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EUROPEAN NETWORK OF MOBILITY CENTRES

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RE	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services)	
CO	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	X

Steering Group meeting

4 July 2006

On 4 July 2006 in Sofia University – CIST took place the third meeting of the Steering Group (SG) of the BulRMCNet project.

At the meeting participated Assoc. Prof. Roumen Nikolov, Vice Dean of FMI at Sofia University, Zdravka Gjozlieva, Head of Department at the Patent Bureau, Rosen Simeonov, Head of Sector, National Employment Service Agency, Ljubomir Timchev, Police Academy, Todorka Todorova – University of Rousse, Assoc. Prof. Galia Kojoucharova – Director, Thracia University - DIITT, Elena Lavrentsova - Thracia University – DIITT, Plamen Paroushev –Technical University - Varna, Fanny Koleva – UNWE, and from Sofia University – Kamelia Stefanova, Victoria Damyanova, Elisaveta Gourova, Eugenia Kovatcheva, Maria Dikova and Stanimira Yordanova.

The meeting agenda included the following items:

1. Report on the activities of BulRMCNet project during the period 2005-2006
2. Presentation of the Regional Research Mobility Centers (RMC)
3. Proposal for sustainable development of the Network
4. Preparation of a final conference
5. Other issues

The meeting was opened by Kamelia Stefanova, Deputy Director of CIST on behalf of Assoc. Prof. Roumen Nikolov, Chairman of the SG.

E.Gourova briefly presented the activities on BulRMCNet Project during the second period 2005-2006. She focused on the development of the Bulgarian Network of RMC and the on-going communication strategy, targeted at making the Network popular and used by the research community. An important element of present activities is the development of a Guide for foreign researchers in Bulgaria. She provided an outline of the Guide, and asked the SG to provide their feedback and additions/corrections.

The representatives of the SG briefly presented the activities of the newly established RMCs focusing on their structure and specific tasks. It was made clear that all RMC staff has participated at training provided by SU-CIST and have established contacts with other institutions in their regions. In April 2006 all of them have provided training at regional seminars organized in their premises with the support of SU-CIST and local authorities. As more interesting activities of the RMCs were stressed the following:

- specific experience of Rousse RMC with a German researcher;
- successful collaboration with the local authorities and in particular searching for common activities focused on academia-industry with the municipality of Varna;
- interuniversity collaboration and support by local branches of the National Insurance Institute, the National Incomes Agency and the Ministry of Interior in Stara Zagora;
- collaboration with other university units and centers specialized in contacts with industry and on IPRs.

On point 4 of the agenda, E.Gurova presented a proposal for the conference topics and structure. It was accepted that the conference will be on ‘Researchers Career and Mobility’

and will take place on 6-7 November within the next edition of the European Day of the Entrepreneur (EDE). The main goal of the conference will be to present to the research community the Bulgarian Network of Research Mobility Centers and ERA MORE. It aims also to discuss the researchers' career opportunities and the mobility between academia and industry. The main topics will be:

- Mobility and career development of researchers in Europe
- European Networks for mobility of researchers
- The challenges to the Bulgarian Network of Research Mobility Centers
- Opportunities for research career in university, industry and research institute
- The challenges of the knowledge economy – technology transfer, innovation and knowledge management
- Career of women and young people in research

The first two sessions will be on 6 November in plenary, and the other 4 sessions will be on 7 November splitting the audience into two parts for parallel sessions. The first session will focus on some policy and legal aspects of researchers' mobility, while the second will present the activities of foreign ERA MORE members (e.g. Greece, Italy, Hungary, Turkey, etc.). All participants accepted to be actively involved in the organization of the conference and especially the lecturers. E.Gourova encouraged them to prepare presentations focusing on the specific experiences of their RMCs.

In this relation, Victoria Damyanova presented the present ideas for EDE'2006 which will be targeted at the EU membership of Bulgaria and the opportunities provided by the structural funds.

Another important issue of the agenda was the sustainability of the Bulgarian Network of RMCs. E.Gourova stressed that the EC financial contribution is just for a limited period and that it is expected a national funding for the continuation of the activities at national level. She expressed a hope that the present integration of most RMCs in other university structures will help their future sustainability. Nevertheless, there is a need to preserve the network as such. Assoc. Prof. Nikolov presented his opinion on creating an association and its possible activities. In this relation, one of the main tasks is to find suitable models and organizational structures, so as the network to preserve its face and to enlarge its activities in the future. As some possible future directions were outlined: to provide support services for preparation of European projects at regional level, to support the academia-industry collaboration, to establish good regional collaboration with Greece, Turkey, Romania, etc. T.Todorova pointed out that the RMC development may be linked to the establishment of Technology Transfer Offices at universities. It will be necessary to enlarge the competences of the RMCs and their subjects. Z.Gioslieva stressed that there is an ongoing initiative of the Patent Office for establishing at universities small units for IPRs awareness raising and information dissemination (IP points) which may also be considered as a possible future direction of RMCs activities. As a third direction R.Simeonov mentioned the establishment of career offices at the universities supported by the National Employment Agency.

The presentation of E.Kovatcheva raised the interest of participants as she showed the new design of the National RMP (<http://www.eracareers-bg.net/>). She made an on-line demonstration of the new portal and compared it with the old one. She emphasised that one of its main features is the better navigation and user friendly design. E.Kovatcheva provided also information on the meeting with IT specialists of the RMCs held at the end of January in Sofia, and its follow up activities. She stressed the need for timely preparation of the RMC

own sites, where a certain delay is observed, and the need to place the ERA MORE logo on the first page of the universities' sites with a link to the RMC site. On the latter should be given a link to the National RMP (<http://www.era-careers-bg.net/>).

At the meeting were taken the following decisions.:

- SU-CIST to disseminate the draft Guide for foreign researchers in Bulgaria to all SG members and they to provide their feedback to mobility@fmi.uni-sofia.bg within a month;
- SU-CIST to prepare a project for setting up an association and to distribute it to the SG members for consideration;
- members of the SG and the RMCs to take part in the Organizational committee of the Conference and by the end of July to send to E.Gourova their proposals for lecturers, topics and chairs of the sessions.
- next SG meeting to take place on 3 October 2006 in SU-CIST office.