

Competences of forestry graduates and European labour market – working for a European graduate analysis

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Abstract

Looking back we find that in many countries numbers of forestry graduates seem to have matched the needs of employment in the forestry sector for long time. Probably nobody can prove this, and surely the situation in different countries was very different.

The situation in the 1990s has been reviewed by Lewark, Pettenella & Saastamoinen (1998)³ The authors had experienced difficulties in doing this, as only in a few cases data were just ready to take, and definitely there was no standardized way of assessment and presentation. Also it is notable, that the available data have been collected by universities in some cases, associations in others. And there were few cases where real specialists did surveys of the whereabouts of graduates in a regular manner.

Meanwhile the methods of graduate analysis have been developed further and standardized procedures would be possible, but application would need cooperation and agreements between universities. The graduate surveys in the field of higher forestry education in Europe have been mostly stand-alone events, even if the advantages of comparable approaches and data are obvious. Presently in SILVA Network we try to lay ground to coordinated approaches of graduate analyses in higher forestry education in Europe. An important step on this way is the knowledge of what has been done and what is going on – what do the universities know about our graduates? At the annual conference in Copenhagen in May 2008 the experiences will be collected and presented and possible ways ahead will be discussed.

¹ President of SILVA Network; Deputy Coordinator of IUFRO education group 6.15.00

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³ Lewark, Siegfried; Pettenella, Davide; Saastamoinen, Olli, 1998: Labour markets for university educated foresters: recent developments and new perspectives. Wageningen: Proc. Workshop "New Requirements for University Forestry Education" 30.7.-3.8.1997. DEMETER Series 1, 69-88