

# Summary report of WP 3

## Germany, Greece, Poland

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## 1 Introduction

The project addresses the problem of insufficient transnational cooperation between SMEs. To date the problem of lack of appropriate skills in the area of transnational cooperation is not well enough recognized by the SME's owners and managers as well as the policy makers and, as a result, there is a significant lack of educational programs, which address this problem. Present educational schemes are usually tailored according to the needs of some particular programs (mainly EU funded activities). Apart from that they identify the potential problems, indicate and propose the solutions, but they generally do not increase the skills and competencies of the users. On the other hand there are also very well developed learning programs and universal methodologies for project coordination (e.g. PMI) but in this case they usually do not address sufficiently and adequately the context of transnational cooperation and the needs of SMEs involved in such activities.

The aim of the report is to present the results of the research conducted within the frame of the work package 3 (WP 3) "Analysis of the state of the art in the area of communication, coordination, and cultural consideration". The goal of the research was to:

- find out the main barriers and stimulators (key success factors) in the process of initiating and preparing and conducting transnational projects and
- identification of good and bad practices in the area of communication, coordination and cultural considerations of transnational cooperation.

The report consists of three parts. The first chapter consists of the presentation of the research sample and the presentation of the research assumptions as well as organization of research. The second part of the report, the main one, presents the results of the conducted research. That part of the report consists of five sub sections covering the following issues: the way of approaching new projects (starting the projects), identification of the key success factors and major problems of the proposal's development and later at the stage of the project's implementation, coordination of the transnational project, communication and finally, cultural considerations. The last part presents conclusions. The report concludes with the appendixes presenting the list of interviewed persons, the research tool – the questionnaire, and the identified best practices.

The report addresses directly one of the three objectives of the work package - analysis and identification of the key success factors in the contexts of communication, coordination, and cultural considerations of transnational cooperation as well as one of the project's goals: identification of the main barriers and stimulators in the area of transnational cooperation (communication, coordination and cultural considerations) in the context of learning content development.

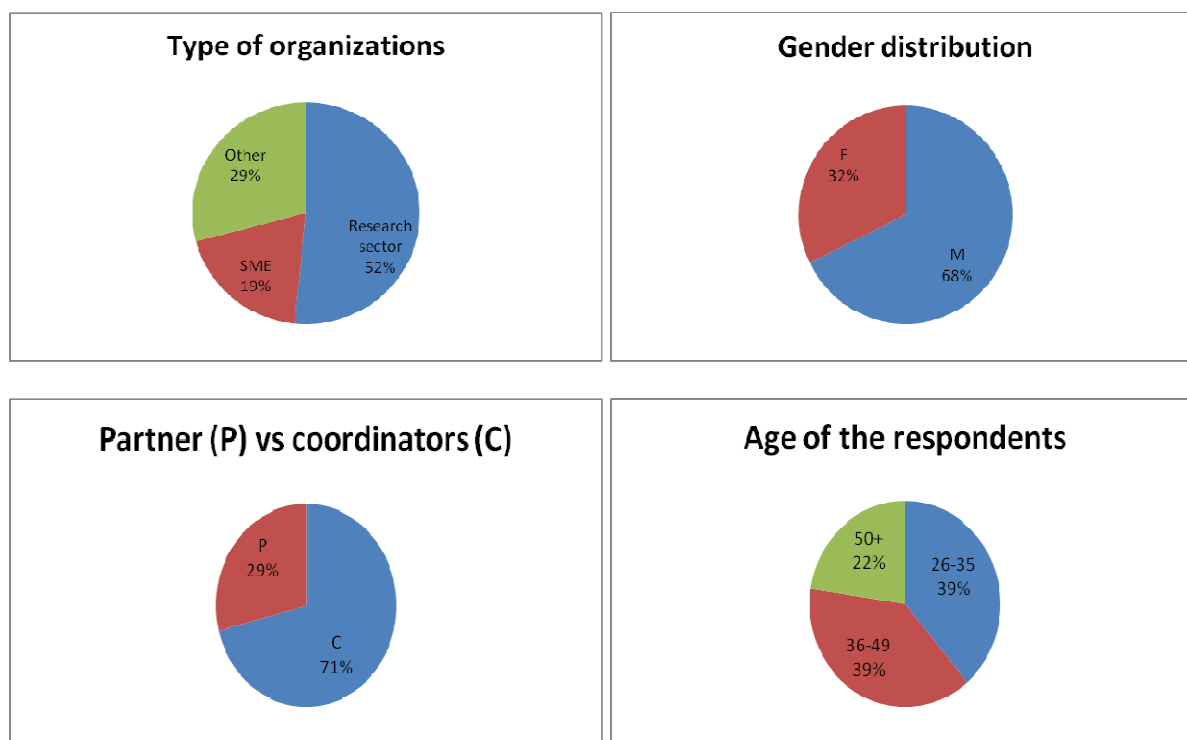
The report prepared by CASE-Doradcy Sp. z o.o. presents the results of the research activity and research results for Poland, Germany and Greece. The research was conducted by the partners of the 3XC project.

## 2 Research sample

The IDI – in-depth-interview was selected as the main research method as it is the most appropriate method to meet the research target defined as an identification of the main barriers and stimulators (key success factors) in the process of initiating and preparing and conducting transnational projects. Additionally the direct contact with respondents experienced in the realization of transnational projects allowed the research team to verify the hypothesis and indicate the new areas of the project’s interest. Additionally some good practices in the project’s realization were identified based on the IDIs.

In order to achieve the research goals, only the respondents having experience in transnational projects (as a coordinator or as a partner) were interviewed. The research sample therefore includes respondents that have had significant experience in collaborative work. Additionally in the research sample the respondents having experience in cooperation with the research sector as well as private and non research sectors (e.g. SMEs ) were included.

30 respondents from Greece, Germany and Poland were interviewed, of which 13 were from Poland, 8 from Germany and 9 from Greece. The structure of the research sample is presented below.



The research was conducted from February to June 2009, with the pilot phase in February 2009.

## 3 Main report

### 3.1 Starting new projects

#### Poland

A vast majority of institutions are rather passive when searching for new partners and they are mainly invited to the projects as partners. However in a few cases the respondents indicated that the institutions they represent have acted recently as the coordinators of international projects or they are trying to act as coordinators (they just submitted the proposals). They mentioned that coordination of such projects requires international experience. As they had already participated as a partner in many international projects, after a few years of gaining such experience they are already organizationally and technically prepared to coordinate large research projects (e.g. FP EU funded projects). They mentioned that without that experience the coordination of such projects would not be possible. The respondents indicated that at present they more carefully choose the projects in which they want to be a partner. In the past (a few years ago) just after the Polish institutions had an opportunity to more actively participate in the international projects (mainly funded by the EU) the selection process was less restrictive. After a few negative cases now they more carefully look for or accept the invitation to be a partner in the projects (especially if they are considered a reliable partner). In the majority of cases participation in the project results from personal connections and informal contacts. It shows the importance of experience in realization of such a type of project, a record of conducting such projects and last but not least, well developed personal relations. Also the institutions acting as a coordinator rather look for the partners they already know and have cooperated with in the past. The respondents from such institutions mentioned that the risk of coordinating such large projects is high. Thus they have to rely on the institutions or people they know (at least in the case of a project's lasting a few years and in case of large projects – in terms of funding). As far as it concerns criteria of engagement, interviewees indicated different aspects. Merit quality of the people involved in the project, trust of the organization (people from the organizations inviting or invited to the project) as well as the institutional capacity of the organizations involved in the application process are the most important selection criteria listed by the respondents. For example one respondent indicated that trust in a partner that it will fulfill his task is more important than if the partner is the best expert in its field. Language knowledge was also mentioned as an important criteria to join the international projects. The respondents listed also other factors:

- the nature of the program – in which the project will be realized since this determines the thematic range, financial conditions for the project and it provides a way to evaluate whether an institution has the appropriate abilities, qualifications and resources;
- the range of tasks – which are foreseen for the institution by the potential partner. This is linked to the conditions which would make the project a financially sound undertaking;
- the timing of the invitation to join a project - it is difficult to get involved in a project which is initiated just a few days before the application is due. What is more, lack of participation in the design of a project has influence on the ability to design the project shape and tasks;
- commercialization of project results – the ability to commercialize project results, as a result of a project a product is created however in order for it to survive on the market –

valorization of the project, what happens after the project financing is finished is a key element here;

- work involved is aimed at the same target group – the project is addressed to the same target group involved in current activities.

## Germany

In general the interview partners reported that they usually cooperate with the same partners they already know. Beyond that, they look for new partners if it's necessary due to the thematic or geographical focus of the respective calls. It was mentioned that personal connections to partners are very important when building a partnership. If there is no direct contact available, contacts through personal recommendations are preferred. Databases for searching projects partners are used very rarely. It was often mentioned, that a good personal relationship with key partners of a project is a very important factor in order to undertake a successful project.

The themes of applications have to fit in the activity profile of the organizations. Furthermore, the expected results must have an added value for their regular work. The project should be useful! That's what all interviewees mentioned. Furthermore, the interviewees preferred long-term projects, which allow a comfortable development of new products.

## Greece

The analyses of the responses strongly suggest that there are significant differences between the academic / research and business sectors in the purpose and rationale for engaging in transnational cooperation projects. The former engages in projects as a means to advance knowledge in the domain areas of interest while the latter appears to enter projects in order to upgrade knowledge and tools for the advancement of the organization. Likewise, the results suggest that project initiation is by far stronger in the RTD community than in the business sector. Project conceptualization appears to emerge from previously conducted collaborative activity which suggests that experience in transnational cooperation is catalytic in enhancing an agency's involvement in transnational collaboration but mainly in defining the scope of activity for transnational collaboration.

Amongst the reasons for engaging in transnational cooperation reported are: acquisition of new knowledge, application of new methodologies and tools, enlargement of the research team, hands on approach to new applications as well as getting "to know how others work and succeed in business" (awareness development). The financial dimension appears to constitute a stronger incentive for the SMEs than the academic / research institutions.

The role the institution plays in the project at the starting / development phase does not appear to influence engagement especially for the non academic agencies. For the academic ones it appears that there is an element of leadership / prestige attached to both coordinating a proposal / project but also in determining the composition of the partnership. Proven effectiveness (or excellence) in transnational collaboration –measured in multiple ways, at the level of being a partner works catalytically towards undertaking coordination. Smaller agencies / SMEs appear to fear administrative coordination while these are more open to technical type of collaboration. The size of the agency might be a factor that either directly or indirectly determines the role an agency plays in a

project. Overall it can be said that for agencies to engage in transnational cooperation a required condition is experience which seems to define the degree of confidence an institution has in initiating and implementing activity work of transnational nature.

The driving force in motivating agencies to enter projects seems to be the profile of the individual / agency setting the frame of the collaborative activity. This holds true for both inviting agencies to participate and also being invited. It is of interest that the interviewees of the smaller agencies tend to consider the parameter of geographical proximity in building consortia or joining consortia, while this parameter tends to be insignificant in the case of the academic / research agencies. In terms of the criteria the interviewees report to be of significance when engaging in projects, these include:

- “prestige” –measured in different ways, of the agency or person initiating the contact
- degree of acquaintance (which implies trust)
- the profile of the person contacting
- relevance of implied activity in relation to on-going activity or strategic orientation of the agency / team
- innovative character of the proposed activity

In contacting agencies to join projects it is emphatically stated that the criterion of experience coupled with institutional capacity and trust orient the process of partner seeking. In joining partnerships the criterion of agency and individual promoter profile, especially in relation to a proven record of success in proposal funding, appears to be a determining factor. In the case of SMEs / business sector the above are weaker than in the academic / research agencies.

Lastly, respondents report that on the average these collaborate with more or less the same partners. Noted should be that the smaller agencies –representing the sector of SMEs, do not appear to be strongly networked and often do attach themselves to projects on an ad hoc basis. Central to this is that the inviting firm bears an attractive (innovation based) profile. Of interest is the fact that one of the SME respondents reported to always being called to collaborate with different agencies.

### 3.2 Key success factors and majors problems in transnational projects

Interviewees claimed that there are serious problems during a project’s realization but it is not often that they quit the project because of them. None of the respondents described the case of a project collapsing although there were situations close to that. Only one of the respondents had quit an approved project.

When thinking about the factors involved in preventing problems, reducing project realization risk or in other words influencing project success, the conclusions from the interviewees comments are:

- It is critical to know the partners, especially the coordinator, before entering the project (its experience and merit knowledge);
- The crucial stages are project planning and partners’ selection;
- The quality of coordination is important for project success;
- A consortium consisting of many partners makes project realization more challenging.

Problems mentioned by the interviewees resulted from more than one cause. The basis of the majority of the problems was lack of knowledge about partners’ institutions, especially about the coordinator before entering the project. In many cases other problems were linked to or even caused by that. The causes listed below are divided into the following groups:

- Quality of coordination at the level of coordinator (personality issues) and of the coordinating institution (how communication is achieved, how funds are distributed, etc.)
- Knowledge about the partners,
- Project planning,
- Size of the consortium,
- Lack of monitoring mechanisms,
- Communication issues,
- Financial issues,
- Mobility of people involved in the project.

It is good to keep in mind that the crucial factor is lack of knowledge about the partners, how other partners “act” in specific situations.

**Quality of coordination at the level of coordinator (personality issues) and of the coordinating institution (how communication is achieved, how funds are distributed, etc.)**

- **Leader’s lack of experience and paternalistic behavior**

One of the problems resulted from the coordinator’s lack of experience in preparing methodology of research projects. The application was written by the project’s leader (coordinator) because none of the partners wanted to get involved before proposal approval. The interviewee’s institution did not know the coordinator previously. The problem came up just after proposal approval. During the first project meeting the partners’ point of view on transforming the project idea into operational level (e.g. activities) was different from the coordinator’s point of view. The Coordinator tried to force its concept, but it behaved in a paternalistic way and did not take into account the outcomes of the meetings’ discussions on the project’s concept. As a result the concept was created after one year and a half, and it was only possible because after a few months the project leader stopped trying to force its opinions and on the other hand the partners reduced their commitment. The problem influenced the project in that the products’ (reports’) quality was quite poor. After this project the interviewee’s institution has tried to avoid involvement in projects if it has not cooperated previously with the potential partner or if the coordinator is not recommended by a reliable partner.

- **Leader’s dictatorship attempts**

The next problem was similar – it resulted from the leader’s behavior who tried to rule the project as a dictator. He did not take into consideration any ideas of the partners. The interviewee did not know the coordinator personally before the project. After a few months the interviewee’s institution quit the project as it could not find a common language and ground for communication.

- **Weak leadership**

In opposition to the above described coordinator's dictatorship attempts, the next problem was caused by weak leadership which resulted in significant delays in project implementation. Probably one of the solutions to such a situation could be to change the coordinator but it is hard to do during a project's realization.

- **Insecurity on coordination**

The coordinators lack of security on issues of coordination had an effect on a project from a temporal point of view. Specifically, the coordinator would not reach decisions with the partners but would take issues arising in discussion to his supervisor / supervisors. As a result the project meetings did not lead to any decisions and likewise the communication process between the coordinator and the partners never resulted in anything conclusive. This went on for over a year and affected implementation of the workplan. The partners at some point started to implement the project independently of the coordinator and produced their own minutes and definition of work methodology. The coordinating institution eventually replaced the coordinator with another individual. The project was delayed in being completed for about six months. There were no other serious implications deriving from this case.

- **Lack of flexibility - not *redefining* work tasks from an operational perspective but staying with what is stated in the contract**

Problems that arose due to the coordinator's lack of experience in transnational cooperation that relates to flexibility of adjusting work tasks and/or output development to "reality" was reported by an interviewee. Specifically, the coordinator was "stuck" to the outline of the workplan following it in terms of task 1, 2, 3... and failed to consider the intersection of the various tasks in the project plan. At a point in the project cycle the work produced implied that an activity / task was not required to be performed as per described in the workplan because the previous activity had already addressed the issue under concern from a much more "appropriate and efficient" method and satisfying the development for the subsequent work activity. The coordinator however demanded the task to be re done as it was stated as a separate work task in the Technical Annex. This issue caused a delay in the project. It was resolved in a face to face meeting with all partners present where it was explained to the coordinator that there would not be consequences for him as a coordinator from the funding agency if a task is performed differently (in an integrated way) than stated in the TA.

### **Knowledge about the partners**

- **Deficiency of institutional experience in transnational projects mixed with the problems within the institution**

One of the interviewees pointed out the problem of a lack of knowledge about the partners. In some European projects Western European institutions need partners from Eastern Europe – it is a matter of funds redistribution. That is why they search for partners in Eastern Europe. However, they have no possibility to check partners' quality – experience and competences. So, when making a consortium, building relations and searching for experts, they had to take a risk, because they did not have enough information. Also, in some cases they do not have the possibility to find the persons

with appropriate experience because there are merit areas with a deficiency of experience people in Eastern European institutions. The interviewee told about an experience of her institution which was one of these “not well-known Eastern European partners”. When participating in a project, they got the plan of work which was already prepared and its description and they did not know how to interpret it. The country coordinator agreed to do some work without knowledge of how to do it, which had to end in disaster. The institution **did not have enough competences to solve problems**. Working on an international project was a completely new experience for the institution, so they had even delays in starting work because they did not have people with proper knowledge to build a team. Later it appeared that they were even **not used to a specific style of project work. Also older team members were not able to adapt to a situation as fast as younger members which resulted in serious communication problems**. In our interviewee’s opinion the crisis situation resulted from the following overlapping problems: **inadequate human resources management at the institution, problems with understanding the budgetary issues in the project, not understanding the role of the partner and its tasks, low coordinator’s competences on the partner’s level – the project was conducted by the people who were not able to organize a team and be project managers and additionally there was no staff in the institution adequately prepared to implement the project, with a lack of strictly scientific and merit competences among team members** - they had not conducted many international projects so they were not able to fulfill their partners’ expectations. All these resulted in delays and put the finalization of the project into question. In this situation foreign partners were very helpful. From the very beginning they were asking questions, trying to determine the nature of the problem, but it did not bring any satisfactory results so they turned to putting pressure on the interviewee’s institution. Initially they tried to mobilize the coordinator. Finally they took over some responsibility from the partner and delegated two or three researchers to support the interviewee’s institution - it prevented the project’s collapse.

- **Poor merit quality of the partners**

The interviewee presented also the case of the project, in which poor merit quality of the partner and additionally time pressure for accomplishing the tasks resulted in poor quality of the final products. He also mentioned the case of not accomplishing the tasks in the projects, which resulted from poor merit quality of the partners and additionally imprecise planning. The respondent indicated that the solution as well as the nature of these problems was recognized as the same. In that case the solution could be: good time planning, changing the person responsible for a task or adding a new person to the team. The basic reason why the problems occurred was lack of knowledge about the partners. Selection was based on CVs. This case shows the significance of the partner selection stage as a part of project preparation. However it should be underlined that on the later stages, there are some means which could be implemented to prevent such a situation: controlling of quality of “semi-products”, more frequent contact, contacting far before deadlines and asking about any potential problems with accomplishing tasks.

- **Commitment of partners - overly individualistic approach of the partner to the project’s goals realization**

One of the most important identified problems was caused by an egoistic and individualistic approach of the partner during the project’s realization. The partner was focused on a realization of its own goals and did not care about the rest of the partners. As a result it did not fulfill some tasks, which were important for other partners. Others partners and the project leader tried to take the next steps in the project, they had meetings and made decisions and later informed the partner about the taken decision (as the partner was absent). However the partner did not accept the

decision. It resulted in a serious threat of the project collapsing. The reason why the problem occurred was that the interviewee's institution knew a person (a representative of the partner) only from conferences and publications. He was a well-known specialist in his area. Probably, he believed he was not treated with enough esteem relevant to his scientific output. The interviewee's institution did not know that he was a person so hard to cooperate with and that he was so aimed at doing his own project, unwilling to team-work. When the interviewee and the partner finally had a meeting, it ended cooperation in the project because the meeting transformed into a row. The problem influenced the project in a way that the project leader cut off this partner's budget for the tasks which were not completed. The long-term consequence was that the interviewee declared: "Now we do not work with the partners who are the best in the area but with the people we can count on".

Another interviewee reported that in a project she was involved in not all partners were committed to execute the project under the same scope. Specifically, in a project involving seven partners the most senior academic partner had a personal agenda for the project. From the kick-off meeting this agenda became evident. The aim was to use the project – which was of a one-year duration, to support a PhD thesis. An attempt was made to shift the project focus to the dissertation topic and to change the time frame from one to two years. The discussions on this problem consumed a great deal of energy and time resources from the project. The result was that the partner with the personal agenda was isolated having however caused serious problems for the completion of the project.

- **Partners' overloading with projects**

The other problem was the risk of one partner quitting a project. Such a risk appeared in the middle of a 24-month project. The direct cause of the eventual resignation of a project partner was the lack of their desire to cooperate. The problem had not occurred due to inadequate planning, it was rather the effect of a high number of projects being done by that partner and the fact that this project was not a priority for them. The effects and consequence of their eventual resignation from the project became serious complications for the project and its continuation without affecting quality, costs or schedule. In seeking a solution to the problem, the project coordinator showed the partners the 'big picture' of the situation, their rationale based on the project directives. Focusing on arguments based solely on the directives and quality of the project, the partner changed their decision and remained in the project. What is more, that partner who had been the least enthused about this project, then went on to become the most involved. In an effort to prevent in the future similar problems, it is worth meeting on an ongoing basis with a partner, and each time reviewing the tasks done to date and future plans, working out each time joint decisions.

### **Project planning**

The following cases are examples of importance of the project planning stage. The problems described below could be grouped as: a necessity of changing the way a research project was conducted; a necessity of looking for financial means needed to fulfill all tasks included in the proposal; project activities inadequately planned to a country's specifics.

- **Imprecise planning of external factors influencing a project's realization**

One of the identified problems was an inability to gain specific data needed for research. The problem resulted from the fact that at that stage of proposal writing the partner assumed that taking into account the experience in some countries, it would be no problem in receiving the data for all countries. However in some countries there was a lack of such data. When the problem occurred, the project team had to use different methods of estimation and made rather qualitative, not quantitative analysis, as it was written in the proposal. In the interviewee's opinion it is hard to check such detailed information at the stage of the proposal development.

Inadequately planned activities was the next identified problem (e.g. dates and duration of meetings). The interviewee's institution entered the project when the proposal was ready. They agreed on it but they did not co-write it. As a result the coordinator decided on behalf of the partners about the schedule of the project. After the approval of the project it was necessary to make significant changes in the budget and schedule. The conclusion is that it is needed to take into account many factors when planning a project including partners' opinions about their time availability. Partners should have a real influence on the proposal.

- **Imprecise description of activities because of time pressure**

Another problem also occurred because of imprecise planning on the project's proposal development: the project coordinator assumed that every partner would prepare 2 case studies (part of qualitative analysis) but this was not discussed during the planning phase because there was no time. Teams from countries where labor costs were high stated that they were able to prepare only 1 case study. Finally every country described 1 case. The conclusion from this situation is that the application should be prepared in agreement between partners and it needs time. Additionally it is hard to do that when having only email communication. The respondent indicated that an organization of a meeting in order to write a proposal would be a quite useful activity.

One interviewee reported that one project in Bosnia was prepared very badly. The tasks each partner should fulfill could not be done as a result of bad pre recherche and communication by the applicant in the phase of preparation of the proposal. Inappropriate experts were integrated in the project and the goals could not be reached in the framework of the participating institutions. The reasons for that problematic situation lay in imprecise planning. The project proposal was not clear, roles and tasks of the partners were imprecise in some core fields. At the end, the coordinator required thematic support which the partners could not give. To prevent such a situation it is important to develop a clear proposal with realistic definitions of the partner's tasks and roles. To avoid the disintegration of the entire project, the tasks and roles in the project were redesigned within an amendment to the TA.

- **Inadequately planned budget concerning activities**

This case could be an example of a problem linked to a proposal being written very quickly which causes the common situation that the leader is the only person who knows what the project is about. It is also because of a lack of funding no meeting is held which would give every partner a possibility to participate in agreements on crucial project issues. This situation influences project realization. As

a result in one project a delay in publishing a publication occurred. It happened because the leader did not allocate the right funds in the budget for the publication at the planning stage. He was forced to seek financing during the project's realization. It was the matter of imprecise planning because the leader knew that there would be a publication but it did not know the details e.g in which country it would be published. Finally the leader found the funds with the support of team members. In order to avoid such situations it is necessary to think ahead about finance matters at the stage of planning or submitting an application, to plan in detail what we expect to be the final product.

### **Size of the consortium**

A significant part of the interviewees (especially Greek) have made reference to the parameter of consortium size. From the discussion it appears that problems arise by large consortia whereas reference to problems in relation to small size projects was not made. The sections above on coordination, communication issues and exclusion of partners touch on the issue of consortium size.

The problem was identified by one of the interviewee when, during a project's realization, a problem with communication between members occurred. The point of view of project partners was often different, which resulted from the size of the team - over 20 partners. The problem was solved by dividing the team into smaller "task-groups" and the project's coordinator communicated only with the representatives (leaders) of these smaller groups. There was no need to communicate with each team member.

The size of the team also caused a problem with fulfilling the tasks by the team members – a long-term project with unexpected changes within the project team. It also affected engagement. There was a misunderstanding that this was the coordinator's project and that he was responsible for everything. Dividing the project team into smaller groups helped in the way that clear requirements of the leaders of particular tasks made them responsible for the specific parts of the project and made them feel more engaged and obliged. A necessary condition for that solution is a strong position of leaders of the smaller groups. They have to be able to enforce the tasks.

- **Exclusion of partners in a large size consortia (leads to small clubs and excludes partners from an essential interaction process )**

FP7 IP projects are rather large and the size seems to constitute a problem in linking different project dimensions together. An interviewee reported that in a project she had participated in, private clubs were formed of various profiles. Among these is the profile of partners that have in the past worked together or partners that come from the same sector of activity. New-comers to the consortium tend to be left aside from discussions and the process of decision making. This is because the large projects address different dimensions, the convergence of which are dealt with by the leaders of the various teams. Such a problem was experienced by the interviewee who could not develop a sense of belonging and ownership of the project. The decision is to avoid entering projects where established relations do not already exist with the leading persons in that project.

### **Lack of monitoring mechanisms (especially for large projects)**

For exemplary purposes reported here is the experience of an interviewee who participated in a project of approximately 25 core members and approximately 10 associate members. The project produced around 26 deliverables of an average size of 200 pages each. The interviewee calculated that he spent his resources in the project just by reading (and revising) project outputs. Raised as issues relating to size is that there is no consistency on what is being produced, no real monitoring of who is actually working in the project and very little integration in terms of interdisciplinarity.

In another project a significant delay occurred but it was not mainly the problem of planning but rather lack of adequate monitoring of activities at the project realization stage. The solution here could be activities such as: more frequent contact between the partners, contact far before deadlines asking about any potential problems with accomplishing tasks, i.e. having a few days in reserve.

The nature of the problem indicated by one of the respondents was related to lack of ability on the side of the partners to fulfill their reporting duties. While this problem was not seen as very serious, it did have a great influence on the ability to qualify expenses. Reports submitted to the project leader after deadlines were threatened by the disqualification of expenses. The cause of what occurred may be found in the overly 'light-handed' manner in which project duties were treated. Additionally, the variations among documentation across different countries can make it more difficult to provide appropriate documentation. The 'human factor' (an inappropriate person involved in carrying out a task with regard to their ability to document their activities), and certain customs developed throughout cooperation in previous projects as well as insufficient management of the entire partnership influenced the ability to complete reporting on time. The respondent indicated that the problem could not have been foreseen in the planning stage. The partners in this project who were late in their reporting, were proven partners from previous projects where such problems had not occurred. It is worth highlighting that this was not an error made in the planning, as the preparation and submission of the application went well and in cooperation with all partners. Additionally, a partnership agreement was signed in which the range of duties and reporting deadlines precisely noted. The partners were also regularly informed of the deadlines for submission of further reports.

Despite these precautions, delays occurred. This could have been due to a certain asymmetry based on the fact that the project coordinator was answering to the European Commission while the partners were only responsible to the coordinator. This could have been taken as a feeling that the coordinator played the role of the 'watchdog' over the partners. However, the longer the project lasted, the harder it was to 'frighten' the partner with threats such as the dissolution of the contract. Searching for a solution to this problem which could be an example of a good practice a few options could be considered. Firstly, if this was a problem which involved a single partner, one could consider their replacement. In this case however the problem affected all partners. Additionally, the longer the project goes on, the more advanced it becomes and it becomes harder to make such changes. Also, agreement to any such change of this type must be given by the European Commission, and that makes the entire process lengthy and consequently it may turn out to be inappropriate. In speaking of this problem it is worth remembering that although all partners submitted their reports with delays, their scale and size were varied. The second solution, which was used by the coordinator was to put the deadlines forward for the submission of documents which were in the possession of the project coordinator and to send the remaining documents as supplementary. The third useful tactic was the fact that partners were informed and trained in the completion of financial reporting and in the methods of their documentation. These methods, in conjunction with the quick reaction to any document received that contained errors, were more an effort at project management rather

than a solution to this problem. Even so, these steps had a definite effect since with each report the quality of documentation submitted by the partners increased, although it never became totally sufficient.

In analysis of the nature of this problem, its causes and possible solutions, the conclusion may be made that there is no ideal solution, when irresponsible people are involved. It should be recalled that while the partners had difficulty in providing their reports in a timely and proper manner, the merit of their work was rated quite well. However, despite the fact that these problems were of an administrative nature, they were able to make the coordinator's work more difficult. This can be compared to a situation in which someone works quite well but simply doesn't pay any attention to the official, formal side of a task including documentation. In the case of projects this has a great influence as well as in the case of a merit question.

The last method used by this coordinator was the acceptance of a 'philosophy' according to which the partners were informed that in sending their reports after the deadlines they were risking the disqualification of all of the expenses on the report. It is interesting to note that this argument was effective (at least for a certain time) and the documents sent were of an increasingly higher quality.

The question arises as to whether one may prevent the occurrence of such a situation. Two things need to be remembered here. Firstly, at the start of a project it is worth meeting with all of the partners with the aim of informing them as to the method of documentation to be used and the accepted unified standards for all partners. Secondly, during the project ongoing monitoring of partners must be done and any errors must be indicated in a timely manner.

### **Communication issues**

A case described by an interviewee implying poor communication between the various teams of a rather large project affected not only the project implementation but also the assessment of the project. The interviewee participating in the project belonged to the so-called "technical team". Another team in the project was responsible for the definition of requirements and the evaluation of the technical components of the project. The two teams worked rather independently with very limited interaction (only in project meetings) and while both produced the "expected outcomes" in terms of deliverables there was a failure in integrating knowledge generated from the study team to the technical team and vice versa in terms of evaluation. While this lack of communication between the teams can certainly be traced down to coordination, however the interviewee justified that the problem was due to the lack of communication (again the size of the consortium is central here). So, it appears that in large projects the channels of communication do not work as well as they should. Interaction between teams needs to be enhanced.

The result of this case was that while the project team believed that it successfully completed its work at the evaluation stage it was noted that the requirements defined by the study team were not incorporated in the system developed by the technical team, and they were requested to re-develop the system as per study requirements. This had a serious financial implication in the interviewee's organization.

- **Weak language skills and communication competences**

One interviewee reported that especially referring to employees of the public sector, English language competence is often very weak. Moreover, their knowledge regarding instruments – in this case of labour policy – is rudimentary. Additionally, people working in the public sector are often loathe to speak openly. If employees and officials of the public sector are involved, their specific role has to be taken into account by the coordinator of an international project.

The other interviewed institution put particular emphasis on translation during meetings. They said that a good and deep communication among the partners is the most important factor of success in international projects. Therefore they always work with translators in their projects. Even when partners confirm English as the project working language, they often are not able to discuss and to work in English as it would be necessary. Every partner should have the chance to speak in his/her mother tongue. Otherwise too much information gets lost. Furthermore, longer discussions in a foreign language overstrain the participants in meetings. It is not possible to reach a certain and appropriate level of communication in English as working language. This has to be taken into account in the budget planning.

The other problem which occurred in the project was the barrier of language given experience and knowledge. A certain trend was noted, in that while the most experience and knowledge in a given area is generally found in more mature people, unfortunately those same people often have problems with foreign languages. Generally, younger people don't have such problems, however they lack the experience and practice in a given field. This is not the only model which was noted, however often enough it was noted that people have either 'knowledge of languages OR knowledge and experience'.

## **Financial issues**

### **Poor financial situation of partners**

Due to financial problems (the lack of their own contribution) a change of partners was necessary. In one case one partner could give guarantees for another partner, which could therefore remain in the project. A constructive resolution of problems can strengthen a partnership and can enable partners to help each other. Creating a methodological openness is a key success factor in the work of one interview partner. That approach was especially praised by the EU. Long term partnerships can lead to trust and mutual financial support. In some projects it might be helpful to develop an alternative scenario, which takes into account failure of partners. In the stage of selecting the partners it is very important to check the institutional capacities.

Distribution of funds does not appear to always be made on-time, and in certain cases it is not done at all. This causes problems for the individuals working on a project in relation to others in their institutions. A severe case was reported by an interviewee where she worked in a project for two years along with the contractor and the other partners and successfully completed the project. Upon the completion of the project the contractor declared bankruptcy. As a result the interviewee and the rest of the partners did not get paid for work done in the project. As the contractor formed a new company after the bankruptcy he called upon the interviewee to collaborate with him, an offer that was of course turned down.

In one project it was a merit problem based on the finding of appropriate staff with financial resources that had been significantly decreased. The cause of the problem was a cut in the funding in the stage of evaluation by the Implementing Institution in relation to the planned budget. The problem was not the result of irregularities in the work plan or the implementation of the project or inaccurate planning. It was mainly the result of a decreasing budget for the project and the difficult content of the project (multiple intelligence). The problem was dealt with by taking on some of the administrative and financial tasks which had been assigned to partners who due to the reduced budget had 'problems' completing these tasks (a good specialist means higher costs). Since the problem was caused mainly by budget cuts at the evaluation stage of the project, it is difficult to

recommend any sort of preventative measure in this case. However, it is still worth noting that despite decreasing the budget, the project was completed and the desired results were achieved.

### **Mobility of people involved in the project**

In the world of business there is a great deal of mobility within the company and across the sector. There is less mobility among the members of the academic community. An interviewee reports a problem faced by a project he participated in that relates to mobility of partners. A partner institution in that project (two years duration) changed the person working on the particular project four times. Of interest is that the partner institution was also the coordinating institution of the project. It is obvious that the continuity of the workplan was affected but perhaps more importantly the style of collaboration was influenced. The reporting of project outcomes was by no means consistent and neither was the scope of the activities undertaken. Each change introduced a new project culture which proved very tiring and totally unfulfilling for the interviewee.

### 3.3 Key of success factors for each project's stage

This part of the chapter presents the results of the research aimed at identification of the key success factors at all identified stages of the proposal development, and later, the project's implementation. The identified stages can be aggregated into three broader groups:

- Initial stage of the proposal development consisting of the following sub-stages: initiation of the contact with the potential partners, partner selection and finally building up the partnership;
- Proposal development stage consisting of the following sub-stages: plan of work and preparation of the proposal
- Project's implementation phase

#### *Initial stage of the proposal development*

The first analyzed stage of the proposal development process is the initiation of the contact with the potential international partners. As it is the first step in the process of building up the international partnership, its role is considered one of the most important as it influences the success of the further stages and the start of the process.

A vast majority of interviewees in the three countries studied (24 out of 31 respondents) stressed that a clear and concise explanation of the project is the most important factor at this stage (of attracting potential partners to the project or promoting the project idea among the potential partners). It means that the company/institution looking for or approaching other companies/institutions should in the simplest possible and most precise way describe the idea and the main goal and the background and the rationale behind the project. It should be remembered that the decision of potential partner interest in the project resulting in readiness to start discussing potential cooperation is made usually after a short review of the project idea. That means that the project description should be written in such a way as to encourage the potential foreign partners to start discussion about the project (or to ask for further information about the potential project) and eventually to join the team developing the proposal (application). On the other hand the partner searching for the international partners should be aware that a clear and precise presentation of the project's idea is a key success factor for attracting foreign partners of the best quality from the point of view of the project and of determining the partners who are not interested in the project (saving the time of both sides). In the context of a clear and concise explanation of the project, the usage of simple

language to avoid misunderstandings (it should be remembered that in case of international projects usually for the potential partners the language of the project is a foreign language, thus jargon, slang, or for example abbreviations should be avoided); a precise as well as concrete presentation of the project idea (in that context a usage of the bullet style is an identified good practice) are the most important factors mentioned by the respondents.

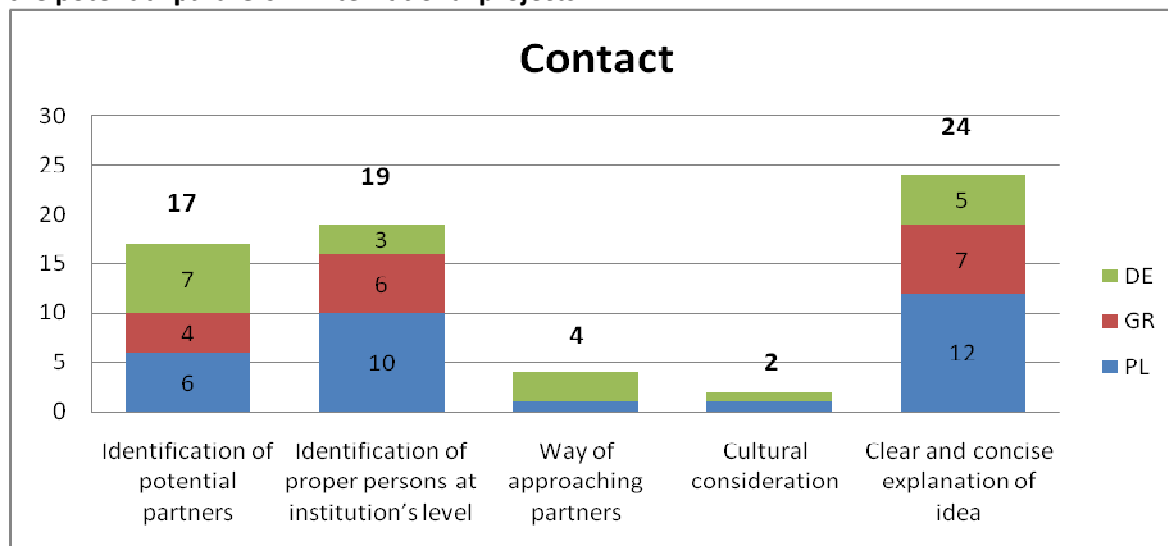
The second most important factor in the process of approaching new potential partners is identification of the proper person at the institution's level – 19 interviewees indicated this. The identification of a competent and responsive person is the key factor in the context of the potential partner's assessment of their ability and interest in joining the project. It should be also underlined that the person we approach should have the ability to take decisions or at least to have a relatively easy access to the decision making person in order to declare in a relatively short time the partner's interest (or lack of interest) in the project. On the other hand communication with a single, properly identified competent person smoothes the communication process (especially in the case of non-written communication tools – e.g. telephone calls).

More than 50% of the respondents indicated that a proper identification of potential partners (institutions) is the next key success factor at this stage of the proposal development. The interviewees pointed out that personal contacts and the internet search (including searching in the specially designed data bases – e.g. data bases of the potential partners developed within the frame of the EU Framework Programmes) are the main and the most important methods of searching and identifying the potential partners. Direct contacts from/to proposal promoters are also mentioned by some respondents.

Two additional factors were analyzed: the way of approaching partners and cultural considerations were mentioned incidentally by the interviewees.

Taking into account the structure of answers in the analyzed countries one should emphasize that in Poland and Germany the respondents stressed mainly the importance of a clear and concise explanation of the idea and identification of proper persons, while in Germany almost all respondents indicated the identification of potential partners as a key factor.

**Graph 1. Key success factors indicated by interviewees in order to successfully approach (contact) the potential partners in international projects.**



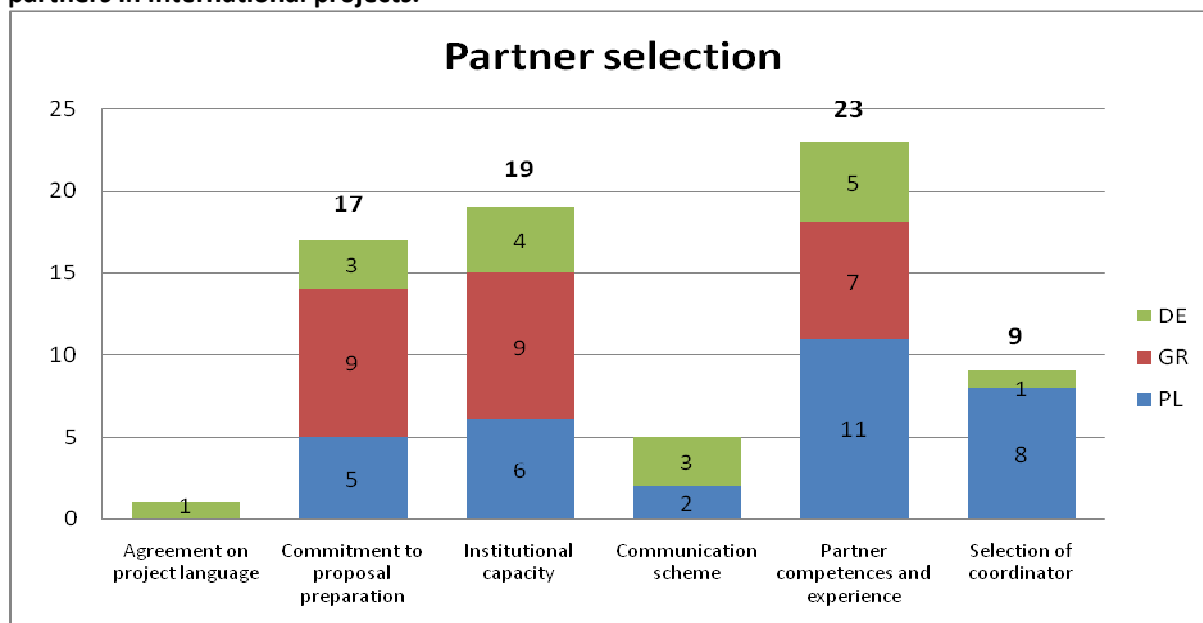
The goal of the next stage of building up international partnerships is to select the partners able to form a partnership of a good quality.

At that stage of the project development the respondents in all analyzed countries indicated that they pay special attention to the potential partner's merit competences and experience – this factor was indicated 23 times in the study, followed by institutional capacity (including size of the institution, ability and experience to implement international projects on the administrative level, financial standing and financial capacity – e.g. yearly turnover of the institution) and commitment to the proposal preparation as the next important factors of selecting (or not) potential partners – respectively 19 and 17 indications. In that context, a list of questions which would provide a way to assess the partner's ability and usefulness to join the potential consortium from the point of view of the technical and merit capacities was identified as a good practice. On the other hand, partners are very often taking the decision to join a potential consortium after assessing the organizational and merit capacity of the potential coordinator of the projects (usually the institution which presents the project idea). In the opinion of the respondents, good coordination is one of the most important key success factors at all stages of the project's development. It is worth mentioning that this factor was identified only by all Polish respondents, which may indicate that the partners from Poland are paying more attention to a project's good organization. This may result from the lack of experience in that area (in opposition to e.g. German respondents) or a more tangible outcome approach of the partners already at that stage of proposal development.

It should be also added that the evaluation of the competences can be made from two perspectives. The first is done through the prism of the coordinator (is the partner reliable and can they guarantee the completion of the assigned tasks) and from the perspective of the partner (does he have the appropriate resources to complete the tasks and to take on the relevant costs).

At that stage of the project development, such factors as agreement on the project language (in fact English was considered among the respondents as the main and only international project language) or selection of the communication scheme are not important factors in the selection process of the potential partners.

**Graph 2. Key success factors indicated by interviewees in order to successfully select potential partners in international projects.**



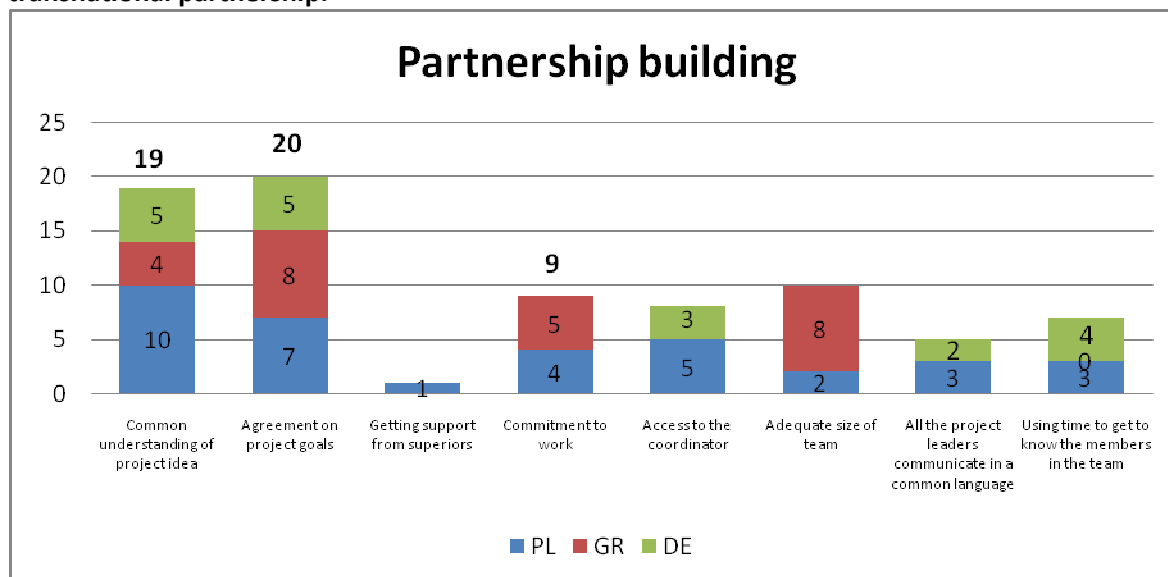
The initial stage of the proposal development finishes by a building up of the partnership after the preliminary selection of the potential partners. It means that we know already which institutions can be the partners taking into account the merit and institutional capacity, but we do not know if they really want to join the consortium, understand the idea of the project, and have a similar vision of the merit and institutional implementation of the project. The final outcome of this stage is a consortium of partners willing to develop the proposal.

At that stage the majority of respondents indicated a common identification and understanding of the project's goals and idea as key success factors. It means that all partners should have the same understanding of the project idea. It is extremely important taking into account that usually the project idea is presented in a language which is usually not the first language for the partners. In that context again, simple and precise language should be used. An adequate size of the teams, commitment to work, and contact with the coordinator were pointed out as the next decisive factors.

The pattern of answers in the three analyzed countries differs. The Greek respondents indicated that the two most important factors are: agreement on project goals and adequate size of the team. There was no indication of this in Germany at all and only two indications in Poland. In Poland common understanding of the project idea is considered the most important factor followed by the agreement on the project goals. In Germany, apart from these two factors, time to get to know the members in the team was mentioned as an important factor by the half of the respondents. It may indicate that the German respondents pay more attention to building informal relations already at the stage of project proposal development. More than half of Greek respondents pointed out the importance of commitment to work (here there was no single indication of this in Germany). On the other hand, a few respondents from Poland pointed out access to the coordinator as an important factor, which confirms the observation from the previous part of the report about the passive

attitude of the Polish partners towards developing international project proposals (they rather act as partners than coordinators).

**Graph 3. Key success factors indicated by interviewees in order to successfully build up the transnational partnership.**



### Proposal development

The proposal development stage consists of the following sub-stages: plan of work and preparation of the proposal.

The respondents were asked to assess the importance of eight factors in the context of the successful work plan of the proposal development. A common understanding of project goals was indicated as the most important factor (18 respondents), followed by division of responsibility (16 indications) and a balanced as well as justified division of work - in the context of involving all partners in the preparation of the proposal and agreeing on the common understanding of the goals and its content in order to stimulate joint discussion and a more comprehensive approach to the project realization (14 indications). Additionally, balanced involvement of all partners in preparation of the application process also somehow verifies the partners as it shows their merit and technical capacity and ability at the stage of the proposal development. The next point mentioned by the respondents is that the more partners are involved in a more balanced way in the process, the more resources can be used in case of emergency and in a crisis situation (e.g. in case one or more partners quits the project at the stage of proposal preparation) – as a result it reduces the risk of proposal failure.

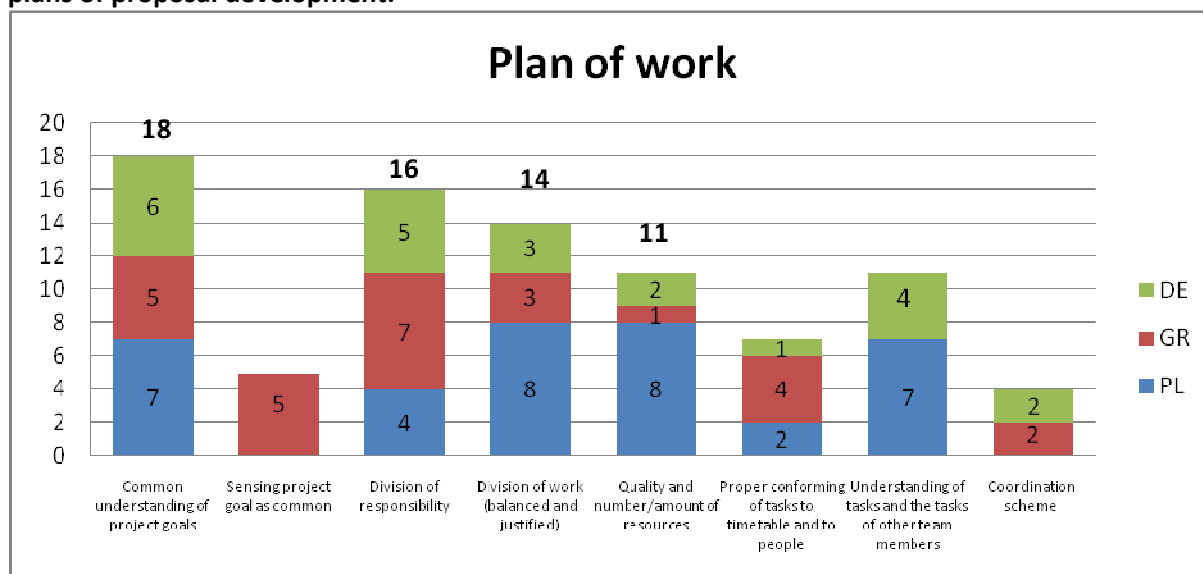
Eleven times the quality and number/amount of resources allocated by partners to work on the proposal, and understanding of tasks and the tasks of other team members were indicated as key factors. In the case of the first, 'quality and amount/number of resources allocated by partners to work on the proposal', the interviewees pointed out that in some cases the institutions do not understand that the decision to join the project's proposal development implies costs for the organization (at least in the form of a number of working days of the persons involved in

development of the proposal, but in some cases also it requires a bearing of such costs like traveling, interpretation or communication). If the institutions do not understand this, the financial constraints may be a very important factor limiting or blocking the successful cooperation and involvement of the partner in the process of the proposal development. As a result it may negatively reflect on the preparation process of the entire proposal. Understanding of the partner's tasks in the projects as well as the tasks of other team members provides for a better understanding of the idea and the operational structure of the project by all partners. It also helps to understand the strengths (and weaknesses) of all partners involved in the project proposal preparation and to identify the potential merit and organizational and technical gaps at this stage.

The coordination scheme and sensing project goals as common do not appear as being influential to success at this stage of development

Analyzing the structure of the answers in the three countries one should note a different pattern of responses. For the Polish respondents, four the most important factors are: division of work, quality and number/amount of resources, common understanding of the project goals and tasks as well as the tasks of other members. On the other hand, Greek respondents stressed division of responsibilities as the most important factor (in Poland this was the fifth most important factor). Additionally, they were the only interviewees who pointed out the importance of sensing project goal as common – no single respondent from Poland or Germany indicated that factor, which may indicate that the respondents from Greece require not only a clear understanding of the project's goals but they expect more emotional involvement in the project from the partners. In case of the Greek respondents a great deal of emphasis was put by all participants upon the issue of 'ownership' of the developed concept. As one respondent put it: "if the team does not reveal a common spirit the project is a failure". German respondents indicated a common understanding of project goals as the key success factor. Contrary to the Polish and Greek respondents, they do not consider a proper confirmation of tasks to the timetable and to people highly important, which may indicate that they take good organization of the project and deep involvement of all potential partners for granted or that they are rather focusing on soft factors at this stage of proposal development (or both).

**Graph 4. Key success factors indicated by interviewees in order to successfully develop the work plans of proposal development.**



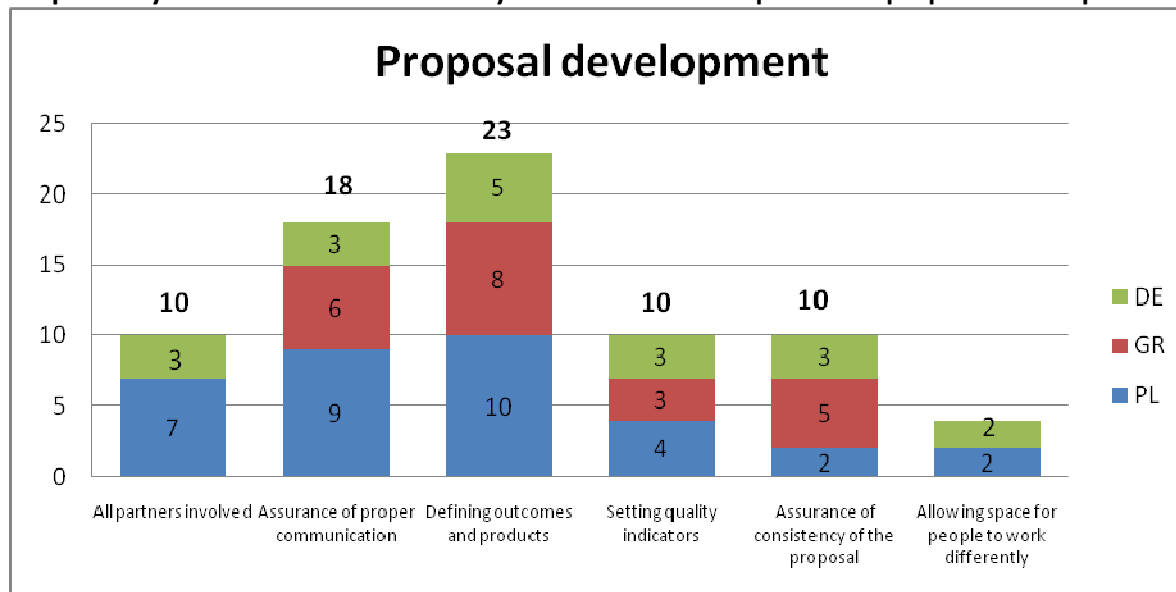
The stage of the proposal development is the most important stage from the merit point of view.

At that stage the respondents in all analyzed countries listed a defining of the outcomes and products of the project as the most important factor – 23 indications. It means that the general project’s goals should be transposed into the project’s operational goals and tangible outcomes of the project. The process is a key step in the context of the merit and organizational structuring of the project. Defining the project outcomes and products results from the correct identification of the operational goals. It also means that the project’s goals should be appropriately designed in order to derive the project’s outcomes and products. Taking that aspect into account a SMART approach was identified as a good practice – the SMART method is a way evaluating the objectives or goals for an individual; it provides a way to check if the project’s goals are Specific, Measurable, Ambitious (yet achievable), Resource and Time bound – the SMART tool is presented in the annex.

At the proposal development stage, an assurance of proper and effective communication tools and methods was mentioned as the next most important factor – 18 indications – and in that case in all analyzed countries it was the second most important factor (which indicates a similar pattern of answers in all countries). It results from the fact that communication is the crucial factor during a joint proposal development process. The respondents in a more detailed way described the most appropriate methods from the point of view of the stage of the project’s proposal development in chapter 2.4. At this stage, communication by e-mail as well as project meetings, communication via IT tools supporting communication (such as discussion platforms, intranets, joint virtual disks, etc.) and teleconference calls were mentioned by the respondents as the most important communication methods.

The interviewees emphasized that involvement of all partners in the proposal preparation process is a very important factor – that point of view was not shared by the Greek respondents. The interviewees also indicated the need for assurance of proposal consistency, which partially results from the respondents' expectation of involving all partners in project development – that factor was mainly pointed out by the respondents from Germany and Greece. The interviewees from the analyzed countries also indicated the importance of setting quality indicators.

**Graph 5. Key success factors indicated by interviewees in the process of proposal development.**



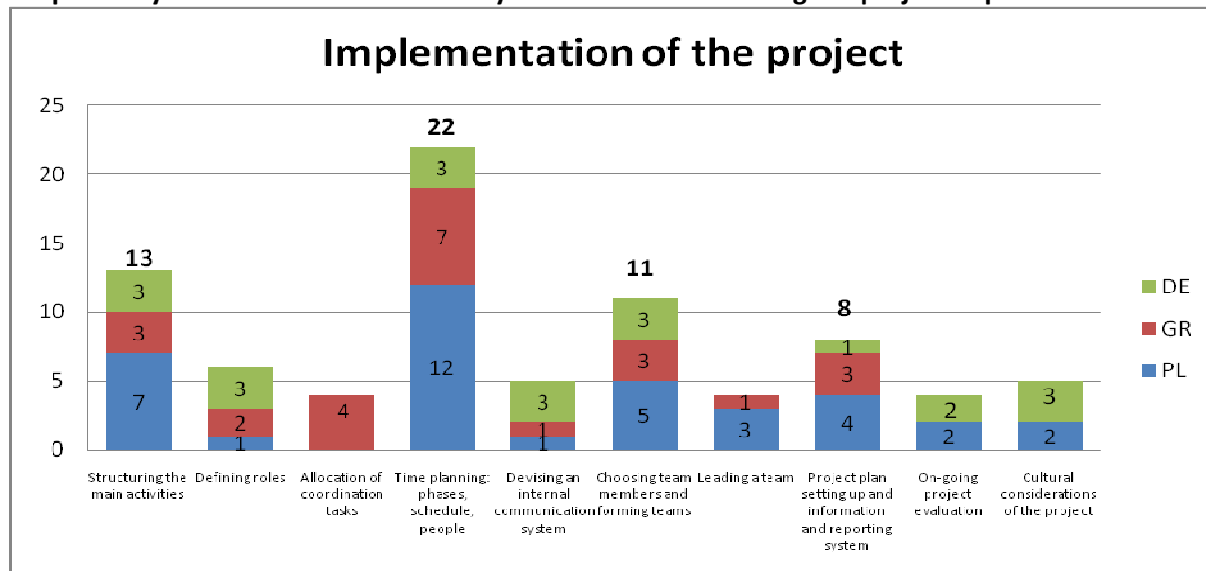
### **Project implementation phase**

The project implementation phase is the next stage after successful preparation of the proposal – it starts after the selection of the project by the sponsors for funding. A vast majority of respondents (22 of 30 interviewees) asked about the key success factors at that stage indicated time scheduling and task allocation to the team members. It should be underlined that initially planned activities at the stage of the project's proposal development should be corrected taking into account the real time frame of the projects (e.g. significant delays in the selection process in the case of e.g. EU funded projects can be observed on a regular basis) and the partner's availability taking into account the new time frame of the projects. Additionally, at that stage, usually more detailed planning is required compared to the time and resource schedule presented in the proposal (very often the sponsors in the applications do not require such detailed planning).

A structuring of the main activities was mentioned as the next key factor in this stage by the respondents (13 respondents). In that context it means that more detailed planning on the level of organizational issues (except scheduling) is required. Those activities include first of all a more detailed description and imposing of more detailed management rules as well as a more detailed description of the activities of the research teams (e.g. within the frames of the work packages). Choosing team members and forming teams was mentioned by the respondents as the third most important factor at the stage of the project's implementation – 11 indications.

In the case of this question the pattern of answers in Poland and Greece was very similar. In Germany, compared to Poland and Greece the respondents paid special attention to cultural consideration of the projects and defining an internal communication system.

**Graph 6. Key success factors indicated by interviewees at the stage of project implementation.**



That part of the report summarizes the most important factors in the context of the process of the project's proposal preparation and later its realization. The respondents were asked to indicate five of the most important factors out of 44 presented in the previous chapter (looking at the whole process from idea presentation to finalization and follow up of the project without dividing it into a separate part – as was done in the previous chapter).

Time planning, identification of potential partners, defining outcomes and products, and partner competence and experience were the most important factors for the respondents in all analyzed countries. Looking at the structure of the answers in the analyzed countries one should point out that Polish respondents indicated time planning and partner competences and experience as the key factors. Time planning was also mentioned by the respondents from Germany and Greece as an important factor. In Greece special attention was paid to the process of finding partners, which may indicate that the Polish respondents are aware of the importance of the partners but they do not concentrate on the identification process – it may result from the fact that Polish respondents act rather as partners and they are invited to the project rather than invite others to join the consortium. Defining outcomes and products and a clear idea of the project are considered as the next key factors in all countries.

**Graph 7. Key success factors indicated by interviewees in the process of project development and implementation – summary of the key factors in the process of project implementation.**



### 3.4 Communication

Summary of Greek and Polish research<sup>1</sup>:

There are some ways of contact which are highly recommendable at some project stages, and there are some not to be recommended. The first observation is that “new” ways of communication (like *e-mails*, *video conferences*) are more recommendable than the “old” ones (*faxed messages*, *letters mailed by post*). The second remark is that personal contacts (especially *project meetings*) are highly recommendable and are said to be essential for making the project go smoothly forward, within the schedule. Face-to-face meetings also provide an opportunity to explain doubts, resolve problems and last but not least, to build “project culture” and facilitate cooperation during the periods with no personal contact.

The most popular way of communication at every stage of project development is *e-mail*. The results do not differ between Poland and Greece at this point. As it was 22 interviewees: from 18 to 22 marked *e-mail* as the recommended way of communication at every project stage.

*Telephone calls* are said to be a good way of contact at the project planning phase, especially during the partner selection and proposal development phase (12 ticks of 22). Some of the interviewees indicated telephone calls as a good idea for contact in the project realization stage (8 ticks of 22).

As it was said above: *project meetings* are extremely important at the realization of the project stage (21 ticks from 22). They are also recommended in the preparatory stage (10 ticks of 22): building up the partnership and plan of work phase as well as in finalization of the project (12 ticks of 22).

Video conferences were chosen by 10-13 interviewees in most of the stages. But it should be highlighted that a part of this (in the Greek responses) is linked to *IT tools supporting communication*.

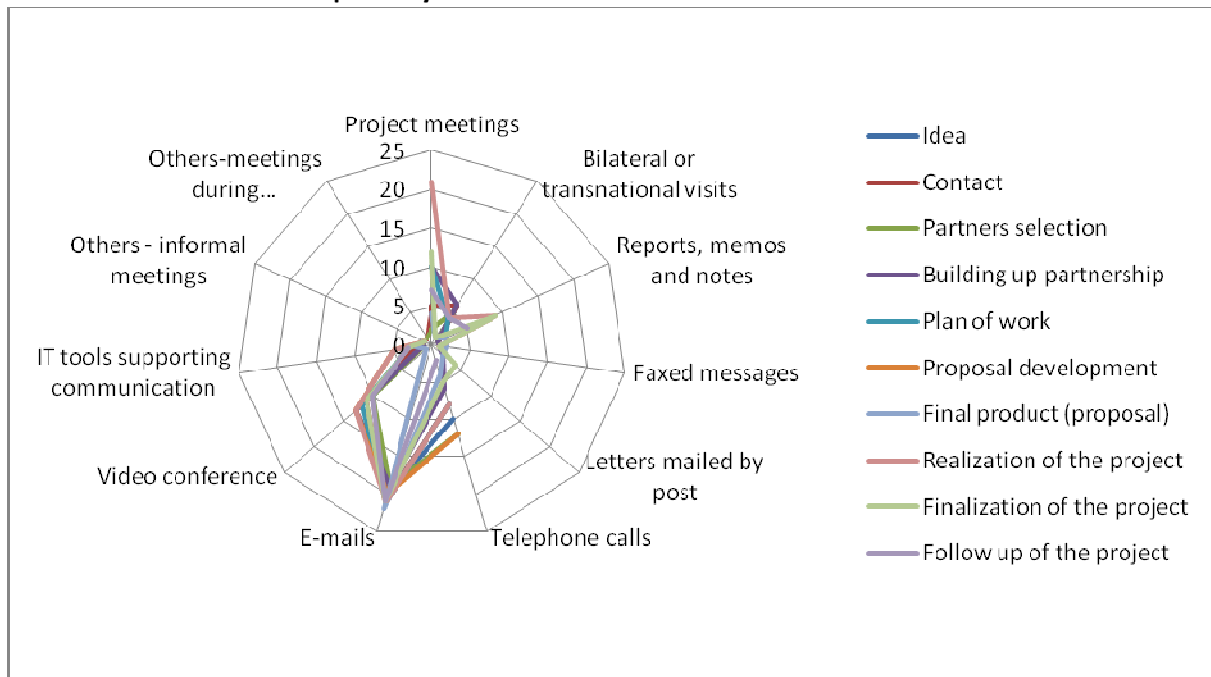
*Reports, memos, notes* are said to be useful in the project realization and finalization stages (9 ticks of 22).

*Faxed messages, letters mailed by post* are said to be useful only in the case when formal approval of some documents is needed. In other cases they are not used because there are more convenient ways of communication (as mentioned above).

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<sup>1</sup> Summary consists of results of Poland and Greece, as there are no countable answers to this question from Germany.

**Graph: Ways of communication – Poland and Greece**



Source: CASE-Doradcy, IACM/FORTH and UITM

All the respondents answered the same questions, but there are differences in the way the answers were summarized by each country. That is why it is necessary to demonstrate each country's results in a summary.

Table: Ways of communication - Poland and Greece

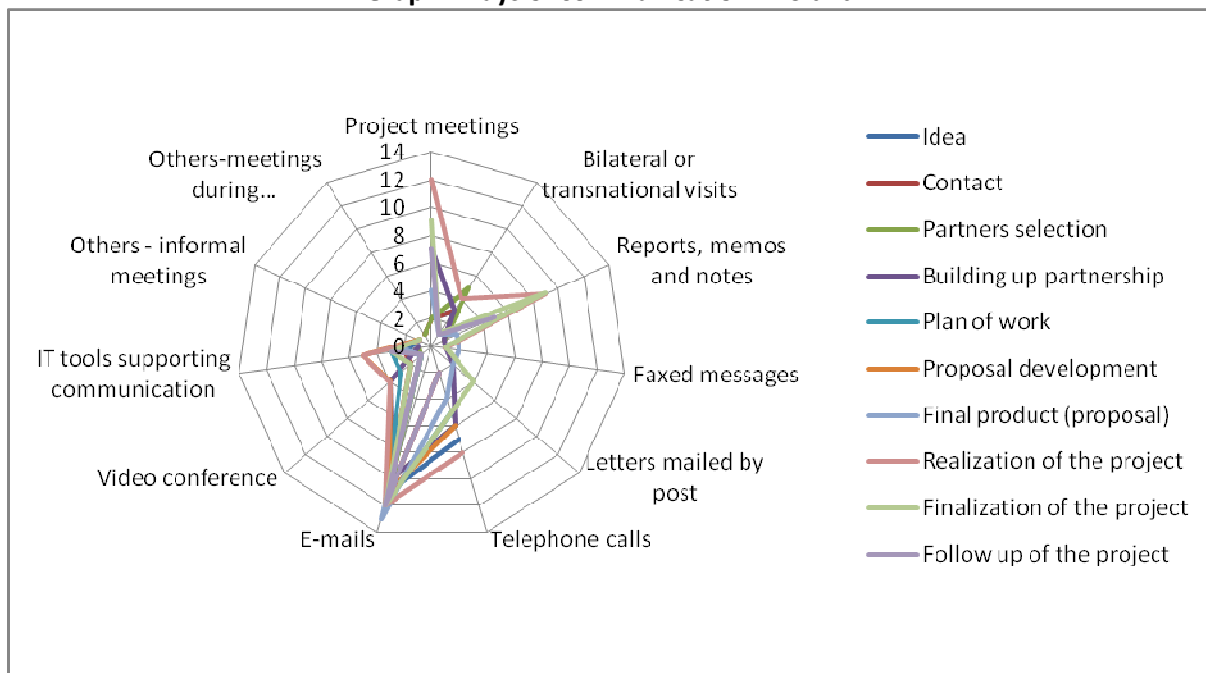
Name of the stage	Ways of communication										
	Project meetings	Bilateral or transnational visits	Reports, memos and notes	Faxed messages	Letters mailed by post	Telephone calls	E-mails	Video conference	IT tools supporting communication	Others - informal meetings	Others-meetings during confernces, schollarschips
Idea	5	6	1			10	20	10	2	1	
Contact	5	6	1			8	21	11	2		1
Partner selection	2	5	1			12	19	10	1		1
Building up partnership	10	6	1	1	2	6	19	13	1		
Plan of work	10	4	2			8	21	12	3	1	
Proposal development	8		1			12	20	13	5	1	
Final product (proposal)	4	1	2	2	2	4	22	1	2		
Realization of the project	21	4	9	1		8	21	13	5	1	
Finalization of the project	12	1	9	1	4	5	21	11	3	1	
Follow up of the project	7	4	5			2	21	10	3		

Source: CASE-Doradcy, IACM/FORTH, UITM

**Poland**

Interviewees indicated most often *e-mail* as the most effective way of communication. Almost all respondents stated that it is very useful at each stage of the project. *Telephone calls* as well as *IT tools supporting communication* were often mentioned as useful (*telephone calls* especially at the stage of realization of the project). Slightly less popular were *video conferences*. *Project meetings* turned out to be very important during realization of a project and finalization of the project. It is worth mentioning, considering the first project meeting, that it is extremely important to have it as soon as possible but taking into account proper arrangements. *Reports, memos and notes* were mentioned in the context of realization of the project and finalization of the project. Traditional, paper-based communication (*letters mailed by post, faxed messages*) turned out to be not very popular and very few people indicated them. If so, in the stages of: building up the partnership, final product (proposal) and finalization of the project. It is because these stages are connected to co-signing project documents such as the: letter of intent, consortium agreement, final report. One more remark needs to be made: interviewees emphasized the significance of informal relations and meetings in the context of the creation of new relationships and in the context of project problems solving or intensifying the cooperation (e.g. starting a new project with well-known partners).

**Graph: Ways of communication - Poland**



Source: CASE-Doradcy, UITM

### *3 x C - tandem learning*

Table: Ways of communication – Poland

Name of the stage	Ways of communication										
	Project meetings	Bilateral or transnational visits	Reports, memos and notes	Faxed messages	Letters mailed by post	Telephone calls	E-mails	Video conference	IT tools supporting communication	Others - informal meetings	Others-meetings during conferences, scholarships
Idea	2	3	1				7	11	1	2	1
Contact	2	3	1				2	12	2	2	1
Partner selection	2	5	1				6	10	1	1	1
Building up the partnership	7	3	1	1	2		6	10	4	1	
Plan of work	7		2				5	12	3	3	1
Proposal development	8		1				6	11	4	5	1
Final product (proposal)	4	1	2	2	2		4	13	1	2	
Realization of the Project	12	4	9	1			8	12	4	5	1
Finalization of the Project	9	1	9	1	4		5	12	2	3	1
Follow up of the project	7	1	5				2	12	1	3	

Source: CASE-Doradcy, UITM

### 3 x C - tandem learning

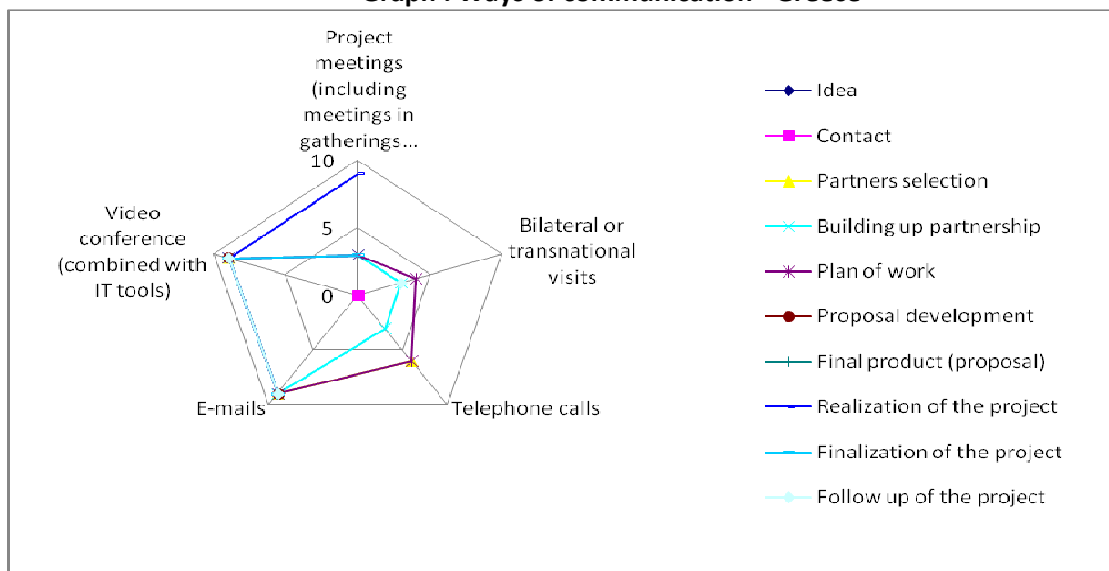
#### Greece

At the stage of the conception of the project idea the respondents report that the prevailing communication channel used between partners is *IT tools / video conferencing*: used by all interviewees as it is a tool(s) that allows for reflection, discussion and exchange of files. About 1/3 of the respondents report having used meetings (i.e. previous projects, conferences, other), bilateral meetings with proposal developers and exchange of e-mails.

At the stage of contact again IT tools constitute the principle means of communication with greater use of e-mail than at the conception level and to a more limited degree direct f2f contacts in the forms of meetings / visits. It should be noted that visits are more common among the business sector respondents. IT tools supporting communication (and e-mailing) also dominate communication at the partner selection stage. The communication means used for building of partnerships resembles that of the conception stage and is more or less identical at the stage of “plan of work”.

It appears that the prevailing preferred means of communication at the stages of proposal writing, project realization, finalization and follow-up, is IT tools (which perhaps includes not only video conferencing but also e-mail). The stage of finalization seems to be in need of f2f meetings. The above strongly indicate that f2f meetings are considered highly important at the stage of finalization while necessary at some of the other stages –especially from the business sector respondents. IT tools certainly dominate the communication process (or preference for it) where more traditional means of communication appear to be disappearing from the process of communication in transnational projects (at least for the sample of this study). The figure here illustrates the participants’ preferences of communication means for the different stages of project development.

**Graph : Ways of communication - Greece**



Source:

Source: IACM/FORTH

*3 x C - tandem learning*

Table: Ways of communication – Greece

Ways of communication						
Name of the stage	Project meetings (including meetings in gatherings such as conferences)	Bilateral or transnational visits	Telephone calls	E-mails	Video conference (combined with IT tools)	
Idea	3	3	3	9		9
Contact Partners selection	3	3		6	9	9
Building up partnership				6	9	9
Plan of work	3	3	3	9		9
Proposal development	3	4	6	9		9
Final product (proposal)					9	
Realization of the project					9	
Finalization of the project	9				9	9
Follow up of the project	3				9	9
		3			9	9

Source: IACM/FORTH

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### Germany

Regarding the most effective ways/instruments of communication a combination of actual meetings (*project meetings and bilateral meetings, visits*), *telephone calls* and *e-mails* was a very common answer of all interviewees. Face-to-Face meetings were regarded more important than virtual meeting via Skype e. g. In order to have a successful project, direct personal contacts are indispensable, almost all respondents stated. Less popular were *video conferences* and *IT tools supporting communication*. Some of the respondents had experiences with internal database and communication platforms. But it was a useful instrument for only one of them in addition, use of the *fax* machine seems to have disappeared. Traditionally, posting of written material (e.g. *letters*) is used in addition to e-mails (such as pdf files). Concerning the first contact, a big question was, if it is better to use telephone or e-mail. Depending on the partners and kind of project it might be either useful to call by phone (e.g. when making contact with Polish trade unionists) first, or to send an e-mail with all key information (as in scientific projects). One respondent recommend the following scheme referring to first contact:

1. Standard letter,
2. Posting of standard letter,
3. Calling via phone after 2 weeks,
4. Confirmation after call via email.

### 3.5 Cultural consideration

Cultural consideration is the aspect of transnational cooperation that is hardest to measure and describe in a concrete way because of its many dimensions and intangible character. Cultural differences may occur at every stage of project development and because culture is ubiquitous it is so hard to define. When thinking about displays of culture in transnational projects, interviewees mentioned e.g.: working hours, commitment to work, and the manner in which deadlines are treated, preference to personal or impersonal contact.

Most of the interviewees emphasized that when cooperating within transnational projects, the countries from which, partners come from are not the most important factor to predict the quality of cooperation and commitment to the project. It is possible to make a list of other influential variables:

- Personality,
- personal competences,
- personal experience,
- institutional flexibility and procedures,
- institutional competences,
- institutional experience.

All the respondents were asked a question about a list of considerations they have to take into account when implementing the project with partners from other countries. Below, are shown the answers for each country to give a deeper insight into personal as well as national experiences. It needs to be emphasized that these opinions were made only by the people who have experience in cooperating with the countries they mention.

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### **Poland**

Respondents tried to avoid articulating opinions about different nations. They stipulated that it depends on the people or institution rather than the country. One of the interviewees claimed: *We are experienced with work with many institutions, so sometimes we expect some problems but we are not prejudiced. More depends on the institutions than on national factors.* The second interviewee: *There are both cultural differences concerning the countries and cultural differences concerning the institutions.*

Some of the respondents made a comment that people and institutions participating in EU projects, have much in common: style of work, communication etc. It is easier to cooperate between institutions experienced in EU projects. The interviewee said: *When we had a project with Turkey we could find some differences in attitude towards the project, but the differences were slight, because the chamber was quite experienced with European projects. But when preparing the next project with Turkish regional chambers who had not participated in EU projects, we found it more difficult to cooperate because of their work organization.*

Some of the interviewees made a division between some group of countries e.g. countries with a well-organized work tradition versus a loose attitude to work tradition or Southern versus Northern countries or Western vs. Eastern countries. These are two statements on that:

- *When collaborating with countries with a well-organized work tradition it is much easier (time-table, communication, administration). It hard to work if it is not organized in such a way, if it is organized in a loose way and with poor communication.*
- *Southern countries have a more liberal attitude towards e.g. deadlines. Northern countries take matters more seriously.*

These opinions need to be taken into consideration with reservations: we do not have a defined list of Southern and Northern countries or well-organized work culture countries.

Another interviewee emphasized differences between the style of work in the private and public sectors: *If we work with a private consulting institution, they are more engaged, of course if they see that the certain project is profitable. With public institutions the situation is worse because the team members are not directly dependent on the project.*

Some of the respondents remarked that leader's role is crucial for creating something like "project culture":

- *Much is related to coordinator personality, also to organization. It is hard to speak only about countries.*
- *In many cases it depends on who is the project's leader. His authority can change certain attitudes.*

One of the respondents remarked that **above personality, organizational customs, national culture** etc. **there are also external circumstances** like workoverload: *We have to take into consideration people' over-loading with work. It is obvious that if somebody is carrying a few projects at once it may*

### *3 x C - tandem learning*

*be hard to contact him and to keep on schedule. It is always safer to cooperate with a trusted organization which has proven its responsibility.*

Another made a statement that **A similar level of development** at the country level (economic, social, etc) between partners allows the partners to work at similar levels throughout the project. For example, to do an IT-related project, on a distance learning platform, the appropriate infrastructure must be in place. If this level of development or experience is not provided among all the partners, then the mentality of those involved, their ambitions and motivations become highly significant to the project's success. Despite the lack of infrastructure or experience, the desire to cooperate can influence the quality of a project. Among conditions notes, a key role is played by the similarity of skills (e.g. IT or language skills).

A person who is much experienced with work with post-socialist countries could see how the attitude to the project differs between post-socialist and Western European countries. He remarked: *The differences result from the country's past and the scientific level relating to it. People from western universities are used to high standards. People from post-soviet countries - their level often leaves a lot to be desired. They have problems with understanding what a proper text is. It is often hard to explain them that their text is not appropriate for publication, because it is too weak. Also there is a difference in the style of working, writing a bibliography. Mutual denigrating in post-socialist countries at the stage of forming a team is also quite often experienced.*

Some of the interviewees' made more detailed reflections which emphasized customs of countries they had had a chance to cooperate with:

- *In Ukraine from 12 to 13.30 it is lunchtime, and it is impossible to contact anybody. After lunchtime it not obvious that everybody gets back to the office. So the best time to contact them is before midday. In Greece usually they have a delay in response to e-mails. They do not contact the sender if something is incomprehensible as Germans or Czechs do (they call) in this kind of situation. Finns would rather send mail.*
- *For example in Holland they work to 17:00 or even longer and that during one day we can exchange emails three times and solve some problem, whereas in Spain it is very often impossible. I know that if I want to get something on time it must be sent them well in advance, described in detail etc. Something what you can get in one country by courtesy in other it is a problem because you must pay additionally for it.*
- *I have also experiences with Italian Chambers (before Polish accession to EU) and the way they were explaining a project idea, how they communicated was so indefinite (goals, role division) we didn't try to cooperate. Eurochambres projects or projects from Western European project experienced countries are well planned.*
- *British, Scottish are very sensible while Americans are very easy-going but also concrete.*

One of the interviewee tried to show some aspects of other nations' behaviors which are close to Polish. About Italians: *During a personal meeting (like dinner) you may get agreement on everything, but it is necessary to make contact informal. It is very close to Polish culture.* About Germans: *They like to have formal agreement on everything and to have clear division of responsibility in the partnership. It is also close to the Polish approach.*

## *3 x C - tandem learning*

### **Greece**

Overall, the interview process points to the conclusion that while cultural issues come into play in projects –at its various stages, these are not by any means determining factors –perhaps not so at the selection phase, in project implementation. The persons behind the projects – personality, competency, and experience seem far more influential (but these are cultural issues as well).

The indications given by the participants suggest that Greeks, while recognizing a degree of inefficiency, defined as not meeting deadlines, in Italians and Cypriots, easily accept collaboration with them. On the other hand there is recognition that Scandinavians are realistic planners which has implications in the implementation and (successful) completion of a project. Likewise it was pointed out that the Germanic model (expressed by Germans and Austrians) bears characteristics of professionalism and dedication to the work undertaken, elements highly valued by the Greek participants in this study. Collaboration with Eastern Europeans appears to be guided by a sense of skepticism as there is a lack of experience in such collaboration. It is fully recognized however that the New Member States need to be represented in the composition of consortia and thus often they are included for purposes of “political correctness”. The respondents did not have a sufficient amount of experience to discuss the issue of effectiveness.

### **Germany**

Respondents tried to avoid generalizing their statements. They mentioned that how partners work depends on the people or institution rather than the country. One respondent, who is very experienced in cooperating with Polish trade unions, said that Polish partners want to have personal contact. They would prefer to call by phone (more than one call) instead of sending emails. Often they don't answer emails, if there was not a personal contact before. Moreover, it is worth planning to meet each other without discussing project issues at once. To build up a trustful relationship, it would be important to just meet for personal contact. Some more differences were mentioned. For example, employees of ministries in France see themselves less as initiators of projects than in Germany. In addition the competition among project agencies is much higher in Germany than in France. Concerning Polish people working in administration, it was mentioned that they are less open in communication than in western European countries or even compared to some other east European countries.

Some of the respondents made a comment that referring to deadlines and contributions some countries are less reliable. It would be better to be a bit more generous in these questions. That would make the difference compared to national projects, they said. But overall cultural differences exist and they should be used to enrich projects, many of the interviewees concluded.

## 4 Summary and conclusions

### Key success factors and starting the projects

#### General conclusions:

- participation in a project results from personal connections and informal contacts (cooperation with the same partners) - it shows how important experience and building relationships is in realization of such projects;
- usually, problems mentioned by the interviewees resulted from more than one cause. The basis of the majority of the problems was lack of knowledge about partners' institutions, especially about the coordinator before entering the project. In many cases other problems were linked to or even caused by that;
- when thinking about the key success factors the conclusions from the research is that:
  - It is critical to know the partners, especially the coordinator, before entering the project (its experience and merit knowledge);
  - The crucial stages are project planning and partner selection;
  - The quality of coordination (coordinating institution as well as coordinator as a person) is important for project success;
  - On-going monitoring activities could prevent serious problems.
- there are significant differences between the academic / research and business sectors in the purpose and rationale for engaging in transnational cooperation projects - the project initiation is by far stronger in the RTD community than in the business sector, the financial dimension appears to constitute a stronger incentive for the SMEs than the academic / research institutions;
- The identified stages can be aggregated into three broader groups (learning components):
  - Initial stage of the proposal development consisting of the following sub-stages: initiation of the contact with the potential partners, partner selection and finally building up the partnership;
  - Proposal development stage consisting of the following sub-stages: plan of work and preparation of the proposal
  - Project implementation phase

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- Key success factors for the identified learning components:
  - Initial stage of the proposal development:
    - a clear and concise explanation of the project (attracting potential partners to the projects or promoting the project's idea among the potential partners);
    - potential partner's merit competences and experience;
    - identification of the proper person at the institutional level;
  - Proposal development stage:
    - a common understanding of project goals;
    - defining of the outcomes and products of the project;
    - assurance of the proper and effective communication tools and methods;
  - Project implementation phase:
    - time scheduling and task allocation to the team members;
    - a structuring of the main activities.

#### Results for the Polish sample:

- no experience in coordination – no opinion regarding it or partnership building;
- focus on the “technical” realization of the projects – focus on the tangible results;
- Polish partners are rather passive in the process of establishing partnerships – they act mainly as partners – there is a need to build a track record and gain international experience; without international experience the coordination of such projects is not possible;
- In the process of “entering projects” they usually pay attention to the partners not the projects – now there is a more careful approach to selection of the foreign partners;
- relatively young project coordinators – different ways of learning approach;

#### Results for the German sample:

- more experienced project coordinators;
- also focus on non-tangible project's results;
- focus on the team-spirit building even at the phase of proposal development – face to face meetings, time to develop the proposal;
- more trust of the partners;
- In Germany, compared to Poland and Greece, the respondents paid special attention to cultural considerations;

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### Results for Greek sample:

- more experienced project coordinators;
- very “emotional” attitude towards the projects;
- more drive on coordination of the projects;
- a great deal of emphasis was given to the issue of “ownership” of the developed concept.

### **Communication**

“New” ways of communication (like *e-mails, video conferences*) are more recommended than the “old” ones (*faxed messages, letters mailed by post*). E-mail is the most important tool of communication. The second remark is that personal contacts (especially *project meetings*) are highly recommended and are said to be essential for making the project go smoothly forward, within the schedule. Face-to-face meetings also provide an opportunity to explain doubts, resolve problems, and last but not least, to build “project culture” and facilitate cooperation during the periods of no personal contact.

### **Cultural consideration**

Cultural consideration is the aspect of transnational cooperation that is hardest to measure and describe in a concrete way because of its many dimensions and intangible character. Cultural differences may occur at every stage of project development and because culture is ubiquitous it is so hard to define. When thinking about displays of culture in transnational projects, interviewees mentioned e.g.: working hours, commitment to work, the manner in which deadlines are treated, preference to personal or impersonal contact.

When being asked about cultural considerations, respondents tried to avoid articulating opinions about different nations. They claimed that it depends on many factors, and the country of origin is not the most important among these. It is possible to make a list of other influential variables:

- Personality,
- personal competences,
- personal experience,
- institutional flexibility and procedures,
- institutional competences,
- institutional experience.

## 5 Appendix

### 5.1 Annex 1 - List of the Interviewees

No.	Institution	Interviewee	Date
1	Centre for European Regional and Local Studies (EUROREG) at the University of Warsaw	Karol Olejniczak PhD	2009-02-19
2	Warsaw School of Economics	Krzysztof Piech PhD	2009-02-26
3	Centre for European Regional and Local Studies (EUROREG) at the University of Warsaw	Agnieszka Olechnicka PhD	2009-03-02
4	Marshal's Office of the Mazovia Voivodship	Andrzej Buczacki	2009-03-03
5	TIHC (Center for Professional Training of the Chamber of Commerce of Heraklion)	Michalis Katharakis PhD	2009-03-11
6	Polish Academy of Sciences Institute of Rural and Agricultural Development	Katarzyna Zawalińska PhD	2009-03-12
7	Polish Chamber of Commerce	Katarzyna Grzejszczyk	2009-03-13
8	CASE – Center for Social and Economic Research	Piotr Kozarzewski PhD	2009-03-13
9	Intelearn, SA	M. Karavelaki	2009-03-16
10	Warsaw University of Life Sciences	Marta Kraszewska	2009-03-20
11	Lychnostatis Cultural Center	Y. Markakis	2009-03-23
12	ICS/FORTH	Angelina Kouroumali PhD	2009-03-27
13	IACM/FORTH	Vas. Dougalis Prof	2009-04-08
14	University of Crete Department of Applied Mathematics	G. Makrakis Prof	2009-04-10
15	FORTHNET International Studies Department	Man Stratakis	2009-04-16
16	University of the Aegean	G. Korres Prof	2009-04-09

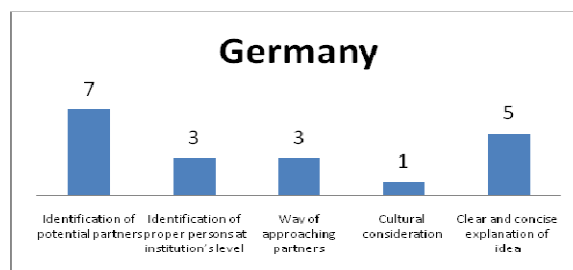
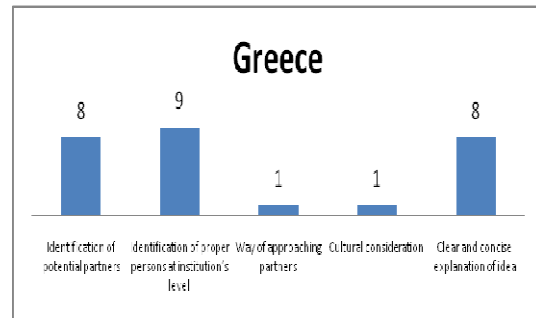
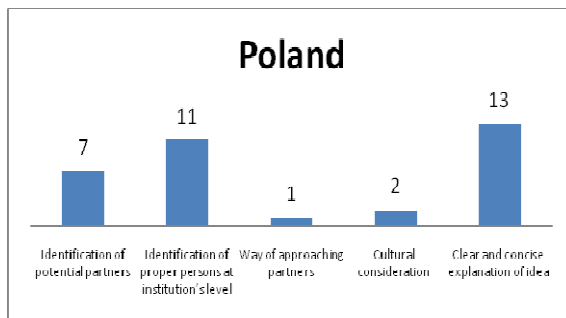
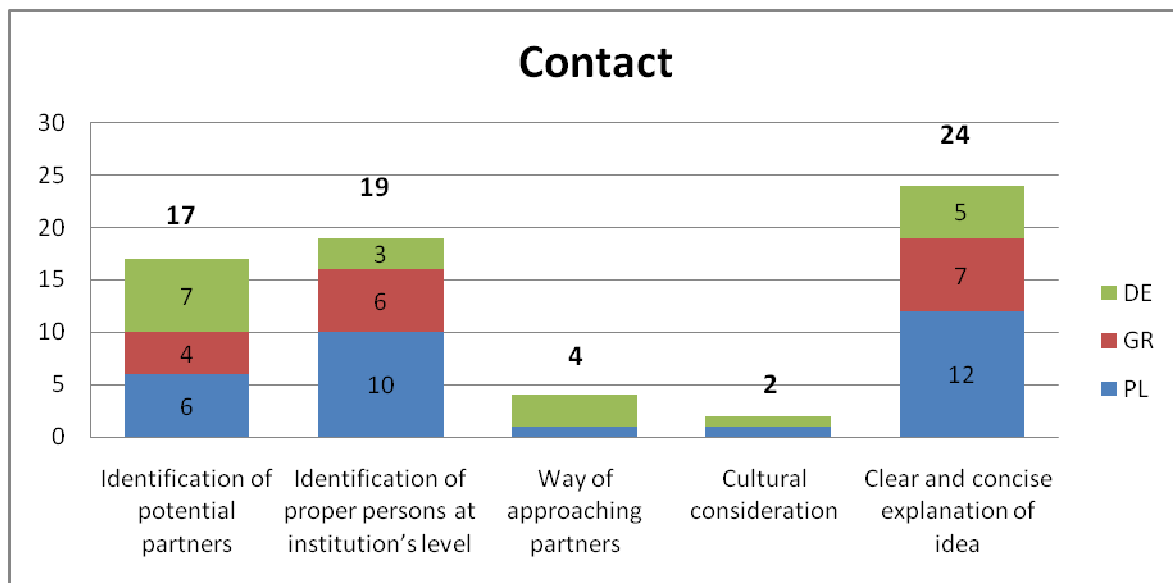
*3 x C - tandem learning*

17	University of Crete Department of Biology	N. Panopoulos Prof	2009-04-27
18	Hiba-impulse Berlin Gmbh	Oliver Jentsch	2009-03-05
19	KOWA e.V	Wioletta Wlodarczyk	2009-03-10
20	Tamen GmbH	Marie-Luis Kopp PhD Thomas Hartmann	2009-03-11
21	Berlin Partner Gmgh	Burkhard Volbracht	2009-03-24
22	Bbm Bildungszentrumm FFO	Klaus-Dieter Dolves	2009-04-08
23	TANDEM School Hamburg	Henning PruB	2009-04-29
24	Gsub mbH	Dietmar Simon PhD	2009-04-30
25	Universitat Frankfurt am Main	Jens Becker PhD	2009-05-06
26	Association of Entrepreneurship Promotion in Rzeszow	Grzegorz Karpiuk	2009-04-07
27	University of Information Technology and Management in Rzeszow	Anna Warzybok	2009-04-22
28	College of Business - National-Louis University in Nowy Sącz	Sebastian Filek	2009-06-12
29	Danmar Computers in Rzeszow	Małgorzata Mikłosz	2009-06-30
30	E-service sp. z o.o.	Sławomir Umpirowicz	2009-06-30

### 3 x C - tandem learning

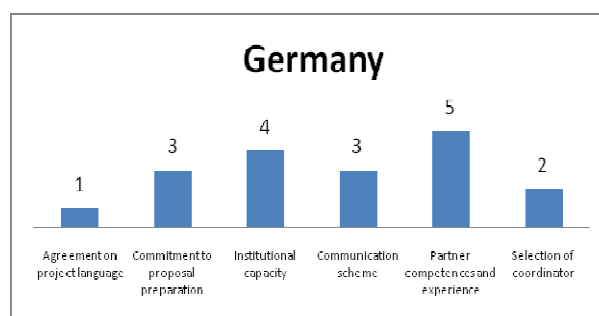
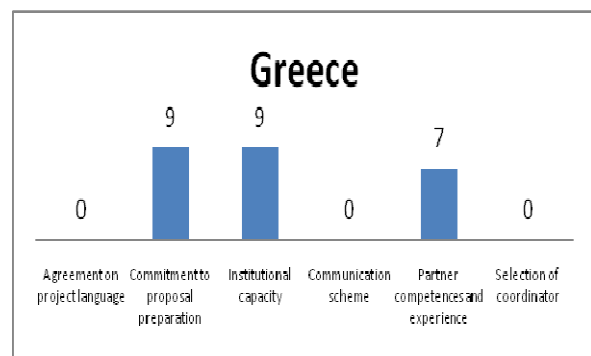
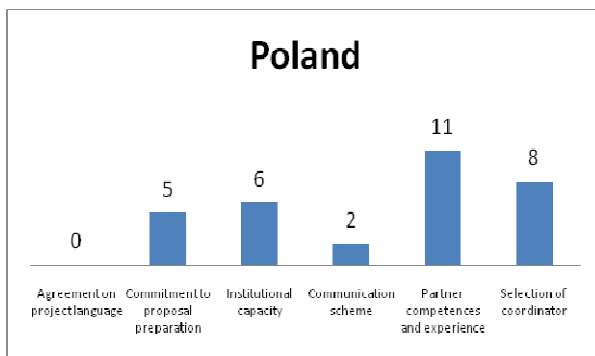
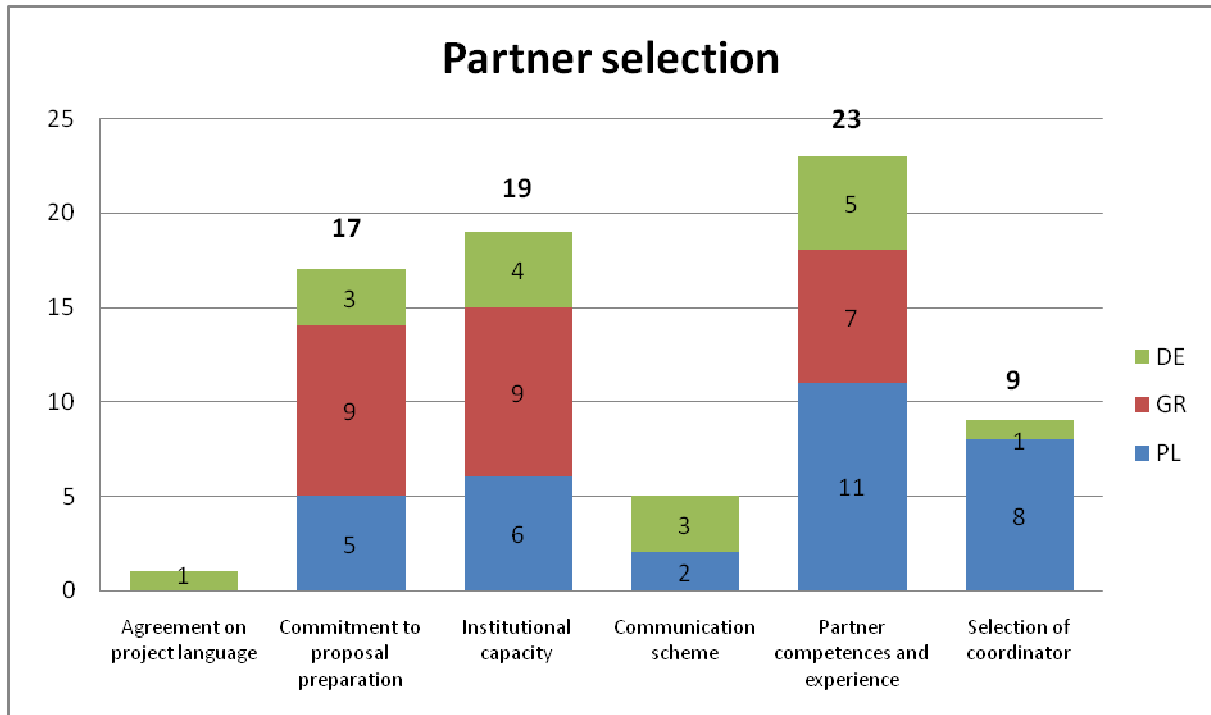
## 5.2 Annex 2. – Graphs and tables

Key success factors indicated by interviewees in order to successfully approach (contact) the potential partners in the international projects.



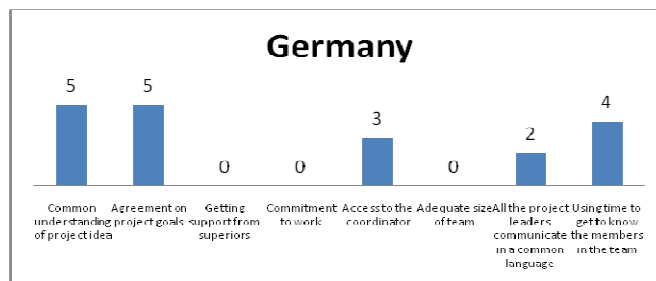
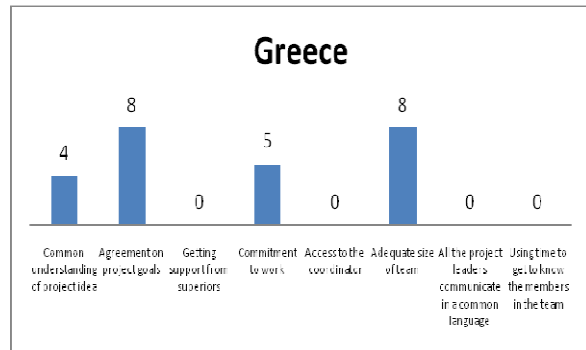
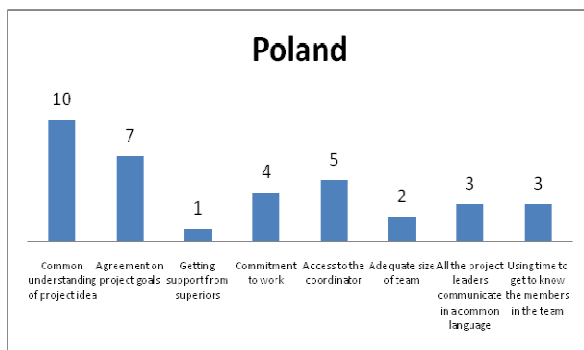
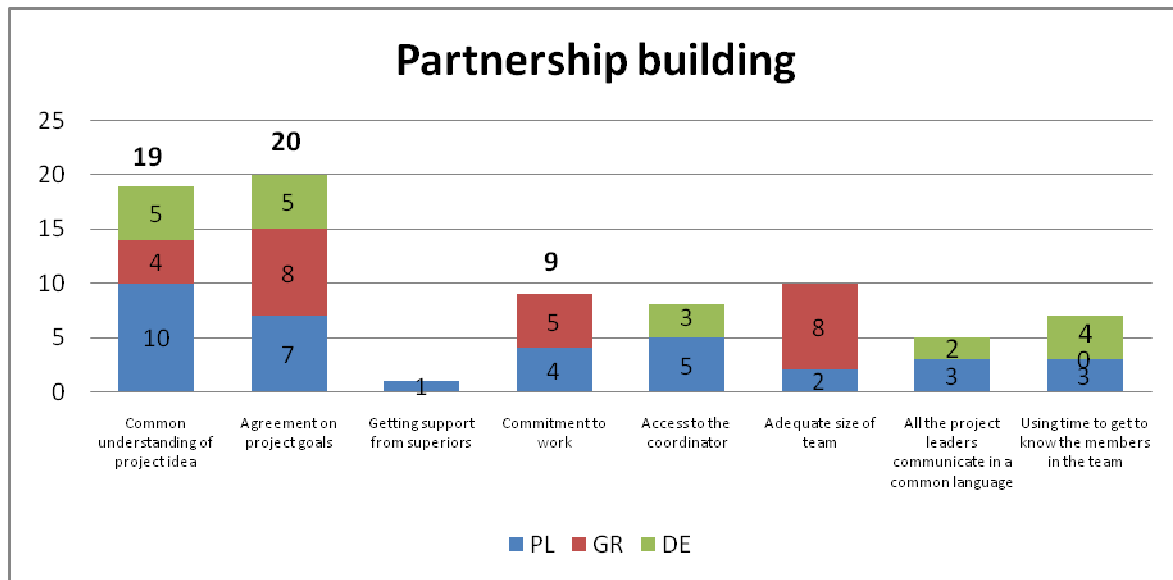
### 3 x C - tandem learning

Key success factors indicated by interviewees in order to successfully select potential partners in the international projects.



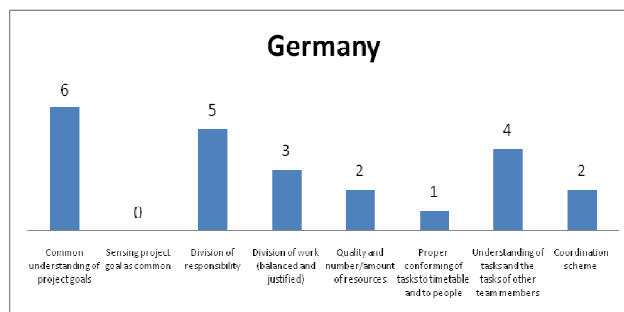
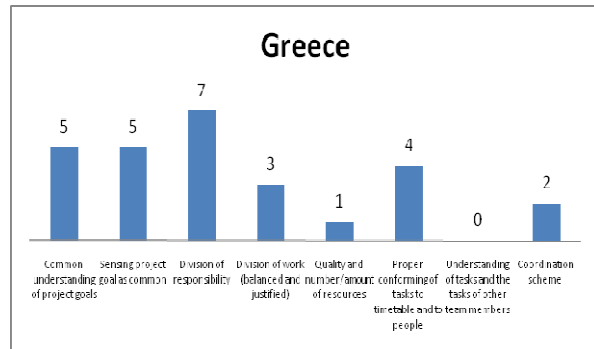
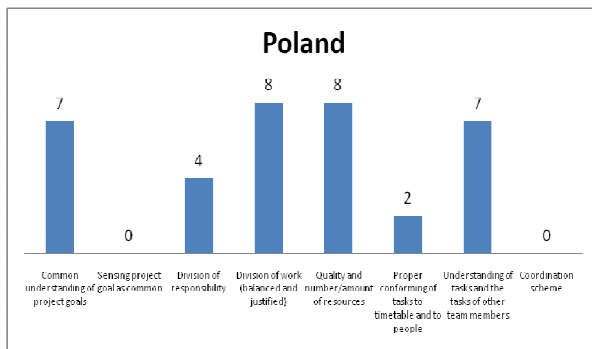
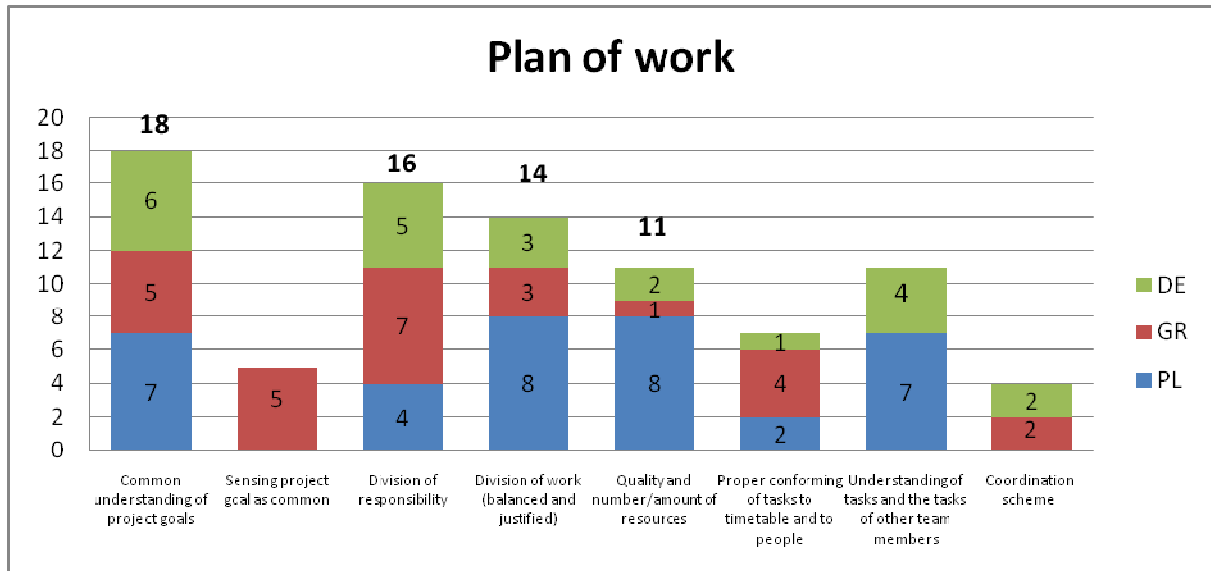
### 3 x C - tandem learning

Key success factors indicated by interviewees in order to successfully build up the transnational partnership.



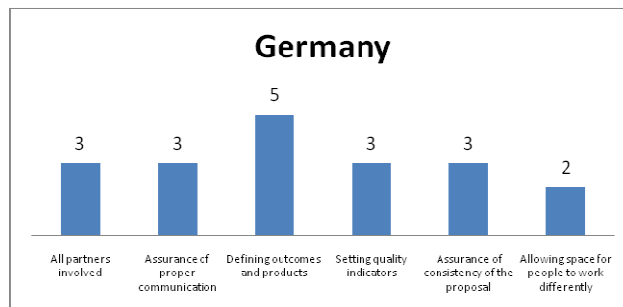
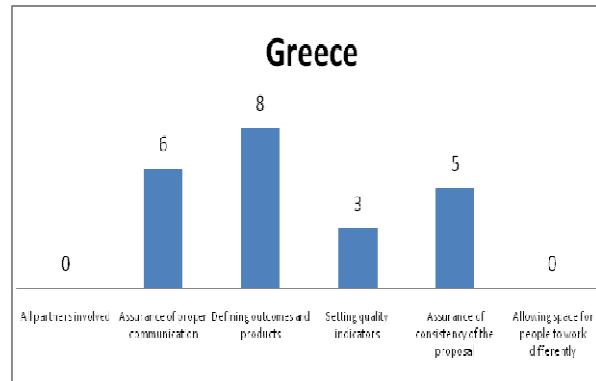
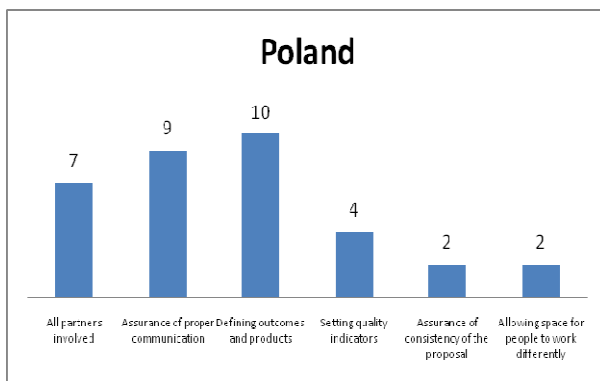
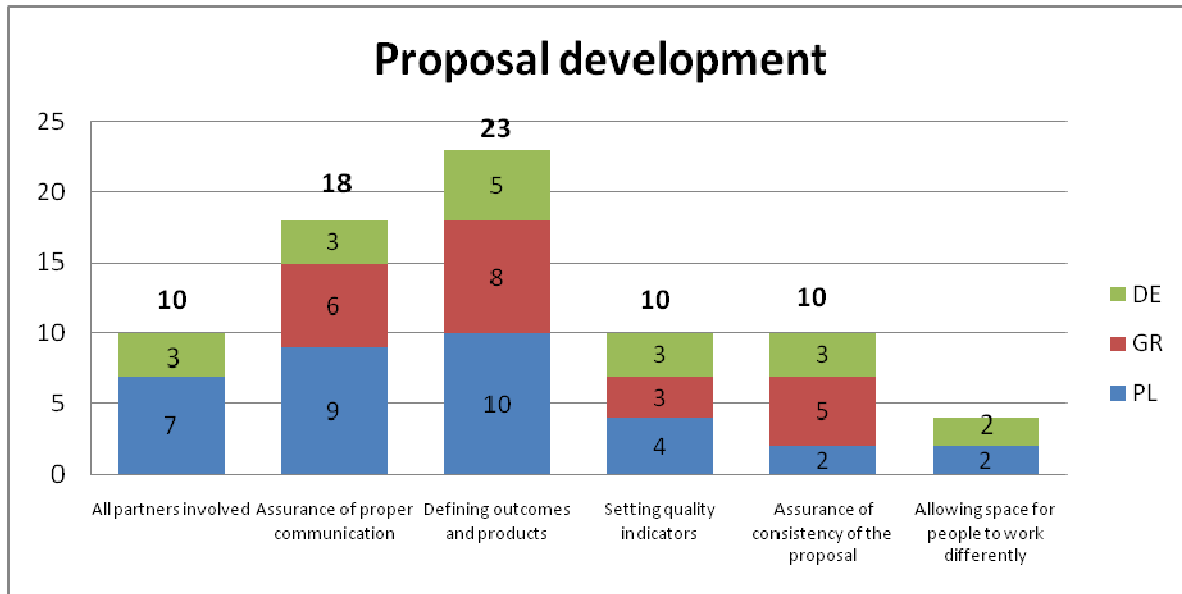
## 3 x C - tandem learning

Key success factors indicated by interviewees in order to successfully develop the work plans of proposal development.



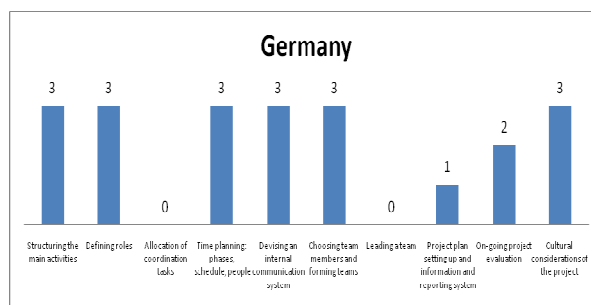
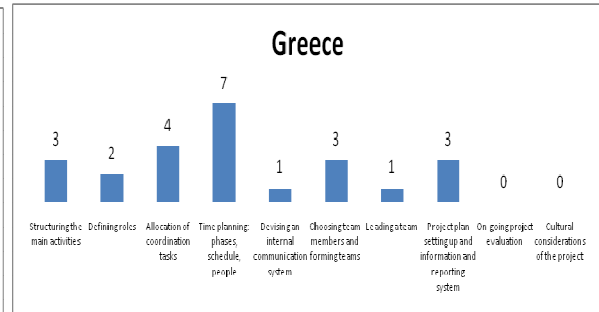
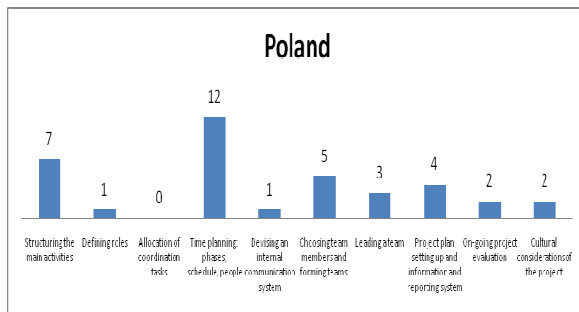
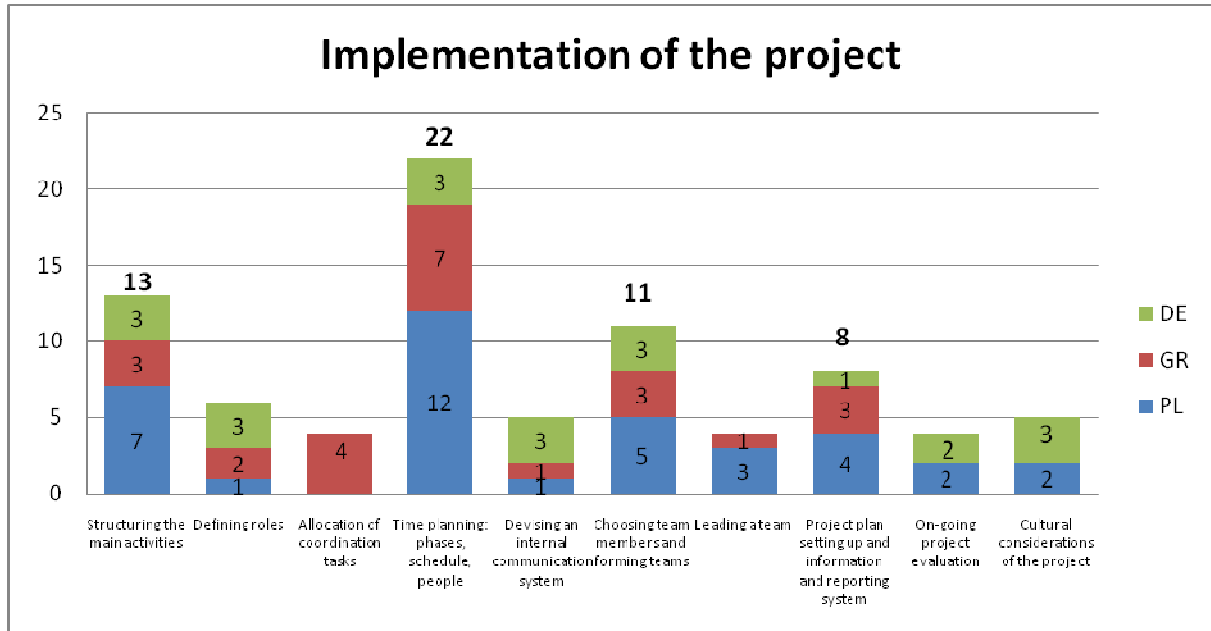
### 3 x C - tandem learning

Key success factors indicated by interviewees in the process of proposal development.



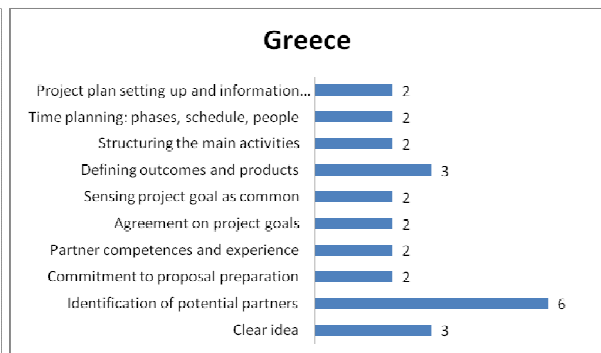
## 3 x C - tandem learning

Key success factors indicated by interviewees at the stage of project implementation.



### *3 x C - tandem learning*

**Key success factors indicated by interviewees in the process of the project's development and implementation – summary of the key factors in the process of project implementation.**



### 5.3 Annex 3. IDI scenario

#### Scenario of Individual In-depth Interview

*Opening text:*

The interview we are going to have will be focused on your experience during the implementation of international research projects. We are interested in projects in which partners from at least 3 countries have participated.

The purpose of our research is to find out what are the key success factors and what are the major problems when carrying out the projects. We are going to talk about the whole cycle of the project – from the very beginning till its' finalization.

In order for our interview to proceed smoothly, I would like to ask you for permission to record our conversation. This would facilitate my work because I could focus entirely on the interview without taking notes. We will prepare a report which will be based on the interviews. So it could be useful for me during report preparation – the report summing up the results of the research. I would like to assure you that the information you give me will be presented in the report in such a way as to prevent your identification. The recording will be available only for members of the team working in this project.

1. First, I would like to learn more about ... *(insert the name of institution represented by the interviewee)*.

- How many international projects have you participated in since 2006?

- How many international projects has ... *(insert the name of institution represented by the interviewee)* carried out over last 3 years (since 2006)? We want to know the number of projects conducted by the institution, not only those conducted by the interviewee.

- What role did you play in partnerships? We want to know whether the interviewee usually plays a leading role or is a partner.

2. How do you ... *(insert the name of institution represented by the interviewee)* usually enter new international projects? What criteria do you use when engaging in the projects?

3. When participating in international projects: do you usually work with the same people or institutions or not?

Now we will move on to questions about our main point of interest.

4. Have you participated in a project in which serious problems occurred? *Serious problems means problems that influence on final results quality or delay during the course of project. Project collapsing is the extreme case.*

- Yes
- No

### 3 x C - tandem learning

The question below is directed only to interviewees who responded NO in question 4:

**5. What are the reasons that there have never been any serious problems during the course of the projects?**

The question below is directed only to interviewees who responded YES in question 4:

**6. Handle the interviewee an interviewee card nr 1**

- **What was the nature of the problem?**
- **What were the causes of these problems?**
- **Did the problems result from irregularity during the project's implementation or from imprecise planning of the project (at the stage prior to submitting an application)?**
- **How were or how could be the problems resolved ? Here we want to identify good practices.**
- **What and when (in which phase) should be done to prevent such problems? Here we want to identify good practices.**

**7. Thinking about the project cycle: from the very beginning to the end we have prepared such a scheme. Handle the interviewee an interviewee card nr 2 and describe shortly each stage. I would like you to go through all the stages and tick the key success factors:.**

**a. in each stage. You may choose up to 3. Tick them and say shortly why. We do not want to fall into details but assure that we have common understanding of the factors which were chosen by the interviewee.**

**b. in whole the project. You may choose up to 5. Tick them and say why these factors are the most important. Indicate solution for problems if appropriate.**

Number of the stage	Name of the stage	Key Success Factors for each stage Tick up to 3 in each stage (beside stages I, VII, IX, X)	Key Success Factor Tick up to 5
I	Idea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear idea</li> </ul>	
II	Contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of potential partners (institutions) (e.g. credibility of institution)</li> <li>• Identification of proper persons at institution's level</li> <li>• Way of approaching partners</li> <li>• Cultural consideration (e.g. use titles when writing or talking, ways of writing emails)</li> <li>• Clear and concise explanation of idea to potential partners</li> </ul>	
III	Partners selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreement on project language</li> <li>• Commitment to proposal preparation (idea)</li> <li>• Institutional capacity (financial strength of institution)</li> <li>• Communication scheme</li> <li>• Partner competences and experiences</li> <li>• Selection of coordinator</li> </ul>	
IV	Building up partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common understanding of project idea</li> <li>• Agreement on project goals</li> </ul>	



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting support from superiors</li> <li>• Commitment to work: declaration of cost-sharing when writing a proposal</li> <li>• Easy access to the coordinator</li> <li>• Adequate size of team working on proposal preparation</li> <li>• Making sure that all the project leaders communicate in a common language</li> <li>• Using time to get to know the members in the team (building team spirit)</li> </ul>	
V	<b>Plan of work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common understanding of project goals (realistic, concrete, clear)</li> <li>• Sensing project goal as common</li> <li>• Division of responsibility</li> <li>• Division of work based on each institutions competences (e.g. balanced and justified)</li> <li>• Quality and number / amount of resources (time + money and people – specialists)</li> <li>• Proper conforming of tasks to timetable and to people;</li> <li>• Understanding of every team member his tasks and the tasks of other team members</li> <li>• Coordination scheme</li> </ul>	
VI	<b>Proposal development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All partners involved</li> <li>• Assurance of proper communication between partners (e.g. to all relevant people, the best ways in different situations, frequency of communication)'</li> <li>• Defining outcomes and products</li> <li>• Setting quality indicators (for monitoring and evaluation purposes)</li> <li>• Assurance of consistency of the entire proposal</li> <li>• Allowing space for people to work differently. Not demanding that everybody work in the same way.</li> </ul>	
VII	<b>Final product (proposal)</b>		
VII	<b>Carrying out of the project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structuring the main activities</li> <li>• Defining roles</li> <li>• Allocation of coordination tasks</li> <li>• Time planning: phases, schedule, people</li> <li>• Devising an internal communication system</li> <li>• Choosing team members and forming teams</li> <li>• Leading a team</li> <li>• Implementation of the project plan setting up and maintaining an information and reporting system</li> <li>• On-going project evaluation</li> </ul>	



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		• Cultural considerations of the project	
IX	<b>Finalization of the project</b>		
X	<b>Follow up of the project</b>		



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**8. Which of the following ways of communication are most effective and at what stages of the project you could recommend to use them during the project's?** *Hand the interviewee an interviewee card nr 3.*

		Ways of communication									
Number of the stage	Name of the stage	Project meetings	Bilateral or transnational visits	Reports, memos and notes	Faxed messages	Letters mailed by post	Telephone calls	E-mails	Video conference	IT tools supporting communication	Others. What?.....
I	Idea										
II	Contact										
III	Partners selection										
IV	Building up partnership										
V	Plan of work										
VI	Proposal development										
VII	Final product (proposal)										
VII	Realization of the project										
IX	Finalization of the project										
X	Follow up of the project										

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**9. Are there any circumstances which you have to take into account when implementing the project with some countries?** (*e.g. cultural differences: how deadlines are treated by different countries*)

**At the end I would like to ask some short additional questions.**

**10. Sex**

1. Female
2. Male

**11. Age**

1. Up to 25 years
2. 26-35
3. 36-49
4. 50 and over