

I. Educational programs for state employees: international cooperation experience

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Project “ECESIS” focused on retraining of state employees is coming to an end. It is time to make certain conclusions, size up the situation and specify objectives for the last half of a year.

In general the main tasks and objectives of the project didn't undergo evident changes. There was only an insignificant correction made for the deadlines of few deliverables. Certainly, problems appeared, but they were usually of local character so there was no need to change direction of project activities. In everyday work management is remarkable for its flexibility and necessity to communicate a lot and solve problems in the “manual mode” taking into account the impossibility of precise long-term planning in the partner countries. Step by step we achieve project outcomes though observing some 2 months lag caused mainly by the centers' opening delay at few universities (Tambov State University, Dnepropetrovsk National University) and insufficient tempo of certain courses' development.

Among 19 participants of the project there are more or less active partners. The leaders among universities of partner countries are Moscow State Regional University (Russian Federation) and Sumy State University (Ukraine). Comrat State University (Moldova), Yerevan State Academy of Fine Arts (Armenia) and Lviv National University (Ukraine) also hold an active position in project activities. Among Ministries the most active is Armenian, less active – Ukrainian and even less - Moscow Regional. Here we have faced a huge problem – low activeness among Russian state employees stipulated by the risk of being accused of latent corruption. Among local administrations the most active is Dnepropetrovsk Regional State Administration followed by Lviv and Sumy Administrations.

Passive participants were paid special attention; apart from the activities of the initial schedule special meetings for the representatives of local authorities and ministries were appointed and held at the time convenient for them.

Among EU participants the contractor of the project Koblenz-Landau University is the major executive. One of the most active players is Maria Curie-Sklodowska University (Poland) that has arranged seminar for young trainers in November 2009 and is responsible for project educational Internet-sources. Technical University of Kosice (Slovakia) also takes an important part in the project realization. It participates in all coordination meetings within the project activity and has organized training for teachers in April 2010. University of Valladolid (Spain) has conducted staff retraining in January 2010.

The possibility for beneficiaries to use the project deliverables is really great. All the project working-outs (materials of trainings, educational programs developed by the international groups etc.) are available for project participants. There are seven brochures published during the project life-time containing the current information. In the framework of the program of regional centers' opening all universities from partner countries receive necessary equipment. A number of academic staff has already been retrained in EU.

One of the side effects of the project is establishment of close partner relationships between participating universities. First, the cooperation agreements between Moscow, Tambov, Sumy and Dnepropetrovsk universities on the one hand and Koblenz-Landau University, University of Valladolid,

Maria Curie-Sklodowska on the other have been already signed or are in the process of signing. Second, close professional partnership was established between trainers from different countries - representatives of working groups established for development of educational courses. Many of them used to apply for organization of special work meetings for developers in one the partner countries. As a rule, project administration tried to comply with such requests.

All introduced as well as still planned project actions are internally and politically supported by local authorities as they are active participants of the project. Development of the system of professional retraining of state employees and international cooperation in this field contribute to the institutional development of partner countries. The project promotes solution of social and cultural problems both directly (by improvement of professional and cultural level of trainers and officials involved in the project) and indirectly (by means of elevating educational and public services). There is no special accent put upon the gender factor, although nearly 50% of all the participants are females (for instance, there are 7 women among 15 official contact persons).

There are economical, financial and social capabilities of the educational institutions who participate in the project to use the obtained results. Activity of the Centers will be integrated into the existing and successfully working system of postgraduate education. Even pilot groups' training will be financed partly by the project; the majority of universities have already defined the algorithm of further sustainable work of the Centers.

Educational programs in IT and management are being modernized at the university level due to the project and partnership of EU and partner countries colleagues. Although these programs are basically aimed at retraining of public servants, the accumulated materials will be used for student training educational programs.

With no doubt, establishment of the Centre with new courses for local government representatives enhances the prestige of participating universities at regional and national levels. Realization of the project contributes to the modernization of university education, development of new teaching style and promotion of life-long learning techniques.

The project assists the cooperation between university and local authority which themselves offer jobs for graduates and also represent such important players of labor market as employment centers, services for support of entrepreneurship etc.

It was already mentioned above that project management is rather flexible that is in our opinion enormously required for realization of projects with participation of partner countries where general situation is often unstable and participants have little opportunity for long-term planning.

The current publication is dedicated to a new action within the project – Summer Academy on information management 2010 organized in Koblenz. Along with young trainers among the participants of the Academy there were representatives of first pilot groups of retrained state employees who had preliminary training in Moscow, Sumy, Lviv, Comrat and Yerevan. The new stage of their training under the guidance of experienced German professors will certainly produce a positive impact for development of their professional career.