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Minutes of the Kick-off Meeting of the ERASMUS+ “Change in Classroom: Promoting Innovative Teaching & Learning To Enhance Student Learning Experience in Eastern Partnership Countries” PRINTeL Project

15.02.2018

Venue: Yerevan State University
1 Alex Manoogian, Yerevan, Armenia
Working languages: English

**Day 1: Overview of the PRINTeL Project,
Presentations of EU and PC institutions,
Administrative management of the Project**

Present:

54 participants from Armenia, EU and PC institutions
Official guests
Media representatives

(See attached the attendance list for the 1st day meeting)

The Kick-off Meeting of the Erasmus+ PRINTeL Project started at 10:00, after registration of the participants.

The Kick-off Meeting was organized according to the initially announced Programme (see attached).

The meeting launched with official welcome speeches chaired by Aleksandr Grigoryan, Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, Yerevan State University (YSU) who welcomed the participants and passed the floor to the following persons for welcome speeches:

- ✓ Aram Simonyan, Rector of Yerevan State University
- ✓ Vahram Mkrtchyan, Deputy Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia
- ✓ Lana Karlova, Head of National ERASMUS+ Office in Armenia

Armen Budaghyan, Deputy Vice-Rector, Director of the Quality Assurance, YSU and the Coordinator of the PRINTEL Project started with a welcome speech and continued on the overview of the Project:

- ✓ Rationale, goals and objectives,
- ✓ Methodology,
- ✓ Expected results,
- ✓ Consortium,
- ✓ Work packages
- ✓ Management,
- ✓ Work groups,
- ✓ Timetables.

The Overview of the Project was followed by short presentations by EPC partners on their institutions with special focus on teaching & learning practices, current issues and teaching staff development centres and EU partner countries on the existing innovative teaching & learning practices, and the trainings it can offer to EPC partners' teaching staff within the project activities, Chair- Ruben Aghgashyan, Vice-Rector on International Cooperation and Educational Reforms, National Polytechnic University of Armenia (NPUA).

- **Presentation 1.** Tamta Murdashvili, Human Resource Office Staff, Ilia State University, presented their institution emphasizing the innovative center Iliani FabLab established for fabricating digitally technology-enabled products and creating smart devices that will be used in teaching and education purposes integrated into curriculum and extra-curricular activities, innovation and entrepreneurship, sales and marketing.
- **Presentation 2.** Vladimir Galynsky, Deputy Head of Academic Affairs Department, Belarusian State University (BSU), following the introduction on their university presented their B-learning practice in teaching & learning: using LMS MOODLE with traditional lecture and seminars as well as in staff development with a program “How to make online course in MOODLE in 3 weeks”. He mentioned that the challenge for achieving the objectives that BSU is facing is the insufficiency of academic competence among teachers.
- **Presentation 3.** Armine Khachatryan, Head of Professional Development Unit, Yerevan State University (YSU), focused on the additional education at YSU which is the activity of the Department of Additional Education consisting of Professional Development Unit and Special Training Unit. Two additional educational programmes, namely professional training of teaching staff and development of professional skills of public servants are implemented at YSU. A. Khachatryan mentioned some current issues YSU is facing currently among which are training of trainers, training of foreign language lecturers in native speaking countries, implementation of online education, etc.

- **Presentation 4.** Maria Solé Català, Professor and EU-funded Project Coordinator, Universitat de Barcelona (UB) highlighted UB Institute for Teacher Professional Development in her presentation about the university of Barcelona, the main tasks of which are fostering educational innovations, analyzing training needs of the teaching staff , developing advisory, publication and dissemination activities of good practices, etc.
- **Presentation 5.** Wim Van Petegem, Policy Coordinator Learning Technologies, Faculty of Engineering Technology, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KU Leuven), dragged participants' attention on the Three-Tie Support Model in T&L: 1. Do it yourself- stimulating students and teachers to work autonomously on their projects with their own tools, 2. We do it together- offering students and teachers advice, instruments and facilities to work with professional tools and 3. We do it for you-taking the responsibility and solving for them but not completely free.
- **Presentation 6.** Samvel Shoukourian, Scientific Leader of IT Educational and Research Centre, Yerevan State University (YSU), presented the problems of traditional and virtual learning competition. Computerized traditional learning is widely available, easy to use, became commodity on the market, while virtual learning offers a variety of infrastructural concepts requiring complex computerized frameworks, studies of these concepts are difficult and the performance is poor and framework development is platform dependent and expensive.

The presentations were followed by a group photo taken in the lobby against the Academic Council Hall.

After lunch break the participants continued the meeting chaired by Chris Van Keer, Professor at Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KU Leuven).

- **Presentation 7** Natallia Chetyrbock, Head of Department of Management, Economics and Finance, Brest State Technical University (BrSTU), presented innovative activities at BrSTU including designing unique large-span metallic coverings, building structures and materials, roof coating, etc. The university has a faculty of Innovation, Management and Finance the general fields of which are machine-building technologies, logistics, computers, systems and networks, etc. There is an Institute of Staff Development for enhancing the employability of the professionals which provides extensive resources for adult education based on the principle of lifelong learning.
- **Presentation 8.** Pilot e-learning courses such as virtual communication, project management, introduction to web design and others, Rosetta Stone language learning licensed user-friendly platform accessible for students and staff as well as teaching staff development center CPDESC (Center for Professional Development, education, science and culture) offering for example teaching-oriented training for the faculties were presented by Boris Gitolendia, Associate Professor at the Faculty of Transportation and

Mechanical Engineering, Georgian Technical University. The current issues they are facing today are lack of teaching staff with new pedagogical approaches, innovative T&L methods, online learning tools, need of redesigning some courses, students' concern about boring and outdated lectures and need of new learning activities.

- **Presentation 9.** Ruben Aghgashyan, National Polytechnic University of Armenia (NPUA), apart from the main academic units of NPUA introduced also the Center of Continuing Education and Faculty Development offering continuing education in computer graphics, design and modeling, programming, etc, and teaching technologies, general background courses and professional oriented courses for faculty development. On behalf of NPUA R. Aghgashyan presented main expectations from PRINTeL project: to improve professional abilities of trainers, to update the trainings' technical base, to introduce innovative teaching and learning methods, etc.
- **Presentation 10.** Maria Aguiar Lopes Pinto, Pedagogical Coordinator, Pedagogical Innovation and Sport, Universidade do Porto (U. Porto), during her presentation emphasized U. Porto's Pedagogical Innovation Unit, the mission of which is to develop the pedagogical component in teachers activities, promote the improvement of the educational models adopted in the study cycles and courses, encourage the research on educational models, embrace the development of competences in the educational models of U. Porto and enrich pedagogical excellence in the national and international context.
- **Presentation 11.** Peter Dalenius, Deputy Manager at TSDC Didacticum, Linköpings Universitet (LiU), presented the further training programme offering experienced HE teachers to work with critical thinking in teaching, active learning with response systems, yearly conferences, where teachers can present development work and discuss new ideas, and on demand workshops when they visit the groups of HE teachers on their demand as well as ICT Studio aiming at increasing the pedagogical digital competence for teaching staff.
- **Presentation 12.** Arusyak Abrahamyan, Lecturer, Institutional Executive of ARMAZEG (NPUA), Synergy with Tempus project ARMAZEG: "Developing e-Learning in the Trans Caucasus Region" presented the functions of ARMAZEG.
- **Presentation 13.** Anush Gevorgyan, Head of Education and Methodology Department, Vanadzor State University (VSU) gave the introduction for their university and Kristine Ghazaryan, Head of Lifelong Learning Center at VSU continued on presenting their center which offers pedagogical and psychological trainings, IT, language and labour rights trainings for academic staff.
- **Presentation 14.** A detailed developed personnel policy up to 2020 was presented by Nino Korinteli, Chief Specialist at International Relation Office, Iakob Gogebashvili Telavi State University (TeSaU), which aims at raising pedagogical competence and increasing productivity and efficiency of performance, to improve work with talent pool

among university staff members, especially young employees, etc. The laboratory of educational innovations analyzes students' and teachers' performance holds methodological seminars, designs and develops experimental educational platforms and organizes pedagogical master classes.

- **Presentation 15.** Alena Apiakun, Head of International Projects Department, Yanka Kupala State University of Grodno (YKSUG) presented the structure of YKSUG, its mission, main functions and activities and on behalf of YKSUG shared the expectations from the Project which are creation of internet platform for sharing experience and achievements, holding virtual seminars, online conferences, development and promotion of academic leadership programmes for young teachers, modernization of the university infrastructure for innovative teaching, etc.

- **Presentation 16.** Ingrid Kienberger, Researcher at International Management, FH Joanneum Gesellschaft mbH (FHJ), made a short introduction on FHJ and passed the floor to Jutta Pauschenwein, the director of Innovative Learning Scenarios, who spoke about research-training implementation at FHJ by supporting online learning processes, coaching learners and teachers in respect to their individual needs, using diverse approaches and materials. An innovative programme in the university is game based learning for younger learners to involve them in the academic process with the help of learning by doing.

First day presentations were finished with FHJ practices and after a coffee break the meeting moved to its final part.

Armen Budagyan spoke on administrative management of the PRINTeL project in conclusion of the Day 1. The following topics were presented and explained to the participants:

- ✓ Management bodies and work groups (WGs),
- ✓ Project steering committee (PSC),
- ✓ Project management team (PMT),
- ✓ Management structure,
- ✓ National coordinators (NCs),
- ✓ Institutional coordinators (ICs),
- ✓ Contact persons (CPs),
- ✓ WP Lead partners and work groups,
- ✓ Project WGs,
- ✓ WGs for the implementation of WP1 and WP3
- ✓ Partnership Agreement.

The Chair Chris Van Keer expressed his gratitude to all the presenters for their active contribution to the meeting and closed the meeting at 17:45 according to the initially announced Programme.

16.02.2018

**Day 2: Organization of project work packages,
Financial management of the project,
Consortium meeting discussions, feedbacks**

Present: 47 participants and guests

(See attached the attendance list for the 2nd day of the meeting)

After the registration of participants the second day of the meeting started at 10:00 according to the initially announced Programme, chaired by Vitali Khaletski, Head of International Office and Technology Transfer Center, Brest State Technical University (BrSTU).

The first part of Kick-off meeting Day 2 started with the activity descriptions of 7 Work Packages.

- **WP.1.** Gevorg Margarov, Head of Information Security and Software Development Department, Lead partner NPUA, presented “Strengthening Teaching Staff Development Centres (TSDC) in PC HEIs”.
- **WP.2.** Tamta Muradashvili, Human Resource Office Staff, Lead partner ISU, made a presentation on “Capacity Building of Teaching Staff”.

Q&A

Question: Samvel Karabekyan asked if the criteria will be common for all participating institutions.

Answer: Tamta Muradashvili answered that she couldn't tell about common criteria, but they will have a meeting with rectors and head of administration in Georgia and they will have a decision on it.

Answer: Armen Budaghyan answered that it is an important issue for having a good result because there are people who are not prepared for trainings, so they should think together which criteria should be used when they nominate or elect future trainers, and these criteria will be provided for all partner universities.

After a coffee break the organization of Work Packages continued.

- **WP.3.** Creating Virtual Academy of Teaching & Learning (VATL) was first presented by Alina Satsuk, specialist at International Programmes and Projects Office, Lead

partner BSU, and was continued by Vladimir Galynsky, Deputy Head of Academic Affairs Department. **Q&A**

Question 1: Vitali Khaletski's first question was that if there will be any repetition between VATL and PRINTeL websites and asked about any criteria how to choose which criteria information to place in PRINTeL website, and which in VATL.

The second question he pointed to be more technical: as for his information some members of the consortium, for example colleagues from YKSUG have their own electronic platform for distance learning, he asked how the system of distance learning is compatible.

Answer: Vladimir Galynsky answered the first question that the websites of PRINTeL and VATL may be different, because the presentations from the meetings will be posted to PRINTeL website, not to VATL. On the VATL website there will be information, instructions and presentations on T&L.

The answer to the second question was that each university has its own model installations.

Question 2: Gevorg Margarov asked about the equipment to be used for creating the virtual academy, which was suggested to do on local servers by V. Galynsky, and asked also about Mr. Galynsky's viewpoint on making a complete system on the virtual servers. The second question was if they have any research on whether to use MOODLE or it is easier to use GOOGLE for education.

Answer: To the first question Vladimir Galynsky answered that it is a technical question but maybe it will be Cloud or local servers. Cloud needs expenses. The technicians will decide what the best option is.

The answer to the second question was that he doesn't like GOOGLE for education.

Remark: Nino Korinteli added that they had such a problem of a choice between MOODLE and GOOGLE for the previous projects, but they used MOODLE which was better and flexible.

- **WP.4.** Otar Zumburidze, Head of International Relations and Standards Office, Lead partner GTU, presented Raising Awareness on Innovative Teaching & Learning.

Remark: Wim Van Petegem stated that in their university when talking about raising awareness, they don't forget about students, because they might be ambassadors of innovations for teaching and learning in universities, and he thinks that it is important to give role to students in raising awareness but he is not sure if it is an option for partner universities.

Answer: Otar Zumburidze answered that Bologna places students in the first place and T&L is student-oriented which is one of the important parts of the Bologna declaration. Without students they cannot do anything. He understands that it is not easy but they should find ways to communicate with them because they know better how, for example, to do the lecturing.

Armen Budaghyan added that WP4 is mainly focused on raising awareness through the VATL portal. The portal will serve as a tool to disseminate the methods already adopted by PC universities. As this virtual platform is not only for teaching staff but also the students, they will be a part of the virtual community and will be aware of the new methods and technologies already adopted in their universities. What refers to the synergy between the WP4 and WP6, there are two dissemination work packages because raising awareness and creating incentives is the key for the success of the Project. One of the packages is virtual through VATL portal and another is physical, disseminating all the outputs, materials related to the new T&L methods already adopted in PCs.

- **WP.5.** Chris Van Keer, Professor at Faculty of Engineering Technology, Lead Partner KU Leuven, made presentation on Quality Control and Monitoring (QC&M).

Question 1: Vitali Khaletski asked if the quality management should be incorporated as one system of the project inside our universities or these systems could exist separately.

Answer: Chris Van Keer answered that if they input all quality management of the Project into their university system, then there will be more partners who will have different procedures and quality management standards and then it will be very difficult. So, it should be kept separately.

Question 2: Armen Budaghyan started with the statement that in the WP of quality management it is foreseen to have external expert who will make judgments on the quality of their work. The question was about Van Keer's viewpoint on how they will set standards for tendering for choosing experts outside the consortium, what the criteria will be and whether Mr. Van Keer has considered it in quality monitoring or quality assurance.

Answer: Chris Van Keer answered that the key to solve all these problems are the guidelines published for the Project, which means that they need someone aware about project management and ERASMUS+ framework. The financial and operational management are two separate things and they need someone experienced who knows the guidelines.

Lana Karlova, Head of National ERASMUS+ Office in Armenia made an overview on behalf of National ERASMUS+ Office. She thanked everyone for the wonderful presentations and encouraged all participants to ask many questions to understand where to start.

After lunch the organization of last two WPs were introduced.

- **WP.6.** Vitali Khaletski, Head of International Office and Technology Transfer Center, Lead partner BrSTU, presented Dissemination and Exploitation.

Q&A

Question: Otar Zumburidze asked about the challenges dissemination faces.

Answer: Vitali Khaletski answered that each partner institution should elaborate a detailed dissemination plan with the list of dissemination activities, timelines and responsible persons, but at the same time he emphasized that we should be more flexible when implementing the mentioned dissemination plans.

- **WP.7.** Armen Budaghyan, Project Coordinator, Deputy Vice-Rector and Director of the Quality Assurance, Lead partner YSU, presented the overall management of the Project, including the financial management (PRINTeL budget, types of costs, budget allocation, staff costs, travel costs, costs of stay, equipment costs, subcontracting costs, co-financing, supporting documents per budget heading, tax exemption, exchange rates, penalties for non-publicity and poor performance).

Q&A

Question: Nino Korintelli asked about timesheets.

Answer: Armen Budaghyan answered that timesheets refer to the staff costs. There will be certain periods for paying staff costs. It is considered that every six month there will be open periods for payments according to the real outcomes/outputs produced when institutions can pay the staff costs according to the work they have done. Timesheets are now different from those of Tempus Project, and they are very easy to fill in. It should be considered that each staff cannot have more workload than 20 days per month and 240 days per year.

After Armen Budaghyan's presentation on Project Management and Q&A Mr. Budaghyan announced the end of presentations on WP organization and passed to the last part of the meeting- Project Steering Committee decisions and Consortium Meeting discussions.

Project Steering Committee (PSC) made decisions upon the following important points:

1. The **Project management bodies** were presented to approval, as follows:
 - ✓ It was suggested to appoint **official institutional coordinators (contact persons)** as Project Steering Committee (**PSC**) members and **the Project Coordinator** as **Chair** of the PSC.

- ✓ Project Management Team (PMT) consisting of **three members** from YSU was assigned to approval.
- ✓ It was suggested to appoint the **3** universities from each PC country which received the biggest budget - YSU, ISU, BSU as **National Coordinators (NCs)**.
- ✓ The Quality Evaluation Committee (QEC) composition was introduced consisting of one representative from each EU partner university (UB, U. Porto, KU Leuven, LiU and FHJ) which will be **chaired** by the representative from KU Leuven.
- ✓ The modified detailed activity plan of **WP.1** was submitted to approval for **2018**.
- ✓ The modified detailed activity plan of **WP.3** was submitted to approval for **2018**.

All the abovementioned suggestions were approved by the participants.

2. **New Co-Lead Partners of WPs** were presented to the PSC for approval, as follows:
 - ✓ WP.1. NPUA + UB
 - ✓ WP.2. ISU + U.PORTO
 - ✓ WP.3. BSU + YSU
 - ✓ WP.4. GTU + LiU
 - ✓ WP.5. KU Leuven + YSU
 - ✓ WP.6. BrSTU + FHJ
 - ✓ WP.7. YSU
3. The work group **leaders** were assigned for implementation of the following activities and were presented to PSC for approval (WG-Work Group, WT-Work Team, TG-Task Group):
 - ✓ **WG1:** 1.1 TSDC best practice report – UB
 - ✓ **WG2:** 1.2 Need analysis report – NPUA
 - ✓ **WG3:** 3.1 ToR for VATL portal – BSU
 - ✓ **WT1:** 1.3 Operational plans for TSDCs – P1-P9
 - ✓ **TG1:** 1.4. Trained TSDCs staff – U.PORTO

The abovementioned new Co-Lead partners and assigned WG leaders agreed on their nominations which were approved by the PSC.

4. The following WGs members were nominated:

- ✓ It was decided that **by 23rd of February** the Project Partner Institutions will nominate and submit to the Coordinator for 5 personnel members for **WG1, WG2 and WG3**
 - **WG1: UB, LiU, VSU, TeSaU, YKSUG** (5 members). Three additional members from EU partners (KU Leuven, U.PORTO and FHJ) will be assigned to this work group as it was suggested by the group leader UB, so that each EU partner will contribute and bring its experience to the final report.
 - **WG2: NPUA, ISU, BrSTU, U.PORTO, FHJ** (5 members)
 - **WG3: BSU, YSU, GTU, NCSRHE, KU Leuven** (5 members)
- ✓ And **by 28th of February** the Project Partner Institutions will nominate and submit to the Coordinator for personnel members for **WT1 and TG1**
 - **9 institutional WT1s** (4, 3 or 2 members in each)
 - **TG1: U.PORTO, UB, KU Leuven, LiU, FHJ** (5 members)

The abovementioned deadlines for WG membership nomination were agreed by participants and approved by the PSC.

During the Consortium Meeting the following topics were discussed:

1. Upcoming study visit to Universitat de Barcelona (UB), **trainings and coordination meeting** in Universidade do Porto (U.PORTO):
 - Date: **June 10-16/17, 2018**
 - Nomination of participants: according to **the set requirements** (number and composition of participants)
 - Deadline: **19 Feb 2018**
2. Training of trainers in 5 EU partner universities:
 - ✓ Dates: **October- November, 2018**

- ✓ Duration: **4-5** working days
 - ✓ Training groups: 1 group (**20 person**) per EU partner (5x20=100)
 - ✓ Available **dates** for each of the EU partners
 - ✓ **1 or 2 training course** on innovative/ICT based T&L methods offered by each of the EU partners
3. Procurement of the equipment:
- ✓ Possible ways of **tendering** (for the whole project - by project coordinator, for a country – by national coordinator)
 - ✓ Tax **exemption** procedures in AM, GE, BY: Certificates from EACEA and EU delegations to be sent to national authorities (sample package provided by coordinator)
 - ✓ The **list** of the equipment(name and quantity) to be purchased
 - ✓ **Importing**, tax clearing etc.
- During the two days of the Kick-off meeting the original signed ITR forms were collected and finalized.
 - At the end of the meeting signed partner agreements were handed over to the partners and PRINTeL leaflets were distributed to partner institutions.

In conclusion of the day Armen Budaghyan thanked the participants for their contribution, involvement and commitment. He expressed his great hope that during the coming weeks they will start the foreseen activities and implementation of the Project and thanked his team for the support.

The meeting finished at 16:00 according to the initially announced Programme.

The **culmination** of the Kick-off meeting was a group photo in front of YSU and an excursion to the Museum of Ancient Manuscripts “Matenadaran”.