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Report on seminar HER "Modernization of curricula"
Oslo 6-7 June 2011

Seminar for Bologna and higher education reform expert which held at University of Oslo 6-7 June 2011 was organized very good and for me it was very significant. Subjects and speakers were very interesting. From me the most important lectures were "Modernization of curricula in Europe and Beyond: Are we failing? Or are we not?" from Robert Wagenar, Joint Coordinator Tuning Project. He pointed out that Europe has agreed – as part of the Bologna Process – to implement student-centered outcome based and transparent higher educational programs which are comparable and compatible. Modernizations of higher education institutions and its study programs has been mainly politician driven process. Only after ten years higher education institutions received recognition as important players in reforming process. One of the most important initiatives among these is Tuning Educational Structures in Europe, set up by a group of renowned universities in Europe and supported by the European Commission. Tuning has developed into a process in itself, which has drawn worldwide attention. It has made the point that student-centered programs require a change of paradigm and hence a change of mindset of the academic staff responsible for designing and delivering degree programs, at all three cycles involved, bachelor, master and doctorate. Tuning has contributed to the implementation of the Bologna objectives by developing a number of practical tools for academics-institutions to implement three cycle system.

A very important contribution has also been the development of sets of reference points for a growing number of subject's areas. These reference points based on a common template – have been developed by the Tuning projects and in close cooperation with so-called Thematic Network Programs, co-financed by the European Commission. The Tuning approach which has been validated by renowned academics in 2008, has inspired many regions in the world to set up their own projects. Tuning hopes, that given the global interest for its methodology and the fact that all necessary tools – which are not limited to the Tuning ones only have become available now, will convince the academic world that modernizing higher education programs.

Second lecture, which gathered my attention, was "Student Centered Learning – Toolkit for students, staff and higher education institutions" by Allan Pall, from European Student Union.

He said that it is crucial that we translate the philosophy and culture of what is student-centered to an easy to understand concept. Thus we have defined it as broadly as possible while acknowledging that this is nothing new, but in a way, a revamping the understanding of learning to what it has been all the time. It is just that in first time in history, we have a common basis to work on implementing student-centered approach in Europe. Many of the tools developed in relation to the Bologna Process are actually enablers to this. But also the change in technology is assisting learners becomes more than ink on paper. Thus we know more about the art of learning, its complexities its social influence and context than ever before.

Workshops were very interesting and useful. Exchanged a lot of experience and established contacts with other experts which will be very useful in process reform higher education in our country.



Prof. Ramo Šendelj, PhD
Dean