

Integrated Doctoral Program for Environmental Policy, Management and Technology – INTENSE

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kick-off meeting
Vienna, Austria
26-28 March 2018

Minutes of Meeting

Coordinator: Estonian University of Life Sciences

Partners: EMU, BOKU, LNU, OSENU, KKNU, IECNASU, NUM, KHU, HUST, HCMUNRE

The list of attendees:

1. Aron Buzogany, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU), Austria
2. Lisa Kargl (BOKU), Austria
3. Hans Peter Nachtnebel (BOKU), Austria
4. Kalev Sepp, Estonian University of Life Sciences (EMU), Estonia
5. Henri Järv (EMU), Estonia
6. Anton Shkaruba (EMU), Estonia
7. Diana Pungar (EMU), Estonia
8. Raimonds Ernsteins, University of Latvia (LNU), Latvia
9. Oyunsanaa Byambasuren, National University of Mongolia (NUM), Mongolia
10. Gerelbaatar Sukhbaatar (NUM), Mongolia
11. Amarjargal Auyrzana, Khovd State University (KHU), Mongolia
12. Bayarkhuu Batbayar (KHU), Mongolia
13. Oleg Shabliy, Odessa State Environmental University (OSENU), Ukraine
14. Anatolii Polovyi (OSENU), Ukraine
15. Sergyi Stepanenko (OSENU), Ukraine
16. Ganna Titenko, V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University (KKNU), Ukraine
17. Kateryna Utkina (KKNU), Ukraine
18. Volodymir Rozhak, Institute for the Carpathians' Ecology of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences (IECNASU), Ukraine
19. Iryna Shpakivska (IECNASU); Ukraine
20. Ly Bich Thuy, Hanoi University of Science and Technology (HUST), Vietnam
21. Hoang Thi Thu Huong (HUST), Vietnam
22. Xuan Cuong Vu, Ho Chi Minh City University of Natural Resources and Environment (HCMUNRE), Vietnam
23. Thi Van Ha Nguyen (HCMUNRE), Vietnam

Summary of the outcomes of INTENSE kick-off meeting in Vienna, Austria

- Partners should hurry up with signing the Partner Agreements (given during the meeting), because the contracts come into force after the signing of the last partner (EACEA);
- Next step will be setting up an online platform with different categories (supporting documents, meetings, photos, finances, reports) for internal usage of the partners;
- All materials should be available in web, so any documents, materials etc should be sent to P1 member not more than 10 days after the event;
- The documents of the meeting and the group photo will be presented on the webpage in two weeks;
- The deadline for draft ToRs is in late April, thus it will be open for comments and after corrections should be distributed to all institutions;
- Partners should start equipment acquisitions as soon as possible, but not later than this year (2018);
- Invite people to join Facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/INTENSE.Doctoral/> for increasing dissemination efforts;
- Election of the Steering Committee and the QA officer;
- **Next country meeting will be in 18.-20. of April Kharkiv, Ukraine, 2018;**
- **Next consortium meeting will be before the reporting period in first decade of March 2019 in Tartu, Estonia.**

The structure of the meeting:

1. Section 1: introduction:
 - Opening and welcome
 - Presentation of BOKU
 - Project overview
2. Section 2: plans for work packages (WP1-WP3), discussion
3. Section 3: introduction: Presentation of the partners
4. Section 4: plans for work packages (WP5-WP6), discussion
5. Section 5: plans for work package (WP4), discussion
6. Section 6: Financial and Administrative Issues
7. Section 7: Discussion on already started activities of work packages (WP1-WP6) and presentation of the first results
8. Section 8: Final discussion, Open Issues
9. Section 9: Next meetings
10. Individual partner consultations, discussion of agendas for the meetings in Ukraine, Mongolia and Vietnam

Monday, 26th of March, 2018 (Project meeting, day 1) **Section 1: introduction**



1. The coordinator of the project Kalev Sepp from Estonian University of Life Sciences (EMU) made the **opening and introductions** and Hans Peter Nachtnebel from the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU) gave **welcome greetings** to everybody.
2. Lisa Kargl (BOKU) **introduced** briefly **the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU)**.
3. The project vice-coordinator Anton Shkaruba (EMU) gave an **overview of the INTENSE project** and Work Packages – partner countries, institutions, project duration, budget, start-up meetings and summer schools:
 - Start-up meeting in Ukraine Kharkiv, 18.-19. April, 2018;
 - Start-up meeting in Mongolia 30. April – 1. May, 2018;
 - Start-up meeting in Hanoi, Vietnam 1.-2. May, 2018;
 - 1st summer school: “The Precautionary Principle in Sustainability Transitions: Thinking forwards, Looking backwards, Acting” in Budapest (Hungary) with European Agency, 28. June -4. July, 2018;
 - 2nd summer school –researcher based: “Nature-Based Solutions for Smart Cities” in Mahilioŭ (Belarus), (12)15.-26. August, 2018.
 - The theme of the 3rd summer school is “Water management and governance”, probably the school will be held in Ukraine (Odessa?);
 - Conferences in Vietnam (Hanoi) in 2020 and in Ukraine 2019.

Section 2: plans for work packages (WP1-WP3), discussion

WP 1: Preparation work of INTENSE and exploitation activities

Project vice-coordinator Anton Shkaruba (EMU) and Huong Thi Thu Hoang (HUST) explained the preparation work of INTENSE WP1 - development and exploitation activities.

- The WP1 is led by P9, P11, and deals with the survey of institutions involved in doctoral studies and research training in the field of environment in Mongolia, Vietnam and Ukraine;
- M8 and M9 are responsible for development of INTENSE e-service;
- **Sixty questionnaires** are worked out for end-user institutions (in Mongolia up to 20, in Vietnam more than 20);
- The aim is to get **knowledge about the actual capacity of the doctoral schools** in Mongolia, Vietnam and Ukraine for understanding how to improve the quality of doctoral schools and for comprehensive self-assessment;
- **Discussion** about the questionnaires and implementation of INTENSE schools - how to make doctoral schools attractive and increase the quality of PhD programs;
- Statement - students **from other universities** can also participate in INTENSE schools, however on self-funded basis;
- A suggestion was made **to focus on the project aims** (environmental policy, management and technology), otherwise the questionnaires will be too wide and also was pointed out that the **definition of environment** is not clear and **need more discussion** (reforms of the curricula);
- The questionnaires **should be tightened up** so that the message is clear;
- **Discussion** about the **improvement and problems** concerned with PhD programs:
 - Subject related or general skills of the PhD programs are missing;
 - Cooperation in PhD awarding is important – should be coordinated by nationwide organization and **general rules for the service** should be worked out (what kind of a service would be expected);
 - How to include organizations outside of the INTENSE partners consortium for example Russia;
 - Important notice –**evaluation of the existing PhD courses should be done** (self-assessment exercise) - what is applicable in the countries, structure, credits and publications. The evaluation involves the gaps, main specific issues/topics with research training and the most important measures that can be taken. Evaluation gives opportunity to change social focus, cooperation and changing of knowledge.
 - Mongolian programs are too technical - need more linking with policy.

WP 2: Development of the INTENSE institutional infrastructure

Project coordinator Kalev Sepp explained INTENSE infrastructural plans – INTENSE school, e-learning and project vice-coordinator Anton Shkaruba introduced the framework. As there were many uncertainties, a discussion was held.

- Discussion about **generic skills** – definition, integration of generic skills courses, the number of credits, elective subjects:
 - 20 credits is obligatory;
 - sustainable development can be defined as generic skills and involved in the programs;
 - Important notice: in cases that **local rules** (national law) **are straighter than EACEAs**, the local legislation should be followed!
 - Important to remember that **different countries has their peculiarities** – for example in Vietnam is obligatory to name outcomes “Schools” otherwise these will be tricky to implement;
 - Notice, WP 2.5 (Sharing of research facilities) is concerned with obligations from EU and will be discussed separately in the Work Group.



WP 3: Development of learning infrastructure and contents

Open education platform for managing INTENSE e-learning and MOOCs has been worked out and **Oleg Shabliy** (OSENU) introduced the website:
<http://intense.network/>.

- Was decided, that Oleg Shabliy will **work out internal page** for co-operational work of project members (WP 6);
- Discussion about WP 3.3. (Development of e-Science modules) –INTENSE modules, MOOCs, technical issues, experiences in other countries, participation, curriculums etc:

- Partners have the obligation to set up the INTENSE school, but they have free hands in establishing, working out standards and quality assurance; flexibility is extremely important;
- Country specific details must be taken into account - for example in the starting point Vietnams can call participants only from their university, involving outsiders is impossible;
- Flexibility is important;
- The number of credits of PhD programs and etc is different all over EU and thus upgrading of PhD programs in Vietnam, Mongolia and Ukraine is difficult;
- Establishment of the MOOCs will start soon and guidelines and experiences of the project partners will be used.
- **Was decided**, that discussion of PhD programs in detail (current situation, credits, structure, course description, lectures, practical assignments, self-assessment, final control quizzes etc) will be held during the visits to Ukraine, Vietnam and Mongolia.
- A proposal (Raimonds Ernsteins) of forming platform for cooperation between PC members was approved and a **cooperation internal platform with forums for each WP** will be formed.

Section 3: Presentation of the partners

All partners made very interesting brief presentations (10 minutes for partner) of their institutions.



Section 4: plans for work packages (WP5-WP6), discussion

WP 5: INTENSE dissemination and exploitation

Oleg Shabliy introduced the established **INTENSE online platform** for networking, Facebook, Twitter and skype accounts and **proposed to establish internal forum** and platform for materials and documentation **in ASANA** (later discussion was held).

- Discussion how to reflect Mongolian and Vietnam external partners. Two options were brought out Option 1 – to take them as legal partners; Option 2 – they have separate responsibilities (translations) and partial access. **Topic needs extra time for discussion in forum;**
- Kateryna Utkina led a discussion on policies for the development of multilingual site contents and the project coordinator carried out **a survey about the need for separate webpages** in local languages;
- **Was decided** not to establish separate webpages, but **add translations** (option to choose language on the webpage) and **courses descriptions** and other detailed information, what interests students, should be described in **local language;**
- An additional specification was outlined – **all information for wider audience** should be also in **local language** for dissemination and exploitation;
- **Recommendations for the webpage** were brought out: content must be in high quality, **every event must be properly reported as widely as possible**. All news should be linked as news in Facebook, Twitter etc.
- **NB! News reporting should follow the rules (project number, logos etc).**



WP 6: INTENSE management

Project co-manager Diana Pungar (EMU) explained the main roles of project members (the role of the coordinator, the manager etc), gave overview of the tasks of General Assembly of Partners (GAP) and the Steering Committee.

Important notes:

- All communication between the Agency (EACEA) and project partners goes through the coordinator;
- Partners should make a written application for amendments and should inform the project leads of any change;
- All documents and information should be submitted in due time;
- INTENSE, Erasmus + and disclaimers should be used every time (meeting, presentation, conference, equipment etc)!
- Partners should choose their own finance officer, who has access to first level costs.

Tuesday, 27th of March, 2018 (Project meeting, day 2)

Section 5: plans for work package (WP4)

WP 4: Quality assurance and monitoring

The project vice-coordinator Anton Shkaruba explained why and how the quality assurance and monitoring is carried out.

Important notes:

- PIs will be requested to submit travel information at least 3 days before the arrangement of the documents and submit reports during one month after the event ;
- NB! It is essential to describe the outcomes and achievements!
- GAP will carry out self-evaluation and the members;
- Steering Committee will be elected (in the next day schedule of the meeting).

Section 6: Financial and Administrative Issues

The project manager Henri Järv introduced the general rules of the financial management of the project (requirements, supporting documents, reporting activities and outcomes etc). He explained the current situation of Partner Agreements and the role of the partners to sign them as quickly as possible. After the presentation, a discussion was held about travelling issues (costs of stay, travel, working days, declaration and timesheets).

Important notes of financial issues:

- It is extremely important to work through the Grant Agreement and Guidelines not to make mistakes;

- Requirements of all documents: INTENSE and title, Grant Agreement no, project reference no;
- Transfers are not allowed to exceed 10% (If there is a need, an application should be done - contact the manager in every case);
- Most budget is meant for the development;
- Reporting should be regular;
- The first payment was in January 2018, for the budget transfer is essential, that the Partner Agreement is signed (50% of the budget will be transferred in two weeks after signing);
- Second funding will be 14.04.2019 – there is only 1 year and if the money has not been spent efficiently, the amount of the budget will be reduced;
- Final funding (10%) - after final report;
- Co-financing – report the level and source of co-financing for the final report;
- Transfer rates of the INTENSE project are calculated after the date **09.01.2018** and **P1 will send the transfer rates** for every partner;
- NB! The same transfer rates of the 09.01.2018 will be used for transferring money from EUR to other currency;
- If one partner fails, everybody will be punished with the reduction of the grant;
- The project ends on **14.10.2020** – all invoices and payments should be done before the deadline;
- All costs – should be identifiable, connected with actions and reasonable;
- Purchased equipment must be reasonable, same or better quality (as in project), labelled properly, need approval of the Agency, auditors will check them;
- **P1 promised to supply** project partners with the **appropriate labels**;
- Equipment will be acquired locally, so the legal legislation should be followed;
- Supporting documents must be sent to the manager – first report will be in **October 2018**;
- Translation of the documents is not needed, but it should be understandable, what kind of a document it is – name, price, amount;
- All supporting documents should be kept (for example e-mails concerned with choosing equipment) - no need to send all of them, but may happen, that the Agency wants to see them;
- If the VAT tax is not recovered by your country, it is eligible cost;
- Unit costs should be reported in the number of units (guideline), the real costs (actual salary) are not reflected in the report;
- Categories are not set after the working contracts, but after the real work done in the project – the maximum period is 20 days per month and 240 days per year, the minimum is one day;
- If there are more working days – **the case must be clarified**;
- Travel costs are always calculated as one way;
- All templates can be found in the webpage of the Agency;
- **P1 promised to send information about what documents** (list of supporting documents) and **when** they need for reporting.

Section 7: Discussion on already started activities of work packages (WP1-WP6), presentation of the first results

1. WP 5.1: Project website

- Oleg Shabliy introduced the ASANA platform as an option for internal communication of the project issues. Discussion about the ASANA structure and using opportunities was carried out.
- Was decided that **Oleg Shabliy will carry on** with working out the platform and it will be established as quickly as possible.

2. WP 3.5: summer schools

The project vice-coordinator Anton Shkaruba gave an overview of upcoming summer schools in Belarus and Budapest. He showed the webpages and discussed about the application process, travelling, accommodation, distribution of information. It was noticed that the school in Budapest is not appropriate for student mobility (otherwise the students are employed as academic staff), while the school in Mahiliou (Belarus) also support student mobility.

3. WP 1.1: Conducting in-depth survey of end-users and the institutional contexts

Discussion about the questions of the survey in detail to improve the understandability and about conduction of the survey. The survey will be circulated to all the partners for comments.

4. WP 1.2: ToRs for the development of learning and institutional infrastructure

Anton Shkaruba led the discussion about the development of ToRs - the curriculum, contents, remarks and details. The ToRs' outlines will be completed and circulated to all the partners for comments within a week.

5. WP 6.2: Appointment of the Steering Committee and upcoming tasks

The coordinator Kalev Sepp initiated the discussion of choosing the members of the Steering Committee and the committee was elected, and suggested a candidate for an external quality assurance officer.

- **The quality assurance officer:**

Kalev Sepp suggested Prof. Ruben Mnatsakanian of Central European University (Budapest, Hungary) and presented his CV and the most important achievements. Prof. Ruben Mnatsakanian was anonymously elected the INTENSE external quality assurance officer. The GAP has entrusted the coordinator to subcontract Prof. Ruben Mnatsakanian to work in this capacity.

- **The members of the Steering Committee:**

1. Vietnam: not yet selected, time up to the end of next week (6. April 2018);
2. Mongolia: Oyunsanaa Byambasuren (NUM);
3. Ukraine: Anton Panteleimonov (Vice-Rector of V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University) and Sergiy Stepanenko (OSENU);

4. Austria: Hans Peter Nachtnebel (BOKU);
5. Latvia: Raimonds Ernsteins (LNU);
6. Estonia: Kalev Sepp and Anton Shkaruba (EMU);
7. External Quality Assurance: Ruben Mnatsakanian.

Section 8: Final discussion, Open Issues

Cooperation work was carried out in smaller groups, where project partners discussed special topics for example in concerns of financial issues, next meeting in partner countries, plans for summer schools etc.



Section 9: Next meetings

- Start-up meeting in Ukraine Kharkiv, 18.-19. April, 2018;
- Start-up meeting in Mongolia 30. April – 1. May, 2018;
- Start-up meeting in Hanoi, Vietnam 1.-2. May, 2018;
- Next consortium meeting will be before the reporting period in first decade of March 2019 in Tartu, Estonia.

Wednesday, 28th of March, 2018 (Project meeting, day 3)

1. **Individual partner consultations.**
2. **Discussing agendas for the meetings in Ukraine, Mongolia and Vietnam.**