

Central European Education Institute s.r.o.

Summary Report on BFB-PA26-006 Bilateral Activity under Action B of the SK08 Cross-Border Cooperation Program

The realised bilateral BFB-PA26-006 activity was aimed at strengthening the cross-border cooperation between the regions on both sides of the EU's external border. Its main purpose was to gain a greater understanding of common cross-border challenges and opportunities and the development of new and innovative forms of cross-border cooperation.

Bilateral activity took place in several stages. The first stage was the pre-preparation phase that began in August 2016 and was related to the search for a Norwegian partner for cooperation. After reaching out to several possible partners and in cooperation with the Ambassador of the Slovak Republic in the Kingdom of Norway, František Kašický, the proposed theme of cooperation made interested the representatives of the Bjorknes Collegde, who subsequently traveled to Slovakia to discuss the cooperation and its objectives and procedures. The meeting of representatives of Bjorknes C. and representatives of Central EI took place on 7.11.2016 at the premises of the Education Institute in Bratislava. Torstein Dale-Åkerlund, Professor Kjetil Tronvoll and Associate Professor Christopher White, and Head of the Institute, represented by Mr. Hucík, Mr. Zajac and members of the project team Nadežda Jankelová, Anna Ďurfina, Tatiana Tokolyová, Marián Děd, Jozef Hrabín, Jans Kušnírová. The meeting was interesting, inspiring, full of ideas and opinions on possible topics of cooperation. The result was:

- The interest of both sides in their long-term cooperation in solving current social issues, sharing knowledge, best practices, experience and their transfer between Slovak organizations and donor organizations.
- Sketch of the first activity - purpose, aim, deadline, manner of realization, content,
- Preparing themes for other activities.

In the pre-preparation phase, the Institute's representative also discussed with the Ukrainian party, represented by Alla Belous, Evgeny Romanenko, on the topic of cooperation, on the course and involvement and participation of the Ukrainian partner in the activity.

The meeting followed the preparatory phase of the project, which resulted in the application for a bilateral fund contribution under Measure B of the SK08 Cross-Border Cooperation Program. A team of researchers was created, consisting of Slovak, Norwegian and Ukrainian members. The objectives of the project, the activities to achieve the objectives, the precise timetable of activities, relevant outputs, indicators and their target values were set. On the basis of the objectives and the procedures for their achievement, a budget was drawn up specifying expenditure in terms of eligibility and compliance with the principle of economy. The main objective of the bilateral activity was to increase understanding of common cross-border challenges and opportunities, and to develop new and innovative forms of cross-border cooperation. This first project served to gain the necessary experience in cooperation with our

partners and to acquire basic knowledge on the subject. Cross-border cooperation is reflected mainly in the direct connection of Slovakia and Ukraine and the common history within the former socialist block. At this stage of the project, the valuable experience of Slovakia with the democratic transition after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the fulfillment of the criteria for joining the Euro-Atlantic structures in the first decade of the 20th century. We will offer these experiences through academic discussion and scientific monograph in English to our Ukrainian partners.

All other information is listed in the project application.

The implementation phase of the project was a seminar and workshop on "Economic and Political Perspectives of democratic transition of Ukraine". The seminar was conducted according to the prepared program, which is in the Annex of the Summarizing Report. The output of the seminar is the "Summary of Analysis" document, which summarizes the results of expert analyses of Slovak experts for the needs of the example and the creation of a set of challenges faced by society in Ukraine in the context of democratic transition. The Slovak partner participated in the seminar with own experience of democratic transition as part of a former block of socialist countries, while the Norwegian partner provided own rich experience of deepening democratic principles and building civil society as one of the most advanced countries in the world.

The seminar was attended and the contributions of academics and invited guests were presented with the participation of students. The seminar was divided into the following blocks:

Morning block from 9: 30 a.m.-12: 30 p.m. A seminar with the participation of students of the Master's study program, where the Slovak partner presented own contributions.

The afternoon block from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. consisted of the Ukrainian contributions. During the block, brainstorming was done for students who had three tasks to solve. After the Ukrainian contributions, a discussion was held with the Norwegian partners on the challenges of democratic transition in Ukraine.

Following the presentation of contributions to the above areas, the student workshop was followed by a group brainstorming on the challenges of democratic transition in Ukraine.

The seminar and workshop were focused on getting acquainted with the issues of Ukraine, which is going through the process of democratic transition after the so-called Maidan revolution. At the same time, the civil war is taking place in the south-east of the country, which is affecting the sphere of civil society. This project therefore created a basic understanding of the challenges and environment of the present-day Ukraine, possibilities of further exploration of the democratic transition of the country, and the possible solution of the situation in the context of the civil war in the south-east of Ukraine.

Conclusions

The conclusions of the implemented activity are presented in the "Summary of Analysis" document and are divided into the individual areas under consideration.

Results and use for the future

The outputs of the project in the form of a monograph and in the form of the "Summary of Analysis" document will be used in the teaching of the Applicant's and partner's higher education institutions and will be available to a broad professional public. The project is also an excellent basis for future cooperation with the partners. In the next phase, we want to focus on mediating the conflict in Ukraine. The project will also invite partners from the Russian Federation.

Sustainability of bilateral cooperation to the future from the point of view of cross-border cooperation

We maintain active communication with a Norwegian partner even after the end of the project. Partner gives us valuable advice on creating a new project in which we will work together with Ukrainian and Russian partners to identify possible areas for mediation in the Ukrainian conflict

Sustainability of bilateral cooperation in the future in terms of dissemination of results in Slovakia, Norway and Ukraine and their application to further work

The sustainability of bilateral co-operation in the future is perceived in the context of the project's effects (outcomes and impacts) to persist in the medium and long term after the end of project funding. The outputs achieved will bring concrete benefits to the various target groups of the project and will continue to have a positive impact on them after the end of the project. At the same time, sustainability is perceived in the context of maintaining the quality and timeliness of the benefits provided after the project is completed.

Annexes:

Activity program



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