and/or students of each institution, followed by discussions. Between 50 and 160 people attended each session. In most cases, intensive discussions were held after the formal presentations by HERE's. The seminars also attracted a large number of students, who were interested in the discussions, especially those related to students' learning outcomes.

In Belarus, members of HEREs team, Igor Titovich and Inna Mitskevich organized lectures for higher education stakeholders on the “European Higher Education Area: history, current state and prospects”, at the National Institute of Higher Education. These trainings were held every month in 2012 and gathered up to 25 higher education stakeholders at a time. HEREs also organized two Information Days for Belarusian students on the “Bologna Process: the Mobility of Students” and “Bologna Process: Lifelong Learning”. The events were held at the National Institute for Higher Education on 27 January and 24 February 2012. Students who participated at the second Information Day received a booklet entitled the “Bologna process and European Higher Education Area: information for Students” prepared by HEREs. As a result of these seminars, students expressed their interest in going on academic mobility through Tempus, Erasmus Mundus and other scholarship programmes.

In Kazakhstan, the National Tempus Office, together with Ryskulov Kazakh University of Economics organised a Summer School on the “Adaptation of main parameters of Bologna Process in Kazakh universities” from 2 to 5 July. Members of the Kazakh HERE team and their colleagues lectured and carried out training sessions for participants on the following topics: “Diploma Supplement”, “Learning Outcomes”, “Higher Education Quality Assurance System” and “Strategic Planning in HEIs”. The Summer School was attended by 80 people, comprising of academic as well as administrative staff.

c. Promoting University Enterprise Cooperation and the Employability of Students

HEREs have encouraged reflection and debate on how universities can ensure that their courses are the most relevant for the labour market.

Examples

In Moldova, a presentation on ‘Quality Assurance Promotion in Higher and Vocational Education’ has been delivered in the framework of a seminar for HEIs, enterprises and social structures representatives. A roundtable on “Training technical staff – Needs and Mutual Advantages” was organised for German enterprises. The main objectives of this event were to present the Moldovan higher education system, to discuss the quality of engineers and managers and to agree on some disciplines in the curricula for economic specialities at the Technical University of Moldova. A collaboration agreement has been drafted. A roundtable with information technology enterprises was also held. The quality of specialist's training in this sector was evaluated and methods for improvement and how the curricula need to be modified, to keep up with present trends were discussed.

In Serbia, a round table was organised in close coordination with the Serbian Chamber of Commerce in Belgrade on the skills and competences of graduate pharmacists. The aim was to enumerate the expected competences of graduates who are employed in different sectors and to explore whether the current study programmes cover all their needs. The event was attended by almost 70 participants, half of which were representatives from the pharmaceutical industry and half were teaching staff and students of pharmacy studies. The HERE team prepared and published conclusions of the discussion in an informative booklet that was distributed among stakeholders. The workshop helped to incite thinking about curricula adjustment among the members of teaching staff, so that the specific needs of employers in various fields could be met.

d. Advising on the Organisation of Doctoral Studies

HEREs have been involved in reflections on the organisation of doctoral studies in certain countries.

Examples

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dr. Muharem Avdispahic (HERE) made a presentation entitled “Achieving the Critical Mass: Internationally Networked PhD Programs”, in a conference on the “Conception and Standards of PhD Studies with the Aim of Developing a European Research Area –ERA”, organised on 13 April 2012 at the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering of the University of Sarajevo. The main aim of the conference was to look at different problems in the organization of PhD studies, as well as other important issues regarding the implementation of the Bologna process (accreditation, organization of PhD studies, quality management, information literacy, student mobility, etc.). Four other HEREs also participated in the conference.

In Moldova, following the HERE team’s participation at the 'Research-Based Education at BA, MA and PhD Level' seminar conducted in Armenia, a report on “Researched based education” was written by the HEREs and distributed. A presentation on the topic of “Research Activities at Master and Bachelor Levels” was delivered at the State Pedagogical University. This led to discussions on the subject of students' scientific research in the European context, changes in knowledge and the role of research in education. A seminar on “Research-based education” was also organised at the Technical University of Moldova.

e. Training Sessions on Curriculum Development Methods

HEREs have given training sessions on different aspects of curriculum design and reform in 2012.

Examples

In Ukraine, four HEREs organized a seminar for ECTS coordinators. They presented all aspects of ECTS implementation in Ukraine to 100 Ukrainian academics. The seminar was organized by the NTO in cooperation with the Ministry and NAPS in Ukraine. They discussed curriculum development items such as learning outcomes, tuning, Qualification Frameworks and ECTS.

In Serbia, HERE team representatives were invited to present a workshop on 'Learning Outcomes' at the closing conference of the Tempus project on 'Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Serbia' held at the University of Belgrade. This raised the level of interest of the academic community in restructuring existing programmes using learning outcomes and competences. One of the conclusions was that it is precisely this approach (use of learning outcomes) that, if applied correctly, can solve many issues in quality assurance.

II.2. HERE SUPPORT TO NATIONAL EDUCATION AUTHORITIES AND HIGHER EDUCATION REFORM

HEREs acted as intermediaries between higher education institutions and governmental authorities in their countries. In certain countries, they were invited by Ministries of higher education or other governmental working groups to offer their advice and expertise on education reform in areas such as quality assurance systems, the degree cycle systems and the recognition of learning outcomes. Thus, HEREs have been directly involved in the policy-making processes at Ministries or in national Parliaments, contributing to higher education reforms in their country. Several HERE teams reported that they collaborated with the higher education authorities in their country on higher education policy development.

Examples

In Russia, seven experts from the HERE group have been included in the expert pool of the Higher Education Modernization Working Group, set up recently by the Ministry of Education and Science.

In Lebanon, HEREs participated in the discussions on the Decree on Doctoral studies at the Ministry of Education in spring 2012.

In Armenia, a project was set up by HEREs to analyse the results of reforms within the context of the Bologna Process, assessing the progress of Bologna Process based on reforms implemented, highlighting the factors that impede the process, as well as developing recommendations for the improvement of the situation. Directives have been developed for the coming decade to synchronize the progress of reforms with the aims defined in 2009 Leuven Communiqué. In addition, Armen Budaghyan (HERE) made a presentation for the Ministry of Education and Science of the report on “Current State and Perspectives of Higher Education Reforms of Armenia in the Context of Bologna Process”.

In Belarus, a number of HEREs participated in the development of the Protocol amending the Agreement between the government of the Republic of Belarus and the Russian Federation on mutual recognition and equivalence of documents on education, degrees and titles.

In Albania, HERES met on 29 December 2012 with the working group for the development of the National Strategy for Higher Education (2014-2020).

In Montenegro, the HERE team supported the Ministry of Education in preparing the report for the 2012 Ministerial conference on benchmarking the reforms, in line with the Bologna Process. Two HERE members, Prof. Mira Vukcevic and Ms. Biljana Misovic were involved in the negotiating process with respect to Chapter 26 of the Acquis Communautaire (Education and Culture).

However, HEREs' level of participation in education policy-making varied from country to country. EACEA is continuously supporting this approach, recommending that the governments of Partner Countries invite HEREs to participate in debates about higher education policy and provide recommendations.

II.3. COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

HEREs played an important role in promoting higher education reforms to a wider audience outside higher education institutions in 2012. They did this through involvement with the media, speaking at public events and writing articles in publications.

a. Media Appearances

In a number of countries, HEREs took the initiative to contact the media and set up interviews to publicise their role and their work.

Examples

In Turkmenistan, Mr. Shallyev regularly participated in round-tables on education in the Educational Programme on TV.

In Serbia, the HERE team are well-known in the local media and wider public, as an expert group of the Ministry of Education, that has a point of view on important issues related to tertiary and other levels of education and their events are always covered by the media.

b. Publications

In a number of Tempus countries, HEREs have produced publications on higher education reform and distributed them to the wider public.

Examples

In Russia, all HEREs contributed to a Tempus collection of articles relating to the modernization of higher education and international integration that was initiated by the National Tempus Office and published by Vladimir State Humanities University.

In Uzbekistan, HEREs prepared 10 articles according to their areas of specializations in a publication entitled 'Tempus in Uzbekistan (1994-2011): Achievements and Best Practice'. This publication was widely disseminated during Tempus project events.

They have not been listed here but in many Tempus countries, there are numerous examples where HEREs have written articles on higher education reform that has been published in academic journals, publications and newsletters.

In many of the Tempus Partner Countries, HEREs contributed to the text of the Tempus study, 'Overview of the Higher Education Systems in the Tempus Partner Countries'. They also helped with the study on human resource development in EU neighbouring countries entitled, 'Human Resource Management in Public Higher Education in the Tempus Partner Countries 2012'. They assisted with the dissemination of the questionnaire and responded to it in detail. In a number of cases, they met with the EU experts carrying out the research and gave interviews.

In many countries, HEREs have also fed into the mid-term evaluation of the Tempus programme, which has been published on the Tempus web-site.

c. Other Dissemination and Communication Activities

Examples

In Israel, a Bologna Training Centre has been established at Ben Gurion University. The centre is headed by one of the HEREs, Mr. Moshe Amir and aims to disseminate information about the principles of the Bologna Process in Israel and assist Israeli higher education institutions with their implementation.

In Israel, HEREs set up a function mail box, where anyone can contact them, with questions on EU higher education reform (bologna@che.org.il). During 2012, the experts received several emails which included questions about the Bologna process principles, requests for information about the Bologna Process and the HEREs' activities.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, HEREs have been very active in 2012. They have put into practice what they have learned at the international seminars, EU-study visits and thematic and regional seminars upon return to their countries. They have also taken advantage of the EU technical assistance facility and the virtual community to enhance their knowledge of higher education reform topics. In their home countries, they have given training sessions on what they have learned, supported the work of their national higher education authorities, given interviews to the media and published articles and books on EU higher education reform to raise awareness and deepen understanding of higher education stakeholders. Given the small budget allocated, their impact on promoting the modernisation of higher education under Tempus has been very considerable indeed.

Róisín Mc Cabe
EACEA
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ANNEX

HERE TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN 2012

International Seminars for Tempus HEREs and EU-Bologna Experts

4-6 June 2012: Bologna Expert and HERE seminar on 'Putting Bucharest's Conclusions on Track: The Expert's Role', Vilnius, Lithuania

Participants: approximately 150

Countries Represented:

Albania, Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Moldova, Montenegro, Morocco, Palestine, Russian Federation, Serbia, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

5-7 November 2012: Bologna Expert and HERE seminar on 'Research-based Education: Strategy and Implementation', Budapest, Hungary

Participants: approximately 125

Countries Represented:

Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo², Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Moldova, Montenegro, Morocco, Russian Federation, Serbia, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan

Study-Visits

23-24 April 2012: Study visit on 'Diversification of Funding, Autonomy and Strategic Planning at Universities', Vienna, Austria

Participants: approximately 33

Countries Represented:

Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, Jordan, Kosovo, Moldova, Palestine, Russian Federation, Serbia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan

² This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

2-3 October 2012: Study visit on 'University-Business Cooperation', VUB and ULB, Brussels, Belgium

Participants: approximately 40

Countries Represented:

Albania, Algeria, Egypt, Georgia, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Montenegro, Morocco, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan

Thematic Seminars for Tempus HEREs

14-15 May 2012: HERE Thematic Seminar on 'University-Business Cooperation', Holon, Israel

Participants: approximately 80

Countries Represented:

Azerbaijan, Belarus, Israel, Russian Federation, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan

9-10 July 2012: Thematic Seminar on 'Research-Based Education at BA, MA and PhD level', Yerevan, Armenia

Participants: approximately 70

Countries Represented:

Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Israel, Kosovo, Moldova, Palestine, Russian Federation and Tajikistan

Regional Seminars on Human Resource Management in Public Higher Education

14-15 June 2012: Tempus Regional Seminar on the 'Management of Human Resources in Public Higher Education in the Western Balkans', Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Participants: approximately 60

Countries Represented:

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia

8-9 October 2012: Tempus regional seminar on the 'Management of Human Resources in Public Higher Education in Central Asia', Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Participants: approximately 80

Countries Represented:

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan

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