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## **“Interim Evaluation of the Lifelong Learning Programme (2007-2013)”**

### **FINAL REPORT**

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Contractor:



**VIEŠOSIOS POLITIKOS IR VADYBOS INSTITUTAS**  
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The conclusions, recommendations and opinions in this report are those of the authors and they do not necessarily represent the views of the European Commission



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| <b>CEDEFOP</b> | European Centre for Development of Vocational Training       |
| <b>DG EAC</b>  | Directorate-General for Education and Culture                |
| <b>GDP</b>     | Gross domestic product                                       |
| <b>EACEA</b>   | Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency          |
| <b>ECTS</b>    | European Credit Transfer System                              |
| <b>ECVET</b>   | European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training |
| <b>EEA</b>     | European Economic Area                                       |
| <b>EFTA</b>    | European Free Trade Area                                     |
| <b>EHEA</b>    | European Higher Education Area                               |
| <b>EU</b>      | European Union   |
| <b>EU12</b>    | EU Member States that acceded in May 2004 or later           |
| <b>EU15</b>    | EU Member States prior to May 2004                           |
| <b>EU27</b>    | EU Member States after 2007                                  |
| <b>ET</b>      | Education and training                                       |
| <b>ICT</b>     | Information and communication technologies                   |
| <b>LLL</b>     | Lifelong learning  |
| <b>LLP</b>     | Lifelong Learning Programme                                  |
| <b>NA</b>      | National Agency  |
| <b>OMC</b>     | Open Method of Coordination                                  |
| <b>ToR</b>     | Terms of Reference   |
| <b>VET</b>     | Vocational education and training                            |

**ABBREVIATIONS OF THE COUNTRIES:**

|                |                                      |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>AT</b>      | Austria                              |
| <b>BE</b>      | Belgium                              |
| <b>BE (nl)</b> | Flemish Community of Belgium         |
| <b>BE (fr)</b> | French-speaking Community of Belgium |
| <b>BG</b>      | Bulgaria                             |
| <b>CY</b>      | Cyprus                               |
| <b>CZ</b>      | The Czech Republic                   |
| <b>DE</b>      | Germany                              |
| <b>DK</b>      | Denmark                              |
| <b>EE</b>      | Estonia                              |
| <b>EL</b>      | Greece                               |
| <b>ES</b>      | Spain                                |
| <b>FI</b>      | Finland                              |
| <b>FR</b>      | France                               |
| <b>HU</b>      | Hungary                              |
| <b>IE</b>      | Ireland                              |
| <b>IS</b>      | Iceland                              |
| <b>IT</b>      | Italy                                |
| <b>LT</b>      | Lithuania                            |
| <b>LU</b>      | Luxembourg                           |
| <b>MT</b>      | Malta                                |
| <b>NL</b>      | The Netherlands                      |
| <b>NO</b>      | Norway                               |
| <b>PL</b>      | Poland                               |
| <b>PT</b>      | Portugal                             |
| <b>RO</b>      | Romania                              |
| <b>SE</b>      | Sweden                               |
| <b>SI</b>      | Slovenia                             |
| <b>SK</b>      | Slovakia                             |
| <b>TR</b>      | Turkey                               |
| <b>UK</b>      | The United Kingdom                   |

The 2007-2013 LLP was designed on the basis of “Education & Training 2010” work programme with the aim to ensure that the EU education and training policies would contribute to the objectives of the Lisbon strategy. The Programme which is comprised of four sectoral programmes (Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, and Grundtvig), the Transversal programme and the Jean Monnet programme supports transnational mobility, partnerships and other cooperation projects in all educational sectors.

The interim evaluation of the LLP was launched by the European Commission following the requirements of the LLP Decision. This evaluation covers the entire content of the LLP, with all its sub-programmes and actions, over the implementation period of 2007-2009. The purpose of this evaluation is to provide a retrospective and prospective analysis of the LLP.

The Report was prepared under Service Contract No. 2009-5173-PPMI “Interim evaluation of the Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2009”. The evaluation is being carried out by the Public Policy and Management Institute (Lithuania) and steered by the Steering Group involving the Directorate-General for Education and Culture of the European Commission and the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency. The Steering Group met five times to discuss evaluation reports submitted by the contractor.

This report answers all evaluation questions based on the results of the evaluation tasks carried out in the previous evaluation phases. A main report presents the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations on the basis of the data collected and analysed during the evaluation process. Since interim evaluation of the LLP was performed during the implementation phase, it focuses on the products and results of the Programme.

The Final Report offers recommendations for the European Commission concerning the development of a Programme for the post-2013 period as well as the continued implementation of the current Programme, taking into account its main design and implementation deficiencies.

As provided in the Terms of Reference, the recommendations focus on six important issues:

- Improving the effectiveness and utility of the LLP and its sub-programmes;
- Better reaching the relevant target groups and making better use of the Programme's results at the policy level;
- Improving the synergies and interaction between the sub-programmes and between the centralised and decentralised actions;
- Simplifying the degree of complexity of the rules and the level of the management workload;
- Simplifying the management system of the LLP;
- Identifying the most effective and useful activities and their relative financial weighting.

In addition, the main report contains a description of the evaluated Programme and its context as well as the methodology used during the evaluation project.

The Final Report is divided into the following parts:

- Context of the Programme operation (Part 1);
- Description of the Programme and its implementation (Part 2);



- Evaluation methodology (Part 3);
- Evaluation results (Part 4);
- Conclusions and recommendations (Part 5).

An executive summary of the Final Report (in English, French and German) is presented separately.

In addition, a number of annexes are attached to this evaluation report presenting technical details of the evaluation and additional information. Annex 1 presents the Terms of Reference of this interim evaluation. Annex 2 provides the synthesis of the National Reports. The case studies, the list of interviews, the survey results and the longitudinal mapping of the Programme are presented in Annexes 3, 4, 5 and 6 respectively. Analysis of the monitoring data is provided in Annex 7. Annex 8 contains the note on monitoring the Lifelong Learning Programme, while Annex 9 - the list of references and information sources.





# 1. CONTEXT OF THE PROGRAMME OPERATION

## 1.1. Needs and challenges: promoting lifelong learning in the context of the Lisbon objectives

The Lisbon European Council emphasised the role of education and training in developing the most competitive and dynamic knowledge based economy capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. To this end the Lisbon and subsequent European Councils called for concerted efforts in modernising ET systems. In order to guide progress on achieving the objectives set for ET systems, in 2003 the Council<sup>1</sup> adopted five benchmarks to be achieved by 2010:

- EU average rate of early school leavers to be no more than 10%;<sup>2</sup>
- Total number of graduates in mathematics, science and technology in the EU to increase by at least 15% (achieved in 2004), with a decreased gender imbalance in these fields;
- At least 85% of 22-year-olds to have completed upper secondary education;<sup>3</sup>
- Percentage of 15-year-olds who are low-achieving in reading to have decreased by at least 20% compared to the year 2000;<sup>4</sup>
- Average participation in LLL to be at least 12.5% of the adult working age population (25–64 age group).<sup>5</sup>

The progress towards these benchmarks is depicted in Figure 1. Overall, significant progress has been achieved since 2000 in many areas. However, it is likely that four ambitious targets have not been achieved by 2010. The decreasing levels of low-achieving 15-year-olds in reading and falling levels of adult participation in learning are among the largest concerns.

The EU-level averages, however, conceal considerable differences between the Member States. One example is an aggregate measure of participation in LLL, which captures the levels of participation in formal and non-formal learning of populations aged 4 to 64. Figure 2 indicates that Sweden is the best performing country in this respect and its LLL index is almost 30 points above the EU average, whereas Bulgaria is more than 16 points below the average. The regional grouping of countries shows that northern and western European countries are among the best performers, while southern and eastern European Member States (with some notable exceptions) tend to lag behind the EU average.

The above discussed differences indicate that the countries lagging behind have substantial scope for improvement. Since the Member States have responsibility for the content and organisation of ET, there is substantial need for European Union measures in supplementing national efforts by the promotion of policy learning, spread of best practices, interchange, mobility and cooperation between the Member States. The next chapter presents the European Union policies and specific measures in tackling these needs.

<sup>1</sup> Council of the European Union, *Council Conclusions on Reference Levels of European Average Performance in Education and Training (Benchmarks)*, No. 8981/03, Brussels, 7 May 2003.

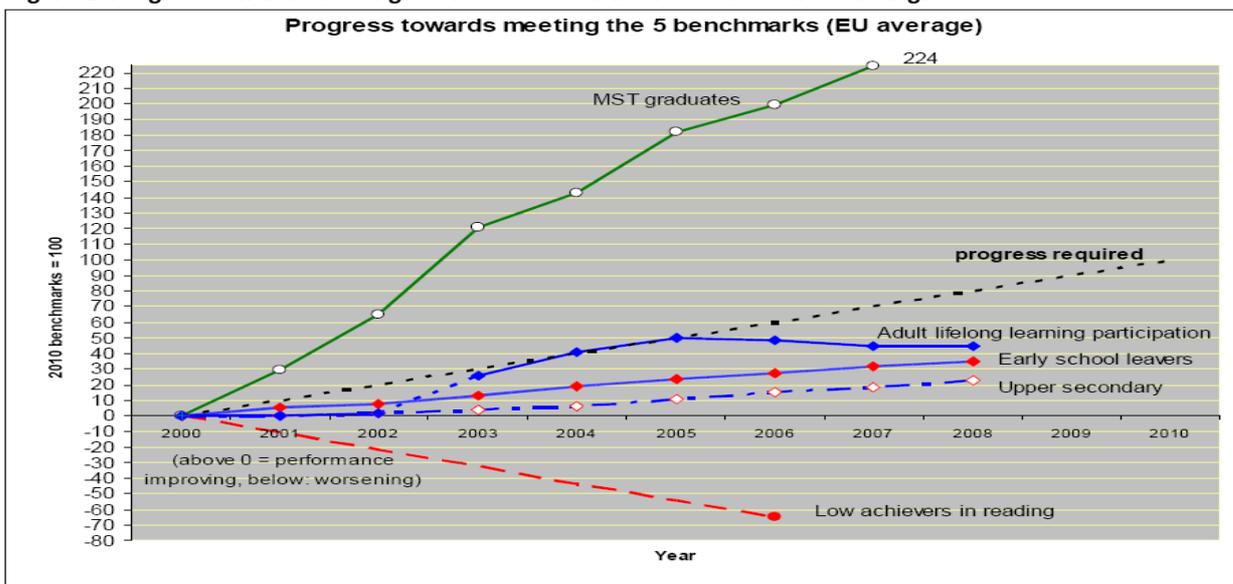
<sup>2</sup> The rate in 2004 was 16%.

<sup>3</sup> The rate in 2004 was around 77%.

<sup>4</sup> The average rate in 2003 was almost 20%.

<sup>5</sup> The average rate 2004 was 9.9%.

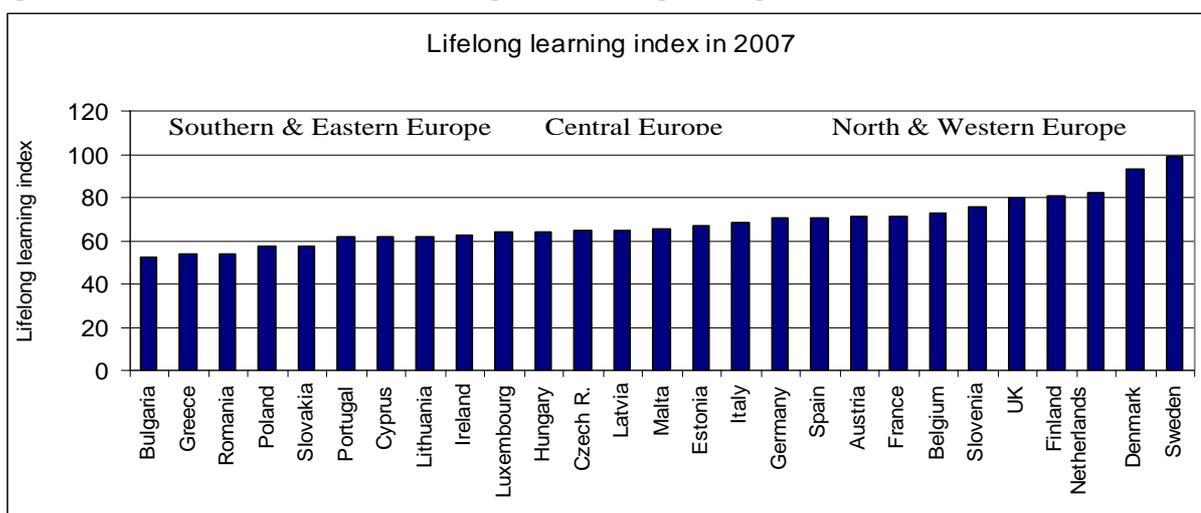
**Figure 1. Progress towards meeting the five benchmarks in education and training.**



Source: Commission of the European Communities, *Progress Towards the Lisbon Objectives in Education and Training: Indicators and Benchmarks*, Commission staff working document, Brussels, 2009.

Notes: the starting point (in 2000) is set at zero and the 2020 benchmark at 100. The results achieved each year are measured against the 2010 benchmark (= 100). The diagonal line shows the progress required. If a line stays below this diagonal line, progress is not sufficient; if it is above the diagonal line progress is stronger than what is needed to achieve the benchmark. If the line declines, the problem is getting worse.

**Figure 2. Cross-national differences according to the Lifelong learning index.**



Source: Own compilation on the basis of data provided in: Commission of the European Communities, *Progress Towards the Lisbon Objectives in Education and Training: Indicators and Benchmarks*, Commission staff working document, Brussels, 2009.

Notes: The index is a proxy measure of participation in education and lifelong learning for populations aged 4 to 64. One indicator is used for each stage of lifelong learning: the first one measures the participation in early childhood education between 4-years-old and the starting age of compulsory primary education, the second shows the participation in primary, secondary and tertiary education of populations aged 5 to 29 and the last one covers the participation in lifelong learning of 25- to-64 year-olds. These three indicators - each representing a lifetime stage of lifelong learning - are subsequently normalised using the distance to the best performer method and, the simple arithmetic mean is taken to arrive at the overall index values in the range 0 to 100.

The literature shows that learning takes place in different settings and contexts, in what we prefer to call formal, non-formal as well as informal learning environments. Learning that takes place in formal education and training environments is the most visible and has long dominated educational policy and practice. In recent years, however, there has been a growing understanding that learning in non-formal and informal settings are equally crucial for the realisation of lifelong learning, thus requiring new strategies for the identification and validation of these more 'invisible' learning environments. This is confirmed by recent Eurostat data indicating that of the

EU population between 25-64 years participating in education and training, approximately 94% participate in non-formal learning (and the remaining 6% in formal education and training) for which 80% is job related. Moreover, employers are the leading providers of non-formal education and training with a share of almost 40%, indicating that not all the learning takes place in a formal school setting<sup>6</sup>.

## 1.2. EU policies in the area of lifelong learning

The Treaty of Rome<sup>7</sup> contained the first seeds of future European ET policies, by providing a limited role for the Commission in the area of vocational training. The period between 1957 and the Maastricht Treaty (1992) witnessed a number of important policy developments, such as the adoption of the Directives on the recognition of regulated qualifications (e.g. doctors, engineers, etc.), the development of the first Community action plan on education (1976) and the launch of the first Community programmes in the area of education.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, the development of policies in this area was slow and experienced numerous setbacks. This was largely due to the need to develop effective modes of cooperation between: (a) the Commission, which lacked a clear mandate and (b) the Member States, maintaining diverse national systems. The Maastricht Treaty<sup>9</sup> provided a new impetus to the development of European ET policy by giving a clear mandate to the Community to support and supplement national policies in line with the principle of subsidiarity. This fostered expansion of the Community programmes, the development of new policies and the establishment of a separate DG in the European Commission responsible for education and culture. However, it was not until the adoption of the Lisbon Strategy that education and training (and LLL in particular) became one of the top priorities of the EU.

Lifelong learning was not a new Community initiative: the year 1996 was devoted to LLL, the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) explicitly recognised the importance of LLL and in 1998 it became a horizontal priority of the European Employment Strategy<sup>10</sup>. However, it was the Lisbon European Council (March 2000) that defined LLL as a core element to make Europe the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based society in the world. Following the conclusions of the Lisbon and Feira Councils, the Commission published the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning<sup>11</sup>, which initiated an EU-wide consultation on a comprehensive strategy for implementing LLL policies. The results were streamlined by the Communication “Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality”<sup>12</sup>.

Lifelong learning (LLL) – all learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Eurostat, Statistics in focus, “Significant country difference in adult learning” 44/2009.

<sup>7</sup> The articles 41, 57, 118 and 128.

<sup>8</sup> E.g. Erasmus, PETRA, 'Youth for Europe', Lingua and others.

<sup>9</sup> Articles 149 and 150.

<sup>10</sup> See: A. Dehmel. “Making a European area of lifelong learning a reality? Some critical reflections on the European Union’s lifelong learning policies”. *Comparative Education*, Vol. 42, No. 1, 2006.

<sup>11</sup> Commission staff working paper, *A Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*, SEC(2000) 1832, Brussels, 30.10.2000.

<sup>12</sup> Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, *Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality* (COM(2001)678 final). **Note:** *The Communication argued that the aspirations to achieve the Lisbon objectives require a fundamentally new approach to education and training. These reforms should be guided by the principle of LLL.*

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

The shift towards an integrated approach to LLL and expansion of the scope of Community policies in this area was furthered by the 2001 Stockholm European Council. It laid down three concrete objectives for education and training policies:<sup>14</sup>

- Increasing the quality and effectiveness of education and training systems in the European Union;
- Facilitating the access of all to education and training systems;
- Opening up education and training systems to the wider world.

These strategic objectives were operationalised by the “ET 2010 work programme”<sup>15</sup> adopted in 2002. The Programme re-emphasised the importance of LLL and provided a concrete framework for further development of EU education and training policies by:

- Breaking down three strategic objectives into 13 associated objectives, identifying the timeframe for their implementation and setting-up the system of agreed-upon indicators for measuring progress;
- Underlying that the OMC should be applied to implementing EU education and training policy by relying on such instruments as indicators and benchmarks, exchanges of best practice, periodic monitoring and peer review.

The aforementioned strategic developments had profound impacts on practical measures and programmes implemented by the Commission. While the second generation of Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci programmes have substantially broadened their scope and successfully integrated a number of previous programmes during the 2000–2006 period, their design did not explicitly take into account the Lisbon agenda. It was the launch of the LLP for the 2007–2013 period that signalled a breaking point in terms of putting the newly developed Community policy objectives into practice. The LLP integrated the previous Community programmes and actions in the area of ET into a single programme. This was done with the view of ensuring closer links between interventions in ET so that all stages of learning from pre-school to post-retirement were coherently covered.

The Community-level policies ran in parallel to intergovernmental cooperation in the area of higher education. The Bologna process, initiated in 1999, could be an example of it. Although different origins and mandates of Community policies and intergovernmental cooperation prevented the possible merger of this initiative, a number of the EU strategic documents explicitly aim at creating synergies with the Bologna process.

The future framework for European education and training policies is outlined in “An updated strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training”, which was adopted in 2009 and provides a follow-up to the Education and training 2010 work programme. The new strategic framework identifies four new strategic objectives, priority areas, concrete follow-up activities as well as indicators and targets to be achieved in 2020. More specifically, the new strategic objectives include:

- Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality;
- Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training;
- Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship;
- Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.

In summary, the Lisbon strategy and subsequent policy developments marked a turning point by: (a) establishing ET as one of the top priorities of the EU; (b) widening the scope of the EU policies in this area as well as providing new instruments (the OMC) for policy implementation; (c) proposing that reforms of European ET policies should be based on the principle of LLL. These strategic developments had a

<sup>14</sup> Council of the European Union, “The concrete future objectives of education and training systems”. 14 February 2001 (5680/01 EDUC 18).

<sup>15</sup> Council of the European Union, Detailed work programme on the follow-up of the objectives of Education and training systems in Europe, (2002/C 142/01).

fundamental impact on the objectives and design of the LLP, which is outlined in the following part of the Final Report.

With the aim of contributing to the achievement of the EU 2020 strategic objectives, the European Commission will propose a new Programme for the post-2013 period. The successor Programme will constitute an important contribution to the 'Youth on the Move' flagship initiative, which aims to "enhance the performance and international attractiveness of Europe's higher education institutions and raise the overall quality of all levels of education and training in the EU, combining both excellence and equity, by promoting student mobility and trainee mobility, and improve the employment situation of young people".

In order to tackle the problems of early school leaving, insufficient participation in higher education and youth unemployment in Europe, the 'Youth on the Move' initiative set out actions affecting young people in three main areas:

- education and training systems;
- mobility (both for learning and jobs);
- a new framework for youth employment.

'Youth on the Move' also focuses on disadvantaged youth. It should be noted that this initiative does not financially sponsor actions on its own - instead it aims at aligning and focusing on youth-related activities, acknowledging that a vast majority of the LLP budget is spent on youth (initial) education.

The European Commission initiated a public consultation on the future Programme on education and training (LLP) (during the period 15 September 2010 to 30 November 2010). Also, three separate Impact Assessments were launched in a co-ordinated way to support the proposal for the future Programmes, including the successor Programme.



## 2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAMME AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

### 2.1. Outreach of the Lifelong Learning Programme

Since learning takes place in formal, non-formal and informal learning environments, it is important to ensure broad access of different groups to the LLP. According to the LLP Decision, the Programme should be aimed at:

- pupils, students, trainees and adult learners;
- teachers, trainers and other staff involved in any aspect of lifelong learning;
- people in the labour market;
- institutions or organisations providing learning opportunities within the context of the LLP, or within the limits of its sub-programmes;
- persons and bodies responsible for systems and policies concerning any aspect of lifelong learning at local, regional and national level;
- enterprises, social partners and their organisations at all levels, including trade organisations and chambers of commerce and industry;
- bodies providing guidance, counselling and information services relating to any aspect of lifelong learning;
- associations working in the field of lifelong learning, including student, trainee, pupil, teachers, parent and adult learner associations;
- research centres and bodies concerned with lifelong learning issues
- non-profit organisations, voluntary bodies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Therefore, the Programme covers all learners in their specific learning environments (schools, universities, adult education, training centres etc.) and teachers, trainers and managers of education organisations. In addition, explicit priorities in the Programme single out disadvantaged groups (such as socially excluded persons, persons with disabilities, young people excluded from education and training systems) as their priority target.

From an economic point of view, the Programme is supposed to affect positively all those involved in the productive process: employees and their representative organisations; employers and their representative organisations. It also affects those striving to be included in the work force: young people aiming to enter the labour market and unemployed persons of all ages aspiring to re-enter it.

Part 4 of the Final Report analyses the extent to which the target audience is being successfully reached during the implementation of the LLP.

### 2.2. Main activities of the Lifelong Learning Programme

The Lifelong Learning Programme is comprised of four sectoral programmes, the Transversal programme, which encompasses four key activities, and the Jean Monnet programme encompassing three key activities. The sectoral programmes focus on school education (Comenius), higher education (Erasmus), vocational education and training (Leonardo da Vinci) and adult education (Grundtvig), while the Transversal and Jean Monnet programmes support cross-cutting areas (e.g. policy cooperation and innovation in lifelong learning, languages, development of innovative ICT, dissemination and exploitation of results) and teaching, research and reflection around



European integration respectively. Therefore, the scope of the Programme covers all education sectors.

The LLP supports eight different categories of action: mobility (mobility of individuals and its organisation), bilateral and multilateral partnerships, multilateral projects, multilateral networks, unilateral or national projects, observation and analysis of policies and systems in the field of lifelong learning and related activities, operating grants and various accompanying measures in line with the objectives of the Programme. It is also possible to distinguish an additional category – charter and certificates that are preconditions for participating in the Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci sub-programmes. Moreover, the European Commission may organise other actions that are likely to facilitate implementation of the LLP (seminars, colloquia, meetings, and information, publication and dissemination actions).

All action categories are not applicable to each sub-programmes of the LLP. Table 1 below gives an overview of action categories supported by the LLP in the period 2007-2009. This table also distinguishes between the actions managed on the “decentralised” and “centralised” basis.

**Table 1. Action categories supported by the Lifelong Learning Programme in the 2007–2009 period**

|   | COMENIUS | ERASMUS | LEONARDO DA VINCI | GRUNDTVIG | Transversal programme |     |     |     | Jean Monnet programme |     |     |
|---|----------|---------|-------------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----------------------|-----|-----|
|   |          |         |                   |           | KA1                   | KA2 | KA3 | KA4 | KA1                   | KA2 | KA3 |
| Preconditions                           |          | +       | +                 |           |                       |     |     |     |                       |     |     |
| Mobility                                | +        | +       | +                 | +         | +                     |     |     |     |                       |     |     |
| Bilateral and multilateral partnerships | +        |         | +                 | +         |                       |     |     |     |                       |     |     |
| Multilateral projects                   | +        | +       | +                 | +         |                       | +   | +   | +   | +                     |     |     |
| Multilateral networks                   | +        | +       | +                 | +         |                       | +   | +   |     | +                     |     |     |
| Unilateral or national projects         |          |         |                   |           |                       |     |     |     | +                     |     |     |
| Accompanying measures                   | +        | +       | +                 | +         |                       | +   |     |     |                       |     |     |
| Observation and analysis                |          |         |                   |           | +                     |     |     | +   |                       |     |     |
| Operating grants                        |          |         |                   |           |                       |     |     |     |                       | +   | +   |

|                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Centralised actions | Decentralised actions |
|---------------------|-----------------------|

Source: European Commission; adapted by the contractor.

The indicative *financial envelope* for the LLP was set at €6.97 billion for its total duration. Its annual breakdown according to the sub-programmes is provided in Table 2 below. It indicates that the sub-programmes of Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci are the largest in terms of financing. About 18% of the total LLP budget was allocated for the centralised actions at EU level, and the remaining 82% – for the National Agencies implementing the decentralised actions.



**Table 2. Financial allocations for sub-programmes (€)**

|                   | 2007               | 2008               | 2009                 |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Comenius          | 147.000.000        | 152.000.000        | 181.000.000          |
| Erasmus           | 407.000.000        | 456.000.000        | 459.000.000          |
| Leonardo da Vinci | 236.000.000        | 257.000.000        | 274.000.000          |
| Grundtvig         | 44.700.000         | 45.600.000         | 60.800.000           |
| Transversal       | 50.900.000         | 54.400.000         | 53.100.000           |
| Jean Monnet       | 23.500.000         | 23.590.000         | 24.500.000           |
| Others            | 3.430.000          | 1.520.000          | 900.000              |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>913.000.000</b> | <b>990.000.000</b> | <b>1.100.000.000</b> |

Source: LLP Activity Report 2009-2010 Annex III Budget statistical data 2007-2010.

Note: All figures are ex-ante and rounded to 1 ‰ of their value.

### 2.3. Implementation and management structure of the Lifelong Learning Programme

The LLP is implemented through an indirect centralised budget management mode<sup>16</sup>. A general legal framework for the LLP implementation and management system is laid down in the LLP Decision and in the Commission's Decision C (2007) 1807 of 26 April 2007 relating to the respective responsibilities of the Member States, the Commission and the National Agencies in implementation of the Lifelong Learning Programme (2007–2013). Administrative provisions are further specified in regulatory and guidance documents issued by the Commission (annual calls for proposals and LLP Guides, Guides to NAs, etc.). The main bodies engaged in the implementation of the LLP are the European Commission, the LLP Committee, National Authorities, National Agencies and the Executive Agency.

The European Commission (DG EAC) is responsible for ensuring the effective and efficient implementation of the LLP as a whole. The Commission is assisted in this task by the LLP Committee, which comprises representatives of the Participating Countries and is chaired by the Commission.

The National Authority, usually the ministry responsible for education in each participating country, monitors and supervises the work of its National Agency/-ies. The National Authority is responsible for establishing a system of so-called secondary controls, whose objective is to give reasonable assurance that the systems and primary checks carried out by the NAs are working effectively, and on the basis of those secondary controls to issue *ex-ante* and yearly *ex-post* declarations of assurance.

Operational management of the decentralised actions of the Programme is carried out by the NAs (one or more in each of the Participating Countries), which manage the lifecycle of the projects and perform monitoring and evaluation activities related to the LLP decentralised actions in their country. Operational management of centralised actions is carried out by EACEA (Executive Agency), which is responsible for the management of the whole lifecycle of the centralised projects.

The European centre for Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) in Thessaloniki supports the European Commission by coordinating the implementation of study visits of the Transversal Programme at the EU level

<sup>16</sup> A small share of the programme (impact and policy studies, special events, etc.) is implemented directly by the European Commission through a direct centralised management mode.

Information on the main tasks delegated to LLP management bodies is presented in Table 3 below.

**Table 3. Implementation structure of the Lifelong Learning Programme**

| Implementation body   | Main tasks  |
|---|---|
| European Commission (DG EAC)  | Ensuring the effective and efficient implementation of the LLP as a whole (regularly monitoring and evaluation of the LLP against its objectives, establishment of appropriate supervisory controls by overseeing and coordinating the operation of the whole system and reviewing the systems of national controls, etc.).   |
| The LLP Committee   | Assisting the European Commission in the implementation of the LLP  |
| The National Authorities  | Monitoring and supervising the National Agencies and providing assurance to the European Commission on the proper management by the National Agencies of the European Union funds for decentralised actions and the LLP.  |
| National Agencies   | Operational management of the decentralised actions of the LLP at the national level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Publication of any national calls for proposals or deadlines complementing the European call for proposals on the LLP;</li> <li>- Providing information on and promoting the programme actions, counselling potential applicants;</li> <li>- Reception, assessment and selection of grant applications<sup>17</sup>;</li> <li>- Taking the grant award decision for approved grant applications;</li> <li>- Issuing grant agreements and payments to beneficiaries;</li> <li>- Reception and treatment of contractual reports from beneficiaries;</li> <li>- Monitoring and support to programme beneficiaries;</li> <li>- Desk checks and on the spot control and audit of supported activities (so called primary checks);</li> <li>- Dissemination and exploitation of results from supported activities;</li> <li>- Analysing and providing feedback on programme implementation and impact in their country.</li> </ul> |
| The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency in Brussels (EACEA) | Operational management of the LLP centralised actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Publication of specific calls for proposals and calls for tender;</li> <li>- Receipt of grant applications and organising the assessment and project selection;</li> <li>- Issuing project grant agreements and decisions, making grant payments to beneficiaries;</li> <li>- Acceptance and treatment of contractual reports from beneficiaries;</li> <li>- Monitoring and support to programme beneficiaries;</li> <li>- Desk checks and on the spot control and audit of supported projects.</li> </ul>  |

Source: European Commission; adapted by the contractor.

## 2.4. Monitoring system and indicators

### *Monitoring of the LLP at the project level*

Project-level monitoring (monitoring and support to beneficiaries) is carried out by the NAs for the decentralised actions, and EACEA - for the centralised actions of the LLP. The main purpose of monitoring is to provide support for each project offering guidance and advice that can be integrated by the project team as it endeavours to achieve a successful outcome. Monitoring is also aimed at ensuring that projects are aligned with and fulfilling their stated objectives and allows good practices and lessons learned to be identified so that others may benefit from them.

Monitoring activities carried out by the agencies comprise the organisation of monitoring visits, monitoring meetings, desk monitoring (assessment of project reports, contacts and advice to beneficiaries seeking help), etc. The main sources of

<sup>17</sup> Grant applications for decentralised actions are processed via so called NA1 or NA2 procedure. NA1 procedure is used for all decentralised actions except Leonardo da Vinci Transfer of Innovation multilateral projects, NAs carry out evaluation, award and contracting procedures to beneficiaries located in their respective countries. NA2 procedure is used for Leonardo da Vinci Transfer of Innovation multilateral projects. Grant applications under the NA2 procedure are submitted to the NA of the country where the applicant is located. Grant award decisions are taken by the Commission but evaluation and contracting procedures are carried out by the respective NAs.

monitoring information are progress and final project reports presented by the grant beneficiaries.

#### *Monitoring of the LLP at the programme level*

Monitoring at the programme level (monitoring and support to National Agencies and to the Executive Agency) is executed by the European Commission, in the case of decentralised actions in cooperation with the Participating Countries and their respective National Authorities.

The key focus of monitoring at the programme level is on the core outputs, which could be aggregated at the programme level, and also results and impacts (i.e. the expected benefits which follow the production of the outputs and occur in the targeted groups but also beyond them). Monitoring at the programme level is closely coordinated with programme evaluation activities, especially with respect to monitoring results and impacts of the LLP.

The main information sources of programme monitoring are Yearly NA Reports, EACEA reports, information in relevant LLP information systems (LLPLink for decentralised actions, Saykiss for centralised actions, other IT tools specific to the sub-programmes and actions of LLP – Rap4Leo for Leonardo da Vinci sub-programme, Erasmus Database for Erasmus sub-programme) and reports on the implementation and impact of the LLP in respective Participating Countries presented by the National Authorities in 2010 and 2015. For programme monitoring DG EAC also deploys such tools as quality and impact monitoring visits to NAs.

#### *Monitoring indicators*

Four quantified targets were set for the four sectoral programmes of the LLP in the LLP Decision:

- **Comenius** should involve at least three million pupils in joint educational activities, over the period of the programme;
- **Erasmus** should reach a total of three million individual participants in student mobility actions by 2012;
- **Leonardo da Vinci** should increase placements in enterprises to 80.000 per year by the end of the programme;
- **Grundtvig** should support the mobility of 7.000 individuals involved in adult education per year by 2013.

The system of LLP monitoring indicators was further developed by a special working group of the LLP Committee and the European Commission on impact monitoring, which provided its proposals for the LLP monitoring framework and indicators. Based on these proposals, the system of LLP monitoring indicators was approved by the LLP Committee in June 2010 (see Table 4 below). The approved set of indicators is based on factual information that is being collected from the grant beneficiaries (data on indicators will be extracted from beneficiary final reports) and is well structured. Information for the calculation of indicators will be collected via the LLPLink.



**Table 4. Approved set of indicators for monitoring of LLP**

| Number | Indicator  | Statistics   |
|--------|--|--|
| 1      | Grants by consortia  | Number of CONSORTIA, grant per CONSORTIUM  |
| 2      | Grants by partner  | Number of PARTNERS, grant per PARTNER  |
| 3      | Grants per participant   | Number of PARTICIPANTS, grant per PARTICIPANT (Number of staff. Number of students / pupils / learners. Per country)   |
| 4      | Consortium Composition and Size, by size, legal status and commercial orientation            | Type of PARTNERS, HOSTS and HOMES (Public, Private, etc), per action, per country.   |
| 5      | Consortium Composition and Size, by type of institution                                      | Type of participating institutions (institution types, sector). Per country.   |
| 6      | Consortium Composition and Size, Intensity of the cooperation and Country of the coordinator | Number of CONSORTIA, number of PARTNERS per consortia. Per COORDINATOR country. Per PARTNER country.   |
| 7      | From/To mobility   | Number of student / pupils / learners in-flows and out-flows matrix. Per country.  |
| 8      | Duration of the Mobility   | Number of participants in-flows and out-flows durations from days to months. Per country.  |
| 9      | Educational Map of the Action  | Subjects, educational areas [ISCED], of the project. Per action.   |
| 10     | Social Cohesion Topics addressed by the projects   | Social cohesion topics addressed by the projects (cultural diversity, xenophobia, special needs, equal treatment, sexual discrimination, racial discrimination, age discrimination). |

Source: the European Commission.



## 3. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

### 3.1. Intervention Logic

The LLP is comprised of four sectoral programmes (Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci and Grundtvig), the Transversal programme and the Jean Monnet programme. While each sub-programme has a fairly distinct target group and set of operational objectives, they are also united by a common logic of intervention and higher-level objectives.

#### 3.1.1. Global, intermediate, specific and operational objectives of the Lifelong Learning Programme

This section discusses the objectives hierarchy of the LLP. The objectives are derived from the Decision establishing the action programme in the field of lifelong learning<sup>18</sup> (hereafter the LLP Decision).

##### Global objectives

Article 1.2 of the LLP Decision stipulates that “The general objective of the Lifelong Learning Programme is to contribute *through lifelong learning* to the development of the EU as an advanced *knowledge-based society*, with *sustainable economic development, more and better jobs* and *greater social cohesion*, while ensuring good protection of the environment for future generations” (italics added). Thus, lifelong learning is seen as a global objective, which is instrumental in achieving the objectives set in the Lisbon Strategy.

##### Intermediate objectives

Substantial improvements in participation rates in lifelong learning largely depend on national education and training policies, which are the responsibility of the Member States (see part 4.2 and Annex 2 for more in depth discussion of national education policies). The role of the EU in this policy area refers to supplementing and supporting the actions of Member States, as stipulated in articles 149 and 150 of the Treaty. Accordingly, the logic of intervention of the LLP is heavily based on the principle of subsidiarity: the Programme takes action only in the areas and in so far as the lifelong learning objectives cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States alone and can therefore, by reason of the scale or effects, be better achieved by the Union. In line with this logic, the LLP aims to support national efforts by implementing the following intermediate objective: to foster interchange, cooperation and mobility between education and training systems within the EU so that they become a world quality reference<sup>19</sup>. Accordingly, it is expected that the intended impacts will be triggered through EU action at three levels:

1. The individual level. The LLP seeks to supplement the efforts of the Participating Countries by fostering mobility of learners and providers of learning opportunities;
2. The organisational level. The LLP seeks to create value added by stimulating interchange and cooperation of organisations involved in the provision of learning opportunities;

<sup>18</sup> Decision No 1720/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006 establishing an action programme in the field of lifelong learning.

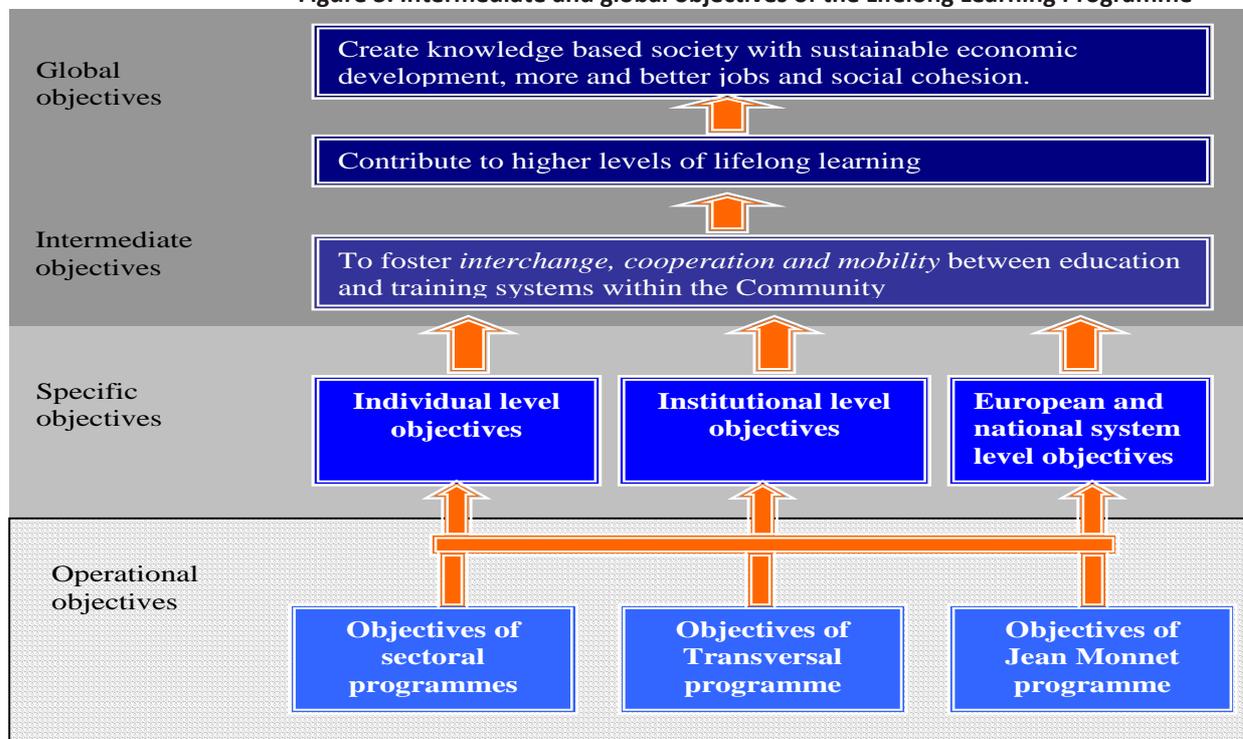
<sup>19</sup> Ibid.



- The European and national level. The LLP contributes to the implementation of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) in education and training through interchange and cooperation of the Participating Countries (see evidence under evaluation question 17 for more in depth discussion on OMC).

Figure 3 outlines the hierarchy of the LLP objectives.

**Figure 3. Intermediate and global objectives of the Lifelong Learning Programme**



### **Specific objectives**

Interchange, cooperation and mobility are furthered by the implementation of 11 specific objectives, which characterise the areas of intervention of the Programme as a whole (see Table 5 below). Also, each sub-programme has additional specific objectives, which are discussed below.

Analytically, the Programme-wide specific objectives could be grouped into three broad categories, according to the level at which the results are likely to occur: individual, institutional and system levels. The main benefit of distinguishing between these three levels of intervention is that this facilitates the identification of different types of results that each specific objective is expected to deliver:

- At the individual level the intervention seeks to change the attitudes and perceptions of participants as well as increase their competences;
- At the institutional level the Programme seeks changes in services, pedagogies, contents and practices in the provision of lifelong learning opportunities;
- At system level the intervention's specific objectives aim at policy-learning, change of national systems and the development of European dimension in lifelong learning.

As Figure 4 indicates, there are potential spillover effects between these levels. For instance, the mobility of teachers, trainers, researchers and other staff could – in addition to individual-level results – lead towards improvements in the performance of the institutions. Also, the institutional performance could be affected by European cooperation initiatives in the area of education and training as well as in national education and training systems, whose reform is shaped by the open method of

coordination. These spillover effects explain why most of the specific objectives are expected to deliver results at more than one level.

**Figure 4. Individual, institutional and system levels of the Lifelong Learning Programme**



Table 5 outlines the Programme-wide specific objectives and indicates at what level (individual, institutional or system) these objectives seek results. It shows that a number of the LLP objectives seek to influence *participating individuals*. In line with the Kirkpatrick's analytical framework<sup>20</sup>, participation in mobility, training, seminars, etc. (output level) should change attitudes, perceptions and competences (result level), which in the ideal case should lead to the application of these competences and attitudes in civic, social and economic contexts. Furthermore, the Programme-wide specific objectives also target *institutions*, which provide lifelong learning opportunities. The logic of intervention at this level is that cooperation and interchange between the institutions as well as mobility of their staff and "clients" should result in changes of services, pedagogies, contents and practices in the provision of providing lifelong learning opportunities. Lastly, the Programme also targets *national and European systems* of lifelong learning. It is expected that changes at individual and institutional levels as well as cooperation and interchange should lead towards policy learning and change of national lifelong learning systems as well as the development of European dimension in this area.

<sup>20</sup> Kirkpatrick, D. "Evaluating Training Programs. The Four Levels". San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1994.

**Table 5. Specific objectives of the Lifelong Learning Programme**

| Specific objectives by levels of intervention |  |  |   |  |
|---|--|--|---|--|
|   |  | Individual level:<br>attitudes,<br>perceptions,<br>competences | Institutional level:<br>services,<br>pedagogies,<br>contents and<br>practices | System level:<br>policy learning,<br>change of national<br>systems and<br>development of<br>European dimension |
| a   | To contribute to the development of quality lifelong learning, and to promote high performance, innovation and a European dimension in systems and practices in the field  |  | +   | +  |
| b   | To support the realisation of a European area for lifelong learning  |  |   | +  |
| c   | To help improve the quality, attractiveness and accessibility of the opportunities for lifelong learning available within Member States  |  | +   | +  |
| d   | To reinforce the contribution of lifelong learning to social cohesion, active citizenship, intercultural dialogue, gender equality and personal fulfilment   | +  |   | +  |
| e   | To help promote creativity, competitiveness, employability and the growth of an entrepreneurial spirit   | +  | +   |  |
| f   | To contribute to increased participation in lifelong learning by people of all ages, including those with special needs and disadvantaged groups, regardless of their socio-economic background                                      | +  |   | +  |
| g   | To promote language learning and linguistic diversity  | +  | +   | +  |
| h   | To support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning  |  | +   |  |
| i   | To reinforce the role of lifelong learning in creating a sense of European citizenship based on an understanding of and respect for human rights and democracy, and encouraging tolerance and respect for other peoples and cultures | +  | +   |  |
| j   | To promote cooperation in quality assurance in all sectors of education and training in Europe   |  |   | +  |
| k   | To encourage the best use of results, innovative products and processes and to exchange good practice in the fields covered by the Lifelong Learning Programme, in order to improve the quality of education and training            |  | +   | +  |

**The operational objectives of the sub-programmes**

This section presents the operational and specific objectives of each sub-programme and identifies the main types of activities supported.

*Comenius*

Comenius is a sectoral programme, which focuses on pre-school and school education (up to the level of the end of upper secondary education). It has three broad target groups: a) individuals in pre-school and school education; b) teachers and other educational staff; c) institutions and organisations providing such education. The sectoral programme has six operational objectives. Table 6 outlines these objectives and typical activities supported.

**Table 6. Operational objectives and types of activities supported by the Comenius sub-programme**

|   | <b>Operational objectives</b>   | <b>Types of funded activities</b>  |
|---|---|--|
| a | To improve the quality and to increase the volume of mobility involving pupils and educational staff in different Member States | Mobility of individuals, which encompasses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- exchanges of pupils and staff;</li> <li>- placements in schools or relevant organisations involved in school education for educational staff;</li> <li>- participation in training courses, conferences and seminars for teachers and other educational staff;</li> <li>- study and preparatory visits for mobility, partnership, project or network activities;</li> <li>- assistantships for future teachers</li> </ul> |
| b | To improve the quality and to increase the volume of partnerships between schools in different Member States                    | Comenius school partnership projects;<br>Comenius-Regio partnerships;<br>eTwinning. <sup>21</sup>  |
| c | To encourage the learning of modern foreign languages   | Mobility of individuals (pupils, educational staff, assistantships, etc.);<br>Comenius school partnership;<br>eTwinning.   |
| d | To support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning             | Multilateral projects and networks   |
| e | To enhance the quality and European dimension of teacher training   | Mobility of individuals (educational staff and teaching assistantships);<br>Multilateral projects and networks;<br>Comenius school partnerships;<br>eTwinning.   |
| f | To support improvements in pedagogical approaches and school management   | Multilateral projects and networks;<br>Comenius school partnerships;<br>eTwinning.   |

In addition to 11 programme-wide specific objectives, Comenius has two additional specific objectives: a) to develop knowledge and understanding among young people and educational staff of the diversity of European cultures and languages and its value; b) to help young people acquire the basic life-skills and competences necessary for their personal development, for future employment and for active European citizenship.

#### *Erasmus*

Erasmus is a sectoral programme, which focuses on higher education. It has a wide range of individual and institutional beneficiaries including students and trainees, teachers, trainers and other academic staff, higher education institutions, associations and representatives of those involved in higher education, research centres, etc. Table 7 outlines the six operation objectives of this sectoral programme and types of supported activities.

**Table 7. Operational objectives and types of activities funded by the Erasmus sub-programme**

|   | <b>Operational objectives</b>  | <b>Types of supported activities</b>  |
|---|--|---|
| a | To improve the quality and to increase the volume of student and teaching staff mobility throughout Europe | Mobility of individuals, which encompasses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- mobility of students;</li> <li>- mobility of teaching staff in higher education institutions;</li> <li>- mobility of other staff in higher education institutions and staff of enterprises;</li> <li>- participants of Erasmus intensive programmes</li> </ul> |
| b | To improve the quality and to increase the volume  | Erasmus charters;   |

<sup>21</sup> eTwinning differs from other Comenius actions in that it does not finance individual projects but is rather a support infrastructure and teacher training service to facilitate school collaboration and networking. Funds are allocated to a Central Support Service through a service contract and to National Support Services through operating grants.

|   | Operational objectives  | Types of supported activities  |
|---|---|--|
|   | of multilateral cooperation between higher education institutions in Europe   | Multilateral projects;<br>Erasmus thematic networks  |
| c | To increase the degree of transparency and compatibility between higher education and advanced vocational education qualifications gained in Europe                       | Networks and projects  |
| d | To improve the quality and to increase the volume of cooperation between higher education institutions and enterprises  | Erasmus consortium placement certificates;<br>Participants in related mobility actions (mobility for placements; teaching assignments by staff from enterprises; training for HEI at enterprises);<br>Multilateral projects (cooperation between higher education institutions and enterprises); |
| e | To facilitate the development of innovative practices in education and training at tertiary level, and their transfer, including from one participating country to others | Multilateral projects;<br>Erasmus thematic networks  |
| f | To support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning   | Multilateral projects (curriculum development; modernisation of higher education; virtual campuses);<br>Structural networks  |

The Erasmus sectoral programme has two additional specific objectives: a) to support the achievement of a European Area of Higher Education; b) to reinforce the contribution of higher education and advanced vocational education to the process of innovation.

#### *Leonardo da Vinci*

Leonardo da Vinci is a sectoral programme, which targets vocational education and training (VET). Its individual and institutional beneficiaries include people in all forms of VET, people in the labour market, organisations and their staff providing VET, associations and representatives of those involved in VET, enterprises, social partners, etc. Table 8 outlines the operational objectives and types of activities supported by the Leonardo da Vinci sub-programme.

**Table 8. Operational objectives and types of activities supported by the Leonardo da Vinci sub-programme**

|   | Operational objectives  | Types of funded activities   |
|---|---|--|
| a | To improve the quality of and increase the volume of mobility throughout Europe of people involved in initial vocational education and training and in continuing training  | Mobility of individuals, which encompasses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Trans-national placements in enterprises or in training institutions;</li> <li>- Placements and exchanges of trainers, guidance counsellors and those responsible for training establishments and for training planning and career guidance within enterprises</li> </ul>   |
| b | To improve the quality of and increase the volume of cooperation between institutions or organisations providing learning opportunities, enterprises, social partners and other relevant bodies throughout Europe | Partnerships, focusing on themes of mutual interest;<br>Multilateral projects focusing on the transfer of innovation involving the linguistic, cultural and legal adaptation to national needs of innovative products and processes developed in different contexts;<br>Multilateral projects focusing on the development of innovation and good practice;<br>Thematic networks of experts and organisations |
| c | To facilitate the development of innovative practices in the field of vocational education and training other than at tertiary level, and their transfer, including from one participating country to others      | Multilateral projects focusing on the transfer of innovation involving the linguistic, cultural and legal adaptation to national needs of innovative products and processes developed in different contexts;<br>Multilateral projects focusing on the development of innovation and good practice;<br>Mobility of individuals  |
| d | To improve the transparency and recognition of qualifications and competences, including those acquired through non-formal and informal learning  | Networks and projects  |
| e | To encourage the learning of modern foreign languages   | Mobility of individuals  |
| f | To support the development of innovative ICT-   | Multilateral projects  |

|  | Operational objectives   | Types of funded activities |
|--|--|----------------------------|
|  | based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning |                            |

The Leonardo da Vinci sub-programme has three additional specific objectives, which complement the ones established at the Programme level: a) to support participants in training and further training activities in the acquisition and the use of knowledge, skills and qualifications to facilitate personal development, employability and participation in the European labour market; b) to support improvements in quality and innovation in vocational education and training systems, institutions and practices; c) to enhance the attractiveness of vocational education and training and mobility for employers and individuals and to facilitate the mobility of working trainees.

### Grundtvig

Grundtvig is a sectoral programme, which targets adult learning. Its individual and institutional beneficiaries include learners in adult education, organisations (and their staff) providing learning opportunities in adult education, establishments involved in initial or further training of adult education staff, associations, bodies and persons responsible for systems and policies of adult education, research centres, enterprises and other organisations. Table 9 outlines the operational objectives and types of activities supported by the Grundtvig sub-programme.

**Table 9. Operational objectives and types of activities supported by the Grundtvig sub-programme**

|   | Operational objective  | Types of funded activities  |
|---|--|---|
| a | To improve the quality and accessibility of mobility throughout Europe of individuals involved in adult education and to increase its volume   | Mobility of individuals, which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- mobility of adult learners (workshops and senior volunteering projects);</li> <li>- mobility of individuals directly and indirectly involved in the provision of adult education (visits, assistantships, exchanges)</li> </ul>   |
| b | To improve the quality and to increase the volume of cooperation between organisations involved in adult education throughout Europe   | “Grundtvig learning partnerships” focusing on themes of mutual interest; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multilateral projects focusing on development and transfer of innovation and good practice.</li> <li>“Grundtvig networks” of experts and organisations working on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- developing adult education in the discipline, subject area or management aspect to which they relate;</li> <li>- identifying, improving and disseminating relevant good practice and innovation;</li> <li>- providing content support to projects and partnerships set up by others and facilitating interactivity between such projects and partnerships;</li> <li>- promoting the development of needs analysis and quality assurance within adult education</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| c | To assist people from vulnerable social groups and in marginal social contexts, in particular older people and those who have left education without basic qualifications, in order to give them alternative opportunities to access adult education | Mobility of adult learners; “Grundtvig networks”; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning partnerships;</li> <li>Workshops;</li> <li>Multilateral projects.</li> </ul>  |
| d | To facilitate the development of innovative practices in adult education and their transfer  | Multilateral projects; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Grundtvig networks”</li> </ul>   |
| e | To support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning  | Multilateral projects; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Grundtvig networks”</li> </ul>   |
| f | To improve pedagogical approaches and the management of adult education organisations.   | Individuals involved in visits and exchanges for adult education staff, in-service training for adult education staff, assistantships; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Grundtvig learning partnerships”;</li> <li>Multilateral projects;</li> <li>“Grundtvig networks”</li> </ul>   |

Grundtvig has two additional specific objectives, which complement the ones established at the Lifelong Learning Programme level: a) to respond to the educational challenge of an ageing population in Europe; b) to help provide adults with pathways to improving their knowledge and competences.

#### *Transversal programme*

The Transversal programme consists of four cross-sectoral Key Activities (KA) focused on: KA1 - policy cooperation and innovation in lifelong learning; KA2 – languages; KA3 - development of innovative ICT for education purposes and KA4 - dissemination and exploitation of results. The operational objectives of the Transversal programme and the types of supported activities are indicated in Table 10.

**Table 10. Operational objectives and types of activities supported by the Transversal programme**

|   | <b>Operational objectives</b>   | <b>Types of funded activities</b>  |
|---|---|--|
| a | To support policy development and cooperation in lifelong learning at European level  | Mobility of (study visits for) education and vocational training specialists;<br>Multilateral projects aimed at preparing and testing policy proposals developed at European Union level and innovation in lifelong learning;<br>Multilateral networks of experts and/or institutions working together on policy issues;<br>Activities aimed at supporting transparency and recognition of qualifications and competences including those acquired through non-formal and informal learning, information and guidance on mobility for learning purposes, and cooperation in quality assurance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- networks of organisations which facilitate mobility and recognition, (Euroguidance and National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARICs));</li> <li>- support for transnational web-based services (such as Ploteus);</li> <li>- the Europass initiative</li> </ul> |
| b | To ensure an adequate supply of data, statistics and analyses, as well as to monitor progress towards objectives and targets in lifelong learning | Analysis of policies and systems in the field of lifelong learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- studies and comparative research;</li> <li>- development of indicators and statistical surveys, including support for work undertaken in the field of lifelong learning in cooperation with Eurostat;</li> <li>- support for the operation of the Eurydice network and funding of the Eurydice European Unit set up by the Commission</li> </ul>  |
| c | To promote language learning and to support linguistic diversity in the Member States   | Multilateral projects aimed at developing new language learning materials, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- online courses, and instruments for language testing;</li> <li>- developing tools and courses for training language teachers, trainers and other staff;</li> </ul> Multilateral networks in the field of language learning and linguistic diversity;<br>Accompanying measures, publicity and information campaigns, conferences, studies and the development of statistical indicators;   |
| d | To support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning                               | Multilateral projects, aimed at the development and distribution of innovative methods, contents, services and environments;<br>Multilateral networks aimed at sharing and exchanging knowledge, experience and good practice;<br>Studies and analyses in the field of ICT based content for lifelong learning.  |
| e | To ensure that the results of the LLP are appropriately recognised, demonstrated and implemented on a wide scale                                  | Unilateral and national projects aimed at demonstration and dissemination of the results of the LLP;<br>Multilateral projects aimed at demonstration and dissemination of the results of the LLP.  |

The Transversal programme has two additional specific objectives, which complement the ones established at the Lifelong Learning Programme level: a) to promote European cooperation in fields covering two or more sectoral sub-programmes; b) to promote the quality and transparency of Member State education and training systems.

#### *Jean Monnet programme*

The Jean Monnet programme focuses on the provision of support to teaching, research and reflection on European integration and to key European institutions and associations. Its beneficiaries include students and researchers in the field of European integration, higher education institutions as well as their staff, associations and representatives of those involved in education and training, public and private bodies responsible for the organisation and delivery of education and training and research centres concerned with the issues of European integration. The operational objectives and types of activities funded by the Jean Monnet programme are indicated in Table 11.

**Table 11. Operational objectives and types of activities funded by the Jean Monnet programme**

|   | Operational objectives   | Types of funded activities   |
|---|--|--|
| a | To stimulate excellence in teaching, research and reflection in European integration studies in higher education institutions within and outside the Community | University level projects on European integration (Jean Monnet Chairs, centres of excellence and teaching modules, information campaigns, etc.);<br>Multilateral projects and networks |
| b | To enhance knowledge and awareness among specialist academics and among European citizens generally on issues relating to European integration                 | University level projects on European integration (Jean Monnet Chairs, centres of excellence and teaching modules, information campaigns, etc.);<br>Multilateral projects and networks |
| c | To support key European institutions dealing with issues relating to European integration  | Operating grants to six higher education institutions  |
| d | To support the existence of high-quality European institutions and associations  | Operating grants to support European institutions or associations active in the fields of education and training   |

The Jean Monnet programme has two additional specific objectives, which complement the ones established at the Programme level: a) to stimulate teaching, research and reflection activities in the field of European integration studies; b) to support the existence of an appropriate range of institutions and associations focusing on issues relating to European integration and on education and training in a European perspective.

### 3.2. Objectives and scope of the evaluation

Based on the requirements of the LLP Decision the European Commission launched the interim evaluation of the LLP, seeking to improve the continuation of the Programme and to provide recommendations for the successor post-2013 Programme.

An interim evaluation examines an ongoing activity whether this is a programme of limited duration or a policy, which will continue for an indefinite period. An interim evaluation also has an important role to play in producing direct feedback into the implementation process and thus help to improve the quality of ongoing interventions. Moreover, since new initiatives are often prepared long in advance, interim evaluation is also a very important source of information for the design purposes for the next generation of a programme, new policy orientations, etc.<sup>22</sup>

As stated in the Terms of Reference, the objective of this evaluation was twofold, namely to provide a *retrospective* and a *prospective* analysis:

- The *retrospective analysis* took the form of an interim evaluation of various qualitative and quantitative aspects of the implementation of the LLP and the results achieved;

<sup>22</sup> Source: European Commission, Evaluating EU Activities: A Practical Guide for the Commission Services. July 2004, p. 15.

- The *prospective analysis* examined the strengths and weaknesses of the LLP as well as provided recommendations on the continued implementation of the current Programme and the design of the successor Programme.

The retrospective analysis covered all evaluation questions in the area of relevance, efficiency and effectiveness based on the methodology used in the evaluation process. Although the prospective analysis also covered all aspects of the Programme, in this analysis the contractor emphasised the following issues (as indicated in the Terms of Reference):

- Improving the effectiveness and utility of the Programme, including more effectively reaching the relevant target groups and making better use of the Programme's results at the policy level;
- Improving the synergies and interaction between the sub-programmes and between the centralised and decentralised actions as well as improving the weighting of the sub-programmes and activities;
- Making the management system of the LLP more effective and efficient, including its simplification.

According to the Terms of Reference, the scope of this interim evaluation included the evaluation of the LLP with its sub-programmes and actions. Therefore, the assessment covered both the collective performance of the Programme as well as the individual performance of its sub-programmes and actions.

In addition, a monitoring task was carried out during the interim evaluation of the LLP. Its main purpose was to propose a practical monitoring approach for both the continuation of the current Programme and the future Programme based on the information needs of the European Commission.

Since the interim evaluation of the LLP was performed during the implementation phase, it emphasised the Programme implementation as well as products and results achieved in the 2007-2009 period from a qualitative and quantitative perspective.

According to the Terms of Reference, the evaluation should propose *concrete recommendations* concerning the continued implementation of the current Programme and the successor Programme, for which the European Commission will submit a draft proposal in the first semester of 2011. As provided in the Terms of Reference, the recommendations focus on the following issues:

- How can the effectiveness and utility of the LLP and its sub-programmes be improved?
- What should be done to reach the relevant target groups more effectively and make better use of the Programme's results at the policy level?
- How can the synergies and interaction between the sub-programmes and between the centralised and decentralised actions be improved?
- How can the degree of complexity of the rules and the level of the management workload be simplified at the level of sub-programmes and of the LLP as a whole?
- How can the management system of the LLP be simplified in order to be more effective and efficient (for each of the stakeholder categories)?
- Which are the most effective and useful activities and what should be their relative weighting, considering the needs in the field of education and training? What should be the level of funding devoted to each part of the Programme?



### 3.3. Design and implementation of evaluation

First, in the Terms of Reference the European Commission identified 17 evaluation questions according to three main evaluation criteria:

- *Relevance* (covering continued relevance, European added value as well as coherence and synergies inside and outside the Programme);
- *Effectiveness* (including the achievement of vertical and horizontal objectives, contribution to political priorities and the European Educational Area, Programme integration, reaching the target groups, awareness of the Programme in the education and training community);
- *Efficiency* (including the implementation and management structure, the monitoring mechanisms and management support tools as well as the cost-effectiveness of the Programme).

All evaluation questions are provided in the Terms of Reference annexed to this report (see Annex 1).

Second, to answer all evaluation questions of the Terms of Reference, in the inception phase the contractor defined 46 operational questions (about three operational questions for one evaluation question of the Terms of Reference). The operationalisation of evaluation questions involved the definition of explicit success measures against which the Programme design and implementation could be measured. All operational questions with corresponding indicators, judgement criteria and methods were presented in the Inception Report. One example of operationalisation is provided in Table 12 below.

**Table 12. Example of operationalising the question concerning the achievement of the Programme objectives**

| No.  | Operational question  | Indicators  | Judgement criteria  | Methods   |
|------|---|---|---|---|
| 5.1. | The extent to which the Programme objectives and targets are being achieved | 5.1.1. Level of the financial and physical implementation of the centralised and decentralised actions of the Programme | - Effectiveness is high, if 90% of the earmarked funds are used and sufficient progress is being made towards the achievement of the Programme targets (for Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci and Grundtvig) | - Desk research;<br>- Analysis of the National Reports;<br>- Analysis of monitoring data;<br>- Survey of the National Authorities and Agencies;<br>- EU-level and national case studies;<br>- EU-level and national interviews. |
|      |   | 5.1.2. The extent to which the supported projects respond to the programme priorities and objectives.                   | - Effectiveness is high, if all supported projects respond to the objectives and priorities of the sub-programmes and actions as well as they well meet the national objectives                                 | - Desk research;<br>- Analysis of the National Reports;<br>- Analysis of the monitoring data;<br>- EU-level and national case studies;<br>- EU-level and national interviews.   |

Third, to answer each operational evaluation question, during the first and second evaluation phases the contractor gathered and analysed the evaluation data. It was based on the evaluation methodology and the following evaluation methods:

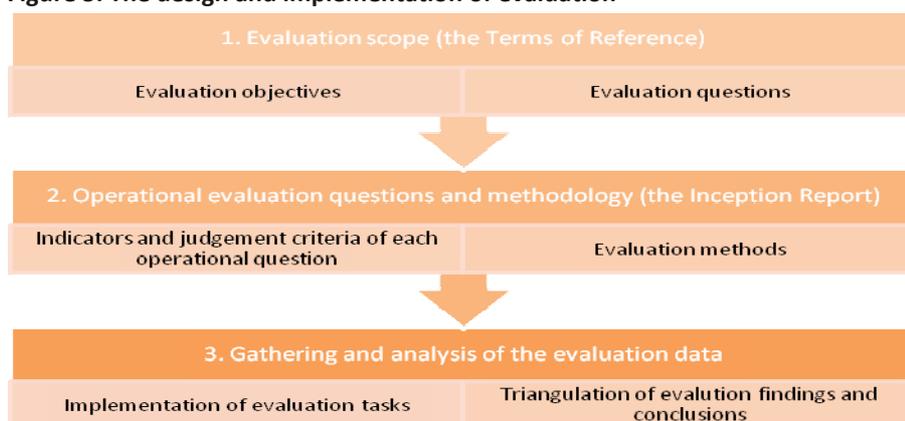
- Desk research, including the synthesis of the National Reports;
- 14 case studies at the EU and national levels;
- The interview programme with the respondents at the EU and national level (including the project beneficiaries);

- The survey programme: the survey of the LLP beneficiaries (both individual and organisational) as well as the survey of the National Authorities and National Agencies;
- Expert assessment/panels;
- Other methods of policy analysis (including the analysis of the intervention logic as well as policy alternatives and options).

Part 3 of the Final Report describes each evaluation method and the principle of triangulation.

The main steps of the evaluation design and implementation are summarised in Figure 5. All the evaluation results are presented in Part 4 of the Final Report (according to each evaluation question and operational question) followed by evaluation conclusions and recommendations.

**Figure 5. The design and implementation of evaluation**



## 3.4. Evaluation methodology

### 3.4.1. Methods for data collection and analysis

The evaluator employed a number of recognised evaluation methods for the interim evaluation of the LLP. Evaluation data were collected and analysed using the following main methods:

- Desk research,
- Case studies,
- Interviews,
- Surveys,
- Expert assessment, methods of policy analysis.

Each method is described in detail below. These methods were applied during the following phases of interim evaluation:

- The inception phase that involved methodological preparation and initial desk research;
- The data collection phase that involved further desk research, implementation of the interview and survey programmes as well as the EU-level and national case studies, synthesis of the National Reports;
- The data analysis phase that involved additional desk research, analysis of the monitoring data, finalisation of the interview and survey programmes as well as the case studies, completion of the synthesis of the National Reports, organisation of the expert panels;
- The final phase that involved the preparation of the Final Report.

Furthermore, the monitoring task was implemented during the data analysis and final phases.

The evaluation consisted of the following phases and tasks:

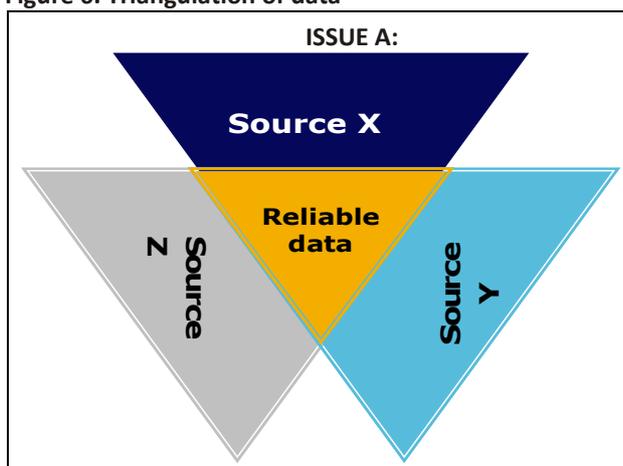
1. The inception phase:
  - 1.1. Kick-off meeting with the EC in Brussels
  - 1.2. Methodological preparation
  - 1.3. The Inception Report
2. The first/data collection phase:
  - 2.1. Desk research
  - 2.2. Interviews
  - 2.3. Surveys
  - 2.4. The 1<sup>st</sup> Interim report
3. The second/data analysis phase:
  - 3.1. Assessment of the National Reports
  - 3.2. Case studies
  - 3.3. Expert assessment and panels
  - 3.4. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Interim Report
4. The final phase:
  - 4.1. Monitoring task
  - 4.2. The Final Report

The principle of triangulation was applied during the interim evaluation of the LLP. This is a method of data verification based on the use of different sources of data on the same finding or conclusion (see Figure 6 below). The application of this method consisted of three steps:

- first, all potential sources of information were identified in the operationalisation of the evaluation questions;
- second, each source of information was exploited in order to obtain evidence on the same question;
- third, the data from various sources were compared.



Figure 6. Triangulation of data



In addition, the Final Report explicitly indicates the sources of information supporting the evaluation findings as well as the extent to which the evaluation conclusions are supported by the evaluation data (weakly supported; moderately supported; strongly supported).

#### **Desk research**

The data analysis phase included the utilisation of the extensive desk research resources. The desk research focused on the following sources of information:

- EU policy documents relating to education and training, skills, the Lisbon agenda and others;
- Previous studies and evaluations of the sub-programmes and actions;
- Reports:
  - The LLP Activity Report produced by the European Commission;
  - Annual reports produced by the National Agencies;
  - Calls for proposals and reports of the beneficiaries and participants of the sub-programmes and actions;
  - Reports produced by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency;
  - Reports from “Systems monitoring visits” and “Quality and impact monitoring visits”.
- Minutes of the LLP Committee meetings and other documents concerning decisions on the operational management of the LLP and its sub-programmes;
- Monitoring data on financial and physical implementation of the LLP and its sub-programmes (see Annex 7);
- Statistical data in the area of education and training provided by Eurostat.

#### **Synthesis of the National Reports**

Following Article 15.4 of the LLP Decision<sup>23</sup>, the Member States submitted to the Commission the National Reports on the implementation of the Lifelong Learning Programme in 2007–2009. The contractor drafted the synthesis of the National Reports (see Annex 2). The main objective of the synthesis was to provide a coherent narrative of the views expressed in the National Reports regarding the success of the implementation of the LLP in the Participating Countries. The synthesis aims to outline

<sup>23</sup> Decision No 1720/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006 establishing an action programme in the field of lifelong learning.

the key areas, where the opinions expressed in the National Reports converge, as well as the particularities and differences between the Participating Countries.

The synthesis is an important source of information for the purposes of interim evaluation of the LLP. However, the findings provided in this document are treated with caution. The National Reports differed in their structure, methodologies adopted, scope and level of analysis. Therefore, while the general conclusions, to the extent possible, reflect the views of all National Reports, the discussion of concrete issues and recommendations reflect only the views of specific Participating Countries. The structure of the synthesis follows the template provided by the European Commission for the preparation of National Reports. Whenever relevant, the synthesis discusses the implementation of each sectoral programme separately.

The synthesis is based on reports from all Participating Countries with the exception of Latvia – this report was not received.

### **Case studies**

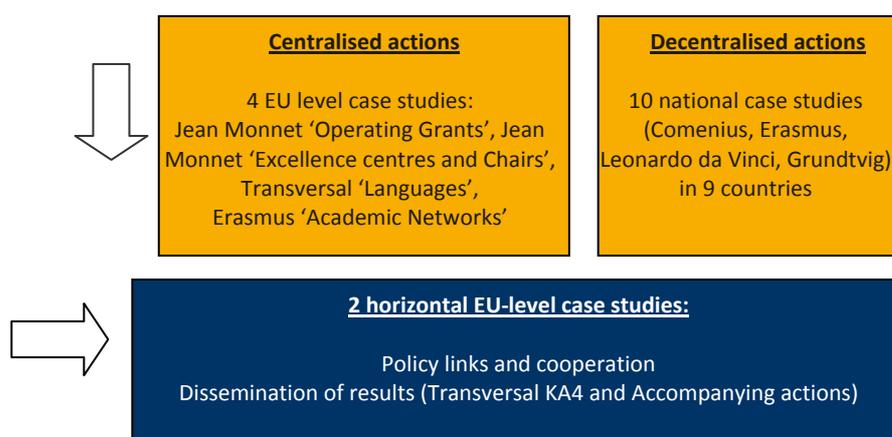
During the interim evaluation of the LLP the contractor carried out 16 case studies.

The overall objective of the case studies was to investigate the functioning of the LLP sub-programmes and actions in different Participating Countries as well as at the supranational level, in order to answer the evaluation questions. This requires in-depth qualitative research, which takes into account multiple contexts of the functioning of the sub-programme and its actions. Namely, the national context and the context of a respective education sector were analysed, when applicable. The case studies respond to these needs of the interim evaluation:

- The need to address the balance of the *centralised and decentralised actions* of the LLP. Since the National Reports will represent important inputs for the interim evaluation of the decentralised actions of the LLP; therefore, the contractor decided to include more EU-level case studies in the selection of individual case studies.
- The need to examine *horizontal as well as vertical issues of the Programme content*.

The case study design is presented in Figure 7.

**Figure 7. The case study design**



Most of the findings in the *case study reports* were supported by multiple sources: interviews with different stakeholders, desk research and survey data (where applicable). Interviews were used extensively in conducting the research related to the case studies.

The contractor carried the EU-level horizontal case studies on:

1. *The EU level programme-policy link*: this case study contributed to outlining the links between the LLP, cooperation at EU level as well as national policies in the area of education and training affected under the OMC. It supported the findings of questions related to the Programme's contribution to EU education and training priorities and the European Educational Area;
2. *The EU level study on Dissemination and exploitation of the Programme results*: contributed to the investigation of the success factors in sharing good practice and making project results as widely known as possible to potential users. The case study included Transversal KA4 'Dissemination and Exploitation of Results' as well as the accompanying measures on the dissemination of results in the decentralised sub-programmes and actions. It supported the findings of the questions related to dissemination and exploitation (effectiveness, operational question 11).

With the view to evaluating the balance of the decentralised and centralised actions of the LLP, the contractor carried out four EU-level case studies, as follows:

1. Transversal KA2 'Languages' to explore the LLP contribution to the Community horizontal policy of Multilingualism (covering both KA2 of the Transversal Programme and relevant decentralised actions);
2. Jean Monnet 'Excellence Centres and Chairs', which focused on best practices of the excellence centres and chairs that were granted support over the 2007-2009 period;
3. Jean Monnet 'Operating grants to support specified institutions dealing with issues relating to European integration';
4. Erasmus 'Academic networks', which focused on best practice projects of academic networks that contribute to enhancing the quality of teaching in higher education, defining and developing a European dimension within a given academic discipline, furthering innovation and exchanging methodologies and good practices.

The sample of ten national case studies on the decentralised actions was built (a) taking into account the scale (budgets foreseen) and relative visibility of actions; (b) paying attention to the diversity of types of applicants (individuals, associations, institutions, etc) and (c) type of activities (mobility, partnerships, networks):

1. *Erasmus 'Student mobility for studies'* (outgoing students): Lithuania;
2. *Erasmus 'Student mobility for studies'* (incoming students): Germany;
3. *Erasmus 'Staff Teaching Abroad'*: the Czech Republic;
4. *Erasmus 'Staff Teaching Abroad'*: Norway;
5. *Comenius 'Bilateral and Multilateral Partnerships'*: Italy;
6. *Comenius 'Assistantship'* (mobility; future teachers; schools as host organisations): Bulgaria.
7. *Leonardo da Vinci 'Professionals in Vocational Education and Training (VETPRO)'*: the Netherlands;
8. *Leonardo da Vinci 'Transfer of innovation'*: the Netherlands;
9. *Grundtvig 'Learning Partnership'*: Slovenia;
10. *Grundtvig 'In-service Staff Training for Adult Education Staff'*: Denmark.

The breakdown of the proposed case studies according to the action categories supported by the Programme is presented below.



**Table 13. The case study design according to the action categories supported by the Lifelong Learning Programme**

|   | COMENIUS | ERASMUS         | LEONARDO DA VINCI | GRUNDTVIG | Transversal Programme |     |     |     | Jean Monnet Programme |     |     |
|---|----------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----------------------|-----|-----|
|   |          |                 |                   |           | KA1                   | KA2 | KA3 | KA4 | KA1                   | KA2 | KA3 |
| Preconditions                           |          |                 |                   |           |                       |     |     |     |                       |     |     |
| Mobility                                | BG       | LT+ DE<br>CZ+NO | NL                | DK        |                       |     |     |     |                       |     |     |
| Bilateral and multilateral partnerships | IT       |                 |                   | SI        |                       |     |     |     |                       |     |     |
| Multilateral projects                   |          |                 | NL                |           |                       | X   |     | X   |                       |     |     |
| Multilateral networks                   |          | PT              |                   |           |                       | X   |     |     |                       |     |     |
| Unilateral or national projects         |          |                 |                   |           |                       |     |     |     | UK                    |     |     |
| Accompanying measures                   |          |                 |                   |           |                       | X   |     |     |                       |     |     |
| Observation and analysis                |          |                 |                   |           |                       |     |     |     |                       |     |     |
| Operating grants                        |          |                 |                   |           |                       |     |     |     |                       | IT  |     |

Centralised actions

Decentralised actions

Source: European Commission; adapted by the contractor.

NB: where available, the countries selected for case study analysis are indicated in the table. For the case studies on centralised actions (namely, the Transversal programme) the countries / projects to be examined have not been selected yet due to the lack of data.

To ensure a wide geographical reach, ten national case studies were carried out in nine different countries in order to reflect the diversity within the EU. The breakdown of countries according to the national case studies was organised to ensure a good geographical spread and range of country sizes, such as population, geographical location, status of EU membership and the date of entry, as well as the strength of the educational system.

In order to select sample countries for case studies at the national level, the participant countries (EU27, EEA and Turkey) were grouped using several criteria:

1) *Geographical and political distribution* operationalised using the following parameters:

1. Population ('small' up to 8 million, 'medium' from 8 to 25 million, and 'large' more than 25 million),
2. Geographical location (region)
3. EU membership status and date of entry.

2) In addition, there are other important criteria that differentiate countries by the *strength of the educational system*.

The selection of the centralised projects was the following:

- Two projects for the *Jean Monnet 'Centres of Excellence and Chairs'* case study were selected. The first project at the London School of Economics involves a Jean Monnet Chair and Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence that has wide international coverage and has been promoted as a major success story, is long-standing and

has been funded over a long period. The second project at the University of Edinburgh involves a Jean Monnet Chair (without a Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence);

- For the case study on *Jean Monnet 'Operating grants to support specified institutions pursuing an aim of European interest'* an institution was selected according to these criteria: a) it clearly incorporates all of Europe, b) it is directly focused on generic issues of the Programme, and c) it has received comparatively large amount of financial support from the Jean Monnet programme. The selected institution is the European University Institute in Italy;
- Finally, the selection of countries for the studies covering the *decentralised actions* was based around contrasting cases, i.e. one country that is a high performer and another that is not active in a selected sub-programme or action. Including country cases that are less successful as well as the perceived 'stars' is important for obtaining a rounded understanding. Namely, Lithuania was selected as a high performer in Erasmus outgoing mobility for studies, Germany - in Erasmus incoming mobility for studies, the Czech Republic - in Erasmus outgoing staff mobility, Italy - in bilateral and multilateral Comenius partnerships; Portugal was selected as a case to be studied under the 'Erasmus Academic Networks' case study as a small country without a strong and prominent education system, the Netherlands - as a moderately active participant in Leonardo da Vinci Transfer of Innovation and in the VETPRO action, Denmark - as a moderately active country in Grundtvig In-service Staff Training for Adult Education Staff; Bulgaria was selected for the Comenius Assistantships case study as a country which struggles to attract incoming assistants, Slovenia - as a country which receives many applications for Grundtvig Learning Partnerships, but has to reject many of them due to lack of funds; Norway was selected for limited Erasmus staff mobility.

Frameworks of the case study for the centralised and decentralised actions, detailed interview questionnaires, a memo for the experts and preliminary list of interviewees were prepared and used for all case studies in order to ensure consistency and comparability (see Annexes 3 and 4).

### Interviews

In the technical proposal it was planned to conduct about 110 interviews. The interim evaluation of the LLP actually achieved 119 interviews. Additional clarifications with the interviewees were carried out, when necessary.

The interviews were conducted with two main types of respondents:

- *EU-level respondents* from the European Commission (DG EAC), EACEA, EU-level social partners and grant recipients of the centralised actions (38 EU-level interviews);
- *Respondents at the national level*: respondents from the National Authorities and the National Agencies, social partners, other relevant national stakeholders (e.g. various associations, NGO's, etc.), grant beneficiaries of the decentralised actions (81 national-level interviews).

The interviews were semi-structured and used the unified template, provided in Annex 3. The main findings of the interviews were verified with the interviewees. The data collected during the interviews was used to answer a number of evaluation questions in the areas of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency. Furthermore, the interview programme supported both the retrospective and prospective analysis of the LLP.

### Survey programme

The survey programme of this interim evaluation consisted of the following surveys:

- A survey of the institutional and individual beneficiaries of the LLP;
- A survey of the National Authorities and the National Agencies involved in the implementation of the LLP.

*Survey of the institutional and individual beneficiaries*

During the first/ data collection phase of this evaluation the surveys of the beneficiaries of the LLP were implemented. These surveys covered two types of beneficiaries:

- Individual beneficiaries (all sub-programmes except the centralised actions);
- Institutional beneficiaries (all sub-programmes).

The questionnaires of the surveys of the individual and institutional beneficiaries can be found in Annex 3. Depending on the type of the sub-programme, 11 different versions of the questionnaire of the institutional beneficiaries were prepared. Most answers to the questionnaire of the institutional beneficiaries and all answers to the questionnaire of the individual beneficiaries are comparable across the different sub-programmes. A set of questions was included in the questionnaires to assess client satisfaction with the Programme.

Draft questionnaires were piloted by using two types of tests. First, all questionnaires (in the English and Lithuanian languages) were tested during face-to-face interviews with the beneficiaries of the different sub-programmes. Second, the questionnaires were tested on the Lithuanian beneficiaries of the decentralised actions during the pilot web-based survey (in the Lithuanian language). Necessary changes to the draft questionnaires were made based on the results of these tests.

E-mail invitations and reminders to participate in the web-survey were sent to about 30 000 contact persons of the projects from the list of the Programme beneficiaries received from the European Commission. Communication was organised in four EU languages - English, German, French and Italian. All questionnaires were translated into these languages by professional translators. The survey was web-based – respondents received a personalised link to the questionnaire. In order to secure a sufficient number of replies to the survey, invitations were sent to all unique emails from the lists of Erasmus, Grundtvig, Leonardo da Vinci, Transversal and Jean Monnet sub-programmes – no sampling was performed. Due to the long list of Comenius respondents every third respondent was invited to participate after the sampling procedure. Response rates of different institutional beneficiaries are provided in Table 14.

**Table 14. Response rates of the survey of the institutional beneficiaries**

| Respondent group                | Number of respondents in the list | Answers received | Response rate |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Comenius decentralised          | 11.455                            | 2.915            | 25%           |
| Erasmus decentralised           | 3.896                             | 1.052            | 27%           |
| Grundtvig decentralised         | 6.070                             | 1.532            | 25%           |
| Leonardo da Vinci decentralised | 6.546                             | 1.851            | 28%           |
| Comenius centralised            | 113                               | 29               | 26%           |
| Erasmus centralised             | 151                               | 26               | 17%           |
| Grundtvig centralised           | 187                               | 57               | 30%           |
| Leonardo da Vinci centralised   | 142                               | 45               | 32%           |
| Jean Monnet                     | 252                               | 42               | 17%           |
| Transversal                     | 1.299                             | 313              | 24%           |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>30.111</b>                     | <b>7.862</b>     | <b>26%</b>    |

The total response rate was around 26% with some variation across the sub-programmes. Although this survey was dominated by education providers, other groups of beneficiaries were sufficiently represented (see Table 15).

**Table 15. Types of respondents of the survey of the institutional beneficiaries**

| Type of respondent  | Frequency    | %            |
|---|--------------|--------------|
| Education provider (including higher education institutions)              | 5.635        | 71.7         |
| Association (including students associations, employers, employees, etc.) | 326          | 4.1          |
| Enterprise  | 216          | 2.7          |
| Public authority  | 400          | 5.1          |
| Public service provider   | 159          | 2.0          |
| Counselling body  | 41           | 0.5          |
| Research centre   | 64           | 0.8          |
| Non-governmental organisation   | 458          | 5.8          |
| Other   | 447          | 5.7          |
| (Missing answer)  | 116          | 1.5          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>7.862</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Since the lists of the individual beneficiaries were not available for this survey programme, institutional respondents were asked to forward a link of the survey to individual beneficiaries of their organisation. This produced a sufficient number of responses for the purposes of data analysis (see Table 16).

**Table 16. Number of responses to the survey of the individual beneficiaries**

| Respondent group                | Answers received | General population N | Response rate |
|---------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Comenius decentralised          | 1.641            | 33.000               | 4.89%         |
| Erasmus decentralised           | 3.385            | 633.900              | 0.005%        |
| Grundtvig decentralised         | 1.266            | 5.560                | 22.77%        |
| Leonardo da Vinci decentralised | 657              | 221.200              | 0.29%         |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>6.949</b>     | -                    | -             |

Note: General population for years 2007-2009 counted based on data provided in LLP Activity report 2009-2010.

Response rates provided in the table are approximate and based on the participation data from the LLP Activity Report. Due to the large general population of Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci, the response rates of individual beneficiaries of these sub-programmes are considerably lower. However, they were sufficient for data analysis. Distribution among types of respondents is provided in Table 17. Both individual and organisational respondents covered all Participating Countries.

**Table 17. Types of respondents of the survey of the individual beneficiaries**

| Type of respondent  | Frequency    | %            |
|---|--------------|--------------|
| A learner (pupil, student, trainee, adult learner)        | 4.246        | 61.1         |
| A teacher, trainer, researcher or other staff member      | 2.110        | 30.4         |
| An employee, employer or other staff member of enterprise | 331          | 4.8          |
| Other (please specify)                                    | 191          | 2.7          |
| (Missing answer)  | 71           | 1.0          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>6.949</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

#### *Survey of the National Authorities and the National Agencies*

During the second data collection phase the survey programme of the National Authorities and the National Agencies was implemented. The survey was designed to gather additional data to answer evaluation questions and identify main areas of consensus among the national stakeholders concerning the design of the successor Programme. The survey measured opinions/perceptions of the National Agencies and

the National Authorities regarding the issues of LLP design and implementation. Two versions of the survey questionnaire were developed for this survey.

The National Authorities version of the questionnaire included 17 questions, while the National Agencies version of the questionnaire - 31 questions. The questionnaire was tested during interviews with several respondents. The questions covered the following issues:

- Efficiency of the Programme implementation (questions aimed at assessing the LLP management, control and monitoring system);
- Relevance of the Programme;
- Budget of the Programme;
- Integration of the Programme;
- Dissemination of results;
- Mobility barriers;
- Influence of the LLP on EU priorities.

The questionnaires of this survey are provided in Annex 3. They were e-mailed to 48 representatives of the National Agencies as well as active members of the LLP Committee from 32 countries (in most cases two members per country) as a MS Word document. The return rate of the survey was 60%, with 22 replies from the National Authorities and 26 replies from the National Agencies.

#### **Expert assessment and panels**

The method of expert assessment and panels was used to complement other methods of analysis. It was implemented during the second evaluation phase. An expert meeting concerning the monitoring of the future Programme and its indicators was organised on 21 September in Brussels. The expert panel was composed of senior evaluators and thematic experts of the evaluation project with the participation of experts from the European Commission and its Executive Agency.

Taking into consideration the purpose of the monitoring task, it was decided to discuss the following issues during this meeting:

- 1) The intervention logic of the future Programme and its integration;
- 2) Monitoring of the future Programme and its indicators.

The meeting discussed the following questions:

- What is the intervention logic of the 2007-2013 LLP (in terms of global objectives, intermediate objectives, specific objectives and operational objectives)? What intervention logic could be designed for the successor Programme?
- How to better connect formal, informal and non-formal learning within the lifelong learning perspective and in the framework of the LLP? What are the alternatives of further integration for the future Programme?
- What are the monitoring and evaluation needs for the future Programme? How can the existing monitoring arrangements and indicators be improved?

This method of expert assessment was useful, taking into consideration the need to make evaluation judgements in relation to the successor Programme facing a shortage of objective empirical evidence. In particular, the expert meeting contributed to the prospective analysis of the LLP, including main alternatives for the future Programme in terms of its intervention logic, integration of current sub-programmes and actions as well as a future monitoring framework.

#### **Methods of policy analysis**



During the interim evaluation of the LLP, the following main principles of prospective analysis were applied. First, the prospective analysis concerned both the continued implementation of the current Programme as well as the design of the future Programme. Second, the prospective analysis took into consideration the Education and Training 2020, 'Youth on the Move' initiatives and other general and specific initiatives of the Programme context. Third, the prospective analysis was based on the empirical evidence collected and analysed during the interim evaluation. Fourth, the prospective analysis involved a few additional methods of policy analysis (including SWOT, alternatives and options). Fifth, although the prospective analysis covered all the questions of the interim evaluation, it emphasised three main issues indicated in the Terms of Reference:

- Improving the effectiveness and utility of the Programme, including more effectively reaching the relevant target groups and making better use of the Programme's results at the policy level;
- Improving the synergies and interaction between the sub-programmes and between the centralised and decentralised actions as well as improving the weighting of the sub-programmes and activities;
- Making the management system of the LLP more effective and efficient, including its simplification.

More specifically, the contractor analysed the intervention logic of the current Programme as well as the main external factors affecting the achievement of the Programme objectives. This analysis is provided in Part 3 as are the conclusions and recommendations of the Final Report respectively. In addition, the Final Report includes other methods of policy analysis, including the analysis of alternatives (the status quo, partial integration and full integration of the Programme) and the analysis of strengths and weaknesses.

#### **3.4.2. Strengths and weaknesses of the methodology used**

The main strength of the evaluation methodology is the fact that it employed a number of recognised evaluation methods, combining both the qualitative (through desk research and the case studies and interview programme) and quantitative (through the survey programme and analysis of the monitoring data) approach. The large number of quantitative and qualitative methods allowed the collecting of a wide range of evaluation data and undertaking their holistic analysis. Also, this facilitated the application of the triangulation principle, helping to avoid subjectivity and partiality of the data.

Moreover, the interim evaluation of the LLP featured intensive steering of the evaluation progress from the Steering Group as well as active involvement of the Programme stakeholders during the implementation of the survey and interview programmes, expert assessment and other methods. Therefore, it became possible to exploit many strengths of the participative approach to evaluation. For instance, the prospective analysis of the Programme benefited considerably from discussions with the responsible persons in the European Commission, EACEA and other stakeholders.

On the other hand, since the interim evaluation covered the entire Programme (with its sub-programmes and actions), the evaluation methodology emphasised width rather than depth. This methodological weakness was addressed through the application of specific evaluation methods. For instance, the case study programme allowed in-depth qualitative assessment of the selected themes and actions of the LLP.

Furthermore, the interim evaluation required the achievement of a good balance between the collective performance of the whole Programme as well as its individual sub-programmes and actions. For instance, the case study design balanced different sub-programmes and actions of the LLP implemented in the selected sample countries.

However, it should be noted that due to the limited number of case studies at the EU level, the KA3 of the Transversal programme was not a subject to the same in-depth assessment as other actions of this sub-programme.

Another methodological challenge was related to the nature of the Programme itself. The broad scope and social nature of the Programme made it difficult to identify the main causal links between different actions of the LLP and its global/intermediate objectives (e.g. the influence of mobility and partnerships on sustainable economic development, more and better jobs and more social cohesion). Therefore, the reconstruction of the intervention logic drew on extensive desk research (including analysis of EU policy documents and sector-specific studies) as well as a few interactive evaluation methods involving the main stakeholders in the interim evaluation (the interview programme, expert panels, etc.). In addition, it became necessary, during the interim evaluation, to explicitly link the LLP actions and objectives with different policy and implementation alternatives.

Another evaluation difficulty was related to collecting monitoring data, processing this data into an up-to-date database and producing analysis of the 2007-2009 monitoring data for the purposes of the interim evaluation. This is associated with the ongoing development of the LLP monitoring system and its support tools during the evaluation process. However, the monitoring data and their analysis provided in the Final Report are considered to be sufficient for answering the evaluation questions (in combination with the evaluation evidence gathered during the evaluation process).

Overall, the evaluation results and conclusions are considered to be robust. All the evaluation conclusions are strongly or moderately supported by the evaluation data, the Final Report contains no weakly-supported conclusions. The report indicates the extent to which each evaluation conclusion is empirically supported. Moderately supported conclusions, whose number in the Final Report is rather small, should be treated more cautiously in policy making (to be used in combination with other empirical evidence or during the consultation process).

Table 18 summarises main method-specific strengths and weaknesses.

**Table 18. Strengths and weaknesses of the main evaluation methods**

|  | <b>Strengths</b>   | <b>Weaknesses</b>  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>1.Desk research</b>                     | It provides objective results, since it is based on official documents and statistics;<br>It is holistic and detailed: the available sources cover the whole Programme as well as specific aspects of implementation of each sub-programme.  | Interpretation of the findings of desk research requires additional data collection methods;<br>Official documents do not necessarily reflect the perceptions of decision makers and target groups.  |
| <b>2.Synthesis of the National Reports</b> | The synthesis reflects the objectively verifiable data as well as perceptions of the National Authorities and NAs regarding the success of the LLP;<br>The synthesis facilitates detailed country-level analysis regarding the success of each sub-programme.<br>The synthesis provides qualitative in-depth understanding of the LLP implementation within diverse national contexts. | Due to differences in adopted methodologies of the National Reports, the findings of the synthesis do not cover all aspects or all Participating Countries at the same level of generality;<br>The results of synthesis are seldom quantifiable. |
| <b>3.Case studies</b>                      | In-depth contextual and holistic view of the themes and actions selected;<br>Good triangulation, since many  | It is difficult to generalise on the basis of case studies;<br>Many contextual factors do not allow the establishment of clear   |

|                                  | <b>Strengths</b>  | <b>Weaknesses</b>  |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
|                                  | <p>sources of evidence are used;</p> <p>Allows longitudinal analysis instead of a 'snapshot' approach to programme design and implementation;</p> <p>Balanced representation of different types of countries and actions.</p>   | <p>causal links;</p> <p>Case studies are heavily influenced by the quality and results of interviews and hence inherit their main weaknesses.</p>  |
| <b>4.Interviews</b>              | <p>Interviews provide detailed and comparable information. Unlike surveys, the interviewer can explain or clarify the question, minimising the chances of misinterpretation;</p> <p>Excellent methodological tool for capturing subjective assessments and opinions of different stakeholders;</p> <p>Since institutional interviewees represent their institution, their statements reflect the position of their respective institutions.</p> | <p>Interviews capture standpoints of the individual interviewees and do not necessarily provide 'hard' data;</p> <p>The answers are given from a point of view and may be mindful of the interests of a particular institution;</p> <p>Since the interviewees are known by name and position, they may refrain from critical/ inconvenient statements.</p>   |
| <b>5.Surveys</b>                 | <p>Good method to collect quantitative data about a large population (such as institutional and organisational beneficiaries);</p> <p>Statistical analysis of the survey data is possible;</p> <p>Allow comparisons across the sub-programmes, actions or types of beneficiaries;</p>   | <p>Surveys measure perceptions of the individual and organisational beneficiaries and other participants at a particular point of time;</p> <p>The small number of National Authorities and the National Agencies does not support more sophisticated analysis of the data;</p> <p>Administrative burden on the respondents participating in the survey.</p> |
| <b>6.Expert assessment/panel</b> | <p>Provides in-depth insights of experts about the assessed issues;</p> <p>Allows making evaluation judgements about the future facing the shortage of objective empirical evidence;</p> <p>Contributes to consensus building.</p>  | <p>Captures standpoints of the individual participants and does not necessarily provide 'hard' data;</p> <p>Risk of a single leading expert or a higher-ranked official dominating discussion.</p>   |

## 4. EVALUATION RESULTS

### 4.1. Relevance

Set of evaluation questions No. 1 in the ToR: to what extent do the Programme objectives remain relevant to policy priorities and socio-economic needs, facing the development subsequent to the adoption of the Programme?

*Operational question No. 1.1: To what extent are the intermediate and specific objectives of LLP remain pertinent in the light of new EU policy developments?*

Overall, the analysis revealed that the objectives of the LLP are closely linked with the priorities identified in EU-level strategic and operational policy documents. However, the objectives of the successor Programme should be streamlined, should focus on clearly defined impact areas and should ensure close links with ET2020. These findings are based on the results of desk research and interviews with EU-level decision makers.

The intermediate objectives of the LLP – to foster interchange, cooperation and mobility between education and training systems within the Community – are duly emphasised in a number of strategic documents<sup>24</sup>. Interchange and cooperation between education and training systems constitute the core of the OMC, which is used to support progress towards a set of shared higher-level objectives outlined in the Lisbon Strategy and Europe 2020 Strategy. Furthermore, mobility of learners and providers of learning opportunities is closely linked with such higher-level policy objectives as increasing participation in lifelong learning, building people's employability and adaptability, and reinforcing European citizenship<sup>25</sup>. Hence, the intermediate objectives of the LLP have been and are likely to remain relevant in the foreseeable future.

Table 19 discusses the links between the LLP specific objectives as well as the objectives and challenges identified in the EU-level strategic documents. The analysis indicates that the EU-level strategic documents recognise the pertinence of the LLP specific objectives. Hence, these objectives remain relevant in the context of new policy developments at EU level.

<sup>24</sup> Among other see: Council of the European Union, *Joint Progress Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the "Education & Training 2010" work programme*, 15897/09 EDUC 180 SOC 687 – COM (2009) 640 final). Council of the European Union, *Conclusions of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 12 May 2009 on enhancing partnerships between education and training institutions and social partners, in particular employers, in the context of lifelong learning*, 8986/09 EDUC 70 SOC 269 COMPET 226. Commission of the European Communities, *An updated strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training*, Brussels, 16.12.2008 COM(2008) 865 final.

<sup>25</sup> Commission of the European Communities, *An updated strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training*, Brussels, 16.12.2008 COM (2008) 865 final.

**Table 19. Links between the LLP specific objectives and the challenges and objectives identified in the EU-level policy links**

| Specific objectives of the LLP   | Objectives and challenges identified in the EU-level strategic documents   |
|--|--|
| To contribute to the development of quality lifelong learning, and to promote high performance, innovation and a European dimension in systems and practices in the field  | These rather broad specific objectives are also emphasised in ET 2020, Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs (guideline no. 24), Action Plan on Adult Learning “It is always a good time to learn”   |
| To support the realisation of a European area for lifelong learning  | European area for lifelong learning is closely linked with quality assurance, recognition and transparency of qualifications and mobility. These links are highlighted in ET 2020, report on the “Progress towards the Lisbon objectives” <sup>26</sup> and policy documents on the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning <sup>27</sup> and the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training <sup>28</sup> |
| To help improve the quality, attractiveness and accessibility of the opportunities for lifelong learning available within Member States  | While this objective remains relevant for almost all policy areas, it is particularly closely linked with the development of key competences of the most disadvantaged pupils, low-skilled adults and the elderly <sup>29</sup>  |
| To reinforce the contribution of lifelong learning to social cohesion, active citizenship, intercultural dialogue, gender equality and personal fulfilment   | The links between lifelong learning and social cohesion, active citizenship, intercultural dialogue, gender equality and personal fulfilment are emphasised in virtually all the relevant strategic documents  |
| To help promote creativity, competitiveness, employability and the growth of an entrepreneurial spirit   | ET 2020 pointed out that this is one of the key remaining challenges in the area of education and training   |
| To contribute to increased participation in lifelong learning by people of all ages, including those with special needs and disadvantaged groups, regardless of their socio-economic background                                | Europe 2020 strategy, the Lisbon strategy and other policy documents emphasise increased participation in lifelong learning especially among those social groups that have been previously deprived of learning opportunities  |
| To promote language learning and linguistic diversity  | These objectives are recognised in a number of strategic documents and particularly in the Communication “Multilingualism: an asset for Europe and a shared commitment” <sup>30</sup>  |
| To support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning  | Promotion of ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practices is a well-established horizontal priority in the relevant strategic documents (for instance, see ET 2020)   |
| To reinforce the role of lifelong learning in creating a sense of European citizenship based on understanding and respect for human rights and democracy, and encouraging tolerance and respect for other peoples and cultures | This objective is closely linked with the European dimension in education and training as well as the development of key competences (see e.g. “Progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training”). This objective is also closely related with the “Youth on the move” initiative   |
| To promote cooperation in quality assurance in all sectors of education and training in Europe   | This objective is closely linked with the promotion of worker mobility in the Action Plan on Adult Learning as well as the Bologna and Copenhagen Processes, which remain highly relevant in developing a European area of lifelong learning   |
| To encourage the best use of results, innovative products and processes and to exchange good practice in the fields covered by the LLP, in order to improve the quality of education and training                              | ET 2020 argues that mainstreaming and visibility of products, processes and practices developed during implementation of the LLP remains an important challenge  |

The above discussion concludes that the objectives of the LLP have been relevant in the light of EU policy priorities in the period 2007-2009. Interviews with EU-level policy

<sup>26</sup> Commission of the European Communities, *Progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training*, COM (2009) 640 final.

<sup>27</sup> Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning, (2008/C 111/01).

<sup>28</sup> Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 on the establishment of a European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET), (2009/C 155/02).

<sup>29</sup> Council of the European Union, *Joint Progress Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the “Education & Training 2010” work programme*, 15897/09 EDUC 180 SOC 687 – COM (2009) 640 final.

<sup>30</sup> Commission of the European Communities, *Multilingualism: an asset for Europe and a shared commitment*, COM (2008) 566 final; Commission of the European Communities, *Progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training*, COM(2009) 640.

makers also support this conclusion. The interviewees argued that the progress in achieving the Lisbon targets in the area of education and training has been too slow. This suggests that further commitment, efforts and financial resources are required to achieve the targets set for ET. Furthermore, none of the interviewees have indicated a dramatic shift in policy discourse or priorities.

To sum-up, the retrospective analysis revealed that the LLP objectives were relevant in the light of new EU and national policy priorities as well as the needs of the target groups. However, the prospective analysis suggests that the future generation of European Union programmes in the area of lifelong learning could be enhanced in several areas: reducing the number of objectives and ensuring close links between the Programme and ET 2020.

First, a number of policy makers have pointed out that in future the objectives should be streamlined and should focus on a clearly defined set of expected impacts rather than on a broad range of outputs. The current structure of the objectives of the LLP evolved over time, when the “inherited” objectives of the previous Programmes were supplemented by the new policy initiatives. While all of these objectives remain relevant, they should be further integrated and should focus on key cross-cutting issues rather than on numerous priorities of the individual areas of action. More specifically, the main problems with the current structure of the objectives include:

- The number of objectives is too large. As the desk research reveals, there are 11 specific objectives of the LLP, which are supplemented with 13 specific objectives of sectoral programmes. In addition, there are 33 operational objectives of the sub-programmes.
- The majority of the operational objectives overlap, i.e. they seek the same outcomes in different sectors. Furthermore, several specific objectives overlap with the operational objectives. For example, specific objective “To support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning” is duplicated by the operational objectives of the sub-programmes. Furthermore, the specific objective “To promote language learning and to support linguistic diversity” is duplicated by the operational objective of the Transversal programme and overlaps with the operational objectives of the sectoral programmes.
- Specific objectives seek to contribute to broadly defined processes in a very wide range of areas. As the National Report from Slovenia puts it, “reduction, clarification and prioritisation of LLP goals would certainly bring about a more focused short-term effect and long long-term impacts <...>. Here, two aspects must be clarified. First, at the national level, all the stated LLP goals are simply not attainable within the given Programme period (2013) and with the available financial resources. Secondly, being that general, it is relatively easy for end-users to display their achievement, whereas detailed impact analysis often reveals less than the ideal picture. <...> Clearer Programme focus would thus present considerable improvement in this respect”<sup>31</sup>. While these problems are pertinent to all sub-programmes, they are particularly relevant to the Grundtvig programme. The activities and funding for adult education has so far been widely, but thinly spread between diverse target groups and a large number of issues. Concentration on a smaller number of challenges could be beneficial for creating critical mass and achieving more visible breakthroughs in adult education.
- The logical links between different levels of objectives are not straightforward. For example, the specific objective “to help promote the creativity, competitiveness, employability and the growth of an entrepreneurial spirit” seeks to contribute to the intermediate objective “to foster interchange, cooperation and mobility between education and training systems within the Community so that they become world quality reference”. However, it is questionable, whether achievement of the specific objective

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<sup>31</sup> Klemen Širok, Katarina Košmrlj, LLP Interim Evaluation. National Report – Slovenia, 2010, p. 25.

could in principle contribute to the achievement of the said intermediate objective.

Second, the objectives of the LLP were closely intertwined with the objectives of the relevant EU-level strategic documents. Similarly, the future generation of the LLP should be closely linked with the implementation of the Updated strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020<sup>32</sup>). ET 2020 focuses on four objectives to be achieved by 2020:

1. Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality;
2. Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training;
3. Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship;
4. Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.

Achievement of the ET 2020 objectives depends on a combination of factors, including policy developments in the Member States, successful implementation of EU programmes and coordination of the efforts taken at national and the EU level. Hence, the intervention logic of the future generation LLP: a) should be closely aligned with the ET 2020 priorities and b) recognise that LLP is just one of the instruments that contribute to the achievement of the aforementioned objectives. Accordingly the intermediate objectives of the future LLP should be aligned with the ET 2020 objectives and impact monitoring indicators should seek to assess the extent to which the LLP has contributed to the achievement of ET 2020 priorities.

*Operational question No. 1.2: To what extent are the LLP objectives pertinent in the light of new policy developments at the national level?*

The Participating Countries have diverse education and training systems, which could imply incoherence between the objectives and priorities of the LLP as well as key challenges faced at national level. The findings indicate that this is not the case: the objectives of the LLP were highly relevant within the national education and training contexts. However, the Participating Countries also proposed that in future the objectives of the LLP should be clearly focused on key impact areas.

The system for setting the objectives and priorities of the LLP contained several safeguards to ensure the relevance of objectives within national contexts. First, the objectives and specific priorities were set taking into consideration a wider strategic context (Lisbon strategy and ET 2010 in particular). Hence, they should reflect the national priorities as agreed in these strategic documents. Second, while the priorities were set by the European Commission, it consulted the LLP Committee that comprised national policy makers. Third, each Member State could introduce additional priorities or criteria in the national calls for proposals for a majority of the supported actions.

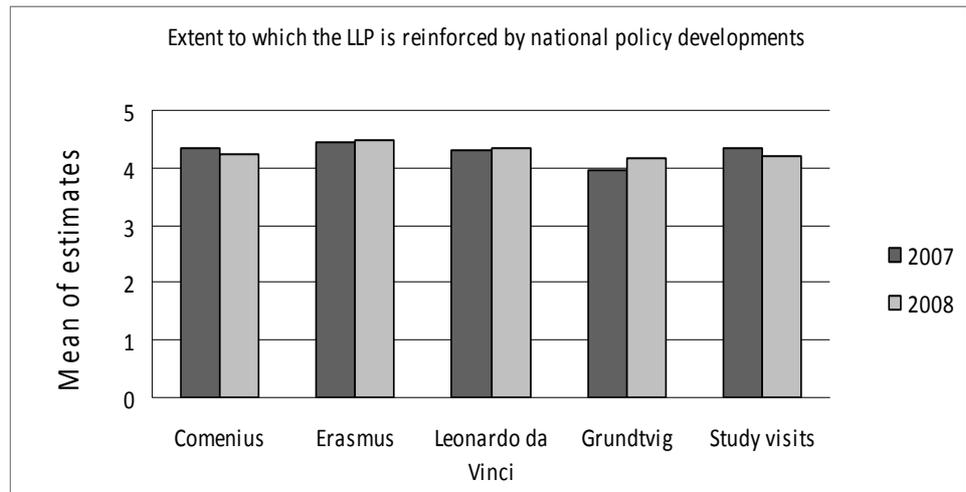
The findings reveal that such a system of policy coordination was effective: the objectives of the LLP were relevant within the national contexts. This conclusion is based on information from several sources. First, interviews with national policy makers and stakeholders unanimously revealed that the national strategic priorities and objectives of the LLP were coherent and mutually supportive. In fact, the LLP priorities were either explicitly (e.g. in the national documents) or implicitly recognised in national education and training systems.

Second, the National Agencies (NAs) reported that the implementation of the sub-programmes was strongly reinforced by national policy developments (see Figure 8). This would not be possible, if the national priorities and the LLP objectives were incompatible.

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<sup>32</sup> The Council of the European Union, Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020'), 2009/C 119/02. Similar issues are also emphasised in: Commission of the European Communities, *Promoting the learning mobility of young people, Green Paper*, Brussels, 8.7.2009 COM(2009) 329 final.

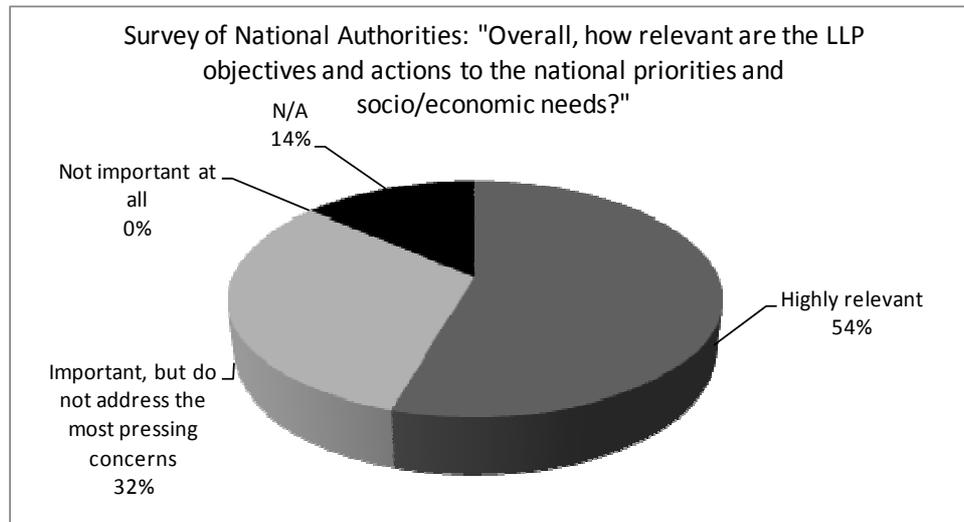
**Figure 8. The extent to which implementation of the LLP is reinforced by the developments in national education and training policy**



Notes: the figure reports answers to the question: "To what extent was the implementation of the programme in your country affected by national policy developments in education and training?" 1= major negative influence; 5= major positive influence. Source: Synthesis of Annual National Reports.

Third, the survey of the National Authorities revealed that the objectives and actions set in the LLP remained highly relevant or important to national priorities and socio-economic needs (see Figure 9).

**Figure 9. Survey of the National Authorities regarding relevance of the LLP objectives and actions**



Source: survey of the National Authorities.

Fourth, the opinions expressed in the National Reports on the implementation of the LLP in 2007 – 2009 argue that the LLP objectives remained highly pertinent to the national policy priorities. Due to different national contexts, the opinions of the Participating Countries slightly diverge regarding the objectives, which were the most relevant. However, a large proportion of Participating Countries emphasise internationalisation and higher quality of education and training as the most important objectives of the LLP. In addition a large proportion of the reports pointed out the importance of the following objectives:

- Higher accessibility to learning opportunities and learning of foreign languages were seen as a very important Comenius objective.
- Promotion of employability and learning of foreign languages were emphasised among the Erasmus objectives.

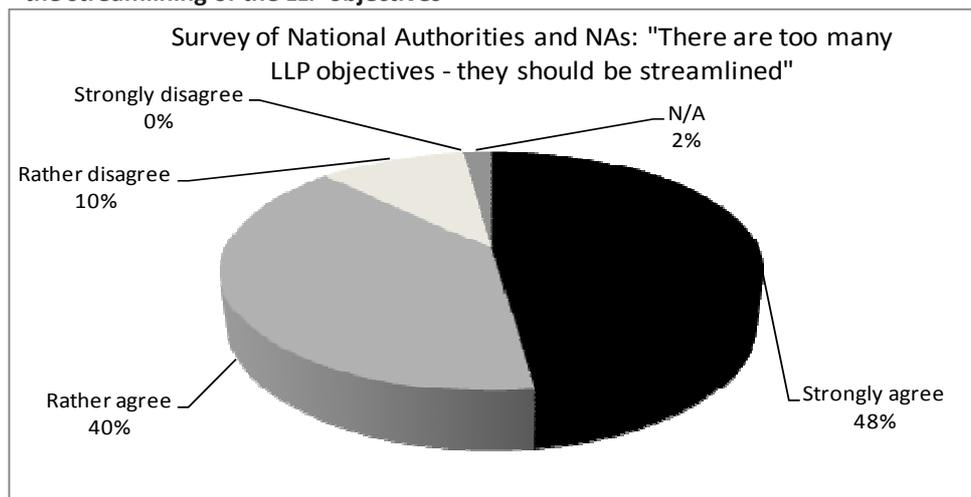


- Promotion of employability and participation in the European labour market, higher accessibility to learning opportunities and enhanced attractiveness of vocational education and training stood out from the Leonardo da Vinci objectives.
- Higher accessibility to learning opportunities, promotion of non-formal and informal learning, learning of foreign languages and adaptability were very important Grundtvig objectives.

Despite a very positive assessment, the Participating Countries also provided several recommendations on improving the logic of intervention of the LLP in the future. First, a large proportion of the Participating Countries suggested streamlining the objectives with the view of focusing on key impact areas. National Reports from BE (nl), FI, FR, HU, PL, SL and the UK among others argued that the objectives were multiple, general and all-encompassing. As a result, the main priorities were blurred. Hence, several National Reports proposed to focus on expected key impacts, “streamline”, “rationalise” and reduce the number of objectives. This view echoes the concerns expressed by EU policy-makers (see discussion under operational question 1.1.).

The survey of National Authorities and Agencies also reinforce the position that there are too many LLP objectives and they should be streamlined in the future. 88% of the respondents either strongly or rather agree with this statement (see Figure 10).

**Figure 10. Survey of the National Authorities and NAs regarding attitudes towards the streamlining of the LLP objectives**



Source: survey of the National Authorities and NAs.

Second, the diversity of the national contexts and the increasing pace of change created pressure for flexibility in reacting to the most pressing domestic challenges. The existing universal objectives and targets for all the Participating Countries impose constraints on flexible policy implementation. Hence, the National Reports from the Czech Republic, Estonia, Iceland and the Netherlands among others argued for increasing the leverage of National Authorities and Agencies in setting national priorities and criteria for the selection of applications. This view, however, did not receive support from EU-level decision makers. They argue that the Participating Countries possess a wide range of national policy instruments (including European Social Fund, allocations from national budgets, etc.), which could be flexibly used to tackle country-specific problems. The LLP as a Europe-wide instrument should be used for a concerted action aimed at solving common challenges. Furthermore, decentralised setting of priorities could lead to coordination problems. If different countries set divergent priorities, then funding of cross-national partnerships and projects would become complicated, since it is unlikely that the same partnership could meet the divergent priorities of the Participating Countries. This could lead to erosion of the European dimension of the LLP. Taking into account these arguments,

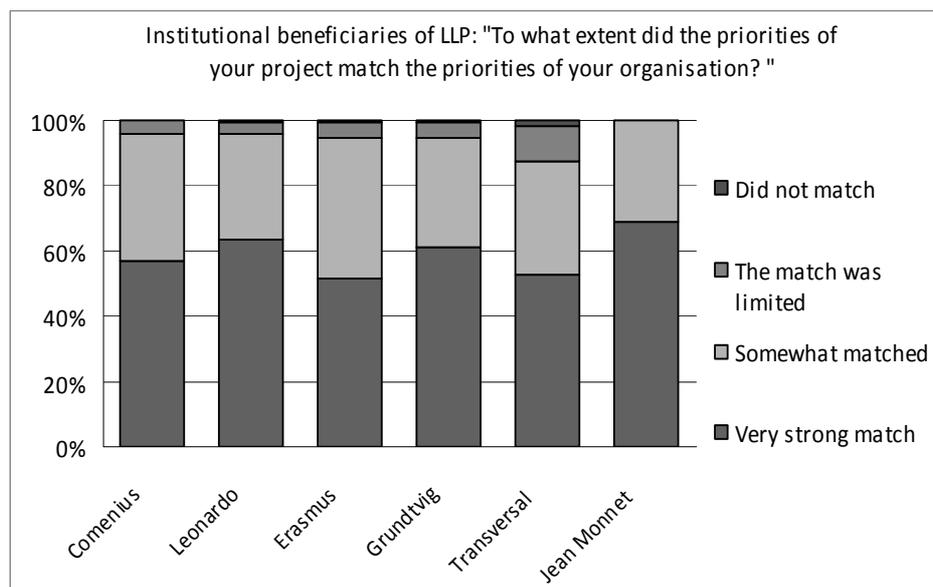
the evaluator suggests that the mechanism of setting the priorities for the calls for applications should remain unchanged.

*Operational question No. 1.3: To what extent do the objectives of LLP remain pertinent to the lifelong learning needs of the target groups of the programme?*

Overall, the objectives of the LLP were relevant to the target groups. Promotion of active participation in lifelong learning as well as the development of quality, performance and innovation in the provision of lifelong learning opportunities was seen as very relevant by the largest proportion of the institutions that participated in the LLP actions. Individuals, who participated in the LLP activities, also argued that the Programme was pertinent to their needs, particularly to language learning and personal fulfilment. However, the Programme was seen as less relevant in meeting the needs related to employability and the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills. These findings are based on the representative surveys of the organisational and individual beneficiaries.

The institutional beneficiaries agree that the objectives of their projects, which were closely linked with the LLP objectives, were relevant for their organisations. More specifically, over a half of the beneficiaries surveyed argued that these objectives were among the top priorities of their organisations. Over a third indicate that the objectives of their projects and the priorities of their organisations somewhat matched, while a small number acknowledged that the objectives did not match or the match was limited (see Figure 11 for the breakdown of these results by the sub-programmes).

**Figure 11. Links between the objectives of funded projects and priorities of the organisational beneficiaries**

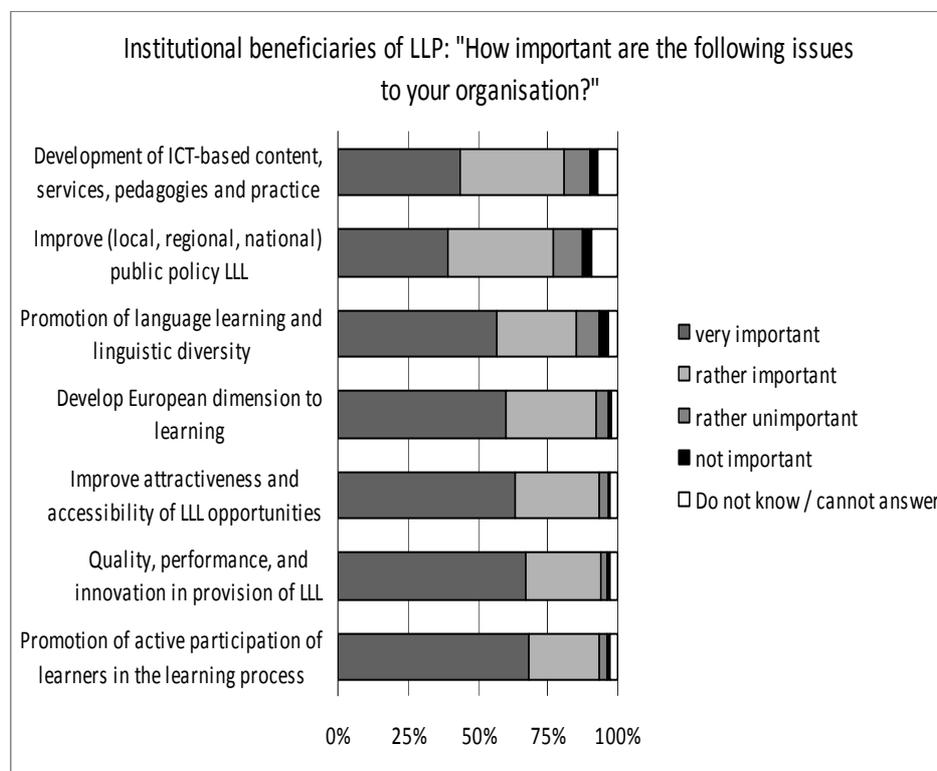


Source: survey of institutional beneficiaries of the LLP.

In order to gain a more in-depth understanding of the extent to which the LLP objectives were relevant to the institutional beneficiaries, the contractor “translated” the LLP specific objectives into reference systems of the surveyed organisations. The largest proportion of the surveyed organisations indicate that the LLP objectives linked to promotion of active participation in the lifelong learning as well as development of quality, performance and innovation in provision of lifelong learning opportunities were highly relevant (see Figure 12). The smallest proportion of the organisations surveyed pointed out that improvements in (local, regional or national) public policy on lifelong learning and development of ICT-based content, pedagogies and practices were important for them. This does not mean that the latter objectives were the least relevant: it merely reflects the diversity of beneficiary organisations and different

focus of the sub-programmes of the LLP. For instance, development of ICT-based content seems to be particularly relevant for the organisations applying for KA3, as it is amongst the most in-demand strands of centralised measures with a 1:13 success to application ratio in the most recent call and a very high threshold score for approval.

**Figure 12. Assessment of importance of the lifelong learning related issues for the organisational beneficiaries**

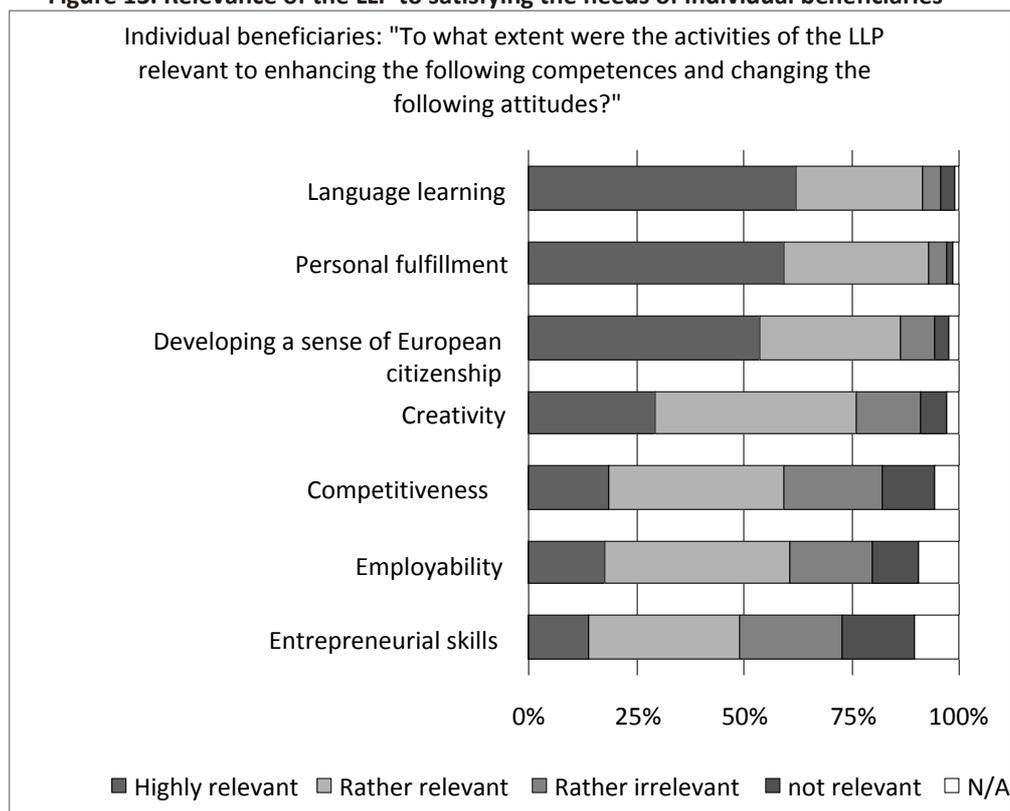


Source: survey of institutional beneficiaries of the LLP.

The survey of the individual beneficiaries sought to assess whether participation in the LLP activities was relevant for meeting the needs of individuals which were identified in the specific objectives of the LLP. Overall, the results indicate that the LLP was highly relevant for meeting such needs as language learning, personal fulfilment and developing a sense of European citizenship (see Figure 13). A smaller proportion of the individual beneficiaries surveyed argued that their participation in the Programme was less relevant for satisfying the needs in such areas as competitiveness, employability and entrepreneurial skills. What factors could explain the latter finding?



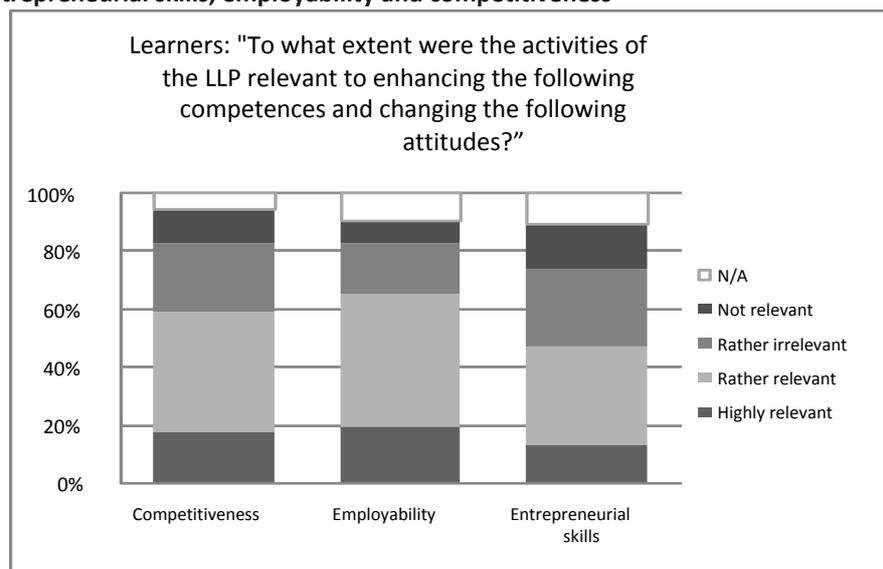
**Figure 13. Relevance of the LLP to satisfying the needs of individual beneficiaries**



Source: survey of individual beneficiaries of the LLP.

It was expected that relevance of the LLP actions to developing employability related skills should differ by type of beneficiary and sub-programme. The LLP actions should be more relevant to enhancing the said competences of learners (pupils, students and trainees), who seek integration in the labour market. Learner responses are provided in Figure 14. It indicates that the LLP actions were highly or rather relevant to enhancing employability (64.9%) and competitiveness (59%) of the learners. However, less than 50% of the learners have indicated that their participation in the LLP actions was relevant for enhancing entrepreneurial skills. There is also considerable variation between the target groups of the sectoral programmes. For instance, the Jean Monnet actions, which seek to provide operating grants to specialised institutions, substantially contributed to the employability of graduates of these institutions: the case study on Jean Monnet indicates that graduates of the European University Institute were very successful in the labour market. On the other hand, a number of LLP actions do not directly aim at fostering employability, competitiveness and entrepreneurial skills. For example, the focus of Grundtvig is on the development of social and personal skills. Acquisition of these general skills could certainly contribute to higher employability and competitiveness, but increased rates of employment among the target groups is not *per se* the main expected outcome of Grundtvig actions.

**Figure 14. Relevance of the Lifelong Learning Programme action to enhancing learner entrepreneurial skills, employability and competitiveness**



Source: survey of individual beneficiaries of the LLP.

Similar findings also emerge from the National Reports on the implementation of the LLP in 2007 – 2009. The reports argued that the LLP objectives remained pertinent to the needs of the target groups. However, the objectives and the funded actions did not sufficiently prioritise employability and participation in the European labour market. This was seen as particularly important in relation to the current economic crisis, high levels of unemployment and the emerging mismatches between the demand and supply of skills.

Furthermore, the reports of the Participating Countries also argued that higher priority should be given to accessibility to opportunities for lifelong learning. More specifically, inclusion of those, who typically face problems in accessing education and training – the elderly, early school leavers, migrants, ethnic minorities, persons with special needs and disabilities, the unemployed and those who lack foreign language skills and ICT competences. This is still a challenge in a high number of the Participating Countries. Hence, higher priority should be given to concrete actions, which aim to remove the barriers faced by the disadvantaged groups.

Set of evaluation questions No. 2 in the ToR: What is the Community Added Value of the Programme? Does it effectively promote cooperation between Participating Countries? What does the LLP offer in addition to other education and support schemes available at both international and national levels?

European added value is defined as the “value” resulting from EU intervention that is additional to the “value” that would have resulted from intervention at national or regional level by public authorities and/or the private sector.<sup>33</sup> This evaluation assessed what additional “value” the EU level intervention created in three areas: policy cooperation and interchange between the Participating Countries, development of the European dimension in education and training and the extent to which the LLP creates additional value in comparison with similar international or national programmes. The finding is that in the absence of the LLP, developments in all three areas would be fragmented (in terms of scope of activities and coverage of the Participating

<sup>33</sup> European Commission, *Ex-ante evaluation, A Practical Guide for Preparing Proposals for Expenditure Programmes*, 2001.

Countries), activities would be carried out on a smaller scale and less extensively, and a number of important results would not have been created at all. Mobility actions, international cooperation and partnerships would be hindered by insufficient financial resources, lack of information and other critical factors creating an inadequate social environment. Hence, the European added value of the LLP was considerable. The findings are based on the interviews, case studies, the National Reports from the Participating Countries and the surveys of the beneficiaries that implemented projects supported by the LLP.

*Operational question No. 2.1: What would be the quality and extent of policy cooperation and interchange between the Participating Countries in the absence of LLP?*

Cooperation and interchange between the Participating Countries would be considerably lower and fragmented in the absence of the LLP. The Programme played two important roles in this respect. First, it was an important instrument of the OMC, since it provided an institutional framework for the *fora* of the Member States. Deliberations at the European level have significantly contributed to the emergence of joint policy initiatives and adoption of new cooperative instruments:

- Development of a European Framework for Key Competences for Lifelong Learning and European Qualifications Framework closely relied on the success of the LLP in fostering EU level policy cooperation.
- The Comenius programme facilitated the development and implementation of the “Council conclusions on the education of children with a migrant background”<sup>34</sup> as well as implementation of the Commission Communication “Improving Competences for the 21st Century: An Agenda for European Cooperation in Schools”<sup>35</sup>.
- The success of Erasmus paved the way for the Bologna process and subsequently to the Europe-wide development of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)<sup>36</sup>.
- Like Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci considerably contributed to the Copenhagen Process and implementation of the European Credits in Vocational Education and Training (ECVET), European Quality Assurance Reference framework for VET (EQARF) and Europass. The contribution of the LLP to the cooperation between the Participating Countries was also emphasised in the Council conclusions on “Future priorities for enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training”.
- Similarly, the success of Grundtvig and cooperation initiated under the Transversal programme considerably contributed to the 2006 Commission Communication “it is never too late to learn” and the 2007 Action plan on adult learning “it is always a good time to learn”.

The results of a survey of National Authorities and Agencies also indicate that the LLP created considerable European added value in the development of common EU-wide tools and methods. More than 80% of respondents argue that, if hypothetically the LLP did not exist, the level and quality of activities aimed at development of tools and methods for the recognition and evaluation of competences and skills would be lower (see Figure 15).

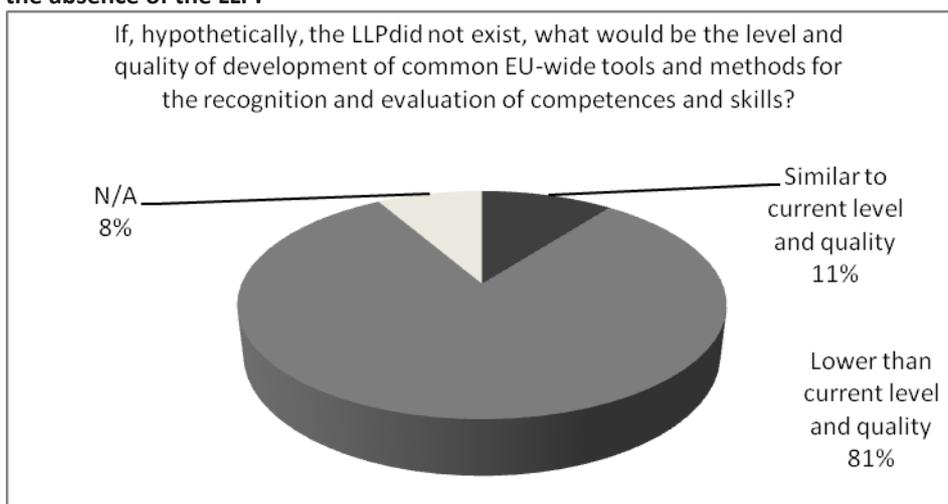
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<sup>34</sup> Council of the European Union, Council conclusions on the education of children with a migrant background, 2978th Education, Youth and Culture Council meeting Brussels, 26 November 2009.

<sup>35</sup> Commission of the European Communities, *Improving competences for the 21st Century: An Agenda for European Cooperation on Schools*, Brussels, 3.7.2008, COM(2008) 425 final.

<sup>36</sup> Commission of the European Communities, *Final report on the implementation and impact of the second phase (2000-2006) of the Community action programmes in the field of education (Socrates) and vocational training (Leonardo da Vinci) and the multiannual programme (2004-2006) for the effective integration of information and communication technologies (ICT) in education and training systems in Europe (eLearning)*, Brussels, 6.4.2009, COM(2009) 159 final.

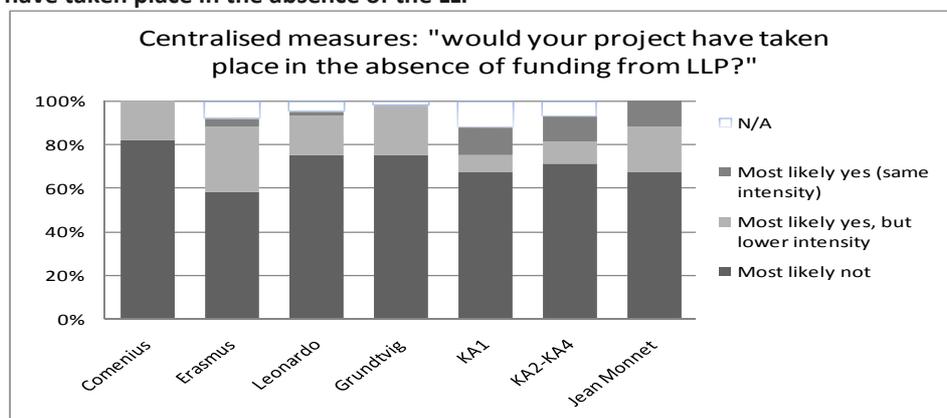
**Figure 15. The hypothetical level and quality of development of common EU-wide tools and methods for the recognition and evaluation of competences and skills in the absence of the LLP.**



Source: survey of the National Authorities and NAs.

Second, the LLP (centralised measures in particular) provided funding for such cooperation. A combination of these instruments created European added value by providing solutions to the problems of collective action, which would otherwise hinder cooperation between the Participating Countries. For example, Erasmus multilateral networks provide support to the implementation of the Modernisation of the Higher Education Agenda; Key Action 1 of the Transversal programme provides a solution to the collective action problems in setting standards and collecting comparable statistics as well as in providing comparative studies and evidence for further policy development; the Jean Monnet programme facilitates teaching and research on European integration as well as providing support to the Europe-wide associations.

**Figure 16. The likelihood that the projects funded by centralised measures would have taken place in the absence of the LLP**

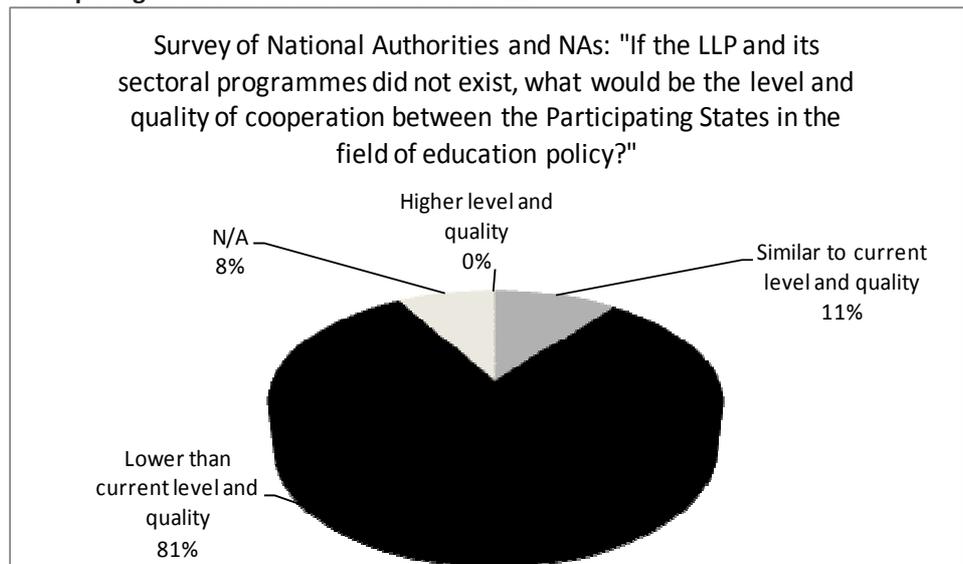


Source: survey of institutional beneficiaries of the LLP.

Findings presented in Figure 16 indicate that the vast majority of multilateral projects and networks funded by the centralised actions of the LLP would not have taken place if they did not receive funding from the LLP. Hence, in the absence of EU intervention in this area, the level of multilateral cooperation and interchange would be considerably lower: 71% of all projects funded by centralised actions would not have been implemented without support from the LLP.

The survey results of the National Authorities and NAs also reinforce this position. 84% of respondents argue that in the absence of the LLP the level and quality of cooperation between the Participating Countries would be considerably lower (81%) (see Figure 17).

**Figure 17. The hypothetical level and quality of cooperation between the Participating Countries in the absence of the LLP**



Source: survey of the National Authorities and NAs.

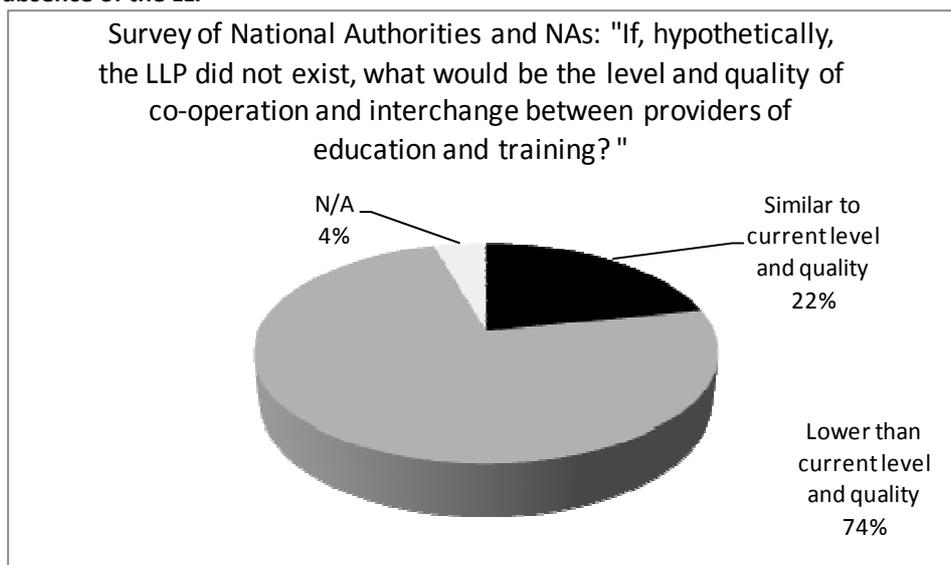
*Operational question No. 2.2: What is the European added value of LLP in introducing the European dimension in education and training?*

*Ex-ante* impact assessment of the LLP argues that the introduction of the European dimension in education and training is one of the key areas of expected European added value.<sup>37</sup> Desk research, interviews with the representatives of the National Authorities, the survey of NAs and the National Authorities as well as synthesis of the National Reports on the implementation of the LLP in 2007-2009 revealed that the highest European added value of introducing the European dimension manifested itself in three main areas: a) internationalisation, b) creating a sense of European citizenship and promotion of language learning, c) personal and professional development.

The LLP has directly contributed to the internationalisation of education and training through the introduction of a European dimension in two main areas. First, support to mobility actions, projects and partnerships resulted in sustainable and long term cooperation between providers of education and training: this finding is supported by the results of the interviews, synthesis of the National Reports and the survey of the National Authorities and NAs (see Figure 18). Second, support to mobility has changed the structures and practices of organisations: education and training institutions have developed internationalisation strategies and support services for mobile learners, teachers and administrative staff. The latter developments so far have been the most visible in the higher education sector, but similar trends have also emerged elsewhere.

<sup>37</sup> Commission staff working paper, Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council for an integrated action programme in the field of lifelong learning, Extended impact assessment integrating ex-ante evaluation requirements, Brussels, SEC(2004) 971.

**Figure 18. Results of the survey of the National Authorities and NAs: the likely level and quality of cooperation between providers of education and training in the absence of the LLP**



Source: survey of the National Authorities and NAs.

Furthermore, introduction of the European dimension also indirectly created European added value in the area of internationalisation. The main indirect effects included the following:

- The LLP acted as a catalyst for further opening-up and internationalisation of education and training systems. For example, establishment of the Nordplus programme was heavily based on the positive experience with previous European Programmes in the pre-2007 period. As a result, the structure of Nordplus, which is a cooperation instrument in the area of education and training among the Nordic countries, significantly resembles the structure of the LLP. As the national report from Norway summarises, Nordplus is “a Nordic version of the original <...> Programme”. Another example is the Erasmus Belgica programme, which is “a copy of Erasmus but limited to mobility between the three communities of Belgium” (national report from the Flemish Community of Belgium).
- The LLP stimulated national investments in international mobility and cooperation. For example, the Austrian Government provided additional national funds to the Leonardo da Vinci programme with the view of expanding the scale of successful activities. Similarly, Portugal allocated national funds for additional Erasmus scholarships to persons from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. These are just a few of many examples. However, lack of systemic data prevents provision of quantitative estimates of the level of additional investments that were stimulated by the LLP.
- The LLP has contributed to higher international visibility of education and training institutions. This has been particularly relevant for higher education institutions in the smaller EU Member States and the EU12. Higher visibility facilitated further cooperation, mobility and interchange, which took place beyond the LLP framework.
- The Grundtvig programme virtually created the European dimension and cooperation in the adult learning community. This dimension had not existed before the Programme, since the sector was rather fragmented and locally embedded. Furthermore, the number of new Grundtvig beneficiaries has grown year on year.
- Funding from the EU and particularly from the LLP provided a “quality label” for the projects and improved the image of the institutions at national level. This contributed to higher visibility of the projects and their capacity to attract

larger target groups and additional funding, as well as allowing them to seek closer cooperation with decision makers. A good example is Jean Monnet as an international brand, which signals “excellence” and attracts universities wishing to set up Centres of Excellence. Furthermore, with relatively small funds, the JM Programme increased the visibility of the EU around the world, and its accumulated knowledgebase enabled the EU to help itself in a way which was independent of national concerns, and allowed critical open methods of working.

- As discussed above, the LLP contributed to further development of common European tools and principles aimed at enhancing transparency and quality of competences and qualifications, such as Europass, the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning, the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training and the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework. This contributed to enhanced professional and geographical mobility, which goes beyond the mobility instruments directly funded by the LLP.

Creating a sense of European citizenship and promotion of language learning refers to the second area, where introduction of a European dimension has created considerable added value. National Reports on the implementation of the LLP in 2007 – 2009 revealed that participation in the Programme has had the following effects on the individual beneficiaries:

- Has contributed to the development of a European identity and values, fostering interaction and understanding of different cultures.
- Has facilitated promotion of solidarity and has contributed to combating racism, prejudice, xenophobia and discrimination.
- Has facilitated foreign language learning.

Thirdly, introduction of the European dimension in education and training has contributed to the European added value by facilitating personal and professional development. More specifically, the National Reports argue that the European dimension in funded projects, partnerships and mobility has contributed to:

- Personal maturity, self-esteem and sense of independence of mobile learners.
- Improving basic skills and vocational skills for socio-economically disadvantaged beneficiaries and those with special needs.
- Interchange of ideas, practices and knowledge.
- Raising aspirations of learners for further education and/or career.
- Professional growth of teachers and administrators. This has resulted from adoption of new teaching methods, increased knowledge about the European education and training systems and innovative practices as well as the development of intercultural and linguistic skills. Furthermore, joint implementation of projects also contributed to an improved ability to work as part of an international team.

The discussion so far clearly shows that introduction of a European dimension in the education and training system has created considerable added value. However, the added value is the highest at the individual level (developing skills, changing attitudes and practices) and the organisational level (closer cooperation and changing institutional structures). The direct added value at systemic level is predominantly linked to the recognition of qualifications and increased transparency of education and training systems across Europe. One could also expect that in the long term, changes in the behaviours of individuals and organisations could indirectly affect the modernisation of education and training systems. Nevertheless, such indirect impacts are hard to measure and quantify. This problem is further discussed under the operational question No. 11, which provides an assessment of valorisation and mainstreaming.

*Operational question No. 2.3: What does the LLP offer in addition to other education and support schemes available at both international and national levels?*



There are numerous multilateral, bilateral and national programmes, which resemble specific actions or sectoral programmes of the LLP. The characteristics and examples of such programmes are listed in Table 20. While some of them provide support to the initiation of partnerships and networks, most of the resources are allocated to the mobility of learners. The vast majority of national and international programmes focus on the tertiary level. There are considerably fewer programmes that target secondary education and VET and virtually no multilateral, bilateral or national programmes, which resemble the actions supported by Grundtvig.

**Table 20. Main characteristics of multilateral, bilateral and national education and support programmes**

| Type of programmes  | Similarities with the LLP  |
|---|--|
| Multilateral programmes (e.g. Nordplus)   | Supports mobility of learners and providers of education at all levels<br>Supports initiation of partnerships or cooperative networks  |
| Bilateral cooperation and cultural programmes (e.g. programmes funded by the British Council and Goethe Institut, Centre Culturel Français) | Supports mobility of individuals (usually at higher education level)<br>Supports initiation of networks and innovative projects  |
| National programmes: ESF funded projects  | Supports development of innovative teaching and learning instruments, training of teachers and other providers of education<br>Also provides funding for short term international mobility actions |
| National programmes: mobility and scholarship schemes   | Provides scholarships mostly to the students at tertiary level   |

In comparison with the existing programmes, the European added value of the LLP lies in several areas. The first one refers to the wide range of target groups and geographical coverage. Even the largest multilateral programmes (e.g. Nordplus) cover less than 30% of the countries participating in the LLP and provide support to around 10 000 beneficiaries per year. In comparison, the LLP on average annually funded 350 000 participants in mobility actions in 2007 – 2009. This suggests that in the absence of the LLP the geographical coverage and scale of opportunities for mobility would be considerably lower.

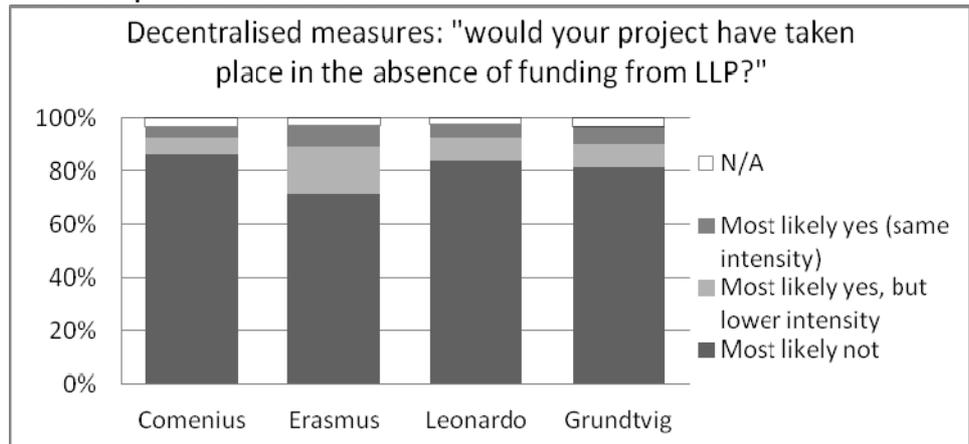
The second area encompasses the complexity and comprehensiveness of support. The LLP seeks to provide comprehensive support aimed at improving a number of aspects in educational and training systems, whereas the existing multilateral, bilateral and national programmes usually focus on specific issues, among which the mobility of university students is the most broadly covered. Hence, in the absence of the LLP, the existing programmes would provide only fragmented support to educational and training systems.

Furthermore, several sectoral programmes of the LLP occupy specific niches, which are not covered by the national educational policies. The best example is Grundtvig. There are no similar multilateral or bilateral programmes in the area of adult learning. As a result, Grundtvig creates considerable added value, because it provides beneficiaries with a unique opportunity for mobility, interchange and cooperation.

The above findings are also reinforced by the results of the survey of the institutional beneficiaries, which have carried out projects supported by the decentralised actions of the LLP. Figure 19 indicates that a vast majority (82.6%) of the projects would not be carried out in the absence of the LLP. Furthermore, the differences between Erasmus and other sectoral programmes also show that the existing multilateral, bilateral and national programmes provide more support to the higher education sector, while such support to other education sectors is virtually unavailable.



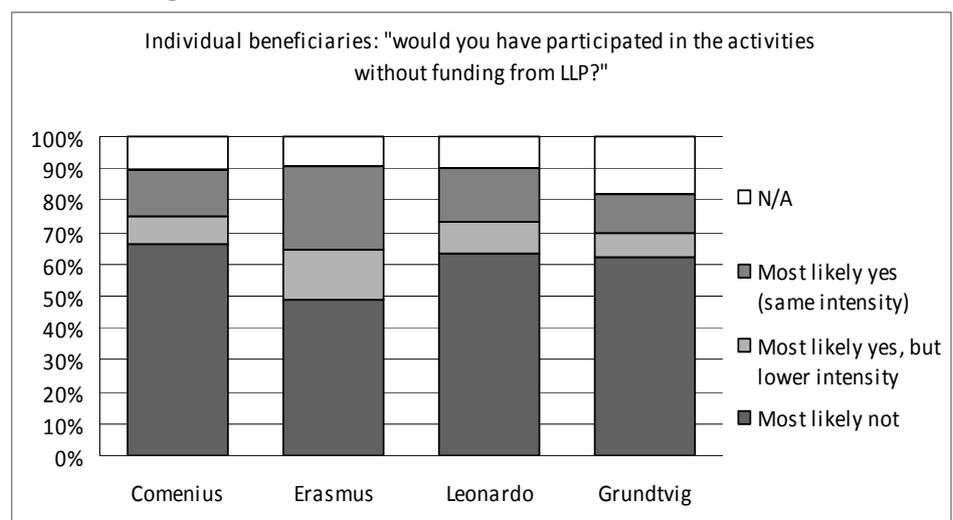
**Figure 19. The likelihood that the projects, funded by decentralised actions, would have taken place in the absence of LLP**



Source: survey of institutional beneficiaries of the LLP.

These conclusions are also reinforced by the data in Figure 20 which provides responses of the individual beneficiaries regarding the likelihood of their participation in activities without funding from the LLP. The data shows, that a majority of individuals would not be able to participate in the activities without such support. However, participants of the Erasmus programme stand out from the rest: 40% of individual beneficiaries could have participated in similar actions without support from the LLP. This could be explained by the fact that there is a wider array of national, bilateral and multilateral programmes available in the higher education sector. However, the availability of such alternative programmes is not uniformly high in all Participating Countries. The alternative funding is the most accessible in the Netherlands, Estonia, Denmark, Norway and France and the least accessible in Slovakia and Turkey. In fact, over 90% of individual beneficiaries from Turkey argue that they would not have been able to participate in the actions if they have not received funding from the LLP. Hence, the statement that “Erasmus systemically substitutes funding from other sources” does not have strong empirical support across the Participating Countries.

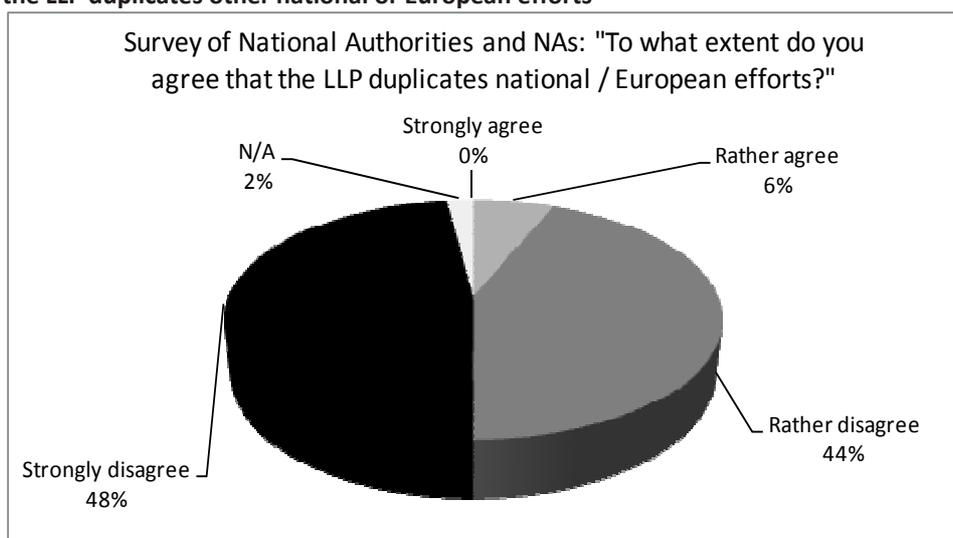
**Figure 20. The likelihood that the individuals would have participated in the activities without funding from the LLP**



Source: survey of individual beneficiaries of the LLP.

Lastly, the survey of the National Authorities and NAs also indicates that the LLP does not duplicate other similar national and EU initiatives (e.g. funding of European Social Fund or national funds for student mobility). As Figure 21 indicates, 92% of the representatives surveyed do not agree that such duplication exists.

**Figure 21. Survey of the National Authorities and NAs regarding the extent to which the LLP duplicates other national or European efforts**



Source: Survey of the National Authorities and NAs.

Set of evaluation questions No. 3 in the ToR: Do the Programme objectives and design provide proper links to policy initiatives and political priorities (Lisbon strategy, Education & Training 2010 Work Programme).

*Operational question No. 3.1: To what extent is the LLP linked to EU-level priorities at the level of objectives?*

The answer to this question focuses on the analysis of formal links between the objectives. The assessment suggests that the objectives of the LLP were strongly linked with the policy initiatives and political priorities identified in the Lisbon strategy and ET 2010 Work Programme. These findings are based on the desk research, as well as information provided in the National Reports and interviews.

A detailed assessment of the links between the LLP objectives and priorities outlined in the Lisbon Strategy is provided in Table 21 below. The focus of analysis is on Guideline No. 23 and Guideline No. 24 of the Guidelines for Growth and Jobs, since these guidelines are directly related to the education and training policy.

**Table 21. Assessment of the links between LLP objectives and priorities outlined in Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs**

| Priorities outlined in Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs (2005 – 2008 and 2008 – 2010)                     | Assessment of the strength of the links between the LLP objectives and political priorities  | Summary assessment |
|--|--|--------------------|
| <i>Guideline No 23: Expand and improve investment in human capital</i>   |  |                    |
| Inclusive education and training policies facilitate access to initial vocational, secondary and higher education. | At the level of specific objectives, the LLP aims to help improve the quality, attractiveness and accessibility of the opportunities for lifelong learning available within the Member States.   | +++                |
| Facilitate access to apprenticeships and entrepreneurship training   | Access to apprenticeships is prioritised in Leonardo da Vinci annual calls for proposals. Placements of students in enterprises are also supported by Erasmus.<br>One of the specific objectives of the LLP aims to promote growth of entrepreneurial spirit. To this end annual calls for proposals under | ++                 |



| Priorities outlined in Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs (2005 – 2008 and 2008 – 2010)   | Assessment of the strength of the links between the LLP objectives and political priorities  | Summary assessment |
|--|--|--------------------|
|  | Comenius, Erasmus, Grundtvig and KA1 of the Transversal programme prioritise entrepreneurship. Nevertheless, a considerable proportion (39%) of the individual beneficiaries argues that participation in the LLP was not relevant for enhancing entrepreneurial skills <sup>38</sup> .  |                    |
| Reducing the number of early school leavers  | The LLP prioritises increased participation in lifelong learning by people of all ages. Reducing the number of early school leavers was one of the priorities of Comenius in the calls for proposals in 2007, 2008 and 2009. Early school leavers are also among the Grundtvig target groups.  | +++                |
| Lifelong learning strategies open to all in schools, businesses, public authorities and households according to European agreements, including appropriate incentives and cost sharing mechanisms, with a view to enhancing participation in continuous and workplace training throughout the life-cycle | Specific objectives of the LLP explicitly recognise the need to promote increased participation and access to education and training. Furthermore, the Leonardo da Vinci and Erasmus operational objectives explicitly support cooperation between educational institutions and business. However, the LLP largely targets those, who are already in education and training (i.e. providers of learning opportunities or participants in education and training), while those who are not likely to participate in education and training are at the margins of the LLP. Development of cost-sharing mechanisms is not explicitly supported by the LLP objectives. Several National Reports pointed out that active involvement of enterprises (and SMEs in particular) remains problematic. Furthermore, lifelong learning strategies open to all households is not sufficiently prioritised: for instance, support to mobility does not include mobility of the dependant household members, which hinders mobility of (lone) parents. | ++                 |
| Lifelong strategies for the low-skilled and older workers  | This objective is consistently prioritised by the LLP. However, as discussed above, the main target groups of the LLP include those already in education and training, while low-skilled and older workers are captured only by several Grundtvig actions.   | ++                 |
| Adaptation and capacity-building of education and training systems   | Objectives and the structure of the LLP put substantial emphasis on strengthening and modernising education and training systems. However, the National Reports (e.g. from the Netherlands and Slovenia) argue that the impact of the LLP is largest at individual and institutional levels, but rather limited at system-level.   | ++                 |
| Use of ICT   | This is a vertical as well as horizontal priority within KA3 of the Transversal programme, which cuts through the sectoral programmes  | +++                |
| Improve the evidence base of education and training policies   | This is the main operational objective of KA1 of the Transversal programme   | +++                |
| <b>Guideline No 24: Adapt education and training systems in response to new competence requirements</b>  |  |                    |
| Raising and ensuring the attractiveness, openness and quality standards of education and training  | The specific objectives of the LLP explicitly prioritise attractiveness, accessibility and quality standards of education and training. Within the context of the LLP objectives, openness is linked with internationalisation and Europeanisation of education and training   | +++                |
| Broadening the supply of education and training opportunities  | On the one hand, broadening of supply is closely linked with increasing the quality and attractiveness of education and training. On the other hand, broadening of supply also refers to inclusion of potential learners, who do not participate in lifelong learning. In this sense, the contribution of the LLP is modest, because it is predominantly focused on those, who already participate in learning,  | ++                 |
| Ensuring flexible learning pathways  | Objectives of the LLP put considerable emphasis on increasing participation in learning. Furthermore, priorities for the annual calls for proposals under the Erasmus programme emphasise better links between higher education and VET and priorities for calls for   | ++                 |

<sup>38</sup> For the discussion on the remaining problems in the area of entrepreneurship education, please see: European Commission (2010), Towards greater cooperation and coherence in entrepreneurship education. Report and evaluation of the pilot action "High-level reflection panels on entrepreneurship education" initiated by DG Enterprise and Industry and DG Education and Culture; [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promoting-entrepreneurship/education-training/entrepreneurship/reflection-panels/files/entr\\_education\\_panel\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promoting-entrepreneurship/education-training/entrepreneurship/reflection-panels/files/entr_education_panel_en.pdf)

| Priorities outlined in Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs (2005 – 2008 and 2008 – 2010)  | Assessment of the strength of the links between the LLP objectives and political priorities   | Summary assessment |
|---|---|--------------------|
|   | proposals under all sectoral programmes prioritise development of guidance systems.<br>However, the sectoral structure of the LLP does not actively promote links between different sectors of education  |                    |
| Enlarging possibilities for mobility for students and trainees  | Mobility is one of the key priorities of the LLP  | +++                |
| Easing and diversifying access for all to education and training and to knowledge   | Objectives of the LLP put considerable emphasis on increasing participation in learning. However, the sectoral structure of the Programme implies that diversification of access is insufficiently prioritised. Furthermore, as discussed above, those who are not likely to participate in education and training are at the margins of the LLP. | ++                 |
| Responding to new occupational needs, key competences and future skill requirements   | LLP objectives explicitly prioritise facilitation of employability and development of key competences   | +++                |
| Improving the definition and transparency of qualifications, their effective recognition and the validation of non-formal and informal learning | This priority is reinforced by several LLP objectives   | +++                |

Notes: +++ very strong links; ++ some links; + no direct links.

The assessment provided in Table 21 above shows that in a vast majority of cases the links between the LLP objectives and the priorities established in the Guidelines for Growth and Jobs are quite strong. Nevertheless, there is also some scope for improvement in the following areas:

- The Guidelines for Growth and Jobs strongly emphasise *openness and links between different education and training sectors*. Although the objectives of the LLP also recognise these priorities, the sectoral structure of the Programme does not actively support such approach. Each sub-programme is focused on a specific education and training sector, but there are virtually no instruments linking these sectors. This is particularly relevant in targeting groups such as early drop-outs: while Comenius puts considerable emphasis on prevention, the other sectoral programmes (with the exception of Grundtvig, which, however, accounts for a fraction of the LLP budget) do not aim to offer open learning opportunities to those who have already dropped-out.
- The Guidelines for Growth and Jobs strongly prioritise accessibility as well as increased participation in lifelong learning by those who are not likely to explore the possibilities provided by education and training (the low skilled, the elderly etc.). Formally, these objectives are also emphasised by the LLP. However, the main participants in the LLP include those who are already in education and training, i.e. providers of lifelong learning opportunities or the learners themselves. Hence, those who have not been actively involved in lifelong learning are left at the margins of the Programme.

Assessment of the links between the LLP objectives and the objectives outlined in the ET 2010 Work Programme is provided in Table 22. It yields largely similar results to the ones discussed above. Overall, the links between the objectives and the priorities are strong. However, the structure of the LLP: a) institutionalises rather than promotes openness of learning environments, b) targets those persons who already participate in education and training rather than those who are at the margins of the lifelong learning (low-qualified, low-skilled, elderly etc.).

Moreover, several National Reports (e.g. from Austria, Flemish Community of Belgium and Malta) emphasise that it is difficult to measure the scale of the LLP impact. For instance, the Netherlands points out that “it is highly ambitious to expect the LLP with its limited budget to contribute substantially to the broader priorities of the Education

and Training Programme 2010". The project leaders from France have some doubts about the long-term effects of their actions, as they believe that when financial support is cut, various initiatives will remain only experimental, without any long-lasting impact. Concerning the scope of effect, the reports (e.g. from the Netherlands and Slovenia among others) point out that the largest impact of the LLP actions is found on the individual and organisational level. However, the impact at systemic level is rather moderate. However, as discussed above (see Operational question 2.2 above), conclusions concerning the impact level of the LLP should not be over-generalised: the spillovers from individual and organisational level to systemic level could be indirect (through learning, exchange of good practice) and therefore difficult to observe and estimate.

**Table 22. Assessment of the links between the LLP objectives and priorities outlined in the ET2010 Work Programme**

| Priorities outlined in the Education & Training 2010 Work Programme   | Assessment of the strength of the links between LLP objectives and political priorities   | Summary assessment |
|---|---|--------------------|
| <b>1<sup>st</sup> objective: improving the quality and effectiveness of education and training systems in the EU</b>  |   |                    |
| Improving education and training for teachers and trainers  | This is reflected in the specific objectives as well as cross-cutting operational objectives of the sectoral programmes   | +++                |
| Developing skills for a knowledge economy (key skills: Numeracy and literacy; Basic competencies in mathematics, science and technology; Foreign languages; Digital competences and use of technology; Learning to learn; Social skills; Entrepreneurship; General Culture) | Development of key skills such as foreign languages, digital competences, innovation skills, creativity and entrepreneurship are explicitly recognised by the specific LLP objectives. Development of key skills is also one of the priorities in the annual calls for proposals  | +++                |
| Ensuring access to ICT for everyone   | Access to ICT and development of ICT-based services, pedagogies and content is well reflected by the operational objectives of the sectoral programmes, with multi-lateral projects of KA3 of the Transversal programme aimed at identifying and implementing innovative uses of ICT for lifelong learning, in particular for groups at risk of exclusion   | +++                |
| Increasing recruitment to scientific and technical studies  | Promotion of scientific and technical studies is recognised as a priority in the Comenius annual calls for proposals  | +++                |
| Making best use of resources  | Efficiency is one of the main priorities: a) of study visits as well as studies and comparative research funded under KA1 of the Transversal programme; b) ICT projects funded under KA3 of the Transversal programme   | +++                |
| <b>2<sup>nd</sup> objective: facilitating the access of all to education and training systems</b>   |   |                    |
| Open learning environment   | Open learning environments are prioritised by emphasising: a) the links with the world of work in the Comenius, Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci calls for proposals; b) the links between higher education and VET in Erasmus and KA1 of the Transversal programme's calls for proposals; c) provision of information, advice and guidance in the Comenius, Leonardo and Grundtvig calls for proposals; d) knowledge triangle of education, research and innovation in the Erasmus calls for proposals. However, since the LLP (with the exception of several actions funded by Grundtvig) targets those already in education and training, promotion of "open learning environments" does not include individuals who are outside of the system. Furthermore, the sectoral structure of the Programme does not facilitate links between different education levels and sectors | ++                 |
| Making learning more attractive   | Attractiveness, accessibility and higher participation in lifelong learning are explicitly outlined in the specific objectives of the LLP. However, since non-participants in education and training do not comprise the main target group of the LLP, prioritisation of the attractiveness of learning is limited (with the exception of Grundtvig, which, however, accounts for a fraction of the LLP budget).  | ++                 |
| Supporting active citizenship, equal opportunities and social cohesion  | This is strongly prioritised by the LLP   | +++                |

| Priorities outlined in the Education & Training 2010 Work Programme   | Assessment of the strength of the links between LLP objectives and political priorities  | Summary assessment |
|---|--|--------------------|
| <b>3<sup>rd</sup> objective: opening up education and training systems to the wider world</b>   |  |                    |
| Strengthening the links with working life and research, and society at large  | The "Knowledge triangle" of education, research and innovation is prioritised in the Erasmus calls for proposals; links with working life are also prioritised in the Comenius, Leonardo da Vinci and Erasmus calls for proposals  | +++                |
| Developing the spirit of enterprise   | Development of entrepreneurial spirit is one of the specific objectives of the LLP   | +++                |
| Improving foreign language learning   | This is adequately reflected by one of the specific objectives of the LLP and embedded in Key Activity 2 of the Transversal Programme.   | +++                |
| Increasing mobility and exchange  | This objective is highly prioritised by the LLP  | +++                |
| Strengthening European cooperation  | This objective is highly prioritised by the LLP  | +++                |
| <b>Priorities outlined in the Education &amp; Training 2010 Work Programme</b>  |  |                    |
| <b>Assessment of the strength of the links between LLP objectives and political priorities</b>  |  |                    |
| <b>Summary assessment</b>   |  |                    |
| <b>1<sup>st</sup> objective: improving the quality and effectiveness of education and training systems in the EU</b>  |  |                    |
| Improving education and training for teachers and trainers  | This is reflected in the specific objectives as well as the cross-cutting operational objectives of the sectoral programmes  | +++                |
| Developing skills for a knowledge economy (key skills: Numeracy and literacy; Basic competencies in mathematics, science and technology; Foreign languages; Digital competences and use of technology; Learning to learn; Social skills; Entrepreneurship; General Culture) | Development of key skills such as foreign languages, digital competences, innovation skills, creativity and entrepreneurship are explicitly recognised by the specific LLP objectives. Development of key skills is also one of the priorities in the annual calls for proposals   | +++                |
| Ensuring access to ICT for everyone   | Access to ICT and development of ICT-based services, pedagogies and content is a well reflected by the operational objectives of the sectoral programmes, with multi-lateral projects of KA3 of the Transversal programme aimed at identifying and implementing innovative uses of ICT for lifelong learning, in particular for groups at risk of exclusion  | +++                |
| Increasing recruitment to scientific and technical studies  | Promotion of scientific and technical studies is recognised as a priority in the Comenius annual calls for proposals   | +++                |
| Making best use of resources  | Efficiency is one of the main priorities: a) of study visits as well as studies and comparative research funded under KA1 of the Transversal programme; b) ICT projects funded under KA3 of the Transversal programme  | +++                |
| <b>2<sup>nd</sup> objective: facilitating the access of all to education and training systems</b>   |  |                    |
| Open learning environment   | Open learning environments are prioritised by emphasising: a) the links with the world of work in the Comenius, Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci calls for proposals; b) the links between higher education and VET in Erasmus and KA1 of the Transversal programme's calls for proposals; c) provision of information, advice and guidance in the Comenius, Leonardo and Grundtvig calls for proposals; d) knowledge triangle of education, research and innovation in the Erasmus calls for proposals.<br>However, since the LLP (with the exception of several actions funded by Grundtvig) targets those already in education and training, promotion of an "open learning environments" does not include the individuals, who are outside of the system. Furthermore, the sectoral structure of the Programme does not facilitate links between different education levels and sectors | ++                 |
| Making learning more attractive   | Attractiveness, accessibility and higher participation in lifelong learning are explicitly outlined in the specific objectives of the LLP. However, since non-participants in education and training do not comprise the main target group of the LLP, prioritisation of attractiveness of learning is limited (with the exception of Grundtvig, which, however, accounts for a fraction of the LLP budget).   | ++                 |
| Supporting active citizenship, equal opportunities and social cohesion  | This is strongly prioritised by the LLP  | +++                |
| <b>3<sup>rd</sup> objective: opening up education and training systems to the wider world</b>   |  |                    |
| Strengthening the links with working  | The "Knowledge triangle" of education, research and innovation   | +++                |

| Priorities outlined in the Education & Training 2010 Work Programme | Assessment of the strength of the links between LLP objectives and political priorities  | Summary assessment |
|---|--|--------------------|
| life and research, and society at large                             | is prioritised in the Erasmus calls for proposals; links with working life are also prioritised in the Comenius, Leonardo da Vinci and Erasmus calls for proposals |                    |
| Developing the spirit of enterprise                                 | Development of entrepreneurial spirit is one of the specific objectives of the LLP   | +++                |
| Improving foreign language learning                                 | This is adequately reflected by one of the specific objectives of the LLP and embedded in Key Activity 2 of the Transversal Programme.                             | +++                |
| Increasing mobility and exchange                                    | This objective is highly prioritised by the LLP  | +++                |
| Strengthening European cooperation                                  | This objective is highly prioritised by the LLP  | +++                |

Notes: +++ very strong links; ++ some links; + no direct links.

*Operational question No. 3.2: What are the links between the LLP and other EU-level and national policies?*

This subsection seeks to assess, whether the LLP is complementary to the other EU level initiatives (Erasmus Mundus, Youth in Action, etc.) and national strategic priorities. The analysis clearly shows that the LLP objectives complement and contribute to the implementation of other EU and national level policy initiatives: a large number of objectives are either complementing each other or fully overlapping. The conclusions are based on the desk research and the information provided in the National Reports.

Table 23 below discusses the links between the objectives of the EU-level initiatives and the priorities of the LLP. Overall, the complementarities are very strong. Implementation of the LLP objectives associated with increased transparency and recognition of qualifications, introduction of innovations, promotion of attractiveness and accessibility of education and training and higher mobility provide the largest contribution to the implementation of the EU-level initiatives.

**Table 23. The complementarities and overlaps between the objectives of the LLP and other EU-level initiatives**

| EU-level policies/ instruments/ organisations | Objectives linked to the LLP   | Sources of information                      |
|---|--|---|
| BOLOGNA PROCESS                               | The objectives of the Bologna Process and the LLP are coherent, since both initiatives seek to create more comparable, compatible and coherent systems of higher education in Europe. This would promote the attractiveness of learning opportunities abroad, increase transparency and enhance mobility of participants.  | Desk research, National Reports             |
| COPENHAGEN PROCESS                            | The Copenhagen Process seeks to increase transparency and recognition of VET qualifications. The LLP contributes to these efforts by facilitating mobility of learners.  | Desk research, National Reports             |
| ERASMUS MUNDUS                                | Erasmus Mundus not only complements the Erasmus programme, as the former includes third country institutions. It also overlaps considerably with Erasmus through supporting mobility in Europe, giving grants to European students to study in another country in Europe, also giving grants to third country students already enrolled in European higher education institutions to study in another European country, supporting the setting up of joint study programmes, promoting the attractiveness of European higher education to enhance transnational mobility. Opportunities also exist for bridges to be built between Mundus and the Jean Monnet Programme. | Desk research, National Reports, interviews |
| YOUTH IN ACTION                               | The objectives of the Youth in Action initiative and the LLP overlap: both programmes seek to promote active citizenship, quality of educational system, European cooperation and mobility, promote accessibility, especially for disadvantaged groups and young people with special needs.  | Desk research, National Reports             |
| TEMPUS  | Tempus is linked with the LLP, as the former also aims to modernise higher education and introduce innovative teaching methods, material and academic disciplines. Synergies also exist between the Jean Monnet Programme and Tempus, and in some cases national Tempus offices are becoming the entry   | Desk research, National Reports,            |

| EU-level policies/<br>instruments/<br>organisations  | Objectives linked to the LLP   | Sources of<br>information       |
|--|--|---------------------------------|
|  | point for Jean Monnet. Moreover, Tempus aims to develop partnerships with enterprises. As a result, it enhances the quality and attractiveness of HEIs.  | interviews                      |
| EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND   | The European Social Fund, among other objectives seeks to expand and improve investment in human capital, in particular by improving education and training systems. Hence, the objectives of the ESF and the LLP are highly complementary, although these two Programmes are implemented through different approaches.  | Desk research, National Reports |
| COOPERATION WITH INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRIES  | This initiative encourages student mobility, recognition of qualifications and accreditation system, promotes intercultural understanding and enhances the quality of higher education and vocational training. These objectives are in line with the priorities of the LLP.   | Desk research                   |
| SEVENTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME (FP7)  | The FP7 and the LLP jointly seek to promote competitiveness and employability of the target groups, to enhance innovations and encourage the creation of European poles of (scientific) excellence.  | Desk research                   |
| EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING (CEDEFOP)                               | Cedefop complements the LLP by promoting vocational education and training in the EU: it monitors, analyses VET systems, policies, research and practice, and provides recommendations for the future.   | Desk research                   |
| EUROPEAN TRAINING FOUNDATION (EFT)   | The mission of EFT is to assist transition and developing countries to harness the potential of their human capital through the reform of education, training and labour market systems. These aims are highly complementary with the LLP priorities aimed at promotion of quality education and training.   | Desk research                   |
| EUROPEAN YEAR OF INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE 2008; THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION 2009. | The European Year of Intercultural dialogue was highly complementary with the objectives and actions funded by the LLP. The European Year of Creativity and Innovation also reinforced the objectives of the LLP to promote creativity of all as a driver for innovation, to enhance entrepreneurial and social competences, as well as to disseminate the results of good practice. | Desk research, National Reports |
| EUROPEAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (EQF)  | EQF facilitates the achievement of LLP objectives, as it makes different qualification levels comparable across Europe, enhances the transparency of education and training systems and promotes mobility as well as equal opportunities for all.  | Desk research, National Reports |
| EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK FOR KEY COMPETENCES   | The objectives of this initiative and the LLP overlap: they are oriented towards promotion of communication in foreign languages, digital competences, and improvement of civic competences, entrepreneurship, cultural awareness and expression.  | Desk research, National Reports |
| SINGLE COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK (EUROPASS)  | Europass and the LLP complement each other since they both seek to promote transparency of qualifications and competences.   | Desk research, National Reports |
| THE EUROPEAN AGENDA FOR CULTURE  | This initiative aims to promote cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue, stimulates creativity, managerial competences, entrepreneurship and introduction of innovations in the culture sector. These aims correspond to the objectives of the LLP for education and training.   | Desk research                   |
| CULTURE PROGRAMME  | The EU's Culture Programme contributes to the promotion of cross-border mobility of those working in the cultural sector, fosters intercultural dialogue and encourages the transnational circulation of cultural output.  | Desk research                   |
| THE PROGRAMME MEDIA 2007   | The objectives of MEDIA 2007 are in harmony with the objectives of the LLP: the former programme aims to preserve and enhance European cultural and linguistic diversity, fosters creativity, supports mobility of European training professionals, particularly of those working in the media sector.   | Desk research                   |
| COMPETITIVENESS AND INNOVATION FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME (CIP)   | Both the CIP and the LLP are complementary, since they support innovation activities and technological development, encourage a better take-up and use of ICT and help to develop the information society.   | Desk research                   |
| CITIZENSHIP PROGRAMME 2007 – 2013.   | The Citizenship programme seeks to promote active European citizenship and its activities complements the actions of the LLP   | Desk research                   |

The objectives of the LLP are also coherent with the objectives and priorities set in the national policies of the Participating Countries. The Table 24 below focuses on policy

areas, where complementarities between the national strategic priorities and the LLP objectives are the strongest: higher quality of education, internationalisation of education and training systems, promoted mobility, introduction of innovations and ICT instruments, higher attractiveness and accessibility to learning opportunities, as well as the promotion of employability. The findings are based on information provided in the National Reports on the implementation of the LLP in 2007-2009.

**Table 24. The links between the objectives of the LLP and the national strategic documents**

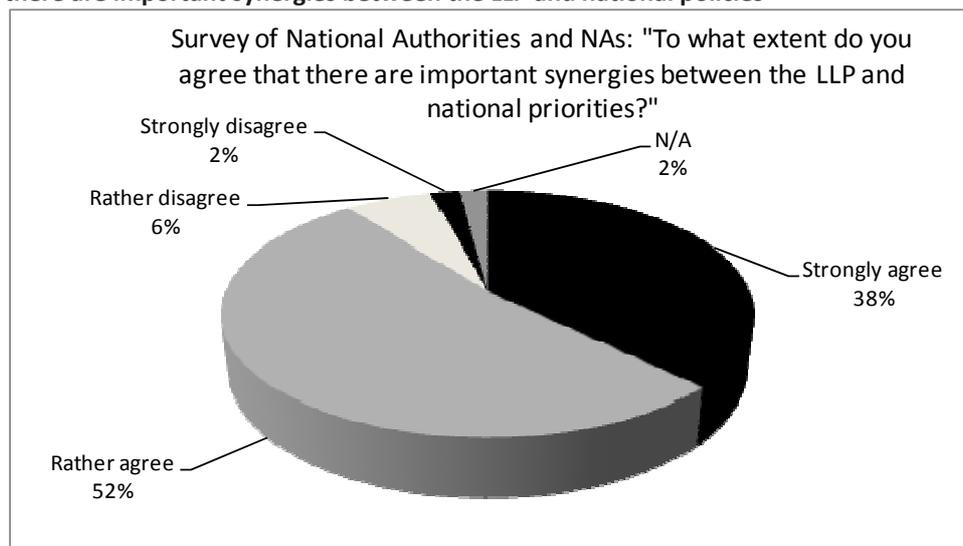
| Policy areas, where complementarities between the LLP objectives and the national strategies are especially strong  | Examples of the national strategic documents, which are complementary to the LLP objectives   |
|---|---|
| Development of quality education and promotion of innovation  | <p><i>The Programme of the Government for the European Development of Bulgaria (2009-2013), National LLL policy and the National Programme for Modernisation of VET from Bulgaria; Internationalisation Strategy and General Education Strategy 2007-2013 from Estonia; National Development Plan for Education and Research 2007-2012 from Finland; Strategy of Enhancing Competitiveness through Innovation, Knowledge-based Activities and the SMART Economy, and Strategy for Science Technology and Innovation from Ireland; Strategy on Education Policies from Lithuania; National Reform Programme from Malta; Internationalisation Strategy from the Netherlands; Quality Reform in Higher Education, Education Strategy and Act on Adult Education from Norway; Strategy for the Development of Polish Higher Education until 2020, Assumptions of Scientific, Science and Technology and Innovation Policy of Poland until 2020 and National Cohesion Strategy from Poland; Strategic Directions of the Minister of Education and Research for 2006-2008 and Prospective Planning till 2010 from Romania; LOE (Organic Law 2/2006 of 3<sup>rd</sup> May) from Spain; Government's Bill Knowledge Without Borders - Higher Education in the Era of Globalisation from Sweden; Farabi Programme from Turkey. The UK also points out that the development of quality education and innovations is in line with its national policy priorities.</i></p>              |
| Internationalisation of education and higher mobility of participants   | <p><i>Policy Vlaanderen in Actie (Flanders in Action) from the Flemish Community of Belgium; National LLL Policy from Bulgaria; Internationalisation Strategy, development plan "Tark ja tegus rahvas" ("Smart and active people"), development plan for Estonian Vocational Education System 2007-2013 and Estonian Higher Education Strategy 2006-2015 from Estonia; Higher Education Reform Strategy from Greece; Guidelines for Intercultural Education, Intercultural Education in the Primary School and the report Internationalisation of Irish Education Services 2004 from Ireland; programme Academic Exchange from Lithuania; Dutch Internationalisation Strategy and Programme Internationalisation VET from the Netherlands; report Internationalisation of Education, Green paper Vocational Education and Training for the Future and Quality Reform in Higher Education in Norway; Strategy for the Development of Polish Higher Education until 2020 and programme Mobility of Students and Teachers (MOST) from Poland; Government's Bill Knowledge Without Borders – Higher Education in the Area of Globalisation from Sweden; Farabi programme and LLL Strategy from Turkey. Denmark and the UK also point out that internationalisation of education and promotion of mobility is in line with their national policy priorities (for instance, in Denmark, the priority is called European Opening up – Improving Mobility and Recognition).</i></p> |
| Increased participation by people of all ages (especially low-skilled and older beneficiaries), including those with special needs and disadvantaged groups | <p><i>National LLL policy and initiatives Supporting the education of children with special educational needs, Integration of children and pupils from ethnic minorities in the educational system, Development of Distance Education and Student granting for an equal access to education and increasing their motivation for better results from Bulgaria; Internationalisation Strategy from Estonia; National Development Plan for Education and Research 2007-2012 from Finland; white paper Ready to Learn, National Children's Strategy, initiatives Skillnets and One Step Up, policy Towards 2016 – Ten Year Framework Social Partnership Agreement 2006-2015 and National plan for social inclusion 2007-2016 from Ireland; National Reform Programme from Malta; Education Strategy and Act on Adult Education from Norway; The Lifelong Learning Strategy and Globalisation Strategy from Denmark; Strategy for the Development of Polish Higher Education until 2020 from Poland; New Opportunities Initiative, which is especially aimed at young drop-outs and adults, from Portugal; LOE (Organic Law 2/2006 of 3<sup>rd</sup> May) from Spain; Lifelong Learning Strategy from Turkey.</i></p>  |
| Improving the quality, attractiveness and accessibility to the learning opportunities   | <p><i>The Polish Ministry of Education has approved a specific sub-programme, which contributes to the implementation of this priority. Quality Reform in Higher Education and the Green Paper Vocational Education and Training for the Future from Norway also seek to promote the attractiveness of learning. The LLP is in tune with the Bulgarian National LLL Policy and initiatives Making the school attractive for the young people and Let's make school attractive for young</i></p>   |

| Policy areas, where complementarities between the LLP objectives and the national strategies are especially strong | Examples of the national strategic documents, which are complementary to the LLP objectives  |
|--|--|
| Promoting employability  | <p><i>people</i> which aims at promoting the attractiveness of education.</p> <p>The aim to strengthen the ties between education and working life is explicitly set in: <i>the National LLL Policy</i> and <i>The Programme of the Government for the European Development of Bulgaria</i>; national policy <i>Towards 2016 - Ten Year Framework Social Partnership Agreement 2006-2015</i> from <b>Ireland</b>; <i>National Development Plan for Education and Research 2007-2012</i> and <i>Education Strategy</i> from <b>Norway</b>; <i>Strategy for the Development of Polish Higher Education until 2020</i> from <b>Poland</b>; <i>the National Employment Strategy for 2004-2010</i> and <i>the Operational Sector Programme for Human Resources Development</i> from <b>Romania</b>.</p> |
| The development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practices in education                   | <p><b>Bulgaria</b> has initiated the action <i>ICT in Education</i>; <b>Ireland</b> has adopted the initiative <i>Investing Effectively in Information and Communications Technology in Schools 2008-2013</i> and <i>The Strategy for Science Technology and Innovation</i>; <b>Poland</b> has launched the project <i>Teach-IT.net</i>, which is aimed at the application of innovative IT methods in the vocational education sector.</p>  |

Notes: +++ very strong links; ++ some links; + no direct links.

Furthermore, the survey of the National Authorities and Agencies reveal that implementation of the LLP creates synergies with the national policies: 90% of the respondents strongly or rather agree with this statement (see Figure 22).

**Figure 22. Survey of the National Authorities and NAs regarding the extent to which there are important synergies between the LLP and national policies**



Source: Survey of the National Authorities and NAs.

Set of evaluation questions No. 4 in the ToR: to what extent are the objectives of the sub-programmes consistent and mutually supportive? What evidence exists of synergies between different sub-programmes? Do duplications, overlaps or other disadvantageous issues exist between the sub-programmes?

*Operational question No. 4.1: Were there preconditions for coherence of efforts?*

Close cooperation between the relevant stakeholders during the set-up and implementation of the LLP is an important precondition for coherence and synergetic implementation of the sectoral programmes. Analysis shows that integration of the previous programmes led to increased coordination, but segmentation remained an

important barrier to consistency and mutual support between the sub-programmes. These findings are based on interviews, desk research and National Reports on implementation of the LLP in 2007 – 2009.

The interviews and desk research reveal that important steps have been taken to foster coordination. The launch of the LLP was the result of intensive collaboration between the units of the DG EAC responsible for the different sub-programmes and actions of the LLP as well as consultations with the social partners and representatives of the National Authorities. Implementation of the LLP sub-programmes was also coordinated through several institutions and mechanisms. First, at the strategic level, the coordination takes place through: a) the LLP Committee, which is comprised of the representatives of the DG EAC, the National Authorities and social partners, b) internal formal and informal coordination mechanisms (working and steering groups, meetings, etc.) within the DG EAC. At the operational level, the implementation of the sub-programmes is coordinated through: a) the rules and procedures regarding implementation of centralised and decentralised measures, b) interaction between the DG EAC and the NAs regarding implementation of the decentralised measures, c) interaction between the DG EAC and the EACEA regarding implementation of the centralised measures.

While the launch of the LLP has clearly contributed to better coordination between the sub-programmes and strengthening or establishment of the coordination instruments discussed above, further progress is necessary in the following areas:

- At the strategic level, there is a need for better coordination between the units of the DG EAC responsible for different sub-programmes and actions. As one interviewee argued: “The policy units<sup>39</sup> tend to act as “owners” of the sectoral programme rather than “owners” of an integrated Lifelong Learning Programme”. As a result, there is a need for stronger coordination: a) between different sectoral units, b) between the sectoral units and the unit that coordinates the NAs. In particular, at the start of the Programme, there were quite a few instances, when sectoral programme units and the coordinating unit provided completely different guidance to the NAs. The National Reports also reinforce these findings: the NAs argue that in a number of instances different units provided conflicting advice and instructions.
- Successful implementation of transversal objectives also calls for closer cooperation between the DGs. ICT is a good example in this respect: successful implementation of KA3 is closely linked with the activities of the DG Enterprise and Industry in relation to e-Skills of professionals to DG Information Society and Media in relation to e-inclusion and digital literacy and to DG Research in relation to research and development in the area of technology-enhanced learning. However, as pointed out by an interviewee from the KA3 area, although other DGs touch on issues concerned with LLL, this is not central to their work. For example, DG Enterprise and Industry runs awareness-raising events, which have a LLL component, but these are largely sector-based. Some of the projects of DG Information Society and Media relate to LLL, but they do not consider instruments that enhance the LLL. Within FP7, there is hardly any research that focuses on either education and LLL or the applications of ICT tools. Several National Reports also call for closer coordination between the LLP (which falls within the responsibility of DG EAC) and the European Social Fund (which falls within the responsibility of DG EMPL).
- At the operational level, coordination between the implementation of decentralised and centralised measures could be further developed. During the first years of the LLP, there was virtually no contact between the NAs and EACEA. Recently, coordination between these bodies has gained momentum.

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<sup>39</sup> The interviewee referred to the units responsible for different sectoral programmes.

However, the National Reports argue more intensive cooperation could foster synergies between the two types of measures.

To sum-up, integration of the programmes into a single LLP has considerably strengthened coordination efforts. This was an important precondition for synergies between the sub-programmes. Nevertheless, insufficient (although improving) coordination between the units within DG EAC and between the NAs and EACEA created segmentation and could hinder potential synergies.

*Operational question No. 4.2: Were there any synergies or duplication between sub-programmes?*

*What are the synergies between the sub-programmes?*

We define synergies as additional outputs that could not have been created, if the sub-programmes were implemented separately. The assessment reveals that the synergies between the different sub-programmes are largely limited to more effective administration and promotion of the LLP. Higher level of synergies is hindered by the segmentation of the LLP. These findings are based on the results of the survey of the NAs and National Authorities, interviews, case studies and National Reports from the Participating Countries.

The strongest synergies were identified in five main areas. First, a number of interviewed representatives of the National Agencies argued that joint promotion and information campaigns on all of the sub-programmes allowed a better reach of the target groups. As case studies point out, such synergies, however, could be fully exploited only in those Participating Countries, where a single agency is responsible for the management of the decentralised actions. This finding was explained by the economies of scale and better coordination within a single agency.

Examples of synergies in promotion and dissemination of the LLP results also exist at the EU level (in addition to the national level). For example the DG EAC organised a conference on prison education and training. It was primarily aimed at the results of Grundtvig projects, but also covered similar projects funded by Leonardo da Vinci and former EQUAL development partnerships.

Second, the synergies between the sub-programmes lie in identifying common rules and procedures. For mobility, for example, inter sub-programme meetings facilitated streamlining of the placement contracts and learning agreements. Furthermore, synergies existed between the sub-programmes on the level of “instruments”. For example, the Erasmus University Charter has been transferred to Leonardo da Vinci in the form of a Certificate in Mobility, which simplified the grant application procedures. There is also evidence that some actions were successfully transferred to other sub-programmes, such as the Leonardo da Vinci learning partnerships.

Third, there is some evidence of synergies between the sectoral programmes and the Transversal programme. KA2, KA3 and KA4 support initiatives that cover at least two sectoral programmes. For instance, KA4 aims at dissemination and exploitation of the results, which have already been achieved by the LLP. This created additional outputs (e.g. higher awareness, streamlining and valorisation of achieved results), which are not likely to have occurred, if the sub-programmes were implemented separately.

Fourth, the National Reports note the synergies between eTwinning and the rest of Comenius. As the Irish report argues, “synergies between eTwinning and Comenius continue to enhance autonomous learning at all levels. Using ICT, two or more schools from two or more European countries can work in partnership on a project of their choosing. This becomes a valuable learning experience in which pupils and teachers alike encounter new cultures while developing ICT skills. The eTwinning action provides tools for carrying out the project. The mailbox allows pupils and teachers to exchange messages safely, while chat rooms make live-feed communication possible.



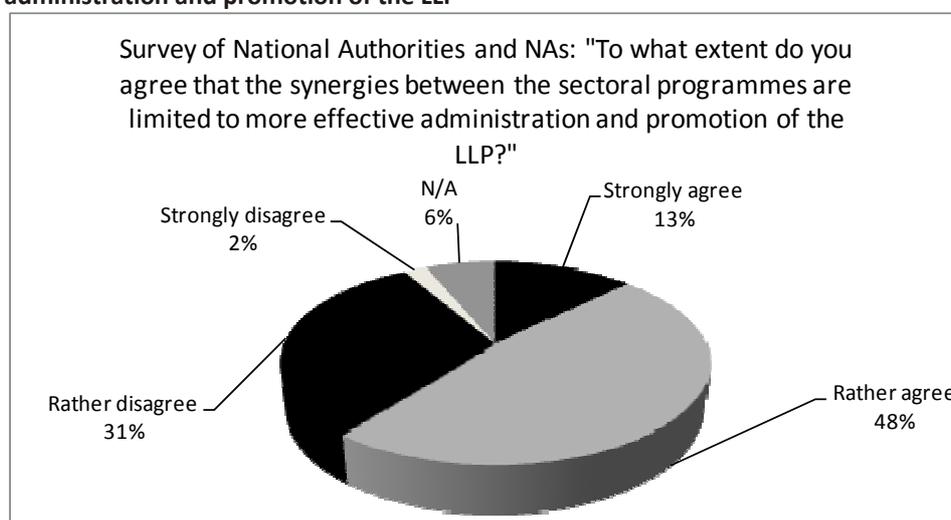
The flexible nature of eTwinning means that projects can last as long as the partnership decides and there is no restriction on themes. Integration into the curriculum is recommended but often this happens quite seamlessly, as the pupils discover the myriad possibilities of the technologies available". There is also further room for mainstreaming e-learning into all Comenius actions: this could contribute to the development of digital skills and prevent the loss of good practice that was developed by Comenius funded activities.

The fifth area encompasses spin-off effects. They occurred in several ways:

- Teachers, who had participated in LLP-funded activities, encouraged both their colleagues and their students to participate in LLP-funded projects, partnerships and mobility actions.
- Participants in mobility actions had a higher propensity to participate in LLP-funded networks or multilateral projects and school partnerships.
- *Ad personam* Jean Monnet Chairs carry the title from institution to institution, within and beyond the EU multiplying the effect of their work on European Integration studies, and are able to use the title after funding has ceased.

However, several National Reports (including the Flemish Community of Belgium, the French-speaking Community of Belgium, Denmark, Hungary and Slovenia) and a number of interviewees point out that the synergies between the different sub-programmes were rather limited. Furthermore, several interviewees indicated that from the beneficiaries' point of view the integration of the previous programmes had not created opportunities for closer cooperation. The main reason refers to the segmentation of the LLP. It is divided into the four sectoral programmes, the Transversal programme with four separate key activities and the Jean Monnet programme with three separate key activities. Furthermore, within each sub-programme there are several types of supported activities that use different instruments and tend to differentiate between specific target groups. As the report from the Flemish Community of Belgium reflects, "actually, the "integration" of the programmes into the LLP is perceived to be more an "addition" or "juxtaposition" than a real integration. There was almost no streamlining of actions: the LLP has no less than 64 actions and sub-actions! Moreover, there are still many walls between the sub-programmes <...>". Such segmentation prevented cooperation between the beneficiaries of different sub-programmes. As a result, there was limited scope for creating additional outputs and, as the survey of the National Authorities and NAs indicates, the synergies were the most visible in the promotion and more effective administration of the LLP (see Figure 23).

**Figure 23. The extent to which the National Authorities and NAs agree that the synergies between the sectoral programmes are limited to more effective administration and promotion of the LLP**



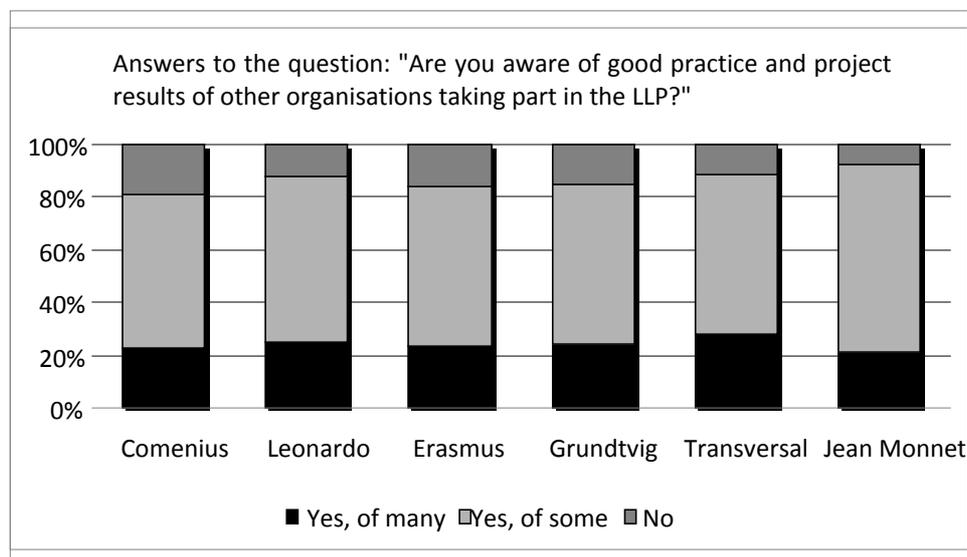
Source: Survey of the National Authorities and NAs.

The negative impact of the segmentation is well illustrated by the case study on the implementation of the Leonardo da Vinci sub-programme in the Netherlands. VET colleges in the Netherlands are largely responsible for formal adult education. While the VET colleges “fall under the jurisdiction” of Leonardo da Vinci, adult education is funded by the Grundtvig sub-programme. As a result, adult education in VET colleges fell into a gap between the two sectoral programmes and potential synergies failed to materialise.

Insufficient coordination during implementation of the centralised and decentralised actions also hindered synergies. In 2007 and 2008 the implementation of the two types of actions was strictly separated. This implied a lack of institutional infrastructure for linking projects, partnerships and networks funded by the decentralised and centralised actions. Recently, cooperation between the National Agencies and the EACEA has been strengthened, which could lead to higher synergies in the future between the projects supported by these two types of agencies.

The survey of the institutional beneficiaries also supports the above findings. A vast majority of the respondents indicated that they were aware only of some of the good practice and results achieved by other organisations participating in the LLP (see Figure 24). This implies that the preconditions for closer cooperation between the different projects were very limited. Interviews and information provided in the National Reports also strongly indicate the need for better sharing of knowledge on the projects: for example some interviewees in the case studies of Jean Monnet, Action 1, were unaware of the existence of other projects funded by Jean Monnet and run by their own institutions, indicating a lack of internal coordination. Hence, better dissemination of information is essential for increasing the scope for synergies and avoiding overlaps.

**Figure 24. Awareness of the results achieved by other organisations participating in the LLP**



Source: representative survey of the institutions, which participated in the projects funded by the LLP.

*Are there duplications and overlaps between the sub-programmes?*

The launch of a single integrated Programme in the area of the lifelong learning has considerably strengthened management of the risks of duplications. While there were several areas of potential overlaps between the sub-programmes, in practice this has not resulted in duplication due to differences in the target groups, education sectors or divergent focus of the supported activities.



The launch of the LLP was accompanied by the development of the unified database Saykiss, which is used for monitoring, whether the same organisation receives funding for the same or similar projects from different sources of the centralised measures. In comparison with the previous generation of programmes, the development of such a system considerably lowered the risk of double funding. For decentralised actions, a separate management tool, LLPLink, was developed as of 2008. However, due to the different scope of centralised and decentralised LLP actions, the risk of double funding is virtually non-existing.

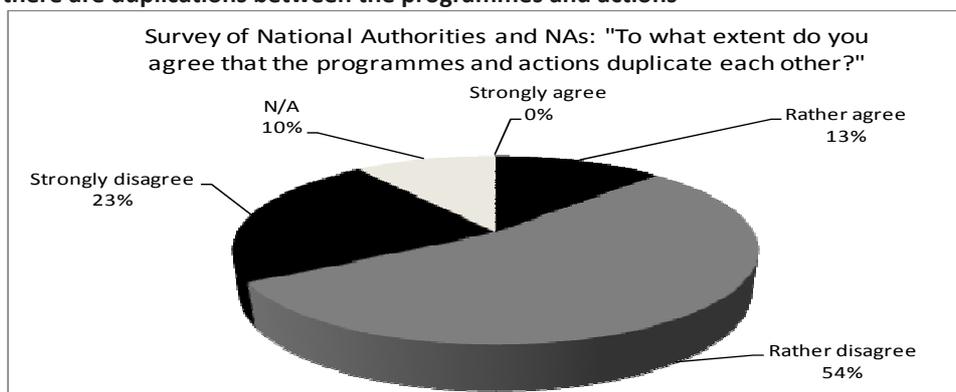
Several areas for potential thematic overlaps or duplications were identified in the case studies and during the interviews with the National Authorities and the EU-level stakeholders. The first area of potential overlaps encompasses KA4 of the Transversal programme and dissemination activities of the individual projects. KA4 funded dissemination activities, while each project also had an obligation to disseminate the main results. The case study on KA4, however, indicated that the overlaps in this case did not lead to duplications. KA4 aims to support large-scale projects, which can create a structural addition to the European educational landscape and are not necessarily linked to a concrete project.

Second, potential overlaps could occur between the Leonardo da Vinci and Grundtvig in the provision of “indirectly vocational” or “employability relevant” general competences. However, the available data does not provide evidence that such overlaps have materialised. In fact, the case study from the Netherlands indicates that there is a gap rather than an overlap in the provision of employment related competences to adult learners.

Thirdly, there are potential overlaps between the Leonardo da Vinci and Comenius programmes. In some Participating Countries there is a lack of clear delineation between vocational education, which is funded by Leonardo da Vinci, and technical training in secondary schools, which is funded by Comenius. However, these potential overlaps occur due to the specificities of national education and training systems rather than from the design of the LLP.

The survey of the National Authorities and NAs indicates that despite the above discussed risks of overlaps, the programmes and actions do not duplicate each other. 77% of the respondents rather or strongly disagree that there are duplications (see Figure 25).

**Figure 25. Survey of the National Authorities and NAs regarding the extent to which there are duplications between the programmes and actions**

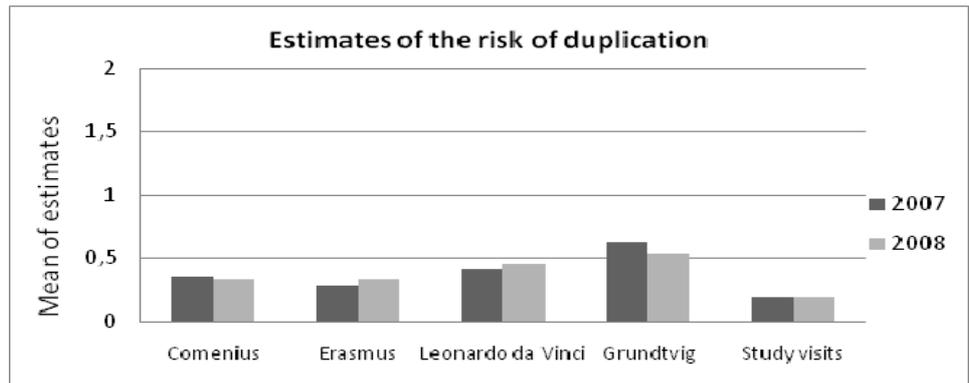


Source: Survey of the National Authorities and NAs.

The assessments provided in the Yearly National Agency Reports also indicate that the risk of duplications was rather low (see Figure 26). This reinforces the above discussed findings that while there were several areas of potential overlaps, in practice they did not lead to duplication due to differences in the target groups, sectors of education or divergent focus of the supported activities. The highest risk of overlaps in the case of

Grundtvig (in addition to the factors discussed above) was related to the cross-sectoral character of this sub-programme. The adult learning sector is historically closely interwoven with other educational sub-sectors, because adult learning is delivered by a wide range of institutions covering all educational sub-sectors. Hence, there is potential overlap with vocational oriented (the Leonardo da Vinci programme) and second-chance school oriented adult learning (the Grundtvig programme). Nevertheless, despite its highest risk of overlap, the Programme is funding activities, which are not covered by other programmes (such as second chance and non-formal learning, social, civic, cultural and artistic learning activities, non-vocational learning for migrants, learning opportunities for older citizens and inter-generational learning).

**Figure 26. Assessment of the risk of duplication**



Source: summary of assessments provided in Yearly National Agency Reports. Note: 0=no risk of duplication; 1=minor risk of duplication; 2=major risk of duplication.



## 4.2. Effectiveness

Set of evaluation questions No. 5 in the ToR: To what extent does the Programme achieve its general, specific and operational objectives? To what extent are the various sub-programmes delivering the expected outputs? Which are the most effective sub-programmes and actions considering the needs in the field of education and training? What negative and positive factors seem to be influencing outputs and results?

*Operational question No. 5.1: The extent to which the Programme objectives and targets are being achieved*

Overall, the effectiveness of reaching the Programme's objectives is quite high. In spite of this, there is a risk that some of the Programme's quantified targets will not be reached, owing to the insufficient size of the LLP budget and other important barriers. Based on initial data available for the evaluated period, the risk of not achieving its target might be highest for the Comenius programme. Although Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci are in a better position, increasing unit-costs may change their chances of achieving their targets. Meanwhile, as the implementation of new Grundtvig actions gain momentum, this sectoral programme faces the lowest risk of not achieving its quantified target. At the same time various sources raise concerns about the adequacy of these targets to key objectives in lifelong learning.

The LLP aims at fostering "interchange, cooperation and mobility between education and training systems". Its specific objectives could be roughly divided into the following spheres: (a) the quality of lifelong learning in the EU, (b) access and participation, (c) acquisition of skills, and (d) contribution to European cohesion. The LLP's substantial contribution to the quality of lifelong learning is confirmed by several sources: 64% of the institutional beneficiaries of our survey indicated that their participation in the LLP activities lead to an improvement of content/curriculum of education and training, and 67% of them stated that participation improved the practice and techniques of education and training in their institution. 79% of the NAs and the National Authorities indicated that cooperation and interchange between education providers would be of lower scope and quality in the absence of the LLP. The synthesis of the National Reports shows that the main improvements in the quality of education due to the LLP are related to the recognition and transferability of qualifications.

The monitoring data show that in the 2007-2009 period the selected applications of the centralised actions covered all the objectives of the Programme as well as the specific objectives of the sub-programmes/key activities. Up-to-date data reveal that the increases in funding are insufficient to meet the growing demand for mobility and the growing quality of applications. This trend is also acknowledged in the National Reports, which indicate that good quality applications have to be rejected due to a lack of funds, especially in the EU12 and to an even larger extent – in Romania and Bulgaria. The total funding allocated to these countries tends to be less than allocated to other Member States of comparable size.

Many Comenius partnerships fail to meet the criteria of involving at least three funded partner schools. Particular difficulties were faced by applicants when partners withdrew, as confirmed by our case study. Regarding the Transversal programme, although not all of the selected applications for each of its four key activities covered all the objectives of the LLP every year, all the objectives were covered by the Transversal programme as a whole. It should also be noted that selected applications on average covered more than one objective of the Programme.

With regard to access and participation the evaluation of achievements is more moderate (see operational question No. 7.3 on the inclusion of disadvantaged groups). The National Reports indicate that by mainly targeting those already in education and training (exceptions being some Grundtvig actions, and the Transversal programme) the LLP cannot foster more inclusive education. On the other hand, only 27% of the NAs and 41% of the National Authorities surveyed agree with this statement. The survey of the institutional beneficiaries shows that access limitations resulting from various barriers, especially language, prevail.

Operational question No. 5.3 deals with the acquisition of skills in more detail. It shows that although indirect contribution to the development of skills relevant for the labour market is substantial, the beneficiaries do not perceive that they have acquired employability-enhancing skills to the same extent as to which they upgraded their social and personal competences. Finally, in relation to the contribution to European cohesion, intercultural dialogue and active citizenship, it is difficult to measure the impact of educational activities, having in mind their different nature (e.g. mobility, partnerships, support for institutions, etc). This aspect was particularly emphasised in Jean Monnet activities. Meanwhile the National Reports and the surveys indicate that these aspects are expected to be an outcome of mobility and interchange projects 'by default'. Overall, the LLP successfully achieves its specific objectives relating to the quality and acquisition of skills, while access and cohesion require more attention.

Moreover, the monitoring data show that in the period 2007-2009 the selected applications of the centralised actions covered all the objectives of the Programme as well as the specific objectives of the sub-programmes/key activities. Although not all of the selected applications for each of the four key activities of the Transversal programme covered all the objectives of the LLP every year, all the objectives were covered by the Transversal programme as a whole. It should also be noted that selected applications on average covered more than one objective of the Programme.

In relation to the Programme's targets, the comparison between the funds allocated/awarded to the sectoral programmes and the total amounts of grants signed/committed reveals that in general the Programme effectively uses the earmarked funds. On the other hand, despite a high demand for funding (for more details please see operational question No. 16.1), the consumption rate has decreased quite significantly in 2009. In particular, Comenius and Grundtvig were those sectoral programmes which distinguished themselves by a lower consumption of funding. Such a trend is rather disturbing (especially in the case of Comenius), taking into consideration the risk of not achieving some of the quantified targets by the end of the Programme implementation. On the other hand, a comparison between the 2008 and 2009 data reveals progress in this area as the Comenius consumption rate seems to be increasing.

**Table 25. The use of funds – the funds allocated/awarded to the sectoral programmes and the total amounts of grants signed/committed.**

| Programme/Funding allocation-consumption | 2008            | Consumption rate, % | 2009            | Consumption rate, % |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Comenius                                 |                 |                     |                 |                     |
| Total sum of grants signed*              | 128.147.50<br>0 | 92.9                | 150.354.88<br>1 | 94.6                |
| Funds allocated**                        | 138.000.00<br>0 |                     | 159.000.00<br>0 |                     |
| Erasmus                                  |                 |                     |                 |                     |
| Total sum of grants signed               | 433.730.63<br>7 | 99.9                | 416.685.45<br>3 | 96.0                |
| Funds allocated                          | 434.000.00<br>0 |                     | 434.000.00<br>0 |                     |
| Leonardo da Vinci                        |                 |                     |                 |                     |
| Total sum of grants signed               | 244.757.41<br>4 | 102.8***            | 245.628.32<br>3 | 96.0                |

| Programme/Funding allocation-consumption | 2008            | Consumption rate, % | 2009            | Consumption rate, % |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Funds allocated                          | 238.000.00<br>0 |                     | 254.000.00<br>0 |                     |
| Grundtvig***                             |                 |                     |                 |                     |
| Total sum of grants signed               | 24.916.414      | 96.6                | 38.684.796      | 93.7                |
| Funds allocated                          | 25.800.000      |                     | 41.300.000      |                     |
| Total sum                                |                 |                     |                 |                     |
| Total sum of grants signed               | 831.551.96<br>5 | 99.5                | 851.353.45<br>3 | 95.8                |
| Planned                                  | 83.800.000      |                     | 888.300.00<br>0 |                     |

Source: European Commission's data from National Agencies; own calculations.

\* European Commission's data from National Agencies about commitments, payments and agreements per National Agency.

\*\* Data from LLP Activity Report 2009-2010 Annex III Budget statistical data 2007-2010

\*\*\* Fluctuations of Leonardo da Vinci consumption rate could be explained by the fact that a new two-year duration action "Partnerships" was introduced in 2008.

Desk research suggests that in the case of partnership projects, funding is allocated individually to each participating partner school by its own National Authority. If, for example, only two of five (minimum three countries are required to be eligible for funding) Participating Countries approve the budget, the partnership cannot be implemented. This argument at least partially explains why the consumption rate of Comenius and Grundtvig is notably below the average.

Monitoring data to calculate the achievement ratio of Comenius quantified target is available only to a very limited extent due to the particular structure of actions whose results count to achieve the 3 million pupils involved in joint education activities target. The duration of School Partnership projects is two years and therefore the results of the first round projects that began in 2007 will only be available with the assessment of the Yearly Reports 2009. Given the timeframe of this evaluation, the estimates cannot be provided.

Two contradicting aims make it difficult to assess the Erasmus quantified target achievement. According to available data, gathered during the interviews, there is no additional funding foreseen for Erasmus implementation, i.e. the annual budget of Erasmus programme will largely remain at the current level for the remaining duration of the LLP. Meanwhile available calculations reveal that the Erasmus quantified target will not be achieved with the current level of funding unless the expenditure per participant is decreased. On the other hand, there is political pressure from the European Parliament's side to increase the amount of individual grant to Erasmus participants. As a result, at least three potential scenarios of further development are available.

The first scenario is oriented to the quantified targets achievement without an increase in a unit-cost. The second scenario aims to achieve the quantified target in combination with a gradual increase in the amount of funding awarded to each Erasmus participant. The third scenario is based on the assumption that the total budget of each relevant action shall remain at the 2009 level for the remaining part of the LLP. Moreover, it takes into consideration the possibility of an annual increase in expenditure per participant (unit-cost). The choice between these three scenarios (for more details see Annex 7) is of a political nature and therefore the final results of Erasmus programme completely depend on this choice. In any case, either an increase in funding or a decision to keep the expenditure per participant at the 2009 level will be necessary. Otherwise, the *status quo* (the overall programme budget and unit-costs, the number of SMS and SMP participants remain at the 2009 level) should result in an approximate shortfall of 114 000 students.

Achievement of the quantified target set for the Leonardo da Vinci programme is also hindered by insufficient funding of the relevant actions. According to current figures,

around 84% of the quantified target has been achieved in 2009, i.e. in order to fully meet the target of 80.000 placements, the 2009 programme budget should have been more than €22,5 million larger or around 18%, with the funds allocated for other Leonardo da Vinci actions being constant. In other words, in order to achieve the target, either an increase in the cost-effectiveness of all relevant actions, which seems to be feasible (see Annex 7), or an increase in funding is needed.

Meanwhile, the Grundtvig target of 7 000 individuals involved in adult education per year by 2013 is on track, since in 2009 around 2 500 staff and 3 600 adult learners participated in individual mobility activities, making up a total of 6 100 persons.

**Table 26. Progress towards the achievement of the quantified targets of the Lifelong Learning Programme**

| Sectoral programme | Quantified target   | Target achievement   |
|--------------------|---|--|
| Comenius           | At least <b>3 million</b> pupils in joint education activities over the period <b>2007–2013</b>                                   | Introduction of two-year partnerships causes a lack of comparable monitoring data. Based on average participation rates under Socrates, the estimates for 2013 range between 1 650 000 and 2 320 000 pupils.   |
| Erasmus            | At least <b>3 million</b> individuals in student mobility actions under the Erasmus and its predecessor programmes <b>by 2012</b> | The <i>status quo</i> (the overall programme budget and unit-costs, the number of SMS and SMP participants remain at 2009 level) should result in an approximate shortfall of 114 000 students. In the case where there a political choice to increase funding or amounts of expenditure per beneficiary is made, the results should be different (see the analysis of three possible scenarios in Annex 7). |
| Leonardo da Vinci  | At least <b>80 000</b> placements at enterprises per year <b>by 2013</b>  | The programme supported 67 545 in 2009. In order to achieve the quantified target in 2009, the programme budget should have been more than €22,5 million larger or around 18%, with the funds allocated for other Leonardo da Vinci actions being constant.  |
| Grundtvig          | Mobility of at least <b>7 000</b> individuals involved in adult education per year <b>by 2013</b>                                 | According to available data, in 2009 Grundtvig supported mobility of around 2 525 staff and 3 625 adult learners, which amounted to 87% of the quantified target. It is worth noting, that (far) more mobility takes place in Grundtvig partnerships (almost 20 000 people in 2009) than in the individual mobility actions.   |

The desk research, the National Reports and the interviews conducted show that besides inadequate funding another major obstacle to reaching targets is linguistic barriers (see operational question 5.4, which shows that language barriers have been identified as an obstacle to participation by between 30% to over 60% of individual beneficiaries), particularly affecting adult education staff in Grundtvig. According to the National Reports, language capacities shape the scope of participation, choice of project partners and the selection process, for example, by favouring staff involved in language teaching. In addition, while the involvement of eligible institutions, notably in Erasmus, approaches saturation point, linguistic barriers still hinder more extensive inclusion of various relevant institutions, particularly primary and especially pre-primary and special schools in Comenius. While nearly all (over 80% in all the sectoral programmes) participants improved their language skills, it is important to focus on the skills of potential applicants, as language is still one of the main filters of participation.

While involvement of eligible institutions, notably in Erasmus, approaches saturation point, linguistic barriers and inadequacy of funding still hinder more extensive inclusion of various target groups in other sub-programmes. This is particularly the case in Comenius (the synthesis of National Reports particularly highlights insufficient access to the mobility of primary and pre-primary education staff, and schools for pupils with

special needs), which is crucial in reaching key policy priorities of the EU, notably reducing early school leaving (see also operational question 7.3). Therefore it can be concluded that more focus on access is needed (both for institutional and individual beneficiaries), while quality- and skills-related achievements are on track. This conclusion is strongly supported by the monitoring data, interviews, the National Reports and desk research.

*Operational question No. 5.2: The extent to which the beneficiaries are satisfied with the outputs and results of different sub-programmes and actions*

Our data show that the beneficiaries are highly satisfied with the outputs and results of the Programme. The high level of satisfaction is confirmed by the survey data and reinforced by the Yearly NA Reports. It is important to note higher levels of satisfaction among individual beneficiaries, while institutional beneficiaries tend to reflect more on administrative burdens and other costs of participation. The differences in the satisfaction of beneficiaries of different sub-programmes can be attributed to both project management specificities and the availability of alternatives.

The survey of individual and institutional beneficiaries of the Programme (see Figure 27) shows that around two thirds of them are very satisfied with their overall participation in the Programme. Moreover, slightly less than one third are rather satisfied, and dissatisfied beneficiaries are absolutely marginal. Therefore, it could be concluded from the survey data that almost all of the participants are satisfied with the different sub-programmes and actions of the LLP. However, the survey also indicates that the share of very satisfied institutional beneficiaries – especially the percentage of participants of the centralised actions – is notably lower than that of individual beneficiaries. Although the survey could not have elaborated on this, “rather satisfied” beneficiaries most probably see the value of participating, but encountered obstacles. The share of very satisfied institutional beneficiaries is highest amongst participants of the Comenius programme (77%, with a further 20% rather satisfied, and 62%, with a further 34% rather satisfied, respectively) and lowest amongst the institutional participants of the Erasmus programme (54% in both centralised and decentralised actions; plus 42% and 46% rather satisfied beneficiaries respectively).

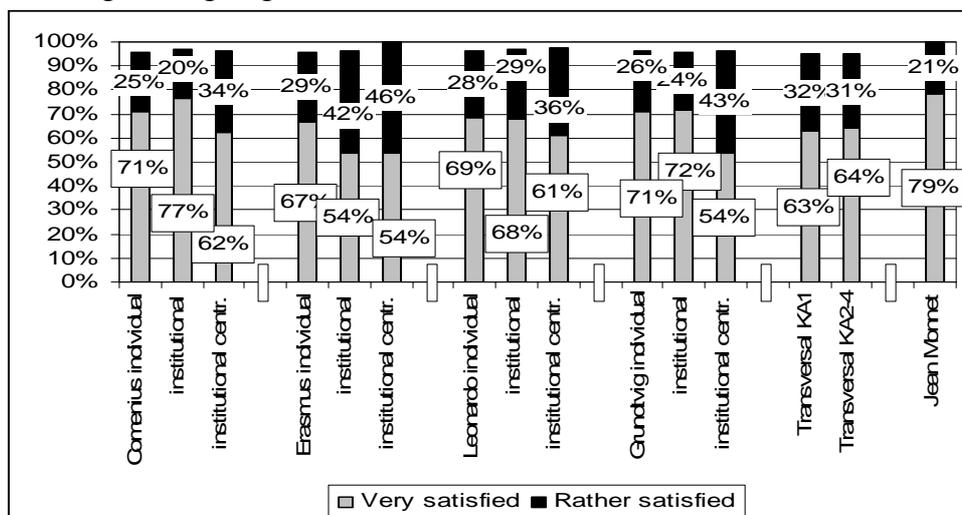
This trend could be explained by the existence of other similar multilateral, bilateral and national programmes providing support to the higher education sector. Meanwhile, similar support for other sectors of education and training is unavailable and hence has more impact on the beneficiaries. In addition, full recognition of Erasmus mobility is often desirable by the participants, implying a certain administrative burden of converting credits, grades and other attainments. In a recent survey, Erasmus institutional beneficiaries indicated that bureaucratic costs were relatively high compared to the benefits of centralised actions<sup>40</sup>. Concerning the Comenius programme, one could conjecture that project managers encounter considerable costs of participation in both Comenius Multilateral Projects and Comenius School Partnerships. The synthesis of the National Reports clearly indicates that key obstacles to higher satisfaction of institutional beneficiaries are: the high costs of finding and funding substitute teachers and complex approval requirements in Partnerships, the uneven quality in In-Service Training, and lengthy selection procedures, leading to many cancellations on behalf of individual beneficiaries, in Assistantships. In Partnerships, there is a need to introduce mechanisms which would ensure commitment of all the partners, as currently there are too many instances of schools withdrawing from partnerships when a member of staff who initiated the partnership leaves their post. It may be that the suggested flexibility in terms of involving a wider range of actors would help improve satisfaction levels – though this would tend to increase rather than reduce the complexity of projects. eTwinning has

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<sup>40</sup> CHEPS, INCHER, ECOTEC, 2008. *The Impact of ERASMUS on European Higher Education: Quality, Openness and Internationalisation*. Final Report.

developed two quality labels to promote sufficient quality management among the beneficiaries – this practice could be explored in other actions.

**Figure 27. The overall satisfaction of the beneficiaries with their participation in the Lifelong Learning Programme**



Source: surveys of individual and institutional beneficiaries of the LLP.

The high effectiveness of the LLP in meeting the expectations of its beneficiaries is also confirmed by the Yearly NA reports. According to the National Agency reports from the 2007-2009 period, more than three quarters of the National Agencies indicated “major” or “good/excellent” satisfaction of the beneficiaries with the decentralised actions of the LLP. The majority of the Agencies mentioned great benefits for the professional and personal development of the participants, established new contacts, better knowledge about other education and training systems and cultures, etc. They also called the LLP a key driver of internalisation in education. On the other hand it is important to note the factor of “too extensive reporting requirements” is contributing to dissatisfaction. NAs highlight duplication in reporting and changing rules as the main obstacles, causing particular disadvantages to smaller and less experienced institutional beneficiaries.

Overall, dissatisfaction with LLP activities is marginal, as can be seen from the survey and the National Reports. Nonetheless, evidence strongly supports the conclusion that opportunities to achieve higher satisfaction of individual and institutional beneficiaries are not yet exploited. They mainly relate to other questions in this evaluation: simplification of the application process, project management and reporting procedures and quality assurance.

*Operational question No. 5.3: Match between the needs of the beneficiaries and their satisfaction with the outputs and results of different sub-programmes and actions*

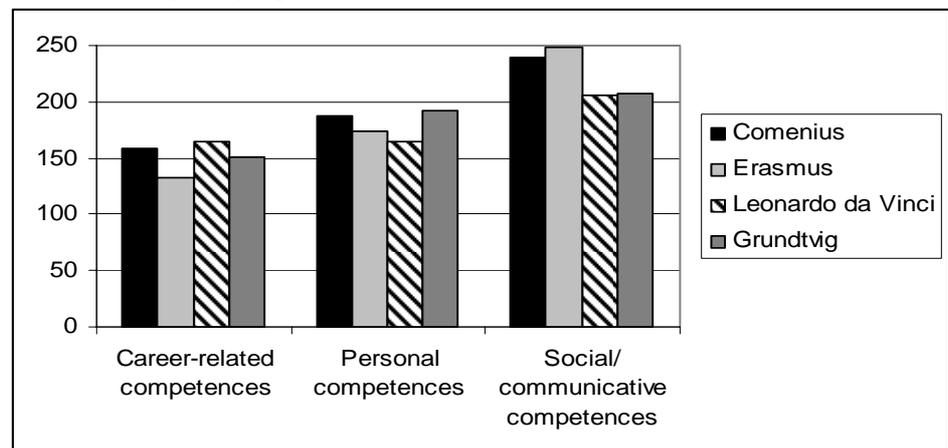
Beneficiaries may have various types of needs related to lifelong learning: some of them relate to key competences (such as learning to learn), others are social, cognitive and communication (e.g. obtaining a comparative perspective on education from other European counterparts, learning languages), and still others relate to practical skills and flexibility thereof, related to further training and employment, as emphasised in the New Skills for New Jobs initiative. Institutional beneficiaries’ needs relate to minimising the administrative burden as discussed above, sustainability of activities and of funding, and various spillover effects on the institution. Operational question 1.3 already addressed to what extent the needs of the target groups are related to the objectives of the LLP. As regards the LLP outputs and results, it can be suggested that the needs of beneficiaries were sufficiently addressed, yet perceived effects on employability and competitiveness lagged behind in terms of individual beneficiaries.

Of those surveyed, 65% of the National Agencies and 55% of the National Authorities believe that LLP integration had a significant effect on meeting the needs of beneficiaries better. A monitoring report of the eTwinning action under Comenius shows that the programme contributed to promoting learner-centred education, and the learners highly valued the responsibility and involvement they were given<sup>41</sup>. As the results of the LLP are multi-faceted (taking into account the individual, institution and system level) and cannot be fully measured, in this evaluation we focus on career, personal and social benefits. The survey points at a slight difference across the sectoral programmes in terms of their impact on the career benefits of the participants and an interesting gap between the perceived acquisition of skills and actual effects of participation on one's career. According to the survey (see Figure 28), the strongest career benefits are found amongst the Leonardo da Vinci participants. As a result, it may be concluded from the preliminary analysis that Leonardo da Vinci is the most effective sub-programme of the LLP in terms of career prospects, which corresponds to its aims (supporting VET, while, for instance, Grundtvig explicitly supports non-vocational training).

In order to identify the key strengths and weaknesses of each sectoral programme, we summed up the percentages of beneficiaries<sup>42</sup> who reported high attainment in terms of the relevant skills, and constructed generalised indices in the following fields (Figure 28):

- Career-related competences (consisting of competitiveness, employability, entrepreneurial skills, professional competences, digital and mathematical competences, and sense of initiative and entrepreneurship);
- Personal competences (consisting of creativity, personal fulfilment, learning to learn, and cultural awareness and expression);
- Social and communication competences (language learning, communication in mother tongue and foreign languages, developing a sense of European citizenship, and social and civic competences).

**Figure 28. Career-related, personal and social competences acquired by individual beneficiaries, by sub-programme**



Source: survey of individual beneficiaries of the LLP.

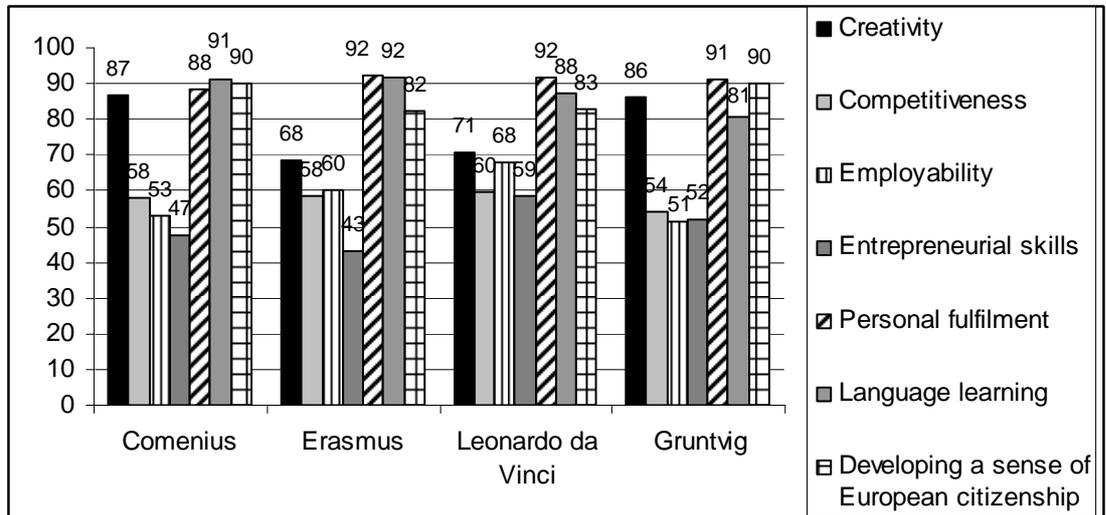
It was concluded in the relevance part of the final report that all the sectoral programmes of the LLP are highly relevant to meeting such needs of the beneficiaries as language learning, personal fulfilment and sense of European citizenship. The survey of the beneficiaries also showed that all the sectoral programmes were less

<sup>41</sup> eTwinning monitoring report 2009.

<sup>42</sup> Note for all survey data: of the individual beneficiaries surveyed, their status at the time of participation was: learner: Comenius - 36%, Erasmus - 83%, Leonardo da Vinci - 57%, Grundtvig - 21%; teacher/ academic staff - Comenius - 60%, Erasmus - 14%, Leonardo da Vinci - 225, Grundtvig - 57%; employee, employer or other staff member of enterprise: Comenius - 1%, Erasmus - 2%, Leonardo da Vinci - 12%, Grundtvig - 13%. Although the competences acquired are different, they were chosen broadly, as to correspond to the reoccurring objectives of sub-programmes, all sectoral sub-programmes aim to address these competences.

relevant to satisfying the needs in such areas as competitiveness, employability and entrepreneurial skills (even though they may have profound indirect impacts, e.g. through language learning). The National Reports (see their synthesis) also point at the need to focus more on competitiveness and basic-life skills. The above-mentioned needs are better met by the activities supported under the Leonardo da Vinci sub-programme compared to other sectoral programmes (see Figure 29 below).

**Figure 29. The relevance the Lifelong Learning Programme to the competences and attitudes of the individual beneficiaries**

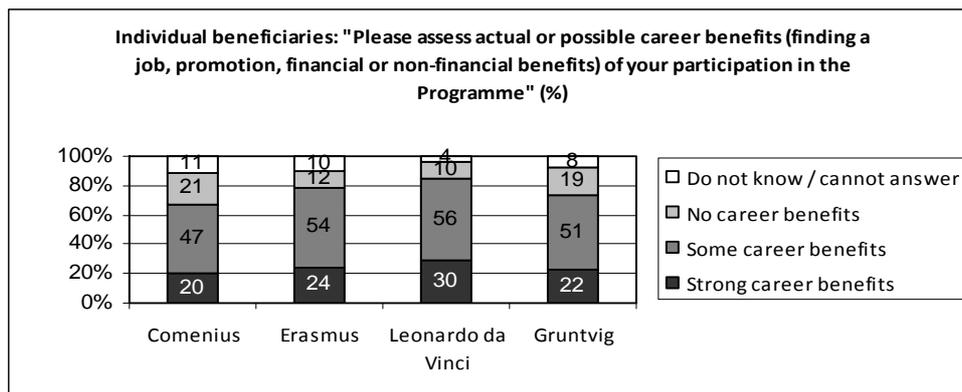


Source: survey of individual beneficiaries of the LLP.

This analysis showed that Leonardo da Vinci and Comenius were above-average in terms of providing career-related skills, Comenius and Grundtvig were the most beneficial to personal development, while Comenius and Erasmus enhanced social and communication skills more. The results were predictable, having in mind the objectives of these programmes, their target groups and the age structure of the beneficiaries. Most Comenius and a large share of Leonardo da Vinci beneficiaries are staff; therefore mobility certainly enhanced their career prospects. Language learning has been emphasised as very successful in Yearly NA reports.

The survey of the individual beneficiaries indicates that participation in the Programme has strong or some career benefits for more than two thirds of the beneficiaries of the sectoral programmes. Some differences among these programmes were noticed. As many as 85% of the participants in the activities supported under the Leonardo da Vinci programme find their participation beneficial for their career. As a result, it can be assumed that certain needs which are better met by the Leonardo da Vinci programme have the biggest influence on the effectiveness of the Leonardo da Vinci programme. Meanwhile, participation in the Comenius programme has strong/some benefits for around 67% of the participants.

**Figure 30. The career benefits of the participation in the Lifelong Learning Programme**



Source: survey of individual beneficiaries of the LLP.

This paradox in Comenius (strong effects on career-relevant skills and considerably weaker effects on actual career development) could be explained by the inability of the labour market to fully absorb and make the best use of the skills acquired (60% of Comenius beneficiaries surveyed were teachers). Educational staff across the EU, as shown by multiple studies in the past, suffers from undervaluation of their skills, gender inequality and low salaries. Typically, career advancement depends on academic achievements rather than acquisition of skills. Whether the skills acquired will translate into promotion or other benefits, depends on the career structure in each country (better opportunities exist in the UK, Ireland, the Netherlands and Scandinavian countries).

Regarding Erasmus, a survey of 63 experts found that most of them considered former participants as having acquired better cognitive, problem-solving, leadership and other capacities in comparison to non-mobile students. Slightly over a half of the experts surveyed believed that former Erasmus students have better chances of finding a job after graduation<sup>43</sup>. Interestingly, self-perception of students often differed from the perception of career-related competences, as evaluated by employers. 77% of students, but only 62% of employers found that mobile students had improved field-specific theoretical knowledge, but employers' assessment of foreign language skills of mobile students was higher than their self-assessment. On the other hand, both beneficiaries and employers similarly assessed the improvement of problem-solving abilities, initiative and assertiveness<sup>44</sup>. Only 21% of employers thought that formerly mobile graduates could expect a higher salary during the first five years of their career<sup>45</sup>. Regarding staff mobility, 44% of experts thought that mobile teachers are more likely to be ranked higher at the same institution, but only 12% believed that mobility would increase the income of beneficiaries<sup>46</sup>. Similarly, very few teachers surveyed for the 2006 report believed that their enhanced competences would translate into career benefits, but notable differences were observed between Western Europe on the one hand and Central and Eastern Europe on the other hand. 10% of teachers in the latter and only 1% in the former reported a raise in income; 30% in CEE and only 7% in Western Europe received a higher academic rank<sup>47</sup>. These numbers could have changed since the LLP was integrated, yet the trends are quite clear. Mobility increases the quality of teaching and the 'soft' changes in one's career (e.g. higher recognition), but these changes do not necessarily translate into financial and other benefits.

<sup>43</sup> Oliver Bracht et al. 2006. *The professional value of Erasmus mobility*. International Centre for Higher Education Research (INCHER-Kassel), University of Kassel, Kassel, p. 20-22.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, p. 99

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, p. 103.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, p. 41. CHEPS, INCHER, ECOTEC study also confirms that although employers highly value "soft" skills of Erasmus participants

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, p. 127.

Research amongst young trainees and employees involved in the mobility actions within the Leonardo da Vinci programme shows that significant career benefits resulted from the mobility action. This statement is strongly supported by survey results amongst beneficiaries in 2007<sup>48</sup>, as well as the synthesis of the National Reports and the survey of beneficiaries in this evaluation. Namely, according to the survey of 2007, among the unemployed persons who participated in this mobility action approximately 58% found a job or were self-employed after the measure; of those who were already employed 27% found better work placement, 24% professional advancement, 21% attained a better income, and 34% achieved greater responsibility in the workplace. Of the beneficiaries involved in vocational training 36% found work or placement after the training, 32% found work in another country, 37% indicated to have better success in training, and 41% report more intense participation in training. Predictably, actual career benefits are more observable among beneficiaries in the early stages of their career compared to mid-career teachers as in Comenius.

Another study on the impact of the Leonardo mobility of teachers and trainers in vocational education (VETPRO), which was published in 2010, indicates positive effects not only on the personal development of participants, but also on the VET schools, training providers and systems.<sup>49</sup> According to this study, VET professionals often apply the knowledge, skills and experiences acquired during their stay abroad in their practical work applying new curricula (in existing training courses), new teaching and learning methods, new working techniques and practices. They engage in initiating completely new processes and innovations. The personal impact of VETPRO mobility on VET professionals is diverse, ranging from higher income, greater personal involvement in the improvement of VET systems, or more responsibility at work. Mobility actions also lead to decisive changes and innovations in schools, training companies and other educational institutions with regards to pursuing an internationalisation strategy, quality improvement of VET, stronger embedding in transnational networks. Other impacts at the system level are recognition of the importance of international competences, regional and international networking.

Meanwhile, the synthesis of National Reports suggests that the needs of trainees were met to a particularly high extent, and employability effects were particularly significant on Leonardo da Vinci trainees. Predictably, actual career benefits are more observable among beneficiaries in the early stages of their career compared to mid-career teachers.

As regards institutional beneficiaries, 84% of them believe that participation in LLP activities influenced the professional competences of their staff and trainees, and 71% think that their key competences were also improved. As many as 91% of institutional beneficiaries indicated that the priorities of their project funded by the LLP matched those of their organisation. The highest figure of very strong matches was observed in Leonardo da Vinci projects - 62%, the lowest - in Erasmus (49%). The National Reports also confirm that many needs, although not all, of institutional beneficiaries are successfully addressed, and our case studies show how participation in the LLP fosters institutional development.

In conclusion, there are two main robust findings, confirmed by multiple sources: the needs, especially in relation to key competences, of individual beneficiaries are sufficiently met, and institutions improve and benefit through participation. However, some of the sources indicate uneven performance both among the sub-programmes and across different competences they aim to develop. The findings about career benefits are relatively weakly supported: while the surveys of Leonardo da Vinci and Erasmus participants measured actual benefits, the survey carried out for this

<sup>48</sup> European Commission, WSF – Economic and Social Research, 2007, “Impact Analysis of LEONARDO DA VINCI Mobility Measures on Young Trainees and Employees, and the Influence of Socio-economic Factors”.

<sup>49</sup> European Commission, WSF – Economic and Social Research, 2010, “Study on the impact of Leonardo da Vinci Programme on the quality of vocational education and training systems”

evaluation, the interviews and the synthesis of National Reports rely on self-perception and self-reporting. Therefore there is a need to further study the link between the competences acquired and the actual career patterns of the beneficiaries. For this purpose, both quantitative (esp. longitudinal studies) and qualitative research would be necessary.

*Operational question No. 5.4: What are the main external factors affecting the outputs and results of the LLP?*

Analysis of multiple sources shows that the most important negative external factors are the lack of language knowledge and different mobility barriers, including different living standards between Participating Countries, heavy overload of educational and training staff, discouraging administrative burden of participation, lack of recognition of skills and competences, lack of control (e.g. certification - over a half of National Authorities and National Agencies identify this as a problem) of the quality of mobility, lack of awareness about mobility opportunities and their added value for the beneficiaries, insurance policies, legal obstacles, etc.

There are also some programme-/ action-specific external factors. In the case of Jean Monnet KA2 “Operating grants to support specified institutions”, indirect individual beneficiaries (learners) are affected by the willingness of their countries of origin to provide grants, as grants are provided by MSs to their nationals. At present, six Member States do not provide grants to their nationals eligible for the programmes under this activity. Therefore some groups of individual beneficiaries (learners, scholars) cannot be reached.

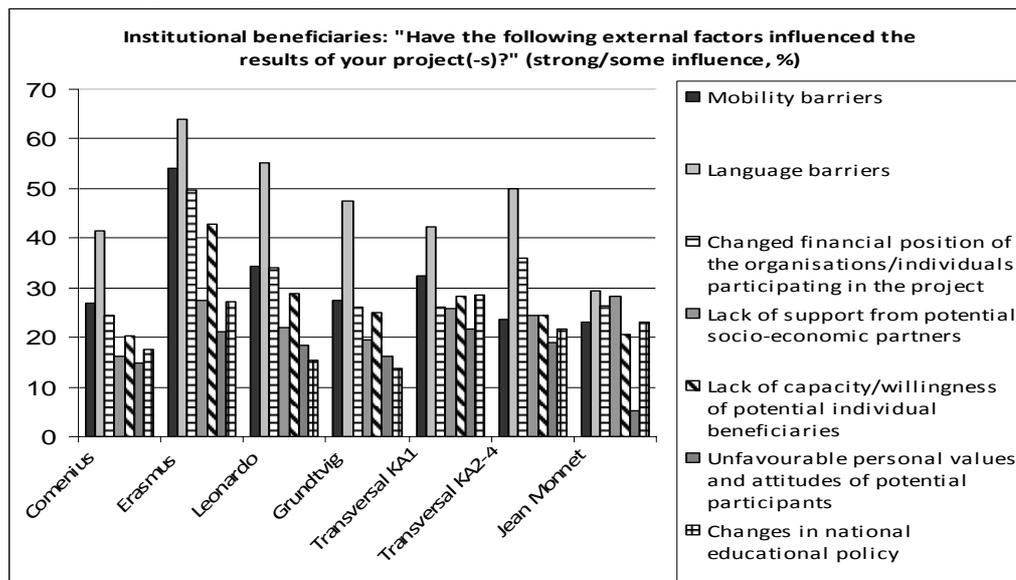
The development of national education and training policies was identified as a supporting external factor for the achievement of the outputs and results of the LLP (see operational question No. 1.2). As many as 92% of the NAs and 91% of the National Authorities believe that the LLP supplements national policies, therefore it can be expected that national policies provide not only synergies, but also infrastructure, development of beneficial attitudes, and knowledge of the local context for the LLP functioning. Meanwhile, the increasing variety of learner backgrounds or unfavourable personal values and attitudes of potential beneficiaries were found to be the least important factor for the implementation of the LLP.

The survey of the National Authorities and National Agencies as well as that of the institutional beneficiaries (see Figure 31) indicates that the most important negative external factor is the language barrier, which was mentioned by more than 40% of the respondents and in many of the Yearly NA reports. Although this barrier (especially knowledge of less widely used languages) is found to be a common problem for the implementation of all actions of the LLP, it was identified by a significantly higher share of the beneficiaries of the Erasmus decentralised actions (64%) in comparison with other sub-programmes. For example, only 41% of the institutional participants of the Comenius decentralised activities perceive it as a negative factor influencing the results of their projects. It can be explained by Yearly NA reports, which point out that English language teachers predominate among Comenius individual beneficiaries. Since Comenius mobility is typically short, except for Assistantships, the most effective and feasible way to improve language capacities of the participants is to organise it in cooperation with the sending institutions.

These findings are also supported by the desk research. It is important to note, however, that the lack of language knowledge has a negative effect not only on the outputs and results of the Programme, but also on the quality of mobility. As a result, current policy priorities in the field of language learning and linguistic diversity, which are also clearly reflected in the priorities of the general call for proposals, meet the needs of the potential beneficiaries.



**Figure 31. The external factors and their impact on the implementation of the Lifelong Learning Programme**



Source: survey of institutional beneficiaries of the LLP.

According to the survey, the second most important negative factor is the mobility barrier, followed by changes in the financial position of the institution/individual participants in the LLP. This factor has much stronger impact on the implementation of the Erasmus programme (identified by around 50% of the institutional beneficiaries) than on the other sub-programmes of the LLP. Still, it could be concluded from the desk research that such mobility barriers as different living standards between Participating Countries and changes in the financial position of the institutional or individual beneficiaries of the LLP are closely related to the pre-conditions of the Programme, namely, insufficient grants.

According to the National Agencies, insufficient grants for achieving the anticipated outputs of the LLP are mentioned by the participants of most actions. This is especially the case in involving learners with special needs or responsibilities, such as domestic care of children, elderly or disabled family members. While the value of grants awarded for mobility periods spent in the countries with lower level of subsistence may not be a serious mobility barrier, the lack of funding for mobility to countries with higher living costs may prevent the participation of potential beneficiaries, negatively affecting the principle of equal opportunities. For instance, the National Agencies notice that sometimes young people cannot participate in the Leonardo da Vinci mobility activities because of the too small subsistence grant for particular countries. The Erasmus student mobility for studies (outgoing students) case study also signals the danger of "social selectivity" of the participants, which is reinforced by certain delays of grant payments and the current economic downturn. Since many participants of LLP mobility actions complain about the too low subsistence grants (especially for countries with higher living standards), outputs and results of the Programme strongly depend on the ability of the potential beneficiary to co-finance participation. Increasing financial pressure on individuals because of the economic downturn limits their abilities to allocate additional funds for participation in the Programme and may both decrease the participation rates and increase social selectivity of mobility because of economic reasons.

It is important to note that most of the above mentioned problems and barriers to mobility have been already identified by the Council of the European Union. For instance, the need to widen and diversify sources of funding for youth mobility was

mentioned as a means to removing mobility barriers<sup>50</sup>. They are to be addressed in the remaining years of the LLP, as well as the successor programme (see prospective analysis).

Small and inexperienced learning providers (as expressed in country reports) or SME's (in context of the LdV programme) are facing difficulties in applying and running activities (e.g. finding partners in other countries, while National Agencies are only responsible for securing placements in foreign countries for applicants from their own country). Finding partners within e.g. Leonardo da Vinci remain a challenge. This was also expressed in the 2010 audit report of the European Court of Auditors on the design and management of the Leonardo da Vinci mobility scheme, in which they conclude that the Commission did not address the difficulties of applicants in finding partners. The National Agencies are only responsible for securing placements in foreign countries for applicants from their own country; they have no role in helping applicants from other countries to find suitable hosts. Therefore, stakeholders recommend that pan-European contact seminars be organised, while others suggests that the European Commission should provide support to the networks of actors focusing on VET. Also the setting up of European partner search database has been recommended.<sup>51</sup> There was a previous European partner-search database, but the Commission decided to close it in 2007, as it could not ensure that the data on potential partners in the database were of the quality expected by its users in the Participating Countries. This database has not yet been replaced by a suitable alternative. Nevertheless, national partner-search databases already exist in some Participating Countries, but these are not a substitute for an EU-wide database. According to the Court of Auditors report, using the respective national databases as a partner-search tool leads to a situation where those seeking partners are obliged to register with multiple databases so that they can sign in and make a search.<sup>52</sup>

The analysis has identified that the main problems leading to insufficient progress towards the quantified targets are limited access and external factors. They should receive more attention, e.g. the experience of Erasmus intensive language courses could be more extensively applied in other sub-programmes to address the language barrier. Evidence strongly suggests that several options should be considered in the successor programme: firstly, addressing the language barrier using language courses, the Transversal programme, and promoting language training within participant institutions; secondly, allowing more flexible mobility periods, which would remove multiple visa and other barriers for participants from candidate countries or non-citizen beneficiaries. Although the quality of mobility is high and improving (satisfaction with participation is nearly universal), many institutional beneficiaries express dissatisfaction with the administrative burden they face (even though it does not outweigh the benefits of mobility).

Set of evaluation questions No. 6 in the ToR: To what extent does the Programme implementation contribute to the EU education and training political priorities (e.g. Education and Training 2010 Programme, the Lisbon strategy)?

*Operational questions No. 6.1 and 6.2: the extent to which the Programme contributes to the OMC mechanism of European benchmarking and evidence-based policy making as well as peer learning activities and other fora of learning*

<sup>50</sup> Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 21 November 2008 on youth mobility, (2008/C 320/03).

<sup>51</sup> European Court of Auditors (2010), Special Report No. 4, Is the design and management of the mobility scheme of the Leonardo da Vinci programme likely to lead effective results?

<sup>52</sup> European Commission (2010), Study on the Impact of the Leonardo da Vinci programme on the quality of vocational education and training systems

According to the synthesis of the National Reports, the implementation of the LLP directly and indirectly contributed to the EU priorities set out in ET 2010. Through the actions of mobility (of learners and providers of learning opportunities) as well as partnerships and projects the sectoral programmes directly contributed to the following priorities of the ET 2010: opening up education and training systems to the wider world (especially through the objectives of improving foreign language learning, increasing mobility and exchange as well as strengthening European cooperation), improving the quality and effectiveness of education and training systems in the EU (all objectives of this priority are referred to in the synthesis of the National Reports with the exception of increasing recruitment to scientific and technical studies) and, to a smaller extent, facilitating the access of all to education and training systems. Furthermore, the survey of the National Authorities and National Agencies indicates that the Programme’s contribution to the priority of “Opening up education and training systems to the wider world” (73%, see Table 27 below) was stronger, but weaker to the priority of “Facilitating the access of all to education and training systems” (46%). This is not surprising, taking into consideration the Programme design (its focus on the actions of mobility and partnerships) as well as its implementation (e.g. insufficient integration of equal opportunities, see operational question No. 7.3).

**Table 27. The contribution of the LLP sectoral programmes to the EU priorities set out in the Education and Training Programme 2010.**

Question to the National Authorities and National Agencies: “Please assess the contribution of the LLP sectoral programmes to the EU priorities set out in the Education and Training Programme 2010” (% , strong contribution)

| No. | Priority of ET 2010  | %  |
|-----|--|----|
| 1.  | Opening up education and training systems to the wider world (strengthening the links with working life and research and society at large, developing the spirit of enterprise, improving foreign language learning, increasing mobility and exchange, strengthening European cooperation)                                     | 73 |
| 2.  | Improving the quality and effectiveness of education and training systems in the EU (improving education and training for teachers and trainees, developing skills for a knowledge society, ensuring access to ICT for everyone, increasing recruitment to scientific and technical studies, making the best use of resources) | 56 |
| 3.  | Facilitating the access of all to education and training systems (Open learning environment, making learning more attractive, supporting active citizenship, equal opportunities and social cohesion)  | 46 |

The synthesis of the National Reports also showed that the largest impact of the LLP decentralised actions was found on the individual and organisational level. The impact of the Programme at the system level was quite small or moderate. Based on Figure 4 (individual, institutional and system levels of the LLP) the system level is influenced by two mechanisms: spillover effects of individual- and institutional-level results at the system level (the bottom-up logic) as well as the reform of national education and training systems under the OMC (the top-down logic). Continued cooperation and interchange between the institutions under the LLP affected changes of services, pedagogies, contents and practices in the provision of lifelong learning opportunities at the system level, but the scope of these changes was small or moderate, depending on the particular sectoral programme. There is certain evidence from desk research, the interview programme and the case studies that the systematic impact was more apparent under the sectoral programmes of Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci.<sup>53</sup>

According to the synthesis of the National Reports, links between the sectoral programmes and national education policies is uneven in the Participating Countries. A number of the Participating Countries face difficulties in involving key decision makers in the LLP actions. This problem is particularly relevant when organising study visits supported under the Transversal programme.

Furthermore, the achievement of the ET 2010 objectives depends on the OMC and its effectiveness. In the period 2007-2009 the LLP and its sub-programmes contributed

<sup>53</sup> Nonetheless, there are also project examples under other sectoral programmes. According to the European Commission, a Grundtvig multilateral project “Virtual European Prison School” produced demonstrable impacts on the system of prison education in a number of Participating Countries.

increasingly to both mechanisms of the OMC influence: European benchmarking and evidence-based policy making as well as of peer learning activities and other fora of learning.<sup>54</sup> The Programme supported several activities useful for informing national policy making through these OMC mechanisms, especially under its centralised actions. According to the survey of the LLP beneficiaries, about 37% of the KA1 respondents and 34% of the KA2-4 respondents agree that their project strongly contributed to “raising the competences of policy makers and education/training specialists on the new demands of society and knowledge about good practice examples”. This finding is also supported by the survey of the National Authorities, whose data show that peer learning activities and other fora of learning in the framework of the LLP were very useful in raising competences and awareness of national stakeholders in certain lifelong learning issues (68% of the National Authorities perceive them as ‘very’ and ‘rather useful’) as well as informing policy making at the EU or national level (68%). The Programme contributed less to reaching consensus of the main stakeholders in certain areas of education and training policy (41% of the National Authorities perceiving as ‘very’ or ‘rather useful’).

The following characteristics of the Programme implementation ensure its contribution to the EU policy: the differentiated approach to the Programme implementation; annual or multi-annual policy priorities announced in the general calls; supporting the activities of exchanging good practices under the Programme. Taking into account the higher political ambition of the EU 2020 strategic framework and national-level commitments (especially quantified targets to be set by the Member States in the area of education and training), there is a need to promote better links between the Programme and EU-level or national lifelong learning policies. It is important to mention several areas of the Programme, whose implementation could be improved in the future in view of a better contribution to the EU policy: strengthening the involvement of national policy makers and other stakeholders in the cooperation process (69% of the National Authorities and National Agencies agree), improving the use of studies, comparative research and other evidence for informing policy making and monitoring (52%) as well as increasing the effectiveness of peer learning activities and other fora of learning for informing policy making and monitoring (48%).

It is also recognised that increased political ambition of education and training policy in the EU 2020 strategy (especially its headline targets) will improve the contribution of the LLP to the EU priorities (52%). There is no significant difference among the three groups of Participating Countries (EU15, EU12, non-EU Participating Countries) with regard to these means, with one important exception: EU12 and non-EU Participating Countries are more supportive to increasing the effectiveness of peer learning activities and other fora of learning compared to EU15 (59% of EU12 compared to 39% of EU15). This reflects a stronger need for policy learning in the new EU Member States and other Participating Countries for informing policy making.

**Table 28. Means of improving the Programme’s contribution to the EU education and training priorities as well as the European educational area.**

Question to the National Authorities and national Agencies: “how could the contribution of the LLP to the EU education training priorities and the European educational area be possibly improved?” (all answers, %)

| No. | Contribution   | %  |
|-----|--|----|
| 1.  | Strengthen the involvement of national stakeholders in the cooperation process at the EU level                 | 69 |
| 2.  | Improve the use of studies, comparative research and other evidence for informing policy making and monitoring | 52 |
| 3.  | Increased political ambition of education and training policy in the EU 2020 strategy will improve the         | 52 |

<sup>54</sup> KA1 of the Transversal programme is particularly important in terms of the “top-down” contribution of the Programme to the EU policy. The procedure of the framework contract should be noted because of its focus on evidence- and learning-based activities in the framework of Education and Training 2010.

| No. | Contribution   | %  |
|-----|--|----|
|     | contribution of the LLP to the EU priorities   |    |
| 4.  | Increase the effectiveness of peer learning activities and other fora of learning for informing policy making and monitoring | 48 |
| 5.  | Design of the future LLP should allow for a more flexible contribution to the EU priorities or cooperation initiatives       | 46 |
| 6.  | Increase ownership and visibility of the EU priorities and cooperation initiatives at the national level                     | 35 |
| 7.  | The new structure of Education and Training 2020 will provide more flexibility for the LLP contribution                      | 25 |

In addition, there is a need for better dissemination and exploitation of project results and better monitoring of the Programme impacts on policy. For instance, it is important to continue improving dissemination and especially exploitation of the Programme results in the future, taking in consideration the evidence of limited involvement of national policy makers in this process (see the evaluation question No. 11).

Set of evaluation questions No. 7 in the ToR: To what extent does the implementation of and participation in the Programme appear satisfactory in relation to the objective of the LLP contribution to the Community horizontal policies, especially to the issues of Multilingualism and equality between men and women?

Multilingualism, equality between men and women and other equal opportunities issues are all very important horizontal issues of the LLP, directly contributing to its general objective. However, in the current design of the LLP only the theme of Multilingualism has been dedicated a separate Key Activity within the Transversal programme. Hence the interim evaluation dedicated a separate case study to this policy and paid additional attention to this theme in all of the case studies and in the synthesis of the National Reports. In addition, the survey of both individual and organisational beneficiaries posed questions related to language learning.

On the basis of the evidence collected, it can be concluded that the programme contributes significantly to the horizontal policy of multilingualism and linguistic diversity on several levels and in several ways.

- First, Key Activity 2 Languages supports multilateral projects, networks and accompanying measures that aim to improve the quality of language learning and to finding ways to motivate learners to learn languages, especially the less widely used and taught languages (LWUTLs).
- Second, the centralised actions of the sectoral programmes provide possibilities for beneficiaries to set up projects and networks focused on language learning and related topics if they wish to do so.
- Third, the decentralised actions of the sectoral programmes contribute directly, through language courses, and indirectly, through mobility actions, to the language skills of individual beneficiaries and encourage the learning of the LWUTLs.

On the other hand, language skills are also seen as one of the key barriers to mobility and participation in the programme (see operational question 5.4). This underscored the importance of the horizontal policy.

Equal opportunities in the LLP are expected to be much more than a procedural requirement. The LLP is committed to actively reduce existing inequalities, and this commitment is reflected in formulating the LLP objectives and mainstreaming equal

opportunities into the sub-programmes. However, as evidence collected for operational question 7.3 shows, *de facto* implementation is insufficient and very different across equality strands (e.g. gender equality is addressed considerably more than the needs of disadvantaged Roma learners or persons with disabilities and special needs).

Although the Terms of Reference does not attribute ICT to the Community horizontal policies, the implementation of this cross-cutting theme is also assessed under this evaluation question. Our sources suggested that the demands of the Transversal programme did not always match the goals of ICT integration, while at the same time it was too early to advocate for full mainstreaming of ICT actions, when Transversal KA3 was developed. KA3 is not sufficiently coordinated with other actions, and better integration with other EU initiatives (including thematic years) is desirable.

*Operational question No. 7.1: Is the implementation of the multilingualism action of the transversal sub-programme satisfactory?*

The information collected for the KA2 case study indicates that the implementation of KA2 is running satisfactorily. The funds available for the key activity are used up, as enough good quality applications are received by the EACEA (Indicator 7.1.1). The KA2 supports between 25 and 30 projects per year, awarding between €9 and 10 million in grants per year.

The key activity is also judged to be relevant to both the general EU policy framework regarding education and the specific LLP framework. Accordingly, the projects funded by the KA2 also respond to the objectives set out in the LLP (Indicator 7.1.2). The projects focus on the less widely used and taught languages and are judged to produce results of higher quality than what is produced under the sectoral programmes in relation to language learning. The KA2 is clearly divided into two parts: one, multilateral projects, focusing on the development of specific products and the organisation of awareness raising activities, and the other, thematic networks, focusing on the exchange of knowledge and good practice. The interviews with beneficiaries posed the question whether this division works well in practice, as multilateral projects were seen as pursuing entirely different objectives than networks. Looking at the projects that have been funded so far, however, it can be seen that these two priorities are complementary to one another. Thus, the networks and accompanying measures can be used to focus on the dissemination and exchange of good practices that come out of the multilateral projects, or, as the projects of the KA2 are not all finished yet, earlier Lingua actions. The set-up of the KA2 actions can thus be seen as both consistent and complementary.

While the case study shows that KA2 is successful in reaching institutional target beneficiaries, it is not clear whether the final target groups are reached by the projects themselves. The survey of organisational project beneficiaries of the Transversal programme, which had 41 respondents, 23 of which were involved in KA2, gives an indication of the participation of the target groups (see Table 29 below). The table shows that reaching people in rural and remote communities proved to be the most successful so far, yet the objective of reaching people excluded from education is accomplished to a lesser extent. It must be noted, however, that not every project is expected to aim at all of these target groups. Thus, the aggregated survey results do not enable us to make a clear judgment on the participation of target groups.

**Table 29. Outreach to disadvantaged groups (self-assessment)**

| Indicator  | Programme success with respect to the indicator (% respondents claiming the programme was successful) |
|--|---|
| Reaching people excluded from the education and training systems | 17  |
| Reaching people outside the labour market                        | 21  |

| Indicator   | Programme success with respect to the indicator (% respondents claiming the programme was successful) |
|---|---|
| Reaching migrants   | 27  |
| Reaching linguistic minorities  | 33  |
| Reaching people with disabilities, special needs and socially disadvantaged | 34  |
| Reaching people in rural and remote communities                             | 40  |

These indicators of budget absorption rates and target group reach do not however fully reflect the widely dispersed nature of the horizontal policy, especially the relationship between KA2 projects and networks and those funded under the centralised actions of the sectoral programmes which is important when assessing the horizontal implementation of the theme. The case study of the horizontal policy showed that in the case of multilingualism a lot of potential is not being capitalised upon. Little cross-sectoral exchange and coordination of projects dealing with language issues takes place (e.g. there are potential duplications with language teaching in sectoral sub-programmes). Coordinating diverse language actions that take place at different levels of the programme can bring more focus to these activities and increase the impact of LLP funding in this area.

*Operational question No. 7.2: Does the Programme contribute sufficiently to the multilingualism objective by improving the language skills of its participants?*

The results of this evaluation suggest that the Programme contributes to the multilingualism objective by improving the language skills of its participants since:

- the survey results show participation in the programme had a positive impact on participants' language skills (self-assessment);
- the nature of European cooperation encouraged project beneficiaries to improve their language skills in all actions of the programme, even those not focused on languages or mobility.

The Erasmus programme has already started successful language courses for its participants, providing linguistic support is considered under other sectoral programmes. Yet, as our sources confirm, these initiatives are not coordinated with Transversal KA2.

Where the centralised actions of the sectoral programmes are concerned, we can conclude on the basis of the monitoring data and interviews with officials, that the theme of multilingualism and linguistic diversity comes back sporadically in the projects financed by these actions, but is not a structural obligation of applicants. In general, the actions do not express specific attention to aspects of language learning, but are open to projects focusing on a diverse selection of themes, language learning being one of them. Hence it cannot be concluded that the horizontal policy of multilingualism is implemented consequently within the centralised actions of the sectoral programmes.

Nonetheless, even in projects and networks focusing on aspects other than language learning, language skills of participants are improved as they have to communicate in foreign languages for the running of the projects. The case studies of different actions also support the observation that the programme contributes significantly to the foreign language skills of its participants. Most actions are judged to contribute, directly or indirectly, to this horizontal priority. However, in some cases this is only the case because project partners have to communicate in a foreign language with one another<sup>55</sup>. In general, language is seen as a double-edged sword. On the one hand, participation in the Programme clearly leads to improved foreign language skills; on

<sup>55</sup> Erasmus "Academic Networks": the EU Level Case Study.

the other hand, language is seen as an entry filter that may hinder cooperation (more details under operational question 5.4)<sup>56</sup>.

Regarding the decentralised actions of the sectoral programmes, it can be concluded that participation in the activities supported by the Programme has a positive effect on the language learning competences of the beneficiaries. This is confirmed by the survey of beneficiaries, which indicates that participation in the Programme has strong or some influence on communication in foreign languages of more than 90% of the individual beneficiaries of the four sectoral programmes.

The National Reports also pay attention to the horizontal policy of linguistic diversity. In most Member States, language learning and linguistic diversity are seen as intrinsic aspects of the programme and as an essential part of mobility. As a consequence, in most cases, no additional actions are taken to implement the horizontal policy. The mobility and partnership actions are seen as the most significant instruments contributing to the horizontal policy.

It should also be pointed out that English is the most popular language in the decentralised actions, with 45% of the individual beneficiaries indicating that their participation in the Programme helped to improve English language skills notably. The dominance of the English language is seen as a matter of concern by some experts in the field and in some of the case studies, as it is noted that English remains the main foreign language that is spoken by participants. Nearly 50% of the individual survey respondents report that their English language skills have improved as a result of participation in the Programme. French, Spanish, German and Italian also receive comparatively high response rates, but rarely ever above 10%.

Overall, since linguistic competences are strongly related to the quality of mobility, it is hardly surprising that language learning and linguistic diversity is prioritised in the programme. For instance, according to the European Quality Charter for Mobility strong emphasis is given for linguistic preparation of Erasmus students. It is widely believed that all necessary measures should be taken to create opportunities for every Erasmus student to obtain appropriate linguistic preparation in the language of the host country. Vocationally Oriented Language Learning and Content Integrated Language Learning were identified as a transversal priority in the Leonardo da Vinci sub-programme in the period 2007-2010. Priority was given to projects which took appropriate measures to ensure the quality of mobility, including linguistic (and cultural) preparation of the beneficiaries. Priority was also given to Comenius multilateral projects and Grundtvig multilateral networks addressing the issues of language learning and linguistic diversity and applicants for Comenius in-service training grants wishing to develop skills to implement Content and Language Integrated Learning or holistic language policies at schools. Meanwhile, KA2 of the Transversal programme was created to supplement objectives related to language learning and linguistic diversity in all the sub-programmes of the LLP. Overall, improving language skills of the participants is given due importance, yet unequal language skills of project applicants and participants could be considered an external factor (see operational question 5.4) influencing the functioning of the LLP.

Concerning the future of the programme, the central issue to address is the way that the horizontal policy of multilingualism is embedded in the overall programme. This refers to the extent to which multilingualism and linguistic diversity are mainstreamed as cross-cutting themes into the general activities of the programme, as opposed to an approach where they are targeted directly and specifically. Theoretically, there are three ways of integrating the horizontal policy into the programme:

- Mainstreaming the horizontal policy in the sectoral programmes as well as paying specific attention to language learning and linguistic diversity as a thematic focus in a separate programme;

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<sup>56</sup> Erasmus "Staff Teaching Abroad": the Czech Republic, Erasmus "Staff Teaching Abroad": Norway.

- Integrating the horizontal policy completely into the sectoral programmes by mainstreaming language priorities throughout all priorities and actions;
- Taking the horizontal policy out of the sectoral programmes and setting up a separate programme of sufficient (budgetary) size covering all the sectors as well as informal and non-formal learning.

Based on the information collected in the case studies, the interviews, the surveys, the National Reports and the monitoring data, it can be concluded that the partial mainstreaming of the horizontal policy complemented by a separate thematic priority in the Transversal Programme is (for the time being) the preferred option. Both mainstreaming in the four sectors as well as a separate approach which opens up opportunities for innovation and for targeted programming, are needed. The mainstreaming in the sectors needs to be extended and targeted, and the separate opportunities need to fill the gaps that are left by a sectoral approach. Importantly, these two approaches need to be bridged effectively, in order to connect the areas of research, innovation and practice.

In practice, this means that within a newly structured Transversal Programme, in line with partial integration of the programme, language learning and linguistic diversity should be retained as a thematic priority. Special cross-sectoral calls for proposals should provide room for projects addressing language learning as a topic. These could however be used more strategically to better complement the efforts undertaken in the sectoral programmes, for example by addressing specific language barriers and exploring possibilities for widening the scope of language learning within the decentralised actions of the sectoral programmes.

At the same time, the sectoral programmes themselves should pay more explicit attention to aspects of multilingualism and linguistic diversity, in both their centralised and decentralised actions. Thus, every sectoral programme could have an explicit objective targeting multilingualism and linguistic diversity. Another possible consideration would be to earmark certain amounts of funds per sectoral programme for language projects. In the end, integral mainstreaming of the policy throughout the sectoral programme may be seen as a goal to strive for in the future. Evidence, however, suggests that this process of mainstreaming will take more time and needs to be actively promoted.

In the light of further programme integration, the contribution of the LLP to the horizontal policy of multilingualism and linguistic diversity could also be increased by coordinating the relevant (centralised and decentralised) actions of the sectoral programmes and the Transversal Programme more closely. This can be achieved with respect to the design of the actions, and by considering the inclusion of language components in more of the calls for proposals of the sectoral programmes. Additionally, thematic sharing of outcomes and good practices in the field of language learning between the Transversal Programme and the sectoral programmes and increased thematic monitoring can lead to improvements in the design of actions in the field of the horizontal policy.

*Operational question No. 7.3: Is the implementation of equal opportunities satisfactory in the centralised and decentralised actions of the Programme?*

With high-level horizontal objectives and related priorities in the general call for proposals in the 2007-2009 period, the LLP contributes to equal opportunities to some extent. Most sub-programmes addressed at least one equality issue. On the other hand, the actual implementation of equal opportunities takes place in sporadic targeted initiatives instead of being successfully mainstreamed into the whole implementation process. This is at least partly due to the rather low awareness of equal opportunities at multiple levels. While separate projects provide examples on how equal opportunities can be addressed, the overall implementation does not live



up to the requirement expressed in the LLP Decision - to actively “combat” discrimination and prejudice, and “promote” equality.

Article 12 of the LLP Decision identifies the following horizontal policies:

- Cultural and linguistic diversity within Europe,
- Combating racism, prejudice and xenophobia,
- Making provisions for learners with special needs and for their integration into mainstream education and training,
- Promoting equality between men and women,
- Contributing to combating all forms of discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, age or sexual orientation.

They relate to two aspects: inclusion of certain disadvantaged groups and raising awareness. Inclusion of groups is a more ‘tangible’ requirement, and a number of project managers attempt to address it. On the other hand, awareness issues are expected to result from international mobility ‘by default’, as exemplified by National Reports and the survey. Another important aspect is the fact that there are more disadvantaged groups in addition to those identified in Article 12: learners and institutions in rural and remote areas, unemployed persons, early school leavers, etc. Many of these groups are subject to multiple disadvantages: e.g. early school leaving is widespread among migrants and pupils with special needs, in addition to following clear gender patterns<sup>57</sup>. Our survey of individual beneficiaries reveals several imbalances among Programme participants: while 64% of all participants were female (reflecting the gender distribution in educational staff, horizontal segregation among study fields, gendered early school leaving patterns, etc.), only 1% over 65 years of age, only 4% early school leavers, less than 2% with special needs, and 4% consider themselves belonging to other disadvantaged groups.

Institutional awareness proved to be limited. Just over one third of the NAs (35%) and under a quarter of the National Authorities (23%) surveyed agree that LLP integration leads to better mainstreaming of the horizontal priorities, but the surveys of the beneficiaries and the National Reports show that the integration of horizontal priorities requires more attention and awareness. The European Commission set annual priorities for the 2007 general calls and multiannual strategic priorities for the general call for proposals 2008-2010. Priority to projects addressing people with special needs was given in Comenius partnerships, Comenius networks and Grundtvig learning partnerships. Comenius partnerships and Grundtvig learning partnerships addressed gender equality. Comenius networks, Grundtvig learning partnerships, multilateral projects and networks addressed such issues as racism, xenophobia and gender imbalance in science studies (2007-2010). Less noticeable priorities could also be identified for Erasmus networks, KA1 of the Transversal (2007), KA2 multilateral networks (people with special needs, 2008-2010) and KA4 of the Transversal programme for multilateral projects and the actions of the Jean Monnet Programme. The Comenius in-service training for school education staff aims to teach heterogeneous groups of pupils in terms of learning needs as well as other related aspects (2008-2010). The Comenius programme also set a priority to improve literacy. Other sub-programmes and actions did not contain any related priorities (see Table 30 below). At the programme- or sub-programme level no benchmarks are set for equal opportunity monitoring, and a system of indicators reflecting various equal opportunity issues is not in place either.

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<sup>57</sup> Network of experts in social sciences of education and training (NESSE), 2009. *Early school leaving: Lessons from research for policy makers*, p. 25.

**Table 30. Explicit integration of horizontal priorities in the priorities set for the sub-programmes, 2007-2010**

| Sub-programme     | Assessment      |                      |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
|                   | Priorities 2007 | Priorities 2008–2010 |
| Comenius          | +++             | +++                  |
| Erasmus           | ++              | +                    |
| Leonardo da Vinci | +               | +++                  |
| Grundtvig         | +++             | ++                   |
| Transversal       | ++              | +++                  |
| Jean Monnet       | +               | +                    |

Note: +++ stands for high level of integration, ++ stands for some integration, + no integration.

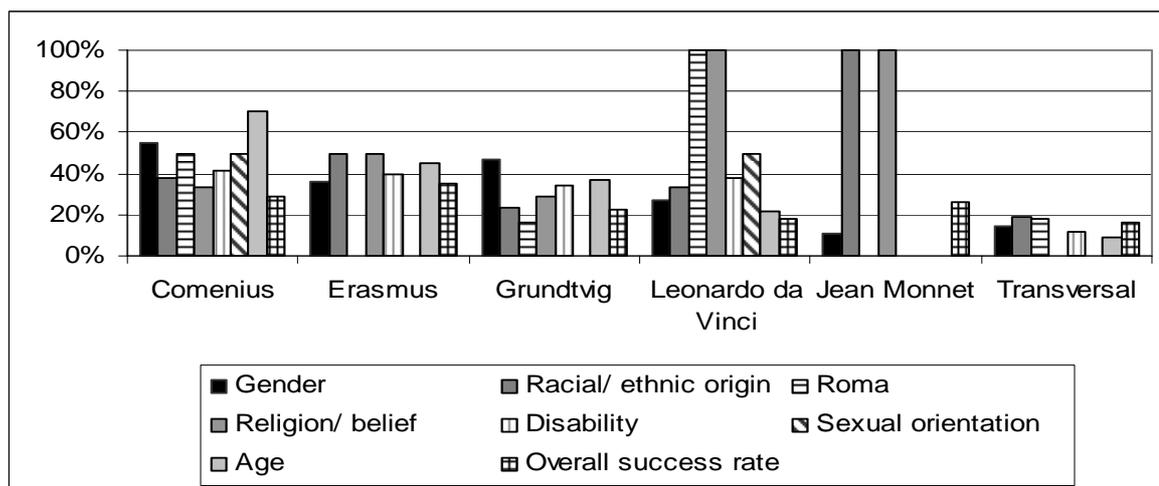
\*Having in mind the nature of the Jean Monnet programme, equal opportunities could not always be integrated explicitly in the priorities. On the other hand, some contribution is notable: Jean Monnet KA2 funds the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education in Denmark.

It should be emphasised that the content of the implemented decentralised projects is strongly influenced by the theme of the European Years. Since certain priorities corresponding to a concrete European Year are usually set in the annual work programmes of the National Agencies, applicants have higher incentives to address these issues in their projects. Regarding the reach of the disadvantaged groups, the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion is of particular importance and more attention to social integration issues is already seen in the current applications. Disadvantaged youth is also the focus of the Youth on the Move programme. The New Skills for New Jobs initiative also emphasises that low qualified and disadvantaged members of society are expected to become increasingly vulnerable due to the current economic downturn and restructuring of the economy. One of the Flagship Initiatives designed to support delivery on the Inclusive Growth priority of the Europe2020 Strategy, European Platform against Poverty<sup>58</sup>, envisages transformation of the Social OMC into a Platform against Poverty so inclusion of migrants, minorities, youth, disabled and other vulnerable groups are integrated as cross-cutting issues in multiple policy areas (implying cooperation, among others, in particular with DG EAC).

Data about the participation of various target groups are insufficient (under the monitoring framework it is planned to collect monitoring data to measure certain social cohesion topics). Each LLP sub-programme received at least several applications directly addressing equality issues, and, weighting their overall numbers against the number of received applications, they were rather successful in receiving grants. At the project level, judging from the data of 2009, awareness of equal opportunities in the applications received was relatively low: few applicants submitted relevant applications despite the fact that comparatively better chances of being selected could be expected if horizontal priorities were addressed (see the success rates in Figure 32 on centralised actions - such comparable data is not available for decentralised actions). It is likely that many relevant applications were submitted for the decentralised actions, but, judging from the survey, most institutional beneficiaries did not find horizontal priorities relevant to their projects. Due to typically small numbers of specifically-targeted applications, these rates should be interpreted with caution. Nonetheless, these rates show that overall specifically-targeted applications have better chances of being selected.

<sup>58</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/planned\\_ia/docs/15\\_empl\\_platform\\_against\\_poverty\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/planned_ia/docs/15_empl_platform_against_poverty_en.pdf)

**Figure 32. Success rates of the received applications which integrated equal opportunities (%)**



Source: Statistics of centralised actions, DG EAC, 2009.

Note: in 2009, where relevant applications were submitted, from 2 (Roma, sexual orientation) to 24 (racial/ethnic origin, disability/special needs) relevant applications were received in Comenius, from 2 (religion/belief) to 14 (gender) in Erasmus, from 1 (Roma religion/belief) to 48 (gender) in Leonardo da Vinci, from 2 (sexual orientation) to 86 (age) in Grundtvig, from 1 (racial/ethnic origin, religion/belief) to 9 (gender) in Jean Monnet, and from 5 (sexual orientation) to 79 (age) in the Transversal programme. Transversal KA3 (ICT) stood out by the number of applications submitted across all relevant themes, but very few were accepted.

There are a number of project examples relevant to the principle of equal opportunities. The needs of people with learning disabilities were addressed in promoting ICT-based learning (Transversal KA2 for sign language<sup>59</sup>). A high number of Grundtvig projects focused on entrepreneurship of the unemployed and elderly population and vocational skills for young dyslexic adults. In Leonardo da Vinci, the ELE 55+ project focused on employability for persons over 55. National Reports suggest that the integration of persons with special needs and disabilities received the most attention, although it was not always sufficiently promoted due to lack of funds. Meanwhile, reaching early school leavers (one of the key EU priorities in education and training) was addressed insufficiently (see under operational question 10.1). Further research should estimate the effectiveness and impact of these projects (thematic monitoring could be considered).

There were large discrepancies in the awareness of horizontal issues among National Authorities (see Annex 2). Many believed that horizontal priorities are by definition integrated effortlessly due to national priorities and the nature of mobility, even more so with the awareness and intercultural dialogue (rather than, for instance, making provisions for learners with special needs) dimension of the horizontal policies. It is important that NAs and project managers become more aware that 'background-blindness', or non-discrimination, is insufficient to address equal opportunities, as the LLP uses very strong vocabulary to address horizontal priorities - *combating* discrimination, prejudice, etc. The limited awareness of horizontal policies signals the need for guidelines and training at all levels. However, this conclusion is not confirmed by the survey of institutional beneficiaries: 41% answered negatively when asked if information about how equal opportunities can be addressed was insufficient. Also, the respondents did not relate the limited effectiveness in integrating the horizontal priorities to lack of prioritisation of equal opportunities, inflexibility of management, or difficulties in involving institutions in socio-economically disadvantaged areas. The main obstacles identified were financial, human resources and time (32% respondents), especially in Grundtvig.

<sup>59</sup> EACEA (2010). "ICT and digital media for key competences". Available online at <[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/results\\_projects/documents/publi/eden\\_brochure\\_2010.pdf](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/results_projects/documents/publi/eden_brochure_2010.pdf)> [Accessed 21-06-2010].

The survey data show that around a half of the institutional beneficiaries address gender and racial/ethnic origin issues very or rather successfully, followed by age. Meanwhile, dealing with Roma, religion/belief and disability/special needs is less successful. It should be emphasised that the respondents regard the aforementioned priorities irrelevant rather than unsuccessfully integrated. According to the survey results, the main problem faced by the project beneficiaries in addressing the issue of equal opportunities is the fact that this requires additional financial and human resources, and time. This could be a result of limited awareness of innovative approaches to “mainstream” equal opportunities without changing the project management. Therefore there is a need for in-built measures for better integration of these priorities. For example, special cross-sectoral calls to address certain horizontal priorities, particularly early school leaving and socio-economic groups affected by it could be considered (see operational question 17.2).

To sum up, the LLP should be better aligned with other EU policies which contribute to such key targets as raising tertiary education attainment among 30-34 year olds to 40% and reducing early school leaving to 10% by 2020. This could be done by fostering inclusion of the disadvantaged groups as well as raising awareness about the importance of equality and intercultural dialogue in the education and training community. As mentioned above, training and awareness-raising are needed at all levels in the light of such high instances of perceived irrelevance of horizontal priorities among institutional beneficiaries (see also under operational question 10.1). The Grundtvig programme which addresses the topic of equal opportunities for adults under the current Programme should therefore be given this focus in the successor Programme. In addition, the LLP should make the best use of the ‘Youth on the Move’ framework in order to address the needs of disadvantaged youth.

Set of evaluation questions No. 8 in the ToR: Are the forms of cooperation and the types of the actions under the LLP effective for the purpose of supporting the European Educational Area for lifelong learning?

*Operational question No. 8.1: Is mobility and cooperation (supported by the Programme) increasing in the European Educational Area?*

In the period 2007-2009 the LLP contributed considerably to mobility and cooperation in the European Educational and Training Area. Monitoring data show that the number of grants awarded for separate actions (especially the decentralised actions) of the Programme increased compared with the similar activities supported under the previous programmes. According to the LLP Activity Report 2009-2010, during its first three years of implementation the Programme supported transnational learning mobilities of 900 000 European citizens (including that of 720 000 students and 180 000 teachers, trainers or staff)<sup>60</sup>. The larger budget of the current Programme was the most important factor contributing to the increase in the number and volume of grants and people flows.

Table 31 below indicates that the LLP on average enabled many more individual beneficiaries to participate in different mobility actions per year than under the previous programmes. In other words, since the integration of the Programme, obvious progress has been made in terms of advancing the mobility of both learners and teachers as well as partnerships. However, the monitoring data on the number of supported projects and networks under the centralised actions of the LLP show a mixed situation. On the one hand, the number of grants awarded for multilateral networks and multilateral projects experienced a sharp decrease under all sectoral programmes. This was mainly the result of the lower budget allocated to centralised

<sup>60</sup> The European Commission. *Lifelong Learning Programme: Activity Report 2009-2010*. P. 3.

actions. In addition, certain actions underwent some changes which currently limit their comparability. In particular, the number of Erasmus Networks was higher under the previous Socrates programme because they included two types of activities: traditional Networks and Dissemination Networks, which became Accompanying Measures under the LLP. Moreover, Curriculum Development was the main cooperation action under the Socrates programme. Under the LLP Curriculum Development shares its leadership with 3 other actions of Multilateral Projects.

As a result, it could be concluded that mobility and cooperation in the EEA has increased during implementation of the LLP. In general, the increase in the budget for mobility actions was a major factor triggering such effect.

**Table 31. The LLP outputs in comparison to the outputs of the previous Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci programmes**

|                       | Target audience       | Comenius   |  | Erasmus   |   | Leonardo daVinci   |   | Grundtvig                 |                        |                        |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|--|---|---|--|---|---------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
|                       |                       | Socrates 2000–2006   | LLP  | Socrates 2000–2006                                | LLP   | 2000-2006  | LLP   | Socrates 2000–2006        | LLP                    |                        |
| Decentralised actions | Mobility              | Students   | -  | 43.000 (in 2009)                                  | 843.000 students in mobility schemes (120.429 per year) | 490.000 (163.333 per year)   | -   | -                         | -                      | -                      |
|                       |                       | Training placements  | -  | -   | 73.804 university students**** (10.543 per year)        | 50.300 (25.150 per year)   | 174.937 trainees in initial VET (24.991 per year) | 182.000 (60.666 per year) | -                      | -                      |
|                       |                       | Staff/teachers/education specialists/adult education staff | 55.695 teachers and future teachers (7.956 per year) | 33.000 (11.000 per year)                          | 135.208 exchanges (19.315 per year)                     | 93.600 (31.200 per year)   | 56.079 trainers in VET (8.011 per year)           | 39.200 (13.066 per year)  | -                      | 5.560 (1.853 per year) |
|                       | Other                 | Partnership projects                                       | Around 24.000 (3.429 per year)                       | 20.300 (6.767 per year)                           | -   | -  | -   | 1.760 (880 per year)      | 7.775 (1.111 per year) | 4.140 (1.380 per year) |
| Centralised actions   | Multilateral projects | 386 (55 per year)  | 119 (40 per year)                                    | 520 curriculum development projects (74 per year) | 91 (30 per year)  | 1.933 pilot projects for development of innovation in VET (276 per year) | 1.070 (357 per year)                              | 417 (60 per year)         | 202 (67 per year)      |                        |
|                       | Multilateral networks | 41 (6 per year)  | 13 (4 per year)                                      | 180 (26 per year)                                 | 21 (7 per year)   | 78 (11 per year)   | 19 (6 per year)                                   | 37 (5 per year)           | 7 (2 per year)         |                        |

Source: European Commission, „Final report on the implementation and impact of the second phase (2000–2006) of the Community action programme in the field of education (Socrates) and vocational training (Leonardo da Vinci) and the multiannual programme (2004–2006) for the effective integration of information and communication technologies (ICT) in education and training systems in Europe (eLearning)“, COM(2009) 159 final; European Commission: *The Grundtvig Programme 2000-2010 – Facts, Figures, Examples*. Brussels 2010; LLP Activity Report 2009-2010, Annex II Outcomes and Results 2007-2009.

*Operational question No. 8.2: what is the extent to which the types of actions supported by the LLP are effective for transversal and sectoral mechanisms of the European Educational Area?*

As far as the European Educational Area (EEA) is concerned, the sectoral programmes had different starting points at the outset of the Programme. Based on the data analysed, in the period 2007-2009, the Programme contributed to the EEA from a medium to a high extent. The forms of cooperation and the types of actions under the LLP are on average effective for the purpose of supporting the EEA. However, there are

certain factors hindering the effectiveness of the LLP contribution to EEA that could be overcome in the future.

The LLP contributed to the transversal cooperation initiatives at the EU level. The examples of such cooperation initiatives were the “New Skills for New Jobs” initiative, the European Qualification Framework as well as the validation of non-formal and informal learning, the European Framework of Key Competences, cooperation in the field of guidance throughout life, the Europass and other tools linked to mobility. The Transversal programme particularly contributed to these initiatives of European cooperation. For instance, a specific call for proposals “Projects aiming to implement and develop the EQF” was announced to support the development and preparation of the implementation of this framework, and which is one of the main cooperation initiatives at the EU level.

Also, under KA1 of the Transversal programme a number of instruments and bodies facilitating mobility and lifelong learning were supported, including the Europass initiative and the Euroguidance network. The European Commission promoted the “New Skills for New Jobs” agenda through its fora of learning and networks in order to encourage Member States to analyse, disseminate and exploit information on future skills needs. KA2 of the Transversal programme especially contributed to the European Framework of Key Competences.

However, certain areas such as the visibility of policy cooperation process and results, the involvement of stakeholders (especially policy makers) as well as the monitoring of the Programme impact on the transversal mechanisms of the EEA could be improved. The interviews also revealed the need to better disseminate the results of the studies under the Transversal programme and better link the results of both the studies and the expert groups to the decision making process. Involving the unions in the expert groups of the Business-University Cooperation initiative was mentioned as a good practice example by social partners who were interviewed.

Second, the LLP also contributed to the transversal initiatives through the sectoral programmes. For instance, specific calls under the Leonardo da Vinci programme supported projects intended to test how to effectively implement the EQF and how to apply the learning outcomes approach. Such projects addressed the development of national qualification frameworks, bridging VET and HE, promoting the validation of informal and non-formal learning and the involvement of stakeholders, etc.

There is enough evidence that the sectoral programmes contributed to various cooperation initiatives in different education sectors: school education, vocational education and training, higher education and adult education areas. For instance, the Bilateral and Multilateral School Partnerships Multilateral Projects and Networks and European In-service Training Courses under Comenius contributed to the cooperation initiatives in the area of *school education*, such as “An Agenda for European Cooperation in Schools”, key competences, the quality of teachers, etc. The synthesis of the National Reports revealed Comenius value added and synergies with the following national and international programmes available in particular Participating Countries: *Youth in Action, Nordplus Junior, Klavertje Drie, Euroklassen, European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, European Year of Creativity and Innovation, BIOS-subsidy, School partnerships with Africa and Interkulturelles Zentrum*.

The Multilateral Networks funded under Erasmus contributed significantly to the cooperation initiatives in the area of *higher education*, especially the Bologna process, the Higher Education Modernisation Agenda and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System. The European added value in this case was especially high due to the lack of similar funding initiatives at the national level in most Member States. In the case of networking projects, the following characteristics of Programme implementation ensure its contribution to the EEA: a mandatory requirement to involve all the Participating Countries in the network application and encouraging a



high range of partners (according to the type of institutions), establishing strategic priorities, at the calls for proposals, closely linked to the European policy.

The LLP has also played a significant role in narrowing the large difference in the speed of implementation of the Bologna process between individual countries. Such divergence has been strengthened by the fact that key actors in different countries interpreted elements of the Bologna reform agenda differently. In response, seeking a positive impact, national policies sought to involve stakeholders in various stages of the policy process and establish strong links between national and European-level actors. In this context, the international Erasmus networks have a role to play for countries progressing at a slower pace – the primary intention in the forthcoming period is to bring the Bologna objectives to the institutional level, while the other instruments of the OMC have already played their part in bringing these objectives to the forefront of national policy documents.

The Erasmus student mobility for studies action contributed greatly to the establishment of a system of comparable degrees. According to the case studies, the LLP student mobility programmes had an important influence on the introduction of the ECTS and credit transfer systems. On the other hand, mobility from other parts of the world towards the EHEA has increased substantially and faster than international mobility has grown worldwide. Yet for internationally mobile learners the EHEA has little reality: they choose to study in countries and institutions without considering if they are part of the EHEA. Equally the EHEA is not seen as an area providing a uniform level of higher education degrees. Apparently the LLP (together with Erasmus Mundus) should focus on the promotion of the EHEA brand outside the EHEA.

The synthesis of the National Reports revealed Erasmus added value and synergies with the following national and international programmes available in particular Participating Countries: *Erasmus Mundus, Nordplus Higher Education, Erasmus Belgica, Learning Agreements, Transcript of Records, ECTS* etc.

The actions funded under the Grundtvig programme and their thematic priorities addressed key policy initiatives in the area of adult education to a great extent (e.g. 2007 Action Plan on Adult Learning). They addressed topics such as putting learners at the centre of the learning process, opening up better transitions between learning pathways, promoting flexible and innovative learning / pedagogy, the acquisition of key competences and particular basic skills, and effective concrete measures. The Grundtvig programme also contributed to the Action Plan by directly financing many of the activities relating to its development and implementation, and indirectly through innovative projects, partnerships, networks and mobility activities funded by the programme. The Yearly NA Reports frequently draw attention to the positive influence of the sectoral programme in assisting the development of adult learning policy, especially in the EU-12 Member States.

The synthesis of the National Reports revealed that in comparison with other education and training sectors, there are comparatively few national or international programmes in the area of adult learning. As a result, Grundtvig complements national efforts aimed at stimulating motivation for adult education, promoting active international cooperation, development of multicultural projects and mobility of participants in adult education, development and dissemination of innovations in this sector. The emergence of a European community and its cooperation initiatives in the area of adult education is particularly important because of the lower-level starting point of Grundtvig compared to other sectoral programmes at the outset of the Programme.

With regard to the Leonardo da Vinci programme, the multilateral projects (Development of Innovation and Transfer of Innovation) and networks were used to implement the Copenhagen agenda. This addressed the priorities of increasing the transparency and common tools to facilitate European mobility, European cooperation



in VET, and the attractiveness and quality. A special emphasis was put on further developing and implementing European instruments. According to the interviewees, a large proportion of the Leonardo da Vinci budget was spent on setting conditions for transnational cooperation. The continuation of this process in the future will gradually contribute to changes in national educational structures. The synthesis of the National Reports revealed high added value of Leonardo da Vinci in the following areas: the provision of a unique opportunity of internationalisation, widened participation and support for innovations in VET, promotion of mobility and quality of VET, prerequisites for participation in other projects.

Set of evaluation questions No. 9 in the ToR: How successfully has the integration of the previous activities into the LLP been implemented? To what extent were the difficulties overcome? What are the advantages and disadvantages of the integration of previous programmes into the LLP?

- What are the effects of the integration of education and training programmes under the LLP? How, and to what extent, has integration within the LLP produced value added?
- Does the LLP effectively exploit possible synergies between its different parts?
- To what extent are the centralised and decentralised actions coherent? How do they interact/complement each other?
- Are the number, typology and respective weight of actions within the LLP proportional and adequate?
- Did the integration of the previous programmes have an effect on the groups targeted by the Programme? Have new target groups joined the LLP?

The purpose of integration was to better connect formal, informal and non-formal learning within the lifelong learning perspective, while keeping the high visibility of the previous programmes. Also, it sought to simplify management procedures of the LLP.

*Operational question No. 9.1: the extent to which a certain integration of the Programme content across the sub-programmes as well as sectors of education and training has occurred*

The first type of integration concerned *the Programme content* (the sectors of education as well as actions supported under the Programme). During the period 2007-2009 certain integration occurred across the sectoral programmes. For instance, the mobility actions of the former Leonardo da Vinci programme were included under the current Erasmus programme, allowing placements in enterprises for student mobility as well as the mobility of staff of enterprises for training and teaching. Also, the actions of partnerships were replicated across the sectoral programmes (the actions of partnerships are currently supported under Grundtvig, Leonardo and Comenius). Moreover, under Grundtvig new mobility actions were introduced in order to stimulate the achievement of its quantitative target provided in the LLP Decision.

As a result, the Programme has become more flexible, meeting the needs of beneficiaries and target groups across the different educational sectors. This is supported by the survey of the National Authorities and National Agencies (61% of the respondents agree with large/reasonable influence, see Figure 33 below). Also, there is some support that the Programme integration allowed better reaching the quantitative mobility targets (61% of the respondents). This contribution is particularly important under the Grundtvig programme, whose 2009 mobility achievements point to significant progress towards the mobility target. These benefits of the Programme content are reflected in the high levels of satisfaction with the sectoral programmes (see evaluation results under the operational question No. 5.2.).

Furthermore, the Programme integration generated more synergy effects between the different sub-programmes and actions (59% of the respondents from the National Authorities and National Agencies agree). According to the EU-level case study, through its dissemination and exploitation actions KA4 of the Transversal programme increasingly contributed to the integration and harmonisation across the sub-programmes.

However, integration across the educational sectors still remains limited. Despite the holistic approach of the LLP, the lifelong learning perspective has not been fully exploited, with non-formal and informal learning areas remaining in a position where there are further needs for special attention. Although the LLP addressed the importance of recognition or validation of non-formal and informal learning, there was a lack of emphasis on developing systems that encourage non-formal and informal learning by adults. As a result, in its current state the LLP has more the features of a bundle of sectoral programmes, predominantly focusing on the formal education sector.

In addition, despite more integration, the beneficiaries of the Programme cannot directly benefit from the cross-cutting actions (e.g. the providers of tertiary-level education services cannot apply for the Leonardo da Vinci programme). Also, the exchange of good practices and synergy effects remains limited across the sub-programmes, despite some positive efforts (including the development of thematic monitoring groups or new approaches for dissemination and exploitation). Therefore, it is necessary to continue the Programme integration across the different educational sectors, taking into consideration the content of ET 2020<sup>61</sup>.

Moreover, there was an expansion of the actions in the LLP in its first three years of implementation. Mapping of the Programme actions illustrates that 18 new actions were gradually added to the integrated Programme in the period 2007-2009.<sup>62</sup> Therefore, the Programme has become more complex, currently supporting a total of about 60 actions (79% of the respondents agree). For instance, despite their benefits to the achievement of the mobility target, the introduction of four new actions increased the complexity of Grundtvig, causing certain management problems. To deal with this negative effect, it was proposed that the number of actions should be reduced (with several interviewees suggesting to “cut down on specificities and create a critical mass”). However, reducing the number of actions within the sub-programmes was supported by only 38% of the respondents.

The introduction of common types of actions could be considered within a consolidated structure of the Programme, taking into account possible advantages and disadvantages of this decision. The Monitoring Framework classified mobility in terms of student/trainee mobility and mobility of staff, future staff and other specialists.<sup>63</sup> Also, inside the different sub-programmes of the LLP there are many actions supporting cooperation (such as partnerships, project and networks). Analysis revealed that the distinction between the different types of cooperation actions is not always clear, sometimes causing confusion for applicants concerning the level at which an application could be proposed. In the successor Programme all actions supporting cooperation could be classified as partnerships, making a distinction among four different types of partnerships:

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<sup>61</sup> The Council of the European Union, Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020'), 2009/C 119/02.

<sup>62</sup> Most new actions were introduced under the sectoral sub-programmes (five under the Erasmus sub-programme, four under the Leonardo da Vinci and Grundtvig sub-programmes, and two under the Comenius sub-programme). This gradual expansion is associated with the need to meet the Programme targets and support for the new actions in the European Commission as well as the National Authorities and Agencies. Following the LLP integration the Jean Monnet sub-programme remained largely the same.

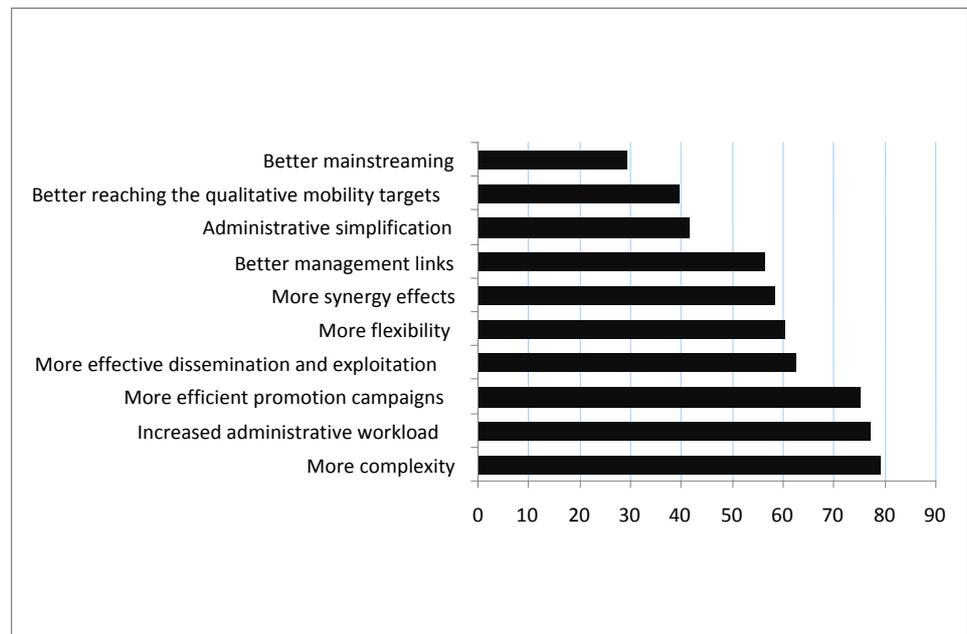
<sup>63</sup> Main types of decentralised actions in the Monitoring Framework are as follows: student/trainee mobility; mobility of staff and future teachers as well as study visits of specialists; partnerships (including eTwinning), various projects (multilateral projects, transfer of innovation, thematic networks, accompanying measures).

- a *bilateral partnership* is a partnership between organisations of two countries aimed at exchanging experiences;
- a *multi-lateral partnership* is a partnership between organisations of at least three countries and less than all countries aimed at exchanging experiences;
- a *network* is a partnership between organisations from all countries aimed at exchanging experiences;
- a *project* is a partnership aimed at developing new tools, policies etc. or transferring an innovative approach.

Finally, the Programme integration had only a small influence on better mainstreaming of the horizontal policies (especially multilingualism and equality between men and women) in the sub-programmes and actions (only 29% of the respondents agree with large/reasonable influence).

**Figure 33. Positive and negative effects of the Programme integration.**

Question to the National Authorities and national Agencies: “To what extent has the integration of the Programme in terms of the Programme content as well as its management led to the following positive or negative effects? (large/reasonable influence, %)



*Operational question No. 9.2: the extent to which a certain integration of the Programme management across the sub-programme and actions of the LLP has occurred*

The second type of integration concerned *the Programme management*. According to the synthesis of the National Reports, the main benefits of integration occurred in the overall management of the Programme (standardisation of procedures and documents; development of a unified database; more flexible re-allocation of funds across the sub-programmes) as well as the dissemination of information to the target groups (development of a single website; a single design of all dissemination material). This is supported by the survey of the National Authorities and National Agencies, whose results show a large influence on promotion and information campaigns and awareness (75%), dissemination and exploitation of project results (63%) and, to a smaller extent, administrative simplification due to standardisation of procedures and documents (42%).

However, several National Reports indicate negative side-effects of the Programme integration (standardisation of the management going beyond actual integration of the sub-programmes and activities, increasing administrative burden, national-level



integration outpacing administrative integration in DG EAC). This is also recognised in the survey results (77% of the respondents perceive a large/reasonable influence of the Programme integration on administrative workload).

The Programme integration allowed the achievement of better managerial links between ministries and government departments, which are responsible for education and training policy-making at the national level, as well as the National Agencies, which are responsible for the implementation of the sectoral programmes at the national level. This finding is supported by the survey of the National Authorities and National Agencies (63% of the respondents perceive a large/reasonable influence on better management links between the National Authorities and the National Agencies). However, the National Reports and the national case studies show that the policy links between these institutions remain weak in some Participating Countries.

In some Participating Countries integration of the Programme has resulted in the merger of several agencies. The synthesis of the National Reports and the case studies show that the establishment of a single National Agency improved coordination, made the use of administrative resources more efficient, reduced the duplication of administrative tasks and facilitated cross-sectoral integration at the national level. In some Participating Countries the different sub-programmes still remain managed by the different National Agencies. Therefore, the trend of horizontal de-specialisation (in the form of a merger between one or more agencies) could be pursued in the future, taking into consideration the structure of national administrative systems.

The lack of connection between the centralised and decentralised actions which is an outcome of the Programme management structure was reported in the National Reports. Therefore, close cooperation among the different management bodies is necessary in order to exploit possible synergies within the LLP. One interviewee argued that this cooperation is gradually improving, but “continuous monitoring is needed to ensure co-ordinated and coherent management and implementation”. Coordination efforts remain necessary at the policy level (including in the European Commission) as well as at the implementation level (between the Executive Agency and the National Agencies).

According to the survey of the National Authorities and National Agencies (see Table 32 below), the main means of the Programme integration in the future are more flexibility in the re-allocation of financial resources inside the Programme, integrating some Programme-specific objectives and reducing their number, improving cooperation between the Executive Agency and the National Agencies, further harmonisation in the Programme documents, introducing common types of actions across the sub-programmes as well as establishing a single National Agency responsible for all sub-programmes at the national level (though 10% of the respondents strongly disagree with this possibility). According to the survey data, there is little support for expanding the number of potential applicants across the sub-programmes.

**Table 32. Main means of the Programme integration in the future.**

Question to the National Authorities and National Agencies: “How should the integration of the LLP Programme be pursued in the future?” (strongly agree, %)

| No. | Means of integration  | %  |
|-----|---|----|
| 1.  | More flexibility in the re-allocation of financial resources inside the Programme                   | 77 |
| 2.  | Integrating some Programme-specific objectives and reducing their number                            | 67 |
| 3.  | Improving cooperation between the Executive Agency and the National Agencies                        | 60 |
| 4.  | Further harmonisation/standardisation in the Programme documents and procedures                     | 58 |
| 5.  | Introducing common types of actions across the sub-programmes                                       | 50 |
| 6.  | Establishing a single National Agency responsible for all sub-programmes at the national level      | 44 |
| 7.  | Reducing the number of actions within the sub-programmes  | 38 |
| 8.  | Involving new applicants (e.g. companies or regional authorities) in the Programme implementation   | 33 |
| 9.  | Expanding the range of potential applicants that can apply for different sub-programmes and actions | 27 |

*Operational Question No. 9.3: Are the number and respective weight of actions within the LLP proportional and adequate?*

The total number of actions (about 70) broadly corresponds to the number of the Programme objectives (a total of 44 specific and operational objectives).<sup>64</sup> Therefore, one lower-level objective of the Programme corresponds to about 1.5 supported actions. A further integration of the Programme could involve a reduction in the number of both the Programme objectives and actions (see the assessment of relevance in Part 3.1).

Analysis of the monitoring data indicated that since 2007 the total budget of the Programme has increased by about 15% in the first three years of implementation. Almost an entire increment was allocated for the four sectoral programmes, whose scope has been expanded by supporting new mobility and partnership actions. The Grundtvig allocation has increased by about 36% in the aforementioned period.

Despite this trend, the financial weight of mobility actions is still insufficient to reach the ambitious targets of the Programme. This is supported by the survey of the National Authorities and National Agencies showing that the size of the LLP budget is rather inappropriate (42% of the respondents) or inappropriate (42% of the respondents) to achieving the objectives of the Programme. Analysis of the survey data indicated that the size of Grundtvig is the most inappropriate to what this sectoral programme sets out to achieve, despite its modest target of 7 000 individuals (73% of the respondents).

**Table 33. Inappropriateness of the size of the LLP budget according to the sectoral programmes.**

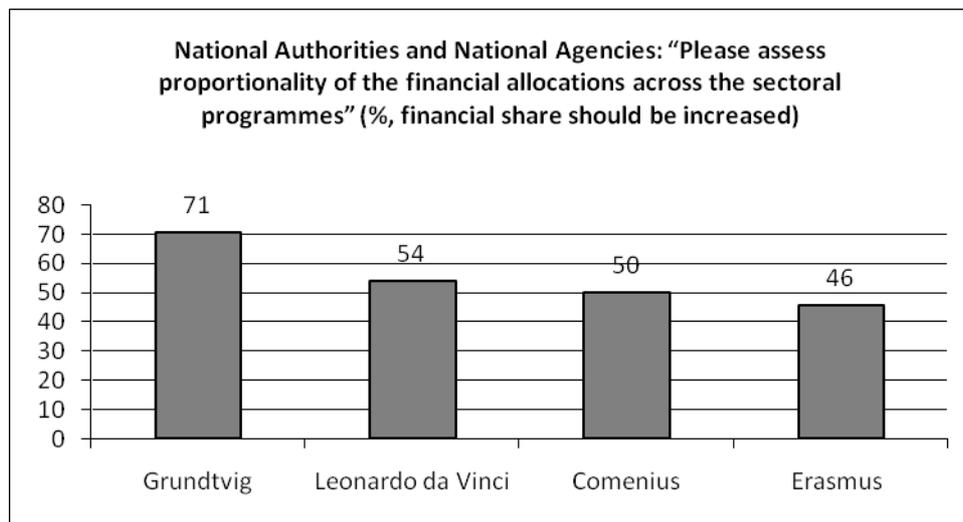
Question to the National Authorities and National Agencies: „In your opinion, is the size of the LLP budget appropriate to what the Programme is set out to achieve?“ (rather inappropriate and inappropriate, %)

| No. | Opinion on the inappropriateness of the size of the LLP budget   | %  |
|-----|--|----|
| 1.  | The size of the Grundtvig budget in relation to achieving the quantified target of the Grundtvig Programme (mobility of at least 7 000 individuals involved in adult education per year by 2013)                             | 73 |
| 2.  | The size of the Leonardo da Vinci budget in relation to achieving the quantified target of the Leonardo da Vinci Programme (at least 80 000 placements at enterprises per year by 2013)                                      | 71 |
| 3.  | The size of the Comenius budget in relation to achieving the quantified target of the Comenius Programme (at least 3 million pupils in joint education activities over the period 2007–2013)                                 | 65 |
| 4.  | The size of the Erasmus budget in relation to achieving the quantified target of the Erasmus Programme (at least 3 million individuals in student mobility actions under the Erasmus and its predecessor programmes by 2012) | 63 |

The National Authorities and the National Agencies strongly agree that the financial share of the decentralised actions should be increased (85% of the respondents), and the financial share of the centralised actions should be decreased (63% of the respondents). Within the decentralised actions, the financial share should be increased for mobility (56% of the respondents agree) followed by partnerships (35% of the respondents). According to the National Authorities and the National Agencies, the financial share should be especially increased for Grundtvig (71% of the respondents agree) (see Figure 34 below). The scores for other sectoral programmes are similar and lower compared with Grundtvig. However, there is no support from the EU-level interviewees that the financial share of the centralised actions should be decreased.

**Figure 34. Proportionality of the financial allocations across the sectoral programmes**

<sup>64</sup> In addition to 11 programme-wide specific objectives, there are 33 operational objectives of the different sub-programmes.



In the context of the new EU 2020 strategy the European Commission proposed the "Youth on the Move" initiative, aiming to improve the performance of Europe's education and training systems, to create more opportunities for student and trainee mobility as well as to promote youth employment. Although more financial resources are required for the actions of mobility under the future Programme, any expansion is constrained by the existing economic situation following the financial crisis.

Based on the existing findings, the financial balance between the sub-programmes and actions seems rather appropriate. The interviewees argued that the future Programme should contain an appropriate balance between all main areas of activity (mobility, partnerships, projects, networks and other actions). However, the actions of mobility as well as the Grundtvig programme could take a larger financial share in the future. The importance of mobility which is highlighted in the "Youth on the Move" initiative stems from the fact that mobility "touches the individual", and its impact is more significant, when a critical mass of individuals is supported (e.g. under the Erasmus programme). There is a broad consensus that the Grundtvig programme which is targeting a large population of adults involved in post-initial learning needs more funding. However, its financial expansion should be combined with a better specification of its impact areas (particular target groups or themes). Also, since the adult learning sector is strongly interwoven with other education sectors, the provision of adult learning lying on the border line of other sectoral programmes could be more systematically promoted without increasing the financial shares of appropriate sub-programmes and actions.

There are a few areas for any possible expansion of funding within or across the sectoral programmes. First, in order to achieve better results at the policy level, it is possible to expand the new action of Comenius Regio partnerships, whose progress was positively assessed by the majority of the Participating Countries in the synthesis report, to other sectoral programmes (especially in Grundtvig and Leonardo da Vinci). Second, the action of eTwinning which was successfully integrated with Comenius in the area of school cooperation at the European level could be replicated in other sectoral programmes (especially under Grundtvig in the area of adult learning, where a wide range of training provides need a support structure). Third, the potential of Transfer of Innovation projects (ToI), as currently deployed within the LdV programme could be further exploited under the decentralised action of other sectoral programmes. Although a definitive judgment about this action could not be made, since first results are just becoming available, positive signs were given by respondents. ToI actually address an important need of the Programme, making better use of the outcomes of projects and networks by exploiting them better in different national contexts. Outcomes of this particular action should be carefully monitored and studied during the remaining part of the programme, before further integrating it in the programme. Fourth, the action of Comenius school partnerships could be



expanded, taking into consideration its positive assessment in the synthesis of the National Reports, the very high level of satisfaction of its institutional beneficiaries from the survey of the LLP beneficiaries as well as the expected results of this action on learning and in particular the European dimension of the curriculum.

In addition, the interview programme, the synthesis of the National Reports as well as the survey of the National Authorities and Agencies indicated that there should be more flexibility in the system allocating financial resources during the Programme implementation. A more flexible system would allow a better balance to be achieved among the different decentralised actions (mobility, partnerships and other) as well as the sectoral programmes (Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Grundtvig). However, the future Programme should continue to be based on the principles of the Community programme. Flexibility of the successor Programme should be properly balanced with its EU-level purpose.

The financial weight of the centralised actions has not increased as fast as that of the decentralised actions in the first three years of the Programme implementation. Analysis of the monitoring data pointed to the decreasing volume of support under two centralised actions (KA3 of the Transversal Programme and the centralised actions of the Grundtvig programme). Also, analysis of the success rates (see operational question No. 16.2) indicated that the success rates of the centralised actions (e.g. multilateral projects and networks, in particular under the Leonardo da Vinci programme as well as the Transversal programme) are much lower compared to these of the decentralised actions.

Moreover, in the absence of any quantified targets it is difficult to assess how proportionate the budget of the Transversal and Jean Monnet programmes is. Taking into consideration the importance of the Transversal key activities (in the areas of policy cooperation, multilingualism, innovation and dissemination) as well as the high level of satisfaction of the Jean Monnet beneficiaries, these programmes should be treated equally with the sectoral programmes in the allocation of funds across the LLP sub-programmes. There is no evidence that their financial weight should be further reduced (there is some evidence for strengthening some key activities of the Transversal programme). It is argued that the centralised actions should focus on strategic projects (with more funding allocated to fewer larger projects based on more stringent calls for proposals or even calls for tenders), and the decentralised actions – on implementing good practices (based on the positive experience gained from the “Transfer of Innovation” action under the Leonardo da Vinci programme on the decentralised level). Calls within the Transversal programme would add greater value if they focus on key themes and works in parallel with and takes cognizance of both historic and current sectoral projects.

*Operational question No. 9.4: how has the integration of the previous activities influenced the target groups?*

Overall, the integration has had a positive influence on the target groups. The integration of the previous programmes resulted in the extension of the target groups compared with the 2000-2006 period. First, more target groups were incorporated into the list of potential final beneficiaries of the LLP. Second, taking into consideration the four quantified targets of the LLP, new actions were launched with the view to encouraging mobility of the individual participants. The majority of new target groups gradually joined the Programme during its implementation.

Although the previous Comenius partnerships under the Socrates programme could involve regional and local authorities, the new action of Comenius Regio partnerships started in 2009 and aimed at improving cooperation between regional and local authorities responsible for school education. With the introduction of the new Erasmus staff mobility for training action allowing teachers, other higher education staff and staff from enterprises to spend a period of training abroad, the Erasmus



programme became able to cover all staff in higher education. It also offered more opportunities for staff from enterprises to participate in higher education. The cooperation between enterprises (especially SMEs) and higher education institutions was further encouraged by incorporating placement actions into the Erasmus programme and launching a new centralised action aimed at cooperation projects between higher education institutions and enterprises. Therefore, despite these changes, the National Reports stress that enterprises are still difficult to reach and they could participate more actively in the future (see question 10.1).

The integration of the previous programmes also had a substantial influence on the beneficiaries in the field of adult education. Starting in 2009, four new actions were launched under the Grundtvig programme offering mobility opportunities for adult learners to participate in workshops, seniors to do voluntary service abroad or future adult education staff to carry out an assistantship in another participating country. In addition to a new action offering mobility opportunities for adult education staff to undertake a work-related visit abroad, the target groups of the Grundtvig programme experienced a significant extension. The new actions significantly boosted mobility by about 40%, thus demonstrating the usefulness and consumption potential of increasing the Grundtvig budget.

According to the synthesis of the National Reports, the Programme integration contributed to higher awareness of the support opportunities offered by the sectoral programmes. Also, many National Reports found that better accessibility of information to the target groups as a result of the Programme integration.

Set of evaluation questions No. 10 in the ToR: How successful is the Programme in reaching the target audience / target groups of sub-programmes?

*Operational question No. 10.1: How successful is the Programme in reaching the target groups of the LLP?*

Reaching of the target groups of the LLP is more context-dependent than other results of the Programme. First of all, target groups differ across sectors. Next, not all of them are directly related to the formal education and training community, targeted by most actions of the LLP. Finally, there are differences across the sub-programmes in budget, type of activity and specific goals. All in all, it can be concluded from our research that the direct target groups of the LLP are being reached quite successfully. According to the survey of institutional beneficiaries, more than two thirds of the target groups are successfully reached at least by one sub-programme of the LLP. Moreover, the Programme is quite successful in reaching target groups whose participation is quantified according to the targets set out in the Decision establishing the LLP.

The extent to which more specific target groups of the Programme are being reached varies across the sub-programmes as well as centralised/decentralised actions. According to the survey, 77% of National Agencies and 86% of National Authorities which submitted their responses believe that important target groups were not left out. According to the survey of the institutional beneficiaries, more than 85% of the respondents perceive that both learners and teachers/trainers are successfully or rather successfully reached by the Programme. The limitations in reaching the target groups have already been identified in the previous sections: language barriers, shortage of funding, and 'social selectivity'.

As the success of reaching other target groups strongly depends on the specific sub-programme and its designated objectives, the sub-programmes can hardly be compared in this respect. For instance, Grundtvig is the most successful in reaching people outside the labour market (retired or unemployed), with around 43% of the

institutional beneficiaries of the decentralised actions and about 57% of the centralised actions indicating their very or rather successful coverage. The synthesis of the National Reports suggests that the LLP is not tailored to the needs of unemployed persons, who would benefit if mobility periods were shorter or more flexible. Since there is still a need for a clear grant management structure, the contractor proposes to divide mobility periods to short-term (up to one month - currently most staff mobility, e.g. in Comenius, lasts only a few days) and long-term (up to six months - roughly one semester or a standard internship period).

Similarly, other target groups typically outside the formal education system are reached only where sectoral relevance is strong. Certain target groups are usually beyond the reach of formal education due to multiple disadvantages<sup>65</sup>. The Grundtvig programme is the most successful in reaching early school leavers, with about 34% and 35% of the beneficiaries of correspondingly decentralised and centralised actions indicating their very or rather successful coverage. Early school leaving is measured by Eurostat as “the number of 18 to 24 year olds with only lower-secondary level education who are not in further education and training”<sup>66</sup>, implying that the focus group is young, and IVET, ICT and language learning are as relevant to it as adult learning, especially having in mind that, according to the New Skills for New Jobs initiative<sup>67</sup>, upgrading of skills is necessary for all. As multiple sources suggest, although reducing early school leaving is a flagship EU initiative<sup>68</sup>, this group remains not only outside of the education system, but also outside of the focus of most projects funded by the LLP. Figure 35 shows that most institutional beneficiaries perceived early school leaving as not relevant to their projects, and many did not answer the survey question. In 2009, there was only one Comenius Multilateral project that specifically addresses the issue of early school leaving – MOTivation to STudy (MOTS), which aims to improve teacher competence and skills to strengthen pupil motivation to study, especially that of disadvantaged pupils. Examples of other, indirectly relevant projects could be the AVATAR project for virtual learning for teachers. Earlier, the PRESENTIA project focused on training on school absenteeism<sup>69</sup>, “Dropouts? Not in my school” in Iceland aimed at raising awareness and reducing early school leaving rates<sup>70</sup>. However, one of the main factors reducing the contribution of Comenius to the reduction of early school leaving is insufficient dissemination and exploitation of the results.

Grundtvig is of key importance in reaching these groups and providing them with second-chance options (in line with the EU’s commitment to foster adult education, ensure key competences for all, and help former early school leavers to acquire a qualification). However, having in mind the definition used by Eurostat and policy documents it may not directly correspond to the EU’s goal to *reduce* early school leaving. Firstly, due to diverging definitions of adult education, young dropouts may not fall within its reach (if a person under 24 dropped out at, for example, 16, but took part in training which leads to a qualification at the age of 23, he or she would not count as an early school leaver in a Eurostat survey). Secondly, the orientation of Grundtvig is non-vocational, and its contribution to acquiring a qualification depends on validation mechanisms. The commitment of Grundtvig in reducing social exclusion and improving basic skills and the capacity of ‘learning to learn’ is of prime importance, but it is focused on second chance rather than *reducing* early school leaving. Initiatives to address the needs of early school leavers who dropped out because of multiple disadvantages (e.g. large numbers of Roma minority children) or family reasons (e.g. teenage pregnancy) should be aimed at helping them acquire at least an initial qualification.

65 Siyka Kovacheva., 2006. “Constellations of Disadvantage and Policy Dilemmas in Youth Transitions from School to Work in Bulgaria.” *Social Work & Society*, 4(2): 308-322, p. 309-310.

66 European benchmarks in education and training: follow-up to the Lisbon European Council. Available online at <<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2002:0629:FIN:EN:PDF>>

67 “New Skills for New Jobs: anticipating and matching labour market and skills needs”.

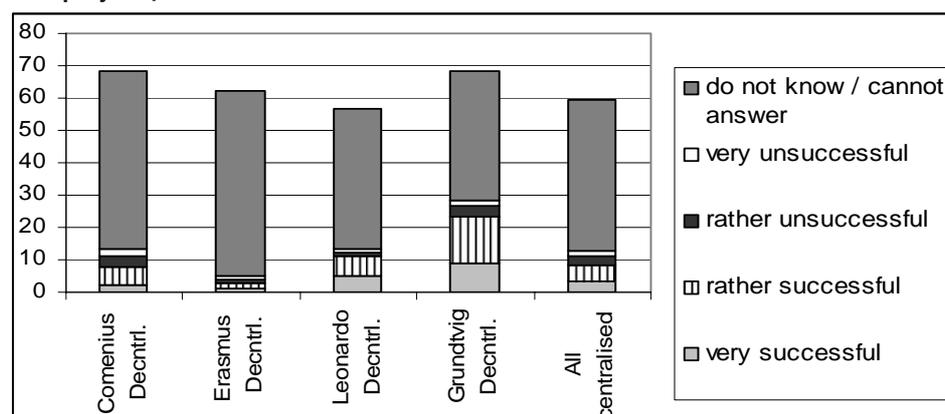
68 Report from the Education Council to the European Council “The concrete future objectives of education and training systems.” Brussels, 14 February 2001.

69 European Commission, 2009. *Comenius School Education - Creativity And Innovation: European Success Stories (2009)*.

70 COMENIUS Success Stories: *Europe creates opportunities (2007)*

The limited awareness of the importance of such initiatives is at least partly due to the fact that early school leavers tend to remain outside formal education and training, targeted by those the LLP actions which could actually help them acquire a qualification before the age of 24. An example of cases where multiple disadvantage is present is the situation of the Roma minority in Bulgaria, where half of Roma youth of compulsory schooling age have never been to school<sup>71</sup>, while the inclusion of the group is extremely relevant not only in relation to early school leaving, but also for combating discrimination and prejudice, as formulated in the LLP Decision. It is particularly notable that many institutional beneficiaries of Leonardo da Vinci did not perceive targeting early school leaving as relevant to their projects, while VET is of key importance in helping this group to remain in/ return to school and acquire a qualification.

**Figure 35. Institutional beneficiaries' assessment of reaching early school leavers in their projects/ activities**



Source: survey of institutional beneficiaries of the LLP.

Meanwhile, the Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci programmes are the most effective in reaching enterprises, including SMEs, while National Reports suggest that overall, including enterprises in the LLP is rather problematic. According to the survey, about 52% of the institutional respondents of the decentralised Leonardo da Vinci actions, about 57% of the Erasmus centralised actions and around 80% of the Leonardo da Vinci centralised actions perceive that the latter sub-programmes reach enterprises very or rather successfully. It is interesting to notice, however, that according to the survey data some of the target groups are much better reached by the centralised actions of the Programme (e.g., associations, public authorities, NGOs, etc.) than the decentralised (see Table 34 below).

**Table 34. The reach of the target groups of the sectoral actions.**

Institutional beneficiaries: "Was (were) your project (-s)/activities, funded by the Programme, successful (or likely to be successful) in reaching the following target groups?" (% very successful and rather successful)

|  | Comenius Decentralised | Erasmus Decentralised | Leonardo da Vinci Decentralised | Grundtvig Decentralised | All centralised |
|--|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Learners                               | 89                     | 94                    | 76                              | 76                      | 60              |
| Teachers                               | 91                     | 76                    | 67                              | 75                      | 65              |
| Other staff                            | 44                     | 43                    | 34                              | 42                      | 46              |
| People in the labour market            | 11                     | 11                    | 35                              | 26                      | 34              |
| People outside the labour market       | 6                      | 3                     | 12                              | 31                      | 14              |
| Early school leavers                   | 8                      | 3                     | 11                              | 23                      | 9               |
| People in rural and remote communities | 21                     | 5                     | 13                              | 25                      | 14              |

<sup>71</sup> Kovacheva, p. 311.

|   | Comenius Decentralised | Erasmus Decentralised | Leonardo da Vinci Decentralised | Grundtvig Decentralised | All centralised |
|---|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Linguistic minorities                                     | 18                     | 6                     | 8                               | 18                      | 12              |
| Migrants  | 20                     | 7                     | 11                              | 26                      | 13              |
| People with disabilities, special needs and disadvantaged | 28                     | 13                    | 16                              | 31                      | 15              |

Source: survey of institutional beneficiaries of the LLP.

As was found in the answer to operational question No. 5.1, available forecasts of the Erasmus future mobility trends show that current progress towards the quantified targets of the LLP is insufficient. Meanwhile, monitoring data show that the number of applications received for supporting activities contributing to the quantified targets of the LLP is much bigger than the availability of funds, therefore there are grounds to expect that more funding would broaden the reach. Our case study of the Jean Monnet KA2 shows that high visibility of the institution studied ensures that the target groups are well-informed and easily reached. However, reaching target groups is easier for an institution which targets highly qualified persons than for institutions targeting schools in remote areas, as in Comenius, or in a diversified sector such as non-vocational adult learning (Grundtvig).

It can be concluded that the sub-programmes successfully reach many of the groups they aim to include, yet evidence strongly suggests that the success is more moderate when considering the disadvantaged groups (see question 7.3). The inability to reach various disadvantaged or atypical groups was usually explained in the National Reports as resulting from insufficient funds and lack of innovative approaches, while flexibility of learning (mobility periods, inclusion of non-formal learning, etc.) was hardly ever mentioned. This calls for specialised measures, as mentioned in the previous operational questions, training at all levels, and more focus on the quality of results than quantity of outputs.

*Operational question No. 10.2: How successful is the Programme in reaching the institutional beneficiaries of the LLP?*

Similar to the reach towards target groups of the Programme, the reach to the institutional beneficiaries is quite successful, albeit with some discrepancies and concerns. Reaching institutional beneficiaries is uneven across the sub-programmes, and there is a risk of the LLP becoming a structural subsidy for experienced institutional beneficiaries.

**Table 35. The reach of the target groups of the sectoral actions.**

Institutional beneficiaries: "Was (were) your project (-s)/activities, funded by the Programme, successful (or likely to be successful) in reaching the following target groups?" (% very successful and rather successful)

|   | Comenius Decentralised | Erasmus Decentralised | Leonardo da Vinci Decentralised | Grundtvig Decentralised | All centralised |
|---|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Education providers (including higher education institutions)                 | 52                     | 52,8                  | 38                              | 41,3                    | 57,2            |
| Associations (including associations of students, employers, employees, etc.) | 17                     | 15                    | 21,2                            | 28,2                    | 37,7            |
| Enterprises, including SMEs   | 9,2                    | 21,7                  | 31,7                            | 15,2                    | 31,5            |
| Public (national, regional, local) authorities                                | 33,2                   | 16,4                  | 25,8                            | 32,5                    | 48,7            |
| Non-governmental organisations  | 10,2                   | 7,6                   | 17,6                            | 32,2                    | 31,1            |

Source: survey of institutional beneficiaries of the LLP.

At the most general level, all types of institutional beneficiaries listed in the LLP financing decision are reached. This is confirmed by the survey of the institutional

beneficiaries of the LLP and NAs (more than two thirds of the National Agencies consider that the distribution of participating institutions is good or excellent). On the other hand, National Reports from the National Authorities express concern over LLP becoming a 'structural subsidy' to some experienced institutions rather than attracting new beneficiaries. Also, the case study of Transversal KA2 (see Annex 3) emphasises that inexperienced managers cannot cope with the application process. Managing complex multinational projects is challenging to institutions, especially when commitments to quality are different. The case study on Comenius partnerships cited withdrawing partners, mismatch among the partners' visions, and non-cooperation of one of the partners as important reasons for failures in the partnerships.

Overall, the best balance and coverage of the institutional target groups was reached in the Erasmus student mobility action. However, there is a tendency that students from technical disciplines go abroad less frequently. According to the yearly reports of the National Agencies, business studies and languages tend to dominate. On the other hand, some of the unpopular study areas in student mobility are popular in the Erasmus mobility for placements action. This fact offers a good solution for balancing the coverage of potential target beneficiaries in the future, if current trends persist. Other problems with reaching the balance between the potential beneficiaries of student placements and staff training (especially according to the type and size of institution involved or subject area covered) were related to the fact that these actions were new in 2007.

Concerning the Comenius programme, underrepresentation of certain target groups remains, despite additional efforts made by the National Agencies (see the synthesis of National Reports, as surveys did not show which potential beneficiaries were absent from the Programme). These groups include teachers and pupils in pre-primary (and primary) schools, Teachers of subjects other than foreign languages, and especially teachers and pupils of special schools. One of the main reasons identified for underrepresentation of these target groups is their lack of knowledge of a foreign language – a major negative factor affecting the implementation of the Programme. Other factors are low recognition of the relevance of internationalisation, lack of expertise in effective communication via the internet and email, as well as a low level of support at the local level. Successful projects, such as "Effective teaching and learning for minority children in pre-schools" in Estonia and Slovakia, "Early steps – promoting healthy lifestyle and social interaction through physical education activities during pre-school years" in Greece, the UK, Italy, Cyprus and Finland, a multilateral project "Pupils for innovation as a key to intercultural and social inclusion"<sup>72</sup>, and a partnership "CODE of learning" (Turkey, Germany and Wales), have been implemented, but their results are not widely disseminated, and no extra efforts have been made in order that these results can become available to the pre-primary education community. Since many research studies show that pre-primary education has the highest returns in both the achievements and social adaptation of children and that it is also of key importance in reducing early school leaving, better involvement of pre-primary schools should be further encouraged<sup>73</sup>.

A similar majority of National Agencies find the coverage of the target public of the Grundtvig and Leonardo da Vinci programmes as good and excellent. The biggest challenge for Leonardo da Vinci (as well as for the other sub-programmes) comes from reaching small and medium enterprises, since these companies – a priority of the Leonardo da Vinci Programme in the period 2008-2010 – as well as different professional associations usually show little interest in applying. This could be explained by the fact that education and training is not their main business, and local individual applicants may be preferred to mobile applicants. According to a recent Flash Barometer<sup>74</sup>, employers value sector-specific skills (which can be presumed to be

<sup>72</sup> European Commission. 2009. *Comenius School Education - Creativity And Innovation: European Success Stories (2009)*

<sup>73</sup> Communication from the Commission to the Council and to the European Parliament "Efficiency and equity in European education and training systems", 2006, 5.

<sup>74</sup> The Gallup Organization, 2010. Flash Eurobarometer 304: *Employers' perception of graduate employability*. Analytical report.

tuned to their needs more among domestic learners) more than, for example, foreign language skills (91% and 67% respectively).

Scarce financial resources do not allow co-funding of projects and may be a serious obstacle for these organisations. Moreover, several interviewees mentioned the lack of intermediation between enterprises, their associations and education and training systems as a factor causing difficulties for reaching the SMEs and – especially – micro enterprises. Still, SMEs generally participate as project partners and receivers for placements. Different National Agencies also note that it is difficult to attract new applications for the decentralised Leonardo da Vinci actions. A possible explanation for this is, besides the lack of interest of SMEs to participate in the Programme as described above, the unfavourable economic developments, administrative burden for applying, absence of a clear business case (especially for VET colleges and the business sector) and the discouragingly high failure rate of proposals. It must be noted though that trends in attracting new applicants in different countries tend to differ, pointing to a mixed situation.

In addition, many National Reports point at ‘word of mouth’ as one of the key methods for dissemination (see the next evaluation question). While this method may be very effective and causes spillover effects, as pointed out in the synthesis of the National Reports (Annex 2), overreliance on informal dissemination may cause insufficient inclusion of potential candidates and eligible institutions. Moreover, the findings in question 5.2 shed light on the considerable lack of satisfaction among some institutional beneficiaries, signalling administrative burden, as identified also in the National Reports. These problems have to be addressed urgently in order to achieve better reach of institutional participants.

In conclusion, the LLP successfully reaches its most direct beneficiaries - teachers, learners and education institutions. However, as has been shown above (also under operational question 7.3), the inclusion of various disadvantaged groups and others, who are excluded from education and training, is not perceived as relevant. In the successor programme mechanisms to provide opportunities for inexperienced beneficiaries should be envisaged. It is important to take into account which actions are currently considered the most useful by the target groups (e.g. partnerships in Comenius, learning partnerships and in-service training in Grundtvig) and use the good experience of the current programming period in order to include more diverse beneficiaries. In addition, due to the high administrative burden and the perceived insufficient added value of participation, the inclusion of SMEs is lagging behind. Therefore, mechanisms which do not require SMEs to invest much in the application and reporting process, and which do not require as much co-financing should be developed (e.g. to capitalise on the administrative capacities of education providers).

Set of evaluation questions No. 11 in the ToR: To what extent are the Programme results adequately disseminated and exploited?

Dissemination and exploitation (D&E) of LLP results constitute both a horizontal and a vertical LLP objective, which pertain to operational (sub-programme level) through intermediate/global objective levels, involving centralised as well as decentralised actions.

After taking into account the case study reports, EU-level interviews, survey data and the Synthesis of the National Reports, it can be concluded that Programme results are *disseminated* to a great extent, but that fewer results are achieved in the area of *exploitation*. Even though the implementation of the dissemination and exploitation activities is going well, the final results and impacts are not clear. Opportunities for improvement on the way to a more effective dissemination and exploitation

framework can be found in stimulating the D&E expertise of project holders in projects, moving towards more efficient use of the available budget and solving the structural obstacle that no stakeholder seems to be a “problem owner” of D&E by setting up an observatory of experts which bridges the gap between projects and decision makers.

In the LLP framework, dissemination and exploitation of results takes place at different levels:

- Compulsory valorisation plan for projects, networks and partnerships funded under the sectoral programmes and the Transversal programme;
- Transversal Key Activity 4;
- Accompanying measures for each sub-programme;
- Additional Commission/EACEA D&E activities (conferences, databases etc.);
- National Agency events and publications.

The interim evaluation paid special attention to the centralised dissemination and exploitation activities within KA4 and the sectoral programmes in the case study on dissemination and exploitation. In addition, all case studies of specific actions in the sectoral programmes looked at the issue of D&E within their specific context. The survey amongst institutional and individual project beneficiaries as well as the survey amongst National Authorities and National Agencies posed questions regarding the implementation and results of D&E activities.

Regarding KA4, the case study shows that good progress is being made towards the implementation of this Key Activity. The KA4 funds are usually 100% used up every year. The case study confirmed that KA4 projects and networks are focusing increasingly on longer term strategies instead of punctual events such as a single conference or seminar. Analysis of the project compendia reveals that projects increasingly aim at mainstreaming products and results to policy makers and other important multipliers, and that they are involving more large-scale European networks to achieve these goals.

Nonetheless, the ambitions and broad objectives sometimes formulated in the call for proposals for KA4 are not matched by the amount of funds available for specific projects/networks. Dissemination and exploitation are long-term processes that require specific skills, long-term strategies and the inclusion of key actors and institutions. Due to the limited budget, KA4 may not attract the right actors applying for funding. According to the EU-level interviews, the fairly limited maximum KA4 grant of €300 000 which has to be shared amongst several participating organisations could potentially deter some of the larger European organisations. These larger organisations are important to reach since they have access to important networks that could effectively serve D&E purposes.

The projects and networks carried out in the framework of KA4 respond to the priorities set out in the framework of the LLP. The most prominent objective of approved projects and networks is to encourage the best use of results. The most important specific objectives addressed by approved projects/networks are to promote European cooperation in fields covering two or more sectoral programmes and to promote the quality and transparency of Member States education and training systems. Most interviewees highlight the objective of ensuring follow-up to and sustainability of project results as a key result of KA4 projects and networks. The EU officials interviewed assessed the budget for D&E activities within Key Activity 4 as being sufficient but, at the same time, suggested that it be used to support fewer but bigger projects.

Regarding the other activities relating to dissemination and exploitation taking place next to KA4, it can be reported that the different dissemination and exploitation activities by beneficiaries on the centralised and decentralised levels are implemented to a satisfactory extent. The survey of organisational beneficiaries of both



decentralised and centralised actions indicates that dissemination and exploitation plans are executed as planned, and respondents expect their project results to be sustainable and accessible after the project ends.

The survey data also provides some relevant insights regarding the perception of results of the various D&E activities. The data below applies to both centralised and decentralised actions, unless specified differently:

- The vast majority of organisational beneficiaries (> 80%) of both centralised and decentralised actions rate the implementation of the D&E plan to be rather or very successful;
- The majority of respondents from organisations participating in centralised actions strongly indicate that D&E activities lead (or will lead) to raised awareness by target groups. The adoption and/or application of categories within the organisation and adoption and/or application outside the organisation both apply strongly to roughly half of the respondents. The category transfer of results to decision-makers is less likely to be an outcome of D&E activities. A similar pattern is seen on the institutional level;
- The vast majority of organisational beneficiaries (80 - 90%) indicates that it is rather to very likely that the project results will be sustainable and accessible after the end of the project;
- The vast majority (> 80%) of organisational beneficiaries mention that they are aware of good practice and project results of other organisations participating in the LLP;
- The vast majority of individual beneficiaries (> 90%) of decentralised actions indicate that they do (or will) actively promote the experiences and skills gained from participating in one of the sub-programmes. The exchange of information and good experiences between colleagues and fellow students is also rated positively, with roughly half of the respondents indicating they have heard of some and between 40 and 50% stating they have heard of many. Erasmus beneficiaries are the most positive, with 74% reporting that they have heard of many colleagues and fellow students. Grundtvig scores relatively low, with 29%, though 54% of respondents still report that they have heard of *some* colleagues and fellow students with good experiences.

The survey data point towards a tendency on the part of organisational beneficiaries to focus dissemination activities on their own organisation (teachers, staff, learners etc); this is followed by education providers, public authorities and associations/enterprises. Confirming this impression, most organisational beneficiaries mention that their dissemination and exploitation activities lead (or will lead) to raised awareness, followed by the adoption and/or application within and outside the organisation and the category transfer of results to decision-makers. These outcomes suggest that more attention is paid to dissemination of results whereas exploitation and (vertical) mainstreaming are not prioritised.

The survey of National Authorities and National Agencies also indicates that within participating organisations, good practices and results of projects were adopted and applied frequently. Respondents are a lot more cautious when indicating the dissemination and exploitation of results to other organisations. In these cases, there exists some trust in the fact that other organisations are informed about best practices and results. The question whether target groups outside of participating organisations are adopting best practices and results is however not always answered positively.

**Table 36. Perceptions of the National Agencies and National Authorities regarding dissemination and exploitation impact on target groups**

| Question  | Answer categories | Type of respondent |                    | Total      |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------|
|   |                   | National Agency    | National Authority |            |
| Good practices and the results of projects were | Yes, frequently   | 16 (61.5%)         | 10 (45.5%)         | 26 (54.2%) |
|   | Yes, sometimes    | 10 (38.5%)         | 10 (45.5%)         | 20 (41.7%) |

| Question   | Answer categories             | Type of respondent |                    | Total      |
|--|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------|
|  |                               | National Agency    | National Authority |            |
| adopted and applied by target groups within participating organisations.   | Do not know/<br>cannot answer | 0                  | 2 (9.2%)           | 2 (4.2%)   |
| Target groups of D&E activities outside participating organisations are informed/aware of good practices and the results of projects                     | Yes, frequently               | 10 (38.5%)         | 1 (4.5%)           | 11 (22.9%) |
|  | Yes, sometimes                | 16 (61.5%)         | 17 (77.3%)         | 33 (68.6%) |
|  | No, never                     | 0                  | 1 (4.5%)           | 1 (2.1%)   |
|  | Do not know/<br>cannot answer | 0                  | 3 (13.6%)          | 3 (66.2 %) |
| Target groups of dissemination and exploitation activities outside participating organisations adopted/applied the good practice and results of projects | Yes, frequently               | 1 (3.8%)           | 0                  | 1 (2.1%)   |
|  | Yes, sometimes                | 24 (92.3%)         | 15 (68%)           | 39 (81.2%) |
|  | No, never                     | 0                  | 2 (9.1%)           | 2 (4.2%)   |
|  | Do not know/<br>cannot answer | 1 (3.8%)           | 5 (22.7%)          | 6 (12 %)   |

This cautious perception of the effects of D&E activities becomes even more cautious when it concerns the target groups of decision-makers at local, regional, national or European level. Where dissemination of information and awareness-raising is concerned, some respondents still have confidence that this happens frequently (29.2%). However, when it comes to adopting and mainstreaming results into policy, the respondents are still less confident and individual respondents even choose the strong answer that mainstreaming into policy never takes place (6.2%). The National Authorities are generally more cautious in their answers than the National Agencies.

**Table 37. Perceptions of the National Agencies and National Authorities regarding dissemination and exploitation impact on policy making**

| Question   | Answer categories             | Type of respondent |                    | Total      |
|--|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------|
|  |                               | National Agency    | National Authority |            |
| Appropriate decision-makers at regional (or local), national or European levels (not including reporting to National Agencies) are informed about the good practices and results | Yes, frequently               | 9 (34.6%)          | 5 (22.7%)          | 14 (29.2%) |
|  | Yes, sometimes                | 16 (61.5%)         | 15 (68.2%)         | 31 (64.6%) |
|  | Do not know/cannot answer     | 1 (3.8%)           | 2 (9.1%)           | 3 (6.2%)   |
| Good practices and results of the projects were adopted and mainstreamed into local, national or European policy on life-long learning   | Yes, frequently               | 3 (11.5%)          | 0                  | 3 (6.2%)   |
|  | Yes, sometimes                | 20 (76.9%)         | 17 (77.3%)         | 37 (77.1%) |
|  | No, never                     | 2 (7.7%)           | 1 (4.5%)           | 3 (6.2%)   |
|  | Do not know/<br>cannot answer | 1 (3.8%)           | 4 (18.2%)          | 5 (10.4%)  |

The survey data thus indicate that dissemination of results and information and awareness-raising is taking place, whereas the exploitation of results and the mainstreaming into policy is not fully exploited. This impression is also confirmed by the information collected in the case studies of actions in the sectoral programmes as well as by the National Reports. The case studies of decentralised actions indicate that attention is paid to dissemination, which is not always equally true for exploitation. The Synthesis of the National Reports confirms the picture that emerges from the interviews, case studies and monitoring data. Thus, National Reports point out that dissemination activities are successful, while the results of exploitation are lagging

behind. An exception is the Transfer of Innovation action of the Leonardo da Vinci programme. This action is developed specifically to target exploitation.

Moving on to the results achieved in the area of D&E, it is not always clear whether dissemination and exploitation activities will have the desired effects, both in centralised and decentralised actions. According to the EU-level interview respondents, the information that is provided to target groups of dissemination activities is not always the information that is needed, as no overall analysis of different project results is undertaken.

Regarding Key Activity 4, it is still too early to judge the effects, let alone the impact of the projects. Since the first projects of KA4 have only just been completed, little information is available on the achieved results. While the projects receive good results in their own terms according to progress reports and EU level officials, it can be questioned whether an activity like KA4 can have the desired long-term impact, as it is rather limited in size and budget and cannot be expected to have a structural effect on the educational landscape. On the other hand, as has already been noted, the projects and networks are increasingly involving the key actors that can contribute to the success of the Key Activity. Finally, the Commission's own D&E activities within the LLP tend to remain focused on the groups that are already involved in the Programme. Whether they have effects beyond these groups can therefore be doubted.

The National Reports also describe some problems encountered in the dissemination and exploitation of results which could explain the lack of attention and results in the area of exploitation. Specifically they point out that there exists a gap between projects and policy makers which is hard to bridge. Project beneficiaries find it difficult to get access to decision-makers. They lack the skills and knowledge for effective exploitation of results. The EU-level interviews carried out for the case study of KA4 also clearly indicated that project beneficiaries need more competences for dissemination and exploitation to effectively reach policy makers and other organisations. This knowledge can possibly be acquired through more intensive training. In addition, National Reports point out that decision-makers on both national and European level do not have the resources to deepen their understanding of the relevant projects and results themselves.

In fact, some National Reports point to a lack of resources for the creation of an effective national framework for dissemination and exploitation of results in which results could be shared, adopted and made sustainable. Survey participants from organisations participating in centralised actions also list insufficient budget for using more or other dissemination instruments as one of the key obstacles affecting the dissemination, application and implementation of project results. Having insufficient staff expertise for virtual dissemination is another important factor which is emphasised, though a lack of general expertise is mentioned less frequently. Additional factors include: difficult to reach appropriate target groups, and resistance to change by certain target groups do not fit with the prevailing legal regulations of the education system.

Looking at the future of D&E within the programme, the key issue to be addressed is that it remains relatively undefined as to who is ultimately responsible for disseminating the project results, after a project, network or partnership is finished, and for ensuring the best use of results. It is not clear who needs to take action to ensure that results get the broadest use and attention possible. D&E activities take place at several levels, but are not coordinated properly and do not always complement each other. As became clear in several case study reports, exploitation of results at national level is potentially problematic, since it is left up to beneficiaries to involve national policy makers in the projects. This is essential if project results are to be mainstreamed into policy. The effectiveness of KA4 projects is also very dependent on the expertise and reach of organisations involved. Finally, the centralised activities undertaken at EU-level such as the Success Stories publication, the LLP conference and



the set-up of project database are focusing mainly on indirect dissemination, i.e. they depend on people getting access to the information and actually doing something with it. They do not actively accompany the effective use of results.

Several beneficiaries have therefore pointed out that more leadership needs to be shown at the EU level by the EACEA and the Commission, especially regarding the linking of projects/networks to one another, bridging the gap between projects and policy makers and encouraging the active use of the project databases. National Agencies also have a crucial role to play in bringing together information about results achieved on a national level. There is indeed a need for deeper analysis of results, more thematic monitoring, increased guidance in bringing projects together and top-down linkage of policy makers and project results. Good practices in this area are the European Prison Education Conference which was organised in 2010 for the purpose of showcasing Grundtvig and Leonardo da Vinci projects and bridging the gap between centralised and decentralised actions. Also, in 2009 an open call for tender was launched by the Executive Agency (reference number EACEA/2009/04) which called for the identification and collection of 50 high quality project results in the area of adult education and the development of dissemination and exploitation strategies for these projects.

Additionally, EU level interviewees indicated that the National Agencies are not involved in the management of the centralised actions. They can often not support the Executive Agency in reaching potential target groups in monitoring and exploitation of the centralised projects' results, etc. Collaboration largely remains limited to the exchange of information.

To sum up, there is a general consensus on the relevance and pertinence of dissemination and exploitation of Programme results. Thereto, a structural framework covering centralised and decentralised action is in place. To a certain extent this leads to greater sustainability of projects, more synergy between the different sub-programmes, better involvement of key European stakeholders in D&E activities and improvements in horizontal and vertical mainstreaming of results. The survey results indicate that dissemination and exploitation activities have some effect on the project beneficiaries. Nonetheless, the framework can be improved especially with regard to the top-down coordination of activities on the central European level and regarding the level of expertise on how to organise D&E within projects themselves. Steps towards more strategic monitoring of outcomes and results combined with a direct focus on decision makers are needed to increase the actual use of results at different levels.

Looking to the future of the programme, more analysis of project activities and targeted stimulation of exploitation and mainstreaming can lead to better use of results. A potential solution for this problem would be the setting-up of a European observatory for the Lifelong Learning programme. This observatory would have the function of a central hub of information analysis, for all stakeholders involved. Concrete activities could include:

- Thematic monitoring of project results;
- Analysis of project results and their relevance in the light of external developments (national and European wide trends);
- Preparing policy-relevant content for National Authorities and decision-makers in organisations, based on programme results;
- Organising seminars and workshops for regional, national and European policy makers;
- Bringing project beneficiaries from all sectors together in thematic working groups.

None of these ideas are new, but need, according to the evaluators, to be developed in order to make the programme exploitation exercise effective.



There are different organisational ways of setting up this kind of observatory. One option would be to locate the observatory within the Commission or the Executive Agency. This would strongly embed the observatory within the programme and foster the inter-linkage of D&E activities and programme management. However, within the current budget constraints and the current task assignment of the Commission and Executive agency, this would not be possible. Additional resources and expertise would be needed within the Commission or Executive Agency to carry out such a task. Also, close connections at the national policy level are needed and in-depth knowledge of the different situations in the Participating Countries which would require great investment by the European institutions. Alternatively, it could be a preferable option to tender this activity to an external contractor. In line with partial integration, this tender procedure could be located within a newly structured transversal programme as one of the new thematic priorities. The advantage of such a solution is that the task could thus be outsourced to a network of experts which has sufficient knowledge, expertise and presence within all Participating Countries. On the other hand, a tendering process provides less flexibility, as clear instructions need to be formulated from the very start. Furthermore, outsourcing this activity to possibly changing external contractors creates the risk that the benefits of the 'institutional memory' that exists within European institutions are lost. Thus, a thorough analysis of the benefits and disadvantages of the different solutions needs to be carried out and the different options need to be explored further before a decision is taken. In this context it can be helpful to also look to other European Union programmes. As an example, the Urbact and Interact programmes financed out of the ERDF funds can provide inspiration for the formation of such an observatory.

In order to also strengthen the bottom-up dimension of dissemination and exploitation activities organised by project beneficiaries, the competences of project holders with regard to dissemination and exploitation needs to be strengthened. Dissemination and exploitation activities need to be embedded into the entire project cycle instead of being carried out just after a project has finished. For this reason, projects are already encouraged to think about dissemination and exploitation from the beginning by setting up their D&E plans. A possible way to increase the commitment and expertise of project sponsors in this field would be to provide more in-depth training and guidance for beneficiaries on this specific topic than is so far the case. In addition, the National Agencies and the EACEA can give more explicit support to projects on how to make use of their results, contact other actors, set up networks and other aspects. Especially the aspect of exploitation and ways for beneficiaries to involve policy makers need to be emphasised.

In addition to setting up an observatory, still closer cooperation between the EACEA, the Commission, and National Agencies and between the different sectoral programmes can support the process of exploitation of project results better. Joint monitoring and exchange of information on the projects financed could also feed back into the design of calls for proposals, selection criteria and actions. Lessons learned from successful projects and networks can be incorporated in calls for proposals. Good results achieved in projects can build the basis for new networks. There could also be a better alignment for example between the Transfer of Innovation and the Development of Innovation actions within the Leonardo da Vinci programme. By taking these kinds of actions, the internal exploitation of results can be increased. Finally, the Commission and EACEA can, together with the National Agencies, make greater use of awards, prizes, labels in order to bring greater internal dynamism into the way the entire LLP is run. All these efforts would also contribute to and be facilitated by further (partial) integration of the programme.

Set of evaluation questions No. 12 in the ToR: Is the LLP well known to the education and training community – both as the "LLP" as such, and with regard to

its sub-programmes? How and to what extent is the existence of one integrated Programme a help or a hindrance in promoting greater visibility for the EU's activities in the field of education and training – compared with a sector-specific or target group-specific approach to Programme design?

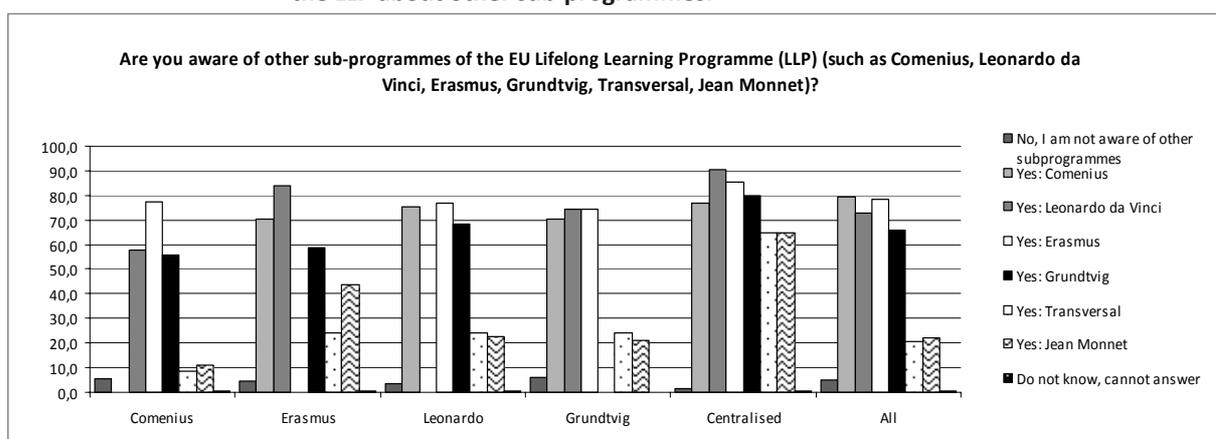
*Are the sub-programme brands and the LLP brand well known to the education and training community? Did (and to what extent) participation in the LLP contribute to the awareness of different LLP sub-programmes?*

Evidence gathered during the survey programme of the LLP organisational and individual beneficiaries suggest that the brands of the previous actions of the Socrates programme and Leonardo da Vinci programme sustain their visibility within the education and training community. Figure 36 shows the awareness of organisational beneficiaries about various sub-programmes of the LLP. This data show that the sectoral programmes are very well known among the beneficiaries of various sub-programmes.

However the Transversal Programme is far less known among the organisations participating in the LLP. An average of 20% is aware of Transversal. A new Transversal brand, replacing the Minerva and Lingua brands as well as branding other important actions of the LLP, is not yet very well recognised. The Jean Monnet programme has similar awareness levels among organisations participating in LLP. However this programme is very well known among target groups in the higher education sector. More than 40% of organisations participating in Erasmus are aware of this programme.

There are two initial explanations for the rather low awareness of Transversal. First, this relatively new brand is not directed at any single educational sector or a single target group and, therefore, has no “ambassadors” for interpersonal awareness-raising. The second problem affecting the awareness of the Transversal programme lies in the ownership of the programme. The interviews show that the potential of the National Agencies to raise awareness about the Transversal programme has not been fully exploited. The National Agencies do not have an obligation to assist the Executive Agency in raising the awareness of the centralised actions and the exchange of information between the Executive Agency and the National Agencies is not always effective.

**Figure 36. Awareness of organisational beneficiaries of various sub-programmes of the LLP about other sub-programmes.**

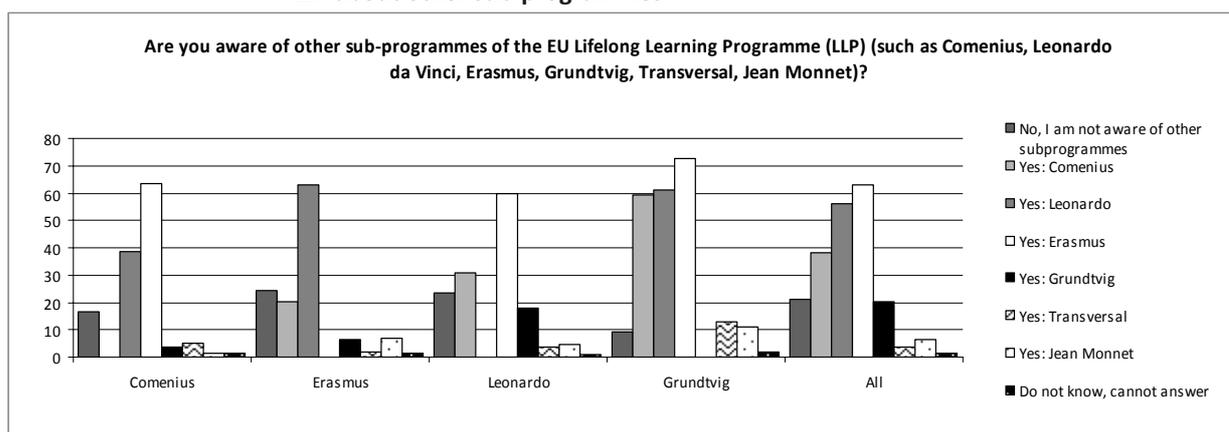


The survey data shows higher awareness of the sub-programmes among the beneficiaries of the sub-programmes with related target groups. High awareness of the LLP brand among organisational beneficiaries (95% of the organisational respondents were aware that a particular sub-programme was a part of LLP) confirms that the LLP

brand was effective as an umbrella brand. In general, the survey data show a positive impact of participation in the LLP on institutional awareness of various sub-programmes.

Effects of the LLP brand on the awareness of individual beneficiaries are not that strong. Although the LLP brand is well known among organisational beneficiaries, it is far less known among individual beneficiaries of the Programme. The survey of the individual beneficiaries of the LLP programme shows that the awareness of the LLP brand varies significantly among the different groups of beneficiaries. Only 56% of learners are aware that the sub-programmes, in which they are participating, are a part of the LLP. 87% of teachers, trainers, researchers or other staff members are aware of this issue. This shows that the LLP brand is much more established among the administrative staff of organisations participating in the LLP and employees of these organisations, but not the learners. It means that not all the potential of this brand is used as yet to strengthen awareness of individual beneficiaries of the LLP sub-programmes. Individual beneficiaries tend to relate their experience with more familiar and more established sub-programme brands rather than with a new brand name of the LLP. They also tend to perceive sub-programmes as separate interventions rather than integral parts of one single Programme. Individual beneficiaries of the sub-programmes with stronger brands (such as Erasmus) are also less likely to know about the existence of the LLP.

**Figure 37. Awareness of individual beneficiaries of various sub-programmes of the LLP about other sub-programmes.**



Despite different levels of awareness of various sub-programme brands most individual beneficiaries had substantial awareness about the sub-programme in which they are involved. An absolute majority of the respondents were aware of the sub-programme one year before participation in the Programme, at least to some extent, and 20 to 40% were substantially aware of the programme. This proves substantial general awareness of the sub-programmes among the target groups.

The data analysed in this section leads to the general conclusion that the sub-programme brands are widely known among the education and training community, especially the staff and employees of organisations participating in the Programme. The LLP brand as an umbrella brand strengthened awareness of different target groups of the LLP about various sub-programmes. Therefore, the Programme integration had a positive influence on the awareness of the sub-programme brands. However, the umbrella brand has been less effective in the case of learners, who are less aware of the various sub-programmes of the LLP. Analysis shows that there are some problematic specific target groups with low awareness of the Programme. Additional efforts should be placed on raising awareness of the Transversal brand, which is not yet very well recognised. This could be achieved through greater involvement of the National Agencies in the provision of information about this sub-programme. The

possibility of choosing another brand, probably giving more clues about the content of this sub-programme should also be considered.



### 4.3. Efficiency

The evaluation of the efficiency of the management, supervision, control and monitoring structure of the LLP centralised and decentralised actions is subject to two important qualifications, which should be kept in mind while reading this report. First, the LLP is a very fragmented programme featuring a variety of intervention areas and types, the administrative requirements across which tend to differ (even if sometimes they look very similar). As a result, when reporting the findings of evaluation, there was an on-going attempt to balance between possible danger of over-generalisation on the one hand and going into too much detail in any given aspect of the administrative system on the other.

Second, both in the case of decentralised and especially centralised actions the Programme after the initial years (2007 and 2008) only recently reached a more stable and 'normal' pace of implementation. While a major attempt for reporting the evaluation findings was put on differentiating between initial and more recent stages of the Programme implementation, a number of important aspects of the system were introduced or revised too recently, hence not enough time has passed to observe and evaluate the full scale of their effects.

Set of evaluation questions No. 13 in the ToR: To what extent is the implementation and management structure of centralised and decentralised actions appropriate, efficient, and well-functioning? How effective is the cooperation between the different management bodies (the Commission – the Executive Agency – the National Agencies – National Authorities – the LLP Committee), and to what extent does the Commission fulfil its guiding role in the process? What are the areas for improvements?

*Operational question No. 13.1: the extent to which implementation and management structure of centralised and decentralised actions is appropriate and functioning well?*

Overall, the results of desk research, interviews and surveys point out that the implementation and management structure of both the centralised and decentralised actions was appropriate. In the case of the decentralised actions, its functioning has improved over the period of analysis (i.e. 2007-2009) and at present it is functioning well. *At the overall Programme management level, formally* the regulatory framework of both centralised and decentralised actions provided for clear and sound attribution of Programme management functions. However, the functioning of the framework *in practice* in the case of decentralised actions appeared to be problematic as to the mismatch of expectations between the Commission and some Participating Countries concerning ex-ante and ex-post declarations of assurance to be issued by the National Authorities, especially what concerns the role of this instrument in the overall system of supervision (this issue is analysed in more depth under the subsequent evaluation question No. 14).

The Court of Auditors of the European Union in its annual report on the implementation of the budget concerning financial year 2008 (2009/C 269/01) concluded that the financial impact of errors in the policy area of education and citizenship was below the material level of 2%<sup>75</sup>, the functioning of supervisory and control systems was rated as partially effective (the Court's main observations were related to the functioning of secondary controls and issuing of ex post declarations of

<sup>75</sup> 91% of the transactions included in the sample of substantive testing in the policy area of Education and Culture were advance payments which due to the largely formal conditions for payment are related to lower risk level than final payments where risks are associated not only with formal requirements but also with eligibility and occurrence of declared expenditure.

assurance). As for financial year 2009, the Court of Auditors concluded<sup>76</sup> that the financial impact of errors in the policy area of education and citizenship for closures<sup>77</sup> was affected by material error (i.e. error rate above 2%), the functioning of supervisory and control systems were rated as partially effective, the same as for 2008.

The analysis of the regulatory framework (also taking into account the various guidance documents issued by the Commission) revealed that requirements for Programme management processes were:

- appropriate/detailed enough;
- balanced (i.e. they allow for a certain level of flexibility);
- initially not very stable in the case of decentralised actions: there were both substantial and more technical changes in the initial years (2007 and 2008) of the Programme concerning application and reporting forms, guidance on the declaration of assurance; such changes resulted in additional administrative burden to the Agencies, yet there seems to be a broad consensus among the latter that changes led to improvements. Importantly, as revealed below, the changes did not have any major negative effects on beneficiaries: their survey indicates that overall they were very satisfied with all the key aspects of the functioning of the management and control system; also, interviews with the Commission reveal a firm determination to maintain the stability of requirements over the remaining years of the Programme;
- commonly well understood by the respective actors in the management and control system, with the exception of the role and content of the declarations of assurance with reference to certain National Authorities and on-the-spot checks after submission of the Final report.

Desk research, National Reports and results of NAs survey reveal the need to simplify project administration arrangements by further harmonisation of administrative arrangements for similar types of actions across different sub-programmes of the LLP (see Table 38). Harmonisation of administrative arrangements (such as grant administration procedures and document templates, eligibility requirements for expenditure, etc.) between similar action types and different LLP sub-programmes would allow for decreasing the overall number of programme actions and administrative burden both at project applicant/beneficiary and NAs level and also would increase the clarity and consistency of the administrative arrangements.

**Table 38. Survey of NAs regarding harmonisation of administrative arrangements for similar types of actions**

| In your opinion, are the administrative arrangements (such as project administration procedures & document templates, eligibility requirements for expenditure, etc.) for similar types of actions (i.e. mobility, partnership, other) well harmonised and unified across different LLP sub-programmes? | Share of responses (%) |
|---|------------------------|
| The administrative arrangements for similar types of actions should be further harmonised across different LLP sub-programmes to achieve full uniformity  | 62.5                   |
| No change is needed, the current level of harmonisation should be maintained  | 37.5                   |
| The administrative arrangements should be further differentiated to better reflect specificities of the LLP sub-programmes  | 0                      |

Source: survey of NAs.

One of the main tools which allowed for simplification of LLP administrative arrangements was the wide introduction of grants based on fixed costs (lump sums and flat rate grants based on a scale of unit costs). Nevertheless a number of LLP actions still comprise a combination of fixed costs and real cost (e.g. mobility actions comprising fixed costs for subsistence and real costs for travel, etc.), which complicates management and control arrangements. As desk research, interview programme and results of NAs survey indicated (see Table 39) wider use of fixed costs grants would allow for further simplification of LLP administrative arrangements and

<sup>76</sup> Court of Auditors of the European Union. Annual report on the implementation of the budget concerning financial year 2009 (2010/C 303/01).

<sup>77</sup> No errors were found in advance payments.

decrease of administrative burden both at beneficiary and agency (NAs and EACEA) level and would also allow focusing on the content and quality of supported actions.

**Table 39. Survey of NAs regarding types of financing**

| Do the project financial management arrangements provide for proper balance between financing on the basis of real cost and financing based on fixed cost (lump sums and flat rate grants) | Share of responses (%) |
|--|------------------------|
| Current arrangements provide for proper balance between financing on the basis of real cost and financing based on fixed cost  | 15                     |
| Share of project financing based on fixed costs (lump sums and flat rate grants) should be further increased   | 85                     |
| Share of project financing based on real costs should be increased   | 0                      |

Source: survey of NAs.

LLP in its essence is a multiannual programme, however guidance and programming documents are being prepared on a yearly basis, which is very demanding both at national (NAs and National Authorities) and EU level (analysis of NAs survey reveals that 89% of NAs assess requirements related to the preparation of annual work programmes as too demanding). Taking into account that all principal LLP administrative arrangements as from 2009 are being regarded as stable, it would be feasible to transit to a multiannual programming and contractual management (Commission – NAs) exercise (subject to limits set in financial regulations) and multiannual guidance documents.

*At project management level*, both desk research and the results of the beneficiary survey serve as one of the key sources of information on the functioning of the system, the key aspects under analysis being:

- the clarity of key requirements and procedures (such as selection criteria, eligibility of expenditure, etc.);
- timely execution of the key functions (such as selection, payment, etc.);
- support and guidance on various management issues by the respective agency.

The survey results point to very high overall satisfaction levels (over 95% of respondents are either very satisfied or rather satisfied with the participation in the Programme), which do not differ much across the sub-programmes<sup>78</sup>, but do vary by type of management (i.e. centralised vs. decentralised actions) with the share of very satisfied beneficiaries being consistently higher in the case of decentralised actions. For example, in the case of Comenius, the share of very satisfied respondents is 62% for the actions implemented by EACEA, while it reaches 77% for decentralised actions; likewise, for Grundtvig the respective shares amount to 54% and 72%<sup>79</sup>.

The same pattern is observed in the case of responses about specific management aspects: the overall response is very positive. Still there is some important variation between the centralised and decentralised actions. Table 40 below summarises the positive answers of responding beneficiaries concerning the various management aspects.

<sup>78</sup> Although, e.g. the overall satisfaction of beneficiaries is somewhat higher in the case of Comenius than Erasmus.

<sup>79</sup> Due to varying number of responses, which may be rather low for some actions, we focus only those differences in average response rates which are larger than 10 percentage points.

**Table 40. The summary of positive responses of beneficiaries concerning the key management aspects**

| Share of beneficiary survey respondents (%) either STRONGLY AGREEING or RATHER AGREEING that ...   | Comenius |          | Erasmus |          | Grundtvig |          | Leonardo |          | KA1 | KA2-4 | Jean Monnet |
|--|----------|----------|---------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----|-------|-------------|
|  | Centr.   | Decentr. | Centr.  | Decentr. | Centr.    | Decentr. | Centr.   | Decentr. |     |       |             |
| ... application timing is well coordinated with the relevant education processes   | 75       | 90       | 92      | 83       | 75        | 84       | 91       | 81       | 90  | 74    | 93          |
| ... requirements for applicants are clear, the application procedure is user friendly  | 75       | 85       | 73      | 85       | 63        | 84       | 75       | 81       | 91  | 79    | 95          |
| ... assessment criteria and their application are clear and transparent  | 89       | 83       | 85      | 85       | 84        | 85       | 93       | 81       | 89  | 85    | 95          |
| ... selection and contracting of successful applications was timely and took the appropriate time  | 93       | 83       | 81      | 80       | 69        | 81       | 89       | 84       | 88  | 71    | 95          |
| ... expenditure eligibility requirements are clear   | 79       | 87       | 69      | 85       | 72        | 86       | 84       | 86       | 85  | 83    | 93          |
| ... procedures pertaining to financial management of the project (payment arrangements, requirements for accounting and justification of expenditure, etc.) are clear                        | 82       | 87       | 52      | 85       | 80        | 88       | 77       | 85       | 86  | 74    | 93          |
| ... payment processing procedures were timely and took the appropriate time  | 89       | 84       | 77      | 78       | 89        | 83       | 95       | 83       | 86  | 92    | 93          |
| ... the financing conditions (such as 10% threshold applicable to budget re-allocations, percentage of indirect costs and percentage of first instalment) allow for effective implementation | 68       | 73       | 60      | 67       | 73        | 75       | 91       | 74       | 75  | 68    | 79          |
| ... duration of the project and timing of reporting are well coordinated with the relevant education processes (e.g. duration and timing of study programmes)                                | 78       | 88       | 80      | 79       | 78        | 85       | 88       | 80       | 86  | 58    | 88          |

Table 41 below summarises the key differences observed in negative responses of beneficiaries concerning Erasmus, Comenius and Grundtvig<sup>80</sup>.

**Table 41. The key differences observed in responses of beneficiaries concerning Erasmus, Comenius and Grundtvig**

| Share of beneficiary survey respondents (%) RATHER DISAGREEING that ...  | Comenius |          | Erasmus  |          | Grundtvig |          |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|
|  | Central. | Decentr. | Central. | Decentr. | Central.  | Decentr. |
| ...application timing is well coordinated with the relevant education processes  | 18       | 5        | 0        | 11       | 9         | 6        |
| ... requirements for applicants are clear, the application procedure is user friendly  | 21       | 10       | 23       | 12       | 30        | 11       |
| .. expenditure eligibility requirements are clear  | 21       | 6        | 31       | 8        | 38        | 7        |
| ... the financing conditions (such as 10% threshold applicable to budget re-allocations, percentage of indirect costs and percentage of first instalment) allow for effective implementation | 25       | 8        | 24       | 11       | 20        | 6        |

There are only three sub-programmes presented above, as the perceived performance of various aspects of the implementation of the Leonardo da Vinci sub-programme was fairly alike for all aspects. This was largely due to a decline in the negative answers of the evaluation of LdV centralised actions. Also, in contrast to the above tendency, Transversal KA1 was characterised by very positive response rates. Overall, the amount of negative feedback on KA1 falls behind all other sub-programmes, including

<sup>80</sup> Due to varying number of responses, which may be rather low for some actions, we focus only those differences in average response rates which are larger than 10 percentage points.

all decentralised actions, and together with Jean Monnet are among the most positively perceived actions with regards to management aspects. In contrast, Transversal KA2-4 received one of the least favourable assessments by the respondents (especially with regards to the timeliness of selection and contracting of successful applications and the extent to which the financing conditions allow for effective implementation of the Programme). Importantly, the Comitology system has recently been adjusted to allow for timelier informing of potential applicants, which should have a positive effect on the situation registered by the survey.

Finally, the attitude of respondents concerning support and guidance by the EACEA and NAs is also highly positive, with rather limited variation across the various project implementation phases. The only areas, where assessment was somewhat more negative, are the support and guidance given by these agencies on:

- dissemination of project results (e.g. the share of negative answers amounted to 18% in the case of Comenius centralised actions, 12% – Grundtvig centralised actions, 11% – Transversal KA2-4) and
- thematic monitoring of the Programme (e.g. the share of negative answers amounted to 11% in the case of Grundtvig centralised actions).

Also, despite the fact that both decentralised and centralised actions recorded high positive response rates, the number of very positive answers is typically smaller for the latter. In some cases, these differences are substantial. For example, in the case of Comenius the average share of respondents giving very positive feedback on various components of support and guidance the EACEA is 45%, whereas the corresponding share for NAs is 67%; the respective shares in the case of Erasmus amount to 26% and 45%.

As regards the systematically more positive (or less negative) response of beneficiaries concerning decentralised actions (if compared to centralised actions), it should be kept in mind that survey results are primarily the sum of individual perceptions, which can be also explained by

- both objective factors: e.g., while centralised actions are predominantly financed through real costs reimbursement, decentralised actions feature more simplified financing rules such flat rates or lump sums; on average projects financed by centralised actions are more complex (e.g., aimed at creating innovative outputs) and demanding (e.g., involve more partners) both at the application and delivery stages than ones financed by decentralised actions; and
- more subjective ones: e.g., as a rule NAs are geographically and linguistically closer to beneficiaries than the Executive agency, which may result in NAs being perceived as more accessible and therefore more positively evaluated.

Furthermore, in the case of centralised actions, particularly interesting are the cases, where the assessment of beneficiaries varies for the actions that are managed more or less in the same way (i.e. the same application, reporting and other templates are used, the requirements are very similar and internal procedures within the Agencies are the same). This signals that standardisation and unification of forms and processes for several actions can reduce user-friendliness as these are likely to fit better some actions than others. In the case of centralised actions responding Leonardo (and sometimes Comenius) beneficiaries were consistently more positive than beneficiaries of the other two sectoral programmes. Another potential factor explaining such variance could be actual performance of various EACEA units in charge of the respective actions (due to their size, workload and other factors). Finally, comparison across the sectoral programmes indicates that the expectations and capacity of the adult learning sector are simply different from those of the other sectors, which is not reflected in the rather uniform management approach operated by the Executive Agency.



An additional aspect of a well-functioning management system is the effective reach of the target groups. The case studies on separate sub-programmes voiced some concern about the representation of different target groups in the group of organisations awarded grants, as:

- a certain type of organisations sometimes makes up by far the largest group of beneficiaries for a given action (e.g. around 41% of Transversal KA2 beneficiaries for 2009 were universities); and/or
- since it is generally agreed that preparing a transnational project takes around six months (e.g. due to the need for state-of-the-art research to prove the innovation criteria asked of applicants), it might be that some smaller organisations cannot engage in European projects, while others become “experts” or even “specialised” in the EU projects.

Still the statistical analysis did not reveal any major tendency to award LLP grants to the same institutions. In the case of decentralised actions, the share of LLP grants awarded (counting only the number of grants awarded and not taking into account the actual size of grant) to organisations which in the 2007-2009 period have been awarded three or more LLP-funded grants was estimated around 16%; the share ranges from 10% in the case of Grundtvig (which indicates relatively high number of ‘newcomer’ organisations each year) to 18.5% in the case of Leonardo da Vinci (which indicates higher number of organisations receiving grants repetitively).<sup>81</sup> The same analysis for centralised actions indicated somewhat higher estimates (approx. 20-25%). In both cases the exact analysis was not possible due to the inconsistency of available data. In the future it would be important to introduce some common identifier (e.g., the number or code of the organisation), which would allow a more exact identification of beneficiaries.

*Operational question No. 13.2: the extent to which the LLP programme is implemented and managed at a reasonable financial cost*

The overall cost of management (i.e. including monitoring and supervision which are covered by the next evaluation question) of the Programme was evaluated based on the ratio between the operating grant allocated to NAs and/or EACEA and the total amount of LLP funds managed by the respective agencies.

*The operational grants allocated to NAs* in the period 2007-2008 constituted 4.3% of the decentralised funds<sup>82</sup>, the amount of operational grant allocated to certain NAs directly correlated with the amount of funds allocated to the respective country – the NAs located in countries which managed higher amounts of LLP funds tended to be more cost efficient (operating grant in Germany, Spain, France, Italy, Poland, Slovakia and United Kingdom corresponded to less than 4% of the decentralised funds, while in the case of Luxembourg and Liechtenstein – to more than 15% of decentralised funds). Exact data on national co-financing and other sources of funding is not available, however results of the NAs survey revealed that national co-financing and other sources of funding on average constituted 40-50% of the total budget allocated to LLP management, thus estimated total management cost of LLP decentralised actions in the period of 2007-2008 constituted around 7-8% of the decentralised funds.

*The operational grant allocated to EACEA* in 2007-2008 constituted 12.6% of the centralised funds managed by EACEA<sup>83</sup>, thus administration of centralised actions tended to be less cost efficient than administration of decentralised actions (especially

<sup>81</sup> Please note that the abovementioned overall share of 16% is not the average of respective shares for separate sub-programmes, as it also includes the cases where a certain organisation has been awarded grants by several sub-programmes.

<sup>82</sup> Including operational grant to NAs.

<sup>83</sup> Including operational grant to EACEA. EACEA operating grant besides administration of LLP centralised actions also covers running of Eurydice European unit (EACEA P9). Information on the share of EACEA operating grant allocated to the management of the Eurydice Network was not attained, however taking into account that total annual grants allocated to all 35 Eurydice national units combine €1,1 million and the fact that responsibility for the management of the Eurydice Network was transferred to EACEA at the very end of 2008, it is presumable that the costs of Eurydice European unit do not account for a more substantial part of the operating grant allocated to EACEA for 2007-2008.

if compared with LLP countries with higher LLP budgets). The average annual amount of decentralised funds allocated to one LLP Participating Country in 2007-2008 was approximately €26 million, while the average annual amount of centralised funds managed by EACEA in 2007-2008 amounted to €129 million. The operating grant for LLP Participating Countries with annual LLP budgets of more than €50 million was, on average, 3.4% of the decentralised funds (and an estimated average 6-7% including national co-financing and other sources of funding). Grants implemented under centralised actions are usually more complex than under decentralised actions, but smaller average size of grants under decentralised actions counterbalance this issue (average size of grant was approximately €23 300 for decentralised actions and €175 000 for centralised actions). Grants implemented under the centralised actions are predominantly financed on the basis of reimbursement of real costs while the majority of grants under decentralised actions are based on simpler arrangements of application of fixed costs (lump sums and flat rate grants), which can partially explain the higher administration costs of LLP centralised actions. Administration of LLP centralised actions was also less cost efficient than administration of most other programmes<sup>84</sup> entrusted to EACEA: overall EACEA operating budget constituted 7.38% of the total financial resources managed by the agency in 2007–2009, while the LLP operating grant constituted 12.7% of the total LLP centralised funds managed in the same period.

**Table 42. Summary comparison of LLP management costs in 2007-2008**

|                             | Average annual amount of managed LLP funds | Average size of managed grant | Relative complexity of managed grants | Predominant rule of financing grants         | Average annual operational grant by the EC as a share of average annual amount of managed LLP funds | Total estimated average management costs as a share of average annual amount of managed LLP funds |
|-----------------------------|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| National Agencies (average) | €26 million                                | €23 300                       | Lower                                 | Fixed costs (lump sums and flat rate grants) | 4.3%  | approx. 7-8% (includes national co-financing)   |
| EACEA                       | €129 million                               | €175 000                      | Higher                                | Real cost                                    | 12.6%   | 12.6%   |

Source: survey of NAs; own calculations based on EC data.

*Combined, operational grants* allocated to NAs and EACEA constituted 5.4% of LLP overall (decentralised and centralised) funds. This share could be compared to the share of funds allocated to cover the costs of management and control systems under shared (Commission – Member States) management arrangements such as the European Structural funds (the so-called technical assistance), namely the programmes funded by the European Social Fund (because of their investment in people and education and training systems) and by the European Regional Development Fund under the European Territorial Cooperation objective (because of their partnership approach engaging beneficiaries from several Member States). The actual shares allocated to technical assistance costs<sup>85</sup> in 2007-2013 ESF and ERDF European territorial cooperation objective operational programmes constitute:

- ESF operational programmes – 3.3%;
- ERDF European territorial cooperation objective operational programmes – 5.7%.

While the relative amounts allocated to cover management costs are similar in the latter case, the lower share observed in the case of ESF programmes could be explained by economy of scale as the average ESF programme is much larger than LLP: the average size of European Union contribution to an ESF operational programme (€646 million for 2007-2013) exceeds more than three times the average amount of LLP funds managed by one agency (less than €200 million for 2007–2013).

<sup>84</sup> Media 2007, Erasmus Mundus, Tempus, Culture 2007, Youth in Action, Europe for Citizens, etc.

<sup>85</sup> In practice, contribution of structural funds to technical assistance actions covers only part of the operational costs of management and control systems, the rest being covered by national co-financing (just as in the case of LLP decentralised actions) ; the numbers provided here represent only the EU contribution .

*Operational question No. 13.3: effectiveness of the cooperation between different management bodies (the Commission – the Executive Agency – the National Agencies – National Authorities – the LLP Committee)*

The overall effectiveness of the cooperation between different management bodies appears to have improved during the initial years of the Programme. Cooperation between the Commission, the National Authorities and the LLP Committee remains effective. The survey of National Authorities and NAs and analysis of national reports reveals that in most of the Member States National Authorities became closer engaged with respective NAs, if compared to the situation in the previous programmes.

Cooperation between the Commission and EACEA in principal was effective and included both formal and non-formal cooperation links (establishment of EACEA annual work programme, monthly, quarterly and annual reports, coordination meetings, provision of information on best practice projects, (usually) cooperation on development of new centralised actions to be implemented by EACEA, etc.), which were active at both the level of overall organisation (DG EAC - EACEA) and between 'mirror' units of both organisations. A standard good practice of cooperation included adequate formal and informal cooperation throughout the life-cycle of a given centralised action: from its conception through its management (call for proposals, selection and grant award, monitoring) and onto valorisation.

One area identified where cooperation relations are problematic is the cooperation between the EACEA and NAs. The formal rules detailing the clearly separated responsibilities of EACEA and NAs in managing LLP provide for limited opportunities for cooperation<sup>86</sup>. Still many stakeholders voice the need for better links between EACEA and NAs (survey of NAs: 88.5% of responders indicated that cooperation with EACEA should be strengthened), especially the potential synergies which could be brought by NAs to management of centralised actions, such as support in valorisation of the centralised projects' results<sup>87</sup>, in reaching potential target groups<sup>88</sup>, etc. On the other hand, since 2009 efforts have been made to ensure closer collaboration between the EACEA and NAs.

In addition to the fact that NAs still do not have a formal obligation and responsibility to support EACEA in the management of centralised actions (information, promotion, valorisation)<sup>89</sup> and generally lack resources for these types of activities<sup>90</sup>, National Reports also reveal insufficient accessibility to the EACEA from the point of view of the NAs (NAs feel lack of structured information on projects implemented under centralised actions, some important information e.g. about partner organisations of centralised actions was not available; 37.5% of responders of the NAs survey indicated difficulties in collaboration with EACEA as a very important obstacle impeding adequate cooperation between NAs and EACEA).

*Operational question No. 13.4: the extent to which the Commission fulfils its guiding role in the cooperation process*

The desk research indicates that in the case of decentralised actions the Commission issues very extensive guidance on a variety of Programme management aspects, including:

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<sup>86</sup> Guide to NAs 2010, point 4.1: The NA has no formal responsibility with regard to the management of the centralised actions of the programme, which falls within the scope of competence of the Executive Agency.

<sup>87</sup> Survey of NAs: 78.3% of responders indicated that valorisation of project results implemented under centralised actions is a very important area of possible cooperation.

<sup>88</sup> Survey of NAs: 56.5% of responders indicated that information/promotion of the centralised actions is a very important area of possible cooperation.

<sup>89</sup> Survey of NAs: 52% of responders indicated that no formal responsibilities related to coordination of centralised actions and cooperation with EACEA is very important obstacle which impedes adequate cooperation with EACEA.

<sup>90</sup> Survey of NAs: 65.4% of responders indicated that no funding for NAs related to cooperation in implementation of centralised actions is a very important obstacle which impedes adequate cooperation with EACEA.

- Guidance to the NAs (Guides to NAs implementing the LLP, model and standard documents, technical instructions, etc.);
- Guidance to National Authorities (guidance on preparation of *ex-ante* and *ex-post* declarations of assurance, other on-going guidance);
- Guidance to applicants and beneficiaries related to the annual calls for proposals and implementation of the projects (LLP guide, application forms, reporting forms, etc.).

The overall system of LLP management, control and monitoring is based very much on such guidance to ensure that all actors of the system perform in the required manner. This is an alternative to having a more sanctions-based system, whereby a legal framework would provide for both more strict obligations (e.g., sample for secondary control must be more than 5% of eligible expenditure) and better defined potential sanctions (e.g., possibility for a 5-100% flat rate de-commitment of funds allocated to a Member State) in the case where they are not respected. The latter alternative does not seem to be politically feasible; therefore, the adequate guidance by the Commission played a crucial role in ensuring the adequate functioning of the management and control system during the initial years of the Programme and will continue to do so in the remaining years of it.

Desk research and survey of NAs (see Table 43) reveal that in the first years of the Programme there were issues with timely provision of guidance (Guides for NAs, standard application and reporting forms) and training support; several reiterations of updating the guidance in the subsequent years has improved the sufficiency of guidance, yet it also caused issues with stability of guidance (however currently rules and administrative arrangements are seen as stable). National Reports and results of the NAs survey also reveal that the relationship between the Commission and NAs is seen as constructive, since the Commission promptly reacts to ad hoc requests for guidance (though this is a less important factor than timely provision of systemic guidance). An important proxy for the quality and effectiveness of guidance is the abovementioned finding that all the formal requirements are commonly well understood by the respective actors in the management and control system and that the overall management system is rather well-functioning and enjoys very high levels of approval by the beneficiaries.

**Table 43. Survey of NAs regarding guidance provided by the Commission**

| Please provide your assessment of the following aspects of European Commission guidance (guides to NAs, LLP guides, application and reporting forms, various templates, and other guidance) on LLP management, monitoring and control issues (share of responses, %) | During initial years of the LLP (2007-2008) |                 |                 |               |               | More recently, at present (2009 and later) |                 |                 |               |               |
|--|---|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|--|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
|  | Very positive                               | Rather positive | Rather negative | Very Negative | Cannot answer | Very positive                              | Rather positive | Rather negative | Very negative | Cannot answer |
| Timely <i>ex-ante</i> formulation and adoption/setting of rules and administrative arrangements  | 0   | 23              | 54              | 23            | 0             | 12   | 61              | 23              | 4             | 0             |
| Stability and continuity of rules and administrative arrangements  | 0   | 23              | 54              | 23            | 0             | 12   | 57              | 23              | 8             | 0             |
| Adequacy of training support related to the introduction of new rules and administrative arrangements  | 0   | 23              | 58              | 15            | 4             | 8  | 65              | 19              | 4             | 4             |
| Availability of ad hoc guidance (ability to react to ad hoc requests for guidance in due time)   | 4   | 73              | 15              | 4             | 4             | 50   | 38              | 8               | 0             | 4             |

Source: survey of NAs.

Additionally, the table above clearly indicates that the guidance of the Commission is perceived to have improved since the initial years of the Programme.

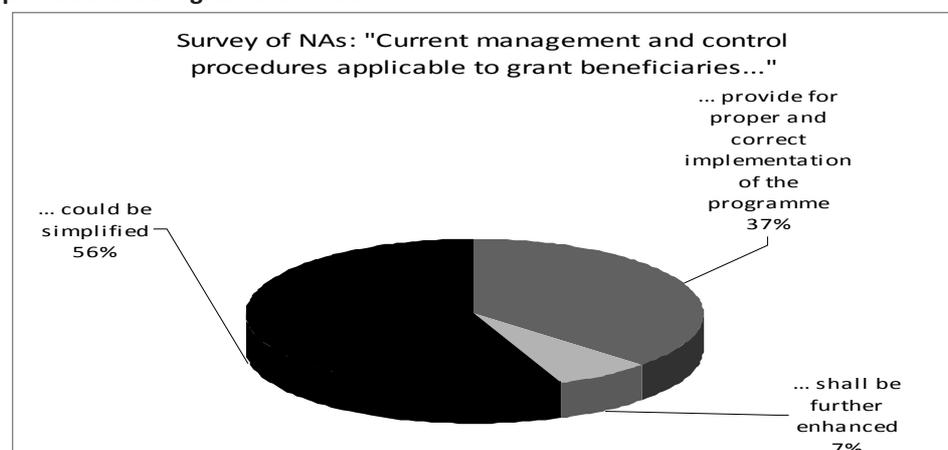
Set of evaluation questions No. 14 in the ToR: Are the monitoring mechanisms applied by the Commission, the Executive Agency and the National Agencies efficient/cost-effective? What are the areas for improvement, considering the need for a smooth and effective implementation of the LLP? Are the procedures for supervision of the work of beneficiaries by National Agencies and the Executive Agency, as well as of the activities of the National Agencies and the implementation of the Programme at national level effective and proportionate? Should the concept of *ex-ante* and yearly declarations of assurance by National Authorities be simplified? What are the possible alternatives in this respect?

*Operational question No. 14.1: are the monitoring, supervision and control mechanisms applied by the National Agencies efficient? Are the procedures for supervision of the work of beneficiaries by NAs effective and proportionate? What are areas for improvement, considering the need for smooth and effective implementation of the LLP?*

As the monitoring both of the Programme and its supported projects is dealt with under the next evaluation question, the key focus here is put on supervision arrangements. They consist of a) primary checks (checks of grant beneficiaries); and b) secondary controls (including declaration of assurance). To be efficient, both arrangements first of all should be effective, i.e. they should lead to an adequate level of assurance that LLP funds are being managed correctly (i.e. in compliance with all formal requirements).

*Formal requirements* concerning primary checks of project beneficiaries executed by the NAs are extensively defined and include analysis of final reports, desk checks of supporting material for costs claimed, on the spot checks during implementation of supported activities, on the spot financial checks and system audits of recurrent beneficiaries. According to the survey of NAs (see Figure 38) current management and control procedures applicable to grant beneficiaries provide for proper and correct implementation of the LLP decentralised actions (37% of responders) or could be simplified to provide for more efficient implementation of the programme with no (substantial) negative effect on ensuring of proper and correct implementation of the programme (56% of responders), simplification opportunities being firstly related to wider use of fixed costs grants (lump sums and flat rate grants based on standard unit costs).

**Figure 38. Survey of the NAs regarding adequacy of management and control procedures over grant beneficiaries**



Source: survey of NAs.

The minimum requirements for primary checks (type of checks, minimum sample) are clearly set in the Guide to NAs, requirements for the control sample in the view of NAs in principle are well balanced (see Table 44); the requirements for primary checks are based on risk assessment and are differentiated among various types of actions. Risk analysis based differentiation of requirements for primary checks provides for higher efficiency of primary checks, the minimum requirements for the scope of primary checks helps to harmonise control level among different LLP countries and to increase reliability of checks.

**Table 44. Survey of NAs regarding requirements for sample (minimum percentages and numbers of grant agreements) of primary checks**

| Type of primary checks / Share of responses (%)                              | The sample is too broad | The sample is well balanced | The sample is too small |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Analysis of final reports  | 8                       | 92                          | -                       |
| Desk check of supporting material for costs claimed                          | 19                      | 81                          | 0                       |
| On the spot check during the implementation of supported activity            | 12                      | 88                          | 0                       |
| On the spot check (audit) undertaken upon completion of a supported activity | 8                       | 92                          | 0                       |
| System audit of recurrent beneficiaries                                      | 21                      | 79                          | 0                       |

Source: survey of NAs.

An important element in ensuring proper execution of primary checks is clarity of requirements (methodology) set by the European Commission. The survey of the NAs reveals that for the most, primary checks requirements are clear with the exception of on the spot checks during implementation of a supported activity (see Table 45).

**Table 45. Survey of NAs regarding clarity of requirements (methodology) for the primary checks executed by NAs**

| Type of primary checks / Share of responses (%)                              | Very clear | Rather clear | Rather unclear | Very unclear | Do not know/cannot answer |
|--|------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| Analysis of final reports  | 58         | 38           | 0              | 4            | 0                         |
| Desk check of supporting material for costs claimed                          | 27         | 62           | 11             | 0            | 0                         |
| On the spot check during the implementation of supported activity            | 12         | 42           | 42             | 0            | 4                         |
| On the spot check (audit) undertaken upon completion of a supported activity | 16         | 65           | 19             | 0            | 0                         |
| System audit of recurrent beneficiaries                                      | 19         | 62           | 0              | 8            | 11                        |

Source: survey of NAs.

As regards the *practical execution* of the primary checks the analysis of Yearly NA Reports for 2008 reveals that not all NAs managed to ensure that primary checks meet the established minimum requirements: 82% of NAs reported to have managed to carry out the minimum number of checks required, with regard to checks of final reports, 49% – with regard to on the spot checks during action (low compliance related to carrying out minimal number of on the spot checks during an action closely interrelates with insufficient understanding of the requirements (methodology) for these checks, see Table 45 above), 67% – with regard to checks of supporting material and 62% – with regard to on the spot checks after receipt of the final report. 71% of NAs in Yearly NA Reports for 2009 reported that they have complied with the minimum requirements related to checks on grant beneficiaries; however, analysis of the European Commission’s evaluation conclusions<sup>91</sup> on the declarations of assurance, revealed that observations regarding non-compliance to carry out the minimum

<sup>91</sup> Analysis sample included 32 evaluation conclusions.

number of checks on grant beneficiaries were issued to 81% of NAs<sup>92</sup>. Further, observations related to follow up of primary checks<sup>93</sup> were issued to 78% of NAs.

In summary, the primary checks are well regulated, yet the system is still not functioning fully as intended. Assessment reveals that the number of staff of the NAs assigned to carry out primary checks<sup>94</sup> in 2008 on average comprised 20% of the total number of NAs staff. Such share is relatively low, for example, compared with the share of resources allocated to controls in the management and control systems of European Union instruments implemented under the shared management arrangements<sup>95</sup>.

*Operational question No. 14.2: are the procedures for supervision of activities of NAs and implementation of the Programme at national level effective and proportionate? Should the concept of ex-ante and yearly ex-post declaration of assurance by National Authorities be simplified? What are possible alternatives in this respect?*

Supervision of activities of the NAs and their tasks related to implementation of the Programme at national level is performed by the designated National Authorities through the secondary (national) controls which lead to issuing of *ex-ante* and *ex-post* yearly declarations of assurance. This evaluation did not audit or assess the secondary control system so as to establish whether it was functioning correctly (this is an audit function) and whether it assures the legality and regularity of LLP expenditure. This evaluation rather established that level and type of secondary controls substantially varied among different LLP countries, while underlying control activities in a number of cases led to duplication control and supervision effort of the Commission itself, which limited the overall efficiency of the secondary controls system, especially in the initial years of the Programme (2007 and 2008). On the other hand, as from the 2009 declaration of assurance exercise and as a result of revised (complemented) guidance to the National Authorities and other related Commission efforts, the situation is improving (e.g., quality and comparability of secondary controls among different Participating Countries increased).

The *ex-ante* and *ex-post* declarations of assurance follow the single audit concept which means that one institution should rely on and should not duplicate the control activities executed by another institution. Proper application of the single audit concept would require a high level of reliability and comparability of the results of *ex-ante* and *ex-post* declarations across different LLP countries (i.e. declarations of assurance must be based on actual audit/control activities executed by or under the responsibility of National Authorities; secondary controls should meet common standards and must be properly documented).

One of the main problems related to the introduction of a system of secondary controls and declarations of assurance was the unclear role of the secondary controls in the overall LLP management and control system and the absence of consensus among the Commission and National Authorities concerning the requirements for the secondary controls. The exercise of the *ex-ante* declarations was carried out by National Authorities under time pressure and was largely formal; *ex-ante* declarations of assurance were not necessarily based on actually performed audit and control activities over the NAs.

Similar issues continued into the exercise of yearly *ex-post* declarations: the level of quality of secondary controls related to the preparation of *ex-post* declarations of

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<sup>92</sup> Substantial share of observations related to non compliance to carry out the minimum number of primary checks can be attributed to methodological issues: despite initial delays minimum number of required checks in certain cases can be reached in subsequent reporting periods before the closure of relevant Commission-NA financial agreements, etc.

<sup>93</sup> Cases where in different actions/different primary check procedures financial corrections in relation to the total grant requested exceed materiality level of 2%..

<sup>94</sup> NAs staff reported (according to 2008 NAs reports) to be engaged in checks of project reports and on-the-spot checks.

<sup>95</sup> There the share under question could typically amount to at least one third of resources.

assurance for 2007-2008 varied among Participating Countries, which negatively affected comparability and subsequently utility of the results of *ex-post* declarations. The problematic state of the system was further illustrated by late delivery of yearly *ex-post* declarations: only the minor part of *ex-post* declarations of assurance for 2007–2009 (25%, 15% and 23% respectively) were presented to the Commission by the National Authorities in time (i.e. before 30 April of year N+1) although the delayed durations decreased substantially over the years – from nearly 8 to 3 months delays for the last declarations. According to the results of the survey of National Authorities the main difficulties of the secondary controls and declaration of assurance are related to overly demanding requirements for the secondary controls (95.4% of responders), the novelty of the procedure (90.9% of responders) and also to untimely (77.3% of responders) and insufficient (54.6% of responders) guidance by the Commission, National Authorities have no difficulties related to cooperation with the NAs or with the quality of NAs reports.

As from the 2009 yearly declaration of assurance exercise, quality and comparability of secondary controls and declarations of assurance improved. One of the main tools to ensure comparability and reliability of declarations of assurance is availability of comprehensive methodological guidance. The rather general initial guidelines for National Authorities for the yearly declaration of assurance were complemented substantially in 2009 and now include both methodological guidance and also practical support tools (such as model documents and forms to be used by National Authorities – checklists, example of terms of reference for financial audits, etc.), which are essential for the harmonisation of practices related to secondary controls in different Participating Countries. The present guidance related to the preparation of yearly declarations of assurance is extensive (especially in relation to the system audit), but still lacks detail on the sampling of individual transactions to be checked and standards to be followed:

- There are no defined minimum requirements related to the control sample of transactions (i.e. there are no requirements related to the share of transactions to be checked by the secondary controls (e.g., 5% of the total value of the realised grants/expenditure declared to the Commission) or minimum degree of confidence resulting from secondary controls – system audits and audits of transactions);
- Although the guidelines for the National Authorities encourage the auditors to follow to either International Standards on Auditing or INTOSAI standards, still in cases where auditors belong to specialised control bodies other professional standards can be applied. This does not contribute to ensuring comparability of results of secondary controls among different Participating Countries. It should be recognised that the current regulatory framework does not facilitate the Commission to enforce strict requirements on Participating Countries,

During the process of assessment and approval of *ex-post* declarations of assurance and Yearly NA Reports, the Commission made substantial efforts to ensure the existence of and minimum standards of secondary controls. It should be noted that the Commission has no contractual relations with the National Authorities (in contrast to the contractual relations with NAs), the execution of secondary controls is financed by national sources (i.e., it is not covered by the LLP operating grant for NAs), which further impedes setting up a unified system of secondary controls across different LLP countries. There are several alternatives for further mainstreaming and simplification of the system of annual and *ex-post* declarations of assurance:

- Waiving of requirements for *ex-ante* and yearly declarations of assurance, setting up a direct NA–Commission reporting system and strengthening the Commission controls (if needed). This could be based on the arguments that LLP
  - is implemented under centralised budget management mode, the principal legal base for implementation of the decentralised actions are the yearly Commission-NAs annual agreements, i.e. National

- Authorities are not part of the financing agreements, which are the subject of their secondary controls and declaration of assurance;
  - the requirements for the management system of decentralised actions are set by the Commission in the Guides for NAs and further agreed in the yearly work programmes of the NAs: these requirements are detailed enough and do not provide for much flexibility at national level (thereby they do not necessitate additional national controls);
  - Commission's controls include supervision (performed by DG EAC) and financial (usually done by an externally subcontracted audit company) audits, which include both NAs system audit and a sample check of declared expenditure; audits are carried out according to international audit standards therefore secondary control activities of the National Authorities to some extent are duplicating the work of the auditors commissioned by DG EAC and are causing additional workload both for National Authorities (in relation to undertaking unnecessary secondary controls) and NAs (administrative burden caused by the additional controls).
- *Ex-ante* definition and agreement with Participating Countries of clear requirements for the *ex-ante* and annual the yearly *ex-post* declaration of assurance and their place in the overall LLP management and control system. The requirements must ensure adequacy of the scope and effectiveness of secondary controls (audits) and comparability of the results of secondary controls across different Participating Countries – i.e. guidance of the Commission must ensure that secondary controls (audits) take into account internationally accepted audit standards and the guidance should include minimum requirements for the sample of transactions to be checked under secondary controls.

The functions of National Authorities related to secondary controls and declaration of assurance are similar to those delegated to the Audit Authority in the case of EU Structural funds and European Fisheries Fund and the Certification Body in the case of common agricultural policy instruments (European Agricultural Guarantee Fund and European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development). Summary information on functions delegated to the Audit Authority, standards to be followed and requirements for the control sample is presented in the box below and could serve as an illustration for following the second of the above mentioned simplification options.

**Functions of Audit Authority** (article 62 of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006):

- Ensuring that audits are carried out to verify the effective functioning of the management and control system of the operational programme;
- Ensuring that audits are carried out on operations on the basis of an appropriate sample to verify expenditure declared;
- Presenting to the Commission within nine months of the approval of the operational programme an audit strategy covering the bodies which will perform the audits referred, the method to be used, the sampling method for audits on operations and the indicative planning of audits to ensure that the main bodies are audited and that audits are spread evenly throughout the programming period;
- Submitting to the Commission an annual control report setting out the findings of the audits carried out during the previous 12 month-period ending on 30 June of the year concerned in accordance with the audit strategy of the operational programme and reporting any shortcomings found in the systems for the management and control of the programme;
- Issuing an opinion, on the basis of the controls and audits that have been carried out under its responsibility, as to whether the management and control system functions effectively, so as to provide a reasonable assurance that statements of expenditure presented to the Commission are correct and as a consequence reasonable assurance that the underlying transactions are legal and regular;
- Submitting to the Commission at the latest by 31 March 2017 a closure declaration assessing the validity of the application for payment of the final balance and the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions covered by the final statement of expenditure, which shall be supported by a final control report.

**Standards:**

The Audit Authority shall ensure that the audit work takes account of internationally accepted audit standards

**Compliance assessment** (article 71 of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006):

Before the submission of the first interim application for payment or at the latest within twelve months of the approval of each operational programme, the Member States shall submit to the Commission a description of the systems, covering in particular the organisation and procedures of:

- The managing and certifying authorities and intermediate bodies;
- The audit authority and any other bodies carrying out audits under its responsibility.

The description of the management and control systems shall be accompanied by a report setting out the results of an assessment of the systems set up and giving an opinion on their compliance with relevant requirements. The report and the opinion shall be drawn up by the audit authority or by a public or private body functionally independent of the managing and certifying authorities, which shall carry out its work taking account of internationally accepted audit standards.

**Requirements for sampling** (article 16 – 18 and Annex IV of Regulation (EC) No 1828/2006):

The assurance provided on the functioning of the systems is determined by the degree of confidence resulting from the conclusions of the system audits and from the audits of operations in the sample selected by a random statistical sampling method. In order to obtain a high level of assurance, that is, a reduced audit risk, the audit authority should combine the results of system audits and audits of operations. The audit authority first evaluates the reliability of the systems (high, average or low) taking into account the results of systems audits, so as to determine the technical parameters of the sampling, in particular the confidence level and the expected error rate. Member States may also use the results of the report on the compliance assessment pursuant to Article 71(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006. The combined level of assurance obtained from the systems audits and the audits of operations should be high. The confidence level used for sampling operations should not be less than 60% with a maximum materiality level of 2%. For a system evaluated as having low reliability, the confidence level used for sampling operations should not be below 90%. The audit authority should describe in the annual control report the way assurance has been obtained.

The reliability of management and control systems is determined using criteria established by the audit authority for systems audits, including a quantified assessment of all key elements of the systems and encompassing the main authorities and intermediate bodies participating in the management and control of the operational programme. A record of the assessments carried out is kept in the audit file.

Where problems detected appear to be systemic in nature and therefore entail a risk for other operations under the operational programme, the audit authority shall ensure that further examination is carried out, including additional audits where necessary, to establish the scale of such problems. The necessary preventive and corrective action shall be taken by the relevant authorities.

The method used to select the control sample and to draw conclusions from the results shall take account of internationally accepted audit standards and be documented.

*Operational question No. 14.3: are the monitoring, supervision and control mechanisms applied by the Executive Agency efficient? Are the procedures for supervision of the work of beneficiaries by Executive Agency effective and proportionate? What are areas of improvement, considering the need for smooth and effective implementation of the LLP?*

As the monitoring both of the Programme and its supported projects is dealt with under the next evaluation question, the key focus here is on supervision and control arrangements over project beneficiaries and ensuring regularity of expenditure in LLP centralised actions.

The main tools to check and ensure regularity of expenditure in LLP centralised actions are assessment of the final reports (both assessment of the quality of the work accomplished under the project done by the external experts and assessment of administrative compliance and eligibility of expenditure aspects done by the internal staff of the Executive Agency) and on the external controls (audits), which are usually executed by the externally contracted audit companies (projects for audits are selected on the basis of risk analysis or identified problems). In 2009 audits covered projects representing 7.7% (value) of the population of closed projects in the education sector, the error rate detected in 2009 fell below materiality level of 2%.

*Operational question No. 14.4: are the supervision and control mechanisms applied by the Commission efficient? What are areas of improvement, considering the need for smooth and effective implementation of the LLP?*



The supervision and control system adopted by the Commission consists of assessment of *ex-ante* and *ex-post* declarations presented by the National Authorities, system monitoring visits as well as supervisory and financial audits. The evaluation reveals that the system functions effectively.

The exercise of the assessment and approval of *ex-post* declarations of assurance and Yearly NA Reports takes into account both the information presented in the respective reports and the information acquired through other control activities (system monitoring visits, results of the audits, etc.) and leads to the approval (or rejection) of annual financial reports included in the Yearly NA Report and subsequent decision(s) on the closure of relevant financial agreements and financial transactions. Initially, the lengthy process of assessing and approving *ex-post* declarations of assurance in 2009 on average took only 2.5 months including suspension periods in the case of need of further clarifications of missing documents. The assessment of the *ex-post* declarations of assurance provides updates on the results of the different control activities executed throughout the year, and results in an updated list of conclusions and recommendations related to issues of non-compliance of NAs and National Authorities.

System monitoring visits are undertaken by DG EAC NAs' desk officers from LLP coordinating unit; visits involve general on the spot monitoring and control activities over the NAs (collection of information on NA systems, operations and activities and on their compliance with the requirements set for LLP management) and also provide for exchange of information on LLP management issues between the Commission, NAs and National Authorities; system monitoring visits could also be understood as part of the overall guidance effort by the Commission (rather than pure control and/or audit activity).

There are also supervision audits undertaken by the supervision unit of DG EAC, which involve on the spot audit activities over NA and National Authorities and their compliance with the requirements set for LLP management. Financial audits are carried out by the subcontracted external audit company. The audits are carried out according to international audit standards and include checking of the systems for primary checks executed by the NAs and checking of a sample of transactions.

A good proxy indicator is the fact that the functioning of the system lead to imposing sanctions (which varied from suspending the payments to NAs to suspension of the Programme) in the case of 5 countries, where the controls revealed absence of adequate assurance.

Set of evaluation questions No. 15 in the ToR: To what extent are the monitoring arrangements and the management support tools (e.g. LLPLink, EST, Saykiss, Nety, Circa, etc.) adequate and sufficient to support sound and effective management of the Programme? Do the indicators identified for the LLP impact correspond to the monitoring purposes? How could the overall management and monitoring system be improved?

*Operational question No. 15.1: to what extent are the monitoring arrangements and procedures adequate and sufficient to support sound and effective management of the Programme?*

#### **Decentralised actions – project level**

*Monitoring arrangements at project level* are overall adequate. Project reporting frequency in general is well balanced with the administrative burden (all projects are subject to final reporting, progress reports are required only for projects longer than

one year), project monitoring requirements by NAs are regarded as well balanced<sup>96</sup> (92% of NAs in the survey indicated ), information in projects reports is used for subsequent management decisions (though management decisions are mainly related to administrative issues – approval of the final project report is a prerequisite for final payment, etc.) and for external reporting (i.e. reporting to the European Commission, National Authority, reporting and promotion to wider public), see Table 46. Monitoring and reporting arrangements related to the monitoring of outputs and results of the projects are coordinated with the support to beneficiaries, valorisation of project results and exchange of experience between beneficiaries.

**Table 46. Relevance and actual usage of monitoring information provided by grant beneficiaries in their progress and final reports**

| Type of information provided in the progress and final reports of the projects / Share of responses (%)  | Use of information for internal decision making needs (i.e. project control and monitoring) |                | Use of information for external reporting of achievements |                | Do not know / cannot answer |
|--|---|----------------|---|----------------|-----------------------------|
|  | Actively used   | Sometimes used | Actively used   | Sometimes used |                             |
| Information on organisational matters (travel, accommodation, learning/placement environment, difficulties encountered, sufficiency of the grant amount, etc.) | 73  | 23             | 50  | 46             | 4                           |
| Content of the activities and outputs (descriptive part)   | 81  | 19             | 69  | 31             | 0                           |
| Content of the activities and outputs (statistical data)   | 65  | 35             | 81  | 19             | 0                           |
| Evaluation of results/impact/quality of the activities   | 69  | 31             | 69  | 31             | 0                           |
| Information/recommendations on dissemination and exploitation of results/experience of the activities  | 64  | 36             | 56  | 44             | 0                           |

Source: survey of NAs.

The results of the case studies indicate that the focus of monitoring is on administrative aspects (as monitoring largely focuses on compliance with administrative and financial regulations) and somewhat less on content. In the future simplification of eligibility rules and stabilisation of project management provisions should provide for the monitoring system to switch from inputs and process-based control towards management by results.

#### **Centralised actions – project level**

*Monitoring arrangements at project level* are overall adequate. Project reporting frequency in general is well balanced with the administrative burden (all projects are subject to final reporting and progress reports for projects longer than one year); information provided in projects reports is used for subsequent management decisions and for valorisation of project results. Monitoring arrangements related to processing of projects reports are related both to administrative issues and to assessment of the quality of the work accomplished under the project, quality assessment is done by external experts, weak quality of the project (final qualitative rating between 0 and 4) results in reduction to eligible staff costs<sup>97</sup>.

Monitoring and reporting arrangements related to the monitoring of outputs and results of the projects are coordinated with the support to beneficiaries, valorisation of projects results, and exchange of experience between beneficiaries (monitoring arrangements include visits by the Executive Agency to the beneficiary or project events, visits to the Executive Agency or events organised by the Agency (kick off meetings, individual meetings, cluster meetings), etc.). As concerns monitoring efforts,

<sup>96</sup> 92% of NAs in the survey assessed requirements set for monitoring of projects as well balanced.

<sup>97</sup> Reduction to eligible staff costs is a critical measure, which is rarely used in practice (as problems usually are solved at earlier monitoring stages)

projects with difficult cases and best practice cases (projects with an external expert score of 80% and above) receive highest attention (first ones – to solve problems, second ones – to extract and publicise best practice results).

#### **Programme level**

As regards *monitoring at Programme level*, at the start of the LLP programme the novelty of the Programme and the merger of two previously separate programmes caused a situation where the focus was on the creation and alignment of financial and administrative procedures to ensure effective take-up and running of the Programme. In turn, the focus on administrative issues and limited resources both at the Commission and NAs level caused insufficient attention to impact monitoring arrangements and limited use of monitoring data for management decisions. The Programme monitoring data consists mainly of statistical data and information related to outputs of the projects. The system for LLP impact monitoring is not finalised yet, a set of monitoring indicators agreed by the LLP monitoring committee in June 2010 are limited to the output level and subsequently there is no structured data related to the impact of the Programme. The high number of supported actions and complexity of LLP objectives further complicate monitoring efforts.

Analysis of the National Reports also reveals dissatisfaction of NAs in relation to reporting to the Commission: the reporting process is seemed as time and resource consuming and not proportional (e.g. LLPLink contains a large part of the financial and statistical information to be provided in NAs reports, the feedback from the Commission on monitoring data is quite limited, etc.), the period of the annual calls for proposals (period of highest intensity of NAs workload) coincides with the reporting period to the Commission. Results of the NA survey show that 89% of NAs assess the requirements and administrative burden caused by reporting to the European Commission as too demanding.

Besides there is still limited sharing of monitoring information and good practices across the LLP sub-programmes as well as between the centralised and decentralised actions. Evidence from the case studies shows that in the Transfer of Innovation projects funded by the Leonardo da Vinci sub-programme there is only limited take-up of innovations coming from previous Leonardo da Vinci projects or other educational sub-sectors. The main reason for this is that applicants, but also the staff at NAs, EACEA and the Commission dealing with a certain sub-programme are hardly aware of projects in other sub-programmes. However, there are also positive experiences indentified, e.g. as regards the development of thematic monitoring groups, evaluation of the quality of the work accomplished under the project (scoring of the projects quality done under centralised actions), clustering different projects together, in order to identify successful approaches for further dissemination and exploitation. Further simplification of eligibility rules and management provisions (e.g. mainstreaming by the type of action: mobility, partnership, other) should allow for more focus on results and impact.

*Are the indicators identified for the LLP impact appropriate for monitoring purposes?*

The system of indicators should normally be established at the Programme design stage, and indicators should reflect quantifiable targets of the Programme. There should also be a balance among output, results and impact indicators. Afterwards, the design of the management and control system and management support tools (IT systems, etc.) should provide for the collection and accumulation of data related to indicators. This ideal logic was not followed in the case of the LLP.

The LLP Decision contains 4 quantifiable targets, related to expected outputs of 4 sectoral programmes of the LLP.<sup>98</sup> The system of LLP monitoring indicators was further

<sup>98</sup> Comenius: involvement of at least 3 million pupils in joint educational activities, over the period of the programme; Erasmus: contribution to the achievement by 2012 of at least 3 million individual participants in student mobility under the Erasmus programme and its

developed by the special working group<sup>99</sup> on impact monitoring. Finally, the set of LLP monitoring indicators was approved by the LLP committee in June 2010. The approved system of monitoring indicators consists of 10 indicators that are based on existent and structured data. The set of indicators will allow the generation of monitoring information that is necessary to report on the quantified targets defined in the LLP Decision. However, all the indicators are limited to measuring outputs; there are no result and/or impact level indicators among them.

In summary, the defined LLP monitoring indicators are largely sufficient for regular management of the Programme, yet they are not suitable for impact monitoring. The previous version of the Commission's working document on "Impact monitoring" proposed a number of result and impact indicators, which could generate useful monitoring information for future impact evaluations. It clearly reveals that the monitoring system already contains monitoring information, which could be used to assess the impact according to the following or similar indicators, which are directly linked to the LLP objectives:

**Higher levels of lifelong learning:**

- (increase in) share of LLP-participants in CVT in relation to all CVTS participants;
- share of LLP-participants in relation to all participants of a certain age group (e.g. 15-24, 25-34 ... 55-64, 65+);
- LLP-motivation index: number/share of LLP-participants with repeated mobility activities (during ET, job, excl. private/vacation purposes);
- LLP-creativity index: number/share of patents by LLP-participants.

**Fostering interchange (between education and training systems in the EC):**

- share of outgoing and incoming LLP-students/LLP-participants to all mobile students/persons for ET.

**Fostering mobility (between education and training systems in the EC):**

- share of new LLP-participants who were motivated by former LLP-participants (could also be broken down by sub-programme).

**Gender equality:**

- LLP gender equality in Math, Science and technology (in relation to general gender distribution in MST);
- LLP gender equality in Arts (in relation to general gender distribution in MST).

**Personal fulfilment:**

- job satisfaction of LLP-participants in relation to job satisfaction of non-participants.

**Employability:**

- unemployment rate of LLP-participants in relation to overall unemployment rate;
- increase in the number of employed people, reduction in the share of unemployed people, transition rates into the labour market (within a certain period) after training;
- the growth of an entrepreneurial spirit; increase in number of new(or newly founded) firms by former LLP-participants, growth rates (in turn over) of companies founded by former LLP-participants within the last two/five years.

**Language learning:** contribution of LLP to language learning in a MS

- linguistic diversity: increase in the (average) number of languages spoken by individuals; average number of languages spoken by LLP-participants (in relation to non-participants).

*Operational question No. 15.2: are the management support IT tools adequate and sufficient to support a sound and effective management of the Programme?*

The evaluation question is divided into three sub questions:

- Effectiveness of LLP management support IT tools (LLPLink, Saykiss);
- Effectiveness of systems related to exchange of information between Commission, NAs and National Authorities (CIRCA, NA Forum and former Nety);
- Effectiveness of LLP valorisation platforms (EVE, EST, ADAM).

As regards *LLPLink*, this is a management tool which was deployed (from inception to production) in one year, which is an impressive achievement given the functionality and scope of the system. At present, the system is rather effectively supporting the management of the decentralised actions by the NAs and offers access to a wide array

predecessor programmes; Leonardo da Vinci: increase placements in enterprises to at least 80,000 per year by the end of the programme; Grundtvig: support the mobility of at least 7,000 individuals involved in adult education per year by 2013.

<sup>99</sup> Working document "Monitoring and Evaluation of Life Learning Programme"

of management and monitoring data. However, the initial development of and subsequent improvements to the system were more problematic.

The decision on the development of the LLPLink was only taken in mid-2007, which caused late delivery of the IT system for LLP decentralised actions. LLPLink was developed in stages. The LLPLink became operational in 2008 and was used predominantly to collect application and financial data on projects under the 2008 Call. In 2009-2010 electronic forms of applications were prepared and electronic applications launched (applications are directly imported into the system). In 2010 electronic reporting forms for the project beneficiaries were launched, which will allow for increased functionality of LLPLink related to monitoring and control of the LLP projects.

As the LLPLink was not available at the beginning of the Programme implementation, the projects from different Programme periods have different data level or no data<sup>100</sup> in LLPLink. Before the realisation of electronic forms and direct import of data into LLPLink, manual input of project data caused considerable additional workload for the NAs. As a result, in many cases only minimum required project information (mainly financial data) was inputted in LLPLink.

Before the development of the NA Mobility tool (which is planned to deploy in 2011), mobility data is being collected using other IT tools<sup>101</sup>. The complexity of IT tools used for LLP management due to fragmentation of data may cause further difficulties related to monitoring and management of the LLP programme. LLPLink and IT management system for centralised actions (Saykiss) were developed in parallel with no coordination between the systems despite similar project cycle of decentralised and centralised actions which has a negative impact on tools and possibilities to coordinate centralised and decentralised actions. This adds to fragmentation of LLP management.

The development and changes of the procedures while developing the IT system caused the frustrating situation of a 'moving target'. The realisation of new functionalities in LLPLink also caused some changes to the procedures at NAs which had a negative impact on the stability of procedures (guidance documents and the manual of procedures of NAs had to be frequently updated) and caused additional workload. As a result, LLPLink (at least initially) was often regarded by the NAs as a cause of additional workload with limited or no use. However, this attitude is changing with further development of the IT system: the introduction of electronic forms and direct data import into the system (for applications and reports), increase in stability and reliability, etc., have a huge potential of reducing the workload at the NAs. Information on results of NA survey related to experience with LLPLink is presented in Figure 39 below; the interview programme also revealed that many NAs don't use LLPLink to its full potential (this relates especially to smaller NAs), which has a negative influence on the utility of the system. Therefore training and other LLP user support measures will help to maximise benefits of the system.

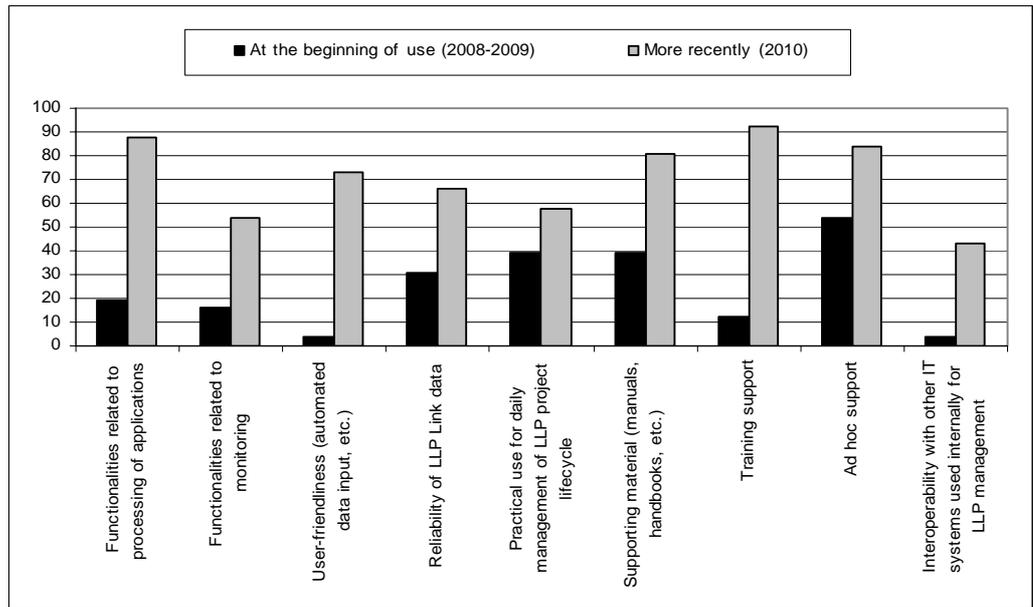
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<sup>100</sup> For 2007 Commission – NAs agreements.

<sup>101</sup> Rap4Leo, Erasmus DB.

**Figure 39. Survey of NAs: experience with LLPLink**

(Share (%) of responders either positively or very positively assessing following aspects of functioning of LLPLink)

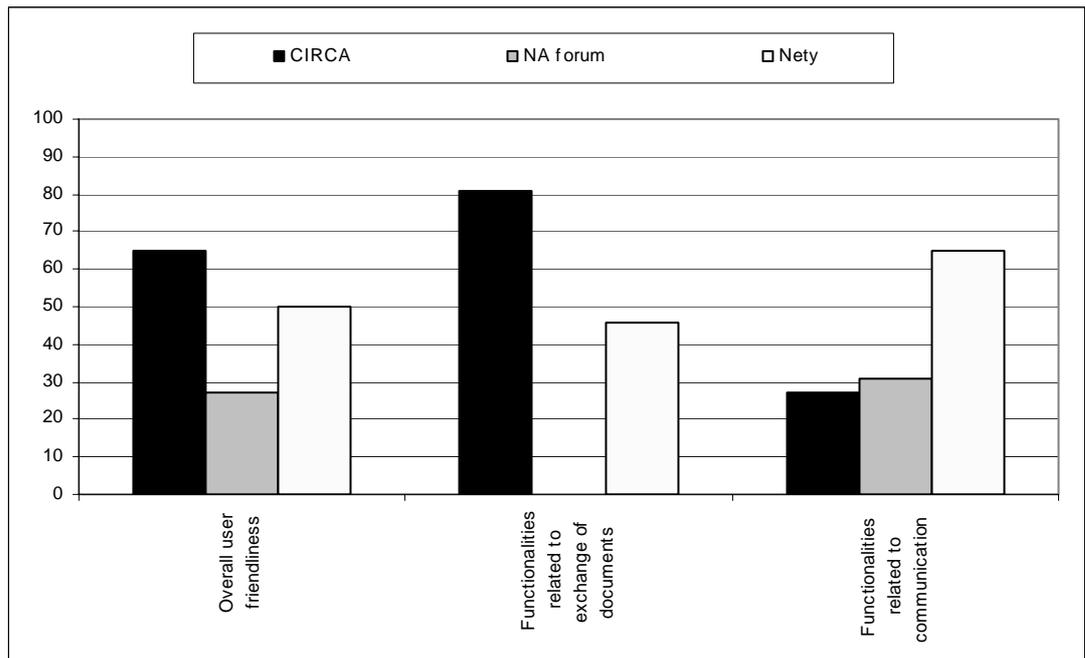


Source: survey of the NAs.

As regards the effectiveness of systems related to exchange of information between Commission, NAs and National Authorities, the results of the desk research and NAs survey reveal that CIRCA is an adequate and sufficient tool for exchange of documents, however functionalities related to communication (forums, possibilities to provide questions and comments on documents, etc.) are insufficient. Results of the NAs (see Figure 40) survey reveal that the inter-institutional communication functionalities of former Nety system were perceived more positively than the present NA Forum system (38% of responders did not provided their opinion on the NA Forum, which also indicates limited use of the system)

**Figure 40. Survey of NAs: IT systems related to exchange of information**

(Share (%) of responders either positively or very positively assessing following aspects of CIRCA, NA Forum and Nety)



Source: survey of the NAs.

As regards *LLP valorisation platforms*, there are several electronic platforms for valorisation of LLP results: EST for Comenius, Leonardo da Vinci and Grundtvig partnership projects, ADAM for products and results of Leonardo da Vinci Transfer of Innovation projects and EVE – electronic platform for dissemination and exploitation of results of projects supported by the DG EAC in the fields of education, training, culture, youth and citizenship. Although some interfaces are developed between them and between them and LLPLink (e.g. LLPLink-EST, EST-EVE), the development of LLP valorisation platforms was not closely coordinated; the results of the LLP projects are fragmented between different platforms and there is no single reference point for the results of all LLP projects which impedes the proper valorisation of LLP results.

Set of evaluation questions No. 16 in the ToR: Is the size of budget appropriate and proportionate to what the Programme is set out to achieve? Are the funds allocated proportionally across the sub-programmes in relation to their level of effectiveness and utility? Could the same results be achieved with less funding?

*Operational question No. 16.1: Is the size of budget appropriate and proportionate to what the Programme is set out to achieve?*

As was concluded in the answer to operational question No. 5.1, there is a threat that at least some of the quantified targets set out in the Decision establishing the LLP will not be reached under current mobility trends. According to the findings of desk research activities and analysis of the monitoring data, the inadequate funding and annually increasing unit-costs are the main reasons behind this situation. Moreover, the current quantified targets were established before cuts on the proposed LLP budget envelope took place and later these targets were only partially adapted to the new reality. As a result, the size of the LLP budget became inappropriate to achieve the ambitious targets.

In order to reach a balance between meeting the quantified targets and ensuring sufficient funding, three options should be considered: 1) raising funds to an adequate level; 2) increasing the cost-effectiveness of separate sectoral programmes and actions; 3) making the duration of mobility more flexible and shorter. Calculations on the needs for additional funding were already presented under operational question No. 5.1. To meet the target of 80 000 placements set for Leonardo da Vinci, a budget increase of around 18% is needed. Meanwhile, the achievement of Erasmus quantified target demands for a significant budget increment of 7-12% (depending on the scenario) each year. Due to the constraints of relevant monitoring data calculations regarding Comenius and Grundtvig are not available. Nevertheless, it is obvious that the current level of funding for these sectoral programmes is insufficient. Findings of the survey of the National Authorities and National Agencies, desk research, analysis of the monitoring data and other sources validate this conclusion and pre-suppose the need for a substantial increase in funding.

Since the first option is certainly costly and, therefore, not very attractive due to limited financial resources for the remaining period of the LLP, the second option should be strongly considered. Calculations presented in Annex 7 reveal a general trend of increasing average unit-costs in Grundtvig and Erasmus programmes. In order to achieve the quantified targets, an inverse trend should be encouraged. The same calculations suggest that several Leonardo da Vinci mobility actions are already in line with this (desirable) trend. It seems that numbers of PLM and VETPRO<sup>102</sup> beneficiaries increased despite a decrease in their funding. In other words, the unit-costs of these

<sup>102</sup> PLM – Leonardo da Vinci action ‘People in labour market’; VETPRO – Leonardo da Vinci action ‘VET professionals’

actions have been decreased by improving their cost-effectiveness. On the other hand, a further unit-cost decrease in IVT and PLM actions should be pursued as the unit-costs of Leonardo da Vinci learners' mobility are currently much higher than Erasmus mobility unit-costs (for more details see operational question No. 16.2).

The third option is in line with a proposal to make the duration of mobility actions more flexible. (see operational questions 9.2–9.3). Although it requires a case-by-case selection approach when the mobility duration cuts of certain actions or projects are being considered, shorter mobility duration would decrease the unit-costs of particular mobility actions, making them more cost-effective.

Another issue worth mentioning when the appropriateness of LLP budget size is considered is the balance between demand and supply. Based on the existing monitoring data it could be concluded that the demand for support to different activities of the Programme is much higher than the availability of funds. The success rates of applications to four sectoral programmes of the LLP show that on average less than a half of all applications were selected in the period 2007-2009. The best match between demand and supply was in the area of learner mobility. Meanwhile, the success rates of applications for multilateral projects and multilateral networks amounted to only about one third. Moreover, although the total LLP budget increases every year, the success rates of applications do not display a clear up-wards trend.

There is also a general agreement that the Grundtvig programme needs more funding, targeting many stakeholders and supporting many actions. With the approximate amount of €46 million a year at its disposal, the Programme certainly was not able to address all the learning needs of the adult population and corresponding objectives of the LLP in the period 2007-2009. As was already indicated, the EU stresses the importance of lifelong learning and continuous learning of adults. Therefore, it seems vital to provide more funds with the view of ensuring that this sort of learning can take place.

**Table 47. The success rate of applications for actions supported under the sectoral programmes of the Lifelong Learning Programme**

|   | Comenius |      |      | Erasmus |      |      | Leonardo da Vinci* |      |      | Grundtvig |      |      |
|---|----------|------|------|---------|------|------|--------------------|------|------|-----------|------|------|
|   | 2007     | 2008 | 2009 | 2007    | 2008 | 2009 | 2007               | 2008 | 2009 | 2007      | 2008 | 2009 |
| Mobility of learners                                      | n/a      | 50%  | 50%  | n/a     | n/a  | n/a  | 65%                | 58%  | 55%  | 40%       | 45%  | 47%  |
|   |          |      |      |         |      |      | 57%                | 54%  | 49%  |           |      |      |
|   |          |      |      |         |      |      | 63%                | 57%  | 54%  |           |      |      |
| Mobility of staff/teachers/trainers/education specialists | 29%      | 31%  | 30%  | n/a     | n/a  | n/a  | 30%                | 31%  | 31%  | 41%       | 50%  | 41%  |
|   |          |      |      |         |      |      |                    |      |      |           |      |      |
| Partnerships  | n/a      | 50%  | 61%  | -       | -    | -    | -                  | 42%  | 42%  | -         | 45%  | 48%  |
| Multilateral projects                                     | 28%      | 30%  | 26%  | 39%     | 30%  | 33%  | 37%                | 33%  | 31%  | 24%       | 27%  | 23%  |
|   |          |      |      |         |      |      | 23%                | 18%  | 17%  |           |      |      |
| Multilateral networks                                     | 31%      | 30%  | 35%  | 57%     | 67%  | 42%  | 44%                | 32%  | 17%  | 33%       | 22%  | 19%  |

Note: the green highlight marks the success rates above (or equal to) 50%, the yellow highlight - the success rates in the range of 20-50%, the red highlight – success rates below 20%.

\* There are three Leonardo da Vinci mobility actions dealing with learners mobility – “Initial vocational training”, “People in labour market”, and “VET professionals”. As a result, the Leonardo da Vinci column for “Mobility of learners” is split into three rows. The same applies to the column “Multilateral projects”, as Leonardo da Vinci actions “Transfer of innovation projects” and “Development of innovation projects” fall into this category.

Several conclusions could be drawn from all findings. Since the demand for funding considerably exceeds the supply, there is enough room to undertake actions leading to either an increase in funding allocated to sectoral programmes or an increase in cost-effectiveness of separate actions. In any case, the demand is high enough to absorb these changes and produce the desired outcome (if the aim to reach the quantified targets can be described as such). If none of these actions take place, the current size

of the budget will prove to be not appropriate/proportionate to what the Programme is set out to achieve.

*Operational question No. 16.2: Are the funds allocated proportionally across the sub-programmes in relation to their level of effectiveness and utility?*

In order to decide whether a re-allocation of funding across the sub-programmes should be undertaken, a sound comparison between actions of a similar kind and the effectiveness and utility of these actions is necessary. Meeting this pre-condition is certainly difficult as each sectoral programme addresses a different target group and the outcomes and outputs of their actions are not identical. As a result, our analysis dealt with a very limited set of actions, namely, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci and Grundtvig (Comenius could not be included in the comparison because relevant data was not available at the time of the evaluation) mobility actions. All of these actions were further divided into two sub-sets of actions – actions dealing with learner mobility and actions dealing with mobility of staff and teachers. Only then was a comparison between the unit-costs and the utility (operationalised as the institutional perception on the impact of participation in certain mobility actions to the development of professional and key competences of institutional beneficiaries) made. A first sub-set of mobility actions comprise of Leonardo da Vinci PLM, IVT and Erasmus Student mobility for placements and Student mobility for studies actions. Leaving the last action a little aside (Student mobility for studies deals with studies, not placements), a comparison between the unit-costs of the remaining actions can be made. Table 48 shows that the mobility action of Leonardo da Vinci ‘People in labour market’ is the most costly among the three analysed actions. Moreover, the unit-costs of both Leonardo da Vinci actions are considerably higher than the unit-costs of Erasmus student mobility for placements. Findings of the interview programme suggest that these differences in the unit costs are the result of a relatively higher grant awarded to PLM and IVT actions (as an incentive to applicants due to unfavourable co-funding opportunities) as well as the shorter duration of mobility.

**Table 48. Ranking of mobility actions (learners) according to the unit-cost variation (from highest per day to lowest unit-cost per day)**

| Rank | Action                          | Sectoral programme | Unit-cost per day* (EUR) |
|------|---------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 1    | PLM**                           | Leonardo da Vinci  | 90,67                    |
| 2    | IVT**                           | Leonardo da Vinci  | 47,51                    |
| 3    | Student mobility for placements | Erasmus            | 13,06                    |
| 4    | Student mobility for studies    | Erasmus            | 8,76                     |

\* According to the most recent data available

\*\* PLM – Leonardo da Vinci action ‘People in labour market’; IVT – Leonardo da Vinci action ‘Initial vocational training’

Analysis of the aforementioned mobility actions’ utility suggest that despite its comparatively high unit-costs, Leonardo da Vinci PLM action was not perceived as an action with a high impact on specific and key competences of institutional beneficiaries. Meanwhile participation in Leonardo da Vinci IVT and Erasmus Student mobility for placements could be associated with higher utility in terms of competence development. The same insight applies to Erasmus Student mobility for studies action which was very cost-efficient (low unit-costs) and often mentioned by institutions with a high perception that competences of the institutional beneficiaries had improved.

**Table 49. Ranking of mobility actions (learners) according to their impact on competences (from actions with lowest impact to actions with highest impact)**

| Rank | Action | Sectoral programme | % of institutions with a perception that specific competences of the beneficiaries have improved | % of institutions with a perception that key competences of the beneficiaries have improved |
|------|--------|--------------------|--|---|
| 1    | PLM    | Leonardo da Vinci  | 70.8   | 64.8  |
| 2    | IVT    | Leonardo da        | 90.7   | 82.9  |

| Rank | Action                          | Sectoral programme | % of institutions with a perception that specific competences of the beneficiaries have improved | % of institutions with a perception that key competences of the beneficiaries have improved |
|------|---------------------------------|--------------------|--|---|
|      |                                 | Vinci              |  |   |
| 3    | Student mobility for studies    | Erasmus            | 92.4   | 84.1  |
| 4    | Student mobility for placements | Erasmus            | 94.5   | 84.8  |

The second sub-set of actions comprise of Grundtvig In-service training for adult education staff, Leonardo da Vinci VETPRO and Erasmus staff mobility actions. Unluckily, they are non-comparable, as their activities differ too much. Therefore Table 51 serves only as an illustrative example of the actual unit-costs of the aforementioned actions.

**Table 50. Ranking of mobility actions (teachers and staff) according to the unit-cost variation (from highest per day to lowest unit-cost per day)**

| Rank | Action  | Sectoral programme | Unit-cost per day* (EUR) |
|------|---|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 1    | In-service training for adult education staff | Grundtvig          | 261,36                   |
| 2    | Staff mobility for training                   | Erasmus            | 115,54                   |
| 3    | VETPRO  | Leonardo da Vinci  | 113,57                   |
| 4    | Staff mobility for teaching                   | Erasmus            | 111,23                   |

\* According to the most recent data available

As the analysed mobility actions are non-comparable, their utility perception also serves only as an illustrative example, suggesting that Grundtvig In-service training for adult education staff is not viewed as having a notable impact on institutional beneficiaries competences (especially their key competences).

**Table 51. Ranking of mobility actions (teachers and staff) according to their impact on competences (from actions with lowest impact to actions with highest impact)**

| Rank | Action  | Sectoral programme | % of institutions with a perception that professional competences of the beneficiaries have improved | % of institutions with a perception that key competences of the beneficiaries have improved |
|------|---|--------------------|--|---|
| 1    | In-service training for adult education staff | Grundtvig          | 84.4   | 66.2  |
| 2    | Staff mobility for teaching                   | Erasmus            | 91.6   | 74.2  |
| 3    | VETPRO  | Leonardo da Vinci  | 94.3   | 81.1  |
| 4    | Staff mobility for training                   | Erasmus            | 95.4   | 82.5  |

As has already been noted under Operational Question No. 16.1 above, one more trend is evident from the analysis of mobility action unit-costs (see Annex 7 for more details). In particular, there is a tendency of a unit-cost increase over time in Erasmus and Grundtvig mobility actions. On the other hand, the mobility actions of Leonardo da Vinci display the opposite trend.

To sum up, one should be cautious about making direct conclusions from the above analysis as it does not provide any solid evidence of disparities in the effectiveness or utility of the sectoral programmes. In addition, a number of reasons limiting reliable comparison of the sub-programmes exist. To begin with, the outputs and outcomes of the sectoral programmes are comparable only to a limited extent because their individual actions differ to some extent. Secondly, these actions target different target groups and there are certain differences in terms of eligible expenditure. Finally, the figures concerning improved competences measure only general (rather action-

specific) institutional perceptions. As a result, the above data should not be treated as an argument for funding re-allocations.

Hence, any changes in the structure of the LLP budget should be grounded on more general findings resulting from programme-level analysis. It suggests that in general funds allocated to the LLP sub-programmes are proportional to their effectiveness and utility, therefore, re-allocations should only occur if some sectoral programmes are to be prioritised due to severe shortfalls in reaching their quantified targets. There is a risk that Comenius might be in a need of such support. Another funding re-allocation option is in line with previously discussed findings that certain groups and themes are not properly addressed by the LLP – Comenius partnerships/assistantships for primary, pre-primary or special schools, Leonardo da Vinci mobility actions, targeting disadvantaged groups, could gain more attention.

The results of the survey of the National Authorities and National Agencies suggest that the size of the Grundtvig budget for the period 2007-2009 was the most inappropriate to what this sectoral programme was set out to achieve. As a result, the future Programme should be in line with current developments (a substantial increment of the Grundtvig budget in 2009 coincided with substantial progress of this programme towards its quantified target) and allocate adequate funding to this sectoral programme.

Set of evaluation questions No. 17 in the ToR: Could the use of other policy instruments or mechanisms have provided better cost-effectiveness?

*Operational question No. 17.1: Could the use of other policy instruments have provided better cost-effectiveness?*

In the Inception Report the evaluator selected the processes of the OMC for the analysis of policy instruments alternative to the LLP. A comparison of the centralised actions of the Programme and the OMC processes indicates that the OMC would not have better cost-effectiveness. In addition, the possibility of integration of certain academic and research-oriented actions (e.g. in the Jean Monnet programme) into the FP7 was assessed. Evidence does not suggest that this instrument would provide better cost-effectiveness in achieving the desired outputs or results. It is important to note that the findings in this section are based on the case studies and interviews.

The evaluation of relevance found that cooperation and interchange between the Participating Countries would be considerably lower and more fragmented in the absence of the LLP (see the assessment under operational question No. 2.1.). One of the obvious advantages of the integrated Programme is multilateral partnerships and sectoral synergies (although they are not sufficiently exploited among the centralised and decentralised actions). Therefore, this part of the LLP intermediate objective would be achieved less effectively. As discussed in the relevance part of the evaluation, the main channels for achieving the desired results and impacts are mobility at individual level, and interchange and cooperation at the institutional and national levels. These directly relate to the intervention logic of the LLP. In the absence of the Programme the OMC would not achieve the results and impacts at the individual and institutional levels.

Also, the processes of the OMC would not achieve the similar result of the centralised actions at a lower cost. The OMC processes are based on two main implementation mechanisms: European benchmarking and evidence-based policy making as well as peer learning activities and other fora of learning. In the absence of the projects supported by the Programme these mechanisms would only be applied at the level of main EU-level and national policy makers. The LLP complements OMC in education

and training by adding a ‘bottom-up’ dimension (see operational questions 6.1 and 6.2) through spillover effects starting at the individual and institutional levels. In addition, the relatively high visibility (e.g. established labels of Erasmus and Jean Monnet) and awareness of the sub-programmes compared to the OMC processes allows a larger contribution to reaching such objectives as the quality of education in the EU.

However, there is evidence that alternative policy instruments could be considered to some centralised actions of the Programme. For instance, the action of studies and comparative research could be implemented using other policy instruments (e.g. the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme) or implementation instruments (see below). Some alternatives were considered for the Jean Monnet KA2 programme (calls for proposals for operating grants and calls for proposals for projects, see the case study), yet the analysis has shown that changing the mode of operation of this activity would be neither more efficient nor politically feasible.

It is important to note although the OMC processes are treated as a policy alternative to the Programme under this question, the case study on the Programme-policy link indicates that these alternatives are to some extent complementary. For instance, some actions of the Transversal programme (e.g. the framework procedure under the action of policy cooperation) are directly contributing to European cooperation in the area of education and training policy (see operational questions 6.1 and 6.2), as well as to bringing European objectives into national policy documents (see operational question 8.2). The coordination of different policy instruments shows that some synergy effects are possible in achieving the objective of cooperation and interchange in the area of education and training. Better use of Transversal KA1 can allow the development of more effective projects based on the knowledge of previously implemented actions, projects and results achieved.

With regard to Jean Monnet, the case studies showed that the logic of supporting institutions provides stability and is supported politically. In addition, the Jean Monnet actions analysed achieve the results they aim at, and enjoy high visibility within and beyond the EU, which contributes to the prevalence of the distinct Jean Monnet label. The analysis shows that modifications in the LLP design should not be performed at the level of policy instruments. Key findings about the use of alternative mechanisms are summarised in the table below.

**Table 52. Assessment of alternative policy instruments**

| Centralised actions of the Programme   |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Strengths of <i>status quo</i></b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Multi-level approach</li> <li>- Bottom-up dimension</li> <li>- Pooling of resources</li> <li>- Visibility</li> </ul>   |  |
| <b>Weaknesses of <i>status quo</i></b> | High costs;<br>Insufficient synergies and sharing of experience   | Overlaps with academic programmes supported by the EU  |
| <b>Alternative</b>                     | <b>OMC</b>  | Integration of some Jean Monnet and KA1 transversal actions under FP7  |
| <b>Strengths of alternative</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Emphasis on peer review and learning</li> <li>- System-level focus</li> </ul>  | Clearer relationship between inputs and outputs  |
| <b>Weaknesses of alternative</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cooperation would be more fragmented; Multilateral partnerships would not take place to the same extent;</li> <li>- Loss of visibility and ‘labels’;</li> <li>- Loss of the bottom-up dimension</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fragmentation of the education process due to shorter implementation periods;</li> <li>- Loss of quality label</li> <li>- Visibility diluted</li> </ul> |
| <b>Results of analysis</b>             | Not recommended as a replacement of the current instrument  | Not recommended as a replacement of the current instrument; rather, more extensive synergies desirable   |

*Operational question No. 17.2: Could the use of other implementation mechanisms have provided better cost-effectiveness?*

The activities of the LLP can be implemented through the following implementation mechanisms: general/specific calls for proposals and operating grants, calls for tenders and experts (for evaluating proposals, evaluating and monitoring projects, etc.), framework contracts or directly by the Commission, which may organise certain actions facilitating the implementation of the LLP. In the inception phase of the evaluation the contractor selected a limited number of implementation instruments: general calls for proposals and direct support provided by the European Commission under KA1 of the Transversal programme and the Jean Monnet programme. In addition, special thematic calls for proposals were added at the later stages.

Cost-effectiveness could be improved by either reducing the costs or increasing the effects. In discussing cost-effectiveness, it is important to keep in mind the intervention logic (section 3.3) of the programme. Specifically, the LLP aims to achieve change at individual, institutional, national and EU levels. The analysis found that in certain LLP actions (for example, student and staff mobility actions) alternative mechanisms do not match the current ones in cost-effectiveness. The latter represent a well-functioning mechanism of intervention, which features:

- clear and measurable effect;
- relatively low administrative costs (for administration) and administrative burden (for beneficiaries), mostly due to a number of simplifications pertinent to the financial management (such as lump sums, flat rates, etc.).

The relative cost-effectiveness could be further improved by increasing the budget available to these actions (previous increases are proven to lead to significant progress – obviously, given there is an unmet demand for assistance which definitely exists in some Participating Countries and especially in EU12). Since the increase and/or re-allocations in budgets are subject to political decisions, one important opportunity is offered by closer coordination between the LLP and EU structural assistance (first and foremost, the European Social Fund) at the Member State level. At present (i.e. for 2007-2013) the differences in regulatory framework do not allow an easy pooling of LLP and EU Structural Funds resources to achieve common policy priorities in the field of lifelong learning; this would be an important area for review for the next programming period. The above-mentioned opportunity was also mentioned by some of the interviewees. Moreover, it is important to note that the Council of the European Union has already highlighted the need for better usage of the possibilities of the European Social Fund for supporting youth mobility, including other ways of widening and diversifying sources of funding (e.g. resorting to different sources of funding, incl. state, regional and local authorities, enterprises, banking institutions, etc.).<sup>103</sup> Better coordination of LLP, other EU and national resources is also a part of Youth on the Move.

At a more specific level, the evaluation found supporting evidence to introduce special thematic calls for proposals, of which at least some could be a part of the newly restructured Transversal programme:

- To address cross-sectoral issues with high political importance, e.g. early school leaving;
- To address horizontal priorities (inclusion of disadvantaged groups, initiatives against discrimination and prejudice);
- To better achieve the objectives of the Transversal programme by introducing more flexibility, cross-action and cross-sectoral cooperation.

As mentioned in the section on effectiveness, question 7.3, horizontal priorities have not been sufficiently addressed through the general calls. While 2010 was designated as the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion, and reducing early school leaving is one of the key policy priorities, addressed in the Lisbon Strategy,

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<sup>103</sup> For example, Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 21 November 2008 on youth mobility, (2008/C 320/03).

Education and Training 2010 strategic framework and the Renewed Social Agenda of the European Commission, the potential of the LLP to contribute to these priorities has not been fully exploited (see also operational question 3.1). Although the success rate of applications which integrate horizontal issues is high, there are no in-built incentives to submit such applications, as this is expensive and difficult to achieve. Therefore a differentiated implementation approach is needed (see the case study on Policy-Programme Link, Annex 3). Transversal KA1 has already used such a mechanism successfully. Special calls for proposals to address horizontal priorities and issues of the highest political importance, especially early school leaving, should be considered. At the same time the requirement to mainstream horizontal priorities into other sub-programmes should be kept.

The challenge for such a mechanism would be the distribution of funds among the multiple horizontal priorities and integrating these special calls into the LLP as a whole. It would also be a challenge to consider under which actions these calls should be introduced and whether this would not lead to fragmentation of the LLP. A better option would be making such special calls cross-sectoral, further promoting cooperation among the relevant sectors of education. An alternative would be introducing a special budget for actions directly relating to the horizontal priorities under the general calls (the general priorities for 2011 already strongly emphasise equal opportunities). In addition, needs analysis (e.g. using Transversal KA2) should identify which groups are relevant in each sector or cross-sectoral programmes, and what their actual needs are. Thematic monitoring on horizontal priorities should be introduced in order to identify the needs of target groups, awareness among responsible institutions and stakeholders, and progress towards the inclusion of horizontal priorities. Clearer benchmarks could also be set. It might be possible to create a virtual community of practice around these thematic analyses to the sectoral programmes so that instead of a snapshot (at best once a year and more often than not retrospective), there would be ongoing cross- project dialogue and development.

Evidence suggests (although more supporting research is needed) that the current structure of the Transversal programme does not reduce fragmentation in education policies and does not provide the best cost-effectiveness. Therefore in this evaluation we considered the option of structuring it along the lines of thematic cross-sectoral calls on languages, ICT, innovation, etc. This would allow expanding or integrating some themes, depending on the needs of the ET community and availability of budget. The evaluation found that:

- 1) The brand 'Transversal' is not very well recognised, having replaced the more popular Minerva and Lingua brands (operational question 12).
- 2) Synergies between sectoral programmes and Transversal are limited. Our interviews and desk research (including the National Reports) suggest that there are no built-in incentives for cross-sectoral cooperation and cooperation between sub-programmes that fall under the scope of the National Authorities, and the Transversal programme. More specifically, our interviewee from the KA3 management suggests that KA3 on ICT is isolated and disconnected from other sub-programmes in addition to being under-funded.
- 3) Synergies currently depend on how the management tries to push for them, implying that no built-in incentives for synergies exist.
- 4) Meanwhile, the needs of target groups, which are of direct relevance to the actions of the Transversal programme (e.g. upgrading language skills), are pressing - linguistic barriers constitute the main obstacle to mobility across all the sub-programmes.
- 5) The outputs and results that the Transversal programme is aiming to achieve are mainly tools and infrastructure for increasing the quality of education in the EU, as well as interchange, cooperation and mobility. These can be better developed in the proposed structure, as it would not impose artificial division among the thematic areas.



- 6) In the case of the ICT theme whilst logically KA3 of the Transversal Programme could be completely mainstreamed the time is not yet ripe since more focused and innovative developments are needed. There are still a number of important issues to focus on. Educational systems cannot be closed to the added value of digital media, and the work is also relevant to a number of areas including e-government, e-health and issues pertaining to the elderly. ICT cannot simply be a technical and administrative system, but must respond to the ways in which people (especially young people) use it. There is still the need for a transversal role and this also reflects the position of international bodies such as the OECD and the World Bank, who put a lot of emphasis on innovation. Many Member States of the EU take the same position. A transversal theme need not be exclusively ICTs and it could be re-conceptualised around the themes of creativity and innovation.

The advantages of special calls for tenders or proposals vis-à-vis the current sub-programme division into key actions have the following advantages:

- More flexible structure (new thematic focus areas can be introduced or close thematic focus areas can be merged);
- Better use of existing comparable outputs (e.g. innovative language teaching methodologies, which are developed by education institutions, Member States and the private sector) in order not to duplicate efforts;
- Better programme-policy link through more responsiveness to EU and national priorities, as well as new ways of influencing the system level;
- Sustainability of management, as the existing institutions under Transversal would be employed in managing the calls and carrying out thematic monitoring, as well as acting as a support structure and agent for change;
- Dissemination, exploitation and mainstreaming would be an integral part required in the calls, therefore addressing the need for better use of programme results at the system level;
- Links to sectoral programmes could be created in real time within virtual communities of practice linked to thematic projects.

Some evidence under the EU-level case study of the Programme-policy link was collected to show that the action of studies and comparative action could be implemented under other implementation instruments (e.g. through specific calls for proposals, calls for tenders and the framework procedure rather than the general calls for proposals). Also, with a view to strengthening the link between the sectoral programmes and the EU or national policy, the instrument of calls for tenders could be used under the decentralised actions (where the outputs of projects aimed at policy changes at the systemic level could be identified in advance).

The comparison of direct financial support under KA2 of the Jean Monnet Programme and alternative implementation mechanisms in the case study carried out shows that other mechanisms would not have provided better cost-effectiveness. Although a more direct relationship between financial inputs and outputs would be desirable, the main advantages of the currently used mechanism stem from the concentration of limited financial resources in several institutions with a proven record of excellence. This implementation approach allowed for long-term planning and establishing a quality label, which in turn leads to a better reach of target groups and easier dissemination of the results. In addition, the operating grant is given with full respect to the institutions' academic independence, allowing more flexible responses to the needs of the academic community and the general public. Therefore, the introduction of other implementation mechanisms is not likely to produce the same outputs at a lower cost.

The comparison of the main alternative mechanisms identified is provided in the table below.



**Table 53. Assessment of alternative implementation mechanisms**

|  | General calls  |  | Operating grants to support specified institutions dealing with issues relating to European integration   |  |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| <b>Strengths of <i>status quo</i></b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identifying sector-specific needs and challenges</li> <li>- Effective in dealing with vertical priorities</li> </ul>  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sustainability and long-term planning;</li> <li>- Visibility and quality label;</li> <li>- Balance between decentralisation (incl. academic independence) and commitment to relevant research results;</li> <li>- Concentration of financial resources.</li> </ul> |  |
| <b>Weaknesses of <i>status quo</i></b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No built-in incentives to address equal opportunities (except in Grundtvig and some specific actions);</li> <li>- Sectoral fragmentation not always relevant (e.g. in developing ICT for disadvantaged groups);</li> <li>- Insufficient needs assessment of the target groups and dissemination in dealing with the horizontal priorities.</li> </ul> |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Insufficient synergies and sharing of experience;</li> <li>- Unclear relationship between inputs and outputs;</li> <li>- Potential overlaps with academic programmes supported by the EU (e.g. FP7).</li> </ul>  |  |
| <b>Alternative</b>                     | Special thematic calls for proposals   | Special budget for projects addressing horizontal priorities under the general calls for proposals   | Calls for proposals for projects  | Calls for proposals for operating grants   |
| <b>Strengths of alternative</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clearer benchmarks and expected effects;</li> <li>- Innovative products and services could be developed;</li> <li>- Cross-sectoral approach and integration;</li> <li>- Better identification of the actual needs of target groups;</li> <li>- More effective partnerships beyond formal.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Targeted support;</li> <li>- Competitive advantage for projects which successfully integrate horizontal priorities;</li> <li>- Incentives for development of innovative products and services;</li> <li>- Does not result in fragmentation of the LLP;</li> <li>- Identifies the most relevant groups.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clear relationship between inputs and outputs;</li> <li>- Competition among institutions, potentially leading to higher quality;</li> <li>- Possibility to quantify targets.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clearer relationship between inputs and outputs;</li> <li>- Competition among institutions.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Weaknesses of alternative</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- May reduce incentives to include these priorities in the general calls for proposals and other actions;</li> <li>- Risk of duplication with the projects financed from the structural funds projects and national policies/programmes.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rules of applying may not be clear to applicants;</li> <li>- Risk of duplication with the projects financed from the structural funds projects and national policies/ programmes.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fragmented education process;</li> <li>- Losing the quality label and close connections with policymakers;</li> <li>- Losing continuity;</li> <li>- Causing confusion among the target groups.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More fragmentation in the activities;</li> <li>- Losing continuity and long-term planning;</li> <li>- Very long-term operating grants would not be fundamentally different from the current mechanism.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Results of analysis</b>             | Recommended for the successor programme  | Not recommended due to fragmentation and management complication - other incentives to address horizontal priorities can be introduced   | No proof of considerably higher cost-effectiveness, no political feasibility. Could be considered for some actions  | No proof of higher cost-effectiveness  |

## Relevance

### *Relevance of the Programme objectives to policy priorities and socio-economic needs*

The objectives of the LLP remain highly relevant. First, they are closely linked with the priorities identified in the EU-level strategic policy documents. Second, the LLP objectives are also coherent and supportive to the policy developments in the Participating Countries. More specifically, the National Authorities argue that internationalisation and higher quality of education and training are among the most important objectives of the LLP within national contexts. In addition, higher accessibility to the learning opportunities and learning of foreign languages are seen as very important Comenius objectives; promotion of employability and learning of foreign languages are emphasised among the Erasmus objectives; promotion of employability and participation in the European labour market, higher accessibility to learning opportunities and enhanced attractiveness of vocational education and training stand out from the Leonardo da Vinci objectives; higher accessibility to the learning opportunities, promotion of non-formal and informal learning, learning of foreign languages, adaptability and flexibility in the labour market are very important Grundtvig objectives. Third, from the point of view of organisational beneficiaries the most relevant LLP priorities include: promotion of active participation in lifelong learning and development of quality, performance and innovation in provision of the lifelong learning opportunities. Fourth, individual beneficiaries of the LLP also argue that the Programme is pertinent to their needs, particularly to language learning, personal fulfilment and developing a sense of European citizenship. These findings are strongly supported by the results of the desk research, synthesis of National Reports, survey of National Authorities and NAs, organisational and individual beneficiaries.

The prospective analysis revealed that the logic of intervention of the future generation of Community programmes in the area of lifelong learning could be enhanced in several areas. First, objectives of the LLP should be very closely linked with the priorities of ET 2020. Successful implementation of the latter priorities depends on a combination of factors (including policy developments in the Member States) and LLP it is just one of them. Accordingly, ET 2020 should be treated as higher-level intermediate objectives of the future LLP and the impact monitoring indicators should seek to assess the extent to which the LLP has contributed to the achievement of ET 2020 priorities.

Second, the number of objectives should be reduced and the objectives should be streamlined with the view of focusing on concrete outputs and outcomes. Currently, the LLP has 24 specific objectives and 33 operational objectives. The majority of the operational objectives overlap, i.e. they seek the same outcomes in different sectors. The logical links between higher level and lower level objectives are weak. Accordingly, the specific objectives should outline the main results and operational objectives should reflect the key outputs to be produced by the future generation of LLP.

Table 54 below provides indicative suggestions regarding the intervention logic of the future generation of the LLP. The intermediate objectives (the first column of Table 54) follow the priorities of ET 2020. The specific objectives (the first row of Table 54) focus on three main types of instruments of the LLP: interchange, cooperation and mobility. The nine operational objectives show what types of LLP outputs could contribute to the intermediate objectives (implementation of ET 2020 priorities), and outline concrete areas for the use of interchange, cooperation and mobility instruments. This



facilitates analysis of the linkages between the intermediate, specific and operational objectives. The list of operational objectives (as provided in Table 54) is based on streamlined operational objectives of the current LLP and DG EAC working document<sup>104</sup>. This list requires further discussion and consideration.

**Table 54. Suggestions regarding the intervention logic of the future generation of the LLP**

| <b>Specific objectives</b><br><br><b>Inter-mediate objectives (ET2020)</b>  | <b>Interchange and cooperation:</b><br><b>1.</b> Stimulate high quality cooperation between providers of learning opportunities, enterprises, social partners and other relevant bodies throughout Europe;<br><b>2.</b> Stimulate interchange of policy developments on European level in lifelong learning and ensuring that the results of the LLP are appropriately recognised, demonstrated and implemented on a wide scale.   | <b>Mobility:</b><br><b>3.</b> Stimulate high quality mobility of pupils, students, teaching staff and persons involved in continuous VET and other forms of learning in all educational sectors.                   |
|---|--|--|
| <b>1.</b> Contribute to making lifelong learning and mobility a reality;  | 1) Support exchange of good practices, implementation of agreed EU reference tools, recognition of competences and activities contributing to the creation of flexible learning pathways;<br>2) Support the learning of modern foreign languages.  | 9) Support a transnational learning mobility within and outside the EU with the emphasis on access and quality of mobility;<br>10) Support the mobility of teachers and trainers and education and training staff. |
| <b>2.</b> Facilitate improvements in the quality and efficiency of education and training;                        | 3) Increase the quality and the European dimension of staff training;<br>4) Facilitate the development, transfer and adoption of innovative practices, including the use of ICT, in pedagogical approaches and management of organisations providing learning opportunities;<br>5) Support the activities, which will contribute to the opening-up of the EU education and training systems;<br>6) To stimulate teaching, research and reflection activities in the field of European integration studies. |  |
| <b>3.</b> Promote equity, social cohesion and active citizenship;   | 7) Support the activities aimed at creating opportunities for second chance learning, empowerment and provision of access to education and training to everybody, including through non-formal and informal learning.  |  |
| <b>4.</b> Enhance creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training. | 8) Enhance cooperation and involvement of social partners, enterprises and other relevant bodies in learning.  |  |

*The European Added Value of the LLP*

The evaluation revealed that the European added value of the LLP is considerable in three major areas. First, in the absence of the LLP policy cooperation and interchange between the Participating Countries would be considerably lower and fragmented. Second, the LLP supported the development of a European dimension in education and training. The value added of the European dimension is reflected by: more intensive cooperation between providers of education, changing structures and practices of the educational institutions (including development of internationalisation strategies, introducing support structures to mobile learners, etc.), catalysing the emergence of new national and multi-national mobility programmes and creating a sense of European citizenship among mobile learners. Third, the LLP complements

<sup>104</sup> DG Education and Culture, Roadmap: Initial IA screening & planning of further work, Brussels, 07/07/2010.

similar international, bilateral and national programmes (for those educational sectors and those countries in which these programmes exist). These findings are strongly supported by the results of the desk research, case studies, synthesis of National Reports, interviews and surveys National Authorities and NAs, organisational and individual beneficiaries.

*Do the Programme objectives and design provide proper links to policy initiatives and political priorities?*

Retrospective evaluation revealed that overall the links between the LLP objectives and the priorities established in the Guidelines for Growth and Jobs, ET 2010, other EU-level and national strategies and initiatives were rather strong. However, the actions and the structure of the LLP did not actively contribute to two main priorities:

- The Guidelines for Growth and Jobs and ET 2010 strongly emphasised the *openness and links between different education and training sectors*. Although the objectives of the LLP also recognise these priorities, the sectoral structure of the Programme does not actively support such approach. Each sub-programme is focused on a specific education and training sector, but there was virtually an absence of instruments linking these sectors.
- The Guidelines for Growth and Jobs and ET 2010 prioritise accessibility as well as increased participation in lifelong learning by those, who are not likely to explore the possibilities provided by education and training (the low skilled, the elderly etc.). Formally, these objectives are also emphasised by the LLP. However, the main participants in the LLP include those, who are already in education and training, i.e. providers of lifelong learning opportunities or the learners themselves. Hence, those who have not been actively involved in lifelong learning are left at the margins of the Programme.

The prospective analysis revealed that the next generation of strategic documents, namely ET 2020, also emphasise openness, links between different education sectors as well as accessibility to lifelong learning opportunities. In order to avoid the above discussed weaknesses, the actions and structure of the future generation of the LLP should be reconsidered. These findings are moderately supported by the results of the desk research, interviews and synthesis of the National Reports.

*Coherence of efforts, synergies and duplications of the sub-programmes*

The evaluation revealed that integration of previous programmes into a single Lifelong Learning Programme has considerably strengthened coordination and coherence of efforts. Nevertheless, there is also considerable room for intensifying and deepening the coordination between the units of the DG EAC as well as between the EACEA and NAs. There are important synergies between the sub-programmes, which could not have occurred if these sub-programmes were implemented separately. However, the most visible synergies occur in the areas related to administration and promotion of the LLP. Further exploitation of synergetic effects is prevented by the segmentation of the LLP: significant “walls” between the sub-programmes and between the decentralised and centralised measures persist. Evaluation did not find any considerable evidence that the sub-programmes and funded actions duplicate each other. In fact, integration of the previous programmes and development of unified databases proved to be instrumental in avoiding duplications. These findings are moderately supported by the results of the desk research, case studies, synthesis of National Reports, interviews and surveys National Authorities, NAs and organisational beneficiaries.



## Effectiveness

### *Progress towards the LLP objectives and targets*

Being of an unprecedentedly high scale and complexity, the LLP aims to address the needs of a wide variety of target groups. However, in the period 2007-2009 the Programme did not equally advance with respect to all of its ambitious objectives and targets. To start with objectives, evidence suggests that the LLP significantly contributed to fostering “interchange, cooperation and mobility between education and training systems”. The participation in LLP activities led to an improvement of content/curriculum in education and training as well as improved practices and techniques in education and training. Furthermore, the projects supported under the decentralised and centralised actions of the Programme corresponded to the objectives and priorities of the different sub-programmes. This conclusion is strongly supported by the desk research, surveys, interviews and analysis of the monitoring data.

The LLP provides various necessary skills for its beneficiaries, but its contribution to the quality of lifelong learning and European cohesion is uneven and still sub-optimal. While the contribution to these spheres is significant, several gaps were revealed in this evaluation: focus on quantity in sectoral programmes sometimes occurs at the expense of quality; good quality projects were turned down or faced implementation obstacles. Even more importantly, the opportunities of potential beneficiaries to participate were uneven by country, as well as limited by socio-economic status and special needs for individuals, experience and resources for institutions.

Despite good progress towards the objectives and a rather good use of the earmarked funds (up to 96-100% in the first three years of the Programme implementation), there is a risk that some of the Programme quantified targets will not be reached, owing to the insufficient size of the LLP budget and other important barriers (such as increasing unit-costs or less effective use of the earmarked funding). The risk of not achieving its target might be highest for the Comenius programme. Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci are in a better position, although increasing unit-costs may negatively impact their chances of achieving their targets. Meanwhile, as the implementation of new Grundtvig actions continues to gain momentum, this sectoral programme faces the lowest risk of not achieving its quantified target.

The evaluation asked whether the needs of various target groups are addressed, with one of the needs being usability of skills at later stages of life. The analysis shows that Leonardo da Vinci was the most successful in providing career benefits for its participants, while Comenius and Erasmus stood out in enhancing social and communicative skills. The synthesis of the National Reports indicates that benefits on individual participant careers and employability are not yet sufficient, due to limited involvement of enterprises and, possibly, the inability of the labour market to absorb specific competences acquired (such as proficiency in less widely used and taught languages, European dimension of learning, etc) - at least in terms of tangible career benefits. This occurred despite the importance of personal and social competences in the labour market. Further initiatives in bringing education and the labour market closer are needed, for which it is essential to meet the objectives in flagship EU initiatives. Further research should establish the exact links between the competences fostered by the LLP and the performance of its beneficiaries in the labour market (the comparable data collected for this evaluation are mainly based on self-perception; hence the finding is only moderately supported).

Our data show that the main target group, the formal education and training community, is being reached to a large extent. On the other hand, there are several important obstacles to wider and more inclusive participation, and those are addressed



unevenly across the sub-programmes, Participating Countries and fields of education. The prospective analysis of main external factors which affect the achievement of the Programme objectives and could be controlled by the Programme stakeholders is summarised in Table 55 below. The findings are strongly supported by the synthesis of the National Reports, case studies, desk research and to some extent the surveys.

**Table 55. Importance and possible impact of main external factors to the achievement of the Programme objectives**

| No. | External factors (assumptions/risks)                                 | Importance of the external factor (very important, important, unimportant) | Possible impact of the external factor (high, moderate, low) |
|-----|--|--|--|
| 1.  | Language barriers (risk)   | Very important   | High   |
| 2.  | Other mobility barriers (risk)                                       | Important  | Moderate   |
| 3.  | Development of national education and training policies (assumption) | Important  | Moderate   |
| 4.  | Negative effects of the economic downturn (risk)                     | Important  | Moderate   |

First, language barriers have been identified as the most important risk affecting the achievement of the Programme targets and objectives with regard to mobility. They should be addressed under the education and training policy as well as during the Programme implementation. Having in mind that funds for this purpose can hardly be increased, there is a need to better streamline and coordinate language learning under the LLP, as well as use other resources. Namely, in the next programming period:

- Language courses could be taken out of sectoral programmes and integrated into transversal actions so that all learners (particularly those taking part in longer mobilities, such as Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci, but also beyond the LLP, such as Erasmus Mundus, Marie Curie) can have equal access to these courses. A distinction could be made according to how the language will be used. If it is the language of instruction, such training could remain sectoral (academic, VET-related language). Meanwhile, if the training is given to help learners and teachers adapt to their new environment, it could be cross-sectoral.
- Education systems in the EU should be further unified. Universities should be encouraged to introduce more courses in more widely taught languages (English, German and French). For example, this could be taken into account more as universities apply for Erasmus funding. SME managers and teachers at VET schools should be able to benefit from various sources of funding to create an environment which is welcoming to mobile learners.
- Particular emphasis should be placed on mobility multipliers. While it has been identified that academic mobility of university students is not only on track, but also produces spillover effects, in the next programming period it is important to focus on the mobility of academic staff, so that they can encourage learner mobility, develop courses in foreign languages and joint degrees.
- The LLP should strive to achieve that all future foreign language teachers in the EU have an opportunity to spend a part of their educational pathway abroad, and all people who are studying to become teachers of their native language have an opportunity to do an internship in another EU Member State. Future language teachers could be prioritised over other learners (for example, according to our case study of Comenius Assistantships, future language teachers are already prioritised in Bulgaria).
- E-learning could precede mobility and be made available to all mobile learners and teachers. This policy is already being piloted for Erasmus students in Germany (see the case study).

Second, other mobility barriers are particularly burdensome to learners from candidate countries like Turkey. It is strongly recommended that an LLP participant card be introduced in order to facilitate their access to various services. Cooperation on visa issuance should be strengthened so that administrative issues never hinder educational mobility. Initiatives for this should be already taken in the current programming period.

Third, the development of national education and training policies was recognised as a positive factor. Our case studies, the synthesis of the National Reports and interviews strongly suggest that, given the limited funds, there is a need for better coordination at the national level. Development of national policies should be better promoted by the Programme through better use of the Programme results at the policy level as well as strengthening links between the Programme and the EU-level or national policies in the area of lifelong learning.

Fourth, while the effects of the economic downturn are expected to decrease, some countries will be facing long-term fiscal constraints. It is important to ensure that their learners are not put in a position of disadvantage due to lack of national co-funding. Streamlining and channelling the limited resources to disadvantaged learners and strategically important groups can be considered for the next programming period, while other learners should be able to use more beneficial loans to co-finance their mobility. The EU Member States should receive assistance in making their HE or VET loans portable.

In addition to external risks to be addressed, some weaknesses of the current arrangement also hinder its successful implementation:

- The biggest problem identified was “social selectivity” of mobility actions, as insufficiently large grants require co-financing from individual beneficiaries, thus disadvantaging certain groups of learners and to some extent staff.
- Incentives for the participation of disadvantaged persons are not sufficient, and hence the contribution to key EU targets of reducing early school leaving and ensuring key competences for all is limited (more achievements in this respect can be observed in Grundtvig);
- It has been observed that the Programme objectives do not always reflect the needs of some target groups sufficiently, especially specific institutional beneficiaries such as enterprises or the third sector. This is particularly the case when education or upgrading capacities of learners are not their primary aim (see the Synthesis of the National Reports). On the other hand, their inclusion is a priority. In addition, although the institutional beneficiaries surveyed indicate high levels of correspondence between the Programme’s objectives and their own goals, the survey relies on self-reporting by those who have already benefited. We therefore cannot predict to what extent the Programme’s objectives correspond to the needs of the education and training community, especially that which concerns informal and non-formal education.

More focus on the quality of mobility and reduced quantitative pressure would help to better meet the needs of the target groups, thus enhancing the effectiveness and utility of the Programme. As the synthesis of the National Reports shows, insufficient quality can be a discouraging factor for highly motivated participants. In addition, contribution to better quality education and training is among the LLP specific objectives. The following steps should be taken in the successor programme:

- Mechanisms for the recognition and validation of competences, including those acquired through non-formal education, should become an integral part of the Programme implementation. This would produce more tangible effects on the employability and career of the participants;
- More outreach to institutions providing non-formal and informal education should be encouraged, as most adult education takes place in enterprises and non-formal education providers. Associations and networks of enterprises



should be better involved in the Programme implementation and act as intermediaries between the different management bodies and enterprises;

- To achieve qualitative objectives and systemic impact, commitment to quality on behalf of all participants should be required (e.g. in school partnerships, placements in enterprises, etc. – see the synthesis of the National Reports and the case study on Comenius partnerships for problems arising).

The objectives of the successor Programme should be better aligned with ET 2020. To achieve this, the successor Programme should focus on 'width' (in terms of access and making lifelong learning an opportunity for all) and 'depth' (quality, acquisition of competences) of mobility, interchange and cooperation. In terms of access, mobility should be divided, as suggested earlier, to short-term (up to 1 month) and long-term (around 6 months) exchanges. The contractor proposes this structure based on the evidence (particularly from case studies, expert assessment and the National Reports), taking into account that:

- Staff replacement issues, difficulties in including unemployed and other disadvantaged persons call for more flexible mobility periods.
- On the other hand, total flexibility would complicate allocation of grants and administration.
- Currently two types of mobility can be identified - visits and short-term exchange in Comenius, Grundtvig, some actions in other mobility actions on one hand, and learning mobility in Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci on the other hand. They could be better streamlined into a dual structure, allowing some modifications if necessary.

Shorter mobility periods would allow inclusion of more diverse learning providers (including primary education institutions, small institutions struggling with the need to replace their staff, non-formal education institutions) and learners (including those with carer responsibilities or special needs, non-EU citizens subject to visa/ residency requirements, etc), as can be concluded from the National Reports. This suggestion should be considered in the successor programme.

#### *Better reaching the target groups of the Programme*

The inclusion of certain disadvantaged groups still remains a challenge. The analysis has shown that projects with an equal opportunities dimension have rather high chances of being selected, but the number of such projects submitted is very low (integrating horizontal policies is perceived as expensive and/or requires innovative approaches), and horizontal priorities relating to equal opportunities are perceived as irrelevant by most institutional beneficiaries. This is despite the LLP Decision explicitly saying that the LLP should combat discrimination and prejudice, and promote equality.

Multiple sources strongly suggest that there is a pressing need for better integration of the horizontal priorities, as well as EU education and training priorities relating to social cohesion. This could be achieved by 'soft' and 'hard' measures. 'Soft' measures include improvement of guidance and training at all levels (NAs, institutional beneficiaries, partners), more active networking, exchange of good practices, needs analysis and thematic monitoring, as well as better dissemination. 'Hard' measures are targeted approaches to horizontal policies through specific instruments, e.g. special calls for proposals, prioritised funding to address the needs of learners with special needs or early school leavers (as reducing early school leaving to no more than 10% by 2020 (especially among disadvantaged social groups) is one of the EU's key priorities), incentives to include special schools. This is essential in meeting the demands on the European education and training systems to prepare people for lifelong learning and promote both excellence and equity (as highlighted in the Youth on the Move flagship initiative). Political priority has already been given to these themes in the general calls for 2011, but, as our surveys and an interview with a responsible person at the European Commission show, equal opportunities and access to education issues are very complex. There is a need to single out some themes of particular importance. The



LLP actions on studies and research should be better utilised to identify the needs of the relevant target groups.

Including less experienced and underrepresented education providers (e.g. pre-primary and special schools) remains a challenge. More progress in this respect could be achieved by focusing on meeting the demand for interchange, mobility and cooperation (widening participation, including inexperienced applicants, aligning the LLP with other policy instruments), and better involving social partners, enterprises and local authorities. It is important to direct good quality applications addressing important issues in education to the matching sectoral or transversal, centralised or decentralised actions. Currently some applications are rejected either for not meeting the exact requirements of the actions they apply to, or due to lack of funds. This could be improved in the current programming period.

Evaluation data show that the beneficiaries were highly satisfied with the outputs and results of the Programme. The high level of client satisfaction was confirmed by the survey data and reinforced by the Yearly NA Reports. Around two thirds of institutional and individual beneficiaries were very satisfied with their participation in the Programme and slightly less than one third are rather satisfied. Therefore, an absolute majority (96%) of the beneficiaries was satisfied with their participation in the Programme.

#### *Contribution to the EU education and training priorities as well as the European Educational Area*

The interim evaluation demonstrated that in the period 2007-2009 the Programme was contributing to all the priorities of ET 2010. Its contribution was stronger to the priority of “Opening up education and training systems to the wider world”, but weaker to the priority of “Facilitating the access of all to education and training systems”. The LLP became a major driving force in the internationalisation of education, and the beneficiaries of the Programme are highly satisfied with the benefits of mobility and other actions. Furthermore, the Programme enabled an increasing volume of mobility and cooperation in the European Educational Area in terms of grants awarded under the LLP. The LLP supported important initiatives of transversal and sectoral cooperation at the EU level, including the Bologna and Copenhagen processes. This conclusion is strongly supported by various sources of information (desk research, the monitoring information, the survey and interview programmes).

The synthesis of the National Reports pointed out that the largest impact of the LLP decentralised actions was found at the individual and organisational level with the impact at the system level being rather small or moderate. Continued cooperation and interchange between the institutions under the LLP was affecting changes of services, pedagogies, contents and practices in the provision of lifelong learning opportunities at the system level, but the scope of these changes was small or moderate, depending on the particular sectoral programme. This conclusion is only moderately supported by the interim evaluation of the LLP.

The achievement of the ET 2010 objectives also depends on the OMC and its effectiveness. The Programme contributed to EU policy in education and training by raising the competences of the main stakeholders as well as informing policy making at the EU or national level under both mechanisms of the OMC influence (European benchmarking and evidence-based policy making as well as of peer learning activities and other fora of learning). KA1 of the Transversal programme is directly aimed at contributing to EU policy (especially the actions of policy cooperation, with the need to improve the effectiveness of studies and comparative research). This conclusion is also strongly supported under the interview programme, the case study programme and the survey programme.



Taking into account the higher political ambition of the EU 2020 strategic framework and national-level commitments (especially quantified targets to be set by the Member States in the area of education and training), there is a need to promote better links between the Programme and EU-level or national lifelong learning policies:

- during implementation of the current Programme up to the end of 2013: strengthen the involvement of national and sub-national policy makers and other stakeholders in the cooperation process at EU level (peer learning activities and other fora of learning) as well as in the implementation of the LLP actions (e.g. by better involving sub-national stakeholders in regional partnerships supported under the decentralised actions or national stakeholders in the actions of policy cooperation under the Transversal programme); improve the use of studies, comparative research and other evidence supported under the LLP in the process of peer learning and policy formulation at the EU level; make better use of the Programme's results at the policy level through better dissemination and exploitation (especially through a special observatory for the LLP);
- in the preparation of the future Programme for the post-2013 period: better align the intervention logic of the future Programme with the Education and Training 2020 priorities, better monitor and evaluate policy impacts of the Programme during its implementation, continue supporting policy cooperation at the EU level under the streamlined Transversal programme.

In addition, it is recognised that increased political ambition of education and training policy in the EU 2020 strategy (especially its headline targets) will improve the contribution of the LLP to EU priorities.

#### *The Programme integration*

The Programme integration has been quite successful. During the period 2007-2009 certain integration occurred across the sectoral programmes, increasing the flexibility of the Programme. However, the Programme has become very complex, necessitating some internal streamlining across main types of actions (mobility and partnerships). Also, integration across the educational sector remains limited, and the lifelong learning perspective is not fully exploited in the LLP. The main benefits of integration occurred in overall management of the Programme (including the dissemination of information to the target groups). Moreover, the high visibility of the previous programmes has been maintained, but the Transversal brand is not yet recognised very well. This conclusion is strongly supported by the interview programme, the survey programme as well as the synthesis of the National Reports.

Therefore, further integration in the future Programme should be pursued, taking into consideration the importance of better connecting formal and non-formal learning into the lifelong learning perspective recognised at the EU level. Three alternatives for further integration of the Programme are described in Table 56 below. These alternatives differ in terms of the Programme objectives, actions, applicants, documents and procedures, financial management as well as institutional responsibility at the national level. Despite different positions and opinions in the participating countries, the alternative of partial integration is supported by the most Participating Countries. According to the survey of the National Authorities and National Agencies, this alternative is supported by 50% of the respondents (12.5% of whom support the status quo, and 37.5% support the alternative of full integration). There is no significant difference among the three groups of the Participating Countries (EU15, EU12, non-EU Participating Countries) with regard to this alternative.

The alternative of partial integration involves integration of some specific and operational objectives of the Programme, the introduction of common types of actions (e.g. mobility, partnerships, projects/networks, accompanying actions) across the sub-programmes, involving new applicants (e.g. companies or regional authorities) under the decentralised actions, further harmonisation in the Programme documents and procedures, making the re-allocation of financial resources more flexible as well

as establishing a single National Agency in additional countries participating in the LLP (where it is possible, taking into account national administrative arrangements). This alternative would ensure a balance between the stability and flexibility of the Programme, high visibility of the sub-programme brands, while enabling more cross-sectoral activity and better access of different target groups (including enterprises) to various activities during the Programme implementation. In addition, it is proposed to pursue thematic integration across the sub-programmes wherever relevant rather than keeping them separated by different target groups.

**Table 56. Three alternatives for further integration of the Programme**

| Alternatives                 | Objectives of the LLP   | Actions of the LLP  | Applicants of the LLP   | Documents and procedures of the LLP                   | Financial management of the LLP   | Institutional responsibility at the national level                                     |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| <b>1.NO CHANGE</b>           |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| <b>2.PARTIAL INTEGRATION</b> | Integrating some specific and operational objectives of the Programme, especially along thematic lines (e.g. languages) | Introducing common types of actions across the sub-programmes | Expanding the range of applicants within the decentralised actions                | Further harmonisation in the documents and procedures | More flexibility in the re-allocation of financial resources inside the Programme | Establishing a single National Agency in additional countries participating in the LLP |
| <b>3.FULL INTEGRATION</b>    | Keeping only Programme-wide objectives  | Introducing common types of actions within the sub-programmes | All applicants could benefit from the different sub-programmes or types of action | Full standardisation of documents and procedures      | No financial allocations set for the sub-programmes at the national level         | The principle of a single National Agency in each participating country                |

Further integration should affect both the Programme content and its implementation. First, with regard to the Programme implementation it is important to continue further harmonisation in the Programme documents, improving cooperation between the Executive Agency and the National Agencies as well as introducing more flexibility in the re-allocation of financial resources inside the Programme (in the implementation period up to the end of 2013). Second, with regard to the Programme content, some Programme-specific objectives should be integrated and common types of actions should be introducing across the sub-programmes, thus reducing the number of objectives and actions in the successor Programme. The future Programme could contain two main types of action: mobility (student/trainee mobility and mobility of staff, future staff and other specialists) and partnerships (bilateral partnership, multi-lateral partnerships, networks, projects).

As long as the LLP remains structured along the sectoral lines, the Transversal programme should be kept in the design of the future Programme. Within the Transversal Programme integration could be pursued by streamlining its structure and using a more flexible and targeted approach to its implementation. Its current structure of key activities in the area of policy cooperation, languages, ICT and dissemination could be replaced by a more targeted approach supporting thematic calls for proposals, calls for tenders and other implementation mechanisms supported by thematic monitoring (based on the long-term or short-term priorities of the Education and Training 2020 set for three-year cycles). This could be linked to creating virtual communities to link in real time to sectoral programmes to achieve maximum synergetic effect in real time. Flexibility of the Transversal programme would help better responding to the needs of the target groups, exploiting as well as creating cross-sectoral links, and increasing its currently limited visibility.

The evaluation has shown that the programme contributes significantly to the horizontal policy of multilingualism and linguistic diversity at several levels. Throughout the Programme, LLP address the topic of multilingualism on the system and organisational level, as well as the individual level. Key Activity 2 of the sectoral programme and the centralised actions of the sectoral programmes target the organisational and systemic levels. The decentralised actions of the sectoral programmes target the language skills of individual beneficiaries directly through language courses or indirectly as a by-product of mobility.

Concerning the future of the programme, the central issue to address is the way that the horizontal policy of multilingualism is embedded in the entire programme. This refers to the extent to which multilingualism and linguistic diversity are mainstreamed as cross-cutting themes into the general activities of the programme, as opposed to an approach where they are targeted directly and specifically.

Based on the evidence collected, it can be concluded that the partial mainstreaming of the horizontal policy complemented by a separate thematic priority in the Transversal Programme is, for the time being, the preferred option. Both mainstreaming in the four sectors as well as a separate approach which opens up opportunities for innovation and for targeted programming, are needed. Importantly, these two approaches need to be bridged effectively, in order to connect the areas of research, innovation and practice. In practice, this means that within a newly structured Transversal Programme in line with partial integration of the programme, language learning and linguistic diversity should be retained as a thematic priority in the future programme. Special cross-sectoral calls for proposals should provide room for projects addressing language learning as a topic. These could however be used more strategically to better complement the efforts undertaken by the sectoral programmes, for example by addressing specific language barriers and exploring possibilities for widening the scope of language learning within the decentralised actions of the sectoral programmes.

At the same time, the sectoral programmes themselves should pay more explicit attention to aspects of multilingualism and linguistic diversity, in both their centralised and decentralised actions, for example by setting up specific language actions or earmarking certain amounts of funds per sectoral programme for language projects. This process can already be emphasised within the current framework of the programme. In the light of further programme integration, the contribution of the LLP to the horizontal policy of multilingualism and linguistic diversity could also be increased by coordinating the relevant (centralised and decentralised) actions of the sectoral programmes and the Transversal Programme more closely. Thematic sharing of outcomes and good practices in the field of language learning between the Transversal Programme and the sectoral programmes combined with targeted monitoring of language outcomes can lead to improvements in the design of actions in the field of the horizontal policy. A strong thematic monitoring component should complement the restructuring.

The survey data and the synthesis of the National Reports strongly supports the conclusion that the LLP and sub-programme brands are widely known among the education and training community, especially the staff and employees of organisations participating in the programme. The Programme integration had a positive influence on the awareness of the sub-programme brands. The brands of the previous actions of the Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci programmes sustain their visibility. The LLP brand as an umbrella brand is becoming stronger. The survey results and interviews indicate that a new Transversal brand is not yet well recognised.

The brands of Comenius, Grundtvig, Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci are valuable communicative assets and should be maintained in the future. The potential of the National Agencies could be better exploited in raising awareness about the support



opportunities and results of the Transversal programme and the centralised actions at the national level. Since the awareness of the sub-programme brands is not uniform in the education and training community, additional efforts are needed to inform the target group of learners about the structure of the LLP. This would contribute to improving the awareness of the LLP in the education and training community.

#### *Dissemination and exploitation*

A lot of emphasis is placed on the importance of dissemination and exploitation to increase the impact of the Programme. At several levels, from project level to centralised EU institutional level, action is taken in order to ensure the further use of the Programme results. While the implementation of dissemination activities is satisfactory, multiple sources strongly suggest that less attention is paid to exploitation of results and mainstreaming into policy, and fewer results are achieved in this area. Improvements in the way D&E is organised and implemented at all of these levels could increase the effectiveness of the efforts and lead to more intensive exploitation of project results. More centralised ownership of exploitation and mainstreaming mechanisms at the Commission, Executive Agency and the National Agencies is to be especially recommended.

In order to achieve this, the creation of an ‘observatory’ for the future Lifelong Learning programme is recommended. Such an observatory could operate centrally and across the sectors to collect and analyse evidence of results of actions in the light of trends on national and European level, prepare policy-relevant content for the European Commission, National Authorities and policy makers, organise seminars and workshops and bring project beneficiaries from different sectors together in thematic working groups. There are different options for the organisational set-up of such an observatory. For example, it could be located within the Commission or the EACEA or alternatively be tendered within a newly structured Transversal programme under the thematic priority of dissemination and exploitation. The advantages and disadvantages of the different options need to be analysed thoroughly before setting up the observatory (in terms of cost effectiveness, responsibilities, deliverance, sustainability and continuity),

In addition, to increasing the competences of Programme beneficiaries (project holders) better exploiting the results of their activities, the evaluation recommends more intensive training of project holders in the area of dissemination and exploitation, and more guidance in the targeting of decision-makers. Steps can already be taken within the current framework to facilitate this improvement. Moreover, it is important that partnerships include the targeted organisation for D&E (horizontal, vertical and transnational) in their activities as much as possible in order to streamline the exploitation process. Finally, closer cooperation between the EACEA, the Commission and National Agencies and between the different sectoral programmes, by sharing knowledge on the outcomes of activities and developments on policy level, can support the process of internal exploitation of results.

In conclusion, many of the recommendations are based on the unmet needs identified, therefore the feasibility of the solutions proposed still needs to be tested. However, evidence strongly suggests that there is a need for a more inclusive approach to education and training (better inclusion of various sectors, actors, disadvantaged groups, non-formal learning) and more focus on sustainable results rather than on only quantitative outputs of mobility.



## Efficiency

### *Overall functioning of the implementation and management structure of the centralised and decentralised actions*

Even though the overall framework of LLP management and control system remains unchanged, the initial years of the Programme were characterised by change of both more substantial and technical requirements applicable to the management of the Programme. This complicated the evaluation of the system as it turns it into an exercise with a 'moving target'. Desk research, surveys and the synthesis of the National Reports strongly support the conclusion that changes in requirements rather than requirements themselves caused a substantial share of the administrative workload and problems, and also that (on the other hand) changes essentially resulted in improvements. As all stakeholders at present agree that from now on the change will be followed by a period of stability, the latter should allow capitalising on many improvements which are still to bring their positive effects.

The synthesis of the National Reports and the survey of the National Authorities point to the conclusion that the role of secondary controls was not clearly defined in the regulatory framework and guidance documents for the 2007-2009 period. This evaluation did not audit or assess the secondary control system aimed at establishing whether it was functioning correctly (this is an audit function) and whether it assures the legality and regularity of the LLP expenditure. However, it established that the level and type of secondary controls substantially varied among different Participating Countries, while underlying control activities in a number of cases led to duplication in control and supervision efforts of the Commission itself. This fact undermined and limited the overall efficiency of the secondary controls system. Importantly, since the exercise of the 2009 declaration of assurance, the situation improved (e.g., quality and comparability of secondary controls among different Participating Countries increased) as a result of revised (complemented) guidance to the National Authorities and other related Commission efforts.

### *Supervision, control and monitoring arrangements*

Desk research, but also the results of both the beneficiary and NA surveys moderately support the conclusion that projects supervision and control arrangements over project beneficiaries are effective and proportionate. The beneficiaries overall are very positive about the Programme management arrangements and guidance received from the NAs and EACEA. The cost efficiency of the LLP management arrangements is comparable with the management of other related European Union instruments implemented under a shared management system (namely European Social Fund and European Regional Development Fund falling under European Territorial Cooperation objective). At the same time administration of decentralised actions is more cost efficient than that of the centralised actions.

Regular and structured monitoring of the decentralised actions both at the programme and projects level primarily focused on administrative aspects (compliance with administrative and financial regulations) and outputs. Monitoring of policy content (i.e., benefits accruing due to delivery of outputs, potential impact to wider groups) was less systematic:

- evaluation studies served as a key information source for that purpose at the programme level, while remained evaluation studies;
- also, a substantial share of monitoring effort at the projects level was sought to follow-up of the contents and progress of projects.

Reliability and availability of monitoring data varies across the years, but a trend in their improvement can be observed. Importantly, some clear improvements were brought along by the LLPLink management tool (and its further extensions such as e-

forms), which (for such a system) was deployed within a very short time-frame and which has huge potential to further increase the efficiency of the LLP management, monitoring and control system.

The system of monitoring indicators was set only in June 2010 (i.e. in the middle of programme implementation). The approved set of monitoring indicators is limited to measuring outputs and, although approved indicators further specify quantifiable targets set in the LLP Decision, they do not reflect results and impacts of the LLP programme.

The management and control system of the future Programme in the area of lifelong learning could be simplified and made more efficient by introducing the following adjustments:

- *The current LLP management system should be maintained* for the management of future generation European Union programmes in the area of lifelong learning (with the exception of the system of secondary controls). Maintaining the current LLP management system would ensure continuity of administrative arrangements between the two generations of programmes, which in turn will result in an easier transition to the new generation programme (both for the administrators and the beneficiaries), application of an already tested system would help to ensure stability of administrative arrangements in the new programming period.
- *System of secondary controls and declaration of assurance should be simplified* either by:
  - Waiving the requirements for secondary controls and setting up a direct NA–Commission reporting system. Accordingly, the scope of Commission controls should be adjusted (if needed), or;
  - Ex-ante definition (and reaching the agreement with Participating Countries) of clear requirements for secondary controls and ex-ante and yearly declaration of assurance (which would provide for adequate scope and effectiveness of secondary controls, comparability of the results of secondary controls across different Participating Countries and implementation of a single audit concept).
- Documents related to the functioning of the management system (Guide to NAs, etc.) and management support IT tools should be developed on the basis of present LLP arrangements and should be agreed and set well before the start of a new programme. LLP (and presumably future lifelong learning programme) in its nature is a multiannual programme, therefore to ensure continuity and user friendliness of management arrangements *multi-annual guidance documents* (guide to NAs, model and standard documents, etc.) should be prepared.
- Cooperation between the Executive Agency and NAs in implementation of centralised actions: strict legal separation of the management of centralised and decentralised actions and limited cooperation between the Executive Agency and NAs limit synergies between centralised and decentralised actions. *The cooperation between the Executive Agency and NAs should be made more formalised and structured, clearly defined channels of exchange of primary information should be established*, to support dissemination of information on the centralised actions to potential beneficiaries and valorisation of the results of projects implemented under centralised actions.
- Principal project management arrangements should be maintained. *Administrative arrangements should be further simplified by unifying the requirements for similar types of actions across different sub-programmes* (creating universal actions for all sub-programmes such as mobility/partnership/projects, which would allow for a reduction in the high overall number of LLP actions and fragmentation of the programme) *and by expanding the share of project financing based on fixed costs* (lump sums and flat rate grants). Necessary flexibility may be ensured by providing wider

choice of lump sums and flat rate grant options. Streamlining and unifying of similar actions across different sub-programmes may result in a requirement to establish single National Agency in each Participating Country.

- *NAs reporting to the Commission arrangements should be simplified by wider application of LLPLink* (i.e., the tool will give access to primary data from 2011, so the Yearly NA Report can be simplified from 2012 onwards);
- *The logic model of programme intervention* (i.e., the model which would clearly set out what benefits are expected to accrue to target groups and beyond as a result of implementing the projects and delivering the outputs; as such it would describe in a more structured way what is perceived as a success of the programme from the manager's point of view) *should be developed and agreed at programme design stage* (i.e. together with the definition of intervention logic of the new programme). Reporting forms and IT support tools should be then designed with a view to collecting from projects beneficiaries and processing the information necessary for programme impact monitoring needs.

Simplification measures proposed above would allow for a reduction in the overall degree of complexity of the LLP administrative framework (unification of the actions across different sub-programmes, multiannual guidance, optimisation of secondary controls, etc.) and would allow for a reduction of management workload (wider use of fixed cost grants, simplification of reporting requirements, etc.).

Development of an intervention logic model for the programme and results and impact monitoring framework at programme design stage would allow for more evidence-based policy, which is essential to the European Commission as overall coordinator of the lifelong learning policy at European level, Participating Countries, other stakeholders and decision makers.

Simplification measures related to unification of actions and wider use of fixed cost grants would help administrative efforts to be minimised both at grant beneficiary and NA level, would allow focusing on content and quality of supported actions and would also add to ensuring regularity of expenditure in the area of education and science. Maintaining a general LPP management system would provide positive impact on the smooth transition between different generations of the programme which is essential to all stakeholders.

#### *The allocation of funding, cost-effectiveness of the Programme*

Analysis of the monitoring data (in combination with other sources of information) strongly supports the conclusion of a possible risk that at least some of the quantified targets of the LLP will not be met. Although this is mainly a result of inappropriate size of the overall LLP budget and individual budgets of separate sectoral programmes, annually increasing unit-costs further reduce chances of target achievement. In order to reach a better balance between meeting the quantified targets and ensuring sufficient funding during the implementation of the current Programme, three options should be considered: 1) allocating additional funding to sectoral programmes; 2) increasing the cost-effectiveness of separate sectoral programmes and actions; 3) making the duration of mobility more flexible and shorter.

Although the current allocation of funds across the sub-programmes and actions is fairly appropriate, there is some evidence that certain re-allocation could be undertaken. Funding re-allocations between sectoral programmes could be based on a judgement that a certain programme is severely lagging behind its quantified target. In terms of the current Programme, it seems that Comenius could be such a programme. Meanwhile the substantial progress of Grundtvig towards its quantified targets, which coincided with the programme's budget increment in 2009, suggests that this programme as well as other mobility actions under sectoral programmes could gain a larger financial share in the future Programme. The increased budget would allow

more people to benefit from mobility (as provided in the 'Youth on the Move' initiative) and for more attention to be paid to the importance of post-initial training and adult education in the lifelong learning perspective. Additionally, the provision of post-initial or adult learning being at border line with other sectoral programmes could be promoted without increasing the financial weight of Grundtvig.

Within and across the sectoral programmes there are a few areas for possible expansion. It is recommended to expand the Comenius actions of Regio partnerships and eTwinning to other sectoral programmes, adopt projects for the transfer of innovations (based on the experience of Leonardo da Vinci) under other sectoral programmes and target early school leavers or other specific groups or themes under Grundtvig. On the other hand, it is recommended to re-focus the implementation of the centralised actions by strategically targeting future funding on fewer larger cooperation projects (based on more stringent calls for proposals and other implementation instruments).

The conclusions regarding the achievement of quantified targets are strongly supported by the results of the desk research, analysis of the monitoring data, the survey of the National Authorities and National Agencies as well as the synthesis of the National Reports. The conclusions regarding the re-allocation of funding are only weakly supported: despite many sources of information (desk research, analysis of the monitoring data, the survey of the institutional beneficiaries, the survey of the National Authorities and National Agencies), there is some conflicting evidence (especially concerning the financial volume of the centralised actions) as well as certain caveats to the analysis of cost-effectiveness mentioned under operational question No. 16.2.

The analysis showed that, given the context, other policy instruments would not provide better cost-effectiveness. The open method of coordination alone would not produce better outputs and results at a lower cost compared with the centralised actions of the Programme. Although some actions of Jean Monnet and KA1 Transversal could in theory be implemented under the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme, it is better to promote synergies between the 7FP programme and relevant parts of the Lifelong Learning Programme.

There is no proof that calls for proposals for projects and operating grant would provide better cost-effectiveness compared to direct support provided by the European Commission under KA1 of the Transversal programme and the Jean Monnet programme. However, it is possible to restructure the Transversal programme along thematic lines and adopt a more targeted approach to its implementation (based on thematic calls for proposals, calls for tenders and other implementation mechanisms supported by thematic monitoring).

Table 57 below offers recommendations for the European Commission concerning the continued implementation of the current Programme in the period 2011-2013 as well as the preparation of the future Programme for the post-2013 period. Taking into consideration these two time-frames, the post-2013 recommendations are more general and strategic, and the recommendations for the remaining duration of the current Programme are more specific and operational. The design and implementation of the current Programme could be adjusted to the extent possible within the LLP Decision.

All recommendations are structured according to the evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency). A summary of the evaluation conclusions is provided to support both sets of recommendations.



**Table 57. Main conclusions and recommendations**

| No.       | Main conclusions  | Recommendations concerning the continued implementation of the current Programme up to the end of 2013   | Recommendations concerning the preparation of the future Programme for the post-2013 period   |
|-----------|---|--|---|
| Relevance |   |  |   |
| 1.        | <p>Retrospective analysis revealed that that the objectives of the LLP remain pertinent to the needs of the target groups and remain relevant in the light of the EU and national policy developments. Nevertheless, the prospective analysis shows that the logic of intervention should be streamlined and should focus on a clearly defined set of expected impacts. Currently, the LLP has 24 specific objectives and 33 operational objectives, the latter objectives overlap and the logical links between higher level and lower level objectives are not straightforward. Furthermore, there is a need to align the LLP objectives with the priorities of ET 2020.</p>  | <p>Within the legal framework of the LLP Decision, the priorities of the Programme should be aligned with the objectives of ET 2020.</p> <p>Work on defining a set of expected impacts and impact monitoring indicators should be continued.</p>   | <p>The intermediate objectives of the future generation of the LLP should be aligned with the EU 2020 strategy and the priorities of ET 2020 framework.</p> <p>The number of specific objectives should be reduced. The specific objectives could focus on stimulation of interchange, cooperation and mobility. The operational objectives of the sub-programmes should be integrated and streamlined with the view of outlining concrete outputs and areas, where the instruments of interchange, cooperation and mobility should be used. Suggestions regarding the intervention logic of the future generation of the LLP are provided in Table 54. Quantified targets should be reconsidered with the view of ensuring closer links with the objectives of the Programme and the needs of the target groups.</p> |
| 2.        | <p>Retrospective evaluation revealed that overall there were strong links between the objectives of the LLP and the priorities established in the Guidelines for Growth and Jobs, ET 2010, other EU-level and national strategies and initiatives. However, the structure and overall design of the LLP prevents the Programme from more extensive contribution to the political priorities linked to fostering accessibility as well as increased participation in lifelong learning by those, who are not likely to explore the possibilities provided by education and training (the low skilled, the elderly etc.). Formally, these objectives are also emphasised by the LLP. However, the Programme is predominantly focused on the formal initial ET sector (primary, secondary, vocational education and training and higher education) and mostly related to young students. As a result post initial ET (including non-formal, informal and adult learning) receives considerably less attention and funds. Hence, those who have not been actively involved in lifelong learning are left at the margins of the Programme. Since ET 2020 also prioritises accessibility as well as increased participation in lifelong learning by those, who are not likely to explore the possibilities provided by education and training, the actions and structure of the LLP should be reconsidered.</p> | <p>Systematic thematic monitoring of best practices in fostering access and participation in lifelong learning by those, who are “out” of the formal learning systems should be introduced. More efforts and resources within the existing actions should be provided to the involvement of enterprises (SMEs in particular) as education and training venues.</p> | <p>Fostering access and participation in lifelong learning by those, who are “out” of the formal learning systems, requires systematic approach. The measures should horizontally cover all education and training sectors and all types of learning (including informal and non-formal). Concrete actions could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reconsider the balance (in terms of types of actions, target groups and financial resources) between initial and post-initial education with the view of contributing to the overarching policy goal of making lifelong learning a reality;</li> <li>- More resources should be provided to the involvement of enterprises (small and medium enterprises in particular) as education and training venues.</li> </ul>                           |

|               |   |  |   |
|---------------|---|--|---|
| 3.            | <p>There are important synergies between the sub-programmes, which could not have occurred if these sub-programmes were implemented separately. However, the most visible synergies occur in the areas related to administration and promotion of the LLP. Further exploitation of synergetic effects is prevented by the segmentation of the LLP.</p>  |  | <p>The links between the sub-programmes should be strengthened with the view of exploiting synergetic effects. Concrete measures could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Launch thematic cross-sectoral calls for proposals and thematic monitoring of best practices (see recommendation 2);</li> <li>- Introduce changes in the selection process: proposals that tackle problems and create value in more than one educational sector should be given additional points.</li> </ul> <p>Mainstream the successful sectoral actions to other sectors. For example the success of eTwinning could be replicated elsewhere (in providing language learning platforms, non-formal and informal education to adults, etc.). Leonardo da Vinci transfer of innovations could be also successfully applied in other educational sectors.</p> |
| Effectiveness |   |  |   |
| 4.            | <p>Reaching the direct target groups and meeting their needs is fairly sufficient, but limited in relation to the quality of participation (relating to expectations, awareness, duration of mobility, involvement of partners etc.). The main external risks are language barriers, administrative and other mobility barriers, and lack of national co-financing. The main internal weaknesses are “social selectivity”, lack of incentives for cross-sectoral cooperation, and lack of incentives to engage atypical, inexperienced or underrepresented target groups.</p> | <p>During the current Programme implementation, the following steps should be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sharing of good practice among the Participating Countries and various stakeholders (e.g. German initiative to provide free online language courses for incoming students);</li> <li>- Better use of Transversal KA1 to analyse the needs of the target groups;</li> <li>- Strengthening mechanisms for recognition and validation of competences;</li> <li>- Outreach initiatives to associations of enterprises, non-formal and informal education providers.</li> </ul> | <p>Focus on the quality of mobility and reduced quantitative pressure would help better meet the needs of the target groups, thus enhancing the effectiveness and utility of the Programme. Access and the acquisition of competences should be two dimensions to be taken into account in all actions.</p> <p>It is recommended to introduce a dual structure of mobility (with potential modifications): short-term (up to 1 month) and long-term (around 6 months).</p> <p>To address the multiple barriers, language learning (and acquisition of other key competences) should be prioritised in the successor Programme, focusing on current and future language teachers and mobility multipliers. Policies to facilitate the visa and residency processes for participants from the candidate countries should be formulated.</p>                   |
| 5.            | <p>Horizontal policies and key EU priorities relating to social cohesion (e.g. early school leaving) are poorly addressed due to limited awareness and incentives to fully incorporate them into the Programme and project implementation. On the other hand, equal opportunities are already prioritised in the general calls of 2011.</p>   | <p>What is further needed during the current Programme implementation is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Analysis of which groups are relevant in which sector and what their actual needs are (better use of Transversal KA1 for this purpose);</li> <li>- Directing good-quality applications which address equal opportunities to the relevant actions;</li> <li>- Developing and supporting the mainstreaming</li> </ul>   | <p>‘Soft’ and ‘hard’ measures should be introduced to address horizontal policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ‘Soft’ measures include better guidance, awareness and thematic monitoring;</li> <li>- ‘Hard’ measures include special calls for proposals and special budget to address not only horizontal priorities, but also disadvantaged education sectors of strategic importance (e.g. pre-primary, primary and special schools);</li> </ul>   |

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|    |   | of equal opportunities into all actions; Improving monitoring arrangements, including the collection of gender-disaggregated data.   | - On the other hand, the mainstreaming approach should be kept and strengthened.<br>The successor Programme should be better aligned with ET 2020, Youth on the Move, "An Agenda for New Skills for New Jobs" and other initiatives in order to prioritise access and equity in education.   |
| 6. | In the period 2007-2009 the Programme contributed to all the priorities of ET 2010. Its contribution was stronger to the priority of "Opening up education and training systems to the wider world", but weaker to the priority of "Facilitating the access of all to education and training systems". The synthesis of the National Reports pointed out that the largest impact of the LLP decentralised actions was found at the individual and organisational level with the impact at the system level being rather small or moderate. The Programme (especially KA1 of the Transversal Programme) contributed to EU policy in education and training by raising the competences of main stakeholders as well as informing policy making at the EU or national level. | In order to improve the Programme contribution to the EU education and training policy: strengthen the involvement of national and sub-national policy makers and other stakeholders in the cooperation process at the EU level (peer learning activities and other fora of learning) as well as in the implementation of the LLP actions (e.g. by better involving sub-national stakeholders in regional partnerships supported under the decentralised actions or national stakeholders in the actions of policy cooperation under the Transversal programme); improve the use of studies, comparative research and other evidence supported under the LLP in the process of peer learning and policy formulation at the EU level. | In order to improve the Programme contribution to EU education and training policy: better align the intervention logic of the future Programme with the vertical and horizontal priorities of ET 2020 in the area of education and training; pursue and strengthen the support to the policy cooperation at the EU level under the streamlined Transversal programme and to partnerships (bilateral and multi-lateral) involving national and sub-national policy makers under the sectoral programmes.   |
| 7. | The Programme integration has been quite successful. Certain integration occurred across the sectoral programmes, increasing flexibility of the Programme. However, the Programme has become very complex, necessitating some internal streamlining. Also, integration across the educational sector remains limited, and the lifelong learning perspective is not fully exploited in the LLP. The main benefits of integration occurred in the overall management of the Programme (including the dissemination of information to the target groups). Moreover, the high visibility of the previous programmes has been kept, but the Transversal brand is not yet recognised very well.   | Continue the Programme integration during its implementation up to the end of 2013. The Transversal programme, while keeping its flexible implementation approach, should be streamlined and made more thematic. With regard to the Programme implementation it is important to continue further harmonisation in the Programme documents, improving cooperation between the Executive Agency and the National Agencies as well as introducing more flexibility in the re-allocation of financial resources inside the Programme.  | Taking into consideration the importance of better connecting formal, non-formal and informal learning into the lifelong learning perspective recognised at the EU level, pursue further integration in the preparation of the future Programme. With regard to the Programme content some Programme-specific objectives could be integrated and common types of actions should be introduced across the sub-programmes, thus reducing the number of objectives and actions in the successor Programme. The future Programme could contain two main types of action: mobility (student/trainee mobility and mobility of staff, future staff and other specialists) and partnerships (bilateral partnership, multi-lateral partnerships, networks, projects). The future Programme should also continue to provide a framework for the Jean Monnet programme which constitutes a distinct label with high visibility bringing together specific education actions that stimulate excellence in European integration studies world-wide. |
| 8. | A lot of attention is paid to dissemination and exploitation of results at different levels. However, due to the lack of centralised responsibility,  | In order to make the exploitation of the Programme results more effective: provide more  | In order to make the exploitation of the Programme results more effective: reduce the gap between projects   |

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|            | resources and a gap between projects and policy makers, the results in the area of exploitation and mainstreaming into policy are limited.   | in-depth training for beneficiaries on possible dissemination and especially exploitation strategies and stronger guidance on ways to reach key decision-makers; include mainstreaming partners (horizontal, vertical and transnational) in projects as much as possible in order to streamline the exploitation process. | and policy makers by considering the creation of an 'observatory' for the Lifelong Learning Programme.  |
| 9.         | The Programme contributes significantly to the horizontal policy of linguistic diversity through successful implementation of Key Activity 2 of the Transversal programme, through sporadic support for language projects in the centralised actions of the sectoral programme and through language courses and mobility actions for individual beneficiaries in the decentralised actions of the sectoral programmes.   | Maintaining the good results of the horizontal policy of linguistic diversity by retaining a horizontal priority for linguistic diversity within a newly structured Transversal Programme through special cross-sectoral calls for activities related to language learning.   | Pay more explicit attention to linguistic diversity within the sectoral programmes, for example by setting up and broadening the scope of specific targeted language actions.   |
| Efficiency |  |   |   |
| 10.        | Regulatory framework of both centralised and decentralised actions provide for clear and sound attribution of Programme management functions (with the exception of secondary controls and declaration of assurance), though initial years of the programme were affected by late guidance and changes. All stakeholders at present agree that from now on the change will be substituted by a period of stability; the latter should allow capitalising on many improvements which are still to bring their positive effects.<br>Project supervision and control arrangements over project beneficiaries are effective and proportionate; the beneficiaries overall are very positive about the programme management arrangements and guidance received from the NAs and EACEA. | Any further changes to the regulatory framework of both the centralised and decentralised actions should be limited; the period of stability would allow capitalising on many improvements that are still to bring their positive effects.  | The current LLP management system should be maintained for the management of the future Programme in the area of lifelong learning (with the exception of the system of secondary controls). Maintaining the current LLP management system would ensure continuity of administrative arrangements between the two Programme generations, which in turn would cause an easier transition to the new Programme (both for the administrators and beneficiaries). The application of the already tested system would help ensure stability of administrative arrangements in the new programming period.<br>Documents related to the functioning of the management system (Guide to NAs, standard and model documents, etc.) and management support IT tools should be developed on the basis of present Programme arrangements and should be agreed and set well before the start of the new Programme. Multi-annual guidance documents should be prepared in order to ensure continuity and user friendliness of management arrangements that are important to any multi-annual programmes. |
| 11.        | The role of secondary controls was not agreed with Participating Countries at the Programme design stage and was not clearly defined in regulatory framework and guidance documents until 2009. The level and type of secondary controls varied substantially among different LLP countries, which limited the overall efficiency and utility of the secondary controls system. As from the 2009 declaration of assurance exercise, as a result of   | -   | The system of secondary controls and declaration of assurance for future generation of the programme could be further simplified by either:<br>- Waiving the requirements for secondary controls and setting up a direct NA–Commission reporting system. Accordingly, the scope of the Commission's   |

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|     | revised (complemented) guidance to the NAs and other related Commission efforts, the situation improved (e.g., quality and comparability of secondary controls among different Participating Countries increased).   |   | controls should be adjusted (if needed);<br>- Or <i>ex-ante</i> definition (and reaching agreement with Participating Countries) of clear requirements for secondary controls and <i>ex-ante</i> and yearly declaration of assurance (which would provide for an adequate scope and effectiveness of secondary controls, comparability of the results of secondary controls across different Participating Countries and the implementation of single audit concept).   |
| 12. | The strict legal separation of the management of centralised and decentralised actions and limited cooperation between the Executive Agency and NAs had negative effect on potential synergies between centralised and decentralised actions.  | The cooperation between the Executive Agency and NAs should be acknowledged formally; structured and clearly defined channels of exchange of primary information should be established to support the dissemination of information on the centralised actions to potential beneficiaries and valorisation of the results of projects implemented under the centralised actions. |   |
| 13. | The high overall number and variety of LLP actions complicates administration of LLP.<br>At the same time, LLP administrative arrangements highly benefited (decrease in administrative workload both to programme managers and grant beneficiaries, contributing to regularity of expenditure, etc.) from the wide use of grants based on fixed costs (lump sums and flat rate grants). Still, many (especially centralised) actions are still based on real costs or a combination of fixed costs and real costs, which complicates implementation of the programme. | Introduction of any new LLP actions should be avoided.<br>Administrative arrangements could be further simplified by expanding the share of project financing based on fixed costs (lump sums and flat rate grants). Necessary flexibility may be ensured by providing a wider choice of lump sums and flat rate grant options in a given action.                               | Administrative arrangements should be further simplified by unifying the requirements for similar types of actions (mobility and different types of partnerships) across the different sub-programmes. This would decrease the overall number of Programme actions and administrative burden both at the project applicant/beneficiary and NAs level and would increase clarity and consistency of the administrative arrangements.   |
| 14. | The system of LLP indicators and monitoring framework was not developed until 2010. The agreed set of indicators is limited to monitoring outputs. Monitoring of Programme's results and impacts is very limited; their assessment is mostly based on ex-post evaluation studies.  | While the existing tools (LLPLink) and the level of harmonisation in principle allow for the collection, aggregation and reporting on the agreed 10 output indicators, a further review of the system is recommended to be carried out once the system is populated with data (i.e. in late 2011 and onwards) so as to check the correctness of its functioning.                | Developing monitoring of the Programme impact would allow for better measurement of Programme performance and its external communication. A logic model of the Programme intervention and a system of monitoring indicators (comprising indicators related to outputs, results and impact of the programme) should be developed and agreed at the stage of the Programme design. Reporting forms and IT support tools should be further developed in order to collect the information necessary for the purpose of impact monitoring from projects beneficiaries. |
| 15. | Analysis of the monitoring data (in combination with other sources of information) strongly supports the conclusion that at least some of the quantified targets of the LLP will not be met. Although this is mainly a result  | In order to reach a better balance between meeting the quantified targets and ensuring sufficient funding during the implementation of  | The actions of mobility as well as the Grundtvig programme could gain a larger financial share in the future Programme. The increased budget would allow  |

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|  | <p>of inappropriate size of the overall LLP budget and individual budgets of separate sectoral programmes, annually increasing unit-costs further complicate the chances of target achievement. Although the current allocation of funds across the sub-programmes and actions is rather appropriate, there is some evidence that certain re-allocation could be undertaken.</p> | <p>the current Programme, three options should be considered: 1) allocating additional funding to sectoral programmes; 2) increasing the cost-effectiveness of separate sectoral programmes and actions; 3) making the duration of mobility more flexible and shorter.</p> <p>In the case where certain sectoral programmes do not display satisfactory results in the area of quantified targets achievement, certain re-allocation processes could be initiated. Analysis of the current state suggests that Comenius might require such interventions.</p> <p>In line with other recommendations, Comenius partnerships/assistantships for primary, pre-primary or special schools, Leonardo da Vinci mobility actions, targeting disadvantaged groups, could be supported as they do not receive adequate attention under current Programme.</p> | <p>more people to benefit from mobility (as provided in the 'Youth on the Move' initiative) and to pay more attention to the importance of post-initial training and adult education in the lifelong learning perspective. Alternatively, the provision of post-initial or adult learning on the border line of other sectoral programmes could be promoted without increasing the financial weight of Grundtvig.</p> <p>Within and across the sectoral programmes there are a few areas for possible expansion. It is recommended to expand the Comenius actions of Regio partnerships and eTwinning to other sectoral programmes, adopt projects for the transfer of innovations (based on the experience of Leonardo da Vinci) under other sectoral programmes and target early school leavers or other specific groups or themes under Grundtvig. On the other hand, it is recommended to re-focus the implementation of the centralised actions by strategically targeting the future funding on fewer larger cooperation projects (based on more stringent calls for proposals or and other implementation instruments).</p> |
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 ANNEXES (*PROVIDED IN A SEPARATE DOCUMENT*)

Annex 1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Annex 2. SYNTHESIS OF THE NATIONAL REPORTS

Annex 3. CASE STUDIES

Annex 4. LIST OF INTERVIEWS

Annex 5. SURVEY RESULTS

Annex 6. THE LONGITUDINAL MAPPING OF THE LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMME

Annex 7. ANALYSIS OF THE MONITORING DATA

Annex 8. NOTE ON MONITORING THE LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMME

Annex 9. LIST OF REFERENCES AND SOURCES

