

Meeting at World Bank (Chisinau)

July 27, 2015

Meeting notes

Present:

Anna Olefir, Operations Officer at the World Bank Group's Education Global Practice (AO)

Romeo V. Turcan, EUniAM project coordinator (RVT)

Purpose of the meeting:

To explore possible venues to support financially and technically the restructuring, rationalization, and modernization of Higher Education sector of Moldova.

Discussed:

RVT introduced the EUniAM project and its major deliverables.

RVT in detailed presented the legislative proposals for the restructuring, rationalization, and modernization of HE; inter alia, presented the proposed structure of HE sector, introduced its key players and stakeholders, relationship between the parties, as well as proposed operational and funding mechanisms. Further, RVT further presented the road map and rationalization map to get from 35 public HE institutions (20 universities and 15 research centers of Academy of Science) to 7 (6+1, 1 being a regional university in Tiraspol) universities.

AO explained that in the education sector the World Bank supports reforms that aim to improve the quality of education while promoting sector efficiency such as an IDA credit for the Education Reform Project or the Bank-financed technical assistance to provide tailored policy advice, in particular to support the alignment of the education system with labor market needs (all the details are available at the web-site:

http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/moldova/projects/all?lang_exact=English&qterm=). These programs are already designed and have clear implementation plans. An additional financing envisaged next year of around 15 million dollars will further promote reforms in the sector (potentially teacher policies reforms according to initial discussion with the government counterparts).

RVT further discussed the road map, emphasizing the time-line and major activities for which WB and other donors funding would be needed to successfully implement the restructuring, rationalization, and modernization of HE. Here are examples of major activities/outputs that would require donor funding: infrastructure (hard/soft-system wide) support/purchase and capacity building (training) to make functional and operational the National Agency for Research and Innovation, Division for Higher Education, National Agency for Accreditation and Quality Assurance; support the dis-establishment of the Academy of Science of Moldova; support the merger/rationalization process .

RVT emphasized that as part of the earmarked agreement there should be explicitly stipulated a number of conditions:

1. The expected outputs must be clearly stated, i.e., after rationalization from 35 public institutions there should remain 6+1 universities (implicit, hidden agenda, or leaving it at the 'invisible' market hand will not produce desired results; au contraire, as our benchmark analysis shows, the opposite effect takes place – more universities mushroom)
2. Dis-establishment of Academy of Science of Moldova must be formalized and put into effect (with its research institutes having a choice to join the remaining universities (6+1) based on specialization and non-duplication of programs principles)
3. Clear separation between governance and management must be in place (currently the Code of Education does not offer this distinction)
4. Take into account during the process the comments provided by Dr. John Reilly on the Code of Education

RVT suggested that the material developed by the EUniAM could be a strong starting point to initiate the development of an earmarked portfolio. Also, RVT mentioned that the EUniAM Lead Task Force team could substantially contribute to this process as well as to the process of implementation.

AO said she will pass the results of the project to her colleagues at the WB as well as to other development partners in Moldova.

RVT will pass the results of the meeting to his colleagues, ERASMUS+ office, and Ministry of Education.

Sources:

EUniAM Legislative Proposals and Commentary on the Code of Education:

<http://www.euniam.aau.dk/work-packages/wp4/wp4-deliverables/>

Benchmark Analysis of Higher Education Sectors in Denmark, Lithuania, Romania, Scotland and

Sweden: <http://www.euniam.aau.dk/work-packages/wp3/wp3-deliverables/>

Evaluation of Existing Situation of University Institutional Autonomy in Moldova:

<http://www.euniam.aau.dk/work-packages/wp2/wp2-deliverables/>

Lead Task Force: <http://www.euniam.aau.dk/euniam-team/lead-task-force/>

Other project material: www.euniam.aau.dk

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