

“Guide of Good Practices for the implementation of European Mobility Projects” - SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. THE S.P.R.E.A.D. PROJECT

S.P.R.E.A.D. – “Sharing good Practices foR European mobility Activities Development” aimed at promoting internationalization and transnational mobility in VET organizations. Its main objectives were to upgrade the competences and skills of the staff on specific and relevant issues related to mobility; develop and reinforce European networks; increase the capacity of VET organizations to operate at translational level; and promote work-based learning through mobility projects.

Supported by the European Commission within the Erasmus+ Programme, Key Action 2, the project was promoted by: Essenia - Italy (coordinator), 3S - Austria, Paragon - Malta, Danmar – Poland, EUROYOUTH - Portugal and Europa Training - United Kingdom.

S.P.R.E.A.D. promoted six joint staff trainings events dedicated to sharing and confronting tools, good practices and methodologies related to the implementation and management of European mobility projects:. 1. Competences of tutors and mentors; 2. Intercultural issues; 3. ECVET methodology and the validation and recognition of competences; 4. ICT in European projects; 5. Quality in mobility projects; 6. Dissemination and exploitation of results. Staff trainings were followed by national sharing of results with local seminars and brochures.

1.2. THE GUIDE OF GOOD PRACTICE

The “Guide on good practices in mobility projects”, of which we present here a summary, is the final product of the project. It is the result of the gathering and re-elaboration of the experiences, discussions, training materials and conclusions shared during the joint staff training and local seminars.

The Guide is accessible at www.spread-project.eu and it includes, in detail, concepts, practices, definitions, tools, and other practical aspects to improve mobility.

1.3. THE CONTEXT:

Transnational mobility for learning has always been a crucial issue in European policies, and European Institutions constantly highlight in their directives, strategies and recommendations the value of studying or training abroad for personal and professional growth; for the acquisition of sectorial and transversal knowledge, competences, skills and attitudes; for facilitation of employability of people in the European labour market.

Erasmus+ actions in particular contribute to the implementation of Europe 2020 Strategy for growth, employment, social equity and inclusion, as well as the achievement of ET 2020 goals. This Guide focuses only Erasmus+ - Key Action 1, the one funding mobility projects in the field of education, training and youth to undertake a learning experience in another Country.

In addition to positive effects that mobility has on participants and on the organizations/staff involved, in the long run, the final impacts are to be felt in systems of education, training and youth in the participating countries, thus stimulating policy reforms and attracting new resources for mobility opportunities in Europe and beyond.

2. GOOD PRACTICES

2.1. TUTORING AND MENTORING

Tutoring and Mentoring are features present in any mobility project, from design to closure. Before mobility, it has to be decided who will be the participant's tutors and what orientations and strategies they should follow. After mobility, to assure long term learning and experience impacts, participants might need extra support to follow life plans or job search. As it involves all project stakeholders it is important to have a clear and shared tutoring and monitoring strategy that brings all of them together working with the same vision. A tutor should be someone with experience, success and credibility in order to be seen as a reference.

Tutoring has proven to be useful for learning mobilities. A tutor transmits knowledge and know-how, identifies with the participant the main tasks or priorities and middle term objectives and supports his problem resolution. He/She questions, gives feedback and discusses possibilities. He/She will be asked for advice, looked as a model and will be expected to support participants if they face a more difficult situation. Sometimes they can act as a mediator with other persons or gathering resources that foster problem solving.

Tutoring also works as a prevention measure. Constant reflection and communication makes possible to early detect difficulties and challenges and tackle them immediately. Each participant is unique and each of them will need to overcome challenges and face difficulties, especially in the first days or weeks of mobility, when they are starting their process of integration and autonomy in destination. Each of the different tutors can help the participant to think things through.

- Tutors have different styles, strategies, calendars and perspectives and have to be available and committed. A 24/7 emergency number should be available. It also should be clear who are the contact persons and how and when they can be reached. Tutoring has to be continuous to assure participants' learning process and fulfil with the committed evaluation, certification and recognition of skills
- Selection is one of the main factors of success, as it confronts and matches participants' profile, needs, motivation and expectations with project objectives and internships possibilities for each destination and sector.
- Preparation of participants should include at least one onsite session in the weeks before departure. Preparation has to be done together with hosting and intermediary partners, as early as possible.
- Paperwork is obligatory and can be useful to project management, in particular ECVET and Europass. Some paperwork is optional and can raise project quality, with extra information and better follow-up and organisation.
- Evaluation and follow-up calendar and methods have to be clear since the project design stage, so there is effective participation and involvement of participants and partners.
- Sometimes it is needed to build the motivation and to learn other languages and cultures to facilitate integration and communication.
- 'Silent' stakeholders as participants' families and friends should be involved from the beginning and informed about the project to ensure their support.
- First impressions count and affect trust and proximity.
- Tutoring is needed to retain lessons, consolidate changes and set new life plans.
- After mobility, the sending programme tutor is again face to face with participants and can present with various forms of support. The internship tutor continues tutoring, often in a more personal or professional relationship.

Some practical tools you might explore are: the “MOB GAE Educational Module to implement a Preparation Session”¹ and the “PLACET Checklist for Internship Tutors”².

Tutoring is quite a challenging topic as it deals with non-tangible aspects like motivation, aspirations, expectations, trust, self-perspectives, world/life visions and hidden emotions. A good tutoring and monitoring system has to focus on participants, with good selection and preparation, and on solidity and cohesion of the partner’s network. In any case, mobility is full of surprises and unexpected events, some good, others not so much, and this will be the moment when the tutoring system will be put to test.

2.2. INTERCULTURAL ISSUES

One of the most important areas of mobility is the understanding and identification of intercultural issues which can present many different barriers for students and professionals working on mobility projects. Present in all stages of the mobility, there are two most important times - before the mobility and during the mobility.

Participants will need to discover living and working cultures and develop targeted knowledge, skills and attitudes that lead to behaviours and communication that are effective and appropriate in intercultural interactions. Therefore, the first step with participants should be to define and understand culture. The iceberg model is a good one to realise that cultures, like icebergs, only have a very small portion visible and that invisible part is, in fact, the powerful foundation. Hofstede’s approach is also important to reflect on cultures around six dimensions: power distance index, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance index, pragmatic/normative, indulgence/restraint.

Some of the learning results that should be aimed in preparation are: cultural self-awareness, socio-linguistic awareness, listening and observing, respect (valuing other cultures), openness (withholding judgement), curiosity (difference as a learning opportunity) and discovery (tolerance for ambiguity). These will contribute to increase participants’ empathy (ability to understand someone else’s feelings), adaptability (ability to behave properly in a new environment/context) and ability to tolerate and live with uncertain, undefined situations.

Mobility participants often face communication difficulties as well as conflicts and differences that involve communication problems, as both a cause and an effect. Misunderstandings can easily cause a conflict or make it worse. Further, once a conflict has started, communication problems often develop because people in conflict do not communicate with each other as frequently, as openly, and as accurately as they do when relationships are not strained. Thus intercultural communication is central. Case studies, videos and real stories can be a good way to learn, prepare and practice intercultural communications and conflict management.

As a strategy, you can start discussing common barriers to effective communication: use of jargon; emotional barriers and taboos; lack of attention, interest, distractions, or irrelevance to the receiver; differences in perception and viewpoint; physical disabilities; physical barriers to non-verbal communication. You can also practice and promote new and useful behaviours to reduce conflict and build an effective communication: awareness, creativity, truth, engagement; listening; creating relationships, looking for alternatives.

This also refers to the tutors that should be aware of the different cultures and know different ways and patterns of communicating with international participants, to create a workplace where the participant from different backgrounds can easily adapt, flourish and grow.

When it comes to adaptation, participants may encounter a wide array of emotions that theory describes in four different stages: honeymoon, culture shock, recovery, and adjustment stages. Here the most salient challenge is to make a successful intercultural transition as quickly as possible and still remain focused on the learning mission.

¹ https://www.dropbox.com/s/6kyxswc9yp2cpd3/MOB%20GAE_Educational_Module_EY.pdf?dl=0

² <https://www.dropbox.com/s/ij5d61q1zph2iwd/Placet%20-%20Checklist.pdf?dl=0>

Culture shock is where most preparation work should be done. It is a stress reaction experienced when entering a new culture due to the inability to understand cultural cues in the new environment and to its ambiguity, lack of certainty, and unpredictability. Encourage participants to be open-minded, ask questions, make friends, establish connections, and embrace their own culture.

After mobility it is important to offer guidance and support when reintegrating. It can take time for learners to readjust to their own country working methods, standards and regulations.

All in all, it is key to ensure all actors involved in mobility have an understanding of the potential differences in culture and a good set of conflict management skills to ensure any differences can be quickly and effectively resolved to improve the quality and success of mobility programs.

2.3. ECVET METHODOLOGY AND THE VALIDATION AND RECOGNITION OF COMPETENCES

The European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) was designed as a European instrument to support the mobility of learners, lifelong learning and the flexibility of learning pathways to achieve qualifications. It is one of the European transparency tools, aiming for the promotion of mobility and recognition.

Moreover, the ECVET framework aims for the improvement of quality of mobility periods. However, the framework is not designed as a new system; it provides flexibility to accommodate to the characteristics of each national VET system. ECVET forms a “common language” in European VET. It builds on a description of a qualification which is based on units of learning outcomes, facilitating the validation, recognition and accumulation of learning outcomes, acquired in another learning context.

It can be used during the whole cycle of a learning mobility (before, during and after) to enhance quality and ensure the recognition of learning achievements after the mobility. It also makes sure, all stakeholders, including learners, companies, schools and intermediary organisations are on the same page: well prepared, coordinated, following common goals. ECVET leads to greater comparability between qualifications and VET systems in Europe.

ECVET provides many benefits for learners, education and training providers and employers. It enables more transparency in mobility, but also in lifelong learning, as it helps to accumulate learning and formalize learning outcomes. This can be used to recognize achieved learning outcomes, in case someone wants to change pathways or progress to another level.

Learners benefit from a learner-centered approach. It enables recognition of learning during an international mobility, so learning and its assessment do not have to be repeated including recognition of periods of work-based learning abroad. ECVET also enables returning to education and training, in case of a drop-out or a pause, without losing any achievements, but building on what a person has learned in the past.

Education and training providers can use ECVET to improve the quality of their mobility exchanges. Moreover it supports recognition of learning outcomes, a learner has achieved in another context. It also improves understanding of different VET and educational systems, as it provides a common language to describe qualifications.

Employers can use ECVET to better understand the needs of a learner, as they are expressed in learning outcomes. They are provided with a more international experienced workforce, which are trained in qualifications that are described in a comparable way, thanks to a more transparent description of qualifications.

Before	During
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Set up a partnership ▪ Identify learning outcomes/units, involving learners ▪ Define assessment methods ▪ Define validation and recognition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide learning activities ▪ Assess of learning outcomes ▪ Document achieved learning outcomes <p style="text-align: center;">After</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sign the Memorandum of Understanding ▪ Sign the Learning Agreement ▪ Manage practical responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Validate and recognise learners' achievements ▪ Evaluate and review of the mobility
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By providing a common framework it helps to develop mutual trust and understanding between partners, encourages detailed negotiation and has a focus on the learner and the learners involvement in the learning process. However, some organizations consider ECVET still complicated, due to its paperwork and level of detail, which is not implemented in all countries yet. It will require some patience and flexible use of the concept ECVET by all involved mobility partners to figure out how to benefit the most from ECVET. Thus, we recommend to start using at least some elements of the ECVET methodology, for example the Memorandum of Understanding and the Learning Agreement.

2.4. ICT IN THE IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT OF EUROPEAN PROJECTS

In mobility projects, ICT is a bank of resources assisting in carrying out tasks, very flexible, available worldwide 24/7. Well-structured ICT tools are a driver throughout the whole mobility experience.

Most available ICT tools are intuitive and easy to use, sometimes difficult to live or work without. Digitalization imposes the use of ICT tools, which de facto facilitates and simplifies activities between multiple actors – the coordinator, sending organization, hosting organization, participant and other bodies adding value to the process.

The basic ICT tool most used in mobility projects is emailing. Since mailing is a process with which everyone is acquainted with, it is the easiest mode of communication to choose before, during and after mobility. But there are more examples of cooperation tools useful throughout the mobility process include:

The tools used in the mobility experience can be defined as cooperation or collaboration tools. Their aim is to facilitate communication, coordinate activities and enable collaboration.

Tool	Purpose	Examples
E-mail	First contact, sending light files and documents, continuing communication	Microsoft Outlook, Gmail
Communicator	Interview, video call, exchanging messages between participant and organizations	Skype, WhatsApp, Viber, Telegram
Presentation	Slideshows or info kits	PowerPoint, Prezi
Cloud sharing	Sending heavy files and allowing mutual document sharing	WeTransfer, Dropbox, Google Drive (Google Docs)
Social media	Networking, posting, collaborating, dissemination	Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Facebook, LinkedIn
E-learning	Improving language skills	The Erasmus+ OLS, Duolingo, Memrise, MOOCs: OpenLearning, Iversity
Search engine	Searching for data and booking logistics	Booking platform, Trivago
Geolocalisation	Tracking routes and searching for places	App in the Air, Live Tracker, Foodspotting, GoogleMaps
Other apps	Risk management, including translations, weather forecast and alerts	Dictionary, Reverso, Wordreference, Sleep Time, Weather Channel
Calendar	Scheduling	Google Calendar, Doodle
Online diary	Storytelling, video blogging	Personal blog, Vimeo, YouTube

Newsletter	Publishing, dissemination	MailChimp, SendinBlue, PSMailer
Assessment	Documenting skills, education and competences	Europass CV, Language Passport
Questionnaire	Evaluation, measuring impact, monitoring learning path, checking received support	SurveyMonkey, Murvey
Certification	Confirmation of a completed mobility; and of competences and qualifications acquired	Europass – Mobility; ECS – supplement to Europass
Management platforms	Communication, document sharing, reporting, evaluation, monitoring	Bitrix24, Asana, AdminProject

In the full version of the Guide it is described how to use each of these applications in the different moments of the project and with the different stakeholders.

Crucial at the very beginning is the consideration of the tools one will be used at any of the stages, avoiding the use of a multiple number of tools, since the aim is to simplify work, provide clear guidelines and effective coordination of tasks. The Coordinator should assure that before the beginning of the project, all the parties involved know which tools they have to use and why.

ICT tools are inevitable in carrying out mobility projects, especially for the purposes of communication, dissemination and evaluation. The majority of these tools are available for free and user-friendly, requiring access to the Internet. A properly chosen ICT tool will be a reliable mode of communication in your mobility projects.

2.5. QUALITY IN MOBILITY PROJECTS MANAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITION

Everyone has an idea of what quality is, but to give an universal definition is much more complicated than it can seem. Quality is a multifaceted concept as a variety of perspectives can be taken into account, like persons/organisations point of view, field of reference, context and many others.

Edward Deming, for example, defined quality as “how efficient the management circle is in planning, implementing and making improvements in the project”. He also developed an approach to quality assurance based on the idea of continuous improvement and four main actions: (1) PLAN - definition of a strategy and an action plan; (2) DO - carrying out the activities planned; (3) CHECK - evaluation of what has been done; and (4) ACT - implementation of corrective actions and plans.

When speaking about quality in transnational mobility there is a reference document to take into account - the European Quality Charter for Mobility, a recommendation of the European Parliament with 10 guiding principles:

- **INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE** focused on candidates and participants access to clear and reliable information about all aspects of mobility
- **LEARNING PLAN**, being mandatory to draw it and sign it among all involved partners and participant
- **PERSONALIZATION**, that fosters the idea that while planning each mobility participants profile need to be taken into account
- **GENERAL PREPARATION** before departure approaching at least linguistic, pedagogical, intercultural, legal and financial aspects
- **LINGUISTIC ASPECTS** encouraging language learning to make mobility, learning and growth more effective
- **LOGISTICAL SUPPORT** aiming at involving and informing participants about travel arrangements accommodation, insurance, legal aspects regarding grants, residence and work/training permits, among others
- **MENTORING** to be made by sending organisation, assuring advise and help as well as participants’ integration

- **RECOGNITION** and certification of learning and experiences, namely with Europass and ECVET
- **REINTEGRATION AND EVALUATION** after return further guidance is recommended to better exploit results
- **COMMITMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES** assuring, in written, that these and other quality criteria will be followed by all parts

TRANSVERSAL ASPECTS

Quality is also guaranteed through transversal activities implemented through the lifecycle of the project:

Project management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complying with Erasmus+ regulations and Agreement signed with the National Agency ▪ Managing the relationships with the Partnership ▪ Monitoring and evaluating project progress and following up to measure impact
Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identifying stakeholders and local actors that can benefit of project's activities and results, and maximize involvement and impacts
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communicating among the partnerships and with participants
Dissemination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promoting the project and its activities beyond the partnership

BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER MOBILITY

To assure quality, establishing procedures and methodologies and sharing them with the project partners is needed from the project planning stage. When the project is approved, and before the mobility takes place, it is necessary to re-confirm roles and responsibilities among the key actors: sending organization, participants, hosting organization, companies, and service providers. This contributes to strengthen the commitment and assure that all are aware of the processes, documents, tools and instruments to use.

Setting clear criteria and standards is crucial to assure the quality during mobility, the core moment in which all the procedures are implemented and attention has to be paid to learning, pedagogical, practical and logistic aspects. Monitoring and evaluation activities are fundamental in this phase.

Quality assurance does not end with the conclusion of the experience abroad, but it should be guaranteed after mobility and beyond, when dealing with certification, recognition of competences, career guidance and valorisation of the learning experience.

BEFORE MOBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information and guidance of all actors involved: sending official communication and project details to partners; publishing news on website/social media; organizing a launch events/meetings to inform staff/potential participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Re-confirmation of roles and responsibilities among partners: organizing face-to-face meetings with national partners and virtual meetings / e-mails with transnational partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Setting of a definitive work plan and timetable: elaborating a definitive working plan and a timetable taking in account internal and external factors and the different needs of actors involved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drafting internal agreements among partners: making responsibilities clear to all concerned and assuring respect for programme requirements.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drafting of agreements with services suppliers: establish the standards and negotiate the services needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Re-confirmation of selection criteria and procedures: further specify the criteria for the selection of participants and the details of the selection process.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Setting monitoring and evaluation procedures with partners: verifying the coherence between the learning outcomes, activities, MoU drafted at application stage and ECVET

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public call for application: publicizing the relevant and detailed information to potential participants; designing complete, understandable, easy to fill in application forms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Selection procedure: controlling of eligibility of applications received and participation requirements; making interviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agreement between sending organization and participants: collecting the information needed for project management; drafting agreements regulating all aspects of the mobility; explaining the contract in meetings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Personalization of the placement, learning agreement and logistic: sending CVs and other relevant documents to partner organizations; matching participant/company; making accommodation, travel and insurance arrangements; learning agreement preparation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pedagogical, intercultural, linguistic, work-related preparation: organising specific training to prepare the participants; giving support in carrying out the OLS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Management of information and documents: after preparation phase, it is fundamental to build a database to store and organize all the information and documentation; use the same excel database suggested in the section Before Mobility, enlarging it at each step
DURING MOBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementation of the mobility: implementation of the logistic aspects and services planned; carrying out of the traineeship respecting the procedures and the learning agreement agreed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tutoring and mentoring – monitoring of the traineeship: constant support to participants is given by sending, receiving and hosting organisations; checking that activities planned in the learning agreement are performed; administering periodically monitoring questionnaires about learning progress to participants and company tutors; recording the learning outcomes acquired
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluation: evaluating the experience and knowledge, competencies and skills acquired abroad and confront it with the learning plan
AFTER MOBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Certification: issuing the certificates to each participant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Intermediary and final report: production of detailed reports of project and mobilities, including information of each participant.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognition: assisting participants regarding procedures for the recognition of the experience and of the competences acquired during through the mobility programme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Follow-up: sending questionnaires to participants to find out if the experience has been useful in finding a job and to grow as persons and citizens, and to partners to measure impacts in their organization

2.6. DISSEMINATION

Dissemination and exploitation are a vital part of any project funded by the Erasmus+ Programme and is one of the award criteria for the assessment of the application. The type of project being developed determines the sort of activities required. In the case of mobility projects listing planned dissemination activities and identifying potential target groups is requested at application stage. While in the case of cooperation projects, a detailed and comprehensive plan, describing targets, tools and outcomes is required.

Apart from being a contractual obligation which all members of a consortium enter, it is important in order to promote and support the EU vision. Dissemination and exploitation of project results increase awareness of the opportunities offered by the programme and highlight the European added value of activities supported by Erasmus+. Sharing the results will also enable others to benefit from the activities and experiences of the Erasmus+ programme. Project results can serve as examples and inspire others by showing what is possible to achieve under the programme.

Dissemination also benefits the members of the consortium. As well as raising the profile of the organisation, it can often create new opportunities to extend the project and its results, develop new partnerships for the future and lead to external recognition of the work carried out adding further credit to it. Effective dissemination, communication and exploitation can help: raise awareness; extend the impact of the project and its results; engage stakeholders and target groups; share solutions and know how; influence policy and practice; and develop new partnerships.

It is also an opportunity to showcase: how European collaboration has led to the achievement of results that otherwise would not have been possible; how the outcomes are relevant to our everyday lives, by for example creating jobs or introducing new teaching methods; the creation of new business and job opportunities. This can contribute to a positive public perception and encourage wider participation in this EU programme.

Definition of Concepts

- Dissemination is the provision of information and the sharing of results with potential users - peers in the field, industry, and policymakers. It occurs as and when the result of programmes and initiatives become available.
- Communication is a broader concept. It includes information and promotion activities to raise awareness and enhance the visibility of the project's activities.
- Sustainability refers to the fact that crucial activities and results of the project are maintained and continue to deliver benefits to the partners, stakeholders and others after the end of the EU funding.
- Exploitation refers to a set of activities which are aimed at promoting the usage of project results beyond the life-span of the project.

Before, During and After the project

Although most of the work on dissemination and exploitation takes place once project implementation commences and throughout the project lifetime, certain aspects need to be addressed even before this takes place from the initial stages of proposal writing, whilst the project is underway and after the project has ended.

Before

- Identification of stakeholders, who are crucial to the success of the project: End-users, Decision Makers/Replication Actors, Market actors, Funding Authorities.
- Identification of dissemination and communication methods to ensure that the relevant stakeholders are reached in the best way available
- Identification of the expected impact and deliverables during the stage of proposal writing or project planning

During

- Dissemination, Communication and Exploitation Plan - to properly define the message that the consortium wants to put across with their dissemination, and the objectives, targets, channels used, timing and the different responsibilities. An effective plan should answer these simple questions:
 - Why? To know purpose will help you determine the audience, message, method and timing.
 - How? The proper channel needs to be used so the message gets to the target and objective is reached.
 - What? Select and present the content in a way it reflects the interest of the receivers.
 - When? To identify the right moment in the project plan and to reflect the project progress.
 - To whom? Each target group has different characteristics and needs that will lead to tailored approaches.
- Assessment of dissemination activities (quantitative and qualitative indicators)

After

- Further dissemination
- Register and report
- Evaluation and future cooperation

Good Practices which should be applied

- Targets, audience and message have to be clarified **before** deciding on the media platform
- **Interactive**. Listening to the stakeholders and adapting the messages accordingly must become a regular feature of the project communication activities
- Activities should be **selective** and the language used should be specifically written to maximise impact on target groups
- Particular emphasis must be put on "**going local**" – use partners, contact local press
- Tailor communication to **different audiences** by responding to the issues and needs that matter locally
- Make sure the EU and project **logos** are visible on every communication material
- **Slogans and symbols** should be selective, simple and repetitive
- All documents, websites, brochures and audio-visual material need to be presented in clear, simple and **jargon-free** language unless they are directed to an expert audience

Common mistakes

- Focusing on media before message
- Objectives are not clearly defined
- 'Why' or 'what' questions are left unanswered
- Budget is inadequate
- Messages are not tailored to the specific target group and are too technical
- Project managers and researchers underestimate dissemination activities
- No concrete targets are set for success indicators
- No professional expertise to deal with dissemination and communication tasks

Dissemination methods

There are many ways to disseminate projects: these range from online tools such as websites and social media and offline tools like banners, mugs and flyers. Websites are a great way to disseminate projects and there are a number of free tools, such as WordPress, to create simple free websites to help disseminate projects easily.

By using social media platforms such as Facebook, goals and targets can be set to measure the success of content and the insight feature of Facebook can be used to track the results. Radio and video media are also good tools for dissemination of projects. It is a good idea to contact local TV and radio stations and keep them updated with project progress: some airtime may be given if this is done.