

Swiss-Estonian Cooperation Programme

Support Measure "Supporting Social Inclusion"

**Minutes of the Steering Committee meeting**

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| **Date**  **and time:** | | 16.10.2024  11:15 – 13:30 | |
| **Place:** | | Integration Foundation  Linda 2, Narva | |
| **Participants:** | |  | |
| Members with Voting Rights: | | | |
| Kärt Kallion | | Chair, Representative of the Programme Operator, Ministry of Culture |
| Olga Gnezdovski | | Representative of the Programme Operator, Ministry of Culture |
| Evelin Liechti | | Swiss Contribution Office of the Swiss Embassy to Estonia |
| Sandra Prince | | Swiss Contribution Office of the Swiss Embassy to Estonia |
| Ege Ello | | Representative of the National Coordination Unit, State Shared Service Centre |
| Helena Musthallik | | Representative of the National Coordination Unit, State Shared Service Centre |
| Members without Voting Rights: | | | |
| Keit Spiegel | | Participated via Teams, Representative of the Programme Component Operator (Component 1), Ministry of Culture |
| Ülar Vaadumäe | | Representative of the Programme Component Operator (Component 2), Ministry of Social Affairs |
| Anu Vau | | Representative of the Programme Component Operator (Component 3), Ministry of Education an Research |
| Ave Osman | | Representative of the Programme Component Operator (Component 4), Ministry of the Interior |
| Observers: | | | |
| Margit Tilk | | Ministry of Culture |
| Viola Läänerand-Moisto | | Integration Foundation |

**Agenda:**

1. Opening remarks, introduction
2. Updates on the Support Measure "Supporting Social Inclusion"
3. Presentation of Components
4. Questions and discussion on presentations
5. Discussion addressing the approval conditions of the Support Measure:
   * Logframe indicators
   * Joint discipline of language

**Item 1. Opening remarks, introduction**

The meeting was opened by chair Kärt Kallion, who welcomed the participants and emphasised that the first Steering Committee meeting and opening event are important milestones in the implementation of the Support Measure. The Chair introduced new members of the Support Measure team: Olga Gnezdovski and Keit Spiegel. Recognition was given to all the participants for their active involvement in the support measure so far.

Opening remarks were given by Evelin Liechti, who expressed gratitude for the preparations for the meeting and the opening event, highlighting that for the Baltic States, where a total of nine programmes are being implemented, this is the first off-line Steering Committee meeting.

Viola Läänerand-Moisto welcomed the participants to the Integration Foundation in Narva, pointing out that the office situated in Narva is the main office of the Foundation.

**Item 2. Updates on the Support Measure "Supporting Social Inclusion"**

**Item 3. Presentation of Components**

Olga Gnezdovski presented the update on the support measure, focusing on general management issues. The thematic and more detailed view was presented by the programme component operators.

For more information, please refer to the attached presentation.



**Item 4. Questions and discussion on presentations**

1. Evelin Liechti asked why it was decided to have only online workshops in the frames of the partnership with the Swiss partner.

Olga Gnezdovski explained that there are three main types of cooperation formats: online workshop, study visit to Switzerland and visit of Swiss expert to Estonia. During the kick-off meetings between the Swiss and Estonian partners, which have so far taken place for three components (the kick-off for Component 2 will take place on 5 November), it was decided that it would be useful to start with online workshops in order to better understand the context and background of each country. An additional benefit is that more people can take part in the online workshop.

Ave Osman noted that during the workshops we reach a common understanding so that the partner organising the study visit knows exactly what we need and what our specific interests are. Given the high cost of the study visit, it is essential that the visit aligns closely with our needs.

Kärt Kallion added that, as the programme components are still in the development phase and designing their activities, online workshops seem to be a more effective approach. These workshops provide us with more valuable insights as we plan our activities. In the coming years, following these workshops, we will have a clearer understanding of the specific organisations we want to visit and the topics we want to explore during the study tours.

1. It was mentioned that the timeline for procurements is currently the same as in Support Measure Agreement Annex C, with the exception of procurement in Component 2 “Advertising new possibilities and positive changes in social care and child protection studies and work environment” which is postponed to 2026 to better align with the development of the updated curricula.
2. Participants discussed the optimal method and frequency of information flow to ensure that no important updates are missed. **It was agreed that the exchange of information with the Swiss Contribution Office (SCO) would be linked to Task Force meetings**, which are scheduled approximately four times per year. Additionally, two Steering Committee meetings are planned each year, with the option to hold additional meetings as needed for urgent discussions or decisions.

Moreover, the SCO expressed the particular interest in events conducted in English (e.g., online workshops with the Swiss partner). The SCO may wish to attend these as part of monitoring missions or to gain insight into the activities (how and what is actually happening). However, the information on events in Estonian can also be shared. In addition, participants noted that combining Steering Committee meetings with monitoring missions where possible would be beneficial.

1. Evelyn Liechti asked about Component 1, where media literacy trainings are focused on adults aged 50 and older. However, young people are also very vulnerable to disinformation. Why was the decision made to target adults 50+?

Keit Spiegel explained that research in this field indicates that adults aged 50 and older are particularly vulnerable to disinformation, largely due to historical factors and lower familiarity with digital tools. As Estonia is a digital nation, where almost all state services are accessible online, it is essential for this target group to understand how to use IT tools effectively and how to assess the accuracy of the information they receive. Regarding young people, media literacy is already addressed in schools as part of the national curriculum, which provides younger generations with essential skills to navigate digital information.

1. Evelyn Liechti asked about Component 3, which includes activities intended for parents. Do you already know in which languages this counselling or training for parents will be provided?

Anu Vau answered that this issue has been discussed. To effectively reach parents from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, it won’t be feasible to conduct all activities exclusively in Estonian. Depending on the nature of the activity, we may use translators, provide pre-translated materials, or add subtitles for online workshops. The main language we will be translating into is Russian, but we also need to think about other languages, such as Ukrainian. However, it is not planned to translate everything into multiple languages.

1. Participants discussed communication issues.

The SCO presented a fact sheet on the Cooperation Programme and an infographic on the Second Swiss Contribution. It was suggested that it could be beneficial to have these materials available in Estonian and published on the programme's website.

The SCO highlighted their interest in any communication conducted in English, as this would allow them to share the information on their website.

In addition, the promotion of the Support Measure was discussed. While the SCO accepts the country’s approach of not producing branded goods, it was noted that alternative ways to promote the Support Measure should still be considered. The Estonian counterpart shared examples from projects funded by other funds, where promotional activities included videos, TV shows, and radio campaigns. However, such promotional activities are generally more impactful and attractive when project results are available to showcase, so they may be more appropriate for future phases rather than the upcoming year.

**It was agreed that the Estonian side will bring up these communication issues at the regular communication meeting organised by the State Shared Service Centre.**

**Item 5. Discussion addressing the approval conditions of the Support Measure**

**Logframe indicators**

For background information, please refer to the supporting documents that were distributed in advance.



1. The Swiss side outlined their general approach to the logframe, emphasizing their flexibility with regard to it. They highlighted that while they do not view the logframe as unchangeable, they understand that the Estonian system is somewhat more complicated, as these indicators must be integrated into contracts/orders with implementers. The Swiss side also clarified that they do not want to change the logframe completely. However, given the logframe’s critical role in steering and monitoring the Support Measure, they emphasized the importance of assessing during implementation which indicators remain relevant, which do not.

In addition, the Swiss side noted that core indicators are of particular importance to them, as these are reported to parliamentarians. Currently, the logframe only includes one core indicator, but SCO has identified two more that could be added. These are:

* *CIV\_CI\_3 Number of volunteers mobilised,*
* *CC\_CI\_1 Number of people benefiting from training to improve institutional and professional capacity.*

In the opinion of the SCO, this change should not affect the content of the logframe, as similar indicators will be tracked anyway.

**It was agreed in regard to core indicators that:**

* The SCO will submit a written proposal to include two additional core indicators.
* The Estonian side will review this proposal, comparing it with the existing indicators and identifying targets for new core indicators.
* A written procedure will follow to formalise these changes.

1. **It was agreed in regard to disaggregation that:**
2. In the outcome indicators where target group is people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds and the measurement unit is percent or number of participants, the minimum package of basic characteristics to be collected and along which disaggregation should be done is as follows:

* Mother tongue
* New immigrants
* Refugees, distinguishing Ukrainian refugees
* Gender

In the context of the given Support Measure, people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds are considered as a disadvantaged target group, as they need to integrate into Estonian society in order to become fully engaged and active members of it.

1. In the outcome indicators where the target group is professionals and the measurement unit is the percentage of specialist or the number of participations, disaggregation will be done along the following sector:

* Professionals in the field of child welfare
* Professionals in the field of social work
* Professionals in the field of education, with a further breakdown into specific groups such as teachers, support staff, youth workers, etc
* Gender

In the context of the given Support Measure, professionals are considered as a non-disadvantaged target group.

1. For indicators where measurement unit is yes/no or the disaggregation mentioned in I and II is not possible, qualitative information should be included in the Annual Reports according to the context (content-wise description and examples).
2. **It was agreed that in justified cases also ethnic Estonians and Estonian speakers are allowed to participate in trainings and services implemented in the frames of intermediate outcome 1 and immediate outcomes 1a and 1b.**

**Joint discipline of language**

The file on the joint discipline of language has been elaborated. For background information, please refer to the supporting documents that were distributed in advance.

**It was agreed:**

* The document will be further elaborated, as the SCO received two additional questions that will be sent to the Estonian side for response.
* The second sentence in reply four should be rephrased to make it clear that funding from the state budget will remain at the 2024 level.
* The document will be maintained as a live document. Any additions, updates, or new questions that arise can be incorporated here as needed.

**Final item. Other issues**

Evelyn Liechti pointed out that, according to the decision letter, sustainability elements should be discussed at every Steering Committee meeting. While it may be too early to address this in detail at the current stage, **it was agreed that the discussion on the sustainability will be included in future agendas.**

The SCO proposed holding the **next Steering Committee meeting during the week of 17–21 February 2025**.

After the meeting, the Steering Committee was introduced to the services of the Integration Foundation and visited Narva Estonian Gymnasium.

Chair Minutes secretary

(digitally signed) (digitally signed)

Kärt Kallion Olga Gnezdovski

Head of Foreign Financing Coordinator of Estonian-Swiss cooperation programme