



Southeast Europe Economic Forum 2005

Development of Knowledge-Based Economy and Support for Competitive SMEs

1 - 2 November 2005, Sofia, Bulgaria

Organiser:



BULGARIA
ECONOMIC
FORUM

CONFERENCE BOOK

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The State University – IT Development and challenges

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION NETWORKS

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The State University - "Ss. Kiril and Metodius" University was founded in 1949 and today it consists of 23 different faculties and 11 research institutes. The language of instruction is Macedonian, however some courses are taught in the minority languages and English language for some postgraduate courses. The University organizes postgraduate studies on 17 different faculties and two research institutes with total of 148 disciplines. During the academic 2005-2006 the has enrolled about 40 000 students.

“SS Kiril and Metodius” University is actively following the Bologna Process , accepting the Bologna Declaration as platform for integrating in European higher education area with the following priorities:

- Development and securing the **academic autonomy**
- Introducing **Credit Transfer System**
- Harmonization and **compatibility of the study programs** with the EU model of university
- System of Quality assurance with **evaluation and accreditation** of the higher education institutions and study programs
- Student and academic staff **mobility**
- **Competitiveness** at home and abroad

The international cooperation of the University is given high priority, focused towards intensive participation in the CARDS-TEMPUS and UNESCO programs, the Regional Central-East European initiative, cooperation with neighboring countries and Mediterranean region.

Long-term bilateral cooperation with 75 foreign universities is realized through revised forms in the areas, which directly reflect the mutual priorities and the interests of the partners. Workshops and training seminars on

reconstruction, modularization and management have been organized for the purpose of attaining compatibility with European HE model.

Following the Bologna principles of recognition of degrees and studies, promotion of Diploma Supplement, introducing credit system, development of policy and system on quality assurance and quality assessment in higher education, developing university strategies for continuing education, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje is actively participating in the regional projects on curriculum development and harmonization, students and mobility, multilateral and bilateral cooperation in selected CARDS-TEMPUS program and other regional projects.

TEMPUS Assistance for compatibility development of education

The development of the higher education according to the Bologna principles and the European orientation as one of the prerequisites for European Association and integration, requires inevitably compatibility building

European educational model in all segments of the teaching and research, diploma and studies acknowledgement, Diploma Supplement promotion and implementation, European Credit Transfer System, developing a quality assurance system, teaching programs and curricula advancement, implementation of new curricula, bilateral and regional cooperation and academic mobility.

Since the FARE program establishment in the Republic of Macedonia in 1996, the European Commission supports an intensive cooperation between the higher education institutions in ED member states, Central and South-Eastern Europe.

In that context, the TEMPUS program should be highlighted as the most powerful instrument for the support of the higher education institutions which should play an active role in the creation of the European Higher Education Area in accordance with the Bologna Declaration as a founding document and a strategy for the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University. The mobility promotion and students' participation strengthening in the intensive East-West and West-East mobility is immanent to the TEMPUS activities.

The Ss. Cyril and Methodius University also participates actively in the regional projects in order to implement quality assurance projects and higher education evaluation procedures, development and harmonization of curricula, diploma acknowledgement, academic mobility, distance education, multilateral and bilateral cooperation in the areas of priority of the TEMPUS program.

Within the TEMPUS program on a national level the cooperation has been realized by 74 Joint European Projects and 20 Compact and Structural Measures .About 330 grants have been awarded for mobility of the academic and administrative staff.

The overall financial support of the European Commission within the TEMPUS program amounts to 27.3 million euros.

With the project "**Support for Higher Education at the Ss. Kiril and Metodij University**", funded by the Republic of Austria, Ministry for Foreign Affairs in amount of 390 000 EUR have been completed the following:

- Support for quality assurance and evaluation activities at Ss. Kiril and Metodij University;
- Organisation and implementation of a competitive infrastructure programme (equipment and devices for research and teaching) for faculties of the Ss. Kiril and Metodij University;
- Support for human resources development at the Ss. Kiril and Metodij University by implementing an academic exchange programme.

UNIVERSITY NETWORKS

Ss. Cyril and Methodius University has become a member of **UNICA-Network of Universities of the Capitals of Europe**. This is a network of 41 European universities and it stands for capacity of 131 000 teachers and 1. 5 million students.

Our University has maintained the cooperation with the **Interuniversity Center CIRCEOS** located in Bari, Italy in the field of filology and culture.

The University is the founding member of the **Balkan Academic Network** which was established in April 2005, which will be administered by the Aristotle University in Thessaloniki, Greece.

The University is actively participating in the following networks;

o **Central Eastern University Network** in the field of business management, macroeconomics, education and culture, international politics and security, EU studies.

o The University **Mobility Network MIREES** within the INTERREG III program with Bologna University in Italy

o CEI **Uni Net** - Network of the Universities of the member countries of the Central European initiative promoting interuniversity cooperation in the countries of Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe by supporting academic mobility and introducing joint programs such as PhD and Masters studies in English.

****Office of University International Programs 25 September 2005****