

## *International Seminar*

### The connections of the university education with the labor market

Period of the seminar: May 15-16, 2002, Chisinau

#### **Seminar participants:**

- Decision factors and representatives of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Finances, National Council of Academic Evaluation and Accreditation;
- Leadership and teaching staff from higher education;
- Scientific researchers;
- Representatives of student NGO's.

#### **Invited experts:**

- Council of UNESCO for higher education;
- International Association of Universities;
- University representatives from Romania, Poland, Hungary, France, Germany, USA.

#### **Project administration:**

- Anatol Gremalschi –project director;
- Paiu Mihai – project coordinator.

## **Preliminary Program**

Thursday, May 15, 2002

10.00 Opening of the seminar

10.30-13.00 *Plenary session: **University vs. Labor Market***

- European practice in the establishment of connections between universities and labor market.
- Legal and normative framework of the Republic of Moldova in the field of graduates' employment.
- University autonomy and the role of the state in establishment of priority directions for the training of staff for the national economy.
- Interaction: university-enterprise-community
- Paid education and employment.

13.00-14.30 *Lunch break*

14.30-16.30 *Plenary session: **The connections of the system of higher education with the labor market***

- Correlation of higher education with the labor market in developed countries.
- The catalog of specializations - Tradition or anachronism?
- Training of teaching staff for the general secondary education.

- Labor market and training of staff with higher education in the Republic of Moldova.

**17.00-18.30 Workshops:**

*Workshop 1.* Conciliation of students in the establishment of their professional career

*Workshop 2.* Adjustment of higher education system to the needs of the labor market

Friday , May 16, 2002

**9.00-10.30 Workshops** (continuation)

11.00-13.00 *Plenary session:* **Perfection of the legal and normative framework regarding the employment**

- Report-backs of the results of the workshop discussions

13.00-14.30 *Lunch break*

14.30-16.00 *Plenary session:* **Conclusions and recommendations**

## Motivation

The system of higher education from the Republic of Moldova has generally inherited the basic principles of the education system existent in the former Soviet Union: the structure of educational institutions, management, organization of learning process, the method of election of leadership bodies, curricula, methods of evaluation (assessment) and promotion of the students, selection and promotion of teaching staff, etc. Some of these principles have been adapted to the present realities, others have been modified in accordance with the international practice, many of them, unfortunately, remained unchanged and represent a serious obstacle for the educational system reform. Among these we would mention the problems related to the effectiveness of the educational system in general, and connections of the higher education institutions with the labor market, in particular.

It is well known that within a centralized economic system, the labor market simply did not exist and the graduates of the higher education institutions were employed through the decisions of some ad-hoc commissions created prior to the graduation exams.

The mechanism which guaranteed the arrival of the graduate to the assigned enterprise or institution had a prescriptive character and the other enterprises did not have the right to employ young specialists without the approval of hierarchically superior bodies, normally their ministries. Obviously, with the democratization of the society this mechanism stopped functioning but, unfortunately, no solutions have been found which would guarantee, or at least facilitate, the employment of the young specialist. According to the statistical data, approximately 25 percent of the unemployed persons officially registered at the employment offices are persons having higher education degrees, approximately 60 percent of the graduates of higher education institutions in the last ten years are not working according to the qualification obtained at the graduation. In the field of training of teaching staff, the situation is even more complicated - Only ten percent of the graduates of departments of education are employed in schools. To our opinion, the reasons for these negative phenomena are:

- Lack of a mechanism for the development of a catalog of specializations that would reflect not the interests of the departments or groups but then necessities of national economy;
- Lack of certain methods of prognosis of the necessary number of specialists depending on the priority directions of the development of national economy;
- The imperfection of the management of educational system in general, and higher education institutions in particular;
- Inexistence of a mechanism of conciliation of the graduates regarding finding of jobs;
- Lack of a normative and legal framework that would explicitly stipulate the way of interaction of universities and institutions that need specialists, mechanisms for the involvement of community in the university management;
- The ambiguity of the legislation in the fields related to the mutual rights and duties of the state, universities, graduates, communities and enterprises and that will employ the future specialists

As a consequence, the issue of establishment of certain direct connections between the higher education system and the labor market is a stringent imperative.

## **THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT**

The general objective of the project is to accelerate the reforms in the higher education system from the Republic of Moldova, a fact that will contribute to its adjustment to the present and future necessities of the national economy, creation and consolidation of the links between the universities and the labor market.

The specific objective that must be achieved is the development of recommendations regarding the adjustment and update of the normative and legal framework in the field of management of higher education institutions, development of mechanisms for the correlation of the educational system with the labor market.

## **THE IMPACT OF THE PROJECT:**

The project will contribute to:

1. The adjustment of the legal framework of education from the Republic of Moldova to the European policy in the field of education.
2. Improvement of the quality of education from the Republic of Moldova measured by indicators that are comparable with the European ones.
3. Increase of mobility of students and teaching staff.
4. Increase of competitiveness of the young graduates from Moldova on the internal and European labor markets.
5. Orientation of the mentality of decision factors from the country towards the acknowledgement of the necessity of European integration of education.
6. Development of certain mechanisms for the improvement of efficiency and correlation of educational system with the present and future necessities of the national economy.