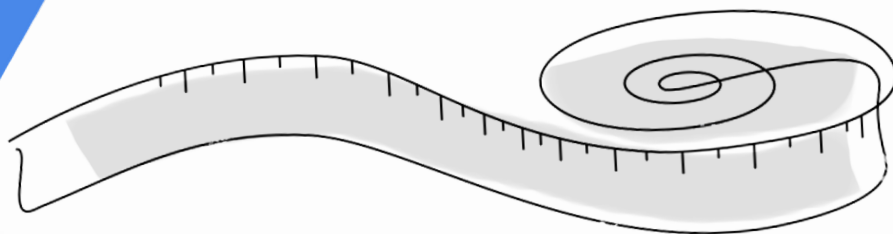


IMPACT MEASUREMENT REPORT



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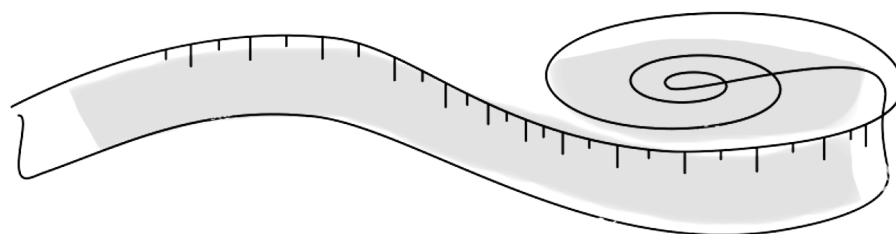
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IMPACT MEASUREMENT REPORT



PREAMBLE

In the world of project leaders, we often hear about impact and even social impact. The definition of impact may differ from one country to another and even from one actor to another, but all will agree that the impact of a project refers to positive or negative, expected or unexpected changes caused by and attributable to an intervention. These changes can be of different natures : social, economic or environmental. But how to evaluate the impact of a project and more particularly of an Erasmus + cooperation project? This is the subject of this document, which proposes an overall impact assessment methodology and illustrates this methodology with concrete examples from the Erasmus + Soft skills project that can be used and transferred to other projects.

The Erasmus+ Soft skills project is part of an approach that facilitates access to soft skills for people with low levels of qualification in order to accelerate their professional integration. Indeed, mastering a professional activity does not only suppose the implementation of technical skills specific to the job (hard skills), it also relies on the mobilization of soft skills. To this end, the partnership has developed a method as well as pedagogical tools for training in soft skills. For more information, do not hesitate to contact us (contact details on p.29).

This impact measurement report is composed as follows: firstly, you will find all the keys to set up a tailored impact measurement method, adaptable to all projects; secondly, the report will focus on the impact of Erasmus + project Soft skills on the project partners and on its target groups. You will therefore find transferable elements that will be useful for your projects, whether European or local.

1. A TAILORED IMPACT MEASUREMENT METHOD

As we said in the preamble, the impact of a project is not something easy to define or even to measure. Indeed, measuring the impact of a project is a project in itself that has its own objectives, its own steps, its own schedule, its own dedicated team and its own tools. Different methods already exist to evaluate the impact of a project and more particularly of an Erasmus + project. One can think of the Impact + exercise developed in the framework of a transnational European cooperation project coordinated by the Erasmus + agency of the United Kingdom in 2018, the impact measurement report published by AVISE in France or the SROI method which consists in creating an impact map.

Each method has its advantages and disadvantages and is more or less adapted to a particular situation or project. Rather than proposing yet another impact measurement method, the following pages provide an action plan that will help you to implement the impact measurement method that is best suited to your project. This action plan is composed of 4 main steps

- A) Formalize the project charter and the issues of the impact study
- B) Analyze internal and external stakeholders
- C) Create an evaluation framework
- D) Prioritize and plan

Following these steps will help you formalize your own impact measurement methodology and allow you to develop an operational schedule that will accompany you and your team throughout the life of the project and beyond.

A very important point to emphasize: measuring impact is not only done at the end of the project. It is done from the beginning of the project and continues long after its existence. It is therefore very important to define the method of impact measurement from the very first days of the project, but this does not mean that this method cannot be questioned throughout the project.



A) Formalize the project charter and the issues of the impact study

The first step in our action plan for creating a tailored impact assessment method is to formalize a project charter. This charter should fit on one page and gather all the information related to your project: the needs that the project addresses, the vision that the project carries, and the mission that the project sets for itself. Formalizing this charter is sometimes harder than you think: the more partners there are in your project, the longer it will take to answer these questions. Indeed, the partners in a project do not always have the same motivations to work together or the same vision of what the results of the project could look like. Formalizing a project charter together is therefore not only useful for building an impact assessment method, it also ensures that everyone shares the same picture of the project.

How to formalize the project charter ?

Nothing could be simpler: all you have to do is to answer together the 3 main questions below and to formalize these answers in writing:

- 1) What social need does our project meet? Where do we start from?
What is the problem? Why is it a problem? How big is the problem?
What vision of the world does the project have?
- 2) What do we want instead? How will we see that we have achieved? (Descriptive elements of the vision)
In this question we are not talking about the project itself but about the dream behind it.
- 3) What is the project's mission?
What is its object of work? What will it not do?
In this question we leave the dream to talk about the concrete missions of the project.

Once the project charter has been formalized, it is important to take some time to reflect on what is at stake in the impact assessment: in other words, why are we doing an impact assessment? Without answering this question, you risk losing your way in your impact assessment and not knowing where to start. Here again, nothing is better than formalizing the answer to this question. To help you answer it, ask yourself what you expect from the project, what it will bring in concrete terms.



B) Analyze internal and external stakeholders

Now that your project charter has been formalized and the impact study issues are clear to everyone, it is time to analyze and map the project's stakeholders. Indeed, it is on these stakeholders that a project has an impact and it is therefore with these same stakeholders that the impact of a project can be evaluated.

As a reminder, a stakeholder is an individual or collective actor (a person, a company, an association, a cluster, etc.) who is actively or passively concerned (directly or indirectly) by a project. These are people who have an interest in the outcome of your project and who will be affected by it in one way or another.

In project management we can distinguish between key stakeholders :

- The customer/beneficiary: direct user of the product or service generated by the project
- The project manager: the person who directs and coordinates the project
- The project team: the people who execute the project according to the project manager's instructions
- The promoter/funder: the one who finances the project (there can be several)

Depending on the project, other stakeholders may be involved, such as vendors/suppliers, subcontractors, utilities, or friends/family of the clients/beneficiaries.

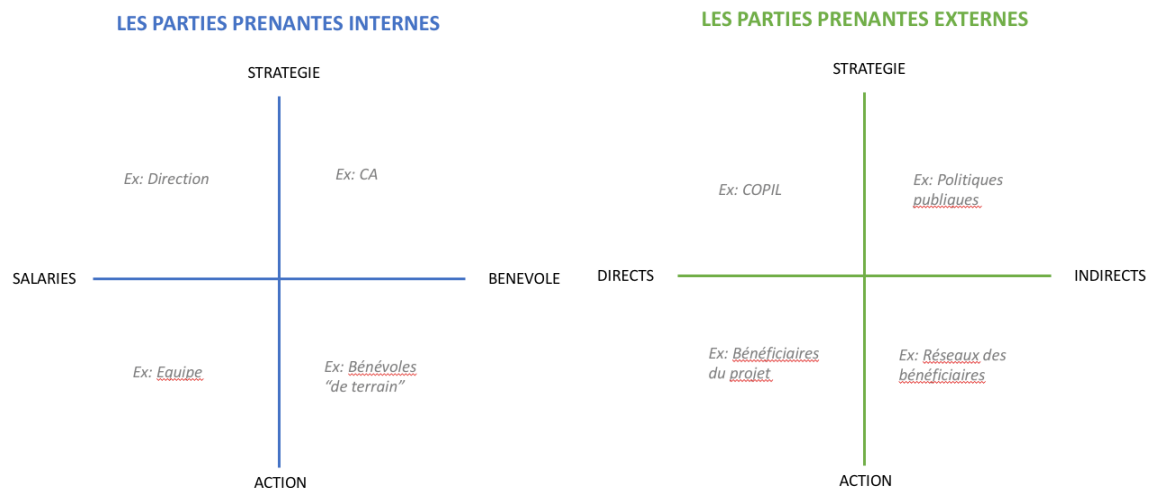
The easiest way to map all stakeholders and not forget any is to distinguish between internal and external stakeholders of the project.

An internal stakeholder is an interested party who belongs to the project while an external stakeholder is an interested party who does not belong to the project. If we take the example of a company, the internal stakeholders will be all the people working directly in the company such as the managers, the board of directors, the volunteers or the project team while the external stakeholders will be the people who are not directly part of the company but who have a link with it such as the steering committee, the public policies, the clients and beneficiaries, the subcontractors etc...

To map them and not forget any, do not hesitate to create your stakeholder grids and place all the actors on it according to the following criteria:

- For internal stakeholders: are they more operational or strategic? Are they volunteers or employees?
- For external stakeholders: are they directly or indirectly linked to the project? are they more operational or strategic?





Here again, we strongly advise you to do this exercise with as many people as possible so as not to forget any stakeholders. Forgetting a stakeholder is a way of reducing the impact of a project, so don't hesitate to take the time needed for this step.

C) Complete the evaluation framework

Now that you have formalized your project charter, clarified the issues of the impact study and mapped all the stakeholders, you can begin to complete the evaluation form that you can download at www.zerobarrier.eu or www.softskills-project.eu . This completion is done in two steps and should be done as early as possible in the project so that it can be implemented naturally and easily.

1) Prepare indicators

The first step is to assign at least one indicator to each stakeholder. But what is an indicator and how do we proceed?

An indicator is an instrument used to provide indications/information on a particular phenomenon. A distinction is often made between outcome indicators, performance indicators and impact indicators. What distinguishes them is above all their temporality:

- Outcome indicators are measured in the short term
- Performance indicators are measured in the medium term
- Impact indicators are measured in the long term

How to link one or more indicators to a stakeholder?

To do this, we suggest you complete the first part of the evaluation framework



INDICATORS					
For WHOM?	WHAT? (criteria)	TEMPORALITY	MEASURE	TYPE OF TOOLS	INDICATORS
The stakeholders of the project --> Stakeholder grid	What is expected from the project? Impact hypotheses that will become criteria (human, ecologic, economic, social impact)	Is it long term or short term? When do I get the information back? ~Anticipation Short Medium Long	(qualitative, quantitative / subjective, objective) GAP (X compared to Y) - Present self VS past self (X in 2019 X in 2020) - Present self VS ideal self (projection) - Self VS others	direct (formal) - indirect (informal) the further away from the action, the further away from the stakeholders, the more indirect the tool is - collective - individual.	What does this mean in practice?

a) Define one or more **criteria** for each stakeholder. (Column 2)

First of all, we must ask ourselves the question "What does the stakeholder expect from the project? We can make hypotheses of impact that will become criteria (human, ecological, economic impact) or we can go directly to the stakeholder and ask them about their interest and motivations in the project

b) Define the **time frame** of the evaluation. (Column 3)

Once the criterion is defined, you need to know whether it is to be evaluated in the long, medium or short term, the idea being to know when you need to collect the information.

The longer the time frame, the harder it is to collect the information and the more you have to anticipate in order to set up the evaluation framework and have the information you are looking for.

c) Define the **measurement mode**. (Column 4)

There are different types of measurement units: qualitative (related to the quality of what you want to measure) VS quantitative (related to the quantity of what you want to measure) AND subjective (related to a particular person's opinion) VS objective (not related to someone's opinion).

Regardless of the unit of measurement used, we strongly advise you to use deviation measurements (i.e. X vs. Y (Y being a measurement benchmark))

There are 3 categories of deviation measures:

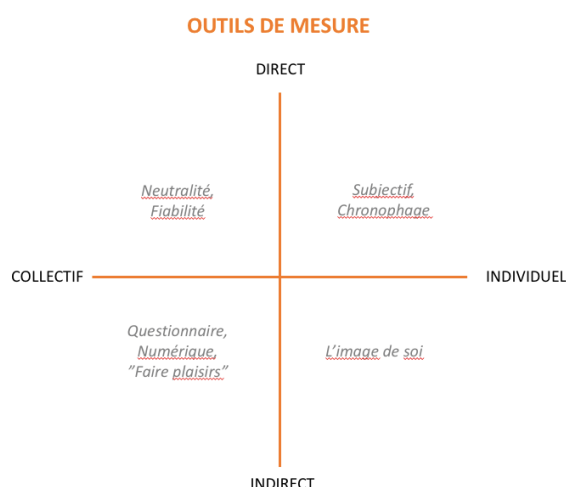
- Present self VS past self (X in 2019 VS X in 2020)
- Present self VS ideal self (projection: X in 2019 VS ideal action in 2025)
- Self VS others (my action VS a similar action)

d) Define the type of **measurement tools**. (Column 5)

There are more or less direct or indirect tools and collective or individual tools. A direct tool is a "formal" tool, while an indirect tool is an "informal" tool. The further away from the action, the further away from the stakeholders, the more indirect and informal the tool. The more direct and collective the tool, the more neutral and reliable the measurement will be, but the more indirect and individual the tool, the more it reflects the image of a person. The more collective and indirect the tool, the more the notion of "pleasing" will come into play (we are thinking in particular of the satisfaction



surveys that we all answer after a training course), the more individual and direct the tool, the more subjective and time-consuming it will be.



By reviewing these first 5 columns for each row, we are able to link consistent indicators to each stakeholder and fill in the sixth column. However, sometimes these five columns do not allow us to find a suitable indicator. In this case, we strongly advise you to consult the repository of impact indicators developed by the UDES (Union of Employers of the Social and Solidarity Economy) in France as part of the Valor'ESS project, which includes 42 innovative indicators.

Once the indicators are ready, we can move on to the second part of completing the framework: the organization of the information flow.

2) Organize the flow of information

Having only indicators will not allow us to measure the impact of the project. Indeed, it is vital to organize the data collection, i.e. to know what means (human, material, etc.) are needed to measure what we want to put forward and what methods will facilitate the task. To do this, simply complete the last 4 columns of the evaluation form.

ORGANIZATION OF DATA COLLECTION			
SUPPORTS	MEANS	DANGER	MODALITIES
Who is needed?	What is needed	dangers and obstacles encountered	How to do it concretely? such an individual interview? keeping an attendance register to be signed at each visit? a satisfaction questionnaire? a follow-up of the visits on the web page? the results of an evaluation? etc. ...



a) What **supports** are needed? (Column 6)

Here you need to define if you need support to be able to collect the data: who is needed to get the information?

b) What **resources** do we need? (Column 7)

Just as in the previous point, the question here is to know what is needed to collect the data. What tools and resources are needed?

c) Are there any **blockages**? (Column 8)

The idea is to estimate if you will encounter any obstacles or dangers in collecting the information. What are the risks and obstacles to anticipate in order to ensure that we will be able to access the expected information?

d) What are the **concrete modalities**? (Column 9)

Finally, you will have to define the strategy to be used depending on the other 8 columns: How to do it concretely? Individual telephone interview? Keeping an attendance register? Questionnaire? This last column is the translation of an indicator into a concrete action.

D) Prioritize and plan

Now that your framework is duly completed, it is time to prioritize the information to be collected. Two very important aspects must be taken into consideration in this step: time and budget. Indeed, it is necessary to be realistic and to worry about the time that certain information can take, as opposed to others, just as it is necessary to worry about the costs that certain expenses can generate.

The prioritization must be done between the project manager and the project team and be in line with the project charter and the impact study issues. We recommend that you have between 7 and 12 criteria to observe per project and that you choose them carefully so that they best reflect the impact of the project.

Once you have prioritized these criteria, you will need to create a timeline that reminds you of each time you/an impact assessor will need to collect information and analyze it.

2. IMPACT MEASUREMENT IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EUROPEAN PROJECT ERASMUS + SOFT SKILLS

Within the framework of the European project Soft skills Erasmus +, we used tools that allowed us to evaluate certain aspects of the impact of our project on the project partners and on our direct and indirect target groups. Thus, using the action plan described above, we defined our evaluation framework, prioritized the points that seemed most important to us and developed the appropriate tools in relation to the points in question.

The Erasmus+ program financially supports a wide range of actions and activities in the fields of education and training, youth, and sport and thus gives participating organizations the opportunity to work in international partnerships and to develop and share innovative practices. In the field of vocational education and training, the program aims to give the target audience the opportunity to improve their skills and increase their employability.

Many partner organizations can participate in the Erasmus+ program: associations, institutions, whose activities are supported by the program.

As a reminder, in the framework of an Erasmus project, the impact of a project is defined as follows in the program guide : « *L'impact est l'effet que l'activité réalisée et ses résultats ont sur les personnes, les pratiques, les organisations et les systèmes. La diffusion et l'exploitation des plans de résultats peuvent aider à maximiser l'effet des activités développées afin qu'elles aient un impact sur les participants immédiats et les partenaires pour les années à venir. Les avantages pour les autres parties prenantes doivent également être pris en compte afin de faire une plus grande différence et de tirer le meilleur parti du projet.* »

Thus, in the framework of the Erasmus+ Soft skills project, we wanted to focus on the impact that the project would have on the project coordinator and partners but also on our direct and indirect target groups

A. Impact on project partners

Who are project partners ?

Many partner organizations can participate in the Erasmus+ program: associations, institutions, whose activities are supported by the program.

In the framework of a European K2 project, an organization can be the project promoter or the project partner, which implies different roles and missions.

Roles of the project promoter :

- Animate the partnership: make the project live and coordinate the partners;
- To submit the file during the calls for European projects;
- Be the referent and interlocutor of the Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS), the Managing Authority or the European Commission;
- Be legally responsible for compliance with the terms of the grant agreement;
- Stimulate the reporting of partners' expenditure, coordinate the payment request and ensure the transfer of the European grant to the partners;
- Draw up the implementation reports and all documents relating to the project, as requested by the program manager;
- Demonstrate a real willingness to assume the responsibility of "coordinator".

Role of the partners :

- Participate in the implementation of the project;
- Facilitate the process in the territory or sector assigned to you in the partnership agreement;
- Respond to requests from the person who coordinates the administrative and accounting follow-up of the project;
- Promote exchange;
- Bringing the project to life.

The partnership of the Erasmus + Soft skills project is made up of institutions and associations that support actions in the sectors of adult education and vocational training: the consortium is composed of 9 partners from 5 different countries.

Each of the partners is a non-profit organization or a social enterprise aimed at a public far from employment or in a situation of disability

Even if each partner organization works in the field of lifelong learning and has common objectives for the welfare and social integration of people far from employment, they provide different services: day care services, sheltered housing, education and vocational training,



employment, adapted work enterprises, support services for people at risk of exclusion or in a situation of exclusion, services oriented, towards disability or not (...)

	<i>Country</i>	<i>Line of business</i>
<i>Chance B</i>	Austria	Provides social services for all ages and all areas of life, including education and work: employment assistance, employment support and counseling, sheltered workshops, ...
<i>Le Plope</i>	Belgium	Training and socio-professional integration center for people with disabilities
<i>Work'inn</i>	Belgium	Work-linked training company for low-skilled people
<i>Asociación Española de Escuelas de Segunda Oportunidad</i>	Spain	Network for the integration and training of young people with low qualifications
<i>Peñasca S. Coop</i>	Spain	Training center and integration company for disadvantaged people and people at risk of exclusion
<i>Régie des écrivains</i>	France	Integration company, Adapted company, Personal services company, Training center
<i>Solivers</i>	France	Cooperative society of collective interest
<i>Les Z'ailes</i>	France	Strategy and management of innovative projects
<i>CUDV DRAGA</i>	Slovénie	Training and care center for disabled people



How to measure the impact on the project partners?

It is important to measure the impact of the project on the partners throughout its implementation. This is particularly important in an Erasmus+ project as it usually brings together entities from different countries, different backgrounds, different cultures and therefore different needs and expectations.

For this, the partnership can collectively agree on a methodology involving different tools. It is preferable that the methodology include both quantitative and qualitative data. It can include a socio-economic analysis of the project for each partner (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) to assess the needs at the level of each partner at the beginning of the project and then a follow-up, taking into account the general context of the project implementation.

It is also important to collect and analyze the impressions and feelings of the partners about the project, for example during the different transnational meetings. A final questionnaire can also be used, asking each partner to evaluate the impact in their organization.

In the Soft skills project we agreed on such a methodology, which was used throughout the implementation. The tools are described below.

In the long term, one of the key factors is to see if the developed soft skills process has helped the partner organizations to improve their processes and to better support disadvantaged people.

Tools to measure the impact on project partners

The SWOT Analysis

The SWOT method consists of identifying and comparing the positive and negative factors of the internal and external environment. Performing this analysis allows us to assess the partner's relationship with its context and environment and helps to evaluate the socio-economic situation in relation to the project. A summary table can be used:

Strengths are the internal factors of the partner that give it an advantage over other projects and/or methods.	Weaknesses are negative internal factors that can be improved.
Opportunities are external situations, specific to the environment in which the partner evolves, which can give it a	Threats are unfavorable external situations that can negatively influence the project results for the partner.



competitive advantage and on which it can build.	
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The SWOT analysis provides an overview of the project and an insight into its positioning in the partner environment.

For the Soft Skills project, each partner conducted three SWOT analyses: one at the beginning of the project, one in the middle and one at the end of the project.

These different SWOT analyses have been analyzed by the project coordinator who adapted his project management or the turn the project was taking thanks to the opinions shared by the partners. The idea of doing it at 3 different temporalities also allowed to see if the threats that had been detected at the beginning of the project persist, if new weaknesses appear or if things are improving.

Thus, a weakness that appeared in the first SWOT analyses of the partners was the fact that the project was not necessarily clear to all after the first seminar. A clarification was made by the project coordinator at the second seminar, which meant that comments on the clarity of the project were no longer found in the second and last SWOT analyses. Another weakness often highlighted was the level of English of each partner: in order to act on this point, the coordinator detected the people with the best level to do the proofreading and made it a point of honor that each partner could have at the end of the project the productions accessible in their native languages. Finally, a threat that appeared in the first two SWOT but that disappeared at the end of the project is the complementarity of our project with what is already being done today. Indeed, the coordinator and the partners had to be careful to propose innovative tools that bring something new.

Feedback from partners after each transnational meeting

In order to adjust the elements of the project as closely as possible to the needs of the partners, the impressions and feelings of the partners should be collected and analyzed regularly throughout the project.

For the Soft Skills project, the steering committee that took place after each transnational meeting was the ideal moment to do so. Each partner reflected on the project and the meeting, and shared their impressions as well as any fears and concerns. This feedback was systematically written down and helps to improve our seminars and our daily project management. This was particularly important in the difficult context of Covid-19, which forced us to make adjustments.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a data collection technique that takes the form of a series of questions. It allows the collection of a large amount of data, including testimonials or opinions.

For the Soft Skills project, a final questionnaire was sent to each partner to collect quantitative and qualitative data about the project and its impact.

A key question included in the questionnaire is, for example, « How do you plan to use the Soft Skills approach in other local, national or European projects? » This question allowed us to gather elements on the strengths of our project. Seven out of nine partners praised the Soft skills project management and seems ready to reuse the tools such as the expenditure reporting tables, the work plans, the GANTTs or the systematic holding of a steering committee at the end of each seminar.

Another key question was « What activities are you going to maintain once the European funds are no longer paid out? » The partners could have all said that they would make the tools available on the web page. Instead, many are already planning and have started to integrate soft skills in their daily life, in their more global training programs. Some partners have already been approached by potential clients who are looking to develop soft skills for their employees.

B. Impact on direct target groups

Who are the direct target groups ?

For Erasmus+ projects related to the field of vocational education and training, various target groups are defined, including apprentices and students, professionals, trainers and staff of vocational education and training organisations, as well as professionals working in enterprises (e.g. integration enterprises).

It is important to define the direct target groups of the project and to ensure that the work done will be useful to these target groups. The productions and materials developed should be adaptable in different contexts.

The Erasmus+ Soft skills project follows the approach of facilitating access to soft skills for people with low qualifications in order to accelerate their professional integration. Mastering a professional activity does not only require the implementation of technical skills specific to the job (hard skills), it also relies on the mobilization of soft skills, especially for this target group of disadvantaged or disabled people.

The Soft skills project focused on the development of a "soft skills acquisition process", which includes a method as well as pedagogical tools, aimed at people with a low level of qualification and/or disabilities in soft skills. The products developed are intended for two direct target groups, related to the main activity of the partner organizations:

- Trainers/ technical supervisors/ tutors/ assessors working either in a vocational education and training organization or in an integration enterprise.
- Disadvantaged people: young people with a low level of qualification, disabled people or people excluded from the labor market. They can be enrolled in a vocational education and training organization or work in a work integration enterprise. In our project, we use the generic term "learners".

How to measure the impact on our direct target groups ?

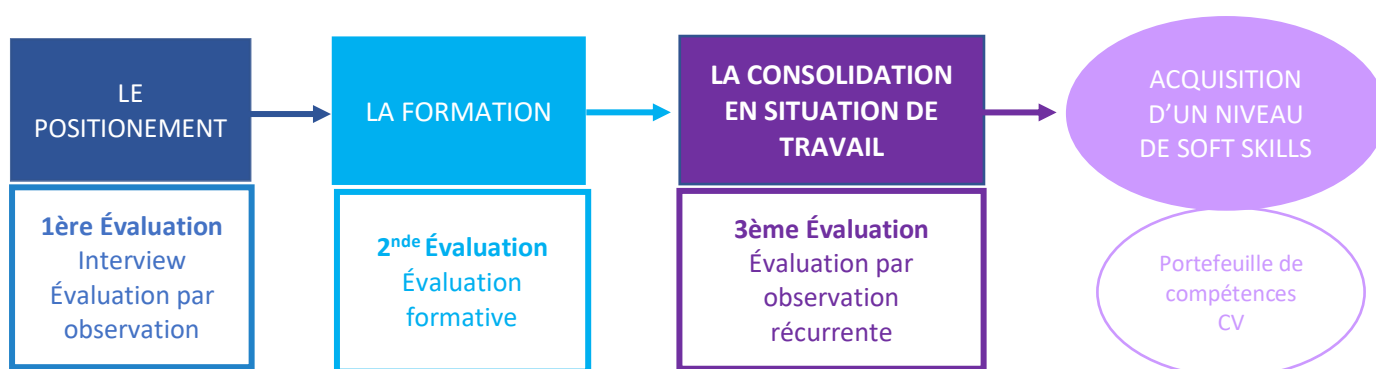
The projects supported under Key Action 2 are intended to produce results such as innovative education and training programs in line with the needs and expectations of the respective target groups. It can also be new or improved processes of recognition and validation of competences in VET, or new or improved practices to meet the needs of target groups with fewer opportunities, to name a few.

Learning, teaching and training (LTT) activities are important elements of Erasmus+ projects. In these activities, the developed training program is put into practice with a limited number of participants from all partner countries. During these events, the impact on the intended target groups is evaluated and the results are taken into account in the improvement and finalization of the developed products.

In terms of learning, teaching and training activities, the Soft skills project has followed a two-track approach: The soft skills acquisition process developed by the partners included a soft skills training and assessment program for learners, as well as training for trainers to support the trainers who lead this acquisition process. Both were tested in an experiment to measure the impact on the respective target group.

The assessment and validation of the knowledge and skills acquired during an acquisition process can be considered as a specific form of impact measurement, because its results reflect the progress of the participants during this process and thus the impact of the training on their qualification level.

The soft skills acquisition process developed in the project includes a placement and assessment protocol that describes the methodology for soft skills assessment based on the ECVET system. This methodology, throughout the three main steps and on 4 levels, can also be used to measure the impact of the acquisition process on the first target group (disadvantaged people), reflecting their progress and achievements.



This image shows that measuring impact is a pervasive element in all steps of the soft skills acquisition process. By comparing the results of this first evaluation with the results of the third evaluation, it is possible to measure the progress/success of the process for each participant. By including formative evaluations in the training sessions, trainers can assess the success of the training and - if necessary - adapt their program to increase the impact on the trainees.

Once the training process is complete, it is important to measure the "final" impact on the target group(s), given the main objective of the project. To do this, it is necessary to examine the long-term effects on the target group(s).

For the soft skills project, this means for disadvantaged people:

Did the soft skills process developed in the project facilitate their social and professional integration?

Different indicators are useful, for example the number of people who found a job, the quality of the job found, the longevity of the contract, the perceived impact on their daily and professional life,

And for trainers:

Did the soft skills process developed in the project help them implement soft skills training programs for the target group? Do they (better) integrate soft skills into their daily work with learners?

Various indicators are useful, such as the number of soft skills trainings conducted, the perception of trainers (whether they feel better equipped to train in soft skills), etc.

Tools to measure the impact on direct target groups

A placement and assessment protocol

Evaluations provide the trainer and the trainee with information on the status and progress of the training. Predefined and/or standardized criteria ensure objective evaluation and comparability of results.

A series of tools allows to assess the trainees during the soft skills acquisition process:

- A placement test: carried out before the start of the training program to find out the participants' level of soft skills. The results of this first assessment describing the initial situation can be compared with the results of the last assessment.
- A formative assessment: this is used to evaluate the learning progress. The main objective is to highlight the trainee's difficulties and to provide information on what has been learned or what needs to be improved during the training or during consolidation in the work situation.
- Recurrent assessment by observation: assesses the practical application of new knowledge acquired during the training and determines whether or not a certain level of soft skills has been acquired. It can be compared to the results of the first assessment to measure progress.

It is the comparison of the results that will allow us to evaluate the impact of our training on the trainees. Out of the 98 learners that we trained during the experiments in April May June 2021, 70 were able to be evaluated in a work situation and 62 validated the level at which they were trained. They have thus increased their skills thanks to the training they have received.

Zerobarrier

Vocational education and training follows (standardized) training plans and programs. At the end of the learning paths, the acquired knowledge, attitudes and skills are certified. To



validate the success of a training program, it is necessary to track the progress of trainees wherever they go.

As part of the Soft skills project, the Zerobarrier digital training and assessment platform has been adapted and extended to map the entire soft skills acquisition process and to manage all data related to the trainees' soft skills placement, training and assessment sessions: it can be used to keep track of training sessions, record the results of the placement test or assessments and generate CVs and skills portfolios. Thus, impact measurement can also be supported by using the reporting functions of the Zerobarrier application. We will be able to track the 98 people trained and see their progress if they continue to work in organizations that use the Zerobarrier application.

Satisfactions surveys

Next to the evaluation of the participants' performance in a training program, another relevant aspect is the quality of the training program itself. Satisfaction surveys are a common tool for collecting feedback from a target group regarding the quality of a service or program. Surveys can also be conducted to measure the long-term effects of the service/program.

During the Soft skills project, several satisfaction surveys were developed for the different target groups. At the end of the soft skills trainings for trainees and at the end of the training for trainers, these surveys give us an overview of the opinions and feelings of the trainees and trainers regarding the training sessions attended.

These questionnaires give us an indication of the short-term impact that the soft skills training may have had on the trainees and trainers. Indeed, while the first questions allow us to question the organization, the means, the learning method or even the training group, the last questions allow us to know more about the feelings of the trainers and trainees regarding the usefulness of such training for them and the daily use of the knowledge acquired during the training. Thus, out of the 98 questionnaires completed by the learners, 62 were very satisfied with the usefulness of the training, 35 satisfied and 2 not very satisfied. To the open question "Will you use elements of this training in your daily life? Some trainees insisted that this training would help them for future job interviews. In addition to these questionnaires, other trainees asked directly for other soft skills training.

It would be interesting to send a questionnaire back to our 98 trainees in a few months to find out how they are doing, whether soft skills have helped them find a job more easily or helped them in their daily lives.

The 19 questionnaires answered by the trainers showed that 18 were very satisfied with the usefulness of the training and 1 was satisfied. In response to the open-ended question, "Will you use elements of this training in your daily work?" many trainers explained that they wanted to use the tools developed in the project and integrate them into more existing



training programs. This is the case, for example, of the trainer at Work'inn who succeeded in integrating the soft skills in more technical training weeks or the case of Solivers who tried to adapt our methods to their reality: training in work situation.

You will find the frames of our satisfaction surveys on our digital educational application www.softskills-project.eu

C. Impact on indirect target groups

Who are indirect target groups ?

As a reminder, the Erasmus+ program explains that "The impact of the Erasmus+ program is measured not only by the quality of the project results, but also by the extent to which these results are known and used outside of the project partnership."

For now, we have focused on the impact that the project could have on the partners and direct target groups (learners and trainers trained in the project). We will now focus on the extent to which the results of our project are known and used outside the partnership and direct target groups. We will therefore speak of external target groups, which in fact represent the network of training organizations, public institutions, classical and social enterprises of potential future learners in France, Austria, Spain, Belgium and Slovenia, but also on a broader European scale.

Method and tools to measure impact on indirect target groups

The impact on our external target groups is ultimately the least obvious to evaluate. Indeed, they are by definition external to the project and we have therefore less ease in gathering information. In the framework of the Erasmus + Soft skills project, we wanted to focus on communication tools and we therefore relied on our digital pedagogical tools, our communication plan and our dissemination events to measure the impact of our project on external target groups.

Communication and dissemination of results is an essential part of an Erasmus+ project. It allows not only to share the experience and knowledge generated by the partnership but also to maximize its impact. Several tools can be used to assess communication and the impact of communication throughout an Erasmus+ project

External communication plan and report

Defining collectively the objective of the communication, the key audiences as well as the communication channels to be used, is an essential first step which then allows to monitor what is done. This is particularly important for an Erasmus+ project that involves many partners from different countries. At the end of the project, the preparation of a short final report is essential to reflect on the dissemination activities and to see how many people have been reached. This helps to measure the impact of the communication and to identify ways to improve dissemination in future projects.

For the Soft Skills project, we designed a simple external communication plan at the beginning of the project. We identified key actions to be implemented and a timeline, and used it to



follow up at transnational meetings. At the end of the project, each partner prepared a final communication report, using the communication plan template (in Excel format) so that it could be easily filled in by each partner. Thus it is possible for us to realize the channels on which we communicated, the people we potentially reached.

For the Erasmus + project, each partner has used its own means of communication such as social networks, newsletters etc. ... The social network that has been most used by the partners is Facebook. Thus, we accumulate 10 050 subscribers on all our pages which means that we have potentially reached 10050 people with the hundred publications that have been made in 3 years.

However, we know that this indicator is not so precise since people did not necessarily follow up on these publications or did not necessarily see them.

Questionnaire for the evaluation of dissemination events

The organization of dissemination events to present the project, the prepared productions and the results of the experimentation is a way to raise awareness and share the knowledge and experience acquired by the partnership in a more complete and transversal way than by broadcasting it on Facebook. It is a key step to reflect on the work done and to debate with other actors from related fields. However, it is not always easy to see the impact of such an event, so it is necessary to get feedback from the participants.

For the Soft Skills project, we organized 5 dissemination events (one in each country) and each participant received a short evaluation survey to help us assess the impact. The survey included questions to obtain basic information about the participant (to assess who we were able to reach), but also their opinion on the quality of the event (content, organization), as well as the usefulness of the material presented.

228 people attended the dissemination events and 143 people completed this questionnaire. To the question "Do you think you could use the material presented at this event?" 125 answered yes. The people who attended the seminar were all given the link to our digital educational platform www.softskills-project.eu where they can download all our tools and intellectual productions.

Digital applications

Within the framework of the project, 2 digital applications have been developed: a pedagogical platform which simply allows access to all our productions and tools and a digital training and evaluation application which can be accessed for a fee and on which it is possible to follow the progress of trainees and record the results of their placement and evaluations. In the long term it would be interesting to question our Zerobarrier to know, for example, the

number of connections or the number of documents downloaded, which would give us an indication of the use of our tools by our external target groups. Another possibility would be to count the number of new memberships in the Zerobarrier digital application after the project and directly related to the new soft skills features.

Multilingual productions and tools

Finally, it should be noted that even if English is a known language, translating the main productions developed is a key element to ensure a better dissemination and understanding of the productions of an Erasmus+ project.

For the Soft Skills project, we spent a lot of time (human resources) translating all the main productions into French, Spanish, German and Slovenian to ensure that they are easy to use by all interested trainers within our organizations and beyond. This translation also facilitates the appropriation of the tools by all and thus increases the impact of the dissemination.

CONCLUSION

Measuring the impact of a project is a time consuming task and two projects will not necessarily use the same method, tools or indicators. This report first gives an action plan to create a tailor-made method that will fit any project and then gives some examples of tools that have been mobilized to measure the impact of the Erasmus + Soft skills project.

We urge you to deploy your action plan from the very first days of your project and to have a clear timetable so that you do not forget to look for information at the right time and develop the right tools. Measuring the impact of a project may seem very abstract at the beginning of a project but it makes sense at the end of the project: it allows you to be accountable to your funders, but even better, it allows you to be accountable to yourself, to better understand the changes brought by the project, to improve your practices and to motivate your project team and your partners. Impact evaluation is about supporting decision-making and steering your activity by making it more effective.

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