



Tempus



ASPIRE Dissemination in Astana, Kazakhstan

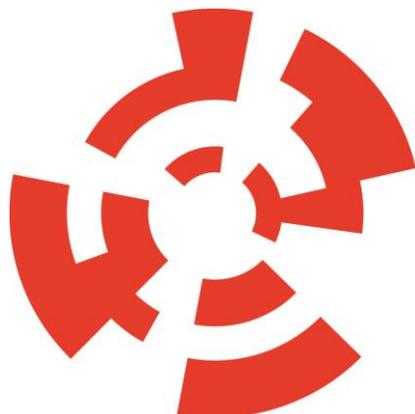
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Hosted by:

*S.Seifullin Kazakh Agro Technical University, Astana Kazakhstan,
September 21st-22nd 2015.*



S.Seifullin Kazakh Agro Technical University



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1. Introduction

Hosted by S.Seifullin Kazakh Agro Technical University, Astana, Kazakhstan this Dissemination visit involved delivery of intensive 2 day ASPIRE Curriculum Training and workshops. This training and workshops focussed upon the models and training methods employed throughout the project. The workshops were aimed at Regional stakeholders in Kazakhstan and focussed on various modules of the ASPIRE Curriculum such as the *Use the Library* module, *Marketing*, *English for Specific Purposes (ESP)*. The visit also included delivery of a selective and intensive training input of Library and Information Literacy Training Seminars to lecturing and library staff as well as postgraduates of S.Seifullin Kazakh Agro Technical University.



Figure 1: Map of Kazakhstan

This visit to Kazakhstan is a central component of the ASPIRE project as per the original project application. The involvement of Kazakhstan in the ASPIRE project owes its origins to the original Tempus project application. This application specifically included dissemination in Kazakhstan as well as the Russian Federation due to the inputs received from Russian & Kazakh university and NGO partners in the original project application not to mention their intellectual property used for

TEMPUS PROJECT Access to Society for People with Individual Requirements 530345-TEMPUS-1-2012-1-GE-TEMPUS-JPHES the purpose of this project. Additionally EU partners involved in the project application agreed to be involved on this basis and subsequently see this as a mandated activity.

As mentioned the strong involvement of both Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation is highlighted in the original application and features strongly on page 85 of the original project application and also in Work package 9. Pages 152-159 are almost completely devoted to Dissemination in Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation hence these Dissemination Workshops are part of the essential fabric of the project.



Pictured (from left to right- centre) Jerald Cavanagh BSc Econ, MSc, MA, Institute Librarian, Limerick Institute of Technology and Padraig Kirby BA (Hons), HdipLIS, MSc (LIS), Senior Library Assistant, Limerick Institute of Technology with some of the participants in the ASPIRE Dissemination Workshops, S. Seifullin Kazakh Agro Technical University, Astana, Kazakhstan.

2. About S. Seifullin Kazakh Agro Technical University

S.Seifullin Kazakh Agro Technical University (KATU) trains students in areas such as: economy, agriculture, architecture, land planning, computer systems and vocational training, technical, veterinary medicine and technology of animal husbandry, humanitarian and energy. The University Library “develops pace with the times” and “improving the information literacy of library staff and library users generally is one of the priorities” (KATU 2015).

The university is on the way of becoming a research institute and always encourages scientific projects and new initiatives. The University has introduced

multilingual education and has a practice of staff exchange. Moreover the University works to identify, develop and disseminate evidence-informed approaches, engage academics, subject communities and institutes of higher education in examining current evidence about effective practice, and in using this evidence to make decisions about teaching, assessment, information literacy and research skills, assessment, curriculum design and support for students and Faculty staffs.

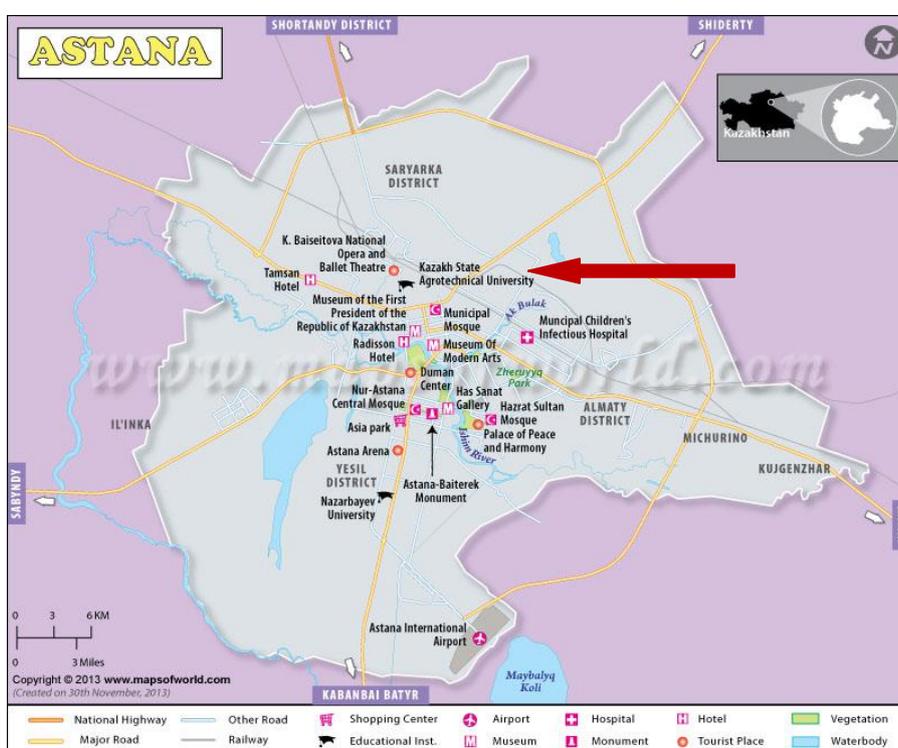


Figure 2: Location of S.Seifullin Kazakh Agro Technical University

KATU seeks to become a research university on the international level- in the agro industrial sphere by realisation of its mission and strategy (European Commission 2015). The University strives for close integration into the world scientific and educational space and “having partner communications with the world’s leading research universities and scientific centres of similar profile” (European Commission 2015). The University encourages unique training programmes,

TEMPUS PROJECT Access to Society for People with Individual Requirements 530345-TEMPUS-1-2012-1-GE-TEMPUS-JPHES projecting results of scientific research in educational processes and providing for the training of specialists with profound learning and developed skills of application of the acquired knowledge in real production. KATU actively supports introducing scientific results through educational processes, dissemination of knowledge and commercialisation of technologies.

Mission of KATU: The mission of KATU to 2025 is the construction of the best education system for advanced training of specialists and scientific-pedagogical personnel by providing a wide choice of training opportunities on the basis of unique Training programmes and academic mobility.



Pictured from right to left are Jerald Cavanagh BSc Econ, MSc, MA, Institute Librarian, Limerick Institute of Technology; Saltanat Meiramova Director of the International Cooperation and Multilingual Education Centre, Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor of the Teaching methods of Foreign languages at S. Seifullin Kazakh Agro Technical University; Padraig Kirby BA (Hons), HdipLIS, MSc (LIS), Senior Library Assistant, Limerick Institute of Technology.

3. The Dissemination Workshops

These Dissemination Workshops in Astana, were aimed at regional stakeholders in Kazakhstan and focussed primarily on various modules of the ASPIRE Curriculum and dissemination about the ASPIRE project. Key staff from other Kazakh universities, NGOs and Ministry of Education were invited and participated in the Workshops. We also delivered a selective and intensive training input of Library Access and Information Literacy Library Training Seminars (Module 3 of the Aspire project) to lecturing and library staff as well as post-graduates of S. Seifullin Kazakh Agro Technical University (KATU), Astana, Kazakhstan. Almost 80 people

TEMPUS PROJECT Access to Society for People with Individual Requirements 530345-TEMPUS-1-2012-1-GE-TEMPUS-JPHES attended the lectures and presentations about ASPIRE and of these approximately 20 persons attended each Workshop.

A first goal of these Dissemination Workshops and training was to promote a tolerant attitude towards students with Special Needs and Disabilities and initiate awareness and a change in attitude. Representatives in Kazakhstan have underlined the importance of changing general public perceptions which still tend to view persons with special needs negatively to one of awareness and acceptance in society taking as an example the success achieved through the ASPIRE National Awareness Days in Armenia and Georgia held in 2014 and 2015 in which we took a leading role and participated in.

We believe that these workshops and training will help initiate a move towards access to inclusive education and non-discrimination for persons trying to access tertiary education and then the workplace in Kazakhstan.

4. Content of the Workshops:

The Dissemination Workshops focussed on the ASPIRE project and its main aims- to foster the rights of individuals with special needs to access education and enjoy the right of participation in everyday society. The programmes focussed particularly on the ASPIRE Curriculum developed by the project which is aimed at improving access to education for people with disabilities.



Participants engage in workshop activities at the ASPIRE Dissemination Workshops at S. Seifullin Kazakh Agro

One of the modules in the ASPIRE project is called "Use the Library" and we are specialists in the Library and Information Science field and we lead the design and implementation of this module in the ASPIRE project. Hence these Dissemination workshops also focussed on Library skills as well as the area of Information Literacy. Information Literacy is a vital lifelong learning skill for helping learners find and use reliable, quality information and to capitalise on the diverse and often overwhelming range of information choices which all of us have been confronted with on a daily basis by the power of the Internet and World Wide Web.

4.1 Main topics and themes

These Workshops covered various important topics and themes pertaining to the ASPIRE project such as Curriculum and administration of inclusive education for students with special needs; the role of libraries for inclusive education; role of media in highlighting the problems of students with disabilities; tradition of inclusive education in Universities and secondary schools in the European Union; English (ESP) in the internationalisation of inclusive education.

The workshops also dealt with important themes and concepts pertaining to the *Use the Library* Module and Information Literacy such as Information Sources and Resources, Evaluating Information Sources, Web Search Strategies and Tactics, Referencing, citation & Avoiding Plagiarism, Introduction to Bibliographic Software, Information Literacy and Academic Writing.



4.2 The Importance of Information Literacy

As a recognised skill for self-empowerment, self-actualisation, self-motivation and self-direction having Information Literacy (IL) as an important focus within the *Use the Library* module was an obvious choice for the ASPIRE project. The benefits of Information Literacy not just for learners with special needs but for all learners are best summed up by Lau:

Harnessed together, information literacy and lifelong learning substantially improve the set of personal choices and options opened up for, and offered to, an individual in the context of personal, family and societal matters; quality and utility of education and training in both formal school settings preceding entry into the workforce and later in informal vocational or on-the-job training settings; prospects of finding and keeping a satisfying job and moving up the career ladder rapidly and with appropriate rewards and making cost-effective and wise economic and business decisions (Lau 2006 p.12).

Information literacy involves having the ability to recognize when information is needed and having the ability to locate, evaluate and use effectively the information needed (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2000). Information literacy "is the keystone of lifelong learning" (Byerly & Brodie, 1999 cited in Lau 2006 p.7) and is "absolutely critical literacy to all sectors of society" (Kajberg & Lørring 2005 p.67).

Information Literacy components feature prominently in the *Use the Library* module, recognizing that access is not just about physical access to Library buildings or access to "easy to read" materials for example but also having the ability to access information effectively and efficiently. Mastering Information Literacy allows all learners to capitalise on the diverse and often overwhelming range of information choices which we have been confronted with by the power of the Internet. This great power has forced all of us to develop strategies for confronting issues concerning accessibility, reliability, authenticity and validity as well as information overload.

5. Disseminating about the Workshops and Synergies with other projects

We plan to disseminate about the visit in the media and similar to the brochure produced by Ogarev Mordovian State University (MRSU), Saransk which outlined Dissemination Workshops held in the Russian Federation in February 2015, we have developed this brochure about our visit to Astana, Kazakhstan to deliver the ASPIRE Dissemination Workshops which we will distribute widely. As well as this we plan to disseminate about the visit at national and international conferences as we understand does our partner in Kazakhstan.

In Tempus projects it is important to cultivate synergies with other Tempus projects where possible. In an example of such synergies, in June 2015 we presented and published a paper about the ASPIRE project at the 2015 *Western Balkan Information Literacy Conference* which was well received.

This conference was attended by delegates from around the World and was made particularly special by the attendance of Dr Christine Bruce from Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane Australia as Keynote speaker- widely considered to be the most important figure in Library and Information Science and Information Literacy in the World today and we ensured that Dr Bruce and all delegates were well informed about the progress and achievements of the ASPIRE project.

The Western Balkan Information Literacy Conference is supported by, inspired by and dedicated to the achievements of European Union Tempus project 517117 *Developing Information Literacy for lifelong learning and knowledge economy in Western Balkan countries*. This is a unique, pioneering European Union funded project which is led by Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) and which aims to develop information literacy for lifelong learning in the Western Balkans.

The specific objectives of the project are development of IL programs for lifelong

learning and their use in curricula as appropriate; development of innovative online IL modules for lifelong learning; harmonisation of the IL programs with those currently active in Western Balkan countries. An important objective, also, is strengthening the capacities of Western Balkan higher education institutions for strategic planning and implementation of IL programs, in order to instil transferable skills for a competitive, dynamic, knowledge-based economy, as well as to develop IL policy, guidelines, goals mission. The main outcomes of the project are guidelines for planning IL programs, harmonised contents for the teaching of IL, training of IL practitioners, development of innovative online IL modules, and implementation of IL programs, dissemination and sustainability of IL programs.

We believe that this visit to Astana to deliver Dissemination workshops is highly significant not only for the ASPIRE project but for our Tempus project 517117 in the Western Balkans. We will use all our networks and contacts to disseminate about this visit to Astana to further the main aim of the ASPIRE project- to improve access to Society for people with special needs and disability.

6. Conclusion

The Tempus ASPIRE project aims to foster the rights of individuals with special needs to access education and enjoy the right of participation in everyday society, to combat discrimination of the individuals with special needs by instilling awareness and acceptance in society as in line with Bologna Process and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The objective of the project lies in three strand implementation of a comprehensive sustainable curriculum in Armenia and Georgia for the following target groups:

- Teacher Trainer Educators and Lecturers (Universities);
- Government & State Employee & Policymakers (Public Administration Educators);
- NGO (Non-university Educators).

A significant development in the second half of the project has seen the ASPIRE project expanding its influence to partners outside the project Consortium but who are part of the project plan hence aiding restructuring of university management and structures. Part of the ASPIRE project plan involves dissemination about the project activities and trainings in Universities in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan.

The overall aim of this series of Dissemination workshops held during 2015 first in Saransk, Russian Federation in February and Astana, Kazakhstan in September was to address the strong interest in the ASPIRE project from universities and NGOs in Russia and in Kazakhstan which dates right back to when the ASPIRE project application was being formed- before the commencement of the project.

At the time of application, the project steering group felt it was better to concentrate on two smaller countries (Armenia and Georgia) for a more effective project implementation. It was, however, agreed to disseminate the project activities and trainings to these parties in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan and later present the results of the ASPIRE project in workshops to be held in these countries.

The first goal of these workshops was to promote a tolerant attitude towards students with Special Needs and Disabilities and initiate awareness and a change in attitude. Our Kazakh and Russian colleagues have underlined the importance of changing general public perceptions which still tend to view persons with special needs negatively to one of awareness and acceptance in society taking as an example the success achieved through the ASPIRE National Awareness Days in Armenia and Georgia held in 2014 & 2015.

The second goal of the workshops was to initiate a move towards access to inclusive education and non-discrimination for persons trying to access tertiary education and then the workplace.

We believe these workshops succeeded in their main objective of disseminating effectively about the ASPIRE project in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan and of raising awareness about critical issues affecting persons with special needs and disability who are striving to partake in education. We are very proud to have been

TEMPUS PROJECT Access to Society for People with Individual Requirements 530345-TEMPUS-1-2012-1-GE-TEMPUS-JPHES involved in both Dissemination Workshops in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan.

We are pleased to say as the EU partner given main responsibility for implementing ASPIRE Dissemination Workshops in Kazakhstan that these workshops were a success and we believe that they will aid "improvement of educational processes and living conditions of students and the professional and teaching staff" (KATU 2015).

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