

TEMPUS project 158881-TEMPUS-1-2009-RS-JPHES



National Platform for Knowledge Triangle in Serbia

Minutes of the Management Meeting

held on September 20, 2011

at the Instituto Superior Tecnico, Lisbon, Portugal

Official Project Website: <http://knowts.elfak.ni.ac.rs/>

Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting

Project Title: National Platform for Knowledge Triangle in Serbia

Date: September 20, 2011

Time: 11:40-13:30

Location: Instituto Superior Tecnico, Tagus Park Campus, Lisbon, Portugal

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Participants

University of Nis – **Prof. Dr. Miroljub Grozdanović, Prof. Dr. Ivan Milentijević, Prof. Dr. Teufik Tokić, Dr. Vladimir Ćirić, MSc Oliver Vojinović**

University of Belgrade – **Mrs. Gordana Danilović Grković, Mrs. Aleksandra Stanišić**

University of Kragujevac – **Prof. Dr. Dragan Milosavljević**

Prof. Dr. Marjan Gusev (external expert), University Sts. Cyril and Methodius of Skopje

TU Dortmund University – **Mrs Dorota Pawlucka**

Dr. Norbert Jesse (external expert)

Prof. Dr. Katerina Georgouli (external expert), Technological Educational Institute of Athens

Prof. Dr. Claudio Moraga (external expert)

Instituto Superior Tecnico Lisbon – **Prof. Dr. Leonel Sousa**

University of Alicante – **Ms Ester Boldrini**

Ministry of Education and Science – **Prof. Dr. Viktor Nedović**

National Council for Science and Technological Development – **Prof. Dr. Vera Dondur**

National Council for Higher Education – **Prof. Dr. Srđan Stanković**

Canterbury Christ Church University – **Mr. Timothy Dee**

1. **Professor Milentijević** welcomed all participants, noted that all partner representatives are present, except Prof. Kopacek from Technical University Vienna. He reported the fact that Interim Report was accepted with minor remarks and said that he would distribute Commission's remarks to all the consortium members. There were two monitoring visits, both were mentioned in the Report and both affected the Report assessment. Prof. Milentijević emphasized the two main points in the Report – creation of national platform for knowledge triangle, and forming of TTOs at Serbian Universities, and also referred to the status of these two crucial activities.
Since some issues related to the doctoral studies were hot topics in Serbia, prof. Milentijević asked prof. Dondur for the brief presentation about current situation in Serbia, so that EU partners could have realistic picture and try to contribute.

2. **Prof. Vera Dondur** gave presentation titled „R&D in Serbia – Facts and Figures”.

GSI Global Competitiveness Index for 2010/11 of Serbia is 96, which is very low, main problems identified are brain drain and low innovation ratio. Some of indicators that should also draw attention:

Indicator	Serbia	EU average
students per million	34.000	38.000
students to teachers ratio	30	15
PhD students per million	680	1.050
doctorate graduates per million	70	390
researchers per million	1.140	2.800

There are intentions to enhance quality of doctoral studies. Increasing in total number of journal papers published by Serbian authors is encouraging. High concentration should be put to researchers in basic sciences. The Strategy of Scientific and Technological Development 2010-2015 has been adopted, national priorities in science and technology were defined. There are numerous research programs in Serbia. Also, infrastructural investments in equipment, science and technology parks Belgrade, Kragujevac, Novi Sad, Niš. The overall goal is to increase GDP percentage for research from 1% nowadays up to 2% until 2020.

3. **Prof. Milentijević** stressed that the project did not start from the empty field. Our platform should be built upon experiences and the results already achieved.
4. **Prof. Viktor Nedović**, on behalf of Ministry of Education and Sciences, and as FP7 coordinator in Serbia, presented details of the first Strategy of Scientific and Technological Development that was adopted in Serbia, as a legal frame for research and innovation. Action plan is about to be adopted. The budget for R&D activities has been increased by 22% in 2011, resulting in the increase in the total number of researchers by 33%. For the first time, young researchers were stimulated to lead their own research. Also for the first time, international experts were invited to participate in research. In that way, many people from diaspora were involved in research. Also, R&D infrastructure investment initiative was launched, 400MEUR during next 2 years will be invested.
- Serbian rank concerning FP7 is similar to some of new EU states, e.g. Romania and Bulgaria, also similar to Croatia. In order to improve these results, it is necessary to include more young researchers in the coming calls.
- Prof. Nedović expressed an opinion that this project could be important for area of innovation. He announced that new national innovation fund was prepared, first call for early support for innovative companies will be 8.4M EUR. The main goal is to support innovation SMEs.
5. **Prof. Srdjan Stanković**, as a president of the National council for Higher Education, highlighted recent activities of the National Council and relations to the Project. One of the duties is to define policy for financing Higher Education institutions in Serbia. The Council is thinking about creating a new strategy of Higher Education in Serbia. It is very important to connect KNOWTS and the strategy for higher education. Bologna model of doctoral studies started just 2-3 years ago and many things were formalized in a way Mr. Stanković personally did not like. As an emerging question, financing doctoral studies is arising. There are many old institutes in Serbia, remnants of old days, with qualified researchers, but outside universities. There is an idea to make integration in many aspects between universities and institutes, with focus on innovation, but there are many difficulties there. This project could help to establish such integration. Project's National platform for knowledge triangle takes place in a Strategy of higher education, it can be implanted directly, which would be a very important Project result.

National council for Higher Education is open to adopt, formalize and present to other people anything that would be the Project result. However, the moment is very important, strategy will be written these days, discussed in October and adopted in November. Because of that, in order to implant the Platform into the Strategy it should be done as soon as possible. The Strategy opens doors to many things, including the new Laws, new way of financing. The more things we have in the strategy the easier implementation of plans from the Platform.

6. **Prof. Milentijević** concluded that the production of the National platform for knowledge triangle is not a trivial task, but we have a good basis, the Ministry and both national councils are open for cooperation, and the ball is in our yard. The process is to be realized in the following period, meetings will be organized in permanent rhythm at least once per month and communication via communication tools will be constant. Inputs to the Ministry and councils will be provided. The platform will be available also in English, so the feedback from EU partners will be very welcomed.
7. **Mr. Timothy Dee** was satisfied with the outcomes, but stressed that, from UK experiences, institutions trying to be involved in knowledge society, underestimated how this job was hard. Capacity building is crucial, particularly in knowledge exchange, knowledge transfer. Many researchers know how to do research, but not exactly how to exchange knowledge. In UK, after years of struggle, many funds were devoted directly to knowledge exchange capacity building, building abilities and skills related to knowledge transfer. He suggested that part of the budget in Serbia should be oriented in that way so that the potentials could be unlocked.
8. **Dr. Norbert Jesse** agreed that the first thing was definitely composing a strategy, but the very next step, to which it was necessary to proceed very fast, should be as following: encouraging people at different levels, even from secondary school level, people who had not finished PhD studies, etc. There is a must to change the mindset of people. There is no simple roadmap, no single step that solves problems, rather, it is a complex and long process. Besides investing in HW and buildings, building relationships with young people and entrepreneurs is very important. From experiences from Germany, it is proven that cities could participate a lot locally. “Dortmund story” is a very significant example of this.
9. **Prof. Vera Dondur** mentioned that city of Čačak wants to establish a technology park, but they do not know how to start. It may be good for them to connect them to “Dortmund story”.
10. **Prof. Srdjan Stanković** discussed about the need to centralize things, in one hand, but decentralize in other hand. We are aware of capacity building needs, but we really do not know what actually can do to achieve that. Concrete ideas are precious for us. It is precious to hear as many opinions as possible.
11. **Prof. Milentijević** moved the discussion to the level of forming TTOs at universities in Serbia. He reported that the only completely formed TTO is the one in Belgrade.
12. **Ms. Aleksandra Stanišić**, employee of the Center for Technology Transfer, University of Belgrade, gave short presentation about newly formed center. Center was founded by University Council, and it is a part of the University. Among main goals of the Center is the one to protect researchers’ work, support and encourage research, marketing of new technologies, links between researchers and the industry, and to setup networks for more intensive technology transfers.
University of Belgrade contracted Intellectual Property Office of Serbia for financial and

expert support. The center is at the very beginning, it has two employees and a contractor from Intellectual Property Office.

13. **Mrs. Gordana Danilović**, manager of the Business Technology Incubator, University of Belgrade, informed the position and objectives of the incubator. Their mission is to encourage young people to establish their companies and to help researchers (professors) to innovate and form spin offs. Model of operation of the Incubator is a two-phased: education phase (about business plan, product pricing, etc.) and incubation phase. Mrs. Danilović could qualify results as very good, with 21 companies established and more than 10 people who came back from abroad. All companies are exporting from their beginning. However, there are many practical steps in promoting new technology park, and the technical assistance is very welcome.
14. **Prof. Dragan Milosavljević**, reported about the process of forming of the TTO at the University of Kragujevac. TTO will be hosted at the Faculty of Engineering Science (former Faculty of Mechanical Engineering), formal procedure is under way. They are already building a database about people and equipment.
15. **Prof. Milentijević** announced the only change in the Project in respect to the initial application. It is decided to offer software platform for TTOs in order to connect researchers and their research results with companies. For that purpose, about 4.500EUR is redirected to the software design and development. Reallocation of the budget is approved by the Commission.
16. **Dr. Vladimir Ćirić** gave a presentation about benefits that software would offer to TTOs and reported about development status of the platform. He described the strategy for hierarchical registration for academic users in order to spin the wheel of registration. Also, the specific details of company registration were presented, as well as the plan to control the registration of companies. kontrola nad registracijom kompanija. Second important area of software usage is related to technology brokering. Capabilities for automatic matching academic and company profiles, and also for searching the database are under development. Current status: 80% of interface and underlying logic is finished, alpha version will be finished until the end of September, beta will be installed into the servers upon purchasing the equipment. The system can and should evolve during the platform lifetime, according to emerging users' needs.
17. **Prof. Viktor Nedović** suggested that it would be very good to be in touch with people in Serbia who had already built some databases for companies: Prof. Kutlača and also Prof. Mandić from Kragujevac. Mr. Nedović was very glad that the software would be bilingual because there have already been the requests from abroad. Also he raised the issue of finding a way for the system to be sustainable.
18. **Mrs. Dorota Pawlucka** asked whether registered companies could browse profiles of other companies. After Mrs. Pawlucka got the answer to the question she was very pleased with it that the profile of one company would not be exposed to other companies because companies do not want their profiles to be visible to other companies, they consider it a secret. Profile visibility is one of the factors that deter companies from using such databases.
19. **Prof. Milentijević** moved the discussion to managing activities and planning for next activities. Next study visit will be to University of Alicante, first proposal is last week of October. Proposed termin will be tuned according to availability of people in Alicante. One of the important remaining visits is the visit to EU TTOs by staff of Serbian universities TTOs

during spring next year. These visits are flexible but should be carefully prepared. It is a need to do some retraining for Serbian TTO staff, just to get the feeling how the system works. By that time, all TTOs will be formed, and the Platform will be in mature version.

The crown of the Project will be an international conference on knowledge transfer. The goal is to gather at least 50 participants; all should help to increase participant number and quality of the conference. It is yet to be decided how the conference will be organized. It is possible to embed the conference within the frame of some of well established conferences, TELSIKS, MIEL of ETRAN, or it could be a separate event.

Dr. Jesse is not anymore with TUD, he is an external expert now, subcontracting with TUD, within the previous budget of TUD.

Another information that Prof. Milentijević gave was the one concerning the financial revision. The need for the financial revision before the first report was raised after the application. After tough negotiations with revision companies, from initial price of 3% of the budget (around 30.000 EURO), Serbian branch of well known Moore & Stephens revision house agreed to do financial revision for the price between 5000 and 7000 EUR. Since the cost of financial revision was not planned in the application, this cost will be decreased from all partners. Meanwhile the Commission gave up from demanding the financial revision for the first report. The complete revision must be made at the end of the project.

70% of 60% of the grant have not been spent, so we have no rights to second installment from the Commission. If some partner needs a second installment, it is possible to make it.

20. Prof. Marjan Gušev, as a regional external expert also responsible for quality control, gave concluding remarks. Forthcoming job is certainly very complex, with many stakeholders, from ministries, academia and industry. In order to achieve success, strategy needs an action plan, with definition of “projects” within the plan, clusters such as promotion and motivation, capacity building, organizational aspects, etc. Each cluster can have estimated budget and personal responsibilities.