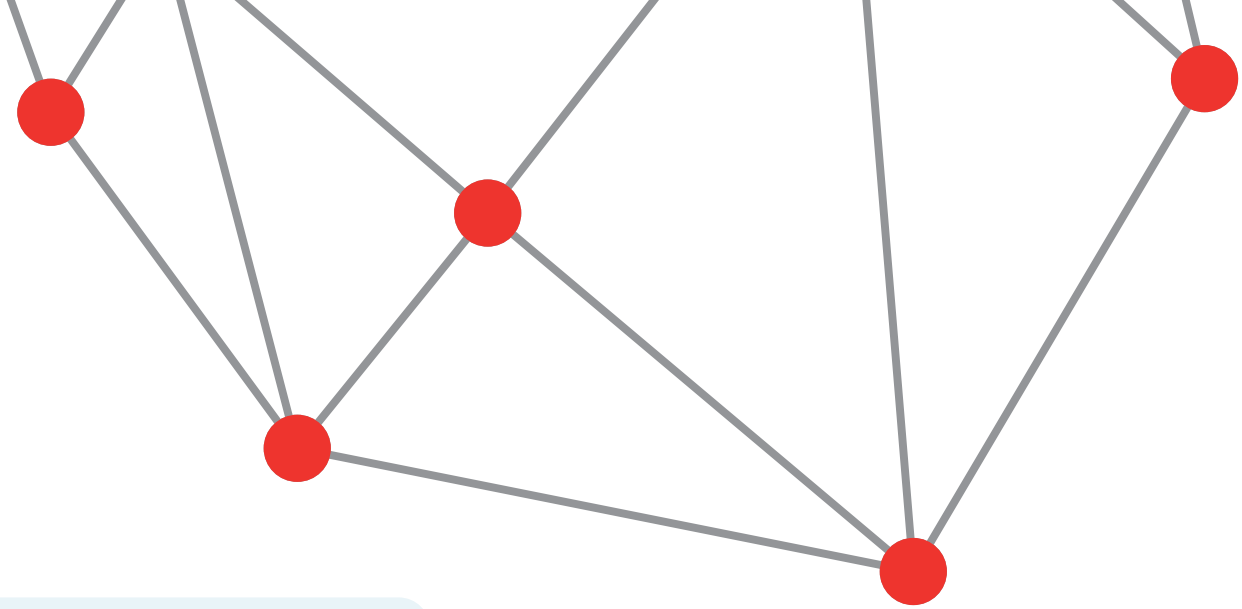
KEEP IN PACT

Keep innovation in multi partnership cooperation in lifelong career guidance services

VADEMECUM ON MULTI STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS MANAGEMENT IN LIFELONG CAREER GUIDANCE

Guide for cooperation



KEEP IN PACT (2019-2022) – Guide for cooperation – December 2021

This guide for cooperation contains strategic and operational recommendations based on the results and conclusions of the project's activities (training, case studies, debates, etc.). It is a combination of recommendations, good practices, advice, points of attention, and key findings for successful multi partnership management.

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Start date of Project: 01/09/2019

Duration: 31 months

Grant Agreement: 2019-1-FR01-KA202-063068

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

PREFACE

In recent years, regional, national, and European policies have stressed the crucial need to increase cooperation and synergy research to deliver better services in lifelong guidance. With public needs evolving at a rapid pace, and the holistic approach to lifelong career guidance not being addressed enough, we need to develop the way we tackle challenges in the field. Carried by the Cités des métiers International Network, from September 2019 to March 2022, the KEEP IN PACT project's aim was to respond to these ever-changing needs. It focused both on better understanding and highlighting the complexity of "multi-partnership management"; and also the development of tools and methods for Cités des métiers and other lifelong career guidance centers.

6 partners from 5 countries were involved in this cooperative adventure:

- Cité des métiers of Paris-La Villette, France
- Cité des métiers of Porto, Portugal
- Learningdigital, Italy
- Agency for Science and Higher Education, Croatia
- Lifelong Learning Platform, Belgium
- the Cité des métiers International Network, France

The general objectives of KEEP IN PACT were:

1. To upgrade the function of multi partnership cooperation in lifelong career guidance services;

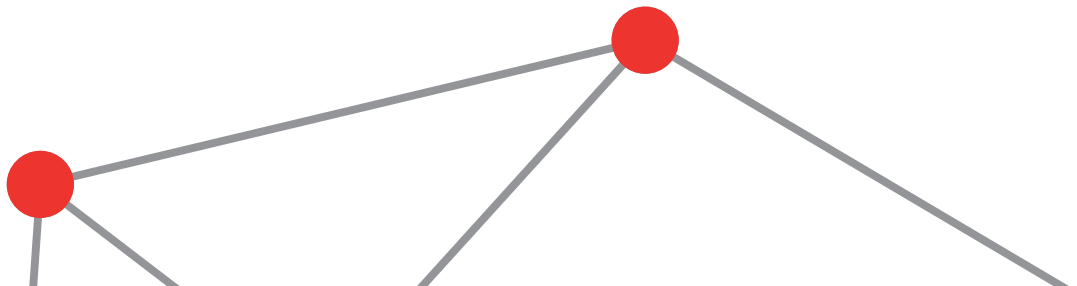
How has it been reached? We conducted surveys and desk research from actors in various different fields: education, training, employment, entrepreneurship, etc. This allowed us to draft a competency framework which eventually got enriched to become a repository of skills. From there, the main competencies were turned into modules of training towards professional dealing, fully or partly, with multi partnership management. That being said, to get trained we need trainers, right? So partners designed materials and led 2 training of trainers. This "pool" of newly equipped professionals has now got basic knowledge and tools to support colleagues arriving in the field. The non formal validation of the competence elaborated allows them to assess and realize their progression but is also a way to get recognition for their abilities.

2. To develop an innovative ecosystem approach to the management of professionals working together in partnership.

How has it been reached? Research insights have been completed with 7 case studies. It shows how a multi-partnership approach might increase tenfold the response capacity of LLCG centers to the needs of users, as well as its impact on the actors in the field. Besides, local debates to discuss practices and challenges were held in all 5 countries of the consortium. Altogether, these activities bring us to the creation of this guide for cooperation with the key success factors of multi partnership management.

More to discover in this guide and on our website https://keepinpact.eu/resources/download-area/

All of the project's productions are in free acces on Keep In Pact website and the official plateform Erasmus + Project Results



INTRO

The initiation, development, and management of multi-stakeholder partnerships is a complex task. There are not many sources on the matter, and in particular, sources related to the field of Lifelong career guidance.

This guide for cooperation contains strategic and operational recommendations based on the results and conclusions of the project's activities (training, case studies, debates, etc.). It is a combination of recommendations, good practices, advice, points of attention, and key findings for successful multi partnership management; all of which have been gathered throughout many activities led during the project and which were complementary. They have therefore been counter-validated by many sources and rise from concrete experiences lived by professionals across Europe.

It is intended for any lifelong guidance professional whose missions are related to the management of multiple partners. This list is not exhaustive and may include partnership officers, head of services, development or business managers, communication officers, etc.

In particular, this guide aims to serve as a support in the daily life of the partnership officers and to accompany newcomers in the field as they take up their duties. For this purpose it has been divided in 4 major topics:

1. Context of multi-stakeholder partnership in lifelong career guidance
2. What multi-partner cooperation can bring to the European challenges in terms of lifelong guidance
3. Explore the practical case of one-stop-shop centers: the Cité des métiers model
4. The major skills and actions for driving multi-stakeholder cooperation in the long term

The guide is therefore designed to address both the political aspects and the European context in which the LLCG centers operate, as well as advice on the attitudes to adopt in specific situations and analysis of the potentials and breaks of multi partnership management.

We wish you a good reading!

May this guide be useful to you.

1. SOME PRELIMINARY NOTIONS ON MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF LIFELONG GUIDANCE

Definition of a multi stakeholders partnership

Based on the definition of Cambridge university Dictionary, a partnership is "**an agreement between organizations, people, etc. to work together**:

- **a partnership between sb/sth and sb/sth** *The government is promoting a partnership between the state and the private sector.*
- **a partnership with sb/sth** *The Symphony has announced a new partnership with the Seattle Young Artists Festival.*
- **build/develop/form a partnership** *The company has formed a partnership with a US marketing firm to try to break into that market.*
- **in partnership with sb/sth** *The university works in partnership with several local businesses.*
- **a partnership of sth** *The program is a local partnership of groups helping elementary students begin preparing for college.*
- *They have signed a strategic* **partnership agreement** *with a leading mobile operator.*
- **go/enter into a partnership** *He has entered into a business partnership with his former boss.*"

Multi-stakeholder partnership is one in which multiple entities will take part. Their legal status may vary, as well as the purpose of the agreement, the length of it, how restrictive it is, the more you have partners, the more complex it gets.

The partnering Initiative[1] gives also a useful definition of what is a multi-stakeholder partnership:

"Multi-stakeholder partnerships involve organizations from different societal sectors working together, sharing risks and combining their unique resources and competencies in ways that can generate and maximize value towards shared partnership and individual partner objectives, often through more innovative, more sustainable, more efficient and / or more systemic approaches."[2]

Definition of the field of career lifelong guidance

Lifelong career guidance is "...a continuous process that enables citizens at any age and at any point in their lives to identify their capacities, competences and interests, to make educational, training and occupational decisions and to manage their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which those capacities and competences are learned and/ or used. Guidance covers a range of individual and collective activities relating to information-giving, counseling competence assessment, support, and the teaching of decision making and career management skills."
(Council of the European Union, 2008[3]).

Lifelong guidance aims to provide career development support for individuals of all ages, at all career stages. It includes activities such as careers information, advice, counselling, assessment of skills and mentoring. Quality guidance services should be available to all individuals, regardless of their employment situation and independently of their socioeconomic status, ethnicity or gender.
(CEDEFOP (LLL) 2015[4])

[1] https://partnerinit.org
[2] https://www.thepartneringinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Introduction-to-MSPs-Briefing-paper.pdf
[3] https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/educ/104236.pdf
[4] https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/projects/lifelong-guidance

2. THE EXPERTS POINT OF VIEW

2.1. The responses that multi-stakeholder cooperation can bring to the European challenges in terms of lifelong guidance

Article by Cynthia Harrison, CareesNet coordinator, VET supporting policy, Lifelong Guidance, Cedefop (European centre for the development of vocational training)

"Modern societies and their labour markets in Europe are shaped by a range of policies, some of which are designed to have an impact on environmental, technological, and other changes and developments, leading to continuously changing demands for individuals. This includes an increased demand for flexibility, openness to continuous learning, and adaptability in the labour market, on staying in tune with new workplace skills requirements, and more. At the same time individuals need to know how to gain access to career development and pathways that can lead to a fulfilling life in the community of others – seeking quality of life in the face of an uncertain and complex world.

As connecting forces in education, training and the labour market, career development and support systems are positioned to receive new challenges in responding to the cycles of change. In this picture are individual users and communities who can be change-makers, enabled through access to optimal tools and resources that support identification of needs and strengths, while learning how to find key resources and networks. In this way, lifelong guidance can address both individual aims in wellbeing, motivation, changes in personal and working life in sustainable employment, career capacity development and employment progression and so on, while guidance also strives towards public policy goals – equity, inclusion, fairness, societal resilience, labour market participation and skills utilisation, to name a few (Cedefop, et al; Vuorinen and Kettunen, 2022).

Effective partnerships are critical in the career guidance field, from national policy to client facing services. Authors in a recent Cedefop collection of working papers (Cedefop, et al, 2022) update arguments for utilising cooperation and partnerships in the field: to address increasing interest in gathering evidence for organisations to improve and to involve more stakeholders (Cedefop, et al; Percy and Hughes, 2022); for better cross-sectoral service and policy coordination and joint policy development (Cedefop, et al; Vuorinen and Kettunen, 2022); for positioning users at centre and where practitioners join with stakeholders in the development of tools for monitoring client progress and data gathering (Cedefop, et al; Elftorp and Stokes, 2022).

At the same time, many experts agree that in most places in Europe the guidance system is still strongly sectoral and fragmented. In some countries career guidance support services operate under different regulations and authorities rooted in divided public sectors and with diverse assumptions about the purposes and expected outcomes of guidance and support, so there is a need for actors to find common ground (Cedefop et al; Bielecki, Płachecki and Stasiowski, 2022). This makes exploiting the benefits of cooperation and coordination challenging – but not impossible. Yet, holistic and seamless approaches in service provision are still rare across an individual's lifeline.

When Cedefop's CareersNet members, national experts in lifelong guidance and career development policy, met at their <annual meeting in December 2021>, they agreed there is a vast pool of devices and tools for cross-service and multi-agency in Europe, for professional, organisational use – food for innovation, but there are still obstacles to using the tools cooperatively. To this end, some countries in Europe are implementing new legislation and acts, policy notes, reforms, regulations, contributing to formal cooperation arrangements where informal ones exist, sometimes including coordination with a wider range of stakeholders, with regional and city partnerships, research institutes, and civil society actors.

However, there is more work to be done. With the increased awareness in Europe of the critical role of career guidance and career support, there are calls to work harder to transform and invest more in services to remain relevant to the public. Among other things, this implies being more flexible, integrated and collaborative, responsive, user-oriented, informed, and professionalised with evidence of value added - and focused on ways to innovate to increase access to services, to reach more users further from the labour market or who want to progress in the careers. Career services need to be prepared to have appropriate networks to serve these users.

The theory behind innovative, integrated one-stop guidance centres and multipurpose services may provide solutions for the public and for meeting identified organisational needs such as bringing together and coordinating resources, staff competencies and diverse perspectives, and enhancing unique partnerships in order to better serve users and meet public policy goals such as social inclusion and upgrading the overall level of skills and productivity in the labour market.

Gathering together professional and comprehensive support services and material under one roof to enhance synergies – whether virtual, multi-channelled, or physical or through outreach services and measures, holds great potential for service users who can view – and importantly, access – services to help discover all of the possible doorways open to them. Enhancing capacity to walk through those doors, to step in and out, provides valuable skills for life."

2.2. The multi-stakeholder cooperation into practice: the concept of Cité des métiers as holistic approach to lifelong career guidance

Interview with Sylvie Sesma, in charge of the CDM label at Universcience

Could you tell us the history behind the Cité des métiers concept and the label?

The creation of the first Cité des métiers in 1993 at the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie in Paris laid the foundations for the development of an international network of this type. It is a multi partnership under one roof, a place where one can find the answer to a specific question regarding lifelong career guidance.

Working like a laboratory for innovative practices, it is an integrated workspace where different stakeholders working in the fields of education, training, employment and career guidance can pool resources and expertise.

Twenty-seven (27) Cités des métiers have now enriched this unique concept in various territories (municipalities, provinces, regions, etc.) of six (6) countries that have diverse and unequal economic, cultural or geographical characteristics.

A labeling process was set up in 1998 following the principles of a charter: open to all audiences, free of charge, without appointment and on an anonymous basis.

A Cité des métiers must adapt to the needs of the inhabitants and territories, offer a plurality of points of view, foster listening by creating welcoming and gratifying space and be proactive in listening and providing innovative solutions adapted to the changing situations of the inhabitants.

Taking the example of the CDM concept, what effects does multi-partner cooperation have on the public, the partners and the territory?

A Cité des métiers is a multi-stakeholder space, open to anyone seeking information and advice about their professional life, while respecting the principles of free access, anonymity and gratuity.

Its mission is to guide users towards the means of developing and achieving their professional objectives and to accompany them in their choices by offering different services in a one place :

- Interviews with professionals from competent institutions in the field of lifelong career guidance
- Documentation on employment, jobs and training
- Workshops, conferences and debates

Cité des métiers: a space to deal with professional life

As for the territory, there are significant disparities in accessible information on training, employment and business creation. The establishment of a Cité des métiers responds to a territory's desire to facilitate accessible information for a population with specific needs such as low mobility using seasonal or "fragmented" activities. The objective is to offer a service that is distributed throughout the territory in a balanced and equitable manner. This can be obtained by setting up a system which offers this type of service; ensuring a territorial network. That being said, there are significant disparities in access to information on training, employment and business creation.

Regarding the partners, the Cité des métiers can be considered as a tool that strengthens connection and synergie between local actors of a territory by:

- improving the quality and the level of access to information,
- getting closer to the needs of the inhabitants,
- linking the territorial services together, thus creating synergies and avoiding working in silos,
- avoiding redundancy of services and allowing the pooling of resources in order to make savings. The multiplication of partners within a CDM allows better coverage of the territory and permits us to be closer to the needs of the public. This also contributes to the dynamization of the territory,
- developing the collective skills of professionals working in the various institutions, thus promoting inter-knowledge between them and ultimately increasing the quality services and information provided,
- making economies of scale: e.g. a person who does not go to the right actor will mobilize the time of the reception agent, who will refer this person to another actor (who may not be the right one). When this occurs, the beneficiary mobilizes human ressources time on the wrong interlocutors, therefore wasting time. Multi-stakeholder cooperation helps to limit this loss, thanks to the inter-knowledge of the actors.

How is the governance of such a structure organized?

The governance is essential. For the creation of a CDM, project leaders have first to approach Universcience to ask for support in implementing a Cité des métiers in their territory. This is mainly based on collaborative engineering for the implementation of a **neutral and shared governance**.

It is obvious that the idea of working in cooperation with actors is not new but it is important to distinguish the fact of working together on an event and this collaborative engineering, which is more about learning to work together beyond an opportunity. **Continuity is necessary** but also partners' awareness that collaborating constantly allows everyone to improve the way they work. How do we do this? We put all the partners around a table so that each can assess its own situation in relation to the others and then reach a consensus on what needs to be done to fill the gaps, mainly through the implementation of working groups.

Once the CDM is operational, partnership managers must also ensure that the quality of the partnership is good. Maintaining a constant link with the partners ensures a strong partnership, territorial network and the quality of the offer in the territory. They must guarantee that the offer is in line with the changing needs of the public.

Main challenges of a CDM

- Improving and adapting the services provided to the public while respecting the common references and specificities of the Cité des métiers network.
- Establishing a process of active and permanent professionalization of the different stakeholders.
- Providing the means to assess users' satisfaction on a regular basis.
- Sharing the interest of being part of an organized network as a means of improving professional practices and, as a result, increasing the satisfaction of the public, partners and the funders.

3. THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR DRIVING A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COOPERATION

Multi-stakeholder cooperation involves various activities and complex human, technical and organizational aspects. Moreover, the function and missions of the professionals in charge of creating new partnerships and engaging them in a cooperative way may vary according to the country, the local issues and the distribution of tasks inside their organization. In this section you will find key tips, examples and methodological guidelines that will support you in the successful management of the different dimensions and issues related to driving multi-stakeholders cooperation.

Let's first discover below what can be the added value of multi-partnership regarding the implementation of projects and actions.

If you want to know more about it, feel free to discover the results of a European survey on multi-stakeholder cooperation conducted as part of the Keep in pact project.

In the next pages you will find 7 practical sheets for the implementation of major activities inherent to the position of multi-partner project manager in the LLCG field. The following work is based on the competence framework developed during the project; which has pointed out seven key competencies of a multi-partnership manager.

We invite you to keep this document with you, and use these cards as resources that you can consult whenever you have a question about an activity or are looking for a new tool. You will find: a description of the key competency and the activities in which it is used, testimonials and examples, some of the necessary knowledge, hard and soft skills needed, a methodology, as well as samples of tips and tools.

However, these sheets are not exhaustive. Other resources are available online. In particular, we suggest you to see the complete competency framework on the resources section of our website or to take the online training linked to the etraining website of the Cité des métiers International Network, which you can explore free of charge in 6 languages (ENG, FR, IT, HR, PT).

COMPETENCE FRAMEWORK FOR MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COOPERATION MANAGEMENT IN LIFELONG CAREER GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

A. Developing and formalizing new partnerships

A partnership endeavour is an effective and efficient process to resolve joint solutions problems or adress new opportunities. In fact - both in private and public sector – joint partnerships are set to address new challenges that can arise from multiple situations. In the core-business of lifelong guidance entities, these partnership models are extremely useful to create bridges between civil society and its productive fabric.

To set up a partnership, five steps are essential to undertake:

1. IDENTIFY THE NEEDS AND POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

Reality is dynamic and often presents us with new challenges and opportunities. You can first ask yourself some basic questions before implementing new partnerships. This will help you to better identify your needs and priorities and also find out which actions to set up in order to achieve your goals.

Exemple: what are my clients needs? What can I do with this partner to meet those needs? Do I know this partner well?

Have a clear vision of what is your goal and what scenarios you envisage. To join forces, we must share objectives. Without it, you are likely to move fast but not far.

Tips from the field: "To identify the needs of clients it is necessary to have continuous contact and dialogue with the actors on the ground, to analyse society and the labour market."

2. TARGET ACTORS WITH ADDED VALUES

Partners should be complementary. Identify actors that have the potential to tackle the challenge with you by providing added skills, knowledge, or resources to yours.

Tips from the field: "Identifying the partners who will best meet the needs identified requires monitoring, prospecting, questioning close existing partners, participating in networking events and job fairs, watching out for and getting out of the classic stakeholders."

3. CRAFT YOUR COMMON PROJECT

Refine together your project definition and goals which have to be clear and precise. What each party gains from the others shall be very clear as well.

Tips from the field: "With each partner, we take the time to get to know each other and then we work on building a partnership by putting each other's needs, desires and projects on the table to see together what can be done.
"It is necessary to check the relevance of the collaboration (common goals and objectives), to sign an agreement setting out the conditions of the mutual collaboration, to check the quality of the collaboration (feedback from users and partners)."

4. AGREE ON THE STRATEGY

Once you have identified your needs and potential partners to meet them, you can start the negotiation process. In a collective negotiation or decision-making process, a win-win strategy seeks a solution favorable to all participants. The win-win strategy is an agreement in which each partner seeks to generate one or more benefits common to all. This approach is therefore a state

of mind by which each stakeholder promotes the constant benefit of its partners. Far from pure philanthropy, the win-win partnership is a strategy and represents a shared vision of a project.

Tips from the field: "It is important to show future partners the advantages of multi-partner work, to mention the links with funders, possible opportunities, future constructions, the potential gain in terms of image.
Thanks to the partnership dynamic, thanks to the pooling of resources, it is possible to co-construct strategic objectives that contribute to the missions of all partners."

5. FORMALIZE THE PARTNERSHIP

Writing an agreement might take some time. The better you have defined goals and methods in the previous steps, the easier it will get. Building a multipartnership means that multiple parties will gather their resources and strengths to achieve a common goal. We recommend the use of two tools to do so:

- The charter which is a framing tool to establish the non-formal agreement of a partnership.
- The agreement or contract, is a formal materialization of this collaboration.

Although they have a different format and legal value, these two documents can seem similar as they both tend to spell out the terms of a partnership and make explicit the commitment of the parties.

Toolkit:

● CREATE A SHARED PARTNERSHIP VISION

In order to better identify the key elements of your project, you can organize a brainstorming session with your partners. You can also make it online using collaborative tools like Padlet or Miro.
Tutorial to use Padlet: https://padlet.com/mathieuvincent/3xy2i8vth9vlo6sj

● FORMALIZE THE PARTNERSHIP

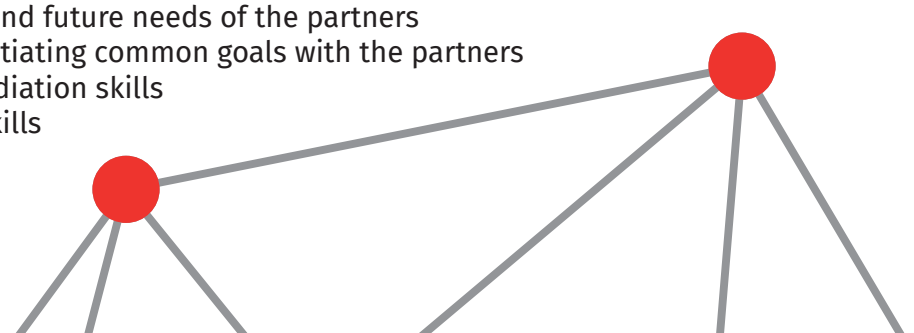
Checklist for a partnership agreement: A successful partnership requires the agreement of all parties on:

- The object: purpose, format, calendar, provision of resources (human, material,...), its conditions, ...
- The responsibilities of each stakeholder
- The financial terms : price, distribution and valorization
- The communication and visibility of the stakeholders
- The duration of the contract
- The ethical agreements

Projects'charter template: access the document

Associated skills, knowledge, softskills

- Identifying new partners in accordance with the needs of the territory and action plan of the service
- Identifying current and future needs of the partners
- Discussing and negotiating common goals with the partners
- Negotiation and mediation skills
- Social networking skills



An example of a win win partnership

Espaço T entered into a partnership with the SONAE group when their vocational training department was reopened. Following the economic crisis, Espaço t sought help from the civil society. The CEO of SONAE answered this call. The partnership allows students from the training department to do internships in different services within the group and they even have possibility to be hired after. It is a win-win partnership that contributes to the goal of the Espaço t professional training department and to the workforce and training need of the SONAE group.

[Project charter]

WHAT ?	PROJECT'S TITLE :	DESCRIPTION :	
	PROBLEMATIC :		
WHY ?	OBJECTIVES :	KEY SUCCESS FACTORS :	OPPORTUNITIES :
	INDICATORS :		THREATS/LIMITATIONS :
HOW ?	RESSOURCES :	STAKEHOLDERS :	GOVERNANCE :
	BENEFICIARIES :		

B. Administrative and financial monitoring

In order to develop projects that are carried by several actors, the financing stage is essential. A person in charge of partnerships will often have to seek funds and therefore carry out a watch of opportunities; formalize a project that will be evaluated, and accepted or not, by a funding organization; follow up on the use of funds and report the activities ... all of this while taking into account the capacities and/or willingness of engagement from the various partners.

We can divide the major skill of administrative and financial monitoring into 4 main activities.

1. Looking for new sponsors and funds

You have identified a need within your LLCG Center and wish to finance the development of a solution? Europe has set up over time a policy of support to initiatives that you may be eligible for. From this point of view, it may be useful to monitor local, national or European public policies,

as well as fundings, in particular public calls and tenders. Of course, you can go on the dedicated websites of funding authorities or programs, to see what's new, or to come. Or, you can have the information coming to you! Subscribe to a specialized magazine on calls, follow the CEDEFOP on linkedIn or get into one of the EPALE community of practitioners.

2. Responding to new calls for projects

The first step is to identify the possible calls and to analyze both their concordance with your objectives and the conditions of eligibility. For example, in the framework of the European Social Fund + you could ask yourself the following questions: At what kind of scale do we want to have an impact? Will our budget be calculated in the form of flat rate, of standard unit costs, or unique lump sums? Do our objectives allow us to implement the European Pillars of Social Right?

Then you will then need to work out the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved, the budget for these roles and responsibilities and the rules for working together. You will need to explain your diagnosis in a clear and concise way, demonstrating the relevance, coherence and interdependence between the actions of each partner involved in the project, which will underline the relevance of your project. Your budget will reflect the logic behind this proposal.

You might choose to contact the financing authority to ensure your project is eligible and your description of it is clearly related to the fund objectives.

3. Monitoring administrative and financial aspects of the partnership agreements

The administrative monitoring starts at the previous stage, with the legal documents asked for the proposal submission. Besides, now that your budget is established it is time to officialise how it is divided. A partnership agreement states the responsibilities, the rights and duties of each stakeholder in a project. This is a good time to discuss payment schedules and administrative obligations.

4. Projects' reporting and responding to control system

Once the project is launched, monitoring of administration and finance becomes even more important. Create tools adapted to the requirements of the program, the project and the type of collaboration you have (do you share all the documents? are the partners automatically updating the supporting documents or does a coordinator take care of it?). We recommend to share the administrative and financial rules, for example of the won call for proposals, as soon as the activities are launched to make everyone responsible and involved. They may provide feedback on the tools and methods of reporting which can be very helpful.

Toolkit:

● TO SCAN FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Find out the open calls, stay updated on new ones with an RSS or see thematic webinars to come on the EU portal: Funding and Tenders

● TO CREATE MONITORING TOOLS

The EU has provided some examples of tools on various administrative and financial aspects such as working timesheet, financial reporting, cash flow assesment,... They might inspire you: EU funds external actions

● TO SUBMIT A CALL FOR PROPOSAL

Checklist before you submit an application :

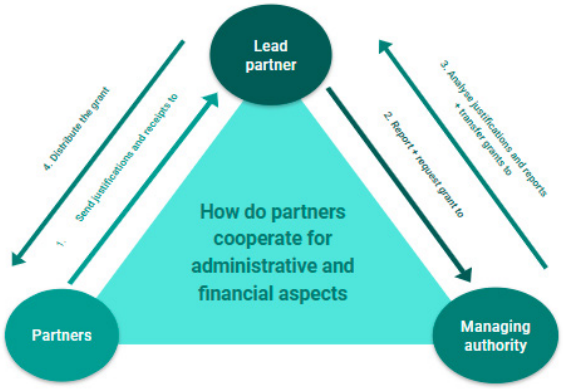
- Does the project align with your mission?
- What type of governance have you chosen and why?
- Are the responsibilities of each partner clear?
- Is the budget a clear reflection of the project in all its components (people involved, material to be invested, activity phases including preparation, translations needed, ...) ?
- Does the application comply with administrative criterias?
- Does the application comply with financial criterias?
- Does the involved staff have the skills and willingness to carry out the project?
- Have you got all the mandatory documents?
- Have you introduced the project to an evaluator or councelor from the financing authority?

Associated skills, knowledge, softskills

You can see form the activities explained above that among the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to ensure this major task of administrative and financial monitoring of multipartnership projects we can cite:

- set an opportunity watch
- time management
- mastery of complex financial agreements
- build monitoring tools
- writing skills
- have knowledge of local, national and EU strategic frameworks
- understand and meet the administrative requirements of public or private funds
- ...and many others!

Find out more about this in our repository of skills in annex.



C. Coordinating, managing and leading the partnership

Partnership management is the process of following up and maintaining effective, productive and harmonious relationships with partners.

Some of the most important aspects of this job are investing the time and resources needed to maintain the partnership, communicating with the partners and assessing their different activities.

It is necessary to maintain a partnership for four main reasons :

- to better achieve objectives
- to keep credibility
- to ensure the project stays on track
- to better handle the project challenges and opportunities

There are many tools, techniques and processes that will help you manage your project more efficiently. Below are some sub-activities related to this key competence, as well as a selection of tools and methods that may help you carry it out.

1. Have a well-defined project plan

Action plans are simple lists of all the tasks you need to finish to meet an objective. It also can help you clarify the different activities the partner will undertake and the steps of a new partnership. They differ from To-Do Lists in that they focus on the achievement of a single goal. To help you define your project plan, you can use a Gantt chart or Action Sheet. A Gantt chart can be drawn quickly and easily and is often the first tool used by a project manager, to provide a rough estimate of the time needed to complete the key tasks.

To help you develop your Gantt chart or action sheet, you can first use a mind map to brainstorm your ideas. A mind map is a diagram designed to organize information, in a visual hierarchy. It is often used to see connections between concepts or ideas.

2. The Agile methodology and its application in project management

Once you have a plan for your project, you need to organize yourself to work efficiently. The principles of the agile method can help you to do this. To apply the agile method with your team, whether it be face-to-face or remotely, you can rely on digital tools, like Trello. Simple and intuitive, Trello is inspired by the Kanban agile method and allows you to divide your tasks, in the form of cards, that can be broken down into “To do”, “In progress” and “Done”.

3. Maintain strong relationships with partners and facilitate cooperation between partners

Maintaining the link with partners allows the exchange of useful information and news but also the possibility of taking stock of joint activities and adapting them if necessary. It also allows new needs to be identified and new actions to be considered. The link with the partners is maintained through regular meetings, e-mails and phone calls. You can also use some social media like Slack to communicate with your partners. Slack is a channel-based messaging platform. With Slack, people can work together more effectively, connect all their software tools and services, and find the information they need to do their best work — all within a secure, enterprise-grade environment. To better communicate with your partners you can also use tools like Slack.

Tips from the field: “Maintaining strong relationships with partners means respecting the history, customs, practices and problems of the partners and staff that make them up. It means creating as much as possible an atmosphere conducive to partnership and exchange (quality of the contact,

reception, exchanges and their frequency, creation of conditions for the development of potential, respect for different approaches, etc.)".
"maintaining strong relationship involves organizing partnership meetings with regular or contracted partners very regularly (once a quarter) and an extended meeting with all partners once a half year. It involves also sending the agenda of the service offer once a month to the partners".
"In the framework of the animation of a multi-stakeholder cooperation, it is necessary to have a role of mediator and organiser between the partner organisation".

4. Review and adapt partnerships

Once you have developed several tools to communicate effectively with partners over the long-term, you will need to get to know them, to understand their strengths and weaknesses, and adapt your collaboration accordingly. The first essential tool for achieving analysis is the SWOT, which stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. This tool is a simple and useful technique to help you analyze the current situation and/or plan a future project.

Tips from the field: "It is important to "Make people say (the expectations, the needs, the constraints of the partners) Dare to say (our objectives, our rules, our limits) Say (when it does not go well or no longer, but also when it goes well)".
"Accept that partnerships can die and be reborn: remain flexible and responsive to the context".

5. Conflict Management

As project manager, you may adopt different techniques to manage conflicts. The first step is to become aware of the typologies of conflicts that may occur.

According to the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument, there are five styles of handling conflict. These five styles are very useful when planning how to approach a difficult conversation or meeting, as well as helping you understand the other party's position and approach.

You will find more information about the activities and tools in our training program, but some of them are listed below.

Toolkit:

- **Have a well-defined project plan**

Gantt Chart: template: https://www.teamgantt.com/
tutorial: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=un8j6QqpYa0
Mindmapping: You can use different free online tools to try to make your own Mind Map:
https://cmap.ihmc.us/
https://www.mindmeister.com/fr

- **Maintain strong relationships with partners**

Slack tutorial: https://youtu.be/yHaLOoXA0vU

- **The Agile methodology and its application in project management**

Trello tutorial: https://trello.com/b/I7TjiplA/trello-tutorial

- **Review and adapt partnership**

SWOT templates: https://templatelab.com/swot-analysis-templates/

Associated skills, knowledge, soft skills

Many competences and soft skills are needed to be an effective project manager in the context of multi-stakeholders partnership. Some of them are listed below :

Competences

- Sharing relevant information with the partners
- Planning and organizing the service offers according to the negotiated common goals
- Coordinating partners' activities
- Facilitating steering meetings of the action programme with partners

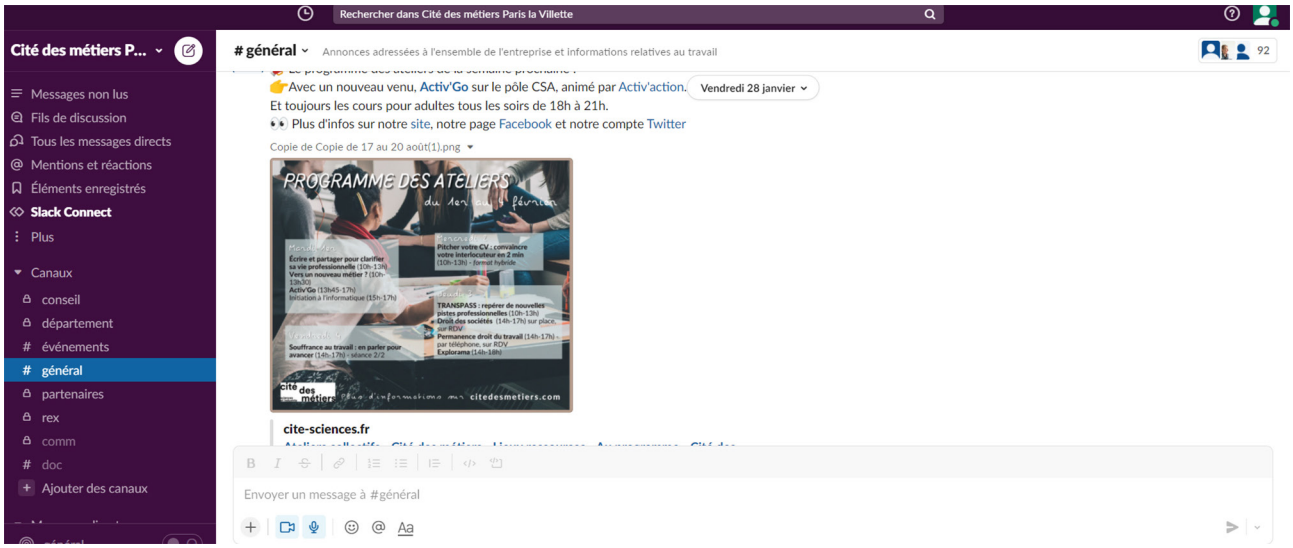
Skills

- Negotiation and mediation skills
- Mediation skills
- Leadership and supervisory skills
- Teamwork
- Adaptability
- Creativity

Find out more about this in our repository of skills in annex.

An example

In order to improve communication and to encourage the sharing of information between partners , the Cité des métiers of Paris has created a Slack account for all stakeholders. This tool contributes to the monitoring and facilitates the sharing of news and events of each partner. An instant messaging chat is also incorporated in the tool, allowing colleagues and partners to message each other, in turn reducing the excessive use of emails.



D. Developing partners' competences in multi-stakeholder partnership

One of the most important aspects of a partnership is the ability of joint-development. In this module you will learn how to implement strategies to develop partners competencies in a multisakeholder context. The materials presented and the approach used reflects an expositive method with a theorethical approach on the subject. The main ideas that oriented this module are to:

- Promote autonomy to (and) reflect (ion) on the ongoing partnerships;
- Share good practices and tools in order to develop partners competencies;

In order to do so, you must first understand how a **Training Program** is defined, mainly the steps that must be considered. After an initial **Training Needs Assessment**, one of the paramount stages of the definition of a training program is the accurate definition of its **Learning Outcomes**, i.e., what learners are expected to know, understand and put in practice in their own environments. **Bloom's Taxonomy** is a good framework to classify and understand levels of complexity and specificity when dealing with a training program.

Defining a training program also requires to consider many other dimensions, as, for example, the **Delivery Mode** to be implemented, as well as the Content Development, always bearing in mind the **Target Audience** and **Learning Styles** by which trainees apprehend the subjects. In a more "logistic" approach **Budget** should also be taken in account, as it will impact the resources to apply on the training as well as the **Communication Style** used to inform about the training, if needed. Finally, every new training will be more efficient if you apply an **Evaluation** to its target audience in order to improve.

Tips from the field: "As part of the animation of a multi-stakeholder ecosystem, it is interesting to allow the acquisition of a common base of competences between the professionals of the various partners".
"The development of competences within the multi-stakeholders ecosystem can be achieved by organising peer learning and good practices exchange activities."

Toolkit:

Training Needs Assessment Template:
https://www.business.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/228043/Template_Training_needs_analysis.pdf

Learning Style:
http://www.educationplanner.org/students/self-assessments/learning-styles-quiz.shtml

Evaluation: EXAMPLE OF QUESTIONNAIRE

Example of a Training Program:
https://studylib.net/doc/8492671/final-training-session-plan---sharon-s-e

Points of You: https://www.points-of-you.com/

IdeaChef: https://www.facebook.com/ideachef.eu/

Associated skills, knowledge, soft skills

The joint development in a win-win partnership depends on a set of competences and soft skills that a partnership manager should have, such as:

Competences

- Working together on partners' competences on the specificity, principles and values of the partnership
- Designing and conducting informative and training sessions and workshops aimed to increase partners' competences on the partnership

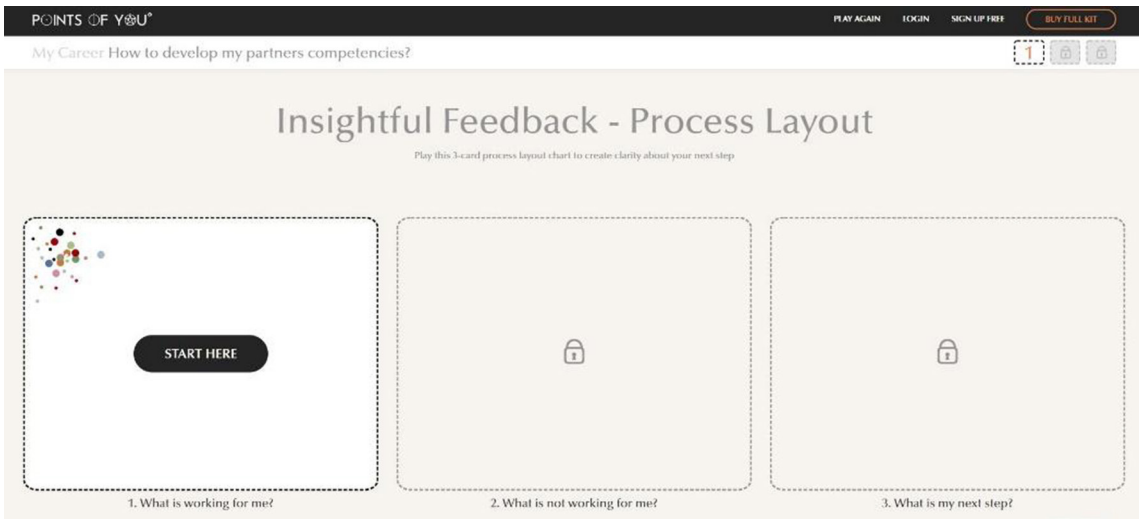
Soft skills

- Presentation skills, active listening, teaching skills, Interest in educational activities, empathy, practical reasoning

Testimony

Some of the participants were suggested to comment on the relevance and applicability of the module in their own environments, and also to reflect on the module in an overall manner. These were the results:

- *"very relevant to understand the process for planning and delivering training - focus on planning of learning outcomes"*
- *"great for partnership officers, trainers and animators of workshops"*
- *"good systematization of info and selection of resources for further reading"*
- *"very useful focus on learning outcomes"*



E. Evaluating implemented measures and activities

Activities and sub-activities

Evaluation is the process of applying various methods and tools to assess the effectiveness of specific work, here the effectiveness of partner network management. The module is defined as an introduction to evidence-based management to ensure you to take into account the best available empirical data when making decisions in day-to-day work.

Two sets of activities are presented: The first set refers to the internal assessment of the structure and activities of the established partnership, and the second to the collection of data on the needs

of partners and clients and satisfaction with the partnership. The first set represents the first step in the evaluation process, as well as a prerequisite for successfully evaluating the attitudes of clients and partners

So, the partnership evaluation should be done in two steps:

First, a partnership manager needs to establish and analyze a database of existing and potential partners and to define:

- Who are their current partners?
- Who are their potential partners?
- What is the status of a partner in their network?

The second step is to collect and analyze data on needs and satisfaction from two sources:

- Clients
- Partners

The general aim is to critically evaluate your own work as well as the work of your organization and it could be realized through specific sub-activities that are presented in the module.

I. STEP

1. Establish a database of your current partners

The first sub-activity in the process of evaluation is to collect objective data on the established partners' network. For this purpose, it is necessary to make a list of the employers you work with, as well as a list of other stakeholders you work with (e.g. government sector, non-governmental sector, EU and other international institutions, educational institutions).

The module gives you suggestions how to organize the database by using Excel.

2. Analyze the database

Information on the size and structure of the network is crucial for assessing the partnership established. The module offers a guide to this process presented through questions on the representation and activities of employers and other stakeholders.

3. Make a report on current partnership network

Next sub-activity is to produce a brief narrative report based on previous analyzes. The module offers the structure of such a report as well as examples presented in the reading materials.

4. Develop your partner network

Produced databases, analyzes and reports should serve as a starting point for partnership management. You need to define the strengths and weaknesses of the partner network as a whole, as well as to decide what to do with inactive stakeholders and those with incomplete data, and turn them into an action plan. You should also make a list of the employers and other stakeholders that you would like to work with and organize a database of your potential partners. It is especially important for this sub-activity to make a list of unrepresented profiles and sectors in the network, to discuss it with your colleagues and supervisors, search for specific partners and contact them.

II. STEP

A key step in the empirical assessment of partnership management is to collect and report quantitative data on the experience of your stakeholders in the partnership you manage.

To this end, it is necessary to apply a survey on a representative sample of your partners and collect data on their attitude towards the cooperation in which they participate.

If you just ask them how satisfied they are with the collaboration, you will get data that is not precise enough to make an action plan, and such general questions are largely subject to socially desirable answers. Therefore, the module supports you to collect more valid empirical data that will serve as a basis for further decisions and activities. Learning materials and tools guide you to organize and collect data using a tool to assess partners' attitudes toward the collaboration in which they are involved. Aimed learning outcomes are: construct a survey; collect and analyze self-reported data on partners' and clients' satisfaction with the established partnership; apply qualitative methodology for analyzing partnership maturity; report the results.

The step also involves four sub-activities:

1. Make a tool for self-assessment data collecting

The first step in this part of the evaluation is to create a tool to collect data from your partners about the perceived quality of the collaboration in which they are involved. The module offers readings and tools with this purpose and encourage you to search the literature on survey design, and we have prepared two examples of partner collaboration assessment. In the „Define a questionnaire" activity, we will guide you through the seven steps of designing a survey that you can use to gather relevant data for your organization. The survey will be based on a SWOT analysis you conducted with your team, and your partners 'database will serve you to select a target sample for data collection.

2. Collect the data

Once you design the final questionnaire, you can apply it to the target sample and collect the data. Your assessment will be worth as much as your questionnaire is relevant and valid. The key questions in the data collection process are the samples of people who will complete your questionnaire, the methodology and the technique you apply in the process. To get valid results, you must collect data that is representative of your partner network. Probably the best solution is to send the survey to all the partners in the established network that you have recorded in your database. For this type of research, you have to follow the rules of anonymous and voluntary participation. Finally, you can use one or both technics of the survey application methods: paper and pencil or online data collecting. Today, it is very popular to use the internet or online technique, but the paper-pencil method of applying the survey in small groups still has some advantages.

3. Analyze the data

The data collected should be analyzed using descriptive statistics. First you need to pay attention to the average ratings and their variances. For this analysis, you will need knowledge of elementary statistics that you can recall in the suggested learning materials.

4. Report the results

The module offers you a guide to create a narrative report based on collected quantitative data.

Tools and activities:

Define a questionnaire
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1aozMKxblT6j4Ei3wBVQaSKJmDF-fpdbR7CIiOnbujOc/edit?usp=sharing

A short rating scale of the established partnership network
https://docs.google.com/document/d/16oQbmWMO66Q8v2JcL5pnvO2FszHawBDm70zn3pRmLPg/edit?usp=sharing

Partner database
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1SUzApQAINVDRcYUHMzN_RQQPyTU-U85YflK8V5GUdJQ/edit?usp=sharing

Key competences

- Developing and using the tools for monitoring and evaluating the activities of the partnership
- Reporting on conducted evaluations

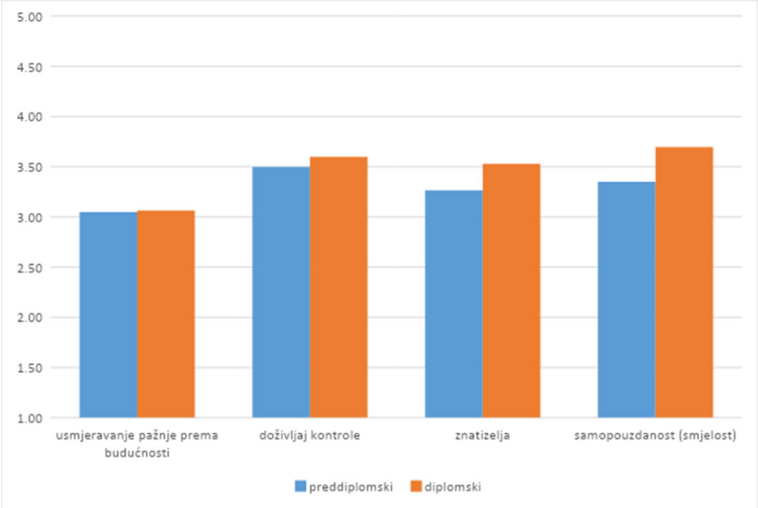
Skills

- Know how to build an evaluation reference document adapted to the initial objectives, to different scales and to the specificity of each action
- Know how to collect and analyze data
- Know how to sort information and prioritize key information
- Know how to develop tools to report on the different indicators (output, result, etc.)

An example of testimony

As a career center in higher education, the Career Center of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, regularly monitors students' needs for career support. Data collected among students of different generations and faculties are used to plan actions and evaluate achievements.

Example of the results presentation: differences in the needs between undergraduate and graduate students



F. Monitoring relevant national and local policies and reforms

The monitoring of policies and reforms is the process where the multipartnership manager follows and get informed about existing and future policy-making in the field of his or her work (lifelong guidance) by collecting information on any policy documents such as, strategies, laws, regulations, opinions, papers, etc published by public governments, institutions or administrations. It is often closely linked to the monitoring of existing and emerging social and economic challenges (such as digitalisation, unemployment, or skills gaps)

This activity can be done by multiple ways: receiving newsletters from the public institutions or other organizations following up policies in the sector, monitoring websites or any other communication platforms (eg social media) where policy-makers publish information, attending and organizing meetings or events with policy-makers, reading publications and papers, reading relevant media who publish on these issues, etc.

The policies that are considered relevant to monitor are often broader than the ones focusing on guidance (also, taking into account that many countries do not have policies solely focusing on guidance provisions). Other policies can include guidance, for example policies on skills, validation of competences, employment and social inclusion.

Monitoring policies is useful not only to know the context in which the multipartnership operates (eg priorities of the government, main challenges on the territory or future challenges, target groups in needs of guidance which is reflected sometimes by political priorities, to know about funding for their activities) but also because it is a pre-requisite to respond to the policy challenges (eg via projects or public-private partnerships) and even, sometimes, to influence policies for improvement (eg by pointing out specific target groups needs, barriers and enablers, new challenges in the field of guidance).

It can therefore lead to organisational actions eg having an advocacy strategy and planning specific actions and reactions to them (campaigning, writing position papers, recommendations, action plans), having meetings with policy-makers and structured or informal dialogue with them.

The monitoring process must be adapted to the context and particularly, to the level of the policy. For instance, at EU level, it is easy to register to EU institutions news channels and other civil society organisations that follow the EU policies. It is also possible to follow the EP committee meetings and find documents online. Other key organisations like Cedefop provide regular information about guidance. At national, regional or local levels, such information and access to the information is not necessarily guaranteed. In some contexts, it can be very helpful to maintain informal relationships with policy-makers to make sure to be informed - if not involved - in policy-making and implementation. Often, there are information points where news about guidance can be found. Some specialised media can also provide information. The Euroguidance networks and its national centres is likely to be a good contact point for making a link between EU policies and national policies.

Policy-related activities consist in monitoring policies, writing policy documents (eg action plan, strategy, policy paper), organizing policy-related meetings and events, using tools such as stakeholders' mapping, a SWOT analysis can also be valuable.

Tips from the field: The presence of Directors of the partners organization and policy makers in the partnership committees can provide good sources of information

Associated skills, knowledge, soft skills

- Knowledge of political science, educational and social policies
- Ability to identify key stakeholders in the policy fields at relevant levels
- Interpersonal skills, communication and networking skills
- Thinking and analysis skills, critical thinking, attention to details, planning and organizing
- Learn to learn skills and proactivity
- Digital skills for online research and information

Toolkit:

In the publication of the European Commission "Lifelong guidance policy and practice in the EU[1]" from 2020, you can find information about lifelong guidance policies in EU countries. The publication, a study made by researchers from the Institute for Employment Research, University of Warwick and the Finnish Institute for Educational Research, University of Jyväskyläon, addresses lifelong guidance (LLG) policy and practice in the EU focusing on trends, challenges and opportunities.

This publication is an interesting read for any MP managers who wish to know more about what a policy is and what is the policy in their context. They can also learn about good practices at the end of the study.

G. Ensuring communication and representation activities

Communication activities are an important part of the Multistakeholder Partnership Manager's field of action.
Communication and representation activities should be adequately ensured at all stages of the partnership's life cycle: during the search for partners, during the operational life of the partnership and also during its termination. At all times, relevant information must be communicated to stakeholders in the correct way and in due time.
Below are some key activities which are also defined in the Multistakeholder Partnership Manager competence framework we developed during the project.

- Organizing and participating in events, meetings, debates, round tables with different actors including public authorities
- Communicating and disseminating the measures and activities implemented by the partnership
- Representing the partnership in various bodies and assemblies and in the meetings of the public authorities

Useful techniques and tools exist to better manage communication within the partnership :

- **Event planning, marketing and communication**

Event marketing is of particular importance to ensure the success of initiatives, both in terms of the number of participants involved and in terms of actual impact. Event marketing is based on the promotion of a brand or service through interaction between people.

It is important to distinguish the types of events in order to choose the most suitable one for the purpose and it is equally important to be able to communicate them effectively, defining the key information precisely.

In order to understand whether the event has been successful, it is necessary to define success indicators and to measure them, to identify the most appropriate venue and to use the most

1 https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=8284&furtherPubs=yes

effective tools to disseminate the event as widely as possible.

- **Involvement of stakeholder and partnerships in communications/event**

In order to encourage the involvement of stakeholders in communication events, it is necessary to involve partners at an early stage of the organization. In this way, everyone feels fully involved in the event and therefore responsible for its success.

There are a number of factors to consider in order to ensure the full success of the event, such as clarifying everyone's roles and motivations and resolving any conflicts of interest; this will lay the foundations for organizing a successful event.

- **Engagement of direct and indirect beneficiaries**

The construction of a publicity plan is essential to ensure that the message reaches the final beneficiaries of the initiative being organized.

To implement an advertising plan it is necessary to go through some basic steps:

- define publicity goals
- generate story ideas
- create a publicity scheduler
- create a set of advertising tools

- **Intercultural communication**

Intercultural communication is very useful to elaborate messages free from cultural conditioning or, on the contrary, culturally oriented in order to reach specific target audiences.

In the relationship between two individuals, both are bearers of culture and, in order to identify their own representations and areas of misunderstanding, it is necessary to follow a three-step path: decentration, discovering the other's frame of reference, creating a space for intercultural negotiation.

It is important to emphasize the difference between a transcultural and an intercultural approach, as communication and mediation work produces new cultural forms capable of responding in an original way to present and future problems, contributing to social innovation.

Toolkit:

- **Virtual event distribution**

Streamyard is a live streaming studio in your browser.

More information about the tool on the website: https://streamyard.com/

- **Organisational communication**

Trello and slack as communication tools

- How to use Trello for collaborative group work
- Introduction to Slack
- Centralized communication center

- **Training communication**

Moodle and Survey Monkey as training communication tool

- Communicate with Moodle
- Competencies framework with moodle
- What is a badge
- What is SurveyMonkey

Associated skills, knowledge, soft skills

- Organizing and facilitating meetings and events
- Presentation skills
- Master different communication tools and media
- Social network management
- Ability to listen and reflect
- Knowledge of public relations strategies and methods
- Knowledge of private actors, public actors and the economic world (branches, professional federations and companies) of the community

KEEP IN PACT PARTNERSHIP

LIFELONG LEARNING PLATFORM
EUROPEAN CIVIL SOCIETY FOR EDUCATION

cité sciences et industrie

cidadedasprofissões

Réseau International cités des Métiers

azvo croatia

Find out more about multi-stakeholder cooperation on our website: https://keepinpact.eu/ or on www.reseaucitesdesmetiers.org

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