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Dobrinka Georgieva

New CPLOL European Union Project with Bulgarian Participation

NetQues is the acronym for *Network for Tuning Standards and Quality of Education programmes in Speech and Language Therapy across Europe*.

- NetQues is an exciting partnership of 65 partners representing all 27 EU member states plus partners from Liechtenstein, Norway and the EU-candidate countries of Iceland and Turkey. South West University and National Society of Logopedists are the Bulgarian participants.
- The three-year long project (2010-2013) is funded by ERASMUSENWA Life Long Learning Programme.

The NetQues network project aims to address the needs of tuning speech and language therapist / logopaedist (SLT) education in Europe through defining educational benchmarks and sharing best practice in teaching, learning and assessment.

More specifically, it will:

- Map and describe all areas of SLT education, training and practice using the Tuning methodology
- Develop SLT standards across the EU based on this information
- Identify, share and develop best practice in SLT education
- Foster development of Lifelong Learning (LLL) at EU level and nationally
- Provide opportunities for Higher Education Institutions and professional bodies to engage with each other and to influence educational debates on implementation of Bologna and other EU policies
- Provide a solid base for workforce mobility

Current speech and language therapy (SLT) education in EU-countries differs in curricular structure, and also in award/degree level. SLT education has been evolving and continues to expand in size and range of models both within and across countries.

Some countries are currently in the process of establishing new courses (e.g. Iceland, Cyprus) or extending / reviewing existing ones (e.g. Hungary); a few EU countries do not have any SLT programmes with most of their SLTs educated in other EU states, (e.g. Luxembourg and Lichtenstein) but may consider setting up an educational programme in the future.

It is important to ensure that any future changes align themselves in a more harmonised system. Widely accepted standards that member countries have elaborated are necessary to guide such developments.

NetQues is about setting and maintaining high standards of professional education of speech and language therapists across Europe. It is about identifying and sharing best practices, developing knowledge and its transfer. This is to ensure that all people with communication difficulties in all EU member states are able to access high quality services provided by appropriately highly educated and skilled professionals in communication disorders.

