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ZSO's experiences while working on QuaG
– Innovation Transfer project

Zespół Szkół Odzieżowych is a school with a long tradition of working on international projects. However, we usually dealt with initiatives that were designed to activate teenagers and teachers in their educational process. This time, it is a bit different as we take part in the project that is mainly concerned with the organization itself, the quality of its functioning, and the management.

We have become part of the project team as a partner with much to offer thanks to the experience we gained in the previous Leonardo TQP – EU project. Works that we completed from October 2007 to June 2009 enriched our organization a lot: it helped to understand how to label and systematize processes regulating our school functioning and improve instruments to measure their quality. Crowning achievement for ZSO was to earn the ISO 29990 certificate – a norm for learning service providers. We are one of the first two educational organizations in Poland able to be proud of such an accomplishment.

With all the so far gains and attainments in mind, we were more than content to accept an invitation to participate in the project continuation – QuaG Innovation Transfer. It gives us an opportunity to use once gathered knowledge and acquired skills, and what is more, to share our experience and learn about other educational organizations. Last but not least, it creates prospects for further development along the path we have decided to follow.

Only several months have passed since the project launch and we are already richer with new experiences. The first event that appeared incredibly interesting to us was the kick-off meeting and the DIN quality conference in Berlin, in January 2012. Not only were we able to meet new, interesting partners and learn about the organizations they represented, but we could also discuss methods they use to improve quality of their services. The DIN conference deepened our understanding of quality management systems thanks to the speakers who approached the subject from different angles, also including a critical view. An additional value, we did not expect to gain there, was getting into contact with other possible future partners since ZSO raised a huge interest among institutions who want to promote the ISO 29990 norm.

ZSO never stops working on self-improvement – we are obliged to this by our participation in the project and by the aforementioned norm: we are trying to work on perfecting information flow within the organization and we are looking for opportunities to cooperate with other similar institutions to be able to promote ideas of the project, and our school at the same time. Thanks to this attitude we managed to create a friendly network of institutions in Poland interested in our activity. We hope we will make them accept our invitation to the planned project workshops.

We were a bit afraid of the ISO 29990 norm at first, but eventually it turned out to be almost cut for us. We are able to stand up to its requirements but most importantly, it inspires us to work more on improving school management, modernizing technical-didactic equipment and nurturing professional staff self-improvement.

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