

Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency

Erasmus+ : Higher Education - International Capacity Building

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Mrs Danute REMEIKIENE
Director
ALYTAUS KOLEGIJA
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LT - 62252 ALYTUS

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Cc: lina.kankeviciene@akolegija.lt

**Subject: 574283-EPP-1-2016-LT-1-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP
Technical Implementation Report of the project**

Dear Mrs REMEIKIENE,

We would like to inform you and your project partners that we have carried out the assessment of your Technical Implementation Report submitted on 30/4/18 and we are pleased to inform you that it has been approved.

Our assessment looks at the partnership's performance as regards the efficient implementation of the project. It takes into account the Technical Implementation Report but also the desk monitoring conducted by the EACEA since the start of the eligibility period and the field monitoring visit carried out so far. The project implementation should not only respect the CBHE requirements but it should also be in line with the original proposal included under Annex I of the Grant Agreement.

In this context and in accordance with the Grant Agreement and with the Guidelines for the Use of the Grant, your project implementation has been qualified as “**GOOD**”. The Comments and recommendations sheet in Annex of the letter provides more detailed feedback.

We would like to draw your attention on the fact that we have requested some additional information/clarifications to be provided by 15 September 2018.

In addition, we remind you that your project is now online on the Erasmus+ Project Results Platform, so as to ensure transparency and visibility of EU funding. We invite you to update your project data and to upload your project results. Please note though that these results will become publicly available only after the validation of your final report by the Agency.

Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)
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http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus_en
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Finally, we would like to thank you for your "Statement of the Costs incurred and Request for Payment" received together with the report.

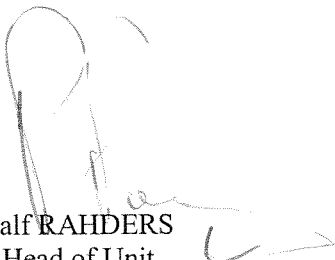
We take this opportunity to remind you that in order to receive your second pre-financing instalment you will have to submit at your best convenience a "Request for Payment and Statement of the Costs incurred". Please note that the second pre-financing will be paid only if your "Statement of the Costs incurred" shows that 70% of the previous pre-financing amount has been spent.

Please note that the eligibility of the costs incurred (excel file) will only be verified at Final Report stage (art.II.24 and II.25 of the Grant Agreement). Therefore, this feedback letter does not imply the approval of the costs declared in this reporting exercise.

Should you require any further information, please contact France Dantin (Tel: +32 2 29 62058, e-mail: france.dantin@ec.europa.eu). We also encourage you to regularly consult our Erasmus+ website https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/beneficiaries-space_en.

We wish you a successful continuation of your activities.

Yours sincerely,


Ralf RAHDERS
Head of Unit

Copy: NEO Belarus

Annex: Comments and recommendations

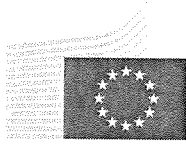
Categories of qualification:

Very good (at least 75 pts out of 100): the project is implemented in accordance with its original work programme and timetable; the report provides all the information and evidence needed and there are no particular concerns or areas of weakness.

Good (between 74 and 60 pts out of 100): the project progresses in accordance with its original work programme and timetable but some improvements could be made; the report gives clear information on all or nearly all of the evidence needed.

Fair (between 59 and 50 pts): there are weaknesses and concerns in the project implementation; although the report gives some relevant information, details are lacking and/or the information is unclear; there are several areas in the implementation that must be improved during the second half of the project.

Weak (less than 50 pts out of 100): the project is not respecting its original work plan/timetable and/or is not fulfilling the CBHE requirements; the report fails to address important aspects of the project implementation that cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information; in accordance with article 1.10.6 of the Grant Agreement and section 3.5.2.2 of the Guidelines for the Use of the Grant, the maximum grant will be reduced at final report stage if no substantial improvements are observed during the second half of the project.



Project Implementation Report COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Project Number: **574283**

Project Title: **Innovative ICT education for social-economic Development (IESED)**

Coordinating Institution: **ALYTAUS KOLEGIJA (LT)**

Relevance

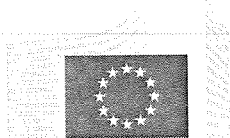
The project is very **relevant** to Belarus in the context of both the digital society and the Bologna process:

- According to the report, the demand in IT specialists is 3 times as high as the number of professionals available on the market. Even so, current IT graduates find it difficult to get a job despite the high demand because their studies do not answer the labour market needs. This project aims to increase the competitiveness of IT studies in Belarus.
- The project contributes to the implementation of the Bologna process in Belarus by improving the quality of studies, fostering international cooperation, introducing ECTS, etc.

Quality of the project design and implementation

The project seems to be progressing according to plan. Please find below a few comments and recommendations for improvement:

- No **equipment** has yet been bought for Belarusian universities. Although it is understandable because of the lengthy registration procedure, the coordinator should make sure that the partners have their technical specs and tender documents ready, in order to be able to launch the equipment purchase as soon as the Ministry of Economy gives its green light. This would allow the equipment to be used during the project lifetime.
- Regarding **equipment purchase**, we would like to remind you a few basic CBHE rules. Please pay attention to the subcontracts for the whole consortium and group them by subcontractor. The important thing is the name of the subcontractor, not the subcontracted tasks. This applies even if the purchases are made at different dates and by different partners. If the total amount awarded to one subcontractor exceeds 25,000 EUR, a tender procedure should be launched. It is all explained in the Guidelines for the Use of the Grant.
- A detailed **Quality plan** has been submitted together with the progress report. It provides a project governance structure, project management procedures (also for risk & change management), indicators, a list of deliverables, a timeline, and reporting templates. The table



summarising the critical indicators and deliverables per WP is particularly relevant.

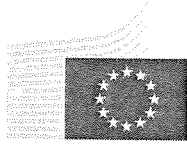
- A procedure with **selection** criteria has been put in place to select both experts and teachers. This is a good start to avoid nepotism and ensure that only the best and most motivated people will participate.
- However, some **problems** were reported in the progress report, and it is not clear how these issues have been addressed in the Quality plan:
 - The progress report states that the project managed to catch up most delay by squeezing activities, sometimes to the detriment of quality. Could you please expand? How much and for which deliverables was quality sacrificed?
 - The report mentions some collaboration issues between partners (P2-P6) working together on joint courses. Which issues? Are they solved now, and if so, how were they solved?
 - It seems that some teachers were not motivated to participate in the project, and/or did not have the required English level (despite the English courses provided by the project). How will the project solve this?

Quality of the project team and the cooperation arrangements

- We are glad to see that all **Partnership Agreements** have been signed.
- Partners have reported no **staff costs**. Whilst we understand the situation of Belarusian partners since the registration procedure was only completed in March, it is unclear why the British partner has billed no staff costs. Does this mean these partners have not been actively involved in the project? How did you manage to motivate the Belarusian partners to participate actively in the project without remuneration? Please explain.
- The project seems to involve **students** in project tasks (website, logo, etc.) on a regular basis. This is a good way to promote the new curricula.

Impact and dissemination

- The project **website** provides the basic project information and should be far more informative. An up-to-date timeline as well as project documents could be made available to all. This would allow stakeholders to follow the project's progress on a real time basis. Also, the News page could be better structured and made more attractive; for the moment it is just a list of web links.
- A **dissemination plan** has been submitted together with the progress report, but it remains very general. For example, it states that the project will engage with stakeholders but does not say how this will be done and which activities will be put in place to do so. We consider this plan as a good basis for improvement. The various dissemination activities should be described in more detail, and a matrix should be added to the plan specifying which partner does which activity and by which date.
- No staff costs have been reported for **dissemination**. Does this reflect the partnership's lack of activity on this topic?
- Some measures are being enforced as regards **sustainability**, such as:
 - The curricula will be upgraded in 2 languages. This multiplies the chances for them to be used.
 - The new courses will be accredited at national level.



However, based on the information provided in the progress report, it seems that there is no formal sustainability plan. It would be a good idea to put together a strong sustainability strategy, with measurable quantitative/qualitative indicators, which would (i) increase and ensure the interest of students for the newly developed courses (ii) convince the labour market of the value of the revamped courses, and establish cooperation agreements with companies to ensure both effective integration of students in the labour market and project sustainability (iii) increase the sustainability of these courses in the future by committing the universities' management (iv) push for the project outcomes to contribute to the Bologna reform at other Belarusian higher education institutions, or in subject areas other than IT. Like the dissemination plan, this sustainability strategy should distribute tasks amongst partners according to a set timetable.

- The report states that cooperation between Belarusian universities increased, and that the partners' teaching staff is planning to exchange lecturing on the profile study courses developed under the project. This is a good way to contribute to the project's **sustainability**.

