

**Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training  
in the Erasmus+ Partner Countries neighbouring the EU:  
Partnership for socio-economic development**

*Erasmus+ HEREs Seminar* held on 10 and 11 March 2015 in Istanbul, Turkey

Attended by 27 countries as well as representatives from EC, EACEA and ETF, the seminar provided valuable opportunity to discuss interrelationships of HE and VET systems, facing challenges and their potential to tackle the economic and social development needs of the countries and the globe. Both plenary and workshop sessions touched upon several key issues ranging from challenges and trends in VET. Special focus was duly placed on a potential synergy with HE in the EU and partner countries, illustrated by country experiences and best practices in partnerships for local development, teacher training, market responsive post-secondary qualifications and permeability of systems.

For Georgia, with its very intensive reform agenda in both VET and HE (and related qualifications), exposure to best practices of Slovenia and Turkey in intermediary qualifications, and Israel and Netherlands in VET and HE synergy for development would be highly beneficial. The further networking opportunities or twinning with counterparts from the respective countries will enable Georgian institutions (both policy and executive) to inform its reform agenda.

One of the main objectives of this gathering was also to introduce renewed HERE team in partner countries with new responsibilities and possibilities. The Codes of conduct as well as the functions of newly appointed chairs as contact persons were discussed.

EUA will coordinate the work of HERE's. The team of EUA from Barcelona University expressed interest in organizing an international seminar in Tbilisi in 2016. HERE experts agreed to discuss this matter further and find a university willing to organize such an event. For organizing useful seminars on regional level EUA team asked to provide regional priorities. The priorities for seminars and activities for capacity building in Georgian Higher Education institutions were also topics of interest. It included targeted seminars and/or site visits to study best examples of joint degree programs, PhD supervising and establishing nationwide networks for PhD Education in Georgia. The meeting was also highly useful for networking.