

The People Behind the Projects

Transport > Strengthening Transport Training Institutes in the NIS > Interview with Rene Meeuws

TRACECA training: teaching the teachers to teach

Behind the development of modern transport infrastructures and services lay well-trained, qualified and competent staff. This is the target of the EU-funded project, **Strengthening Transport Training institutes in the NIS**, part of the broader TRACECA (Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia) programme, an international transport cooperation



■ Rene Meeuws
team leader

initiative between the EU and its Partner Countries in Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia.

Team Leader Rene Meeuws tells the ENPI Info Centre in an interview that this is a key link in the transport chain: "We are trying to improve the training capacity of universities and other higher education establishments that breed transport specialists."

The project develops new curricula and teaching techniques in transport planning and teaches university professors how to teach these subjects.

Q: *What is the project trying to achieve?*

Rene Meeuws: The project aims to help train well qualified and competent staff, who would in turn contribute to the development of sustainable transport infrastructure and modern transport services in the TRACECA countries. To be more precise, we are trying to improve the training capacity of universities and other higher education establishments that breed transport specialists.

How are you planning to achieve these objectives?

The bulk of our work has to do with developing new curricula and introducing new teaching techniques in transport planning. Essentially, we teach university professors how to teach subjects related to transport planning and investment appraisal.

But to come to this, one needs to prepare the ground. We start by reviewing course contents and curriculums in our partner universities. In parallel, we disseminate information among the relevant univer-

This is a series of interviews with leaders of projects funded by the EU's Regional Programme, prepared by the ENPI Info Centre. © 2009 ENPI Info Centre / EU

This publication does not represent the official view of the EC or the EU institutions. The EC accepts no responsibility or liability whatsoever with regard to its content.



sity faculties about state-of-the-art teaching techniques. My team then helps develop course materials on transport planning techniques, investment appraisal and other subjects. In addition, we organize discussions on how to establish regional training platforms and networks, and conduct training courses for lecturers. For example we are planning to give master classes in two or even three languages (English, Russian and the local language).

The project also assists partners in mastering transport simulation and forecasting software. Besides, we disseminate cooperation opportunities with European training institutes and provide access to online libraries and other training materials

One of our main outputs is an Atlas of TRACECA routes, which we are planning to publish, and make available online for all stakeholders and the broader public. This is a unique publication. TRACECA exists 16 years already, and to date no such atlas has ever been produced.

This atlas will serve three purposes, namely it can be used as an important promotional tool, a training material and a working document for all parties involved in the implementation of the TRACECA projects.

What are your main challenges?

Our counterparts do not have much experience in transport economy-related training methods. Most of the universities we work with have neither the necessary knowledge nor the people who would adopt and promote the new teaching techniques.

Overall, we have contacted around 50 universities across the TRACECA region, only to discover that their interest and teaching capabilities as far as transport economy-related subjects are concerned are limited. So rather than trying to engage them all, we set up small groups of six or seven 'champions' who are really interested in cooperating with us.

There is another challenge worth mentioning. All curriculums that we help universities put together have to go through approval by government ministries, which is time consuming to say the least.

We teach university professors how to teach subjects related to transport planning and investment appraisal.

The project helps train staff, who would contribute to the development of sustainable transport infrastructure and modern transport services.

Strengthening Transport Training Institutes in the NIS

Contributes to the development of sustainable transport infrastructure and modern transport services in the TRACECA countries through the training of staff

<http://tracecatraining.org/index.php>

Participating countries

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

Objectives

The project contributes to the training of well-qualified and competent staff for the development of sustainable transport infrastructure and modern transport services in the TRACECA countries. It also improves the training capacity of transport higher education entities in the TRACECA CIS countries. It is an essential part of the TRACECA (Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Asia) programme, which fosters regional transport integration between partner countries.

Find out more

Strengthening Transport Training Institutes in the NIS fiche www.enpi-info.eu/maineast.php?id=195&id_type=10

ENPI Info Centre – Transport webpage > www.enpi-info.eu/themeeast.php?subject=8

Timeframe

2008–2010

Budget

€ 2 million

The ENPI Info Centre is an EU-funded Regional Information and Communication project highlighting the partnership between the EU and Neighbouring countries. The project is managed by Action Global Communications.

ENPI info centre

www.enpi-info.eu