TRANSFORM4EUROPE:
THE EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY FOR KNOWLEDGE ENTREPRENEURS

Language Learning Formats
Implementation Report

Lead Beneficiary
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The main aim the task was to prepare an innovative package of language learning formats for the whole community of Transform4Europe Alliance.

The activities included the development and implementation of the following concepts:

- Digitalised catalogue / inventory of language courses available at partner Universities
- Transform4Europe Summer of Languages
- Preparatory Language Courses for Students
- Preparatory Language Courses for Staff
- Languages for Lunch

All the concepts were developed in the period between May 2021 and July 2023.

The majority of Transform4Europe partners actively participated in the development of all the concepts. Details in point 2 of the following report.

2. TASK DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

2.1. Concept

- Digitalised catalogue / inventory of language courses available at partner Universities

In order to prepare a digitalised catalogue / inventory of language courses available at partner universities, a survey on foreign language learning at partner universities was implemented. The results of the survey clearly indicated that: 1) foreign language learning is not obligatory at all partner universities and might be related to the regulations at national level (e.g. The Act on Higher Education in Poland requires the universities to introduce foreign language learning in each curriculum together with the description of the target foreign language level of a university graduate, whereas in other countries, foreign language learning is not obligatory and FL courses are elective). That is why, it was decided to prepare a digitalised catalogue of FL courses available at Transform4Europe universities which might be of use for students from partner universities.
The catalogue included the following information:
- Name of the university
- FL courses available for 1st, 2nd and 3rd cycle students
- Levels of FL courses
- Number of hours per academic year
- Number of ECTS
- Mode of the FL courses: (onsite, online, blended)
- Other information, e.g. fees

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The recruitment of participants for FL courses was included in the procedures related to mobilities of students, i.e.: Transform4Europe students who decided for long-term mobilities (usually 1 or 2 semesters) at partner universities could choose FL courses as part of their curriculum during the mobilities.

The Transfor4Europe students had access to FL courses which were offered in a particular academic year at partner universities.

Challenges:

– recognition of FL courses by all Transform4Europe members.
– fees: some Transform4Europe universities offer FL courses which are free of charge; whereas some partners charge students additional fees.

Good practices:

– the concept of availability of FL courses on platforms and granting access to Transform4Europe students (under discussion).

- Transform4Europe Summer of Languages

Preparing a catalogue and calendar of summer (and winter) schools of Transform4Europe languages, i.e., each Transform4Europe university which offers summer and/or winter courses of the language or languages which are used by the Transform4Europe universities was invited to prepare a list of events – summer and/or winter schools of languages.

Dates, places, together with other requirements were announced to Transform4Europe members in advance.

The calendar of summer schools of languages was compiled upon the information received from partner universities and announced on Transform4Europe website and through internal channels.

Challenges:

– Internal and external channels of information; some announcements concerning the summer and winter schools of languages appeared either too late, or were not detailed in terms of place and other requirements.

- Preparatory Language Courses for Students
- Preparatory Language Courses for Staff

The aim of preparatory languages courses for students and staff is to familiarize both students and the staff with the language, culture, and realities of the host institution. The courses

are offered for students and staff members who decide on long-term mobilities – usually one semester – at Transform4Europe Universities.

According to the concept, students and staff members should be offered FL language courses either a few weeks before the commencement of the mobility or during the first two weeks after the commencement of the mobility.

Participants of preparatory language courses should be informed about the possibilities via International Exchange Offices (Erasmus + offices) or by Departmental Erasmus + Coordinators or, in the case of staff exchange, by bodies responsible at host universities.

Challenges:

– Transfrom4Europe universities need a transparent flow of information about preparatory language courses.
– students and staff members need to be informed by exchange supervisors at home universities about the possibility of preparatory language courses.
– mode: preparatory language courses should be available in various modes (online, onsite and blended)

- Languages for Lunch

Informal language learning "labs" or "language sessions" for small groups of students with a visiting or permanent student native-speaker of a foreign language from the alliance, and open sessions for staff with a visiting or permanent staff in a language represented in the alliance. The informal "languages for lunch" focus on verbal discussions competences. They run for one semester or the whole academic year with the same tutor or team of tutors, they are free of charge, and include lunchtime snacks for participants. In this way students at home will also benefit from the mobility of other individuals.

The concept was developed through several meetings and consultations. The main areas of Transform4Europe language experts concern, or, in other words, the main challenges were:

– the organization of languages for lunch at Transform4Europe universities
– the recognition of participation in languages for lunch sessions by host and home universities
– the recognition of students' involvement in languages for lunch sessions by host and home universities
– the reliability of languages for lunch sessions

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The concept was developed (trial version) by the University of Silesia and at the beginning included 4 students who represented different universities, 2 of them Transform4Europe Universities; 2 universities which are not in the alliance.

Two students successfully finished the programme; the other two students could not finish the programme as it was not recognised by their universities. Nota bene: the students who did not complete the programme represented a Transform4Europe university.

The students of completed the program conducted over 60 hours of language sessions in French and English.

The sessions took place twice a week and were dedicated for University of Silesia staff and students. Only University of Silesia students participated in the sessions.

The students who conducted the languages for lunch sessions were supervised by Paweł Zakrajewski, PhD in terms of:

– syllabus design
– choice of topics
– choice of materials
– evaluation

At the end of the sessions, the students were granted 4 ECTS points for conducting the sessions.

2.2. Implementation and communication

All the tasks were implemented in accordance with the established task implementation procedure and timeline of the project.

All the concepts were communicated to the Transform4Europe university communities via various internal and external channels.

3. TRANSFERABILITY

Recommendations:

– Language learning formats need to be recognised by all alliance members.

– Language Learning formats need to be supervised by a group of language experts who will implement and supervise the formats at their home universities.

– Language Learning formats experts need to cooperate with internal bodies responsible for academic exchange, curriculum design and alliance management.

– Language Learning formats should be available to broader communities.

– Language experts should create a stable network of information and good practice exchange with other alliances

– Language experts need to create a platform for mutual cooperation on common endeavours