

REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

Tempus Project No. 544117 European and International Master Programme Development in Eastern Europe (InterEULawEast)

External evaluators: Prof. Peter Van Elsuwege (Ghent University) and Prof. PierreTifine (Université de Lorraine)

Overall achievements

The Tempus Project InterEULawEast was launched in February 2015 with a Kick-off meeting for the project staff and the organisation of the first international conference “Legal Reform and EU Enlargement – Transfer of Experiences”. Both activities took place at the university of Maribor and allowed representatives of the partner universities to engage in an open discussion regarding project management, strategic planning and quality control (WP 6 and WP 7). In this context, a first curricula analysis meeting was also organised contributing to the objectives of WP 1. During this first meeting, existing curricula at the different partner universities were compared and discussed and the legal requirements of the Russian and Ukrainian educational systems were explained to the project coordinator. On this basis, the European partners of the project proposed the introduction of new master courses in European and International law, which were discussed during the second curricula analysis meeting, held in Zagreb in June 2014. The third meeting contributing to the objectives of WP 1 (curriculum development in International and European Law) took place in Kazan in November 2014. On this occasion, the Russian and Ukrainian partners agreed with the introduction of new courses dealing with EU constitutional and institutional law, EU internal market law and EU competition law. Due to the different regulatory frameworks in Russia and Ukraine, the master programme proposals for the Russian and Ukrainian partners are different (e.g. the EU law courses are mandatory in Ukraine and elective in Russia). At the end of 2014, draft master programmes in European and International Law including draft ECTS files were finalised as a basis for further discussion during the next phase of the project. The preparatory steps for the start of the accreditation procedure (WP 4) were made and will need to be implemented in 2015 so that the programmes can become operational as from 2016 onwards

As far as capacity building and dissemination of the project is concerned (WP 3 and 5), two international conferences on “Legal Reform and EU Enlargement – Transfer of Experiences” were organised in Maribor and Kazan. A summer course in European internal market law was organised in Zagreb (23-28 June 2014). There was also a ‘Zagreb meeting with master students’ on 13 February 2014 to disseminate information about the Tempus project to master and doctoral students from all partner institutions. In addition, Prof. Hana Horak and Prof. Rajko Knez and Dr. Domonik Vuletic provided guest lectures (in Voronezh, Kazan and Tyumen respectively), and were responsible for curricula development activities during the second project meeting in Kazan . Three Tempus Centres have been opened (in Zagreb, Voronezh and Odessa) (WP 2).

The new EUInterLawEast Journal for International and European Law, Economics and Market Integrations was launched in 2014 within the framework of the Tempus project in order to contribute to the objectives of dissemination (WP 5) and sustainability (WP 8). The journal is indexed in the EBSCO Index Business Source. In addition, a European Market Law Handbook, jointly published by the universities of Zagreb of Voronezh forms a very relevant achievement at this stage of the project implementation contributing to the objectives of curriculum development (WP 1) and sustainability (WP 8).

Coherence with the workplan and comments on deviations and modifications

Following the illegal occupation and annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation, the participation of Taurida National V.I. Vernadsky University has been suspended. The project coordinators made the necessary arrangements in cooperation with the EACEA. Rebellions also took over the seat of Donetsk National University, which has moved to the city of Vinitsa. The required adaptations to the workplan and initial project proposal will be discussed with the EACEA. As a result of the events in Ukraine, the planned summer course on EU internal market law was organised in Zagreb instead of Odessa.

Obstacles and shortcomings

Apart from the obstacles deriving from the domestic evolutions in Ukraine (see above), the involvement of the third European partner (Socialo Technologiju Augustskola (STA)) is a matter for concern. After the kick-off meeting, where a representative of this institution was present, no further contributions were made. The project coordinator contacted the director of STA to see how its role in the project can be reactivated.

Another obstacle for the implementation of the project are the legal requirements for the organisation of new master programmes in Russia and Ukraine, in particular the requirement to provide general mandatory courses at state level dealing with topics such as legal philosophy, history of political and legal doctrines, etc. The project team openly discussed the constraints of the legal requirements for accreditation and decided to include as much as possible an EU law component within the compulsory state courses. In addition, it was decided to develop different programmes for Russian and Ukrainian universities in order to take into account the flexibilities offered under the respective legal frameworks.

Development of programmes and courses

Draft master programmes in European and International Law including draft ECTS files were finalised for Russian and Ukrainian partner universities. In this context, the project resulted in the publication of a European Market Law Handbook as a tool for education of the new master course on EU internal market law.

Restructuring: university management and governance

The project resulted in the opening of three Tempus centra, in Zagreb, Odessa and Voronezh.

Staff (re-)training

An advanced summer course in European internal market law was organised at the university of Zagreb (23-28 June 2014) instead of the university of Odessa as initially foreseen in the workplan. The course aimed to provide in-depth training on modern issues of European integration and European Internal Market Law for Partner Countries staff, young researchers, assistants and lecturers employed at Partner Countries institutions. During the project meetings in Maribor and Kazan, Prof. Hana Horak and Prof. Rajko Knez provided lectures on “learning outcomes in law disciplines” and “teaching methods in EU law”

Staff mobility

Prof. Hana Horak and Prof. Rajko Knez and Dr. Domonik Vuletic provided guest lectures (in Voronezh, Kazan and Tyumen respectively). Academic staff from the partner institutions took part in the academic conferences organised in the framework of the project meetings in Maribor and Kazan.

Student mobility

Students of the different partner universities are widely associated to the project. They took part in: in the international quality committees of each partner and in the organization of the conferences in Zagreb, Maribor and Kazan.

An advanced summer course in European internal market law took place in Zagreb from 23 to 28 June 2014. There were 48 students enrolled in this program : 10 Ukrainians, 8 Russians and 35 Croatians.

The main goal of the Tempus programme is the creation of a master in international and European law involving students and academics mobility. The programme should help to organize this mobility. The main issue, which is a key element for the success of the Tempus programme, will be the mutual recognition of the ECTS credits obtained in different partners universities for the deliverance of a single common master or twin masters. Different partner universities ensured the promotion of this future programme. However there is no precise information about the number of students interested in the programme. Nonetheless, it seems that this new programme is fuelling a real interest among the students taking into account their participation in the activities organised in the framework of the project (meeting with Master students in Zagreb, conferences, summer course etc.). Students interested in the programme seem to be mainly Russian and Ukrainian. However it seems this programme also meets the interest of students from other countries, from Croatia and Slovenia first, and from students of different countries registered at Russian universities : mainly Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia. This point is particularly interesting in relation to the scope of the programme and for the promotion of European law.

Academic co-ordination and administrative management

The coordination of the project is under the direction of professor Hana Horak from Zagreb university. The interlaw management group of the project includes representatives from different partners universities (two representatives for Zagreb, one for the other partners). The management group is responsible for methodological, organizational and financial management, development of strategic decision-making on project implementation, mid-term reviews, progressive planning and potential adjustments. Tasks are clearly divided between the different partners, with more or less involvement (see logical matrix reports of the project). The internet site of the project gives a very clear and very complete information about the organization of the consortium, the different tasks given to the university partners and the aims of the project.

From the European side, the representatives of the universities of Zagreb (Prof. Horak and her team) and Maribor (Prof. Rajko Knez and his team) have been the driving forces behind the project whereas the involvement of the third partner (Socialo Technologiju Augustskola) was negligible. On the partner universities' side, the co-beneficiaries agreed that Vorozenzh state university is in charge for co-ordinating the master programme structure for the participating Russian universities and the National University Odessa Law Academy will do the same on behalf of the Ukrainian co-beneficiaries. Notwithstanding the difficulties resulting from the conflict in the eastern part of Ukraine (see above), academic co-operation with the Russian and Ukrainian partners developed smoothly.

Equipment

This is not the essential point for a project about the creation of a master degree in the field of legal sciences. Nevertheless, the project allowed for the opening of three Tempus centra in Zagreb, Voronezh and Odessa. The issue of purchase of equipment for Donetsk National University, Tyumen State University and Kazan Federal University has been discussed with the project coordinator which gave clear instructions on the procedures to be followed (see minutes of the Kazan project meeting, 14 November 2014). However, at this point it is not entirely clear what kind of equipment has been purchased or will be purchased in the future.

Dissemination

Dissemination activities essentially concerned the organisation of academic activities in Zagreb, Maribor and Kazan as well as the publication of the new Journal of International and European Law, Economics and Market Integration.

At this period the involvement of other partners in the dissemination of the project is not perfectly clear. It should be defined more precisely in the next months.

Sustainability

The objective of the Tempus project is the creation of a common master programme in European and international law. This programme is supposed to continue after the EU's financial assistance has ended. In a very difficult international context, the different partner universities managed to progress in the process of establishing this new degree. The creation of a common master programme, very original in the landscape of superior education in Russia and Ukraine, is of course essential for the sustainability of the project. It will be crucial to carefully monitor the local accreditation procedures, which are to be launched in 2015 so that the programmes can become operation by 2016.

In June 2014, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the University of Zagreb and Voronezh State University. This should be used as a model for the signature of comparable arrangements with the other partner universities. The Tempus project also leads to more informal cooperation between the partner universities. For instance, the logical framework matrix refers to the agreement between Voronezh state university and Tyumen state university about the access to the Tempus centre of Voronezh state university. This type of cooperation can only be supported.

An important challenge for the success and sustainability of the project concerns the establishment of a scholarship mechanism. According to the project proposal co-beneficiaries in the partner countries must take the necessary initiatives in 2015.

Quality control and monitoring

All representatives of the partner universities were introduced to the goals and conditions of participation in the Tempus project. They are also involved in the implementation of the project objectives, curriculum development, and dissemination activities. In addition to the external quality control, there is an internal evaluation committee with representatives from the partner universities. The first Logical Framework Matrix Report (Report on Internal Quality Control) is published on the project website.

Gender balance

The project is organized and managed by women and men in almost equal proportions.