

**Internal Quality Report RETHINK**

**Date:** June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015

**1. Comparison of Target State and Current State of the Project in June 2015**

Target State According to the Original Work Plan	Current State June 2015 by Work Package
<p><b>Work Package 1 Road-Map:</b> SWOT analysis of PC HEIs’ and EU HEIs’ Curricula should have been completed and published on the project’s website until May 2015.</p>	<p><b>Work Package 1 Road-Map:</b> SWOT analysis of PC HEIs’ and EU HEIs’ Curricula are completed and published on the project’s website.</p>
<p><b>Work Package 2 Rethinking Curricula – Architecture/Urban Planning:</b> Up to the current date the activities of this work package include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the definition of general and specific goals for WP2,</li> <li>– the agreement on the transdisciplinary framework to be introduced to curricula of PC HEIs.</li> <li>– the agreement on the “CO2THINK” component to be used in the new Joint Degrees.</li> <li>– the successful integration of the Innovation/Entrepreneurship component to the new Joint Degrees.</li> <li>– the elaboration and publication of teaching materials,</li> <li>– the development of preliminary versions of Joint Degree</li> <li>– the development of final versions of Joint Degree Programs and its publication on the project’s website.</li> <li>– Selection and development of the e-learning tool useful and accepted by all partners</li> </ul>	<p><b>Work Package 2 Rethinking Curricula – Architecture/Urban Planning:</b> The following activities have been accomplished up to now:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– definition of general and specific goals for WP2 (May 2014),</li> <li>– agreement on the transdisciplinary framework to be introduced to curricula of PC HEIs (May 2014).</li> <li>– agreement on the “CO2THINK” component to be used in the new Joint Degrees (11/2014).</li> <li>– agreement on the integration of the Innovation/Entrepreneurship component to the new Double Degrees (11/2014).</li> <li>– elaboration of teaching materials of some (not all) new programs (05/2015),</li> <li>– the development of some (not all) preliminary versions of Double Degree (03/2015),</li> <li>– the development of some (not all) final versions of Double Degree Programs (05/2015).</li> <li>– agreement on MOODLE as e-learning tool</li> </ul>
<p><b>Work Package 3 Rethinking Curricula – Environmental Sciences/Climate Engineering:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the definition of general and specific goals for WP3,</li> <li>– the agreement on the transdisciplinary framework to be introduced to curricula of PC HEIs.</li> <li>– the agreement on the “CO2THINK”</li> </ul>	<p><b>Work Package 3 Rethinking Curricula – Environmental Sciences/Climate Engineering:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– definition of general and specific goals for WP3 (May 2014),</li> <li>– agreement on the transdisciplinary framework to be introduced to curricula of PC HEIs (May 2014).</li> <li>– agreement on the “CO2THINK”</li> </ul>

<p>component to be used in the new Joint Degrees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the successful integration of the Innovation/Entrepreneurship component to the new Joint Degrees.</li> <li>– the elaboration and publication of teaching materials,</li> <li>– the development of preliminary versions of Joint Degree</li> <li>– the development of final versions of Joint Degree Programs and its publication on the project’s website.</li> <li>– Selection and development of the e-learning tool useful and accepted by all partners</li> </ul>	<p>component to be used in the new Joint Degrees (11/2014).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– agreement on the integration of the Innovation/Entrepreneurship component to the new Double Degrees (11/2014).</li> <li>– elaboration of teaching materials of some (not all) new programs (05/2015),</li> <li>– development of some (not all) preliminary versions of Double Degree (03/2015),</li> <li>– development of some (not all) final versions of Double Degree Programs (05/2015).</li> <li>– agreement on MOODLE as e-learning tool</li> </ul>
<p><b>Work Package 4 Upgrade cluster:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The Guidelines for Quality Assurance System ready for approval,</li> <li>– Implementation of the QAS Guidelines,</li> <li>– RETHINK partners from HEIs in PC have participated in training courses on technical English (as far as necessary),</li> <li>– all RETHINK participants (teachers/students/staff) are fluent in English,</li> <li>– Purchase, installation of communication and e-learning equipment,</li> <li>– PC teachers mobility to EU HEIs for training methods' upgrade</li> </ul>	<p><b>Work Package 4 Upgrade cluster:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Guidelines for Quality Assurance System have been completed (12/2014),</li> <li>– several partners already have achieved official language certificates on English language</li> </ul>
<p><b>Work Package 5 Quality Statute:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Internal monitoring of the action in Partner Countries including monitoring reports,</li> <li>– Internal monitoring of the action in EU Countries including monitoring reports,</li> <li>– Internal monitoring visits to PC HEIs including monitoring reports,</li> <li>– Inter-project coaching,</li> <li>– External Independent evaluation of the project,</li> <li>– Financial audits</li> </ul>	<p><b>Work Package 5 Quality Statute:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Self-evaluation of the project’s progress until 11/2014 including HEIs from PC and EU and report on self-evaluation from 01/2015,</li> <li>– Self-evaluation of the project’s progress until 03/2015 including HEIs from PC and EU and report on self-evaluation from 05/2015,</li> <li>– inter-project coaching has been accomplished (11/2014),</li> <li>– external evaluations of the project have been accomplished by the National ERASMUS+ Offices Moldova (05/2014), Ukraine (03/2015), Georgia, Azerbaijan</li> </ul>

<p><b>Work Package 6 Expand RETHINK:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Promotion of the project's activities/results in Partner Countries including promotional events (round table's discussions, workshops, conferences),</li> <li>– Promotion of the project's activities/results in EU Countries including promotional events (round table's discussions, workshops, conferences),</li> <li>– Project website with Moodle platform: creation, use, support,</li> <li>– Strategic plan for the implementation of dissemination tool,</li> <li>– Supply the repository with scientific/academic/administrative publications</li> </ul>	<p>and Armenia (06/2015)</p> <p><b>Work Package 6 Expand RETHINK:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Promotional events/activities have been accomplished in the framework of project meetings as well as independently of meetings by EU and PC universities (<a href="http://rethink.fa.ulisboa.pt/index.php/report-info/workpackage-6">http://rethink.fa.ulisboa.pt/index.php/report-info/workpackage-6</a>)</li> <li>– Project website with Moodle platform has been established and it is maintained continuously,</li> <li>– strategic plan for the implementation of dissemination tool has been discussed (11/2014)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Work Package 7 Exploitation and Sustainability:</b> All activities are scheduled for the third project year</p>	<p><b>Work Package 7 Exploitation and Sustainability:</b></p>
<p><b>Work Package 8 Administration &amp; Management:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Project's meetings: strategy, publishing of results including the establishment of a management council, concept council and quality council and the completion of memorandums of understanding,</li> <li>– Teleconferences for the intermediate strategy control</li> </ul>	<p><b>Work Package 8 Administration &amp; Management:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Project meetings have been accomplished 05/2014, 11/2014, 03/2015,</li> <li>– establishment of a management council, concept council and quality council (05/2014),</li> <li>– completion of all memorandums of understanding (10/2014)</li> <li>– regular Skype conferences are held with partners from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Moldova and Ukraine in order to clarify administrative questions and technical problems</li> </ul>

**2. Deviations According to the Original Work Plan**

The above comparison of the target state and the current state of the project indicates some changes in the project's objectives and some lacks/delays in the project's progress.

The most important change is the decision of the project consortium to develop and establish double degrees instead of joint degrees. This decision has been taken at the initial project meeting in Chisinau 05/2014. According to the given possibilities of the PC universities as well as to the complexity of introducing joint degrees this decision is adequate. It has established the RETHINK project's targets on a realistic base.

“**Work package 1** Road Map” has been completed in line with the work plan.

Regarding the development of double degrees “**Work Package 2** Rethinking Curricula – Architecture/Urban Planning” and “**Work Package 3** Rethinking Curricula – Environmental Sciences/Climate Engineering” are in good progress. All universities from PC have signed at least one cooperation agreement on the establishment of double degrees with one of the European partner universities. In addition there are several agreements on double degrees among the universities from PC. Herewith very important preconditions for the achievement of the project's targets are fulfilled.

According to the original work plan the final versions of all newly to be developed Double Degree Programs should have been completed including teaching materials until May 2015 in order to implement them by the beginning of the academic year 2015/2016. Due to the plurality of board decisions and organizational preparations several of the PC universities are not ready to implement new double degrees already 09/2015. Thus the project management council in close cooperation with universities from PC has decided to implement only those double degree programs 09/2015 that are in appropriate progress. All further programs will have to be implemented by the beginning of the academic year 2016/2017 in September 2016 latest. This target seems to be realistic and all forces should be concentrated on the achievement.

Most activities of “**Work Package 4** Upgrade cluster” are in delay. Only the elaboration of the guidelines for quality assurance system has been completed in time according to original work plan. In how far the QAS guidelines already have been implemented at PC universities is unknown. It is very important that all university partners complete the questionnaire on the QAS system that has been provided by Prof. Fernando Peña (University of Coruña already 02/2015 as soon as possible. Only based on the results of this questionnaire it will be possible to detect needs of improvement regarding the actual existing quality assurance systems. In order to provide smooth and efficient project communication those partners who are not fluent in English should catch up language trainings as soon as possible. An interrogation in Tbilisi 11/2014 has shown that there are still considerable lacks. Purchase, installation of communication and e-learning equipment should be prepared and accomplished until the end of 08/2015 latest at those universities in PC that are going to implement double degrees in 09/2015. In parallel to the implementation of the first double degree programs PC teachers mobility to EU HEIs for training methods' upgrade should be conducted.

Regarding “**Work Package 5** Quality Statute” internal monitoring actions in PC and EU are done by the responsible contact persons of the partner universities in connection with the preparation of presentations on the project's progress. These presentations are presented at project meetings and they substitute explicit monitoring reports. They are complemented by reports on the self-

evaluation of the project's progress. Presentations and reports on self-evaluation in combination provide sufficient information on the current project progress.

Internal monitoring visits to PC HEIs should not take place before PC HEIs will have implemented the new double degree programs. Only after the implementation of the new programs there will be the chance to receive a feedback from students enrolled in these programs and such a student's feedback is considered to be fundamental for the evaluation of the programs.

An inter-project coaching has been accomplished in line with the original work plan.

External independent evaluations of the project have been accomplished by the National ERASMUS+ Offices Armenia (06/2015), Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova (05/2014) and Ukraine (03/2015).

Although external financial audits are scheduled in the workplan at the end of each project year it does not make any sense to do so. The project coordinator is obliged to organize an external financial audit on the final financial report including supporting documents in order to verify and to confirm correctness of all expenses of the project. Thus intermediate external financial audits are not necessary.

Dissemination activities of "**Work Package 6** Expand RETHINK" seem to be in line with original work plan besides the realization of a repository with scientific/academic/administrative publications. Since the implementation of this repository is closely connected to the operation of the new double degree programs it should be available as soon as the first programs will start.

Independently from the more or less general specifications of dissemination activities in the work plan promotion activities on those double degree programs that will start 09/2015 already should have been implemented in order to achieve student's awareness of these programs and to activate them for enrolment.

All activities of "**Work Package 7** Exploitation and Sustainability" are scheduled for the second half of the project's duration and thus no activities have been accomplished up to now.

The activities of "**Work Package 8** Administration & Management" have been implemented according to the work plan except the accomplishment of teleconferences for the intermediate strategy control at regular intervals. Whether the realization of these teleconferences really would improve the quality of project management is not clear. Obviously none of the project partners is missing them. A further important aspect of project management that neither is mentioned in the work plan nor in the logical framework matrix is the formal registration of the project in PC. It is a precondition for transferring money without problems to those PC that prescribe such a formal registration (i.e. Belarus, Ukraine). If project registrations are not completed up to now this completion should have first priority.

### 3. Conclusions

The development and introduction of joint or double degrees usually need many detailed preparations, coordination and communication processes inside the universities involved. In the same time many different departments and boards have to be involved until such a program finally

can be implemented. All this needs a lot of time and engagement. Due to this fact the original work plan that is heading for the implementation of new joint (now double) degrees already after 18 months is very ambiguous. The actual course of the project is indicating exactly this. Right the latest project meeting in Kiev 03/2014 has made evident the enormous need of detailed conversations between the project partners in order to clarify single aspects of cooperation agreements on double degrees. And each single result of those conversations probably will have to be approved by several university boards.

On this background it is a large success that several double degrees already will be implemented 09/2015 and that all universities from PC have prepared/signed at least one agreement on a double degree with one of the European partner universities. Thus and although this will be not in line with the original work plan it seems to be no problem to implement double degrees at a later date at those universities that need some more time for preparation. But the latest date of implementation should be 09/2016 in order to take the chance receiving some feedbacks from students enrolled. And in order to achieve a considerable number of students enrolling in the double degrees promotional activities should be implemented in time.

In any case all barriers hindering the implementation of double degrees at PC universities should be overcome by first priority. This especially is regarding the completion of “work package 4 Upgrade Cluster”.

#### **4. Quality Assurance with Regards to Content**

The above chapters deal with the project’s quality in terms of the project’s progress in comparison to the original work plan. Another aspect of quality is quality regarding contents. Content in this sense does not mean the content of the curricula<sup>1</sup> themselves but the process of the implementation of the double degrees.

At the project meeting in Kiev 03/2015 Josef Noeke and Guido Kaufmann have presented a general guideline on the implementation of double degrees. Structured into 6 phases it covers all important steps and considerations that have to be done from the very beginning, from the idea to develop and implement double degrees up to the introduction of the program. Following the presentation of these guidelines Josef Noeke and Guido Kaufmann have offered consultancy to all representatives of the universities from PC. Only some of them have taken this chance and asked specific questions regarding concrete problems/challenges that did occur at their universities. That there did not have been more requests might be reasoned either by the fact that the presentation of the guidelines already has answered many questions and/or the necessity to take the chance of direct conversation with cooperation partners in order to clarify detailed aspects of their cooperation agreements.

There are two main dimensions of quality regarding the implementation of double degrees: Completeness of all considerations, organizational preparations and capacities necessary to operate a double degree program and their adequacy or efficiency. Guido Kaufmann has developed a tool for the measurement of both dimensions in cooperation with Josef Noeke. This tool is based

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<sup>1</sup> Regarding the quality of the double degree programs themselves guidelines on a quality assurance system have been developed and published including a questionnaire on the fulfilment.

on the guidelines and it will be complemented by questionnaires/interviews of students enrolled in the double degree programs. Guido Kaufmann suggests using this quality measurement tool for quality control/assurance at all partner universities in order to receive comparable results. It should be applied in connection with the monitoring visits at PC universities. These visits should be scheduled for the first semester/first study year after the start of a double degree program.

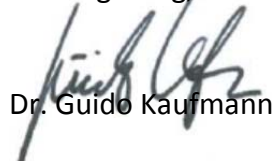
## 5. Summary and Future Actions

Summarized the RETHINK project is in good progress although the completion of several actions/activities is in delay. Due to the complexity and the deriving necessity of bilateral and internal clarifications, decisions and preparations for the implementation of double degree programs several universities from PC are not able to implement newly developed double degrees into their regular curricula offers. They should concentrate their forces on proper preparation of the double degrees and implement them in 2016. In order to support a proper preparation at these universities and to support a proper implementation at those universities that will start their double degrees programs already 09/2015 the activities of “Work Package 4 Upgrade cluster” should be caught up as soon as possible.

Based on the above considerations the following actions should be implemented until the end of 2015:

- implementation of double degree programs at those universities that already have completed all preparations, intensification of efforts of all further university partners in order to complete preparations for the implementation of double degrees,
- installation of e-learning classes and teleconferences' rooms,
- participation in courses on Technical English for PC teachers/students,
- translation of teaching materials, adaptation at PC HEIs,
- PC teachers mobility to EU HEIs for training methods' upgrade,
- Internal monitoring visits to those PC HEIs that will introduce double degrees 09/2015,
- start activities seeking for projects/contracts for RETHINK partners in PC and EU Countries,
- start preparation of Double Degrees for evaluation/accreditation in PC and EU Countries,
- organization of a coordination meeting some months after the first Double Degree programs will have been implemented,
- Enhancement and intensification of dissemination activities

Bad Segeberg, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015



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