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HIGHER EDUCATION CAPACITY BUILDING

Erasmus+ Project

**Crisis and Risks Engineering for Transport Services
(CRENG)**

Minutes of the teleconference with Azerbaijani Partner Universities

January 23, 2020.



On January 23, 2020 (14.00) online meeting (teleconference) of representatives of CRENG Project Management Board and local coordinators from Azerbaijani Universities took place. The meeting was attended by:

Members of Project Management Board:

1. Prof. Marianna Jacyna (Warsaw University of Technology)
2. Konrad Lewczuk (Warsaw University of Technology)
3. Arnold Sterenharz (EXOLAUNCH GmbH)
4. Iuliia Bulgakova (State University of Infrastructure and Technologies)
5. Elena Eynhorn (Technical University of Berlin)
6. Kateryna Polupanova (Priazovskyi State Technical University)

Representatives of Azerbaijani Partner Universities:

1. Arif Najimov (Baku Engineering University)
2. Narmin Alakbarova (Baku Engineering University)
3. Orkhan Vatankhah (Azerbaijan Technological University)
4. Marziya Agayeva (Azerbaijan Technical University)
5. Subhan Namazov (Azerbaijan Technical University)

The conference was dedicated to the following issues:

- comments from Project Officer to CRENG project included in the feedback from AZ and AZ NEOs monitoring visits (mailed to Konrad Lewczuk on January 20, 2020),
- decisions of Project Management Board regarding comments submitted by the Project Officer (teleconference Jan 22, 2020, 11.00)
- current issues related to project management.

The following resolutions were agreed through discussion:

1. The feedback from Project Officer has been sent to local coordinators in Azerbaijan and partners of CRENG project. Local coordinators of Azerbaijani Universities are aware of its content and discussed reported issues. During discussion representatives of Azerbaijani Universities share the following conclusions:
 - The *Crisis and Risk Engineering in Transport Services* project was submitted as joint project, not the structural project.
 - All three Azerbaijani Universities applied to the Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan for admission to start new master studies at the early stage of the project.
 - In the second year of project realization, according to the work plan, they should receive permission and trigger new programs at all three Universities. Regular path of master program accreditation is longer than scheduled in project.
 - Azerbaijani partners never wanted to avoid official procedure and will follow it in the first possible moment.
 - To stay in line with the project work plan Azerbaijani partners decided to and pick existing name of the master program from the ministerial list. This program was never used before, so all the content of CRENG will be implemented under that program since it will be possible to register new one.
 - Then new master program will be opened. The *Crisis and Risk Engineering in Transport Services* name can't be used for that moment because it is not registered by the Ministry of Education.



- Azerbaijani partners are determined to implement new program and finalize the project in accordance with its assumptions.
 - All master programs in Azerbaijan must contain eligible content regardless whether they are new or old. Therefore, CRENG content must be combined with eligible content and does not fulfill the program in 100%. This does not mean that CRENG program will be implemented in 60%, but it means that CRENG content will constitute at least 60% of the complete program. The 60% is an estimation. Partners don't know the source of this estimation and can't confirm the number.
 - Azerbaijani partners emphasize that decision to include the Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan was part of a well-thought-out strategy to minimize the difficulties of the new program accreditation.
 - All three Azerbaijani Universities declare opening new master programs with CRENG content as a result of the project. New programs must be opened in line with Azerbaijani law regulations.
 - Total number of students declared by all three Azerbaijani Universities starting pilot master program is 22 (5+5+12). The number is expected to be higher in next years after the project is ended and all dissemination and promotional actions are undertaken.
 - The information about trainings which not equipped the staff with the needed strategic and content related knowledge has not been directly confirmed by any of local coordinators. Partners were actively looking for possible reasons for this impression by the monitors. The satisfactory questionnaire for training participants will help in answering quality questions.
2. All Azerbaijani Universities are obliged to contact as soon as possible the Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan and clarify new master program implementation path and request the Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan for official response. Partners will inform Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan that they plan to start new master program with content development in CRENG project from the academic year 2020/2021.
 3. If starting CRENG master program in line with work plan is difficult or subjected to any additional restrictions not resulting from the grant proposal, local coordinators are obliged to prepare detailed information on that and send it to the project coordinator immediately. Information must be formally confirmed by authorities of the University. It must contain propositions of solutions to the situation and confirmation of will to fully implement new programs in the first possible moment allowed by Azerbaijani law regulations. The official information from the Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan (also translated to English) should be attached to the letter.
 4. Institutional EUR bank accounts of Azerbaijan Technological University, Azerbaijan Technical University must be fully operational, confirmed by university authorities, reported to the coordinator and used for money transfer after completed grant registration procedure. Cash transfers are no longer an option in any case.
 5. Money transfers (including staff costs and equipment purchase) will be frozen until the provisions of points 2 to 4 are fulfilled. This is to ensure the highest quality and transparency of procedures.
 6. All planned monitoring actions and visits of EACEA or NEO in Azerbaijan related to CRENG project must be reported to the coordinator immediately. Feedbacks from visits must be prepared and forwarded to the coordinator if representatives of PMB are not present – in other way it is out of the procedure and is against the good of the project.



7. All partners are aware that any penalties charged in case of EACEA objections to the project realization will be charged to all participants.
8. Participants exchanged views on the main issues of the equipment procurement in the project. All three Azerbaijani Universities confirmed the decision made in the coordination meeting at the Technical University of Berlin in September 2019 to delegate the equipment procurement procedure to P4. Azerbaijani partners emphasize that decision to delegate equipment procurement procedure to P4 is in accordance with the tasks described in the detailed description of the project and information management package and allows to ensure timely equipment delivery in accordance with the project work plan and Guidelines for the Use of the Grant and to provide high-quality equipment.

Partners agree that centralized equipment purchase simplifies controlling and ensures more effective tender procedures, supplier selection, control of supply as well as minimizes bureaucracy. Equipment purchase becomes transparent and delivery conditions are the same for all partner countries. Currently running process does not raise formal doubts. Tasks are carried out in accordance with the initial assumptions of the work plan (from the report to Belen).

9. The following equipment procurement procedures have been already executed:
 - In September 2019 P4 published an announcement on the company's website looking for the suppliers of the project equipment.
 - In order to secure transparency and to involve project partners in the equipment procedure in the beginning of November 2019 during the meeting regarding the tender opening, the tender evaluation committee with the representatives of European partner's representatives and representatives of all target universities was established.
 - In November 2019 P4 sent to the companies the invitation to tender for equipment procurement with the tender conditions, locations, deadlines and technical specifications of the equipment.
 - In response to the invitation to tender, P4 received four commercial offers for equipment procurement.
 - In December 2019 P4 prepared the tender evaluation report with the details of all received commercial offers and selected supplier for the equipment procurement. The evaluation report was approved by the tender evaluation committee.
 - Currently, P4 prepared the draft of the equipment procurement contract and going to send it to the project partners for approval.
10. Each partner university is obligated:
 - To prepare rooms for the laboratory CRENG SO, to prepare and approve on institutional level CRENG Lab and VCR regulations.
 - In order to facilitate customs clearance, the regional Coordinator should inquire information regarding the necessary procedures of the equipment procurement on the national level, to inform the national authorities about the equipment delivery;
 - To ensure timely equipment delivery in accordance with the project work plan, the universities should speed up the process of issuing the contracts for the supply of equipment and sign the contracts until 20.02.2020;
 - After signing the supply contract, each partner university should send a scanned copy to the representative of the supplier Raivo Neimanis, e-mail: raivo.neimanis@gsdas.eu (CC



arnold.st@exolaunch.com). Partners should add to the contract: partner address, address of the supplying. If necessary, partners will translate the contract into native language but for the project English version is important. The contract must be signed by the legal representative. Equipment will be supplied in 60 days after sending of the contract scanned copy signed by the legal representative of the partner institution to the supplier.

- After the university has signed the supply contract, EXO (P4) will make prepayment of 30% (from the total costs of the equipment in each partner university) to the supplier;
 - After the equipment procurement and installation to the university, each partner university should sign the act of acceptance and to record the equipment units on Universities balance; after that, EXO (P4) will make the remaining payment (70% from the total costs of the equipment in each partner university) to the supplier.
11. CRENG textbook planned as an additional project result is not mandatory for partners. However, all partners are encouraged to take a part in that initiative for dissemination purpose.
 12. If the satisfactory survey of training participants reveals the need for remedial actions (additional training), the project coordinator will analyze the financial possibilities of carrying out the training.
 13. Any promotional materials that are to be founded in the project must be prepared in accordance with guidelines and with the approval of the coordinator. Otherwise, the costs will not be eligible.

Coordinator:
Project Manager:

Prof. Marianna Jacyna
Dr. Konrad Lewczuk