Study of the Impact of Comenius Centralised Actions

Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks

Final Report

Written by Ellinogermaniki Agogi

Lifelong Learning Programme

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Credits

The study of the impact of Comenius Centralised Actions (Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks) was carried out for the European Commission by an international research team assembled by Ellinogermaniki Agogi[1], Greece (Service Contract EAC-2010-1305).

Authors: Pavlos Koulouris, Heinrich Pingel-Rollmann and Sofoklis Sotiriou, with contributions by members of the research team.

Research team:

- Sofoklis Sotiriou (project leader)
- Pavlos Koulouris (research manager, general editor)
- Heinrich Pingel-Rollmann (project co-leader responsible for quality assurance, country expert for Germany, translator of the executive summary into German)
- Mario Barajas (country expert for Spain)
- Alan Clarke (country expert for UK and Ireland, proof-reader of final report)
- Irene De Angelis-Curtis (country expert for Italy)
- Andrea Kárpáti (country expert for Hungary)
- Thierry Lallemand (country expert for Belgium and Luxembourg, translator of questionnaires and the executive summary into French)
- Olga Megalakaki (country expert for France, translator of questionnaires into French)
- Mikhel Pilv (country expert for Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania)
- Dagmar Schaeffer (country expert for Germany and Austria)
- Riina Vuorikari (country expert for Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Norway, responsible for visual explorations of data sets)
- Anna Zoakou (country expert for Greece and Cyprus).

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[1] http://www.ea.gr

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Executive summary

The context of the study

The 'Study of the Impact of Comenius Centralised Actions: Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks' was carried out for the European Commission (EC) between December 2010 and December 2012, with the aim to investigate the impact of the Centralised Actions of the Comenius Programme. Comenius is the sub-programme focused on school education within the EU's wider Lifelong Learning Programme (2007-0213).

Through Comenius Centralised Actions the EU supports organisations from different countries working together to develop, promote and disseminate good practice and innovation in school education. Comenius Centralised Actions are of two types: Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks.

Each project is implemented by a consortium of partners led by a coordinator. Comenius Multilateral Projects are undertaken by consortia of organisations based in three or more countries working together to improve the initial or in-service training of teachers and other categories of personnel working in the school education sector, to develop strategies, exchange experiences, and more generally improve the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. Comenius Multilateral Networks are networks of organisations from at least six countries which aim to develop education in their subject area or discipline, acquiring and disseminating relevant good practice and innovation, and providing content support to other Comenius projects and partnerships. Both Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks are expected to address priority thematic areas, which are defined in the yearly Calls for Proposals.

Aim and objectives

The present study aimed to assess the impact of the Comenius Programme on school education in Europe, to identify obstacles and opportunities to increase the effectiveness of the Comenius Programme, and contribute to the final evaluation of the Lifelong Learning Programme. To this end, the study focused on the impact of Comenius Centralised Actions on individuals, organisations, and wider systems.

The study specifically looked for evidence relating to the impact of the projects and networks on: a) the personal and professional development of the individuals participating in, as well as more widely benefiting from, Comenius Centralised Actions; b) the institutional development of the participating and benefiting organisations at local, regional and/or national level; and c) school systems more widely.

In this context, the study particularly investigated whether and how Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks can have a positive impact on school and teacher training practice, and on education policies. The study also looked into the European dimension of Comenius Centralised Actions, cooperation at the European level and internationalisation of the participating institutions. Further, the patterns and appropriateness of the involvement of the different types of organisations in Comenius Multilateral Projects and Networks were investigated, with a special focus on how schools are involved and whether their interests are taken into account.

More generally, the study identified enablers and obstacles to the successful implementation of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks and their impact. In this process, the study identified and analysed several outcomes of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks, which it has made available for consultation through an online inventory. Based on its findings, the present impact study has formulated recommendations on possible improvements, so as to help the European Commission improve the way similar activities will be supported under the future European education programme.

Methodology

The study was carried out by an international team of experts implementing a detailed programme of intensive quantitative and qualitative research. A gradual approach of evolving deeper insights into the research area was adopted. This approach started by addressing the 145 consortia of all Comenius Multilateral Projects which started in 2006, 2007 and 2008, and of all Comenius Multilateral Networks which started in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009, with an invitation to participate in an online survey.

A sample of 80 consortia was used for deep qualitative analysis, while a smaller sub-sample of interesting cases eventually provided 28 case studies including both examples of good practice and cases highlighting the challenges and opportunities faced.

Input from the field was sought through an online questionnaire survey[2], interviews and group discussions with key people involved in the projects and networks as well as more widely with beneficiaries and stakeholders, and analysis of the activities and outcomes of the sampled targets and networks. In addition, the research team took into consideration all available data and information from evaluations and other relevant studies[3].

Main characteristics of Comenius Centralised Actions

The study examined the level of involvement of the different countries and types of organisations in Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks, as well as their typical outcomes.

Country participation

While participation in the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP), and therefore in Comenius Centralised Actions, is open to partners from a large number of countries across Europe, there is a tendency for significantly higher involvement of organisations from certain countries. Approximately three quarters of all 145 coordinators of the sampled Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks come from eight European countries. In addition, approximately three quarters of all 1,247 organisations involved in these projects and networks come from fifteen European countries.

[2] http://www.ea.gr/ep/survey/2011/

[3] E.g.: Impact of the Comenius School Partnerships on the participant schools (2007); available at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/more-information/doc/comenius-report_en.pdf
Study of the Impact of Comenius Assistantships (2010); available at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/more-information/doc/2010/comeniusreport_en.pdf
Study of the impact of Comenius school partnerships on participating schools (2012); available at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/comenius/doc/study/study_fr.pdf

Character of consortia

With regard to the involvement of different types of organisations and institutions, the consortia of the studied Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks were characterised by the predominance of universities and research centres and the low representation of schools, despite the focus of Comenius on school education. Although the development of solutions for schools and teacher training institutions by universities and research centres is relevant to the nature of these projects and networks, there is a wide-spread recognition by the majority of informants of the study that it is important for schools to be actively involved as beneficiaries participating in the development of such solutions.

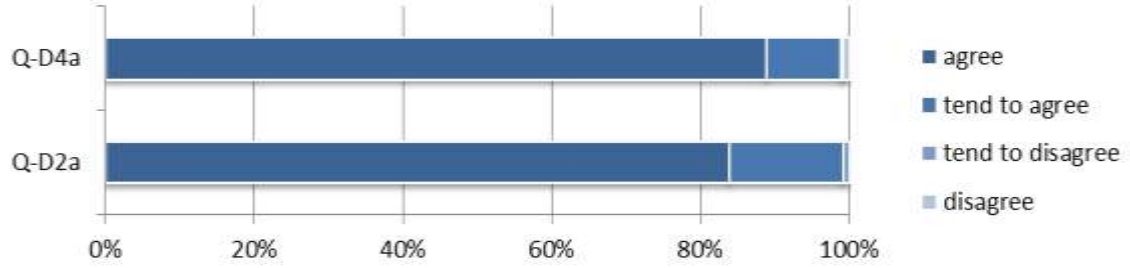
Outcomes of project and networks

The outcomes of Comenius projects and networks are characterised by considerable variety. Among them, various forms of educational 'designs' and content (curricula, courses, methodologies, materials, etc.) appear to be most frequent. Further, quite often projects and networks produce various analyses and studies (e.g. comparative analyses, analyses of training needs, recommendations, etc.). Another important type of outcomes is events, serving mainly training and dissemination purposes. Overall, outcomes of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks tend to focus on educational staff's professional development and teaching practice, with a stronger emphasis on in-service training than on initial teacher training. Considerably less common are outcomes linked to educators' mobility (e.g. for training purposes). Students are also rarely addressed directly by project or network outcomes (e.g. teaching materials for the student). Finally, the recorded project outcomes seem to focus more on secondary education than on primary schools, and even less so on pre-school education.

Impact of Comenius Centralised Actions

Impact on the individual

Involvement in a Comenius Centralised Action is reported as a very positive experience for individuals. Among the 90 statements in the questionnaire that were to be marked on an 'agreement scale', some of those most agreed on stated that this involvement had added value for the informant as a person, as well as that this involvement has had a positive and lasting impact on them and others directly involved (Figure i).



Q-D4a: 'Overall, your involvement in the Action(s) has had added value for you as a person. You would recommend this to a friend / colleague'
Q-D2a: 'Overall, based on your experience from the Action(s), you would say that they have had a positive and lasting impact on you / other individuals (those directly involved)'

Figure i: Involvement in Centralised Actions as a very positive experience; two of the statements most agreed on by questionnaire respondents

Several aspects of a positive effect on the personal and professional development of those involved were revealed. At the personal level, it was particularly highlighted that involvement in the projects and networks offered opportunities for broadening one's cultural experiences and sharing European values. Regarding professional development, individuals stressed the positive impact on their professional life of learning from others about innovation and best practice, and of getting acquainted with new educational materials, methodologies, and the realities of education in other countries. They also recognised some gains in terms of direct skills improvement, including linguistic, ICT, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and management skills. Opportunities for increased mobility in Europe for professional development are highly valued, and it is clear that there is a requirement by practitioners for more activities of this kind.

Finally, impact on individuals also includes positive effects on students' learning experiences, mainly through their teachers' development and the wider impact on their school. On the other hand, students' mobility in Europe as a means of enriching their learning does not appear as a strong result of Comenius Centralised Actions.

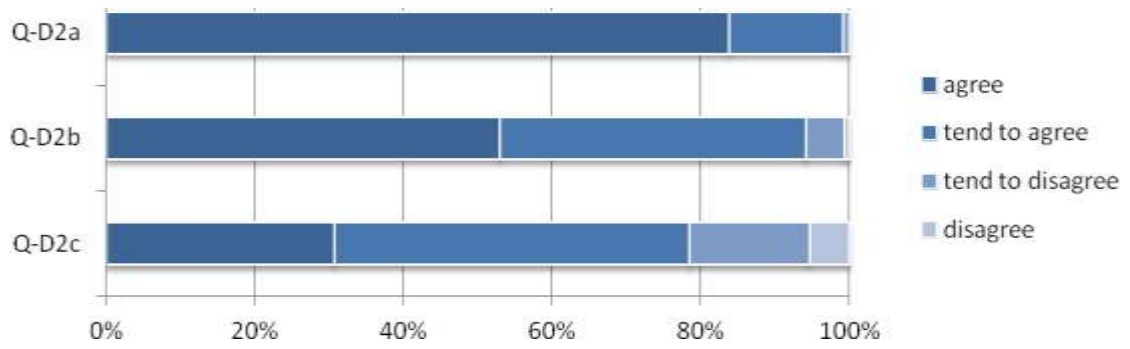
Impact on the institution

Through transfer of experiences and development of new practices Comenius Centralised Actions can have a significant impact on the participating organisations more widely and beyond the individuals who directly participate in activities. However, this impact is less readily recognised than the direct impact on the individuals: almost consistently, areas of positive impact are more strongly associated with the individuals involved than with their institutions more widely.

Similarly to individual Comenius actors, their institutions value the fact that they get acquainted with, and position themselves in, the wider European context. In addition, the funding received also naturally plays an important role. Participation in Comenius projects and networks seems to be a factor motivating the development of further links and synergies between departments within the same organisation, as well as between the organisation and other partners. Comenius seems to function as a catalyst for change at the institutional level. In some cases, sustainability of the Comenius activity seems to be linked to the fact that the whole institution experiences positive change, rather than just those directly involved in the Action.

Impact on systems

Comenius Multilateral Projects and Networks, despite being rather small-scale interventions, may have some potential for systemic impact in wider contexts, e.g. by influencing the development of education policies at the local, regional, national, or European level. Impact on wider systems is very clearly reported by the informants of the study as least strong when compared to impact on individuals and their organizational context (Figure ii). This may be expected to some extent, since impact is first achieved, as well as perceived by beneficiaries, in the personal and immediate organisational context. Systemic impact takes more time and is more likely to occur under certain conditions, such as those discussed below.



Q-D2a: Overall, based on your experience from the Action(s), you would say that they have had a positive and lasting impact on you / other individuals (those directly involved)
Q-D2b: Overall, based on your experience from the Action(s), you would say that they have had a positive and lasting impact on your (and/or other) organisation as a whole (across the community and structure, beyond isolated individuals)
Q-D2c: Overall, based on your experience from the Action(s), you would say that they have had a positive and lasting impact on wider systems (e.g. the local/regional/national education system or EU policies, beyond the institutions directly involved)

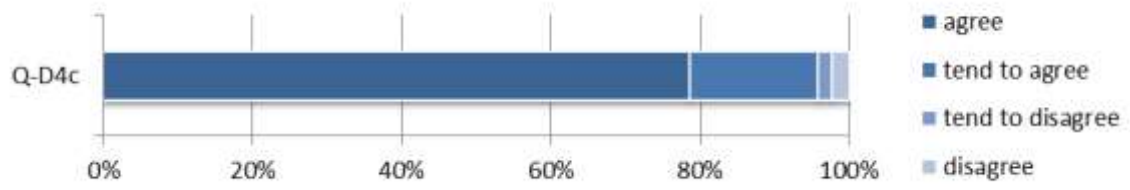
Figure ii: Impact on wider systems compared to impact on individuals and their organizational context, as reported by questionnaire respondents

Nevertheless, there are many positive messages from the field that acknowledge the potential of Comenius projects to have an impact on a scale larger than that of the involved institutions. For instance, there are cases in which teacher training modules and content produced through Comenius have been integrated in established courses. Generally, the chances for a wider impact seem to increase under certain circumstances, such as:

- Bringing together diverse stakeholders and complementary actors in the consortia, including educational policy makers
- Effective dissemination of relevant outcomes (e.g. policy recommendations, or report on the state of innovation in a certain field) to policy makers, leading to an increased potential for exploitation
- Careful positioning of the work carried out by Comenius projects and networks in relation to current and emerging educational policy priorities, at the local, regional or national level
- Continuity of work (e.g. on a certain thematic axis) transcending the duration of one Comenius project or network, by building on previous success and planning ahead for continuation beyond the end of Comenius funding
- Linked to the previous point, development of synergies of the Comenius projects and networks beyond their immediate circle, in wider policy contexts and initiatives, especially at the European level (cf. other EU programmes).

Evaluation of the European dimension of Comenius Centralised Actions

Cooperation at the European level and, more generally, the European dimension of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks are widely acknowledged as some of their strongest assets (Figure iii).



Q-D4c: D4. Overall, your involvement in the Action(s) has had European added value: It would not have been possible to develop these Action(s) and results, and have an impact, if any, without European cooperation.

Figure iii: Recognition of the European added value of Comenius projects and networks by questionnaire respondents

Collaboration and exchange between education professionals and institutions from different countries, cultures and backgrounds leads to a better, deeper understanding, and valuable strengthening of both Europe and education. Some of the most salient benefits include the following:

- Development of an inclusive European identity and culture, and a sense of belonging together
- A greater interest in the life and culture of other countries, including an interest in learning languages
- Important gains in teachers' professional development, through the exchange of professional experiences and transfer of good practice across Europe
- A step towards closer coordination of educational principles, values, methodologies, content within Europe, synthesising while respecting the local and national identities and circumstances
- A step towards a coherent system of recognition of professional skills in education across Europe
- A better, richer understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by education in Europe in the 21st century
- Promotion of educational innovation which would not be initiated or produced in large parts of Europe at the local, regional or national level.

Enablers and obstacles

The study has yielded insights into various factors which act as enablers of, or obstacles to, the successful implementation of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks and the achievement of a stronger impact.

The most salient identified obstacles include:

- The administrative burden of applying for, and running, a Comenius project or network
- Administrative and organisational barriers and weaknesses in the participating organisations or in the local systems in which they operate (e.g. lack of resources or support), as well as relevant differences between the different contexts (organisation type, country, etc.)
- Unrealistic objectives included in the applications, partially due to the way requirements are defined in the calls for proposals, as well as due to the very strong competition
- Inexperienced coordinators and consortia, who are not sufficiently prepared and supported to undertake their roles
- Time required and possible difficulty in the development of shared understandings, interests, aims and practices in the consortium, if this

has not happened before the start of the project (at the application stage)
- Lack of, and difficulties faced in, effective dissemination and exploitation, including lack of knowledge about similar projects carried out previously or in parallel
- Limited exploitation of the potential of National Agencies to support Centralised Actions at the local level (dissemination, links with school communities), and, more generally, insufficient consistency and integration between the Comenius Centralised Actions and the other strands of the Comenius programme managed by the National Agencies
- Lack of a European dissemination and recognition framework (e.g. accreditation of teacher training carried out through Comenius projects or networks)
- Lack of post-project support for exploitation of project results and sustainability.

Some of the most important identified enablers include:
- Careful preparation of the partnership that applies for a Comenius project or network, with support from the National Agencies (e.g. preparatory meetings and visits)
- Good planning of projects already from application stage, with clarity of scope, based on a sound previous exploration of the field, with realistic objectives mapped to the educational realities in the different countries
- Comenius projects and networks carefully building on the work normally or currently carried out by participating organisations, thus gaining local support and interest
- Good use of ICT facilitating partnership, collaboration and sharing, as well as dissemination, and continuation of presence in the post-project phase
- Good planning and coordination of dissemination and exploitation activities
- Opportunities for further support and continuation of good work after the end of Comenius funding.

Involving schools

Of particular interest are specific reasons identified for the low involvement of schools:
- Project and network proposals very often resulting from initiatives of universities and research institutions
- A difficulty to define the role of schools, and manage their continuous involvement
- Continuous cooperation with schools may prove difficult for reasons relating to school management and managerial capacity, local/regional administrative and training arrangements, the replacement of practitioners involved with new colleagues during the project, lack of expertise in the project theme within the school, etc.

Ways to improve school participation include the following:
- Exploitation of umbrella organisations, networks of schools, larger regional or national organizations, and higher education institutions with strong teacher training departments, which can provide links to, and strong support for, schools and smaller organizations
- Guidance and support at the national level, with a more active role of the National Agencies in helping schools reach the 'distant' world of Centralised Actions

- Applications for funding and progress reports could more clearly require specific information about, evidence of, and concrete feedback from, the actual involvement of schools in the implementation of the Comenius projects and networks.

Recommendations

Based on the above findings, the study produced a set of recommendations to the European Commission and the stakeholders of Comenius Centralised Actions for possible improvements of similar forms of EU support under the future education programme (2014-2020).

These recommendations, which are detailed and operationalized in Chapter 7 of the Final Report, can be summarised in outline in the following messages:

- Actively encourage and practically facilitate a stronger participation of schools and education practitioners in all processes.
- Reduce the administrative burden of the participation.
- Prepare and continuously support coordinators and consortia, focusing particularly on the less experienced among them.
- Synergize with other forms of EU support, both within the wider context of the education programme as well as with other EU programmes and initiatives
- Synergize with the National Agencies, and possibly also with other umbrella or networking organisations available in countries, and activate them to provide support at the local, regional, and/or national level.
- Provide a wider European dissemination and recognition framework in which successful outcomes of projects and networks would be more effectively disseminated and exploited.
- Provide post-project support to successful work so as to strengthen the chances of projects and networks to have a strong impact in wider contexts and in the longer term.

1 Introduction

The present document is the Final Report of the 'Study of the Impact of Comenius Centralised Actions: Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks', which was carried out for the European Commission between December 2010 and December 2012 (Service Contract EAC-2010-1305). The purpose of the Final Report is to present the results of the study and provide some recommendations on possible improvements in the design and management of similar forms of EU support under the future education programme (2014-2020).

Following this introduction, the Final Report includes:

- A description of the identity and context of this study, including some basic information on the nature of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks, the organisations they typically involve, and the types of results they typically produce (Chapter 2).
- An overview of the methodology designed and applied for the purposes of the study (Chapter 3).
- A detailed discussion of the main results from the analysis of the data and information collected in the course of the study (Chapter 4).
- The case studies of selected Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks, which were developed in order to exemplify and illustrate the points made by the study (Chapter 5).
- A discussion of the multimedia inventory of the analysed Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks, which is available online (Chapter 6).
- The recommendations resulting from the study on possible improvements in the design and management of similar forms of EU support under the future education programme (Chapter 7).

The Final Report has been authored with the interested but not necessarily expert reader in mind, while containing a sufficient level of detail and analysis in order to be of interest and use to the policy maker and the interested researcher. This main body of the Final Report is accompanied by the following Annexes, which present the methodology, data and findings of the study in more detail:

- Annex 1: a detailed account of the methodology and procedures followed in the course of the study
- Annex 2: an overview of the overall sample of 145 targeted Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks
- Annex 3: visualisations used to explore the overall sample of 145 targeted Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks
- Annex 4: the online questionnaire developed and used in the survey
- Annex 5: a full account of the data and information collected through the online questionnaire
- Annex 6: details on the monitoring of the websites of the Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks studied
- Annex 7: the narrow sample of 80 Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks on which the study gradually focused
- Annex 8: the interview guidelines and interview report templates used.

The Final Report is accompanied by an Executive Summary and a slide presentation with notes for the speaker, to be used for the promotion of the study results.

2 Identity and context of the study

2.1 The Comenius Programme

This study investigated the impact of the Centralised Actions of the Comenius Programme, which is part of the wider Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Commission. The nature and aims of these European instruments are briefly presented below.

The European Commission defines the focus of the Lifelong Learning Programme as 'creating education and training opportunities for all'[4]. Through this Programme, which has a budget of nearly €7 billion from 2007 to 2013, the EU offers funding in various forms and actions to interested individuals and organisations, with the aim to enable people at all stages of their lives to gain learning experiences, as well as helping to develop the education and training sector across Europe.

The Lifelong Learning Programme consists of four sub-programmes which fund projects at different levels of education and training. The 'Comenius Programme' is the sub-programme focused on school education. Before the commencement of the Lifelong Learning Programme (2007-2013), Comenius was part of the Socrates II Programme (2000-2006).

Comenius[5] focuses on all levels of school education, from pre-school and primary to secondary schools. It is relevant for everyone involved in school education: mainly pupils and teachers but also local authorities, representatives of parents' associations, non-government organisations, teacher training institutes and universities.

Within Comenius, actions aim to help young people and educational staff better understand the range of European cultures, languages and values. They also help young people acquire the basic life skills and competences necessary for personal development, future employment and active citizenship. Further, the programme addresses issues strongly related to current discussions and developments in school policy: motivation for learning and 'learning-to-learn' skills, key competences, digital educational content and inclusive education.

More specifically, Comenius aims to:

- Improve and increase the mobility of pupils and educational staff across the EU;
- Enhance and increase partnerships between schools in different EU Member States;
- Encourage language learning, innovative ICT-based content, services and better teaching techniques and practices;
- Enhance the quality and European dimension of teacher training;
- Improve pedagogical approaches and school management.

The Comenius Programme funds several types of actions related to school education, among them the Centralised Actions, the impact of which is the focus of this study. As their name denotes, Centralised Actions are managed centrally by the Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) of the European Commission.

There are also smaller-scale Comenius Actions managed with the help of National Agencies in the Member States. These are the Mobility Actions and the Partnerships,

[4] http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc78_en.htm
[5] http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/comenius_en.htm

which are only peripherally considered in this study, in as much as this helps to place Centralised Actions in their wider policy context.

In short, Comenius Mobility Actions enable individuals to spend time abroad for learning, personal or professional development. This includes:

- Individual pupil mobility, which gives secondary school pupils the chance to spend a study period abroad for up to ten months;
- In-service training of staff grants, which enable teachers and other education staff to undertake training abroad, for up to six weeks;
- Assistantship grants, which fund student teachers to work in a school abroad for up to ten months.

Through Comenius Partnerships, on the other hand, organisations involved in the school education sector from different European countries can work together in various ways:

- Schools partnerships enable school co-operation and class exchanges;
- Regio partnerships enable co-operation between different regions;
- eTwinning is an internet platform for the collaboration between teachers and schools.

2.2 Comenius Centralised Actions

In this context, The Centralised Actions are larger-scale actions, with organisations from different countries working together to develop, promote and disseminate good practice and innovation in school education.

There are two types of Centralised Actions: Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks[6]. Each Comenius Multilateral Project and Comenius Multilateral Network is implemented by a consortium of partners led by a coordinator.

Comenius Multilateral Projects are undertaken by consortia working together to improve the initial or in-service training of teachers and other categories of personnel working in the school education sector, to develop strategies or exchange experiences, to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. Each project is expected to give rise to an identifiable outcome - e.g. a new curriculum, training course, methodology, teaching strategy, teaching material - which meets the training needs of a defined group of educational staff, taking account of the realities of each participating country. The use of all possible methods, including information and communication technologies, for the production and dissemination of training materials to the widest possible audience is encouraged.

There is a specific requirement in Comenius Multilateral Projects to plan monitoring and evaluation as a continuous project activity, from the very start of each project, aiming to enhance the quality of work carried out. Dissemination of the good quality results, specific 'dissemination' events involving interested educational authorities or policy makers to raise awareness of the project's activities and planned outputs should be always included. In addition participation in Comenius Network events of the same thematic area is encouraged.

Activities of Comenius Multilateral Projects may include:

[6] These were also part of the Socrates II Programme (2000-2006). The current Comenius Multilateral Projects are the successor of the former 'Comenius 2.1 Training of School Education Staff', and the current Comenius Multilateral Networks are the successor of the former 'Comenius 3 Development of Networks'.

- The adaptation, development, testing, implementation and dissemination of new curricula, training courses (or parts of courses) or materials for the initial or in-service training of teachers or other categories of school education staff
- The adaptation, development, testing, implementation and dissemination of new teaching methodologies and pedagogical strategies for use in the classroom and including the development of materials for use by pupils
- Providing a framework for the organisation of mobility activities for student teachers, including the provision of practical training periods and the recognition of these activities by the institutions concerned

The second type of Centralised Actions is Comenius Multilateral Networks. These are Networks which represent, as a minimum, organisations from six countries and aim to develop education in their subject area or discipline, acquiring and disseminating relevant good practice and innovation, and providing content support to other Comenius projects and partnerships.

Comenius Multilateral Networks encourage the networking of educational establishments and organisations. They are designed to promote European co-operation and innovation in specific thematic areas of particular importance to school education in a European context.

Comenius Multilateral Networks are expected to constitute:

- A forum for joint reflection and co-operation in identifying and promoting innovation and best practice in the thematic area concerned; or
- A platform to assist the persons and institutions involved in Comenius in strengthening their co-operation, and enabling them to maintain and consolidate their European co-operation beyond the period of EU support for their specific projects.

Activities of Comenius Multilateral Networks may include:

- Activities to promote educational innovation and best practice in the thematic area concerned, such as comparative analyses, case studies, formulating recommendations and organising working groups, seminars or conferences and other dissemination activities;
- Activities to facilitate and enhance European co-operation, such as exchanging information, training of project co-ordinators, promoting new projects, disseminating project results and good practice.

As a minimum, each Comenius Multilateral Network is expected to:

- Establish a website and other appropriate tools to support information exchange and dissemination;
- Produce an annual report on the state of innovation in its area of activity;
- Provide the 'players' in Comenius with full information about the network's events and activities;
- Organise an annual meeting of Comenius projects working in the thematic area of the network. This meeting can be in the form of an open seminar or conference, combining several objectives of the network.

Between 30 and 45 Comenius Multilateral Projects and between 3 and 7 Comenius Networks are typically launched every year with Comenius support, following relevant

Calls for Proposals issued by the European Commission. Demand has been steadily increasing for both types of Centralised Actions. Characteristically, in the period 2007-2011, 802 applications for Comenius Multilateral Projects were received by the EC, of which 183 were selected for funding (22.8% success rate). During the same period 27 Comenius Networks were selected for funding, out of 91 applications (29.7%)[7].

A Comenius Multilateral Project has a maximum duration of 3 years, and may receive a Community Grant of a maximum of 150,000 euro per year, reaching overall up to 300,000 euro for the whole duration of the project. A Comenius Multilateral Network has a maximum duration of 3 years, and may receive a Community Grant of a maximum of 150,000 euro per year. For both projects and networks, European Commission's contribution may reach up to 75% of the eligible costs[8]. The overall budget for Comenius Multilateral Projects and Networks is €51.2m over seven years (2007-13).

Both Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks are expected to address priority thematic areas, which are defined in the yearly Calls for Proposals. The different priority areas since 2007 have been the following:

2007:

Priorities for Comenius Multilateral Projects

- Implementation of the Action Plan on Promoting Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity
- The contribution of teacher education and training to the Lisbon strategy ('Education and Training 2010') (including: The continuum of the teaching profession, from initial teacher education to induction and continuing professional development; Development of partnership approaches between teacher training institutions and the world of research, business and society at large; Approaches designed to encourage teachers to develop new pedagogical methods to increase pupil motivation)
- Implementation of the Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning
- School policy

Priorities for Comenius Multilateral Networks

- Involvement of parents in school education
- Special educational needs
- Citizenship, culture and education, including intercultural education and combating racism and xenophobia in school education
- Health education and physical education
- Links with the world of work
- Science education

2008:

Priorities for Comenius Multilateral Projects

- Improving motivation for learning and learning to learn skills
- The development of a range of approaches to teaching and learning to support 'transversal' key competences
- School management
- Language learning and linguistic diversity
- Improving literacy skill

[7] Comenius in figures: EU support to schools (2012 Edition); available at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/comenius/doc/figures_en.pdf

[8] More information about the funding rules applied can be found on EACEA's website, at http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/comenius/comenius_en.php.

- Digital educational content and services

Priorities for Comenius Multilateral Networks

- Development of pre-primary and early learning provision
- School management
- Supporting entrepreneurship and links with the world of work
- Digital educational content and services
- Making science education more attractive

2009:

Priorities for Comenius Multilateral Projects

- Improving motivation for learning and learning to learn skills
- The development of a range of approaches to teaching and learning to support 'transversal' key competences
- School management
- Language learning and linguistic diversity
- Improving literacy skills
- Digital educational content and services

Priorities for Comenius Multilateral Networks

- Development of pre-primary and early learning provision
- School management
- Supporting entrepreneurship and links with the world of work
- Digital educational content and services
- Making science education more attractive
- Development of special needs education (SEN) towards inclusion of all young people, in particular of those with disabilities

2010:

Priorities for Comenius Multilateral Projects

- The development of approaches to teaching and learning that support the acquisition by all students of 'transversal' key competences
- Improving reading literacy and other basic skills
- Language learning and linguistic diversity
- Development of digital learning environments for the acquisition of key competences
- Reducing early school leaving
- School development and leadership

Priorities for Comenius Multilateral Networks

- Development of high quality early childhood education and care
- School Leadership
- Supporting entrepreneurship and links with the world of work
- Developing digital learning environments for the acquisition of key competences
- Making science and technology education more attractive
- Development of special needs education (SEN) towards inclusion of all young people, in particular of those with disabilities
- Early school leaving

2011:

Priorities for Comenius Multilateral Projects

- School development, leadership and links with the world of work
- Development of approaches to teaching and learning
- Support to literacy and 'transversal key competences'
- Reducing early school leaving, improving the learning of students with migrant background and promoting gender equality and inclusive approaches to learning

Priorities for Comenius Multilateral Networks

- Support to entrepreneurship and links with the world of work
- Support to making science education more attractive
- Development of Pre-school and Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) provision
- Development of Special Needs Education (SEN) towards inclusion of all young people, in particular those with disabilities

2012:

Priorities for Comenius Multilateral Projects

- School development, leadership and links with the world of work
- Development of approaches to teaching and learning
- Support to basic skills and 'transversal key competences'
- Reducing early school leaving, improving the learning of students with migrant background and Roma pupils as well as promoting gender equality and inclusive approaches to learning

Priorities for Comenius Multilateral Networks

- Support to entrepreneurship and links with the world of work
- Support to making science education more attractive
- Development of Pre-school and Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) provision
- Development of Special Needs Education (SEN) towards inclusion of all young people, in particular those with disabilities

2013:

Priorities for Comenius Multilateral Projects

- Towards 21st century schools: openness, innovation and relevance
- School leadership and teacher competence
- Basic skills and 'transversal key competences'
- Reducing early school leaving, improving the learning of students with migrant background and Roma pupils as well as promoting gender equality and inclusive approaches to learning

Priorities for Comenius Multilateral Networks

- Entrepreneurship and links with the world of work
- Making science education more attractive
- Development of Pre-school and Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) provision
- Development of Special Needs Education (SEN) towards inclusion of all young people, in particular those with disabilities

2.3 Aims and objectives of this study

The present study of the impact of Comenius Centralised Actions aimed to contribute to the overall objectives of impact studies related to the Comenius Programme, i.e. to contribute to:

- assessing the impact of the Comenius Programme on school education in Europe;
- identifying obstacles and opportunities to increase the effectiveness of the Comenius Programme;
- the final evaluation of the Lifelong Learning Programme (2007-2013).

To this end, the following specific objectives for the study were set by the European Commission:

- To assess the impact of the Comenius Centralised Actions on:

    - the institutional development of the participating/benefiting organisations at local, regional and/or national level, with special attention to the pedagogic development of schools and teacher training centres;
    - the professional development of the participating/benefiting individuals;
    - school systems.
- To analyse in which way Comenius Centralised Actions influence teaching, learning, teacher training, and classroom management and education policies.
- To compare the results of the above analysis with the results of other impact studies and especially of the study of the impact of Comenius School Partnerships, so as to provide insights into similarities and differences of impact between the different Actions.

Further to the above explicitly stated objectives, the expected results of this study as specified by the European Commission implied the following additional specific objectives:

- To analyse the impact of Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks on the basis of an appropriately designed sample of sixty or more participating consortia.
- To evaluate the European dimension of the two Comenius Centralised Actions, including an evaluation of how cooperation at European level has contributed to the implementation of projects and to the achievement of projects' objectives, as well as to increasing the internationalisation of the participating institutions, and particularly of teacher training institutes and schools.
- To provide an overview of the involvement of the different types of organisations and institutions, including those not in themselves educational, in Multilateral Project and Multilateral Network activities, providing in particular insights into the typical structure of consortia, the types of organisations involved, whether the usual structure is suitable for the objectives of the respective action, how schools are involved and whether their interests are taken into account.
- To identify enablers but also obstacles, including administrative procedures, to the successful implementation of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks.
- To produce a multimedia inventory of the analysed Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks providing a detailed description and analysis of project activities and results, and allowing consultation per thematic areas, geographical distribution, types of activities carried out and types of organisations involved.
- Based on all findings of the study, to give recommendations on possible improvements to the actions, so as to help the European Commission improve the way the actions will be supported under the future European programme for education (2014-2020).

With regard to the exact aspects of impact to be examined, the European Commission further defined the objectives per Action as follows:

For Multilateral Projects:

- To analyse the impact of Multilateral Projects on teaching methods and material, on pedagogical strategies for use in the classroom, on the development of materials to be used by pupils, and on curricula for the

initial or in-service training of teachers or other categories of school education staff.

- To analyse how the action has contributed to develop a framework for the mobility of student teachers, teachers and other staff and how the activities carried out in mobility have been recognised.
- To assess how the implemented projects have succeeded in disseminating the training material to the wider audience, in particular through ICT.
- To assess how the exchange of experience has been managed within the projects and how this has had an impact on the participating organisations/ institutions.
- To assess the integration of ICT and new media in the projects and identify any innovative use.

And for Multilateral Networks:

- To analyse the impact of Multilateral Networks on strengthening the networking of educational institutions and organisations and on enhancing the sustainability of their project by helping them consolidate the cooperation beyond the period of financial support by the Commission for their specific project.
- To assess the extent to which the Networks have contributed to the promotion of European cooperation in their specific thematic areas of work.
- To assess the extent to which the action has contributed to identifying and promoting innovation and best practice in the relevant thematic areas, and which kind of practical outcomes it has contributed to achieving (pedagogic material, teaching content, etc.).
- To analyse the impact of the action on strengthening the cooperation of already existing Comenius projects.
- To assess the impact of the Networks' activities and results at policy level (through formulation of recommendations and reports on the status of innovation in the Networks' area of activity, if possible).

Overall, the aim of this impact study was to focus on deeper evaluations and insights into the impact of the Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks rather than mere surface descriptions of the investigated projects and networks, with a strong emphasis on the actual impact on schools in Europe.

3 Methodology

This chapter provides an outline of the methodology designed and applied for the purposes of the study. Full details about the methodology and procedures followed in the course of the study are provided in Annex 1.

3.1 Overview

The research team that carried out the study implemented a detailed programme of intensive quantitative and, mainly, qualitative research designed to provide answers to all questions reflected in the study's set objectives (Chapter 2).

At the outset of the project, the parameters, criteria, procedures and tools for the whole study were defined in detail. To this end, an inception report was developed and submitted to the European Commission, and the practical details of all aspects of the project were agreed.

A gradual approach of evolving deeper insights into the research area was adopted. This approach started by addressing the 145 consortia of all Multilateral Projects which started in 2006, 2007 and 2008, and of all Multilateral Networks which started in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009, with an invitation to participate in an online survey. In the course of the project, research gradually moved towards gaining deeper insights into the researched areas based on smaller, carefully and specifically selected balanced sub-samples. The sampling process was based each time on the information and experiences which the research team had collected and evaluated at the preceding stage of the study. Thus, a well-designed representative sample of 80 consortia (72 from Multilateral Projects and 8 from Multilateral Networks) was used for deep qualitative analysis, while a smaller sub-sample of interesting cases eventually provided 28 case studies including both examples of good practice and cases highlighting the challenges and opportunities faced. This 'funnel' approach (Figure 1) has enabled the research team to gain an initial overview of the landscape and gradually narrow down, sharpen and deepen the focus of the impact study.

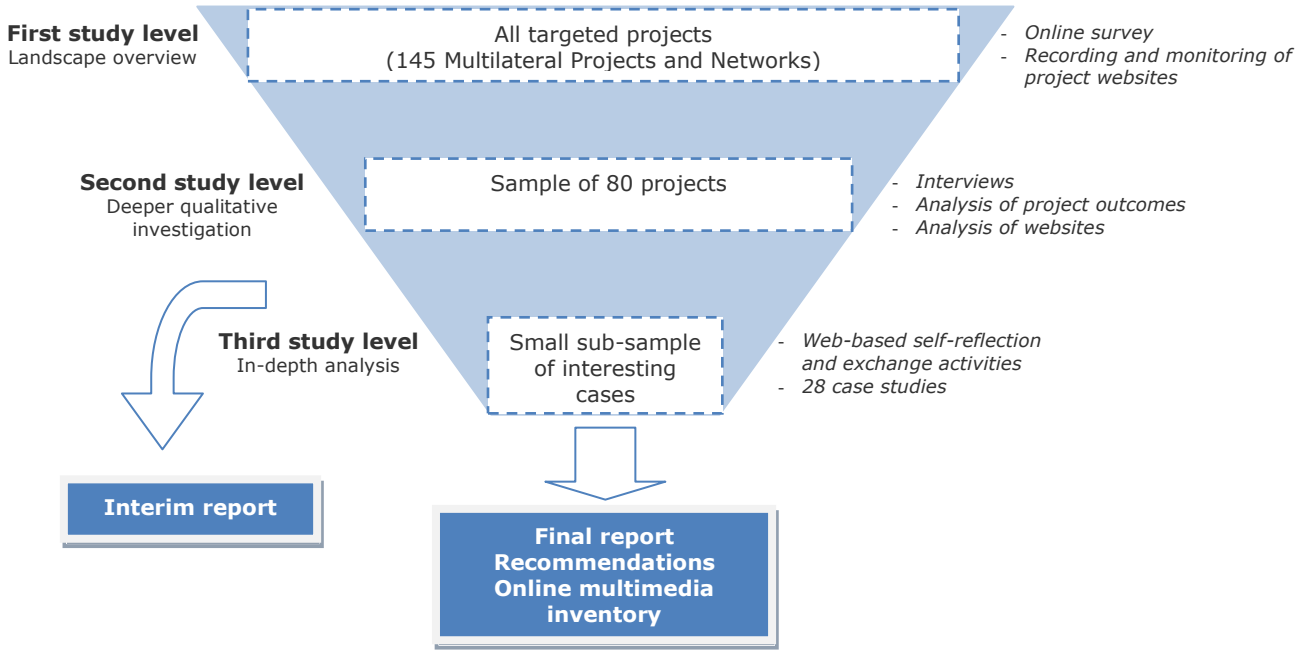


Figure 1: The 'funnel-shaped' research approach of the impact study

In summary, input from the field was sought through an online survey (questionnaire), interviews and group discussions with key people involved in the Actions and more widely with stakeholders, observation of project/network activities, observation of the presence and activity of the projects and networks in the internet. In addition the research team took into consideration all available data and information from evaluations and other relevant studies[9] carried out by the European Commission or EACEA.

A rich online environment was also developed to support the study. This included: a) a website for dissemination and promotion purposes; b) the online questionnaire and a Web2.0 functionality environment enabling and facilitating exchange, collective reflection and communication among interested informants; and c) an online inventory, which is a searchable and expandable repository of Comenius projects and networks and their outputs, structured according to concrete content organization and characterization standards.

The following sections provide an outline of the methodological elements and stages of the study. A fuller account can be found in Annex 1.

3.2 Work with the overall sample of 145 projects and networks

The research team prepared for the field work by analysing the information on the 145 targeted Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks which was provided by the European Commission, namely:

- The Compendia for Calls 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009
- Information on the public part of project progress reports, which are available on the internet
- Information on final report assessment of those projects for which this assessment had been finalised
- Information on the coordinators and partners of all targeted projects and networks.

Available information was synthesised and missing data was complemented where possible. In this way, the team established a clearer picture of the targeted projects and networks, and devised a consistent system of reference to them.

An overview of the overall sample of the 145 targeted Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks is provided in Annex 2.

The team also used an advanced visualisation tool[10] to produce dynamic visual representations which allowed exploration of the patterns of networking and links observed in the overall sample of the 145 projects and networks (Figure 2). This technique offered further interesting insights into the field that was to be explored, which are presented in Annex 3.

[9] E.g.: Impact of the Comenius School Partnerships on the participant schools (2007); available at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/more-information/doc/comenius-report_en.pdf
Study of the Impact of Comenius Assistantships (2010); available at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/more-information/doc/2010/comeniusreport_en.pdf
Study of the impact of Comenius school partnerships on participating schools (2012); available at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/comenius/doc/study/study_fr.pdf
[10] IBM Many Eyes, http://www-958.ibm.com/software/data/cognos/manyeyes/

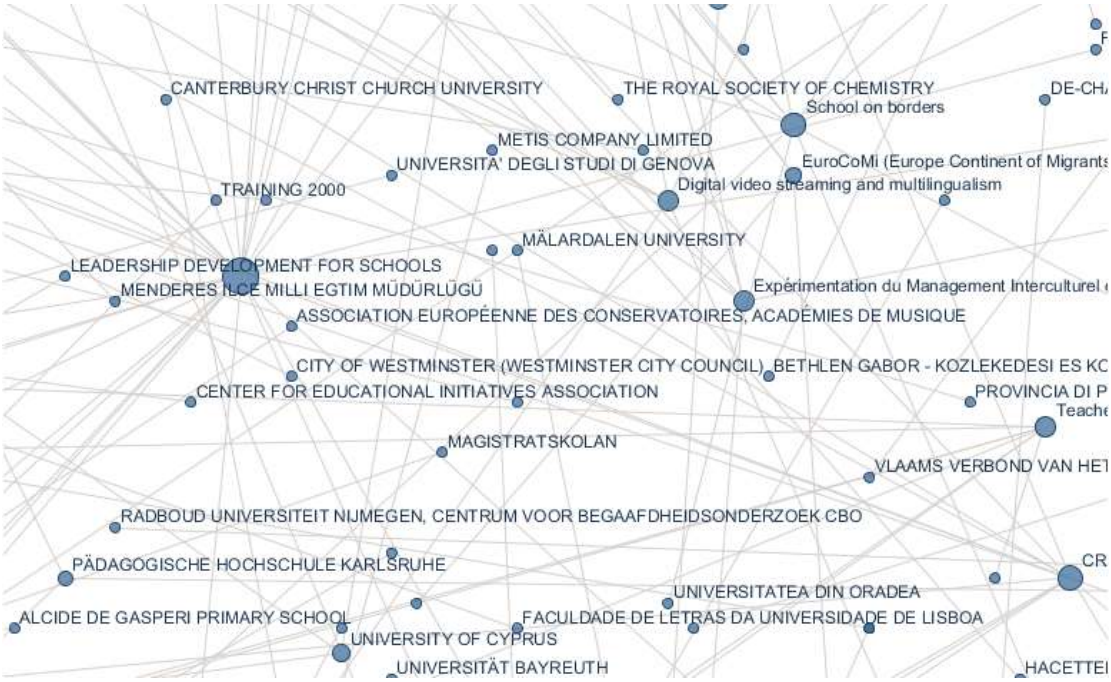


Figure 2: An example of part of a dynamic visualisation of the overall sample, showing links between organisations through projects: organisations are represented as nodes and projects as lines connecting them

3.2.1 Online survey

As the starting point for work in the field, an extensive survey consisting of an online questionnaire was carried out with a twofold purpose:

- To collect information about the views of people related to as many of the 145 targeted Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks as possible on impact, at a first level of detail. This provided the ground for deeper investigation in the subsequent stages of qualitative study.
- To provide factual information and insights into the characteristics and realities of the different projects and networks. This also helped in the selection of interesting cases among the questionnaire respondents for further qualitative investigation, as well as in the collection of information for each project and network that has become available through the online inventory.

The online questionnaire consisted of two parts:

- The general questionnaire focusing on respondents' views, opinions and stances towards Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks and their impact (in short: the 'views' questionnaire). This was addressed to all coordinators, partners and beneficiaries of the 145 targeted projects and networks.
- The questionnaire that focused on factual information about each Multilateral Project and Multilateral Network (in short: the 'project facts' questionnaire), including a part aiming to collect rich structured information about the different outcomes of each project or network. The 'project facts' questionnaire was addressed to the coordinators only.

The online questionnaire was quite extensive, covering all aspects of the study and inviting not only quantitative, but importantly also qualitative input through a number of open-ended questions. The vast majority of the closed-ended questions invited response on a Likert scale of level of agreement in relation to a given statement (agree; tend to agree; tend to disagree; disagree), which allowed for comparisons of responses across a wide arrange of variables. Overall, the questionnaire included 207 fields of information (162 fields in the 'views' questionnaire, and 45 fields in the 'project facts' questionnaire). It was available in English, French, and German.

The online survey was publically launched in April 2011 and remained open up to the end of the field work in October 2012, yielding very rich results. The now archived 'views' questionnaire can be found for reference at www.ea.gr/ep/survey/2011/. The 'project facts' questionnaire was available, and can be viewed for reference, either as a continuation of the 'views' questionnaire (offered as an option at the end of the completion of the 'views' questionnaire), or directly at www.ea.gr/ep/survey/2011/q2/. Both parts were preceded by appropriate introductory notes to the respondents, explaining the purpose of the survey, assuring respondents about the confidentiality of the information provided, and encouraging and motivating them to provide well-thought and rich responses.

A hard copy equivalent of the online questionnaire was also produced. It is included in Annex 4.

3.2.1.1 Response to the online survey

All coordinators of the 145 targeted Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks were invited to participate in the online survey, and encourage the partners and beneficiaries of their projects or networks to do so too. Project and network partners whose email addresses were available were also directly invited and asked to encourage others in their consortia (coordinators and beneficiaries) to participate in the survey. Invitations were reiterated in several cycles. All invitations for participation in the study were supported through an official supporting letter provided by the European Commission.

The online response was very satisfactory. The 'views' questionnaire was completed by 374 individuals, 243 (65%) of whom also offered their contact details making themselves available for further involvement in the study. As can be seen in Figure 3, these respondents were linked to 128 (113 projects and 15 networks) of the 145 targeted Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks (88.3% of all targeted projects and networks). It is worth noting that the responses collected were linked to 15 of the 16 networks in the overall sample (93.8%).

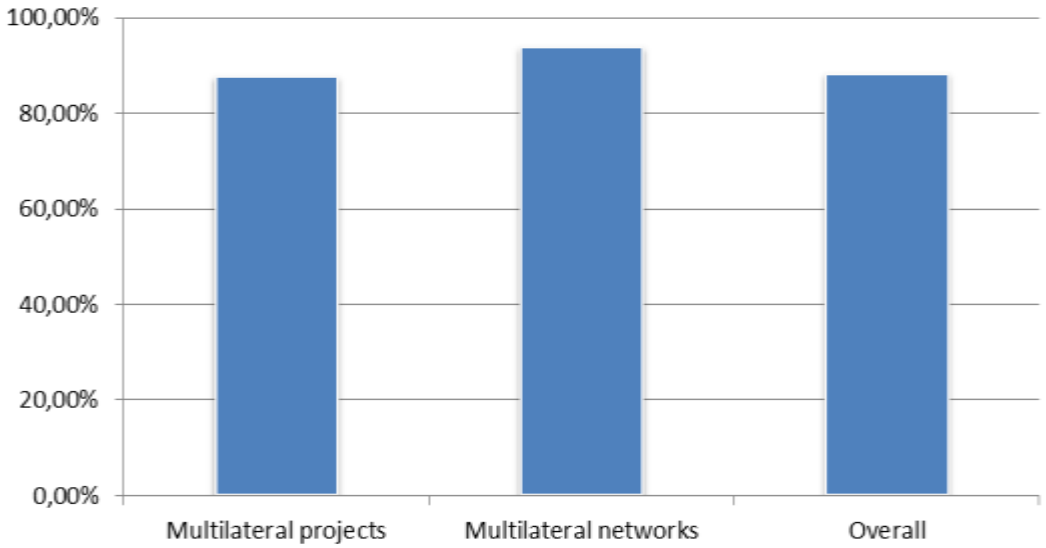


Figure 3: Response rate within the sample of target projects and networks

The coverage of the different years was also excellent, with a quite balanced distribution in years 2006-2009 of the projects and networks covered by the survey (2006: 3 networks, 45 projects; 2007: 5 networks, 31 projects; 2008: 2 networks, 37 projects; 2009: 5 networks).

The response from coordinators and partners was very satisfactory from the first stages of the online survey. Intensive efforts were made throughout the study to also encourage the response of beneficiaries of the project and networks, who could only be indirectly invited through the coordinators and partners, and therefore constituted a hard-to-reach target group. Eventually the response rate achieved for beneficiaries was good and comparable to that of coordinators and partners (Figure 4). More specifically, the 'views' questionnaire was completed by 120 coordinators (32.1% of all responses), 171 partners (45.7%) and 83 beneficiaries (22.2%).

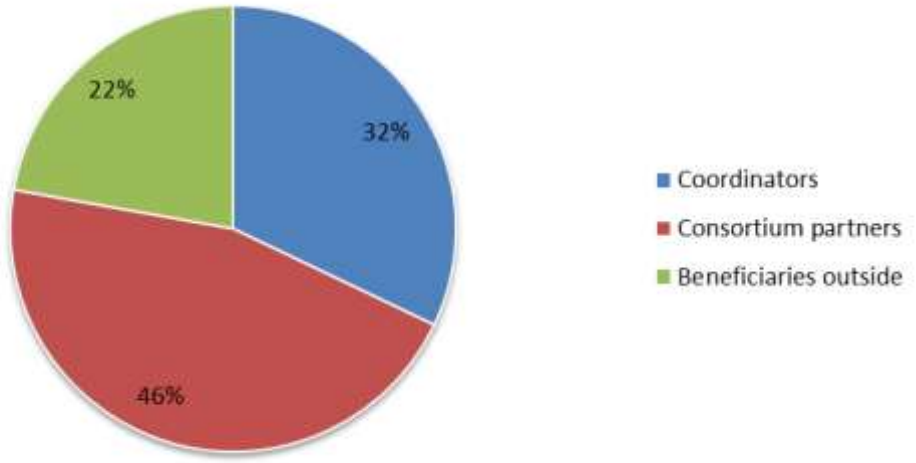


Figure 4: Composition of the response: consortium coordinators, consortium partners, and beneficiaries outside the consortium

Through the 'project facts' questionnaire, 88 responses were collected, providing information about 80 projects and networks (some coordinators provided additional information through a repeated entry). Of these projects and networks, 78 belonged to the sample of the 145 targeted Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks, while there were responses about two more projects which were not part of the sample of the study. Those coordinators further reported on 155 project outcomes (153 of these were linked to the 145 projects and networks belonging to the sample of the study). Detailed information can be found in Annex 5.

3.2.1.2 Characteristics of the online response

The online questionnaire offered very rich input in terms of both quantitative and qualitative data. The number of missing responses was low, while the open-ended questions typically provoked extensive free-text responses which provided rich qualitative insights into respondents' views and stances.

Naturally, the analysis of the online response could not provide findings which could safely be generalised in respect of wider populations, due to the self-selection of respondents. Nevertheless, it did provide very useful, clear insights into the tendencies, emerging trends and correlations between the various variables, reflecting the views of a population that forms the core of recent and current activity in the field of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Networks.

Detailed information on the online response can be found in Annex 5, which includes the quantitative analysis of the responses to all closed-ended questions as well as the free-text responses to the open-ended questions. In addition to summary statistics (frequencies) for the closed-ended questions, the Likert-scale questions which gathered responses to several statements concerning the level of respondents' agreement with those statements (agree; tend to agree; tend to disagree; disagree) are summarised so as to allow for easy comparisons between the different statements and reveal interesting tendencies. This is particularly useful for the additional reason that the response was characterised by an overall very positive disposition of most respondents towards Comenius, which led responses to tend heavily towards the end of the Likert scale. However, the collected data was rich and varied enough to reveal different 'weights' in the way respondents reacted towards the given statements.

Selected aspects of the online response are integrated into the discussion of the results of the study in Chapter 4 of this report.

3.2.2 Recording and monitoring of the websites of projects and networks

As one of the first steps in the preparation for the field work, the research team carried out a first-level basic recording and monitoring of the websites of all Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks in the overall sample whose coordinator was based in the sample countries. Through this, evidence was gathered about the extent to which the projects and networks have exploited ICT and particularly the internet for their operation and dissemination, as well as about the sustainability of their activities beyond the period of EU-funded operation as reflected in their web presence. For this purpose, a questionnaire with guidelines was designed for internal use within the team, which is presented in Annex 6 together with a summary of the results of this exercise.

Next to helping the research team understand the role Comenius consortia assign to the websites of their Actions, this first monitoring of the project/network websites

provided also very useful input into the first recognition of characteristics of the projects and networks from the overall sample, and contributed to the selection of the networks and projects that constituted the narrower sample of 80 Actions (see section 3.3).

Aiming at a second level of deeper analysis of the use of the websites, the research team contacted the coordinators of the 80 selected sample consortia and invited them to allow the study to electronically monitor the usage of their project/network website, using Google Analytics tools. Despite the effort and the assurance about the strict confidentiality of this and all parts of the study, many coordinators remained reluctant to grant this kind of access to information about their websites. At the same time, others who initially agreed to participate in this monitoring, were slow to implement the necessary technical arrangements (addition of the Google Analytics code into their web pages) so that the monitoring of the web traffic could start. As a result, the study did not manage to have an adequate volume of web analytics data from which to draw any safe conclusions. However, from both the initial monitoring of the websites and the limited web analytics data gathered it is clear that several of the Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks use the internet quite effectively to make their presence known and disseminate their activities and outcomes. It is also clear, nevertheless, that this is not the case for a number of the projects and networks studied. The importance and potential of using ICT and especially the world-wide web will be further discussed in Chapter 4, where all relevant information available (from the web monitoring exercise, the online survey, the interviews, etc.) is synthesised. Clearly, also, the predominant technological environment and culture are now mature enough to allow the European Commission to define web analytics monitoring of the websites of the funded projects and networks as a basic requirement. This would have the potential to reveal (both to the European Commission as well as to the consortia) very interesting patterns, challenges and opportunities in the use of technologies and new media for the effective realisation and dissemination of the Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks.

3.3 Work with the narrower sample of 80 projects and networks

Based on all available information in the first 6 months of the study, the members of the research team made the selection of the narrower sample of about 80 Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks. This sample formed the basis for the subsequent, more qualitative, central elements of the study. From this sample, the even narrower sample of the approximately 28 case studies was later further deduced.

For the definition of the narrower sample of 80 Actions, all relevant provisions of the study design were taken into account. The criteria that were applied for the selection were the following:

- Inclusion of Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks in an approximate ratio of 9:1 respectively, to reflect the distribution of these two types of Actions in the overall sample of 145 Actions;
- Distribution of projects and networks selected across the years (Actions which started in 2006-2009).
- Coordinator's confirmed willingness to participate further in the study
- At least some partners' confirmed willingness to participate further in the study
- Overall evaluation score in the Final Report of the project or network
- Overall impression about the website of the Action
- Overall researcher's impression about the Action

- 'High impact potential' declared through the online survey (self-characterisation by the respondents)
- Type of the coordinating organisation
- Variety of types of organisations in the partnership
- Direct participation of schools in the partnership
- Themes addressed
- EC's political priorities in school education directly addressed.

The narrower sample of the 80 Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks is presented in Annex 7 together with information about the coverage of the above listed selection criteria.

3.3.1 Interviews and other self-reflective activities

In the core of the qualitative research element of the study lay researchers' direct interaction with key people from the selected 80 consortia, including coordinators, partners, and beneficiaries, in the context of semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and other self-reflective activities. Through these, the research team sought to gain deeper and sharper views of the research areas, focusing on these people's opinions and attitudes in relation to all aspects identified in the research questions of the study. Thus through the interviews the team examined and assessed the projects and networks across the impact assessment parameters and criteria, going considerably beyond the surface information initially gathered through the online questionnaire, the analysis of the websites and, if available, the project evaluation.

A set of guidelines, an indicative interview schedule, and a template for the experts to report back centrally about the discussions conducted, were developed. These are presented in Annex 8. Intensive co-design and discussion of these instruments within the team before the start of the interaction with informants ensured integrity and comparability of the gathered evidence. The interaction with the interviews and informants was conducted via various media and at various locations (on the phone, via e-mail, but also face-to-face).

Overall, in the whole of the field work more than 100 interviews and discussions were conducted. Next to the individual interviews, a limited number of participatory group activities were also conducted, in which participants were encouraged to get involved in self-reflection and exchange of views and experiences relating to Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks, aiming at richer explanations and deeper probing of aspects emerging as areas of special interest or ambiguity. Such activities were set up both at a distance (online) as well as face-to-face, in the latter case exploiting opportunities of meetings, conferences, etc.

The evidence collected through the interviews and other self-reflective activities informs the discussion of the findings of the study in Chapter 4, integrated with the insights gained through other sources.

3.3.2 In-depth case studies

Following an interim synthesis of all evidence gathered from all preceding stages of the study, the research team carefully selected interesting cases which exemplify the trends, challenges and opportunities that had emerged as findings from the research. The research selected 28 consortia (about 20% of all projects), distributed in 22 Multilateral Projects and 6 Multilateral Networks. In the case studies, the researchers

investigated the characteristics, activities and achievements (or problems) of consortia, delving further into areas that needed clarification or deeper insights. To gather the extra evidence, researchers conducted extra interviews and group discussions, field visits, deeper documentary analysis of the proposals, existing project reports and evaluations of the projects and networks, as well as a deeper examination of the tangible results produced.

The case studies are presented in Chapter 6 of this report. They have been developed in a structured, reader-friendly way so as to facilitate their independent publication by the European Commission with few adjustments, if appropriate.

3.3.3 Synthesis of all results and recommendations

All evidence and information collected through the various levels of the study was brought together and analysed in preparation for the drafting of the present Final Report. In the synthesis of findings, the research team comprehensively covered all aspects of the impact study. The synthesis of the study results is presented in Chapters 4-6 of this report.

Based on these results and findings, the research team produced a set of concrete recommendations to the European Commission and other stakeholders on possible improvements to Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks, with a special focus on improving the way in which the actions could be designed, managed and followed-up under the future European education programme. The recommendations are presented in Chapter 7 of this report.

4 The findings of the study

This Chapter of the Final Report provides a detailed presentation and discussion of the main findings of the study. All evidence and information collected through the various parts of the research are integrated here into a single discussion structured along the lines of the focus areas of this study. This includes the analysis of:

- The main characteristics of Comenius Centralised Actions, including the involvement of different types of organisations, and the type of results typically produced;
- the impact of Comenius Centralised Actions on individuals, organisations, and wider systems;
- the European dimension of Comenius Centralised Actions;
- enablers and obstacles to the successful implementation of Comenius Centralised Actions.

The discussion of findings in this chapter aims to cover the whole range of issues which emerged through the study, in a practical overview. To this end, the discussion is enriched with selected references to various parts of the data and information gathered, including interpretations of quantitative data from the questionnaire, selected quotations of statements made by respondents and interviewees, and more generally a synthesis of information from all other documentary evidence (project and network websites, public parts of the final reports, etc.). The Annexes provide fuller details of the data and information analysed.

4.1 A sketch of Centralised Actions: who is involved and what is produced

As a background for the discussion of the impact and European dimension of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks, it is useful to observe who is involved in them (which countries and types of organisations), and what types of outcomes they produce. The study looked into these characteristics of the sampled Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks. A discussion of the relevant findings is presented in the following sections.

4.1.1 Countries represented

Participation in the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP), and therefore in Comenius Centralised Actions, is open to partners from a large number of countries across Europe, including the EU Member States, some of the Candidate Countries, as well as the EEA/EFTA Countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland). As a minimum, a Multilateral Project needs to involve at least three partners from at least three countries participating in LLP, while a Multilateral Network has to involve at least six partners from at least six participating countries. In reality, these minimums are rarely the case and the consortia are larger. A central role in each consortium is played by the coordinating partner (coordinator).

An analysis of the representation of the different countries per consortium member role in the overall sample of 145 projects and networks can be found in Table 1. It is worth noting that about one quarter of the coordinators (24.8%) were based in Germany, and another 15.2% were based in Italy. In addition, approximately three quarters of all 145 coordinators came from eight European countries; in order of frequency: Germany, Italy, Belgium, UK, Greece, France, Austria, and Netherlands.

On the other hand, with regard to all 1247 organisations involved in the targeted projects and networks as coordinators *or* partners, about 11% of them were based in Germany, and about 8% were based in Italy. Approximately three quarters of them come from fifteen European countries; in order of frequency: Germany, Italy, Spain, UK, Austria, Poland, Romania, Greece, Hungary, Sweden, Czech Republic, Netherlands, Finland, Belgium, and Denmark.

	Coordinators	Partners	Coordinators and Partners
Austria	4.8%	5.5%	5.4%
Belgium	9.0%	3.3%	4.0%
Bulgaria	0.7%	2.5%	2.2%
Cyprus	1.4%	1.8%	1.7%
Czech Republic	2.1%	3.7%	3.5%
Denmark	0.7%	3.3%	2.9%
Estonia	0.0%	1.6%	1.4%
Finland	0.7%	3.5%	3.1%
France	4.8%	2.8%	3.0%
Germany	24.8%	9.5%	11.4%
Greece	5.5%	4.6%	4.8%
Hungary	0.7%	3.8%	3.4%
Iceland	0.0%	0.3%	.3%
Ireland	0.7%	1.3%	1.2%
Italy	15.2%	7.3%	8.3%
Latvia	0.7%	1.3%	1.2%
Lithuania	0.0%	1.3%	1.1%
Luxembourg	0.7%	0.1%	.2%
Malta	0.0%	0.5%	.4%
Netherlands	4.1%	3.5%	3.5%
Norway	2.1%	1.8%	1.8%
Poland	0.7%	5.2%	4.7%
Portugal	2.8%	2.8%	2.8%
Romania	2.1%	4.9%	4.6%
Slovakia	0.0%	2.4%	2.1%
Slovenia	0.0%	2.4%	2.1%
Spain	2.8%	6.6%	6.1%
Sweden	2.8%	3.7%	3.5%
Turkey	2.1%	2.9%	2.8%
UK	8.3%	6.1%	6.4%
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 1: Representation of countries in the overall sample of 145 projects and networks

Countries seem to cluster in groups in relation to the frequency of their representation in the overall sample of the targeted projects and networks through coordinators or partners:

Germany, Italy and the UK are frequently encountered in the overall sample both as coordinators and as partners, while Belgium is more frequent as a coordinator rather than as a partner. Austria and Spain frequently appear as partners, but less frequently as coordinators.

Greece, France, Netherlands, Sweden and Portugal, on the other hand, tend to produce coordinators and partners more or less with comparable frequency. Coordinators are rarely based in Romania and Poland, while partners based in the same countries are frequent. A similar but less strong difference seems to exist in the Czech Republic, Turkey, Hungary, Finland, Denmark, and Bulgaria. Slovenia seems to be represented quite often as partners, while no coordinator of the sampled projects and networks is based there. The rest of the countries are rare in the overall sample.

Further insights into the representation of countries and specific organisations in the sample of the 145 Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks were gained through visualisation techniques used by the research team. Those produced dynamic visual representations which allowed exploration of the patterns of networking and links observed in the overall sample (cf. Figure 5; see Annex 3).

Figure 5: A visualisation of the intensity of representation of the different countries in the Comenius projects and networks. The big country boxes represent the number of co-ordinators and partners that each country has in the projects and networks. The smaller boxes within the country boxes represent the different consortia and their size. Within some consortia, smaller subdivisions represent the number of partners from the same country, thus revealing country clusters within a given project or network. The latter indicates that Comenius projects and networks offer opportunities for collaboration, exchange and transfer of knowledge not only across countries, but also within countries.

4.1.2 Involvement of different types of organisations

The research yielded insights into the involvement of the different types of organisations and institutions in Comenius Multilateral Project and Multilateral Network activities, and the typical structure of the Comenius consortia. Overall in the various stages, a special focus was placed on questions such as whether the usual structure of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks is suitable for their objectives, how schools are involved in these structures, and whether their interests are taken into account. The present section sets the background for the relevant discussion, which is taken further into the rest of the part of the Final Report on findings, case studies and recommendations.

Data from all parts of the study clearly indicated that the consortia of the studied Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks were characterised by the predominance of universities and research centres and the under-representation of schools. Characteristically, despite the very good penetration of the online survey into the sampled consortia, only about 18% of the respondents were teachers or other school staff, while university staff, researchers and teacher trainers accounted for more than 70% of the responses. Similarly, among the coordinators who responded to

the 'project facts' questionnaire only about 5% were from schools, while 50% were universities and research centres, and another approximately 15% were teacher training institutions. In addition, consistent with other parts of the data, in-service teacher training seemed to have a stronger hold in Comenius consortia than initial teacher training.

These findings were overall in contrast with the wide-spread recognition by the majority of informants that it is important for schools to be actively involved in the projects and networks, as the Comenius programme is by definition an initiative devoted to school education and the participation of its beneficiaries in the development of solutions for schools is desirable. In reality, however, the studied Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks seemed to involve fewer schools *per se*, and more institutions which work *for* schools or *with* schools in mind. Even among the tertiary education institutions involved, the representation of those describing themselves as teacher training institutions appeared to be less than could be expected given the strong focus of the Actions, especially Multilateral Projects, on teacher training. In many cases it was reported that schools and teachers associations were involved in projects as a test bed for implementation, but not as partners in the consortium. Of course, on the other hand, there were also quite a few good examples of strong representation and active involvement of beneficiaries in some project and network consortia.

This lack of balance in the structure of consortia was explained by informants through several interesting points, most of which are summarised in the subsequent section of the report on obstacles and enablers (section 4.4). It is worth mentioning here that, as the interviews revealed, project and network proposals very often are the results of initiatives of universities and research institutions. Schools are included in the applications if they happen to be known to the promoter, or even to the grant-writing agent that may have taken up the preparation of the proposal.

Further, according to some interviewees, reasons for the limited participation of schools often relate to a difficulty in defining the role of schools and managing their continuous involvement during the project lifecycle. While work in pilot schools in the development and implementation phases is considered very valuable, continuous cooperation is reported as 'sometimes difficult' for reasons relating to school management, local/regional administrative and training arrangements, the replacement of practitioners involved with new colleagues during the project, lack of expertise in the project theme within the school, etc. Low or non-existing financial and managerial capacity in the school, as well as in the teacher association, was also reported as an important barrier.

The involvement of umbrella organisations or networks of schools was recognised by many informants as a response to this challenge. Larger regional or national organizations can provide strong support for smaller organizations such as schools and teacher associations, while they can also ensure a much wider and more effective dissemination of project outcomes. Higher education institutions with strong teacher training departments usually have excellent links with both local schools and national teacher organisations, which enables them to embed processes developed through European projects more effectively. Indeed, in some cases, higher education and teacher training institutions have managed to act as catalysts in their vicinity helping to form partnerships and project consortia including schools. In those cases, a grant promoting group based at a publicly funded institution distributes calls, helps authoring applications, and supports the project management of implemented projects. A good example for such a 'bottom-up' organisation comes from the DICE project (Key ID: 107). In that case, an 'umbrella organisation', the Hungarian KAVA

Cultural Network, took the lead as it was well-connected both to schools and training institutions. With an expertise in managing international projects, KAVA was able to unite the benefits of authenticity (educational experiences in the area) with management skills (a competence area that state-powered, centrally regulated schools often lack in Hungary).

Finally, despite any criticism of the domination of the consortia by higher education institutions, the contribution of universities was generally acknowledged as very significant, as it can secure important quality aspects for the projects and networks, such as content development or inclusion of the project outcomes in the initial training curriculum. Nevertheless, this should be combined with a more intensive and sustainable collaboration with, and direct involvement of, schools and teacher training centres.

In the interviews and discussions some points have surfaced as to how the involvement of practitioners of school education could be supported and enhanced in Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks. Guidance and support at the national level was considered as crucial with this respect. Many questionnaire respondents and interviewees underlined the need for a more active role of the National Agencies in helping schools reach the 'distant' world of Centralised Actions. At the central European level, it was suggested that project applications and reports could more clearly require specific information, evidence of, and concrete feedback from, the actual involvement of schools in the work, probably linked to the capacity of the Action for the multiplication of its effect.

4.1.3 The results of project and networks

The online survey, interviews and discussions with coordinators and partners helped the research team to establish a detailed picture of the results of each of the Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks examined. The relevant 'tangible results' were recorded, categorised and analysed according to the information structure defined for the content of the online inventory (see Chapter 6).

The outcomes of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks are characterised by considerable variety. In an attempt to organise the various types of outcomes, the following categorisation was devised by the study:

DESIGNS AND CONTENTS
Curriculum (or parts of)
Training course (or parts of)
Teaching methodology / pedagogical strategy
Teaching material (for the teacher)
Teaching material (for the student)
ANALYSES AND STUDIES
Analysis of training needs of a defined group of educational staff
Comparative analysis
Case study/-ies
Annual report on the state of innovation in an area of activity
Recommendations
Framework for monitoring, evaluation, quality control of project work
Framework for mobility activities / practical training periods
EVENTS
Comenius teacher/staff training event
Training of project co-ordinators
Network thematic event (working group meeting, seminar, conference etc.)

Dissemination event (general)
ICT
ICT facilitating or enabling training
ICT facilitating or enabling information exchange and dissemination
ICT facilitating or enabling training AND information exchange and dissemination
OTHER

In addition, the recorded outcomes of projects and networks were annotated with information regarding the target groups and school levels they address, as well as the kind of professional development they may be related to (initial training vs. in-service training).

The discussion of the findings in the subsequent sections of this chapter (Chapter 4), and mainly the case studies in Chapter 5 provide a very rich picture of the wealth of outcomes of the Comenius projects and networks studied. To illustrate this variety and added value brought, some examples are mentioned here.

The TISSNTE project ('Teacher Induction: Supporting the Supporters of Novice Teachers in Europe'; Key ID: 51) has produced a 'Suitcase of Support', which has been categorised under 'DESIGNS AND CONTENTS > Teaching methodology / pedagogical strategy'. This is a virtual library of support material for those mentoring novice teachers, including user manual, needs analysis questionnaires, generic handbook and intensive course handbook. The target groups it addresses are teachers / other school staff and their trainers, teacher students, and educational policy makers. It relates mainly to secondary school education, as well as to both initial training and in-service training of teachers or other educational staff.

The TACCLE project ('Teachers' Aids on Creating Content for Learning Environments' Key ID: 90) has delivered the 'TACCLE Handbooks', which have been categorised under 'DESIGNS AND CONTENTS > Training course (or parts of) and guidelines'. The TACCLE handbooks have been meant 'by teachers for teachers', aiming to be usable by people who are not familiar with using computer and multimedia technologies and who need to use ICT on a daily basis. The target groups addressed are teachers and teacher trainers. The school levels involved are primary and secondary school education, and the type of professional development is in-service training of teachers.

The TELLP project ('Technologically-Enhanced Language Learning Pedagogy'; Key ID: 91) has produced 'Online training materials', which have been categorised under 'DESIGNS AND CONTENTS > Teaching material (for the teacher) AND Teaching material (for the student)'. These are online training materials for teachers & trainees concerned with delivering foreign language teaching using new technologies. As target groups are considered teachers, teacher trainers and teacher students. The outcome relates to all levels of schooling, and to both initial and in-service teacher training.

The CLIL across Contexts project ('CLIL across Contexts - A scaffolding framework for CLIL teacher education) has produced the document entitled 'Teacher Education for CLIL across Contexts. From Scaffolding Framework to Teacher Portfolio for Content and Language Integrated Learning'. This has been recorded by the study under 'ANALYSES AND STUDIES > Analysis of training needs of a defined group of educational staff'. It is a central outcome of the project, which proposed a model for teacher education based on classroom observation and relevant research in selected areas of bilingual education and learning in general. The target groups addressed include teachers, teacher trainers, and teacher students. School levels involved

include secondary school education, and type of professional development both initial and in-service training.

The same project (CLIL across Contexts) also delivered 'Recommendations to the Luxembourgian Minister of Education', which were recorded as 'ANALYSES AND STUDIES > Recommendations'. This outcome refers to the fact that the project results have been directly and personally delivered to the Minister of Education in Luxembourg. These recommendations have been taken into account in the current reforms at national level, while the projects results have also been published in a national official document.

The BEAGLE project ('Biodiversity Education & Awareness to Grow a Living Environment'; Key ID: 100) has produced the 'Online Beagle Biodiversity Observation Project', which has been recorded under 'ICT > ICT facilitating or enabling information exchange and dissemination'. This involves an online tree monitoring project, supported by an identification key and a comprehensive teaching guide. The monitoring, with over 400 hits from 15 countries is then carried out via an extremely attractive interactive website which is planned to continue for the next 5 years. The target groups addressed include teachers and school pupils of both primary and secondary education.

The Wimi network ('Wide Minds – the human face of digital learning; Key ID: 97) has provided the 'Regional Coordinating Centres', an outcome which is categorised in the 'OTHER' category. Establishing 13 Regional Coordinating Centres (RCCs) in different parts of Europe within the umbrella of the Wide Minds network not only brings together normally loosely connected organizations but also creates on-going forums for future collaboration. This encourages both the development of quality education through promoting certain ICT tools and also the learning of foreign languages from a very young age. The target groups addressed by this outcome include: Teachers / other school staff; Trainers of teachers / other school staff; Teacher students; School pupils; Educational policy makers; and Other school community agents (e.g. parents). The school level involved is primary school education, and the type of professional development is in-service training.

As far as the frequency of the different types of outcomes is concerned, overall the category of 'Designs and Contents' appeared to be the most prominent, accounting for about 41% of the outcomes recorded. It is followed by 'Analyses and Studies' with approximately 27%. 'Events' correspond to about 17% of the recorded outcomes, while 'ICT' is attributed to approximately 7% of the recorded outcomes (Figure 6).

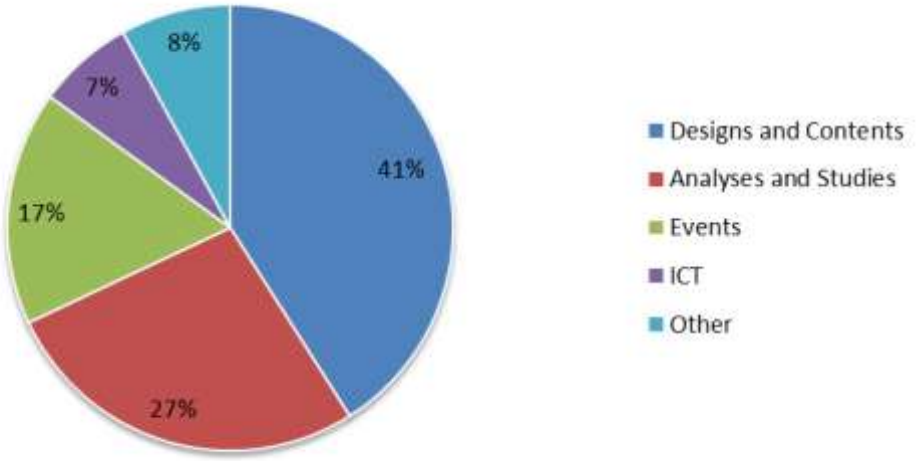


Figure 6: Categories of type of project outcome recorded

Within and across these categories, a clear focus among project outcomes on educational staff's professional development and teaching practice can be observed. In the cluster of the first five most frequent project outcomes, we find 'Teaching material (for the teacher)' (15% of all recorded outcomes), 'Training course (or parts of)' (12%), 'Teaching methodology / pedagogical strategy' (9.8%) and 'Comenius teacher/staff training event' (8.3%). These four items together reach about 45% of all recorded outcomes. They also include the most frequent item in the category of 'Events' ('Comenius teacher/staff training event', 8.3%). Interestingly, the number of these training events is comparable to the total of the recorded dissemination and networking activities together, as it almost reaches the total number of 'Dissemination events' and 'Network thematic events' recorded (5.3% and 3.8% respectively).

However, this emphasis on training does not include 'Frameworks for mobility activities / practical training periods', none of which was recorded. Overall, the data gathered through the various strands of the study showed that Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks have not had a strong focus on contributing towards the development of frameworks for the mobility of student teachers, teachers and other staff, neither on the recognition of such activities at the European level.

The recorded project outcomes also show a very low level of output directly addressing the students. As opposed to the predominance of 'Teaching material for the teacher' (15%) discussed above, 'Teaching material for the student' appears only twice, corresponding to just 1.5% of all recorded outcomes (Figure 7).

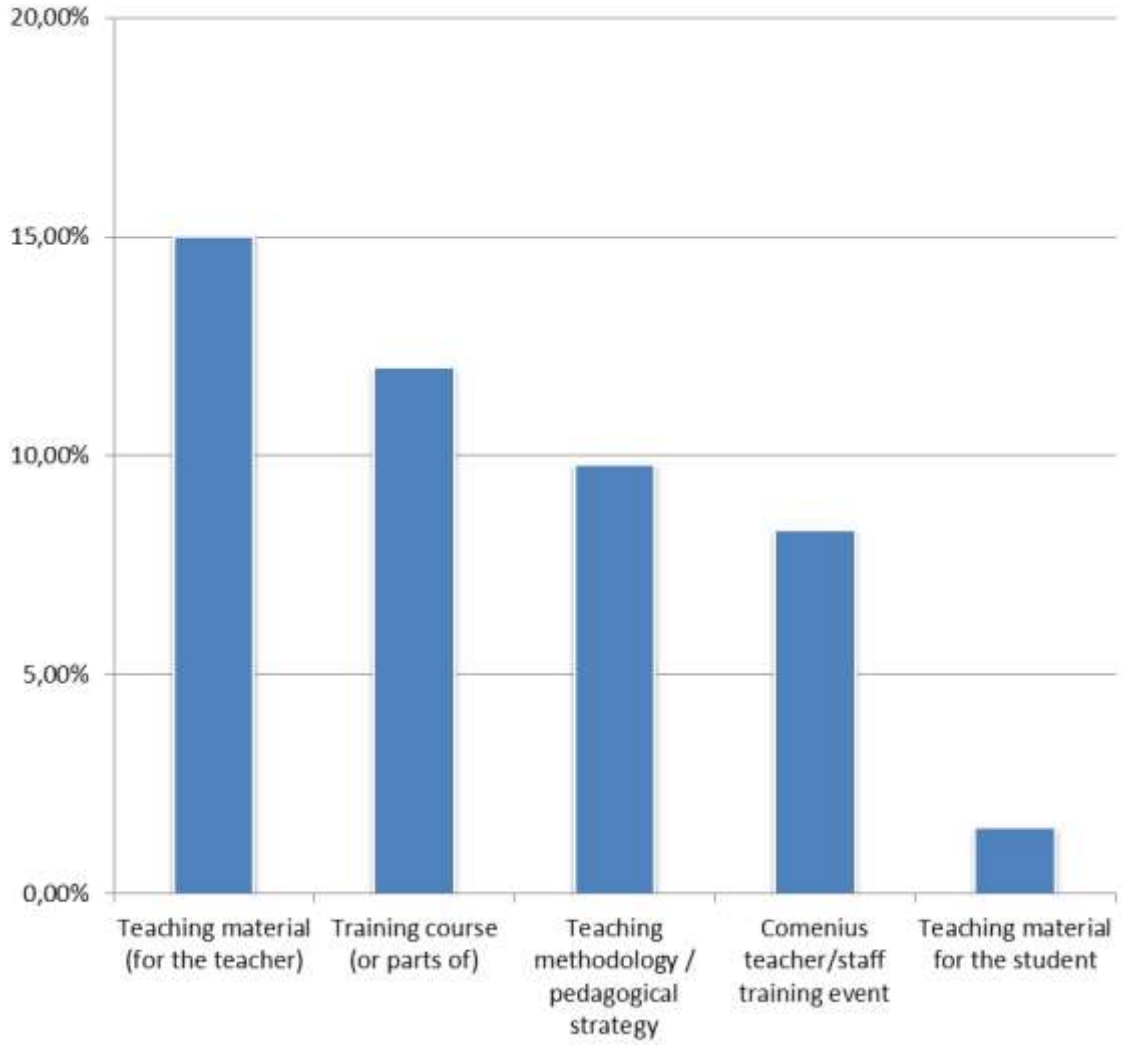


Figure 7: Frequency of some types of outcomes within all recorded outcomes

It should also be noted that in the second most frequent category of project outcomes, that of 'Analyses and Studies', the item of 'Comparative analysis' is considerably more frequent than the other analyses and studies listed, corresponding to 8.3% of all recorded outcomes. It is followed at some distance by 'Analyses of training needs of a defined group of educational staff' and 'Recommendations' (corresponding to 5.3% of all recorded each).

The coordinators who recorded project outcomes indicated also the various target groups mainly addressed by those outcomes (multiple selections were possible). The relevant data confirm the strong emphasis on addressing teachers and teacher trainers (about 93% and 83% of all recorded outcomes, respectively), as opposed to a much less strong focus on students (about 17%). What is more, when asked to indicate the type of training directly addressed by the outcomes, the vast majority of outcomes (about 80%) have been marked as relevant to in-service training of teachers or other educational staff, while only about half of all outcomes (53%) have been recorded as directly addressing initial training (multiple selections were possible). Interestingly, also, coordinators consider that 44% of all recorded outcomes have educational policy makers as one of their target groups, while only few outcomes 11.8%) address other school community agents, such as parents (Figure 8).

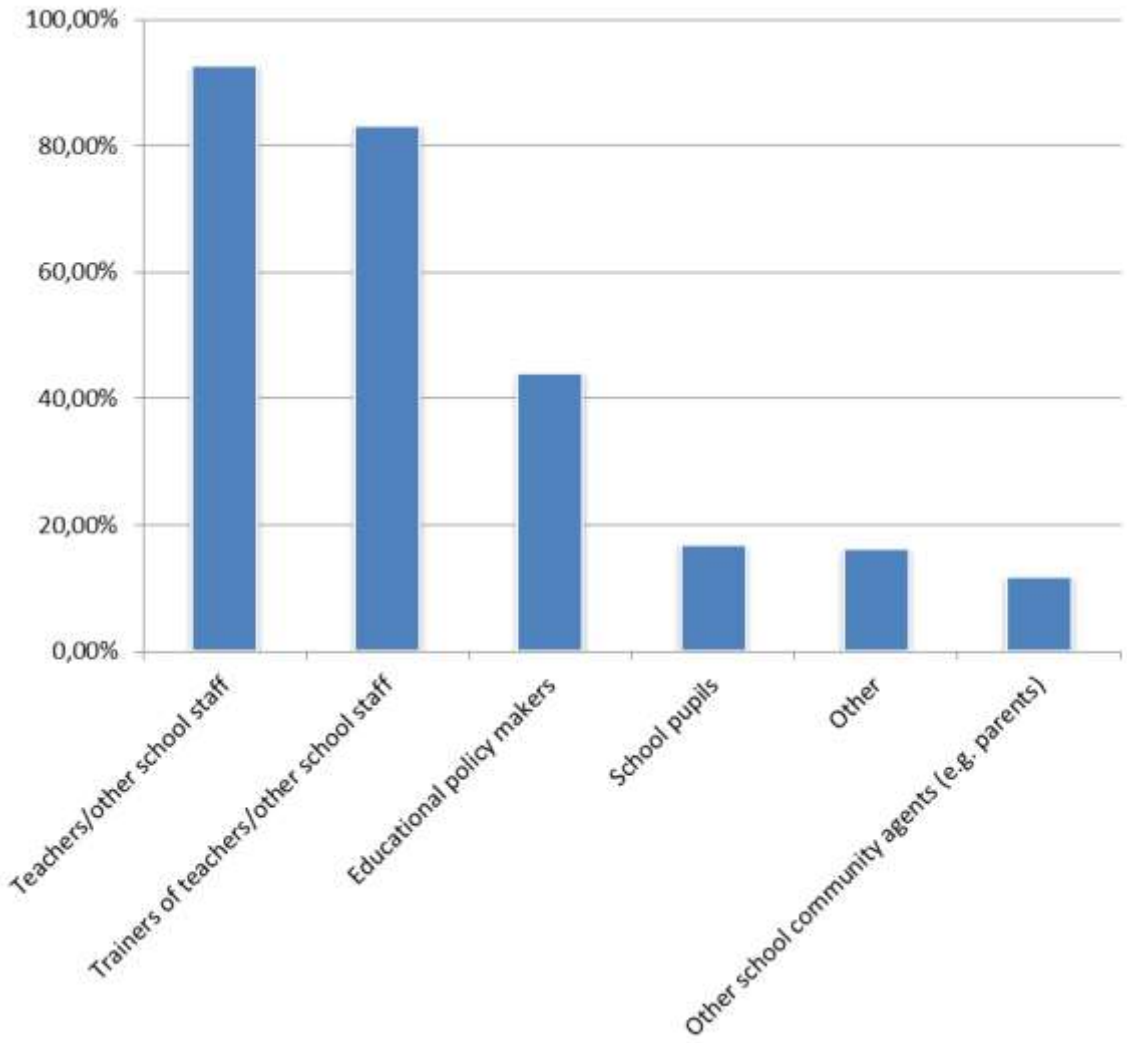


Figure 8: Target groups mainly addressed by the recorded project outcomes (multiple selections possible; percentages within all recorded outcomes)

The recorded project outcomes seem to focus predominantly on secondary education, and to some considerable extent on primary education. About three quarters of the recorded results (75.7%) have been characterised by coordinators as directly addressing secondary school education, while the relevant percentages are 56.6% for primary education, and only 15.4% for pre-school education. One quarter of the recorded findings address other levels of school education, such as post-secondary education (Figure 9).

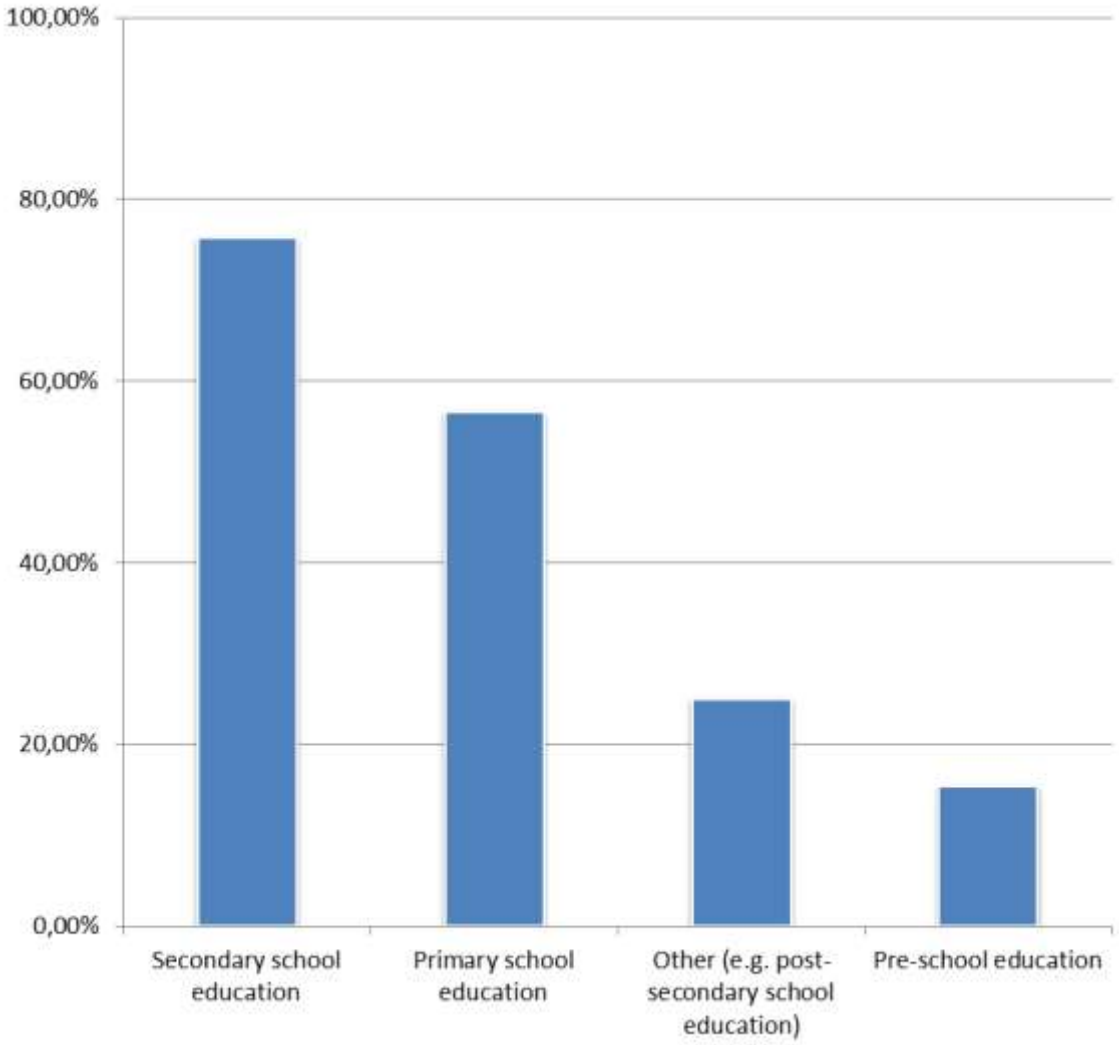


Figure 9: Level of school education directly addressed by the recorded project outcomes (multiple selections possible; percentages within all recorded outcomes)

Finally, comparisons between Comenius Multilateral Project and Comenius Multilateral Networks confirmed that, expectedly, projects tend to be more focused on delivering outcomes falling under the category of 'Designs and Contents' (e.g. curricula, training courses, materials, etc.), as well as training needs analyses and training events. Networks are relatively more prolific in terms of delivering comparative analyses, reports, thematic events, and recommendations.

4.2 Analysis of the impact of Comenius Centralised Actions

'Impact' constituted the central concept of the study. All work carried out aimed at revealing a wide array of aspects of the impact of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks on individuals, organisations, and the wider systems in which they operate. The research gathered very rich evidence about the various aspects of this impact as defined in the conceptual framework of the study. This section provides an overview of the most salient findings about the impact of the Centralised Actions. This is subsequently complemented by further discussion on the European dimension, and the enablers and obstacles to the successful implementation of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks.

4.2.1 Impact on the individual

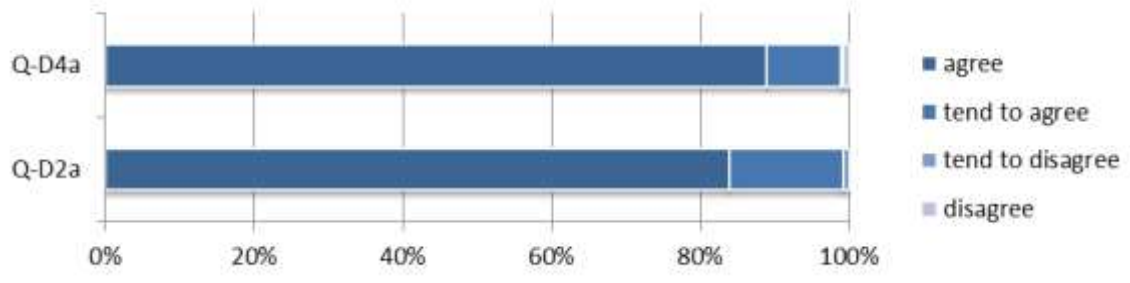
In general, coordinators, partners, and education practitioners were enthusiastic about their active involvement in Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks and more generally in European projects, despite several obstacles which are discussed further below, in the relevant section of this report (section 4.4).

Being involved in a Comenius Centralised Action is reported to be a very positive experience in terms of both personal and professional development for those involved, especially teachers. As it was put by an informant:

> *'Participation in EU projects is a 'life style' - it penetrates both private and public activities'.*

Characteristically, among the 90 statements that were to be answered on the 'agreement scale' in the online questionnaire, the following statements were among the top 5 in terms of agreement (Figure 10):

> D4.a: *'Overall, your involvement in the Action(s) has had added value for you as a person. You would recommend this to a friend / colleague'* (agree: 88.2%; tend to agree: 10.5%; tend to disagree: 0.0%; disagree 1.3%)
>
> D2.a: *'Overall, based on your experience from the Action(s), you would say that they have had a positive and lasting impact on you / other individuals (those directly involved)'* (agree: 84.4%; tend to agree: 15.2%; tend to disagree: 0.4%; disagree 0.0%)

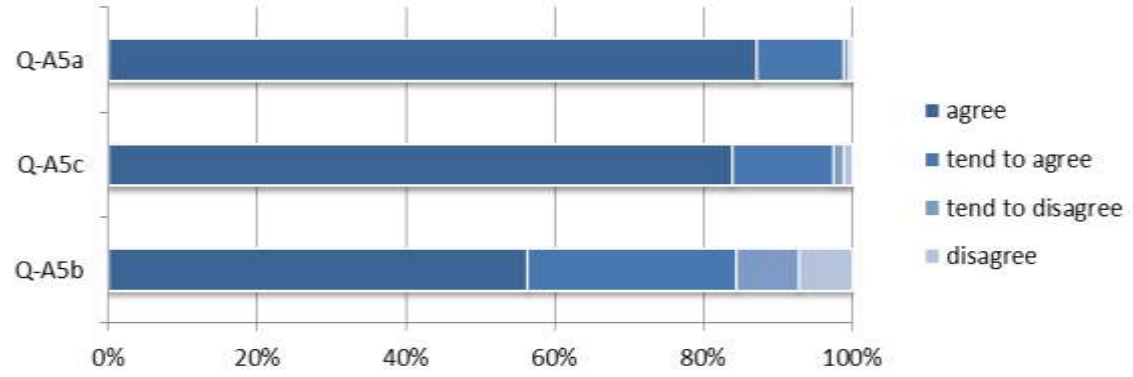


Q-D4a: 'Overall, your involvement in the Action(s) has had added value for you as a person. You would recommend this to a friend / colleague'
Q-D2a: 'Overall, based on your experience from the Action(s), you would say that they have had a positive and lasting impact on you / other individuals (those directly involved)'

Figure 10: Involvement in Comenius Centralised Actions as a very positive experience; two of the statements most agreed on by respondents

4.2.1.1 Impact on personal and professional development

One of the strongest messages coming from the field is that involvement in Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks has had a very positive effect on the personal and professional development of those involved. This, for example is clearly evident in responses to the online questionnaire presented in Figure 11.

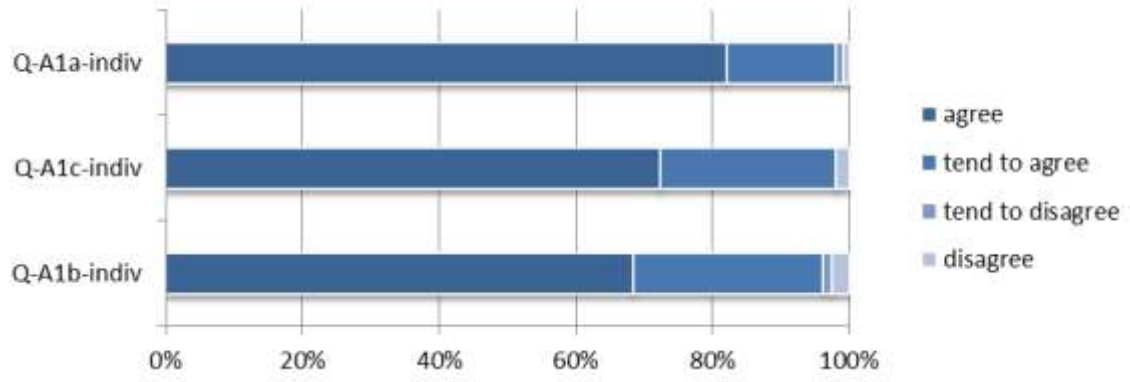


Q-A5a: 'Your involvement in the Action(s) has had a positive effect on your professional development, overall (cf. your teaching, management, and/or other professional skills and knowledge)'
Q-A5c: 'Your involvement in the Action(s) has had a positive effect on your personal development, overall (cf. qualities such as critical thinking and inquiry, flexibility and adaptability, openness and tolerance, etc.)'
Q-A5b: 'Your involvement in the Action(s) has had a positive effect on your career development, either within the same institution or in connection to any future job applications'

Figure 11: Positive effect of involvement in Comenius Centralised Actions on personal development, professional development and career development, as reported by questionnaire respondents

At the level of personal development, both the questionnaire responses and the interviews revealed a wide recognition that Comenius has had a strong impact on individuals involved. Among the things most frequently mentioned as personal gains through the participation in Comenius Multilateral Projects and Networks is the opportunity these Actions offer for broadening one's cultural experiences and sharing European values, through real intercultural communication while meeting and collaborating with colleagues of different cultural backgrounds. This is further discussed in the section on the European dimension of Comenius Centralised Actions, further below (section 4.3).

Individuals also recognised a strong impact of their Comenius experience on their professional life. They reported that they have got acquainted with new educational materials and methodologies, and, importantly, with their colleagues in Europe. Respondents emphasised particularly the positive effect of being able to learn about the realities of teaching and schools in other countries, and discuss professional issues with peers who work in different educational systems and have different theoretical backgrounds. As a result, those involved in Comenius projects and networks readily recognise a positive effect on their teaching methods and practices as well as the teaching and/or teacher training materials they use (Figure 12).



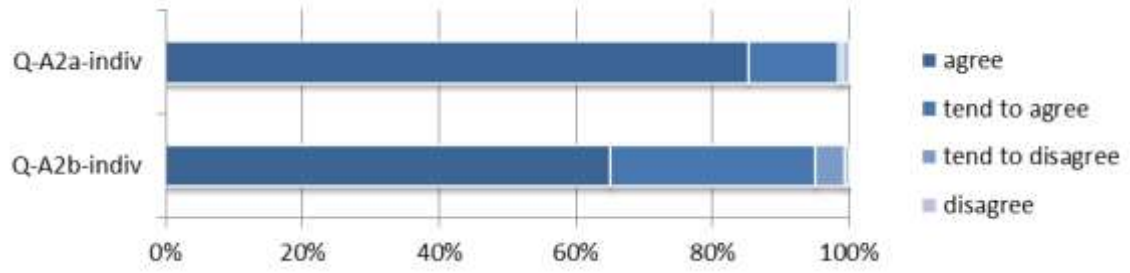
Impact of the Action(s) on individuals (e.g. those who participated in the activities):
Q-A1a-indiv: Overall, you would say that your involvement in the Action(s) has had a positive effect on your usual teaching methods and practices
Q-A1c-indiv: Overall, you would say that your involvement in the Action(s) has had a positive effect on the teacher training materials you use
Q-A1b-indiv: Overall, you would say that your involvement in the Action(s) has had a positive effect on the teaching materials you use at school

Figure 12: Positive effect of involvement in Comenius Centralised Actions on teaching methods and practices, teacher training materials and school teaching materials, as reported by questionnaire respondents

In Figure 12 above it can be seen that respondents are relatively more reluctant to recognise a positive effect on the teaching materials used at school in comparison to the impact of Comenius on their usual teaching methods and practices, and the teacher training materials they use. This difference may reflect a known relative tendency of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks towards teacher training rather than teaching materials development – although the latter is indeed within the scope of realised activities. In any case, it is important that respondents clearly indicate that in their usual everyday practice they are applying knowledge and experiences that they have gained through their involvement in the projects and networks. Somewhat less strongly, albeit very clearly, they also report that the outcomes of the Comenius projects and networks can practically be applied without major difficulties in their usual everyday practice (Figure 13). A comparison between the responses from Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks reveals a strong difference in the recognition of the effect of people's involvement on their usual teaching methods and practices. Respondents with experiences from projects agree significantly stronger on the relevant statement (86% agree, 12.9% tend to agree) than respondents from networks (68.1% agree, 27.7% tend to agree). A similar tendency is also observed for the question referring to a positive effect on the teaching materials used at school (projects: 72.6% agree, 26.2% tend to agree; networks: 61.9% agree and 28.6% tend to agree), as well as in relation to the teacher training materials used (projects: 78.5% agree, 21.5% tend to agree; networks: 61.2% agree, 30.6% tend to agree). This is consistent with the stronger emphasis of Comenius Multilateral Projects on designing concrete solutions to be used in teaching practice, while Comenius Multilateral Networks are more oriented towards the exchange of experiences and practices in a wider context.

The opportunities offered for increased mobility of staff is one aspect of Comenius that appears to be highly valued in the context of professional life. This is often appreciated by respondents as an opportunity for authentic professional development. As an informant has put it:

'the best in-service training imaginable: you learn about methods that actually work in other countries first hand, from practitioners - and of course you also learn from those that fail'

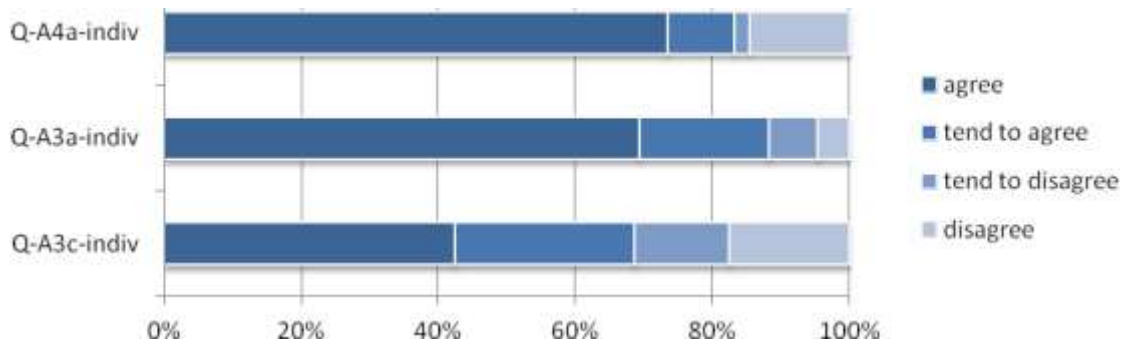


Impact of the Action(s) on individuals (e.g. those who participated in the activities):
Q-A2a-indiv: In your usual everyday practice you are applying knowledge and experiences that you have gained through your involvement in the Action(s)
Q-A2b-indiv: In your usual everyday practice, the outcomes (e.g. methods, materials, curricula etc.) of the Action(s) can practically be applied without major difficulties

Figure 13: Application of knowledge and experiences gained through Comenius Centralised Actions, and of their outcomes, in everyday practice, as reported by questionnaire respondents

As can be seen in Figure 14, a large majority of questionnaire respondents agree that thanks to their involvement in the Comenius projects and networks they have had the chance to participate in European training (e.g. Comenius seminars, etc.). In addition, they report that this involvement has also increased their mobility in Europe beyond the activities foreseen by the Comenius project or network in which they have participated, i.e. it has increased the chances that they will travel in Europe for professional reasons. This effect is clearly stronger for consortium coordinators and partners than for beneficiaries of the projects and networks (for coordinators and partners the relevant responses were very similar: about 73% agree and 15.2% tend to agree; while for beneficiaries: 54.4% agree, 32.4% tend to agree). In addition, increased mobility in Europe seems to have a stronger connection with networks than with projects. Respondents involved in networks clearly agree more strongly with the relevant statement than respondents with experience from projects only (projects: 66.1% agree, 22.9% tend to agree; networks: 78.8% agree, 4.5% tend to agree).

Nevertheless, it should also be noted that the relevant statements in the online questionnaire are not among those attracting the highest levels of agreement. While the ten most agreed statements overall have received more than 97% 'agree' and 'tend to agree' responses, the corresponding percentage for question A4a is 83%. This ranks this question about 70th in the overall list of most agreed statements (out of 90 statements overall). Thus, it could be inferred that despite the strong links of Comenius projects and networks with training and professional mobility, and despite respondents' overall positive appreciation of the impact on people's professional development, there seems to be space for improvement with respect to the extent that Comenius training is utilised and promoted.

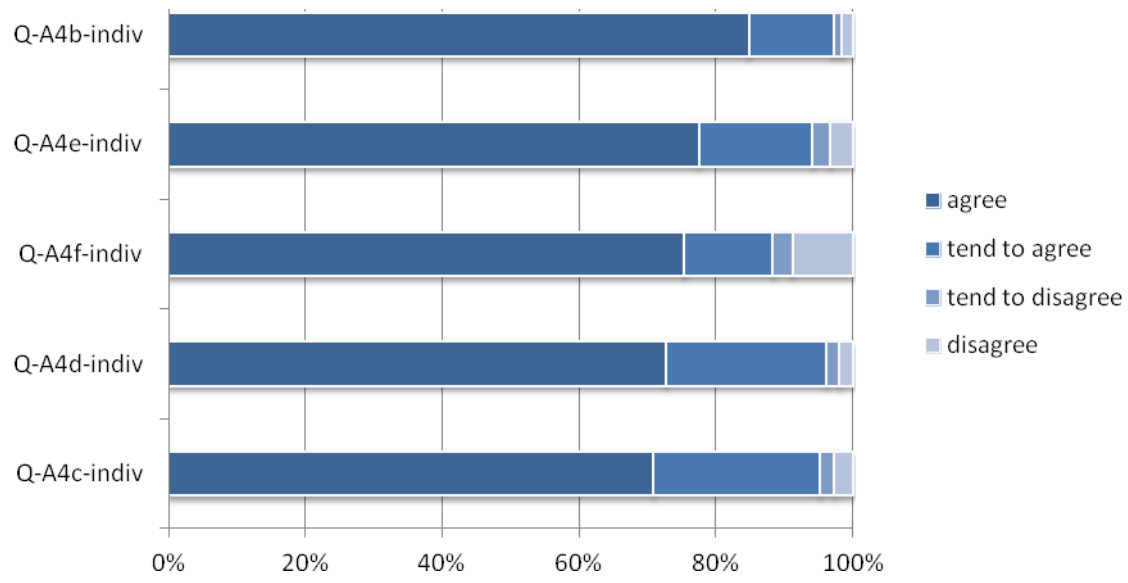


Impact of the Action(s) on individuals (e.g. those who participated in the activities):
Q-A4a-indiv: Thanks to your involvement in the Action(s) you have had the chance to participate in European training (e.g. Comenius seminars, summer/winter schools etc.)
Q-A3a-indiv: Your involvement in the Action(s) has increased your mobility in Europe beyond the activities foreseen by the Action(s) (e.g. it is now more possible than before to travel in Europe for professional reasons, such as attending meetings, conferences, seminars, etc.)
Q-A3c-indiv: Your involvement in the Action(s) has increased your use of EU tools such as the Europass CV

Figure 14: Effect of involvement in Comenius Centralised Actions on European training opportunities and mobility, as reported by questionnaire respondents

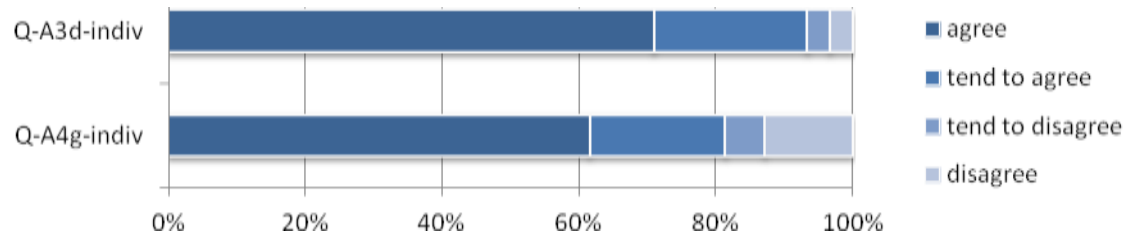
On the other hand, Figure 14 reveals one further area related to professional development and mobility in relation to which questionnaire respondents are less ready to recognise a positive impact. As the response to question A3c shows, those who feel that their involvement in the Comenius projects and networks has increased their use of EU tools such as the Europass CV, are considerably less than those acknowledging a positive impact on professional development and mobility more generally. This can be seen as an example of 'missed opportunity' for Europe to promote the use of an otherwise widely-promoted professional tool for Europeans (Europass CV format) in the context of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks, thus possibly missing out on potential for further personal and institutional impact and European value (e.g. in connection with individuals' flexibility and mobility in Europe).

Beside opportunities for training, involvement in Comenius Multilateral Projects and Networks reportedly offers excellent opportunities for learning from others and gaining experiences linked to professional development. Figure 15 depicts responses to relevant statements in the online questionnaire. It is reported by large majorities of informants that thanks to their involvement in the Action(s): they have learned from others about innovation and best practice in their area of work; they feel less 'isolated' in their professional world ('part of a wider network'); they have got connected with different professional 'worlds' and cultures (e.g. the world of work, museums, the world of training/schools/ research, etc.); they have maintained contact and/or collaboration with others after the end of EU funding; and they have got involved in other projects and initiatives, too, outside Comenius (e.g. other EU programmes, local initiatives etc.). Among these statements, the one referring to learning from others about innovation and best practice in one's area of work receives markedly higher levels of agreement.



Impact of the Action(s) on individuals (e.g. those who participated in the activities):
Q-A4b-indiv: Thanks to your involvement in the Action(s) you have learned from others about innovation and best practice in your area of work
Q-A4e-indiv: Thanks to your involvement in the Action(s) you have maintained contact and/or collaboration with others after the end of EU funding
Q-A4f-indiv: Thanks to your involvement in the Action(s) you have got involved in other projects and initiatives, too, outside Comenius (e.g. other EU programmes, local initiatives etc.)
Q-A4d-indiv: Thanks to your involvement in the Action(s) you have got connected with different professional 'worlds' and cultures (e.g. the world of work, museums, the world of training/schools/ research etc.)
Q-A4c-indiv: Thanks to your involvement in the Action(s) you feel less 'isolated' in your professional world, part of a wider network

Figure 15: Effect of involvement in Comenius Centralised Actions on opportunities for learning from others and gaining experiences, as reported by questionnaire respondents



Impact of the Action(s) on individuals (e.g. those who participated in the activities):
Q-A3d-indiv: Your involvement in the Action(s) has increased your motivation to acquire new (or improve existing) language skills
Q-A4g-indiv: Thanks to your involvement in the Action(s) you have been able to start other projects on your own initiative (e.g. by inviting collaborators rather than being invited or motivated by others)

Figure 16: Effect of involvement in Comenius Centralised Actions on opportunities for learning from others and gaining experiences, as reported by questionnaire respondents

The online response has highlighted areas in which people involved in Comenius projects and networks acknowledge a positive impact of their Comenius experiences in terms of improving their skills. For instance, Figure 16 shows that more than 70% of all respondents agree (and an additional 22% 'tend to agree') that their motivation to acquire new (or improve existing) language skills has been increased. When asked about this effect in the wider organisational context beyond the project (question A3d-organ), beneficiaries tend to agree on the corresponding statement more strongly than coordinators and partners, thus highlighting a clear positive impact reaching beyond the consortia (coordinators: 46.6% agree, 37.5% tend to agree; partners: 61.2% agree, 31.4% tend to agree; beneficiaries: 66.7% agree, 22.2% tend to agree).

Similarly but less strongly, more than six out of ten respondents agree (and another 20% 'tend to agree') that thanks to their involvement in Comenius they have been able to start other projects on their own initiative (e.g. by inviting collaborators rather than being invited or motivated by others). In this case, coordinators tend to agree stronger on the relevant statement that the rest of the respondents (coordinators: 71.6% agree; partners: 54.9% agree; beneficiaries: 60.6% agree). However, it is important that beneficiaries outside the consortium, too, strongly recognise such a gain.

All these findings of the online survey have been confirmed and sometimes amplified during the interviews. Participation in European projects is often reported in the interviews as a strong motivator for individual members of staff to develop their skills. People in managerial posts in educational organizations especially seem to improve their profile in a wider national and international context, gaining a higher professional reputation which may lead to better chances for promotion, especially for young educators. Summarising several points made by interviewees about concrete gains in skills which they attribute to their experience from Comenius projects and networks, we could say that they reported gains in competence areas such as:

- language skills, including both foreign language use in authentic settings, as well as written and oral use of the mother tongue in formal settings;
- use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), among which especially cognitive tools and Web 2.0 applications for networking;
- interpersonal skills, especially in the areas of management and communication;
- intrapersonal skills, especially growth in professional goal setting and increased self-assurance and efficacy of planning actions;
- management skills, and particularly project related managerial skills transferred to classroom management; and
- planning skills and the use of planning and quality assurance tools – a set of skills also transferred to classroom activities.

Overall, the impact on staff's personal and professional development reported here shares common ground with the impact on teachers observed by the European Commission's parallel study on the impact of Comenius School Partnerships[11]. According to that study, the most significant impact of Comenius school partnerships on teachers is related to the improvement of knowledge of other educational systems and, social competences, computer skills, language skills, and other competences.

[11] 'Study of the impact of Comenius school partnerships on participating schools' (2012). Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/comenius/study-impact_en.htm

A snapshot: Evidence of impact on the teacher

The website of the project G@ME - Gender Awareness in Media Education[12] (Key ID: 22) provides information on an interesting pilot delivery of the online course 'Gender Competence & Media Competence in European Teacher Education', including an interesting online questionnaire on the course results and the impact on the participants. Furthermore, two beneficiaries of the project, German teachers, are quoted here talking about how the Comenius project helped them gain a new view on teaching ICT:

> *'The combination of ICT and the gender issue is a good chance to change attitudes. In other fields the gender issue is more discussed for example in 'Leseförderung' (supporting reading competence) like in ICT. At university you talk about gender issues in general but not in combination with ICT. By taking part in the course we got important inspiration: the very young children in our classes (6-year-olds) do not behave in the same way as older pupils. We don't recognize a great gender issue. For example they are all one-minded and interested in ICT. That's an important approach to teaching with the idea of gender awareness.'*

4.2.1.2 Impact on the learner

Both through the individual teachers involved in Comenius activities, but also through the wider benefits for the school as a whole (see section 4.2.2), students are reported to enjoy important gains.

Teachers' positive experiences are believed by study informants to become positive experiences for their pupils as well. It is also often stressed that Comenius projects have proved to be an excellent way of motivating students to get more interested in their learning and develop new skills.

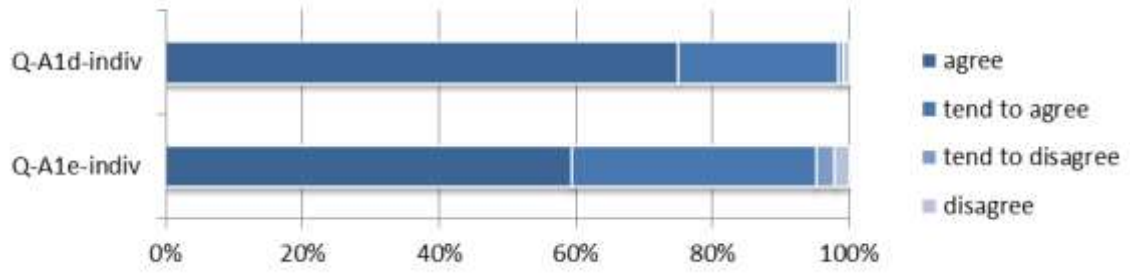
A snapshot: Evidence of impact on competence development

In Hungary, the study team re-analysed empirical data provided by Comenius projects with national assessment data about the same area. In the DICE project (Key ID: 107), for example, a student competence and attitude survey was administered about the effects on drama education (cf. '*Drama Improves Key Lisbon Competences in Education*'[13]). This data is in line with Hungarian national educational assessment findings (cf. Annual Report on Hungarian Education, 2010, Budapest: OFI). The DICE project highlighted an area of competence development, drama education, which did not receive enough attention before, and inspired further research and methodological development, thus contributing significantly to learners' competence development.

The online response revealed very strong agreement among individuals that their involvement in Comenius had *'a positive effect on their students' learning experiences'*. This was much stronger for projects than for networks (projects: 78.0% agree, 21.5% tend to agree; networks: 63.4% agree, 29.3% tend to agree). Less

[12] http://game.bildung.hessen.de/onlinecourse_eva/index.html
[13] Full text at http://www.dramanetwork.eu

strongly, but still very clearly, all respondents specified that this effect could be traced even in the materials used by students (Figure 17).



Impact of the Action(s) on individuals (e.g. those who participated in the activities):
QA1d-indiv: Overall, you would say that your involvement in the Action(s) has had a positive effect on your students' learning experiences
QA1e-indiv: Overall, you would say that your involvement in the Action(s) has had a positive effect on the materials your students use

Figure 17: Positive effect on students' learning experiences and the materials they use, as reported by questionnaire respondents

Reportedly, also, there is an impact of Comenius on the teaching to which students are exposed. As discussed above in the section on the impact on educators' personal and professional development (section 4.2.1.1), individuals involved in the projects and networks clearly confirm that their Comenius experiences *'have affected their usual teaching methods and practices'*, as *'in their usual everyday practice they are applying knowledge and experiences that they have gained'*.

A less positive message comes from the questionnaire responses in connection to students' mobility in Europe, which is not acknowledged as a gain as strongly as most other factors examined in the whole questionnaire. As can be seem in Figure 19 (cf. questions A3b-indiv and A3b-organ), respondents' level of agreement is much lower when it comes to the question whether involvement in the projects and networks has increased students' mobility in Europe beyond what is required by the projects and networks. However, networks might be more effective than projects in this respect, as the comparison of relevant responses shows (for question A3b-indiv, projects: 40.3% agree, 44.3% tend to agree; networks: 51.1% agree, 25.5% tend to agree).

Overall, it should be noted that the impact of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks on students is, and is intended to be, largely indirect, as projects and networks generally tend to focus more on teachers' professional and schools' institutional development rather than on the direct involvement of students. What is more, impact on educational practice involving students is by its nature a longer-term effect, achieved gradually and when all contributing factors and circumstances mature. Evidence of impact on students in the present study is based on projects', networks', and teachers' perceptions of this impact, in a relatively short time span. A larger research programme, with adequate resources and a longer duration, could delve deeper into the aspects of the impact of Comenius Centralised Actions on students.

On the other hand, it should be stressed that there are other Comenius Actions, such as Comenius School Partnerships, which by nature focus directly and clearly on students' experiences. As the European Commission's parallel study on the impact of

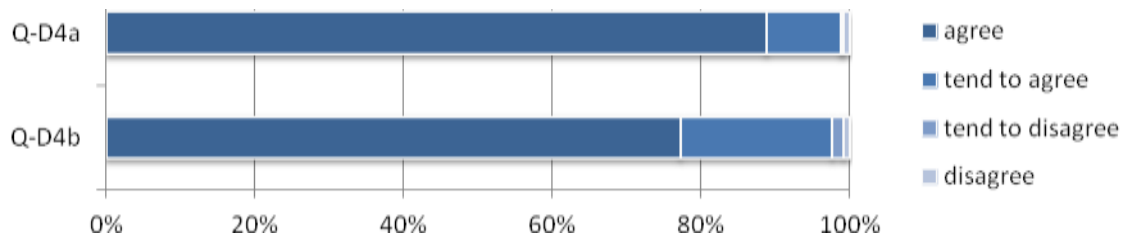
Comenius School Partnerships[14] has shown, those decentralised actions have a direct, better recognisable impact on students, which is comparable to the impact on students found by the present study (e.g. involving the development of students' greater interest in other European countries and their cultures, and improvement of students' skills).

4.2.2 Impact on the institution

The study particularly investigated the extent to which Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks can have an impact beyond the individuals who directly participate in activities, and especially an impact on the participating organisations more widely, e.g. through transfer of the experiences and the development of new practices at the institutional level.

All information gathered points to the recognition of a significant impact of Comenius at the institutional level, too. However, this impact clearly seems to be less readily recognised than the impact on individuals. The responses to the online questionnaire very clearly indicate that informants tend to consider the impact on the individuals involved in the projects and networks as stronger than the impact on those individuals' wider organisational context. This becomes evident in Figure 19 (see following pages), which summarises the response to all those questions in the online questionnaire which directly aimed to compare the impact on the individual with the impact on the organisation (all elements of questions A1 – A4).

Apart from the almost consistent difference in the views expressed with regard to impact on individuals and impact on institutions, in Figure 16 it is to note that the least agreed statements are also those which demonstrate almost no difference regarding impact on individuals and impact institutions (cf. questions A3b and A3c relating to increased students' mobility and increased used of EU tools such as the Europass CV – see their discussion in the section on the impact on the individual; section 4.2.1 above). In other words, questionnaire respondents seem to consider areas of less strong impact as such equally with respect to the individuals as well as the organisations.



Q-D4a: Overall, your involvement in the Action(s) has had added value for you as a person. You would recommend this to a friend / colleague.
Q-D4b: Overall, your involvement in the Action(s) has had added value for your institution as a whole. You would recommend it to other institutions like yours.

Figure 18: Added value of involvement in Comenius Centralised Actions for individuals and institutions, as reported by questionnaire respondents

Nevertheless, it remains clear that there is strong agreement among the vast majority of informants of the study that involvement in Comenius Multilateral Projects and

[14] 'Study of the impact of Comenius school partnerships on participating schools' (2012). Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/comenius/study-impact_en.htm

Comenius Multilateral Networks *does* have a positive impact on the participating institutions and considerable added value for them more widely (and not just for the individuals directly involved). In the online response, almost everyone (>97%) 'agrees' or 'tends to agree' that their involvement in the Action(s) has had added value for their institution as a whole and that they would recommend it to other institutions like theirs (Figure 18). Again, however, the statement relating to added value for the individual attracts even higher levels of agreement.

Similarly to individual Comenius actors, their institutions are reported to get acquainted with and position themselves in the wider European perspective. The fact that Comenius is open to new ideas is highly valued, since it is recognised, as a respondent put it, as:

> *'the best opportunity by far to share your work with the rest of Europe'.*

The funding which reaches the institution through the Comenius Action is also considered a very positive aspect, especially in face of the fact that it is by definition aimed at activities with a real potential to improve teaching and learning:

> *'Your school gets extra funding that has to be used for the improvement of teaching and learning and cannot be taken away to pay electricity bills. In times of crisis, this is a major advantage.'*

Participation in Comenius projects is also reported as a factor motivating the development of further links and synergies between departments within the same institution, as well as between the institution and other local partners.

Overall, Comenius seems to have brought *'fresh ideas and air'* into many participating organizations, and has often functioned as a major catalyst for change. Characteristically, a Latvian school reported that it *'was computerized primarily as a result of the Comenius project... just because the school wanted to use project outputs the way they were meant to be used'*.

In this wider context, it is interesting to note that there are Actions which report larger than 'average' effects at the level of the institution. In a number of cases, respondents and project reports provide indications about considerable impact of the Actions on the institutions involved. Some illustrative examples are presented below, while the case studies in Chapter 5 reveal further interesting cases and probe deeper into the relevant circumstances.

In some cases, sustainability of the Comenius Action seems to be linked to the fact that the whole institution experiences positive change, rather than just those directly involved in the Action. Thus there is hope that the staff of the school will continue with the successful practice. For example, interesting relevant evidence comes from the Comenius Multilateral Project DICE (Key ID: 107). This project proved the beneficial effects of drama education on cognitive and affective development of students in primary and secondary education. The major deliverable of the project was a Green Paper on Drama Education that outlined measured effects of this area of study on a range of competences. Follow-up interviews conducted by the research team conducting the present impact study proved that, as a direct result of the project, 87 % of participating Hungarian schools still keep on offering Drama as a curriculum component. What is more, 12 out of 20 participating teachers are actively disseminating methodology as certified national experts at study courses and regional meetings.

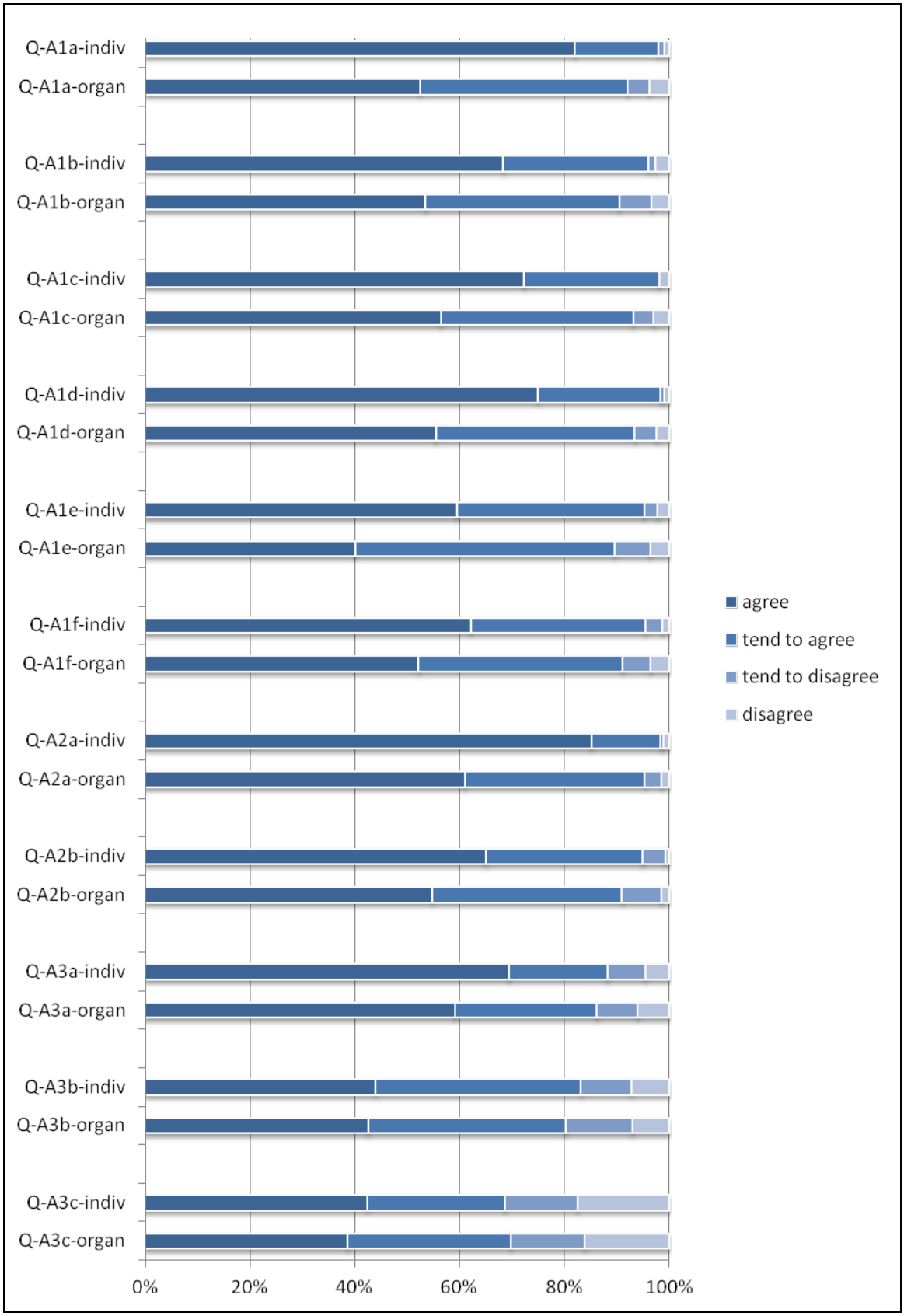


Figure 19a: Comparing the impact on the individual with the impact on the organisation (all elements of questions A1 – A4 in the online questionnaire).

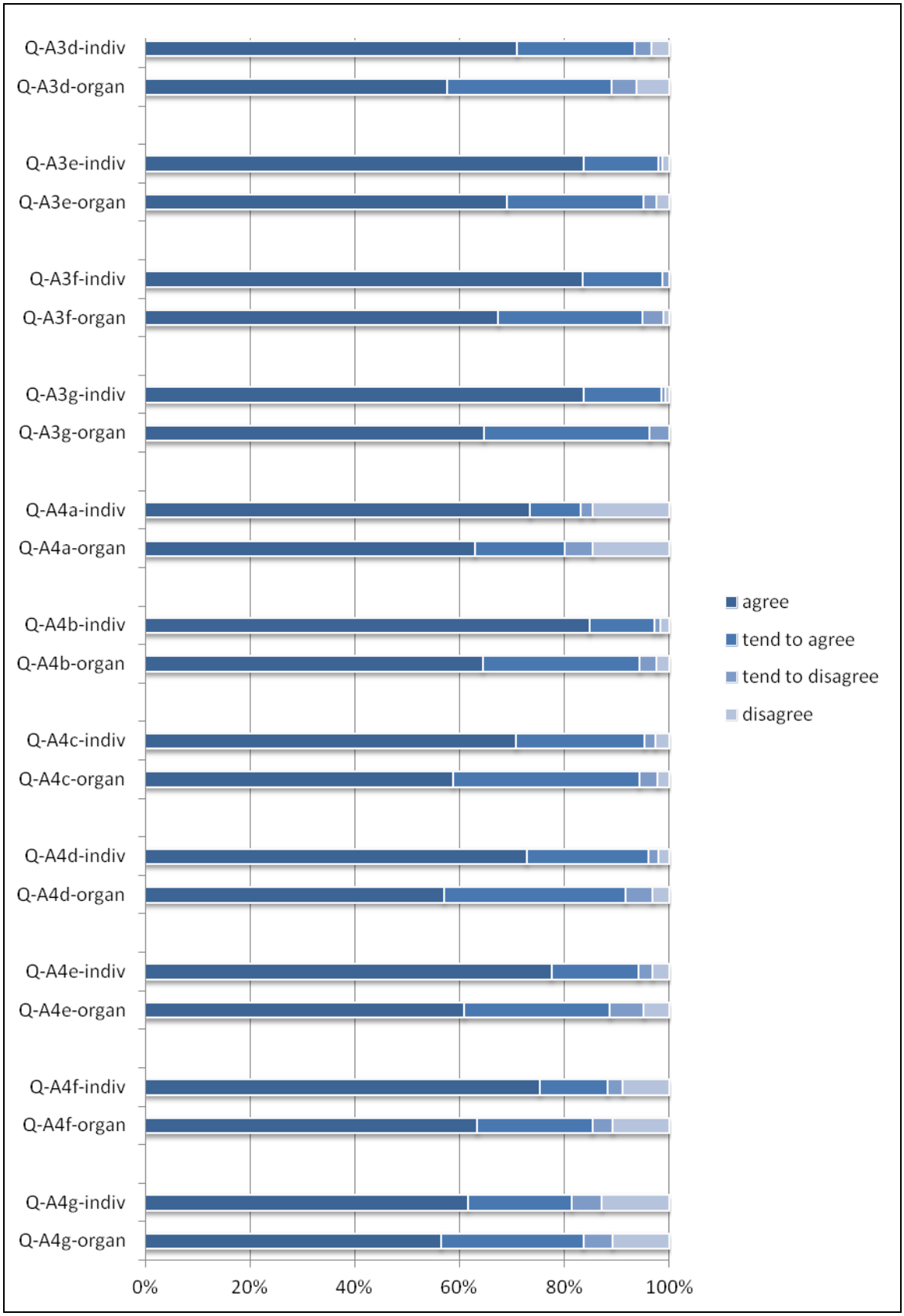


Figure 19b: Comparing the impact on the individual with the impact on the organisation (all elements of questions A1 – A4 in the online questionnaire).

Note: For ease of reference, the questions of the 'views' questionnaire included in Figure 19 are repeated here:

A1. Overall, you would say that your involvement in the Action(s) has had a positive effect on:
- a) Your usual teaching methods and practices
- b) The teaching materials you use at school
- c) The teacher training materials you use
- d) Your students' learning experiences
- e) The materials your students use
- f) Teaching / learning in certain school environments (although you don't work there)

A2. In your usual everyday practice:
- a) You are applying knowledge and experiences that you have gained through your involvement in the Action(s)
- b) The outcomes (e.g. methods, materials, curricula etc.) of the Action(s) can practically be applied without major difficulties

A3. Your involvement in the Action(s) has increased:
- a) Your mobility in Europe beyond the activities foreseen by the Action(s) (e.g. it is now more possible than before to travel in Europe for professional reasons, such as attending meetings, conferences, seminars, etc.)
- b) Your students' mobility in Europe (e.g. exchanges, joint projects etc.) beyond the Action(s
- c) Your use of EU tools such as the Europass CV
- d) Your motivation to acquire new (or improve existing) language skills
- e) Your intercultural communication
- f) Your understanding of other European educational systems
- g) Your 'engagement' with, and understanding of, the European context more generally

A4. Thanks to your involvement in the Action(s):
- a) You have had the chance to participate in European training (e.g. Comenius seminars, summer/winter schools etc.)
- b) You have learned from others about innovation and best practice in your area of work
- c) You feel less 'isolated' in your professional world, part of a wider network
- d) You have got connected with different professional 'worlds' and cultures (e.g. the world of work, museums, the world of training/schools/ research etc.)
- e) You have maintained contact and/or collaboration with others after the end of EU funding
- f) You have got involved in other projects and initiatives, too, outside Comenius (e.g. other EU programmes, local initiatives etc.)
- g) You have been able to start other projects on your own initiative (e.g. by inviting collaborators rather than being invited or motivated by others)

For each of the above questions, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement considering two different aspects of impact:
Impact on individuals: Impact of the Action(s) on some individuals only (e.g. those who participated in the activities) (cf. the '-indiv' ending in the codification of questions in the graphs)
Impact on institution: Impact of the Action(s) on the organisation more widely (e.g. through transfer of the experiences and new practices) (cf. the '-organ' ending in the codification of questions in the graphs)

Figure 19c: Comparing the impact on the individual with the impact on the organisation (all elements of questions A1 – A4 in the online questionnaire).

To mention just one more of several examples, strong institutional impact can be traced behind the TICTC project (Key ID: 50), too, which investigated teachers' ICT competences in connection with teaching children with hearing difficulties. One of the TICTC partners, the School for Children with Hearing Difficulties (SCHD), reported that the project acted as a major catalyst of change in the school, which has influenced the modernization of the school through a new ICT infrastructure and a new curriculum. The project provided the school with international contacts from which it has drawn on ideas and solutions for modernizing learning, importantly also convincing the decision makers to make the necessary expenditures.

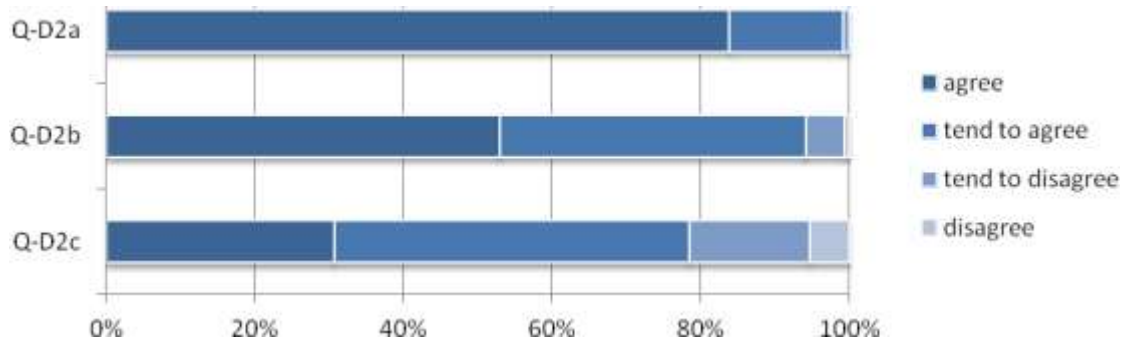
Overall, the kind of impact of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks on the institution appears to be similar to the impact of Comenius School

Partnerships, as observed by the relevant study[15], but also richer and more diverse, given the difference in size and scope between Centralised Actions and School Partnerships. According to that impact study, Comenius School Partnerships make a contribution to strengthening schools' European dimension, improving their image locally, introducing new dynamics, developing new interpersonal links within them, and fostering closer ties with local authorities.

4.2.3 Impact on systems

The previous sections discussed the impact of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks on individuals and organisations directly or indirectly involved in the project or network activities. The study further investigated whether any impact can be traced beyond the immediate environment of the projects and networks, affecting wider systems. In other words, the question was whether Comenius Multilateral Projects and Networks, despite being rather small-scale interventions, have the potential for impact in wider contexts, e.g. influencing the development of education policies at the local, regional, national, or European level.

Overall, the impact on wider systems is very clearly reported by the informants of the study to be least strong when compared to the impact on individuals and their organizational context. The data gathered through question D2 in the 'views' questionnaire clearly depict this (Figure 20). While 84% of all respondents clearly agree that the projects and networks have had a positive and lasting impact on the individuals involved, this percentage falls to 53% for the impact on the organisation as a whole, and only 31% when it comes to the impact of wider systems.



Q-D2a: Overall, based on your experience from the Action(s), you would say that they have had a positive and lasting impact on you / other individuals (those directly involved)
Q-D2b: Overall, based on your experience from the Action(s), you would say that they have had a positive and lasting impact on your (and/or other) organisation as a whole (across the community and structure, beyond isolated individuals)
Q-D2c: Overall, based on your experience from the Action(s), you would say that they have had a positive and lasting impact on wider systems (e.g. the local/regional/national education system or EU policies, beyond the institutions directly involved)

Figure 20: Impact on wider systems compared to impact on individuals and their organizational context, as reported by questionnaire respondents

The oldest of the projects and networks analysed finished less than five years ago, and quite a few of them have just been completed or are still running. At the same

[15] 'Study of the impact of Comenius school partnerships on participating schools' (2012). Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/comenius/study-impact_en.htm

time, it is widely acknowledged that even for a modest system-wide change a longer time period seems to be inevitable[16]. Therefore, this finding does not come as a surprise. As a respondent has put it:

> *'While the impact is very strong on individual development and competences, this may vary when we come to the organization, as it depends on its staff, on the inside communication, on the general response to the project. Wider systems should be more able to listen to, to inquire, to get ideas and input but this occurs very rarely.'*

However, there are many positive messages in the responses that acknowledge the potential of Comenius projects to have an impact on a scale large than that of the involved institutions, under certain circumstances. Continuity on thematic axes is one of the conditions often mentioned:

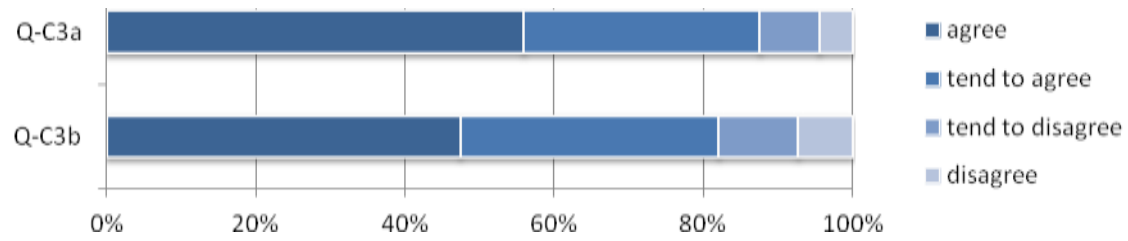
> *'A single action cannot easily have a lasting impact on a system. However on-going activity on a thematic area can facilitate change.'*

> *'Small drops make a river. It's good to have many actors working towards the same goal to eventually affect the policy makers.'*

Clearly, the challenge of effective dissemination to policy makers leading to an increased potential for exploitation is central with regard to the uptake of good Comenius outcomes by wider systems. This is an area very much discussed by many respondents. It is important that 82% of questionnaire respondents reported that their projects and networks have produced reports on the status of innovation in certain areas and/or recommendations for policy development, which have been communicated to educational policy makers. Nevertheless, one could expect that this might need to become the norm for all Comenius projects and networks, with the aim of achieving a higher impact on wider systems.

An important prerequisite of impact on wider systems is the relevance of the work carried out in projects and networks within the wider policy context. Online questionnaire response and interviews indicate that this may not always be the case. Questionnaire respondents are reluctant to agree that their participation in the projects and networks has been clearly connected to any wider educational policies and initiatives, at the local, regional or national level. As a matter of fact, the relevant statement is one of those receiving considerably lower levels of agreement. On the other hand, relevance to the participating institutions' priorities and policies seems to be to some extent higher (Figure 21).

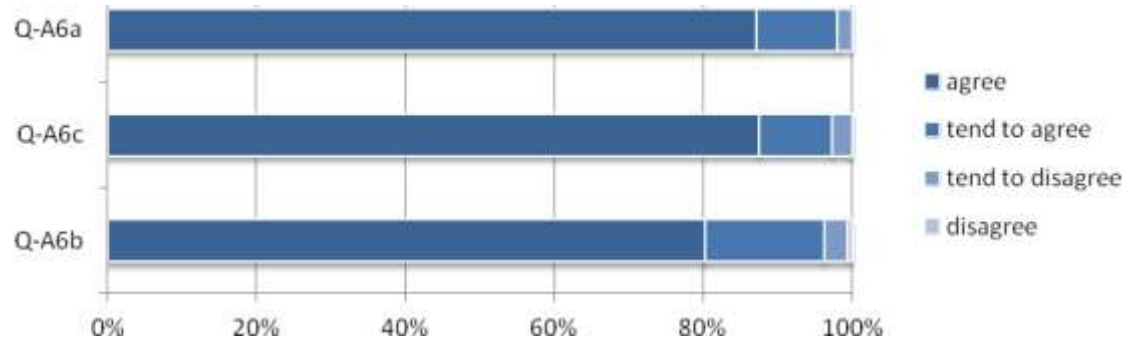
[16] '*The study of change is very complex, partly because of varying definitions of the term 'change' and partly because of the interaction of the many factors involved, over a long period of time, in taking a change from adoption through implementation to institutionalization as a permanent feature of the system*' (Waugh, R. F. & K. F. Punch, 1987. 'Teacher Receptivity to Systemwide Change in the Implementation Stage'. *Review of Educational Research*, Vol. 57, No. 3, pp. 237-254.



Q-C3a: Your participation in the Action(s) has been clearly connected to your institution's priorities and policies
Q-C3b: Your participation in the Action(s) has been clearly connected to local / regional / national educational policies and initiatives

Figure 21: Connection to institutional policies and priorities, and to wider educational policies and initiatives, as reported by questionnaire respondents

With reference to the different system sectors, the online response shows a very strong agreement among informants that Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks are relevant to and useful to schools and in-service teacher training institutions, but maybe marginally less so to initial teacher training institutions (Figure 22). Responses from projects tend to be stronger than responses from networks in this respect (in question A6a, projects: 88.8% agree, 10.0% tend to agree; networks: 79.4% agree, 16.2% tend to agree; in question A6b, projects: 82.9% agree, 15.1% tend to agree; networks: 69.8% agree; 25.4% tend to agree). In other words, respondents with experiences from Comenius Multilateral Projects tend to recognise the relevance and usefulness of Comenius to schools and in-service teacher training more readily than respondents linked to networks.



Q-A6a: In general, you would say that Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks tend to be relevant to, and useful for schools
Q-A6c: In general, you would say that Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks tend to be relevant to, and useful for in-service teacher training
Q-A6b: In general, you would say that Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks tend to be relevant to, and useful for initial teacher training

Figure 22: Impact on wider systems compared to impact on individuals and their organizational context, as reported by questionnaire respondents

This finding is in line with national reports on teacher education – a key system component that is most difficult to influence. For example, a national assessment of the educational system in Hungary showed that it was initial teacher education that

remained immune to reform movements while other system components were more flexible (cf. Green Book for the Renewal of Public Education in Hungary, 2009[17]).

However, there are indeed a number of cases in which initial teacher training modules produced through Comenius have been integrated in university courses, such as, for example, in the case of the CLIL project (Key ID: 9), a module of which has been included in the curriculum of the University of Madrid. Similarly, the universities involved in the MUVEnation project (Key ID: 83) report that they are basing their training courses on results from the project. Outcomes of the TICTC project (Key ID: 50) are used by students doing their Masters in Social Pedagogy at the University of Latvia, in the course on social inclusion.

What is more, there are also cases in which Comenius results which were initially designed with in-service training in mind, have been adopted in initial teacher training practices too. For example, while the DICE Multilateral Project (Key ID: 107) targeted in-service training only, the manual on drama education which it produced, one of the major deliverables of the project which was translated into 12 languages[18], is currently being used in initial teacher training in the participating countries.

Overall, it has been observed in some cases that a key to wider impact lies with the synergies that some Comenius projects and networks manage to develop beyond their immediate, 'minimum' project cycle. Building on the success of previous projects and initiatives and planning ahead for the continuation and expansion of the work beyond the end of Comenius funding ensures that the efforts of a Comenius project or network will not be isolated. Whilst a single project or network may by definition have limited resources and context to propose and introduce change on a larger scale, a longitudinal series of successful interventions, one or some of which may be supported by Comenius, has good chances of making itself visible to policy makers and wider communities of practitioners. This need for larger-scale, integrated initiatives that would maximise the chances for wider and long-lasting impact seems to be beginning to be recognised within the wider European policy context (e.g. the future education programme and the 'opening-up education' initiative that are currently being shaped, or the PSP-ICT programme in the technological context).

The study has revealed such success stories, for instance in the case of the METASCHOOL project (Key ID: 127), which has formed the basis for a long chain of successful interventions including a further Comenius project (LD-Skills[19]), several Comenius In-service Training events, and a number of new European partnerships and initiatives. The line at the beginning of which METASCHOOL lies has eventually culminated into the large-scale Open Discovery Space project[20], which has the potential for Europe-wide, system-level impact in relation to the use of digital educational content. Other similar examples of increased impact potential can be found in the area of science education (cf. for instance the EU-HOU project, Key ID: 115), in which the European Commission's continuous interest in recent years has allowed for the development of successful chains of projects and initiatives that transcend the boundaries of Comenius. One more example of concentrated work comes from the area of mathematics education. In the cases of two of the sampled multilateral projects, i.e. MOTIVATE ME (Key ID: 37) and Math2Earth (Key ID: 126), the same coordinator has developed Comenius funded activity on mathematics over a longer period of time, which has given rise to further European projects on maths (MeetMe, DynaMAT).

[17] http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Hungary/Hungary_Green_book_2009.pdf
[18] http://www.dramanetwork.eu/file/Education%20Resource%20long.pdf
[19] http://www.ea.gr/ep/ld-skills/
[20] http://www.opendiscoveryspace.eu/

4.2.3.1 Snapshots of practice towards a wider impact on the world of education

The various aspects of the research conducted into the sample of the 80 targeted Multilateral Projects and Networks have revealed a number of cases, in which the impact of the Actions seems to be reaching beyond the consortium to a considerable extent, both affecting the institutions involved as well as, importantly, more widely penetrating the educational systems and the societies in which they operate. By looking closer into such cases, the research team identified some practices that may allow the emergence and sustainability of such impact. In this part of the report, short reference is made to some 'snapshots' of practice with the potential to enhance the impact of Centralised Actions on the world of education, as illustrative examples. Complementarily to these snapshots, the case studies in Chapter 5 allow deeper insights into the ways a number of selected projects and networks have addressed this challenge. Practice examples are organised on the following pages under these headings:

- Including the right mix of diverse stakeholders and complementary actors in the consortium – using them to disseminate appropriately
- Involving school communities in the process
- Combining Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks with mobility activities
- Developing diverse cooperation beyond the consortium
- Utilizing publicity and the media and presenting to the right audiences
- Producing high quality outputs gaining wider recognition
- Informing curriculum design and educational decision and policy making.

Including the right mix of diverse stakeholders and complementary actors in the consortium – using them to disseminate appropriately

Project and network consortia which include an effective mix of institutions and groups participating in the relevant educational processes seem to have a considerable potential for enhanced and lasting impact, as they produce outputs which are really relevant and fine-tuned to address the real needs and expectations of a variety of educational stakeholders. Appropriate dissemination also ensures that these relevant results reach the target groups. Good relevant examples include the following:

- The IP-IS project (Key ID: 79) is a characteristic example of a project which functioned as a bridge connecting different types of institutions and target groups involved in the educational process. It produced materials published in several languages and disseminated to parents of a migrant background. Practitioners (teachers) were reached through lectures and presentations given at national, regional, and local conferences and workshops.
- The VISEUS project (ID: 94) is one more good example of diverse institutions complementing one another in a Comenius consortium which has produced interesting results. Software was developed and used by 240 pupils in 9 participating schools. Manuals for teachers as well as pupils were produced and disseminated by the partnership. An accompanying teacher training course, including six modules, was developed by the consortium, too. Furthermore, the developing and implementation process of the innovative language learning materials was accompanied by scientific research carried out by the higher education institutions participating.
- The Naturbild project (Key ID: 129) produced and disseminated through its website video-analyses of plays and experimentations with kindergarten children and primary school pupils. These products were used in the teacher training workshops organised and held by the partner institutions. This can be considered

as a good example of a Comenius project which was successful in training teachers, because project partners, mainly universities and teacher training seminars, had the scientific expertise and qualified staff to develop innovative didactical material for specific target groups who, in reality, do not have a lot of possibilities to attend in-service-training courses reflecting the state-of-art in their professional field.

Involving school communities in the process

Involving school communities, including teachers, students and parents, is particularly highlighted in several cases as a factor contributing to enhanced opportunities for impact. For instance:

- A teacher involved as a partner and beneficiary in the CROSSNET project (Key ID: 10), pointed out that teachers should be actively involved in the discussion and developing process, in the testing and implementation phase, as well as in the dissemination process, and that therefore the integration of teacher mobility activities in the project is preferable.
- In the final report of EduComics project (Key ID: 110) the large participation of both teachers and students in training and implementation activities as well as in the development of all materials is highlighted. More than 600 teachers were formally trained in workshops and seminars using project materials. Further, trained and motivated teachers applied strategies and lesson plans in their schools and gathered evidence of what works, why and under which conditions. Overall, the project involved 9 schools and 12 classes, corresponding to a total of 265 students and 25 teachers, in 6 different EU countries.
- In the PREDIL project (Key ID: 131), similarly, a set of good practice guidelines was delivered. It was reported that both teachers' involvement in the development of such a tool and their participation in training workshops facilitated them effectively to design and apply a pedagogical strategy on the use of ICT in classroom practices from a gender equity perspective.
- In the case of METASCHOOL project (Key ID: 127), the engagement of a large number of teacher trainees all around Europe who undertook the role of multipliers, as well as the synergies with other European projects (e.g. OSR, www.osrportal.eu, and Natural Europe, www.natural-europe.eu) maximized the interdisciplinarity of the approach, as teachers of several specializations were attracted thus forming a learning community.

Combining Centralised Actions with mobility activities

Successful Comenius Multilateral Projects and Networks are often accompanied by mobility activities. The TICKLE project (Key ID: 92) gives proof of creating synergy effects between a Comenius Multilateral Project and a Comenius teacher exchange (Latvia-Germany), as well as a joint French-German teacher trainee exchange with Finland. TICKLE project results were disseminated during a CEDEFOP Study Visit in Sibiu (Transylvania, Romania) concerning multicultural education, too. It involved several school visits and discussions with educational officers, head teachers, teachers as well as pupils and representatives from the various nationalities / communities present in the county[21].

[21] http://www.tickle-project.de/project/documents/dissemination/germany/dissemination_sibiu.pdf

Developing diverse cooperation beyond the consortium

The CCLL Network (Key ID: 55) put effort in setting up cooperation with a diversity of national and European institutions and organisations, including schools, teacher associations, research centres, publishers, political organisations, dealing with the topic chosen and/or language learning[22].

Similarly, the ELIAS project (key ID: 111), which itself was focused on pre-school education, aimed at the continuation of its bilingual programmes in primary schools. To this end the project created an implementation guideline for immersion in primary schools in collaboration with Germany's most notable association for bilingual learning, FMKS (www.fmks.eu). What is more, the ELIAS project, being a successful project with an impact on the scientific community as well as on practitioners, was able to attract additional partners. Through the project's dissemination activities, other universities and preschools adopted the project setup, so that the data pool could be enlarged beyond the original design, including three additional partners (two bilingual preschools and a university) in the second period of the project, thus increasing the project's impact considerably and adding invaluable data and information to the project's framework. In addition, contacts were established with a renowned university in the Netherlands, with which the project exchanged ideas for collaboration. As a result of that cooperation, two of the project partners were asked to write a handbook article on the teaching of English to young children.

Utilizing publicity and the media and presenting to the right audiences

In general, it seems to be a positive factor for wider impact when teacher training courses developed and piloted by international teams are promoted to wider audiences through electronic media in different European languages at the same time. For instance, a documentary on the TICKLE project (Key ID: 92) was produced by French film production companies, supported and distributed by the Regional Ministry of Culture, the Regional Government and a national non-for profit association[23]. Furthermore, several press articles on the project were published. In addition, project partners disseminated and valorised their project results through national authorities in a seminar organised by the German Ministry for Migration.

An important element of dissemination which secures considerable potential for a wider impact is extensive but also carefully designed publishing (both in general and scientific media) and presentation of the important project or network outcomes to the appropriate specialised audiences. There are numerous projects which demonstrate considerable activity in this field. Some interesting cases can be mentioned here:

- The CarCouIT project (Key ID: 65) presented all its results in a European conference on 'Career Counsellors' Training across Europe'. Presentations were combined with fruitful discussions with high levels of participation of all parts of the school community (students, parents, teachers), other stakeholders, and policy makers[24].
- In the case of the INSETROM project (Key ID: 75), its results were presented in an international conference, two symposia, several local and European

[22] http://ccll-eu.eu/cms02/index.php?id=19&L=1%20%20%2Ferrors.php%3F%20b
[23] http://www.tickle-project.de/project/documents/dissemination/france/Tel_me_your_language.jpg
[24] Further information available at the final report: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/acc_mes_final_report_2007/com_cmp_134005_carcouit.pdf

conferences and journals. The project made efforts to address not only academics, researchers, and teachers, but importantly also included the direct beneficiaries, Roma families, Roma associations and other stakeholders, with a view to identifying effective policies for Roma inclusion and engaging Roma in training activities.

- The VISEUS project (ID: 94) has been successful in producing scientific publications in its thematic area, as well as disseminating its results through 19 national and international conferences.
- The results of the TERECoP project (Key ID: 48) were presented at 15 international conferences. Importantly, even after its funding period, the project presented its results at almost 10 European events (training workshops, scientific fairs, and conferences)[25].
- Members of the ELIAS project (Key ID: 111) have presented their findings at 27 national and international workshops and conferences, including some in the USA (the project put effort in transferring knowledge about the current state of research from countries outside Europe). The ELIAS team used different strategies to make the project known in the European context, such as repeated press articles and information, diverse small-scale and large-scale team meetings with practitioners and representatives from administrative and political boards, two symposiums, information events, lectures, presentations and a panel discussion for preschools, parents, students and a wider audience, university classes, as well as diverse academic presentations in conferences. It is interesting to note that in its final conference, the project managed to attract scientists and practitioners far beyond the original partnership (a consortium including 4 countries, conference participants from 10 countries). More generally and very importantly, the ELIAS project has contributed to the scientific research and discussion process in its thematic area and beyond. To make its outcomes as well as the new environmental concept of Green Immersion known to a wide variety of target groups and pursue multidisciplinary work, the project was presented at very diverse national and international conferences, notably including two European conferences of zoo associations (EAZA 2008) and zoo education (EZE 2009), as well as a German conference on foreign language education (DGFF 2009) and the European association of second language acquisition (EUROSLA 2010).
- In the EduComics project (Key ID: 110), too, academic research was highly prioritized. As a result, one PhD thesis and one MSc thesis on the educational use of web comics were realised during the project using the EduComics approach and outcomes. In addition and complementarily to that, three workshops were organised in international conferences, one national conference, and two research papers were presented in other national conferences[26].

Producing high quality outputs gaining wider recognition

- The LEMA project (Key ID: 32) developed materials to support the professional development of mathematics teachers in both primary and secondary education. Among other results, the project has developed a number of video sequences of modelling lessons from some of the partnership nations which are regarded as examples of good practice for innovative teaching of mathematics[27]. Similar cases of successful project results are numerous. As examples only we add here:

[25] Further information is available in the project website (www.terecop.eu) in the dissemination and post-TERECoP activities areas.
[26] Further information available in the final report at:
http://www.educomics.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=20&Itemid=41
[27] http://www.lema-project.org/web.lemaproject/web/dvd_2009/english/video.html

the TACCLE handbook, which has significantly contributed to the success story of the TACCLE project (Key ID: 90); the teaching materials (Handbook, DVD, cards) produced by the Signes@sens project (Key ID: 80), which have been largely disseminated and used in classrooms; the guides developed by the SAEL project (Key ID: 86), which are widely distributed in bookstores, used by educators and academies, and made available during events organized around the themes of language and ICT; the wealth of materials, including games, role plays, and several other school and museum activities produced by the SETAC project (Key ID: 137), which are available through the project website which is hosted in the website of the Museo Nazionale Della Scienza e Della Tecnologia Leonardo Da Vinci; the outputs of the TICTC project (Key ID: 50), which, although technologically outdated, are recognised as a valuable basis on which schools outside the TICTC consortium have been based to adapt the valuable outcomes of the project; et al.

- The VISEUS project (ID: 94) has produced high quality outputs, through a carefully designed scientific process, thus managing eventually to receive wider recognition and awards. The project aimed at the design of a concept of advanced training in the fields of language acquisition, multilingualism and creative language learning. The concept was developed in cooperation with nine project schools and seven academic institutes of higher education in the field of teacher training from different European countries[28]. The pupils who participated in the project produced their own dictionaries and texts in the so-called language workshops by means of the on-line dictionary, 'My Own Dictionary', and the virtual language workshop 'Vis@Vis', the results of which were published in a second conclusive volume. The analysis of the results obtained during these processes formed part of the academic support and monitoring. A large number of primary and secondary teachers attended the final conference. In addition, the project was awarded the European Language Award by a National Educational Authority, the German Pedagogical Exchange Service (PAD).

Informing curriculum design and educational decision and policy making

Some of the projects and networks studied have been successful in distributing their projects results among curriculum designers and educational decision and policy makers, including even national educational authorities and European institutions:

- In Germany, for example, the Leadership in Education network (Key ID: 96) managed that the Ministers and Representatives of the 16 Bundesländer discussed the network results during their annual conference. The necessity of improving the qualification of school heads was regarded a major assignment.
- The results of the CLIL project (Key ID: 9) have been personally delivered to Mrs Mady Delvaux, the Luxemburgish Minister of Education. The recommendations from the Comenius partnership have been taken into account in the current reforms at national level. The project results have also been published in a national official document, 'Réajustement de l'enseignement des langues'. The Council of Europe has expressed its interest in the project results and has included the Comenius partnership recommendations in an official publication about linguistic diversity at school.
- The PREDIL project (Key ID: 131) organized a three-day conference entitled 'Synergy Development between Policy and Praxis on Technology Enhanced Learning from a Gender Perspective', under the auspices of the Slovenian prime minister. The conference was reportedly very successful and strongly addressed policy makers. The book of abstracts presented ICT gender issues and how they

[28] http://www.viseus.eu/downloads/accompanyingresearch.pdf

can be handled from both the policy making and academic point of view.

- An interesting relevant case at the European level is reported through the VISEUS project (Key ID: 94). The consortium disseminated the results of the project in the conference entitled 'EU Projects in favour of the ROMA Community', which was organised by the European Commission in March 2010, in this way informing policy making at the European level on minorities.
- From the ELIAS project (Key ID: 111) it is reported that team members came to the attention of the respective political bodies in their regions in Germany. As a result, not only did the project receive help, encouragement and further dissemination opportunities, but team members were also recommended as experts on issues of early education to other political boards, thus considerably enlarging the network of contacts and the impact of the project.
- Similarly, in a number of cases in Belgium it has been reported that project partners have been empowered through their involvement in Comenius to act as advisors/consultants in the respective thematic area: a partner of the Hola! Project (Key ID: 73) still provides Flemish secondary schools with guidance about the foreign languages teaching methods; two individuals from the Signes@sens project (Key ID: 80) offer workshops and counselling about literacy in Turkish schools; and a partner from the IRIS project (Key ID: 28) provides representatives of the Belgian Ministry of Education with recommendations about inclusion.

4.3 Evaluation of the European dimension of Comenius Centralised Actions

A central aim of the study was to evaluate how cooperation at European level has contributed to the implementation of the Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks and to the achievement of their objectives, as well as to increasing the internationalisation of the participating institutions and especially teacher training institutes and schools.

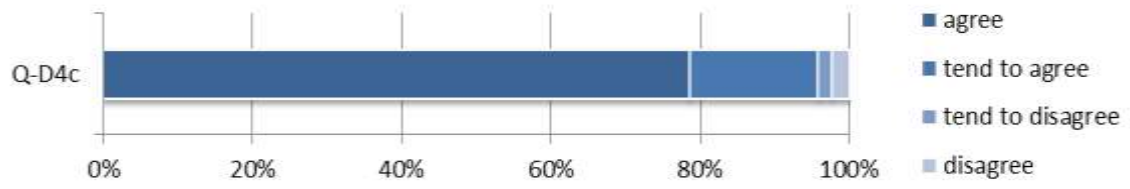
All parts of the research very clearly showed that the European dimension of Comenius is widely acknowledged as one of its strongest assets. In the online response, one statement gathering considerable levels of agreement is D4.c (Figure 23):

> *'Overall, your involvement in the Action(s) has had European added value: It would not have been possible to develop these Action(s) and results, and have an impact, if any, without European cooperation.'* (95.7% 'agree' and 'tend to agree').

In addition, all statements in the questionnaire which related to the 'internationalisation' and 'multiculturality' of the experiences gained through Comenius projects and networks raised very strong agreement levels (e.g. Figure 24). In the interviews, too, informants almost unanimously highlighted the European dimension and added value as most important. This is a point where messages from the present study very clearly converge with the findings of the European Commission's parallel study on the impact of Comenius School Partnerships[29]. As is the case for Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks, Comenius School Partnerships, too, are reported to contribute significantly to strengthening the links between European

[29] 'Study of the impact of Comenius school partnerships on participating schools' (2012). Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/comenius/study-impact_en.htm

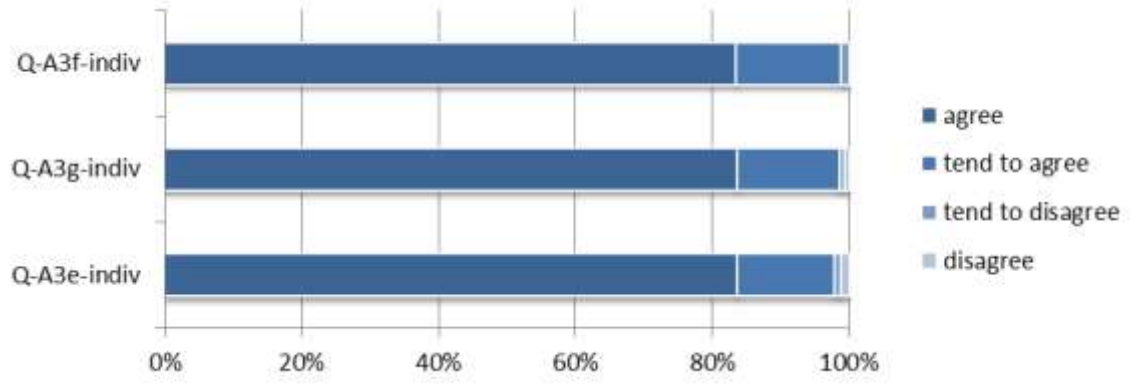
institutions, improving the quality of education in Europe, promoting the exchange of good practice and collaboration among stakeholders in the educational landscape.



Q-D4c: D4. Overall, your involvement in the Action(s) has had European added value: It would not have been possible to develop these Action(s) and results, and have an impact, if any, without European cooperation.

Figure 23: Recognition of the European added value of Comenius projects and networks by questionnaire respondents

According to findings of all parts of the present study, collaboration and exchange between education professionals and institutions from different countries, cultures and backgrounds leads to a better, deeper understanding and valuable strengthening of both Europe and education. Characteristically, questionnaire respondents emphasised that their involvement in the Action(s) has increased their understanding of other European educational systems, their 'engagement' with, and understanding of, the European context more generally, as well as their intercultural communication (Figure 24).



Impact of the Action(s) on individuals (e.g. those who participated in the activities):
Q-A3f-indiv: Your involvement in the Action(s) has increased your understanding of other European educational systems
Q-A3g-indiv: Your involvement in the Action(s) has increased your 'engagement' with, and understanding of, the European context more generally
Q-A3e-indiv: Your involvement in the Action(s) has increased your intercultural communication

Figure 24: Recognition of the European added value of Comenius projects and networks by questionnaire respondents

According to many informants, an inclusive European identity and culture is promoted in schools across Europe thanks to Comenius projects and networks, engaging all actors of school life and facilitating innovative cultural synergies and the development of the sense of belonging to the same community. Student participation in Comenius projects and networks almost inevitably leads to a greater interest in the life and

culture of other countries, including an impetus to learn foreign languages. As an informant has put it:

> *'Comenius means realisation of a core value of the European Union, collaboration of member states, on grass roots level and in a very important area, education'*.

Or, in another informant's words:

> '*Comenius has helped bring more Europe in people's mind*'.

Teachers' professional development greatly benefits from cooperation and exchange with European colleagues, especially as it typically involves the exchange of professional experiences among teachers, teacher trainers, and university staff from very different contexts but on a focused thematic area. In this way, the gap is bridged between pedagogical theory (universities and teacher training institutions) and pedagogical practice (schools, teachers), in a wider common European framework. Thus involvement in European projects greatly increases teachers' awareness of issues central to their work, not only narrowly in their own context, but importantly also in the wider international picture. Even further, several informants have pointed out the opportunities offered through Comenius projects and networks for the gradual development, in the long term, of a more coherent system of recognition of professional skills in education across Europe. Of course, this is a wider system change at the European level that cannot be achieved or even initiated through actions of the size of Comenius projects and networks. Nevertheless, successful projects and networks provide seeds that can prove most fruitful on the way, extending the knowledge base and shared understandings of specific issues at the European level.

Extensive networking and the development of international groups of experts and practitioners sharing common interests contribute to a wide dissemination of good practice and new, richer understandings of the challenges and opportunities faced by education in the 21st century. A clear indicator of this international networking developed through and around Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks is the interest of several consortia to re-apply after successfully completing their Comenius projects. This has been evident in several cases of groups collaborating in more than one project and/or networks, as it is revealed by the visualisation-based explorations of the sample (Annex 3). Relevant examples include, but are not limited to, the DICE project, or the VISEUS project, through which new school partnerships were developed, while the consortium is planning to set up a European network focused on the wider thematic area addressed by the project.

Comenius is believed to be a decisive step towards closer coordination of educational principles, values, methodologies, content within the EU, respecting and synthesising the local and national identities and circumstances. National educational systems stimulate each other through exchange between the North and the South, the West and the East, the 'old' and the 'new' Member States. The conditions are created for real transfer of good practice, and convergence on this basis, but importantly also for testing 'good practice' recognised in a certain national context, in different educational circumstances and cultures.

Comenius enables educational innovation in Europe, through the design, piloting and implementation of new educational approaches, methodologies and materials which would not be initiated or produced in large parts of Europe at the local, regional or national level.

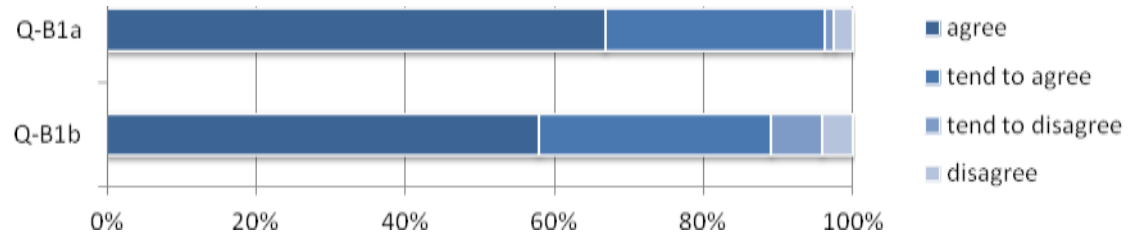
Mobility of individuals, both education practitioners but importantly also learners, is acknowledged as an indispensable asset that Comenius has ensured for the educational communities in Europe.

4.4 Enablers and obstacles

The research has yielded insights into various factors which act as enablers and obstacles to the successful implementation of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks. These findings are discussed in this section. They are based on the response to relevant questions in the online questionnaire, as well as on the interviews and discussions conducted.

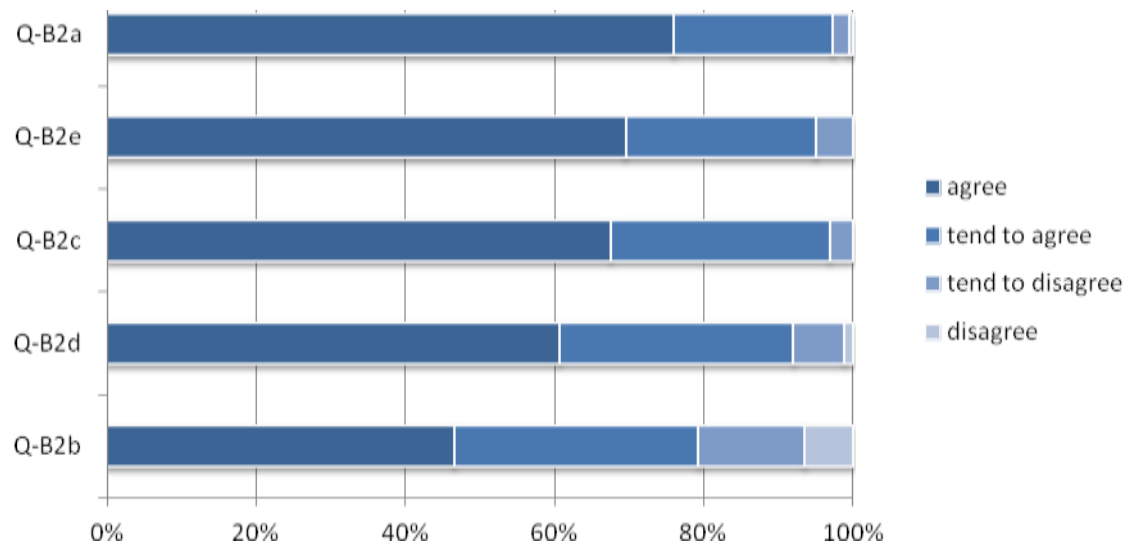
A number of questions in the online questionnaire investigated relevant aspects of projects and networks, such as the extent to which the projects and networks bear relevance to real life, the characteristics and qualities of the project and network partnerships, the level and quality of actual involvement in the projects and networks, issues related to dissemination, the use of ICT, as well as a number of possible difficulties or supportive actions that may affect initiation of and involvement in Comenius project and network activities. It should be noted that in most cases these questions did not specifically ask questionnaire respondents to identify obstacles or enablers. The intention of the research team was to gain indirect insights through respondents' spontaneous views and stances about aspects of projects and networks that are typically associated with facilitating or hindering project initiation, implementation and sustainability. In this way, the questionnaire yielded very useful information about factors that could act as obstacles to, or enablers of, successful Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks. These questions were followed up by open ended questions in the questionnaire and especially in the subsequent interviews and discussions, which enabled the team to delve deeper into the issues.

Responses to these questions in the online questionnaire are presented in summary in Figures 25-30 below. The relevant discussion follows in the subsequent sections on obstacles and enablers, which also contain the much richer insights gained through the interviews conducted.



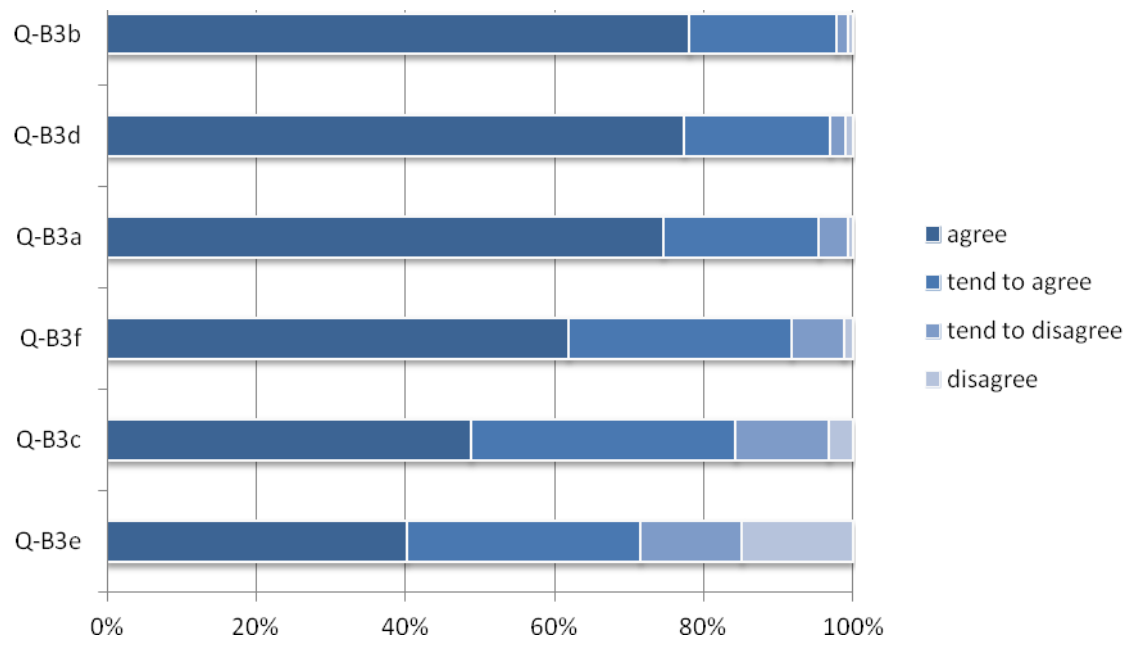
Q-B1a: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that the Action(s) have been relevant to the needs and interests you have in your everyday work
Q-B1b: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that the Action(s) have been relevant to the needs and interests you have in other activities of yours beyond your work

Figure 25: Relevance of the projects and networks to real life, as reported by questionnaire respondents



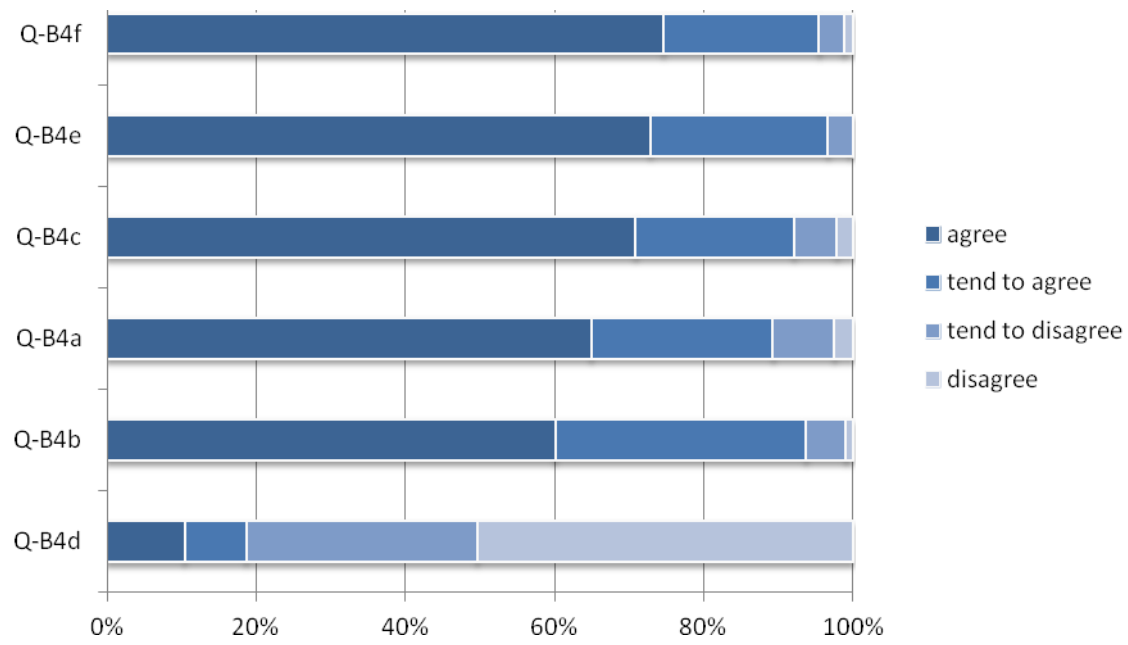
Q-B2a: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that there has been the right mix of different types of institutions in the partnership
Q-B2e: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that the competences available in the partnership have been appropriate to respond to demands posed by the Action(s)
Q-B2c: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that collaboration and exchange of experience among the partners has been effective
Q-B2d: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that the structures in the partnership have been appropriate to effectively address difficulties and problems arising during the Action(s)
Q-B2b: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that there has been a strong representation of schools in the Action(s)

Figure 26: Qualities of the project and network partnerships, as reported by questionnaire respondents



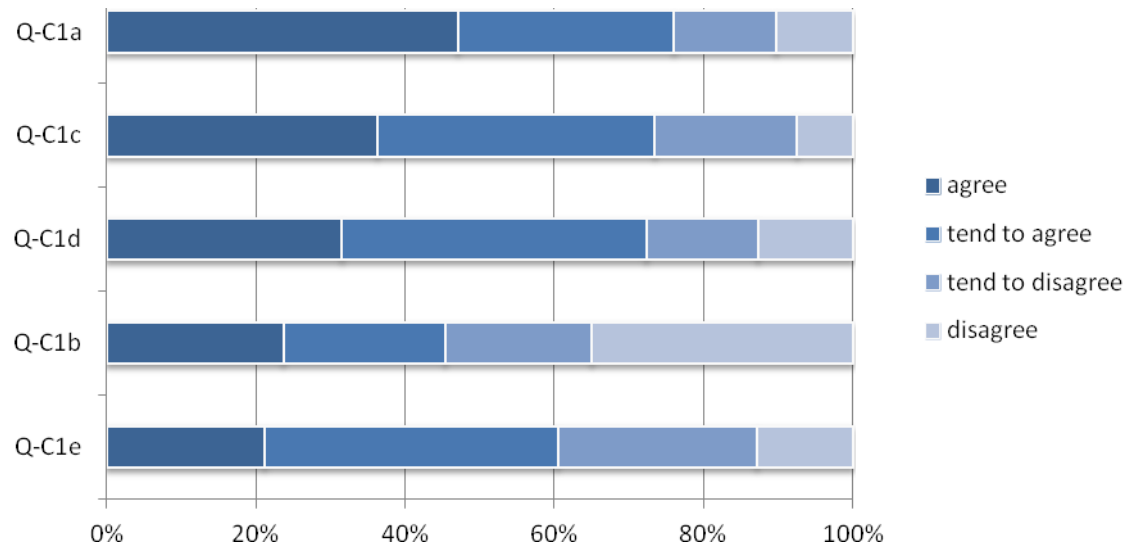
Q-B3b: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that you have been able to 'engage' energetically in the activities (as opposed to 'following, observing others')
Q-B3d: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that you have reported back to your colleagues (or the wider community) on the experiences gained through the Action(s)
Q-B3a: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that it has been clear to you what you have been supposed to be doing in the Action(s) and why
Q-B3f: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that more generally, the messages and outcomes of the Action(s) have been disseminated widely and to the appropriate audiences
Q-B3c: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that the involvement of schools has been direct and active rather than passive (e.g. schools co-designing solutions rather than passive 'consumers' and testers of solutions designed by others)
Q-B3e: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that because of your involvement in the Action(s) you have taken over new roles in your institution related to disseminating project results, coaching / mentoring colleagues, etc.

Figure 27: Quality of involvement and dissemination, as reported by questionnaire respondents



Q-B4f: The use of ICT in the Action(s) has been a strong tool for the dissemination and exploitation of the Action(s) and its/their results
Q-B4e: The use of ICT in the Action(s) has been a strong tool for the exchange of experiences and personal involvement of those participating in the Action(s)
Q-B4c: The use of ICT in the Action(s) has been absolutely necessary (without it, it would have been impossible to realise the Action)
Q-B4a: The use of ICT in the Action(s) has been extensive (ICT use being a very strong characteristic of the Action)
Q-B4b: The use of ICT in the Action(s) has been organised and exploited optimally and creatively (ICT use being effective, efficient, innovative)
Q-B4d: The use of ICT in the Action(s) has been over-emphasised (i.e. the Action could do with less ICT)

Figure 28: Use of ICT in the projects and networks, as reported by questionnaire respondents



Q-C1a: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that you have been encouraged and facilitated by peers / colleagues / management in your institution to get involved in the Action(s) (before the start of the Action)

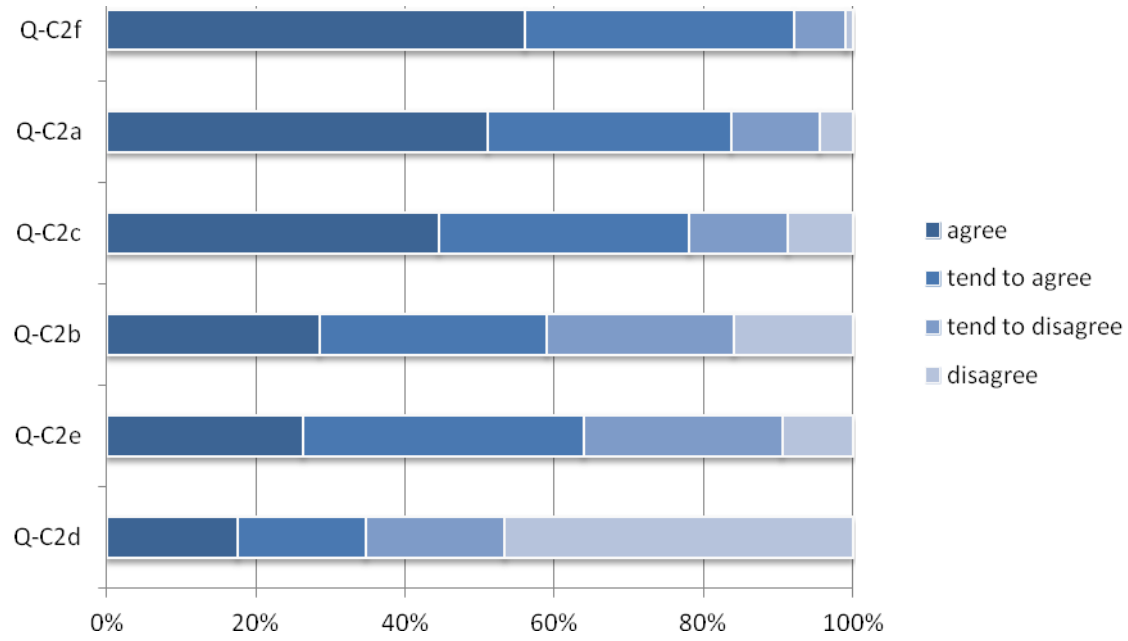
Q-C1c: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that it can be difficult for an individual / institution to manage to start their involvement in such Actions (even if information and support is available)

Q-C1d: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that an individual / institution could have reasons to be reluctant to try to get involved in such Actions (even if information and support is available)

Q-C1b: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that you have been encouraged and facilitated by authorities outside your institution (local, regional, national) to get involved in the Action(s) (before the start of the Action)

Q-C1e: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that the administrative procedures involved in preparing one's involvement in an Action are clear and easy to follow

Figure 29: Difficulties in initiating involvement in Comenius projects and networks, as reported by questionnaire respondents



QC2f: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that overall, your work and initiatives connected to the Action(s) have been perceived and appraised positively by peers / colleagues / management in your institution
QC2a: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that you have been adequately supported by peers / colleagues / management in your institution during your involvement in the Action(s)
QC2c: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that participation in training connected to the Action(s) has been recognised, 'formally' or 'informally', in your professional context (e.g. by your institution / authorities)
QC2b: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that you have been adequately supported by authorities outside your institution (local, regional, national) during your involvement in the Action(s)
QC2e: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that the administrative procedures involved in running the activities in an Action are clear and easy to follow
QC2d: Based on your experience from the Action(s) you would say that participation in training connected to the Action(s) has been mandatory in your professional context

Figure 30: Context supporting the activities, as reported by questionnaire respondents

4.4.1 Obstacles

Throughout the responses to the online questionnaire and in the interviews, bureaucracy emerged as one of the main obstacles identified, referring both to the administrative burden in Comenius, and to administrative issues at the level of the participating organisation or the local system in which it operates.

With regard to the administration of the Comenius Actions, many informants are critical about an overload which seems to them to be out of proportion compared to the level of funding.

It is unanimously reported that the application process is long and difficult, which does not encourage the participation of smaller or inexperienced 'players'. There are comments about the complexity of the application forms, and difficulties in understanding the language used to explain them. Very importantly, the writing of the proposal is considered as a difficult task for new beginners in Comenius projects and

networks, which apparently gives a significant advantage to project promoters with previous experience. There is a message also from practitioners that if a grant writing agency is involved a significant part of the funding will eventually be spent on administration rather than on education.

Reporting is also considered by some respondents as difficult or too bureaucratic, with a weak connection with the actual work and very little dissemination value. However, the comments about reporting are fewer, and less strong than the comments about the obstacles in the application process.

Another obstacle relating to the application process and especially the very tough competition refers to the unrealistic objectives that are often set in the applications, which eventually leads to a problematic implementation. Beyond the obvious responsibility of the applicant in this matter, informants stress that Comenius should also pose more realistic requirements, as the 'high promises' that are impossible to keep are often the result of what seems to be required in the call.

More generally, reference is often made to lack of practitioners' motivation to participate in a Comenius project or network. This includes teachers not willing to get involved in an unknown process, but, even more strongly, schools which are reluctant to participate in a project due to a fear of administration demands on top of the many other obligations of the school.

Further obstacles are identified in connection to the phases after the selection of a proposed project. Some respondents highlight the fact that the preparedness and preparation of the inexperienced coordinators is not adequate. Many coordinators indeed felt that they were insufficiently prepared for undertaking the role and that much of their experience was gained through 'learning on the job'.

During the implementation of the project or network, important obstacles are connected to the development of a 'shared culture' in the consortium. There are references in the data about the difficulty, at times, of all partners making the effort to converge from personal or institutional own interests to a sound common interest. In other cases, misunderstandings about the common objectives and expected results lead to internal communication and collaboration problems. The problem in many cases seems to be that many consortiums are formed too quickly shortly before the application process, without their members knowing each other and without having developed a clear common understanding of the project.

Tensions in the consortia sometimes also arise due to the differences in the ways that the same amount of effort is paid for in the different countries. It is reported that these differences in the recognised costs, which often also bear very little relation to the actual costs of living or price of expert work in a given country, result in limited motivation in a multinational team whose members get paid unequally. Similarly, it is reported by some that there is a difficulty among consortium members to accept that working conditions and wider systems differ in European countries, which sometimes leads to disappointment during the project and less active involvement of some partners. The reason for such discrepancies is that in many EU countries, especially in Central and Eastern Europe, salaries for professionals are low, but expert fees are similar to those elsewhere in the EU. Therefore, if a teacher receives remuneration for his or her work at school, it will be much less than the fee he or she receives when working as a free-lancer after hours. Project work is considered as an expert activity that should be rewarded as such, and not related to teacher salaries. This discrepancy is going to last in the foreseeable future and may only be overcome if fees are allocated in relation to work performed and not to the salary the person receives.

Obstacles at the level of day-to-day management and administration of a project or network are often connected by the respondents with a lack of the required resources (staff, finances for own contribution, time), especially in the smaller organizations, as well as with the differences in the various administration systems and procedures in the various countries, such as in relation to accountancy standards. Often people involved in the projects complain about limited administrative support provided by the participating institutions' administrations, while it is seen as a problem, too, that the coordinators have to deal with administrative tasks and intellectual leadership at the same time. As administrative costs are calculated as 'overhead', institutions may not pay administrative personnel for managing projects but spend this overhead on general maintenance. Thus, administrative staff have absolutely no benefits from projects: they do not participate in inspiring workshops, do not travel abroad or receive interesting visitors, and do not get recognised for their performance in any way. The only way to remedy this situation is to convince institutions that it is in their interests to train and pay a capable project support team.

As an informant very illustrative put it: *'I felt like a guerrilla in my own institution!'* Lack of continuous support from senior management in the participating organisations is reportedly especially a problem for continuing projects after the end of European funding. However, it should be noted that national educational cultures matter. It seems to be easier to develop and manage a project in some countries than others.

Some problems also arise from the skills of the people involved in the Actions. For example, some older teachers were reported to have difficulty in adapting to using the new technologies, which caused tensions in the project at times, while in other cases the language skills required for international collaboration were a barrier. Such problems though are not very frequently reported.

Other obstacles are identified by the informants in connection to the duration of the projects and networks and the practical problems in the exploitation of their results. There are some who believe that longer projects and networks would provide the space for better outcomes, and a better dissemination and exploitation of them.

Effective dissemination is reported as a real challenge for consortia. Many respondents felt that it was extremely difficult to get their work known outside their immediate contact circles. A similar issue arises at the local and national level, where project teams are often unaware of similar projects happening locally. More generally, quite a few respondents have raised the issue of lack of mutual awareness and continuity between projects. Quite often, they report, new projects seem to '*set out from the same starting point over and over again*'.

A commonly recognised barrier is the fact that, according to many informants of the study, the potential of National Agencies is not fully exploited to support Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks locally. In this way, it is felt, an important multiplier factor at the regional or national level is missed, as National Agencies could help significantly in the dissemination of results and in the link of projects and networks with school communities. Overall, it is felt that there is an unfortunate lack of consistency and integration between the Comenius Centralised Actions and the smaller actions managed by the National Agencies, with examples mentioned including difficulties in combining Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks with related student or teacher mobility.

More generally, from all parts of the study there are messages that difficulties in the wider use of good project results relate also to a lack of a European dissemination and

recognition framework. Especially regarding teacher training, it is stressed in some cases that dissemination is often possible in initial training organisations that are linked or part of universities. Thanks to the ERASMUS programme and the uniformization reforms, most of these higher education institutions can ensure the inclusion of Comenius results. However, this is still not the case for many in-service teacher training organisations that are isolated and/or operating on a regional or national basis only. In addition, while Comenius project results in the form of teacher training modules are often well known and recognized by the partner institutions, the Comenius training database, for example, does not fully inform about the opportunities offered and especially about the quality. It is therefore difficult to ensure the valorisation and the recognition of Centralized Actions' outcomes beyond the consortium. Only partners directly linked to or embedded in national training programmes or public authorities are actually able to guarantee attractiveness, transfer and sustainability of the results. In connection to this, there is also a lack of 'credibility' from the National Agencies' point of view: they try to promote the mobility and the professional development of teachers, but they cannot fully guarantee that the Comenius training will be adequate, valuable and recognized by the regional or nation school system.

As a last point about the most salient obstacles revealed, it is stressed that a very large number of messages from the field raises the issue of lack of post-project support. Many respondents feel that this is unfortunate, as *'impact comes later'* – some have defined this as a period of at least 2 years after the end of funding. Thus, it is felt that some form of financial support for sustainability is missing, which constitutes a major obstacle to real impact. Especially in times of constant budget cuts, projects do not seem able to be sustainable as no further local funds can be guaranteed. As someone put it, *'if the post-project phase is not foreseen the result remain on the website, in people's minds and intentions, but not in the classrooms'*.

Finally, it should be noted that the most important obstacles mentioned above have also been identified, identically or similarly, in the context of European Commission's parallel study on the impact of Comenius School Partnerships[30]. In that study, too, the analysis of the school partnership projects highlighted obstacles including organisational weaknesses and institutional barriers, the administrative burden, the over-compartmentalisation of the various Comenius Actions, as well as a lack of competences on the part of some project promoters.

4.4.2 Enablers

The discussion on enablers of successful implementation of Comenius projects and networks with real impact naturally includes the alleviation of the difficulties posed by the above mentioned obstacles. Among those things which have surfaced more saliently in the interviews as enabling factors are those briefly discussed below.

A careful preparation of the partnership is crucial to enable the right mind-set. A preparatory phase of the projects and networks can guarantee the composition of an appropriate partnership and the clarification and sharing by all of the scope of the project or network. It has been observed that prior collaboration among people makes cooperation in current Comenius projects and networks smoother. The main value comes from understanding how schools and teachers work in different countries and how they deal with core-issues. The role of the National Agencies can be essential at this preparatory stage, through the support of contact seminars, preparatory visits, etc. To mention an interesting example, the DICE project (Key ID: 107), a Multilateral

[30] 'Study of the impact of Comenius school partnerships on participating schools' (2012). Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/comenius/study-impact_en.htm

Project focused on drama education, involved participants who had previously met during workshops and conferences of the International Drama / Theatre Education Association, IDEA. This co-operation resulted in a theory-grounded project proposal that managed to reach high methodological sophistication within a short time span (2008-2009). The important deliverables of the project actually include results of 5-10 years of collaboration of many partners. A few other examples of Comenius Multilateral Projects which benefited from the help of National Agencies include the following information reported by informants:

- The decision to initiate the IRIS project (Key ID: 28) project was made in 2004 during a study visit to Sweden on inclusive education.
- The Spanish Agency took the initiative to organize a contact seminar in Avila during summer 2005, which was relayed by the other National Agencies. Thanks to that seminar, a group agreed to set up the CLIL project (Key ID: 9).
- The Belgian National Agency ensures the promotion of the courses of the TACCLE project (Key ID: 90) and distributes mobility grants accordingly, so that a significant number of Belgian teachers have attended TACCLE courses.
- The German National Agency (PAD) has been successful in setting up a small network of Comenius Multilateral Projects coordinated by German institutions and organising national dissemination events.

It is also important for projects and networks to really build on the work the organisations normally or currently carry out. This also allows better dissemination, as the project's message is part of the partner's core message.

Another enabler relates to the good planning of projects with clarity of scope, based on a sound previous exploration of the field. The objectives need to be realistic, and, importantly, adapted to each country's curriculum and wider educational conditions. Flexibility of the work programme, a balanced task distribution, partners' complementary backgrounds and competences, strong support by the participants' institutions and a solid coordinator, are also among the important factors that are believed to lead to successful and impact-rich projects and networks.

Good understanding and close collaboration between the partners during the execution of the project is vital. In successful projects and networks there is a *'networking of common interests'*, intercultural dialogue, shared values and enthusiasm. To this end, projects can particularly exploit the opportunities for mobility during the project, so that to meet face-to-face frequently, even through private initiatives beyond the formal meetings. Good use of ICT can also help a lot, facilitating partnership and creating virtual collaborative spaces and spaces for sharing experiences.

It has been also noted by many informants that good language skills (mainly in English) and ICT skills of the newer generations make communication much easier than 1-2 decades ago.

More generally, the carefully designed use of ICT can be a very strong enabling factor for a Comenius Centralised Action. Especially cognitive tools that support project design, implementation and evaluation like mind mapping, discussion and project management applications are being increasingly used by project teams, and training in their proper utilisation would contribute to the quality of planning and management of Comenius projects. In addition, the internet offers relatively inexpensive tools for dissemination, enabling consortia to reach wide audiences and provide links to updates in the post-project phase.

Finally, as discussed more extensively in the section on obstacles (section 4.4.1), success and impact of projects and networks is felt to strongly rely on good planning and coordination for dissemination and exploitation, opportunities for supporting the continuation of good work and results after the end of the funded period, and strong support and advice from the European Commission and National Agencies that could turn even the lay teacher into an effective project or network actor. There are successful examples in this area that could be explored as good practice. In Hungary, for instance, the TEMPUS Agency has launched relevant training sessions supported by e-learning materials. Training courses include EU Professional English, Project management step by step, Effective communication skills and presentation techniques, Lobbying and identification of financial resources, Support policy in the EU. On the other hand, The CCLL Network (Key ID: 55) provides information on the German Comenius Projects Network (2007-2010)[31], which seems to be a good example of the efforts made by a National Agency to provide a platform for centralized Comenius Projects to discuss and disseminate their results on the national level.

[31] http://ccll-eu.eu/cms02/uploads/media/Netzwerk_Praesentation_2.pdf

5 The case studies

This chapter of the final report presents the case studies developed in the final stages of the research.

Following an interim synthesis of all evidence gathered from all preceding stages of the study, the research team carefully selected interesting cases that exemplify the trends, challenges and opportunities in the landscape of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks.

The following pages include structured information on 28 consortia (of 22 Multilateral Projects and 6 Multilateral Networks), their characteristics, activities, achievements, and, where appropriate, challenges faced. The aim here is to both delve deeper into areas deserving closer attention and illustrate the practical circumstances in which Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks tend to operate.

The case studies are presented in a structured, reader-friendly way which can facilitate their independent publication by the EC, if considered appropriate.

Each case study is structured so as to reflect the main directions of the study, as follows:

1. Information on the Project/Network

- Title
- Project ID
- Coordinating Institution/Country
- Partners (Country, number, types of institutions)
- Project Number
- Comenius Action
- Thematic Area
- Duration
- Short Summary on Objectives and Results
- Website
- Public Part of the Final Report
- Important Characteristics/ Highlights

2. Impact on institutional development of participating institutions. This may include reference to aspects of the study such as the following:

- Professional development of participating individuals (coordinator, project members), other colleagues
- Pedagogical development (e.g. curriculum, courses etc.)
- European dimension (increased internationalisation, new projects, links to European organisations etc.)
- Obstacles and enablers, including administrative procedures

3. Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network). This may include reference to aspects of the study such as the following:

- Developed teaching methods and materials
- Pedagogical strategies for use in the classroom
- Development of materials to be used by pupils
- Curricula for the initial or in-service teacher training (e.g. teacher training courses)
- Professional development of school education staff
- Impact on different types of institutions (schools, teacher training institutes, universities, school administration, decision makers etc.)

- Exchange of experiences
- Development of a framework for the mobility of student teachers, teachers and other staff
- Dissemination of training materials and project results to a wider audience, in particular through ICT and New Media
- Examples of tangible results (good practice)
- Contribution to EU policies
- Obstacles and enablers, including administrative procedures

4. Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks). This may include reference to aspects of the study such as the following:

- Benefits for primary and secondary teachers
- Benefits for pupils and students
- Benefits for school staff
- Benefits for teacher trainers and university lecturers
- Benefits for educational and public decision makers
- Benefits for a wider public
- The degree to which Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks have managed to reach them and have impact on them
- Obstacles and enablers, including administrative procedures

5. Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools in Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks. This may include reference to aspects of the study such as the following:

- Involvement of the different types of organisation and institutions (not educational ones, too)
- Involvement and role of schools in Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks. Are there interests taken into account? Do they play an active role in the consortium, including decision making, members of steering committees, or do they play of role of practitioners that carry out the ideas and plans of the Higher Education institutions?
- For Comenius Multilateral Projects specifically:
  - Impact on other LLP actions and activities, e.g. on School Partnerships, Key Actions, Mobility Activities
- For Comenius Multilateral Networks specifically:
  - Are they strengthening the networking of educational institutions and organisations and on enhancing the sustainability of Comenius School Partnerships and CMPs.
  - Do they contribute to the European cooperation in their specific thematic area of work?
  - Do they contribute to the identification and promotion of innovative results and examples of best practice?
  - Do they strengthen the cooperation of already existing Comenius projects?
  - Do their activities and results have an impact at policy level, e.g. through formulation of recommendations and reports on the status of innovation in the thematic areas chosen?

The 28 case studies are presented in the remaining part of this chapter of the final report, as summarised in Table 2. Their presentation follows a random order, which does not imply any kind of priority or ranking. The case studies are only loosely grouped by the country hosting the respective coordinators. The Key ID number of each of the projects and networks, which has been used throughout the study and in this report, is highlighted next to the title of each subsection for ease of reference.

	Case study	Key ID
1.	ELIAS: Early Language Intercultural Acquisition Studies	111
2.	VISEUS: Virtually Connected Language Workshops at European Schools	94
3.	NATURBILD: Nature and Technology in Early Childhood Education	129
4.	The Making of Leadership in Education: A European Qualification Network for Effective School Leadership	96
5.	EASE: Early Years Transition Programme	109
6.	BEAGLE: Biodiversity Education & Awareness to Grow a Living Environment	100
7.	No Child Left Behind	84
8.	Wide Minds: The Human Face of Digital Learning	97
9.	COPE: Competences of Professional Educators in Europe	111
10.	INTER Network: Intercultural Education, Teacher Training and School Practice	60
11.	KROSS: Kick Racism Out of Sport, Schools and Society	124
12.	SEEP: Science Education European Platform	145
13.	MA²ThE-TE-AMO: Making Mathematics Teachers Mobile	33
14.	MUVENATION: Motivating Pupils, Linking Teachers through Active Learning with Multi-Users Virtual Environments	83
15.	MICHELANGELO: Unlocking European Fine Art	81
16.	SETAC: Science Education as a Tool for Active Citizenship	137
17.	INSETRom: Teacher In-Service Training for Roma Inclusion	75
18.	EUROPSCHOOL NETWORK	2
19.	EU-HOU: Hands-On Universe Teacher Training and Support Programme	115
20.	CLIL across Contexts: A Scaffolding Framework for Teacher Education	9
21.	Hola! for Kids: A Holistic Approach to Language Learning for Kids	73
22.	TACCLE: Teachers' Aids on Creating Content for Learning Environments	90
23.	P2i: Pathways to Inclusion	144
24.	METASCHOOL	127
25.	TERECoP: Teacher Education on Robotics-Enhanced Constructivist Pedagogical Methods	48
26.	PREDIL: Promoting Equality in Digital Literacy	131
27.	TICTC: Teachers ICT Competences - a Way to Effective Learning for Children with Hearing Difficulties	50
28.	DICE: Drama Improves Lisbon Key Competences	107

Table 2: The 28 case studies. The order is random and does not imply any priority or ranking. The case studies are grouped by the country of the coordinator.

The case studies have been drafted by the members of the international team of this study who carried out the respective part of the research. Any variations in the content and style are attributable to the different circumstances of the projects and networks investigated and of the researchers' interaction with them, as well as to the researchers' own background.

5.1 ELIAS: Early Language Intercultural Acquisition Studies

Key ID in this study: 111

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 142355-LLP-1-2008-1-DE-Comenius-CMP

Coordinating Institution: Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg, Germany

Partners: DE: 5 universities/universities of education/teacher training institutions, 7 preschools, 1 private company; BE: 1 university, 1 preschool; UK: 1 university; SE: 1 university

Comenius Action: Comenius Multilateral Project

Thematic Area: Preschool Education

Duration: October 2008 – September 2010

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: ELIAS aimed to make a contribution to the implementation of efficient bilingual preschools programmes throughout the EU and provide children of an early age with crucial knowledge of different foreign languages, intercultural competence, tolerant intercultural attitudes and a heightened awareness of the environment within an integrated programme. ELIAS placed a special emphasis on early environmental education. Research on bilingual science learning and the acquisition of environmental awareness was carried out in the unique zoo preschool at Magdeburg Zoological Garden in Germany. Preschool staff was provided with teacher training in theoretical and practical issues of bilingual education. Teaching materials were developed and are presented on the project website, a CD ROM and though several publications.

Website: http://www.elias.bilikita.org

Public Part of the Final Report:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/acc_mes_final_report_2007/com_mp_142355_elias.pdf

Important Characteristics/Highlights: Manifold and still on-going dissemination activities were carried out, e.g. a final symposium with about 300 participants from ten different countries. There was also a good combination of Academic researchers and practitioners on the preschool level, including interesting partners, such as a zoo. The project has been very successful in combining expertise from academic researchers and practitioners from preschools.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

The project coordinator (Kristin Kersten) pointed out the involvement in the Comenius project lead to an improvement of her language skills, especially in regard to managing skills. Through the close working relationship with colleagues from partner countries and meetings abroad she developed a better intercultural understanding of other educational systems and cultures. Coordinating and managing skills have been

improved, too. The Comenius project helped to establish sustainable working relations to academic colleagues in other European countries.

Project members gained a better knowledge of other European countries and pedagogical approaches not only in Europe, but in Canada, too. New professional contacts on the European level after publication and dissemination of project results is reported, e.g. being asked to work on a European handbook on early language learning. In general, an increase of motivation through professional and personal exchange within the international project partnership has taken place.

Coordinators and team members from universities had the chance to attend classes in preschools and discuss early language learning with the pupils' parents. Courses developed by the partnership were integrated in the participating organisations' curriculum. The participation in the Comenius project resulted in more networking activities on the local, regional and national level. The ELIAS project has increased the interest in internationalisation of the own educational practice. new international projects are planned (in the field of foreign language learning in primary schools as well as in environmental studies)

Obstacles / Enablers: In some cases the institutions' administration should have provided more administrative support for the project coordination, especially in regard to financial handling of an international project; strong support by university authorities and school headmasters helped a lot. Project coordination of an international including many partners and associated members (60 colleagues) is a very time consuming and demanding task: Professional promotion of coordinator and team members result in an loss of expertise in international activities; However, other institutions and organisations benefit from the new staff members' expertise involvement in European educational projects, e.g. the coordinator is preparing a new CMP in her new institution.

Non-existing public funding after the period of EU-financing results in difficulties to go on with research in other related fields.

Impact on the world of school education

The project developed through an interdisciplinary approach including among others zoologists and speech therapists new environmental concept of Green Immersion that was presented during the lifetime of the project to a wide variety of target groups at national and international conferences, e.g. two European conferences on zoo associations (EAZA 20089 and zoo education (EZE 2009) as well as a German conference on foreign language education (DGFF 2009) and the European association of second language acquisition (EUROSLA 2010).

Teacher training on early foreign language learning was offered mainly to the participating kindergartens and preschools but to additional ones, too, attracted by the project's innovative publications.

In regard to dissemination activities and sustainability it was very important that the CMP ELIAS has been successful in gaining the largest association for foreign language learning (www.fmks.eu) in Germany as strategic partner. The organisation 'Frühe Mehrsprachigkeit in Kindergarten und Schule' (Early Language Learning in Kindergarten and School) has provided a platform for the distribution of news on the Comenius project's activities as well as brochures and CD ROMs produced by the partnership. In addition, FMKS organised national conferences where the project coordinator and project partners have been able to present their results to a wider

audience and attract teachers and administrators to the project. (e.g. Hannover, February 2012).

Furthermore, thanks to the initiative of the Magdeburg ELIAS team and a bilingual high school, a new association of bilingual institutions was founded in the region of Saxony Anhalt in order to foster the exchange of information and best practices in immersion teaching.

Following the recommendations of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001), the ELIAS project developed innovative education and training material, which aimed at fostering exchange and cooperation between education and training systems within the community.

ICT and New Social Media played an important role in the project's discussion and implementation process, e.g. a MOODLE platform was used to exchange working results. However, keeping the project website up-to-date seems to be difficult because financial resources for a webmaster are not available.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

Especially teachers in kindergartens and preschools appreciated being recognised and treated by university researchers as respected partners. Teacher training on bilingual language learning offered new innovative ideas on how to integrate early foreign language learning in their daily professional practice. Interviewed teachers from bilingual kindergartens in Darmstadt/Germany and Oldenburg/Germany attending a lecture (400 participants) and a workshop (75 participants) given and held by the coordinator at the German educational fair DIDACTA (Hannover, February 2012) pointed out that they appreciated, both, the theoretical background as well as the examples of best practice in the field of early foreign language learning. Furthermore, an interviewed student from the University of Hildesheim, Department of Education reported that the lecture on the project results was an intellectual stimulus for her Master Thesis.

400 pupils in the participating kindergartens and preschools took part in project activities. In the beginning of the project period, very often parents were reluctant to the idea that their children become involved in the innovative changes within the curriculum, but they finally agreed after extensive discussions (e.g. Magdeburg Zoo Preschool). The interviewed director of the Magdeburg Zoo explained that in the very beginning of the project staff members of the zoo had a lot of criticism in regard to the project, but noticed the growing enthusiasm of the preschool pupils becoming experts on the zoo animals not only in their native language but in English, too. Parents were informed on the animals form insects to elephants, too, by their preschool children.

Furthermore, according to an interview with a senior advisor in the Ministry of Social Affairs in Saxony Anhalt recommendations submitted by the ELIAS project were taken into account and resulted in new regulations on bilingual kindergarten teachers.

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

The ELIAS Comenius Multilateral Project has been successful in involving and combining the expertise of different types of institutions and organisations, especially preschools and universities. Preschools and kindergartens have played an active role in the project. Staff members did not just take orders from the academic staff represented in the CMP, but were actively involved in the discussion and production process of teaching modules. Kindergarten and preschools welcomed the cooperation with universities not part of their regular practice because staff members felt treated like real partners. On the other hand, academic researchers appreciated the chance to

work constantly with preschool children and to validate the own scientific hypotheses. All partners, not only the Higher Education ones were involved in decision making. In so far, kindergartens and preschools contributed to the identification and promotion of innovative results and examples of best practice in the area of early foreign language learning. Another interesting aspect was the Comenius project's cooperation with a zoo, because innovative materials concerning 'Green Immersion' were developed and tested through this liaison. In addition, a nationwide German network of bilingual language learning (www.bikita.de) has had a very positive effect on the dissemination of project results on the national level in Germany. Furthermore, during the period of project financing the coordinator and the partners have been successful in enlarging the partnership by attracting additional institutions representing the target groups.

Finally, it should be mentioned, that the Comenius project ELIAS – Early Language Intercultural Acquisition Studies has been selected by the European Commission, Unit B 2 School Education as example of best practice. The project has been chosen to be included in a Commission website that is part of an initiative in the field of literacy chaired by H.R.H. Princess Laurentien of the Netherlands and launched in February 2011.

5.2 VISEUS: Virtually Connected Language Workshops at European Schools - An Advanced Teacher Training Concept for Language Acquisition, Multilingualism and Creative Learning

Key ID in this study: 94

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 133886-LLP-1-2007-1-DE-COMENIUS-CMP

Coordinating Institution: Osnabrück University, Germany

Partners: DE: 1 university; AT: 1 university; FI: 1 university; HU: 1 university; IT: 1; NL: 2 universities. Associated Partners: schools in DE (2), AT (2), FI (1), HU (2), IT(1), NL (1)

Comenius Action: Comenius Multilateral Project

Thematic Area: Foreign Language Learning

Duration: December 2007 – November 2009

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: The main task of this project was to develop a research based concept of advanced training in the fields of language acquisition, multilingualism and creative language learning. This concept, developed from the personal experience of teachers who teach according to the principles of Progressive Education, was based on the latest research results and approaches, including modern technical aids that promote the learning of foreign languages and multilingualism. Language workshops in all participating schools were set up and connected through a virtual communication platform called 'Vis@vis – The Virtual Writing Workshop'. Thus, the participants were able to communicate with each other and share materials and experience. The main activity in the language workshops consisted of the work with the interactive children's encyclopaedia 'Euroklex'. Students had the chance to access the European children's lexicon 'My Own Dictionary' in eight languages and create their own one. Based on the experience gained in the different schools as well as the results of the accompanying research a general concept of advanced training was developed. Results are provided and disseminated trough e.g. the project website, articles, publications, and teacher trainings.

Website: http://www.viseus.eu

Public Part of the Final Report:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/acc_mes_final_report_2007/com_mp_133886_viseus.pdf

Important Characteristics/ Highlights: The Comenius Multilateral Project VISEUS project has been very successful in combining expertise from academic researchers and practitioners from primary and secondary schools. University staff and practitioners learned from each other and jointly developed innovative teaching modules. Innovative ICT methods played an important role in the language acquisition and teacher training project. Accompanying research carried out by the international academic staff was an additional reason of success. Articles were published as well as lectures given and workshops organized by the partnership. Finally, the VISEUS was

awarded the European Language Label for innovative projects in language teaching and learning by the German National Comenius Agency (PAD) in October 2009[32].

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

The project coordinators (Ingrid Kunze and Susanne Müller-Using) mention that the involvement in the Comenius Multilateral Project lead to a personal and professional development through the international contacts. Because of the close working relationship with colleagues from partner countries and meetings abroad they developed a better understanding of other cultures and educational systems. For one of the two coordinators this first international project helped to look beyond one's backyard and develop additional personal skills. In addition, motivation to be involved in international projects was raised through school visits. Coordinating and managing skills have been improved, too. Working in a European context, being able to discuss professional topics and questions of interest with colleagues from other countries, and dealing with diverse hierarchical attitudes has been regarded as a positive challenge and lead to personal development. According to project partners, taking part in a European project widens one's horizon and the European idea becomes reality.

In addition, the own teaching practice at the university has been positively influenced by the experiences gained in the project. Participation in the CMPS resulted in additional scientific research beyond the project as well as publications. Teacher students attending the project partner institutions were actively involved in the project trough studying classroom activities in the participating partner schools, university seminars and writing master theses. Thus, results of the VISEUS project were integrated in the in the partnership's existing curriculum.

Within the coordinating educational department internationalization has been increased. Part of the project schools successfully applied for a Comenius School Partnership project involving schools from IT, NL, and DE (www.mepeus.eu). 90 students from NL and IT visited the German schools. In addition, one of the coordinators is doing international research for her postdoctoral thesis and the coordinating institution is taking part in a European meeting in order to agree and prepare a new Comenius Multilateral Project.

Applying for, coordinating, reporting to the Agency were very time consuming and demanding tasks. Therefore, the coordinators appreciated the administrative support before, during and after the project provided by the coordinating institution's international office, especially in regard to finances. All in all, the project duration limited to 2 years created too many problems.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

The VISEUS project has had a variety of sustainable impacts on the world of school education. First of all, innovative teaching methods including virtual workshops and online dictionaries to be used by primary and secondary school students were developed and tested. The approach to integrate ICT methods in foreign language learning was of great interest for educational authorities responsible for the initial and in-service teacher training, e.g. the administrator in charge of in-service training in the German Bundesland Lower Saxony attended the final project conference in November 2009. In 2010, the coordinators presented their teaching modules at a teacher training course organized by the Osnabrück Regional Government and

[32] http://www.kmk-pad.org/praxis/ess/ergebnisse/ess2009.html#c6599

attended by foreign language advisors. Participating experts transferred VISEUS results as example of good practice to schools supervised by them.

On the national level in Germany the Comenius Multilateral Projects set up their own network in order to exchange experiences and project results. This cooperation allowed the members to communicate on a professional level. It is also meant to help disseminate new ideas and to present the participating projects as a network. Among others, it was the PAD – Pädagogische Austauschdienst (the Educational Exchange Service set up by the German Conference of Ministers of Culture and Education) to promote and to support this initiative. Lectures were given by the project coordinators and team members at Symposia arranged by the PAD in 2008 and 2009.

On the international level project results, e.g. the level web-based instruments for working in language workshops and the online dictionary 'My Own Dictionary', were disseminated by one coordinator and a team member from Austria e.g. in a workshop during the Creative Learning for a Sustainable World Conference, organized by The Learning Teacher Network in Ljubljana/Slovenia in October 2009[33]. All in all, project findings were presented not only through lectures at project meetings and conferences, e.g. final conference in Osnabrück/Germany attended by more than 80 university staff, school practitioners and educational authorities from the participating countries, but in countries beyond project boundaries, too. Lectures were given in academic institutions, e.g. in Portugal, Estonia, in the USA, and in Belgium to an IBM Master class via video-conferencing in May 2009. Furthermore, several articles were published on the national and international level, e.g. in The Learning Teacher Journal. Vol. 3; Number 1, p. 19-38.

The VISEUS project website played an important role in offering an innovative online environment, but not all features have been available without problems after the project end.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

The research carried out during the project period included evaluation of student's activities and teacher's opinion on their students behaviour and learning progress in dealing with the developed online environment. Children are reported to enjoy going beyond the traditional regular routine work. The concept of 'free expression', developed and practiced by the French educationist Celestin Freinet, lead to an increased motivation among the primary students aged 9 to 11as well as the secondary students aged 11 to 14. A Skype discussion on a farmer drinking goat's milk between two classes in the framework of the virtual 'Vis@vis' workshop has been interpreted by the teacher as an occasion to reflect and to speak about language and cultural differences (cf. Susanne Müller-using, Ingrid Kunze (Ed.) (2009), Virtually Connected Language Workshops at European Schools – Selected Papers of the Accompanying Research, Györ, p. 97)

An interviewed teacher pointed out that foreign language learning according to the principles of progressive learning strengthened the motivation to write. Especially students having a migrant background enjoyed experiencing that other students had problems with the German language, too. Students taking part in the project in afternoon classes reported enthusiastically to their parents on their experiences with their peers from other European countries. As a result the teacher was asked by e.g. a Turkish mother to attend the lessons, too, and to become familiar with the online dictionary in order to improve her own language and ICT skills.

[33] http://www.learningteacher.eu/sites/learningteacher.eu/files/Ljubljana2009_Conference_Brochure.pdf

By integrating ICT methods in classroom teaching students had the chance to change the roles. Robin aged 14 offered to his teachers a workshop in cutting videos and dealing with video equipment. His excellent ICT knowledge helped him to find a company offering him an apprenticeship.

Participating project teachers have partially been successful in transferring their knowledge to schools from additional countries, e.g. an Italian teacher supporting a Belgian secondary school as curriculum developer.

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

The VISEUS Comenius Multilateral Project has been successful in involving associated primary and secondary schools from 6 countries and, thus, combining the expertise of different types of institutions. The universities from Austria and Germany integrated their didactical expertise and experience with creative teaching methods of teaching and learning, whilst the Pedagogical Institute of the German Language Group in Bolzano/IT ranks amongst the pioneers in the field of ICT and its application in school teaching. The NL partner contributed with expert knowledge on language acquisition and multimedia literacy. The HU partner from Györ included among others the integration of minority groups by focusing on the Hungarian Roma, whilst supervision expertise was offered by the Finish partner from Vaasa.

Primary and school teachers as well as their headmasters played an active role in the project. The identified target groups and their representatives within the consortium contributed to the identification and promotion of innovative results and examples of best practice in the field of ICT based language learning on the primary and secondary level. Thus, the academic staff and school practitioners' different expertise and qualifications were effectively combined in this European educational project. The opportunity for teachers to be integrated in the project by being part-time lecturers in some of the universities/teacher training institutions played a positive role.

The coordinators pointed out that criticism by the involved school did take place and was appreciated. Nevertheless, having the primary and secondary schools from the participating countries integrated in the consortium as official partners would have been an additional plus concerning partnership composition and decision making.

5.3 NATURBILD: Nature and Technology in Early Childhood Education

Key ID in this study: 129

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 141796-LLP-1-2008-1-DE-COMENIUS-CMP

Coordinating Institution: Pädagogische Hochschule Ludwigsburg (University of Education), Germany

Partners: DE: 1 university of education; AT: 1 university of education; BG: 1 university; HU: 1 university of education; RO: 1 university; SK: 1 university; Associated Partners: several kindergartens, pre-schools, elementary schools in the participating countries

Comenius Action: Comenius Multilateral Project

Thematic Area: Early Childhood Education / Science Education

Duration: December 2008 – February 2011

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: This project was designed to help improve the scientific and technical education of the past by improving teacher training and further training. The partners developed a joint teaching strategy for challenging children in transition from pre-school to school education to discover and understand natural phenomena and solve technical problems. The strategy was based on children's creative and constructional skills and encouraged them to look from numerous perspectives. It involved playing and experimentation, building and handicrafts, exploration of the world, improvised movement and the aesthetic expression of movement, social co-construction, the explicit interpretation of phenomena, the inclusion of imagination, literature and poetry and independent study in the form of projects. The consortium has been very successful in designing, testing and implementing numerous teaching scenarios published e.g. on the project website and in two multilingual handbooks including videos of lessons and experiments.

Website: www.projekt-naturbild.eu

Public Part of the Final Report:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/com_mp_141796_naturbild.pdf

Important Characteristics/ Highlights: Kindergarten, preschool and primary school staff being members of regional networks were recognized by the project partners as valuable colleagues and having equal say. The project has been very successful in combining expertise from academic researchers and practitioners from kindergartens, preschools and primary schools. University staff and practitioners learned from each other and jointly developed innovative teaching modules. In addition, higher education partners as well as practitioners in the participating countries old and new member states having different intercultural backgrounds as well as pedagogical approaches and traditions developed their professional competences by studying differing teaching methods.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

The project coordinator (Hans-Joachim Fischer) a very well-known academic researcher and university professor having gained manifold experience as primary teacher himself for more than a decade pointed out that his involvement in the Comenius project lead to a personal and professional development through the professional contacts and, partially, controversial discussions on combining early childhood education and science teaching. Because of the close working relationship with colleagues from partner countries and meetings abroad he developed a better understanding of other cultures and educational systems. Coordinating and managing skills have been improved, too.

The Comenius Multilateral Project helped to establish sustainable working relations to academic colleagues in other European countries, especially in the new member states, e.g. a PhD student from Romania had the chance to spend one year at the German coordinator's institution to do research for her thesis. In general, project members gained a better knowledge of other European countries and pedagogical approaches, e.g. the Hungarian progressive education tradition or the Slovak aesthetical learning tradition.

Coordinator and project members from the educational universities as well as invited practitioners had the chance to attend classes in kindergartens and preschools in order to discuss and test methods of science teaching in early childhood education. These mobility activities resulted not only in a critical analysis of the participants' own pedagogical positions, but had a positive impact on the motivation to be involved in European projects and to transfer results from one country to the other. Courses and teaching modules developed by the partnership were presented to colleagues within the participating partner institutions as well as integrated in the curriculum, e.g. in the part-time programme designed for kindergarten teachers in Ludwigsburg/DE.

Furthermore, new professional contacts on the national and European level after publication and dissemination of project results are reported, e.g. being asked to organize workshops at national conferences on early childhood education and chairing the section Early Childhood Education within the German Primary School Teachers Association in Berlin in March 2009. In addition, in 2009 the German project coordinator has been invited to become a board member of the journal Selye János Egyetem, Tanárképzö Kar published by the Slovak partner university.

The participation in the Comenius project resulted in more networking activities on the local, regional and national level. The NATURBILD project has increased the interest in internationalisation of the own educational practice. New international projects are planned, partially supported by the active European office of the coordinator's institution.

Obstacles/enablers: Coordination of the Comenius Multilateral Project was very time consuming. Limited financial resources after the end of Community funding lead to problems in updating the project website. Early information on the administrative procedures and regulations would have been a great help. Fortunately, the coordinating institution's administration carried out the financial tasks. Therefore, the coordinator was able to concentrate on content and management issues. The high number of teachers being members of the local and regional networks, e.g. 25 in Germany, had a very positive effect on the design, testing, evaluation, implementation and dissemination of the project results.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

Through an international discussion partially controversial project members designed and tested innovative teaching methods were designed and tested. Practitioners took part in this process at an early stage of the project. Once a week project coordinator and team members visited kindergartens and primary schools asked children aged 4 to 8 to run by themselves experiments on water, air, leaves etc. These activities were documented through videos which offered university staff and university students as well as kindergarten and primary school staff the possibility to analyse and discuss the learning process. Initial teacher training students were involved in this process by writing their master thesis on these student experiments whereas kindergarten teachers had the chance to earn credits for a higher academic degree.

Furthermore, in the German state (Bundesland) Baden-Württemberg the coordinator has been asked by several town officials to present project results to public decision makers as well as teachers at different levels in order to recommend innovative approaches in science teaching in regard to the newly set up Bildungshäuser (houses of education) institutions combining kindergartens and primary schools. In Stuttgart the capital of Baden-Württemberg project results were presented to more than 100 participants of a conference, including e.g. all directors of the state teacher training institutions in this Bundesland and numerous headmasters from Stuttgart. In addition, project results will be taken into account in designing a new framework for primary schools in Baden-Württemberg to be finished in 2015.

On the national level, the coordinator being the representative of the Bundesland Baden-Württemberg in the German society Gesellschaft für den Sachunterricht (Social Study and Science Society; www.gdsu.de) was successful in setting up a new section on early childhood education. Project results were disseminated to teachers by e.g. giving several lectures at workshops and publishing articles in the society's scientific journal.

In-service teacher training on teaching natural phenomena was offered mainly to the participating kindergartens and preschools but to additional ones, being members of the regional networks.

According to the interviewed project partners and beneficiaries participation in project workshops and conferences and having the chance to attend classroom teaching in foreign countries fostered the teachers intercultural and professional openness as well as their willingness to question the own theoretical background and teaching practice.

A wider audience, more than 1000 persons, including university staff, students, kindergarten and primary school teachers, town administrators responsible for kindergarten and schools, was addressed in a public lecture on early childhood education on natural phenomena in the coordinator's institution.

Handbooks in different languages are available on the project website, e.g. Natural and Technical Phenomena in Early Childhood Education. Study Companion Volume 1: Pedagogical Support including interesting articles, e.g. 'Playing with Air and Water' or 'Air and Water in Movement Games and in Children's Aesthetic Expressive Movement'. In addition, motivating videos and analyses are presented but only in German as well as the work packages. Keeping the project website up-to-date has been difficult for the project coordinator partially because of missing financial resources and problems with the webmaster.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

Especially teachers in kindergartens and preschools appreciated being recognised and treated by university researchers as respected partners. An interviewed former primary school teacher, being a member of the coordinator's regional network and now part-time working in a kindergarten, highly appreciated having the chance to discuss with university researchers theoretical aspects of methods how to teach kindergarten children. He had the chance not only to revise his opinion on kindergarten teachers but on the colleagues' qualities in other European countries by taking part in visits to project partners and the associated kindergartens and primary schools, e.g. in Hungary.

Altogether, more than 400 children took part in science experiments in Germany. They were encouraged to develop their own points of view, to articulate their vision of the world, and to organize their experiences interpretively in language, to communicate their interpretations to each other, exchange them and to think about them together. Children aged 4 to 8 were highly motivated and reported enthusiastically to their parents at home a result of being allowed to explore individually and not being trained and taught by classroom instructions. In addition, the interviewee pointed out that the local mayor as well as the person responsible for the administration of kindergartens in his town were very interested in the NATURBILD Comenius project and supported the implementation of innovative teaching methods.

Another interviewed primary teacher enjoyed to study pupils' attitude and behaviour by being able to explore independently natural phenomena. Discussions with a colleague from Hungary visiting her school and partially working with her pupils were an appreciated possibility to get to know other pedagogical traditions and approaches. Teaching practice in the specific countries were reflected and discussed, partially controversially. In addition, the participating primary school students had the chance to learn something about another European country not known before. An educational decision maker responsible for the primary schools in Heilbronn/DE was very interested in the examples of best practice jointly developed in the project and attended a project conference.

By having the chance to take part in a project conference in Hungary and attending classes in a Hungarian kindergarten another very experienced kindergarten teacher became highly motivated to review her own pedagogical practice and change her attitude towards teaching methodologies allowing children to follow their own path. It was an advantage that some of the Hungarian colleagues knew the German language and an English speaking interpreter was available. Communication only in English would have been more difficult. After the return from the international conference in Hungary the primary teacher invited parents to a meeting and informed them on the results of the visit. Project results are disseminated within the interviewee's kindergarten through in-service training.

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

The NATURBILD Comenius Multilateral Project has been successful in involving associated kindergartens and primary schools and, thus, combining the expertise of different types of institutions. Primary school teachers and, especially, the ones from kindergartens played an active role in the project. They did not just take orders from the academic staff represented in the CMP, but were actively involved in the design, discussion, testing and implementing process. Academic staff and practitioners appreciated the mutual enrichment during the project and contacts between most of them are sustainable. Kindergartens and primary schools welcomed the cooperation with universities not part of their regular practice because staff members felt treated

like real partners. On the other hand, academic researchers appreciated the chance to work constantly with children and to validate and to develop own scientific hypotheses.

The identified target groups and their representatives within the consortium contributed to the identification and promotion of innovative results and examples of best practice in the field of science teaching in early childhood education. It has to be noted that more than one hundred teachers from almost 50 kindergartens and primary schools in 4 countries (BG, DE, HU, RO, SK) were actively involved in the project (cf. list of institutions in Nature and Technology in Early Educational Processes.NATURBILD1.The Natural Phenomena of Air and Water Study Companion Volume 2: Perceiving and Understanding Children for Kindergartens and Grade Schools (4–8 year old children).

The high numbers of involved teachers and their degree of activity have to be regarded as a success story for Comenius Multilateral Projects and an example of best practice concerning making use of synergy effects between higher education institutions (teacher training institutes) on the one hand and kindergartens and primary schools on the other hand. Nevertheless, having at least one kindergarten or primary school from the participating countries integrated in the consortium as official partner would have been an additional plus concerning partnership composition.

5.4 The Making of Leadership in Education: A European Qualification Network for Effective School Leadership

Key ID in this study: 96

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 141730-LLP-1-2008-1-DE-Comenius-CNW

Coordinating Institution: The Lower Saxony State Institute for Quality Development in Schools - NLQ, Hildesheim / Germany

Partners: DE: 1 state institute for quality development in schools; AT: 1 university of education; DK: 1 university; EE: 1 Ministry of Education and Research; HU: 1 teacher training institute; IE: 1 teacher training institute; IT: 1 teacher training institute; NO: 1 primary and secondary school; PL: 1 teacher association; RO: 1 teacher training institute; SL: 1 primary and secondary school; ES: 1 public authority; TR: 1 secondary school. Associated partners: CH: 1 teacher training institute; RU: 1 state institute for pedagogic and further education. Tandem partners: CZ: 1 national institute for education; GR: 1 university; IS: 1 university of education; LT: 1 state institute for education; MT: 1 primary and secondary school; PT: 1 public authority; SK: 1 private institute for education. Co-opted partners: 15 from BG, CY, CZ, FR, GR, IS, LV, LI, LU, MT, PT, SK, SE, UK.

Comenius Action: Comenius Multilateral Network

Thematic Area: School Management

Duration: November 2008 – October 2011

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION aimed to systematically organise the information on concepts of qualifying school heads and of course programmes on school development and leadership, to find a common understanding of key concepts of educational leadership and to disseminate it to experts, specialists and teachers. The target groups are individuals and interest groups who are involved in education, whether in schools, in associations, in national initial and further education institutions, academies and universities. On the political level, the project targets school authorities, ministries and other decision-making bodies in the educational sector. As a final result, the published European Synopsis, the Framework of Reference and the Recommendations to the European Commission and to political decision-makers give insight into the thematic area chosen. Furthermore, a project website and a promotional video on 'Good Schools' have been produced by the consortium.

Website: http://www.leadership-in-education.eu/

Public Part of the Final Report:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/com_nw_141730_mle.pdf

Important Characteristics/ Highlights: This Comenius network has been very successful in generating benefits for practitioners as well as policy makers in 28 European countries by simplifying communication paths for establishing contacts with

responsible contact persons from other institutions and by that initiate and enhance international cooperation and collaboration in the field of school management. Three dissemination conferences in Tallinn (2009), Bolzano (2010) and Leon (2011) attracted a growing number of participants from about 25 countries. The Comenius Network has been successful in setting up a platform for joint reflection and co-operation in identifying and promoting innovation and best practice in the thematic area concerned. Furthermore, the Comenius Network has been able to disseminate project results, e.g. the Framework of Reference and the Recommendations (each 1500 copies) to a variety of important policy makers, e.g. Ministries of Education in the participating countries.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

The project coordinator (Jens Bollhoefer) pointed out the involvement in the Comenius Network led to a growing awareness and better understanding of other cultures as well as to a better view of different educational systems and school-life in other countries. Being the coordinator of such a large European network resulted in an increased ability to intermediate and to work in an international context. The coordinator has developed his ability to organise and chair successfully international conferences (up to 150 participants) and to be in the spotlight.

In general, an increase of motivation through professional and personal exchange within the international project partnership has taken place. The coordinator's as well as the other project partners' contacts to schools, headmasters and teachers on the local and regional level have been fostered. The coordinating institution developed a new curriculum for the in-service headmaster training in Lower Saxony.

Participating in the Comenius Network has been regarded as personal added value for the involved project members. All in all, the European activities carried out by the coordinating institutions and the project partners haven been increased step by step. The participation led to new Comenius School Partnership projects initiated, e.g. by German secondary schools having been associated partners of the network.

Project members gained a better knowledge of other European countries and pedagogical approaches not only in the European Union, but in Switzerland and Russia, too. The Comenius Network helped to establish sustainable working relations to academic colleagues and institutions in other European countries. After the period of project funding the coordinating institution and the coordinator have been asked to become a member of the EPNoSL network (http://www.schoolleadership.eu/) funded by the European Commission, too. The network represents stakeholders on School Leadership from 21 EU Member-States and intends to expand to all EU and Associated Member-States. EPNoSL partners include academic and other experts engaged in key thematic areas, education ministries and other policymakers, as well as professional associations at national, regional and European levels. In this regard, the coordinating institution co-organised a European wide EPNoSL conference on Structuring and Culturing Schools for Comprehensive Learning in Berlin (June 2012).

Obstacles / Enablers: Problems with one partner's activities that had to be solved. Although the coordinating institution's administration supports the Comenius Network Leadership in Education, there is a difficulty of maintaining the project website after the end of the EU funding, because within the institution there are only limited personal and financial resources available. However, the project website still plays an important role in disseminating project results and is regular updated. It turns out to be an advantage that the coordinating institution is part of the Lower Saxony Ministry

of Education, a strong public authority responsible for the quality at several thousand schools.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

The Comenius Network has been very successful in attracting a considerable number of associated partners at an early point to broaden the network. An editorial group of experts evaluated the partner contributions and to edit the final results, i.e. a European Synopsis on School Leadership, a thorough compilation of 30 country reports, the Framework of Reference identifying core elements of school leadership qualifications and structures and the Recommendations to political decision-makers at European, national and regional level.

Dissemination and exploitation took place at various levels, e.g. through international conferences in Estonia, Italy and Spain. Furthermore, a conference not foreseen in the original application was held in Turkey in spring 2009. These events were platforms for the distribution, discussion and evaluation of the network findings and, thus, helped to improve the outcomes.

In addition, the partners' activities included numerous presentations at international, national and regional meetings and workshops, e.g. a national conference in Germany with high-level representatives from all 16 states (Bundesländer) organised in Hildesheim in February 2011. As a result of this conference the network coordinator has been invited to give presentations at conferences, meetings and workshops organised by other ministries in Germany, e.g. in Hamburg, Brandenburg and Baden-Wuerttemberg.

Furthermore, network results and modules prepared were presented to 19 school headmasters and 5 teachers taking part in an LLP Study Visit organised by the German Comenius Agency in Bonn in March 2011. In addition, the network coordinator was actively involved in preparing and conducting two days of a CEDEFOP Study Visit on Innovative Leadership and Teacher Training in Autonomous Schools (Hannover, May 2012) organised by a secondary school being a beneficiary of the Comenius network activities. 16 European head teachers, school inspectors and teacher trainers had the chance to learn about new concepts of leadership and management of different types of schools as well as innovative methods of internal and external evaluation.

The project website played an important role in disseminating the network results, e.g. the Framework of Reference translated into 16 languages and including 300 qualification modules. Furthermore, the very useful and interesting video Good Schools (http://www.leadership-in-education.eu/index.php?id=2) offering interviews with several headmasters on their conception of innovative and student friendly schools is another important aspect of the network's dissemination strategy. However, a forum for discussion is not available on the network website.

All in all, by putting together transnational expertise and by collecting and evaluating examples of good practice, diversified outcomes have been made possible. The advantages for the interested public lie definitely and the exchange and study of culturally different approaches towards leadership styles and the mutual understanding of the cultures and the gathering of knowledge in regard to new or different leadership performances.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

Especially headmasters from schools have appreciated the ability to discuss issues of innovative school leadership not only on a regional level within the sub-networks, but, especially, on the international level. The coordinating institution supported by the Lower Saxony Ministry of Education invited 20 headmasters to attend the network conferences in Bozen/IT and Leon/ES. The mobility activities were highly appreciated by the school heads because they enjoyed the face-to-face communication with their peers from other countries.

Schools in general played an important role within the LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION network not only the headmasters as main target group identified but teachers and parents as beneficiaries, too. Modules developed by the consortium were used in the in-service training activities and feedback was given by teachers and parents, too. The coordinating institution developed and transferred successfully innovative materials to migrant parents' and received feedback through a questionnaire in seven languages. Students were interested in the new materials (toolboxes) that were implemented in the participating schools]

A school headmistress being the president of the Lower Saxony Headmaster Association with more than 1000 members enjoyed having the chance to attend the network conferences in Estonia, Turkey, Italy and Spain and to exchange ideas and experiences on school management in an international framework. She appreciated the transnational exchange of experience on teaching of migrant students, because more than 80 % of her students have a migrant background. In addition, she found it very interesting to study and to discuss the different roles and influence of headmasters in the participating European countries.

The integration of Drama as a new subject in the school curriculum can be regarded as concrete result of visiting schools in other European countries and being able to compare and to analyse positive aspects of different educational systems.

In the journal of the Lower Saxony Headmaster Association it was regularly reported on the network results and events by conference participants. In Tallinn the interviewee was informed by a local headmaster on the existence of the European School Heads Association (ESHA) that resulted in a membership and networking activities in this international association. According to the interviewed headmistress part of her experiences gained through the Comenius network activities resulted in a statement on more school autonomy in the Lower Saxony governmental declaration in 2009. In so far, there has not only been an impact on Comenius network beneficiaries but on the educational system, too.

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

The LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION Comenius Network starting with 13 partners and two associated partners from Switzerland and Russia representing different experiences in education, e.g. teacher training institutions, schools, ministries, and universities. The network has been very successful in attracting additional partners. All in all, thirty countries participated in the network. The idea of creating and setting up a network was achieved at a high level by including a large number different types of institutions from numerous countries working together and sharing experiences and work results. Especially the annual conferences attracting up to 150 participants, including e.g. staff from schools, teacher training institutes, and universities in addition to representatives from educational authorities and school headmasters associations, proved to be highly effective as a motivator and an international forum to exchange contents and research results.

Concerning project management the existence of a strong steering committee including motivated, active and qualified members from different countries turned out to be very helpful to support the network coordinator of such a large network. Practitioners from schools played an important role by being involved actively in the discussion, working process and dissemination process as outlined above.

Furthermore, networking on a European level has been fostered through the links to other Comenius Networks on school management and leadership visible at the network homepage as well as through inviting representatives of other Comenius Networks in the thematic area chosen to conferences and give presentations, e.g. in Bozen (2010). Furthermore, network results were presented at the eTwinning conference Leading 21st-Century Schools in Berlin-Brandenburg /Germany in November 2011[34]. Thus, the network has been successful in strengthening links to the world of Comenius as well as to other LLP sub-programmes, too. The coordinating institution is planning to apply for a new CMP. First discussions with the Lower Saxony Ministry of Education have taken place.

[34] www.etwinning.de/mediathek/file/Minikonferenz_Berlin_BB_2011/eTw_programme_details_111103.pdf

5.5 EASE: Early Years Transition Programme

Key ID in this study: 109

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 141791-LLP-1-2008-1-DE-COMENIUS-CMP

Coordinating Institution: EU-Geschäftsstelle Wirtschaft und Berufsbildung, Bezirksregierung Köln, Germany

Partners:
DE: 1 policy maker, 5 teacher training institutions; DK: 1 university; GR: 1 university; HU: 1 teacher training institution; AT: 1 teacher training institution; PL: 1 university; SE: 1 university; IS: 1 university

Comenius Action: Comenius Multilateral Project

Thematic Area: Early Childhood Education

Duration: October 2008 to September 2010

Short Summary on Objectives and Results:
The project aimed to maximize cooperation between the pre-school and primary school sectors and thus facilitate the transition. It promoted the involvement and exchange of views between parents and professionals in both sectors, and developed connecting curricula in early literacy and language practice within a play-oriented and participatory approach. The project further contributed towards assessing children's literacy learning, and thus encouraged them to reflect on their own learning processes, empowering them to become autonomous learners. The main project results included an overview of the national organisation of early education and early primary services, national course descriptions of initial and in-service training, an internal evaluation tool, an adaptation of the learning-story approach (M. Carr), context and literacy indicators in all national languages, a guideline for courses on educational transition, and a compendium.

Website: www.ease-eu.com

Public Part of the Final Report
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/com_mp_141791_ease.pdf

Important Characteristics/ Highlights
The project enabled very fruitful exchange and cooperation among different partners coming from with different systems of pre-school education. It also contributed to progress towards co-operation between the pre-school and primary education sectors.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

The project added to the professional development of the participating partners, especially as intensive exchange and discussions on the transnational meetings broadened the mind for different educational approaches.

The German teachers involved in the project disseminated and deepened their professional development in further seminars together with their colleagues.

The course descriptions developed in the project are still being further used and developed.

The contacts between the project partners continue and plans for further cooperation in projects exist. The consortium attempted to propose a Network project for funding, which unfortunately was not approved.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

The materials produced, and among them especially the further developed learning-story approach and the guideline for courses on educational transition, contribute significantly to sensitizing pre- and primary school teachers about children's development. They are currently being used, and presented in pre-school teachers training contexts, thus enduring the impact of the project.

The different teacher training institutes use the course descriptions and the materials, in each case adapting them to their systems.

The exchange of experience broadened the minds of all involved partners and contributed to a more child-oriented view on childhood and early years education.

In the region of Cologne the project results were disseminated and implemented in local / regional education networks.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

Future pre-school and primary school teachers, in their different systems of education, benefit from the courses developed. Their trainers (teachers or university lecturers) benefit from the exchange with their colleagues from the other partner countries. Additionally, especially German teachers from the Cologne region benefit from seminars in further education concerning the topics of the project. Students can receive an 'EASE certificate' which certifies advanced competence ('Kooperative Übergangsgestaltung von der Kindertagesstätte in die Grundschule - EASE – EARLY YEARS TRANSITION PROGRAMME').

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

Most of the consortium members were involved in the education of future preschool and primary school teachers. Depending on their national systems they were either university members or teachers in vocational colleges. Their exchange added to recognizing the advantages and problems within the different systems. Exchange of students did not take place. Especially university teachers played a very active role in the consortium and later in dissemination of the project results. The coordinating institution as part of the School Supervisory Board in the Cologne region could disseminate the results especially to decision makers. Moreover it supported the seminars of further education for the teachers in pre-school teacher vocational colleges.

5.6 BEAGLE: Biodiversity Education & Awareness to Grow a Living Environment

Key ID in this study: 100

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 142340-LLP-1-UK-COMENIUS-CMP

Coordinating Institution: University of Warsaw Centre for Educational Studies, Poland; the Field Studies Council (FSC), UK

Partners: 6 partners from Germany, Hungary, Norway, Poland and the UK consisting of universities and non-formal education and environmental organisations

Comenius Action: Comenius Multilateral Project

Thematic Area: Environmental studies

Duration: December 2008 – December 2010

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: BEAGLE is an environmental project, aimed at enhancing teacher's knowledge and understanding of biodiversity and sustainable development through delivering effective and relevant out of classroom learning experiences for young people. It encourages the awareness and understanding of teachers and young people that European and global scale solutions are required for successful sustainable development. It is particularly concerned with improving the quality of learning outside the classroom and enhancing students' motivation to learn. The starting point for activities is the Beagle Biodiversity Observation Project involving online tree monitoring project, supported by an identification key and a comprehensive teaching guide. The monitoring is then carried out via an extremely attractive interactive website which is planned to continue for the next 5 years. An additional way of actively involving pupils was through an international photo competition.

Website: www.beagleproject.org

Public Part of the Final Report:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/com_mp_142340_beagle.pdf

Important Characteristics/ Highlights:
Engaging teachers and pupils through an online environmental monitoring project

Offering an attractive hands-on alternative to formal classroom learning

Enabling teachers and pupils to directly share and compare their efforts with those in other countries

The multilingual website focus enables the project to sustain its activities after the end of EU-funding.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

Richard Dawson, Head of Field Studies Council (the project contractor) emphasised the impact on schools of offering an out-of-school alternative to dealing with environmental and biodiversity issues. Not only does it motivate pupils to explore the curriculum in a non-classroom based context but encourages them to make connections with other subject areas. A school in Denmark even used this model to build the curriculum around an environmental theme. This method has been particularly effective in primary schools which are more used to a multidisciplinary approach, whereas secondary schools tend to lay less emphasis on 'soft subjects' such as environmental studies. Despite this, 57 secondary schools and post-16 colleges have taken part in the scheme.

Another important aspect was the training of teachers, the UK partner offered training sessions to teachers from centres linked to LEAs and school networks delivering in-service teacher training. It also organised for an advisor to go round schools.

The key to the project's success though is its interactive website through which more than 1,000 classes from over 500 schools in 18 countries have already become involved. ICT has become a key tool in linking up teachers and pupils from across Europe, and the Beagle 'brand' with its simple logo is having a strong international impact.

Obstacles: As has already been mentioned, there have been difficulties in involving secondary schools as the curriculum being more restricted. Also there have been real problems for pupil mobility due to organisational and funding issues, especially at school level.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

The initial project research identified different levels of approaches to covering environmental issues. Whilst in Norway extra-school activities in this area were fairly common, they were more random in Slovakia and Bulgaria. Again scientific fieldwork was very strong in the UK, Norway and Germany with their traditions of field studies, whilst further east the emphasis was more on earth education. These differences meant that offering practical hands-on approaches to teaching about the environment changed partner attitudes, particularly in eastern European countries, impacting on their personal as well as their professional development. As one partner commented: 'More teachers and students are inspired to learn about their natural environment through first-hand experiences'.

As has already been identified, a higher level of learning was evidenced amongst primary children with activities linking into other curriculum areas. The attitudes of the teachers also changed through coming into contact with different approaches in other countries. Although the main focus of activities involved monitoring trees, 60% of schools undertook follow-up activities involving climate change monitoring, leading to more confidence in undertaking outdoor learning, better identification skills, and a greater ability to carry out outside investigations. For example at a conference for schools in Shropshire, presentations showed that some had taken idea further, applying their findings to explore the impact that humans had on natural world and personalising links with other curriculum areas.

One last issue is the idea that sustainability needs to be planned into a project at the outset, not as an afterthought.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

The main beneficiaries have been the teachers and pupils in the large number of schools that have been involved in the project, as the list of participants on the Beagle website clearly illustrates. In addition the website publishes a number of examples in different languages confirming the seriousness and high competence level with which pupils undertook the research, whilst the photo section reflects the development of their technical and artistic skills. Positive responses have also been received from teachers across Europe who participated in the scheme. The commitment of the consortium to continue the online project for a further 5 years is further evidence of its success. The Polish partner, who obtained additional national funds to continue the project with small groups, found that they mushroomed.

Along with these, other beneficiaries have become involved. In the UK, contact has been established with two local education departments together with national organisations such as the Open University and the Woodland Trust. In Eastern Europe too a wider impact has been identified: in Hungary links have made with research institutions, In Poland with the University of Warsaw Botanical Gardens, in Slovakia with a national forestry centre and a hydrometeorological institution.

One issue of concern for the partners which also reflects on the beneficiaries is that, whilst the concept of citizenship is frequently geared towards employment, the Beagle project is focused on more generic skills, social education for its own sake, which might limit its impact in formal education.

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

The project was developed to celebrate the bi-centenary of Darwin's birth and the way he looked at the natural world. The project was coordinated by University of Warsaw with the Field Council responsible for the financial coordination. The consortium was made up of a wide mix of organisations from both 'old' and 'new' EU countries with a strong national reputation, each of which had previously worked with at least one of the other partners. All have areas of common biodiversity experience, including in out-of-classroom delivery. This enabled the consortium to cover all the key areas: FSC for identification keys and biodiversity education; Germany for research links and simulation activities; Norway for collecting data and web databases; Slovakia for working in formal and non-formal contexts; Poland for teacher training; Hungary for analysing biodiversity data.

All partners worked closely with teachers and had strong links with existing educational networks, for example, FSC has existed for 60 years and attracts 12,000 visitors a year to its centres. The consortium was able to develop a strong initial idea building on previous experiences, out of which came the idea of concentrating on trees. The wide range of external stimuli in the environmental area, including high quality TV nature programmes, meant that the project outcomes had to be of a good standard to make an effective impact, particularly the interactive website. The wide range of existing partner contacts has enabled the project very quickly to attract other schools and countries.

5.7 No Child Left Behind

Key ID in this study: 84

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 134027-LLP-1-2007-1-UK-COMENIUS-CMP

Coordinating Institution: City of Westminster Council, UK

Partners: 5 partners covering teacher-training, civil and private organisations from Lithuania, Poland, Spain, Romania, and UK

Comenius Action: Comenius Multilateral Project

Thematic Area: Extra-curricular support

Duration: December 2007 to November 2009

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: No Child Left Behind promoted the importance of extra-curricular non-formal learning as an effective instrument for contributing to children's learning, self-confidence, sense of citizenship and achievement, and motivation. Specifically it focused on supporting young people to acquire basic life skills for their personal development, for future employment and for active European citizenship. It was also concerned to develop knowledge amongst young people and educational staff of the rich diversity of European cultures and languages. It achieved this mainly through developing a training kit 'Learning Outside Hours', available in five languages aimed at providing knowledge, examples of good practices and resources to enable teachers, trainers and anyone interested in providing outside school learning activities. This was supported by featuring the kit on the project website along with supporting material, a brochure, research and survey reports, and case studies from different countries.

Website: www.nochildleftbehind.eu

Public Part of the Final Report:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/acc_mes_final_report_2007/com_mp_134027_nochildlb.pdf

Important Characteristics/ Highlights
Non-formal learning more accepted as part of normal school culture, complementing the curriculum

Produced first comprehensive guide in the UK to support out-of-school learning

Focus not only on trainers and learners but also parents

Strong impact in eastern European countries

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

The coordinator, Nishaharan Vaithilingam, stressed the strong impact that the project had both on the coordinating institution, City of Westminster Council, and the schools for which it is responsible. Because it complemented formal learning by targeting those pupils often left behind, it received a positive reaction from the 8 local London schools piloting the No Child approach, many of whom produced their own leaflets and newsletters promoting it. There was also a high take-up of the training offered to school staff, particularly as it helps support the delivery of key competencies in formal learning. For example, St George's school council now plan to use it to train newly qualified teachers.

Overall, there was a positive attempt to make non-formal learning part of the school culture, complementing the curriculum work, not just as an extra. The introduction of terms such 'study support' and 'out of school hours learning' helped with this process. Another positive for all partners was the introduction of the European dimension into this process, with attitudes towards working within Europe beginning to change.

Obstacles: One of the main problems is that small institutions rarely take ownership of project work, with schools lacking the resources to organise EU projects. In order to overcome such problems such as sharing information online (organisations' internal systems often block emails), language comprehension and different term-times, the support of networks and local authorities is crucial. Furthermore, particularly in the UK, one story of failure can cause much damage.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

The No Child approach helped to change attitudes towards informal learning in schools not only through the project itself but as part of a wider learning process, encouraging people to work together in a new way. Engaging young people on a voluntary rather than enforced way enabled teachers to address major problems arising from curriculum-structured learning, including literacy and numeracy. The UK experience showed that unless non-formal learning is targeted towards those who are from economically, socially and culturally disadvantaged backgrounds, at risk of underachieving, the gap between those who succeed and those who do not will continue to widen. The project also tried to promote the idea that it is not enough simply to organise out-of-school hours learning but it needs to be made measurable.

Within the consortium different approaches were developed: for example in the UK the concentration was on learning personal skills, in eastern European countries mainly on meeting the needs of parents. These differences in emphasis are reflected in the impact within different countries. In Rumania links were established with a large teacher-training agency. In Spain they also developed teacher-training connections in Spain but also close links with NGOs in the voluntary sector. This reflected the fact that in Spain there was no coherent system, including for engaging with migrant communities.

Obstacles: Recent changes in the economic and educational climate prevented imbedding in UK, although the process was continuing in Spain and Rumania. Lack of language skills, however, was the main obstacle, problem particularly in UK.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

A major challenge for No Child was to change a culture which had been in existence for 30/40 years. Nevertheless the project was able to involve a wide range of external beneficiaries. Westminster Council was in a particularly advantageous position to do

this, not only through its network of contacts, including schools and teacher and parent organisations, but also its links with education departments of other London Councils. For example, all school inspectors had copies of the training CD-ROM which they disseminated broadly. Schools too were encouraged to promote the approach in their after-hours activities, for example through the Hampstead Theatre performance project, in which pupils were prepared multi-arts performances for a wider public, including writing their own scripts.

The impact in Eastern Europe was variable although by the end there were clearly identifiable changes in attitudes and opportunities. Schools in Poland and Lithuania had traditions of after-school clubs, previously free under communism but now had to be paid for. And the Romanians were able to link up with a teacher training agency with around 10,000 teachers.

Obstacles: Recent changes in the UK educational climate make the promotion of after-school activities difficult, for example school inspectors are no longer available to disseminate training guidelines. Also, whilst a real interest in pupils linking with those in other countries continues, lack of funding and school support limit these. In some countries, administrative barriers have been identified, such as having to obtain the Mayor's permission for outsiders to enter Lithuanian schools.

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

The No Child partnership consisted of teacher training providers and civil organisations with a reasonable geographical and cultural mix. Following initial contacts between the UK and Spain, suitable partners from three eastern European countries were identified, each with a good reputation for transnational partnership working and for promoting innovative learning approaches to school education. Their particular expertise helped identify their main roles within the project: the experienced UK lead partner, a large municipal authority, took the lead on identifying key issues in non-formal learning policy and practice; the Spanish partner, a teacher training agency, coordinated the pilot training syllabus; the Romanian partner, a non-profit making educational institution, played a key role in coordinating the research work package and the structure of the training kit; the Polish partner, a teacher training centre, took the lead on preparing the course materials; the Lithuanian partner, an organisation working with volunteers, contributed to the course contents relating to volunteering. All the transnational partners worked closely with local schools, NGOs, non-formal learning centres and even parents, running pilot courses, promotional and dissemination activities.

A particular strength of the consortium was its ability to engage with schools, teachers and pupils in its locality and to promote the concept of informal learning approaches complementing the formal school curriculum, including the delivery of key skills to underachievers. This approach was especially effective for Eastern European partners where parents often played a leading role and, along with teachers, benefited enormously from the training opportunities offered by the project.

5.8 Wide Minds: the Human Face of Digital Learning

Key ID in this study: 97

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 149175-LLP-1-2008-1-UK-Comenius-CNW

Coordinating Institution: Carmarthen County Council, Wales, UK

Partners: 21 partners from 16 countries: Austria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Poland, Spain, Turkey & the UK. Partners from a wide range of organisations, including education authorities, teacher trainer providers, universities, FE institutions, civil organisations and others

Comenius Action: Comenius Multilateral Network

Thematic Area: ICT, foreign language learning

Duration: October 2008 - September 2011

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: WiMi is a network aimed at promoting international collaboration as a context for improving digital competence and multilingualism in all learners through creating a forum of best practice in primary and secondary school education. It focuses on encouraging innovative teaching and learning methods particularly in foreign languages, as well as improving communication processes through implementing easily accessible and navigable collaborative platforms. It has achieved this through a range of activities and products, including an interactive website (including Moodle and videoconferencing), a regular online journal, 'Kaleidoscope', international conferences, training workshops and online courses, establishing 13 Regional Coordinating Centres (RCCs) in different parts of Europe, and mobility and visits between partner countries.

Website: http://www.wideminds.eu

Public Part of the Final Report:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/com_nw_141975_wimi.pdf

Important Characteristics/ Highlights: The consortium consists of organisations involved with primary and secondary education from a variety of geographical, educational and vocational backgrounds. At least four of the network regions in Wales, Poland, Czech Republic and Spain are disadvantaged areas. In addition to English, most partners speak at least 2 other languages. Wales and Cyprus work daily in a bilingual if not multilingual environment. Thirteen Regional Coordinating Centres (RCCs) bring different partner organisations together within the umbrella of the network.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

In a face-to-face interview the WiMi coordinator (Polly Seton) emphasised that the Network was of real benefit to developing the skills of teachers and in particular their leadership skills. She felt that a local council-led network is a really effective way of

bringing local schools into European projects being in a particularly good position to achieve inbuilt sustainability, at both regional and international level. It has been able to actively encourage schools to participate in European-wide initiatives (through WiMi 29 multilateral projects have been developed involving 50 local schools).

This was corroborated by teachers from two of the participating Welsh schools, who also stressed that by observing teaching approaches in other countries teachers found new ways of delivering their subject. Particularly beneficial was the ICT training as part of Network activities, enabling partners to train other teachers locally and create joint involvement of both teachers and pupils, for example in the production of an animated advent calendar.

Network involvement also encouraged international awareness and language learning links between schools with a range of spin-offs, including foreign languages courses, job shadowing and assistantships. The transnational partners also felt that they had benefited greatly in terms of their professional and technical skills.

Obstacles / Enablers: One particular issue was that many foreign partners knew nothing about Wales before being involved in the Network, and certainly not that it was a bi-lingual country. This added to the intercultural dimension of the project. Problems were also created by the very different conditions in partner countries.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

One of the most striking things about the WiMi initiative and its effectiveness as a network is the on-going and widespread impact it is having on schools education in so many regions of Europe. Two of the key areas in which this is being felt are:

- Developing quality education in various disciplines (especially ICT and languages) by promoting the use of certain ICT tools such as the Moodle learning platform and videoconferencing
- Promoting the learning of foreign languages from a very young age at school.

Clearly the immediate effect is on the schools involved and there is more than enough evidence from them to suggest that participation in the Network has both widened their educational horizons and provided them with innovative ways of improving curriculum delivery and engaging with the new technologies.

However, in the wider context, one of the most effective tools is the role of the RCCs (see above) which not only bring together normally loosely connected organizations – individual schools, local authorities, teacher training providers, etc. – but also create on-going forums for future collaboration. Specifically this has meant that the outcomes of the WiMi network are not only widely disseminated but are able to become imbedded fairly quickly in local, regional and potentially national education systems. The role of the regional authorities such as Carmarthen County Council cannot be underestimated in this, but the fact that such effective local networks are in place clearly helps facilitate this.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

The wealth of feedback both from WiMi itself (including the external evaluator report) and the Impact Study research makes it clear that a wide range of beneficiaries have been positively affected, particularly through the international conferences, the Network website, the on-line journal and the RCCs. In addition partners were able to offer ICT training to teachers in non-partner schools and organise courses developing language skills. The French partner, Angelique Perrault, emphasised that those who

had experienced approaches in other countries were more willing to introduce new approaches. She also noted spectacular improvements in multilingualism.

Linking Network meetings with mobility opportunities enabled pupils to benefit more directly from these experiences, enabling them to improve key competences especially in 'digital, social and civic, and communication in foreign languages'. Schools saw it as a practical way of opening minds to how education can be developed to 'answer the needs of the 21st century'.

RCCs are also an opportunity for decision-makers to become aware of the Network's outcomes, for example in seeing how the web can show 'what happens in European educational environments', helping to influence wider policy. In addition seminars held in many of the partner countries, including Italy, Poland, Turkey, Finland and Wales, provided opportunities for the specific involvement of local stakeholders.

The main obstacle to the involvement of beneficiaries is the general lack of awareness of the Network. Although help from some National Agencies was forthcoming, partners felt that more dissemination support at local, national and European level was needed.

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

'WiMi (has) done a lot for a NEW Europe. Sometimes they have done more than our politicians.' (WiMi partner feedback)

The external evaluator's report makes it clear how crucial the leading role of the Welsh coordinator was in ensuring the effective operation and successful outcome of the project. As a local authority they were able not only to involve a wide local network in the Network's activities but also to organise a wide-ranging and diverse international consortium.

This ensured that the European dimension was especially important in a number of ways. It enabled teachers and educators from different countries to compare and adapt good practice from a variety of contexts and cultures (over 400 heads/teachers have been involved in WiMi activities). In particular it introduced schools to the educational application of new technologies in other countries such as Moodle and videoconferencing. It also provided a basis for effective language learning in real international contexts and enabled teachers and pupils to experience directly and in moderated form the different contexts and cultures in which others operate.

A particular strength of WiMi is the establishment of a strong basis for sustaining the network after the end of EC-funding, in particular through the self-funded continuation of the Moodle platform, the Network website and the on-line magazine, setting up RCCs in a number of countries, organising further conferences and study visits, the creation of an online study visit catalogue, and support for schools tom organise further LLP projects.

5.9 COPE: Competences of Professional Educators in Europe

Key ID in this study: 104

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 141800-2008-LLP-ES-COMENIUS-CMP

Coordinating Institution: CEP Manacor, Spain

Partners: ES: 1 continuing education institution; 1university on education; NE: 1 university on education; DK: 1 university college; PO, 1 university college; 1 teachers continuing education institution; RO: 1 university; 1 teachers continuing education institution

Comenius Action: Comenius Multilateral Project

Thematic Area: Teachers continuing education

Duration: October 2008 – February 2011

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: COPE aimed to make a contribution to study the competences of teachers in Europe at the levels of both initial and in-service teacher training. The participants in the project are institutions which provide initial and/or continuing teacher training. The project identified teachers' competences and the corresponding training needs, both current and desired, which was the baseline for developing a first pilot course at a national level in teacher competences, with different designs adapted to each participating country. Drawing from the results and best practices of that experience, the consortium elaborated and conducted an international Comenius course, based on a common design, with teachers from all the partnership's countries, in order to help promote a European education dimension by describing the educational system and sharing situations and experiences regarding multiculturalism and inclusion in the classrooms. Teacher materials are available on CD and on the web site, and numerous publications resulted from the project.

Website: http://www.copeeproject.com

Public Part of the Final Report:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/com_mp_141800_cope.pdf

Important Characteristics/ Highlights: The project has produced a matrix of teachers' competencies combining the accepted teachers' competencies in many EU countries with the key competencies defined by the Lisbon Strategy. After the end of the project, COPE has implemented Comenius-Grundtvig teacher training courses to take place in different countries up until 2013.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

According to the project coordinator (Mabel Gayà) the involvement in the Comenius project was experienced by the participants as a great lesson on the importance and necessity of teamwork in successfully managing and participating in a project, as much at the level of teachers as at the level of the project consortium.

The consortium undertook a very important, innovative and successful investigation in order to identify teachers' competences and their training needs regarding competences, taking into account the needs unique to each country. The research was done at two levels of teachers' competences: actual (the level they felt to be at) and the desired (the level they would like to reach).

The school teachers who participated in the pilot courses conducted in each country have been able to benefit from all the content covered, information, and innovative strategies in order to use them in the European classroom of the XXI century.

The importance of knowing foreign languages for facilitating communication and the European dimension of the project promoted working on activities for improving English communication skills.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

One of the significant achievements of the project was that, through online interaction between course participants in each country, it was possible to design a successful course, taking into account the training needs resulting from the initial study in coordination with the whole consortium. The result was a course that developed in each of the six countries with an interactive character internationally through the forum tool on the website in which participants from each country could share their experiences, discuss and debate based on the three mandatory common activities designed by the consortium. It was deemed very successful, as participants enjoyed being in contact with foreign teachers discussing their similarities and differences in education.

Every partner institution has developed a serious of actions, some still taking place, in order to transfer the results and outcomes of the project among students to be teachers, in-service teachers and teacher trainers and academic staff. And therefore because of the wide amount of connections with teachers at schools and universities, headmasters and policy/decision makers have made it possible for the COPE information to spread widely to a very large number of people and different departments involved in education. Exact target numbers are very difficult to calculate, but an approximation is that there have been around 6,000 people in short term impact and over 10,000 as long term targets.

The project has produced a matrix of teachers' competencies combining the accepted teachers' competencies in many EU countries (based on the APQT in the Netherlands) with the key competencies defined by the Lisbon Strategy.

COPE has also published articles in different teacher training Journals as, e.g. a special issue at the digital journal INNOVIB (http://www.innovib.cat/numero-2/num-2.php).

The evaluations of the courses have been the basis for the design and plan of the future Comenius courses. After the end of the project, COPE has implemented Comenius-Grundtvig teacher training courses that took place Xasion University in the Netherlands in the summer of 2011, and at Teachers' Continuing Education Institution in Gdansk, Poland, in 2012, and is expected to continue until 2013. The title of the course is 'Teaching across Europe. How to cope with the challenge?'

The project provided a good foundation for disseminating the project and continuing it beyond the conclusion of the project. Because of their commitment to the project, partners were motivated to participate in various events to share all project

information with other educational agents through academic articles, trainings, etc., and have reported that their efforts have been received with great interest. They are motivated to continue dissemination and development activities, such as conferences and meetings, publications, etc.

In COPE the use of ICT has been basic and essential at all times, a growing trend throughout Europe. There have been no publications of books or pamphlets on paper—everything has been done digitally and presented on the website of this project as well as other websites.

COPE has contributed to the goal of improved 'good practice' among European classrooms and teacher training institutions. It also has contributed to improved coordination between pre- and in-service training of teachers in Europe in order to contribute to a qualitative development of life-long learning.

A mobility plan has started being developed in order to motivate teachers to experience school practices abroad and to motivate partners to keep implementing and disseminating the results of the COPE project.

The most difficult aspects of the project have been dealing with a large number of participants with a very different sociocultural background.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

Most of the schools and teaching centres benefited from their participation, many emphasising the professional and personal growth they experienced by being a part of a professional and educational project of such large dimension, some for the first time in their career. They commented on the importance for them of learning how to manage all the aspects of the project, such as bureaucratic reports, task control and completion, financial management, public relations, involvement with the European Commission (understanding and dissemination of their activities) and national agencies, and the dissemination of the activities carried out both at the European level.

Some teachers centres, based on the results of the Project are now applying a new model of needs assessment, valuing perceptions of each teacher about his/her competencies against those needed, which render, as a result, the training needs of the target group.

Working in this project was a great lesson on the importance and necessity of teamwork to successfully manage a project. It taught how to successfully lead and coordinate group work. Some commented that their style of working had improved as a result of the teamwork carried out with the project partners. This kind of professional development will be necessary for the success of all European level activities and collaborations.

It was pointed out that one learns most from difficult situations, referring to the management and moderation of meetings, not only because of the high number of participants, but mostly because of the different personalities and cultures represented in the group.

The project was widely considered to be of great importance and interest to all partners involved, because it not only helped everyone to understand better the situation of each international region, but forced them to learn how to reach important agreements, such as developing questionnaires together and conducting studies with clear results on the training needs of the teachers in each area.

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

COPE was successful from the beginning in involving and combining the expertise of different types of institutions and organisations, as universities, in-service teacher training centres, primary and secondary schools, national agencies, and ministries of education

The first phase of the project, making a study and analysis of the level of competence of teachers in the participating schools, illustrates the important role of the schools in the project, and was done well.

The outcomes of the project have been shared with local authorities of each partner organisation, which should mean an improvement of their plans and curricula of teacher education in the regions of the countries involved

The fact of delivering Comenius teacher training courses during 2011-12 demonstrates the will to promote COPE results in the European teacher training arena.

The project is considered to successfully contribute to the development of quality lifelong learning and to promote high performance, innovation and a European dimension in systems and practices in the field.

5.10 INTER Network: Intercultural Education, Teacher Training and School Practice

Key ID in this study: 60

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 134367-llp-1-2007-1-ES-COMENIUS-CNW

Coordinating Institution: Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED), Spain

Partners: The INTER Network comprises 23 partners from 12 countries, and includes five different types of institutions: schools (5), research centres (3), associations (3), universities (9), and agencies(3), distributed as following: ES, 1 continuing education institution; 2 universities on education; 1 Ministry, 1 research institution, 1 school, 1 agency; IT, 1 university; 1 association, 1 agency; LV, 1 university; MT, 1 company; NE, 1 international association; FR, 1 university; AT, 1 agency; PT, 2 universities, 1 school; SI 1 research centre; UK, 1 university; NO, 1 university, 1 school; PL, 1 agency

Comenius Action: Comenius Multilateral Network

Thematic Area: Teachers' continuing education

Duration: December 2007 to November 2010

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: INTER fostered the reflection on cultural diversity and provided a scenario for cooperation, exchange and elaboration of practical tools for both pre-service and in-service teacher training.

Website: http://internetwork.up.pt/

Public Part of the Final Report:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/com_nw_134367_internetwork.pdf

Important Characteristics/ Highlights: INTER has produced reflection and action oriented to implement an intercultural approach in education, specifically in teacher training (initial and in-service) and school practice (compulsory education), generating a consensus about how to develop intercultural education in teacher training and school practice, and establishing ways to develop common policies. Numerous events and documentation have been produced. The project designed new modules for intercultural education devoted to pre-service teacher training. A 'Directory for teacher training materials and resources to practice intercultural education' has been produced by INTER, available on the website. The network has been present in many international events related to intercultural education in Europe and worldwide.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions
Many of the participants worked in a cooperative way within groups but expanded their abilities in being part of a complex network, composed of schools, research

centres, associations, universities, and private agencies, that required more flexibility of roles, products, etc.

A 'Directory for teacher training materials and resources to practice intercultural education' has been produced by INTER, available on the website.

Members enhanced their self-confidence and credibility within their own organisations. Participation in the INTER network has brought 'social accreditation' benefits. They feel more confident about their abilities and the way they carry out their tasks as a result of having learned but also of having seen diverse realities that confirm 'they are following the right path'. In addition, their new experience from the INTER network has improved their visibility and recognition by their peers within their organisations, who now ask them for advice.

Members benefited by improving their capacity to do their own work and to outreach to others, for example, universities enriching their approaches to interculturalism enabling them to advise schools on such matters as understanding and addressing citizenship issues.

Members improved their capacity to engage in new projects in the field of intercultural education. As a result of participation in the INTER network, its members have established personal and academic contacts that make it possible to participate in and develop new projects and actions. For example, some of its members have engaged into new projects, such as the 'Rick'sCafé' (Recreating Intercultural Competences and Knowledge Spaces), a project for secondary schools that takes stock of the necessity of the internationalisation of school environments with a view to fostering harmony and integration without diminishing the wealth of diversity of cultures.

Evens Foundation for Intercultural Education (www.evensfoundation.be), Belgium, Maud Aguirre is the contact person. The INTER Project was awarded with the Evens Prize on Intercultural Education (2006). It had a relevant role in the First Open Conference and in the dissemination of events and products.

Universidad Veracruzana Intercultural (Universidad de Veracruz, México (www.uv.mx), the contact person is Prof. Sergio Téllez. UNED coordinated an ALFA project (2007/2009) in cooperation with this institution and seven other members of the INTER Network. As a result of this project, an official Euro-Latin-American Master Degree on Intercultural Education started in October 2011, under UNED coordination[35].

OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) (http://tandis.odihr.pl/index.php?p=edu,mus), the contact person is Taskin Tankut Soykan, who is coordinating a project to develop a guide for educators to combat intolerance and discrimination against Muslims. ODIHR aims at producing the guidelines by the end of 2009.

In terms of leadership and participation, one of the drivers forward of the network was the diversity of its members and the appreciation of their differences as an opportunity to learn and enrich their experiences with the experiences of others.

Members of the consortium developed a new proposal: Comenius project focused on Systematisation of Practices. This proposal is being coordinated by UCM (Spain) and

35 http://portal.uned.es/portal/page?_pageid=93,24271216&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&idContenido=14

the partnership includes Universities and schools: UNED, CSIC, FUHEM and Rosa Chacel School (Spain), University of Oslo and Spikkestadt School (Norway), Nottingham Trent University (UK) and Instituto Comprensivo di Montorio (Italy).

Erasmus Intensive Course (EIC) on Intercultural Education. The proposal is being jointly prepared by UNED, CSIC and University of Oslo. The EIC is an Erasmus week long course with workshops, key-speakers sessions, and discussions on the specific topic. It would be held in September 2011 in UNED (Spain).

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

INTER understands that there must be a shift in the vision of diversity to the intercultural approach for all people. The development of joint materials, for instance teaching materials, has made possible the introduction of different approaches into the same teaching package and therefore introduced a European dimension into the field of teacher training on intercultural education.

The teaching materials have been released as a 'Directory for teacher training materials and resources to practice intercultural education', which has been the result of the search, elaboration and evaluation of diverse materials and good practices in intercultural education. The purpose for the directory is to give an overview and description of teacher training materials and resources to practice Intercultural Education[36].

These materials have increased the transferability potential into new contexts. It has also strengthened links among members of the network and has further extended to exchanges of information between them for future projects. For instance, a University in Spain seeking a school for cooperation in the UK under the Comenius programme has obtained contacts from its UK partner.

Another example is the organisation of inter-cultural workshops in Spain for the training of teachers in spring 2010 and an upcoming workshop (to coincide with the science week, November 2010) addressed to people outside the network, namely University professors and secondary education students.

Several schools and Teacher Resource Centres are involved in implementing the INTER Network practices and teacher training activities. For instance, CEIP Carlos Cano (Madrid, Spain) and Centro de Profesores y Recursos de Vigo (Galicia, Spain).

Three special issues of 'Intercultural Education' Journal. They correspond to Volume 20.3 (The intercultural approach in higher education. Three examples of best practices. Editors: Teresa Aguado and Beatriz Malik); Volume 21.4 (The scope of diversity: From the perspectives of Southern European intercultural policies. Editor: Margarita del Olmo); Volume 21.5 (Teacher Education for Diversity. Editors: Miguel Prata Gomes and Jorun Buli-Holmberg).

Three Network Open Conferences: 'Celebrating the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue: Theory and Practice in Intercultural Education', Warsaw, 2008; 'Diversity, Inclusion and the Values of Democracy. Building Teacher's Competences for Intercultural Education', Ljubljana, 2009; and finally, 'Intercultural Education as a project for social transformation. Linking Theory and Practice towards Equity and Social Justice', Malta, 2010.

[36] Available at the website:
http://internetwork.up.pt/sites/default/files/WP6TeacherTrainingMaterials28januar2011.pdf

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

According to the coordinator, one of the meaningful benefits obtained with great potential for being put to use outside INTER's own institutions and networks, by teachers and teacher trainers at all levels, university lecturers, decision makers, and the public in general, is improving or making new contacts with stakeholders outside their communities—contacting and working with different people from different organizations and countries.

Another benefit is attaining stronger skills and knowledge in the field of intercultural education, going beyond the usual ideas on intercultural education that existed in the participants' countries, learning new ideas from other people and organizations as well as learning the limitations and opportunities found in the approaches others used;

A further benefit is for universities dealing with teacher training having the opportunity to contemplate questions of interest to them such as 'cultural diversity and equality at school' or 'how to train teachers and apply intercultural education'; and importantly, the acquisition of more knowledge enlightened members on their knowledge gaps.

As an example, the dissemination of INTER results to teachers outside the network in Portugal, specifically training teachers on how, with minimum equipment, the teacher can generate enthusiasm in class as part of a cooperative learning environment with the use of 'cross curricular cameras' (a workshop on the use of audio visual materials that is an example of practice that can be emulated, copied and adjusted according to context, subject and creativity of the teacher and students together).

Another example is the organisation of inter-cultural workshops in Spain for the training of teachers in spring 2010 and a workshop in November 2010 (which coincided with the Science Week in Madrid) addressed to people outside the Network, namely University professors and secondary education students.

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

The INTER Network, with its 23 partners (including 5 schools) in all areas of expertise from 12 countries, brought together institutions and people at all levels of education, succeeding in making progress toward their aim—a perceived necessity in Europe—to create a networking culture of shared values, standards and rules. There has been an active role of schools in the partnership, participating in the provision of examples of good practice in intercultural education.

INTER Network has increased confidence and credibility in the project of the intercultural approach to education at all levels by putting in centre stage in Europe the need for a common understanding of cultural diversity as a value, the need for an agreement on how best to implement on going exchange and reflection on the intercultural approach transcending national boundaries. Lisbon Education and Learning Indicators have been advanced as learning to learn is the basis of the intercultural approach to education promoting cultural and language diversity leading to more harmonious and non-discriminatory practices at school, the workplace, the community and society.

The production of the 'Directory for teacher training materials and resources to practice intercultural education', is an example of innovative results and examples of good practice in the field of intercultural education, very commendable for all institutions involved in pre-service and in-service teacher training in Europe. This will have an impact on schools, transversally on the curriculum, and in their practice as learning communities.

5.11 KROSS: Kick Racism Out of Sport, Schools and Society

Key ID in this study: 124

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 142471-LLP-1-2008-1-NO-COMENIUS-CMP

Coordinating Institution: Karmøy skole-og kulturetat, Pedagogisk Psykologisk/ Norway

Partners: NO: 1 Teacher in-service training organization, football club; DK: 1 Teachers Learning and Resource Centre, ES: 1 Confederation of Education and Training Centres, UK: 1 football club, 1 research institute

Sub-Programme: Comenius Multilateral Project

Thematic Area: Active citizenship, intercultural education, inclusive approaches

Duration: December 2008 to November 2010

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: Kick Racism Out of Sport, Schools and Society (KROSSS) was a 3-year project that addressed racism and inequalities in education. It focused on harnessing the power of sport in order to create positive influences and connections at cultural and sociological levels. It worked with intercultural learning opportunities both in school and out of school through informal learning in sports clubs. KROSS brought together teacher training organisations, sports clubs and other specialist agencies in the field to develop knowledge, resources and training opportunities. The aim was to enable educators to work with multicultural stakeholders in school and out of school. It developed, among other things, an in-service training course for teachers and coaches, and a resource pack with a curriculum module for use with young people in schools.

Website: http://www.karmoyped.no/krosss/

Public Part of the Final Report:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/com_mp_142471_krosss.pdf

Important Characteristics/ Highlights: An unconventional partnership was comprised of football clubs and teachers' in-service training institutes who worked together to develop the role of sport for educating children on anti-racism and interculturalism. The Partnership created, localised and implemented pedagogical models based on best practices in the field of sport education (e.g. football) and inclusive approaches for intercultural education both in school and out of school.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

The project was conceived around leveraging existing good practices about innovative schools programmes to involve local immigrant communities to everyday life through sports. The two identified partners with such practices were football clubs in the UK and Norway. They both have a range of innovative schools and community programmes from improving racial diversity in education to involving local immigrant

communities to everyday life through sports. The project took up these already existing and proven practices and worked with in-service training institutes to model, formalise and document them, as well as to create new material. The common development process of new pedagogical models and material created and fostered links at the European level. The key factor for all participating institutions was working with practitioners both in football and sports clubs and the teacher trainers in the field of in-service training in all the participating countries. Additionally, the involvement of the local community in the areas of implementation had played a key role.

Curricula for in-service teacher training: A one week long teacher training course was developed by the partnership. It was attended by 29 teachers from 12 European countries. This included a course handbook based on the materials supporting the course which now is available on the project website. Parts of the course have now been integrated into on-going in-service programmes in partner institutions in Denmark, Spain and Norway. Additionally, as a spin-off idea from the KROSS course, an in-service course around 'conflict solving' has been conceived.

Regarding the coordinating organisation, the case study brought in light the long innovation history in terms of EU-funded projects (has participated in more than 40). The key aspect is that the coordinator works closely both with the local in-service training centre and the local education authority in a small town in Norway. This collaboration has brought important new European dimensions and links with European organisations into existence. Regarding organisational learning, the project coordinator calls attention to the importance of building local pockets of EU-expertise where small communities can benefit from them. Such local centres of EU-excellence can be regarded as an important investment of the EU money on players who can spend the EU project money wisely.

In terms of professional development aspect on the individual level, the project coordinator has gained a significant amount of knowledge regarding management and running of EU-funded project (over 20), selecting partners for the project, working on cross-cultural communication aspects and gaining insight into educational systems and the culture of other European countries. The coordinator emphasises that knowing and having the experience to build successful partnerships is also a craft that can be perfected over the course of years, like in the case study in question, where the partnership already had experience in working together and also had a new EC project starting. Moreover, the coordinator gives importance in sharing his knowledge in the field, he has been part of the information days organised by the Norwegian National Agency.

Enablers: An important enabler for the coordinating institution is that over the course of the collaboration history, good connections between the local community and its important stakeholders exist. Projects being beneficial for all stakeholders facilitates the transfer of new practices into effect but also anchors them into local practices through solid connections that exist over many years.

As for the partnership, previous collaboration history is also important. In this consortium, five out of six organisations had already previously worked together. Adding the new partner was carefully crafted to match with the project's aims and needs. The coordinator emphasises the importance of the previous links and experiences for the success of the projects.

Enablers include administrative procedures. The interviewed coordinator acknowledges the usefulness of recent tools to facilitate project work such as the e-form when submitting the proposal and the Project Handbook.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

The impact of the project on the world of school education has been very vivid, examples ranger from training methods and materials to applicable practices in the classroom. The project tackled the topic of social inequalities and discrimination faced by immigrants who attempt to integrate into a new society. It highlighted the role of education practices focusing on co-operation principles through sport such as football. The project put an emphasis on communicating to individuals (e.g. teachers, managers, coaches or clubs) about their ability and important role in shaping society in a way that is positive for all races. The project aims at empowering these individuals to take first steps to on-going changes in their personal and professional lives and the organisations that they are involved in.

Exchange of experiences: Both the football clubs involved had a series of exchanges including visits by the UK club (Arsenal in the Community) to Norway and visits from the Norwegian club (SK Vard) to Arsenal in London to learn more about their respective activities and approaches. These exchanges have developed into a school programme of activities including educational and sporting activities as well as guidance for good practice on engaging parents and local authorities in integration and anti-racism education and activities. Examples include: a curriculum for schools promoting knowledge of different cultures and migration in Europe using sport as a pedagogical tool; a manual for hosting 'colourful football' tournaments to promote teamwork and friendship as part of social integration; a brochure encouraging engagement and outreach with schools and other community organisations.

Examples of tangible results (good practice): The principal method of working in the project was to model, refine, scale up and disseminate the developed community engagement activities. The emphasis was on the development of links with local schools, community groups and other local agencies in order to develop shared initiative and to engage with people. In collaboration with teacher training centres in the project, these were further developed into schools programmes, an in-service training course and into a manual and brochure for educators and sports clubs to undertake similar activities. They offer a model of integration that considers integration as a lifelong learning process. These models exemplify transferable good practices for other sports clubs and schools to follow.

Moreover, a research report was created that looks into the challenge of racism in Europe and the development of effective anti-racism strategies in education and sport. This also contributed to a policy and practice document that supports the development of anti-racism education strategies in classrooms, schools and education systems.

Pedagogical strategies for use in the classroom: A manual for the development of a schools programme was created to be used by teachers and youth coaches. The focus is on using sport as a pedagogical tool for teaching about racism and difference. It is important that this is not only material to be used in schools or in in-server training, but also by voluntary workers, local football clubs to work with the community, etc. Additionally, there are three education videos that demonstrate good practices in addressing the challenge of racism in education and sport in the UK, Denmark and Norway.

Impact on different types of institutions: The project has been able to work and create impact across various formal and informal institutions such as schools and local education authorities on the one hand, and on the other hand, sports clubs, locally and nationally well-known football teams and other volunteer organisations. An

example includes the local football team working with schools and the authorities in the municipality to integrate kids and their parents into local life in that community through football. This aspect of work across institutions in an informal setting is a very important achievement. It also represents a model which is well documented and transferable to new settings.

Dissemination to a wider audience: The project has been able to use the media well to disseminate its message in general both to targeted audiences (e.g. school administration, local education authorities, policy-makers, sport clubs), but also to general audience. The national and international profile and reach of the participating football teams have been taken advantage of in unconventional ways. Dissemination activities, for example, included press releases on the Arsenal FC website with a worldwide profile and the teacher training course received coverage in the Arsenal FC match day programme that is potentially read by the 60,000 attendees at the match.

Obstacles including administrative procedures: The coordinator mentions that the approval process by the National Agency of candidates participating at in-service training courses takes time which results in some participants giving a very late notice of coming to the course. This has been a significant obstacle in the project.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

The KROSSS project estimates to have reached over 1500 school children, 200 schools, 100 parents and volunteer coaches, 7 sports and youth clubs and even disseminating potentially to nearly 100,000 people.

Benefits for primary and secondary teachers: Nearly 100 teachers in about 20 schools have engaged in activities regarding racism in education and sport. Moreover, a one week long teacher training course was attended by 29 teachers and sports leaders from 12 European countries, including a course handbook based on the materials supporting the course (now available on the website). Many of the participating teachers who work with immigrants talked about the attitude change through the training course and new practices that they gained that are directly applicable in the classroom.

Benefits for a wider public: Regarding working with local communities and football clubs to better integrate existing immigrant population, the coordinator emphasises the impact of the informal role that sports clubs can have. The project, for example, builds on that success in some of the communities in Norway and the UK where many of the project's practices have been initiated and further developed to be scaled up. Therefore, the impact was not only on schools and teacher training institutions where the material was used, but also in more informal learning organisation such as sport clubs by voluntary workers and staff.

Furthermore, what is notable about the focus of this project is that it is not only on children from immigrant background in schools, but also about integrating them, and their parents, in the local community after the school hours. Hence, the outside of school educational aspect is very important in this project.

Benefits for educational and public decision makers: The coordinator emphasises the role of involving the local policy-makers. Both in Norway and Denmark the project partners had access to disseminate information about the project among policy-makers. The project material was also of interest to authorities in Norway after the drastic incident where tens of teens were shot. The authorities had an interest in the project's methods and contacts to device new ways to create more inclusive societies.

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

Involvement of the different types of organisation and institutions: The partnership of the KRSOSS project is rather unconventional in terms of combining members from both formal and informal educational settings. On the one hand, there are two football clubs with a history of community involvement (NO and the UK) and on the other, there are three teachers' in-service training organisations (NO, DK and SP) and one think tank/research institute. This combination is rather unique. The project outcomes demonstrate the importance of bridging the gap between school and out of school activities, as well as between formal learning and informal ones. It also demonstrates how certain aspects of community work (e.g. people volunteering in sports clubs) can be brought into the realm of EC funded projects spreading the impact to more unusual stakeholders. This was also demonstrated through dissemination activities that took advantage of the local and nation reputation of the partnership.

Identification and promotion of innovative results and examples of best practice: The project is a great example of identifying and promoting innovative practices. The project acknowledges the role of education and sport organisations in addressing the issue of racism and discrimination with young people. They build upon the fact that some local examples of good practice already exist to combat racism across the member states in education and sport. The aim of the project was to open up opportunities for sharing and promoting this work in a systematic way across the education and sports sectors.

Strengthening the cooperation: There is some previous history for the partnership in terms of working together in EU-funded projects. For example in this consortium, five out of six organisations had already previously worked together. Adding the new partner was carefully crafted to match with the project's aims and needs. The coordinator emphasises the importance of the previous experience for the success of the projects. For example, the Norwegian and Danish teacher training institutes have a deep collaboration and cooperation link already through five previous projects, some of which have already dealt with similar issues (e.g. learning second languages, integration & immigrant education, informal learning settings such as sport clubs).

The coordinator also stresses the importance of the EU-project work when it is rooted in relevant needs of the community. For example, the above mentioned issues are very relevant for the teacher training institutes in the consortium, but also for the local communities, as in many of the schools, a vast number of immigrant populations exist. Moreover, the authorities in the local municipality value the importance of European dimension in their communities, therefore, the project outcomes are taken in consideration also at the level of educational decision makers. Last, a number of consortium members have already started a new EU-project together which shows their commitment for a common goal.

5.12 SEEP: Science Education European Platform

Key ID in this study: 145

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 156699--LLP-1-IT-Comenius-CNW

Coordinating Institution: Universita Telematica Guglielmo Marconi, Italy

Partners: IT: 1 university; MT: 1 foundation, 1 university, 1 school; TR: 2 educational authorities, 1 school; GR: 1 NGO organization; RO: 1 teacher training institution, 2 schools, PL: 1 teacher training institution; ES: 1 teacher training institution; DE: 1 adult education provider; CY: 1 university

Sub-Programme: Comenius Multilateral Network

Thematic Area: Science Education

Duration: October 2009–September 2012

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: SEEP is a network of teachers, teacher trainers and organizations who aim at the development of science education. It is a European network for promoting European co-operation and innovation in science education at secondary level in Europe. The objectives: dynamics of science work in Europe connected to science education; improvement of science teachers and school managers' competences; increase of production and access of information and innovative solutions for science education; innovation in science education and school management in Europe. The action is meant to directly benefit secondary science teachers, students guidance officers, trainers, school managers (direct target groups) and science students (direct beneficiaries), offering them the opportunity of: European joint work, learning and exchanging opportunities, skills and competences development, improving science education, training and guidance quality, strengthening the European dimension and bringing innovation to science education and school management. As secondary goals, SEEP is aiming at interchange, cooperation and mobility between science education, guidance and training systems in Europe, at establishing linkages between science work, science education and careers guidance.

Website: www.seepnetwork.eu

Public Part of the Final Report: Not available yet

Important Characteristics/ Highlights

Blended learning informal training sessions for Science teachers, student guidance officers, school managers and administrators at secondary level. Subject: The mentor role of teachers in science careers guidance (focus on alternative science careers), supportive resources and learning approaches

Dissemination activities for the sustainability of the by the means of a platform in which all the material already uploaded have been transferred.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

All the participants pointed out the fact that the involvement in the Comenius network lead to an improvement of their language skills, especially in regard to communicating skills. Through the close working relationship with colleagues from partner countries and meetings abroad they developed a better intercultural understanding of other educational systems and cultures.

Coordinators and team members had the chance to participate to diverse events related to Science and, more than that, to be in contact with economical associations from the entrepreneurial world to assess the requirements for Science education in school, considering the needs of the working world. The participation in the Comenius project resulted in more networking activities on the local, regional and national level, with Chambers of Commerce, industries, firms and research Institutes. The objective being the new challenges of secondary science teachers and the goal of making science studies more attractive and linked to science labour market trends.

Participating institutions have recorded:

- Increased knowledge about science education in different countries and cultures
- Improvement of knowledge and a better way to understand the topics of Science Education
- Increase in the exchange of experiences
- Increase in the ability to learn about innovative methods of teaching Sciences
- New attitudes in learning to look at things from different perspectives

Obstacles / Enablers: It has been a difficult aspect to keep up a good cooperation and communication among all the partners. It is quite difficult to coordinate and supervise a network. Project coordination of an international network, including many partners and associated members, is a very time consuming and demanding task.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

Several teacher trainings have been carried out during the life span of the Project, together with European workshops and Youth Science Days. However, it seems that a lot of work has been done on the theoretical level. Hundreds of pages have been written for each training course and for each meeting, but no monitoring or assessment for the acquisition and application of results in schools or in educative centres has been produced so far.

As for dissemination activities and sustainability, the SEEP network has been successful in gaining associations and organizations from the world of affairs, enterprises and economic sectors. They have provided a platform for the distribution of news on the Comenius project's activities as well as brochures and CD ROMs produced by the partnership. They have organised national conferences where the project coordinator and project partners have been able to present their results, even though the audience was not that wide.

ICT and New Social Media played an important role in the project's discussion and implementation process, e.g. a platform was used to exchange working results. Involved teachers were supported in understanding the learning style of the NET Generation and in using modern and multimedia tools to involve students in learning science

Obstacles and enablers: Obstacles that may exist include mistrust of the innovative tools and paths, while practices that make involvement in Actions easier and best practices dissemination are among the important enablers.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

- Better understanding how to overcome problems, increase cooperation and create new ideas
- Science education related events - popularisation of science among youngsters.
- More dissemination of good practice in science education.
- Improvement of professional and communication skills.
- Science resources and the exchange of good practices in science and career guidance.
- Creation of a big and active network.
- Prevention of isolation of teachers in their classrooms.
- Stimulation of students' interest.

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

The consortium was made up of several and diverse organizations, both private and public. The academic world being represented by the coordinating institution Università degli Studi 'Guglielmo Marconi' that is the first Italian Open University; the University of Malta, Department of Mathematics, Science & Technical Education that is found within the Faculty of Education and finally by the University of Nicosia, the largest private university in Cyprus, where there is also the only UNESCO Chair for intercultural dialogue in Cyprus and the Head of the National Network of the Anna Lindh Foundation.

Foundations and associations have been represented by: Opportunities Aid Foundation, OAFMalta, a private foundation active in the fields of education and culture, with an expertise in the fields of intercultural education and use of media in education; Ocean NGO Organization of Culture, Education and Advice in Networks from Greece; the Associatia Pro Educatie si Formare located in Ramnicu Valcea, Romania, an organization not for profit, with large experience in training activities and with professional experience in education field; the Bildung und Projekt Netzwerk GmbH, BUPNET that is an adult education provider for the promotion of innovation in education and training and eLearning; the Cracow Centre of the Improvement of Educational Personnel - KCDKO that is a part of The Cracow Centre of Management and Administration Ltd – KCZIA, focused on teachers education and implementation of innovative practices; the Confederaciòn Espanola de centros de Ensenanza, leading association of teachers in Spain and two institutions from Turkey: Kocaeli EU Project Coordination Center that is under the responsibility of the governorship of Kocaeli and comprehends many schools and formal, non-formal, and informal educational institutions and the Bursa İl Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü, Bursa Provincial Directorate of National Education.

Schools were mainly represented by the Technical College 'Mihai Bacescu' Falticeni Romania, a public high school in the branches: theoretical (mathematics-informatics; natural sciences; social sciences; philology) and vocational classes (technical; electromechanical; transports; touristic-services), Gheorghe Asachi Technical College, a high school and a Resource Centre for the North-East Region of Romania, that has been involved in a multi-annual Phare TVET Program, regarding the reform of the vocational pre-academic educational system; finally Sabancı Anatolian Technical High School, a technical high school from Turkey.

However, the role of schools has not been a very active one; the reports do not show that they were in the group of decision making, or members of steering committees. They have rather played the role of practitioners that carry out the ideas and plans of the Higher Education institutions.

As a Network, the partners have contributed to the identification and promotion of innovative results. Nevertheless, they could have contributed to the European cooperation in their specific thematic area of work in a stronger way. They have not really strengthened the cooperation of already existing Comenius projects.

5.13 MA²ThE-TE-AMO: MAking MAThEmatics TEAchers MObile

Key ID in this study: 33

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 129543-CP-1-2006-1 -IT-COMENIUS-C21

Coordinating Institution: CAFRE Università di Pisa, Italy

Partners: IT: 1 University/ Centre for the Training and Education Research, 1 school; AT: 1 University, 1 school; CZ: 1 University, 1 school; DK: 1 College of Education, 1 school; FR 1 Académie for training of primary and secondary schools teachers, 1 school.

Sub-Programme: Comenius Multilateral Project

Thematic Area: Mobility and Maths Education

Duration: October 2006 – October 2009

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: The project has focused on promoting teacher mobility by enhancing teachers' confidence in their language competence and thereby reducing their reluctance to be mobile. It showed, by piloting the same didactic units in five partner countries, that it is not difficult to teach Mathematics abroad provided teachers acquire the necessary intercultural communicative competence in a foreign language.

Website: http://mathe-te-amo.dm.unipi.it/

Public Part of the Final Report
Not available

Important Characteristics/ Highlights
The project focused on interesting concepts, including teacher mobility in Europe, the 'universality' of school mathematics curricula and standards, the language, communicative and intercultural competences necessary for teaching mathematics in a foreign language, and the advantages of cross-cultural exchange.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions
There has been a thorough comparison of curricula and syllabuses in European schools that has greatly improved the teaching and learning on when and how particular topics may be taught. While the school mathematics curriculum across Europe shows some superficial similarities in content and progression, different countries and schools within those countries can have widely differing views. For example, a significant cultural difference appeared in the apparently straightforward teaching of fractions in Italy and France. Due to the traditional approaches, fractional parts and processes were given different names that initially caused confusion for what, were essentially the same mathematical situations. This shows that teaching units needed to be piloted so that the cultural idiosyncrasies can be detected.

Due to the similarity of curriculum content, the mathematical subject matter itself was generally assumed not to be a barrier, but the main emphasis needed to be placed on the change in the culture of the classroom from one country to another, and it needs to be realised that the meta-language required to deal with the mathematical-pedagogical situations is an important theoretical and practical factor. Structural differences between languages can create problems about understanding. It is not necessarily true that mathematical concepts are expressed or understood in exactly the same way even across European cultures.

One aspect of this joint enterprise was that the home teachers in the partner schools learnt a great deal about their own practice from the 'injection' of different ideas and cultural practices. The nature of schools being what they are, their own teaching was open to view (as perhaps rarely before) by a person with different traditions who often had different beliefs about pedagogical practices. In fact, both teachers learnt from each other.

Even given the required level of competence in a foreign language, it became clear that participating teachers and trainees needed other qualities like commitment, adaptability and flexibility under unusual classroom situations that took them out of their 'comfort zone'.

In particular, preparation in local colloquial 'classroom language' and 'teacher talk' as well as 'Mathematical language' has been shown to be essential, and the examples of words and expressions provided by each of the participant institution was a hugely important contribution. Thus a very important feature of the whole experience was the construction of the language 'tool box' for the teachers by bringing together of the ideas, expressions, colloquialisms and understandings involved, was a triumph of patience and application and afforded a considerable effort on the part of the project partners.

The revisions, collations and suggestions for improvement have been made, and some modifications applied. Essentially, such a list becomes a choice between a full 'teachers' dictionary' (which would be a considerable task, even if it were actually feasible) and a glossary of essential words and phrases. This means that the problem of the difference between 'translation' and 'interpretation' is particular to each language and each individual classroom situation.

All the aforementioned aspects have undoubtedly had a huge impact on the institutional development of participating institutions as a practice to be kept on for all subjects and issues. The main target groups have been mathematics in-service teachers and student teachers in secondary schools. The dissemination of the experiences obtained through the piloting of the teaching units has definitely increased teachers' confidence in their ability to prepare and implement similar teaching units independently, thus encouraging them to be mobile.

Teaching resources: Video recordings, teaching units, reports, etc. will be an additional resource for teacher trainers and represent possibilities to change or improve didactical approaches to mathematics. Everything has been tested with schools in each country. Products and resources are available for wider use.

Workshops: Flexible and involving workshops have been performed in all partner institutions. They have strongly contributed to the European dimension among stakeholders.

Side impact: Better understanding of student's motivation. Pupils, specifically those with a non-native mother tongue, benefit from the improvement and tested changes in the teachers' didactical approach.

Material: A significant part of the project involved a selection of video sequences of the teachers who were working in the classrooms and the writing up of their experiences of the exchanges. This information is made available. The considerable time spent in discussing the mode of presentation of the units, has produced a useful paper containing a series of principles and recommendations about the planning, implementation and subsequent review of the activities in the classroom and for 'teaching units'. This material is on the website.

Website and DVD: The Website describing the aims, objectives, content, administration, implementation and results of the project is now in operation. It is well thought out and considerable care has gone into its construction. It is very easy to navigate, clear and easy. It is the means for disseminating a considerable amount of information about his project.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

This project has been an extremely complex enterprise, embarking upon the difficulties and practicalities of ideas that have often hitherto only been discussed in principle. In doing this, the Project participants have broken new ground, because they have been able to put theory and principles into practice and have prepared a wealth of experience and material that is now available for others to use.

The experience shows that a community of practice has been shaped in a close interaction.

The coordinating institution, the University of Pisa, has integrated the results in the core curriculum for students and initial teachers and has handed and transferred the products and the results to Maths faculties all over Europe, thanks to the very good reputation of this project.

Several universities are applying the methods and teaching units that are the outcomes of this project.

Impact on beneficiaries

There has been a broad variety of beneficiaries of the project. The coordinating institution and all the partners have endeavoured to involve and to actively engage diverse target groups.

The participants have to be commended for their enterprise and cooperation in what has been a well-managed, rewarding, and highly significant project.

Beneficiaries themselves say:

Teachers:

'Even as external teachers, we were asked to complete some reports and take part to some activities. In this way we experienced a considerable variety of cultural and pedagogical contexts'

'The principal aim of the project was to prove the feasibility of the idea of mathematics teacher mobility, and while the partners might feel that they could have done more,

within the time and space granted to them, we can see they have achieved a considerable amount of data and experience for anyone who would want to follow their lead.'

A researcher:

'It was disappointing to discover from the results of the questionnaires that a number of teachers (and even teacher trainers) saw no particular advantage of teaching mathematics in a foreign language and were not open to the opportunities of sharing experience or modifying their pedagogical practice. On the other hand, there were a significant number of participants who showed openness, flexibility and a willingness to learn from their immersion in a foreign classroom, and feedback from these teachers and students was very positive.'

Some beneficiaries, that is to say student teachers from outside the project, have been interviewed. These are the aspects they highlighted about the project:

- Teaching practice materials have been used and widely diffused beyond the partnership of the project
- High level of applicability of teaching-related practical outcomes in usual practice
- Quality effect on usual teaching practice
- There has been a valuable effect on teaching materials (to be used by teachers)
- There are useful tools for classroom activities and practices
- Acknowledged value of teacher training curricula for usual practice
- There is tested applicability of teacher training experience in usual institutional practices.
- Effect on initial teacher training scheme
- Effect on in-service teacher training schemes

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

Most of the partners had worked together before on academic research and other projects; thus cordial relations and ways of working were already well established. In order to be reasonably representative yet not too diverse, the partners already offered considerable foreign language competence and a wide choice of language types typical across the European Community. In this case, the Celtic, Italic, Germanic, and Slavic language types were represented.

Given the above, the organisation and coordination of activities essential to any programme, was led by Professor Franco Favilli of the University of Pisa, whose experience and strong organisational skills were evident in the efficient initial agreement and continued management of the basic work plan. This was greatly assisted by the willingness, intellectual investment, commitment, and cooperation of all the partners.

The work plan itself was ambitious in covering a wide number of aspects of the project, some of which only came to light in the process of discussion and practical implementation as time went on. Due to the cooperation, hard work and inventiveness of the partners, these were overcome without any serious crisis occurring.

Liaison with Partnership Schools: The Project Partners were able to approach likely schools as candidates for foreign teacher placement. Aspect of the joint activities:

It seemed possible that the place of the teacher who was moving might be taken by the visiting teacher or trainee, but on reflection, this seemed unwise since the most

important fixed point, apart from the colleague in the partner institution, would be the class teacher whose expertise and experience proved crucial. It was the class teacher (as it is in common experience in our home countries) who would be the Mentor for the incoming teacher or trainee.

In the event, the liaison between the visiting teacher and the receiving class teacher was generally highly successful. Given the vagaries of electronic communication and the working patterns of the class teachers, the communication between them (either directly or through the colleague in the target country) worked well. Naturally, the visitors were anxious about many things, but the liaison arrangements managed to help calm the situation.

One aspect of this joint enterprise was that the home teachers in the partner schools learnt a great deal about their own practice from the 'injection' of different ideas and cultural practices. The nature of schools being what they are, their own teaching was open to view (as perhaps rarely before) by a person with different traditions who often had different beliefs about pedagogical practices. In fact, both teachers learnt from each other.

The partner colleagues went to great efforts to provide pastoral support; they met the visitors on arrival, found them accommodation, and assisted with general administration wherever possible. They were also most important as observers and in feeding back to the Project Group information about the classroom situation in both cognitive and affective senses.

5.14 MUVENATION: Motivating Pupils, Linking Teachers through Active Learning with Multi-Users Virtual Environments

Key ID in this study: 83

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 134221-LLP-1-IT-Comenius-CMP

Coordinating Institution: MENON Network EEIG, Belgium

Partners (Country, number, types of institutions): IT: 1 university, 1 private company; BE: 1 organization; ES: 1 teacher training institution; DE: 1 university; UK: 1 university, 1 college.

Sub-Programme: Comenius Multilateral Project

Thematic Area: Media Education

Duration: December 2007 – November 2009

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: The MUVEnation project developed a European peer learning programme for teachers training for the use of 'Active learning with Multi-Users Virtual Environments to increase pupils' motivation and participation in education'. By doing so, the project partners encouraged the development of teachers' metacognition strategies, problem solving, critical thinking and professional judgement so they would get used to make decisions about which technology to use for which students, how to do it, and how to judge the effectiveness of its use. The main objective of the programme was to develop in-service and future teachers' competencies and skills in order to contribute by through innovative practices to increasing learner motivation and participation in school.

Websites: http://www.unimc.it/muvenation, http://www.MUVEnation.org

Public Part of the Final Report:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/acc_mes_final_report_2007/com_mp_134221_muvenation.pdf

Important Characteristics/ Highlights: This project created a teacher peer learning programme, in which 240 teachers took part for the introductory course and 107 teachers for the full course. Out of the involved teachers, 66 followed actively the programme activities and have contributed to the success of the programme in terms of peer learning and support. This active community of teachers collaborated throughout 9 months of intensive work, even after the end of the programme, to produce an outstanding contribution to the knowledge in terms of teaching and learning with Virtual Worlds. A second major product is the collection of good practices providing a practical guide on the different collaborative techniques which might be used in online learning activity. The handbook is structured in 23 chapters corresponding to 23 pedagogical practices. Each chapter has been prepared by teachers who participated in the MUVEnation project.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

Through the close working relationship with colleagues from partner countries and meetings abroad, all participants developed a better intercultural understanding of other educational systems and cultures, and of obstacles to learning on the part of European pupils that led to cope with general lack of motivation as a common issue to be dealt with. The Comenius project helped to establish sustainable working relations to colleagues in other European countries. The participation in the Comenius project resulted in more networking activities on the local, regional and national level.

Impact on participating institutions can be defined as follows:

- Valuable professional development for teachers
- Teaching practice materials have been used and widely diffused
- Acknowledged value of teaching-related practical outcomes for usual practice
- Applicability of teaching-related practical outcomes in usual practice has been proved
- Effect both upon individuals and upon institutions and school systems
- Teacher training courses upon the use of the manuals, of the published materials and also upon the usage of virtual worlds
- Stronger engagement with Europe, in order to increase the European added value.
- Good share of knowledge and innovation

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

Project members gained a better knowledge of other European countries and pedagogical approaches. In general, an increase of motivation through professional and personal exchange within the international project partnership has taken place.

Courses developed by the partnership were integrated in the participating organisations' curriculum.

All the results have been widely disseminated amongst European HE institutions, teachers' training centres, teachers' training courses and teachers' networks and/or professional communities and several positive feedbacks have been received.

Participants have become proficient in the use of social technologies (blogs, wikis, micro-blogging, aggregators and social networks sites), teachers have acquired practice in digital stories, in visual and textual narratives.

The coordinator affirms: 'We are highly satisfied with the project overall activities. Partners attended meetings and conferences. There has been an impact on wider contexts and we recorded to have influenced policy makers in our contexts. That has been possible because the partnership has always been aware that this aspect is a priority during the entire project'.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

The MUVEnation Pilot experience has included participants from around the world and the group of active participants, came from 27 different countries. Most of the participants were based in Europe. 20% of trained teachers came from across the world, from Argentina to Australia, from Jamaica to Israel, from Venezuela to Morocco. Leading countries with the higher number of participants were Spain, Italy and the United Kingdom.

All participants showed evident greater competence in using ITC; staff, teacher and student improvement has been tested and verified.

The main evidence is the result: the stress on educative use of media that has been put on the part of all stakeholders involved in the project activities.

Coordinators and team members from universities recognize that the dimension of the impact is basically due to the attitude of the partners. Most of them accepted to be involved because the EU projects are considered very attractive.

The coordinating institution is running new editions of the training course that has been released thanks to the project. More information about the second Italian edition of the teachers training course can be found in the website dedicated to the course description[37], the official application form[38], and the weblog of the second edition of the course[39].

Obstacles / Enablers: According to the partners it is necessary to better to test the partnership in advance, paying attention to the requirements and also to verify the motivation. In the schools, that are the target of the projects, it is very difficult to assure a very temporarily relevant impact, but the impact might be strong in the long run.

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

This Comenius Multilateral Project has been successful in involving and combining the expertise of different types of institutions and organisations, especially Universities and training centres.

Staff members were actively involved in the discussion and production process of teaching modules.

Organizations and associations that belong to a wide spectrum of education appreciated the chance to work constantly with schools and teachers, training teachers and trainees. On the other hand the participating teachers appreciated the fact of being exposed to new 'worlds', the ones that teenagers surf and explore every day and being able to share this media with them for didactic purposes.

It has been an important point of contact among different generations. Furthermore, during the period of project financing the coordinator and the partners were successful in enlarging the partnership by attracting additional institutions representing the target groups.

[37] http://www.unimc.it/af/perfezionamento/09/teaching-and-learning-with-muves
[38] http://www.unimc.it/af/perfezionamento/09/teaching-andlearning-with-muves/bando
[39] http://apprendereinsecondlife.wordpress.com/

5.15 MICHELANGELO: Unlocking European Fine Art

Key ID in this study: 81

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 134318-LLP-1-2007-1-IT-Comenius-CMP

Coordinating Institution: Pixel Associazione, Italy

Partners: IT: 1 university of fine arts, 1 association for education and training, 1 ICT company; DE 1 university; BG: 1 association for training; PL: 1 centre for continuing education and professional training; UK: 1 university

Sub-Programme: Comenius Multilateral Project

Thematic Area: Art Education

Duration: December 2007 – November 2009

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: This project addressed teachers and students in European secondary schools and higher institutions who wish to acquire the knowledge of European artists of the last 10 centuries in Europe. Relevant educational packages were made available and an internet portal on European fine arts with the most representative artists or artworks of the last 10 centuries was presented. The project promoted a very innovative didactic approach, where the traditional linear text is integrated with a hyper textual approach that is apt for young students who are used to Internet. The portal includes a methodology in which teachers have the possibility to enter and edit data and also to exchange their ideas.

Websites: http://michelangelo.pixel-online.org/index.php (project portal), http://michelangelo.pixel-online.org/info/index.php (project website)

Public Part of the Final Report:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/acc_mes_final_report_2007/com_mp_134318_michelangelo.pdf

Important Characteristics/ Highlights
Appropriate mix of different partner institutions, with an active role of schools: work was based on a peer to peer analysis of art educational material exchanged among European schools.
Creation of good quality educational content, in innovative ways. Each educational package created was further developed with contributions of other art experts and art teachers who, following a wiki approach, had the opportunity to author it further. Each educational package is therefore work in progress in terms of content. In this way, a database of material for art teaching has been created[40], which currently hosts 231 reviews of web based art sources and selected teaching material. The Michelangelo portal is a rich, clear and smart website, which is constantly updated.
Stronger engagement with Europe for the participants

[40] http://michelangelo.pixel-online.org/elearning.php

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

All partners and all schools participating to the Project underlined the fact that the involvement in the Comenius project lead to professional development of participating individuals (coordinator, project members) and to pedagogical development in the curriculum and in the courses. Through the close working relationship with colleagues from partner countries and meetings abroad each teacher and each student developed a better intercultural understanding of other educational systems and cultures. This Comenius project helped to knot sustainable working relations to academic and school colleagues in other European countries. There is evidence of the European dimension, there is an increased internationalisation, and links to sectoral and non sectoral European organisations.

Obstacles / Enablers: The coordinating institutions has always provided administrative support for the project coordination, especially in regard to financial handling of an international project; they have been able to solve problems, both on practical level and on intercultural understanding, in this way all partners have improved managing skills. The website and the platform are kept alive and that the project is shown to be sustainable after the period of EU-financing.

Sometimes the partners have reported difficulties in motivating teachers in committing to the projects.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

The project has had an impact in the widening of the international dimension of education in schools. The project has had an impact in showing how to involve students in transnational activities and motivate students to learn.

The products, the results and the materials that are available on the project website show developed on purpose teaching methods and materials pedagogical strategies for Art teaching in the classroom ready useful materials to be used by pupils resources for the initial or in-service teacher training concrete examples of exchange of experiences dissemination of materials and project results to a wider audience, in particular through ICT and New Media examples of tangible results.

The Project website and platform are also linked to a Platform for educational progress that represents a European educational network performing as an international platform for professional debate in the vanguard of educational progress. The network is said to embrace practitioners in school, trainers, researchers and other educational experts within the whole range of education from pre-school to universities. Membership is open to anyone. The network is aiming at providing an international forum for professionals embracing a holistic view on education and concerned with professional development in education and training; in supporting, developing and promoting good professional development practice, international exchanges, the creation of new networks and projects, and the thematic interaction between educational players.

Obstacles faced during the project for a deeper impact on the world of school education:

- Lack of support from central educational institutions, such as Ministry or Regional Authorities
- Lack of encouragement and support in established system process, in some cases things would have been easier
- No formal recognition of Comenius related activities in established system processes

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

The coordinator, staff in the coordinating institution and in the partner institutions, together with stakeholders and teachers have seen important improvements in their personal and professional development. The project has had its effect upon individuals rather than upon institutions.

There has been tested effect on usual teaching practice of significant numbers of teachers. There has been effect on teaching materials, on tools to be used by teachers and on didactic practices. The effect upon teachers and students has mainly been about the way of working in a team, of organizing activities around a topic, comparing and using different tools, with respect to the text book.

It is possible to list the following aspects as direct/indirect consequences of the participation to the projects, as beneficiaries:

- easiness in relationship with other people
- capability to share knowledge
- capability to interact with other people in order to show your work
- deeper understanding of intercultural issues
- capability understand the diverse frame of mind in the European contexts
- self-perception of the value of working through projects for the individual, for the institution and for the growth of European dimension
- capacity of spreading results and invite others to insert them in their activity
- ability to insert new aspects in your daily activities
- easiness and readiness to catch others' perspectives
- ability to cope with several points of view on a same topic
- ability to find resources you need
- ability to open up to external contexts, and involve the others
- positive sensation that your personal effort may have an impact on learners
- increased knowledge of different working contexts and relative challenges
- deeper awareness of existing various opportunities for learning and teaching
- improvement of language knowledge
- improvement of ITC skills
- awareness of the possibility of creating national and transnational communities in education
- awareness that improvements or changes cannot be realized without the involvement of different European countries and without European funding
- contribution of resources for others (for example teachers or educative staff)

Obstacles / Enablers: Activities are still going on among some partners about the selected topics and are recorded on the projects' websites.

Usually in a few cases there is sustainability of results beyond the EU funding, but in this case there is full sustainability.

The partners that developed the project, together with the coordinating institution have cofounded a Learning Teacher Network that aims to be a learning community, where knowledge is shared and networking is promoted, boasting a role in the wider

global community. It is an International Community that supports networking as an important mean to connect, share, exchange and form a dialogue across borders and boundaries, nations and cultures. They promote mobility, foster the creation of new projects, inform about international and European activities, activities, events and sister networks that are of importance to the development of education and training. The community is open and free.

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

There has been a networking of educational institutions and organisations that contributes to the European cooperation in their specific thematic area of work. This Comenius Multilateral Project has been successful in involving and combining the expertise of different types of institutions and organisations. A total of 30 schools have been involved at European level. The research activity has been carried out by the art teachers of the thirty European schools involved in cooperation with their students. The results of the research activity carried out at national level in the partner countries consist of educational packages produced for the artists identified. Once all the educational material was available, all the teachers and students involved in the partner countries jointly used it as the basis for a comparative analysis of European art in the last 10 centuries. The work is therefore based on a peer to peer analysis of art educational material exchanged among European schools.

It may seem obvious, but it is not, to say that all teachers and participants have recognized that opening to other European realities and comparing educative practices, materials and methods is fundamental to improve the quality of education. There has been a stronger engagement with Europe for the participants, who had the opportunity to reflect on the system.

5.16 SETAC: Science Education as a Tool for Active Citizenship

Key ID in this study: 137

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 142449-LLP-1-2008-1-IT-Comenius-CMP

Coordinating Institution: National Museum of Science and Technology Leonardo da Vinci Italy, Milano, Italy

Partners: IT: 1 museum, 1 school; BE: 1 museum, 1 school; DK: 1 university; DE: 1 museum, 1 university; HU: 1 museum.

Sub-Programme: Comenius Multilateral Project

Thematic Area: Science Education

Duration: November 2008 – October 2010

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: The project aimed at the development of science teaching. The activities for teachers and students have improved knowledge about 'how science works' in order to take conscious and informed decisions about Science and Technology. The overall activities have been based on the principle that science education is a fundamental tool for developing the right behaviour for an active citizenship in the contemporary knowledge-based society. The project explored the themes of Health, Energy and Climate Change, which stimulated the interest of students in current Science and Technology issues that require responsible engagement by all citizens. Science has been seen not only as a subject to be delivered by teachers and to be learned by students. Students and teachers were addressed as agents engaged in classroom practice and as citizens with the task to acquire knowledge and share social responsibility. The project produced modules for teacher training, a European common framework for science education, a comparison and harmonization of science curricula and syllabuses; tests, games, role plays, questionnaires and simulations for pupils and students to be used in the classroom and in visits to museums.

Website: http://www.museoscienza.org/setac/

Public Part of the Final Report
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/acc_mes_final_report_2007/com_mp_142449_setac.pdf

Important Characteristics/ Highlights: SETAC developed several good quality outcomes, and a series of activities involving school teachers, teacher trainees and school students. Those included experiments, hands-on activities, exhibits, dialogue-based games, which were designed to encourage inquiry-based learning, active engagement in exploration and experimentation, and debate on the topics from the point of view of social impact. The project focused on building skills for addressing Science and Technology in everyday life and not only during school teaching sessions, or through textbooks, and for becoming active and informed citizens participating in issues of social interest and concern.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

The development of a new pedagogy for science education has been one of the most important parts of the project. The partners worked in order to create the context within which all activities and materials were devised; but also in order to contribute specific arguments on Science education seen as both the aim and the tool for understanding contemporary Science and for developing social responsibility and participation. The pedagogy suggested by SETAC draws on different fields (psychology, museum education, scientific research, civic responsibility) and methods (observation, inquiry, experimentation, children's misconceptions, authentic questions, dialogue and debate) and considers Museums and Science centres as fundamental resources.

Teaching resources: the partners devised a series of activities for schools focusing on health, energy and climate change and using inquiry, debate and direct participation in experiments. The activities aimed at developing contents, awareness of the role of science in contemporary society, and at stimulating the engagement of young people in dialogue about Science. Everything has been tested with schools in each country. Products and resources are available for wider use.

Workshops: Flexible and involving workshops have been performed in all partner institutions. They have strongly contributed to the European dimension among stakeholders.

Methodology: Better understanding of student's motivation in dealing with topics of Science. A survey of primary and secondary school students was carried out by the partners aiming to understand motivation and its role in engagement with Science.

Material: Publication of Guidelines 'Quality Science Education: Where do we stand?' This is the concluding manifesto that presents the results of the SETAC work in the form of recommendations for practitioners working in formal and informal Science learning institutions. The publication shows how deep and relevant has been the effect on the students and on the teachers, and their higher level of motivation and pleasure in learning.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

All institutions have acquired experience and innovative methods in the field of learning teaching scientific subjects and practical involving laboratory based activities.

Education authorities have shown adequate involvement.

Several institutions, such as Museums, Universities, associations and individuals, have paid attention to the results of the project. In this way, it can be said that the results entered the system.

There is tested applicability of teacher training experience in the system, as institutions from outer Comenius world were involved, such as individual people interested in training, as well as civil society centres. Namely the 'Associazione per il progresso economico' (Association for Economic Progress) has awarded the partnership with a gold medal for the relative consequent outcomes and results.

Impact on beneficiaries

The aim of the project has been to develop and disseminate a number of tools for the training of teachers, mainly by the means of activities to be conducted in schools and

museums, in order to support both teachers and students in becoming socially-responsible citizens by improving skills and abilities to engage with socio-scientific issues.

There has been a broad variety of beneficiaries of the project. The coordinating institution and all the partners have endeavoured to involve and to actively engage diverse type of beneficiaries, apart from the target groups. There are evidences that they managed successfully to reach them and have an impact on them. Questionnaires and monitor statistics sheets have been submitted to check the work in progress, to verify the content and level of the acquisition of knowledge and specifically to measure the change of attitude in Science teaching and learning that could support an active role as citizens on the part of teachers and students involved

Obstacles: Timing of activities which prove to be more taxing than estimated at the beginning. In-between meetings communication among partners, given that all of them are busy professionals

Enablers: Small scale projects help the development of shared activities within an Action and make an Action manageable. Small scale Actions can have a wide impact. This depends on how they are able to address needs that go beyond country contexts, how they are able to use more than one languages and how much dissemination they do.

Comenius projects allow the Exchange of experience and expertise among professionals and institutions across Europe.

Beneficiaries outside the project have used and widely diffused teaching practice materials. Under this aspect we noticed:

- High level of applicability of teaching-related practical outcomes in usual practice
- Materials and practices useful to work upon the development of the concept of ' scientific citizenship'
- Quality effect on usual teaching practice of significant numbers of teachers tested
- teaching materials (to be used by teachers) – materials used by initial teachers
- Guide Lines have been tested and they are useful tools for classroom activities and practices
- Acknowledged value of teacher training curricula for usual practice
- There is tested applicability of teacher training experience in usual institutional practices.
- Effect on initial teacher training scheme
- Effect on in-service teacher training schemes

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

The partners of the Project belong to institutions that work in the field of formal and informal education (schools, museums, teacher training centres, universities). They have promoted cooperation and high quality in all sectors of education and training by creating a consortium with specific expertise in Science, inquiry-based Science education, teacher professional development, museum education, research, Science in society.

The consortium shows a high degree of appropriateness for expertise, field of operation and variety of contexts and settings where forma, non-formal and informal learning is possible. The National Museum of Science and Technology is the largest

science museum in Italy. It also responds to the increasing demand for teacher training with initial and in-service courses on science or education methodology. The second partner, the Flemish college represents schools of engineering, social sciences, bio-medical sciences, agricultural sciences, informatics, economics, nursing and teaching. The Department of Science Education of the University of Copenhagen, among the other partners, has primarily worked on topics regarding the didactics of the range of Science subjects (Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Geography, Biology, Computer Science, and Physical Education). The Department has carried out research into the didactics of Science interconnected to interdisciplinary teaching of these subjects, thanks to 'informal Science learning environments. The Technical University of Munchen has the task of supporting scientists at each stage of career development in the optimization of the teacher education and in-service trainings. It founded the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) in order to support scientific creativity and set up Clusters of Excellence and Graduate Schools in many scientific fields. Schools have always been actively involved both for the activities the training and trained teachers carried out inside the project, and for the activities linked to the participated visits of children and teenagers to the Museums. In addition to the schools involved in each partner country by the consortium members, the Italian school, the Institute 'Marie Curie', that is a high-school oriented to Science and Technology, has had the role of 'tester' for most didactic tools and products of the SETAC Project.

5.17 INSETRom: Teacher In-Service Training for Roma Inclusion

Key ID in this study: 75

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 134018-LLP-1-2007-1-CY-COMENIUS-CMP

Coordinating Institution: European University Cyprus, Cyprus

Partners:
CY: 1 university; IT: 1 university; NL: 1 association; GR: 1 university; AT: 1 university; RO: 1 university; UK: 1 university; SK: 1 university

Comenius Action: Comenius Multilateral Project

Thematic Area: Social inclusion

Duration: December 2007 – November 2009

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: The aim of the project was to facilitate school and Roma family partnerships in order to establish an environment of collaboration and shared goals for children's education. The underlying assumption was that enhancing teacher awareness of Roma culture and perspectives leads to increased participation of Roma parents in their children's education, thus keeping Roma children in mainstream education and the broader community. This was achieved through teacher training in methods to engage Roma parents as active agents in their children's education. The project included assessment of needs of teachers and Roma families in target schools, development of a teacher training curriculum, provision of teacher training, implementation of teacher interventions resulting from training, and evaluation of the intervention programmes and the training modules.

Website: http://www.iaie.org/insetrom/

Public Part of the Final Report:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/acc_mes_final_report_2007/com_mp_134018_insetrom.pdf

Important Characteristics/ Highlights: The project was innovative in that it brought together and networked several world-class scientists, researchers and practitioners in the area of Roma education, thus drawing on expertise of European and international magnitude in the area. Although the consortium consisted mainly of universities, the project applied a partnership approach between teacher training institutions, the world of education (schools) and society (communities, families) at large. This promoted the building of bridges between academics and practitioners and between cultures and education systems.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions
The cornerstone of the project was the exchange of practices and developing ideas on training teachers from different countries that live and interact in Europe. Thus, this

project focused on curricula, courses, materials, methodologies and pedagogical strategies built through cooperation among partners with very diverse backgrounds and experiences in terms of Roma populations so as to learn from each other and develop their intercultural awareness. Enhancement of collaboration among participating institutions appears as an innovative aspect since this was expected to result in the development of a common European perspective on Roma education with regards to in-service teacher training and at the same time, allow for flexibility with regards to implementation in each and every context.

Most materials were translated into the languages of all the partners and some in common Romani language. Cooperation and communication between partner institutions was ensured by the organization of common meetings, additional meetings at international conferences funded partially or totally by the partner institutions, electronic communication and other electronic communication technologies for discussion and dissemination of findings.

In terms of the pedagogical materials which were distributed to teachers, methodological and didactic approaches included the following:

- Materials were based on the teachers' input regarding the challenges they face in teaching Roma children and their systemic needs
- The main approach during the training modules was the workshop approach during which the participants (teachers) were active in constructing meaning around a problem/question and were not passive listeners.
- A major premise of this project was that the teachers' experience was enriched and it should be an important part of the training process.

The participants were all experienced institutions with reputation and expertise, and created a consortium that produced high quality material. To assure quality in evolving outputs, a quality control unit was placed under the responsibility of the coordinator. It aimed at ensuring the implementation of the quality plan. It reviewed all reports and deliverables to be submitted prior to their submission to the LLF, and required further information or amendments, concerning both contents and formal aspects. Self-assessment was also important and consisted of reviewing schedules, reports, quality and other management items and taking any appropriate steps to correct any disruption. Peer reviews of deliverables were also organised among partners and were discussed both electronically and during the partners' meetings. The quality assurance plan was based on: (a) the definition of project objectives and methodology, (b) reference documents, such as terms of reference, agreements, contracts, (c) management, methodology and communication procedures and (d) standardised elements - documents, lists of tasks, schedules workload breakdowns- were also provided.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

The immediate target group of this project were the teachers but the long-term beneficiaries were the Roma children and their parents. Specifically, teachers had the opportunity to be professionally trained in using new methods and approaches to come closer to the Roma culture and develop their expertise in involving Roma parents in their children's education. The teachers then developed and implemented activities that targeted Roma parents and children in order to create better synergies between the Roma families and the school system. The final recipient of the outcomes of teacher professional development initiatives and parental involvement activities were the Roma school age children by being encouraged and supported to remain in compulsory education.

The outcomes and benefits of the project were aimed to be cascaded to the long-term beneficiaries for Roma families through the increased collaboration between teachers and Roma parents and the capitalised increased educational and social inclusion. A major premise of this project was to increase Roma children's educational participation through the focus of the school system on the links between the school and the family. Focusing on the children themselves does not always bring the desired outcomes and oftentimes leads to a process of personalizing the problem (labelling children, failing to look at the larger cultural context and structures). In this project a systemic approach was followed in which children were viewed as part of the school culture and the Roma culture. The project, therefore, assumed that facilitating the collaboration between schools and families will inevitably have a positive and long-term effect on Roma children's participation in school. The fact that the key beneficiaries of potential outcomes of the project were Roma students and parents constituted one of the innovatory aspects of the particular project. Roma families, with their participation in the project were encouraged and supported to remain in compulsory education, thus increasing their educational and social inclusion. Roma families were thus also given democratic voice and the tools to participate in the process of policy-making for issues of their concern. The project also envisaged to raise awareness about Roma education and Roma inclusion issues, not only Roma families and teachers who were the immediately involved the implementation of the project, but also to educational and social authorities at local and European level through the dissemination strategies outlined.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

With regards to trainees (teachers), they are now expected to turn into key agents for the initiation of innovative practices with regards to Roma children in their classrooms. Transformation of trainees (teachers) into multipliers of 'good practices' is expected to contribute towards the development of communities of practice within schools, resulting in the further initiation of intervention plans either at the school or the classroom level to address the needs of Roma children. More research projects in cooperation with the partners' institutions are likely to result as well.

With regards to school professionals and policy makers, the outcomes of this project are expected to impact on inspectors and policy makers in the establishment of clear policy directions as to the particularities of Roma populations within schools. Inspectors' awareness on Roma populations will be enhanced to a great extent through the dissemination of the outcomes of the project (e.g. publication of articles on the efficiency and impact of the training modules and provided curriculum, presentations of the project results in conferences by participating institutions). Finally, teachers' training is expected to be continued to cover more teaching professionals. The curriculum provided the basis for a series of training modules that were offered on a regional and/or national basis by participating institutions or other associations to cover the emerging needs of teachers on establishing links with Roma families. Access to on-line resources will enhance delivery of such training. In addition, a network of all trained teachers (through the discussion forum on the open section of the website) could emerge to set a platform of exchange of views and experiences. In addition, alternative forms of training on Roma through distance learning, online platforms, discussion forums, self-study training could be developed as an extension of this project.

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

An important breakthrough of the project was that of achieving through the partners' consortium to network for the first time so many world-class scientists, researchers and practitioners in the area of Roma education. The project brought together the

expertise of European and international magnitude in the area. In addition, the project aimed to contribute towards partnership approaches between teacher training institutions and the world of education (schools) and society (communities, families) at large. This promoted the building of bridges between academicians and practitioners and between cultures and education systems.

5.18 EUROPSCHOOL NETWORK

Key ID in this study: 2

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 230253-CP-1-2006-1-FR-COMENIUS-C3

Coordinating Institution: Ligue française de l'Enseignement, France

Partners: 13 preschool and school partners in 10 countries: Germany, Austria, Belgium, Spain, France, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Czech Republic, Romania

Comenius Action: Comenius Multilateral Network

Thematic Area: Preschool Education

Duration: October 2006 - September 2009

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: The aim of the network was to create a common platform for European cooperation in pre-school and primary education, to consider action research on 'how to prepare the child from its young age to interculturality; what teacher training; what teaching practices'. The network aimed to support multilateral school projects in order to increase exchanges between European teachers on their teaching practices about interculturality, especially in multicultural classrooms. The network also aimed to promote European cooperation programs for the training of teachers and educators on the same theme, to strengthen partnerships with all members of the educational community for further development of intercultural and language teaching activities, as well as using ICT to enhance learning and enrich the quality of the learning process in intercultural exchange projects. The immediate beneficiaries were the teachers from the network schools with their preschools and elementary classes, educators and network structures childcare and preschool groups, communities of these educational institutions, organizations and partner organizations. The final results of the Network consisted in: a trilingual website serving as a European cooperation network of stakeholders; space enhancement projects; on-going training available in Europe since 2010 on early learning from the linguistic and intercultural perspective, considerations for educational policy of the partner countries in relation to linguistic diversity and interculturalism in early years.

Website: http://www.europschool.net

Public Part of the Final Report:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/static/Bots/docbots/TCP/Compendia/documents/compendium_2006_Comenius_en.pdf

Important Characteristics/ Highlights: The website of the network provides resources, information tailored to language and intercultural target users (teachers, trainers, teams associated with schools), good practices in Europe, and contact for support and assistance in European cooperation projects. Even after project completion, the website, as well as the training sessions, continues to be active and operational.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

The network worked with various actors in countries with different educational structures of pre-school education towards a collective reflection based on analysis of needs and national findings. The focus was on primary education (pupils of 2 to 12 years) and particularly pre-primary education, which does not have the same structure across Europe (kindergartens in some countries, or different structures in others, with different status).

The network created a community of educational and research organizations composed of diverse agencies from the different countries, who worked on the issue from the view point of cultural and linguistic diversity. It developed joint products, adaptable to the needs of each country: joint EU training, interactive multilingual software, success indicators for use by the coordinators of European cooperation projects, a folder of expertise on the topic in question.

These innovative products became available to the European communities of pre-primary education in order to help improve the quality of their thinking and their teaching practice in the thematic area concerned. Each of the 13 partners from 10 countries dealt directly with classes or structures with computers and connected to the Internet: 5 establishments per country the first year, then 5 more and then 5 more again. In total 150 preschools and schools were involved in the work of the network.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

Being responsible for international projects and a school inspector in Paris, the coordinator of the network spread the final results to 400 institutions in total: 200 primary schools in Paris and their partners through bilateral partnerships in Germany, Great Britain, and Spain. Three years after the closing date, the coordinating institution of the network still promotes on-going experiments and actively participates in developing new Comenius projects at primary education level. Since September 2012, projects undertaken by secondary establishments are supported. They are implemented in cooperation with several French academies, providing information, support and guidance to institutions of primary and secondary education in relation to the actions of the Comenius programme.

The network offered training sessions on Intercultural Education in the Primary Education in Europe twice a year. Seventy primary and secondary teachers had the opportunity to discuss their teaching practices and enhance their actions and projects, both during the course and through the network's website. Additional resources are available through the website, which at certain times of the year receives an average of 1,500 visits per day.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

The key target group of the network were students of nursery and elementary schools in Europe, who can benefit from innovations in teaching methodologies and learning.

Directly benefiting were teachers and their classes, teachers and students of nursery and elementary schools in the partner countries, educational communities of these schools, partner organizations and associations. Indirectly benefiting are teachers and educators across Europe, training institutes for teachers and students, inspection teams (inspectors, counsellors) partner countries, researchers, advisers, national Ministries of Education and European policy makers.

The 150 schools involved over the 3 years of the project participated actively in the drafting of the final results of the network: reflection, tests, survey responses,

presentation of best practices. There were no particular obstacles to their participation because the choice was defined upstream by each partner according to specific criteria on their computational capabilities and their involvement in European cooperation projects at different levels.

The assessment by all project stakeholders was very positive. Since the end of the project, the final results (linguistic and intercultural tools) have been presented by all partners in different countries at educational conferences and continuing education schemes, receiving a very favourable opinion by teachers who use them with their students.

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

The objectives of the project mainly included cooperation, promotion and support of school projects and multilateral exchanges between actors of these projects, educational partnerships between members of different organizations and sectors of intervention, the development of teacher training on European issues, the strengthening of ICT in education and language and intercultural learning. This network has affected a large number of stakeholders during the three years of operation. Network partners use the results in their own networks at different levels depending on their needs and the demands of their members: training teachers in kindergartens and elementary schools, training of educators in childcare of preschool children, internships and educational seminars, organization of conferences and debates. In addition, the website of the network is a tool of exchange, communication, information, training and evaluation, for members and associates of the network, but also for direct and indirect target groups, as well as students of primary classes in Europe. The multilingual material in all partners' languages is adapted to different grade levels of preschool and elementary structures, designed to allow access to large numbers of users, particularly in geographically isolated areas and in priority education zones.

5.19 EU-HOU: Hands-On Universe Teacher Training and Support Programme

Key ID in this study: 115

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 141928-2008-LLP-FR-COMENIUS-CMP

Coordinating Institution: Université Pierre et Marie Curie, France

Partners: universities, research centres and schools from 14 countries: France, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom

Comenius Action: Comenius Multilateral Project

Thematic Area: Science education

Duration: November 2008 to October 2010

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: This project focused on science education and especially astronomy, which combined with the use of new technologies can encourage students' interest in science. The project provides resources for high school teachers and the organization of a network of pilot schools. It is based on actual astronomical observations, possibly acquired by the pupils themselves. It uses a network of European and international automatic telescopes operated via Internet as well as dedicated tools (Webcam systems, radio telescopes) developed for this project. These observations can be carried out in class, and analysed with software designed for educational purposes. Educational resources have been built in close collaboration between researchers and teachers in partner countries. Some resources are also based on astronomical archives and data acquired by other classrooms. The educational material is posted on the Web site of the project.

Website: http://www.fr.euhou.net/

Important Characteristics/ Highlights

The EU-HOU project proposes frontline interactive pedagogical resources for secondary schools based on astronomical data. Its originality consists in involving scientists active in research together with secondary teachers and their pupils. The idea is to share the excitement of research in astrophysics with the young generation and to increase their knowledge and interest in science. The European dimension is enhanced through the development of multilingual tools, and serves as a model to the international community, who uses the EU-HOU tools to develop the Global-Hands-On Universe and Galileo Teacher Training Programme.

The EU-HOU project is also a good example of placing a Comenius project in a line of continuous and evolving work which goes beyond the Comenius project itself. The initiative started in 2004-2006 as a Socrates/Minerva project. After the Comenius project presented here (2008-1010), a further EU-HOU Comenius project was funded in 2010-2012 (entitled 'EU-HOU - Connecting classrooms to the Milky Way'), adding one further country to the activities, so that by the end of 2012 the activity is implemented in 15 countries in Europe.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

The project has had an important impact not just on the individuals involved, but also more widely. The pedagogical resources, after being tested with pupils, were posted on the EU-HOU website in English and the national languages. Teachers were also invited to post their news and share their activities on the website, so as to build a database of pedagogical resources tested in classrooms and ready to be used by other teachers. Experienced teachers were acknowledged as 'Teacher Resource Agents' and receives a Galileo Ambassador Certificate acknowledged by the International Astronomical Union.

Regular teacher training sessions have been offered since 2004 in order to disseminate the pedagogical activities promoted by the project at the European level. Since 2010 teacher training sessions have been offered on the Comenius in-service training catalogue. Motivated teachers are also invited to join the annual international Global-Hands-On Universe conferences gathering teachers, scientists and educators.

The multilingual website has been designed as the main dissemination tool of the project. It is actually maintained regularly by the University Pierre & Marie Curie as well as by the partners during the funded projects but also in-between. Actually, the same website has been in operation since 2004. Evaluation performed in 2010 showed that the website received 5,000 regular visits per month. 10% of the visits were from web navigators in Chinese.

The multilingual SalsaJ software was downloaded 10,000 times in 2010. It has been translated in Arabic and Chinese in order to further enlarge its potential audience. It is currently the sole multiplatform and multilingual tool developed for educational purposes to analyse astronomical data in an easy and meaningful way.

In Poland, the project contributed to several national developments falling beyond the scope of the initial EU-HOU proposal. For instance, the Polish team got associated to the KhanAcademy, which has been localised in Polish. It is also a member of the Citizen Science Alliance and actively participates in the development of the Zooniverse, the world's most successful platform for Citizen Science Projects. It participates in the training of Kenyan teachers, and contributes to finding solutions for providing wireless Internet to Kenyan schools free of charge. They work closely with the Microsoft Research Group on developing the Worldwide Telescope and with the Challenger Centre.

Transnational activities have also been developed. For instance, Polish and Portuguese pupils have discovered asteroids in the International Asteroid Search Collaboration.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

In some countries, a large number of schools are affected either because the country is small (e.g. over 60% of secondary schools in Cyprus) or because the partners have been able to reach the educational system (e.g. Poland) or the interest of a large number of schools (Portugal). In France, the system is very centralised and a European project does not receive real support from the national authorities. This prevents wide dissemination, even though the content of the EU-HOU project corresponds to the new curricula. The EU-HOU project has mainly reached very motivated teachers who are already very active in various projects. It is actually included in the initial training programme of the coordinating university. In Romania, a relatively large number of teachers have been trained and the School Inspectors have monitored their participation in the programme. However, the feedback has shown that the dissemination of the resources in Romania has suffered from some local

difficulties. In Spain, the EU-HOU project has been included in the initial teacher training programme of the partner University.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

The EU-HOU project was born in 2004 through the MINERVA programme with the participation of 8 countries. In 2008, 14 countries came together and got COMENIUS funding in the Lifelong Learning Programme. In 2010, Germany joined the consortium through a new project, entitled 'Connecting classrooms to the Milky Way', financed again by the European Commission. This last project has the ambition to build the first European network of radio-telescopes dedicated to education. This was a challenge, as radio-astronomy is a complex topic, difficult to explain easily. However, large instruments operating at these wavelengths are currently built, namely ALMA and SKA, and mobilise large European funding and a large scientific community. It is important to be able to explain these to a large community. Reaching the young generation is thus essential for the society and for the future of European science.

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

There is an appropriate diversity of types of organisations and institutions involved in this project: universities, research centres, observatories, associations and schools.

There is an active presence and role of schools in the project, as this project is intended primarily for teachers. Teaching materials and exercises are prepared by teachers from 14 countries, and written in English. In each country, teachers can propose to translate and adapt these resources into the local language. The uniqueness of this project is that it involves scientists active in scientific research eager to provide some materials for school teaching and to share their experiences of science and discoveries.

5.20 CLIL across Contexts: A Scaffolding Framework for Teacher Education

Key ID in this study: 9

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 128751-CP-1-2006-1-LU–COMENIUS-C21

Coordinating Institution: University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg

Partners: LU: 1 university; ES: 2 universities, 2 teacher training institutions; NL: 1 university; UK: 1 university; CZ: 1 university; IT: 1 teacher training institution

Comenius Action: Comenius Multilateral Project

Thematic Area: Content and language integrated learning (CLIL)

Duration: November 2007 to October 2010

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: This was a three-year SOCRATES-COMENIUS 2.1 project which aimed at proposing a model for teacher education based on classroom observation and relevant research in selected areas of bilingual education and learning in general. It also generated local actions in the different countries where academics, teacher educators and CLIL teachers worked together towards identifying crucial aspects of effective teaching and learning.

Website: http://clil.uni.lu

Public Part of the Final Report:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/com_nw_133942_ccll.pdf

Important Characteristics/ Highlights: The direct impact of this multilateral project on the ministry of Education is very significant in Luxembourg. The Council of Europe has expressed its interest in the project results and has included the Comenius partnership recommendations in an official publication about the linguistic diversity at school.

The life cycle of the project has therefore started following clear principles:
Analysis, utilization and connection of actual experiences of CLIL/EMILE teachers
Mutual recognition of the competences and feed-back about experiences of each partner
No hierarchy between partners
All partners in charge of the organization of visits, meetings and workshops, on a fair and in turn basis
Establishment of the project activities in each local institutional environment

The synergies between the coordinator and the national agency (anefore.lu) have been exemplary.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

For the coordinator and many other involved professionals, this project was the first Comenius experience.

This new situation was challenging for them and they have developed additional skills (e.g. management, communication) and attitudes.

All these beginners would suggest to colleagues at University and at school to experiment such a European cooperation by participating to/launching new multilateral projects in the thematic area.

The project has also provided some participants with new opportunities to present the results at international conferences/round tables and to publish many articles in cooperation with their project partners. Mrs DAFOUZ has developed European attitudes that did not exist before.

The mobility the main actors (coordinator and partners) has increased thanks to their role in the project but only a small number of associated colleagues at University and at school have actually benefited from the Comenius experience in terms of mobility.

Some participants (e.g. Mr Jovanovic recently promoted as 'directeur des etudes') have got new position in their institution and are able to transfer CLIL results into the teacher training curricula. Some of the researchers have changed their mind about the implementation of pedagogical concepts and didactical approaches.

The project results have been integrated in a 15-hours-initial training module for all future secondary school teachers in Luxembourg. Each year since 2009, 180 new teachers have been trained for the CLIL methodology at the University of Luxembourg. In Spain 100 students are concerned each year. Across Europe, more than 1500 future teachers have learnt about the CLIL modules inspired by this Comenius project.

These initial training modules have been provided by the researchers directly involved in the project. This long-term commitment of the project actors in the teacher training activities ensures a sustainable impact in terms of professional development. Some Comenius actors have also been involved in training the trainers and have contributed to enhance their awareness about the CLIL issues.

A large part of participants consider that the project results have been applicable in their national teacher training context. A majority of the trainees (teachers but also teacher trainers) also declare that their motivation and interest in the multilingual dimension of their work at school have increased.

The thematic issues of the project have been considered as essential at the level of the Universities (especially in Luxembourg). Indeed, the project results have influenced significantly institutional strategies concerning the involvement of the researchers/trainers and the attraction of students speaking several languages.
Furthermore, the project outputs have been helpful to rethink the professional cooperation and the teaching approaches at University by using several foreign languages.

Regarding the trans-national cooperation, the project has brought out the creation of a foreign relation service at University of Luxembourg. New projects based on this previous Comenius cooperation have also been launched (e.g.: about Languages and social cohesion).

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

The CLIL European framework has been designed in order to be applicable in a wide range of multilingual learning contexts and to be understood by various professionals.

The project has not directly led to the production of pedagogical tools or didactical material for the teachers but the CLIL initial training offered to the future secondary school teachers is based on many examples of best practices. It should enable the teachers to effectively provide the pupils with stimulating learning environments in several languages. Unfortunately, there is a lack of evaluation measures regarding these potential multiplier effects.

The CLIL principles have sometimes been put in other words by the institutional decision makers but these responsible persons have been actually influenced by the project. The effect on the initial training schemes is therefore measurable in many partner countries.

Some contacts exist between the project partners and in-service training national institutes) but, at this stage, this training centres do not offer any CLIL module in their catalogues of 'compulsory training activities'.

The use of ICT has been essential in this project because the main outcome (CLIL teacher training framework) has been published as a book but is mainly known and used on digital formats (DVD, downloadable version). The project web platform is very well documented and user friendly.

The disseminated and promoted CLIL methodology relayed by some 'partners of the partners' has probably enhanced the awareness of the professionals and has possibly enabled many teachers to deal with these multilingual groups of pupils. At the moment, there has not been any study focusing on these effects on a national scale.

New initiatives in the field concerned are envisaged by some partners of the previous project.

Connections to the health sector in Luxembourg are foreseen. Indeed, in Luxembourg, many issues related to multilingual environments are similar at University and at hospital.

Since the beginning of the project, the coordinator has collaborated with the national Agency (www.anefore.lu). This synergy could be very useful and efficient in the case of new trans-national initiatives in the thematic area (school partnership, complementary research or training events).

The Council of Europe has expressed its interest in the project results and has included the Comenius recommendations in an official publication about the linguistic diversity at school.

Exchanges still exist between the project promoters and the thematic workgroup (languages schooling) of the Council of Europe.

The coordinator mentions some budget management problems due to the financial procedures that the administrative staff did not know. Since then, her University has modified some internal procedures and has employed skilled accountants.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

From Mrs Hansen's point of view, every individual directly involved in the research has learned about innovation and best practices. The participants have a better understanding of the challenges and of the obstacles related to the implementation of the CLIL principles in usual practices.

Thanks to the project, the participating teachers have realized that, in a multilingual school environment, they do not only transmit knowledge but contribute also to the linguistic development of their pupils. Concerning either the 'literacies' of the taught subjects or the used second languages, the practitioners have developed their skills in identifying the methodological issues. They have changed their mind regarding their role in the classroom (e.g. in Luxembourg, 90% of the initial teacher trainees have mentioned the CLIL issues in their professional dissertations/essays). Nevertheless, the administrative constraints related to teachers' and students' mobility still exist in the educational system.

Some partners (e.g. University of Madrid) have designed Moodle platforms in order to upload materials that teachers consider as useful.

In the pilot schools, the proposed new learning experiences have been valuable for the pupils but the number of learners directly concerned is quite small. Through the participation of the 'missing' Scandinavian school, the partners would have probably been more focused on materials for pupils in usual practices.

This initial training module has been provided by the researchers directly involved in the project. This long-term commitment of the project actors in the teacher training activities ensures a sustainable impact in terms of professional development.

Nevertheless, the synergies between the researchers and the teachers have not been sufficiently developed for a concrete coproduction of applicable learning materials.

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

The project activities have been dedicated to the design of a common framework of reference that enables each trainer or each teacher to create his/her own pedagogical tools and to implement innovation in his/her classroom. The practical impact of the project in the classrooms has been therefore indirect but significant on the small scale of pilot schools.

There is an interest in more collaboration between schools and university on this topic but most of the partners consider that it is difficult to set up these synergies without a school umbrella organization involved in the project. Many links with practitioners since the school visits have been maintained. This multilateral therefore contribute to bridge the gap between schools and university.

Project activities and events have reinforced transnational connections and have stimulated new Lingua end Erasmus cooperation.

The project activities have clearly contributed to reduce isolation of the researchers, trainers and teachers directly involved. The intercultural dialogue has been stimulated and enriched by the CLIL thematic issues. Some connections between professionals have been sustainable and still exist.

Many partners consider that her universities should have specialized staff in Comenius projects. In this project, there was a good balance between practical aspects and significant contribution to research in the field via many valuable publications.

Some participants have gain knowledge and credibility and nowadays coordinate research groups in their institution.

The project results have been directly and personally delivered to Mrs Mady Delvaux, the Luxemburgish Minister of Education. The recommendations from the Comenius partnership have been taken into account in the current reforms at national level. The projects results have also been published in a national official document: 'Réajustement de l'enseignement des langues'.

5.21 Hola! for Kids: A Holistic Approach to Language Learning for Kids

Key ID in this study: 73

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 133919-LLP-1-2007-1-BE-COMENIUS-CMP

Coordinating Institution: Vzw Nascholing in het Katholiek Onderwijs, Belgium

Partners: 2 universities (ES, DK), 2 schools (IT, TR), 2 school umbrella organisations (BE, GR), 1 private service provider (FR)

Comenius Action: Comenius Multilateral Project

Thematic Area: Foreign language teaching

Duration: October 2007 to September 2009

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: The overall objective of this multilateral project is to improve language learning and teaching at primary school (mainly French and English) and therefore to train teachers to teach foreign languages to kids in a more natural way, so that they can have fun while learning to do something with the language, not just to enrich their lexicon or range of structures. Language is dealt with in a holistic way. Language is seen as a vehicle of communication, a means of socialization and discovery of cultural specificity. The primary end user is therefore the teacher at the shop floor, the end beneficiary the young learner. Secondary end users are all people who support the language teachers from pre- to in-service training, and possibly the people who are in charge of the curricula or textbook designers. In order to support the end user in achieving the objectives, partners have developed principles, materials and class management examples, turn these into a training course and inform the target users by means of a website.

Website: www.holaforkids.be

Public Part of the Final Report:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/acc_mes_final_report_2007/com_mp_133919_hola.pdf

Important Characteristics/ Highlights: The project promoters wanted to include as many perspectives on education as possible in their partnership as well as a wide geographic coverage, together with joining up the traditions of teaching French and English because they wanted a project that invited to learn from and with each other – see the project portfolio. The learning process of the partnership would be an ingredient meant to support each institution in making the target teachers learn. The end products were meant to be piloted and screened on their effect at the shop floor as well as their theoretical underpinning.

There were many 'clashing learning moments' that have been useful to understand in depth the interpersonal, intercultural and inter-institutional aspects of the Hola! project.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

Most of the participants certify that they have professionally and personally benefited from this transnational cooperation. They consider that it has been a learning process even for those with a very valuable previous experience. The coordinator, Mrs Van Thienen has been appraised by her institution and has got a new position in the VSKO internationalization service. Mrs LASKARIDOU has been recognized as a national expert by the Greek ministry of education. Mr O Neil has left his school and has become lecturer at University in Turkey. Mr Megaz (ES) has been appointed as responsible for teacher training curriculum. Mrs Macquart (FR) has created her own private training centre.

At each meeting, the partners went to another country and they wanted to be holistic as well in their meetings. The agenda and the methodology have been adapted taking into account the learning style of the host institution. The responsibility for organizing meetings was delegated to the local partner. A portfolio has been enriched along the project duration. All the partners consider that this portfolio has been a very valuable tool for learning to learn, for continuous reflection, for in depth analysis and for mutual recognition.

In Spain the holistic approach has been integrated to the teacher training curriculum thanks to a participant to the Hola! project. In France and Belgium, in-service training modules have been and are still provided d by the French partner of Hola!. The partners have organised an international conference where workshops on Hola! have been offered to a large and diverse audience.

In the universities involved in the project, results have been used and recognised in the initial teacher training. Thanks to the reputation of the Hola! Project, the coordinator has been invited to take part in the e-twinning selection in Belgium.

Most of the Hola! Participants have been enthusiastic and active in encouraging people to move from inside their institution to outside. They continuously inform their colleagues and promote the opportunities to learn abroad.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

The Hola! material is generic and has been designed as a template. It can therefore not be used as a handbook or as a manual. It presents content progressions, resources and examples of best practices.

The school visits enabled the partners to take into account the cultural and methodological diversity within the consortium. The partners have developed means to empower the teacher 'to go a step further'. Most of the participants consider that the impact on the classroom practices was tangible.

The project has actually reduced the professional and institutional isolation (especially for the Turkish partner). This kind of project experience is very powerful to open the minds.

In many partners countries (BE, TR, GR, IT) the parents have also been informed about the holistic approaches that are applicable at both primary and secondary schools.

In Flanders, a person responsible for the curriculum has been involved in the project. Thanks to the commitment of this person, the impact throughout the Flemish catholic network of schools has been very significant.

Tracking learning processes is very difficult but there has been a shift of the corresponding terminology used by the partners. Some concepts have been studied and defined during the project. Nevertheless, the Hola! knowledge is also very practical and 'easy to share' with new beginners. Some Hola! metaphors (spices/cook) make the project results very understandable.

All partners have possibilities to disseminate results through their initial teacher training (e.g. universities in Madrid/Bologna). All involved school teachers have benefited from the project in terms of skills development.

The transnational project had an influence on several policy-makers (e.g. Mr Franck Van den Brouck has opened a new way to teach the language teaching in vocational schools. Mr Pascal Smet, the current Flemish Minister of Education, has taken into account the recent international findings (including Hola! in his reforms). Nevertheless, this influence on the decision-makers is not really measurable.

The website is maintained and still active. All Hola! products are downloadable.

The role of the national agency has been essential to inform potential end-users, to extend the networking and to connect the project to other Comenius initiatives (eTwinning, school partnerships, etc.).

The coordinator and the partners have participated in many international events about language learning but had not any contacts with Comenius networks in this thematic area.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

Mrs Van Thienen has got evidences that the learners had fun during the Hola! Lessons; they were very motivated and stimulated by the learning approach. The pupils have provided the partners with very positive feed-back (available in the project portfolio).

This project has contributed to prepare pupils at an early age for the national (Fonds Prince Philippe) and transnational mobility. Hola! is a way to really speak a foreign language.

In Greece, the Hola! member has contributed (2 units) to a manual dedicated to all secondary pupils across the country.

Each partner has video materials to show how the Hola! approach can be implemented. The Hola! promoters consider that it is crucial to have an impact on the classroom level.

The partners had to create a safe atmosphere and had to encourage the participants in the record of real practices. Many teachers involved in the project have implemented Hola! in their classrooms. There have been reflections with these teachers who were able to describe the effects on pupils.

In a lot of schools of the partner countries, the change has been achieved collectively. Many school managers and subject coordinators have been active in the Hola! dissemination.

In Belgium, the coordinator has also collaborated with full-time trainers for primary catholic education. They have included Hola! results in their in-service training programs.

The coordinator has reported continuously to her legal representative. The manager of pedagogical department of VSKO, was very supportive.

The coordinator received very efficient support from EACEA; she got advice from the EACEA financial officer. A Comenius project coordinator should have self-management skills but he also really needs this kind of support from the EACEA.

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

There has not been any hierarchy among the partners and buddying system has been implemented between school teachers and researchers in order to ensure practicability/feasibility of the results. The whole material has been tested in classrooms and improved by the partners to be usable in a large diversity of contexts. This concrete impact has been significant on the scale of many entire primary school communities in Belgium. Concerning the secondary schools, the impact on learning experiences has been high regarding foreign language lessons.

The transfer of holistic methods depends on the linguistic command of the teachers. In Flanders, the skills of primary teachers in French are not always sufficient to fully implement Hola! in the classroom.

The Comenius multilateral project has stimulated new school partnerships (GR-IT and GR-TR).

The issues that the partners had to deal with have been 'internalized' within the different institutions across Europe (Universities, school umbrella organisations, etc.). The role of the partner universities has been crucial in the conceptual work regarding quality criteria. The researchers/lecturers made an effort to express the rationale of Hola! in transparent terms.

The project coordinator and the Flemish national agency have been connected and have agreed on the tangible impact of a Comenius project like Hola! There have been synergies between Mrs Van Thienen and Mrs Reynders (NA) concerning the valorisation of the results, the regional networking and events in the thematic area.

The coordinator exchanges information from Hola! at an international level thanks to her position in Brussels that enables her to contact EU-regional peers.

5.22 TACCLE: Teachers' Aids on Creating Content for Learning Environments

Key ID in this study: 90

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 133863-LLP-1-2007-BE-COMENIUS-CMP

Coordinating Institution: GO! Onderwijs van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap, Belgium

Partners: 1 school umbrella organisation (BE), 1 university (IT), 1 public teacher training institution (ES), 3 private service providers (AT, IT, UK)

Comenius Action: Comenius Multilateral Project

Thematic Area: Use of ICT

Duration: October 2007 to December 2009

Short Summary on Objectives and Results

This multilateral project supports the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning. TACCLE aimed to train teachers to create content for electronic learning environments in a didactical way in the context of the didactical design of an e-learning course. It also aimed to enable teachers to identify and decide which ICT tools and content are most useful for certain study purposes, and teach them how to create learning content using information design, web standards, usability criteria and reusability of learning objects (text, images, animations, audio, video, …) focusing on learning content which enables active, interactive and cooperative learning processes. Further, the project aimed to enhance the quality of learning environments in education by training teachers how to use them, and create resources for teachers to help them with the use of learning environments in pedagogically sound ways. The project stimulated the implementation of new approaches to ICT teacher training related to the concept of lifelong learning, knowledge sharing and peer learning, as well as stimulating teachers to share the developed content with their colleagues using existing repositories.

Website: www.taccle.eu

Public Part of the Final Report:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/acc_mes_final_report_2007/com_mp_133863_taccle.pdf

Important Characteristics/ Highlights: The international TACCLE courses have been very successful and are still popular. The project results are tangible and sustainable. A TACCLE2 project has been selected and ensures further developments of the TACCLE materials (additional handbooks and training sessions). The Welsh partner did a wonderful job of editing in English thanks to his very valuable background. 3500 users have registered and 10000 PDF copies of the TACCLE handbook have downloaded from the website.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

The partners decided to set up transnational training courses (instead of local training courses) in order to create an appropriate environment for teachers (1 week focusing on the development of their skills).

Through the TACCLE activities, teachers have become aware of shared issues and they have learnt about solutions from each other. The exchanges and the dynamic induced by the transnational course were remarkable. The partners have got a very positive feed-back (via e-mails/Facebook pages) from teachers who have changed their way of teaching thanks to the TACCLE materials. The teacher handbook (10,000 pdf copies) has been designed in order to be applicable in many different training contexts.

The project did not have any direct impact on the curricula. Nevertheless, the Flemish teacher training program is driven by the needs detected by the schools and GO! has an in-service training department that offers courses based on the TACCLE materials.

The coordinator, Mr VERMEERSCH has been involved in many European projects for 18 years. Nevertheless, he has particularly learnt from the TACCLE project in terms of management and of new communication tools.

For many teachers participating in the TACCLE course, it was the first international experience and it has opened their mind to new opportunities. The coordinator and the national agencies have supported and facilitated the individual applications for EU grants. The success of the TACCLE project and the amount of exchanges with the end users have led to a new generation of TACCLE (2) Comenius multilateral project focusing on subject areas (primary school education, maths/sciences, humanities, core skills, arts).

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

Most of the partners consider that many TACCLE trainees have been able to report about their experience to their colleagues. The Handbook is very valuable as a tool to share the knowledge gained (e.g. It has happened that few weeks after a TACCLE trainee came back to his school, several teachers have ordered the Handbook). The coordinator uses Google analytics and considers that the registration process is very useful to evaluate the dissemination.

The partners have ensured the sustainability of the international training course beyond the EU funding period. That also keeps the partnership alive and that provides 'stimuli' for updating the website and the materials. The coordinating institution would be able to disseminate and to sustain the course in Flanders but the TACCLE2 EU funding ensures that this course will still be proposed at a European level to an international audience.

Some partner institutions have pedagogical departments which have supported the development of the project. It was also very useful for the dissemination of results. In Belgium, the Flemish public authorities and the catholic educational network (VSKO) have also been informed about the TACCLE project. In Andalucía, the partner had good opportunities to influence the Spanish public authorities.

The newsletters have been published and the dissemination events have been organized in cooperation with some national agencies.

A few initial teacher trainees from Germany and Belgium have attended the TACCLE international course. In the TACCLE2 project, 2 teacher training institutions (RO, ES)

are directly involved in the partnership. Mr VERMEERSCH considers that it would have been an added value for TACCLE1 if such institutions had been involved.

Some examples of practices inspired by the TACCLE project have been uploaded on European platforms for cooperation and on resources centres like 'KlassCement.be'.

In Belgium, the EPOS national agency is embedded in the Ministry of Education and is very active (contacts with schools, publication of a national catalogue, show cases, workshops, fairs, networking (e.g. Ginko). The Flemish high-ranking civil servants are very aware of the European initiatives. The Flemish lobby (VLEVA) is also very active in stimulating cooperation with other Euro-regional representatives in Brussels.

The communication with the EACEA was very satisfactory. The delays for payments and for evaluation reports were acceptable.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

The first stage of the project was a study about what was available in the field. A questionnaire has also been responded by a large number of applicants wishing to attend the TACCLE test session. It has been used to identify the professional needs, to define the target groups and to catch their attention. EU-Schoolnet has expressed its interest for the results of this on-line survey. The partners consider that this initial research phase has to be included in the project work plan, as no partners would have carried out such a study otherwise.

The coordinator has several indicators of the use of the TACCLE website (Google analytics). 3500 users have registered. It is very popular in Spain and in Latin America. The coordinator also gets positive feed-back from people attending TACCLE courses and ordering the handbook. TACCLE materials are on a 'low threshold' and are intended for teachers who want to use them individually in their daily practice. The TACCLE handbooks have been 'meant by teachers for teachers'. It is understandable and usable for people who are not familiar with using computer and multimedia technologies. It has been drafted in such a way that it can reach a target group who needs to use the ICT on a daily base. 10,000 books (pdf) have been downloaded from the TACCLE website. However, teachers often ask for specific solutions focusing on the subject matters they teach. That is the topic of the next TACCLE2 project.

The TACCLE course participants (150) have significantly improved their linguistic and intercultural skills in the context of the international course. They are more self-confident in using a foreign language. Most of these TACCLE course participants are still in touch through a Yahoo group. The TACCLE2 website will provide users with blogging activities.

The coordinating institution has provided Mr VERMEERSCH with sufficient resources to manage satisfactorily this project. In many other cases (e.g. involvement of schools), the Comenius project is an extra work carried out in addition to the normal work. The coordinator has to be aware of this phenomenon.

The GO! accountancy standards are a bit different from the EACEA ones; it has therefore been 'double work' but it was not really problematic. The main facilitation from GO! was to make enough staff available to do such a project. This was the major GO! commitment along the project lifecycle.

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

The coordinating institution has its own network of 900 primary and secondary schools. The TACCLE material is widely used in these schools. It is sometimes difficult

to involve practitioners and to get them out of their classroom for a few days. This depends on the policy of the schools. Some schools do not want their staff to be away to attend a Comenius event. In Flanders, the autonomy of the schools is very high. It is difficult to convince the head masters in this decentralized educational system. The coordinator has spread TACCLE information via an electronic platform to reach the school managers. The impact of this information depends very much on the culture and on the size of the school (replacement facilities). The Spanish partner has also provided the project with an important network of schools. From the coordinator point of view, this kind of umbrella institution is very useful in terms of valorisation.

In Flanders, 2 organizations (EPOS & ALDEN BIESEN) are in charge of providing information to applicants for EU mobility and of planning contact seminars. Mr VERMEERSCH usually cooperates with these 2 organizations (e.g. presentations, workshops) and considers that this kind of support is very valuable.

Few involved partners were previously working in a European context. For the 'beginners' institutions, the impact of the TACCLE project is very significant. They are now able to organize international study visits for education specialists. It also clearly helps to encourage people to 'look over the wall' and to exchange views with European peers.

As far as the tackle trainees are concerned, a third is beginners and 2 third have previous European experience (eTwinning, school partnerships).

The TACCLE project has neither been detected nor valorised by any Comenius network in the thematic area. Mr VERMEERSCH thinks that a lot of networks are actually nothing more than larger multilateral projects involving more partners and focusing on organizing events but they do not succeed in establishing networks.

5.23 P2i: Pathways to Inclusion

Key ID in this study: 144

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 503614-LLP-1-2009-1-BE-COMENIUS-CNW

Coordinating Institution: European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities, Belgium

Partners: 1 university (DE), 1 teacher training institution (NL), 5 associations (BE, HU, IE, AT, FI), 3 private service providers (FR, SI, PT)

Comenius Action: Comenius Multilateral Network

Thematic Area: Special needs education

Duration: October 2009 to September 2012

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: The overall objective of the project is to facilitate the inclusion of pupils with special education needs into the mainstream education system. The project serves to bridge the gap between knowledge on one side and practice on the other one by putting into place two main structures: a) a virtual knowledge centre on inclusive education; and b) a network of stakeholders committed to inclusive education and available to speak out on the topic at (trans-) national level. The project consortium has developed 10 National reports with a 'barometer assessment' based on a differentiated data analysis. All 10 National reports have been evaluated and their results have been compiled into a comparative report ('Barometer Summary'). The national reports also contain information on teacher training and availability of new technologies. The project consortium has conducted local research in ten selected regions, one per partner country (i.e. 10 local reports). The Local reports are analysed and included in the Barometer Summary. All partners have conducted national seminars to share and discuss the research outcomes. The project consortium has collected models of good practice from the different partner countries. A website has been created with information available in all partners' languages. The website hosts the knowledge centre, which is under development but already contains the available research outputs.

Website: http://www.pathwaystoinclusion.eu

Public Part of the Final Report: Not yet published

Important Characteristics/ Highlights: The coordinating institution (EASPD) is already a network of organizations. Most of the partners previously knew each other under the EASPD but did not cooperate in a Comenius project. The advantage was that partners' capacity was recognized and their way to work was well known among the consortium. The coordinator considers that it would have been risky to involve unknown institutions in such a network. The project actually started with a large conference with much more people than those who have later been directly in charge of the network. This event 'opened up' the theme and gave an overview about what people concerned were thinking and what they needed. This broad exploration of the field has been a starting point for the partners. The coordinating institution organised

this conference before the selection for funding and without any guarantee concerning the EU funding. It was a financial risk.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

The P2i experience confirms that this network aims to help people to get new ideas about inclusion. This is the step before the implementation of new solutions at school. The partners were asked to combine the project meetings with school visits to identify practical issues and examples of best practices.

Through this network, many partners have developed their knowledge of the school contexts across Europe. The intercultural dialogue on theory but also on practice has contributed to broaden their view on what happens regarding school inclusion in the different educational systems. Mobility is considered as essential for having concrete experiences and feed-backs from the actors who daily face the school inclusion facts.

According to most of the partners, the involvement in such a network should not only be personal but also institutional. It has been essential for the P2i promoters to involve their colleagues in order to guarantee the sustainability of the synergies within the network.

The website and the P2i knowledge centre are developed by internal resources and will be maintained by the coordinating institution.

The project consortium has developed 10 national reports with a barometer assessment based on differentiated data analysis. 150 paper copies have been distributed and 230 digital copies have been downloaded from the network web site. A complementary review about teacher training and availability of new technologies has been carried out.

The local reports have allowed the partners to root the network in a large diversity of school contexts and to foresee European school partnerships.

The P2i network has developed connections with the thematic group of the Council of Europe. A representative of the Council of Europe has been invited as a speaker at the final conference.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

Views about inclusion have changed at the level of schools. Headmasters and teachers are getting more aware about the necessity of change. The network activities and events have contributed to the improvement of the dialogue between mainstream schools and special schools in many partner regions.

The national legislation can be an obstacle to the transfer of innovation from a country to another one but the partners believe that the P2i recommendations regarding the school management can have good effects at the scale of the school communities.

The network is very focused on what is needed as competence training for staff in schools but the coordinator considers that it is actually more difficult for the Universities involved in the consortium to have an immediate impact on the teaching practices. Through the initial training of the new teachers, the effect in the classroom could only be measurable in a long term. Furthermore, in many countries, it is difficult to get contacts between special and main stream education institutions and to impact on the initial training. However, in Flanders, the institutional structure (special

education directorate and main stream education directorate under the same authority) helps the P2i network to bridge the gap between special and main stream education training systems. In this Belgian particular case, the network has an influence on the initial training institutes regarding school inclusion.

Through its knowledge centre and its training module, the P2i network mainly contributes to the in-service training.

The network activities and outcomes are stimulating for a significant number of professionals who envisage carrying out new initiatives in the field. The coordinator is confident of the P2i network capacity to support new European school partnerships/projects in the thematic area. Documentation, references, guidance and expertise are available for any project promoters.

The network publications are translated into all the partners' languages but the personal contacts are difficult with people who do not speak English. The partners play an important role regarding the local/ regional communication and dissemination.

The network has not been linked to other sectors yet but the coordinating institution has the capacity to develop connections with the enterprises through its department dedicated to employment of people with disabilities. In Flanders, VVKbuO tries to set up a new project that will ensure the transfer of results from education and training contexts to inclusive job situations.

9 additional forums have been organized in order to inform stakeholders and professionals beyond the partner countries and to extend the network.

A 'post-conference' has been planned by the national agency in order to largely disseminate the P2i results in Belgium.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

The coordinator declares that the network aims to change the mind of people and she considers that it is a slow process. The coordinator cannot therefore observe immediate effects in the classrooms. The network is based on the belief that 'make a better inclusive school system will effect positively on the learners' but the activities and studies are not directly focused on them.

The coordinator and the partners have encouraged teachers and headmasters to ask for EU grants in order to involve the practitioners in the network's training sessions and conferences. Unfortunately these school professionals can only get one grant per 3 year even if they want to participate in several network activities. Concerning a network as P2i, there is a need for a promotion campaign to attract target groups and inform them about the EU grants opportunities.

Partners have been very inspired by the way their European peers are coping and fighting to change inclusive education. From the Belgian partner's point of view, the benefit of this experience is very significant concerning the interesting solutions that could be transferred in Flanders. Some ideas and examples of best practices (e.g. role of the specialized teachers, assistants in the main stream schools) have been communicated to Ministries of Education. Some other administrative actors and decision makers seem to be influenced by this comparative approach. A P2i training course has also been provided in order to develop awareness of a large diversity of professionals (teachers, heads of schools, service providers, etc.). Another one is planned for September 2013.

There have been linguistic and cultural obstacles along the 3 years. The number of face-to-face meetings has not been sufficient to maintain a continuous communication among the partners and to collectively deal with all issues. A big part of the coordinator's work is devoted to reminding partners of fulfilling their tasks. The process to take a common decision is judged as too long by the coordinator.

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

Even if the researches have been carried out both at local level and at national level, it is difficult to root the network activity without an existing network of schools. The Belgian partner mentions that in Flanders, his institution is an umbrella of special schools; this structure reinforces the results of the Comenius network and facilitates the fast dissemination within the regional schools system. Thanks to this initiative, there is currently a willingness of many schools in Flanders to develop European partnerships. This experience has also enhanced the exchanges and the visits between Flanders and Holland. The joint reflection has given new perspectives to deal with the diversity of pupils with disabilities as far as school organization, management and curricula are concerned.

The partners have easily reached an agreement on the goals but it seems difficult to fully guarantee that the 'translation' of these goals will actually be the same in each participating country. The examples of best practices (collected and available on the website) are visible evidences that the school inclusion, as suggested in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Article 24, Education), is possible. Nevertheless, it is difficult to assess if the results will be exploited as recommendations, suggestions or just inspiring ideas.

The P2i knowledge centre is an open platform. Each partner will update the content at least once a year beyond EU funding. Linked-in inter-activities will be maintained by the partners who will continuously post additional information. This sustainable networking will be monitored by the coordinator.

A database of 500 European key-actors (different types of stakeholders, public authorities, etc.) has been set up in order to send the newsletters of P2i but also of other EU-projects (e.g. INVEST Leonardo multilateral project).

5.24 METASCHOOL

Key ID in this study: 127

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 141942-LLP-1-2008-1-GR-COMENIUS-CMP

Coordinating Institution: Ellinogermaniki Agogi, Greece

Partners: DE: 1 university; BE: 1 non-profit organization; AT: 1 policy maker; CZ: 1 association, 1 school; GR: 2 schools, 1 university, 1 research & technology centre.

Comenius Action: Comenius Multilateral Project

Thematic Area: Teachers' ICT and learning design skills

Duration: November 2008 – October 2010

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: The METASCHOOL project aimed to improve teachers' professional development combining ICT and learning design skills with innovative approaches in the area of pedagogy, curriculum, and school organization. METASCHOOL raised teachers' digital competence focusing particularly on developing skills related to the use of computers for retrieving, assessing, storing, producing and exchanging digital learning resources. To this end, trainees were engaged in learning-to-learn activities through the development of a training scheme that improved the uptake, sharing and reuse of digital learning resources in schools. The main output was an innovative training programme on exploiting innovative digital educational content from digital repositories so as to increase students` interest and participation in classroom activities.

Website: http://www.ea.gr/ep/metaschool/

Public Part of the Final Report:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/com_mp_141942_metaschool.pdf

Important Characteristics/ Highlights: The project received considerable publicity and recognition of the quality of its outputs. It was presented as a case study in a workshop organised by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) and DG Education and Culture (EAC) of the European Commission, which explored how European Union policy is encouraging the development of new skills for new jobs and personal well-being in a digital age.

The training developed was adopted by other projects that followed after the end of METASCHOOL, such as the Open Discovery Space project, and is still being developed and updated. Generally, after the end of EU funding, the project remained very active, organising training and other activities, aiming to further increase awareness of its contributions and maximise its impact on the world of school education. All the METASCHOOL products are still available in the website and portal of the project, which have been continuously maintained by the coordinator.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

Project members gained a better knowledge of other European countries and pedagogical approaches not only in Europe, but also in USA. The biggest impact of the project was on the school teachers involved, who gained knowledge, skills and experiences in the use of digital content in their classroom. The ICT support staff of the schools also gained skills in setting up and maintaining web-based repositories of educational content. Overall, participating institutions were committed to using and integrating the approaches developed by the project in their activities. Indeed, the developed training curriculum and the accompanying materials have been implemented in the teacher training programmes of participating institutions (universities and teachers training centres).

The impact on the participating institutions is on-going after the end of EU funding, as the project still organises workshops, summer schools and other activities. Among the consortium partners, the co-ordinator (Ellinogermaniki Agogi – EA), the Austrian Ministry of Education and Culture (BMUKK) and the European Schoolnet (EUN) continue to support the METASCHOOL community, since the developed training framework is in line with their missions and activities in Greece, Austria and Europe.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

The consortium aimed at, and succeeded in creating a 'cascade effect', starting from impact on the participating institutions and gradually targeting wider sections of the world of education. The materials and resources developed were of direct use to teachers and schools, including lesson plans, activities and projects whose quality was checked by experts. These outcomes were disseminated widely during the project. Overall 130 dissemination and publicity activities took place, addressing the wider educational community across Europe. These included publications, newsletters, meetings, workshops, other events, as well as a television interview on the national Greek channel Prisma Plus. The METASCHOOL website had 236,050 page views during the funded period, while even after the end of funding visit frequency remained relatively high.

Indeed, dissemination continued to be very active after the end of the funded period, in a process of sustaining and expanding the community of teachers developed around the project outcomes. This included the organisation of several training activities after the end of the project. Even two years after the end of the funded period, METASCHOOL is still organising events in order to inform the wider educational community across Europe about its proposed approach and outcomes. All METASCHOOL products are available through the website and portal of the project.

The training developed was adopted by other projects that followed after METASCHOOL, most importantly by the large-scale ICT-PSP-funded 'Open Discovery Space' project, which spreads over 25 European countries addressing the challenge of modernizing school education by engaging teachers, students, parents and policymakers in the collaborative creation a pan-European eLearning environment.

The outcomes and the designed innovative approach were communicated to policymakers very actively. In Greece, for instance, there has been an impact thanks to adjusting the project with the emerging new priority of the Ministry of Education for the creation of a big national repository of digital educational resources[41]. The project itself can also be seen as a source of information and motivation in the development of the relevant policy, thanks to a very active promotion of its outcomes to the

[41] See more at: http://digitalschool.ypaideias.gr/

Ministry and especially the Directorate for the Information Society, which is responsible for the national programme of teacher training in the use of ICT.

Participation in the consortium of the Austrian Ministry of Education and the EUN network of ministries of education contributed significantly to the wider exploitation of the project outcomes at the European level, including targeted communications to policy makers and curriculum developers, as well as to teacher communities directly. Thus, METASCHOOL was promoted through the Austrian Virtual School Platform[42] and the training modules were linked to the Subject Oriented Portal[43]. The METASCHOOL portal was used in teacher training on the use of metadata organised by the Austrian Ministry, and a METASCHOOL Wiki in German was set up and further developed in the following years[44]. In addition, since in Austria the demand for mobile learning applications in informal and formal learning contexts was high, a first draft 'Module on how to Use Mobile Applications in Schools' was developed, in order to increase the attractiveness of the METASCHOOL training framework in the Austrian context.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

The METASCHOOL project aimed at a greater impact on beneficiaries and especially on school teachers, by involving large numbers of educators in its activities. To this end the project organised workshops, summer schools and other activities in order to inform the educational world and create the METASCHOOL teacher community.

While in the application the consortium had promised to involve 45 teachers and ICT support staff in the co-design and evaluation of the training programme, and 70 teachers and ICT support staff in the validation phase, in reality 282 teachers and ICT staff were involved in these activities. For instance, sixty teachers from 16 different European countries participated in the first METASCHOOL summer schools, exchanging ideas, developing new approaches within the METASCHOOL approach and uploading 35 learning resources. In the workshops overall 122 teachers from Greece, Austria and Czech Republic participated and interacted with the 21 METASCHOOL learning modules. Similarly, in the summer schools of the second year, 50 teachers from 15 different European countries uploaded 40 learning scenarios, and in the autumn school in Budapest, Hungary, 50 teachers were trained in the use of Web2.0 tools and Open Educational Resources.

To achieve this large number of beneficiaries involved (303% more than initially planned) the consortium and especially the coordinator and the EUN network used all possible links with other European transnational projects and initiatives concerning the world of work and teacher training.

Characteristics of the Consortia - Role of Schools in CMPs and CNWs

The diversity of institutions involved (schools, public authorities / ministries, research centres, universities) turned out to be a very positive asset for the project. Cooperation between the academic world and schools helped to design, test and validate an innovative training framework in the field of online learning resources.

The project also received consultant support from ISKME[45], a research institute dedicated to improving the practice of information access and knowledge sharing by design, an intermediary for continuous learning, collaboration, and change in the education sector. ISKME has developed the OER Commons, which is a free teaching

[42] http://virtuelleschule.bmukk.gv.at/projekte-international/eu-projekteabgeschlossen/METASCHOOL/
[43] http://www.schule.at/gegenstand
[44] http://virtuelleschule.bmukk.gv.at/wiki-METASCHOOL/index.php/Hauptseite
[45] http://www.iskme.org

and learning network, bringing together over 20,000 educational resources available for anyone to use.

What is more, the consortium consisted of partners who had already been working in the field of teacher training on ICT and the use of digital resources for many years, as well as being involved in international initiatives focusing on innovative methodologies concerning teacher training. Based on this background the partnership was able to achieve important results. The questionnaire survey and the telephone interviews carried out by the external evaluator of the project gave proof of the partners' generally active involvement in the process.

5.25 TERECoP: Teacher Education on Robotics-Enhanced Constructivist Pedagogical Methods

Key ID in this study: 48

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 128959-CP-1-2006-1-GR-COMENIUS-C21

Coordinating Institution: School of Pedagogical and Technological Education (ASPETE), Greece

Partners: GR: 1 university; FR: 1 research institute; IT: 1 university, 1 research institute, 1 museum; RO: 1 university; CZ: 1 university; ES: 1 university

Comenius Action: Comenius Multilateral Project

Thematic Area: science and technology (robotics)

Duration: October 2006-September 2009

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: The project, inspired by the theory of constructivism and constructionism (Piaget, Papert), focused on the constructionist use of educational technology as a learning tool. It aimed at the development of teacher training courses that will enable the future or in-service teachers to integrate the use of computer-based robotic activities in their teaching repertoire as a constructivist learning tool that can support pupil/student knowledge construction, learning by doing, learning through active exploration, and can increase pupil motivation in science and technology. The outputs of the project included a methodology for designing computer-based robotic activities supporting constructivist learning, a teacher training course curriculum and learning materials, teacher education courses, a community of practice between trainers and teachers, an international workshop, as well as publications, papers, and presentations in conferences.

Website: http://www.terecop.eu

Public Part of the Final Report
Not available

Important Characteristics/ Highlights: The project featured strong dissemination activity and achieved considerable publicity. It was invited in Campus Party Europe 2010, an event supported by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation, held in Madrid on 15th – 18th April 2010 during the Spanish Presidency of the European Union. This event brought together innovators of the internet, scientists and digital creators to participate in a special edition of the biggest on-line event for technology, creativity and digital culture in the world. 800 people from the 27 Member States of the EU participated in conferences, workshops and competitions centred around three areas: Science, Digital Creativity, and Innovation. During the event TERECoP was selected for the final 20 projects to participate in the Project Forum within the Science area and was presented by Prof. Dimitris Alimisis at the Science stage.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

The project had an important impact on the participating institutions. Especially the coordinator gained valuable experience in project management. During the project coordinator offered project organisation and planning, communication plan, financial management, contractual management organisation and preparation of meetings (agenda, proposals for action plans, financing matters, minutes etc.) and established a structure of support, defining roles in the project. The partners benefited from the experience of collaboratively designing a robotics-based methodology for student learning and a training curriculum, of developing robotics-based training activities and materials, of implementing and evaluating the training courses, and of disseminating the project outcomes.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

The project put considerable effort in making its results visible to the world of school education, through very active dissemination. Project results were presented in 15 international conferences. Importantly, even after its funding period, the project presented its results in almost 10 European events (training workshops, scientific fairs, and conferences). Dissemination to education practitioners was combined with the training activities and workshops of the project. Such activities included the pilot training courses of the project, in which considerable numbers of school teachers and trainees took part. In addition, the project organised international workshops in the framework of conferences and open days, in which it promoted its outcomes and the concepts educational robotics to the world of school education and educational studies (international workshops in the Simulation, Modelling and Programming for Autonomous Robots conferences in 2008 and 2010, participation in the Constructionism 2010 Conference, open days about educational robotics in Venice, Italy, and in Pamplona, Spain, workshop for teachers in Syros, Greece).

Aiming at impact at policy level, the final product of the TERECoP project, a book introducing educational robotics for school classes, was published in printed form and is available online through the project website.

Obstacles and enablers identified include the following:

- Too bureaucratic procedures regarding the financial and contractual issues followed by both EU and local authorities
- Asking for a signature from the legal representative frequently results in long delays.
- Financial departments in institutions face administration of Comenius projects as unnecessary extra work load.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

A series of training activities and workshops were organized, even after the funded period of the project, in which the consortium engaged many teachers across Europe in both face-to-face and e-learning work. In the 1st pilot training course in Rovereto, Italy, teachers from local schools created and presented joint projects regarding constructivist teaching activities. In the pilot training course in Marseille, France, 15 teachers were engaged. In the pilot training course in Pitesti, Romania, 15 further teachers were reached by the project. The teacher training course on educational robotics in Athens was attended by 23 trainees (4 primary education teachers, 11 secondary education teachers, and 8 postgraduate students).

In addition, one group of school students from Greece and two groups from Italy were

invited and participated with their teachers in the open day activities in Spain.

Characteristics of the Consortia - Role of Schools in CMPs and CNWs

The TERECoP consortium consisted predominantly of universities and research institutes. It also included a museum (The Town Museum of Rovereto, Italy), which also acts as a teacher training centre. Through the consortium partners and its very active outreach activity aiming at engaging teachers, the project had indirect access to several school and education practitioners. The consortium was carefully formed with important educational institutions from various parts of Europe with the aim to bring together expertise in the fields of education, computer science, and autonomous robotics, following a clear pedagogical approach (the social-constructivist approach of Piaget and Papert), and exploiting the Lego Mindstorm kits as working tools.

5.26 PREDIL: Promoting Equality in Digital Literacy

Key ID in this study: 131

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 141967-LLP-1-2008-1-GR-COMENIUS-CMP

Coordinating Institution: Institute of Applied and Computational Mathematics - Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas, Greece

Partners: GR: 1 technological research centre; FR: 1 university; UK: 1 university; ES: 1 university; PL: 1 university; SK: 1 university; CH: 1 university (silent partner)

Comenius Action: Comenius Multilateral Project

Thematic Area: ICT and digital literacy, gender aspects

Duration: December 2008 - November 2010

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: PREDIL was built on the premise that evidence based pedagogical strategies can prove catalytic in increasing both the quality of educational provisions and the educational outcomes as well as fostering students' motivation to STEM and related choices for careers. In light of that the project goal was to articulate a gender sensitive pedagogical strategy for technology enhanced teaching/learning for the upper secondary level of education. Such a pedagogical strategy is to be founded on the process that underpins the great imbalance in take up of ICT by boys and girls at school and university levels. The main outcomes of the project included a position paper, a research methodology, focus group activities, reflective tools, a comparative analysis, and, as the principle outcome, a set of good practice guidelines. Using the guidelines teachers can reflect on girls' instructional needs and personal attributions with respect to use of ICT in the teaching / learning process.

Website: http://predil.iacm.forth.gr/project.php

Public Part of the Final Report:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/com_mp_141967_predil.pdf

Important Characteristics/ Highlights: The PREDIL project is characterised by an emphasis on a clearly set out and followed empirical research methodology which helped get comparable pictures across the partner countries, engaging practicing teachers and students. The consortium launched several studies. Focus groups played a part in helping develop an understanding of main issues as teachers see them, while reflective tools enabled large scale on-line data collection from pupils and teachers. The project also employed a rigorous internal evaluation procedure in four rounds, and key project outputs were externally assessed. Finally, the PREDIL workshop engaged over 100 participants and facilitated the emergence of a publication in the form of a book.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

The coordinator reported that the results of the project contributed to teachers' professional development in the partner institutions, while the benefit also reached other stakeholders in terms of in service training.

There is an impact on the institutions in terms of gaining new understandings and tools which retroactively empower then to engage with the theme of the project in an on-going manner.

A new project emerged out of PREDIL, which constitutes evidence of institutional development. More generally, the PREDIL project has contributed its knowledge base to other related projects. PREDIL is currently making contributions to a Comenius Multilateral Network, the STENCIL network.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

Through its outcomes, the PREDIL project had an impact in the world of school education, by proposing gender sensitive pedagogical strategies for use in the classroom. The project results have important implications for materials development, curricula for both pupils and teacher professional development schemes, etc.

The PREDIL project has contributed to drafting relevant policy recommendations, offering added value in terms of benefits to the national contexts and benefits to European policy on STEM careers and gender. The good practice guidelines complemented with diagnostic self-reflective and observation tools were provided to teacher associations and ministries of education, in the form of the 'PREDIL Information Package'.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

The results of the PREDIL project are of use to all project beneficiaries, either from a 'use' or from an 'implications' point of view. The project made great efforts to reach and involve the beneficiaries via diverse activities, including the focus group discussions, on-line data collection methods, the organization of the PREDIL Workshop, etc. As attested through the several evaluation rounds of the project, the experience of collaboration proved rewarding for all engaged partners.

Characteristics of the consortia - Role of schools

The consortium was composed of higher education and research institutions, all of which had direct links to teachers' professional development schemes and were well connected to school settings outside the consortium. The consortium partners used school actors in order to learn and understand processes and classroom practices in relation to ICT and gender. The actual engagement and contributions of school actors are reflected in the results of the project. Through the focus group discussions, on-line questionnaires and reflective approaches for validation of results, a total of 3000 pupils from 9 national contexts participated in the empirical research conducted. Importantly also, the research instruments evolved from the interaction of the project with practitioners and a selected number of pupils (both boys and girls) in the partner countries. In addition, collaboration oriented activities focused particularly on establishing and maintaining a network of practitioners motivated on the thematic orientation of the project. In an iterative process, teachers and the project came to reflect upon the empirical results and on this base defined the form and contents for the tangible project outputs.

The composition of the consortium guaranteed that partners were experienced in conducting empirical research, promoting innovative concepts in educational practices,

linking education to social phenomena, enhancing the networking potential in the sector of education, organizing knowledge sharing and knowledge construction schemes, translating research findings to tangible guidelines for advice and action. The composition of the consortium also featured strong aspects of networking partners who could have undertaken many of the project activities separately in their own national contexts. However, the added value of bringing together selected partners from different educational and country contexts allowed the project to reveal cultural stereotypes, and thus enhance the analysis of empirical data by reducing cultural biases. The multi-country partnership facilitated a transfer of concepts, regulatory frameworks orientation and pedagogical practices.

5.27 TICTC: Teachers' ICT Competences - a Way to Effective Learning for Children with Hearing Difficulties

Key ID in this study: 50

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 129341

Coordinating Institution/Country: University of Latvia, Latvia

Partners: LV: 1 university, 1 school; DK: 1 teacher training centre; CZ: 1 university; UK: 1 training centre; GR: 1 university, 1 public authority

Comenius Action: Comenius Multilateral Project

Thematic Area: teachers' ICT literacy, special needs education

Duration: October 2006 – September 2009

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: The aim of the project was to equip teachers with ICT competences, so as to improve and develop the teaching process and in this way lead students with hearing difficulties to raise their motivation to learn and gain learning skills that are necessary for everybody in the information and knowledge based society. The target group consisted of practicing teachers and future teachers working with children with hearing difficulties in the participating countries. The main outputs included a course description, study materials for the course, and a book with advice on how to use ICT in the core subjects. The study materials are available as printed materials and in a CD version, for use in distance education. The project was carried out in cooperation with schools, centres for children with hearing difficulties, and centres for teacher training.

Website: http://tictc.cti.gr/

Public Part of the Final Report
Not available

Important Characteristics/ Highlights: TICTC produced its deliverables according to its work plan. However, eLearning concepts and technologies change so quickly that teacher training courses aimed to enhance teachers' ICT competences can get outdated shortly after their release. It is important for such projects to produce not only 'hard' deliverables, such as training courses, but importantly also new networks and common understandings among consortium partners and the learning community on how to edit and modify existing courses and practices and work together. The study found evidence that the seeds planted by the TICTC project brought fruit for its online learning community.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions

The coordinator reported that she got new competencies and experiences in the field addressed by the project. Work during the whole project cycle (preparation, management, reporting) also gave her very good experience in management and in how to work successfully with different cultures and organizations.

During the TICTC project partners learned how to create a training course in a multicultural environment and share each other's experiences, including problems and failures.

Both the coordinator and school partners were in favour of centrally organized contact seminars and trips. The project consortium met before the project in a contact seminar and this helped a lot. The coordinator also noted that it would be helpful to organise more meetings for the coordinators of selected projects. The only meeting of this kind that took place was very beneficial, in her view. She suggested that it would make sense to hold another meeting of this kind when interim reports are discussed, for example.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

Project managed to have a wider impact than just through its direct deliverables (ICT courses). During the project partners gained good contacts with other countries and shared valuable information on a more general level. This communication and cooperation continues.

School partners in the project noted that their school moved last year to new premises with new and modern ICT infrastructure. They consider that the TICTC project was a major catalyst which influenced school modernization, as it created belief and understanding that ICT is not just a fashion but can rather offer real solutions.

The TICTC project deliverables were used in a Master program in the University of Latvia, and in the Social Pedagogy Programme in the course on social inclusion.

The Greek partner provides Comenius teacher training courses. The coordinator has authorized the Greek partner to organize and provide these courses.

The Danish partner developed a new project on the basis of TICTC, targeting the mentally disabled in the framework of the NordPlus Programme. Although the target group of this project is different and new countries are involved, the structure and methodology used have been taken from the TICTC project.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

School partners in the project emphasized several times that the TICTC project 'woke teachers up' and injected them with confidence that learning can be modernized. This also enriched pupils' learning experiences.

University partners benefited because they got feedback to their ideas and theories from the real world of classrooms.

Learning solutions for children with hearing difficulties differ from 'mainstream' learning approaches. Working out good solutions just for one small country is costly, and transnational cooperation in this field is most welcome.

The coordinator and school partners of the project described the latest developments and connections with the Czech partners, who have new good learning materials and videos what can also be used in Latvia. As videos are targeted to learners with hearing difficulties they are easily usable requiring little effort (for example, there is no need to translate as there is very little sound). So new learning aids are used and the TICTC project course helps teachers to bring new tools to the learners, which were produced after the project.

Characteristics of the Consortia - Role of Schools in CMPs and CNWs

The TICTC project involved different types of institutions and organisations: schools, universities, training centres. All partners were active during the project. The communication and cooperation between universities and schools which started during the project was also active after the project, according to both the coordinator and the schools partners. Partners from Greece, Czech Republic and Latvia are reportedly in more frequent contact with each other.

The Latvian school partners reported that the TICTC project had a direct impact by enhancing their schools' ICT infrastructure and educational approach.

5.28 DICE: Drama Improves Lisbon Key Competences

Key ID in this study: 107

Information on the Project/Network

Project Number: 142455-LLP-1-2008-1-HU-COMENIUS-CMP

Coordinating Institution: KAVA Cultural Group Association / Hungary

Partners: NL: 1 non-profit organisation, UK: 1 non-profit organisation, RO: 1 non-profit organisation, SI: 1 non-profit organisation, PL: 1 university. Associated partners: Palestine: 1 university, CZ: 1 university, NO: 1 university, PT: 1 university, RS (Serbia): 1 non-profit organization, SE: 1 non-profit organisation

Comenius Action: Comenius Multilateral Project

Thematic Area: Drama education

Duration: November 2008 –February 2011

Short Summary on Objectives and Results: The project utilises educational and artistic effects of drama education on cognitive and affective development of students in primary and secondary education. The major deliverable of the project was a Green Paper on Drama Education that outlined measured effects of this area of study on a range of competences. The project also produced educational resources (A teachers' manual in 9 languages, collections of best practice in drama education) and created a sustainable professional network.

Website: http://www.dramanetwork.eu/

Public Part of the Final Report
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/projects/public_parts/documents/comenius/com_mp_142455_dice.pdf

Important Characteristics/Highlights: The major merit of the project is its sustainability. Follow-up interviews and site visits (May 2011-October 2012) showed that, as a direct result of the project, 87% of participating Hungarian schools still keep on offering Drama as a curriculum component. 12 out of 20 participating teachers are actively disseminating methodology as certified national experts at study courses and regional meetings. Another feature is forging synergic links among theatre artists, teachers and researchers to produce theory-grounded, practice oriented teaching aids.

Impact on institutional development of participating institutions
Professional development of participating individuals: Both the project coordinator and team members reported increased awareness of drama education trends in other countries and their positive impacts and obstacles as well. This type of peer review is only possible when professionals are able to go beyond literature and conference talks and repeatedly engage in on-site observations and follow-up discussions. Visiting drama performances by students and witnessing the preceding rehearsals and the following debates centring on messages of the performance was a unique opportunity

for participating teachers to see methods in action and for researchers to document creative and pedagogical processes.

In the course of roll-out, drama teachers in participating countries could greatly benefit from documented good practice lessons and their discussion with project team members who experienced them on site.

Students of participating teachers benefitted through improved education in a variety of disciplines that could integrate drama elements. Educational resources prepared by the team reflected this double perspective: first, they were accurate representations of drama and social awareness projects; second, they included different interpretations of these methods and thus opened the way to new methodological considerations.

Pedagogical development: Educational resources (teachers' manuals and lesson plans) in nine languages of participating countries may be downloaded from a sub-page of the project web site[46].

European dimension: After the successful completion of the project, partners have prepared a follow-up project (submitted in 2011, not funded), and are currently working on improved applications.

The consortium expanded significantly after the completion of the funded project phase. With one exception, all the 12 project partners remained connected and included 8 more members to re-apply for a grant that would provide funding for the extension of their Drama Education Network.

Regular festivals and professional gatherings that involve the drama educators' network established as a result of DICE provide opportunities for a continuous exchange of ideas.

Obstacles: Working with a large variety of partners may result in differences in management culture that effects communication processes. The DICE project also had to face neglected correspondence, late submissions and also the opt-out of a partner. However, intensive exchanges of ideas in a variety of computer-supported formats (online discussions, joint document authoring, teleconferences etc.) helped the promoter to overcome these difficulties.

Working with national agencies also produced some difficulties of communication, due to large workloads of these agencies.

Enablers: The most important enabler was long-time, multilateral co-operation among partners, resulting in mutual trust and support. The reviewer also emphasizes the importance of full time co-ordination. The project was managed by a dedicated core team that devoted substantial efforts to organisational tasks. Meetings were well-prepared and well-attended as the efficiency of the organisers guaranteed rich professional development programs as well as intensive project session. Thus, partners experienced participation in the project as an enhancement of their professional lives and not as bureaucratic meetings of little use.

Impact on the world of school education (above the level of institutions involved in the project / network)

Developed teaching methods and materials: The most important result of the project is the teachers' manual, 'Making a World of Difference - A DICE resource for

[46] http://www.dramanetwork.eu/education_resource.html

practitioners on educational theatre and drama[47]. The manual contains good practice examples of drama education for social awareness. It is available in 9 languages, is offered for translation by interested organizations without charge, and is disseminated in three continents.

The examples include strategies and methods that show how educational theatre and drama improve key competences as described in the so called „Lisbon Strategies' – a developmental framework for the organisation of skills development at school.

Teaching methods are also documented through a series of video films. Participating teachers have developed collections of lesson plans and descriptions of related educational projects that are available at national drama education sites, e.g. the English page of the Hungarian drama education site[48].

Pedagogical strategies for use in the classroom: The project also published a Policy Paper published in 13 languages (apart from the languages of the project partners, also in Arabic and Chinese[49]. The Policy Paper is based on the results of the testing study and opinion survey done by all partners to identify:

- student interests and motivation factors relevant for drama education
- key competences of students to be developed by drama education
- experiences of students with theatre arts
- curriculum analysis related to the development of key competences and the role drama can play in teaching core disciplines
- teaching methods used by teachers and their effects
- innovative practices that unite civic education and drama.

Development of materials to be used by pupils: Materials to be used in the classroom were developed on a national basis, suited to curricula and developed as packages to be used at schools and also introduced in for the initial or in-service teacher training. Such materials have not been published but partner reports indicate that they were prepared in large numbers in the course of project-related in-service teacher education courses.

Professional development of school education: DICE has organised a wide variety of in-service programs on drama education in all the participating countries. Actually, these training courses are in place ever since. The reviewer visited five unusual but very effective training programs that combined experimental theatre and training based on own experiences. The courses included drama performances with improvisation plays involving the student audience. The plays targeted important social issues relevant for the audience and involved speech and movement improvisations as well as recitations of literary text. Students discussed actions and ideas behind them right after a cathartic performance. Discussion with teachers of the student groups and performers completed the training event. Students – aged 12 and above – left the theatre after the show on their own.

Impact on schools: Schools are institutions that change very slowly. However, evidence based policy suggestions are likely to give a jump start to this long process. The DICE research deliverable is a practice-oriented, insightful report on the beneficial results of drama education on the following key competences:

- Communication in the mother tongue
- Learning to learn

[47] Available at http://www.dramanetwork.eu/file/Education%20Resource%20long.pdf
[48] Available at http://www.kavaszinhaz.hu/english
[49] Available at http://www.dramanetwork.eu/policy_paper.html

- Interpersonal, intercultural and social
- Competences, civic competence
- Entrepreneurship
- Cultural expression

The database of the project included data from 4,475 students from 12 different countries, who have participated in 111 different types of educational theatre and drama programmes. Researchers have not only collected data from the students, but also from their teachers, theatre and drama programme leaders, independent observers, external assessors and key theatre and drama experts as well. Results suggest that children and youth participating in drama activities perform much better in the selected competence areas. Some results that have influenced the selection of drama as an elective by school principals indicate that theatre and drama course participants:

- are assessed more highly by their teachers in all aspects;
- feel more confident in reading and understanding tasks;
- feel more confident in communication;
- are more likely to feel that they are creative;
- like going to school more;
- enjoy school activities more;
- are better at problem solving;
- are better at coping with stress;
- are more tolerant towards both minorities and foreigners;
- are more active citizens;
- show more interest in voting at any level;
- show more interest in participating in public issues;
- are more empathic: they have concern for others;
- are more able to change their perspective;
- are more innovative and entrepreneurial.

Impact on teacher training colleges and universities: As a direct result of DICE, drama education methodology was included in the program of at least one institution of higher education in all the participating countries. In the DICE Policy paper, page 48, there are recommendations for higher education about the integration of drama education in the course programs of teachers of different disciplines. Some of the most important recommendations that have been realised in partner countries:

- Establish theatre and drama departments at all universities/teacher training institutions, when needed, with the help of international experts
- Teach educational theatre and drama forms and methods in a way which would be helpful for practising teachers
- Acknowledge theatre and drama as a proper subject in the curriculum with the same status as music and visual arts, because the impact of theatre and drama depends mainly on this
- Understand the real educational significance of theatre and drama as a knowledge and competence-producing subject area; develop dialogue about methodology, arts, education, didactics, pedagogy and philosophy that is largely absent at the moment
- Establish professional co-operation among school directors, theatre/drama teachers and teachers of other subjects in schools.

There are many other recommendations but these seem to be the most important. According to our informants, these objectives have been realised on the basis of DICE research. The reviewer could not obtain direct proof of the introduction of drama courses and these recommendations in other countries, but in Hungary, the role of

DICE's promoter, the KAVA Cultural Group Association, Budapest, is very important in this area.

Impact on school administration and educational decision makers: The theoretical documents (Policy papers, link above) developed in the course of the project included detailed comparative studies about theatre and drama activities in education in different countries that could be directly employed in the training of drama educators (in most cases, teachers of national language and literature). Such descriptions of national practices enhanced the transfer of know-how.

In many of the partner countries, the competence-based approach assumed by project partners was found highly innovative as it linked a discipline of aesthetic education to the development of key competences by core disciplines. Thus, the role of drama was increased and as its cross-curricular importance was revealed.

If the whole institution experiences positive change, not only those directly rewarded by the action, there is hope that the staff of the school will continue with the successful practice. Convincing evidence for sustained positive change is found in DICE, which demonstrated beneficial effects of drama education on the cognitive and affective development of students in primary and secondary education. As indicated before, DICE is sustainable: follow-up interviews conducted by our project staff proved that, as a direct result of the project, 87% of participating Hungarian schools still keep offering Drama as a curriculum component. 12 out of 20 participating teachers are actively disseminating methodology as certified national experts at study courses and regional meetings.

Exchange of experiences: The DICE consortium held conferences in most of the partner countries in order to disseminate the results of the project. On 25 October 2010, a key stakeholders' event was held in the European Parliament for arts educators, trainers, researchers and policy makers. The conference opened with the keynote speech of Jan Truszczyński, Director-General for Education and Culture, European Commission and Kinga Gál, Vice-Chair of Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs of the European Parliament[50].

Development of a framework for the mobility of student teachers, teachers and other staff: This project did not involve the development of a mobility framework. Mutual visits and exchanges of experiences were included in the follow-up proposal.

Dissemination of training materials and project results to a wider audience: National conferences were held in all partner countries and associated countries: Bergen, Norway; Ljubljana, Slovenia; Wageningen, Netherlands; Birmingham, United Kingdom; Gdansk, Poland; Belgrade, Serbia; Bucharest, Romania; Budapest, Hungary; Gaza City, Palestine; Ramallah, Palestine; Umea, Sweden.

ICT and new media: The main deliverables of the project are all available on the web[51]. Social Media were used to disseminate news about events and deliverables. They used the event organisation application on LinkedIn to organise events and at the same time advertise the home page with the deliverables for a professional community. They also used the internet for local dissemination of training courses.

[50] Presentations and resolutions of the Brussels conference available at: http://www.dramanetwork.eu/brussels_conference.html
[51] http://www.dramanetwork.eu

Examples of tangible results (good practice): Tangible results of good practice are the activities of partners that reflect the results of the project. Examples by some of the consortium members and associate partners (web sites updated as some of those on the consortium website are no longer available and accessed last on 17 December 2012):

- The Netherlands: Foundation Leesmij – drama events to promote the acquisition of reading skills[52]
- Slovenia: Taka Tuka Club (Durštvo Taka Tuka), performances for teachers of art and drama about interdisciplinary aesthetic education
- United Kingdom: Big Brum Theatre in Education Co. Ltd.: regular courses in drama education – utilisation of DICE recommendations and educational tools[53]
- Palestine: Theatre Day Productions, improvisations and drama performances about social conflicts[54]
- Serbia: Centre for Drama in Education and Art CEDEUM (Centar za dramu u edukaciji i umetnosti), organises theatre artists for work with children and youth, and involve artists and teachers in interactive work with children and youth. With their projects and activities, they influence the cultural politics in our country and influence the changes. One of their goals was to launch educational reform where teachers, artists and other experts are involved. They were successful: drama and movement are now part of the curriculum[55].
- Sweden: Culture Centre for Children and Youth in Umea (Kulturcentrum för barn och unga): contemporary arts and aesthetics are in the centre of performances and happenings of this outstanding institution. DICE-related events include regular teacher training activities and links established with neighbouring schools.

Contribution to EU policies: The project is one of the first realisations of the shift from facts-and-data-driven teaching to competence based education. The 'Lisbon Strategy' (Presidency Conclusions, Lisbon European Council, 23 And 24 March 2000), also known as the Lisbon Agenda or Lisbon Process, was an action and development plan devised in 2000 for realisation in the European Union between 2000 and 2010. Translation of the Lisbon Strategy goals into concrete measures led to the extension of the Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development (FPs) into FP7 and the Joint Technology Initiatives (JTI). One of the most quoted EU documents is that which describes the most important skills and abilities (competence areas) for life-long learning. DICE is based on the recommendations of this major policy document and development project and conducted an international research project to prove that the arts – especially drama and theatre – are important components in the development of basic competences. This realisation – and the large scale dataset supporting it – was crucial in the participating countries in the process of modernisation of education through giving the arts more emphasis in the curriculum.

Impact on beneficiaries (outside the projects and networks)

Benefits for primary and secondary teachers: DICE publications are excellent pre- and in-service training resources - not just for future teachers but also for social workers, pedagogical assistants, special educators, classroom teachers. The writer of this case study, for example, is currently using the manuals and leaflets at Hungary's largest teacher training programme as well as in a Science Communication MSc course. Many

[52] http://www.readingworldwide.com/index.php?id=44848
[53] http://www.bigbrum.org.uk
[54] http://www.theatreday.org
[55] http://roeda.at/on-going/pdf/02.pdf

activities described are inspiring methodological examples for work at science centres, as well.

Benefits for pupils and students: DICE introduced a new concept in education in the countries that partnered in this project and thus were targeted by most of the dissemination activities: developing key competences through disciplines usually associated with leisure. Students like acting, directing, designing costumes, - all theatrical activities. According to preference research, in most EU countries, this seems to be the case. However, drama education is restricted to a minimum in the school curriculum because its cognitive effects are left unrecognised. DICE provided examples that many teachers followed – and finally, students benefitted.

Benefits for school staff: Not only drama education, but a range of other disciplines were targeted in the good practice projects that DICE collected and showcased. Training workshops held at theatres and centres of culture made school staff aware of these 'unorthodox' places of theatrical encounters. They realised the benefits of drama education as well as the potentials of alternative theatre in aesthetic education. (Most drama teachers are participants in the alternative theatre scene in their countries). Thus, the project resulted in educational benefits and cultural enrichment for participating – and even for observing – school staff.

Benefits for teacher trainers and university lecturers: DICE developed manuals that are readily utilisable in pre- and in-service primary and secondary teacher education, the training of social workers and school assistants / pedagogical assistants, but also for kindergarten educators' training. The manuals are full of content and well-written; provide illustrations and links that help higher education staff to customize content.

Benefits for educational and public decision makers: DICE provides excellent examples of competence development and cognitive growth through affective activities. In sections above, the reviewer outlined how the project is directly related to key EU educational objectives. Results of the research project (proof of beneficial effects of drama education) and the educational resources are both useful for educational and public decision makers to make evidence-based decisions on the inclusion / extension (increase) of aesthetic education disciplines in the school curriculum.

Obstacles and enablers: Obstacles include communication differences mentioned above and lack of sufficient ICT skills with some consortium members. Disciplined work during the project – required by the excellent management – was also difficult for some partners. One of the partners decided to leave the consortium for undisclosed reasons.

6 The online inventory

As part of the wider online environment of the study, an online inventory was developed with information on the studied projects and networks and their outcomes. The online inventory can be accessed at http://www.ea.gr/ep/comenius-study/. The inventory consists of a rich database in the background which is accessed through dynamic web pages. The database has been built on Microsoft SQL, and the web-based content management environment at the user end is based on Active Server Pages (ASP).

The online inventory is a dynamic, expandable tool, which at the moment includes the 145 Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks sampled for this study, but can be updated with any number of further projects and networks. Central nodes of information in the database structure are the project or network, its coordinator, partners and beneficiaries, its outcomes. It includes registered organisations which are marked with their role in each project/network, and registered individuals linked to organisations. The user can browse through profiles of projects/networks, organisations, and individuals. Individuals are assigned a specific role and corresponding access and editing rights in relation to the management of the database (user vs. administrator). Thus, the repository of projects/networks and outcomes is at the same time a virtual community of people connected to these projects and networks. Registration to become a user is possible for anyone interested. Linked to the inventory is also a dynamic forum mechanism. In that administrators can post questions and users can respond in several threads, linking their response to specific projects/networks, if they wish.

The content of the database is organised according to the following scheme:

- Title of project / network
- Action type
  - Multilateral Project
  - Multilateral Network
- Short description (project / network summary)
- Thematic area(s) – main subject(s) (in keywords)
- Project / network website (link to)
- Starting date (month/year)
- Duration (months)
- Geographical distribution
  - Country coordinating
  - Countries participating
- Types of organisations involved
  - Schools
  - Teacher training providers
  - Educational authorities
  - Civil society organisations active in education (not-for-profit organisations and undertakings, including networks, associations, etc.)
  - Other (universities not training teachers, research centres, companies, etc)
- Target groups addressed:
  - Teachers / other school staff
  - Trainers of teachers / other school staff
  - Teacher students
  - School pupils

    - Educational policy makers
    - Other school community agents (e.g. parents)
    - Other
- School levels involved
    - Pre-school education
    - Primary school education
    - Secondary school education
    - Other (e.g. post-secondary school education)
- Types of training (if applicable):
    - Initial training of teachers or other educational staff
    - In-service training of teachers or other educational staff
- Types of Multilateral Network (if applicable):
    - Forum for joint reflection and co-operation in identifying and promoting innovation and best practice in a thematic area
    - Platform assisting persons and institutions to maintain and consolidate European co-operation beyond the period of EU support for their projects
- Types of project outcomes
    - Curriculum (or parts of)
    - Training course (or parts of)
    - Teaching methodology / pedagogical strategy
    - Teaching material (for the teacher)
    - Teaching material (for the student)
    - Framework for mobility activities / practical training periods
    - Analysis of training needs of a defined group of educational staff
    - Framework for monitoring, evaluation, quality control of project work
    - Comenius teacher/staff training event
    - Comparative analyses
    - Case studies
    - Annual reports on the state of innovation in an area of activity
    - Recommendations
    - Training of project co-ordinators
    - Dissemination event (general)
    - Network thematic events: working group meetings, seminars, conferences, dissemination of project results / new projects
    - ICT facilitating or enabling training
    - ICT facilitating or enabling information exchange and dissemination
- Distinctions and awards received.

7 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study presented in the previous chapters, this Final Report is concluded with a set of recommendations to the European Commission and the stakeholders of Comenius Centralised Actions. These recommendations constitute proposals for possible improvements to Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks, with a special focus on the improvement of the design, management and follow-up of similar forms of EU support under the future education programme.

The recommendations should be read as 'messages from the field' and in conjunction with the discussion of findings in the previous chapters (especially the discussion of results in Chapter 4 and the presentation of the case studies in Chapter 5). Each recommendation is based on the discussion of the relevant underlying issues and especially the discussion of enablers of, and obstacles to, the wider impact of Comenius Centralised Actions.

Encourage and facilitate a stronger participation of education practitioners

Actively encourage and practically facilitate a stronger participation of schools and education practitioners in all processes of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks. To this end:

- A simplification of the administrative processes by all authorities involved would be extremely helpful, as discussed further below.
- Concrete evidence of the actual involvement of schools and feedback from schools could also be required from the consortia.
- Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks should put more emphasis on mobility activities for teachers and students aiming to enhance teachers' professional development and students' learning, and which are very important motivating factors for the involvement of target groups in European cooperation. It is noted that, based on information currently available (December 2012), increased support of mobility activities and encouragement of increased collaboration among education practitioners in Europe appear to be among the priorities of similar forms of EU support under the future education programmes and initiatives.
- Financial resources for the mobility of teachers who are not official project or network partners could be included in the original budget, thus allowing practitioners to take part actively in project and network meetings, workshops and conferences. Such practitioners may for example include staff from associated partners.
- Education practitioners' mobility activities within Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks could be fostered through their documentation by means of EUROPASS documents (EUROPASS Mobility).
- Comenius Multilateral Networks especially should intensify their efforts to attract not only additional institutions and associations, but also individuals, including school staff, from organisations which are not official or associated partners.
- Comenius Multilateral Networks especially should intensify their efforts to identify Comenius School Partnerships and Comenius Multilateral Projects in their thematic area and include at least some of them in their proposed consortium.
- Overall, the official rhetoric and practice should emphatically promote the idea that schools and practitioners should be key consortium

partners, having equal rights with their academic partners, and playing an important role in project and network processes.
- More generally, all suggestions discussed below strongly relate to the encouragement of practitioners' direct involvement in Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks.

Reduce the administrative burden

Reduce the administrative burden of the participation in Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks. To this end:

- The European Commission and its Agencies should simplify the application process, so that it becomes more accessible to smaller and inexperienced organisations, by reducing the complexity of the application forms and making the language used and the information required more transparent, avoiding redundancy.
- The European Commission and its Agencies should use the reporting process more actively as an integrated tool supporting the actual work of the project or network, shifting the emphasis from mainly serving administration purposes.

Support coordinators and consortia

Prepare and continuously support coordinators and consortia, focusing particularly on the less experienced among them. To this end:

- The adoption of a more individualised approach of support and monitoring by the European Commission would be helpful, including the appointment of a specific project officer who would follow the project and provide prompt feedback.
- All the administrative regulations, and illustrative examples on them, should become available and explained to the coordinators and consortia from the very beginning of a project or network, and, ideally, even before its start.
- Publishing methods of good project management practice, in the fashion that good results are often disseminated by the European Commission, would be very beneficial for the consortia and possibly a motivating factor for better project management.
- Potential and existing consortia of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks should become more aware of the positive role evaluation can play towards better results and increased impact. Applicants should be required and facilitated through concrete guidance to integrate internal and external evaluation as functional elements in the project management processes.
- Projects and networks evaluated at the Progress Report stage as weak, partially or in the whole, should be closely followed by the European Commission, e.g. through a process of quarterly working reports and monitoring visits, with an eye to offering advice and support to them in order to achieve the best possible use of the provided funding and avoid failure.
- Coordinators at least of the larger Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks should be supported by active steering committees within the Action including experienced members coming from all types of organisations represented in the consortium.

Synergize with other parts of Comenius and the Lifelong Learning Programme

- Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks should be encouraged and facilitated to strengthen their links to other Comenius and more generally LLP Actions, such as School Partnerships,

Study Visits, Accompanying Measures, Key Activities, the other sub-programmes (Leonardo, Grundtvig, Erasmus), eTwinning, courses in the framework of CEDEFOP. More possibilities for synergies should be available before, during and after the project period. In this way, but also more generally, synergies between schools, teacher training institutions, universities, authorities, teacher and parent associations should be encouraged.

- To increase synergies and cross-fertilisation, Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks could be asked to provide information on their wider European framework (LLP and Comenius) in their project website, as well as listing and describing former and current Comenius projects, networks and partnerships in their thematic area.
- The European Commission should avoid redundant projects/networks and double financing of consortia applying for a new Comenius Centralised Action, by checking the objectives and results of previous projects and networks supported under other LLP strands in the area concerned.

Synergize with the National Agencies

Activate the National Agencies to support Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks at the local, regional, national level. More generally, Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks would benefit a lot from more synergies with the National Agencies, and possibly also with other umbrella or networking organisations available in countries.

- National Agencies could actively encourage and facilitate the preparatory work prior to Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks, so that the latter are implemented by focused consortia dedicated to shared objectives, with shared understandings of the field and of the scope of the project. Before submitting a new proposal, potential partners ought to make use of available grants for preparatory visits and contact seminars available through the National Agencies.
- National Agencies can play a vital role for the exploitation of project results, as a networking and multiplying factor at the local, regional and national level, by facilitating mutual awareness and continuity between projects, dissemination of results into the communities of practitioners directly, and the linking of projects and networks with school communities. For example, Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks should be invited by the National Agencies to take part in national and regional info-days in order to inform Comenius School Partnerships and eTwinning projects of their objectives, activities and results.
- Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks should keep the National Agencies informed about their progress and important outcomes and use them for the dissemination of their results. For example, coordinators of projects and networks could send a copy of the public parts of their progress and final reports to the National Agencies, highlighting opportunities for dissemination and exploitation at the local, regional and national level. National Agencies should also be invited to attend and/or follow dissemination and exploitation activities carried out by Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks.

- More generally, there seems to be space for more consistency and integration between the Comenius Centralised Actions and the smaller Actions managed by the National Agencies related to mobility.

Recognise and exploit successful outcomes

Define a wider European dissemination and recognition framework in which successful outcomes of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks would be more effectively disseminated and exploited.

- This could include sustainable and permanent European discussion spaces, such as regular thematic events, virtual forums on the internet, and other umbrella structures aiming at dissemination and networking of project outcomes in a specific thematic area on a European scale, involving the whole range of stakeholders. In this context, the European Commission should specifically continue to support umbrella Actions in thematic areas of interest, such as Comenius Multilateral Networks or Accompanying Measures or similar, with a strong emphasis on disseminating and exploiting successful results of previous Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks. Coordinators of previous best-practice and successful projects and networks should be invited to participate and contribute, e.g. by becoming members of these bodies at least for three years after the end of their funding, in order to promote European discussion and cooperation.
- Organised meta-analyses of project outcomes in the above described and other relevant frameworks can also enhance the level of take-up of Comenius results into policy and practice.
- A framework for the formal recognition of teacher training based on Comenius results could greatly enhance impact, as in this way Comenius-based training would become more useful for people's career development. An ultimate aim for Comenius training should be to have formal recognition and accreditation, e.g. through the ECTS system.
- Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks should be encouraged to disseminate their results by providing training courses published in the Comenius-Grundtvig Training Database.
- Technological developments should be exploited to help towards efficient monitoring of the activity and impact of Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks. For instance, web analytics techniques could be systematically employed to explore the extent to which Comenius Multilateral Projects and Multilateral Networks use their websites effectively to make their presence known and disseminate their activities and outcomes. This would have the potential to reveal -both to the European Commission as well as to the consortia- patterns, challenges and opportunities in the use of technologies and new media for the effective realisation and dissemination of the Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks.

Provide post-project support

Provide post-project support which could strengthen the chances of successful Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius Multilateral Networks to have a strong impact.

- This could include some further, low-level financial support to the consortia or partners in them for sustainability of good work and monitoring and enhancement of impact through targeted actions, as well as a monitoring and coordination of projects by the European Commission after the end of the funded period.

- With a view to maximising the opportunities for long-lasting impact on wider systems, the integration of Comenius projects and Networks into longer-term plans and greater initiatives, and the development of synergies with other projects and initiatives during and after the end of the funding period, within and beyond LLP and Comenius, should be strongly encouraged. Consortia should look for opportunities to build on the success of previous projects and initiatives and practically plan ahead for the continuation and expansion of their work beyond the end of Comenius funding.