



MINUTES

RETHINKe Project Kick-off meeting

Technical University of Moldova
Faculty of Urbanism and Architecture

39 Dacia Boulevard, Chisinau

20 - 22 May 2014

Participants:

№	Name	Country	Institution
1	Aida Aleksanyan	Armenia	State Engineering University of Armenia
2	Arsen Apyoyan	Armenia	Gavar State University
3	Farid Aliev	Azerbaijan	Azerbaijan University of Architecture and Construction
4	Yashar Omarov	Azerbaijan	Baku State University
5	Svetlana Mikhnevich	Belarus	Ministry of Education of Belarus
6	Siarhei Piashkun	Belarus	Polotsk State University
7	Vitali Khaletski	Belarus	Brest State Technical University
8	Giorgi Kvartskhava	Georgia	Georgian Technical University
9	Ioseb Salukvadze	Georgia	Tbilisi State University
10	Josef Noeke	Germany	University of Paderborn
11	Guido Kaufmann	Germany	Kaufmann Unternehmensberatung
12	Valeriu Lungu	Moldova	Technical University of Moldova
13	Svetlana OLEINIC	Moldova	Technical University of Moldova
14	Natalia CIOBANU	Moldova	Technical University of Moldova
15	Vasili Șaragov	Moldova	Aleco Russo Balti State University
16	Fernando Peña López	Spain	University of A Coruña
17	Oksana Turchanina	Portugal	University of Lisbon
18	António Castelbranco	Portugal	University of Lisbon
19	José Beirão	Portugal	University of Lisbon
20	Helena Bartolo	Portugal	Polytechnic Institute of Leiria
21	Mykola Zaichenko	Ukraine	Donbass National Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture
22	Ihor Dedovets	Ukraine	Donetsk National Technical University



PROGRAM FOR THE KICK-OFF MEETING

20.05.2014

Location: Technical University of Moldova (Kishinev, Moldova)

- 14.00 – Lunch
- 15.00 – Welcome word of the Rector of the Technical University of Moldova
- 15.15 – RETHINK project: objectives, structure (Coordinator - Prof. O.Turchanina)
- 15.30 – RETHINK project: general concept (Concept Coordinator - Prof. A.Castelbranco).
- 15.45 – Ministry of Education of Belarus: Bologna process: integration to the Higher Education System
- 16.00 – Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan: Bologna process: integration to the Higher Education System
- 16.15 – Project's partners' word (presentation of the SWOT analysis, 10 min per partner)
- 17.00 – Coffee-break.
- 17.15 – Project's partners' word (presentation of the SWOT analysis).
- 19.30 – Dinner.

21.05.2014

Location: Technical University of Moldova (Kishinev, Moldova)

- 10.00 – Establishment of the Management Council, Quality Council, Concept Council (Coordinator - Prof. O.Turchanina).
- 10.30 – Management Council: project implementation
- 11.00 – Quality Council – Inter-project coaching: analysis of existing TEMPUS projects on the area of Architecture/Urban Planning and Environmental Sciences/Climate Engineering in order to avoid overlapping of work (Prof. Nikola Zaichenko)
- 11.15 – Concept Council - SWOT analysis: discussion, developing strategy for the Joint Degree elaboration (all partners).
- 12.00 – Coffee-break
- 12.30 – Concept Council - SWOT analysis: discussion, developing strategy for the Joint Degree elaboration (all partners).
- 13.15 – Financial management of the TEMPUS grant (Coordinator - Prof. O.Turchanina).
- 14.00 – Lunch.
- 15.00 – Financial management of the TEMPUS grant (Coordinator - Prof. O.Turchanina).
- 16.30 – Quality Council – Quality Assurance System: objectives, principles, plan of integration to the Partner Countries' HEIs (Prof. Fernando Peña)



17.00 – Coffee-break.

17.15 – Quality Council – Plan of Quality control among the partners (Dr. Guido Kaufmann).

17.45 – Partners’ networking.

19.00 – Dinner.

22.05.2014

Location: Technical University of Moldova (Kishinev, Moldova)

10.00 – Memorandum of Understanding: entering into force (all partners).

11.00 – Awarding of RETHINK plaques to the partners (all partners).

11.30 – Coffee-break

12.00 – Partners’ networking.

14.00 – Lunch.

16.00 – Partners’ departure.

23.05.2014

Partners’ departure



20 of May 2014

The meeting's special guests:

- Ion BOSTAN - Rector, Technical University of Moldova;
- Valentin AMARIEI – Vice-Rector, Technical University of Moldova;
- Nistor GROZAVU - Vice Mayor of Chisinau, Moldova
- Tatiana GHERȘTEGA - Ministry of Education of Moldova
- Valentin ARION - TEMPUS Programme Coordinator in Moldova;
- France DANTIN - Project Manager, Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (Brussels, Belgium)
- Jose GUTIERREZ - Project Manager, European Commission - Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency;
- Team from the News Program „Mesager” of the National Television of Moldova;
- Correspondents from the News Programs and Youth programs of Radio Moldova
- Editor of University Messenger.

The meeting was opened by the Rector of the Technical University of Moldova, Academician Ion BOSTAN who introduced the guests of honor, afterwards he talked about the Technical University of Moldova: the structure, the students, the teachers and the integration into the Bologna Process.

Next to speak was the vice Mayor of Chisinau, Nistor GROZAVU, who spoke in support of the idea for reforming higher education in the field of architecture, urbanism and environment.

From the Ministry of Education of Moldova Tatiana GHERȘTEGA, spoke about the policy of the Ministry of Education with regard to Higher Education in the context of European integration.

Project Coordinator Prof. Oksana TURCHANINA, University of Lisbon, welcomed guests and thanked the administration of Technical University of Moldova for accepting the proposal to organize the meeting in Chisinau and then presented objectives and structure of the RETHINKe project.



The concept coordinator - Prof. Antonio CASTELBRANCO presented the general concept of the **RETHINK** project which intends to promote a Trans-European and trans-disciplinary exchange of knowledge, experience and management and to develop stronger cooperation ties within HEIs of the EU (Portugal, Spain, Holland and Germany) and the ENPI East (PC): Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine.

To make the collaboration more effective, the **RETHINK** project is going to focus on Regional Priority for these Partner Countries “Environment” on the following:

- 1 – Architecture/Urban planning
- 2 – Environmental Sciences/Climate engineering.

Svetlana MIKHNEVICH, Ministry of Education of Belarus gave a speech - Bologna process: Integration to the Higher Education System of republic of Belarus.

During the meeting, Mr. GUTIERREZ's input was very significant as he called the attention of the partners to the possibility that the objectives that were initially planned for the project might be over ambitious -2 joint degrees and 2 double degrees, when having into consideration the fact that there are 22 partners in 9 countries. Therefore, he suggested that the partnership might want to cut down on the expectations and find an agreement among the partners in order to insure that whatever is agreed on will have to be accomplished.

In addition, Ms. DANTIN clarified her position on the following aspects:

"We however still have recommendations to improve the project's impact:

- ***The work plan is extremely ambitious and should be reviewed in order to assess the feasibility of developing and implementing 4 new curricula (2 MAs and 2 PHDs) in approximately than 30 months***
- *The capacity to attract (also in the long term) suitable students and to involve experienced professors in the PCs (in particular with regard to the language of tuition which will be English) should be further analyzed.*
- *Rather than focusing on joint degrees (which are very difficult to achieve even in the EU context), **the consortium should study the possibility of developing double/multiple degrees.***
- ***A signed Partnership agreement should be put in place so as to ensure that all partners understand clearly their rights and obligations in the project.***

We would kindly ask you to actively follow these recommendations and to provide us with information on how you have addressed these issues."



The project Coordinator Prof. Oksana TURCHANINA proposed the project partners present the SWOT analysis in the frame of the Workpackage 1: Road-map.

The SWOT analysis presentations were given by:

- António CASTELBRANCO, University of Lisbon, Portugal
- José BEIRÃO, University of Lisbon, Portugal
- Fernando PEÑA, University of Coruña, Spain
- Helena BARTOLO, Polytechnic Institute of Leiria, Portugal
- Josef NOEKE, University of Paderborn, Germany
- Vitali KHALETSKI, Brest State Technical University;
- Siarhei PIASHKUN, Polotsk State University;
- Vasili SARAGOV, Aleco Russo Balti State University;
- Svetlana OLEINIC, Technical University of Moldova;
- Arsenic APROYAN, Gavar State University;
- Aida ALEKSANYAN, State Engineering University of Armenia;
- Farid ALIEV, Azerbaijan University of Architecture and Construction;
- Yashar OMAROV, Baku State University;
- Ihor DEDOVETS, Donetsk National Technical University;
- Mykola ZAICHENKO, Donbass National Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture;
- Giorgi KVARTSKHAVA, Georgian Technical University;
- Ioseb SALUKVADZE, Tbilisi State University.

RETHINKe Project Coordinator - Prof. Oksana TURCHANINA summed up the first day.



21 of May 2014

Project Coordinator - Prof. Oksana TURCHANINA established the Management Council, Quality Council and Concept Council for every partner institution in the frame of the Workpackage 8: Administration & Management.

Prof Fernando PEÑA presented his views of the tasks of the Quality Council; namely, the Quality Assurance System for the double degree and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in the frame of the Workpackage 5: Quality Plan.

Prof Fernando PEÑA added the following conclusions from the kick off meeting as a plan of activities for the Workpackage 2 “Rethinking Curricula – Architecture/Urban Planning” and Workpackage 3 “Rethinking Curricula - Environmental Sciences/Climate Engineering”:

- The partners have realized that setting up joint degrees in two years and start managing them could be a goal too hard to achieve in only three years. For that reason, they have decided to change slightly the goal and set up double degrees instead of joint titles, insofar double degrees are easier to implement because they can be based on previously existing and accredited official degrees. Anyhow is up to the partners to try to set up joint degrees if they consider possible to put them in force during the project's performance time.
- The partners decided that the new international titles should be set up in the master level, although some of them could try to set up doctoral programmes providing that they consider possible to set them up during the time of the project's performance.
- The partners decided that the first step for setting up those degrees is to design an information matrix with the contents and characteristics of the current single master degrees in the universities' academic offer related to the matters of the project. The objective of this matrix is to allow the partners to look for the matches and similarities between their degrees, so that they could decide which could be the best options to set up the new double titles.
- All the partners have to provide complete information of the masters linked to the project's matters with a short description of each course and subject. The matrix has to be finished some time before the next meeting in November, so that the partners can bring preliminary proposals of double degrees to that meeting.



Dr. Arsen APROYAN added that the only one step to Fernando's suggestions was an English translation of the curricula by all the partners. (Existing master profession which is in action in the university): Course title (including degree), Structure divided by semesters (including total number of ECTS credits per semester), Name of mandatory chairs (including ECTS credits) and so on. Perhaps it will be possible to provide this information until the 10th of July.

Therefore, the next steps should be as follows – suggestion from Prof. José BEIRÃO for Workpackage 2 “Rethinking Curricula – Architecture/Urban Planning” and Workpackage 3 “Rethinking Curricula - Environmental Sciences/Climate Engineering”:

- The partners must send to the manager of the future matrix complete information about their already existing masters related to the matters of the project. This information must be in English and has to include a short description of the courses taught in each master.
- Once the information is publicly available, all the universities should go through the other institution's offer in order to look for matches and similarities.
- Before the following partners meeting each institution must have at least a draft proposal of double degree to be negotiated in the next future. Proposals will determine the name of the institutions involved and a very broad idea of the academic route required, to get the double degree.

Prof Antonio CASTELBRANCO – Concept Coordinator – has described the objectives that underlay the project concepts it was said that the selection of the RETHINK project partnership was done having in consideration the intentions of the European Union in terms of strengthening the East-West relations, the objectives of the TEMPUS Program in terms of connecting HEI's, the individual skills and competences of the EU HEIs and experience with the Bologna Process, environment curricula, environmental education methods, availability of equipment, and business/academia practice. Which will unquestionably match the needs of the ENPI East in terms of environmental issues, the Bologna Process convergence, and the necessity to rethink and to restore the environment In addition, on a higher conceptual level, the most important strength behind RETHINK is its environmental theme and the real need to establish the ENVIRONMENT- BUSINESS- EDUCATION triangle.

Prof. José BEIRÃO has presented the project's web site and how it works within the MOODLE platform in order to share information (<http://rethink.fa.ulisboa.pt>) in the frame of the Workpackage 6 – Expand RETHINK.



22 of May 2014

Project Coordinator - Prof. Oksana TURCHANINA presented:

- 1 – Working plan for every Workpackage, with all the deliverables, inputs and activities foreseen.
- 2 – “Financial Management” of the grant to the partners with the explanation of all the supporting documents.

These presentations are part of the Strategy for the successful project implementation (Workpackage 8 – Administration & Management).

Dr. Guido KAUFFMAN has presented report on the project progress in the frame of the Workpackage 5 – Quality Plan. He also referred to the fact that by the end of May 2015 the first Progress report will need to be delivered to EACEA, and that this document is of paramount importance, as it is considered to be the main document for the successful implementation of the project. As such, he suggested that in the next 6 months the steps in the process of implementation of RETHINKe be carefully chosen and agreed upon.

In addition, Dr KAUFFMAN made the following recommendations:

1. Coordination meetings:

The kick-off meeting has shown that usually there is a need of intensive discussions between project partners in order to establish a mutual understanding of what can be achieved realistically and how to achieve it. The time requirement for these discussions should be scheduled explicitly. Perhaps parallel workshops for the three councils (management, quality, and concept) should be organized in the framework of future meetings. The workshop results should be presented In a final joint meeting of all participants and based on this a detailed action plan should be passed.

2. Management approach: Management by objectives probably is the only management approach suitable for projects like RETHINK. But please be aware that objectives have to be very *smart* (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timed) when working with partners from former Soviet Countries. All our experiences show that these partners usually need very clear and very detailed specifications of what to do and how to do. And it needs a strict control of achievement regarding contents and time.



3. Next steps:

- ask all university partners who will be involved in the elaboration of joint/double degrees to provide a matrix of existing structures according to the scheme provided by José Beirão until end of June. Matrixes should be in English and should be all in the same format.
- agree on a process/procedure of analysis of the matrixes (target of analysis) inside the concept council as well as on the responsibility (who) and time (when) for this analysis, - agree on a process/procedure of decision making out of the results of the analysis including the preparation of decision making (required presentations, discussions, etc.).
- With respect to open questions (compare results, no. 3): to discuss these open questions inside the Management Council and agree on a detailed schedule for implementation with the partners responsible for these deliverables.

Dr. Arsen APROYAN added the need:

1. To explore current and completed Joint and Double Degrees according to the countries (Armenia, Ukraine, Georgia, Belarus, Moldova, Azerbaijan).
2. To observe and summarize existing practice, thus making our future activities' direction and procedure more precise.
3. Our Quality Council Team sees the necessity to develop Quality Plan (QP) for project implementation and I shall do my best to send it to you till the 12th of July 2014.

After all planned presentations and discussions were performed, the “Memorandum of Understanding” document was signed and stamped for every partner. After all the “Memorandum of Understanding” documents were signed, to all the RETHINKe partners were given plaques of the project and next partners’ meeting was planned for 2nd week of November of 2014 in Tbilisi, Georgia.

Results of the promotional activities of the RETHINKe project can be found here:

<http://rethink.fa.ulisboa.pt/index.php/actual-info/promotion>

Report on the Kick-off meeting can be found here:

<http://rethink.fa.ulisboa.pt/index.php/report-info/workpackage-5>
