REPORT on the

Novi Sad University

Serbia and Montenegro

March 15-19, 2004

SALZBURG SEMINAR

UNIVERSITIES PROJECT
VISITING ADVISORS PROGRAM

Table of Contents

The Universities Project of the Salzburg Seminar
Visiting Advisors Program

Summary Report of the Visit to the
University of Novi Sad, Serbia and Montenegro
March 15–19 2004

Team Members:

John Davies (Team Leader), Dean of the Graduate School, Anglia Polytechnic University, Essex, UK
Andrei Marga, Rector, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj, Romania
Ada Pellert, Professor, Department of Higher Education Research, Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies, Austrian Universities
Jochen Fried, Director, Universities Project, Salzburg Seminar

FOREWORD

1. As a part of Salzburg Seminar's Universities Project, the Visiting Advisors Program (VAP) offers assistance to higher education institutions (HEI) in Central and Eastern Europe as well as the Russian Federation which seek to advance the process of institutional self-assessment and change. The VAP consists of consulting visits, at the request of the host institution, by an international team of experienced university leaders who volunteer their time and expertise to provide strategic support and advice to their colleagues in developing new approaches to concerns expressed by the host institution. In doing so, the Salzburg Seminar hopes to promote a broader understanding of the challenges that HEI in the respective regions are facing in renewing their higher education systems; to share examples of good practice; to strengthen the reform impetus at the given HEI; and to encourage professional and institutional linkages.

2. The Universities Project received an invitation to send a Visiting Advisor Team to the University of Novi Sad (in the following referred to as *UNS* or *the University*) in the Republic of Serbia, and the visit took place March 15–19, 2004. The UNS was founded in 1960 and grew quickly to become the second largest university in Serbia with currently almost 38,000 students who can choose between many different study programs (undergraduate and post-graduate) offered by thirteen Faculties. The seize of these Faculties varies considerably between about 600 (civil engineering) and more than 7000 students (engineering). The same is true for the student/teacher ratio which is 3,22 in the arts and 77,07 in law (the UNS average ration is 14,54). The University employs 1430 professors, 1180 assistants and 1103 non-teaching

staff. It is one of the characteristics of the UNS that the majority of the Faculties resides on a campus which is rather unusual for European universities. There are, however, also some Faculties that are located outside of Novi Sad in the towns of Sombor, Subotica and Zrenjanin which reflects the fact that the UNS is mainly serving the population of the Province of Vojvodina, the most northern and most developed part of Serbia.

3.   In preparation of the visit, UNS produced a Self-Evaluation Report which included a very useful SWOT analysis including some main statistical data, a basic organizational improvement plan, some background on the current legislation and the new draft law on higher education in Serbia as well as a summary analysis for each of the five main themes that the UNS leadership has selected as the focus for the discussions with the Visiting Advisors Team:

   3.1   Quality management, quality assurance and quality culture

   3.2   Information flow and information strategy

   3.3   Integrated university – financial flow/management

   3.4   Internal integration

   3.5   Internationalization

4.   Over the three-day visit, UNS organized for the VAP Team a series of detailed and very helpful meetings with the Rector, the Vice Rectors, many Deans and Heads of Department, the faculty and administrative staff as well as student representatives. The discussions offered rich evidence and perspectives in addition to the documentation provided, and the Visiting Advisors Team owes thanks to the colleagues from Novi Sad for their dedication and open-mindedness in sharing their concerns with us. The goal of the Team's visit was not to conduct formal evaluation of UNS, but to offer an independent expertise on those issues that the UNS leadership identified to be of primary importance for the mid- and long-term development of the University. What we have attempted to do in this report is to

   •   offer an analysis regarding the effectiveness of the current practices and strategic approaches to address these issues;

   •   provide a vehicle for enhancing the internal discussions about policy decisions and future directions of UNS;

   •   point to the experience derived from other national and international settings;

   •   lend support to the processes of institutional changes and transformation that are underway at UNS.

   In 2001/02 UNS underwent an external evaluation performed by the European University Association in the framework of its Institutional Evaluation Program.

The report that has come out of this served as a very helpful background to our discussions in Novi Sad and the present document builds on the work of the EUA colleagues and seeks to draw out and deepen the consultation on those issues that the UNS suggested for discussion.

5.   At the outset, we would like to thank Rector Fuada Stankovic and her able team, notably Ms Ivana Vujkov, for their excellent hospitality – social, cultural, gastronomic and intellectual – their warm friendship and stimulating discussions. We would also wish the income Rectors well. We trust that this Report will be a helpful contribution to the future evolution of the University, notwithstanding the limited amount of time and evidence at our disposal. Recommendations for action and future consideration are emboldened in the paragraphs which follow, for ease of reference.

REFLECTIONS OF THE INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

6.   There is no doubt that the situation in the former Yugoslavia during the 1990's had very serious consequences for Serbian universities in terms of, *inter alia*

   6.1   international sanctions and the exclusion from much intellectual mobility and cross-fertilization.

   6.2   repression of academic freedom at institutional and individual levels.

   6.3   severe funding problems and the denial of investment, and even normal maintenance funding.

   6.4   a somewhat skewed balance between institutional autonomy and public accountability, leading to distortions in methods of financial support, institutional planning, university integrity as a holistic concept, perceptions and practices of quality assurance etc.

   6.5   a certain stagnation and rigidity in the evolution of the curriculum and research.

   UNS, it seems to the VAP Team, has endeavored to cope with these privations and distortions with no little skill and determination, but it is recognized that it will be a long time before the University, and indeed Serbian universities not only re-shape the current situation, but also Endeavour to catch up with international developments.

7.   The VAP Team recognizes that the draft of the New Law on Higher Education will provide a sound framework for addressing many of the issues mentioned in para. 7, congratulates UNS on a perceptive analyses of the opportunities offered for creative university management and encourages the Serbian government to embark on an early implementation. In the meantime, we still see disturbing developments with regard to the budgetary situation at Serbian universities which continue to be underfunded by the government. As a

consequence, there is a serious lack of financial resources needed for reconstruction; higher education reform; re-entering the international arena; and sustaining and improving quality. **We strongly urge *an increase* of the Higher Education budget, as a vital element in national economic, political, educational and cultural development**.

8. The UNS is a public university which receives its funds directly from the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports in Belgrade. Because of the legal status of the Vojvodina as an autonomous province with its own parliament, there is some involvement of the provisional authorities in the governance of the University, though in terms of the financing of the University this has no implications and the support it receives from provincial sources is minimal. Apart from the government grant, the single largest source of additional income for UNS is so-called "self-funded" students who pay tuition to pursue their study programs and who represent more than one third of the total student population (the percentage figures differ significantly across the different Faculties: less than seven percent in arts and more than fifty-five percent in law and in economics are fee-payers).

9. There are various other specific aspects of the environment which will be analyzed under particular sections of this Report. However, arising from this section and the above paragraphs, we would suggest at the outset

    9.1 a major focus on external non-state income generation to help mitigate the financial uncertainty from state sources. This does imply a significant attention to the development of a more entrepreneurial culture at UNS, which does also imply an acute understanding of emerging markets.

    9.2 a re-thinking of the role of research (and R and D) as an instrument of institutional advancement; international strategy; Serbian social and economic development; and financial diversification.

    9.3 an urgent attention to international benchmarking, as a tool of both upgrading academic quality and international strategy; and curriculum and research renewal.

    9.4 a continuation of the movement towards the operating concept of the unified university with a strong strategic sense and direction, with demonstrable legitimization, since it is unlikely that the necessary policy outcomes can be accomplished by anything less.

    9.5 a continuation of the commitment to a strong quality assurance agenda, which will underpin so many other elements.

    All these elements will be developed in more operational detail in subsequent paragraphs.

ISSUES OF STRATEGIC EVOLUTION

10.   The Self Evaluation discusses interestingly the current overall position of UNS and how it has arrived at its present positioning, especially after the difficult period of the 1990's. It comes over to the VAP Team as a dynamic and reform oriented university, well respected regionally and nationally, and beginning to assert itself on the European scene. The SWOT analysis provided in the Self Evaluation seems to indicate

10.1   a reasonably self critical perception of strengths and weaknesses, (which are largely internal phenomena), but with some lack of precision on opportunities and threats, (which are largely external phenomena). **More penetrating external intelligence would thus be appropriate at a strategic level**.

10.2   **by international standards, there may be other factors affecting future institutional evolution which should be overtly and systematically identified, analyzed and evaluated, e**.g.

•   **economic trends**

•   **market trends and demand for/relevance of UNS' discipline areas; employability etc**.

•   **competitiveness of higher education market**

•   **demographic trends and the future shape and size of the 18 – 20 year old cohorts**

•   **the potential for lifelong learning in its various forms for different types of adult learners**

•   **the IT revolution, globalization, and the threat of non Serbian higher education competitors (public and private) doing business in UNS' markets**

•   **the pressures from regional stakeholders for UNS' enhanced contribution to regional economics, cultural development, human resource and communications**.

UNS is urged to analyze these factors thoroughly, as they may well have a considerable bearing on mission shift, future development, and the nature of the strategic planning needed.

11.   Discussions on the above with colleagues at UNS did indicate to the VAP Team that some of the prevailing paradigms of the University were likely to evolve in different directions as the new century proceeds. Amongst the descriptors which emerged in discussions were e.g.

11.1   UNS as a comprehensive university: this implies a broader discipline base to

- create an enhanced academic status

- provide greater scope for interdisciplinarity

- provide a better service to the regional community.

The questions therefore for UNS are

What disciplines should be added?

What new postgraduate programs should be developed?

What new student client groups could be contemplated?

11.2   UNS as an entrepreneurial university: this implies market responsiveness, an enhanced income generating capacity in various domains. The questions are thus

Should UNS move in this direction?

How?

11.3   UNS as an international university, which assumes a higher volume of student and staff mobility, joint programs, alliances etc. as discussed in the paras. 25 – 37 together with explicit and formal international status, as required in accreditation.

11.4   UNS as a regional university, which involves a comprehensive set of services for regional development, and robust joint policy and delivery organs with regional stakeholders.

11.5   UNS as a multi-cultural university, which is a fascinating proposition for creative social and political activity following the 1990's: high risk but certainly worthwhile.

What are the precise ramifications of this?

11.6   UNS as a research-led university, which is a concomitant of many of the above paradigms. Here one would expect critical international strategic alliances; strong critical masses in selected fields; targeted investment; and vibrant R and D and intellectual property management (Mode B research).

12.   It is not for the Team to say what paradigms UNS should espouse, but all of these have been quoted to us during our visit. There are, of course, many overlapping elements (e.g. a strong research dimension which can be

exploited for various purposes). **However, the Team would strongly recommend**

12.1 **a serious and open discussion at UNS on the choices of these paradigms as a basis for conceptualizing its future evolution and positioning**.

12.2 **a discussion on what the selected paradigms mean for future size, scope, shape and staffing**.

12.3 **an evaluation of the key steps needed to move in the desired directions re. the strategic plan**.

13. It is also in this context that the internal characteristics are important as facilitators or inhibitors in moving things on. UNS has generally been described to us as an university with

13.1 the characteristics of a loose autonomous federation, rather than a "proper university" (reinforced by the budgetary process).

13.2 strong traditions and with some good areas of lateral cooperation, but not enough.

13.3 Rectorate having to rely on persuasion rather than executive action.

13.4 wide variation in approaches to issues across Faculties, and a predominance of ad hoc approaches.

Whilst there are undoubtedly benefits of an internal culture of this kind, there are also downsides, especially in a complex turbulent environment discussed in para. 7 – 10 and 11.2.

14. Referring to Figure 1, it thus seems to the VAP Team that UNS will very likely need to develop along two dimensions simultaneously.

Figure 1

C   D
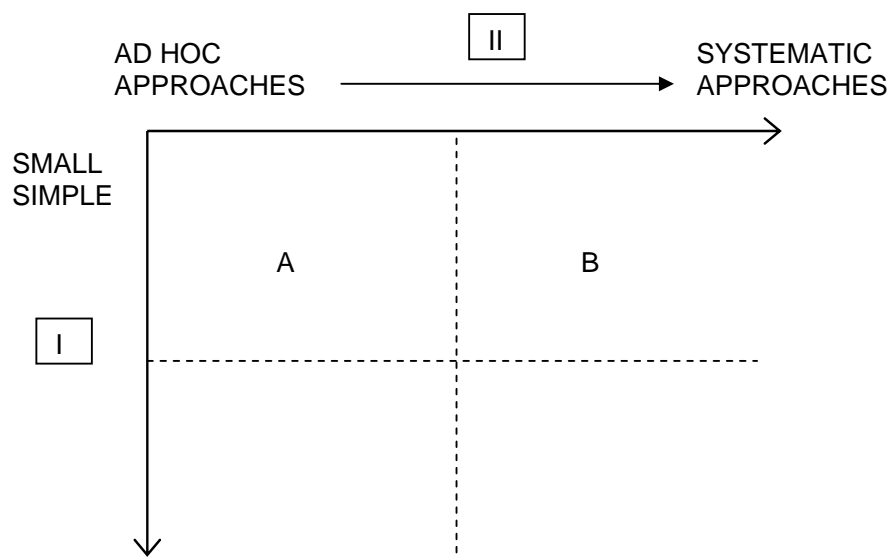
LARGE
COMPLEX
MULTI-
FUNCTIONAL

We would thus certainly see

14.1 a growth in scope and complexity given the above, in terms of the student body, range of activities.

14.2 the need for much more systematization and common approaches to issues and developments, in terms of e.g. quality assurance; information management; income generation; internationalization, which does demand a stronger centre.

We exemplify this major principle/concept in the paragraphs which follow.

CURRICULUM REFORM

15. It is evident from the Self Evaluation and the discussions that there is, at the level of Rectorate and Deans, a robust awareness that curriculum reform is needed, for many interrelated reasons, including

15.1 the structure of much of the current curriculum with

- over-emphasis on teaching rather than learning

- rigid curriculum specializations which discourage innovation and interdisciplinarity

- heavy overloading and excessive length

- out-datedness

- absence of continuous assessment

- uneven balance between theory and practice which reflects an internal rather than external orientation.

15.2 the efficiency and productivity of the learning process.

15.3 the incompatibility of many structures with the "Bologna" course architecture, international definitions and under- and postgraduateness, and the half-hearted adoption of ECTS to date.

15.4   a general institutional reluctance hitherto to use the institutional autonomy for deep-seated academic reforms.

16.   The VAP Team commends the University on its initiation of the Curriculum Reform Project which clearly addresses many of the above points. We also appreciate that much of the discussion so far has been at university level, and has variably permeated the lower levels of the University (though we are certainly aware of productive experiments in some Faculties), and one third of the curriculum has been reformulated since 2003, which is commendable. **The Team strongly urges a continuation of these initiatives, and would especially emphasize**

16.1   **the importance of sustaining the reform across the whole UNS. Whilst the new Forum evidently picks up the Bologna related issues, it is not clear to us how the rest is pursued**. **In this regard, we urge**

- **a clear and explicit course design framework, appropriately updated**

- **a robust internal accreditation process which picks up all the issues mentioned earlier, and insists on their adoption**

- **the strategic planning process should reinforce this, linked, as it should be, to resource allocation and de-allocation (especially with regard to staffing levels and curriculum volume/student load). Resourcing norms could helpfully be re-assessed**

- **the college of deans to be very proactive in this domain**

- **involvement of external agencies in keeping up the pressure – external evaluations, and the input of student and external stakeholders**.

16.2   **critical academic parameters should always be uppermost in pursuing these reforms, especially**

- **a serious reconceptualization of BA/MA differentiation across the University**

- **use of ECTS as the internal currency**

- **the shift from teaching to learning paradigms**

- **the stimulation of interdisciplinary and student choice based course structures through a weakening of rigid disciplinary barriers**

- **the design of programs with output competencies in mind**

- **the inclusion of transferable skills/core competencies in all programs irrespective of discipline (IT, languages, teamwork, leadership, communication etc**.).

16.3 **UNS should design curriculum in a way which is flexible enough for a variety of student populations, including lifelong learners of various types. This would seem to necessitate attention to**

- **student choice across disciplines**

- **part-time study through various modes**

- **interrupted study**

- **credit accumulation**.

16.4 **the importance of creating a resourcing system of academic units in the University which facilitates the above, rather than prevents it**.

16.5 **the criticality of regular periods for the re-accreditation/review of each course/program (e.g. five years) to ensure its updatedness and that it is developing according to original expectations**.

17. The Team commends the University for its readiness to confront these issues: the challenge now is to ensure that very good intentions are delivered, and this is a matter of political will and the creation of appropriate instruments.

QUALITY MANAGEMENT

18. The Self Evaluation document helpfully indicates the current state of quality management both in Serbian higher education and specifically in the University. In the former case, the Team notes the evolving nature of quality assurance legislation; the first steps of the new Commission for Accreditation; and the initiation of some regulations re. teaching staff appointments, but it is apparent that much attention is being given to private providers. There are considerable vacua in policy in policies to procedures and data collection and the implications for UNS would seem to be to

18.1 **retain the high level of awareness, of national developments and recognize signals**.

18.2 **develop internal operating procedures for QA at UNS fairly speedily in terms of**

- **establishing a lead in implementing robust Q. cultures**

- **dealing with obvious QA issues**

- **facilitating international acceptance**.

19. The above being the case, the Team was glad to note recent progress within the University, especially in terms of

   19.1 the 2002 Statute defining the internal Accreditation and Quality Control Body.

   19.2 obligatory student evaluations.

   19.3 commissions for teaching staff appointments.

   19.4 participation in international QA networks.

   19.5 the Project on Q. Monitoring and Control, supported by the Province, and the establishment of quality standards.

20. So far, so good, but it seems to the Team that these foundations need to be built on quickly. We would also observe that

   20.1 **in the interests of institutional integrity, whilst it is fine to allow each Faculty to define its own standards, the University as a whole should legitimize these definitions and monitor their implementation**.

   20.2 in the opinion of the students whom we met, there is enormous disparity across UNS over

   - whether monitoring questionnaires are used at all

   - their design

   - percentage returns

   - the extent to which any action follows, especially in regard to perceived poor teaching

   - the extent to which results are published.

   20.3 the idea of a university ombudsman seems to have been dropped. If so, this creates additional pressure to ensure that other standard processes work well.

   The University is urged to give attention to the above.

21. Whilst the project on the Monitoring and Control appears to be making some progress in its task of establishing Q. standards, the Team feels the University has a need to conceptualize an overall Quality Strategy, to provide a coherent

framework to systematize position and legitimize the various initiatives. **It is suggested that such an explicit strategy should contain, *inter alia*, the following**

21.1 **the University's philosophy on QA matters e.g**.

- **audit or developmental**

- **instrument of planned change**

- **roles of internal/external review**

- **international benchmarking**.

21.2 **the scope of QA at UNS e.g**.

- **teaching and learning**

- **lifelong learning**

- **research**

- **R and D**

- **university services**

- **academic units**

- **policy areas** (**e.g. internationalization**).

21.3 **cyclical review and annual monitoring**.

21.4 **structural links with other organizational processes e.g**.

- **budget allocations and re-allocation**

- **staff appraisal**

- **staff development and remediation**

- **curriculum reform**

- **teaching and learning methods**

etc.

that is, to ensure that issues unearthed in Q. reviews are picked up and acted on.

21.5 **explicit policies and procedures for**

- **Q. audit**

- **Q. assurance**

- **Q. enhancement**.

21.6 **data base and performance indicators**.

21.7 **codes of conduct and good practice to be followed i.e. not optional e.g**.

- **Ph.D. degrees – admission, supervision, training, monitoring**

- **UNS students studying at other universities**.

21.8 **the principle of decentralized operational responsibility for Q. matters, but in a robust and explicit university framework and with accountability**.

22. Organizationally, UNS has established the Accreditation and Quality Control Body, which is a good first step. **The VAP Team suggests also that**

22.1 **whilst one Vice Rector's role should be centered on QA, the other Vice Rectors should be operationally responsible for Q. in their functional areas**.

22.2 **deans should be firmly accountable for Q. in relation to teaching and research and units in their Faculties, but should designate an assistant dean or "responsible" for operational tasks**.

22.3 **the assistant deans or "responsibles" should together form a network across UNS for the exchange of good practice, supported by** ….

22.4 **a Quality Office/Centre to manage the processes; cross-fertilize across the University; respond to external initiatives; and manage the data base**.

23. The Team is confident that, with the above, UNS will be well prepared for any national initiatives, and for further development of the international strategy.

INTERNATIONALISATION

Current Situation

24. Due to the role that the government in Belgrade played in the violent disintegration of the former Yugoslavia during the 90's, Serbian universities

became subject to international sanctions and suffered from an enforced insularity for almost a decade. Institutions as well as individual scholars were excluded from most EU (and U.S.) mobility and exchange programs, and even the rare bilateral contacts that continued to be active were shackled or impeded by restrictive visa requirements or other obstacles. Serbian academics paid a heavy price for the vices of their political leaders, especially those who uncompromisingly fought against the government in their own country and were punished for this by intimidation, deferral or denial of career advancement and even expulsion from their university.

25. After the Milosevic regime was finally brought down in October 2000 (with intellectuals and students being among the most forceful activists), the official sanctions were lifted and Serbian universities re-entered the international arena. However, ten years of separation from the continuous trade of ideas and knowledge have left their traces and caused damages which will take time to repair.

26. Since the inception of the current Rector in 2001, the UNS has made resolute and purposeful efforts to counteract this deficiency and put the University back on the map of European and international higher education. In fact, the Rector emphasized during the Team's visit that the issue of restoring the international reputation of UNS and re-establishing meaningful contacts to partners from abroad has been her primary strategic goal throughout her term in office. The signing of the Bologna Declaration by the Serbian government at the Berlin Conference in September 2002 will add further impetus and a consistent policy agenda to these efforts.

Evaluation of effectiveness of current position

27. There can be no doubt that the UNS has been highly successful in boosting its international profile within a very short period of time. Thanks to its dynamic and forward-looking leadership team it has made a name for itself for being the most reform-minded and innovative university in all of Serbia. This has opened many opportunities for UNS colleagues to participate in international meetings and projects, thus enabling them to reconnect to the academic community abroad. As a result, there is a genuine and wide-spread appreciation at UNS of the need and the benefits of international cooperation. This is particularly evident with regard to productive efforts to become active members of the HEA (European Higher Education Area); ERA (European Research Area); EUA; UNESCO-CEPES; Salzburg Seminar; CAMPUS EUROPAE etc.

28. The current course architecture in UNS is not entirely compatible with the Bologna framework; ECTS is not universally applied as The credit framework; and the average length of study till graduation (7 – 8 years) is excessive by Western European standards.

29. To facilitate the numerous new (or renewed) contacts the UNS has enlarged its International Relations Office with predominantly young and dedicated staff which serves the entire University (only the Faculty of Law employs one

person to cultivate and coordinate its international activities). The strengthening of the Office underlines the commitment of the UNS leadership team to internationalization as a chief priority in the development of the University; but it also is a good example for a useful way of dividing tasks and responsibilities between the central administration and the individual Faculties.

30. As these tasks grow, it will be important to make timely provisions for a smooth and regular flow of information and communication that ensures the widest possible involvement of UNS staff and students in ongoing or planned activities and vice-versa. Currently, the knowledge about existing international links is dispersed throughout the University and is not readily available to those who seek advice or would like to build on the experience and the contacts of colleagues. **An inventory of international projects and contacts in the form of a simple and user-friendly data base would go a long way in addressing this shortcoming**.

31. After a period of extensive growth regarding international contacts and cooperation, it seems now the time to harvest and adopt a more strategic approach in using international cooperation as a tool for *institutional* development. Not all of these contacts may be equally useful and promising, and choices must be made which ones deserve more attention and investment of efforts than others. The selection criteria can vary, but they should be based on a thorough analysis of the longer-term needs of the institution. For some Departments or Faculties this might point to a focus on curriculum development or staff exchange, for others the focus might be on reinforcing the research capacity or on the training of junior professors whereas the UNS as a whole might aim at providing more opportunities to study abroad for its students, and at attracting more international students to study in Novi Sad.

32. A strategic approach to internationalization does not imply a narrowly defined "plan" to which all parts of the UNS must adhere (which would not be feasible anyway, given the internal governance structure of the University). The objectives, as well as the ways to achieve them, can be manifold and flexible. **The only binding obligation is that each unit of the UNS indeed has a set of clearly stated objectives regarding the enhancement of its international profile – objectives that are well-defined, realistic, agreed-upon and demonstrable. The term "strategy" simply suggests a more intentional manner to devise and pursue a plan of action**.

33. Internationalization is a vital element of scholarly work, but it is also becoming more and more important for citizenship education in a world that is increasingly interconnected and interdependent. Therefore, international student mobility should rank high on this list of priorities for any university including the UNS. Deplorably, Serbia and Montenegro continues to be ineligible for programs that promote student mobility in the wider European framework. **The decision to change this is entirely of a political nature, but we want to raise a strong appeal to those involved in the decision-making process to rethink their position and remove the barriers that**

still prevent students from Serbia and Montenegro to participate in these programs. The student representatives that we met in Novi Sad would be the pride of any university in Europe: they were bright, articulate, thoughtful, and they impressed the Visiting Team with their in depth knowledge about the various nuances of the Bologna Process. To exclude them from EU-funded mobility schemes seems to contradict the very goals of these programs. While this is the case, the University leadership for its part should make every effort (as it did in the past) to look for alternative opportunities that could provide more UNS students with a study abroad experience. To realize this, a number of pre-conditions are necessary

33.1 **harmonization of course architecture with the Bologna model, and recognition of credits gained overseas**.

33.2 **significantly expanded language training at UNS**.

33.3 **focused and carefully selected institutional partnerships**.

34. Internationalization is not only a matter of crossing borders and thus should not be measured solely in numbers of exchanges and projects that involve foreign partners. There are universities with high numbers of international students that are completely provincial with regard to what they teach to their students; and the same can be true in the opposite direction. Therefore, internationalization starts with the curriculum: It is the content and the orientation of the study programs that we present to students which influences whether or not their time at the University has prepared them to understand and appreciate the values of being a citizen of the world. The period of the Visiting Team's stay at the UNS was too short to take a close look at the curricula of the different Faculties in order to determine to what degree they include an international dimension. This may not seem equally relevant to the different study programs. But even chemistry students, for example, should have a good understanding how their future professional work might have a positive or negative impact on sustaining the world's finite natural resources. For internationalization to be a true trademark of the UNS, the curricula at all Faculties should reflect the commitment to look beyond the (national, cultural, disciplinary) borders.

Conclusions and Recommendations

35. It is evident from the above that the VAP Team believes that UNS is entering a new phase of its international role and therefore strategy and priorities.

36. The positive international reputation that the UNS enjoys is one of the major assets of the University which needs to be nourished. **The Visiting Advisors Team would like to encourage the UNS to maximize the potential benefit of its international operations by**

36.1 **reinforcing UNS' international profile and activities by systematizing the use of the existing resources which would first of all require a**

36.1.1 **stocktaking by way of establishing an university-wide database on partners, projects and prospects;**

36.1.2 **systematizing of responsibilities, expertise and services in international affairs in order to bolster UNS' capacity with regard to**

- **bidding for international contracts and funds especially, e.g. Brain Gain program; EU Sixth and Seventh Framework Research programs; Trans Balkan projects (in sustainable development etc.)**

- **marketing the University: University Website (English language)**

- **increasing the number of international students coming to Novi Sad by developing more sophisticated international recruitment and multi/bi-lateral agreements with other universities**

- **language training for students and staff**

- **support services for international student at UNS.**

36.1.3 **systematization of responsibilities in the international domain. This is likely to be achieved by a lengthy discussion, and is alluded to in the section on Internal Integration. However, given its importance, it might encompass**

- **a specific vice Rectorship for Internationalization**

- **embedding internationalization in the job descriptions of all other Vice Rectors (according to their functional specialization) and deans**

- **a strong International Committee with faculty link-persons and central offices**

- **the responsiveness of all central administrative offices to international issues, including finance, personnel and student offices**.

36.2 **defining strategic priorities for international cooperation both**

36.2.1 **separately on each organizational level of the University (Department, Faculty, Rectorate) and**

36.2.2 **jointly by making these priorities explicit and converging them into an international "master plan" as part of the institutional development strategy of UNS as a whole.**

"Unity in diversity" should be the motto for a more strategically sound approach towards internationalization at UNS : Each unit can pursue its particular strength, while at the same time a common denominator can ensure new synergies and a consistent image of the UNS in the international arena (a common denominator could, for example, be the commitment that each international project should have a student component).

36.3 **Assuming that internationalization starts by cultivating good neighborhood, by virtue of its geographical location, there are ample opportunities for the UNS to initiate targeted and focused regional cross-border cooperation and partnerships in the form of**

36.3.1 **bilateral exchange of students and academic staff**.

36.3.2 **joint study programs**.

36.3.3 **regional centers of excellence**

to name but a few of the possibilities. The specters of nationalism have haunted those neighbors who not so long ago shared the same nationhood. It is a reasonable expectation that universities should be places that help demystify and debar those specters.

36.4 **Student demand for affordable international exchange programs is almost limitless. Even though the exclusion of Serbian students from EU mobility schemes is lamentable, they should be considered a natural partner in widening and deepening the internationalization strategy at UNS and be involved in its conceptualization and implementation in a proactive manner.**

36.5 **Internationalizing the curricula is a necessary component of preparing students for their future lives as citizens and professionals and attracting foreign students. Each Department and Faculty at UNS should pay attention to the growing importance of this component and be accountable to addressing it, of particular relevance here are**

36.5.1 **interdisciplinary studies**.

36.5.2 **professional recognition where relevant**.

36.5.3 **Master's degrees may be taught in English or German**.

36.5.4 **unique studies: a market niche**.

The University should produce guidelines on the dimensions and parameters for the internationalization of the curriculum.

36.6 **All the above points are related to the model discussed in the section on Strategic Evolution – expansion and systematization. Clearly this is not an easy area given the experiences of the last decade, but the VAP Team commends the University in its endeavors to date**.

INTERNAL INTEGRATION

Current Situation

37. This has emerged as one of the critical issues facing the University as it strives to modernize itself and its contribution to the region and the state. The nature of the problem is very well analyzed in the Self Evaluation, and the root causes in legal terms are clear.

37.1 the University of Novi Sad consists of a loose confederation of autonomous Faculties. Each Faculty presents itself as a highly specialized "university," having its own staff, rules, and curricula, while maintaining only very loose relations with other Faculties under the umbrella of a university with little power. The organizational structure is therefore highly fragmented with little identification with the University.

37.2 the Faculties and Departments are separate legal entities. The Law on Universities does not encourage university integration, but it does not limit it either. Besides a hostile legal framework there is a lack of internal stimulus toward it.

37.3 similarly, most of student and academic organizations also act as entirely independent entities. The lack of cooperation has made them extremely inefficient in their service provision, both in respect to activity at central level, and the centre – faculties interface.

37.4 it is apparent, certainly to the outsider, that there are many serious policy challenges to UNS which simply cannot be dealt with adequately without some purposive integration of key elements of the university e.g.

- coherent responses to the Bologna Declaration

- common approaches to QA and accreditation

- an effective combined strategy for income generation and cost reduction

- life long learning

- responding to the needs of society for R and D, services connected to regional development etc.

- providing property support for both weak and strong academic areas in a strategic framework. The gap between rich and poor Faculties is not helpful in academic nor psychological terms.

Regretfully, despite the best efforts of many university officers, attempts to deal creatively with many other of the above issues are seriously hampered by the existing structures and processes.

38. Integration seems to be recognized internationally an essential prerequisite for building alliances among universities and their local and regional societies, economies and authorities. Successful evolution of the advantages of the concept of a university – interdisciplinarity, unity of teaching and research, interdepartmental courses, etc. – demands an integrated autonomous self-conscious institution. Moreover, the academic autonomy of the institution can much better be preserved by integration. Linkage to the environment and outside world therefore seems to need an unified institution which is not fragmented into specialized Faculties, solidarity of approach, and internal help and compensation is therefore vital.

39. On the level of the stated university goals of the University of Novi Sad, integration is already seen as an important objective. Strengthening the concept of the University as an autonomous, integrated academic place is one aim; a closer linkage with economic and social processes is another. The university strategic plan already underlines the convergence towards an integrated, research oriented, entrepreneurial, knowledge competent university and towards the recommendations of the Bologna Declaration and international accreditation, which is most encouraging.

40. The VAP Team's impression is that the need for integration is being basically accepted by all the important actors. However there is still need for further discussion on the means of effective organizational implementation … and it is in the detail that potential opposition may lie. We are not completely convinced that all of the deans support their objectives of delegation of power to the departmental level below the faculty level and assigning a focused decision making power to the central upper level of the University. The deans are important change agents and sources of resistance at the same time. To achieve effective integration, the active contribution of the deans is very important and to this we turn later.

Approaches to the resolution of the Integration Issues

41. Again, we commend the University for the thinking which has gone into the development of goals and action steps to overcome these problems, as indicated in the Self Evaluation and Strategic Plan. As indicated previously, the operationalization does pose difficulties, and changes to the national Law would clearly give added impetus and legitimization to the exercise. In this section, we comment on some of the major aspects.

42. **A strong public <u>re-statement of the University's mission, vision and principal goals for the new era</u> seems to us to be important, as an internal rallying cry to the faithful, and as a reinforcement of the idea of the University as an entity and what it stands for. This should also be accompanied by extensive external public relations, events, public lectures etc. This would need to be very carefully managed in terms of content, tone, style, timing and realism of the messages given out, but could have great symbolic and psychological significance. There is clearly much to say of an inspiring nature**.

43. **Integration may be greatly facilitated by <u>lateral cooperation</u> between Faculties and Departments, e.g**.

    43.1 **through interdisciplinary, interdepartmental studies; joint courses etc. Here, ECTS is fundamental both to internal student mobility and course construction**.

    43.2 **through interdepartmental laboratories and research centers**.

    Clearly, the creation of incentives and the removal of inhibitors will be necessary here, coupled with a vision of likely connections.

44. **The integration of <u>key common services and functions</u> across the University is a fairly obvious step, but accompanied by a network of "responsibles" at faculty level for common learning and transfer of good practice e.g. information, student aid, international cooperation, libraries, lifelong learning, regional collaboration etc. The style of operation of these central common services is important i.e. a genuine "service" culture rather than a "control" culture, so that these services operating at a high level of quality are wanted and valued rather than imposed**.

45. **There are a number of <u>structural possibilities</u> which should be pursued e.g**.

    45.1 **the strengthening of the Rectorate and college of deans as the major vehicle for policy coordination and strategic planning**.

    45.2 **the Vice Rectors' roles should be strengthened in terms of**

    • **executive responsibilities**

    • **chairing key committees**

    • **leadership of various <u>functional</u> areas, such as academic development; quality assurance; research; external regional services (R and D, lifelong learning, consultancy etc.); internationalization; resources etc.); and perhaps also**

           a pastoral responsibility for certain academic areas also – a "matrix" role

- **the Rectorate's access to development/innovation funds to initiate promising activities i.e. the Rectorate's own budget**.

45.3 **UNS already has an objective of reviving the departmental structure as a means of university integration which, presumably is based on the assumption that this would lessen the current Faculties; tendency to isolation, partly induced by the resource allocation process. To ensure this operates properly and to avoid further fragmentation**

- **the central level of the University would need more authority (see above)**

- **there would need to be internal planning and budgetary agreements between the University and departmental levels**

- **there would need to be clarification of the specific responsibilities of each level – University, Faculty and Department**.

           It should also be borne in mind that Departments per se may not be the best answer in all Faculties in that their inception can create further fragmentation and diseconomies. "Matrix" structures are another alternative. Further consideration is recommended at this point.

46. **We would certainly see an enhanced <u>strategic planning process</u> as a major contributor to university integration. The VAP Team was impressed by the activity exhibited so far in developing planning agreements with the Faculties, and with this the consensus to transfer a proportion of faculty funds to sustain university level support functions. The Strategic Plan is clearly of considerable currency in laying out major developmental priorities especially in terms of integration, and it is appreciated that further policy developments may well be predicated on sorting out these integration issues anyway. The Team would thus recommend for the future development of the planning process**

46.1 **internal agreements not only with Faculties, but also Departments, (if this route is followed**).

46.2 **a reconsideration of the overall structure of the strategic plan itself**

- **a more comprehensive range of contents covering the major academic domains and support services**

- **an iterative three – five year planning process, with annual expressions**

- **a close relationship between the strategic plan and the budget**

- **a tighter annual evaluation of outcomes**.

46.3 **the incorporation of external perspectives in the setting of priorities and the assessment of outcomes**.

46.4 **the Rectorate and college of deans should formally act as the strategic planning board of the University**.

47. **We would also wish to assert the importance of <u>student participation</u> as an unifying integrating factor, in terms of their representation on the councils of the University, and on some of the Faculties. We would urge the University to make fullest use of the very interesting ideas put to us by the student representatives**.

48. **It is hoped that all these instruments would assist in producing integration at policy, operational and psychological levels. However, as has been indicated elsewhere, external legal changes are also needed to sustain internal endeavors**.

<u>INFORMATION STRATEGY</u>

<u>Current Situation</u>

49. The quality of communication is certainly regarded as a central element in the integration of the University. There are widely perceived to be two dimensions to this

  49.1 information dissemination and collection as part of an internal communications strategy (designed to enhance the quality of community life; to enhance feelings of ownership); and external public relations.

  49.2 an effective management information system designed to facilitate policy – and decision-making, which should clearly be linked to strategy.

  The VAP Team regards these as of equal importance in the current turbulent environment.

50. However, there do appear to be substantive problems in the existing situation, including, *inter alia*

50.1 the autonomy of Faculties within the University of Novi Sad is also reflected in the lack of a unique and coherent academic information network. Several independent academic information networks of different origin exist in parallel. They are financed from various sources and managed by independent concurrent groups. Since they are usually based on different technologies and/or operating systems, they consequently tend to evolve away from each other. This deepens the gap between their users and makes the communication flow among various academic and administrative groups difficult.

50.2 decentralized management of information networks and lack of a unique security system make data exchange extremely unreliable. Therefore some groups form their own local sub-networks with restricted access e.g. campuses.

50.3 this imposes numerous difficulties to the network management and dissemination of information within the University.

50.4 the University level information system has yet to be worked out together with the other Serbian universities supported by the Government to develop a standardized database for all universities.

50.5 there certainly is a lack of an efficient system for collecting and handling solid statistical data. Faculties are collecting data which are not standardized at the university level via an explicit common framework. A first step towards an efficient university management is the creation of an information gate and the prevention of parallel tracks.

50.6 there is no uniform agreement as yet as to the domains in which management information is needed.

Broad Directions of Development of an Information Strategy

51. The Team was encouraged to find widespread agreement that information strategy based on effective electronic communication is a key priority.

51.1 UNS is planning to establish an information centre where all data on the University would be available in order to integrate and support the flow of information among University management, Departments and Faculties in both directions. The University plans to establish a university project to design the elements for the database to be collected at all departments and Faculties. IT support should be given to this activity. It is planed to integrate library resources.

51.2 the University wants quick, accurate and safe flow of information between the University and state authorities and institutions, and European institutions. The adequate information flow is also a prerequisite for building alliances among higher education institutions inside and outside of the University both in public and private sector.

51.3 at the moment the web based communication network is the most important technical base for information flow between the University and the other institutional stakeholders, but also among different parts of the University. Therefore the improvement of the technical infrastructure is most urgent. In this respect there are quite positive budgetary signals from the government.

However, according to our assessment the Rectorate regards information flow clearly as a management task. We are not convinced however that this management approach is supported by all units on the sub-rectorate level (deans, heads of departments etc.). Some actors still prefer an academically "closed shop-policy," and the VAP Team, in this context, would support the Rectorate's view. Furthermore, as the vagaries of the objectives for Information Strategy in the Self Evaluation demonstrate a clear concept is still missing with regard to:

- what kind of information is collected?

- by whom?

- for which purposes?

<u>Recommendations</u>

52. Given the above, therefore, whilst the Team commends the frankness with which the issues are being addressed, it recommends some serious consideration of the following:

52.1 **a common understanding of "leadership by information" has to be developed among the different levels of leadership**.

52.2 **developing an information strategy has to be seen as a management task (on all levels) and a prerequisite for quality management**.

52.3 **definition of commonly agreed upon principles of the organization of the information flow – adequate principles would be**:

- **centrally collected data/information (no competing database)**.

- **open access and transparency : interactive**.

- **regular reports using the information within the planning cycle; feeding data into the planning processes**.

- **internal compatibility of systems and data**.

- **incorporation of key external organizations into the University's Internet**.

52.4 **it has to be clarified what kind of information is needed e.g**.

- **environmental data: what is going on in the environment (economic trends, labor market etc.) of the University**?

- **performance indicators: Faculty profiles, comparatively used between Faculties and for benchmarking with other universities)**.

- **information about accomplishing the strategic plan – monitoring data for policy evaluation**.

52.5 **establishment of a department of institutional research as a focus for professional expertise for collecting and analyzing data. This department is part of the strategic planning function of the University and should be part of the Rectorate**.

52.6 **to set up a specific information system represents a top priority for the University**.

Consequently, whilst the Team can readily appreciate the attractiveness of a national initiative and national funding for an HE wide system, UNS should not wait unduly for government, since there are urgent local imperatives to be picked up. In this context, the VAP Team would strongly recommend benchmarking with Western Universities who may be further down the line, through the European Benchmarking Consortium.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

53. The University is clearly in a very undesirable situation with regard to the management of its finances. The factors in this situation appear to be

53.1 because of the 1992 University Law, the basic unit receiving state funds is not the university as an integrated whole, but the legal entity of the Faculty, and the section in the Self Evaluation on funding indicates precisely the criteria for the allocation of funds for budget students and the ground rules for staff – financial students (fees and members), whilst state research funds are competitive. The Rector's office receives a small allocation for its own expenses and a small amount for developmental purposes. Consequently,

- the Rectorate has little influence on Faculty financial management

- Faculties are individually on their own in terms of surpluses and deficits – and what flows from this

- the Rectorate has to rely on planning agreements with Faculties to achieve a clawback of c. 5% for central services

- a lack of relationship between University and Faculty budgets.

UNS deserves credit for inventing means to overcome the worst elements of this curious system, but in the Team's view, it urgently needs changing.

53.2 there are severe financial shortages in general which have been alluded to in earlier paragraphs, **and which inevitably force attention on**

- **prizing more funds and flexibility from government**

- **drives to increased cost effectiveness**

- **entrepreneurial activities to diversity and increase non-state income sources**.

53.3 again for national reasons, the academic and financial years are not aligned.

54. Clearly, there is a limit to what UNS can do by itself to change the situations described above, but the Team would recommend a series of suggestions some of which it can implement, and others where concrete proposals for improvement should be put to the government.

55. Regarding internal reforms:

55.1 the Team commends the steps proposed in the Self Evaluation (pp. 25 – 26) which seem very appropriate to the problems discussed.

55.2 **we recommend the delimitation of competencies of a financial directorate, the drafting of annual budget projects and their approval in the bodies stipulated by law, the differentiation between the method of obtaining resources and the method of spending them, the promotion of financial priorities, the improvement of the accountants' training**.

55.3 **the fact that the Faculties have their own resources and that the university extensions in Sombor, Subotica, and Zrenjanin are under the provision of financial self-sustainability, is in itself positive, but we reaffirm that the principle of Faculties being legally entirely independent units in budget terms is most unhelpful, and will continue to be. There is thus a need to shift to a lump sum or block grant provision and the subsequent allocation of the Faculties' own resources according to**

transparent and plausible internal rules and mechanism (which is mentioned later under 56.1 and 56.3).

55.4 **it is necessary for the Rector's Office to activate the distinction between vision, strategic planning and budget and to ensure conceptual approaches and adequate methods of organization. Further, the services should be more differentiated and the Rector's Office should be assisted by international relations office, specialized offices for European programs etc., in terms of financial awareness and focus**.

55.5 **since personnel expenses constitute a dominant proposition of the budget, a staffing model is needed to determine appropriate levels of staffing per Faculty, and to freeze vacancies or redistribute positions as needed to more stretched parts of the University. The Team feels it necessary for the UNS to be able to help weaker/embryonic areas for strategic reasons, but equally to redistribute funds from poorly performing areas. In the first instance, this may require a Council consensus to achieve, pending more formal grants authority to the Rectorate/University levels**.

55.6 **UNS clearly needs a strategy for income generation from non-state sources which implies**

- **income generation targets for Faculties**

- **a university office to search out opportunities for funding/bids**

- **effective tracking of project bids, spending, progress and reporting**

- **robust intellectual property arrangements for UNS as a whole**

- **uniform incentive arrangements across all Faculties**

- **the possibilities of a Board of Trustee to exercise high level external economic leverage**.

55.7 **an evaluation of the areas of potential cost savings e.g**.

- **curriculum overload**

- **methods of allocating student/staff resources – actual hours v. notional hours v. student headcount**

- **duplication of services across Faculties**.

56. Regarding external reforms on which government should be pressured by all universities, **we recommend**

   56.1 **making universities the prime budget centers rather than Faculties**.

   56.2 **synchronizing the academic and the financial year**.

   56.3 **facilitating a 3 – 4 year rolling budget with**

   - **carry-over between financial years**

   - **lump sum allocations based on Metrics**

   - **a budget formulation which is transparent and includes income and expenditure; teaching, research and other services**.

   56.4 **ease of university investment of surpluses**.

57. Assuming the above are consummated, it then becomes much more possible to create a much closer relationship between strategic planning and budgeting in terms of the University as a whole being able to

   57.1 take a holistic view of the budget.

   57.2 undertake planning with financial realism.

   57.3 use development funds to initiate projects.

   57.4 redistribute funds when needed.

   These elements, after all, are entirely normal in most European systems.

REFLECTIONS ON OTHER ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES

58. This Report has largely dwelt on the agendas defined for us by UNS, and which formed the basis for discussions, though we have, en route, picked up several other issues also. There are perhaps some residual points upon which comment might usefully be offered.

59. Reference has been made to the necessity of recognizing the <u>external stakeholder dimensions</u> for reasons of

   59.1 perceived political relevance of the University to employers, regional and national politicians, consensus of R and D etc.

590.2 engaging with others in the tasks of regional and national development and reconstruction.

59.3 recognizing the Civil Society agendas.

59.4 engaging external influentials in the difficult process of income generation.

59.5 ensuring an external perspective in university governance.

60. The forms of engaging such contributions is indicated in the appropriate paragraphs, **but we may emphasize here**

60.1 **the consideration of whether a Board of Trustees/Governing Body would be appropriate**.

60.2 **the creation of appropriate external liaison organizations in the field of service delivery e.g. business/science parks; joint companies; technopoles etc**.

60.3 **cross-representation on each other; governing councils**.

60.4 **effective marketing and public relations**.

The EUA report "The Dialogue of Universities with their Regional Stakeholders" (1998: Davies) provides potentially useful benchmarking and good practice.

61. The achievement of the objectives envisaged by the University is clearly conditional on <u>personnel and an effective human resources strategy</u> focused on the principal priorities in terms of skills and competencies and on the motivational imperative. Here, **we would merely mention**

61.1 an **assessment of the age profile of UNS, and what it means in policy terms**.

61.2 **a skills audit of UNS in relation to the emerging priorities, e.g. entrepreneurial activities; internationalization; upgrading of research etc. and what this means in terms of ability to deliver; future recruitment priorities; staff development etc**.

for early attention.

62. A current running through the entire dialogue has been that of an entrepreneurial culture, which begs the question of how it may be developed. **The Team would be pleased to advise further on this, if it would be helpful**.

<u>CONCLUSION</u>

63.   It is hoped that this Report will be useful to the University, and especially the new Rector, as UNS enters the next phase of its development. The VAP Team hopes that the University, under its new leadership, will continue to exercise its craft of constructive self-criticism, and the design of strategic and operational responses to the issues identified, as it has done in recent years. We see no reason why not, and look to the University to take its place as a major player in European higher education. Our sincere thanks once more for a stimulating and friendly dialogue, from which the Team has gained a great deal, personally and collectively.

Team Members:

John DAVIES, United Kingdom (Team Leader)
Professor Davies is dean of the graduate school and former pro vice chancellor for research, enterprise, and innovation at Anglia Polytechnic University, Chelmsford, United Kingdom, and pro vice chancellor for quality assurance and organization development at La Trobe University, Australia. He is also professor of higher education policy and management at the University of Bath, academic director of the European Rectors Management Program, and has been a consultant in higher education management to the European University Association and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) since 1977. The founding dean of the Anglia Business School and chair of its Higher Education Management Program, Professor Davies has undertaken numerous strategic consultancy projects in higher education in several countries and directed research and development projects for OECD, UNESCO, and the European Union. He is a member of the Salzburg Seminar's Universities Project Advisory Committee.

Andrei MARGA, Romania
Professor Marga has been rector of "Babes-Bolyai" University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania since 1993, where he is professor of contemporary philosophy and general logic in the Faculty of European Studies. During his tenure as rector, Professor Marga has worked to engage the University in an international network and along multicultural lines, including providing courses of study in Romanian, Hungarian, and German languages. From 1997 to 2000, Professor Marga was the minister of national education, in which role he launched a program of higher education reform for the transition toward a European system of education in Romania. He is a member of the board of the European University Association and the recipient of national merit awards from France, Moldavia, Portugal, and Romania; most recently, in 2003, Professor Marga received the Gold Medal from the University of Tübingen, Germany and an honorary doctorate from Debrecen University, Hungary. Professor Marga holds a Ph.D. in contemporary philosophy from "Babes-Bolyai" University.

Ada PELLERT, Austria

Professor Pellert has been a member and associate professor of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies of Austrian Universities of Klagenfurt, Vienna, Innsbruck, and Graz since 1998. From 2000 to 2003, she was vice rector for instruction, staff development, and affirmative action for women at the University of Graz. She is spokeswoman of the Austrian Network for Contunuing Education and Staff Development at Universities (AUCEN) and a member of the Advisory Board to the Federal Minister of Education, Science and Culture: "Gender Mainstreaming at Universities." Professor Pellert conducts research in the areas of higher education policy, organizational development and staff development in higher education institutions, and higher education management. She has a Ph.D. in business administration from the University of Economics and Business Administration, Vienna and a Dr.hab. in organizational development in higher education from the University of Klagenfurt.

Jochen FRIED, Austria

Dr. Fried is director of the Universities Project of the Salzburg Seminar. Prior to joining the Seminar in 1998, he worked as head of programs at the Institute for Human Sciences in Vienna, and as senior officer in the secretariat of the German Science Council in Cologne, Germany. After receiving a doctorate in German literature from Düsseldorf University, Germany in 1984, he was lecturer at Cambridge University, United Kingdom and at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia under the auspices of the German Academic Exchange Service. Dr. Fried's main area of professional interest is higher education and research policy. He serves as an expert for the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture, and is a member of the editorial board of the UNESCO-CEPES quarterly review *Higher Education in Europe.*

Schedule:

Date/Time	Event/Topic	Participants
Monday, March 15		
	Team arrives in Belgrade	
17:00?	Team Planning Meeting	**VAP Team**
19:00	Welcome Dinner	**Rector**
Tuesday, March 16		
9:00 – 10:00	Meeting with the Rector, Presentation of the Program.	**Rector, Vice-Rectors, Group Leaders**
10:00 – 11:30	**Internationalization**	**Group A**
11:30 – 12:00	Coffee Break	
12:00 – 13:30	Lecture within Scientific Forum **Prof. Dr John Davies**	**open**
13:30 – 14:30	Lunch	
14:30 – 16:00	**Quality I - Management**	**Group B-1**
16:00 – 16:30	Coffee Break & Cookies	
16:30 – 18:00	**Quality II – Curriculum Development**	**Group B-2**
18:00 – 19:00	Team Debriefing Meeting	**VAP Team**
20:00	Dinner	**Some Group leaders or Deans**
Wednesday, March 17		
9:00 – 10:30	**Information Flow**	**Group C**
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee Break	
11:00 – 12:30	**Financial Flow**	**Group D**
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch	
14:00 – 15:30	**Internal Integration**	**Group E**
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee Break	
16:00 – 17:30	**Meeting with Students**	**students**
18:00 – 19:00	Team Debriefing Meeting	**VAP Team**
19:30	Dinner	**VAP Team**
Thursday, March 18		
9:00 – 10.30	**Meeting with Deans**	**Deans / Vice-Deans**
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee Break	
11:30 – 12:30	Lecture within Scientific Forum **Prof. Andrei Marga**	**open**
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch	VAP Team
13:30 – 16:00	Preparation of the Report	VAP Team
16:30 – 17:30	Presentation of the Oral Report to the Rector	
19:30	Farewell Dinner	**Rector**
Friday, March 19		
	Departures	

THE UNIVERSITIES PROJECT OF THE SALZBURG SEMINAR

Universities throughout the world are undergoing systemic changes in their governance, academic design, structure, and mission. From 1998 to 2003, the Salzburg Seminar's Universities Project focused on higher education reform in Central and East Europe, Russia, and the Newly Independent States as universities in these regions redefined their relationships with governments and try to become more integrated into the global intellectual community.

The Universities Project was a multi-year series of conferences and symposia convening senior representatives of higher education from the designated regions with their counterparts from North America and West Europe. Discussion in the Project's programs focused on the following themes:

- University Administration and Finance
- Academic Structure and Governance within the University
- Meeting Students' Needs, and the Role of Students in Institutional Affairs
- Technology in Higher Education
- The University and Civil Society

OBJECTIVES

Universities and other institutions of higher learning are seeking to reshape themselves in ways that will prepare them more fully for the twenty-first century. Even as these institutions are considering extensive systemic changes in their academic design, structure, and mission, all desire autonomy in governance and in their intellectual life. Accordingly, the Universities Project aimed to promote the higher education reform process by inviting senior administrators to participate in conferences and symposia concerning issues of university management, administration, finance, and governance.

THE VISITING ADVISORS PROGRAM (VAP)

The Salzburg Seminar launched this enhanced aspect of the Universities Project in the autumn of 1998. Under the VAP, teams of university presidents and higher education experts visit universities in Central and East Europe and Russia at the host institutions' request to assist in the process of institutional self-assessment and change. By the end of the Program in June 2004, seventy visits had been held at universities in Central and East Europe and in Russia. The addition of the Visiting Advisors Program brought to the Universities Project an applied aspect and served to enhance institutional and personal relationships begun in Salzburg.

The Salzburg Seminar acknowledges with gratitude the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and the Carnegie Corporation of New York, which provided funding for the Universities Project, the Visiting Advisors Program, and the extension of the VAP in Russia, respectively.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information regarding Salzburg Seminar programs, please contact one of the Seminar's offices below.

Salzburg Seminar
Schloss Leopoldskron
Box 129
A-5010 Salzburg, Austria

Telephone: +43 662 839830
Fax: +43 662 839837

Salzburg Seminar
The Marble Works
P.O. Box 886
Middlebury, VT 05753 USA

Telephone: +1 802 388 0007
Fax: +1 802 388 1030

Salzburg Seminar website: **www.salzburgseminar.org**