

INFORMATION BULLETIN

ISSUE 2, DECEMBER 2013

La MANCHE: Leading and Managing Change in Higher Education

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Dear Reader,

Since the edition of the [1st Information Bulletin](#) in June 2013 the La MANCHE project partners have been busy working and supporting project activities around the network of which you could read more in the following pages. Over the last six months we have learnt a lot about leadership and change management in academic settings and have completed some major deliverables in the project like the External Assessment Report in Work Package 2 and the trainings for trainers in Work Package 5. Having entered the second project year in October 2013 and with the upcoming Intermediate Report due in April 2014, we have been also busy looking back and reflecting on the results achieved and lessons learned.

The first year of project cooperation has proved to be a learning curve for the majority of the project partners. The last fourteen months have been an exciting journey not only towards the achievement of our joint project objectives and goals but also towards improved intercultural understanding and collaboration with institutions with diverse profiles and corporate culture. I like to believe that the La MANCHE project is changing the institutions in the consortium by making a difference for their academic communities and helping them unlocking their potential to become better.

The La MANCHE project is dedicated to leadership, education and change. As this bulletin is being edited, the world is paying tribute to Nelson Mandela, one of the great leaders of our time who has changed his country, Africa and the world we live in. The stories of his leadership style have inspired millions of people and are being taught and repeated in leadership courses in classrooms around the globe. We are honoring him by quoting in the following pages some of his most famous motivational thoughts and messages on leadership, education and change. He often said that he was not a messiah, but an ordinary man who had become a leader because of extraordinary circumstances.

Knowing that good leaders are not born but made, leaves us hopeful and with a lot of plans for work during the second year of the project. Over the next months a large number of capacity building activities like trainings and public lectures will be completed to improve leadership skills at the Partner Countries institutions and to empower academics and students to become more involved in the decision making processes at the universities. By starting effectively the processes of project results exploitation and sharing those with the broader audience, we will also engage in a sustainable dialogue with the stakeholders in higher education in the La MANCHE countries. On behalf of International University College, the project lead organization I would like to wish all project partners and current and prospective stakeholders and friends a peaceful Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Let's keep up our good work!

Yours sincerely,
Christina Armutlieva
Project Coordinator

Season's Greetings!



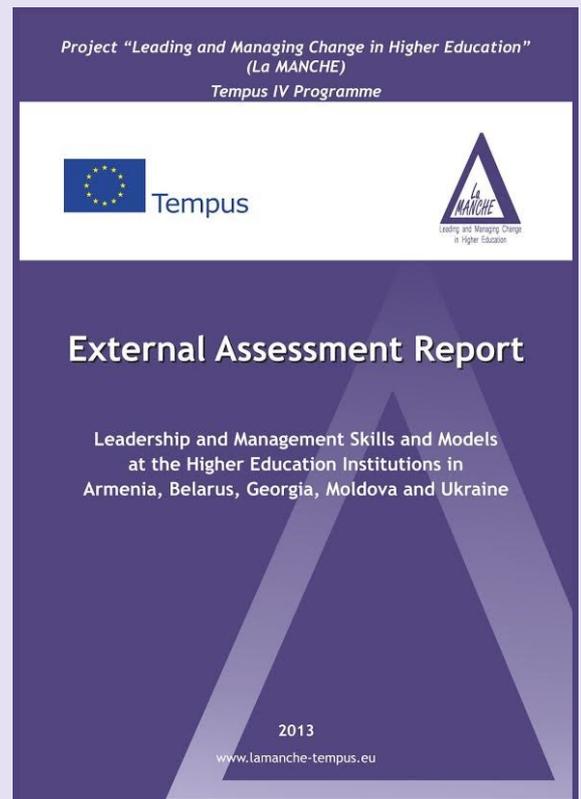
EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT REPORT IN WORK PACKAGE 2 PUBLISHED

The [External Assessment Report](#) Leadership and Management Skills and Models in the Higher Education Institutions in Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine is a major outcome of Work Package 2 in the La MANCHE project and was published in September 2013. It is accessible through the project website and in addition, 290 hard copies have been printed and distributed to the project partners in the ten project countries. During the first stage of the project the 29 consortium members conducted a series of activities to map out the current leadership skills and prevalent management models at the higher education institutions in Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. This was achieved through online focus groups and auditing and self-assessment reports completed by the Partner Countries higher education institutions in order to assess the current situation and to identify existing shortcomings and training needs.

The findings in the 23 auditing and self-assessment reports and the conclusions drawn at the five online focus groups have been summarized by the representatives of the six project partners from the EU in the framework of the External Assessment Report. The analysis of research findings in the auditing and self-assessment reports of the universities from the project Partner Countries has been conducted and elaborated by the EU partners in the project as follows:

Armenia: Agrosup Dijon, France
Belarus: International University College, Bulgaria
Georgia: International University College, Bulgaria and Polytechnic Institute of Bragança, Portugal
Moldova: University of Thessaly, Greece
Ukraine: University College Birmingham, UK and Clevercherry, UK.

The chief goal of the External Assessment Report is to serve as a starting point for the activities in Work Packages 4, namely the elaboration of guidelines and training materials relevant to the identified needs for leadership training and capacity building. In addition, the lessons learned from the Report have been taken into account and integrated in the trainings in leadership and change management organized in Work Package 5 in October 2013. One of the major recommendations in the feedbacks provided to the consortium following the monitoring visits in Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova was to disseminate the Report to the Ministries of Education in the Partner Countries and to the largest possible number of higher education institutions outside the project consortium. It was also mentioned that the Report presents a value for the system of higher education in Ukraine.



“A leader... is like a shepherd. He stays behind the flock, letting the most nimble go out ahead, whereupon the others follow, not realizing that all along they are being directed from behind.”

Nelson Mandela, Long Walk to Freedom



THIRD PROJECT PARTNER MEETING AND TRAININGS FOR TRAINERS

Between 22nd and 25th October almost 90 representatives of the 29 project partner institutions gathered in Bragança, Portugal for the largest meeting in the project. It was hosted by Polytechnic Institute of Bragança and attended among others by the Rectors of seven and Vice Rectors of 15 project partner institutions. The four-day meeting started with live streamed plenary sessions on 22nd October when the participants discussed the overall project progress and got in particular familiar with the results of work in Work Package 3.

The session dedicated to the case studies in Work Package 3 was facilitated by Assoc. Prof. Angela Niculita, Vice Rector for International Relations at Moldova State University and Work Package 3 leader. The Partner Countries institutions had the chance to present the case studies they had developed in the course of summer 2013. In the case studies they had analyzed the processes of change and modernization in the national higher education systems and the ways in which these are being addressed at institutional level. The partners from the five Partner Countries shared their insights and ideas of dealing with challenges related to internationalization, increasing competition among higher education institutions, decreased public funding and limited financial resources, outdated curricula and teaching and delivery methods, irrelevance of graduates' skills to labour market needs, students drop out, demographic problems leading to enrolment decrease, weak links between education, research and innovation, increasing use of ICT in education, weak knowledge-transfer infrastructure at the higher education institutions and the lack of entrepreneurial, creative and innovation skills, as well as reforms in the national legislation leading to major transformations and specific transformations or changes in the political and economic environment that had a major impact on the institution. The 23 case studies compose the major body of the In-depth Report Changing Higher Education Institutions in Societies in Transition.

On 23rd and 24th October the representatives of the Partner Countries institutions participated in trainings in Leadership and Change Management held by experts from the EU partner institutions. The agenda of the trainings included such themes and topics as the EU Higher Education Modernization Agenda and the role of educational leadership, institutional freedom and academic performance in European universities, strategic planning at higher education institutions, social responsibility, sharing leadership and co-creating change, managing change in higher education, practical approaches to developing effective communication skills and communicating change and developing change management culture in the universities. Based on the feedback forms the trainees had to fill out at the end of the trainings, 85 % of them found the conducted trainings interesting, well-structured and productive. 90 % confirmed the relevance of the themes and topics discussed during the workshops and lectures towards the project objectives and more than 90 % evaluated the information provided at the trainings as useful and beneficial for them. The main purpose of the two-day trainings was to prepare the trainees from the Partner Countries for the role of change agents and trainers in leadership and change management which they will fulfill at their home institutions upon return from the meeting in Portugal.





CHANGE AGENTS RETREAT

On 25th October in the framework of the third partner meeting Polytechnic Institute of Bragança organized the so called Change Agents Retreat. The Retreat day aimed at summarizing the achievements of the consortium during the previous three days and at providing opportunities for reflection and networking. The agenda of the Retreat included networking activities, workshop-type sessions, wrap-up discussions and reflections on upcoming events, programming of activities and planning of the next meeting, as well as time-slots for consultations with the Project Coordinator and the Work Package leaders.

During the day Anastasiya Makarenko from NTU Kharkiv Polytechnic Institute in Ukraine and Work Package 5 leader acquainted the partners in details with the tasks to be completed at the Partner Countries institutions including the project evidence to be collected and created by the institutions. Her presentation was followed by a workshop-type session on Dissemination facilitated by Valentina Grigoryan from Armenian National Agrarian Universities and a presentation of the activities to be completed in Work Package 6 dedicated to the establishment of a Virtual Think Tank with the involvement of stakeholders in higher education in the La MANCHE countries. In the late afternoon the partners enjoyed a boat trip on the Douro river and spent quality time together visiting the town of Mirandela where Polytechnic Institute of Bragança has a campus.



"What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead."

Nelson Mandela



MONITORING VISITS AND PROJECT PROGRESS ASSESSMENT

In the period of July – November 2013 the La MANCHE project has been monitored and evaluated in three of the five Partner Countries represented in the project. The monitoring in Ukraine took place on 12th July at Cherkassy State Technological University. During the day another four Ukrainian partner institutions and the Project Coordinator joined the discussions online and contributed to the monitoring by sharing their thoughts and ideas and by answering questions of the representatives of NTO Ukraine. The monitoring visit in Belarus on 5th November was hosted by Belarussian State University of Economics in Minsk and the monitoring team included the project officer at EACEA and representatives of NTO Belarus. On 20th November all four project partners in Moldova gathered in the premises of Moldova State University where a monitoring visit from NTO Moldova was conducted.

The monitoring teams confirmed the relevance of the La MANCHE project in the context of the three Partner Countries as well as the ownership of the project by the partners. It was also concluded that significant transfer of knowledge and experience from the EU to the three Partner Countries is present in the project and that the project management is efficient. The project partners are actively involved and are carrying out the activities in line with the original project design. In addition, the project partners were pleased to read that the Partnership Agreement and the Code of Conduct agreed and implemented by the consortium are considered examples of good practices.

As a result of the three monitoring visits the consortium has also received a list of recommendations for improvement. It was suggested, among others, that the Steering Committee shall start operating on the principle of rotation, so that more partners could engage actively in the process of project management and coordination. In addition, it was noted that the cross-country cooperation in the project is an area where increased efforts need to be invested in order to avoid a situation when multi-national projects turn into independent national initiatives. The potential of the La MANCHE network shall be maximized and new opportunities for project dissemination are to be explored and implemented. The consortium is currently working to address the recommendations and to apply those in the project implementation and will report on this in the upcoming project Intermediate Report in spring 2014.

PROJECT REGISTRATION FINALIZED IN BELARUS AND UKRAINE

In the course of summer 2013, almost 10 months after the project start date, the process of project registration in Belarus and Ukraine has been finally completed. The process of project registration in Belarus was coordinated by the Belarussian Trade and Economics University Consumer Cooperatives. In Ukraine it was the team of Volodymyr Dahl East Ukrainian National University which facilitated the registration process and represented the project consortium in front of the national authorities in Ukraine. Following the successful project registration, the partners in Belarus and Ukraine could finally proceed to equipment purchase and could start benefiting to the full extent from the capacity building opportunities provided by the project.

EQUIPMENT PURCHASE IN THE PROJECT COMPLETED IN ARMENIA, GEORGIA AND MOLDOVA

In the period of July – November 2013 the partner institutions in the three Partner Countries in the project initiated and completed successfully the equipment purchasing procedures. As a result of this, all twelve institutions have already started using effectively the purchased laptops and large screen TVs for the purposes of project implementation.

“After climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb.”

Nelson Mandela



LA MANCHE PROJECT PRESENTED AT GEORGIAN MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

On 27th July the Department of Foreign Relations at Ivane Javakishvili Tbilisi State University visited Georgian Ministry of Education and Science to present the TEMPUS projects at the institutions. The audience of the presentation included members of the Department of Higher Education and Science Development. Specific emphasis was made on the progress achieved in the framework of the La MANCHE project. The staff members of the Ministry of Education and Science were introduced to the auditing and self-assessment questionnaire's findings and got acquainted with the results of the case study developed by the university project team and titled Challenges and Opportunities of Internationalization: A Case study of Ivane Javakishvili Tbilisi State University. Following the presentation attendees discussed the challenges met during the implementation of the La MANCHE project and the overall success indicators and outcomes achieved. The next meeting of this type at the Ministry is scheduled for spring



BUILDING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AT GORI STATE TEACHING UNIVERSITY

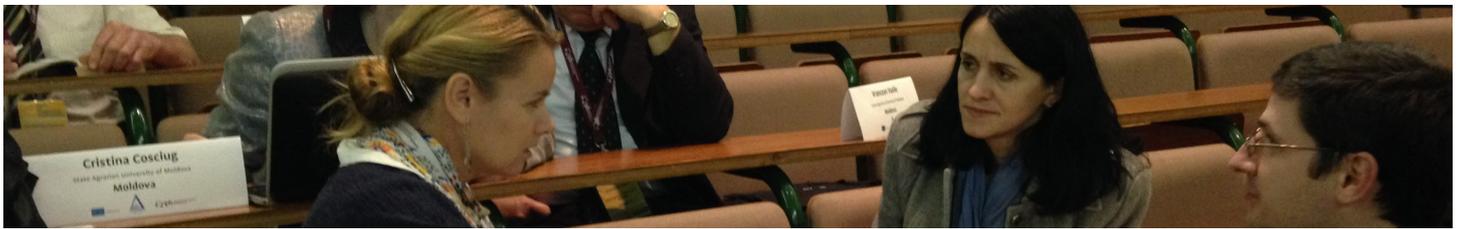
Gori State University has launched a new module titled Building Students' Engagement within Higher Education Institutions for Managing Enhanced Knowledge. The agenda of the module includes trainings, a series of debates and discussions and the elaboration of a case study on students engagement at the universities. The programme of the module builds on the experience of University College Birmingham shared by its project team in the framework of the training in Sharing leadership: Co-creating change at the project meeting in Bragança in October. The first meeting on student engagement at Gori State University took place on 21st November and was facilitated by Prof. Ruizan Mekvabidze and Zurab Zurabashvili who are members of La MANCHE project team at the university.



MEETINGS WITH LA MANCHE PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS AT CAUCASUS UNIVERSITY

On 10th and 17th October Caucasus University hosted dissemination meetings with stakeholders and students. The main purpose of the events was to evaluate the reforms in the Georgian education system and to share experience and good practices in university governance. The meetings were attended by representatives of higher education institutions in Georgia, members of non-governmental organizations working in the educational sector, various partners and representatives of public sector and centers of vocational education. In the framework of the meetings Prof. Boris Lezhava, Dean of the Caucasus School of Business and La MANCHE institutional project coordinator at Caucasus University presented the La MANCHE project, its main activities, objectives and priorities in the context of the Tempus IV Programme.





ROUNDTABLE ON LEADING AND MANAGING CHANGE IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN GOMEL

On 1st July a roundtable dedicated to La MANCHE project dissemination and to the processes of leading and managing change in higher education in Belarus took place in Gomel. The event was organized and hosted by Belarusian Trade and Economics University of Consumer Cooperatives. At the roundtable representatives of five universities located in Gomel discussed the project objectives and the main activities and results achieved so far. Apart from Belarusian Trade and Economics University of Consumer Cooperatives and P. O. Sukhoi State Technical University, which are project partners, the roundtable was attended by representatives of Gomel State Medical University, Gomel State University and Belarusian State Transport University.



LA MANCHE AT P. O. SUKHOI STATE TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF GOMEL

On 31st October P. O. Sukhoi State Technical University of Gomel hosted the third scientific conference dedicated to Challenges of Modern Education in the Technical Higher Education Institutions. The conference was attended by 76 participants from 17 higher education institutions in Belarus, Ukraine and Russia. In his report at the plenary session Prof. Aliaksandr V. Sychou, Vice Rector for Education and Instruction at the university and La MANCHE institutional coordinator presented the La MANCHE project's objectives and the activities the institution is involved in. In particular, he focused on the results of the case study prepared by the project team of P. O. Sukhoi State Technical University of Gomel which deals with the processes of Activization of applying computer technologies in higher education.



INTERNATIONAL DAY AT STATE AGRARIAN UNIVERSITY OF MOLDOVA

The La MANCHE project took a prominent place on the agenda of the International Day organized on 21st November at the State Agrarian University of Moldova. Assoc. Prof. Cristina Cosciug, Vice Rector for International Relations and La MANCHE institutional coordinator presented the project essence, the progress made so far and the upcoming activities with a focus on the student international mobilities envisaged to take place during the second half of the project.

In particular, she draw the present student audience attention to the Young Leaders Academy to be organized in the project in the late summer of 2014. 62 students from the La MANCHE project partner institutions will gather in Bulgaria to build student organizations' capacities and empower students to play a more significant role in the processes of higher education modernization. In the addition, the Young Leaders Academy will aim at motivating student leaders to join La MANCHE Virtual Think Tank and to become more effectively involved in the decision making processes at institutional level. Images of Cristina's presentation were also aired on the [National TV of Moldova](#) on 22nd November.





LA MANCHE AT LVIV ACADEMY OF COMMERCE

On 22nd November the Department of International Relations and Strategic Development at Lviv Academy of Commerce facilitated a roundtable to discuss the implementation of European funded projects at the institution. At the roundtable university students and staff members got acquainted with the La MANCHE project objectives and activities presented by Assoc. Prof. Ruslan Lupak. Dr. Lupak briefed the audience on the participation of the university project team in the La MANCHE trainings and the third partner meeting in Bragança. He also focused on upcoming project events such as the local multiplication trainings and the public lecture in Grassroots Leadership in spring 2014 and the Young Leaders Academy to take place in Bulgaria in autumn 2014.

An article dedicated to the third project meeting was published in the university journal Student Meridian which is distributed to higher education institutions in Lviv and its region. The project was also a subject of discussion at the Academic Council meeting held on 29th November where the project progress was presented by Prof. Petro Kucyk, First Vice Rector at the institution.



LA MANCHE AT ARMENIAN NATIONAL AGRARIAN UNIVERSITY

In the course of November the project team of Armenian National Agrarian University organized two internal dissemination events, the first one attended by staff members of the university's Department for Educational Reforms, Strategic Planning, Quality Control and Self-analyzing and the second one with the participation of students. Prof. Smbat Daveyan, Vice Rector of the institution and also one of the trainees in the trainings for trainers organized in October presented the results achieved so far at institutional level. In particular, he focused on the case study developed in Work Package 3 and dedicated to outdated curricula and teaching and delivery methods and its conformability with the contemporary labour market needs. During the meeting with students Prof. Daveyan paid specific attention to the project activities aiming at empowering students to become more actively involved in decision making at the higher education institutions. Students were highly motivated to discuss the project and expressed their interest in promoting the project mainly because it has the potential to lead to positive changes in the institution by involving the students more effectively in the university governance processes.



"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."
Nelson Mandela



UPCOMING EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Local multiplication trainings in Leadership and Change Management at the Partner Countries higher education institutions	December – April 2014
Public lectures in Grassroots Leadership at the Partner Country higher education institutions:	January – May 2014
Elaboration and submission of project Intermediate Report	March – April 2014
Launch of La MANCHE Virtual Think Tank	June 2014
Fourth project meeting and La MANCHE Virtual Think Tank panel hosted by Yerevan State University	9th – 13th June 2014
Networking events with stakeholders in higher education held at the Partner Countries institutions	June – July 2014
Formation of transnational themed working group for collaboration with policy makers	September 2014
Formation of transnational themed working group for collaboration with higher education institutions outside the La MANCHE consortium in the five Partner Countries	September 2014
Formation of transnational themed working group for collaboration with business leaders	September 2014
Formation of transnational themed working group for collaboration with civil society	September 2014
Formation of transnational themed working group for collaboration with student organizations	September 2014
Formation of transnational themed working group for collaboration for gender equality in higher education	September 2014
Young Leaders Academy hosted by International University College in Bulgaria	September 2014

One of the most difficult things is not to change society — but to change yourself.
Nelson Mandela



LA MANCHE IN SOCIAL MEDIA

La MANCHE on Facebook:



La MANCHE on Youtube:



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