

Interim Activity Report (March-August, 2003)

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March At the beginning of March, I took part in the first IPF seminar in Budapest. In general, during the rest of the month, I finalized pre-project activities such as selecting/purchasing the equipment and preparing the necessary documents related to the receipt of the grant from OSI.

Some time was also spent on learning how to create web-sites and creation of my IPF web-page.

April During April, I conducted several discussions with my local mentor. The goal was to develop the initial research methodology and approach. Discussions on the same issue were also conducted with a number of local economists. As a result, the methodology was developed.

April was a starting month for statistical data gathering and conducting literature review (as envisaged in the project timetable). In particular, I established contacts with some experts from the State Statistics Committee and discussed availability and accessibility of the necessary data. We also agreed on a continued cooperation.

In the middle of the month, I started preparation for the Bucharest conference. At the end of the month I visited the Conference. During the conference, I was a facilitator for two working groups. Besides the scheduled events, I participated in the CIS working group meeting.

During April, some time was also spent on arranging my trip to the 12 WCTOH in Helsinki.

May During May, I continued my data gathering efforts. Data gathering was accomplished via contacting with the State Statistics Committee and the press review. As a result, I managed to obtain data needed for conducting initial analysis (the data were incorporated in my draft research paper). Since my project attempts to analyze data for a rather long time period, the major difficulty was to receive proper time-series data as this is not always available in Ukraine. In addition, some time was spent on processing the data (necessary adjustments, transformations, ensuring comparability over time, etc.).

Another major activity during the month was finding and reading international tobacco control literature. Naturally, these were mainly papers devoted to tobacco economics. In particular, I looked for economic models in the area of tobacco control as my research envisages extensive use of such models. In addition, I started gathering international statistical data as this will be needed to conduct cross-country analyses at the second stage of my project.

June

In the first half of June, I participated in the second IPF seminar in Budapest. During the seminar, I had discussions with Mr. Krasovsky who is working on the advocacy project in Ukraine. As a result, I received recommendations on the layout of my research and topics to be included.

After coming back from the seminar, I started doing initial economic research for my project. This was done on the basis of data received by that time.

The literature review process continued as well. This included review of the Ukrainian press in order to receive information on tobacco companies' advertising activities. While such information is scarce in Ukraine, I managed to find some data on tobacco advertising strategies and expenditures.

July

During the month, I continued my research activities. In particular, I built preliminary econometric models which were included in my interim research paper. These were discussed with my local mentor. While doing the research, I received some additional tobacco control papers and statistical data from Mr. Krasovsky.

At the end of the month, I managed to obtain data of a nation-wide household survey a part of which was devoted to health issues and smoking. The survey was conducted by the State Statistics Committee of Ukraine in 2002. Some of the data were already analyzed and partially incorporated in my research, while this valuable source of information will be extensively used for further analysis as it provides extremely useful information on smoking and health in Ukraine.

August

From August 2 till August 9, I participated in the 12th World Conference on Tobacco or Health in Helsinki. During the Conference, the issue of my international mentor was finalized and I had an initial meeting with Hana Ross who agreed to be my project mentor.

The rest of the month was spent on continuing my research and finalizing the draft research paper, the financial report, and this activity report. A little bit later, the interim research paper was sent to my mentors and they have already prepared the IPF mentor critique forms. As well, I have already received comments and recommendations related to improvement and continuing my research from my local mentor. In this regard, I had an extensive discussion with my local mentor.

At the stage of the draft research paper preparation, I did not manage to analyze all tobacco control tools. This was due to time constraints and current unavailability of all necessary data. This will be accomplished during the second stage of the project. At the same time, according to my plans, I would like to generate a comprehensive policy paper containing analysis and policy recommendations regarding effective tobacco control policy in Ukraine and this requires comparative analysis of all tobacco control tools. Therefore, the draft policy paper was not prepared yet. As soon as I conduct analysis of all major tobacco control tools, the policy paper will be prepared and uploaded to my web-page.
