

EU Project
The logo for the TRAIN project, identical to the one in the top left corner.

**Professionalization of
Literacy and Basic Education
Basic Modules for Teacher Training**

INTERIM EVALUATION REPORT

by

**didaktis
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1 Development of an evaluation concept

1.1 Basis of the evaluation concept

The evaluation concept is based on the chapter “Evaluation & Dissemination” of the Survival Kit for European Project Management, 2nd edition 2001, p. 43 (et seq.).

According to it evaluation

- measures impact and the outputs
- involves the project partners
- explores the effects of evidence
 - o on the target group
 - o on the project structure
 - o project management and
 - o on good transnational partnership.

Internal Evaluation collects data and work. External Evaluation interprets the data and acts as a „critical friend“, provides instruments for evaluation and proposes project modification if necessary.

1.2 Evaluation concept of the TRAIN Project

The project partners got involved in the development of the evaluation concept as required above.

The evaluation concept was presented at the 2nd partner meeting in Zurich and there discussed and adjusted by the partners. The partners agreed upon the following topics:

(LaBE is short for Literacy and Basic Education.)

1.2.1 Measuring the impacts

Aims of impact	Evidence by
- elevating the quality of LaBE courses - improving the qualification of LaBE trainers in Europe - raising awareness for new aspects and findings.	exploring what competences /skills do LaBE teachers need: - development of questionnaires, - interviews with “experts”, - analysis and case studies - compendium: analysis/state of the art reports - dissemination of outputs.

1.2.2 Measuring the outputs: materials and web based

1.2.2.1 Materials

Aims of output	Evidence by
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - implementation of five basic modules for LaBE - dissemination of the project materials like - project flyer - handbook - reports - website - newsletter - meetings and conferences - the results of the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> handbook/manual with guidelines, description of the 5 modules, reports about implementation, good practice examples, recommendations; dissemination in the target groups: the partners and all European experts and educators involved in LaBE; further dissemination in - local and national networks - national and international bodies of experts - final conference - development of Grundtvig 3 Training Courses.

1.2.2.2 Web based

Aims of output	Evidence by
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - establishment of web site(s) with reports, questionnaires, good practice examples, links; - materials for experts; communication space - quarterly electronic newsletter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TRAIN web site including statistics - status of promotion of the project on websites of the partners and other relevant web sites - articles in professional magazines and online http://www.die-bonn.de - internet-platform for European magazines in the field - dissemination of the electronic newsletter.

1.2.3 Involving the project partners

Aims of involvement	Evidence by
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - implement transnational cooperation - integrate the results of debates and agreements - reflect the working process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - minutes of the meetings - evaluation of meetings: questionnaire for feedback from each partner meeting - monitoring (quarterly reports of the partners) - observation by the evaluator.

1.2.4 Exploring the effects of evidence...

on	Evidence by
... the target group: European experts and educators involved in LaBE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compendium: analysis/state of the art reports - final conference on World Literacy Day - quantity of dissemination of the project outputs.
... the project structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - appropriateness and clarity of the objectives - outputs - adherence to the timescale - innovation and variety of approaches in the partnership.
... the project management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - quality of project management - arrangements for the administrative and financial management - good communication structure: questions quickly answered, - monitoring system - observation of the coordinator by the evaluator.
... the good transnational partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - common vision on the project - strong commitment to the project by each partner - contributions to meetings and drafts - effective communication amongst partners - development of trust and positive attitudes.

2 Evaluation of the work process up to the 2nd meeting

2.1 Procedure of evaluation

The concept of evaluation will be applied to the parts which have been realised up to now. Following are the proofs of evidence according to work plan and timetable of the proposal:

Work plan (extracts)	State of realisation
- gathering information of approaches, concepts and good practice:	national and country reports
- partner meetings:	kick-off and 2 nd meeting realised
- development of qualification concept	started
- concept for modules	started
- establishment of local networks	started
- web-based information and communication:	started.

Work process and outputs are evaluated in the chronological order of the project up to the 2nd partner meeting. This evaluation concentrates on the already realised steps such as national and country reports, work progress shown by meetings and feedbacks, concerning the aims of the project and the impact on transnational partnership.

The appropriate documents are

- national and country reports
- minutes of meetings
- feedback of meetings
- monitoring system
- guidelines and forms.

2.2 Evaluation of the work process by the documents

2.2.1 National and country reports

Most of the country reports were completed during the exploration period. The partners reported the state of the art in their own countries and in one other European country. The reports follow the outlines (master form and overview grid for summary) given by the coordinator.

The following reports had been finished until the deadline of this Interim Evaluation Report

<i>European Country</i>	<i>reported by the partner</i>
Cyprus	Cyprus
England	Slovenia
France	France
Germany	Germany
Ireland	Ireland
Liechtenstein	Switzerland
Netherlands	Germany
Scotland	Ireland
Slovenia	Slovenia
Switzerland	Switzerland
Wales	Cyprus

Still missing but announced to come soon are the reports

Austria	Switzerland
Belgium	France

The reports present the states of the art in an informative way. The wide range of didactical aspects, focussed in the reports shows the variety of national situations and gives a good overview on literacy and basic education in Europe. The summaries will be part of the final compendium of the project and provide the target group – European experts and educators involved in LaBE – with a common basis for discussion and qualification.

2.2.2 The meetings as reported in minutes and feedbacks

Working modus with the minutes

The minutes are taken on notebook during the meeting sessions. At every meeting another partner would be in charge of the minutes.

Minutes of the kick-off meeting in December 2006 in Ljubljana, Slovenia

The minutes give insight into a well prepared and successfully held first get-together of the partners. Topics and working plans fit in with the aims, work plan and timetable of the project proposal. A new point is the additional silent partnership of the Swiss Federation for Adult Learning. The partners used a questionnaire to evaluate the kick-off meeting.

Feedback of the kick-off meeting

Questions	Answers
Are you content with the information flow before the meeting?	All: yes – very much
Are the aims / your aims fulfilled?	All: yes – very much
Are you clear about your role and the tasks?	yes – very much (5 persons) ... like more understand what tasks we need to complete
Was the communication sufficient between the partners and the coordinator (during the meeting)?	yes – very much (5 persons) at times it was difficult when an individual spoke for too long
Were there enough opportunities to express your ideas?	All: yes – very much
What are your recommendations regarding further procedure and communication?	More strict on times – Rotating chairperson Monika to involve the other partners in managing the meetings – to produce on time the work that we have decided – to keep in regular contact via e-mail.

As the coordinator informed the evaluator the following tasks had been done between the 1st and the 2nd meeting:

- financial arrangements
- working plan agreement
 - o Partners will use a focus method to explore and identify the competencies of literacy teachers.
 - o All partners will prepare a national report (20 pages) using the agreed structure and a report on one of the countries which are more advanced in the field of literacy (10-15 pages) until the end of March 2007. The coordinator will propose a structure for the reports.
 - o The coordinator will prepare an action plan for the first year of the project.
 - o Partners will communicate at least once a month via email.

The last point was not fulfilled by all partners. Suggestions will be made in chapter 5.

3 Evaluation of the 2nd Partner Meeting in May 2007 in Zurich

3.1 Evaluation material

The meeting is evaluated by the minutes of the meeting, a written feedback questionnaire and personal observation as the evaluator was present on the meeting..

3.2 Minutes of the 2nd meeting

This meeting was an additional one. It had been organized and financed by the silent partner from Switzerland.

The minutes resume exactly the work process and the progress during the meeting.

Due to some reasons in the partner's institutions not all partners had fulfilled the work plan agreements after the kick-off meeting. Reports were delayed and the communication via email was not done within the agreed time schedule or did not happen at all. In the meeting they all agreed to give the delayed contributions within the first period of the project. The coordinator fixed the dates and documents to be worked out. She stressed that all work must be done until the end of June 2007 which is the deadline for the progress report of the project.

The second topic of the meeting – to start the development phase – was intensely discussed. Commitment and setting dates were achieved so that the agenda had successfully been finished.

The external evaluator took part in the meeting. The evaluation during the meeting consisted in observation and personal feedback during the meeting. Furthermore a questionnaire was given by the evaluator at the end of the meeting.

3.3 Feedback by questionnaire

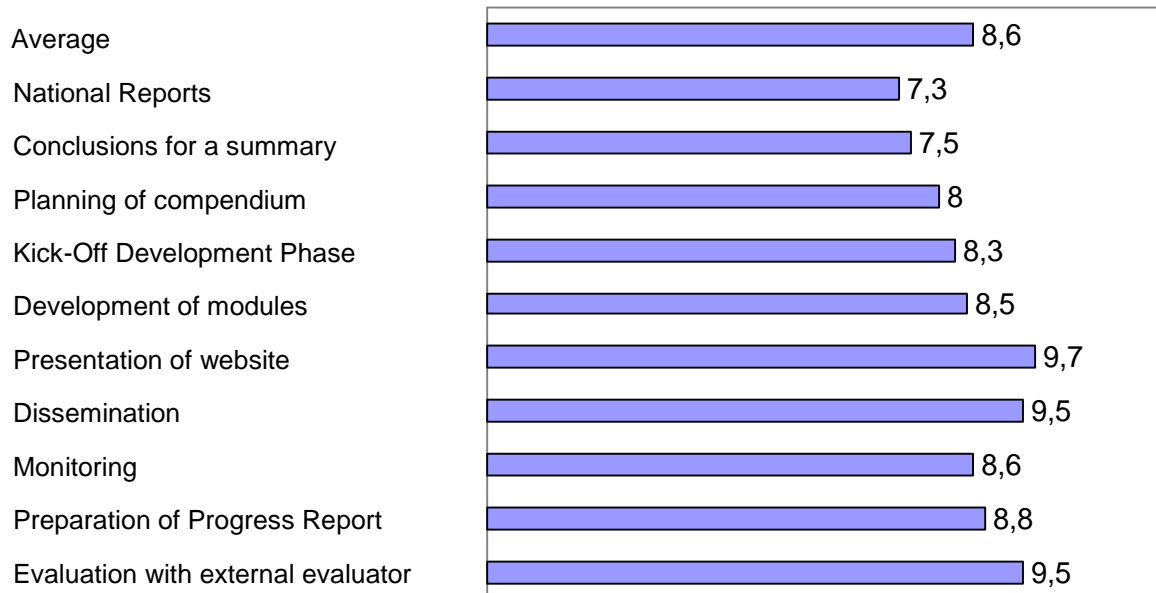
The feedback questionnaire was developed out of the prototype forms supplemented to the Survival Kit for European Project Management. It was then adapted to the subjects of the 2nd meeting and presented to the partners at the end of the meeting.

EXPECTATIONS	
<i>Questions</i>	<i>Answers</i>
What were your expectations of this meeting?	<p>The partners expected to discuss country reports and solve the problem of delayed reports.</p> <p>They also wanted to revise the competencies of literacy teachers and speak about the development of the teaching modules. All expressed their wish to fix the next steps and strengthen the cooperation.</p> <p>The coordinator furthermore wanted to come to commitments regarding further procedure and to set up a more detailed work plan.</p>
To what extent have these expectations been met?	<p>The expectations were fulfilled concerning the structure for developing the modules and the further procedure.</p> <p>The following points were difficult:</p> <p>Some participants did not have a presentation ready so that it was not easy to get a clear idea of what happens in their countries. It was not time enough to discuss bends, similarities, differences between the countries.</p>

The following sessions were given a rating on a 1 low to 10 high scale with added facultative comment. The numbers result from the addition of points divided by the number of persons involved.

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Ratings</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Presentation and discussion of national reports	7,3	Not all partners had presentations, but discussion was good. - The session was difficult, but in the end successful.
Conclusions for a summary	7,5	There is a clear format for summary.
Planning of compendium	8,0	We didn't have time to detailed contents.
Kick-off development phase: Goals and schedule	8,3	(no comments)
Development of modules	8,5	There is a clear structure. - Not enough time.
Presentation and further development of website	9,7	(no comments)
Dissemination	9,5	(no comments)
Monitoring	8,6	Good to have clear forms to fill. - Need some examples.
Preparation of Progress Report for the EU Commission	8,8	(no comments)
Evaluation with external evaluator	9,5	(no comments)

Ratings overview



COMMENTS on the whole meeting	
Questions	Answers
Which session(s) did you find most useful?	Development of modules 4x Competencies
Which session(s) did you find least useful?	Planning of compendium - Country reports - The process around defining the questionnaires of competencies - Long discussions about the questionnaire
Did you receive adequate information about the meeting before it began?	Yes, all satisfied
Please comment on the accommodation and food	Yes, thanks to FSEA and Bernhard
Please add any additional comments here	The partners expressed their thanks to the coordinator and the inviting organisation SVEB. They pointed out the good cooperation, the information gathered and the pleasant atmosphere.

3.4 Observation by the evaluator

3.4.1 Observation of the group behaviour

The evaluator met a group with a friendly team atmosphere. The discussions were open and appreciative.

Some sessions aroused problems which the team finally managed well.

The delayed reports revealed a different understanding of the timescale. Due to the lacking reports not all partners were sufficiently informed about the national state of the art. The partners discussed the next steps and agreed to a new timescale which would allow having all the results in time for the progress report for the EU Commission at the end of June 2007.

A questionnaire for the competencies of literacy teachers was intensely discussed. The group agreed on a form with national accents so that the variety can take place in the project.

The cooperation between the partners increased during the meeting. Offers of support helped to develop mutual trust between the partners. on the second day the group agreed quickly about new topics and how to integrate them into the agenda.

3.4.2 Observation of the coordinator

The coordinator was well organized, gave a good input to start and allowed the partners to explain their situations thoroughly.

Concerning the difficult subjects of delayed reports und definition of competencies she had materials prepared as a base for discussion. These were the actual state of the timescale and a draft of a questionnaire. On this base the partners discussed the subjects openly and agreed on the results.

The coordinator encouraged the team members to give their opinion and to decide together about topics and agenda. Thus the adherence of the team could grow.

3.5 Evaluation of teambuilding

The following description of effective teams is an extract of the chapter “Teambuilding” in the Survival Kit for European Project Management. It supports the development of good transnational partnership.

<i>Left column: Team actions - target</i>	<i>Right column: Actual state in the TRAIN project</i>
Effective teams...	
...have clear and common goals.	Yes, they are fulfilled by the proposal.
...share responsibility for those goals among team members.	Yes, they do by discussion and commitments in the meetings.
...have the necessary blend of skills and roles (technical, problem solving and interpersonal).	The partners have different didactic skills and organisational circumstances, they will develop the teaching modules according to their variety.
...have agreed on basic rules for working together.	The agreement was done about meetings, monitoring system and output, but not completely realised. Communication was difficult as some partners answered delayed to E-mails and one partner did not react at all, although all had agreed upon monthly communication.
...support each other by listening, responding constructively and helpfully.	Yes, as observed in the discussions
...handle conflicts constructively and openly.	Yes, as observed in the discussions.
...use time to understand cultural diversity.	The team discussed and agreed upon different approaches to literacy teaching competencies in the countries.
...measure their progress towards the goals.	See in chapter 5: suggestions
...reflect frequently their working style and on all of the above factors.	

4 Evaluation of the further work process up to the Progress Report

4.1 The monitoring system

The monitoring system includes the instruments of financial administration, the reports about the activities of the partners and about dissemination of the project.

To support the partners and to give an overview over all activities the coordinator had developed a monitoring form and a dissemination form.

All partners except one had followed the agreements and given their monitoring and dissemination reports in time.

4.2 TRAIN website

The coordinator started the preliminary works for the website with a website checklist for translation into the national languages.

4.3 Finishing the exploration phase

Most tasks and decisions of the 2nd meeting as fixed in the minutes had been fulfilled. The partners augmented their activities to cope with the work plan and get ready with delayed works in time for the progress report at the end of June 2007.

The coordinator supported the team by timescales and reminders of deadlines.

Furthermore she provided the partners with forms for the reports about dissemination activities and monitoring reports.

Including the reports still to come the first project period will soon be finished successfully.

5 Suggestions

5.1 Teambuilding process

Suggestions for the teambuilding process (columns continued from p. 14)

Effective teams...	Suggestions
...measure their progress towards the goals.	All partners would profit from the transnational work if they discuss the common progress in the meetings.
...reflect frequently their working style and on all of the above factors.	

5.2 Communication

To strengthen the progress of the project the partners should seriously work on good communication and give contributions and requested materials within short time. If all partners take their responsibility in this way the partners themselves would benefit from the information and come to a workable transnational partnership. Furthermore the coordinator gets the chance to put more energy into the topics and less into the organisational efforts.

5.3 Monitoring system and exchange of information

The monitoring system could be a help to strengthen the transnational partnership. It is suggested to intensify monitoring according to work plan and timetable and give the partners the chance to participate in the results of actual work and to support each other with difficult questions.

5.3 Meta-evaluation

The partners could give a feedback to the coordinator about the impacts and effects of this interim evaluation report.

6 References

6.1 Survival Kit for European Project Management, 2nd edition 2001,
Download from www.socrates.at/survivalkit/

6.2 National and country reports

Master National Report

Overview Reports Grid Blank

TRAIN National Report Cyprus

TRAIN National Report England

TRAIN National Report France

TRAIN National Report Germany

TRAIN National Report Ireland

TRAIN National Report Liechtenstein

TRAIN National Report Netherlands

TRAIN National Report Scotland

TRAIN National Report Slovenia

TRAIN National Report Switzerland

TRAIN National Report Wales

6.3 Minutes of meetings:

Kick-off meeting in February 2006 in Ljubljana, Slovenia

2nd meeting in May 2007 in Zurich, Switzerland

6.4 Feedback from the meetings

Feedback questionnaire from the kick-off meeting and Answers of the participants

Feedback questionnaire from the 2nd meeting and Answers of the participants

Evaluation of the feedback forms

6.5 Forms and guidelines

Dissemination Form

Monitoring Form

Website Checklist for Translation