



We need socially responsible and sustainable universities

Slovenia is richer for the collection of 350 various contributions of Slovenian and international experts, researchers and scientists and many practitioners from all 8 IRDO conferences of 2006 - 2013.

(Maribor, 13 March 2013) After the 8th international IRDO conference "Social responsibility and current challenges 2013: Education and Communication for more social responsibility," which was held at the Rector's premises of University of Maribor, from 7th to 9th March 2013, conclusions of this conference were announced, formed by the totally 162 participants and speakers from 15 countries. The main message of the conference is that there should be more education about social responsibility, it should be communicated in the right way, and that intuition is to be included in the business decisions. Socially responsible and sustainable content shall be included in the primary, secondary and higher education curriculum.

The conference was organized by IRDO and University of Maribor, in collaboration with International Academy for Systems and Cybernetic Sciences, Vienna; European Academy of Sciences and Arts, Salzburg; CSR Europe, Enterprise 2020; Faculty of Arts - Department of Sociology, University of Maribor; Slovenian Research Agency; Municipality of Maribor; Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Styria; Association Manager; Slovenian public relations association; Marketing Association of Slovenia; Slovenian-German Chamber of Commerce; sponsors, and media partners. Honorary patron of the conference is Borut Pahor, President of the Republic of Slovenia. More than 90 authors from 15 countries participated with more than 70 contributions. After the lectures and discussions in several sections speakers and participants of the conference passed the following conclusions:

1. Lack of social responsibility, i.e. responsibility for human impacts on society, is the common denominator of all problems of the modern society and earlier societies.
2. Young people should be more educated on (corporate) social responsibility.
3. Humankind needs socially responsible and sustainable universities.
4. Healthy eating in schools contributes to the health of individuals and thus to the health of society.
5. The use of intuition contributes to more holistic business decisions.
6. Corporate volunteering in organizations and the exchange of good practices in companies and institutions need to be strengthened.
7. Development of individual and organizational social policies toward more social responsibility is needed.
8. In order to increase the knowledge of the concept of social responsibility, it has to be long-termly and properly communicated.

Long version of conference conclusions is available on www.irdo.si, where free e-book of abstracts of this year's conference is available as well.

The European Union and the UN reasonably see corporate social responsibility as an essential basis for the humankind's way out from the current global and local socio-economic crisis, because it emphasizes the interdependence and holism of human behaviour. Unfortunately, this has not been enough recognized; this is why education and communication on social responsibility are essential.

Universities should encourage students to become leaders of projects and activities that are related to sustainable development and social responsibility. This would allow students of higher classes to educate the newcomers, during the introduction week, about sustainable development and corporate social responsibility, raise awareness about the importance of healthy eating habits and other aspects of a healthy lifestyle. After several years of education on sustainable economy, etc., University of Maribor, Slovenia, has recently adopted a program for "socially responsible and sustainable university".

This year's specialty: This year organizers prepared a special edition of proceedings with papers of all eight IRDO conferences. More than 350 contributions of many Slovenian and international experts, researchers, scientists and practitioners, are collected on one CD. This is certainly welcome literature for many students, lecturers and businessmen.

Additional information:

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8th IRDO international conference »Social responsibility and current challenges 2013: Education and communication for more social responsibility«, Maribor, Slovenia, 7- 9 March 2013