

Training and Cooperation Activity (TCA)

TCA with Focus on Southeastern Europe: A New Vision for European Cooperation

Dear rapporteur,

Thank you very much for your willingness to take over the role of “rapporteur”. Each workshop will have assigned moderators, presenters and rapporteurs. A “rapporteur”, in line with the moderator and the presenters, is a key player in each workshop session. The rapporteur is responsible for providing a summary (max 1-2 pages, please see template on page 2) noting key messages, thought-provoking insights, interesting trends, observations and learnings and outcomes. The summary will provide a better insight into all workshops, and all participants get a possibility to benefit from their content. The rapporteur should first send the paper to the moderator (tca.eu@daad.de) for adding supplementary information and comments, and then the moderator will finalize it together with the rapporteur. The workshop report will then be published on the conference website.

The rapporteur is expected to submit his/her summary to the conference secretariat within one week after the conference (19/9/2023). The aim of your valuable input is twofold; to provide a better insight into workshop sessions and to systematise all key messages into an overall conference document, which will be produced and disseminated at the later stage. We do hope that your valuable insights will become an important part of the conference.

Workshop 4: How to successfully manage a project consortium with a focus on South Eastern Europe

Cooperation projects funded under Erasmus+ (Key Action 2 and 3) with its international or European consortia entail special challenges. The workshop which has its focus on South Eastern Europe will deal with a number of questions and will try to find answers to them. These start with the formation of a consortium, the identification of different problem areas and the search for appropriate solutions. Consortium structures, written/verbal agreements, communication channels, cultural differences and practical considerations will be discussed. In particular, the workshop is also intended to provide an opportunity to share experiences and identify best practices.

Goal:

Peer-learning and exchange

Identifying challenges and find appropriate solutions in the context of consortia structures

Networking

Host/Moderation: Dr. Mareike Fröhlich LL.M., Prof. Dr. Neda Zdraveva

Template for Workshop Summary

<p>Name of Workshop</p>	<p>Workshop 4: Cooperation Projects (KA2/KA3) - How to successfully manage a project consortium with a focus on South-eastern Europe.</p>
<p>3 Key messages of the workshops (needed for "Conclusion and outlook" on Sept 12)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know your partners 2. Build trust 3. Keep communication channels open
<p>Thought-provoking insights, interesting trends and observations</p>	<p>Perhaps the most repeated and least predictable idea as a strategy or tool for the successful management of cooperation projects was that of including and empowering the new generations of young people in the management and development of projects. The other strong idea was to empower the project partners in the implementation of the project as well as in the possible future projects and collaborations resulting from joint work.</p>
<p>Learnings and outcomes</p>	<p>The most important learnings and outcomes of this workshop are reflected systematically and by points at the end of the following chapter.</p>
<p>Overall summary</p>	<p>This workshop was conducted by Dr. Mareike Fröhlich from the University of Saarland (Germany) and Prof. Dr. Neda Zdraveva from the Justinianus Primus Law Faculty (North Macedonia).</p> <p>The workshop was divided into three parts. The first part was marked by the presentation of the speakers, their institutions of origin and the history of their joint work in cooperation projects. In 2012, contacts were initiated and the first steps were taken to establish a cooperation framework that has been in place up to the present day. During these years, following a line of work committed to European and international law, the collaboration with institutions in south eastern Europe has been reflected in the impressive number of more than 10 European cooperation projects. These have involved more than 12 institutions with which there was no previous contact. With the exception of Kosovo, all countries in the region were represented in the consortium. From the wealth of knowledge gained from this extensive experience, both speakers shared in a workshop format</p>

with the other participants aspects of vital importance for successful project management.

The second part of the workshop was marked by the central activity of the workshop. Each participant was given three pieces of cardboard in yellow, green and red. When the cards were handed out, each participant was asked to write, according to his or her own criteria, the following:

- A. Green cardboard: the elements (in positive) of greatest importance when creating/starting a new cooperation project.
- B. Red cardboard: The main challenges that can be encountered when conducting cooperation projects.
- C. Yellow cardboard: funny, surreal or surprising situations that have happened during the course of a cooperation project.

After the participants had completed some sentences for each of the cards, they participated one by one and shared some of the thoughts/ideas previously transferred to the cards. From this conversation and the various aspects mentioned by the participants, the speakers took the floor and linked the comments made with contributions from their own experience.

Finally, a third moment was marked by the presentation of the speakers, which followed a logical structure as specified below:

1. Consortium building
2. EACEA - NA - Coordinator relations
3. Organisation
4. Communication
5. Differences (intercultural)

From the contributions of the participants as well as from the presentation of the speakers, we highlight the following aspects necessary for the good management of a cooperation project:

- Prior knowledge between at least a majority of the partners for the guarantees of success in the development of the project;
- A clear wording of the objectives, indicators and results of the project favours the responsible assumption of the different tasks by the partners;
- A clear working methodology and a project structure that follows a coherent logical script facilitate project management;
- Clear deadlines and a realistic distribution of activities over time are indispensable;
- Knowing the cultural and structural differences of the participating partner institutions;
- Knowing how the local administrations of the partnership are organised in order to facilitate administrative processes such as signing documents or transferring funds;
- To favour the partners' ownership of the project as well as of future projections of the project: the feeling of belonging increases involvement and sense of responsibility;
- Choosing people willing to work in a context of internationalisation, exchange and openness as members of the different local work teams is essential for the achievement of the objectives;
- A good triangulation is needed in the relations between EACEA, the NA and the coordinator;

- Including young people who are just starting their academic careers in the projects strengthens the progress and the results obtained;
- Monitoring and time control tasks are indispensable to maintain a high level of activity on the part of the partners;
- Communication and compromise are the fundamental tools for dealing with difficulties in the consortium;
- Conflicts need to be recognised and dealt with in order to reach a solution;
- Tensions between project goals and local or national guidelines, which can sometimes diverge, need to be managed;
- The organisation of face-to-face meetings requires good planning (accessible locations and time arrangements) so that they do not conflict with other responsibilities.
- The net time spent working on projects (excluding holidays and other commitments) is less than a year;
- Finally, cultural differences regarding summer holidays, religious holidays, etc. as well as time zones and other differences due to geographical location should be taken into account.