



**Inaugural meeting
of the
Regional Pathfinder Group on Automatic Recognition**

19–20 June 2013

Venue: Hotel Leopold, Petrovaradinska Tvrđjava, 21000 Novi Sad, Serbia

Preamble on the synergy of two initiatives

The countries (EE ,DK, SE, BE, DE, PT, NL, LU, and SI) and regions (Nordic-Baltic, Benelux and WB) with the auspices and coordination of European Commission, agreed to set up a pathfinder group for setting up a fast track to recognising each other's qualifications; ultimately, paving the way for a European area of recognition, to realise the long term goal of Automatic Recognition (AR) of comparable academic degrees, as formulated in the Bucharest Communiqué.

A number of HEAs and HEIs from the region (Albania, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia), in the presence of Higher Education Authority of Ireland and Swedish National Agency for Higher Education, under the auspices of the Regional Cooperation council, in September 2012 in Dubrovnik, agreed to establish the Regional Platform for Benchmarking and Cooperation aiming to encourage strategic debate in the WB region on higher education issues which will impact on its development, foster a regional 'collective voice' in higher education that resonates regionally, nationally and internationally and support the identification of collaborative solutions in higher education.

These two initiatives have met in the joint effort to provide a platform for constructive

dialogue on the establishment of the emerging Region of Automatic Recognition (RAR) and to discuss necessary measures to be taken, to uphold genuine quality and ensure trust within RAR. As first step towards this goal, the EC Pathfinder Group and the Regional Platform for Cooperation and Benchmarking will establish Regional Pathfinder Group to act as a subgroup of the EC Pathfinder Group.

Itinerary

Tuesday, 18th June

Arrival of the participants

19:30 Informal welcome reception - ZAK restaurant

Wednesday, 19th June

Venue: Boardroom, Leopold Hotel

Discussion seminar on Automatic Recognition

This seminar will provide briefing on Automatic Recognition and its strategic importance within EHEA. It will include discussion of the possibility of creation of the circle of trust within the Regional Platform for Benchmarking and Cooperation in the course of establishing of the Region of Automatic Recognition (RAR).

Morning session:

Ana Tecilazaić Goršić, Head of HE Sector, Ministry of Science, Education and Sport, Croatia

Margaret Waters, Deputy Head of Unit, DG Education and Culture, European Commission

10:00–11:30 Providing general inputs

Margaret Waters, Deputy Head of Unit “Higher Education Policy and Erasmus”, DG Education and Culture, European Commission

Ladislav Novak, Coordinator of the Regional Platform for Benchmarking and Cooperation

Stojan Sorčan, member of the BFUG Pathfinder Group, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Slovenia

11:30–12:30 Discussion

12:30 -13:00 Walking tour along the fortress - an opportunity for participants to interact in smaller groups

13.00 –14:00 Lunch at Leopold Hotel

Afternoon session:

Moderators:

Stojan Sorčan, member of the BFUG Pathfinder Group, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Slovenia

Representative of the Ministry of Education and Science, Serbia (tbc)

14:00 – 17:00 Providing inputs from the region: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia

17:00 – 18:00 Discussion

Thursday, 20th June

Venue: Boardroom, Leopold Hotel

Morning session:

09:30–10:00 Establishment of the Regional Pathfinder Group

11:00–12:30 Agreement on the Founding Document of the Regional Pathfinder Group

12:30–13:00 Drafting Terms of Reference and Action Plan of the Regional Pathfinder Group

14.00 Lunch at Leopold Hotel

Departure of the participants

¹Regional Platform for Benchmarking and Cooperation in Higher Education was launched in Dubrovnik on 26 September 2012, on the occasion of Regional Strategic Forum in Higher Education, and Dubrovnik Cluster of Events, under the scheme of STREW Tempus project: 511355-TEMPUS-1-2010-1-RS-TEMPUS-SMHES, as a mature phase of Novi Sad Initiative, in the presence of Higher Education Authority of Ireland, Swedish National Agency for Higher Education, and Regional Cooperation Council. The founders of the Regional Platform are HEIs and HEAs from seven WB countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia, <http://www.regionalplatform.uns.ac.rs/>)