KEEP IN PACT

Keep innovation in multi partnership
cooperation in lifelong career
guidance services

SURVEY REPORT

European practices of cooperation
in lifelong guidance

KEEP IN PACT (2019-2022) – Survey analysis report – May 2022

This report is produced in the frame of the *KEEP IN PACT* (https://keepinpact.eu). The project involves 6 partners from 5 EU countries (France, Belgium, Italy, Portugal and Croatia). The project aims at promoting upskilling in the field of lifelong career guidance services, as well as at developing an innovative ecosystem approach to the management of professionals working together in partnership.

___

Author(s): Lifelong Learning Platform

Start date of Project: 01/09/2019

Duration: 31 months

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

Contents

Introduction

About the survey

In the framework of the European project Keep in Pact, two surveys were carried out among European professionals in the field of employment, VET and lifelong guidance. These surveys aimed to better understand the practices of multi-stakeholder cooperation, the types of cooperation and activities linked to this cooperation, and the profile of the professionals in charge of the animation of the cooperation. The surveys also aimed to understand the issues and challenges surrounding the facilitation and management of cooperation and the solutions that are provided. The first survey was launched in July 2020. The second survey in September 2021. The report below gives an overview of the main findings and conclusion of the two surveys.

The two surveys received a total of 48 answers from different organisations and 16 countries. Most of the answers came from the following countries: Croatia (11 answers), France (9 answers), Portugal (7 answers), Belgium (5 answers). The other countries of respondents (less than 2 answers) included the UK, Italy, Malta, Estonia, Germany, Switzerland, Lithuania, Albania, Slovenia, Spain, The US, The Netherlands.

Survey results: The respondents

Respondents' job profile

In the two surveys, managers and directors in higher education are the most prevalent positions of respondents. The specific titles vary slightly:

- Project or partnership manager, coordinator or officer.
- Directors, Deputy Director, Head of the Career Counselling and Career Development Office, Head of the Career Development and Student Support Centre, Vice dean for development, Vice dean for industrial relations and development.
- Lecturer in charge for student practice, Assistant professor - Career centre mentor, Lecturer in charge for student work placements, Professor of Psychology, Assistant professor
- Career advisor - Head of the department for the improvement of higher education, Career Counsellor, Professional integration counsellor
- Public relations officers and communication: General public information officer, Communication officer, Head of reception and public engagement
- Others: Professional associate, Consultant, Psychologist

Head of the Career Counseling and Career Development Office
Head of the Office for International Cooperation,
Vice Dean for International Cooperation
Lecturer in Charge of student practice
Head of Career Center
Vice deans for development   Manager
Lecturer in charge for student work placement
Project manager
Scientific and Research Projects manager
Coordinator
Researcher

61% of the respondents have staff dedicated to multi-partnership management in their organisation (from survey 1).

Multi partnership management is only one part of the full activity of the person in charge of it
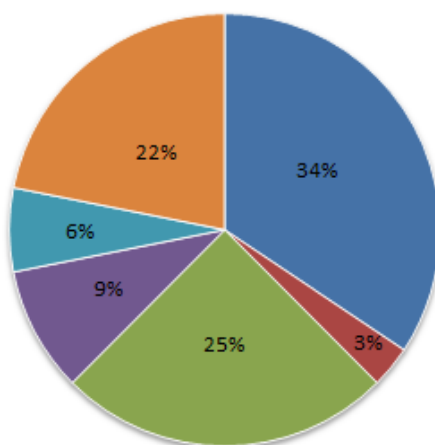
Part of the activity :

- ■ 25%
- ■ 41%
- ■ 50%
- ■ 75%
- ■ 100%
- ■ Don't know

34%

3%

25%

9%

6%

22%

Main tasks and activities of a multi-partnership (MP) manager

### Main tasks and activities of MP managers (survey 1)

- Coordinating activities and services
- People management
- Defining operational actions
- Networking
- Coordination between partners and students
- Administrative work
- Meeting organisation: preparing the agenda and methodology
- Contract preparation and signing
- Development and implementation of informational, research, educational activities and activities which include group and individual counselling
- Taking care of students' practice and for signing partnership agreements
- Career advising
- Giving general feedback on activities
- Sharing relevant external information
- Asking for and discussing proposals for activities
- Informing on advertisement being done about the activities
- Sending profile of participants before the activity
- Sending feedback from participants after the activity
- Collecting information and reporting
- Sharing partners' activities on communication channels
- Putting partners in contact with each other according to relevance
- Developing meetings or events to promote partners' interaction
- Providing symbolic rewarding / thanking activities and celebrating achievements together
- Research and develop materials in the career guidance field
- Fundraising
- International project management
- Communicating with the other partners and making sure that the responsibilities of the organisation within the project are fulfilled (development of outputs, conducting dissemination and multiplication activities, reporting).

Diploma for the position (survey 1)

Respondents in charge of multi-partnership management in lifelong career guidance do not have specific diplomas. Most common diplomas are Political Science or Psychology, Social science, Public relations, and Project management.

Organisations of the respondents

Public employment services, Universities, Municipality, companies, association (NGO), adult education centre, Cités des métiers, cooperatives, public career guidance services.
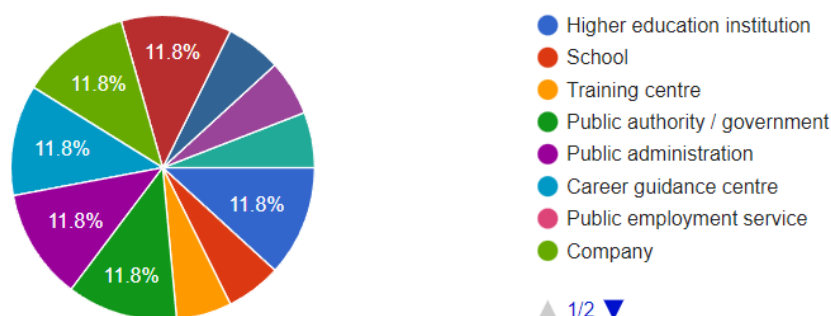
The picture from respondents of survey 2 show a good balance of organisation types.

However, respondents were representing mostly the public sector (data only available in survey 2):
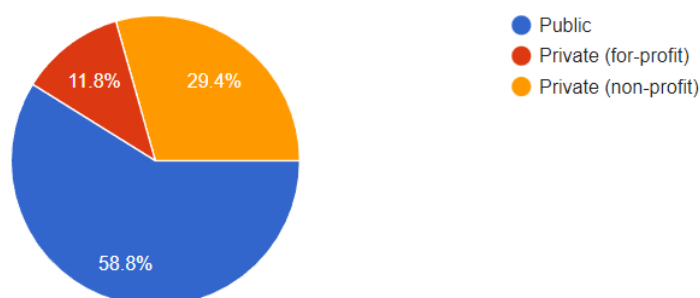
Survey results: The respondents' cooperation practices

Identification of (new) partners

Three main sources (survey 2):

1. Through meetings and events

2. Through existing networks

3. Thanks to recommendations from existing partners

(Not so much from the internet and social media).

Types of cooperation

Survey 1 answers helped us to identify different types of cooperation:

- Public-private partnerships - usually together with the municipality, public administration, to address certain target groups.

- Regional and national partnerships for employment, training and professional programs

- Students placements, studies, work-based learning, link education - business

- Structural / Internal governance / eg New structures based on multi-stakeholder partnership cooperation

- Projects and ad-hoc initiatives (example: mentorship programme, Information day)

- In specific/located departments of the organisation eg public information

Examples of cooperation activities (survey 1 and 2)

- Erasmus+ projects
- Lectures for a group of students
- Working Groups
- Mobility and work placement
- Training to educators
- Class interventions from various professionals aimed at promoting careers in specific sectors
- National guidance forums
- Psychological counselling with both individuals and companies
- Recruitment and selection of personnel

Objectives of the cooperation

- Matching supply and demand in the labour market
- Intensifying investments in strategic human resource development
- Improving the business environment
- Enhancing the competences of both employees and the unemployed
- Contributing to appropriate safe and healthy working conditions
- Promoting the creation and maintenance of sustainable jobs, strengthening competences in the social economy sector
- Interventions carried out in the local, national and European territory
- Increasing the employability of the most vulnerable groups in the labour market through the preparation and implementation of innovative local initiatives in line with local needs and strategic priorities
- Raising awareness of work-study training: information sessions for the public with companies, training centres, International Mobility Day, Social and solidarity economy day.

In survey 2, we asked respondents how they mainly cooperate. A majority of respondents cooperate through EU projects, the organisation of events (fairs, forums) and other joint activities. What is less common are multi-stakeholder guidance structures and working groups.

Cooperation with whom?

Respondents cooperate with…

European, regional and public authorities: Regional Education Administration, Euroguidance Network, Europass, EQF and EURES, municipalities, government, city officials and workers,

Education and training organisations: Public and private adult education organisation, principals, school teachers and students, local level a consortium of VET schools, alumni, Professors, post-secondary institutions..

Business sector: Employers, job agencies, key actors in the labour and education market..

Other stakeholders: public libraries..

Themes of cooperation

Respondents cooperate on the following themes: sustainability, climate change, gender equality, the reconciliation of family and professional life, student mobility, to create new educational materials and tools, on mentoring programs, to share and develop career guidance strategies, on the concept of Third Place in cultural and adult education spaces, to send students and staff for mobilities abroad, job shadowing opportunities, continuous activities related to matching supply and demand in the labour market, to enhance the lifelong learning dimension of their services, to increase their outreach, to promote employability, to increase the balance between personal and professional life in the companies they collaborate with, to raise a common awareness action, for events, public services.

Levels of cooperation

12. What is/are the levels of cooperation?
17 réponses
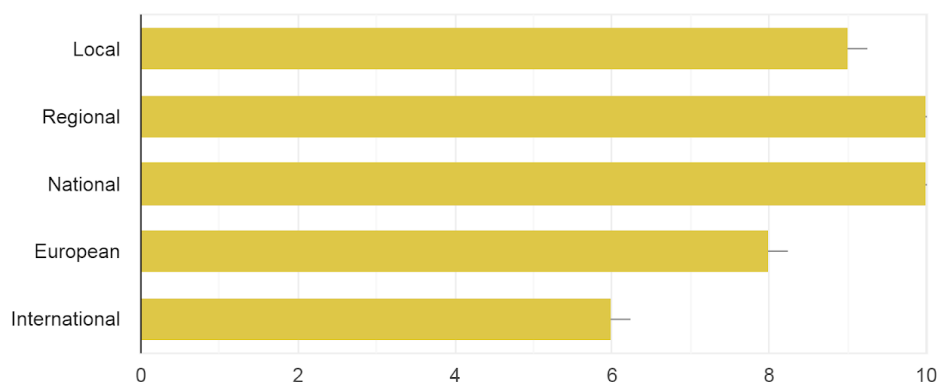
Online tools for cooperation

Examples include: conference calls, collaborative work tools and platforms as Google solutions, Teams, Google meet, Skype, Webex or Zoom, offline and online meetings, email, social networks, Slack, Miro, Padlet

The added value of cooperation (from survey 1)

- Different perspectives and ideas
- Networking
- Experience
- Expertise
- It adds variety/diversity to the offer to the public
- Raising reputation and legitimacy
- Employability of target groups (impact)
- Improvement of the offer to respond to the needs of stakeholders
- A larger audience

What cooperation means to you (survey 1)

- "Being relevant in the market"
- "Cooperation is a key element of partnership and reaching mutual goals. It is a prerequisite for exchanging ideas and creating multidisciplinary solutions."
- "It means that all sides win (win-win situations) there has to be a benefit to both and at the same time a synergistic event, i.e. that the results could not be achieved at that level without the partnership"
- "Cooperation is essential"
- "Exchange of experience, recognition of each other's needs, ensuring common objectives."
- "We have opportunity to learn about different position and attitudes"
- "Opportunities for students to be successfully employed after graduation"
- "Good partnership is very important in establishing good project proposals, in having good results or new products/patents/ in scientific projects. But a good partnership with industry or institutions has a very important role in study programmes that we are developing or in the career of our students."
- "To find ways to do things together that are mutually beneficial"
- "Different sides look at the same problem"

- "Fundamental to the success of the project, to the achievement of its objectives".

- "New competences"

- "Opportunity to improve our own educational work with my students."

- "Develop understandings, collaborations and synergies in terms of innovation and development of new projects that can provide added value for different actors at local level and with a strong social impact."

- "Cooperation within the partnership is the duly fulfilment of obligations by each partner with a view to achieve common goals, shared responsibility for project outcomes and timely and constructive handling with conflicts and disputes, if such arise."

- "Cooperation is the basis of partnership to stay in a win-win situation."

- "Exchange of contacts, resources, space. Collaboration for a common project"

- "Partnerships lead to more efficient and effective results by carefully managing available resources. It also allows a generalised dissemination of the project and its results and guarantees a greater impact on the beneficiaries."

- "Exchange and construction "win-win" - the partner must feel "author" of the action in the same way as the CdM or the partner with which it collaborates."

- "Defend the same ideas, share common goals to succeed together"

- "Respect each other's values, co-build together, do not compete with each other, show generosity"

- "Share the organisation"

- "Together, find ideas to create or adapt tools to different territories / audiences."

- "Collaboration and sharing"

- "Improve services, create the opportunity to pool strengths, be more active and reach more audiences"

Main challenges of cooperation

In survey 1, respondents answered: Building Win-Win relationships, sustainability of the partnership, maintaining the relationship, maintaining the engagement of the partners, dealing with the different needs of the partners, mutual trust, sharing common objectives, horizontal structure for the governance, agile collaboration, staff must be open to work in multi partnership, different work culture, financial and institutional support, communication with partners, motivation and ensuring adequate engagement of each partner, different knowledge and aims.

Top 6 challenges (survey 2):

1. Manage different level of involvement of partners

2. Ensuring financial and institutional support

3. Maintain the motivation and engagement of partners on the long term

4. Time management in the cooperation

5. Evaluate the quality of the partnership and the achievement of the common objectives.

6. Ensure the complementarity of actions and activities between partners

What does not represent so much a challenge for respondents is:

- Different work cultures and methods

- Different goals

- Matching partners' needs with users' demand

- Finding new partners

- Reducing competition between the partners

- Ensure that each partner has the same level of power of decision

- Innovating in the cooperation

- Horizontal structure of the governance

Main interest of respondents in training opportunities
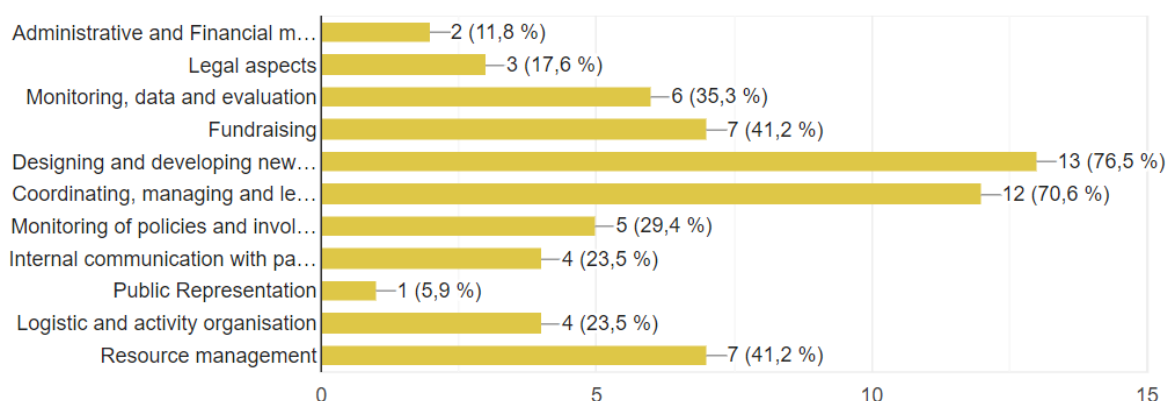
Suggestion other than the list (and KIP modules): resource management, fundraising and monitoring, training on sustainability, quality, and attractiveness of their partnerships. Participants highlight the need to get equipped with tools and methods on co-creation and co-carriage of projects that integrate all partners at a high level of collaboration in a logical

articulation of the knowledge and resources. They also say they want to have means for stakeholders' ideas to emerge in a multi partnership and be an asset to the common project. They recognise multiple times the importance of the preparation phase of a partnership, before it is officialised and is being put into action. They said that developing "strategic partnerships to learn from different policies and activities would be very useful".

Most important competences

According to the respondents those are:

- Designing and developing new partnerships: Ability to plan and manage stakeholders from distance, Time management, trust and cooperation, motivation, flexibility and proactivity, how to find partners and to share common goals to start in eg. a common project;

- Coordination and management of partnerships: motivation, flexibility and proactivity, sustainability;

- Administrative and Financial management: Legal aspects (legal knowledge);

- Monitoring, data, evaluation: trust and cooperation;

- Fundraising and resource management to avoid dependency from institutional donors;

- Monitoring of policies and involvement in policy-making, Career guidance policy and good practices;

- Public representation: Management and communication;

- Logistic and organisation;

- Resources of management;

- Transversal competences: Co-design/creation, trust and cooperation, Communication skills, social and digital skill.

The importance of trust, cooperation and communication skills are stressed in order to create sustainable partnerships. It shows very well that respondents pay special attention to the mid and long terms of partnerships. Respondents are well aware that an adapted strategy must be put in place early in the process. This last point stresses the importance not to rush in the preparation phase but give time to all questions, reframing of project components, and so on.

Lastly, the transversal social and digital skills have been pointed out a few times. They have not been integrated fully in the competence framework so it can constitute a new phase of development. They reflect the underlying need to remain attentive to the tools and methods of work used in a, if not cooperative, shared project and to upskill regularly to remain as efficient as possible.

Use of competence frameworks

70% of respondents from survey 1 and 2 declare that they do not use/have competence frameworks in their organisations.

Lifelong Learning Platform
projects@lllplatform.eu
https://lllplatform.eu