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TEPSA
Trans European Policy Studies Association

Career Skills Training III

14 – 18 May 2018
Brussels



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PREFACE

by Hanna Ojanen, Academic Leader



The PONT programme aims at building a bridge between students, young researchers and EU practitioners in order to improve employability. A central part of the programme has consisted of Career Skills Training courses that help the participants acquire and deepen professional skills but also bring together new and future researchers, the think-tank community in Brussels, EU institutions, journalists and a variety of experts, trainers and coaches.

In PONT, career skills are transferable skills that are often learned “by doing” – but that can indeed be taught and practiced together. The benefits of intensive training courses such as ours lie in the double value of an intensive, engaging programme and a constant accompaniment in the learning process by both trainers and fellow participants. As a matter of fact, the training courses have always served not only to learn skills, but also to discover one’s own skills, and to learn about learning – thus contributing in a more sustainable way to the participants’ thinking about themselves and encouraging openness towards continued learning.

This third edition of the Career Skills Training took place in Brussels on 14-18 May 2018. This time, a considerable part of the training was about research funding and project management. Fundraising is a crucial skill and research funding is an increasingly professionalised field. In our course, the participants got a thorough training in project management, and in addition, an up-to-date view on EU research funding, not forgetting practical tips as to how to go forward right now. A special emphasis was put on teams, team building and working in a team. How to build a successful team is one of these essential skills where background theoretical knowledge, understanding of team dynamics and practical experience all matter, and all these aspects were present on the week’s programme.

As in all our training courses, the importance of communication skills was highlighted. Research communication takes many forms and starts already before the project begins: a research proposal itself is a special way of communication to a potential funder. Researchers then need to communicate not only their research results, but increasingly their ongoing research, to a variety of audiences. Journalists, general public, decision-makers may be reached all in different ways. Our training week included writing a policy brief and presenting it orally to decision-makers, but we also looked at how research can be communicated through organizing events of various types. And, as always, we offered the participants several chances to meet think-tankers in Brussels and build their personal networks.

It was, once again, truly rewarding to organise this course with the great TEPSA team and the excellent trainers. To see the rapid learning and the engagement of the participants is impressive. This time, I was particularly struck by the achievements of the teams that, just freshly formed of people who did not know each other from before, quickly managed to learn together and outline truly interesting and promising research projects.

I wish all the participants success and inspiration in their future careers!

Hanna Ojanen is the Academic Leader of the PONT Career Skills Training



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OVERVIEW

In the framework of the Professional Training on EU Affairs – PONT project, co-funded by the ERASMUS+/Jean Monnet programme, TEPSA organised a five-day “Career Skills Training” on EU affairs for postgraduate students and young researchers on 14-18 May 2018, with a particular focus on fundraising and project management skills.

The PONT project’s objective is to apply a more policy-oriented approach to the participants’ research skills, and to provide them with insights into the world of European policymaking and the Brussels arena. This was the third and last PONT Career Skills Training, with this edition focusing on essential elements of project management, such as writing, implementing and communicating a research project, and on learning essential methods of policy-oriented research. A diverse group of trainers and speakers from the EU institutions, think tanks, media and private organisations shared practical skills and provided unique insight into their work.

21 young professionals and postgraduate students gathered in Brussels to attend the programme. During the different sessions of the training, participants discussed how to build a successful team, were introduced to think-tank research and the art of writing a policy brief by Dr Sven Biscop (Egmont Institute), explored the funding opportunities for research with Dr Funda Tekin (CIFE, IEP and University of Cologne), studied the phases of a project life-cycle with Rui Miguel Santos (expert and trainer in Project Cycle Management), discussed the links between research and communication with Ryan Heath (Politico), learnt how to better communicate their research to the public with Elizabeth van Den Bergh (Montis public speaking), and practised presenting their policy briefs with officials from the European Parliamentary Research Service. The seminar also included visits to the European Research Agency (REA) and to the European Policy Centre (EPC).

TEPSA would like to warmly thank all speakers and trainers, as well as all participants who took part in this stimulating and challenging week. TEPSA also wishes all participants all the best in their future careers, and keeps its doors open to them in Brussels!



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Group picture of the participants in the 3rd PONT CST on fundraising and project management skills together with Prof Dr Hanna Ojanen Academic Coordinator of the PONT Career Skills Training and the staff members of the TEPSA Secretariat in Brussels



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SEMINAR PROGRAMME

Monday 14 May 2018

Venue: Fondation Universitaire, Rue d'Egmont 11, Francqui Room

- 13:00 – 14:30 Welcome and introduction to the training *by Hanna Ojanen (Academic Leader of the training), Kinga Illyés and the TEPSA Team*
- 14:30 – 16:00 How to build a successful team *by Kinga Illyés (Consultant at ICG Integrated Consulting Group)*
- 16:00 – 16:30 *Coffee break*
- 16:30 – 18:00 How to write a policy brief *by Sven Biscop (Director of the 'Europe in the World' programme at the Egmont Royal Institute for International Relations)*
- 18:30 Welcome drinks
Venue: Ginette, place du Luxembourg 5

Tuesday 15 May 2018

Venue: Fondation Universitaire, Rue d'Egmont 11, Francqui Room

- 09:15 – 11:00 Introduction to PCM: setting the stage & the vertical logic (part 1) *by Rui Santos (Expert and Trainer in Project Cycle Management)*
- 11:00 – 11:30 *Coffee break*
- 11:30 – 13:00 How to get funding for research: an overview of funding schemes *by Dr Funda Tekin (Vice Director of the Centre for Turkey and European Union Studies at the University of Cologne and Research Adviser at Institut für Europäische Politik Berlin)*
- 13:00 – 14:00 *Lunch break*
- 14:00 – 16:00 Introduction to PCM: Exercise 1 - Design the Results Chain - Qualify the Change *by Rui Santos (Expert and Trainer in Project Cycle Management)*
- 16:30 – 18:00 Visit to the EU Research Executive Agency (REA): Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+ funding *with Corinna Amting (Head of Unit Inclusive, Innovative and Reflective Societies at REA) and Luciano Di Fonzo (Head of Sector – Erasmus+ Sport at EACEA - Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency)*
Venue: Research Executive Agency, Place Rogier 16



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Wednesday 16 May 2018

Venue: Fondation Universitaire, Rue d'Egmont 11, Francqui Room

- 09:15 – 11:30 Introduction to PCM: the vertical logic (part 2) & the diagonal logic *by Rui Santos (Expert and Trainer in Project Cycle Management)*
- 11:30 – 12:00 *Coffee break*
- 12:00 – 13:00 Introduction to PCM: Exercise 2 - Prepare the Risk Management Strategy – Connect with the Environment *by Rui Santos (Expert and Trainer in Project Cycle Management)*
- 13:00 – 14:30 Communicating your research to the public – part 1: *lunch discussion with Ryan Heath (Political editor at POLITICO Europe)*
- 14:30 – 15:30 Introduction to PCM: the horizontal logic (part 1) *by Rui Santos (Expert and Trainer in Project Cycle Management)*
- 15:30 – 16:00 *Coffee break*
- 16:00 – 18:00 Introduction to PCM: the horizontal logic (part 2) & Exercise 3 - Define the Indicators, Baselines & Targets - Quantify the Change *by Rui Santos (Expert and Trainer in Project Cycle Management)*
- Evening* Time to revise your policy brief

Thursday 17 May 2018

- 09:30 – 10:15 The nexus between research and policy making: presentation of the EPRS *with Alec Vuijlsteke (Strategy & Coordination Unit, European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS), European Parliament)*
Venue: Fondation Universitaire, Rue d'Egmont 11, Francqui Room
- 10:15 – 13:30 Communicating your research to policy makers: mock presentations *with Gaby Umbach (Strategy & Coordination Unit, European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS), European Parliament)*
Venue: Fondation Universitaire, Rue d'Egmont 11, Francqui Room
- 13:30 – 14:45 *Lunch break*
- 14:45 – 16:00 Visit to the European Policy Centre (EPC): working in the think tank environment *with Julian Rappold (Project Leader of the joint EPC-Stiftung Mercator project 'Connecting Europe')*
Venue: European Policy Centre, Rue du Trône 14-16
- 16:15 – 18:00 Communicating your research to the public – part 2: innovative ways to hold conferences *by Elizabeth Van Den Bergh (Speaker coach - Montis Public Speaking)*
Venue: Fondation Universitaire, Rue d'Egmont 11, Francqui Room



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- 18:30 Networking drinks with Brussels think tankers, *with:*
- *Aura Salla (Adviser for Communication and Outreach, European Political Strategy Centre)*
 - *Simone Tagliapietra (Research Fellow, Bruegel)*
 - *Heather Grabbe (Director, Open Society European Policy Institute)*
 - *Rosa Balfour (Senior Fellow, German Marshall Fund of the United States)*
 - *Felice Simonelli (Research Fellow and Head of Policy Evaluation, Centre for European Policy Studies)*
- Venue: Aloft Brussels Schuman, Place Jean Rey*

Friday 18 May 2018

Venue: Fondation Universitaire, Rue d'Egmont 11, Francqui Room

- 9:30 – 12:00 Feedback on your policy brief by *Sven Biscop (Director of the 'Europe in the World' programme at the Egmont Royal Institute for International Relations)*
- 12:00 – 13:00 Discussion on the training's takeaways and written feedback from the participants with *Hanna Ojanen and the TEPSA Team*
- 13:00 *Farewell sandwich buffet*



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DAY-TO-DAY REPORT

Monday, 14 May 2018

Welcome and Introduction to the training, by Hanna Ojanen, Academic Leader of the training, and the TEPSA Team

Rapporteur: Catalina Meirosu

The third PONT Career Skills Training was introduced by Prof Hanna Ojanen, Academic Coordinator of the programme, who welcomed all participants and presented TEPSA's team. She presented the programme of the seminar and the profiles of the invited experts.

She also explained the meaning of the PONT project and the results achieved until now, as well as the fact that a network of "*PONT fellows*" has been created and that it will continue to be developed in the future. She also pointed out the great necessity of such training activities, due to the fact that many young researchers and analysts want to achieve professional skills that normal study curricula do not necessarily offer.

Prof Ojanen underlined that apart from the knowledge gained, the training represents a great opportunity for young researchers to establish useful contacts with academics, think-tankers and policymakers in Brussels.

This year's training was more complex and introduced a variety of experts from different areas of expertise, as Prof Ojanen explained, providing a great opportunity for all the participants to get out of their comfort zone and to acquire and deepen professional skills linked to different dimensions of EU affairs.

Last but not least, Prof Ojanen pushed participants to enjoy the sessions, be curious and assimilate as much knowledge as possible during the entire week.

Training: How to build a successful team, by Kinga Illyés (Consultant at ICG Integrated Consulting Group)

Rapporteur: Garance Hadjidi

At the beginning of the training, the participants were confronted with an exercise on how to build a successful team. This opening exercise was followed by reflections and theoretical inputs on the topic by Kinga Illyés, consultant Integrated Consulting Group.



The exercise provided the group with frameworks to manage their own learning experience. The group was divided in 2 vertical and 4 horizontal sub-groups, assigning each participant to two teams and two tasks to work on during 45 minutes. Participants were requested to divide themselves in these sub-groups with the condition to be the most diverse possible in terms of nationality, gender, research topic and backgrounds. The vertical teams had to capture moments showing ‘What successful teams are made of’ and ‘Team development at its best’.

One of the horizontal teams had the task to design a method which ensures everyone is introduced to the team in a fun way. The team designed an exercise where each participant had to disclose three elements about them including one lie. Other participants would have to guess which one was the lie. This was an excellent opportunity to get familiar with all participants and create a good atmosphere.



All teams succeeded in completing the tasks. Time was then allowed to reflect upon the exercise. Two challenges were identified from participants: seeing the big picture, switching between different tasks and roles.

To pick up on this, our trainer introduced us to the Tuckman team development model which identifies four stages (forming, storming, norming, performing) that all teams go through as they move from "newly formed" to "high-performance" teams. This model proved to be useful throughout the week as participants were assigned multiple team work projects.

Participants also got familiar with the concept of “balanced leadership” as they accessed the role played by the two members of vertical teams as project leaders.



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Lecture: How to write a policy brief, by Sven Biscop, Director of the Europe in the World Programme at the Egmont Royal Institute for International Relations

Rapporteur: Piret Kuusik

In this session, Dr Sven Biscop explained to PONT participants how to write a policy brief.

He started by highlighting the importance of choosing a relevant topic for a brief and to provide a strategic context to it. When choosing the topic, one should always keep in mind the questions “What do you want to say? What is new here? What is my angle?”, as a policy paper should always offer something new and interesting that a knowledgeable expert does not know already. If one has nothing to say then he/she should wait, as a governmental institution could say something in the meanwhile, and then rethink his/her topic/angle. However, it is really important to have an opinion, as a policy brief is an individual exercise for expressing one’s opinion. At the same time, one should not get involved with party politics, but also not be ideologically neutral. Timing is also very important: publishing something first is a good way to overcome the danger of repeating others: when you manage to be among the first ones, the others will repeat you.

Moving to the format and style of the brief, Dr Biscop addressed these recommendations to the participants: to keep it short, clear and well structured; to look for a catchy title; to read different opinions; to read outside the topic, as inspiration can also come from novels; and finally, to let someone read through the paper before publishing it. He then suggested that once the paper is ready it should be advertised as much as possible and that one should network as much as possible, as once people know you, they will be keener on reading your work.



Dr Biscop concluded the session by describing the panorama of think-tanks on EU affairs. He outlined two kinds of think-tanks: national think tanks, based in capitals, and Brussels-based think tanks. However, many national think tanks also have offices in Brussels. Also important is to remember that in Brussels, the debate takes place in English. A final remark concerned the difference between journalism and think-tanks: the latter provide a prospective and recommendations while journalists do not.

Tuesday, 15 May 2018

Introduction to PCM: Setting the stage and the vertical logic, by Rui Miguel Santos,
Expert and trainer in Project Cycle Management

Rapporteur: Paula Ruiz

The second day of the PONT training introduced participants to Project Life Cycle management, with Rui Santos. In his introductory lecture, he started stressing the modalities through which we learn: the most efficient way is teaching, as that allows you to receive a feedback. In a project, we learn when we teach to others, as in a group discussion, a group assignment or in a presentation.



He continued explaining the importance of key concepts in project management, as: Outputs, Outcomes, Benefits and Impacts. These concepts are extremely useful as for what we obtain out of them: resources, products, benefits and changes, respectively.

After that, he described the different steps to design a project (trainings, funding research, evaluation reports, etc.) and he highlighted the importance of this phase of “project designing” to develop all these elements correctly. To this aim, a results chain should be designed to deliver the outputs of a project, as the main aim of the project itself. Since a project is supposed to deliver outcomes, an evaluation phase is also needed to understand how to do a better planning.

3 attributes can be identified out of a project life cycle:

- 1) the relevance: problems and issues politically relevant;
- 2) efficiency vs effectiveness: capacity to transform outputs into outcomes (benefits);
- 3) feasibility: the implementation must be effective.

Finally, he concluded talking about the Vertical Logic. He distinguished between positive stakeholders, who benefit from the use of the outcomes, from the negative ones, who resist the project.

Lecture: How to get funding for research: an overview of funding schemes by Funda Tekin, Vice Director of the Center for Turkey and European Union Studies at the University of Cologne, Research Adviser at Institut für Europäische Politik Berlin, and at Senior Researcher at Centre International de Formation Européenne

Rapporteurs: Cheryl Novak, Barbora Tholtová

In the early afternoon of the second day of the programme, PONT participants were addressed by Dr Funda Tekin who offered guidance on why and how researchers should apply for research funding.

After a brief introduction of herself and her roles at different institutions, Dr Tekin covered the many reasons why researchers and practitioners apply for funding, which include institutions' needs to diversify budgets, networking, mobility, increased competition and institutional reputation. She also offered guidance on how researchers can find the correct funding opportunity. Essentially researchers follow a bottom-up approach, which includes considering what funding is needed for and searching for opportunities, or a top-down approach which entails reviewing the calls that are out and attempting to create project ideas that fulfil the requirements of the call.



Dr Tekin provided PONT participants with information on where to search for funding which include: government, ministries, foundations and EU programs. Specifically related to EU funding opportunities, Dr Tekin highlighted Erasmus+, Horizon2020 and Europe for Citizens, and provided participants with links to the relevant websites.

Participants were then given an assignment which involved breaking down into eight groups of two to three persons to review a Horizon2020 call and try to come up with general ideas on key elements of a proposal within 15 minutes, which would cover the basic elements including the idea, the scope, the partners, the role and the duration. Dr Tekin informed participants that they should first check the eligibility requirements, the deadlines, the scope of the proposal and the details about the composition of the consortium. Afterwards each group presented their general ideas and Dr Tekin offered feedback and more general insights on how researchers should go about designing project ideas which included the following tips:

1. When considering grants, ERC grants are very competitive and it is often challenging to find partners willing to undertake coordination;
2. When choosing the consortium, one should pick the best of the best and be sure of eligibility and whether they match the proposal requirements and topics.



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3. When allocating resources, one should try to keep the budget balanced across partners, with the exception of the grant manager/coordinator;
4. When approaching partners, one should give a short concept note but not present too much information to protect his/her intellectual property;
5. When considering a funding proposal, one should start by conducting desk research including contacting NCPs, previously funded calls, priorities of funders and review all templates, guidance, and evaluation criteria;
6. When writing the proposal, one should follow the call structure using key terms from the call, and focus on key elements of impact and dissemination. Impact strategies should be broad and can include mobility programs, PhD activities, simulation games, public debates, fact pages, and community stakeholder events;
7. When planning the budget, one should make sure to consider the total amount of funding available, the length of the project, the size of the consortium, the eligible costs, the co-funding requirements, and overheads.

In conclusion, Dr Tekin invited participants to try to be as innovative as possible while remaining relevant, and to make use of social media.

Introduction to PCM: Exercise 1 – Design the result chain, by Rui Miguel Santos, Expert and trainer in Project Cycle Management

Rapporteurs: Rogelio Nogales, Gabriel Weibl

Following the early morning session, Mr Santos continued explaining the importance of knowing the stakeholders involved in a project and the different techniques to reach out to them. These techniques should be associated to the different phases of the project.

Afterwards, Mr Rui Santos taught participants the importance of the “needs assessment”. To manage it, the ‘problem tree’ method was introduced, consisting in identifying the problems to be solved, the effects, the causes and create a hierarchy of objectives.

During the second part of the session the participants were divided into four different working groups and had to participate in an exercise to apply the knowledge developed during these sessions.

Participants were asked to realise a project proposal following different steps: find a topic, develop a stakeholder analysis, organise and identify project factors with the ‘problem tree’ technique, create a preliminary analysis using need assessment and finally produce a result framework.

After having chosen their groups, participants started to discuss all the aspects mentioned above, producing a presentation to be presented to the other groups in the following session.





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*Visit to the EU Research Executive Agency (REA): **Horizon2020 and Erasmus+ funding** with Corinna Amting, Head of Unit Inclusive, Innovative and Reflective Societies at REA, and Luciano di Fonzo, Head of Sector – Erasmus+ Sport at EACEA – Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency*

Rapporteurs: Beth Oppenheim, Raul Carbajosa Niehoff

Following the morning sessions, on the second day of the PONT Career Skills Training III organised by TEPSA, the participants visited the EU Research Executive Agency (REA). On site, they were warmly received by Ms Corinna Amting and Mr Luciano Di Fonzo, two EU officers responsible for some of the most important EU programmes aiming to bring together, support and engage students, researchers and young professionals in Europe and neighbourhood countries.

The session started with a presentation held by Ms Corinna Amting, who explained grant management and the role of the EU's Executive Agencies. She outlined the role of different actors in grant management, including the European Commission, Executive Agencies, member states and experts. She delineated the duties performed by the Commission, which focuses on legislation and policy, from the Executive Agencies, which is responsible for programme



implementation. Ms Amting proceeded to explain the Horizon 2020 programme and the Research Agency's role in managing it. Horizon 2020 is the largest research and innovation programme to date, valued at almost €80 billion. She made the interesting observation that there is uneven participation from member states; some lack national investment in research and innovation which leads to a higher participation, while others lack a robust, compatible research structure leading to a lower participation. Ms Amting highlighted the increased importance of communication, so that research is accessible and can be understood by non-experts.

Ms Amting presented two main components of the Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation programme funded by the European Commission for EU citizens and taking place from 2014 until 2020. The first were the Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions (MSCA). They aim to ensure a dynamic use of Europe's intellectual capital in order to generate skills and innovation amongst its beneficiaries from all career stages through trainings, fellowships, exchanges, funding, or connection with the industry. She then proceeded to explain the societal challenges facing the EU. For instance, the need for inclusive and open societies; for innovative societies that capitalise on the creative and productive potential of all generations; and for reflective societies that are in touch with their European heritage. The session



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concluded with a practical explanation of how participants should submit proposals, if they so wished, or how to become an evaluator of proposals or programmes.

In the second part of the session, Luciano Di Fonzo, Head of Sector for Erasmus+ Sport at the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), complemented the first presentation by presenting the ERASMUS+ programme focussing in particular on on the parts related to higher education such as Knowledge Alliance, Capacity Building and Jean Monnet.

Subsequently, Mr Di Fonzo asked whether participants had been Erasmus students, which almost everyone had been. However, Mr Di Fonzo stressed that Erasmus+ is much more than an exchange programme between academic institutions. With an extensive budget of €14 billion, it provides opportunities for over 4 million Europeans of all ages to study, train, gain experience, and volunteer abroad and thereby successfully contributes to the Europe 2020 strategy for growth, jobs, social equity and inclusion.

After the presentations, the floor was open for questions from PONT participants. The main discussion revolved around the question of how the alleged perception of the EU as remote and abstract can be addressed. Participants reached the conclusion that both programmes are great examples of an effective way to connect citizens and share information, and thereby strengthen the role and effectiveness of the EU. Participants agreed that the PONT Career Skills Training, part of the Erasmus+ programme, is an excellent proof of this.

Overall, the session was very useful and informative, and gave participants important insights on significant and successful European initiatives established for its citizens.





Wednesday, 16 May 2018

Introduction to PCM: The vertical logic (part 2) & the diagonal logic, by Rui Miguel Santos, Expert and trainer in Project Cycle Management

Rapporteur: Magda Stumvoll

To begin this session, Rui Santos pointed out that communication should be always results and evidence based.

After the presentation of the first group task, participants went on with discussing the vertical logic of the Project Cycle Management.

The trainer referred to the strategic framework, explaining that evaluation reports are important to avoid mistakes.

He gave participants three theoretic equations:

1. Results Framework = Impact + Outcome + Outputs
2. Theory of Action = Results Framework + Actions + Inputs
3. Theory of Change = Theory of Actions + Assumptions
4. Logic of Intervention = Theory of Change + Indicators

After this, the focus was moved to the planning of the activities. The first step is to classify activities: there are activities that take only place once and there are continuous, dependent and independent activities. The dependent activities are the critical point, as they can only start once another activity has started. If one action on which an activity depends is delayed, everything is delayed. Independent activities can be started at any time.



There is a linear and a regressive way to plan activities. The linear one starts at the starting date and calculates how long it will take for the different activities to be finished. The regressive sequence starts at the desired completion dates and calculates backwards to the day the project team has to start, in order to finish on that date.

The main activities are divided into tasks. It is important to identify the dependencies/sequences of the tasks in a next step. Then the start and completion date as well as the duration need to be indicated. Some specific tasks can be defined as milestones. If special expertise is needed for the completion of a task, it must be indicated in the table as well. As a last step, all the activities need to be linked to costs (fees, salaries, support allowance etc.).

Introduction to PCM: Exercise 2 – Prepare the risk management strategy, by Rui Miguel Santos, Expert and trainer in Project Cycle Management

The trainer explained the relation between assumptions and risks, starting with the definition of assumption as all external circumstances, outside the control of the project manager, that can somehow affect the implementation of the different activities, the delivery of the results and the achievement of the objectives.

Assumptions constitute the diagonal logic of a project, interacting with the Theory of Action to create the Theory of Change.



Risk is the probability that an event or action may adversely affect the achievement of project, objectives or activities. There are three types of risks:

- Operational risks with an impact on the performance of the activities;
- Behavioural risks with an impact on the use of the outputs;
- Political risks with an impact on the sustainability of the outcomes.

The trainer defined then probability and impact as the two criteria to assess risks and select the ones that should be part of the risk management strategy.

Once selected the risks, a risk management matrix should be designed covering the following aspects:

- Nature of the risk;
- Potential adverse impact in the delivery of the results and achievement of the objectives;
- Level of the risk impact, from high to low;
- Risk management strategy and;
- Person in charge of its implementation.

Participants were then divided into working groups and challenged to prepare a risk management matrix for a potential project, as a practical use of the theoretical knowledge acquired during the session.

Communicating your research to the public – part 1: Lunch discussion with Ryan Heath, Political Editor at POLITICO Europe

Rapporteur: Gulnara Anapiiaeva

Ryan Heath, political editor at POLITICO Europe, had a lunch discussion with the CST3 participants in which he addressed several aspects important to communicating a research project to the broader public.

First, he spoke about his early career before starting at POLITICO Europe. Afterwards, he explained POLITICO Europe's functioning as an independent on-line journal. Along with that, Mr Heath could tell more about the EU current diverse issues to TEPSA participants. During the questions and answers session, the participants asked different questions regarding POLITICO Europe's funding sources, average weekly published statements, as well as team of journalists and editors.



Introduction to PCM: the horizontal logic (part 1), by Rui Miguel Santos, Expert and trainer in Project Cycle Management

Rapporteur: Ivana Biondic

The lecture started with the presentation of one of the groups of the PONT participants of a stakeholder analysis in a project dealing with the Roma children in the streets. The stakeholders were identified in details: direct and indirect, as well as negative stakeholders. The presentation referred to the set of skills learned in the previous session.

After the presentation, Mr Santos continued with his lecture. He pointed out that, when working on a project, it is of great importance to present the evidence to support your thesis (e.g. survey results). After that, he continued talking about the horizontal logic of a project. The horizontal logic is the quantification strategy of the project and consists of indicators, target, milestone and baseline.

- Indicators show what it is supposed to be measured and not what it is supposed to be achieved;
- The target is the desired value of direction for progress;
- Milestones are points along the desired trajectory from baseline to target. In other words, milestone presents mid-term targets;
- The baseline represents the starting point of a project and it is crucial for target setting.

A fifth element was also mentioned: the source of verification or where the data actually come from (e.g. actual documents, reports, databases etc.). If there is no data available, it is acceptable to use proxy values.



Introduction to PCM: the horizontal logic (part 2) & Exercise 3 – Define the indicators, baseline and targets – Quantify the Change, by Rui Miguel Santos, Expert and trainer in Project Cycle Management

Rapporteur: Maria Balea

The afternoon session of the third day represented the final part of the series 'Introduction to Project Cycle Management' (PCM), held by Rui Santos.

The whole PCM series comprised six alternating sessions: three of them were mainly theoretical as they introduced and explained new concepts, and the other three were aimed at giving the participants the opportunity to apply what they have learned.

The final session started with a recap of the last chapter of the course series: the horizontal logic of a project. Its purpose is to offer a systematic method for measuring change. First, the indicators of the project must be established. The indicators measure outputs, results and impact. Then, for each indicator a baseline and a target have to be set. In addition, the sources of



verification have to be identified. Finally, the budget of the horizontal logic will be developed accordingly and the logic of the intervention will be established.

Afterwards, the trainee explained the tasks for the last of the three exercises. The first exercise consisted of finding a problem, searching for its causes and its effects and designing a project to solve the specific problem. The second exercise involved identifying and evaluating the potential risks of the project. The third exercise consisted of establishing output, result and impact indicators and providing a baseline and a target for each of them. The teams worked in the same format since the beginning of the PCM series until the end, creating together the structure of a whole project. The results were sent through email to the trainer.

The third team presented their whole work, consisting of the three exercises. They first introduced the vertical logic of their project: outputs, outcomes and impact. Then they explained the diagonal logic of their project: they identified the assumptions for each stage and provided a risk assessment of the project. Finally, they exposed the horizontal logic of the project, by establishing the indicators, with their corresponding baselines and targets.



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At the end of the session, Rui Santos prepared a quiz for the participants. The purpose of the quiz was threefold: provide an interactive recap of the information, test the knowledge of the participants, but also let the trainee know on which topics his explanations were not clear enough for most of the students.



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Thursday, 17 May 2018

The nexus between research and policy making: Presentation to the EPRS & Communicating your research to policy makers: mock presentation with Alec Vuijsteke, Gaby Umbach, Irmgard Anglmayer, Tatjana Evas & Christian Salm, Strategy and Coordination Unit, European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS), European Parliament

Rapporteurs: Kristyna Tamchynová, Marianne Grant, Bekruz Yodgorov

Two sessions took place on Thursday, 17 May 2018, in the morning: in the first one, Alec Vuijsteke introduced the European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS) and its work. The second session was a series of mock presentations of policy briefs prepared by the PONT participants, assuming they were to be presented within a Committee meeting of the European Parliament. A team of EPRS officials and policy analysts, including Gaby Umbach, Alec Vuijsteke as well as Irmgard Anglmayer, Tatjana Evas and Christian Salm commented on the presentations.

The sessions were opened by the speakers answering to the question “What skills do policy-makers appreciate?”



Gaby Umbach underlined the need to be able to communicate one’s research findings to a broader, non-expert audience; and that reduction of complexity and translation of content into understandable language were key requirements of these communication processes. Alec Vuijsteke added that keeping the right balance between completeness and timeliness is especially required. According to Tatjana Evas, researchers also

need to be able to adapt to changing circumstances, quickly grasp new topics, extract the information and present them. Christian Salm pointed out that it was important to communicate in a structured way in order to catch the attention of policy-makers. Irmgard Anglmayer emphasised that the way you say something is as important as what you say. Simply reading out the conclusions of your written paper would be a missed opportunity, since writing for the ears is different from writing for the eyes.

The introductory statements were followed by Alec Vuijsteke’s presentation of the work of EPRS. He explained the main tasks (such as providing expertise to Members and parliamentary committees on demand, but also proactively undertaking research and providing timely publications) as well as the challenges that the EPRS faces (like dealing with a complex and fast-moving political environment, the feeling of ‘information overload’ experienced by Members, or issues such as tackling fake news, the

desire by Members to re-use research/information in all sorts of multi-media formats and the need to cover policy areas with specialist expertise). He then explained the EPRS activities, products and services in detail.

After the session of mock presentations, the main feedback provided by the EPRS staff was to change the structure of the presentation to fit the format of the oral presentation, since this is crucial to catch the attention of policy-makers from the beginning: first state the problem and then explore it in a more detailed way. The style of the presentation is also important: speaking slowly, knowing the speech is simultaneously interpreted, while in parallel controlling the time. Speaking slowly on the other hand does yet not mean to give up on emotions, as they are an important part of the presentation.



It was recommended to stick to the topic, even if the environment was difficult to manage and distraction was easily to happen in public settings such as an EP Committee meeting (people coming and leaving, talking and shuffling, questions being raised in the middle of the presentation). Finally, it was positively underlined that PONT presenters were able to incorporate comments given to previous speakers into their own mock presentations.



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*Visit to the European Policy Centre (EPC): **working in the think tank environment** with Julian Rappold, Project Leader of the joint EPC-Stiftung Mercator project “Connecting Europe”*

Rapporteurs: Natia Ejoshvili, Ronan Ward

Julian Rappold leads two of the EPC’s leading projects ‘Connecting Europe’ and ‘FutureLab Europe’ and serves as a Senior Policy Analyst at the EPC. As an experienced researcher and project manager with 7 years of work experience in the think-tank environment, he provided a comprehensive insight into the think-tank landscape in Brussels and shared his personal experience of a think-tanker’s daily work. Mr Rappold gave a detailed overview of his personal academic background and career path to explain what it takes to enter the field and the opportunities of moving up the career ladder.

Mr Rappold also provided useful tips and advice for aspiring think-tankers, through referring to his previous experience at the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP), where he worked on the issues related to EU Integration, German EU policy, and Southern Europe, particularly on Greece, and explained the main challenges of designing and implementing outreach strategies to various stakeholders. He illustrated this through his previous work when he was trying to explain the German position on the Greek crisis to European stakeholders and the local audience in Germany.



He also discussed the challenges of undertaking research and management jobs simultaneously.

The EPC and the think tank landscape in Brussels

Mr Rappold overviewed the main trends of the Brussels think-tank environment: among others he identified the trend towards an increasing number of so called in-house think tanks that are associated with the Commission, the EU Parliament and its political groupings. According to his assessment, despite tough competition from institutional competitors, independent think tanks still maintain strong stand and influence in Brussels. Along with the EPC, he named other leading players of the Brussels think-tank community such as Bruegel, focusing on economic issues, and Carnegie Europe, specialising on foreign policy matters. In addition, international NGOs would also engage in think-tank work that then serves as evidence for their advocacy work.



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Mr Rappold touched upon the challenges of undertaking scholarly research and maintaining an academic approach in a tense and competitive environment where the pressure of engaging in advocacy work remains high.

He described the EPC as independent, non-partisan and non-profit. According to him, when examining a think-tank, it is important to consider its aim. The mission of the EPC is to 'foster European integration through analysis and debate, supporting and challenging European decision makers at all levels to make informed decisions based on evidence and analysis and providing a platform for engaging with partners, stakeholders and citizens, in EU policy-making and in the debate about the future of Europe'. The EPC's unique features are its focus on analysis, its self-understanding as a platform and its transnational outreach.

Analysis

There are 5 different thematic programmes at the EPC: 1. Europe in the World 2. European Politics and Institutions 3. European Migration and Diversity 4. Sustainable Prosperity for Europe 5. Social Europe and Well-Being. The EPC is taking a generalist approach. Its analysts aim to give policy recommendations based on informed analysis. The major instrument they use is publications, of which the EPC publishes around seventy per year. The analysts try to produce timely policy recommendations, which react quickly to changes in the environment, rather than becoming excessively academic.

Platform

The EPC aims to provide a platform for the exchange of ideas. The Institute hosts around 200 events per year. Their aim is to include a variety of stakeholders from different sectors. The EPC provides a place where these stakeholders can engage in discussion and adapt their views. Their membership comes from a number of different fields such as diplomatic missions, international governance organisations, business and professional associations, businesses, foundations and NGOs. In total they have around 320 members.

Trans-nationalisation

The EPC aims to increase its outreach. Mr Rappold stated that being based in Brussels, they tend to address primarily a Brussels audience. He stated that it is challenging to reach beyond their traditional audience to other groups. Another goal of outreach is to increase the profile of the EPC. They partner up with other think-tanks on a number of projects. One recent major project, the New Pact for Europe, gave a proposal on how to reform the EU. It involved a three-year consultation process with partners in the member states. Mr Rappold emphasised that it is important not only to reach out to other think-tanks but also to engage with civil society.

Communicating your research to the public – part 2: innovative ways to hold conferences by Elizabeth Van Den Bergh, Speaker coach – Montis public speaking

Rapporteur: Tamar Jangulashvili

Elizabeth Van Den Bergh held the training session about “Communicating your research to the public: innovative ways to hold conferences”. She started the presentation with brainstorming and asked the participants if they have experience in organising conferences. She explained the importance of defining the target audience at first and then designing the meeting formats, also known as the purpose before format approach. Participants of PONT Career Skills Training III shared their own experiences and asked questions about the advantages and disadvantages of informal meeting formats. The trainer paid attention to two formats of meeting: the Fish Bowl and the World Café. She noted that before choosing a meeting format we should pay attention to the purpose of the event, define strategies how to engage with our public, then define the format of the event, the audience, how we collect feedback. She focused on the importance of having basic knowledge on which format suits which purpose best when organising an event.

The Fish Bowl method is used for organising presentations, conferences, workshops and small group discussions within large group settings. The speakers are seated in the centre of the room with other participants sitting around them in a cycle and speakers are changed during the meeting under a rotation principle. This method is also useful for direct talks with experts and requires a professional facilitator.



The World Café method is used to foster collaborative and constructive dialogue and active engagement of participants. At small tables people of four or five are seated to discuss a topic related to work, life or community for about 20 minutes. Participants are encouraged to write key ideas on notes. After completing the first round one of the participants is asked to remain at the table to host other participants from the next table and welcomes the next round. Participants carry and share key ideas with other participants and this method gives all of the participants an opportunity to share insights from previous conversations, deepening the knowledge of the topic. At the end participants can return to their first table and share ideas.

The trainer discussed four goals for meaningful presentations: Impact, Connect, Inspire and Motivate. Participants were asked to name the reasons for going to events. During the training the trainer defined the importance of changing the old school lecturing into co-created environment, one-way communication into exchange, monologue into dialogue, little participation into lots of participation. She focused on how these changes exerted an influence on holding meaningful conferences. She also



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explained how when the speaker is much more knowledgeable than the members of the audience it is appropriate to actually do have a formal, lecture-style setting.

The key thing to remember from this training session is to always search for the answer to the question 'Why are we meeting?', 'Why are we here together?'.



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EVALUATION & FEEDBACK

The Career Skills Training was evaluated by its participants, following a scale from -- (not useful) to ++ (very useful) applied to a series of categories and criteria.

Overall, the participants were **highly satisfied** with the seminar, assessing it useful (7) or very useful (12). All participants considered that it was **very useful** for their future career or current job, and that it had a **very positive** impact on their personal development. They declared that they would **absolutely recommend attending this seminar**.

The following suggestions for improvement were made during the feedback session:

- Including more time for the policy brief preparation and feedback;
- Including more collective social moments;
- Include more group activities and/or practical sessions;

For more information, visit
www.tepsa.eu

