Serbian universities and the University of Bamberg: Project FUSE and follow-up activities

Biljana Mišić Ilić
University of Niš, Serbia
Faculty of Philosophy,
bmischeric@gmail.com

Serbian-Bavarian Higher Education Day
September 23-24, 2019
University of Bamberg
Fostering University Support Services and Procedures for Full Participation in the European Higher Education Area

9 partners from Serbia (5 state Universities and 1 college)

5 EU universities
FUSE

Fostering University Support Services and Procedures for Full Participation in the European Higher Education Area

Duration: December 2013 - November 2016

Specific objectives:

- Provide legal and administrative conditions and procedures
- Establish and improve integrated university support services for academic mobility and international cooperation
- Build capacities of teaching and non-teaching staff
FUSION and SYNERGY

UNI Bamberg in FUSE: Project activities and BEYOND

Expansion of cooperation

- in 2015 DAAD grants for student mobilities for all 6 partner HEIs from Serbia
- Very direct Bamberg involvement in setting nomination procedures, selection process, etc. (learning by doing!)

→ Excellent Serbian students as ‘ambassadors’
Follow-on

- Continuation and further expansion of cooperation:
- Student mobilities (BA, MA and finally, PhD level)
- 2 staff members from Serbian HEIs spent a year working at Bamberg international office (2015, 2016)
- "FUSE after FUSE"
  - Staff weeks in 2017, 2018, 2019
  - Teacher mobilities in 2018, 2019 😊
  - Continuation of student mobilities
Success factors and significance

- Project activities and institutional ties enhanced through personal contacts, exceptional professional commitment combined with direct personal involvement.

- Fields and disciplines for student mobilities at Bamberg university: languages, social sciences, humanities (usually these students have fewer mobility opportunities than technical and hard sciences students).
Short video testimonials

- BA student Lidija Petrović (UNI)
- PhD student Ivan Stamenković (UNI)
- Dr Emilija Lipovšek, staff, College of Tourism, Belgrade
Challenges

- Serbia becoming a programme country (topic covered by Dr Andreas Weihe)
- Serbia-Bavaria: Language barrier as Serbian mobility students are not very fluent in German, so mostly choose and attend English courses
- Bavaria-Serbia: very limited number of study programmes in English at Serbian HEIs (but growing constantly!)
FUTURE: Possibilities for further cooperation (still fuzzy!)

- Mobility agreements with other Bavarian universities (in the areas of languages, social sciences and humanities)
- Short-term teaching practice for Bavarian German language students at Serbian HEIs
- German language lectors at UNI
- Enhance cooperation for Slavic departments (including Serbian, BCS)
- Alumni Association for promotion and enhancing cooperation (enhancement and localization of DAAD alumni association in Serbia)
- Establishing ties for joint applications for projects (e.g. strategic partnerships, research projects...
Recepe for success

- Sound financial framework and support
- Personal and professional contacts, understanding and commitment
- (Bamberg) Secret ingredient 😊