FIRST TRANSNATIONAL KICK-OFF PARTNER MEETING

MEETING MINUTES

Date: 12-13 February 2019
Host partner: Faculty of Philosophy Skopje

Venue of the partner meeting:
University “Ss. Cyril and Methodius”
Faculty of Philosophy - Skopje
Blvd. Goce Delchev 9A
1000 Skopje, Macedonia

PARTICIPANTS OF THE PARTNER MEETING

Faculty of Philosophy – Skopje (host partner and coordinator)
- Mrs. Aleksandra Karovska-Ristovska
- Mrs. Olivera Rashikj-Canevska
- Mrs. Alma Tasevska
- Mr. Nikola Minov
- Mr. Vojislav Sarakinski

Faculty of Aveiro, Portugal (P1)
- Mr. Gonçalo Paiva Dias
- Mrs. Elisabeth de Jesus Oliveira Brito

Faculty of Vilnius, Lithuania (P2)
- Mrs. Justina Garbauskaité-Jakimovska
- Mrs. Monika Orechova

European Training Center Copenhagen (ETCC) (P3)
- Mr. Gabriel Vârtopeanu
- Mr. Henrik Haubro
Fostering Accessible Study Technologies (FAST)

AGENDA

Tuesday, February 12, 2019

09:30-10:15 Official promotion of the project at University St. Cyril and Methodius (as part of the International week of the Faculty of Philosophy)
10:15-11:00 Coffee break and networking
11:00-12:00 Introduction of the partners’ organizations and representatives
12:00-13:00 Lunch
13:00-14:30 Revising the project timeline, main activities, outputs, expectations, personnel, budget implications

Wednesday, February 13, 2019

9:30-10:30 Discussing intellectual output O1, agreements on the research methodology, procedures
10:30-11:00 Coffee break and networking
11:00-12:00 Discussing intellectual output O2, defining roles in the creation of the accessible LMS
12:00-13:00 Lunch
13:00-14:30 Setting the following steps, closing

MINUTES

February 12, 2019

- In order to promote the project, the first international meeting started with the presentation of a part of the team within the International Week of the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje. Coordinator of the project, associate professor Aleksandra Karovska Ristovska had a power point presentation explaining the background of the project, objectives, 4 intellectual outputs, beneficiaries and current stage of the project. Mr. Gonçalo Paiva Dias from University of Aveiro, Mrs. Justina Garbauskaitė-Jakimovska from the University of Vilnius and Mr. Gabriel Vârtopeanu from European Training Center also took part at the international week representing their institutions and pointing out their contribution to the realization of the project.

- The second part of the first day meeting continued with self-introduction of all partners. The self-introduction has confirmed the fact the partnership is composed of members of quality and with rich experience in the subjects of the project and revealed also that beyond the
known and sited cooperation among the members some partners have more, long date joint experience the project can make use of.

- The Project coordinator, Mrs. Aleksandra Karovska Ristovska, gave a brief overview of the entire project, presented the intellectual outputs and the timeframe in which they should be realized.

- The partners, Mr. Gonçalo Paiva Dias form Aveiro, Mrs. Monika Orechova from Vilnius asked to extend the time for the implementation of the first intellectual output, given that they do not have direct contact with students with disabilities which should be included in semi-structured interview.

- Mrs. Aleksandra Karovska Ristovska also briefly presented all the activities envisaged, in more detail keeping in mind the first training to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark. According the project goals, one part of the training participants should be students with disabilities, so the coordinator said that the Macedonian partner will take student with visual impairments and student with dyslexia, the partners from Aveiro should take students with hearing impairments and the partners from Vilnius should take students with physical disabilities. All partners agreed to do their best in order to complete the tasks. Mr. Gabriel Vârtopeanu from European Training Center confirmed that appropriate experts will be hired to fully and effectively implement the training.

- Mr. Nikola Minov explained the financial frame of the project and he mentioned that the finance will be distributed in three sections, 40% at the beginning, 30% at the middle of the project realization and 30% after the finalization of the project. He also mentioned that the first amounts of money are already distributed. Coordinator of the project, Mrs. Aleksandra Karovska Ristovska explained that the first official financial frame was corrected and the finance was reduced in accordance with the request and conditions of the National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility.

February 13, 2019

- Second day of the transnational meeting started with the introduction of Mr. Henrik Haubro form the European Training Center in Copenhagen, because he arrived in Macedonia one day later than the other partners. He also asked for all documents needed for confirmation of partners’ presence on the meeting.

- In that context Mrs. Aleksandra Karovska Ristovska asked for all boarding tickets and hotel invoices for all partner guests that have been in Skopje. All of them should be scanned and send to Mrs. Olivera Rashikj-Canevska.

- Due to Mr. Henrik's absence at the meeting on the first day, one more time briefly were reviewed timeframes and activities of the project. With the same explanation like the other partners, Mr. Henrik asked for prolongation of the timeframe for the first intellectual output and all participants agreed that focus groups and interviews as well as desktop research should be completed by the end of March, and the data analysis should be completed by the end of April. Mr. For desktop research Mr. Vojislav proposed all partners to write about Learning Management System (LMS) experience in their countries and Macedonian partner to write about the worldwide experience.
In the direction of prolonging the timeframe Mr. Gonçalo Paiva Dias mentioned that for desktop research it is also necessary to go to the field to see which higher education institutions in Portugal have LMS, for how long, how do they use it. He also pointed out that in the focus groups, in addition to IT professionals, they should include persons involved in providing assistive technology for students with disabilities, as well as librarians who have direct contact with students with disabilities.

Mr. Henrik asked about the costs related to conducting focus groups and interviews, whether and what to provide for the participants. Mrs. Karovska-Ristovska said that in that occasion all partners can use the money for management. In accordance with the predetermined criteria, focus groups should be comprised of about 8 to 10 IT experts, while semi-structured interviews should be conducted with 20 students with disabilities in each partner country. Due to the sensitivity and delicacy of the respondents, Karovska-Ristovska mentioned that instead of semi-structured interviews, closed interviews and web-based interviews could be used, and the methodological framework would be changed. If all partners use semi-structured interviews, they should send only concepts to analyze without transcriptions. The qualitative analyze will be done by Mrs. Aleksandra Karovska-Ristovska and the quantitative analyze will be done by Mrs. Olivera Rashikj-Canevska and Mrs. Alma Tasevksa. Mrs. Elisabeth de Jesus Oliveira Brito pointed out that it is necessary all partners to have the same way of entering the data in order to ensure relevance in their processing.

Mrs. Monika Orechova pointed out that some of the interview respondents would not have 18 years and there is a need for parent confirmation.

Mrs. Aleksandra Karovska-Ristovska said that all data from the research will be published in monograph until the end of the project and also they will be used for manuscripts publication in different journals.

As part of the IO 2, Karovska-Ristovska pointed that the partners from Macedonia will create accessible LMS, while the rest should make their already existing systems accessible to students with disabilities.

Mr. Vojislav explained that in Macedonia, more exactly on Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje there is no learning management system, so he need to create and make it accessible for students with disabilities. He mentioned that Macedonian partners will probably use MOODLE because of the budget and its already existing mobile application. He also said that Macedonian partners will create program plugins for accessible LMS and will distributed them to other partners. Vojislav mentioned that JAVA systems will be used, and the team also is preparing code for text-to-speech. He pointed out that all codes will be transparent and all of the partners can use them and integrate in their own LMS. He also said that all program specifications and minutes from the meeting will be send together to all partners.

Mrs. Karovska Ristovska explained that for students with dyslexia will be use special dyslexic font, for students with visual impairments we will try to prepare text-to-speech, for students with hearing impairments will be use additional sign language videos for explanation. She also mentioned that all partners have budget that they can use for creation of some LMS tools.

Mrs. Olivera Rashikj-Canevska explained the adjustments needed for students with physical disabilities. She mentioned speech-to text, bigger length of the links, bigger clickable fields with more space between them, flashing photos or videos under warning etc.
Mrs. Monika Orechova said that text-to-speech in Lithuania can be used in English, because MOODLE has versions in both languages, and there is no text-to-speech in Lithuanian.

At the end of the meeting all the partners had a discussion about the time of the training in Copenhagen, and it was agreed to be implemented in the period from May 17 to May 21. In that direction Mr. Gonçalo Paiva Dias asked for the training program to be able to provide an appropriate team to be trained.

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