

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Launching “Enhancing University Autonomy in Moldova – EUniAM” project**

The EUniAM project, funded with the support of the European Union, has been launched in Chisinau, Moldova on November 20, 2012. The EUniAM project is a structural measures project that seeks to contribute to the development and reform of education institutions and systems at national level in Moldova, focusing on its national priorities.

Specifically, the EUniAM project is answering to the main objectives of national policies in the field of high education related to increasing **university autonomy**, namely: (i) consolidated Strategy of Education Development for 2010-2015; (ii) activity program of the Government of Moldova for 2009-2013 „European Integration: Freedom, Democracy, Welfare”; and (iii) harmonization of higher education system of Moldova with principles of Bologna process.

University autonomy typology consists of four types: academic autonomy, financial autonomy, organizational autonomy, and staffing autonomy. **Academic autonomy** is about deciding on degree supply, curriculum and methods of teaching, deciding on areas, scope, aims and methods of research. **Financial autonomy** focuses inter alia on acquiring and allocating funding, deciding on tuition fees, and accumulating surplus. **Organizational autonomy** pertains to setting university structures and statutes, making contracts, electing decision-making bodies and persons. **Staffing autonomy** deals with responsibility for recruitment, salaries and promotions.

In light of the above, the EUniAM project **aims** at enhancing the university autonomy in the Republic of Moldova by proposing legislative changes in university autonomy framework. Specific **objectives** of the EUniAM project are to: (1) contribute to the work of the permanent government structures that work with the reform of the university autonomy system; (2) develop skills for modernization capacity of the involved higher education institutions; (3) evaluate the existing university autonomy system applied to higher education institutions of Moldova taking in consideration the main existing constrains; (4) study and adapt the relevant solutions and procedures of the university autonomy system applied in higher education institutions of EU partners; (5) draft legislative proposals on university autonomy; and (6) disseminate the EUniAM project results and ensure the sustainability and awareness of the role of all stakeholders to assure the quality education system development in Moldova.

Major **expected outcomes** of the EUniAM projects are **legislative proposals** on academic autonomy, organizational autonomy, financial autonomy and staffing autonomy. In order to deliver these outcomes a set of work packages and within-work-package actions had been developed. Here are several examples of such actions: (1) develop the methodology to collect, analyze and interpret collected data; (2) evaluate the extant university (institutional)

autonomy in Moldova along the 4 university autonomy types: organizational, financial, staffing and academic; (3) study and adapt the relevant solutions and procedures of university autonomy applied in higher education institutions of EU partners as well as across EU; (4) draft university autonomy framework for Moldova; (5) conduct public hearing on the proposed framework; (6) incorporate/address the feedback from all stakeholders; (7) draft legislative proposal on university autonomy.

There are 19 EUniAM **project partners** directly involved in the implementation of the project. At the **national level** these are: Academy of Economic Sciences of Moldova, State Agrarian University of Moldova, State University of Balti "Alec Russo", State University of Cahul "Bogdan Petriceicu Hașdău", State University of Comrat, State University of Medicine and Pharmacy "Nicolae Testemitanu", State University of Moldova, Technical University of Moldova, Chamber of Industry and Commerce of Moldova, Education and Science Trade Union, Ministry of Education of Moldova, Ministry of Finance of Moldova, National Council of Rectors of Moldova, and National Council of Student Organizations of Moldova. At the **EU level** the project partners are: Aalborg University of Denmark, Mykolas Romeris University of Lithuania, Royal Institute of Technology of Sweden, University of Gloucestershire of UK, and University of Suceava Ștefan cel Mare of Romania.

Aalborg University is the principal applicant and lead partner of the EUniAM project. The EUniAM **project coordinator** is Dr. Romeo V. Turcan, Associate Professor of International Business and Entrepreneurship at Aalborg University, Denmark. The **national project coordinator** is Prof. Larisa Bugaian, Vice-Rector of Technical University of Moldova.

The duration of the EUniAM project is 15.10.2012 – 14.10.2015. The total budget of the EUniAM project is €1,123,955.39, of which Tempus grant is €1,011,067.89 and co-financing is €112,887.50.

A number of **key success factors** have been identified that are essential for the successful implementation of the EUniAM project. It is critical there is a continuous commitment and fruitful collaboration between all project partners and national stakeholders during the EUniAM project and beyond. It is pivotal a holistic approach to university autonomy development is taken, recognizing that each type of university autonomy is necessary, but separately – not sufficient. Active direct participation of the stakeholders to public hearings on projects deliverables is indispensable to the success of the EUniAM project. Stakeholders' confidence in expertise and commitment of the EUniAM project team will also contribute tremendously to the success of the project. Endurance and agility are the two properties of the emergent university autonomy framework – properties that ought to be part of the mind-set of all project members and stakeholders involved. Last, but not least, patience and hard work are virtues everyone involved in the EUniAM project can not afford not to pursue.

For **additional information** on the EUniAM project, please contact either Romeo V. Turcan at [rvt@business.aau.dk](mailto:rvt@business.aau.dk) or Larisa Bugaian at [lbugaian@gmail.com](mailto:lbugaian@gmail.com).