



Leading and Managing Change in Higher Education (La MANCHE)

4th ONLINE STEERING COMMITTEE CONFERENCE

MINUTES

Date: 14th October 2014

Time: 1 pm CET

Venue: online session at oovoo.com

Attendees: Christina Armutlieva, IUC Bulgaria

Lilit Torchyan GSU, Armenia

Valentina Grigoryan, ANAU, Armenia

Filipp Kokosha, GSTU, Belarus

Vadim Sirkeli, CSU, Moldova

Tetyana Shtanko, LAC, Ukraine

Anastasiya Makarenko, NTU KhPI, Ukraine

Pantelis Skayannis, UTH, Greece

1. Recent project developments between June and October 2014

Christina Armutlieva welcomed the participants at the first SC online meeting after the end of the summer vacation. The project is entering its third and final year and according to the initial plans it shall end in exactly one year, namely on 14th October 2015. The upcoming Year 2 Financial and Activity Summary will provide an overview of the activities completed to date and the expenditures declared and claimed for reimbursement. Christina reported shortly on the project management developments and updates which had taken place after the 4th partner meeting in Yerevan in June 2014. Firstly, the project Intermediate Report was approved by EACEA in early July 2014. It provides a positive feedback on the activities completed in the project during the first 18 months of the project life.

On 24th July IUC submitted to EACEA a Request for Payment including an updated Statement of Costs Incurred in the project. Following this, the consortium received the second instalment of pre-financing on 4th August 2014. Starting this date, the exchange rate applicable in the project for costs incurred after 4th August 2014 is the one from Month 8, Year 2014 on EC InforEuro webpage.

The feedback of the Intermediate Report included also recommendations to speed up and finalize the equipment purchasing procedures in Belarus and Ukraine as soon as possible. Christina informed the SC that thanks to the enhanced efforts of Tetyana Shtanko from LAC, Ukraine and Alexander Sychev from GSTU, Belarus the process of equipment purchase in the project was completed by the end of August 2014. Christina expressed her gratitude towards the partners from LAC and GSTU for the commitment and support provided in this very time-consuming and complicated process.

In early summer the project partners selected the students who later in September 2014 took part in the Young Leaders Academy held at International University College, Bulgaria. Christina reported shortly on the event and described it as one of the most inspiring and rewarding project experiences. The students who took part in the Young Leaders Academy were very active, interested and enthusiastic about the project and they could and should continue contributing to the project outcomes, in particular to the activities in Work Package 7.

2. Work Package 7 activities and outcomes

The activities in Work Package 7 are being coordinated by Vadim Sirkeli from CSU in Moldova. As Work Package leader Vadim had already sent away to the project partners detailed information about the Work Package's activities and on the project evidence to be collected and collated. Vadim provides constant support to the partners and consults with the Project Coordinator whenever necessary. Currently the Partner Countries partners are in the middle of organizing their La MANCHE VTT networking events. Some institutions have already held the event, others are planning to do so in the very near future. Lilit from GSU asked if it would be a problem to hold the networking event at GSU later in October 2014. Christina confirmed that this would not be an issue as long the event is organized in the course of autumn 2014 and it achieves its main goals and indicators for participation. Valentina from ANAU was interested to know if stakeholders could participate and attend the networking events through the means of ICT via skype or other types of video conferencing software system. Christina confirmed that should be fine as long as the partners keep exact track of the virtual attendances and provide screenshots, number of IP registrations or other similar type of evidence. Since the min. number of stakeholders per Networking event is 30, it is important to be able to identify all event participants both online and offline.

In general, the networking events aim to attract and convince as many stakeholders as possible to join the 6 Themed Working Groups and to contribute to the project through the La MANCHE VTT. Registration at the La MANCHE VTT shall be smooth as long as the stakeholders follow precisely the simple steps as requested on the website. The La MANCHE VTT platform is user-friendly and initial registration requires only the provision of a username (between 5 and 20 symbols) and an active email address. Upon clicking the button Registration the stakeholder receives an automatic email with a personalized password. Following this the La MANCHE VTT user can register using his/her email as a username and the password received. Vadim has already sent away to the partners detailed explanations on how to register at the La MANCHE VTT.

Within the La MANCHE VTT all registered stakeholders and partners are invited to visit and use actively the Consultation Section. The Consultation Section functions as a blog and provides opportunities for open discussions and dialogue. By the end of December 2014 within the Consultation Section each partner institution will publish a one-page statement or policy change proposal related to processes of higher education modernization and change. The purpose of these one pagers is to stimulate a series of online discussions within the virtual think tank on La MANCHE related issues. The online discussions are planned to run for three months and by the end of March 2015 the La MANCHE institutions will be asked to summarize

the essence and the results of these discussions in two-page memos. The discussion memos on the other hand will constitute the main part of the Strategy for Leading and Managing Change in Higher Education (the La MANCHE Strategy). A draft of the La MANCHE Strategy will be presented and offered for public discussions at each of the five national conferences to take place in the course of May – June 2015 in the five La MANCHE Partner Countries.

Christina asked if the partners have any questions re the La MANCHE VTT or the La MANCHE Strategy and if they would like to share any experience or make additional remarks. Anastasiya from NTU KhPI mentioned that at her institution they had already been in touch with various stakeholders using skype but had not made any screenshots from these online meetings. Christina replied this should not be an issue. She suggested that for the purposes of the project it would be advisable to prepare and keep an updated list with stakeholders and Themed Working Groups members contacted, involved and registered. She confirmed that the chief goal of all networking events in Year 3 is to have as many stakeholders as possible joined the La MANCHE VTT and involved in the project. In fact, all project events in Year 3 shall aim at project dissemination. Simultaneously all dissemination activities in Year 3 shall support the La MANCHE VTT activities and outcomes. Pantelis from UTH requested additional clarifications on how to access the La MANCHE VTT. Christina explained the major steps once again and suggested to provide additional help whenever needed. Vadim as Work Package leader confirmed his availability too. Christina thanked Vadim for his strong commitment and hard work as Work Package leader. She also thanked the SC members for their time and contributions in the project. The SC members agreed on staying in touch in the upcoming months and in keeping each other updated on project progress made.