

Support to strengthening the higher education system in Azerbaijan



Twinning project ENI/2018/395-401

Mission Report

Short-Term Mission on Activity 2.4 Improve study programmes in the priority areas in pilot universities to incorporate learning outcomes and inform and raise awareness about these achievements

(May 20 – 24, 2019)

1. Name and Function of the Expert:

Full name of experts

Mr. Eckhart Hötzel



Signature

Ms. Tatjana Koke



Signature



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2. Objective and Tasks of the Mission:

The mission is carried out within the framework of:

COMPONENT 2: PILOT STUDY PROGRAMME IN PRIORITY AREAS ARE IMPROVED TO BE MORE STUDENT-CENTRED

Activity 2.4 Improve study programmes in the priority areas in pilot universities to incorporate learning outcomes and inform and raise awareness about these achievements

Benchmarks for this activity are:

- Minimum 12 study programmes revised and updated to incorporate learning outcomes;
- Adjusted methodological compendium;
- Dissemination events to raise awareness are organised



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3. Time schedule of mission:

Date and Time	Activity
Monday, 20 th of May 2019	Deskwork. Team work of experts on learning outcomes for the study programme of Foreign Language Teacher.
Tuesday, 21 st of May 2019	A meeting with employers to discuss the suggested list of competences in the new suggested version of the Foreign Language Teacher study programme. <i>Stakeholders:</i> See the Annex II
Wednesday, 22 nd of May 2019	A meeting with heads of chairs related to the Foreign Language Teacher study programme from pilot universities to discuss learning outcomes, competences, disciplines in the suggested version of the study programme. <i>Stakeholders:</i> See the Annex II
Thursday, 23 rd of May 2019	Deskwork.
Friday, 24 th of May 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Debrief about the results of the mission with staff of the Science, Higher and Secondary Professional Education Department of the Ministry of Education. <i>Stakeholders:</i> Mr. Azad Akhundov, Chief Advisor at HE Department, CL II; Ms. Nargiz Garakhanova, Senior Advisor at HE Department, CL IV. <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Report writing

4. Relevant Background Information/State of Affairs regarding the mission

At this stage, our mission focussed mainly on learning outcomes, competences and a list of subjects in the suggested version of the study programme in Foreign Language Teacher. Thus, during the mission (May 20-24, 2019) meeting with employers (five school directors) was held on May 21st to discuss the most necessary new competences for the secondary school teachers. The employers pointed out the need to increase language proficiency and communication skills as well as active involvement in school affairs. The same day the meeting with the rector of Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University (ASPU) took place. We strongly support rector's plans to reorganise and modernise study process. Another meeting took place on May 22nd with teaching staff from four universities implementing FLT programmes. During the meeting, we discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the current state study programme in FLT and the suggested version of a new programme, in particular the list of Learning outcomes (LO) and competences. One more meeting was held with Ms. Diana Whaley, Fulbright scholarship holder at BSPU and with the Vice rector for international relations about the improvement of language proficiency of the students by implementing a new curriculum with strong focus on practical skills. A final debriefing meeting took place at the Ministry where the mission results were submitted and discussed. We also had the opportunity of meeting with the project Steering group staying in Baku and had frequent meetings with the resident team leader and the project staff.

5. Achievement of the Expected Results

The State standard of the study field of FLT (SSFLT) has been amended. Meetings with rector and vice rectors of BSPU gave insight in initiatives and developments in the modernisation of the study field.



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Workshops were held with faculty members of five universities as well as with administrative staff members. A meeting was organised with Ms. Diana Whaley, Fulbright scholarship holder at BSPU.

As a result of the meetings and intense desk work, we were able to elaborate SSFLT in the following way:

- The structure has been changed compared to the previous version in order to establish a logical sequence from general to more specific (see generic and professional competences).
- It is assumed that LO are the final result of the study programme and lead to graduates' competences for employability.
- Formerly standalone subjects have been organised in modules (e.g. Language module)
- 60 ECTS are devoted to introduce electives, giving more flexibility to universities. Thus, universities will be able and flexible to meet the labour market and the students' requirements

As all universities face common difficulties in recruiting new students with an adequate proficiency level in their foreign language, we strongly support the Ministry's initiative to add to the existing entrance exam tests for listening and speaking skills. We also suggested measures to be taken in order to enhance the language proficiency as well as professional motivation of the teaching staff.

A 1-2 years preparatory course mainly focussed on language acquisition may be implemented in case of available financial resources.

6. Unexpected Results

One of the major complaints on behalf of teaching staff was about the size of student groups (over 15) which does not allow to learn language appropriately.

7. Issues Left Open After the Mission

None

8. Recommendations (including recommendation for future missions)

We suggest the compulsory study course Civil Defence and First Aid Skills to be allocated a more reasonable amount of hours not exceeding 3 ECTS instead of currently 7 ECTS.

It seems necessary to produce a glossary for educational terms, like identity, curriculum, etc., in order to make the prepared SSFLT (in English) better understandable for local readers after it's translation into Azeri by avoiding translation errors.

Foreign teachers could be invited to teach FL, to discuss course contents and teaching methods.

9. Acknowledgments (if any)

We would like to express our gratitude to the whole project team for their kind assistance and availability.

Annexes :

Annex I: amended SSFL



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Annex II: Lists of participants



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