

Programme board for Russia and Western Balkan

Minutes

24 January 2008, Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education, Bergen
11:00h – 15:00h

Present:

Board Members: Gunnar Jordfald, Olav Refsdal, Elisabeth Roman, Magny Thomassen, Frode Lieungh

Observers: Unni Poulsson, Lene Oftedal

Secretariat: Birgit Jacobsen, Arne Haugen, Ragnhild Solvi Berg

Apologies: Karin Hilmer Pedersen, Jasna Bogunovic Jakobsen, Harald Sandhåland

01/2008: Adoption of agenda

Decision:

The agenda was adopted.

02/2008: Adoption of minutes from meeting 17-18 October 2007

Decision:

Minutes from the meeting 17-18 October 2007 were adopted.

03/2008: Conflicts of interest

Decision:

The issue of conflicts of interest was not relevant for the agenda for this meeting.

04/2008: Seminar and follow-up of projects, Western Balkan

The Programme Board plans a seminar for project leaders in the programme in 2008. After initial discussions and communication with the project leaders, the secretariat has set up a tentative programme for the seminar. The programme has NOK 425 000 + approximately NOK 40 000 available for the arrangement.

Decision:

The seminar for the project leaders will be planned to be held in Beograd, tentatively in Week 39. The secretariat finds a suitable arranger among the project partners in Beograd. The secretariat completes a programme following the suggestions given by the Programme Board during the meeting, and sends the programme to the Board for a final decision. The participation from the projects should be as broad as possible within the economic frames for the seminar.

05/2008

Information about the economy in the programmes

The Cooperation Programme with the Western Balkans:
Unused funds in 2008 are reserved for the project seminar (04/2008).
Unused funds in 2009 are approximately NOK 1.5 millions.

The Cooperation Programme with Russia 2002-2006:
NOK 206113 remains from this programme period.

The Cooperation Programme with Russia 2007-2010

Decision:

*The Programme Board takes notice of the information.
The secretariat applies to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for a transfer of the remaining funds in The Cooperation Programme with Russia 2002-2006 to the budget of The Cooperation Programme with Russia 2007-2010.*

06/2008

Plans for the Programme Board

The Programme Board discussed possible future activities in connection with the Russia and Western Balkan programmes respectively. Possible activities are seminars/conferences at different stages of the projects and monitoring visits to projects. Several members concluded that the experiences from the concluding seminar in St. Petersburg in March, 2007 were very good.

Decision:

The secretariat elaborates a draft written plan based on the discussion in the meeting.

07/2007

The annual report from the Programme Board 2007

The secretariat presented a tentative plan and table of contents.

Decision:

The secretariat elaborates preferably two annual reports, one for each programme, following the table of contents accepted by the Programme Board. The Programme Board approves the report by e-mail correspondence before the production is finalised. The report should be ready by 15 June 2008.

08/2008

Information

a) Ukraine/Western-SUS

The secretariat informed that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has not formally responded to the report of January, 2007 from the Research Council, SIU and the programme board in spite several initiatives from the Research Council and SIU. For 2008, the MFA will support cooperation projects with Ukraine directly, and the Research Council was represented at a meeting about these issues in the MFA, November 2007. The MFA expressed interest for the idea of a cooperation programme, but there has been no further dialogue between RCN/SIU and the MFA.

Decision:

The Programme Board takes note of the information.

b) Comments to the Research Council's programme plan "International Relations in the North and Russian Society (INOR)

Birgit Jacobsen thanked the Programme board for the response to INOR, which the RCN sent out for comments in November, 2007. The RCN continues to elaborate the programme plan on the basis of the total response.

Decision:

The Programme Board takes note of the information.

c) "Geopolitics in the High North, Norwegian interests 2008-12, (GEOPOLITIKK-NORD)"

Birgit Jacobsen informed about the new research programme "Geopolitics in the High North, Norwegian interests 2008-12". Total budget for the programme period is NOK 25 mill. A call for proposals has been launched, and application deadline is 13 February 2008.

Decision:

The Programme Board takes note of the information

09/2008 Next meeting

Decision:

Monday 16 June 2008, Oslo

10/2008 Any other business

Unni Poulsson, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Scholarships to students from the Western Balkans

Unni Poulsson informed about a discussion in the MFA regarding funds for scholarships to young students from the Western Balkans for 1-2 terms. The aim is to provide an opportunity for the students to get experiences

from outside their countries. The MFA has not yet decided on how the scholarships will be arranged, or if it will be connected to the Cooperation Programme with the Western Balkans. Possibly, a pilot phase will be established the first year of the scheme.

Unni Poulsson asked for an opinion and suggestion from the Programme Board.

Decision:

The secretariat elaborates a suggestion, or two alternative suggestions, for a scholarship scheme following the discussion in the programme board and the recommendation from the evaluation of the Cooperation Programme with South East Europe (2005).

The suggestion is sent to the Programme Board for comments and suggestions by e-mail, and a final draft to the MFA by mid-February 2008.

Oslo and Bergen

Gunnar Jordfald

Birgit Jacobsen
Arne Haugen