

**Transnational cooperation project
„Air traffic and logistics development between the EU rural areas and China“**

Summary of the Zoom meeting on Thursday, 21st November at 1:00-2:30PM CET time.

Participants: Kristiina (Tartu, Estonia), Nicola (Pisticci, Italy), Goran (Maribor, Slovenia), Jukka and Heikki (EU-China, Finland), Elisabet (Seinäjoki, Finland)

Agenda of the Zoom meeting:

1. State of play of TNC project - projects submissions and approvals by Managing Authorities;
2. Kick off meeting in February;
3. Work plans of WPs - short presentation by each WP leader and discussion;
4. AOB.

Summary of meeting by agenda points:

1. State of play of TNC project - projects submissions and approvals by Managing Authorities

Finland – Elisabet informed that the final decision about the project would come in a two weeks time. Everything should be fine and they are looking forward to get approval for the application. It was needed to explain the project idea in greater detail to regional partners and authorities and now the understanding should be clear. They have committed to the project and Elisabets' working time will be covered.

Slovenia – Goran explained that they managed to submit the changes of the local development strategy and expect to get approval in a one month time. After that the project expenses are eligible.

Italy – Nicola said that they have received approval from Managing Authority and expect that the contract will be signed by the end of the year.

Estonia – Kristiina informed partners that Managing Authority approved project and costs are already eligible.

Greece – Tasos couldn't participate at the meeting due to another meeting with national authorities, but he wrote to Kristiina and explained the situation, which is following:

Lesvos LAG goes through the similar process as Slovenia. They need to get approval for the amendments of local development strategy (LDS), which they have already submitted. There should be no problem with that.

The budget is 55.000 € for preparatory phase and implementation phase.

They have also contacted and negotiated with local partners and planning to involve Regional Authority, 2 local municipalities, the University of the Aegean - Department of Environment and the Chamber of Commerce. These partners will most probably sign a letter of intent.

The crucial factor is the company that runs the local airport, FRAPORT, Tasos will have a meeting with them on the 20th in the morning in Athens and hope to get them on board.

Tasos also talked about the project with potential partners in Cyprus. The Cypriot partners seem to like the idea but they do not have a budget for it, so this is not expected that they will join the partnership at the moment.

Tasos also informed that Lesvos LAG would be happy to host the kick-off meeting early February, if they manage to sign the letter of intent with local partners and get approval from MA to their LDS amendments. Otherwise they propose to have a meeting in Finland, which they join.

They hope to catch up with project by the end of the year.

Austria – Kristiina talked with Isolde and sent e-mail but no response at the moment.

China – Jukka and Heikki shared some information. The SME cooperation platform is already ready for collaboration and they proposed to have first study visit with our project team in China already in May 2020. This is in order to get better understanding among consortium about possibilities and include the inputs of the visit for the following project activities. For EU-China aviation training there is a need first to establish European consortium and make a clear mapping of potential and needs and then we can start negotiations with Chinese.

2. Kick off meeting in February

It was decided that the kick off meeting will be **4.-7th of February** in Greece or in Finland. The final location will be confirmed as soon as possible but latest by the middle of December (15th of Dec). Kristiina will notify partners via e-mail.

The meeting is planned in a way that 4th February is for travelling, 5.-6th February for the kick off meeting and 7th for travelling back. The agenda will be agreed at the next Zoom meeting in January.

3. Work plans of WPs - short presentation by each WP leader and discussion

All WP leaders sent their work plans in advance so that partners were able to read these plans before the meeting. Each WP leader introduced the plan briefly as follows:

WP 2: Feasibility study – Leader of the work package is LAG la Cittadella del Sapere, Italy

Nicola gave an overview about the planning of first steps, which are:

Identification of relevant stakeholders to be included into the WP activities at each partner country. This is they would like to start as soon as possible at early January. Nicola will send e-mail to partners about that.

The next step is to start working with the specification of the feasibility study; Nicola proposed that the specification could be ready by springtime, March. Then we can proceed with feasibility study.

WP 4: Business incubators – Leader of the work package is Into Seinäjoki, Finland

Elisabet described the main activities planned for the WP. There are 3 main tasks: joint business development platform for European stakeholders, businesses; EU-China platform and study visit to China. The first step is to find relevant businesses that are interested in finding relations in Europe and in China. It is expected that 2-4 businesses participate in the first contact building phase from each partner country. Elisabet also expect to send some more information about the next steps to partners in January. They also have a meeting with Jukka to plan next steps towards China.

WP 3: Aviation training – Leader of the work package is LAG Tartu County Development Association, Estonia

Kristiina gave an overview about first activities which are: identifying interested partners to participate in the WP work in January and then make a mapping of their aviation training capacities and needs to provide trainings for European and Chinese partners. Kristiina would like to make agreement with Estonian Aviation Academy to take care of the lead of this WP. In parallel we also continue discussions with Jukka how and when exactly we can involve Chinese partners and to know better what are the requirements to European consortium to provide aviation training to Chinese.

WP 4: Tourism – Leader of the work package is LAG Prlekija, Slovenia

Goran briefly introduced that the next steps are related to preparing the questionnaire for partners to collect necessary information to continue working with the WP. It is expected to make a mapping of each partner area about their main assets and opportunities, challenges related to the tourism development. After that the following activity is to work out branding components and design of the platform visittruraleurope.com. Goran also expects to start working with the WP activities in January 2020.

The description of all work packages are available at airtrafficnetwork.com website under meetings.

4. AOB

There was a discussion about the first project visit to China and it was decided that we try to make it in May 2020, second or third week of May. Kristiina will launch the Doodle for that.

Goran asked about ELARD next mission visit to China. Kristiina explained that this is a historical moment and the establishment of the first Chinese LAG is expected to be on 10th December in Xingguo. It is also expected that Chinese partners will establish national rural network and near future expand the LEADER Approach to other areas as well. This is good for our project also because there will be more possibilities to cooperate with Chinese companies as well as other stakeholders at local and national level.

There weren't any other business except the time for the next Zoom meeting.

It was decided that the next Zoom meeting will be on 9th January 2020 and the agenda includes the planning of the kick off meeting.

Summary compiled by Kristiina Tammets