



INTEREST Progress Report questionnaire Evaluation

Work Package 7 – Quality Management

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A. Project Outputs to Date

The partnership is young and, after only 5 months, had to adapt to the COVID context in a period of the project that was rather delicate for the project's overall result: the framing, the harmonisation of methods, and the coordination of an analytical work to be consolidated at project level. After 9 months of the project, 82% of the partners felt the partnership has accomplished the main activities in a good way (see figure 1).

Partners have a good perception of the results achieved for the period despite the COVID context which did not facilitate the action.

During the first 9 months the partnership has accomplished during the period the main activities in a good way to ensure the project expected results
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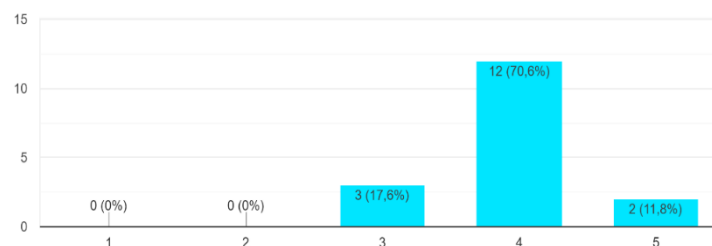


Figure 1: Main activities achievement perception

The expected deliverables have been delivered, with a minimal delay, in accordance with the objective for 74% of the participants (see figure 2), even and without any major impact on the



overall project (see [Dashboard](#) and [CooSpace](#)) even if the partners' perception of the impact of the situation on the actions is so well appreciated (see figure 3),

The produced project results and outcomes are in accordance with the project objectives
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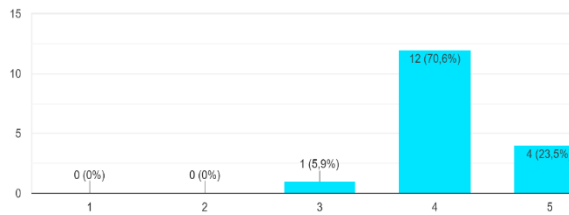


Figure 2: Low impact on the timeline of the project

The project activities ran in line with the project timeline or with minor deviation with low impact for the project output
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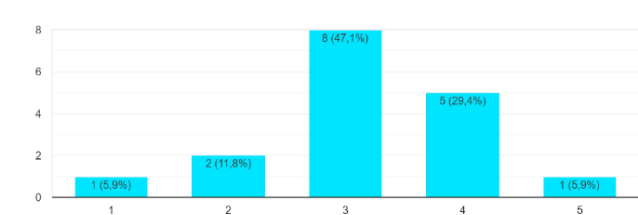


Figure 3: Outcome in accordance with objectives

Nevertheless, the project activities allowed the partners to harmonize their level of knowledge and confirm the common vision on the expected objectives and project deliverables (88,2% - see figure 4) but 29,4% of them does not think all the expected task can be realised in the given time frame (see figure 5).

The effort made before the summer break suggests that the mobilisation of the group by the coordinator may enable the schedule to be kept to despite the difficulties encountered.

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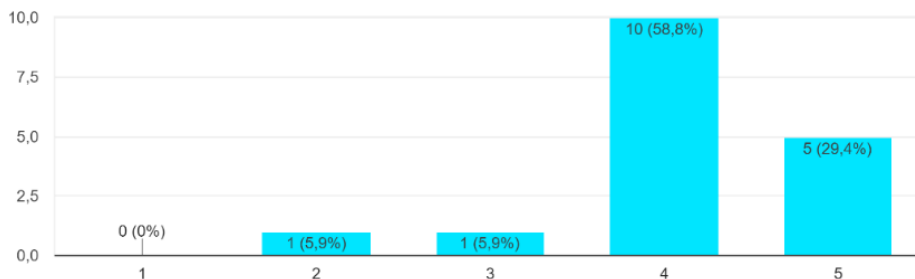


Figure 4:
Harmonise knowledge & common vision



The planned project tasks up until the end of the project can be realised within the given time frame
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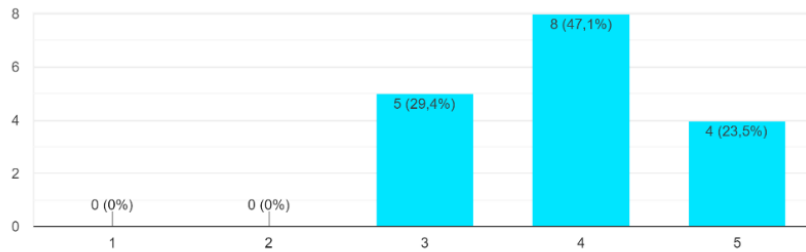


Figure 5: Project tasks to be realised in given time

All partners have contributed the required efforts to the project activities over the first 9 months
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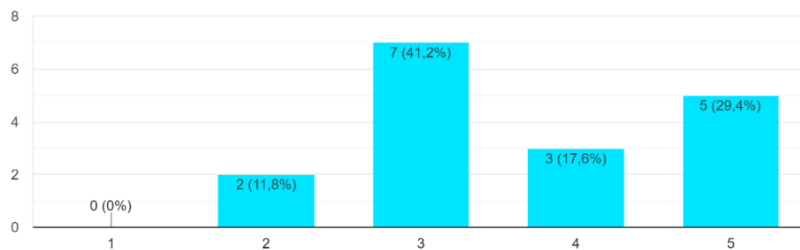


Figure 6: Balance of contribution of partners

B. Project Management

Even if some partners have the perception that not all have made the expected effort during the period (see figure 6), management has made it possible to meet the objective and tighten the partnership's focus on meeting the deadline for deliverables.

Coordination of the project was very efficient during the 9 months, very energetic for the coordinator, well appreciated by partner (see figure 7) with a strong impact on the expected deliverables.

The project management over the first 9 months has been effective
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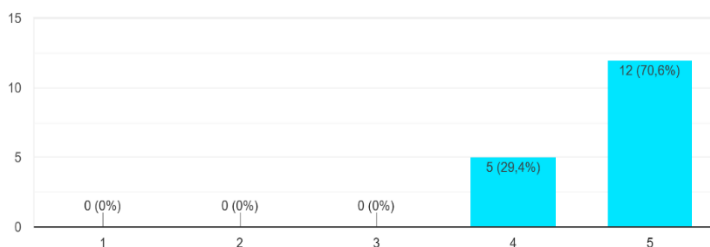


Figure 7: Project Management effectiveness



All partners thanks the management team for:

1. the support to achieve the project activities, (figure 8)
2. the time management (figure 9)
3. the financial management (figure 10)

The coordinator has provided the necessary support to achieve the project activities
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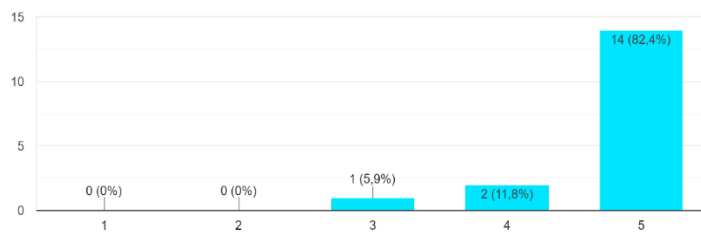


Figure 8: Necessary support to achieve activities

The time management of the project activities has been appropriate and achievable
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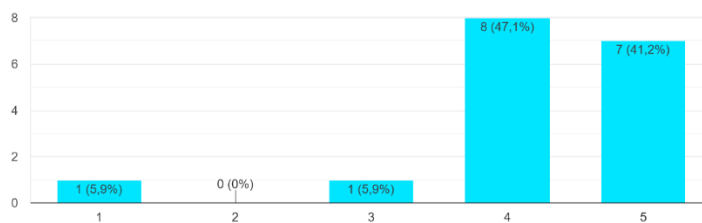


Figure 9: Appropriate Time management

The financial management of the project has been effective
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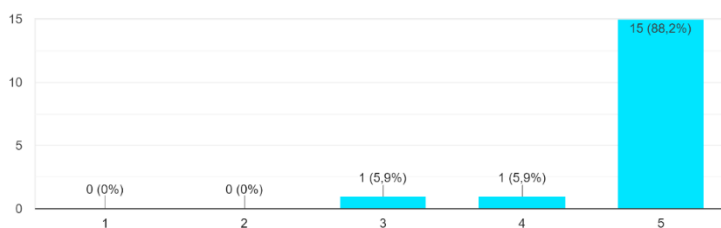


Figure 10: Financial mgt effectiveness

Some comments for partners:

- *"I believe that major problems with deadlines are already under control. I hope that the involvement of all partners is stable and balanced in the future."*

Supported by the coordinator, the guidance of the IO Leaders has also a good impact on qualitative issues with a sympathetic support. (figure 11)

The leaders of the intellectual outputs have provided good guidance and instruction for the related activities and tasks
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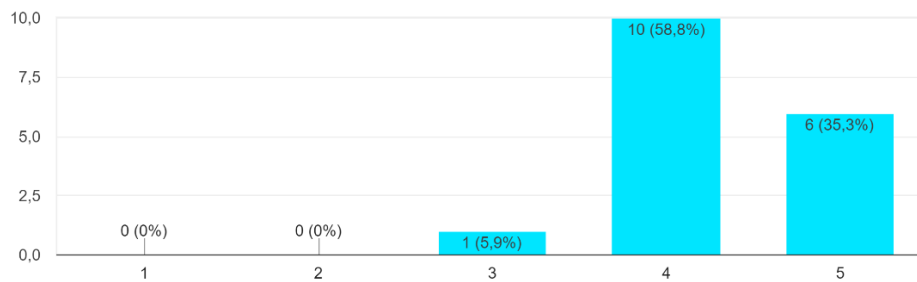


Figure 11: Good guidance from IO leaders

C. Project Partnership

Still 82% of participants declared that level of accountability is high. (see figure 12). The partners have worked quite well even if some of them felt that improving responsiveness may facilitate the effectiveness of the team (see figure 13).

Despite some individual situation with a manageable impact, considering not all partners have a high level of commitment, the partnership is efficient and result-oriented. (see Figure 14).

There has been a high level of accountability within the partnership over the first 9 months
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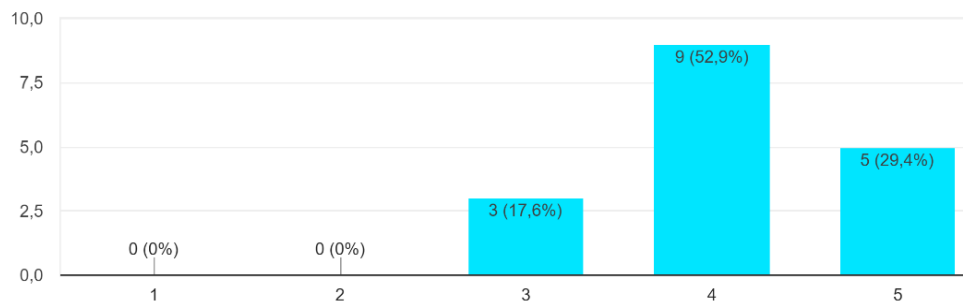


Figure 12: High level of accountability



Partners' responsiveness has been excellent

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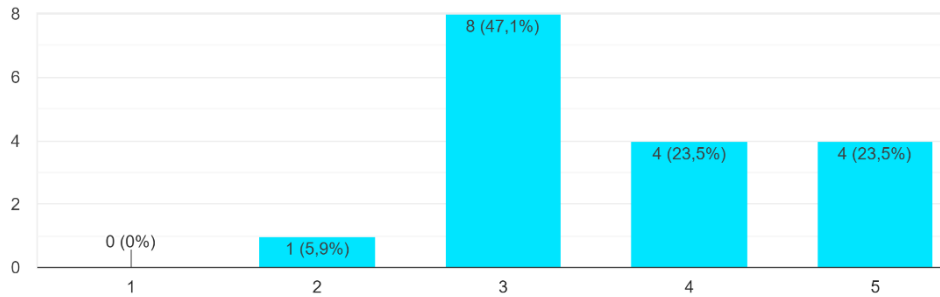


Figure 13:
Partners' responsiveness

All partners have been committed to the project goals over the first 9 months

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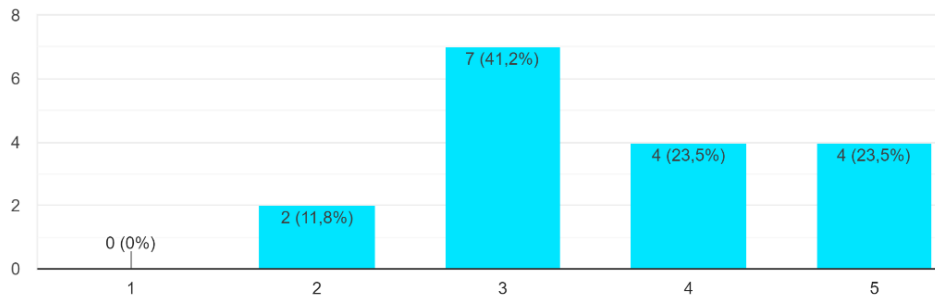


Figure 14:
Partners' commitment

There has been a good level of cooperation between the partnership

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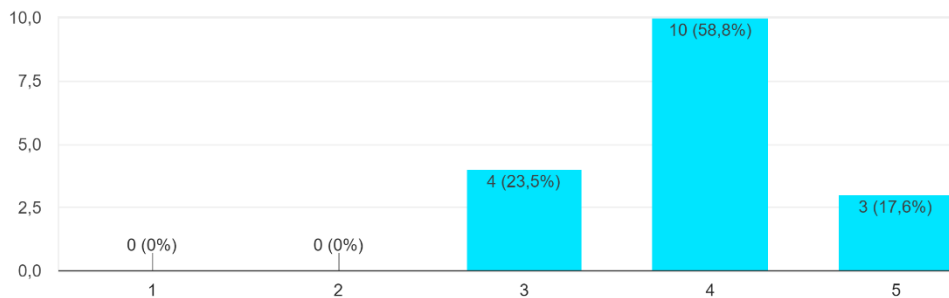


Figure 15:
Good level of cooperation

Some comments :

- *"We are in delay with some of the tasks, but the partners tried to do their best dealing with the project tasks as well. We hope that we will be able to manage the delays in the next periods, and we can accelerate the development process of IO2 and IO3 a bit to finish the project in time with high quality results."*

D. Project Communication

The communication procedures within the partnership was not well understood by all (fig.16) and not facilitated by the constraints of working fully by distance, outside own offices. Some partners were partly disturbed by the situation and the impact in communication and information sharing (fig.17). No one was excluded from the group, even if some tension may have occurred, the cohesion was facilitated by the common vision of the target (fig. 18-19).

The communication procedures within the partnership over the first 9 months have been effective
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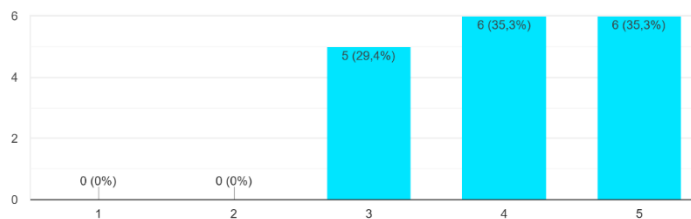


Figure 16: Effective communication procedure

The project partners have maintained open communication and have shared information as appropriate
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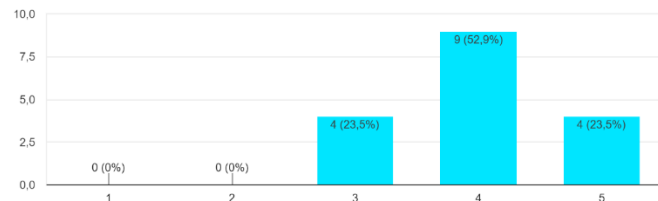


Figure 17: Open communication & information sharing

There have been clear rules concerning conflict management
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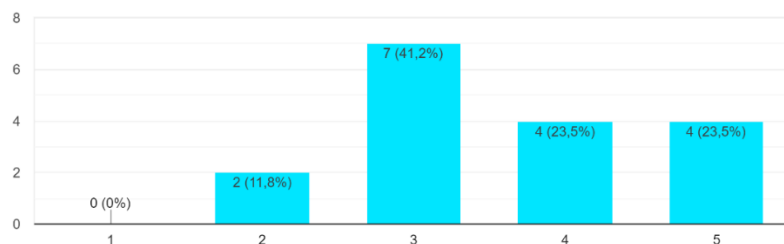


Figure 18 : Clear rules for conflict management

There have been no critical project conflicts and issues
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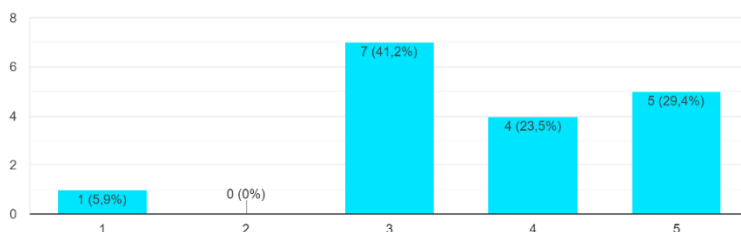


Figure 19: No critical conflicts



E. Impact and Dissemination

In this first part of the project, the dissemination dimension of the project was only partial, essentially centred on the project objectives, communicated on the websites, the impact therefore remains limited in terms of target. The main stakeholders that are SMEs were only slightly affected at this stage.

Nevertheless, it is obvious that this first period of study, consolidation of information and comparative sharing to arrive at a common vision has enabled many partners to upgrade their knowledge. And for the organisations, to take the measure of what is at stake in the project for the next phase, the design of the training courses and the realisation of the pilot training courses.

Some comments for the survey related to the question: What has been the project's impact so far on your organisation, target groups and other relevant stakeholders?

- *Developed knowledge about the IR in the case of SMEs*
- *Next year, a new lecture on integrated reporting in the study program will be launched.*
- *in the preliminary phase, the impact is not relevant*
- *Not yet, this is not that phase of the project*
- *the issue is considered interesting but in the same time challenging*
- *Is early days but we are hoping the impact will be significant*
- *The organization is doing its best to deliver. Almost no impact on target groups and other stakeholders, since it's are not available yet.*
- *My organisation recognizes the project well and considers it to be an important proof of international cooperation. Other target groups are not yet deeply involved, since it is too early to show the work in progress to them. There is a plan of interaction for the future.*
- *We have widely publicized our participation via newsletters, social media and 2019 Annual Report and received positive reactions.*
- *Project has created awareness for topic of integrated reporting and in general for these types of projects*



Now the impact on the SME target group is limited, related to the Covid context, and many actions are still remaining. The outputs finalisation must be an opportunity to accelerate the dissemination actions to this key target group.

Some comments for the survey related to the question: If you involved other organisations, not formally participating in the project, please briefly describe their involvement.

- *First addressing to selected SMEs informing them briefly about the project; also first contact to local public business support agency ...*
- *The project was presented to ... the national accountancy organisation and 1 article was published in their journal concerning the nonfinancial information reporting*
- *Not yet.*
- *We have connected the project with SMEUnited (www.smeunited.eu) who we hope will become an active supporter of our work*
- *It will be relevant later as we will have the first results, we have possible associated partners (SMEUnited) and experts (from South-Africa)*
- *No*
- *Until now project has been introduced at informal meetings and various discussions with companies and representatives of auditors. A more stringent and formal event is planned for the end of the year / beginning of next year.*

To whom did you disseminate the project results so far? Please list 2 or 3 examples of relevant target audience

- *Other experts, student*
- *Academic community.*
- *some of my students*
- *No sharing of results, only informing about the existence of the project.*
- *students and professors from UBB and other Romanian universities, and also via LinkedIn and Facebook to all which are interested*
- *The Good Governance Academy, Globeethics, LBU Integrated Reporting group*
- *Local SME owners and managers (two-pages article in a local monthly magazine)*
- *The dissemination includes so far the authorities of the university (to gain their support), and the academic community (to make them aware of this initiative and later consult result). There is already one academic course approved for spring term 2021/22 which will include in its curriculum certain elements worked out in this project. It will be offered to master level full and part time students (approx. 200-300 per year)*



- *For Members of Confederation (small and medium-sized enterprises)*
- *Our members (professional accountancy organisations), the members of these PAOs and SMEUnited*
- *First to internal institutional target groups - staff and management; besides BBS organised a big conference connecting to the kick-off meeting in Budapest, and the main objectives and the expected results of the project were mentioned at the plenary session*
- *Representatives of companies, Auditors and Tax Advisors, Academics from other Universities.*

E. Partner's suggestions


To the question 'Do you have any additional suggestions or comments at this stage of the project?', suggestions were oriented to project deadline management, related to the forced work by distance, with a trust within the partnership in facing the specific current context with a lack of face to face work. The following list mentioned below raise the global commitment of partners in the INTEREST project.

Main answers of the question: Do you have any additional suggestions or comments ...'

- *"no it is fine"*
- *"Partners should meet deadlines in carrying out tasks, because exceeding them prevents further tasks."*
- *"Covid-19 had several of disadvantages in project activities, in personal meetings, in discussions and keeping the deadline. The online sessions are good but not so effective. We have to focus on keeping the deadlines."*
- *"The last project phase (Feb. 2020 - June 2020) was highly influenced by Covid-19 impacts at HSRW. We are a small group of three professors (representing approx. 40% of business capacities) in a rather young university. Therefore the original timeline which was seen ex-ante rather "challenging" but manageable turn into a "impossible to implement in time" plan as 140% of my capacities had to be assigned to preparation of online teaching. In this questionnaire I provided honest answers but the reason for "bad valuation" was mainly the virus. Although I often gave the project-SOS-sign I got the impression that this sign was overheard."*
- *"No"*



- *"I believe that major problems with deadlines are already under control. I hope that the involvement of all partners is stable and balanced in the future."*
- *"Unfortunately the COVID pandemic (the lack of personal meetings, postponement of the transnational training event) made the implementation process in the first period difficult. We are in delay with some of the tasks, but the partners tried to do their best dealing with the project tasks as well. We hope that we will be able to manage the delays in the next periods, and we can accelerate the development process of IO2 and IO3 a bit to finish the project in time with high quality results."*
- *"Time for more brainstorming / exchange of thoughts on topics... if possible partner meeting / training event in physical presence."*

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