

01/30/2015 Events

One year passed since the launching of the Tempus Project “Technological Transfer Network (TecTNet)”, implemented in the Republic of Moldova by an EU-Moldova consortium composed of eleven partners. The project was started on December 1st, 2013 and will be completed in December 2016. The main objective of the project is to enhance the institutional capacities of the 4 Universities of Moldova participating in the project, namely: Technical University of Moldova (TUM), State Agrarian University of Moldova (SAUM), Moldova State University (USM), “Alecu Russo” Balti State University (USARB), to deal with knowledge and technology transfer, intellectual property and innovation management. The transfer of EU practices is ensured by EU partner-universities with broad experience in the field, namely: University of Sannio (Italy), “Gheorghe Asachi” Technical University of Iasi (Romania), Technical University of Košice (Slovakia) and Instituto Superior Técnico of Lisbon (Portugal). The sustainability of the knowledge triangle *education –innovation-research* is supported also by participation in the project of the Moldovan Agency for Innovation and Technology Transfer (AITT), the State Agency on Intellectual Property of the Republic of Moldova (AGEPI) and a local NGO “Moldovan Technology Transfer Network”.

To achieve its goals, the project is called to provide the beneficiary universities with effective and efficient instruments for exploiting their educational and research capacities by building up the necessary competencies and infrastructure that include (i) deployment of a master program in the fields of innovation and technology transfer; (ii) establishment of university-business collaboration, and (iii) development of Technology Transfer Offices within the above-mentioned universities.

Master program on Management of Innovation and Technology Transfer

The project had a good and early start considering the fact that the Kick-off meeting was held in two weeks after the project official starting date and thus being possible to initiate the implementation of the specific activities soon afterwards. Some important results could already be reported, the most significant being the launching of a Master Program on Management of Innovation and Technology Transfer. The program is a pioneering one from several perspectives. It is for the first time in Moldova when a master program is developed and taught entirely within a TEMPUS project. Another issue to be mentioned is that the course was approved by the Ministry of Education as a joint master program delivered in common by the four universities from Moldova – partners of the TecTNet project. The teaching staff, which includes experienced professors from Moldova and EU, and the opportunity to have an internship in an EU university, constitute advantages that make the course more attractive. The studies started on September 15, 2014 and will be running till January 2016. During the 1st semester (to be concluded in February 2015), the following courses were taught: Data processing; Strategic management; Intellectual Property Law and Management; Applied statistics; Communication Techniques and Human Recourses and technology Management. The second semester includes such subjects as European Project Design and management, Innovation and Technology Transfer, Modern Techniques in Innovation and Engineering, etc. Throughout the master program, the master-students will have the possibility to improve their knowledge of English language within English classes taught as part of the master curricula and by interacting with the EU lecturers.

TecTNet webpage

The deployment of the master program is one of the most important but not the only one achievement of the first year. Progresses were registered in all working packages provided by the project contract. During the period under review, a dedicated to the TecTNet project webpage was developed and launched (<http://www.tectnet.unisannio.it/> [1]) containing detailed information on project partners, objectives to be achieved and reflecting the activities performed. The webpage is designed also to serve as a platform for dissemination and sharing information on how to better use and exploit the research results in building mutually beneficial partnerships between universities and business community.

University-enterprises cooperation

In order to set up the necessary linkages between the universities and entrepreneurial sector, and to raise the interest of companies for investing in innovations, two workshops targeting the university-enterprises cooperation were organized in March and June 2014, in Chisinau. The workshops were aimed at addressing various aspects of the innovation and technology transfer process, presentation of TecTNet project activities and providing a platform for exchange of information, experiences and knowledge on the management of technology transfer from the R&D sector to business. More than 200 persons representing academia and the business sector attended the two workshops, having the opportunity to interact and establish contacts.

With a view to enhance the capacity of universities and companies to build partnerships for promoting the innovation culture, creating incentives for a more competitive and innovative business environment, the Moldovan universities undertook working visits to companies/enterprises with the aim to recruit business-partners interested in technology transfer and further collaboration with universities.

Moreover, the contacts established between universities and companies helped in identifying the demands and expectations of entrepreneurs from the research sector. Attention was given to the student's involvement in the research projects, as the companies perceive them as the main creative force capable to foster the innovation capacities of companies once employed. At the completion of the respective exercise, around 15 companies were recruited to be further involved in university-business initiatives tackling innovation and technology transfer issues.

Setting-up of Technology Transfer Offices

The core element for successful technology transfer process is the availability of adequate infrastructure with qualified personnel, so the project provides for setting up Technology Transfer Offices (OTT) in Moldovan (MD) universities. Two staff members from each MD University, enrolled as trainees in the master program, will constitute the staff of OTTs and they have been chosen among the administrative staff of the four MD universities. An internship is provided by the project for the MD OTTs staff within similar offices from EU universities. Such an approach ensures that at the end of the TecTNet project, the MD universities will possess not only well equipped OTTs, but also skilful, knowledgeable persons with European experience in the field.

In November 2014, the project was assessed within a field monitoring mission realized by the TEMPUS coordinator in Moldova. The monitors reported the situation as good, mentioning the excellent results achieved by the consortium and the good overall management of the project ensured by the project Coordinator – University of Sannio from Italy and its Moldovan counterpart – Moldova State University.

To guarantee an efficient and timely implementation of the project activities, a well functioning quality management mechanism was put in place and is carefully monitored by the Agency for Innovation and Technology Transfer – leader of the Quality Management Workpackage.

To ensure a broad spreading of the activities outputs and knowledge gained, to sustain the project results and their further exploitation after the project completion, a dissemination strategy was developed and specific dissemination activities are provided by the project contract.

Based on the results achieved during the first year of the project implementation, the activities planned to be realized in 2015 are called to consolidate the Technology Transfer infrastructure, including by exploiting the established connections with enterprises and by building new partnerships; widely disseminating the information about the project outputs and findings; consolidating the TTOs and developing the content for the ICT platform and up-grading the project webpage.

More information on the TecTNet project is accessible on the project webpage:

<http://www.tectnet.unisannio.it/> [1].

For further enquiries, please contact the AGEPI TecTNet team, leader of the Dissemination Workpackage: tel: (+373 22) 400583, fax: (+373 22) 440094, email: liliana.vieru@agepi.gov.md [2]

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