**RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT (NCSTD)**

**FOR SIPUS PROJECT**

**May, 2014**

Universities exist to provide high-quality education. But they have a broader economic and social role. Universities are in the spotlight as never before. In part, this new focus is the result of internationalization. The important aspect of higher education internationalization is the flow of knowledge, programmes, lecturers and researchers.

The aim of this short report is to suggest how universities can become part of a wider national effort to advance mobility. **A critical component of a successful internationalization strategy should be full institutional and departmental engagement with all aspects of mobility**.

Mobility and internationalization are key aspects of the Bologna process. This is exemplified most recently in the ” Mobility for Better Learning - Mobility Strategy 2020 for the European Higher Education Area” adopted by the Ministers of the European Higher Education Area countries.

Promoting students, researchers and staff mobility has become an issue of increasing importance in Serbian higher education policy. The Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted two main strategies:

* The Strategy for Scientific and Technological Development, 2010 – 2015 (in 2010)
* The Strategy of the Development of Education in Serbia 2020 (in 2012)

**The strategies and action plans foster mobility, but do not include quantitative targets for the different forms of student mobility in higher education.** National and international mobility must be encouraged and supported. There is still only little national and international mobility students, higher education teachers, other staff and researchers in Serbian higher education system. **Most important action in internationalization of higher education system is to identify and remove obstacles to mobility (funding - loans for incoming and outgoing students, recognition, curriculum/study organisation, legal issues).**

The internationalization of the HE system in RS with concrete aims and measurable mobility targets can be developed and implemented in the following policy documents:

1. **National mobility strategy, competent authority : MESTD**
2. **Bilateral and regional mobility strategies, competent authority : MESTD**
3. **Institutional mobility strategies, competent authority : HEIs**

The NCSTD recommends for partners in the SIPUS project to follow the **Eurydice Report- Towards a Mobility Scoreboards: Conditions for Learning Abroad in Europe**. The report contains a set of draft proposals for indicators of conditions for learner mobility in higher education and direct follow-up of the Council Recommendation on promoting the learning mobility of young people, adopted by the Council of the European Union in 2011.

Institutions of higher education and research institutes must develop academic support services designed to promote national and international mobility. The higher education sector is not a monolithic entity. Different universities have different strengths and face different challenges in different areas of internationalization. Universities are, of course, autonomous organizations with the right to set their own internationalization agendas, but it would be welcome if all universities felt able to make similar commitments. According to the Strategy for Scientific and Technological Development, 2010 – 2015 and the Strategy of the Development of Education in Serbia 2020 the universities should:

* develop internationalization strategies that place the student experience, and teaching and learning, at the centre;
* promote mobility through the Erasmus Programme/Erasmus for All (*now Erasmus+*);
* increase mobility through improved information about study programmes;
* promote the European dimension in all areas of the curriculum;
* promote internationalization at home and abroad;
* promote student mobility for all disciplines
* encourage a greater level of engagement with international partnerships designed to promote mobility, and develop co-operation in scholarship and research;
* promote staff mobility, especially for short-term exploratory visits
* provide increased virtual mobility opportunities within course design, fostering links with overseas partners;
* develop joint degrees through international partnerships;
* promote Masters-level and doctoral studies through the Erasmus Mundus (*continued in Erasmus+ as JMDs and in* Marie *Skłodowska*-Curie *action as European* Joint Doctorates - *EJDs*);
* explore opportunities for joint doctoral supervision and dual awards;
* facilitate credit transfer and accumulation where appropriate with partner institutions; ensure that study abroad or work placements are adequately represented in the Diploma Supplement and that such is recognized by the award of credits;
* encourage student mobility in all cycles;
* foster both inbound and outbound students’ and teachers’ mobility;
* encourage staff and student participation in international partnerships leading to joint conferences, symposia and colloquia, including shared teaching of modules and common assessment, and encourage a diverse and multidisciplinary approach to such initiatives;
* encourage greater levels of international co-operation in research and scholarship;
* fully apply the tools, principles and practices of the Bologna Process, including Diploma Supplement, ECTS, and transparent and appropriate application of qualification frameworks, including correct adherence to the principle of the three-cycle framework, and adherence to effective quality assurance processes.

**Student mobility**

There are five areas that can help universities make progress on improving students mobility:

* student services
* financial support
* student charters
* equalizing skills
* the ability for students to transfer between courses.

**The higher education institutions according to developed strategies should adopt and implement their own strategy for their internationalization and for the promotion of mobility in accordance with their respective profile involving the stakeholders (in particular students, early stage researchers, teachers and other staff in higher education).**

**Staff mobility**

Staff mobility is an element of human resources development and a way to improve the quality of higher education and research. Staff mobility can make a vital contribution to professional development and training. Staff mobility should be a significant part of institutional and departmental planning. Academic staff may be mobile to participate in international conferences, for study visits, for periods of teaching or academic exchange, for a sabbatical with a defined objective, etc. Mobility may be funded by grants and fellowships, or may be supported by an employment contract. A mobility period may take place as part of continuing professional development.

**Annex 1. The Strategy of the Development of Education in Serbia 2020 :** International Openness and Mobility

International cooperation of HEIs, the mobility of teachers and students are elements that contribute to better quality of higher education, increase competences of both teachers and students and gives them a better chance of employment. In this area, the following activities will be carried out:

* 1. All institutes and institutions of higher education in Serbia, by following the actions and trends, will closely cooperate with the relevant institutions of the EHEA and the ERA;
  2. Institutions of higher education shall, for the sake of their improvement and development, internationalise their activities through joint study programmes, international research projects and mobility of students, teachers and researchers;
  3. Base the policy of mobility on various measures that ensure the funding of mobility, availability of infrastructure, the full recognition of studying results and support during the studying, and allow foreign students to obtain a student visa and resolve other issues relevant to their lives in the Republic of Serbia (health care, housing, food, etc.);
  4. Create opportunities for mobility in all three cycles of education, in the structure of study programmes and programmes for the achievement of joint degrees with foreign universities, and bind HEIs to issue a diploma supplement in English or some other European language to each student for a minimum fee;
  5. Completely define and specify, as soon as possible, the policy of mandatory teacher training (through post-doctoral visits) and doctoral students at foreign universities. This policy has to be very selective and with secured funding. All budgetary funds for scholarships, awards and professional development of teachers and students should be united for implementing a proper and responsible public policy in this area;
  6. Accredit, through a special procedure, study programmes that are offered to foreign students (in English, another foreign language or in Serbian) in order to avoid that unprepared HEIs offer inadequate programmes for foreign students and, thus, undermine the reputation of the Republic of Serbia in higher education;
  7. Higher education in Serbia has the potential, with its quality and capacity, to attract large numbers of students from the region, because there are no language barriers for most students, and in order to use these opportunities, we should organisationally and financially support the education fields where we already have satisfactory competitive status, i.e. those in which such a status is yet to be developed.

**Annex 2. ACTION PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA FOR THE PERIOD 2010-2015 (adopted by the Government of the Republic of Serbia)**

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| **INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN AREAS OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY** | |
| **Goals** | **Activities/Measures** |
| To increase international multilateral and bilateral  cooperation | 1. Qualitative and quantitative improvement of international cooperation |
| To establish partnerships with the countries that  are leaders in science and technology through a program of bilateral cooperation | 1. Development of a plan for bilateral cooperation  2. Determining priorities in the area of international cooperation.  3. Realization of bilateral cooperation programs  4. Monitoring realization and financing of approved bilateral cooperation programs;  5. Introducing new cooperation programs with the countries with which agreement for scientific and technological cooperation has been concluded. |
| To improve participation in European  programs for science, research, innovation and  international scientific cooperation | 1.Active participation in Horizon 2020;  2. Participation in programms such as: EUREKA,EUROSTARS, COST, etc.  3. Participation in European projects for networking, mobility of scientists, promotion of science and other activities. |
| Regional cooperation | Participation in coordination of science policies of countries of Western Balkans through preparation of a regional strategy |
| To improve mobility | 1. Encouraging and stimulating mobility of domestic and foreign researchers.  2. Introduction of systematic measures aimed to increase mobility, visits from foreign researchers to the country and visits from domestic researchers abroad.  3. Preparation of a rulebook for the national mobility network;  4. Development of a national network of researchers and promotion of national portal for mobility.  5. Stimulation of visits paid by foreign scientists to our country and at the invitation from RSO. |
| To stimulate support through projects and programs for international scientific cooperation of importance for RS | 1. Providing support to attendance of our representatives at the meetings of work bodies in institution of European Union.  2. Training to be provided for national contact persons in all areas;  3. Development and strengthening cooperation of national contacts;  4. Establishing the system for providing information and connecting institutions in Serbia with the members of program committees.  5. Provision of incentive for scientific societies to join international associations;  6. Establish the network of international consulting editor. |

**Annex 3. Actions/Measures in the ACTION PLAN for the implementation the Strategy of the Development of Education in Serbia 2020 (draft version)**

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| No: | **Actions** |
| HE-Joint action 30 | To improve international openness of the HE system |
| HE-Joint action 31 | To establish international mobility of students, researchers and teaching staff |
| HE-Joint action 32 | Internationalization of study programmes |
| HE-Joint action 33 | To establish partnerships with the international HEIs |

**Instruments of implementation and outcomes of HE-Joint actions 30-33**

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|  | **Action title** | **Instruments of Action implementation** | **Outcomes - results of Action** |
| HE-Joint action 30 | To improve international openness of the HE system | Law on HE, New or amended Law on Scientific and Research Activity; Conference communiqués of ministers in charge of higher education, as well as other relevant EU documents; Strategy of Academic Mobility | Higher education harmonized in line with reforms and trends of EHEA and ERA;  Advanced compatibility of the national system with EU systems;  Membership in coordinating bodies and working groups of the EU institutions. |
| HE-Joint action 31 | To establish international mobility of students, researchers and teaching staff | Law on HE, New or amended Law on Scientific and Research Activity; Strategy of Academic Mobility; Strategy “Mobility for better learning, Bucharest 2011; Regulations on foreigners’ residence permit; Joining Erasmus + and other EU programs; Regulations on how foreign students can use student health centres, student standard facilities, public transportation; subsidized food; Strategy of development of HEIs – mobility program; Regulations on mobility, ECTS recognition; Regulations on criteria and procedures of promotion of teaching staff; Advisory bodies supporting mobility; legislative acts on the financing of HE. | Strategy of Academic Mobility adopted;  Administrative and other mobility obstacles removed;  Equivalent system of mobility indicators, as in EU, introduced;  Mechanisms of financial support for mobility developed;  Measures for balanced mobility (brain gain : brain drain) developed;  Student mobility support office established;  Student mobility increased from the current levels to the levels targeted by the Strategy of Education 2020. |
| HE-Joint action 32 | Internationalization of study programmes | Law on HE; Accreditation standards for study programs; Statutes of HEIs; Regulations on foreigners’ residence permit; Regulations on criteria and procedures of promotion of teaching staff; legislative acts on the financing of HE; educational statistics – methodology and indicators for monitoring mobility and the level of internationalisation. | Number of international students increased;  Number of international teaching staff increased;  Diversification of HE financing sources;  Study programs in foreign languages developed. |
| HE-Joint action 33 | To establish partnerships with the international HEIs | Law on HE; Harmonized standards for the accreditation of joint degrees – participation of international teaching staff; Statutes of HEIs; Regulations on thesis defence; Regulations on study fees; Joining EU actions such as Erasmus+; Marie Curie Actions in Horizon 2020; legislative acts on the financing of HE; agreements on partnership and cooperation; educational statistics. | Joint and double degrees;  Joint masters and doctoral studies; Joint research projects;  Strategic partnerships on the regional and international level established;  Promotion of the educational system in the region and abroad. |