



International workshop

“Participation to the Community programmes in the fields of education and training- an important tool for European integration”

Bucharest, 6-7 May 2005

Background

While *stabilisation and reconciliation* in South Eastern Europe was at the centre of discussions in 2000 at the Zagreb summit of heads of state of the EU and SEE countries, at the EU Summit in Thessaloniki in 2003, the focus has clearly shifted “*The European Union reiterates its unequivocal support to the European perspective of the Western Balkan Countries. The future of the Balkans is within the European Union, The countries of the region fully share the objectives of economic and political union and look forward to joining an EU that is stringer in the pursuit of its essential objectives and more present in the world.*”

The speed of achieving EU membership may differ - Romania and Bulgaria will sign the Accession Treaty in April 2005 aiming to become EU members in 2007, Croatia has received the candidate country status and the Stabilisation and Association Process provides a midterm framework for the remaining SEE countries. But the objective is the same: **European integration**.

The European Commission has put forward for the approval of the Council and the Parliament, the decision on the new lifelong learning integrated programme which includes the Western Balkans countries among the participating countries and allows a participation of third countries in the partnerships developed within different projects.

In accordance with the *Memorandum of Understanding* signed by the SEE ministers of education and higher education, the **Secretariat of the Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE)** has included in its 2005 working programme activities for developing capacity building for an

efficient participation of the SEE countries in the future Community programmes.

- | In the region there is a huge wealth of experience from the candidate countries - Bulgaria and Romania are participating in the current Community programmes in the field of education and training- Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci. The knowledge transfer capacity has been taken into account by the ERI SEE Secretariat, that acts as a platform for facilitating communication, cooperation and networking between experts and institutions.

Another valuable project is initiated and coordinated by the Italian Ministry of Education and IRRE Veneto and aims to include partners from the SEE countries in Socrates projects in order to facilitate the understanding of the mechanisms, procedures but also the outcomes of the Community projects.

Objectives of the workshop

1. To present the ongoing Community programmes in the field of education and training, respectively Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci, as well as the administrative requirements for participation.
- | 2. To disseminate best results, experiences and best practices, to discuss the relevance of participating in the Community programmes and to reflect on how to develop national capacities for managing the newly integrated Community programme.

Expected outcomes

1. An understanding of the concept of participating into programmes developed at European level, implications for the countries from the SEE: benefits and difficulties to pass over
2. Examples of best practices and practices to be avoided, practical examples of success stories relevant for the SEE countries
- | 3. Creation of a network of experts.

Organizers

The workshop will be organised by the ERI SEE Secretariat with the support of the Romanian Agency for community programmes in the field of education and training.

The Romanian Agency for community programmes in the field of education and training is the agency subordinated to the Ministry of Education and Research that has the responsibility to manage the implementation in Romania of the Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci programme.

Target group

The workshop is addressed to the representatives of the Ministries of education from the Western Balkan countries and Moldova dealing with international affairs/European integration, respectively the head of the department plus one expert.

The participants to the workshop are representatives of the ministries of education from the Western Balkan countries and Moldova, representatives from the specialised agencies from Romania and Bulgaria, Italy, the Task Force Education and Youth/Enhanced Graz Process and the European Commission.

Language of the workshop

The working language is **English**.

Organisational details

The ERI SEE Secretariat will support the cost of participation for 2 representatives of the ministries of education signatory of the Memorandum, respectively: transportation, accomodation and visa costs. The cost of subsistence will be covered by the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research.

Contact persons:

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