

EFCE News

EFCE WP on Education: Business Meeting August 2006

On the occasion of CHISA 2006 and invited by the Czech delegate Václav Machoň the EFCE WP on Education held its fall 2006 business meeting on 27th August 2006 in Prague/CZ. The meeting was attended by 17 members.

Prof Jiří Drahoš, Prague, President of EFCE, welcomed the attendees and spent some time with the meeting.

Václav Machoň presented information on Chemical Engineering at the Prague Institute of Chemical Technology. The degrees are in the process of change to the Bologna pattern. While there are relatively few students who graduate as pure chemical engineers, a much greater numbers study chemical engineering as part of other degrees in chemical technology.

Jaromir Lederer gave a provocative view of chemical engineering education and careers in the Czech Republic and European Industry. To his opinion chemical engineers are commonly viewed as narrow specialists indistinguishable from applied chemists and chemical technologists, not adaptable people who could apply fundamental science to a range of branches as described by Prof Drahoš.

Sebastião Feyo de Azevedo, Portugal, was elected unanimously to take over the WPE chairmanship when the present chairman's second term of office will end in 2007.

The attendees discussed the status of preparation for the planned WPE workshop and changed the title into "The Future of European Chemical Engineering Education in a Globalized World". The event will be held along ECCE-6 in Copenhagen/DK on 18th September 2007.

The concept of a third cycle in the Bologna Process, doctoral studies, was discussed thoroughly. It was evident that big differences exist between the European countries. People studying for a doctoral degree have the status of students in some countries and may have to pay tuition fees, though in many there are no fees for nationals of that country. In others (e.g. Germany) they receive a salary as professionals in the first stage of their career. Though the Bologna/Berlin documents seem to envisage the status as students, which could be a major cultural and practical change in some countries, the WPE at present does not see a need to develop a common recommendation.

Martin Molzahn (Chairman of EFCE WP on Education)