TEMPUS JOINT EUROPEAN PROJECT UM_JEP-19105-2004
EDUCATION QUALITY IMPROVEMENT BY E-LEARNING TECHNOLOGY

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REPORT FROM THE 2ND COORDINATION MEETING

HELD IN ZAGREB ON JANUARY 31 AND FEBRUARY 1, 2007

Present (January 31 and February 1, 2007):

University of Zagreb:	Prof. Ljiljana Pinter, vice-rector for Studies and Quality Assurance, Zoran Bekić, University Computing Centre, **project coordinator**, Sandra Kučina Softić, University Computing Centre;
University of Rijeka:	Marta Žuvić Butorac;
University of Dubrovnik:	Lucijana Leoni;
Ministry of Science, Education and Sports:	Anica Hunjet;
Croatian Academic and Research Network CARNet:	Jasna Tingle;
Vienna University of Technology:	Peter Gabko, project grant holder and contractor
Estonian E-university:	Ene Tammeoru;
Lifelong Learning Institute Dipoli at Helsinki University of Technology:	Heikki Hallantie;
University of Leuven:	Prof. Wim Van Petegem;
University of Vienna:	Jan Thomas;
Valencia University of Technology:	Carlos Ripoll Soler.

Consortium members from University of Edinburgh and University of Porto were not present at the 2nd Coordination Meeting.

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The 2nd Coordinating meeting was held on January 31, 2007 from 1 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. and on February 1, 2007 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the University of Zagreb, University Computing Centre – Srce.

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Agenda:

Wednesday, January 31, 2007

1. Panel Discussion: E-Learning and Advancement of Higher Education

Thursday, February 1, 2007

2. Evaluation of the project progress, highlights, problems, personal experience
3. Financial aspects of the project & project budget
4. Preparations for the second project report to EC
5. Future activity plan and other organizational issues

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Ad. 1

A panel discussion titled "E-learning and Advancement of Higher Education" was organized on Wednesday, January 31, as a part of the 2nd Coordination Meeting. The panel discussion took place at the University Computing Centre. Panellists were distinguished guests from European institutions:

- ❖ Prof. Wim Van Petegem, K. U. Leuven,
- ❖ Heikki Halantie, Technical University of Helsinki,
- ❖ Jan Thomas, University of Vienna

and members of Croatian universities:

- ❖ Prof. Vedran Mornar, University of Zagreb,
- ❖ Prof. Ivan Slapničar, University of Split.

Moderator of the panel discussion was Zoran Bekić from University Computing Centre.

Panel discussion was also available via web streaming. Participants (about 80) were deans and vice deans from the faculties of the University of Zagreb and other members of Croatian academic community. Importance of the event was also recognized by the University of Zagreb management and two vice-rectors were present:

- ❖ Prof. Melita Kovačević, vice rector for the Science and Technology,
- ❖ Prof. Ljiljana Pinter, vice rector for the Studies and Quality Assurance.

The panel discussion was vivid and interesting and raised a lot of issues. Conclusions from the panel discussion will be presented in a separate report.

The meeting was continued on February 1, 2007.

Z. Bekić welcomed all present at the meeting and introduced Prof. Lj. Pinter, vice rector for Studies and Quality Assurance at the University of Zagreb. Prof. Lj. Pinter thanked for the invitation to the meeting and pointed out the importance of exchanging the knowledge and experience with European partners.

Z. Bekić presented the meeting agenda.

Ad. 2

Z. Bekić gave the overall overview of the planned outcomes and activities. He reminded of the project objectives and expected results written in the project application. At the moment we are on the half way of the project.

- ❖ **Activities performed by Croatian members**:
  - ◆ 7 study visits (4 reports written, all documentation available on the project's web pages)
  - ◆ 3 workshops (reports written in English and Croatian, all documentation available on the web pages)
  - ◆ 4 lectures and panels with distinguished participants (available via web streaming)
  - ◆ 3 issues of project newsletter published (each circulation 3000 copies)
  - ◆ published workshop 2006 proceedings
  - ◆ regularly updated web pages (about 29 000 visit)
  - ◆ information about project on the web pages elearningeuropa.info

  - ◆ Vision Strategy teams appointed at the University of Rijeka and University of Dubrovnik; at University of Zagreb appointment in progress
  - ◆ University of Rijeka adopted strategy on e-learning

❖ **Activities performed by the project management:**
- ♦ 2 consortium meetings
- ♦ 1 inter-university meeting
- ♦ 1st report to EC prepared and delivered
- ♦ purchase of the equipment for project management (UniZG)

- ♦ purchase of the equipment for e-learning centre (UniRI)
- ♦ purchase of literature on e-learning (UniZG)
- ♦ financial & organizational issues (TUW <->)

❖ **Overall Project Status and Achievements:**
- ♦ a series of high-quality knowledge transfer & experience / knowledge exchange events with 40-50+ participants
- ♦ good knowledge overflow EU > CRO (study visits)
- ♦ good promotion of e-learning and EQIBELT project
- ♦ support from university managements
- ♦ strategic documents still under development (except RI)
- ♦ support centres not defined/operational yet
- ♦ no real new resources allocated to support centres
- ♦ staff not trained for e-learning support ↔ training at ELA cancelled by EC

➢ **Progress report for University of Zagreb was presented by Z. Bekić**.
University of Zagreb had a long period of re-election of university management and during that period no appointment of any committees or establishment of centres were possible. Nevertheless, continuous "political" support of university management was present. Activities performed so far raised awareness of the opportunities of e-learning at most of the faculties. Strategy team will be appointed at February Senate session, and at same time the e-learning centre with status of university central office will be established. First tasks of e-learning centre will be implementation of Moodle LMS and organizing support for it, establishing university network of e-learning support teams and participation in defining e-learning vision & strategy.

➢ **Progress report for University of Rijeka was presented by M. Žuvić Butorac.**
At the University of Rijeka working group for e-learning has been established and confirmed by the Senate. They held four meetings, performed study visits to EU consortium members, participated at workshops and wrote the strategy for e-learning implementation at their university. At the moment they are performing initial work on the establishing University E-learning Centre. From the project budget, equipment has been purchased and one classroom equipped.
Strategy for e-learning implementation on University of Rijeka 2006-2010 has been approved by the University Senate in November, 2006.

➢ **Progress report for University of Dubrovnik was presented by L. Leoni.**
There is a management support at the University of Dubrovnik but real steps in adopting e-learning strategy haven't been taken. Interest in e-learning among teaching staff is low. LMS Yumla and Moodle will be installed at server for the need of University Language Centre and supported by Centre for Informatics and Computing.

➢ **Project partner's view on project progress.**
W. Van Petegem found project's progress fine and nicely developing. He said that measures and ways, as well as building their own community practice, should be defined for each institution. He stated that meetings like these are good for exchange of general opinion and agrees with C. Ripoll Soler that online discussions are suitable for more focused topics and we should have them in a future.

H. Hallantie agrees with W. Van Petegem about the project progress and suggested reviewing PRO& CON's. He stated that it is important to ensure good support to those who would like to practice e-learning and not to push those who wouldn't. University management and teaching staff

want to be sure that what they are doing is right so sometimes is long period of experimenting necessary. Developing an e-course is a long time process.

C. Ripoll Soler pointed out that in the next period more communication and interaction should be present in a way of forums, on-line discussions, on-line workshops, etc. He finished discussion with statement that e-learning is expensive (time, money...) but eligible long term investment.

Due to a low interest of the academic community in events related to e-learning, Lj. Pinter asked European colleagues on their experience how to attract and involve teaching staff in e-learning, technology and new ideas.

E. Tammeoru said that they have the same problem in Estonia. In her opinion, people with psychological and pedagogical skills should be elected for promoters of e-learning. Estonian E-university organizes yearly seminars for teaching staff as well as e-lunches with certain topics. Human contact is very important. Asking professors what they want and how to help them is crucial. For developing a good e-course up to five years is needed. She pointed out that goal of the management is implementation of good and quality process of learning, instead of implementation of e-learning.

J. Thomas concluded that they had similar experience with organizing the workshops. Firstly, only about 10 people attended these workshops, but their presence was constant and today they forward their knowledge to others.

➢ Peter Gabko, project contractor, gave his overview about the project:
   ♦ huge project with 13 members
   ♦ project is going very well
   ♦ there is no current problem in the project progress
   ♦ all consortium members are participating in the project
   ♦ University of Zagreb is highly involved in e-learning (participation of faculty and university management at all events)

It was concluded that biggest challenge for the project at this stage is establishment of e-learning centers and obtaining real resources for operations of these teams. University managements and Ministry should be aware that allocation of human and other resources is not only obligation accepted by submission of project application, but also the crucial factor for the success of the project and overall implementation of e-learning at the universities.

Ad. 3

Peter Gabko reported on financial aspects of the project & project budget:
   ♦ 20.000 euros planned for education at ELA is cancelled by EC and can be transferred for the equipment (permission from EC required)
   ♦ 6.625,87 euros were left after performed study visits which can be spent for additional mobility
   ♦ to get the second rate of the grant, 70% of the first instalment should be spent (210.000 euros)
   ♦ at the moment paid with the invoice is only 111.142,08 euros
   ♦ all consortium members should request reimbursement of their expenses till the end of February
   ♦ for travel costs one should provide fulfilled Individual Grant Report together with the invoice for flight tickets, flight tickets and boarding passes.
   ♦ for staff costs one should fulfil Staff Convention

Ad. 4

Second report to EC should be prepared in March 2007 (contractor will check the exact date). All consortium members received the copy of report questionnaire. **University of Zagreb and TUWien will prepare this report, expecting cooperation with Universities of Rijeka and Dubrovnik.**

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➢ **Study visit** to University of Edinburgh is scheduled for April 2007. Two undefined study visits to EU consortium member institutions are planned for the visit of newly established e-learning centres teams.
Future workshops will be held accordingly to the establishment of e-learning centres and other activities planned by Croatian consortium partners. Dates will be announced later.

➢ **Financial plan** was presented by P. Gabko. He provided consortium members with sheets containing project budget details. He informed project partners that the overheads from the project will be paid after the last instalment of the grant is received. **Also he will send warning to consortium members (about February 20) to hurry with sending the documentation for performed activities within the project.**

➢ Z. Bekić opened discussion about the **extension of the project**. Because of the long period of re-election of University management no appointment of new committees and teams were possible. In a period of 9 moths all decisions were at "status quo", and therefore University of Zagreb was not able to establish University centre for e-learning or to appoint Committee for developing the strategy of e-learning at the University of Zagreb. Another problem is allocation of human resources because Ministry of Science, Education and Sport haven't approved employment of new staff for E-Learning Support Centres. Because of that, University of Zagreb, just as other universities, was in waiting position which started to change (in Zagreb) only last month by reallocating some Srce staff to E-learning Center. Some of scheduled tasks and dates have been failed and period for their fulfilment is now too short. Therefore, University of Zagreb is proposing the extension of the project for four months and pertaining request to EC will be sent with March report or till June 2007.

➢ W. Van Petegem, as well as other consortium members, supported this proposal. P. Gabko expressed his concern as we have already asked lot of questions from EC and suggested to wait with the request till winter 2007.

After some discussion **it was concluded that University of Zagreb will prepare request for extension of the project clearly providing reasons and send it to EC till June 2007.**

Other issues
Alfredo Soeiro sent an e-mail informing that he will not be able to attend meeting because of illness so that the costs of his flight ticket can be excluded from the budget and reallocated for other activities University of Porto can perform within the project.

P. Gabko will send to consortium members table on their financial debts according to performed activities in the project so far.

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Composed by: S. Kučina