Insights into the cross-programme workshops

The results and suggestions provided here reflect the opinions of the funded projects. They do not claim to be exhaustive and do not represent an official position of the DAAD.

Workshop 1 – Subject-specific Networking and Institutional Synergies: And what are the other projects doing?

After a short round of speed dating, the participants met in various focus groups to discuss further networking opportunities. Suggestions included joint tandem teaching in bi- or multinational student groups, particularly in the form of summer and winter schools. While at least the German and Ukrainian students should be taught together, it would be desirable to include lecturers and students from neighbouring countries. In order to promote the dissemination of digitally taught courses, it was suggested that a joint digital platform be created in which students from universities that are not currently involved in DAAD projects could also participate. The participants expressed the wish to continue the exchange on a more regular basis. A suitable format would be a virtual regulars' table four times a year in alternating formats, both for a programme-specific and cross-programme exchange.

Workshop 2 – Between Blackout and internationalisation@home: What is good practice in the virtual auditorium?

During the discussion, it became clear that the focus of the projects is increasingly shifting towards hybrid teaching. Many students and lecturers did not want to leave the country to support family and friends in Ukraine. Digital formats with short-term stays in Germany are therefore in demand. This also makes it possible to prevent brain drain, for students and teachers to gain experience in an international context and to network at universities in Ukraine, Germany and Europe. Experiences gained during the Covid19-pandemic can be utilised when implementing digital/hybrid teaching formats. Co-teaching is a reasonable intervention to lift teaching in Ukraine up to European standards. However, it is important to first create a personal level of trust between the teachers. What is new for many teachers is that traditional communication channels such as email need to be replaced by lower-threshold formats such as "Telegram"-channels in order to reach students. The enrolment and status of Ukrainian students at German universities, access to learning management systems and access to/taking examinations (also depending on German federal state higher education laws) continue to pose challenges. According to the participants, considerations and adjustments should be made on a broader basis, as these regulations could also be applied to international or refugee students from other contexts in the future.

Workshop 3 – University Cooperation with Ukraine: What are the current challenges?

According to the participants, many of the discussed challenges in German-Ukrainian university cooperation intensified under wartime conditions. The administrative differences that arise when cooperating with German universities in different federal states due to the education system are now becoming more apparent. Furthermore, the Ukrainian higher

education sector must become more attractive for students, lecturers, and partner universities. This was primarily related to:

1. The outdated curricula, which are only gradually being adapted according to competence-oriented standards.
2. The low salary level for teachers in Ukraine, which may discourage Ukrainian teachers from returning after their experiences abroad.

The war situation in Ukraine also poses particular challenges for the projects. Recurrent power cuts, destroyed classrooms and the flight situation or military service of many teachers and students pose a major challenge for the planning and implementation of teaching and mobility programmes. Long-term funding commitments, the financing of infrastructure and flexibility in the funding programmes are therefore important.

In addition to all the challenges, the opportunity to put the higher education system on a new footing with the reconstruction and thus bring it closer to the European education structure was also discussed.

Workshop 4 – Sustainability and Dissemination of Project Results: What remains?

Continuity should be sought in teaching, research, administrative structures / science management and infrastructure. However, sustainable results are difficult to achieve due to the short planning and funding periods in the programmes; longer-term funding would be important, also with regard to the future usage of expertise that the staff has acquired during the project. Strengthening networks within Ukraine is crucial for ensuring long-term impact and for involving new partner universities. Another important factor is the visibility of the funded projects, which is why the importance of public relations work based on professional and sustainable concepts is emphasised. Risk management must be included to support the resilience of projects.

Workshop 5 – Reconstructing Ukraine: How can university cooperations contribute?

For the future development of the funding programmes, the participants saw the need for a long-term change in focus from emergency aid to maintaining teaching. This is necessary so that both sides benefit and cooperation on an equal footing is strengthened. The very different requirements for reconstruction - depending on the location of the respective university - due to the war were also discussed. These included the destroyed infrastructure, the replacement of missing teaching staff, the relationship between online and face-to-face teaching and the need to award a wide range of scholarships instead of promoting elites.

In terms of cooperation formats, particular emphasis was placed on joint modules and double degrees (with digital elements), for which in turn legally secure examination options would have to be created. The establishment of personal connections between project members - ideally during a physical exchange stays - as well as the involvement of doctoral

students who remain at the universities for a longer period of time form a sustainable basis for this.

According to the participants, German universities could learn from Ukrainian universities in the areas of resilience and digitalisation. Topics of common interest include infrastructure protection and interdisciplinary topics. Integration into the European education area and development studies (including "building back better" and "advancing good governance") are relevant for Ukrainian universities.

Ukrainian universities could also benefit from cooperation projects when it comes to developing more practice-oriented, participatory teaching programmes and advancing the professionalisation of administrations. According to the participants, change requires the support of the Ukrainian Ministry of Education, which could also be enriched with expertise from the German side through political dialogue.