



2nd NEWSLETTER

December 2010

EDITORIAL

Dear colleagues,

Welcome to the second issue of the newsletter published by the Learning Network on Transnational Cooperation in ESF. This issue presents challenging examples of transnational events that took place in recent months.

Attached to the newsletter, please find summary information on latest developments and upcoming activities of all the supported Learning Networks.

The next newsletter will be published again in four months. By then, you might send us your

contributions (along with pictures if possible) and they will be included into the third issue.

Let us also take this opportunity to wish you Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Many thanks for your support and great cooperation. May transnational cooperation keep bringing together stakeholders across Europe and enrich us all.

Livia Pitonakova, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in the Czech Republic

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THE FIRST TRANSNATIONAL PARTNER FORUM ORGANISED BY THE POLISH NATIONAL SUPPORTING INSTITUTION



Initiators of the Transnational Partner Forum, November 22-23, 2010, Warsaw

On November 22-23, 2010, the Polish National Supporting Institution Center of European Projects (NSI) organised the First Transnational Partner Forum in Warsaw. Almost 80 representatives from Poland, Sweden and England participated in this meeting. The participants represented 55 projects at various stages of completion. 28 projects came from Poland, 11 from Sweden and 16 from England.

Presentations related to differences and similarities among systems of projects' implementation and experience of individual countries in establishing transnational cooperation. However, the main target of the First Transnational Partner Forum was to find the most suitable potential partners for transnational cooperation projects. For this purpose, the Transnational Cooperation Projects' Team of NSI developed an interesting formula of a workshop meeting, consisting of initial assignment of projects to a determined number of areas focused around a specific table. At the tables, the facilitators helped the presented projects during the workshops to express their expectations and desired scope of transnational cooperation, on the basis of a detailed questionnaire. It should be mentioned that

all of the projects were presented according to the same scheme, based on a pattern of a so called "project fiche" (short information about the project). Each project fiche was subject to a detailed analysis, which resulted in assigning of each project to the following areas:

- age management
- 50+/education
- disadvantaged groups
- improving qualifications
- social economy, academic entrepreneurship, social responsibility of business.

On the basis of these areas, each project, along with persons representing it, was assigned by NSI to a specific, marked table on the Forum. In addition to the persons representing the projects, the facilitators worked at each table (usually two persons from different countries) and they led the discussion at the tables. The main task of facilitating was to guide the discussion at a table in order to complete (on the basis of statements of individual project initiators) crucial information concerning the projects, based on a previously prepared flipchart charts. This information regarded the problem area of transnational cooperation, target group of this cooperation, methods of future



cooperation and the status of completion of a respective project (if it is being introduced, if the financing is granted or is at the stage of a project idea, yet without granted financing). As a result of this, each person working at the table had a full review of all projects at the respective table.

At the end of the first day, a facilitator at each table summarized how many projects managed initially to find a potential partner(s) for cooperation and how many projects were not matched.

After work completion on the first day, the facilitators gathered at a "debriefing" meeting in order to discuss quickly the work results of the Forum and to find partners for those projects' representatives that did not find suitable partners at their tables.

On the second day of the Forum, the projects, which initially found a common area of interest (the great majority), worked on the details of further cooperation. For this purpose, an English version of Polish pattern of transnational cooperation agreement was used.

The projects, which did not find the partners, were discussed in detail by facilitators already after the completion of the 1st day of the Forum. On the basis of information from all completed flipcharts,

they were matched again to projects presented at other tables.

In this way, the "unmatched projects" were directed by the facilitators to appropriate tables, in order to start negotiations with potential partners who fulfilled the needs and expectations of these projects.

As a result of the Forum, almost all invited projects declared that they found at least one partner for transnational cooperation. Moreover, some participants managed to sign the Letter of Intent already during the event.

As a result from conversations with Forum's participants and completed evaluation questionnaires, the Forum was assessed very positively and enthusiastically and, as one can expect, it will bring a series of real partnerships in the near future. The future of partnerships of projects presented on the Forum will be monitored by NSI.

To sum up, it can be already stated with high probability that the proposed support of NSI in searching partners for transnational cooperation, by organising such meetings, turned out to be useful. It should be mentioned that this support will continue next year and should result in further partnerships.

*Katarzyna Tyczko, National Supporting
Institution Center of European Projects, Poland*

EVALUATION – THE KEY TO SUCCESS IN GATHERING EVIDENCE AND DEMONSTRATING ADDED VALUE

The English Innovation, Transnationality and Mainstreaming (ITM) projects have reached the mid-programme stage and are well into their implementation phase. Along with their progress it has become apparent that there is a great need for gathering the right type of evidence in order to demonstrate the added value.

In the current economic climate, compelling evidence of successful interventions that demonstrate innovation, value for money and a positive impact on

tackling employment and skills challenges are at the heart of government drive for achieving greater value from government-funded programmes and the European funds.

On 28 September 2010, the ITM Unit hosted an evaluation event with the aim to offer a consistent and coherent approach to how the ESF ITM Programme is evaluated.

The event predominantly focused on the variety of methods and techniques that



could be applied in ESF to meet this challenge. The key message delivered during the event was the importance of evidence.

Projects, researchers and evaluators came together in late September to champion ESF's role in gathering and spreading evidence of effective practice. Against the backdrop of a rapidly changing policy environment, hungry for new ideas and demonstration of what works, the ITM programme's 32 projects are uniquely placed to understand, record and tell their stories. As lessons from projects start to emerge, the event was an opportunity to firm up the evidence base and stimulate debate on different ways to substantiate the message. The event concluded with a clear message: there is more need than ever before for solid, compelling evidence of what works, and ITM is poised to make a unique contribution.

Inputs included:

- an overview of the European and domestic policy context
- evaluating the benefits of transnational working, giving a wealth of information on how to use work with overseas partners to understand policy options and evidence best practice, based

on methods being promoted by European Commission consultants AEIDL

- an overview of effective evaluation, setting the context for ITM's role in using ESF to learn lessons
- linking cause and effect by the Ipswich SAM project, showing how the project is seeking to demonstrate the causal link between their work with people recovering from mental illness and employment outcomes
- social return on investment (SROI) in an employment context, with the SROI network showcasing the key issues in giving values to social impacts, and a practical case study from the FRC Group of their approach in practice
- insights from the DWP ESF Evaluation team on how their work is used in the policy-making process, and what policy makers are really looking for.

The TNC Network intends to upload online the electronic copies of all presentations and other related documents that were delivered on the day.

Karolina Medwecka, Birmingham City Council



ESF-AGE NETWORK KICK-OFF MEETING IN MAASTRICHT, OCTOBER 18-19, 2010



Round tables – kick-off meeting of the Age Network

The aim of the Network (comprising ESF authorities and ministries from 14 Member States and regions) is to promote Age Management in ESF programmes through networking and mutual learning. The ambition is to link the world of ESF funding in Member States and regions with the state-of-the-art but fragmented knowledge of effective Age Management interventions.

The Network's primary target audience is ESF authorities and ministries at national and regional level. But it will also deliver its key messages to the Commission and other stakeholders at European level with the aim of influencing the framing of a new ESF programme, as well as feeding into the EU 2020 vision. The Network's outcomes will inform the content of dissemination tools, including a learning curriculum, an e-learning tool and a 'travel guide' of good practice. These will be made available to stakeholders during the European Year 2012 of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations.

The Kick-off meeting for members of the Network's Steering Group and a wider circle of the key stakeholders was

attended by 55 delegates. Four expert speakers addressed the urgency of tackling the demographic challenge, the need for effective Age Management practices, and provided examples.

Lively round table discussions resulted in key messages and recommendations on the way forward for the Network and its work. A summary of a baseline study was presented. The study discussed the concept of Age Management, highlighting the pressing need for Age Management practices and identifying programmes for the Network to study. Two working groups: Sustainable employability and work ability and Transitions from (un)employment to work were established in Erfurt in November.

The first newsletter was issued in December. Later issues will be circulated to a wider group of experts, practitioners and stakeholders across the EU, inviting them to participate in the Network's exchange of knowledge.

Brenda Gietema, Ministry for Social Affairs and Employment, Netherlands



TRANSNATIONAL SEMINAR “SOCIAL INNOVATION FOR SMART GROWTH: CAN LESSONS BE DRAWN FROM CURRENT PROGRAMMES IN THE EU TO ENHANCE INNOVATIVE WORK ORGANISATION?”

The seminar was held in Maastricht, the Netherlands on September 30 and October 1, 2010. Participants were representatives of the European Commission, Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the UK. The participating EU countries at the Transnational Seminar were either countries that already had programmes for work place innovation in place, or those that currently do not have programmes on work place innovation but are willing to investigate future possibilities and create new chances (Italy, Spain, Bulgaria, Slovenia). The seminar was organised by the Dutch National Centre for Social Innovation (NCSI) and supported by the Dutch Ministry for Social Affairs and Employment and ESF funding.

The aim of the seminar was to provide insight into the new European Policy on Innovation, the results and effectiveness of governmental programmes aimed at promoting Innovative Work Organisations in Europe and to learn from diverse approaches and explore interest in setting up a Community of Practice.

The online report available at <http://www.ncsi.nl/English/Activities/Transnational%20seminar%202010/> provides you with the presentations, short interviews with the speakers, photo impressions of the seminar and background material such as research reports and EU policy documents.

Brenda Gietema, Ministry for Social Affairs and Employment, Netherlands

“IT’S TIME TO START INNOVATIONS” - ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE POLISH NATIONAL SUPPORTING INSTITUTION, DECEMBER 7, 2010 IN WARSAW



Annual conference “It’s Time to Start Innovations”, December 7, 2010, Warsaw

A second year (first within the structure of the Center of European Projects) of the National Supporting Institution (NSI), that was established to support the innovative and transnational cooperation projects within Human Capital Operational

Programme, has passed. On this occasion, NSI organised a conference „It’s time to start innovations”, which was a good opportunity to summarize the NSI activities and achievements in 2010.



The conference was opened by the Director of Center of European Projects (CEP), **Dariusz Nieć**, who after warm welcome directed to the participants, presented the tasks and the role of the NSI within the structure of the CEP.

Next, **Rafał Kociucki**, Deputy Director of CEP, described the role of NSI and its activities carried out in 2010, including in particular: establishment and leading of the Thematic Networks, elaboration of documentation on implementation of innovative and transnational cooperation projects, advisory services, organisation of trainings, participation in transnational activities, website development and preparation and issuing of different publications concerning innovative and transnational cooperation projects. There were several presentations and lectures on subjects related to innovative and transnational cooperation.

Beata Romejko from EUROPERSPEKTYWA provided her experience with opportunities and threats pertaining to innovative projects implementation based on two projects: „Wake up a giant in yourself” – innovative methods to extend an active participation on a labour market and „Innovative programme to prepare disabled pupils to work”. Next, **Małgorzata Jankiewicz** and **Katarzyna Rewers** from PBS DGA

presented their experience from the project “50+: I work = I develop my competences”). The first part of the conference was concluded by **Marzena Wojda**, the chairman of National Thematic Network (NTN) on Good Governance, with the presentation on challenges faced by NTN and possibilities coming from its functioning.

The second part of the conference was opened by **Radosław Sterczyński** from Higher School of Social Psychology on conditions that must arise to create innovative solutions. In turn, **Lívia Pitoňáková** from the Czech Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs introduced the activities of the Learning Network on Transnational Cooperation in ESF, led by the Czech Republic. Poland plays an active role in the Network as well. And finally, **Alina Szklaruk** from Warsaw Regional Office of ESF presented her point of view on opportunities offered due to the implementation of projects within ESF.

The conference was closed with conclusions presented by the CEP Director. Apart from summarizing the NSI activities, he also shortly described plans of NSI for 2011.

*Maciej Jamrozik, National Supporting
Institution Center of European Projects, Poland*