



**TEMPUS PROJECT- 517200-1-2011-1-BE-TEMPUS-SMGR**

## **A REPORT REGARDING THE RETRAINING WEEK IN GERMANY**

**Period:** from October 20<sup>th</sup> to October 26<sup>th</sup>

**Location:** Aalen, Germany

**Campuses:** Main Campus, Burren Campus

**Purpose:** retraining within the Tempus-ECBAC project

**Domains:**

- ✂ International cooperation
- ✂ Quality assurance
- ✂ Student services
- ✂ IT service

**Retraining team:**

1. Aleksandra Boričić (The School of Higher Technical Professional Education Niš – international cooperation)
2. Sanja Kovačević (College of Professional Studies for Pre-School Teachers Pirot – international cooperation)
3. Ivica Stančić (College of Agriculture and Food Technology Prokuplje – quality assurance)
4. Suzana Đorđević (College of Textiles Leskovac – quality assurance)
5. Milan Sretenović (College of Health Studies in Čuprija – student services)
6. Aleksandar Vasić (Preschool Teacher Training College Kruševac – student services)
7. Mladen Nikolić (Chemical Technology College of Professional Studies in Kruševac – IT service)
8. Nenad Janjić (College of Applied Professional Studies in Vranje – IT service)
9. Dragica Jovanović (Railway College of Applied Studies in Belgrade – IT service)
10. Ljubica Diković (College of Business and Technical Studies in Užice – international cooperation)
11. Igor Fürstner (College of Applied Technical Studies in Subotica – student service)

The representatives of the aforementioned colleges participating in the Tempus-ECBAC project departed for Germany on Sunday, October 20<sup>th</sup> at 13:30 hours from Belgrade airport, on which they landed again the following Saturday, October 26<sup>th</sup> at 20:30 hours.

The retraining was organised within the period of five weekdays, from Monday, October 21<sup>th</sup> to Friday, October 26<sup>th</sup> 2013.

## **DAY ONE**

On the first day the members of the Serbian delegation started their joint retraining in Aalen, at the International Relations Office. The programme of the first day lasted from 9 o'clock in the morning to 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

The members of the Serbian team were welcomed by the hosts Pascal Cromm, the chief of International Relations Office, Antje Discher and Nichola Adams. Mr. Cromm introduced us to the retraining agenda and started immediately with the first item of the programme.

Namely, Mr. Cromm presented us briefly with the history of Aalen University and its development from an Engineering school over a Technical college to Aalen University - Technology and Business. The very first study programmes covered the fields of mechanical engineering and surface and material technologies. In 1971 the Engineering school was renamed into a Technical College, and in 1997 it became Aalen University - Technology and Business.

Starting from the year 2010 all technical colleges in Baden-Württemberg have been renamed into University Colleges of Applied Sciences. In the year 2000 they signed the Bologna Declaration and their so-called Diplom system was replaced with Bachelor/Master system.

Upon completing the presentation regarding the history of the development of Aalen University Pascal Cromm gave us certain insights into the present-day Aalen. This presentation included the information on the location of Aalen within the province of Baden-Württemberg, on the structure of their study programmes, as well as on the connections which exist between the University and the industry and labour market. Nowadays there are 5000 students in Aalen, 28 bachelor programmes, 19 master programmes and 9 programmes for further education. These study programmes cover the fields of chemistry, electronics and computer technology, mechanical engineering and surface technologies, optics and mechatronics, business and industrial management.

The next presentation was related to applied research at Aalen University. The province of Baden-Württemberg is one of the most innovative regions in Europe when it comes to research and development. Applied research is simply necessary in order to obtain accreditation of master study programmes, and it is a precondition for the procurement of the laboratory equipment. Research projects have been launched in the fields of laser technology, optics, chemistry, photonics, audiology, etc. The Innovation Centre at Aalen University is a connection between the city of Aalen, the industry and the University.

In the afternoon the delegation visited various laboratories where the members of the team had the opportunity to get acquainted with certain projects which are currently being developed in Aalen. Dennis Herzig took the delegation to see the media lab. Professor Alwin Nagel welcomed us in the materialography lab where they test the macro-and microstructures of different materials. In the polymer processing

laboratory professor Achim Frick introduced us to the research in the field of polymers. Marcel Becker took us on a tour through a die casting lab.

Finally, the delegation visited the Carl-Schneider Student Residence Hall.

This visit concluded the first retraining day.

## **DAY TWO**

Pascal Cromm began the second retraining day with his presentation on the structure and central services at Aalen University. As to the structure, the delegation was introduced to governing bodies and boards which are responsible for various aspects of life and work at Aalen University, such as study programmes, research projects, financing, etc. Three governing bodies have the largest responsibility: Academic Senate, Board of Governors (external members comprise the majority) and Board of Trustees (which consists of 40 to 50 representatives of various companies). As to the central services, Aalen University consists of a large number of different services and centres: Central Services (responsible for the application, admission, and examination matters), International Relations Office, IT Service, Foreign language centre, Media centre, Career and Start-up centre, etc.

As to student participation at Aalen University, students are organised in a very elaborate structure and they have a large number of roles and functions. Among other things, General Student Council offers the support for students with respect to financing, as well as various forms of help for students with disabilities and for those who have children. Independent Student Council is responsible for organising cultural and sport events, student vocational guidance fairs, etc. Additionally, students take care of their peers from abroad by offering them help with regards to accommodation, and also by providing timely and important information regarding the life and study process at the campus. They also organise excursions, tutoring, German language courses, etc.

Regarding quality management, Pascal Cromm introduced us to some crucial issues with respect to accreditation processes in Germany. Furthermore, we were introduced to the services responsible for quality assurance at Aalen University. Those services deal with the quality of the teaching process, study programmes, accreditation, i.e. internal and external evaluation.

In the afternoon the delegation visited the Burren campus where the team members had the opportunity to visit the optometry and acoustics laboratories. Our host was Benjamin Lanzinger. Marco Speich took the delegation on a tour through the Centre for Optical Technology. Afterwards the delegation visited the campus library where our host was Silke Egelhof. The second retraining day ended in visiting the Anton Huber Student Residence Hall

Later in the afternoon the retraining team visited the old town core of Aalen only to discover that a small town of Aalen is a town with a very rich history.

## **DAY THREE**

During our visit Aalen University organised a student vocational guidance fair - AIM, the goal of which is, among other things, for students to find their placements within different companies in order to perform their student practice. Namely, student practice in Aalen is performed during the entire 5th semester. The fair is organised by students and the positive response of industrial giants of the region is really impressive.

Among the companies which were present at the fair one could notice Carl Zeiss, BMW, Boch, Daimler Benz, Voith, Siemens, Stihl, Audi, etc.

In the afternoon the retraining team visited the Limes Museum.

#### **DAY FOUR**

On the fourth retraining day the Serbian team visited the Main campus where all central services are located. Sabine Stradinger in front of the student services offered us some additional information regarding the activities of Aalen student services which mainly use the University site in order to collect information relating to applications, exams, admissions, etc. Nadine Russ provided certain additional information with respect to quality assurance. Namely, all questionnaires and surveys which are used for the evaluation of both study programmes and teaching process can be found online, on the University site. The last presentation that day came from Matthias Holst and it was related to IT services.

#### **DAY FIVE**

On the fifth day Pascal Cromm told us something more about the international cooperation at Aalen University, as well as about the promotion of higher education in Germany. International mobility of both students and staff holds very important place in German higher education system since there seems to be the lack of various educational profiles.

That which left the strongest impression on the retraining team during our stay in Aalen was a very strong bond between vocational education and industry. It is very important to emphasise that all potential professors at Aalen need to have at least three to five years of experience in industry. Moreover, the teaching staff is allowed to take a leave of absence in order to go back to the industry and get up-to-date with new flows and information, thus always keeping in touch with the latest trends in the industry. Aalen University has 95 partnership agreements with various higher education institutions on all continents and they hold the fourth position on the national list of European Erasmus Mobility Grants.

#### Presentation:

[1 Aalen University of Applied Sciences October 2013](#)

[2 Aalen University Structure and Central Services](#)

[3 Applied Research at Aalen University October 2013](#)

[4 History of Aalen University October 2013](#)

[5 Internationalisation at Aalen University](#)

[6 Quality Assurance through Accreditation - The German Way](#)

[7 Quality Management at Aalen University EN October 2013](#)

[8 Student Participation at Aalen University](#)