**Consortium and Steering Committee meeting minutes**

**Amsterdam, 23-25 June 2015**

The meeting was held in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, as a part of the 1.3 activity of the TEMPUS project Master program Leadership in Education. The agenda of the meeting comprises the integral part of this document. This document summarizes the discussions, suggestions and decisions that perspired during the three-day meeting. It is divided into four sections: I Structure of the program, II Institutionalization and sustainability, III Duties and deadlines, and IV Steering committee decisions.

**Participants:**

**UKG**: Jelena Teodorovic, Violeta Jovanovic,Ilijana Cutura, Biljana Stojanovic, Verica Babic, Snezana Marinkovic

**UBG**: Danijela Petrovic, Ivana Petrovic

**UNS**: Olivera Knezevic Floric, Sladjana Zukovic, Stefan Ninkovic

**UNI**: Zorica Markovic

**IPI**: Slavica Sevkusic, Dejan Stankovic

**NSO**: Corine Weerman

**UJ**: Mika Risku

**SZTE**: Tibor Barath, Vilmos Vass

**UAIC**: Ovidiu Gavrilovici, Carmen Cretu

**MEST**: Zeljka Knezevic, Vesna Lukic, Slavica Jasic

**HTAPSNS**: Zoltan Ardjelan, Nedeljko Djordjic

**AHSPNS**: Stanko Matic, Jadranka Pesti

**CMZ**: Sonja Stamenovic, Vesna Petrovic Urosevic

**I - STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAM**

The distinction will be made in this section between the comments and suggestions of the Serbian partners and the comments and suggestions of the EU partners, for the following reason: Serbian partners have a closer understanding about the realities of education in Serbia, and may thus have a more practical view of the program, while EU partners have long-term expertise in the field, as well as experience running programs in Leadership in education, so their angle may be more holistic and research-based. Comments from both sides will be taken into consideration while crafting the final proposal.

**Comments and suggestions – Serbian partners**

* The Program covers the needs of all target groups that are properly recognized.
* Good connection between theory, practice and educational needs.
* Curriculum is excellent, detailed and in line with the Serbian Standards for Competencies of Principals and real needs.
* Program is focused of lifelong learning.
* It is good that the faculties will create a new program, not transform / use the courses they already have.
* Program is very comprehensive and is based on the latest theoretical knowledge and research results.
* Obligatory courses (as proposed in the preliminary draft) should remain obligatory:
* **1a** - Introduction to leadership in education (6 ECTS);
* **1b** - Leading educational organizations (6 ECTS);
* **1c -** Developing people (6 ECTS);
* **1d -** Instructional Leadership (6 ECTS).
* The following course should be included in the obligatory group:
* **2h** - Educational policy and educational change (6 ECTS).
* The following elective courses should be merged into larger units:
* **2a -** Partnerships and **2d** - Communication training (they should comprise one course of 6 ECTS);
* **2e -** Project management and **2i -** Research and evaluation in education / Using data and evidence (they should comprise one course of 6 ECTS). Academic writing should be also a topic within this course;
* **2b -** Educational finances and **2c** - Educational law and administration (they should comprise one course of 6 ECTS). Several expert professors should teach one or two topics in this course – this would ease the accreditation procedure and ensure needed expertise in these somewhat non-educational areas.
* The following courses should remain the same (and be offered in the elective group):
* **2g** - Education systems and governance – Serbia and the world / Comparative and international education (6 ECTS);
* **2j** - Leading pre-school institutions (3 ECTS);
* **2k** - Leading technical and vocational secondary schools (3 ECTS).
* The following course should be abolished as a separate course, and its parts should be included in 1c - Developing people, or 1a - Introduction to leadership in education:
* **2f** - Professional and personal development of leaders.
* There was also a suggestion about more credits / hours for practicum.
* The titles of courses should be developed in Serbian as soon as possible.
* All elective courses should be placed in one group.
* The courses (content and methods) should be carefully aligned with ECTS but also with teachers’ course loads (because of accreditation).
* It was stressed that the learning methods of the courses are of paramount importance, and that leaders in education need to acquire knowledge through modern teaching methods and e-learning (e-learning platform, Google apps for education, Google Moderator, Word Press or other similar resources which will engage cooperation among participants, allow peer learning, but, also, show the benefits of e-learning methods and pave the way of improving institutions where they work).
* Also, advocacy skills should be taught to educational leaders.

**Comments and suggestions – EU partners**

* **General comments:**
* Looking at the title of the courses, the master will contain up-to-date issues and subjects regarding developing school leadership.
* The information in the presentations on ‘needs analysis’ is very impressive, comprehensive, rich and may lead to a number of policy recommendations.
* All materials are very interesting and seemed carefully compiled. They seem to give a firm fundament on paper to the master educational leadership.
* The programme is in good form and will be successful. It has been well designed and seems very doable!
* The master of educational leadership in Serbia should be organised in the Serbian ‘way’, taking into account the current academic and educational cultural. Changes should be made step by step.
* **On the Project’s partnership**: Very good idea of several universities collaborating in the project. It should in the long run help to avoid unnecessary competition between the universities.
* **On the mentioned current and future leaders in schools and other educational institutions:** On the basis of the experience of IEL (Institute of Educational Leadership, University of Jyvaskyla, Finland), the first cohorts will consist of practicing principals and as the years go on will more and more comprise of assistant and vice principals and teachers. The needs of the various groups differ which is good to take into consideration already from the very start.
* **On the subgroups to whom the programme is dedicated:**
* It is crucial that the target groups are precisely defined, since that will determine the content of the course. The suggestion (NSO) is to limit the target group in the first couple of years to a very specific segment/group of school leaders with the image of being early adopters, opinion leaders, role models.
* The needs of these people are quite different so the programme has to be flexible enough to provide the various groups what they need. The suggestion (IEL) is that the application process for both target groups should be planned in beforehand. The experiences of IEL are that the educational leadership studies are very popular. The experience of IEL is that the various groups can support and enrich each other’s learning but also create additional challenges. It is advisable for example that the various school forms and roles are included in the curriculum and made visible through concrete examples during teaching. It seems that particularly the non-employed students benefit a lot from the system. The IEL programme includes both employed and non-employed students in the same cohorts.
* To be able to go deep in the dialogues the use of one’s mother tongue is important. The use of other languages could be an extra and provided in ways that naturally go in line with the domestic programme.
* **On the organization of the program:** It is very important that this issue has been dealt with and that there is a concrete plan how to include all the four universities and still enable the concentration to two for economic reason.
* **On the future cooperation agreement between Serbian universities:** Sounds sustainable. IEL has Friday-Saturday training sessions during one and a half years (10 sessions plus additional work, practicum, tutoring) and the arrangement has turned out very functional. Also non-employed students seem to like it.
* **On the curriculum of the program:**
* The presentation of the syllabus (the way it is presented, it is more of a syllabus than a curriculum) is explicit and allows both teachers and students to have a clear picture of what is offered and how the studying is conducted concerning the courses.
* The amount of attention paid towards ‘school organisational innovation’ and ‘school organisational change’ is too weak in the current concept. There is however, course ‘Education policy and educational change’ which is perhaps dealing with these concepts.
* Instead of the course title *Partnership*, the suggestion is to use the title ‘School and their local alliances’, subtitle: school leadership and collaboration in the community. This should be very much related to ‘systems management’ and the role of the school leader in the community.
* **On the core courses:**
* The suggested core courses seem well-picked, essential and functional.
* We prefer the term *pedagogical leadership* for *instructional* leadership as it is more encompassing*.*
* The description of courses is important but also the learning process should be described and then the courses connected to it. In other words, the learning process and the emphasis of teaching (the HOW in addition to WHAT and WHY) are not included here but should be somewhere. The IEL principal preparation programme curriculum illustrates what is meant with this. Our observation in Finalnd is that particularly this area is most in need among practicing principals.
* Mission should come prior to vision.
* Also, the focus should include or even emphasize the learning of the whole community.
* **On the obligatory elective courses:**
* All the courses seem well-chosen, described and essential.
* On the basis of the experience of IEL, the group of obligatory elective courses in the EdLead proposal includes a lot that should be part of the obligatory courses as well. Most of them are included in the IEL principal preparation programme and should be included in the compulsory courses of EdLead as well and then get further attention in the obligatory elective courses. We suggest going through the courses using the IEL principal preparation programme learning process three-module model as a lens to check the balance.
* Finnish principals are most often worried about meeting particularly the financial responsibilities but they do work like company managers also in public schools so it is understandable.
* **On the elective courses:** “Elective courses would be chosen by the student from the pool of the above mentioned courses and other relevant courses offered by the partner universities, such as Inclusive education, Intercultural education” (p.9 of the proposal) - Very wise determination.
* **On the practicum:** When the principal preparation programme was initiated at IEL there were strict rules not to allow practice in one’s own school so that the mentors could be more open and the students would learn new things in other settings. That rule has been loosened during the last years but there still is the need to avoid too internal practicum particularly for people who are in different roles than that of the principal. One’s own principal can often not speak so openly with one’s own subordinate, for various reasons, and thus essential sides or the principal’s work may remain untouched.
* **On the Master Thesis:** The NSO for example has a lot of experience of tailored master theses for practitioners. The theses of employed and non-employed could be a bit different maybe.
* **On the Teaching methods**: Once more, well-written and comprise essential principles. On the basis of the experiences of IEL, it would be recommendable to mention also the use of various internet platforms and the practical exercises of developing one’s leadership skills in concrete leadership situations (the HOW question).
* **On the Duration and Tuition:** This part is very setting-specific but the IEL experience of having a one-and –a-half-year programme with one annual intake has proved out very successful. The Serbian programme seems to have more or less the same timelines.

**II - INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND SUSTAINABILITY**

* **Accreditation**. Obviously, the first precondition for the sustainability of the program is its accreditation. This is the first task.
* **Qualification issue**. It is very important to place future master degree title (Master of leadership in education) within National Qualification Framework. NQF is not yet developed, the address for advocating this is Higher Education Council. For the interdisciplinary programs, the title of the degree is supplied during the accreditation process and is forwarded to the Higher Education Council.
* **Master program or professional development courses**. This has been discussed and proposal is to have a modularized master program. Therefore, principals could take different modules / courses over a longer period of time, and at the end, if they wish, they could do a thesis and finish the whole program. Moreover, there was a question whether the TEMPUS framework allows abandoning the creation of full-fledged master program, so the focus can be oriented towards PD courses.
* **EdLead as a second master.** We are concerned about sustainability of the program, if the law or by law does not prescribe to have a master’s degree as mandatory for the educational leaders. Some faculties (e.g. pedagogy in UNS) leave acquiring certain very important competencies for the master level. Therefore, a pedagogue who has not finished master in pedagogy is not a pedagogue in a true sense. Hence, EdLead could not replace Master in Pedagogy for Bachelor pedagogues, but could be a second master for them. However, all agreed that having second master is still very rare in Serbia.
* **EdLead good enough for work in classrooms.** Teachers in Serbia are obliged to have a master degree to teach in school. It would be good to ensure that someone having EdLead master is entitled to teach in classroom.
* **Mandates.** It was stressed that the project should advocate not limiting principals for only two mandates on the post. This solution is contrary to tendencies to professionalize school principals.
* **Strategy 2020.** It was emphasized that efforts to create master program and PD courses should address relevant goals stressed in Serbian strategy for development of education until 2020 and that this should be always clearly expressed in communication with education authorities.
* **Depolitization.** Huge problem of educational leadership (especially principalship) in Serbia is involvement of party politics and this will seriously endanger all efforts to professionalize the profession.

**III - DUTIES AND DEADLINES**

* Until 15 October 2014 accreditation papers should be completed.
* 2-3 Serbian professors from each university should be in charge of work on course / structure development.
* Finnish practicum can help in positioning some courses.
* Names of courses should be translated into Serbian.
* Draft of each course syllabus should be prepared until January (ready for review before the meeting at SZTE).
* Decision on when the professional development and next Consortium meeting will take place should be made soon (Tibor suggested that the decision be made until July 15). Current suggestion for the PD visit: last week of January and first week of February.
* Trainings for mentors of principals in the program (i.e., selected, exemplary current principals), and for education counselors from Regional school authorities and for university professors should take place in spring 2015. Ivana Petrovic suggested that Ministry of Education should not be the one picking principals’ mentors, but that we should create the system for motivating and attracting principals’ mentors.
* Jelena Teodorović suggested that Serbian professors / researchers who will create syllabi and teach courses should get a mentor for that process from the pool of our EU partners.
* Danijela Petrovic suggested that it would be good if Serbian university professors could get professional development by the Finnish partner in fall 2014. Jelena Teodorović and Mika Risku will see what kind of training could be provided for university professors who will work on the syllabi.
* All participants should send Jelena the content of their flipcharts and notes made during the meeting (likes, dislikes and recommendations regarding the proposed program and other related topics).
* Vilmoss should send his presentation „Concept of Quality Assesment of EdLead framework“ (formative evaluation of the process of program creation) to Jelena until July 15, and we should all send him feedback. The key reference against which the program should be evaluated should be the Standards of competences for principals in Serbia (Tibor). Jelena said that the program aims to go beyond Standards.

**IV – STEERING COMMITTEE DECISIONS**

During the Steering Committee, Jelena Teodorovic informed partners that finally the wait was over for the first transfer of the money, because all Partnership agreements were signed and all the transfers were made before the Amsterdam meeting.

Partners were reminded that, since 6 months of the project is up, they should start gathering all the supporting documents, arrange for payments, fill out accounting files, etc.

Decisions regarding the deadlines and duties talked about with the rest of the Consortium were confirmed.

Jelena Teodorovic informed partners that, considering that IPI (P5) was selected at the kick-off / Consortium meeting to primarily carry out research for Act 1.1 and Act 1.2 (while the role of other partners was more advisory), the budget for the activities 1.1 and 1.2 should accordingly be slightly adjusted (IPI share slightly increased for larger role in those activities, and other partners’ budgets slightly decreased), as Partnership agreement specifies. Everyone agreed. It was estimated that around 3 to 4 days at each partner’s institution were not utilized for the activities Act 1.1. and 1.2. IPI timesheets will be checked for time invested in 1.1 and 1.2 to see how much of these days should be transferred to them.

Jelena Teodorovic does not foresee similar changes in the budgets in future, as the project budget is relatively well prepared. The exceptions will be activities that the institutions decide not to carry out, such as prepare and accredit the full Master program (such as UBG and UNI).

The agreement was made that potential proposals about changes in the budget come before the SC meetings, so that the partners have more time to think about them.

The meeting was concluded by pointing out that the next SC meeting will be in Hungary, in January / February 2015, but that partners will be continually in touch regarding research and managerial matters via email, skype or video-link.