

# CRIMEA POLICY DIALOGUE

## Final Evaluation Report

### Executive Summary

#### Crimea Policy Dialogue

The Crimea Policy Dialogue (CPD) had been a remarkably successful project, but its ultimate conflict prevention goal could not be fulfilled due to the change in geopolitical conditions. The evaluation found that all CPD stakeholders were highly appreciative of the Dialogue experience, its concept, facilitation, intellectual content and the choice and the variety of subjects covered. The issues, upon which the Dialogue concentrated – identity, Crimean School and land, - were found relevant. Year 2013 amplified the effects of the previous achievements. The highlights included the identity stream, research products on innovative subjects and the preparatory work for implementation of the Crimean School. Inroads were made into institutionalisation of the CPD.

The situation altered in 2013 when politisation along pro- and anti-Maidan lines happened, including among the members of the CPD core group. The mitigation measures discussed in January – February 2014 were overdue as escalation of the conflict reached a stage beyond their remit. PATRIR endeavoured to find avenues for continuation of dialogue in the aftermath of the change in jurisdiction of Crimea, but meaningful formats for searching for a common ground were not available.

Since March 2014 the Dialogue split into a minority which accepted annexation and the majority who did not. This spelt the end of the CPD as a conflict prevention and confidence-building tool. Subsequently, several CPD core group members relocated to Kyiv where they acquired new careers, and two former Crimean Russian participants obtained political appointments with the *de facto* authorities. The unanswered question is whether any from among CPD participants had links to the parties that deployed violence. Some core group members experienced disappointment with the betrayal of trust which they felt the Dialogue had built. There is a sense of a lack of closure and perhaps a need for explanation for the positions taken, as the participants are coming to terms with what happened. Co-directors may consider whether they can facilitate a closure across the political divide. Still, most interviewed former members preserved good memories of each other despite the political gulf.

In terms of impact, the CPD played a valuable role, contributing to de-escalation of inter-communal violence in February – March 2014 inside Crimea. Geopolitics was not the central issue for the CPD, and its relative success or failure cannot be assessed against it, although it may have been slow in reacting to conflict gestation in 2013. The Dialogue worked on internal issues in the peninsula and was successful in this respect, but the locus of the problem which led to the dramatic shift was not in Crimea. The measures which could have worked towards prevention of conflict in Ukraine include an inter-communal dialogue in the ‘political West’ of the country to create a space to express grievances and aspirations and be heard by the power-holders. ‘Identity/ political nation’ dialogue was needed between pro-

Western and pro-Eastern experts in Kyiv to contribute to formation of a national identity which was not exclusivist. Crucially, a timely dialogue between Moscow and the EU over Ukraine on a middle-official and expert level could have been a tool to decisively affect the situation towards peace and unity.

It is important to analyse the experience of the CPD to understand the advantages and limitations of process-type dialogue interventions and draw wider lessons for peacebuilding field. The questions to reflect upon are (1) whether people compromise on their core values when a decisive historical moment arrives, and (2) to what extent participation in multi-stakeholder dialogue affects values, or only produces a short-lasting impact on attitudes and behaviour, and is unable to withstand the pressure of an emerging conflict. The evaluation only gathered data from the Kyiv side, thus the picture is incomplete, but gives food for further thought.

### Multilingual Education (MLE)

The MLE is a legacy project of the CPD and has developed when the latter could not proceed. PATRIR is credited for its ability to find a suitable way out of the difficult circumstances. The issue of MLE is relevant for the country context as bi-lingual education has been *de facto* practiced in its multi-ethnic regions, while the PATRIR initiative elevated it to a sound academic foundation. The project development was influenced, on the one hand, by supply of the available *know how* from the Crimean School initiative, and by demand from the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (MoE) interested in promotion of Ukrainian among minorities without prejudicing their rights for studying in their native languages. Goodwill of the MoE was essential. It selected the target geographic areas in the west and south-west of Ukraine on the basis of their multilanguage environment. It can be argued that the piloting of a new MLE tool is best undertaken in the conditions of relative social stability.

The project had a slower start than envisaged but implementation picked up pace in 2015 when regional consultations, teachers' trainings and field visits were organised. Funds were efficiently used, and many activities have been undertaken on a fairly modest budget. Sound national capacities were critical for the project performance. Enabling factors were an encouraging legal environment in Ukraine, commitment of the MoE which demonstrated policy support and a hands-on approach to implementation, commendable role played by national and international consultants, as well as dedication of teachers and regional educators.

The MLE project has made an excellent contribution to the development of quality multilingual education. The approach is accepted as an alternative in multi-lingual regions. The MoE used the CPD experience and experts for the development of methodology for other multilingual regions. Pilots have been officially approved by the Ministry and endorsed by the regional education authorities. Project achievements were many and include creation of a core group of teachers, methodologists, ministry officials and other educationalists. Teachers grew in confidence, improved their professional expertise, and benefitted from international expertise and networking. Although the pilot has been running for only two months, the demand for places in bi-lingual classes is growing. Parental support and eagerness of children is a sign of success. The project exceeded the ministry's own expectations, as more schools and parents got convinced, and the methodology has been winning their trust. It is too early to assess sustainability, but there are encouraging signs in legislative domain, in creation of a

resource base and in growing professional capacities and personal commitment of educationalists.

The MLE initiative approached the issues from an educational rather than peacebuilding angle, and the resultant project demonstrated little connection between MLE and conflict prevention/ building social cohesion. The stakeholders do not perceive such link and may be right in their thinking because presence of ethnic minorities *per se* does not necessarily presuppose existence of tensions over language and cultural rights.

### **Recommendations**

Language sphere is enormously ideological and politically-sensitive, as it touches upon the core aspects of identity and nationhood. The project needs to take great care in ensuring that MLE is promoted as a positive and enriching tool, and be conscious of the need for impartiality. Peace education and tolerance promotion should start at the central educational institutions in Kyiv, given that they set a standard for the regions in policy, practice and communication.

PATRIR is to decide whether it regards the subsequent phase as an educational project, or a conflict mitigation/ peacebuilding one. In case of the latter, conflict analysis of language sphere should be done and the role of the Russian language as one of the major conflict drivers in society will need to be addressed. PATRIR is recommended to engage with the question of Ukrainian/ Russian bi-linguism which can be promoted through MLE. The emerging issue is the new Law on Education which is likely to affect the legal environment. The project should be prepared to position itself vis-a-vis the ensuing debate. Policy on the kin states' role in language sphere would need consideration and positioning.

It is recommended that MLE is gradually expanded to involve all minority languages. This will require a sustained inter-communal dialogue, and that between the citizens and the state. PATRIR should make Crimean experience fully accessible to the interested parties and develop monitoring tools with the dual purpose of drawing educational lessons from pilots and assessing the impacts on social cohesion and peace relations. It is advised that MLE applies CPD dialogue facilitation techniques and events' organisation standards to enable structured interaction.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ARC	Autonomous Republic of Crimea
CPD	Crimea Policy Dialogue
CMI	Crisis Management Initiative
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland
MoE	Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine
MLE	Multilingual Education
HCNM	High Commissioner on National Minorities of OSCE
OSCE	Organisation of Security and Cooperation in Europe
PATRIR	Peace Action, Training and Research Institute of Romania
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

## Introduction

### CPD background and outline

Crimea Policy Dialogue (CPD) is implemented by the Peace Action, Training and Research Institute of Romania (PATRIR) with financial support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland as a part of its Wider Europe Initiative and in partnership with Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) in one activity. It worked in 2009-2014 on creating the groundwork for the institutionalisation of multi-level multi-sector dialogue and advocacy platform acting towards conflict transformation. The 2014 – 2015 phase concentrated on an options-generating dialogue component (Crimea Dialogue) and a cohesion and prevention oriented multilingual education component (Multilingual Education, or MLE). Finland has funded the project with nearly 1.2 million euro in 2009-2013. In 2014 the budget was 300 000 euros as of funding decision of 2 February 2014.<sup>1</sup>

### Purpose and Scope of the Assignment

The evaluation scope is the period of 2011-2015 of the CPD and includes the following objectives:

- Analyse the relevance of the key objectives of the project and assess to what extent these objectives have been attained;
- Assess the effectiveness of CPD's interventions in achieving its stated objectives and contributing to the relevant outcomes as stated in the project document;
- Evaluate the overall scope and impact of CPD's contribution;
- Provide recommendations on maximising the impact of the project and ensure sustainability of its results;
- Identify options for engagement with international actors active in the region.

### Methodology used

Field research for the evaluation was conducted in November 2015 in Kyiv, and was supplemented by phone and Skype interviews. 22 interviews were carried out with the following categories of key informants:

- Selected CPD core group members;
- Partners, key resource persons and beneficiaries of the project activities, e.g. teachers;
- National public authorities, including the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine;
- Donor representatives.

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<sup>1</sup> Crimea Policy Dialogue, MFA of Finland website  
<http://www.ulkoasiainministerio.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=299712&contentlan=2&culture=en-US>

One focus group was organised with regional coordinators and beneficiary teachers (5 persons) and a group discussion was held with 6 participants from Odessa province. The evaluator benefitted from discussions and field observation at the conference on ‘Multilingual Education in Ukraine’ on 24 November. There was no opportunity to travel to Crimea which limited the evaluation scope, but one telephone interview with a Crimea-based respondent was held.

The MLE project history makes it inappropriate to apply the usual parameters to assessing its strategy and design, and concessions were made, as appropriate.

The disruption of the CPD by violent power change and subsequent annexation of Crimea makes it impossible to measure the outcomes and impact against expected ones as per project document. Instead, the evaluator collected evidence on the achievements reached by the end of 2013 which marked the beginning of descent into violence, and on the key participants’ reflections on the value, meaning and personal impacts of the Dialogue, and on where it ended for them. This is supplemented by the evaluator’s own expert judgement on the course of the Dialogue, its outcome and on whether anything could have been done differently. The evaluator acknowledges that this is an opinion rather than fact, and that there can be other views.

It is also noted that a full CPD evaluation requires a visit to Crimea to meet with the remaining participants there who have a direct stake in it. This could have shed light on the value and contribution of process-type intervention in conditions of sudden violent change, and advanced peacebuilding theory.

The evaluation was constrained by the late arrival of the documents related to the CPD dimension when the field mission was completed, which did not allow developing questions on their basis and using the project documentation in interviews for cross-checking and refreshing the respondents’ memories.

The report is written in a reverse chronological order: MLE project is covered first along the standard evaluation categories, and conclusions and recommendations for further development. CPD as a past project cannot be evaluated using the same yardstick; instead the evaluation offers an analysis of experience in a narrative format.

## MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION

### Relevance

The MLE is a legacy project of the CPD and has emerged in unusual circumstances. PATRIR should be credited by its ability to find an appropriate way out of the difficult and delicate circumstances. The project development was influenced, on the one hand, by supply of the available *know how* and the methodological approaches developed for the Crimean School, and by demand from the MoE interested in promotion of Ukrainian among minorities without prejudicing their rights for education in their native languages. In July 2014 PATRIR received an official letter from the deputy minister of education Mr. Polyankii requesting cooperation on MLE, affirming CPD’s previous successful advocacy efforts.

Goodwill of the MoE was essential, which selected the target geographic areas in the west and south-west of Ukraine on the basis of their multiethnicity and multilanguage environment. PATRIR team of consultants determined which schools and minority groups to work with, e.g. in Odessa province villages rather than Odessa city. An argument can be made that the piloting of a new MLE tool is best undertaken in the conditions of relative safety and social stability, so that it could be refined and monitored. This works in favour of selecting the regions which are not known for a high level of tensions.

In general, the issue of MLE is relevant for the country context. It has been raised by national minorities' associations 15 – 20 years ago, when a role of such organisations was prominent, although understanding of the MLE was unrelated to the methodology used by PATRIR. Respondents among teachers and regional educationalists revealed that bi-lingual education has been *de facto* practiced in Transcarpathia (among Slovak community) and Bukovina.

The initiative approached the issues more from an educational rather than peacebuilding angle, and the resultant project demonstrated a weak connection between MLE and targeted conflict prevention/ social cohesion. The teachers and educators from the regions did not see the relevance of MLE for conflict mitigation in their respective areas. The beneficiaries were adamant that there is no relationship between MLE and issues of conflict and peacebuilding. They may well be right in their thinking because presence of ethnic minorities *per se* does not necessarily mean that tensions over language and cultural rights exist. However, if the project developed in more regular conditions, a question of Russian language and its political role and attitudes to it would have arisen and had to be tackled in some way.

## Design and Strategy

The revised project document defines the MLE objectives as follows:

- To ensure capacities for quality education;
- To develop inter-communal understanding, interaction and interdependence;
- To improve social cohesion and reduce tensions, with the first year focused on piloting and capacity building.<sup>2</sup>

It states that the design follows the ‘research – dialogue - capacity building model’ established in the CPD, while the intervention strategy does not incorporate the first two elements, concentrating on capacity building foremost.

The targeted communities are Slovak in Uzhgorod (Transcarpathian province), Romanian/ Moldovan in the vicinity of Chernitsy (Bukovina) and rural communities in Odessa province which make up an area historically known as Bessarabia. The latter presents a mix of Romanians, Ukrainians, Gagauz and Bulgarians, with small numbers of Russians present in some villages. Ethnic composition of all these regions changed significantly since the World War II due to an exodus of some groups, e.g. Jews, resettlement of others and intermarriages. In the Soviet era, these minorities were taught Russian as a second language in addition to their mother tongues, and instruction in Ukrainian at schools with minority languages was low.

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<sup>2</sup> Multilingual description document, no date.

Commitment and ownership of the Ministry was a key variable in determining intervention strategy. It sought an educational change where MLE is recognised by the state, and parents and teachers as a mechanism for quality education and subsequent integration through Ukrainian language. The concept of MLE was important for the MFA, and it already made available Finnish experience in the CPD.

PATRIR stated that intercultural interaction and immersion, and absorbing experiences of others is also a valid objective. It stated that it sought to enhance a sense of belonging throughout Ukraine. PATRIR regards MLE as a tool for community dialogue aimed at bringing different ethnic groups together. It expresses that the MLE targets social cohesion and increased confidence. Its vision is an anchoring of MLE in law and educational directives, expansion of piloting so that the current pilots assume a life of their own. The direction of the desired change is from education to community dialogue through multitrack top-down (Ministry – local educational authorities) and bottom-up approaches, e.g. for society representatives (parents, teachers, community associations, ethnic leaders, churches) to influence policy.

However, this vision so far has been rather an aspiration than reality, and relevance of the design and strategy to conflict problematique has been uncertain. The intervention was not preceded by a conflict analysis of the country context or targeted regions: ‘we did not want to dig for a conflict, but to create a tool.’ It has not been spelt out between which parties confidence is to be built, e.g. between members of different ethnic groups, between minorities and the majority group, or between citizens and the state. An implicit understanding is that MLE refers mostly to inter-communal cohesion.

Feasibility assessments in the regions did not include an analysis of conflict drivers, although the CPD 2014 – 2015 activities plan envisaged that ‘political particularities of each region’ will be assessed. By the time of evaluation there was no sufficient material to relate MLE to peacebuilding in the selected areas. Indirect evidence, e.g. an interview with a project consultant, identified non-integration of Hungarian minority, dichotomy of rural versus urban environment, and tensions in Odessa city as potential issues. For example, the local authorities were initially opposing the feasibility assessment in Odessa, saying that it may provoke tensions, and their reluctance was only overcome through intervention by the ministry. The Odessa respondents stated that the ministry’s support and the status of an international project shielded them from these pressures.

Major conflict agenda in the country is centred on eastern and southern Ukraine, and language is one of the core divisive issues. However, it stayed outside the scope of the MLE project. Although involvement in Eastern Ukraine is included into the CPD 2014 – 2015 activity plan and logframe document, the Ministry expressed that it was not aware of it [or may not have been able to recall an earlier discussion – AM] and had no view on the reason why this did not take place. PATRIR took the decision in January 2015 not to include Eastern Ukraine into the selected regions. The Ministry expressed that an OSCE HCNM project on multicultural education already addresses the Ukrainian/ Russian dichotomy and there is no need for doing more. However, a national consultant with knowledge of that project was sceptical, noting that it does not sufficiently address the language problem. The evaluator’s efforts to solicit information and interviews with the relevant interlocutors at OSCE did not bear fruit, and the issue remains to be explored.

Educational goals made the MLE project concentrate on the linguistic environments where the level of teaching difficulty was higher than that in the case of Russian. Ministry maintains, with reason that the situation with Russian is different because the barrier is less of a linguistic than of political and cultural nature. An addition to linguistic proximity, they start from a different resource and expertise base. A developed domestic school of Russian philology with high calibre scholarly and pedagogical cadre existed in the Soviet times in Kyiv. This was not the case with respect of smaller ethnic groups where resources are minimal and linguistic barrier is high which prompted reliance on materials and expertise from abroad. Support for minority languages from kin states is a factor for their continuous viability in education system. Respondents noted pro-active assistance from Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Bulgaria. Still, this may also be regarded as an obstacle to integration.

In future, language education is to develop in the context of de-centralisation of governance system. It is uncertain what this process would mean for school curriculum and school financing. Education establishments would have more freedom to choose as how many languages they teach. At present, teaching of Ukrainian as a second language is supported by textbooks tailored for different minorities, e.g. Ukrainian for Hungarians, for Slovaks etc. Ministry interlocutors remarked that there are pros and cons in this approach, and this may be changing towards greater uniformity. In this context, functions of language at schools have to be assessed, e.g. in knowledge transfer, and in expression of thoughts and feelings.

## Efficiency

In 2014 PATRIR made the utmost efforts to continue with CPD, but the dramatic change in the circumstances was too powerful. It found a way out of a difficult situation, but it took a long time for the donor to receive the revised proposal, offering the MLE. The project received a no-cost-extension as an inception phase was needed, and the MLE piloting had to be adjusted to the school year. The evaluation regards the extension as justified. However, the project had a slower start than envisaged in the activities' plan: the consultation on "Multilingual Education in Ukraine: Experiences, Methodologies, Perspectives" took place end of January 2015 instead of October – November 2014. It picked up pace in 2015 when regional consultations, teachers' trainings and field visits were organised. Minimal staff costs were drawn by PATRIR during the period of diminished activities.

Continuity between the CPD and MLE projects happened through involvement of two national consultants (one from Crimea and another from Kyiv), the use of the same international experts and transfer of the *know how* elaborated in the Crimea School at CPD. The two project directors, who facilitated the CPD, were not involved in the MLE, while Denis Matveev ensured the handover and facilitated conception of the MLE as a new project.

The project was a low budget one. The available funds were a reallocation of the outstanding CPD budget, and PATRIR had to deal with this financial reality. Funds were efficiently used, and many activities have been performed on a fairly modest budget. Commitment of teachers and educationalists meant that many of them worked with no or very little financial reward. Regional coordinators were paid a small fee for organising logistics. Pieces of equipment were donated to the schools that piloted the MLE.

Project coordination was undertaken from Romania, with field visits to Ukraine's regions. PATRIR did not have an organisational capacity in Ukraine other than through the MoE

which played an active and valuable role in regional work. It was noted that PATRIR was mostly involved on a project coordinator's level, and its director had a limited field involvement.

The project has an active online platform that allows crowdsourcing and promotes an efficient use of resources. It was said to be in need of fine tuning, as too much is being uploaded, thus making it difficult to navigate. A set of user guidelines would also be helpful.

International consultants were a great asset to the project but it was reported that they were not always content with a lack of consistency in their involvement and uncertainty whether they were a part of a team. They did not sufficiently feel that they were playing a programmatic role with only a light involvement in consultation and planning.

The output on initial assessment of the needs and possibilities (prior to local consultations in the regions) was not produced, and the MLE reader which was to be translated in the languages of the 3 participating regions (Ukrainian, Russian, Romanian) is not available in this format.<sup>3</sup> However, PATRIR noted in electronic communication to the evaluation that the close approximation to

this are the Annexes from the Methodological Recommendations document that contains relevant exercises and activities. We believe that it is up to the teachers and educators to develop their own materials given the unique profiles of their classes/groups/schools/communities. However, we have printed and disseminated 2 publications developed in the framework of another project. We have obtained permission to from the project manager. We printed the following documents in Ukrainian, Russian, Romanian, Slovak and Bulgarian:

- 30 Activities to support Multilingualism at home. Parent's Guide on how to motivate children to use family languages;
- Case Studies. Personal Portraits. Families, Kindergartens and Schools. Sharing Their Experiences With Multilingualism.

It appears that PATRIR has done an appropriate effort in the circumstances when it was difficult to be certain about particular needs in supply of teaching materials.

Internal activity reports and evaluation reports prepared by external trainers/ consultants presented the main monitoring tools. They were compiled on a regular basis and allow monitoring progression. The evaluation quantitative data based on the events' monitoring and solicited feedback from the participants through a questionnaire is available in the case of two major events (it was too early for the 24 November 2015 final conference at the time of writing). Data for logframe indicator on 'positive reviews from participants show 70%+ overall satisfaction' shows that the project has exceeded the target in respect of those events when monitoring data is available.

Structured monitoring of lessons from piloting is yet to begin as the field experiment just recently started. Two consultants visited the regions, but a monitoring report was not available at the time of writing.<sup>4</sup>In future, monitoring of pilots will require more attention.

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<sup>3</sup> Interim report, March 2014 – Jan 2015.

<sup>4</sup> One consultant stated that the report was not required by PATRIR.

The Ministry noted that it has generic education monitoring tools available through the Pedagogy Institute, but they may not be conducive to this particular situation, as they mostly measure educational grades.

Information was provided to the MFA of Finland in a form of an interim report and an embassy representative was present at the final conference. The MFA did not visit from Helsinki for monitoring purpose and communication with the donor was based on report provision. The MFA did not acquire a sense that PATRIR intended to continue with the project.

CPD narrative report 2013 – March 2014 repeats verbatim some of the text of the mid-term evaluation without attribution. A practice of attribution to sources with the reference to authorship should be encouraged, and texts should be presented as quotations.

## Effectiveness

According to the CPD Activities plan and logframe, the anticipated impacts were:

- (1) Contribution is made to the improvement of the quality of the educational process, development of tolerance, and long term prevention of social tensions within multilingual regions of Ukraine.

The MLE project has made an excellent contribution to the development of quality multilingual education. However, there is no evidence to assess impacts on tolerance and prevention of social tensions. The proposed logframe indicator that MoE ‘approves the multilingual education approach as alternative educational methodology’ is appropriate for measurement of progress in education, but unsuitable as an indicator of reduction in social tensions.

- (2) Multilingual education approach is accepted as an available alternative in multilingual regions of Ukraine.

Available evidence suggests that there is movement in this direction, but the scale is yet too small and the project is still ‘young’ to be able to conclude that the approach is already accepted. An indicator proposed to measure this impact is ‘a pilot group of educational institutions is chosen, and accepted by local communities, to start implementing the multilingual education model starting with September 2015 in selected multi-lingual regions.’ It is surprisingly identical to the outcome (immediate objective), posing perhaps a philosophical question whether an impact indicator can be an outcome.

The expected outcomes were achieved: the MoE used the CPD / PATRIR experience and experts for development of the methodology for the other multilingual regions. Pilots have been officially approved by the Ministry and endorsed by the regional education authorities. The Pedagogy Institute prepared ‘Methodological Recommendations on Development of MLE in Primary Education in Ukraine’ with inputs from the MoE experts and regional coordinators.

Project achievements were many and include creation of a core group of teachers, methodologists, ministry officials and other educationalists. As MLE progressed, it mobilised

more teachers and directors into the initiative. Feasibility of MLE in three regions was assessed, with the result that Slovak community in Uzhgorod, Romanian/ Moldovan community in Bukovina and several smaller groups in villages of the Odessa province expressed consent to participate in the MLE piloting. For example, Romanian/ Moldovan community saw the benefits of the MLE in enabling their children to enter higher education in either Romania or Ukraine.

Methodology was tested and new methodological approaches introduced. The experiment went ahead in 9 educational institutions (5 schools and 4 nursery schools). The main language pairs are Slovak/ Ukrainian, Romanian/ Ukrainian, and Bulgarian/ Ukrainian, and tri-linguism was chosen in some Odessa province communities.<sup>5</sup> The teachers received a toolbox of methods and practices which they could try in the classroom. MLE elevated the use of multiple languages to a formal level to move from a spontaneous school practice to a pedagogical system based on an academic foundation. The evaluation did not find a ‘concept document for consultation workshop’

Schools were different: while a Slovak school is one of the best schools in Uzhgorod with high demand for places, village schools in Odessa receive less support and are less well equipped. Moreover, different age groups are involved – from nursery schools which start MLE with three years-old to older children of 11 – 12. These differences would influence subsequent monitoring.

Parental support and eagerness of children is a sign of success. Slovak school headmistress reported that more parents became interested as the pilot in her school progressed. Although the pilot has been running for only two months, the demand for places in bi-lingual classes is growing. The image of the schools and nursery schools enhanced as they have been offering an innovative teaching method. Teachers grew in confidence, improved their professional expertise, benefitted from international expertise and networking. It was an inspirational experience for them to participate in an international project. Pedagogy Institute appreciated an opportunity to meet western experts in MLE, such as Ekaterina Protassova from Finland, and benefitted from a ‘fruitful and creative process’ of engagement and establishing professional contacts.

Inroads were made into institutionalisation of MLE, while regions began to gain from exposure to each other’s experience. Reaching out to wider society started, and new segments got involved. For example, there is an interest in MLE from Roma community.

Enabling factors were an encouraging legal environment in Ukraine and a commitment of the Ministry which demonstrated both policy support and a hands-on approach to implementation. Role of school headmasters/ mistresses was key, and their commitment is a crucial variable for implementation. A commendable role was played by national (Tyshchenko and Kurkchi) and international (Grigule) consultants, as well as by dedication of teachers and regional educators. Sound national capacities were critical for project performance and counterbalanced an absence of field coordination. These assets should be valued and appreciated as such.

Conceptually, the CPD Crimea School was preceded by problem identification, legitimisation of the MLE model through multistakeholder dialogue, and joint design of response measures

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<sup>5</sup> There are also Russian and Gagauz languages present in Odessa province.

by leading representatives of the three communities. The MLE project did not have such luxury of inter-communal dialogue which requires time and effort, but instead sought to solicit cooperation of teachers, educational authorities and parents (and students where appropriate) to an already available design, adjusting it to the local settings. Still, assessment of factors ‘as risks to stability and social cohesion, namely language education policy,’ is deficient. Light steering by PATRIR may have influenced a deficit of conflict and social impact analysis of the piloted regions. The reports of national consultants offer information and conclusions on feasibility of the proposed interventions, but do not tackle the ‘why’ and ‘what for’ questions, because addressing these issues was not required by their terms of reference. In future, PATRIR senior staff needs to play a larger programmatic and intellectual role.

Although in most instances the buy-in consultations proceeded smoothly, one of the results was that the Hungarian minority in Uzhgorod (Transcarpathia) did not see the relevance of MLE but rather regarded it as a threat to an existing situation which they are satisfied with. It felt threatened by a fear a loss of the native language in young generation, possibility of diminishing support from the kin state and expressed reluctance to learn Ukrainian. Consultation also revealed that understanding of MLE goals in Odessa city did not match that of the project consultants. There, an interest among parents was in using MLE for teaching main West European languages, especially English. The project has not taken this route, although the Ministry is not immune to the idea. No community raised the issue of Russian language and it was not seen as relevant for the MLE.

Indirect project stakeholders include parents, ethnic communities’ associations and kin states involved through their embassies in Kyiv. Parents were consulted and their consent solicited which enabled the project legitimisation. In Bukovina, for example, 57 school children out of 200 take part in the pilot whose their parents were willing to try. They had a free choice whether they wished their child to attend a bi-lingual or a monolingual class and were given an opportunity to observe lessons. These children will be given a choice of language to take regular school tests in.

One initial objection across different communities was that parents would not be able to help their children with homework. The project argues that this is not needed; instead, it can fulfil an additional function of adult education when parents learn from their children. Another objection was a doubt that MLE is pedagogically viable and a fear that a child might not learn a single language properly. These objections and doubts were successfully overcome, and more parents are getting convinced. However, parents were seldom involved beyond legitimisation, and parent’s associations and school councils have not been active participants to provide a link with a wider community. The next step could be in making parents strategic partners and educating them, so that they, for example, promote bilingualism at home.

Continuity with Crimean School is rather indirect, as it only partially applied the Crimean approach in the steps’ sequencing. A CPD member who closely accompanied the Crimea School, shared his experiences and observations, and provided samples of lesson plans. In the opinion of Pedagogy Institute, tutorial aspects did not receive sufficient attention in Crimea because it was led by political experts which approached the School as a social rather than educational experience. The Institute was not fully aware what was done in Crimea in concrete terms. The evaluator did not find the research package on multilingual education to be given to participants during October – November 2014 workshop which was meant to clarify this. Recommendations, guidance and articles were available, but not the manuals and

practical exercises. In the teachers' opinion, they cannot be simply adapted from one language to another, but have to be produced anew for each language and the pupils' level of proficiency. Other relevant experiences used in the MLE project include Latvia and Georgia.

The project influenced legal change as MLE is incorporated in the draft of the new Law on Education (article 7), as the current law is due to be replaced. There are different views on whether a new Law may alter the present conducive environment, as the stipulation of education principles does not include a commitment to national minorities' languages.

Respondents reported the following difficulties:

- Possibility of school/ nursery school closure and surrounding uncertainty over future;
- Lack of teaching manuals and developed school curriculum. Many materials had to be prepared by teachers themselves in their spare time for no additional pay for teaching MLE;
- Hard to find sufficient number of teachers who can deliver subjects in different languages, especially in secondary school. Nursery schools offer low salaries to teachers and experience staff shortages;
- Publishing teaching manuals for minorities is expensive as languages are many while print run is small. Schools have few equipment for self-publishing.

Evaluation observes that impartiality requires some attention. For example, a term 'titular nation' was used during the conference which is divisive and sensitive for minorities.

## Results and Impacts

The project had in fact only a year for field implementation, and it is too early to expect many visible impacts. It can be said that the experiment demonstrated a positive dynamic and interaction within the educational community involved in the MLE. It exceeded the ministry's own expectations, as more schools and parents got convinced, and the methodology has been winning their trust. Attitudes among ministry's own staff changed. Inputs, such as training, provision of expertise and preparation of educational guidance produced a big impetus to go further. Teacher respondents expressed that children are getting used to answering questions in the language other than their own, while before, although they often understood a question, they would respond in their mother tongue.

The ministry considers that between three to five years will be needed to make the MLE fully tested and recommended for application in the relevant regions throughout the country.

Still, assessment of results is influenced by the lack of a shared understanding among the core stakeholder group of the project's wider political and social goals: to what end MLE is promoted? What are we doing it for? This makes it problematic to assess it other than as a pilot in education. Answers to these questions are essential and would influence development of appropriate monitoring tools in future.

## Sustainability

This is a too early stage to expect sustainability, and benefits may not be sustainable without further inputs for at least two – three years. However, there are encouraging signs in legislative domain, in creation of a resource base and in developing professional capacities and personal commitment of educationalists. Article 7 of the draft Law on Education which entered parliamentary hearing in December 2015 and expected to be in force in 2016, contains a provision for MLE, but without making it compulsory. Long-term investment would be in building professional capacity for MLE at universities. Ismail University in Odessa province approached the project with an expression of interest and volunteered to host a pilot.

## Synergies with International Stakeholders

The evaluation found the project to be insufficiently imbedded in the international development context and with relevant initiatives in the country, e.g. by the OSCE, the EU and bilateral donors. Its main connection with other projects in language sphere is via the ministry. It may lose out in synergies and country knowledge available, as well in communications.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

### General

Language sphere is enormously ideological and politically-sensitive, as it touches upon the core aspects of identity and nationhood. The issue at stake is an integrational role of Ukrainian; however, an aggressive promotion of Ukrainian as a ‘titular’ language at the expense of others may do more harm than good. The project needs to take great care in ensuring that MLE is promoted as a positive and enriching tool, rather than being framed in negative terms.

A related issue is that the language sphere tends to attract professionals often with strong views on national pride and patriotism, leaning on nationalism. It was observed that certain stakeholders involved in the MLE belong to this category and project such attitudes. PATRIR should be conscious of the need for impartiality, e.g. in the attitudes of regional coordinators and cooperation with the Pedagogy Institute. Its respondent expressed that ‘too much attention is paid to national minorities and their languages in our country. There is too much Russian in everyday speak. People identify themselves as ‘Ukrainian’ in passport, and at the same time state that Russian is their mother tongue.’

Peace education and tolerance promotion needs to start at the central educational institutions in Kyiv, given that they set a standard for the regions in policy, practice and rhetoric. It is recommended to organise a reflective dialogue on the relationship between MLE and peace with participants from the MoE, Pedagogy Institute and key academics working in language sphere.

At present, the national stakeholders do not view the project as tackling any tensions in society, and there are no grounds to argue that this perspective is wrong. PATRIR is to decide whether it regards the subsequent phase as an education project, or a conflict mitigation/peacebuilding one. In case of the latter, conflict analysis of language sphere should be done and the role of the Russian language as one of the major conflict drivers in society will need to be addressed. PATRIR is recommended to engage with the central question of Ukrainian/Russian bi-linguism which can be promoted through MLE. Although both languages are widely spoken in everyday life, students going to a school in one language currently do not master the other language well enough to achieve full literary proficiency and be able to write well in it.

New Law on Education is likely to affect the legal environment. The project should be prepared to position itself vis-a-vis the debate which may unfold in the near future. Policy on the role of kin states' in language sphere would need consideration. At present, such support is appreciated, but some also noted that assistance from Hungary works against integration. Moreover, a policy vis-a-vis kin states should apply, for the reason of consistency, in the same measure to Russia in its efforts to promote Russian language and culture, despite this being a controversial and emotionally charged subject at present.

It is recommended that MLE expands to gradually involve all minority languages/community groups, with an appreciation that it will require time and dedicated inter-communal dialogue, and that between the citizens and the state.

Work with universities is envisaged. It should be supported in order to establish modern professional standards and enhance sustainability but also bearing in mind that this will require at least a medium-term commitment from PATRIR before impacts will transpire.

### **Action points and immediate steps**

Establish a Working Group at the Ministry dedicated to MLE piloting and subsequent application in a larger number of schools.

Prepare teaching manuals and educational resources which a teacher can easily adapt to the local conditions. The finished products should undergo a peer review. If teachers/headmasters spend significant time on creating new teaching resources which will be available for others, it is reasonable that they should receive additional pay. The project can consider a budget for it in future. Proposals were heard on the need to translate books from English; it is advised to check first which materials are already available, e.g. in Latvia in Russian before commissioning new translations.

Make Crimea experience fully accessible to the interested parties. Bringing one or two teachers from Crimea on an experience-sharing visit can be tried. Regional exchanges should be practiced to enable field observation and learning from each other.

Develop monitoring tools, paying attention to the question of what to monitor. This can include two levels:

- Educational lessons from pilots. Apart from quantitative indicators, this can record examples, teachers' narratives and their reflections on pros and cons. It can be done

by asking teachers to maintain diaries where they record their impressions and regular meetings with parents. They will need to be given a light format with questions prompting thought, but not constraining them into answering a questionnaire;

- Impact assessment of social cohesion and peace relations will require a different set of tools and establishment of a baseline to assess progress against. Stakeholders other than teachers will need to be involved as well.

Consider provision of audio equipment, more use of online resources and training for teachers on how to use them. Introduce user guidelines and moderate the resource as necessary. Provide training for those who might need it.

Pay attention to communication and outreach to the international community to increase publicity and produce synergies.

Apply CPD dialogue facilitation and events' organisation standards and techniques to enable structured interaction. Pay attention to details such as seating arrangements, availability of the lists of participants for everybody present, organisation of small group work etc. Solicit feedback from participants in one form or another to take into consideration in future events.

Website – user-friendliness, quality and speed of updating are in need of improvement. CPD publications should be available on the site and those which continue to be relevant, should be widely disseminated; otherwise their value is lost.

Enhance the quality of internal reporting. The implementer should ensure that all internal reports are titled, dated and named, follow a more formal way of presentation and structure, e.g. avoiding the use of first person. In case the reports are shared outside of PATRIR, they would benefit from a spell check.

PATRIR senior management should be involved more closely. If the project scales up, it is advised to base a coordinator in Ukraine. Project should appreciate and support its partners and consultants, so that they feel a part of the team.

## **CRIMEA POLICY DIALOGUE**

The CPD objectives were:

1. Prevention System: to establish a systemic mechanism for early warning, prevention of violent conflict and transformation of ethno-political conflict for Crimea thus diminishing probability of violent conflicts;
2. Domestic Dialogue: to create an internally fostered cross-community cohort of politicians, public officials, civil society leaders, policy researchers, economists, sociologists and other professionals from Crimea and Kyiv who will together take a lead in the formation of Crimean policy to sustainably prevent violent conflict;
3. International Dialogue: to establish an extra-Crimean international multi-partisan consultative body on conflict transformation-focused policy making, the Crimea Policy Club, as a built-in external expert and political support mechanism for conflict transformation in and to do with Crimea;

4. Research: to improve Crimean, Ukrainian, regional and EU analysis and information upon which to develop appropriate and relevant policies in relation to Crimea as part of Ukraine.
5. Advocacy: to achieve recognition from authorities within Crimea and in Kyiv of the importance of the established mechanism followed by the involvement of their dialogue platform into their policy making and implementation.
6. Capacity-building: to strengthen Crimean capacities in conflict analysis, policy research, policy development, advocacy and implementation, across all ethnic and political communities.
7. Model: to provide an operational model for inter-ethnic, cross-political and international cooperation in Crimea.<sup>6</sup>

### **Performance in stable conditions** (autumn 2012 - 2013)

The project was evaluated in autumn 2012 when it was positively assessed as demonstrating high results in policy, practice and capacity building. The section below refers to the period since the last evaluation (September 2012) to the time when peaceful conditions began to alter.

Year 2013 amplified the effects identified by the 2012 evaluation. Work on history of Crimea which formed a part of an Identity stream<sup>7</sup> and evolved into elaborating mutually acceptable approaches to Crimea's history had great achievements under the leadership of one of the co-directors. Dialogue of historians gained momentum, and former fierce opponents became enthusiastically engaged in exploration of contested periods of history of the peninsula. The dialogue acquired public resonance in Autonomous Republic of Crimea (ARC's) media, including on TV when the viewing audience see could prominent intellectuals from three communities holding a united front.

Historians' dialogue was further promoted through a lecture tour when its participants offered audiences three different perspectives on the same historical events, while treating the arguments with respect, so that narratives could speak to each other. Podcasts of the dialogues were available and were in demand. A 'Dialogue of Historians in Divided Societies' conference generated interest when historians and civil society experts from former conflict-affected societies spoke about their experiences in *Dealing with the Past*. Moscow theatre company performance brought lively audience participation and was popular.

The CPD continued with preparation of research products on innovative subjects within an Identity stream which were meant to stimulate debate, such as on 'Problems and Prospects of the Peninsula's Demilitarisation' targeting the perceived interrelationship between hard security and security of group identities, place names as identity markers, and on 'Past, Present and Future of the Crimean Tatars in the Discourse of the Major Islamic Groups of Crimea.' The latter was disseminated and provoked interest of the ARC parliament and other official bodies. In 2013 CPD has moved into new areas, such as multiculturalism in towns (Synergy of Small Towns project strand) where research reached a certain practical application, and media trainings on complicated subjects of identity, development of statehood and multi-ethnic society.

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<sup>6</sup> PATRIR, 'CPD project progress report,' 2013 – March 2014.

<sup>7</sup> Other components of an Identity stream included research on the potential for toponymic policy reforms, on demand for demilitarisation of Crimea and on the topic of multicultural towns.

The participants mastered dialogue skills on internal subjects (geopolitics was outside of its scope). According to stakeholders, CPD produced a real demonstration effect on how peacebuilding theory can be applied in practice at its best. An international consultant commended the joint study tour to Latvia to familiarise with MLE by the CPD members who represented three communities in Crimea. A participant known for his strong Russian credentials addressed interlocutors at a Ukrainian school in Ukrainian which was appreciated. This tour preceded the high-level delegation visit which produced a significant impetus for introduction of MLE in Ukraine. By the beginning of 2014, the preparatory work for the Crimean School was done, a Coordination Council was formed, and the initiative has approached a practical implementation stage.

The other project co-director was said to be gradually diminishing his active steering and delegating more to the Dialogue core group members, so that they can institutionalise it as their own platform in future, and to ensure ownership and sustainability. Core group participants developed the mission and vision for the strategic plan for CPD beyond 2014. Inroads were made into institutionalisation, e.g. a possibility of registering it as an NGO was on the agenda, but the envisaged timeframe coincided with the political change.

One view was that the CPD has not made a big public resonance on a national scene. This to an extent is the case, and can be explained by limited effort of Kyiv-based members to promote it in the capital and a general lack of interest to Crimea in Kyiv. For example, in 2011 the project brought the whole Dialogue core group from Crimea to Kyiv and extended invitations to representatives of political and intellectual elites of different persuasion – and none of them responded to meet the Crimeans.

One reported problem concerns the project's website which was very slow in placing materials, generated little publicity, and several high-quality outputs and publications were absent from it. This seems to continue as the hosting of CPD project moved to PATRIR's main site. Firstly, the project is hard to find as it is placed under a DPO acronym. Secondly, the last posted output was that of April 2012 and the last publication (on Land Conflicts) dates back to 2011, although the project continued to produce materials until its very end.

## **Stakeholders' reflection on CPD, its end and aftermath**

All interviewed CPD respondents were highly appreciative of the Dialogue experience, its concept, facilitation, intellectual content and the choice and the variety of subjects covered. 'Dialogue of intelligentsia was important to identify the points of commonality and the drivers that unite us. People with opposing views could interact productively.' 'The issues upon which the Dialogue concentrated – history, Crimean School and land, - were relevant for all. It was a unique experience in finding consensus, a lesson in how psychology of inter-ethnic dialogue can be constructed.' Organisation was excellent. The role of the two co-directors was highly praised; all interviewees were most grateful for their remarkable experience of participation.

However, as one member put it, 'the result was hellish. A tragedy took place.' The lingering question is whether the events could have been foreseen: 'I had a sense of danger, but could not explain it, and others viewed it sceptically.' The core group's experiences and reflections on the key moments are presented in this section.

## Has prevention failed, and if so, when and where?

Firstly, an understanding that geopolitics was not relevant is perceived with hindsight as wrong. In 2012 an expert from Russia assessed Moscow's role as disinterested in Crimea's situation. Several interviewees hold the view now that the analysis was wrong and the chosen expert may have been too remote from Russian decision-making circles to have a sufficient insight in what was really going on. Some participants disagreed with the analysis at the time when it was presented at an Istanbul meeting. One core group member wished to take the issue further, but since his views were expressed in highly emotive rhetoric, a consensus was that this would be too disruptive for the dialogue process as a whole.

Secondly, in the second half of 2013 some among the CPD core group members participated in politisation along pro- and anti-Maidan lines, but this did not enter dialogue discussions. Some Kyiv core group members were Maidan activists, while two of the Russian constituency representatives were already involved with an anti-Maidan movement in Crimea. Kyiv participants were interested in discussing the Maidan events with their Crimean counterparts, and one wished very much that the CPD declares its support for it. One of the Russian Crimea representatives sought contact with Maidan political activists through the Kyiv-based Dialogue members. They initially started to arrange this, but then abandoned the effort.

The project co-directors were conscious of a potentially divisive impact Maidan could make upon the core dialogue group. They asked the opinion of everybody whether the Maidan events should be discussed and a common CPD position on it should be elaborated. As there were different views within the Dialogue and already some hard statements started to be made, a discussion of Maidan at the CPD was not encouraged mindful of its divisive potential, while internal issues in Crimea had a more unified effect as everybody had a stake in making the future together work.

Thirdly, it was said that maybe two among the Russian core group members understood that annexation was looming, while two others did not and only joined the process later to secure a place in the new order. January 2014 was the last full dialogue meeting when CPD discussed joint public actions in response to the Maidan events aimed at de-escalation, but no visible actions were taken. It was not attended by one Russian core group member whom the others believed to already be a part of a takeover plot. The meeting coincided with the 16<sup>th</sup> January laws which were said to signal a point of no return, after which violence was inevitable: 'there will be a war now.'

None of the interviewed participants remembered 12 February 2014 self-convened meeting which they organised without PATRIR's input (not everybody was present, but most were).<sup>8</sup> An attempt was made to make the Dialogue an active conflict prevention tool. Some core group members felt that the Dialogue can intervene as a group by making public statements in Crimea or meeting with the ARC leadership. According to the meeting minutes, some participants were sceptical that conflict mitigation could be done by the CPD, while others felt that political divisions between them were too great by then. Nevertheless, several members were resolute to intervene for peace, and the following measures were agreed:

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<sup>8</sup> The minutes of the meeting were not available for the evaluation for the field mission to be used in interviews.

- 1) Conduct an extended CPD meeting in Kyiv in February. Kyiv-based colleagues to organise logistics and participation of the relevant actors;
- 2) Delegate a task to Alexander Formanchuk to try organising a meeting for CPD with members of the presidium of the ARC parliament;
- 3) Carry out an experts' survey, as proposed by Natalia Belitser;
- 4) Ask Emine Avamileva to find out about feasibility of holding a meeting between CPD and Mejlis;
- 5) Return to the idea of drafting a joint article about the CPD experience for *Zerkalo Nedeli* (Week's Mirror);
- 6) Draft a document stating the CPD position on the unfolding political crisis.<sup>9</sup>

Alexander Formanchuk who had an access to the Crimean authorities, tried to check feasibility of these steps, but he was told that CPD peace intervention was unwelcome. Events moved fast after that. On 21 February President Victor Yanukovich was removed from power and fled to Russia through Crimea the next day.

These measures (apart from an expert poll) could have played a role in prevention of conflict were they undertaken two – three months earlier. In the evaluation assessment, escalation of the conflict by then reached such stage that they could not have been effective. Although the desire to act as responsible citizens and resolve tensions in Crimea using the skills they acquired through the CPD was commendable, the participants may not have realised that they did not have a luxury of time.

### CPD through the turbulent time

As mayhem started, solidarity started to break. CPD sought to continue with pre-arranged plans as if momentous events were not looming. A core group member from Kyiv came to Crimea at the end of February with the international MLE consultant from Latvia to run a capacity development seminar for pilot Crimean School teachers. The seminar did not take place as the security situation deteriorated, and the team stayed with a Crimean Tatar CPD core group member. Some Russian Dialogue members were aware of their presence in Simferopol, but did not offer assistance. Still, they maintained contacts on return to Kyiv until the March 2014 referendum.

At the time of trouble, PATRIR's project co-directors offered their assistance in protection and evacuation to those who felt in danger. When a pro-Kyiv activist who was involved with the CPD process was abducted during the weeks of chaos in February – March, the project co-director and one Dialogue member tried to intervene for his release with two members who were politically involved with the Russian side. They promised to try to help and investigate the matter. The person was subsequently released after having been tortured, but it is unclear whether his release can be attributed to the Dialogue intervention.

The unanswered question is whether any among CPD core group members or affiliates had links to the parties that deployed violence in the late February –March period before security was restored. What is known is this. On 24 February 2014 a core group member Andrei Nikiforov initiated a meeting of Crimean Russian-oriented experts, political activists and

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<sup>9</sup> 12 February 2014 CPD meeting minutes in Simferopol, unofficial translation from Russian.

journalists in the Russian cultural centre in Simferopol, at which a letter addressed to the ARC parliament chair Vladimir Konstantinov was drafted. The ‘Letter of Fifteen (signatories – AM)’ urged to organise a referendum on the peninsula’s status. Another core group member Andrei Mal’gin was among those who drafted the letter, but he did not sign it, while Nikiforov did.

## How the Dialogue ended

The Dialogue split into a minority which accepted annexation, - in their understanding, unification, - with/ by Russia, and those who did not, including members of Slavic and Crimean Tatar communities in Crimea and all Kyiv participants. Those who sided with the new political order were characterised as collaborationists by others. Andrei Nikiforov continues to work as a university professor and also acts as an adviser to the chair of the Crimean parliament (the same person who was there before). Alexander Formanchuk became a head of Public Council and an adviser to Sergei Aksenov, the *de facto* head of the Crimea republic. Yulia Verbitskaya who participate in the Dialogue but was not a core group member, continues as an active journalist in Simferopol, covering politics. Vladimir Polishchuk is a vice-rector of Crimean Vernadsky University and does not appear to engage in overt political activism.

Several reallocated to the mainland Ukraine soon after the Russian takeover, fearing repercussions from the *de facto* authorities, but there were people who tried to stay and continue with their professional roles until this became inattainable. A pro-Kyiv participant who was determined to stay and work in Crimea as a journalist without accepting the changed jurisdiction was chased out by the Russian security agency and finally left in December 2014 facing a direct threat. Three Crimean Tatar members who do not accept the new order, stayed without playing any political or activist roles, but leading private lives. One participant who continues living in Crimea had charges launched against her. One journalist turned into covering politically-neutral subjects.

Several relocated CPD core group members acquired new careers in Kyiv. Andrii Ivanets became a department head at the Presidential Administration. Another is an editor of Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty reporting service ‘Crimea. Realities’ (krymr.org). Several CPD participants set up a Crimean Research Organisation, but it did not appear to be developing, and the views among those on the Kyiv side grow more nuanced and divergent. One member Andrii Klimenko belongs to a political group named Maidan of Foreign Affairs which was established by Ukrainian diplomats in 2013 – 2014 who rebelled against the course of the president Yanukovich’s government.<sup>10</sup>

The member uses the Black Sea News platform funded by the USAID and Internews as a public platform for the Maidan of Foreign Affairs and to monitor violations of international sanctions against Crimea, such as foreign boats sailing into Crimean ports.<sup>11</sup> Klimenko launched a strategy of Crimea return titled ‘Exodus is inevitable’.<sup>12</sup> Other interviewed members in Kyiv were sceptical, saying that this advocacy did not seem of much use. One noted that Ukraine should wait until Russia weakens and tables would turn then. Another felt

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.blackseanews.net/cat/mfa>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.blackseanews.net/en/read/103369>

<sup>12</sup> [http://gazeta.zn.ua/internal/strategiya-vozvrashcheniya-kryma-ishod-neotvratim-\\_.html](http://gazeta.zn.ua/internal/strategiya-vozvrashcheniya-kryma-ishod-neotvratim-_.html)

that softer measures showing to the Crimeans that Kyiv offer them a helping hand rather than a stick, would be more effective.

The participants expressed their views on the CPD contribution and limitations as follows. ‘When we lived in peace, there was one modality of the CPD, but when the war started, it disappeared.’ ‘When a crisis is of such scale, dialogues become redundant.’ ‘The dialogue could work in certain conditions, but then the conditions altered. Dialogue platform could not oppose this.’ ‘Contribution of CPD is impossible to assess because of politics and emotional issues.’ ‘If external forces would not have intervened, everything would have been very successful, but they were simply too powerful.’

Still, on a personal level, many former members preserved good memories of each other and found the others agreeable despite the political gulf, save for one member from each side, each with strong nationalist convictions. Most stated that the March referendum spelt the end for them. A Crimean Russian participant reflected that the beginning of the war in Donbass became the Dialogue’s end. In his view, resilience of the relationships built by CPD among a number of members could have survived Crimea’s Russian jurisdiction.

## Developments in the Aftermath

Kyiv-based core group members and researchers conducted a brainstorming meeting in April 2014 facilitated by PATRIR. PATRIR travelled to Crimea in June 2014 to assess the situation. The embassy was initially hesitant on continuation of any Crimea-related activities in and around the peninsula, but it was accepted that it worthy of attempt. The project co-director concluded that carrying out activities on the peninsula would not be feasible.

An idea of a meeting in Istanbul after the takeover was floated and some Dialogue members supported it, but there was no consensus among the Kyiv side on how to deal with the former colleagues in Crimea who accepted the annexation. As a result, a meeting closing the project that took place in November 201, only brought together those who shared the same platform. One Russian member from Crimea expressed in an email communication to the evaluator that he ‘regrets that the CPD has been finalised without Crimean experts. We still adhere to maintenance and development of the principles, upon which the CPD was based.’

Research continued to be carried out, but dissemination and discussion around them suffered, perhaps because of a diminishing sense of purpose and ownership. *Prospects of demilitarisation in Crimea* was not published and the research on past, present and future of Crimean Tatars is not available online, although hard copies were produced. Research reports on Mapping Emigration from Crimea (Lviv, Odessa and Kyiv)<sup>13</sup> and on place names as identity markers are not publicly available. ‘Crimea in Exile’ (2014) which traced the displacement flows from the peninsula and group differentiation in migration trends was distributed to a targeted group of key stakeholders who could make use of it. However, there is a view (supported by the evaluator) that it a wider distribution to the government and humanitarian community in understanding the context for IDP policy planning at the time could have been helpful.

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<sup>13</sup> It is unfortunate that the research does not involve a study of Crimean Tatar community in Kherson which has become the most politically active.

Attempts to continue with the Crimean School were made after Russian takeover, but there is no information available as of what is happening now. Although willingness among beneficiaries is reported, impacts may be lost unless the new authorities would be interested in taking them forward. This is not impossible because there is an interest in Russia in MLE, e.g. in application in the North Caucasus. There is an indirect impact of transforming the Crimean school experience into MLE on a national level in Ukraine through cooperation with the MoE.

Participants reflected on their lack of closure, as they were trying to come to terms with what happened. There were attempts at contact among the core group across political divide in the run-up and after the March referendum, but they did not bring an honest explanation of positions. Exchanges through the CPD Facebook group took place, but they were not moderated, - this was not necessary before. In the circumstances, they resulted in some expressive and inflammatory statement posted which made further interaction within the whole group impossible. One Russian Crimean participant noted that he wished to explain his actions and intentions to the CPD members who were on the other side, but since three members from the Kyiv side were posting personal insults, he abandoned the idea.

Several interviewees noted their personal disappointment with the betrayal of trust by the Russian members. The questions lingers as of did they already know what was to come? Were they a part of it? When were they sincere – when they sat together with everybody in the group and spoke their hearts and minds, or when they became supporters of the new order? ‘Some participants were not what we thought they were.’ ‘We were sitting at the same table, while they knew already.’

The evaluation noted that while some CPD participants adapted to the new circumstances fairly well, others were left traumatised. One of the wounds is that ‘a part of the Dialogue core group collaborated with that terror.’

### **Continuation of dialogue, and the need for it**

Attempts to find meaningful avenues for dialogue continuation was made by PATRIR’s project co-director, but a common ground could not be found. Kyiv sought to discuss Crimea’s political status, also human rights violations. As far as Moscow is concerned, the question of status is closed. However, it was interested in talking about social and economic issues, such as supplies to the peninsula, freedom of movement etc. A dialogue between human rights defenders from Russia and Ukraine is taking place, although the Russian activists have a limited access at present. There is no particular reason for PATRIR to be engaged. Expert dialogue made little sense, because Russian experts have no capacity to influence the cardinal decision, upon which the consensus in society exists. After several stakeholder assessment trips networking trips to various capitals it was concluded that activation of a dialogue in a different format is unlikely to bring much result.

The evaluation respondents expressed their views on continuation of dialogue-type activity. An interviewed Russian member from Crimea noted that the need for a dialogue on the peninsula has only grown in the new situation. Another participant remaining there echoed this idea with a caveat that this is not possible in the present circumstances: ‘the same problems remain within Crimea, but it is a pause now and is getting longer and longer.’

A view was also expressed that a Crimea group exists in Supreme Rada (parliament) which has activists who can be involved in a dialogue on practical interaction. Expert contacts are also useful, although they are only likely to deliver long-term dividends. There should be some kind of dialogue with Russian experts, even if only for the sake of continuation of contacts and presence of Crimea issue in the discourse. Moreover, the Crimea problem should be somehow settled for the sake of normalisation of the Russia – West relations.

Another perspective was that a dialogue around the Crimea issue is possible if it focuses on humanitarian issues and human rights. A disruption of electricity supply to the peninsula in November 2015 showed that these issues would not go away unless they are addressed. Dialogue is also needed within Ukraine on how to deal with Crimea problem – would hard or soft measures be more effective? Kyiv is currently using a hard-line tactic to isolate the peninsula, but perhaps the opposite is needed, so that people in Crimea regard the mainland as a pull of attraction ready to embrace them? Or should it leave the issue aside, not spend much resource on it and concentrate on the problems ready at hand? It was reflected that due to the recent experience, political transformation along the Russian model and exodus of much of pro-Ukrainian element in society ‘такой Крым, который был, уже в Украину не вернется’ (a Crimea as it used to be, would not be returning to Ukraine.)

A member who relocated from Crimea to Kyiv remarked that the need for dialogue in mainland Ukraine is pressing on nationwide issues, more than it was in Crimea.

## Evaluation Analysis

Firstly, geopolitics was not the core issue of the dialogue, and it cannot be measured against the agenda which it did not set out for itself. The role of Russia was explored in 2012 and assessed as not particularly relevant for the CPD. The evaluation is of the view that the assessment was valid and adequately reflected the situation at the time. The present author argues that no long-term plot to annex Crimea existed in Moscow at the time which could have been uncovered with a better analysis. Even if it did, it is not clear what a project such as the CPD could have done about it.

As events spiralled down in summer 2013, different scenarios were floated in elite circles in Moscow, some more exotic and marginal than others. Still, the prevailing view was to deal with and support president Yanukovich in an effort to firmly lure him to the Russian side. His fall from power and grace in February 2014 was a little-anticipated development in Moscow, but to which it reacted decisively and forcefully. The key policy decisions likely have been taken only in February, although Moscow was preparing for multiple options and was making contingency plans and investments into several of them. The element of spontaneity, local initiative and quality of leadership played a significant role in shaping the outcome.

Secondly, while the Dialogue worked on internal issues in the peninsula, the locus of the problem which led to the dramatic shift was not in Crimea. New analysis could have been conducted in mid-2013 when the situation in Ukraine started to alter, but before it plunged into a full-blown crisis. This might have brought different understanding of what was at stake, which way the events may be moving and what kind of measures could have prevented the crisis.

Thirdly, the Dialogue played a valuable role inside Crimea, contributing to de-escalation of inter-communal violence. In the words of one core group member, ‘the Dialogue fulfilled its function. It helped to avoid pushing different groups in society towards large-scale violence. The members, - but for one person, - acted towards mitigation and calming the passions down. Still, the events at some point started to move so quickly that it was not feasible to influence them.’

This was possible because it invested in building bridges between political leaders from different communities. For example, it took Refat Chubarov, the chair of the Crimean Tatar Mejlis and Sergei Aksyonov who became later a *de facto* head of Crimea Republic, on a study tour to South Tyrol. When the situation escalated on 26 February, Chubarov and Aksyonov together separated the opposing crowds in front of the parliament, preventing them from clashing with each other.<sup>14</sup> Still, as a result of violence 10 people were hospitalised on the day, but there were no fatalities. As a way out of the tense situation, Chubarov and Aksyonov attempted to negotiate a power-sharing government based on quotas, but the involvement of Moscow changed these plans.

The evaluation regards the period of the second half of 2013 as key for the CPD and concludes that it was slow to react to the events in summer – autumn 2013. The Dialogue turned its full attention to the situation when the type of interventions it could perform, could not be effective. Before that it adhered to the attitude that ‘Crimea does not have a dog in Mайдan fight’ which was understandable as a desire not to dwell on tensions and shield the peninsula from them. There is no certainty of course that even if the CPD saw the forthcoming problems at an earlier stage, they were amenable for peacemaking intervention.

It was observed by the evaluation that different core group members had a different stake in the CPD, and its ending and the aftermath made this more apparent. Project co-directors may consider whether they could facilitate a closure across the political divide for those former participants who experience such need and have a void left by the absence of CPD (it is understood that not all of them do and some have moved on). This can be done by a facilitated exchange through electronic channels, e.g. FB. The tone could be set up a letter by PATRIR co-director(s), explaining the purpose.

The ideas on what measures could have been effective in conflict prevention in Ukraine which would have avoided the situation which made Crimea’s annexation are presented below. Two out of three were included into the 2012 Mid-term Evaluation by the same author, although their formulation had lacked a sense of urgency.

The Dialogue in principle is relevant on the national level in Ukraine, given its divided polity, absence of culture of dialogue in society and a narrowing space for expressing dissent. This would require ‘Ukrainian radicals’ to interact with their opponents from the ‘Russian nationalist’ camp.

There are several other culturally diverse and politically tense regions, e.g. in Western Ukraine where the Dialogue can be applicable. It could be an idea to establish a National Dialogue with regional working groups on an *ad hoc* basis.

Thus, an inter-communal dialogue in the ‘political West’ of the country in 2012 such as Lviv, Ternopol and Ivano-Frankivsk provinces, - from where many Mайдan activists came in 2013,

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<sup>14</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lp\\_g9sXyHs0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lp_g9sXyHs0)

- with participation of Kyiv experts could have created a space, in which their grievances and aspirations could have been discussed and heard by the power-holders.

‘Identity/ political nation’ dialogue was needed in Kyiv on central level between pro-Western and pro-Eastern experts, as there was never a convincing attempt to build a unifying national identity that was not exclusivist. Interaction between the pro-Western and pro-Eastern experts to some extent happened in the CPD, but the power balance was clearly in favour of the former, with the latter treading humbly despite the fact that they belonged to a ruling political establishment. There was little respect towards them then, while now, as one core group member put it, ‘they are hiding as jackals.’

One thought that was not obvious in 2012 is that the EU/ West was also a political actor with real and perceived strong interests in Ukraine, but an insufficient understanding of the country context. It would have benefited from raising awareness of political processes and actors in Ukraine and early warning of what the real stakes are, including that for the EU. This could have been done through a combination of research and dialogue. Importantly, dialogue between Moscow and the EU over Ukraine on a middle-official and expert level could have been a tool to decisively affect the situation towards peace and unity of Ukraine, were the problem addressed earlier in 2013. Should a sense of danger emerged at an earlier stage when mitigation measures can be effective, this could have been a key variable in prevention of the conflict.

## Annex I

### LIST OF RESPONDENTS

22 individual + 11 group respondents

#### General

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| 1. Tanase Andra    | PATRIR, director                        |
| 2. Trubceac Andrei | PATRIR, project coordinator             |
| 3. Matveev Denis   | PATRIR, by Skype                        |
| 4. Kurkchi Yusuf   | Dialogue member & MLE consultant        |
| 5. Tyshenko Yulia  | Dialogue member & MLE consultant        |
| 6. Kullberg Anssi  | Embassy of Finland                      |
| 7. Hyrkkänen Minni | Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland |

#### CPD

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Semyvolos Igor<br>Studies           | Dialogue member, Centre for Middle Eastern    |
| 2. Lupatsy Vladimir<br>Research centre | Dialogue member, director of Sofia Social     |
| 3. Bekirova Gulnara                    | Dialogue member (relocated to Kyiv), by phone |
| 4. Mal'gin Andrei<br>(by phone)        | Dialogue member, museum director in Crimea    |
| 5. Pritula Vladimir<br>to Kyiv)        | Dialogue member, Radio Free Europe (relocated |
| 6. Mirimanova Natalia                  | PATRIR CPD co-director                        |

#### MLE

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| 1. Grigule Ligita      | MLE consultant, University of Latvia         |
| 2. Kononenko Yurii     | Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine |
| 3. Kharchenko Svetlana | Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine |
| 4. Pershukova Oksana   | Institute of Pedagogy, Academy of Sciences   |
| 5. Yurchenko Tatiana   | Regional Coordinator, Odessa province        |
| 6. Fedinets Maria      | headmistress of Slovak school, Uzhgorod      |
| 7. Gavka Svetlana      | headmistress of school + nursery, Chernivtsy |

Focus group (5 participants, 4 women, 1 man)

Ostafii Ol'ga	Regional coordinator, Chernivtsy
Lukach Andrianna	Regional coordinator, Uzhgorod
Kasinets Oksana	Head of nursery school, Uzhgorod
Ignat Ivan	Gymnasium headmaster, Chernivtsy
Pinti Maria	Odessa province, director of <i>ZOSH</i>

A group discussion was held with 6 Odessa participants (all women)

Annex II  
LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Crimea Policy Dialogue 2014 – 2015 activities plan and logframe proposal, PATRIR, H2 2014 and H1 2015  
CPD Project Interim Report, 17 March 2014 – 31 January 2015  
‘Multilingual Education in Ukraine’, conference agenda, 24 November 2015, Kyiv  
‘Training for teachers and educators in multilingual education, trainers’ evaluation report,’ 10 – 13 September 2015, Kyiv  
Multilingual education in multicultural regions: needs, expectations. Yulia Tyshchenko and Yusuf Kurkchi (in English)  
Extended version in Russian by the same authors  
Multilingual description document, no date, English and another language (presumed Romanian)  
Multilingual Education Project update (no date)  
Formation of Strategic Directions for MLE (status unclear, no date)  
Work with the Universities (status unclear, no date)  
Regional Consultations in Odessa, draft internal report, April 2015  
Regional Consultations in Uzhgorod, draft internal report, May 2015  
CPD Project Progress Report, 2013  
Вынужденные Переселенцы из Крыма: Анализ Феномена, 2014  
Встреча Крымского Политического Диалога 12 Февраля 2014  
Тищенко Ю, Куркчи Ю, Куц А, «Топоним как маркер идентичности в АР Крым», Киев 2014