



ANNUAL EVENT  
 “Cross Border Cooperation. Advancing Partnership. Bridging Together”  
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**Summary of the Workshop “Good partnership as a base for project success”**  
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**PARTNERSHIP** – what makes good partnership. Good partnership is a combination of many things. And all of them are more or less important and none of them can be dismissed, if we aim for GOOD partnership.

What are the components of a good PARTNERSHIP?			Additional proposals by Workshop participants
P	People	All starts with people. Organizations do not form partnerships. Actually we can say that instead of “good partnership” there is a “bunch of good people working together”. We should realize that since it is all about people there is a large variety of them. Some people are very likable, some silent, some talkative, some punctual and some always a little late and so on. Forming a good partnership is constant work and interaction with people. With all of them.	Project, progress
A	Alive	Signing a partnership agreement or partnership statement does not mean that now there is a partnership. It starts when you start doing things together, when you come “out from the paper”.	Aim, agreement, argument
R	Real relationship	Partnership is a relationship with all its ups and downs. So for good partnership one should have a good relationship or at least “a relationship”.	Risk, results

		<p><i>There was a project where outside of the official meetings different partner representatives did not have ANY contacts. That led to a situation where all people were doing their individual work (good professional work) and at obligatory meetings all the energy was used for proving that everyone's work is good enough and suitable for the joint result.</i></p> <p><i>Result was achieved, but with much more time and energy and it led to no contacts in future.</i></p>	
T	Time	<p>Partnership is something that is created over larger period of time. Like a family.</p> <p><i>This might be somewhat an extreme story, but there was a partnership that was first formed in 2006 by Estonians and Latvians. In 2011 when they were already finalizing their second joint project I asked our people of something funny or peculiar that they feel about our joint project and partners. One of my Estonian partner representatives told me "You know, Sille, I'm finally not afraid of Latvians any more!" It took 5 years! And just a few hours later to the same question I received an answer from a Latvian "You know, funny thing is that I finally understand what Estonians mean, when they are saying something".</i></p> <p><i>They are now working together on the 3<sup>rd</sup> project and results are achieved without any big difficulties.</i></p>	Trust, truthful
N	"NO"	<p>Good relationship requires a skill to say "no" when it is needed. And a skill to take "no" as an answer.</p> <p>Sometimes we are very enthusiastic and we want to do a lot. So if we are asked: "Could you...?" then the answer is "Sure"/"yes". But sometimes the answer should actually be "No"</p> <p><i>In one of the projects there was a lady who had an excellent skill for that. "Could you ensure that it will be ready within two month?". "NO, the quality will suffer". "Could</i></p>	Nobility, "Never say never", negotiations

		<p><i>you, please, also involve these groups to the activity” - “NO, they bring no extra value”.</i></p> <p>It might be annoying, but by saying “no” you might start a discussion that will lead to more efficient solution.</p>	
E	Equality	<p>All partners must be treated equally. We are in it together with the same rights.</p> <p><i>In one of my projects I had a partner representative (a lead partner), who thought that her organization and herself were just so much better and with so much more rights than other partners. This superiority was showed in many different ways: talking out-loud at meetings with persons sitting next to her, while other partner representatives were discussing project matters, making funny faces, posting to Facebook really belittling comments about partners, allowing her always to be late with stuff, etc. Her attitude created a lot of uneasy situations for all. Project was finished with big difficulties and no future cooperation came from it. New initiatives are being developed, but without her organization.</i></p>	Enthusiasm
R	Responsibility	<p>We all have to be ready to take responsibility of our actions. Within partnership it becomes even more important.</p> <p>One promise given to a big group of people means new promises and actions based on this one promise. So if this promise is broken, there is a “snowball” effect that can cause a lot of on unnecessary problems.</p>	Resources, respect
S	Support	<p>Good partnership can be recognized by willingness to support each other.</p> <p><i>In one of my projects there were good study materials elaborated and some partners (Latvian) had not realized that they should have left budget for translation of materials into other languages. Within seconds after this was mentioned in the meeting, a few partners (Latvians and Estonians) told them just to send the files, as they were ready to</i></p>	Smile, skills

		<p><i>do the translation with their funds.</i></p> <p><i>In one project there was a situation, where a delay was expected in an activity due to a long tender process of that country. Immediately another partner from a neighboring country proposed to take the activity over, if needed.</i></p>	
H	Hard work	<p>All this is hard, hard work. I see my partners replying fast after office hours, when it is crucial for project progress. I see them learning new stuff. I see them working on overcoming our cultural specifics.</p> <p>So you know yourself that no relationship is built without hard work. It applies also to project partnerships. But it gets better as the partnership grows stronger, so it is actually investing in future.</p>	Human resources, honesty, hangover
I	Information	<p>There is usually less communication and information exchange than needed. The more you communicate, the more you achieve. Information is power: in partnership it means that the more information your partners have, the stronger the partnership.</p> <p>And here comes in the language issue again: information should be received by recipient correctly, which means that only a minimum may be “lost in translation”. And if some other language than official English is necessary for this aim be ready for that, if it is suitable and possible.</p> <p><i>It was in 2005 when I was working with Estonians, Latvian and Lithuanians. And of course the official language of the project was English. But at one point I realized that although we agree on things, something is wrong. I started to think that perhaps I was not understood. So just accidentally I started to talk in Russian. And things improved rapidly. Not only results, but also our relationships.</i></p>	Innovative, inspiring
P	People	<p>Finally again – it is all about people. Everything that is said above relates to people. So as said, there is no such thing as a “good partnership”, there is a “bunch of good people doing things together”. Like you.</p>	Problems, partners, public, project



When talking about stories one cannot think only about positive or negative stories. Sometimes there are good times and sometimes bad, like in life in general. As long as we keep it in our minds we can continue building partnerships and cooperating.

**Send your funny or positive or difficult or surprising partnership stories, so we all could learn more from your experience. Send your stories to [sille@gravitas.ee](mailto:sille@gravitas.ee), I will add them to our workshop summary and send out to you all.**

Thank you again for your participation and involvement!

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*The contents of this Workshop summary are sole responsibility of Sille Talvet and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the Estonia-Latvia-Russia Cross Border Cooperation Programme within European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument 2007-2013 and Programme participating countries, alongside with the European Union.*