



Lifelong
Learning
Programme



SISMILE:

**“Increase
Vocational Skills
To Face
Earthquake Risk
Inside Of Building”**

EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF SISMILE

FINAL REPORT

Project No: 517560-LLP-1-2011-1-TR-LEONARDO-LMP

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Table of Contents

A) INTRODUCTION	2
1. Aims of the Evaluation :	2
2. Project Background :	2
3. Information Update on Project Partners	3
4. Information Update on Project End Time	3
5. The Main Areas Evaluated :	3-4
6. Sources of Information, Methods and Processes :	4
B) EVALUATION FINDINGS	4
1. Outcomes & Results (Evaluation of Workpackages)	5-8
2. Project Management	8
3. Quality Assurance and the Testing Process of the E-learning Tool	9-10
4. Partnership & Collaboration	10-11
5. Dissemination	11-14
C) CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS	14-15

A) INTRODUCTION:

In this report the progress and activities achieved until the interim report are mentioned as the 1st phase of the project and the activities and the progress achieved after the interim report are mentioned as the 2nd phase of the project.

1. Aims of the Final External Evaluation Report

The external evaluation, briefly, aims to:

- Assess, in an independent manner, the achievements of Sismile Project comparing with the established objectives and programme of work and share it with the public
- Find out whether the project implementation has respected to the quality assurance process levels
- Identify shortcomings if there are any and possible improvement areas necessary to its structure or content,
- Observe and evaluate the involvement of target groups during the testing phase and provide feedback to the partners
- Realize the functionality of the partnership

2. Project Background :

As mentioned in the interim evaluation report earlier; the project is a pioneer; considering earthquakes, neither in VET nor in seismology science the non-structural elements have been taken into consideration in European level. More than 300 thousand people died and currently, 260 million inhabitants in EU are under the risk of an earthquake.

Considering the risks caused by nonstructural elements of a building during an earthquake; the SISMILE project aims to create an eLearning product –especially for furniture workers and manufacturers- about design techniques that are preventing these risks.

The major break of the project is that; this is the first time “designing of the nonstructural elements inside the buildings against the risks caused by earthquakes” has been considered as a matter of design in furniture production.

The e-learning training content and the manual guides are multilingual (EN, TR, IT, SP, GR, BU, RO) and through studies and surveys, national – cultural differences of the partner countries are reflected. 8 organizations from 7 countries work in cooperation for the creation of the training content underlying that the project’s subject is a transnational issue.

3. Information Update on Project Partners :

During the 1st phase the project partners were:

- Kandilli Observatory and Earthquake Research Institute / Turkey (P1)
- Pera Fine Arts / Turkey (P2)
- Technical University of Varna / Bulgaria (P3)
- Romanian Society for Lifelong Learning / Romania (P4)
- The Institute of Training & Career Guidance (IEKEP) / Greece (P5)
- European Furniture Manufacturers Federation / Belgium (P6)
- Palazzo Spinelli Istituto / Italy (P7)
- AIDIMA Furniture, Wood and Packaging Technology Institute / Spain (P8)

Third country partner:

Yamaguchi University, Graduate School of Sci. and Engr.

During the 2nd phase of the project all the other partners maintaining the same, P4; Romanian Society for Lifelong Learning dropped out and exchanged its place with AEPMR; Association for Lifelong Learning in Rural Areas from Romania. The external evaluators received the amendments from the partners.

4. Information Update on Project End Time

The project was started as written in the agreement and expected to be finished in 30th of October, 2013 but in the midterm of the project, it was foreseen by the partners that the partnership needed to have two months of an extension period to finish all tasks written in the project properly. It was requested by the partners to finish the project in the 30th of December, 2013.

The reasons for this extension were in brief;

- 1) The multi-lingual, multi-cultural and multi-beneficial aspects of the main product
- 2) The content was actually bigger than it was realized due to the national-cultural differences and target group needs analysis
- 3) The partner from Romania decided to leave the project and partnership came to an agreement with another Romanian organization to carry out the planned activities in Romania and this partner change caused the project partnership to lose time

5. The Main Areas Evaluated :

- Evaluation of work packages (Fulfillment of deadlines, involvement of project partners, development of products according to the description in the project plan, etc.)
- The **testing** process of the e-learning tool and the feedbacks of the partners (The usefulness, the content, structure and design aspects of the e-learning tool)
- Involvement of the target group/sector
- The transnationality and functionality of the **partnership** (cross-cultural understanding, sharing of activities, effectiveness of communication, meeting deadlines, etc.)

- The effectiveness of dissemination activities
- The effectiveness of international meetings (Cooperation, achievements, content, etc.)
- The weak points, the improvement areas of the overall project process and for the e- learning tool testing stage evaluation

6. Sources of Information, Methods and Processes

Various sources of information were provided by the Project Management team. The project's external evaluators participated in several project meetings. İdil Ander Dede participated the kick of meeting which was held in 14-15 December 2011 in İstanbul and the third meeting which was held in Varna in July 2012. For effective follow up of information and progress, videoconferences were made on regular basis with most of the partners of the project.

During the 2nd phase of the project, the evaluators monitored closely the testing stage of the e-learning tool, the involvement of the target groups, the overall work-progress, the collaboration and contribution of the partners to the development activities, the internal evaluation, minutes and meeting reports, the surveys and the dissemination activities.

The evaluators assessed the Minutes and the outcomes of partners' face-to-face meetings and the evaluation forms filled in by each participating partner. These sources were completed by the direct observation of activities by participation to the meeting of one of the evaluators (İdil Ander Dede) and partners' direct feedback.

The external evaluator held three face to face meetings with the project coordinator P1 Kandilli Observatory and Earthquake Research Institute and one face to face meeting with P2 Pera Fine Arts.

Questions and clarifications were asked through meetings, videoconferences and e-mails and feedback offered when needed.

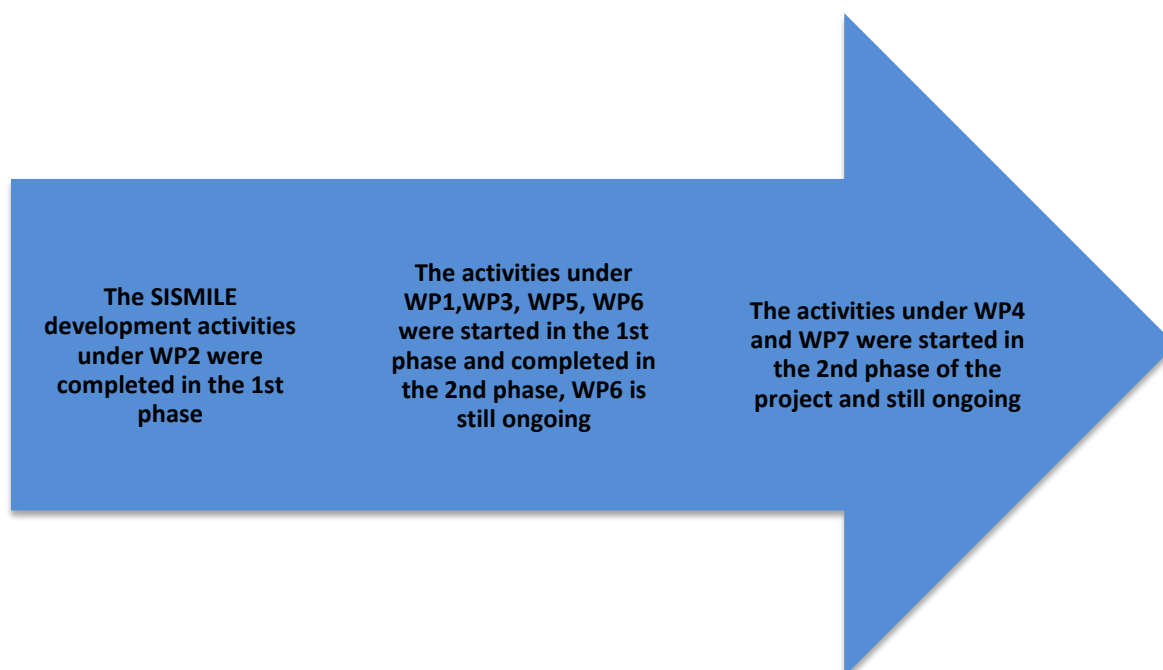
Tools/instruments used for external qualitative and quantitative evaluation :

The tools and instruments that are used by the external evaluators:

- Original application and objectives, activities, results
- Quality Management Plan, QA procedures, internal evaluation of the project's meetings, activities and outcomes by project partners, the partners' and project's progress reports
- Work-plan, work packages, proposed and implemented solutions.
- Additional results or impact
- Dissemination and exploitation
- The quality and relevance of the results

B) EVALUATION FINDINGS:

1. Outcomes & Results (Evaluation of Workpackages)



The outcomes of the activities under

- Workpackages undertaken in the 1st phase; WP2 (Work Package 2 : Information Gathering for Underpinning E-learning Studies)
- Workpackages that were started in the 1st phase and completed in the 2nd phase; WP1, WP3 (Work Package 3 : Developing E-Learning Content and Infrastructure), and the activities under WP6 (Dissemination Activities) are;
- Workpackages undertaken in the 2nd phase; WP4 (Testing) and WP7

Workpackages Undertaken in the 1st Phase			
WORK PACKAGE (WP)	Activity	Status	Method / Source of information
WP 2 (Information Gathering for Underpinning E-learning Studies)	1. Analysis of target group preferences	Accomplished	Evaluation and monitoring
	2. Analysis of cultural – national differences	Accomplished	Evaluation and monitoring
	3. Analysis of seismic differences in target countries	Accomplished	Evaluation and monitoring
	4. Analysis of good practices and know-how of a	Accomplished	Evaluation and monitoring

	third country		
Workpackages Undertaken during the 1st and 2nd Phases			
WP 3 (Developing E-learning Content and Infrastructure)	1. Defining structures and details of the content and e-learning package	Accomplished 1 st Phase	Evaluation and monitoring
	2. Distribution of tasks within the partnership	Accomplished 1 st Phase	Evaluation of the project meeting
	3. Preparation of the content by VET Partners	Accomplished 2 nd Phase	Evaluation and monitoring
	4. Reviewing of the content by the consultancy group	Accomplished 2 nd phase	Evaluation and monitoring
	5. Revising the e-learning content and finalize it	Accomplished 2 nd phase	Evaluation and monitoring
WP 6 (Dissemination Activities and Planned Outputs)	1. Creation of the informative project website	Accomplished 1 st Phase	Evaluation and monitoring
	2. Creation of project's logo	Accomplished 1 st Phase	Partner's reports
	3. Italian partner's attendance to the fair organization	Accomplished 1 st Phase	Partner's reports
	4. Preparation of the Brochures of Romanian and Bulgarian partners	Accomplished 1 st Phase	Partner's reports
	5. Preparation of the Brochures of the other partners	Accomplished 2 nd Phase	Partner's reports
	5. Update of the informative website on regular basis	Ongoing	Website
	6. Main Dissemination Conference	Accomplished 2 nd Phase	Responsible Partner's reports
	7. Small Dissemination Conferences	Will be Accomplished 2 nd Phase	Responsible Partner's reports
8. Creation of the Database	Accomplished 2 nd Phase	Responsible Partner's report	
Workpackages Undertaken in the 2nd Phase			
WORK PACKAGE (WP)	Activity	Status	Method / Source of information
WP 4 (Implementation : Testing and Reviewing of	1. Application of the testing to the target groups	Accomplished 2 nd Phase	Partners Feedback
	2. Attendance of min. 10 target group representatives in each	Accomplished 2 nd Phase	Partners Feedback

the Training)	VET provider partners' country. Because UEA (the TG representative partner) couldn't gather the 30 target group representatives for the testing stage, all the partners shared the target group representatives (5 representatives for each partner) among themselves.		
	3. Find out the best application by using several different methodologies in the testing; such as testing the training in a class environment, in a workplace environment or by distance, etc.	Accomplished 2 nd Phase	Partners Feedback
	4. Forming a questionnaire collaboratively and the responsible partner gathering all the feedbacks	Accomplished 2 nd Phase	Responsible Partners Report
	5. Reporting and presentation of the questionnaire results in the fourth meeting by the responsible partner	Accomplished 2 nd Phase	Meeting Evaluation Report
	6. Revision of the e-learning content and the system according to the reports	Accomplished 2 nd Phase	Evaluation and monitoring
WP 7 (Exploitation and Target Sector Reaching)	1. Getting in contact with the accreditation bodies in each partner country and ask for their contribution to the project	Accomplished 2 nd Phase	Evaluation and monitoring
	2. Preparation of a certificate which will be given to the partners to motivate them to disseminate the project to their colleagues	Accomplished 2 nd Phase	Partners Feedback
	3. Preparation of the copy	Accomplished	Responsible

	right – commercialization agreement which will be prepared in the early steps of the project within the partnership	d 2 nd Phase	Partner's Report
	4. Establishing contacts at local, national and European level for transferring project experience, know-how developed, and products	Accomplished 2 nd phase	Evaluation and monitoring
	5. Integration of project activities into the department's/ institution's development plan	Accomplished 2 nd phase	Evaluation and monitoring

2. Project Management

The project has been managed effectively and professionally from the outset, demonstrating a range of skills and experiences of the leading personnel (P1) in the contextual field.

As mentioned in the introduction section, during the 2nd phase of the project all the other partners maintaining the same, P4; Romanian Society for Lifelong Learning dropped out and exchanged its place with AEPMR; Association for Lifelong Learning in Rural Areas from Romania. Furthermore, the partnership needed to have two months of an extension period to finish all tasks written in the project properly so the end time of the project was extended to the 30th of December, 2013.

The approach presented in the application to involve experienced players both in the field of European project work and in terms of quality and monitoring has encouraged collective and shared ownership of the project while maintaining clear and decisive central leadership by partner P1. An additional strength to the management of the SISMILE project has been the institutional ownership of the initiative by all partners and especially by the project leader P1. This has been witnessed by the external evaluators both in terms of the range of skills and experience brought to the subject and in terms of the evaluators' own sub-contractual relationship with the project leader. With regard to the former, such institutional ownership is essential in any transnational cooperation project, as it is sometimes the case that one or two key partners "drive" a project from the viewpoint of their own field while also attempting to do justice to all the financial, administrative and contractual aspects. This is clearly not the case in SISMILE, where the team presented in the application has been not only specialised but also diverse enough to implement the project effectively. For SISMILE, this strength has particular importance when it comes to the Transfer of Innovation aspect itself.

3. Quality Assurance and The Testing Process of the E-Learning Tool

Quality Assurance of the project is addressed in Work Package 5. WP-5 includes below mentioned activities:

- Preparation of the Quality Management Plan
- Evaluation of the Project Process in the midterm externally
- Evaluation of the Project Process in the final externally
- Involvement of the different groups to the development of the content
- Testing of the content on different groups and revising the content

By nature, the first two activities had been accomplished in the 1st phase of the project, including the interim evaluation report. Other listed activities were accomplished in the 2nd phase of the project.

The two important aspects of quality assurance have been carried out in the project: Depending on the testing phase of the e-learning tool and the feedbacks of the testing stage participants, the e-learning product is “fit for purpose” meaning the product is suitable for the intended purpose. During the testing phase, some corrections and changes were made in parallel with the feedbacks of the testing stage participants, mistakes were planned to be eliminated so that the product should be “right first time”.

The introduction of e-learning system to the target group:

During the testing phase the introduction of the e-learning was mostly done by teachers, experts or in a classroom environment at the university so the content of the training was defined as “understandable” and “attractive” by the partners.

In Bulgarian partner’s example, The Technical University of Varna has already started to implement the e-learning as an optional course for regular and part-time students, masters in the first row. However it is also examined that an important part of the target group members have not used any e-learning system before. This shows that **the computer skills and IT knowledge of the target group members play an essential role in using the e-learning tool**. In cases like this, it could be more appropriate to use face to face trainings or the manual guide.

The Content and Usefulness of the Product:

Overall, the training was found useful in comparison with the target group’s needs and expectations. The organizations of the testing trainings were appropriate and the addressed themes, content and the structure were found adequate. It is proper to say that the trainings had a good impact on the target group’s positive thinking and all the participants were interested in the subject because they became fully aware of the risks of earthquakes.

User-friendliness of the Product:

General feedback gathered from the participants shows that they found the e-learning tool user-friendly.

In the questionnaires the user-friendliness aspect was evaluated under two titles; “visual layout” and “information system”; they were both evaluated mostly as “not bad” and “sufficient” by the participants. Approximately, 20 % of the participants evaluated them as “good and very good”. This information was gathered from the P2’s questionnaire results which were filled by the testing stage participants.

Weak Spot of the E-learning Tool:

The weak spot of the e-learning tool is the fact that it requires an **e-learning** process. As mentioned earlier, the computer skills and IT knowledge of the target group members play a vital role in the usage of e-learning tool. In cases of users from SMEs or craftsmen who do not have any IT knowledge, the testing should be preceded by some basic IT courses. However, it is important to add that the e-learning tool is not the only output of Sismile project. Manual guide prepared in 7 languages and tailor-made trainings provided by the partners will also have complementary influence in terms of reaching the target group members.

Revisions that are Necessary:

In terms of the content, additional tests or some new chapters can be added regarding structural problems during earthquakes, such as building regulations, engineering problems solved and unsolved, suitable furniture design etc. depending on the users’ background. Furthermore, an introduction part (guiding the user about the system) can be added.

As mentioned in the “piloting stage evaluation report” of the Italian partner (P7) the participants made some sound suggestions that should be taken into account such as a sitemap would be useful because the structure needs to be simplified. They also suggested that if a user gives a wrong answer in the test, the right answer should appear immediately in order to make the learning process more effective.

In terms of the Learning Management System a new version of the Moodle can be installed providing adequate up to date features and the navigation can be simplified.

4. Partnership and Collaboration

As noted in the interim report; “Each partner contributes to the project in parallel with their own specializations and skills. Moreover, the cultural diversity and skill diversity of the project team have incredible addition to innovation.”

P1 (Kandilli Observatory and Earthquake Institute) contributes to the project with their expertise and in-depth knowledge on the project subject –being the leading institution in seismology in Turkey-. The 2nd Turkish partner P2 (Pera Fine Arts Vocational Training Institute) contributes to the project mainly with their field of expertise – artistic features and communication, Bulgarian partner P3 (Technical University of

Varna) has in depth experience in the formation process of e-learning systems. Romanian partner P4 (Romanian Society for Lifelong Learning) other than its field of expertise and contributions has also excellent performance as the internal evaluator of the project where the external evaluators found the internal reports very useful within their evaluation process.

Belgium partner P6 (The European Furniture Manufacturers Federation) has not been an active player in the first phase of the project. In the 2nd phase, following the completion of the e-learning tool, the main dissemination conference was supposed to be in Belgium and they were supposed to be the source of the TG and TS and carry out the other activities related with dissemination and exploitation however Belgium partner did not approve the main dissemination meeting in Brussel and instead the meeting was held in Florence, Italy.

The partnership in general has collaborated effectively during the project.

The fact that the most of the project partners are experienced in EU project work has not caused a “mechanistic” approach, instead there is an innovative work that is clearly visible resulting from the cultural diversity and skill diversity of the partnership.

5. Dissemination

The dissemination activities (WP-6) are shown in detail in page 5 and 6, under Work Package table. According to the project plan, in the 1st phase, the dissemination activities were realized up to a certain level. That is due to the fact finalized content is essential for the effective realization of the dissemination activities. Therefore, the main dissemination conference, the small dissemination conferences and the creation of the database, all took place in the 2nd phase of the project.

As mentioned earlier the main dissemination conference was held in Florence, Italy other than Brussel, the original planned destination. All the partners collaborated effectively in the conference and the quality of the information given during the conference was satisfactory. The presented reports by the partners were of good quality and the information received was useful.

Considering dissemination activities in general, all the partners have presented Sismile project in their websites and carried out meetings & presentations introducing the project to the target group participants, students, local authorities or education providers.

All the partners prepared press releases, online news and newsletters to announce and widespread the project in their countries. They have announced the project in their websites. Specific roles played by partners during dissemination process are listed below;

Dissemination activities undertaken by KOERI (P1);

- Presentation of the project objectives and results to the trainers in KOERI's department and started using the project outputs in their Disaster

Preparedness Education Unit

- Preparation of the web page and project logo
- Development of the short films; KOERI provided its premises, décor set and necessary material during the movie creation to P2
- Project dissemination in the university magazine
- The content of the Handbook was produced by KOERI and the cover design and the publishing was done by PERA (The handbook is multilingual)
- Preparation of the database
- Presentation of the project objectives to the visitors of KOERI weekly
- Presentation in the Sismile final seminar which was organized by PERA in Istanbul

Dissemination activities that will be undertaken by KOERI (P1);

- Presentation of the project results at the national conference
- Presentation of the project results at the international conference

Dissemination activities undertaken by Pera Finearts (P2):

- “Life Support Box” was produced as a promotional material. It aims to increase the remembrance of the project in the target group and society’s mind. It includes examples of the materials which could be used to design the non-structural elements against the earthquake risk. It was produced in Turkish, English, Spanish, Romanian, Italian and Greek. 300 boxes in English, Turkish, Romanian, Greek, Spanish and Italian were distributed to the partners in Valencia meeting.
- Earthquake whistles were produced as promotional material; It aims to increase the remembrance of the project and to take attention of the society to the project.
- Brochures, posters and banners of the Project were produced which include information about the project and results and it is used in the dissemination activities by the partners. They are multilingual (Turkish, English, Spanish, Romanian, Italian and Greek)
- Sismile final seminar was organized in Istanbul
- Certificates were produced and started to be delivered to the training participants in the final seminar
- **Small dissemination conference:**
The conference aim to present the project result to the potential users and raise the awareness and attention to the project in partner countries. The manufacturers, workers, craftsmen, interior designers, schools, other type VET provider organizations, employers, trainees, employees, media, associations, unions, local offices, authorities related with the subject and accreditation and other stakeholders in the country will be invited to the conference. It's expected that approximately 50 attendees will come to each event. During the conference the brochure, posters and other promotional materials will be distributed to the attendees
- Development of the Sismile Character
- Development of the short films; Pera developed the short films of the project

with KOERI. The aim of the videos is to train the target group members about how they design the non-structural elements against the earthquake risk

Dissemination activities undertaken by Bulgarian Partner TUV(P3):

- Preparation and publication of the project brochure

Dissemination activities undertaken by Romanian Partner AEMPR(P4):

- Preparation of the project brochure

Dissemination activities undertaken by Italian Partner Palazzo Spinelli Istituto (P7):

- Presentation of the project objectives to the students during different master's programmes such as Master in Conservation and Restoration, Master in Management of Cultural Heritage and Master in Exhibit Management
- Presentation of the project objectives during the university course in conservation and restoration for students coming from University of Dubrovnik
- Presentation of project items and objectives and updated results at the International Fair of Art and Restoration of Florence, at Fortezza da Basso

Dissemination activities undertaken by Spanish Partner AIDIMA (P8):

- Project dissemination in the newspaper; "La Opinión de Murcia"
- Project dissemination in the sectoral magazine; AIDIMA INFORMA
- Project dissemination in an economics magazine; "ECONOMÍA 3"
- Participation in the Valencia Habitat Fair

Dissemination activities undertaken by European Furniture Manufacturers Federation / Belgium (P6):

- Preparation of the Sismile Dissemination Plan

Sustainability of Dissemination

- The findability of the project results is essential for the sustainability of dissemination. The results of the project and the e-learning tool are available in the different languages on the internet. Resource and update for the web site is guaranteed by P1 KOERI. Furthermore, the multilingual approach is also an important aspect that increases the findability of the project results.
- The sustainability of the dissemination also depends on the quality of the product developed. VET organizations are expected to continue to promote the use and disseminate the awareness of the course if they use it.
- The sustainability of the dissemination costs particularly concerning the

website is guaranteed by the engagement of P1 KOERI, which will maintain the web site also after the end of the project (for at least 3 years).

C) CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) The partnership has collaborated effectively during the project. Although the Romanian partner dropped out the project in the 2nd phase, all the tasks and activities were undertaken effectively among the partners
 - Partners were aware of each others' tasks, roles and activities within the partnership
 - They communicated regularly as a group and on a one-to-one basis within the working groups
 - There were conflicts but they have been resolved amicably and without hindering the work progress
 - Each partner has contributed with know-how to the project work
 - Each partner has contributed to the development of project outcomes
 - Partners have been given the possibility to express their opinions freely
 - These opinions have been valued in the partnership
 - Different cultural perspectives have been encouraged and enriched the project outputs
 - The coordinator has administered the project transparently
 - Partners have provided feedback and information promptly and according to deadlines
 - The reports had been completed on time
 - Each partner has completed their work tasks

Recommendation: English language being the foreign language of most of the partners, language can be an obstacle causing misunderstandings between them. With regard to this, more effective communication can be built among the partners.

- 2) The workplan has been completed
 - Tasks have been distributed equitably among partners, and in accordance with the workplan
 - The partnership needed to have two months of an extension period to finish all tasks written in the project properly
 - Partners have supported each other when required
 - Partners have assumed other tasks than those originally assigned when necessary
- 3) No significant delays have been evident and with only some minor exceptions, the outcomes and processes have been achieved well and on-time

- 4) The additional research made in each partner country about the design habits of the householders created an additional outcome; the enriched content of the project's training programme

Recommendation: Partners could get more advantage of promoting 'the enriched content arising from transnationality aspect of the project' especially during dissemination activities.

- 5) An innovative eLearning tool was created which could meet the TG's and TS's needs

Recommendation: The testing phase of the e-learning tool, the weak spots and the revisions advised are discussed elaborately in pages 8,9 and 10

- 6) The dissemination activities have been carried out by partners and different kinds of dissemination tools were used effectively by each partner

- Each partner has focused on different type of dissemination, one partner is focusing on making the project a part of the university education, where the other one is highly capable of using the media and press as a tool effectively, and where another partner plays a vital role in the sustainability of the dissemination etc. – all showing the diversity's achievement in the effectiveness of the project
- The dissemination materials produced have reached and attracted the correct target group
- At least 75% of the numbers of beneficiaries specified for dissemination in the workplan have been reached
- The target group has been kept informed regularly via various communication channels about the project progress
- All partners have established contacts at local, national and European level for transferring project experience, know-how developed, and products
- All partners have disseminated information within their professional groups and existing networks
- The website has been launched on schedule and it functions at normal parameters, with information being updated regularly