Opening up Member States: “Opening up Balkans” as regional pilot for Openness

Open Education as an opportunity to reshape Western Balkans education

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Serbia

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Overview

• OER in Serbia are not yet recognized in official documents nor widely used in the educational setting
• Existing regulations open the possibilities for the development of OER but need further improvement at the national and institutional level in compliance with OER regulations in Europe
• Awareness of the importance of OER, opportunities they offer, methods of development and implementation, and the use thereof, needs to be raised in the educational setting
Policy Action - Education Development Strategy in Serbia up to 2020

Key achievements

• Adopted by the Government of Serbia in 2012
• Criticizes traditional tendencies of the education system for independence from other systems and promotes its openness
• Specifically targets openness and accessibility of higher education

Challenges

• Opportunities the strategy offers for legal regulation of ideas related to OER need to be operationalized into other policy documents related to education
Policy Action - Information Society Development Strategy in Serbia up to 2020

Key achievements
• Adopted by the Government of Serbia in 2010
• Fosters application of information technology in education
• Emphasizes the development of digital educational content as one of the main goals to be achieved

Challenges
• Use possibilities for introducing OER the strategy opens by referring to introduction of modern concepts of e-learning and open distance learning
Policy Action - The Law on Higher Education in Serbia

Key achievements
• Declares openness of higher education towards all citizens and general public as one of its main principles
• Complies with the European system of higher education specifically promoting academic mobility of faculty and students
• Provides a starting point for the development and implementation of OER through alignment with successful European practices and academic mobility

Challenges
• The new Draft law that has been submitted to the Parliament for adoption does not mention specifically OER
• Formulate amendments for including open education and OER in the Law the future
Capacity Building

Key achievements

• University of Belgrade library Svetozar Marković organized a seminar of open access to education, open education and massive open online courses
• University of Belgrade established its Center for e-Leaning and Distance Education
• Balkan Distance Education Network (BADEN) became the Epprobate (first international quality label for eLearning courseware) national partner for WB region

Challenges

• Awareness of the importance of OER and opportunities they offer needs to be raised within the educational community
• Lack of current policies and practices related to OER
• Workshops are needed on methods of development, implementation and the use of OER
Services and Content

**Key achievements**

- Wikimedia Serbia was founded with the aim to allow free exchange of knowledge and participation in gathering educational content
- Creative Commons Serbia project was launched and national CC standards were adopted
- Khan Academy Serbia has started the translation of Khan Academy instructional videos
- BAEKTEL Meta portal was developed for searching and browsing OER based on their metadata in various languages and populated by initial OER

**Challenges**

- Services based mostly on voluntary participation
- Motivate people to engage in activities for further development of services and content (current problem with Khan Academy Serbia)
- Development of a national repository for OER
- Raising visibility of services and content and enlargement of user population using modern approaches such as gamification
- Further improve multilinguality features
Research and Development

Key achievements

• Tempus BAEKTEL (Blending Academic and Entrepreneurial knowledge in Technology Enhanced Learning) - developed an environment for creating publishing and searching OER content by academic and entrepreneurial organizations

• Tempus CaSA (A Sustainable Tool for Knowledge and Innovation Transfer in Animal Sciences) created NaRA - National Repository for Agricultural Education.

Challenges

• Lack of national projects for development of OER

• More Erasmus+ projects are needed (NETCHEM – ongoing, aimed at OER production in Instrumental Analytical Chemistry education)

• Interest in research on OER needs to be raised within the research community
Supportive Environments

Key achievements

• BAEKTEL edX portal for publishing OERs
• Adding and easy editing of videos, tasks, and texts
• Combining different components in the same unit
• Wide range of tasks in various forms
• Monitoring the progress of users
• Detailed description of learning materials
• Easy to use

Challenges

• Development of BOER (Balkan OER network)
• A collaborative BAEKTEL initiative for producing OER within a network of Balkan universities, taking into account the diverse nature of regional and local features of Balkan countries
• The start-up initiative for this network to be presented by all BAEKTEL partner universities through seminars and conferences at a number of Balkan universities
• Further popularization of this initiative throughout the Balkan academic community