

## Conference in Lithuania discusses links between VET research and practice

On May 27-28, 2010 the Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science and Vytautas Magnus University of Kaunas (Lithuania) invited researchers of vocational education and training (VET), practitioners and those who just started studying the field for discussion under the topic “*Systematic Theoretical Dimensions of Change in Vocational Education and Training*”. Conference and its introductory events were held in memory of the 60<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of professor Rimantas Lauzackas (1950-2009). Since the restoration of independence of Lithuania professor Lauzackas was active in initiating and implementing systematic changes of VET processes as well as in promoting and running open discussions of researchers, politicians and practitioners.

More than 30 presentations were offered in plenary and sections of the conference to discuss the changes and to introduce the research of vocational education and training. In the plenary session Jurgen van Buer (Humboldt University, Germany) presented the research on the challenges of VET, among which the most vivid were such as disappearing separation between academic VET and non-academic education and training for profession and increasing domination of interdisciplinary learning as highly significant factor in problem solving. Jean-Luck Patry (University of Salzburg, Austria) presented the concept of “Happenstance” which refers to unexpected, unplanned events that eventually turn out to be beneficial to students. This phenomenon based on cognitive-affective personality system is to be introduced to vocational education and training. Kestutis Pukelis (Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania) who represented Lithuanian part in the plenary, debated concepts of competency, qualification and competence as well as the problems of these concepts relations in the context of Lithuanian Qualification Framework.

Conference discussions were run in 6 sections under such topics as “Policy and management of VET”, “Objectives of pre-vocational education and development of VET”, “Trends of change in IVET”, “CVET in the context of lifelong learning”, “Education and training of VET teachers” and “Quality of vocational education and training”. Among the most important and widely discussed were the issues of the reform of qualification system, the status problem of VET teachers, the perspectives of andragogues professional performance research, the significance of category of goodness in the methodology of vocational education and career design and stakeholders viewpoints regarding the correspondence of graduates’ skills to the labour market needs.

Conference provided with the great opportunity to bring together researchers and practitioners, to summarize the results of long lasted research in VET and to analyse the application of these research results for the development of VET.

For more information on the conference “*Systematic Theoretical Dimensions of Change in Vocational Education and Training*” please visit [www.vdu.lt/profesinis-rengimas](http://www.vdu.lt/profesinis-rengimas). Papers on which the conference presentations were based are available in the 19<sup>th</sup> issue of scientific journal “Vocational Education: Research and Reality” (ISSN 1392-6241) issued by Vytautas Magnus University.

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