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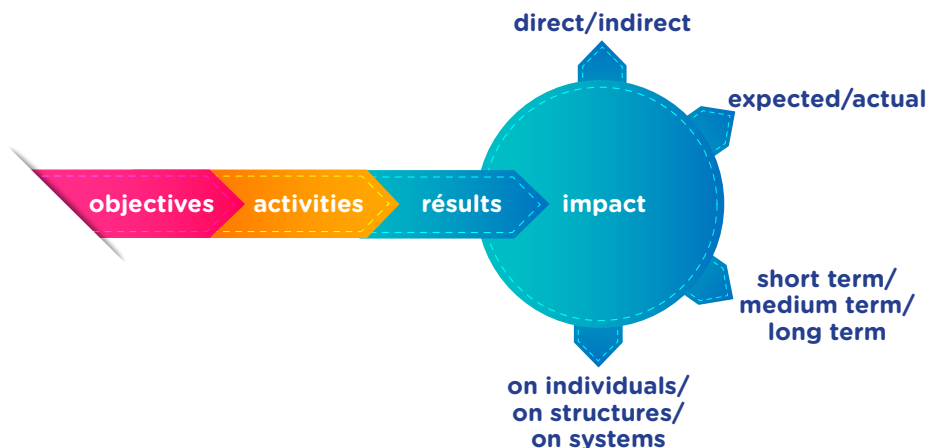
DISSEMINATION AND IMPACT IN ERASMUS+ SCHOOL PROJECTS

DISSEMINATION

IMPACT

CONTENTS

TERMINOLOGY

The definitions used in this document come mainly from the Erasmus+ guide so applicants can familiarise themselves with the vocabulary used in administrative and financial documents.

direct/indirect

expected/actual

objectives   activities   résults   **impact**

**short term/
medium term/
long term**

**on individuals/
on structures/
on systems**

▶ OBJECTIVES

Projects objectives are the desired results and effects at the end of the project. Describing objectives is key to your application as the result and impact assessment is based on described objectives.
NB: you must carry out a study of needs before you set your project objectives.

ADVICE

The S.M.A.R.T method is recommended for describing your objectives: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely.

▶ RÉSULTS

Results are the outputs of a European funded activity or project. The type of result varies according to the type of project.

Results can be material/tangible products such as programmes, studies, reports, tools, events or websites.

Results may also be immaterial/intangible e.g. acquired knowledge or experience, and/or skills gained by pupils, teachers etc. involved in the project.

▶ IMPACT

Impact is the effect that the activity carried out and its results have on people, practices, organisations and systems. Dissemination and exploitation of results plans can help to maximize the effect of the activities being developed so that they will impact on the immediate participants and partners for years to come. Benefits to other stakeholders should also be considered in order to make a bigger difference and get the most from the project.

▶ SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is the capacity of the project to continue and use its results beyond the end of the funding period. The project results can then be used and exploited in the longer-term. Not all parts of the project or results may be sustainable and it is important to view dissemination and exploitation as a progression that extends beyond the duration of the project, and into the future.

▶ DIFFUSION

By dissemination we mean sharing the success and results of your Erasmus+ project with as large a target audience as possible. Bringing your project to the attention of others will have repercussions on other organisations in the future and will help boost the visibility of the organisation conducting the project.

To ensure results are communicated effectively, implement a suitable procedure at the start of the project to define why, how, when, to whom and where to communicate which results both during and after the funding period.

▶ **EXPLOITATION**

Exploitation refers to the use and benefit of something. In terms of the Erasmus+ programme, it's about maximising the potential of funded activities to be able to use the results beyond the project's lifespan.

Please note that the project is conducted as part of an international programme promoting lifelong learning and supporting European policies in education, training, youth and sport. Results should be built on in order to be:

- Adapted to the needs of others;
- Transferred to new areas;
- Prolonged beyond the funding period;
- And used to influence future policies and practices.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

▶ WHY ASSESSING IMPACT?

The impact assessment demonstrates to what extent the objectives and desired outcomes were achieved at the different stages of your Erasmus+ project's lifecycle.

▶ TIMELINE

• Assessment at project launch

It refers to the assessment before the project launch, during the project design. Its function is namely to ensure objectives are in line with requirements, challenges or problems to resolve. → Application stage

• Intermediary assessment

Generally speaking, the midway assessment helps redirecting the project in case of unforeseen difficulties. It can be implemented at the middle of the project to check if requirements are still relevant, if the project is being managed as planned or if it requires improvement and to analyse the initial effects/impacts of the project.
→ Intermediary report

• Final assessment

An assessment at the end of the project gives the opportunity to observe the short-term effects/impact of the project. → Final report

• Assessment at the project closure

This refers to the impact assessment at the end of the European funding; this step comes after the project closure and focuses on the mid-term and long term effects/impacts.

• Assessment all along the project (quality process)

This assessment conducted all along the duration of a project is part of the quality management.

▶ ASSESSMENT PLAN

1. Define and prioritise the project objectives – *e.g. one of the objectives could be the parents' implication in the education of children having difficulties.*

2. Define who will manage the evaluation of your project impact and dissemination
   • *a coordinator in each of the participating schools ;*
   • *one single coordinator for the entire project to collect and analyse all the data ;*

3. Define what you're assessing – *e.g. the project launched a blog to share the project's activities and results with all participating schools as well as with the educational community including with pupils' parents. You would like to assess if the blog is an effective way to communicate about your project.*

4. Define indicators – *e.g. the number of visits to the project blog.*

5. Choose an appropriate assessment method and tool – *e.g. collect statistics using Google analytics.*

6. Ask the right questions – *e.g. blog visitor numbers are low, what does that mean?*

7. Analyse results – *e.g. a few months after creating the project blog, we (coordinators and partners) noticed there were few visits. One of the blog's key features is that it is written solely in English. The blog targeting a large audience (pupils, pupils' parents etc.) we realise that a translation into the languages of the country partners may help widen the net.*

8. Act consequently *e.g. following this analysis, the blog features less text (and more visuals) and is translated into partner languages.*
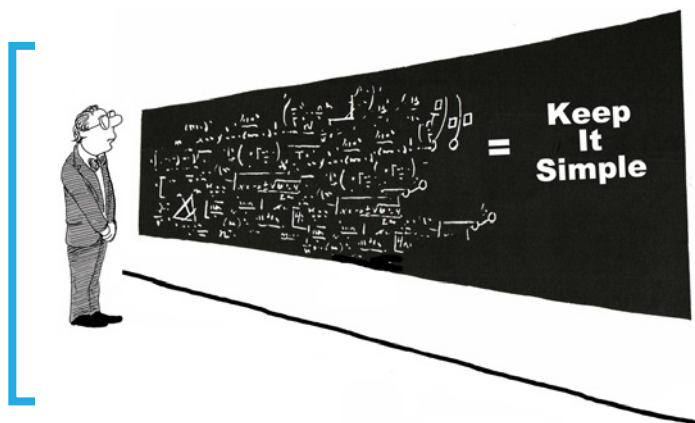
TYPE OF IMPACT

This is a sample list. If elements from this list feature in the application, further detail will be required in the appropriate sections about activities implemented to achieve this impact as well as the method and indicators to measure it.

ADVICE

Keep It Simple

▶ DESIRED IMPACT FOR PUPILS

• Self-confidence ;
• Knowledge of the European Union ;
• Knowledge of lifestyle and education in partner countries ;
• Knowledge of native culture ;
• Strong bonds with pupils from partner schools ;
• Digital skills development;
• Foreign language skills development ;
• Team work development ;
• Social skills development ;
• Interest in other countries and their cultures ;
• Motivation in all subjects and studies ;
• Motivation to study foreign languages ;
• Tolerance with regard to different cultures ;

▶ DESIRED IMPACT FOR TEACHERS

• Experience of different teaching methods ;
• Experience of new subjects/knowledge ;
• Knowledge of the European Union ;
• Knowledge and understanding of partner countries' educational system (content and assessment) ;
• Knowledge of own subject field ;
• Creation of strong bonds with partner country teachers ;
• Project management skills development ;
• Digital skills development ;
• English language skills development ;
• Language skills development in a language other than English ;
• Social skills development ;
• Motivation to work in a multi-disciplinary team ;
• Motivation for professional training and skills development ;
• Motivation for the job ;

BEST PRACTICE

BOOST THE IMPACT OF MOBILITY THROUGH LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL TRAINING

It is important to offer an intercultural and linguistic training to teachers to optimize the impact of their mobility. Erasmus + organisational support can fund the language preparation activities for both teachers and pupils.

As part of a school partnership, participating staff took English lessons before their mobility provided by the teacher coordinating the project. The team also received training using learning tools purchased as part of the project. Teachers may not have received assistance and interpreting during their mobility but the skills they gained beforehand enabled them to be more independent and the quality of English teaching in their pre-primary school improved after the project.

Naturally the terms of language preparation before mobility depend on the mobility duration, participants' profile and pupils' age. Regarding pupils, the impact of mobility is even stronger as mobility activities (namely in multinational groups) and host family accommodation increase the opportunities to exchange and work collaboratively. As for teachers, project activities and class observations are contributions much appreciated by participants.

▶ DESIRED IMPACT FOR THE SCHOOL

• Improvement of school climate ;
• Development of interdisciplinary approaches ;
• Development of openness and cooperation with schools from other countries ;
• Development of work placements abroad ;
• Stronger relationships between pupils and teachers ;
• Better teamwork between teaching, administration and management departments
• Better teamwork among teachers ;
• Financial impact ;
• Introduction of new teaching systems, new content ;
• Strengthening of the European dimension and its development ;
• Increased support and involvement of family members in school life ;
• Increased support and involvement of other local stakeholders: local and regional authorities, companies, parents' associations etc

BEST PRACTICE

INVOLVE COMPANIES IN THE PROJECT LAUNCH

Schools can call on companies' services by keeping them up to date about the project's progress and asking them to contribute to the funding of certain activities or to intervene in the school if appropriate to the project theme.

The "What's in it?" school partnership involved microbiology and nutrition consultants in the school so they could share their view of challenges and techniques related to the project theme. Pupils learnt from professional knowledge, gained awareness of careers in the sector and improved their debating ability. The involvement of these professionals also helped communicate about the project outside the school.

AN EXAMPLE OF IMPACT ON THE SCHOOL: BETTER SCHOOL CLIMATE

Excerpt from the "Study of the impact of Comenius school partnerships on participating schools" conducted by the CIEP for the European Commission in 2013 :

"One of the positive effects of European school partnership projects is succeeding, specifically in secondary schools, to create a dynamic which overcomes the division and the isolation of pathways and classes based on age. European projects give pupils in different subjects (literature, science, technology, economy) the chance to work together on a project which is something they rarely have due to their course choice. Pupils from different classes can take part in a common activity at school or during their mobility with younger or older pupils. This creates solidarity and strong bonds.

The latter encourages more spontaneous support among pupils and helps improve the school climate.

Shared mobility experience and communication with teachers brings pupils and teachers closer. One French pupil explains: "In a secondary school like ours, we walk past each other in the corridor but we don't really talk. But there [in mobility], it was different. Now if I have a question or problem, I wouldn't hesitate to talk to my teachers. It's natural. We've created a bond and teachers are more open."

Without presenting school partnership projects as a solution to major social issues, school visits and particularly interviews show that the project-based learning positively influences how pupils and parents perceive the school."

" A cooperation project pools differences to transform them into complementary features and assets. It creates synergies and helps build transnational citizenship."

Joëlle SECHAUD, Lycée des Métiers J. De Flesselles à LYON

INDICATORS

An indicator is a statistic used to observe and measure resulting changes or progress achieved by a project, programme etc. in view of the completion of an effect or specific result.

Impact measurement indicators should respect **SMART** criteria e.g. **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic** and **Timely**.

It is suggested to have a limited number of indicators, to facilitate monitoring.

▶ RESULTS AND IMPACT INDICATORS

Results indicators help recognise to what degree the project objectives have been achieved (short-term impact).

Final results help recognise the project's **impact**.

Examples of results and impact indicators:

• Number of delivered Europass Mobility;

• Number of information sessions for school staff to learn about skills gained by pupils during project activities;

• Number of training sessions by peers;

• Number of pupils involved in mobility activities as part of a school partnership;

• Number of teachers involved in mobility activities as part of a mobility project;

• Number of European projects conducted in the school;

• Number and type of organisations involved in a project other than schools e.g. any local/national businesses involved;

• Number and profile of people involved in long-term European projects; is there a solid and reliable project team?

• Absenteeism rate.

ADVICE

The volume of mobility is a good indicator of a project impact:

• *A staff mobility project must not have just one mobility request as the impact for the school would be limited to a single person.*

• *Several impact studies have shown that the more students are involved in mobility activities in a project, the better the impact (see resources).*

EXAMPLE OF A MOBILITY RECOGNITION TOOL TO ASSESS LEARNING OUTCOMES: EUROPASS MOBILITY

Europass Mobility is a document which provides a structured description of placement or training periods in Europe. The aim is to highlight skills gained during a placement by detailing its activities and achieved results. The document is for a wide audience: school pupils, apprentice, university students, jobseekers and employees. It is an efficient way to record training experience accomplished in Europe.

The highly detailed way in which the content and results of this training period in Europe is described enables the Europass Mobility to reflect the experience's added value.

Use of this tool is highly recommended by the European Commission to promote and record skills gained during a learning mobility experience (pupils, teachers etc.)

The school could host a prize ceremony to formalise the deliverance of the Europass Mobility certificates; the school head could invite representatives from local/regional/educational authorities, the local press etc. to promote the project as a whole.

▶ DISSEMINATION-RELATED INDICATORS

• Facts and figures about the project organisers' website (updates, visits, views, cross referencing)

• Media coverage: number of specialist press articles, press, reports, press releases, interviews etc.

• Visibility on social networks;

• Links with existing transnational networks and partners;

• Reaction of end users, other stakeholders, peers and decision-makers e.g. using satisfaction questionnaires;

• Number of project-related events: open days, gala etc.

• Number of event attendees (use attendance sheet as proof of this information);

• Diversity of target audience profiles in the dissemination plan etc.

DATA COLLECTION FOR DISSEMINATION AND IMPACT

Data collection requires major planning. The most suitable methods must be selected based on required data, information and available resources. There are two types of data: quantity and quality.

▶ DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND TOOLS

• **Questionnaires:** design questions beforehand based on type of impact.
• **Individual and group interviews:** design interview guides e.g. interviews with students who have been involved in group mobility as part of a school partnership: how do they feel now they've completed their experience?
• **Observation:** design an observation guide based on what you want to observe.
• **Statistics:** e.g. website/page/blog audience for a European project.
• **Skills tests:** a skills assessment table should be designed. Skills assessment must be conducted before and after a mobility experience; or, in some cases, at the start and end of active involvement in a project.

ADVICE

Choose the tool you use based on the data you're looking for and not the other way around.
Data collection alone is not enough; analysing collected data is what enables you to assess how much the project has had an impact on the initial target beneficiaries.

BEST PRACTICE

ASSESS THE PROJECT'S IMPACT ON PUPILS

1/ CONDUCT A PUPILS' SURVEY

Design a survey or provide pupils with a questionnaire before or when the project launches to get a sense of their views and better meet their needs. Analysing and publishing the survey is an interesting way to assess the project's impact. After the project has ended, it may be interesting to question the same students again to see if their views and skills have changed since taking part in the project.

As part of the "Our shared memories: Europeans in the 1960s" school partnership, a questionnaire was designed to test pupils' knowledge at the start of the project. It was analysed during a mobility experience and published on the project website. Answers from students helped streamline the project, identify gaps to fill and question Europe's position.
"Social trends and fashions undoubtedly appeal more to our students than political events. This questionnaire could be a tool, a start point to discuss, share our memories and delve deeper for a better understanding of "The Other". History shouldn't be written "solely from the West's point of view"! That's the challenge of the project. As the Polish historian Bronislaw Geremek, who embodied the European soul before his death on July 13th 2008, put it so well: "We cannot allow the memories of the East and the West to turn their backs on each other."

2/ CREATE SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOLS OR A SKILLS PORTFOLIO FOR STUDENTS

Example 1:
As part of the "In motion with Emotion" European school partnership, a self-assessment booklet was designed by European partner teachers based on a comparative student skills assessment approach. Students made a note of the progress they'd made in the booklet following project activities.
The role given to self-assessment and following advice during independent work has highlighted the key role of the "learn to learn" skill and has enabled students to gain self-esteem.

Example 2:
Creating a skills portfolio has enabled primary school students in the "How to become a European eco-citizen?" project to self-assess and measure their progress throughout the European project. They listed all the environment initiatives and activities that were conducted in the portfolio. Using this portfolio, parents could monitor their children's activities and gain awareness of the issues of sustainable development and recycling.

ERASMUS+ PROJECT APPLICATION ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

As part of the selection methods implemented by the Erasmus + / Education and Training Agency, applications incorporating key actions 1 and 2 managed by the Agency are assessed and graded by independent assessors.
The assessment follows an analysis table and criteria defined by the European Commission.
It is vital to understand the criteria which applications are to be assessed on. This section details criterion related to impact and diffusion for mobility projects and partnerships conducted by schools.

ADVICE

Ensure you have respected and incorporated all criteria in the relevant sections of the application.

MOBILITY PROJECT FOR SCHOOL EDUCATION STAFF

KEY ACTION 1

To be considered for funding, proposals must score at least 60 points. Furthermore, they must score at least half of the maximum points in each of the categories of award.
Impact and dissemination are one of the three major groups of assessment items accounting for about one third of the total score.

→ *The Quality of measures for evaluating the outcomes of the project*

The proposal includes appropriate activities to assess the results of individual mobility and the project as a whole.
The assessment will determine if the project's desired results were achieved and if the expectations of the sending institution and participants were met.

→ *The Potential project impact :*

1/ on participants and participating bodies during and after the project
2/ outside bodies and individuals involved in the project at local, regional, national and/or European level

The project may have a major positive impact on participants' **skills and future professional experience** as well as on the **sending institution** and, where necessary, the receiving institution.

The project will help build a **European dimension** in participating schools.
The project includes suitable measures to produce a long-term multiplier effect and durable impact both internally and, where necessary, outside the sending institution (e.g. in other schools or the educational community). In the long-term, the project will benefit **learners in participating schools**.
The results of the project will be incorporated into the sending institution's methods and management and/or learning/teaching framework.

→ *The appropriateness and quality of measures aimed at disseminating the outcomes of the project within and outside the participating organisations.*

The proposal includes **a well-structured and clearly defined plan to communicate the results** of the mobility project internally and outside participating bodies.
It describes the chosen dissemination methods and channels and identifies target groups and multipliers e.g.

• Teachers of the same subject in school;
• Educational community;
• Local education authorities;
• Teaching associations;
• Teaching reviews;
• Online professional groups;
• Regional/national events for teachers etc.

Dissemination covers the transfer of skills gained during mobility and actively involves the participant.

KEY ACTION 2

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS PROJECTS BETWEEN SCHOOLS ONLY

Only projects with a total score of 60/100 or more and half the points attributable to each of the four groups of items will be selected.

Impact and dissemination make up one of the four major groups of assessment items accounting for about one third of the total score.

◗ *Quality of measures for evaluating the outcomes of the project :*

The suggested assessment methods will help suitably assess if and to what extent the project has achieved the desired results.

◗ *Potential project impact on participants and participating bodies during and after the project :*

The project may have a major positive impact on participating bodies and their staff/learners.

The impact of the project on participants and participating bodies may appear during the project and continue after the project has ended.

◗ *side from organisations and individuals directly involved in the project at local, regional, national, European level: project results can be transferred and used in other European countries*
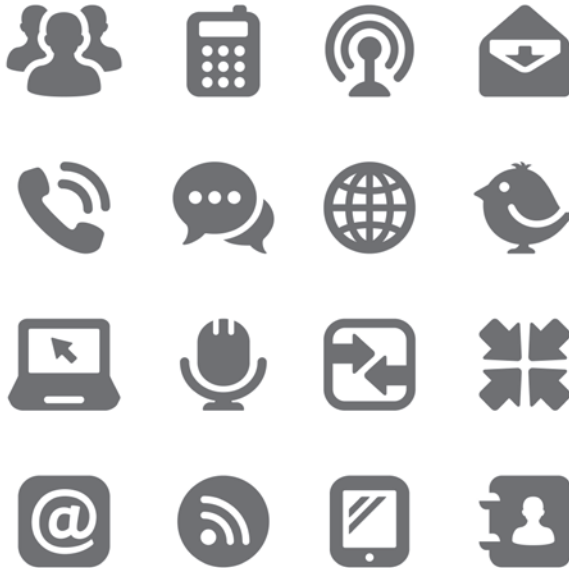
The application identifies potential stakeholders including political figures at the most appropriate level: local, regional, national and/or European. Based on the scope and size of the project:

1/ it may have a positive impact at local, regional, national and/or European level

2/ it may lead to innovative changes to the system and/or provide a useful contribution to political developments

3/ it has the potential for scalability and synergy with other Erasmus+ activities and/or European programmes e.g. a new Erasmus+ project

◗ *Quality of dissemination plan: the appropriateness and quality of measures aimed at sharing the outcomes of the project within and outside the participating organisations:*

The application identifies the results of the project which could be transferred to affected target groups. A group of appropriate and efficient measures and tools will be used to reach the groups targeted by dissemination.

Planned dissemination and exploitation activities ensure the best use of results at local, regional, national and/or European level based on the scope and size of the project.

Specific and appropriate resources are allocated to dissemination activities in each participating body.

◗ *Quality of the plans for ensuring the sustainability of the project: its capacity to continue having an impact and producing results after the EU grant has been used up :*

The project is designed with a view beyond the project duration and the expected long-term impact is realistic and takes the size of the project into account.

CREATION OF A DISSEMINATION PLAN

▶ **DISSEMINATION PLAN**

• What information do you want to communicate: the project's existence? A specific result? Below a list of verbs for objectives that you could use :

      o Make public, inform;

      o Lead to move, to attend;

      o Lead sb. to use;

      o Involve, make active;

      o Lead sb. to read, to see sth. ;

      o Clarify;

      o Raise awareness, make aware;

      o Encourage...

• • • • • • • • • • • • •

- Who to?
- Format (event, publication etc.)?
- How?
- When?
- Who's in charge?
- How much does it cost?

▶ TARGET AUDIENCE

- Pupils ;
- Teachers ;
- Pupils' parents ;
- Entire school staff ;
- Inspection ;
- Educational multipliers ;
- Local authorities ;
- Local environment : businesses, associations etc.
- Erasmus+ agency ;

▶ FORMATS

- Poster ;
- Blog ;
- Brochures ;
- Press release ;
- Email ;
- Online newspaper ;
- Newsletter ;
- PowerPoint ;
- Project videos etc.

▶ CHANNELS

- eTwinning ;
- Town hall event ;
- Exhibition in participating schools ;
- Forums ;
- European Commission dissemination platform ;
- Presentation/s on completed training mobility (in school) ;
- Local press in partner countries ;
- Social networks ;
- Professional networks: teaching associations, PTAs etc.
- Thematic seminars hosted by the agencies, European Commissions etc.
- Websites of participating schools, educational authorities, etc.

ADVICE

• Carefully plan your project's visual identity: use your project logo on all documentation ;

• Use multilingual formats where relevant specifically in a school partnership ;

• Draft a simple reverse planning: dissemination begins at project launch and can continue after the end of funding ;

• Don't forget to list all the activities and tangible proof of these activities: press releases, event photos, videos, copies of emails sent to gain public awareness about the project impact, events schedule etc.

BEST PRACTICE

DESIGN A DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

The experienced school coordinator foresaw the issue of dissemination at the very start of the "Communicating cultural creativity" school partnership. Numerous dissemination channels were used and a website was designed in the first few months of the project.

External dissemination targeted contacts that became sponsors, particularly the local branch of a bank which hosted the exhibition and funded the project brochure. The project focus was on children's visual expression through illustrations of everyday scenes, exchanged between partners and the creation of simple animated films.

During partners' mobilities, press conferences were held and articles were published on the school's website. The website was regularly updated with project activities.

The website featured the arrival of partners, student productions and project highlights. A professional looking brochure summarised the project's key contributions.

ENHANCE YOUR PROJECT AND EXPERIENCE WITH ETWINNING

eTwinning is a European action enabling teachers from 35 participating countries to get in touch with each other to launch virtual exchange projects with their pupils using ICT. Over 300,000 teachers have signed up to the online eTwinning community (March 2015). eTwinning is part of the European Erasmus+ programme.

In addition to the large network of teachers, eTwinning provides free and secure communication and discussion tools for projects. This collaborative platform enables you to manage a virtual project with your pupils, work in an interdisciplinary approach to fuel your teaching, get your pupils involved and enrich your professional development.

eTwinning provides several ways to enhance your project e.g. share your experience in virtual Teacher Rooms, thematic forums designed for teachers. A range of digital valorisation tools is available. Project participants can even receive specific support from eTwinning territorial multipliers.

The European Commission strongly recommends using this virtual cooperation platform as part of an Erasmus + project.

Website: www.eTwinning.fr

KEY FEATURES

❱ Create an impact assessment plan and a diffusion plan for achieved results **before launching** the project and include them in the application;

❱ Do not be too ambitious: quantity and complexity don't always mean quality;

❱ Take note of **assessment criteria**; it will enable you to better meet the assessors' expectations;

❱ Whether it is your project's objectives, impact assessment or dissemination plan, **always be S.M.A.R.T** (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely);

❱ The volume of mobility is a quantitative indicator affecting the quality of your project;

❱ Based on target audience, consider producing your communication media in **at least two languages**

❱ Use the tools provided by the European Commission:
 • **eTwinning** to enhance your project ;
 • Erasmus+ valorisation platform ;
 • **Europass mobility** for mobility recognition in a European project ;
 • **Europass European language passport** for your pupils to self-assess language skills

❱ Consider promoting the impact of your European project **outside** your school: **inspection body**, educational/local/regional authorities, the council, local press etc.
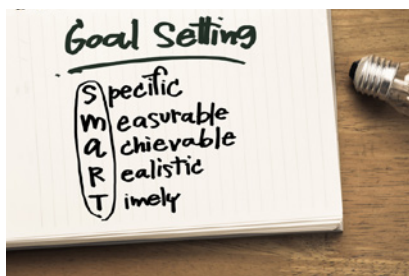
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DISSEMINATION

IMPACT