



EU-Project visualLearning

INTERIM EVALUATION REPORT

by

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Subjects

1	Development of an evaluation concept	p. 2
2	Evaluation of the work process up to the 3rd partner meeting	p. 6
3	Evaluation of the 3rd Partner Meeting Questionnaire and Observation	p.11
4	Suggestions	p.18
5	References	p.20

1 Development of an evaluation concept

1.1 Visualization by mind maps

Following the subject of visualization this evaluation report will be visualized by mind maps. They are worked out with the software freemind, a downloadable freeware. A great number of download links is available via search engines by the term "freemind".

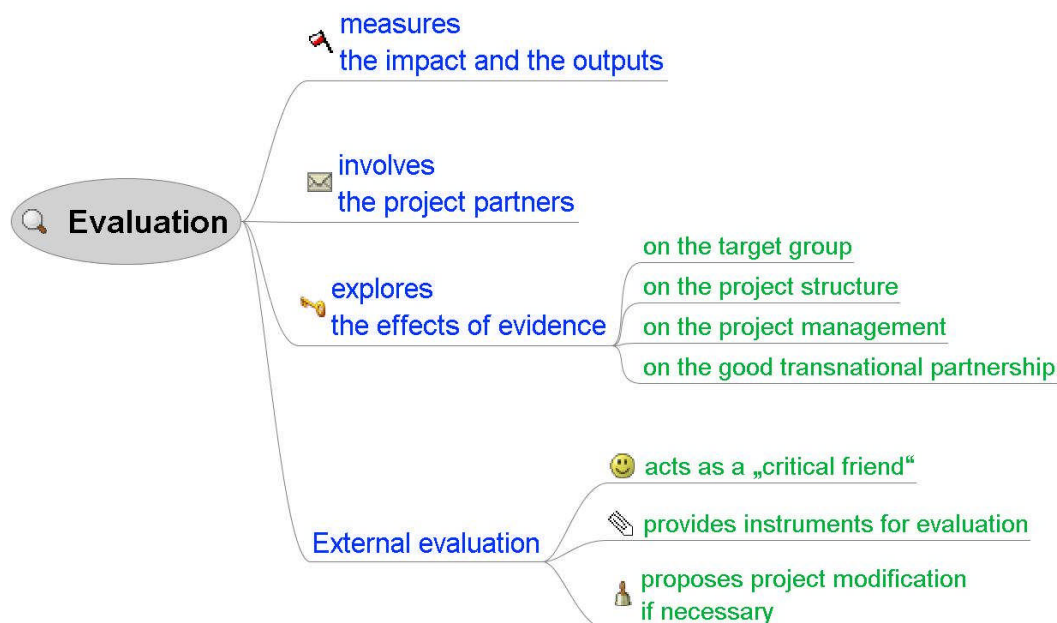
1.2 Basis of the evaluation concept

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 output, involves the project partners and explores the effects of evidence on the target group, on the project structure, project management and on good transnational partnership.

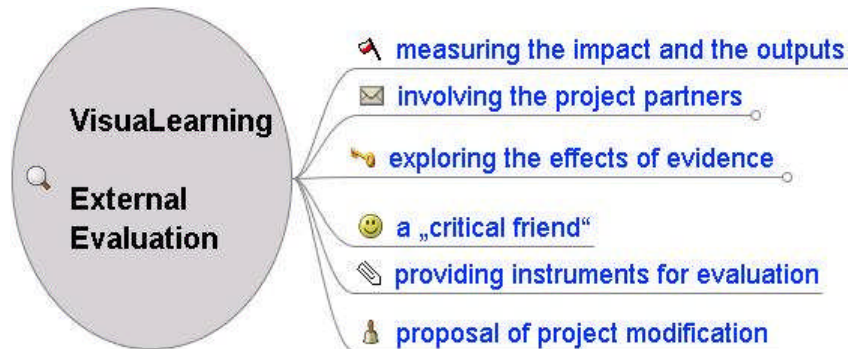
External Evaluation acts as a „critical friend“, provides instruments for evaluation and proposes project modification if necessary.

The above mentioned topics are shown here in a freemind mind map:



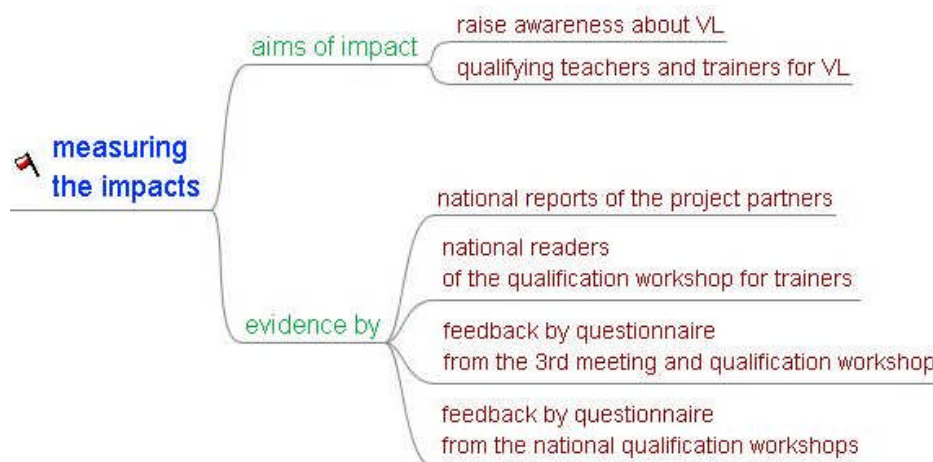
The added symbols will be used along with the topics to help visualization of the aspects of evaluation.

1.3 Evaluation concept of the VisualLearning Project

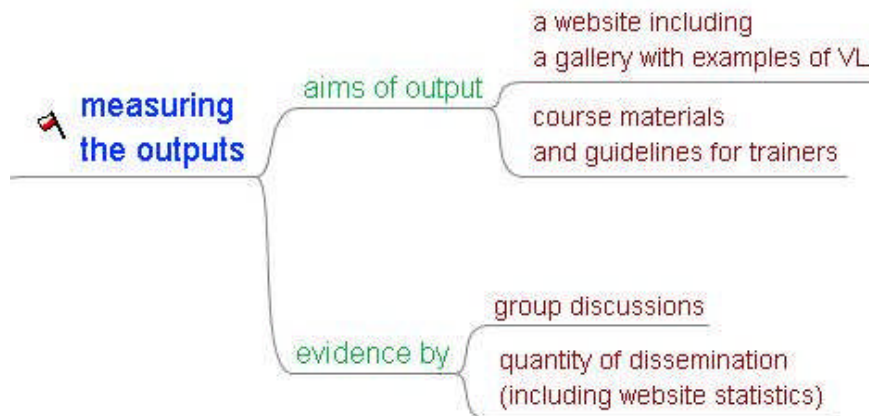


The project partners got involved in the development of the evaluation concept as required above. The evaluation concept was presented at the 3rd partner meeting in Bonn and there discussed and adjusted by the partners. The partners agreed upon the following topics:
(VL is short for visualLearning.)

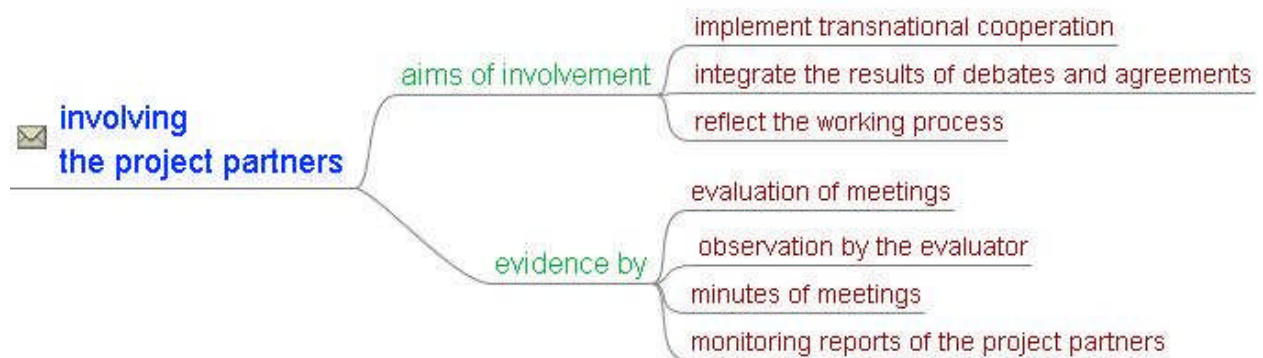
1.2.1 Measuring the impacts



1.2.2 Measuring the outputs



1.2.3 Involving the project partners

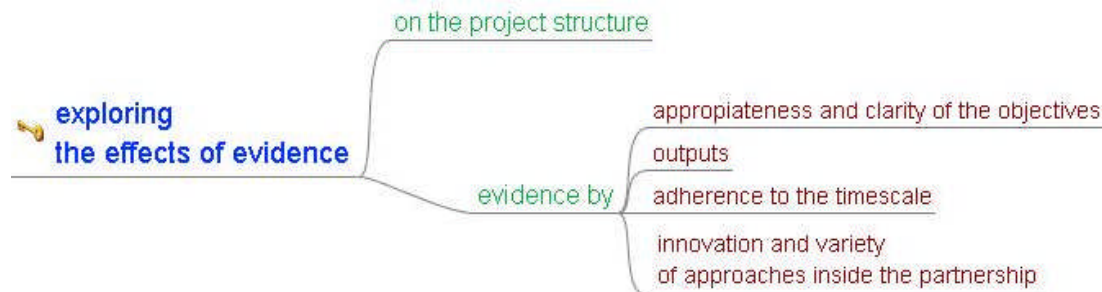


1.2.4 Exploring the effects of evidence...

1.2.4.1 ...on the target group



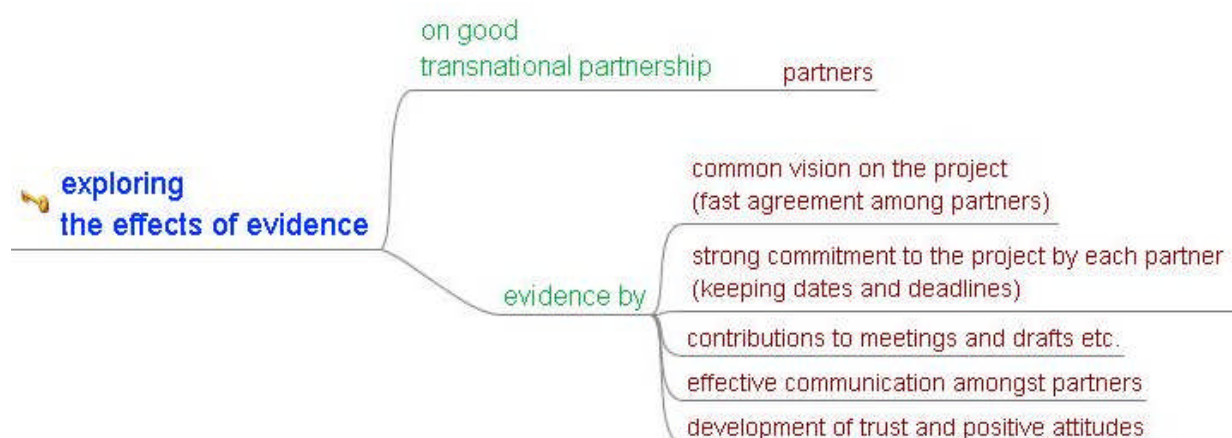
1.2.4.2 ... on the project structure



1.2.4.3 ...on the project management



1.2.4.4 ...on good transnational partnership





2 Evaluation of the work process up to the 3rd meeting

2.1 Procedure of evaluation

The concept of evaluation can only 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	State of realization
- state of the art:	realised in national reports and expert interviews
- local network:	started
- qualification workshop:	realised as a part of the 3 rd partner meeting
- qualitative interviews:	started
- partner meetings:	realised
- trial of the workshop concept:	started
- newsletter:	started
- web-based information and communication:	started, partly realised

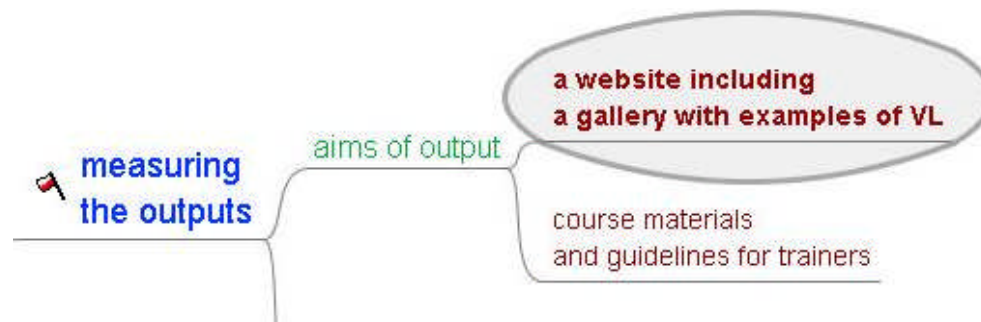
Work process and outputs are evaluated in the chronological order of the project up to the 3rd partner meeting. Therefore this evaluation concentrates on the already realised steps such as state of the art, work progress shown by meetings and work reports, concerning the aims of the project and the impact on transnational partnership.

The appropriate documents are

- national reports
- minutes of meetings
- monitoring system
- website.

2.2 Evaluation of the work process by the documents

2.2.1 National reports



The national reports are completed with exception of the report by the partner from the Netherlands who joined the project only at the 3rd meeting.

The reports include the results of expert interviews. Outlines had been provided by the coordinator for national reports and for interviews with learning experts. The Irish, German, Polish and Romanian reports follow the suggestions of the outline. The states of the art are presented in an informative and well-focused way. In order to follow the aim of qualifying teachers and trainers, the research results from practical visual teachings especially could be adopted by the national readers of the qualification workshops for trainers.

Transnational partnership could profit from the reports and the effect of raising awareness could be strengthened by a summary to give an overview on the European state of the art of visual learning. Since the national reports include the results of the expert interviews the outline for these interviews could be a valuable instrument for structuring a summary. Questions 4 to 11 could form the base of a synopsis in which all partners give their answers in short terms. This suggestion will be made in chapter 4.

2.2.2 The minutes of meetings



Working modus with the minutes

The partnership agreed to take minutes during the meeting sessions. At every meeting a different partner would be in charge of the minutes.

Minutes of the kick-off meeting in February 2006 in Bonn, Germany

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.

Minutes of the 2nd meeting in July 2006 in Radom, Poland

Between the 1st and the 2nd meeting some change had happened in the partnership. Therefore a certain amount of energy was necessary to compensate the withdrawal of the first Dutch partner and new representatives in the Irish and the Romanian partner institution. Furthermore the Romanian representative could not be present at this meeting so that the national report of Romania could not be presented and discussed. A suggestion to that will be made in chapter 4

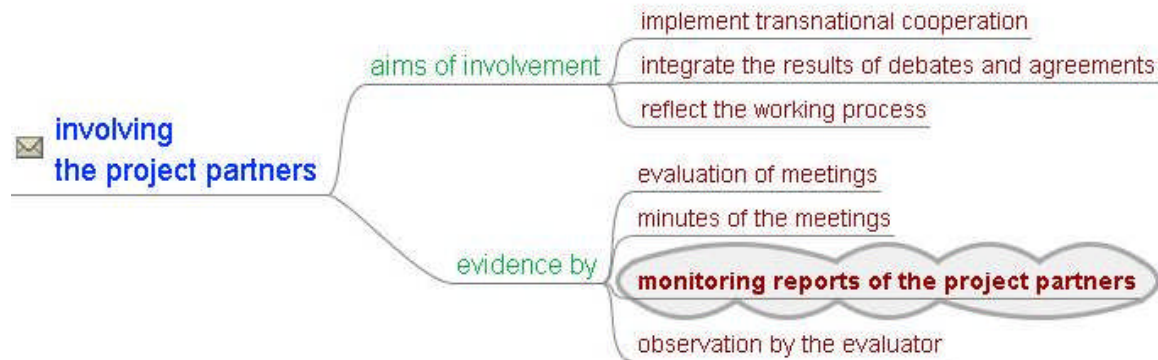
The German, Irish and Polish partners had to adjust the project plans. The remaining partners reacted quite well and managed to continue the project on time.

As a consequence of this incident the coordinator took the responsibility for project modification and initiated a “Contractual modification form and application for extension”.

Minutes of the 3rd meeting in February 2007 in Bonn, Germany

Subjects and working plans fit in with the adjusted work plan. The style of the minutes is rather different from former minutes. Perhaps common standards could be helpful. A suggestion will be made in chapter 4.

The monitoring system



Working modus with the monitoring system

The partners agreed at the 2nd meeting to “prepare monitoring reports (about 1-2 pages) showing when each period is due. This should include information on:

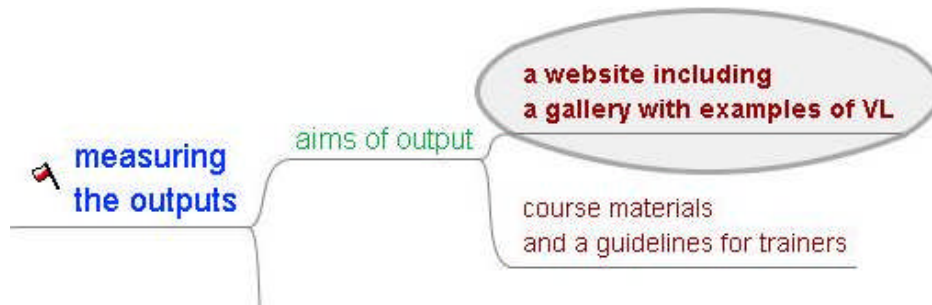
- information about process
- establishment of local network
- development of concept including interviews with learners
- difficulties and weak points
- strategies of problem solving.”

Monitoring documents

The monitoring system had mostly been used as an instrument of financial reporting instrument. Under this impression the coordinator had given a paper with aspects of monitoring report. Only some of the monitoring reports fulfil the above-mentioned requirements. A good example for monitoring a process is the report on the 3rd reporting period by the Polish partner.

But all partners could profit from more detailed information about the work progress. So the suggestion in chapter 4 will be to intensify monitoring according to work plan and timetable and develop a feedback system that lets the partners participate in the results of actual work.

2.2.3 The website

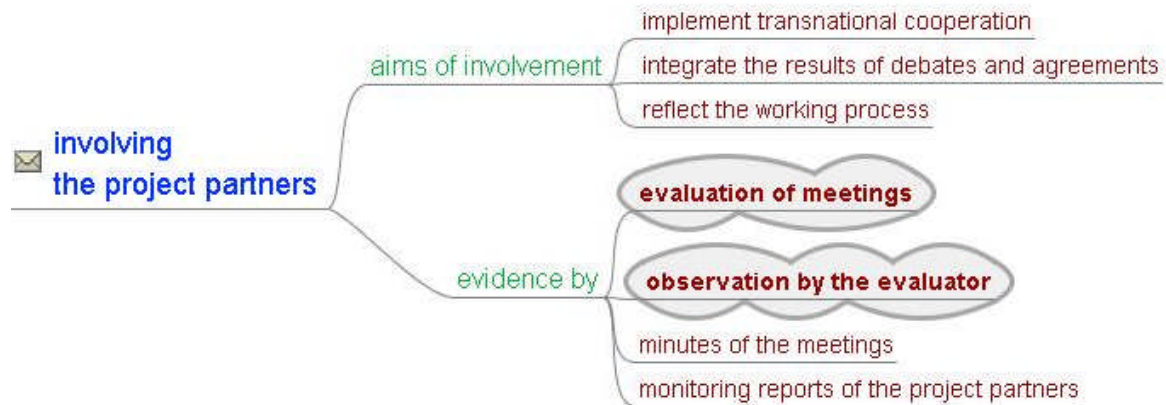


The website of the project is online. It provides information about the project by a flyer and presents the partners with their national reports.

The gallery of pictures is still being discussed.

3. Evaluation of the 3rd Partner Meeting

Questionnaire and Observation



3.1 Evaluation material

Written feedback questionnaire from the meeting and qualification workshop

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 3rd meeting and presented to the partners at the end of the meeting.

Observations by the evaluator

The evaluator was present on the 2nd day of the meeting – qualification workshop – and the 3rd day with discussions and work plans.

3.2 Evaluation results

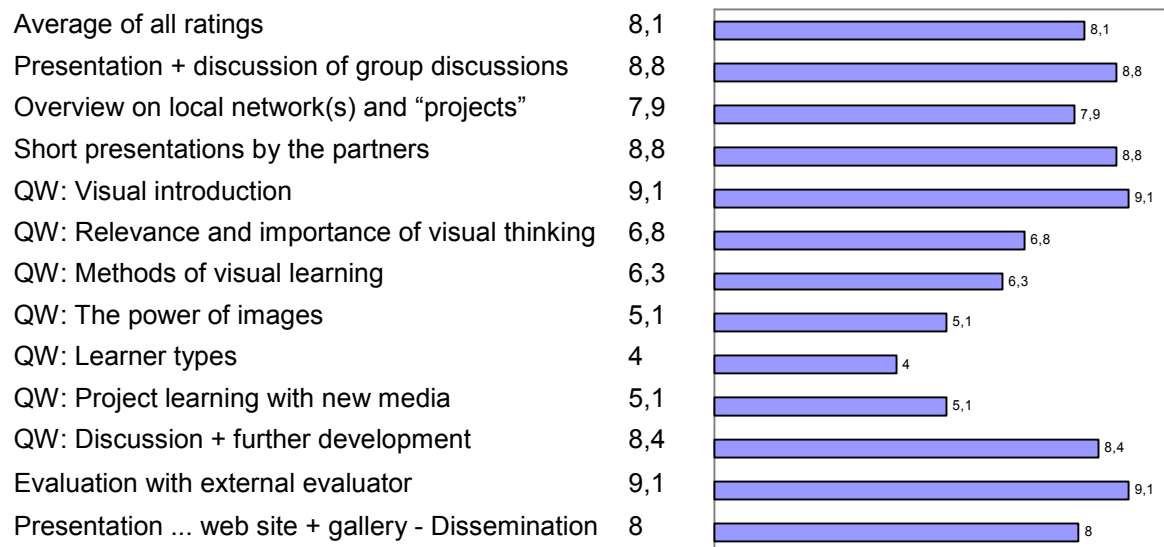
3.2.1 Feedback by questionnaire: The questions and the answers.

Questions	Ratings	Answers
EXPECTATIONS		
What were your expectations of this meeting?		The answers differed according to the position in the project. The new partners from the Netherlands came to know the project and meet the partners, all others were interested in deepening their knowledge and go on with the project work. The coordinator put the emphasis on involving the partners and clarify their vision of responsibilities and as well as development of concept and tasks.
To what extent have these expectations been met?		The expectations were fulfilled except for some opinions which did not appreciate the qualification workshop as useful to the experts and which would like some more practical guidelines for the national workshops.
<i>The following sessions were given a rating on a <u>1 low to 10 high</u> scale with added facultative comment The numbers result from the addition of points divided by the number of persons involved.</i>		
MEETING 1st day		
Presentation and discussion of group discussions with learners	8,8	Question: Did we carry out interviews or group discussions?
Overview on local network(s) and "projects"	7,9	(no comments)
Short presentations of the partners	8,8	(no comments)

Questions	Ratings	Answers
QUALIFICATION WORKSHOP (2 nd day)		
Visual introduction	9,1	(no comments)
Relevance and importance of visual thinking	6,8	The group distinguished between the input and the methods of the referent. The input was accepted while teaching methods failed to involve the learners.
Methods of visual learning	6,3	(no comments)
The power of images	5,1	The session with the power of images was shocking for some group members as violent examples were used to demonstrate the impact of photos.
Learner types	4	The group was not convinced by the concept of learners' types presented by Prof. Röhl.
Project learning with new media	5,1	The group could not benefit from the works of the students which Prof. Röhl showed and would have preferred a wider range of didactical and methodological approaches.
What are your initial impressions of the Qualification Workshop Reader?	No rating	The group appreciated the reader as a good overview but overloaded with theory and not very practical for practitioners. After a discussion about the workshop the reader was taken as a good basis for the creation of national qualification workshops.
What are the most important aspects for a Qualification Workshop in your own country?	No rating	The group pointed out the need for practical examples, methods of VL, encouraging relevant trainers as well as adjustment to the provided technology in the learning centers.

Questions	Ratings	Answers
MEETING 3 rd day		
Discussion and further development of the concept	8,4	We have a good outline to work on.
Evaluation with external evaluator	9,1	The same
Presentation and discussion of web site and gallery of pictures - Dissemination	8	not enough time, but a few good ideas volunteered.
COMMENTS on the whole meeting		
Which session(s) did you find <u>most</u> useful?		The discussions, work planning and structuring of the third day were very useful. There are practical examples and some methods in the QW
Which session(s) did you find <u>least</u> useful?		Not satisfied with the theoretical sessions of Prof. Röll. Furthermore the presentations of the partners (except the Dutch partner) were not seen as useful.
Did you receive adequate information about the meeting before it began?		Yes, all satisfied
Please comment on the accommodation and food		Yes, all satisfied
Please add any additional comments here		Very good atmosphere, interesting & fruitful, I learned a lot. We are a group, we are partners!

Ratings overview





3.2.2 Observation of group behaviour

The evaluator met a group with a very good team atmosphere. The discussions were open and appreciative. The team was interested, polite and trustful.

During breaks and meals the members had friendly and humorous conversation.

Some sessions of the qualification workshop aroused problems which the team managed very well. Some team members had difficulties with pictures of violence and with the analysis of learner's types. The group cared for them and stood by their side.

The coordinator and the team acted in order to save the project aims and the coherence of the group.

- The coordinator informed the group that she had spoken to Prof. Röhl and had criticized the choice of pictures as too violent and not necessary for this workshop.
- The team appreciated the intervention of the coordinator.
- All supported the member who volunteered in the learner type test and was unsuitably analysed.

After a short discussion the group agreed easily on the results of the qualification workshop and took them as basic material for the development of national qualification workshops.

The main subjects were

- the target groups
- available tools and media
- aims to be achieved by the learners.

3.2.3 Observation of the coordinator

The coordinator plans working steps thoroughly and acts with integrating ability. In the process of the project the coordinator had taken the chance to adjust objectives and structure at the right time.

3.2.4 Evaluation of teambuilding

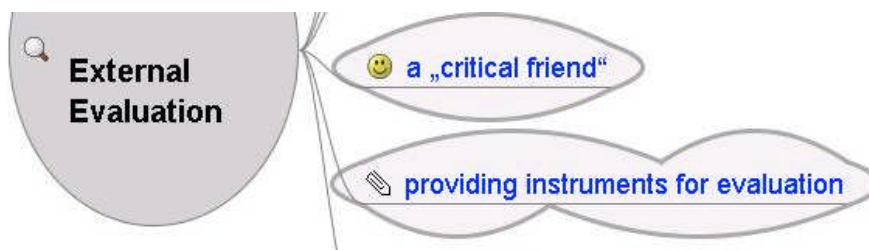
The following description of effective teams is provided by the chapter “Teambuilding” in the Survival Kit for European Project Management.

Left column: Team actions - target

Right column: Actual state in VL project

Effective teams...	Comments by evaluating the documents of the meetings and the observation
...have clear and common goals	Yes, fulfilled by the proposal
...share responsibility for those goals among team members	Yes, by discussion and commitments in the meetings
...have the necessary blend of skills and roles (technical, problem solving and interpersonal)	Difficulties to find learners for interviews – could probably better be mastered together
...have agreed on basic rules for working together	Interaction with timescale by meetings, monitoring system, output and shown by the agreement about papers to be evaluated
...have developed and agreed on practices and processes to get things done	
...have allocated appropriate roles and tasks to each member	Problems because of changes of partners and representatives, achieved in the 3 rd meeting
...produce a collective output which achieves the set goals	Step by step: yes
...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 discussion about the qualification workshop.
...recognise individual and team success	See Mails after in the Feedback for 3 rd Meeting
...use time to know the members in the team	As it happened in the meetings and evenings.
...use time to understand cultural diversity	The team agreed upon different approaches to visual methods in the countries.
...measure their progress towards the goals	See in chapter 4: suggestions
...reflect frequently their working style and on all of the above factors	See in chapter 4: suggestions

4 Suggestions



4.1 Teambuilding process

Suggestions for the teambuilding process (columns continued from p. 17)

Effective teams...	Suggestions
...measure their progress towards the goals	All partners could profit from the transnational work if they would discuss the progress by an instrument of visualization developed in the national qualification works.
...reflect frequently their working style and on all of the above factors	Same suggestion or written feedback by questionnaire

4.2 Overview of national reports

As the national reports include the results of the expert interviews to the evaluator's opinion the outline for these interviews could be a valuable instrument for structuring a summary (especially the questions 4 to 11). The partnership could agree upon a method of synopsis chart and fill in the national answers in short terms.

4.3 Taking minutes during the meetings

The minutes are taken during the meetings and afterwards adjusted by the coordinator if necessary. Another way to fix the results is to discuss and agree upon the text at the end of every session. This procedure has three advantages

- the team must focus on the topics as well as on the results
- the team makes an agreement
- the team commits itself to the written results.

As the presentation of the Romanian national report was missing in the 2nd meeting because of the absence of this partner it is recommended to add this contribution to the documents.



4.4 Monitoring documents

All partners could profit from more detailed information about the work progress. So the suggestion is to intensify the monitoring reports according to work plan and timetable and develop a feedback system to let the partners participate in the results of actual work. A good example how to do a process monitoring is the report about the 3rd reporting period by the Polish partner.

4.5 Visualization of the project output

Visualization by mind maps or icons could raise the effect of the output in print media or on the website.

4.6 Develop feedback for the national qualification workshop

The partners expressed the wish to have a feedback form for their national workshops similar to the feedback questionnaire used in the 3rd partner meeting.

4.7 Meta-evaluation

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



5 References

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

5.2 National reports

Download from www.die-bonn.de/visual/English/materialien/index.asp

State of the art of “Visual Learning” in Ireland

State of the art of “Visual Learning” in Romania

State of the art of “Visual Learning” in Poland

State of the art of “Visual Learning” in Germany

5.3 Minutes of meetings:

Kick-off meeting in February 2006 in Bonn, Germany

2nd meeting in July 2006 in Radom, Poland

3rd meeting in February 2007 in Bonn, Germany

5.4 Feedback from the 3rd meeting

Written feedback questionnaire from the meeting and qualification workshop

Answers of the participants

Evaluation of the feedback forms

5.5 Monitoring report: the report on the 3rd reporting period by the Polish partner

5.6 Website: www.die-bonn.de/visual/English/