

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

Summary of the Zoom meeting on Monday, 27th of May at 12:30-14:00 CET time.

Participants:

Ene, Kristiina (Tartu, Estonia), Nicola (Pisticci, Italy), Goran (Maribor, Slovenia), Heikki, Mikko, Jukka (EU-China, Finland), Elisabet (Seinäjoki, Finland), Marion (Halmstad, Sweden), Tasos (Lesvos, Greece).

Summary of meeting by agenda points:

1) Short overview of the project progress

Kristiina gave an overview about project preparatory activities of last month. There have been meetings and discussions locally in each partner country. There are still ongoing negotiations with potential partner countries - Moldova and Romania. Also two LAGs from Greece are interested in participating and Tasos already attends the meeting. Unfortunately there are no response from Poland, UK and France. Negotiations with Germany are still in process.

Kristiina, Jukka and other representatives from ELARD visited China in May. There were two aims of the visit – to support Chinese partners in developing first LAG in China and start discussions about concrete collaboration possibilities with European territories.

Jukka gave brief overview about cooperation possibilities with China. There has to be agreed and mapped strategy, how to develop cooperation with China, at last in 3 years timeline. He proposed to develop the EU-China negotiations' plan together in Italy.

Goran visited China as well in May and pointed out that there will be new potential partners from China interested in our collaboration and we need to have plan how to involve them and communicate in a correct way. Jukka will explain more precisely the communication issues and the role of central government in our project at the meeting in Italy.

Agreements under this agenda point:

- There is no need for making an extra effort to involve more countries at the moment. We will start with those core partners, who will be present at the meeting in Italy. Additional new partners can join later.

2) Partners information about the progress with cooperation agreements

(Letter of Intent, MOU, TNC Agreement with Annex 1 attached)

Kristiina, Estonia: LAG Chairman and Mayor of Tartu will sign the MOU. In our opinion this is important that public authority will be signing partner as well.

Goran, Slovenia: there have been several meetings with Ministry, who is very interested in developing the Maribor airport and this project. Also there are negotiations about possible investments from one Chinese company. There were meetings with LAG in Maribor area, unfortunately they can't be partners due to lack of resources, but they can still cooperate. Gorans' LAG will be a partner and in Slovenia they are in the middle of getting the approval to their new strategy, for the project activities they are planning the budget of 45 000€. The

final approval is expected to come in September. But they are ready to sign the MOU in June in Italy.

Elisabet, Finland: Into Seinäjoki is the applying partner, LAG will be financing partner in this project. The project proposal must be ready by the end of this month. Progress is good and we are ready to move forward. The final response is coming also in September.

Nicola, Italy: they have had meetings with Matera Municipality, Basilicata University and the airport. Letter of Intent will be signed with City of Matera. They will submit project in September. Letter of Intent and MOU will be signed by LAG in June.

Marion, Sweden: there have been negotiations with region, university, and local airport that all gave positive responses. Now its' up to the LAG to make a final decision. On 13th of June there will be a LAG meeting to decide about the project.

Tasos, Greece: new partner in the network, they received all the project materials to explore them. They will start negotiations with local and national level partners. Opportunity seems to be positive.

Kristiina made overview about the state of play with other partners who weren't present at the Zoom meeting:

- Austria is waiting for response from airport, LAG is interested to participate;
- Spain - there have been negotiations with Spanish partners, Spanish LEADER Network and the Badajoz airport which is on the border area with Portugal are the most probable partners, they try to be present in Italy;
- Romania and Moldova - they are interested, they need to involve local partners and start with negotiations. We will get some more information following weeks;
- Germany – we are waiting for their response;
- Poland – as we decided we don't push at this stage to find partners from Poland.

There are already 11 potential partners from Europe + China. The final number of partners will be clear by the end of this year. Kick off meeting is planned to be in November 2019 in Slovenia and the project activities will start at the beginning of 2020.

Agreements under this agenda point:

- Please send information who will sign the MOU and the copy of the Letter of Intent to Kristiina by 15th of June.

3) Discussion about the content of work packages, responsibilities, budget, timetable (amended description of WPs, draft budget and timetable attached)

New version of descriptions of WPs and budget were sent to partners. There are still five WPs with more structured tasks under each WP, so that it is easier to share tasks between partners even inside WP. Goran gave feedback that WPs are very well structured and easy to understand, but he was concerned, that there will be not enough money and time to cover all those tasks. Kristiina pointed out that there is also possibility that the leading partner under each WP will elaborate the content of the WP further and if needed reduce the activities. Final decision about the reduction of activities is up to the project partners' decision. We will discuss the WP plan once again in Italy and then we make also the prioritisation of activities under each WP.

The budget is also very preliminary. Main idea was to keep the budget as simple as possible. There are four types of costs - management costs of WPs, expert fees, feasibility study costs and travel costs. The preliminary estimated budget shared between 10 partners is about 500 000€, about 50 000€ per country. We need to work further with the budget in Italy, but before that we could discuss it with LAG managers to find consensus about procurement types.

Agreements under this agenda point:

- LAG managers will discuss the project budget and procurement rules.
- The budget, timetable and the content of WPs will be discussed at the face-to-face meeting in Italy. The prioritisation of activities under each WP will be done also in Italy.
- There will be additional agenda point for the Italy meeting - negotiations' plan and activities timetable with Chinese partners.

4) Meeting in Italy on 25-26 June - discussion about agenda and travel arrangements (agenda, travel instructions, participant list attached)

In Italy there will be present approx. 3-4 persons from each partner country, including representatives of airports.

Agreements under this agenda point:

- List of participants of each country must be sent to Nicola by 5th of June.

5) AOB and next steps

All partners will meet in Italy on 25-26 June to sign the MOU and finalize the TNC project issues.