

ISOQUAM

Dissemination Strategy

IsoQquam – ISO 17024:2003 certification: Qualified Metal Worker ISO 17024:2003
LLP-LDV-TOI-09-AT-0004

Provided by



July 2010



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1. Introduction

This document has been written for the multilateral project "*IsoQuam – ISO 17024:2003 certification: Qualified Metal Worker ISO 17024:2003* (LLP-LDV-TOI-09-AT-0004) funded by the action *Leonardo da Vinci – Transfer of Innovation* within the framework of the *Lifelong Learning Programme*.

It presents the dissemination strategy for the 2-year IsoQuam project including national valorisation plans for each project partner. All dissemination activities are either offered by partners or suggested by E.N.T.E.R.

The dissemination strategy gives some general information and suggestions to achieve best possible results and then concentrates specifically on the dissemination situation of the IsoQuam project. Thereby also individual activities of partners will be taken into account.

Certain issues and quality criteria should be considered by the implementation of dissemination actions. This paper also tries to give useful recommendations on this score. Furthermore, some instruments to evaluate the dissemination activities will be presented.

A project and its results can only be successful when they are of sustainable value. For this reason it is necessary to provide a dissemination strategy. The actual use of project outcomes is dependent upon successful dissemination activities. Therefore it is important to understand that a good dissemination strategy is the basis for successful exploitation of results. Both issues are closely related and dependent upon each other, hence both of them are discussed together in this paper.

Petra Kampf, E.N.T.E.R.

2. General information about dissemination and exploitation of EU project results

Whenever we speak of dissemination and exploitation of project results we refer to activities that are designed to ensure that these results are appropriately recognised, demonstrated and implemented on a wide scale. Within the field of dissemination and exploitation the term valorisation is also used to combine the two issues. E.N.T.E.R. prefers to use the expressions separately as they do not mean the same thing and should be seen as equally important even if they are closely related and dependent upon each other. However at the beginning of the project process there should be a focus on general promotion and awareness-raising.

This strategy deals with promotion, dissemination and exploitation and it is of crucial importance for achieving best possible results that all persons involved have the same understanding of these terms.

Dissemination

Promotion and awareness-raising is an important part of the dissemination process. These activities take place at the beginning of the project, or even before it starts, in order to inform about the existence of a project, the aims and objectives and its planned developments.

Dissemination in general is a planned process of providing information to the target group and key actors in regard to project process, activities and results by the use of different dissemination channels at the local, regional, national, EU and international levels.

Exploitation

Exploitation includes the two activities; mainstreaming and multiplication. Mainstreaming means the actual transfer of successful results to appropriate stakeholders and decision-makers. Multiplication concerns the process of convincing end-users to adopt or apply the results of the projects.

In summary dissemination and exploitation aim to achieve the following objectives:

- To promote and raise awareness with regard to the project contents and developments
- To provide information on the quality, relevance and effectiveness of the results
- To successfully transfer the results to appropriate decision-makers in order to achieve their sustainable promotion and support
- To convince individual end-users to adopt and/or apply the results, also after the project and support by the project partnership has ended

2.1. Dissemination

The dissemination concept provided by E.N.T.E.R. is built on two dimensions.

1) Horizontal dimension

The horizontal dimension contains all activities to strengthen the communication and dissemination between the participants. This includes all internal activities to provide information and instruments for further individual dissemination of each partner.

2) Vertical dimension

The vertical dimension concentrates on all activities designed to actually reach the target groups and final users. This includes all activities that will be carried out individually by each partner such as the involvement of their own partners, networks and stakeholders and the implementation of the individual national dissemination plan. The actual success is very much dependent upon the support and cooperation of the project partners.

Both the horizontal as well as the vertical dimension will be carried out by using different approaches, methods and instruments of dissemination, always dependent upon the most adequate means and possibilities of each project partner.

Basically, they can be structured as follows:

- **Face-to-face activities**

Presentations, round tables, workshops, seminars, conference ...

- **Media-based activities**

- Internet-based

- Groups, e-newsletters, websites, networks, e-documents ...

- Paper-based

- Brochures, flyers, posters, articles, newsletters, activity reports ...

- TV/radio-based

- Interviews, presentations, news bulletins ...

- **Performance activities**

Activities closely related to project work packages or process such as the implementation of surveys, seminars, workshops or pilot courses, involvement in evaluation activities ...

The dissemination strategy runs parallel to the phases of the work programme and is specifically adjusted according to the main activities of each phase.

The most important questions that should be answered by each dissemination strategy are:

- 1) Why disseminate
- 2) What to disseminate
- 3) Who to disseminate to
- 4) Who will do it
- 5) When will it be done
- 6) How will it be done
- 7) How it will be evaluated

2.2. Exploitation

Even if exploitation takes place after the project's lifetime, when all project results exist as final products, it is necessary to plan exploitation activities from the start. The basis for successful exploitation is a well planned and implemented dissemination strategy at different levels. Furthermore, the identification of stakeholders has to be carried out as early as possible. This is mostly at a time when the first research phases are completed (e.g. development of an analysis and competence matrix) therefore all further steps with regard to content and target group should be set for the remaining project process.

It is important to involve stakeholders or possible end-users in the project process. On the one hand they can be more easily convinced of the project outcomes when they have the chance to follow the development, but on the other hand also project consortia can benefit by including suggestions or recommendations from the stakeholder side in the development process.

Two key aspects to successful exploitation of project results:

- Producing relevant results of good quality to satisfy the demands of providers, policy-makers and ultimately society more generally
- Ensuring that results reach the right target audiences in a format and at a time, that provides greatest benefit.

3. General preconditions of successful dissemination and exploitation of EU project results

The successful dissemination and exploitation of project results in terms of sustainable use and the permanent further development of results and outputs, especially after the funding for the development and pilot implementation of the outputs has ended, is very dependent upon a number of crucial key factors and criteria, which should be presented at this stage as a basis for the development of the project outputs. From our experiences we consider the following key factors to be relevant:

- a) **Output quality:** To achieve a high degree of valorisation and use, the outputs produced need to be of a very high quality. It is important to pay considerable attention to the output quality during the entire project development, and therefore it is always advisable to introduce procedures and responsibilities for quality management in project processes in order to guarantee a high quality

final output. Outputs must be up to date and appealing to the customers otherwise dissemination and further use cannot be expected.

- b) **Adaptability of outputs to country and organisation specific circumstances:** From our point of view it is an important precondition that the results and outputs of the project are adaptable to a high degree in relation to the circumstances of different countries and companies. This is particularly important as the developed materials and approaches should be relevant to different types of organizations and target groups and we need to be aware that the results must have the necessary methodological and content flexibility to be adapted to different backgrounds. It is always a major problem with European project outputs and results that they are not adaptable enough to country specific conditions and requirements.
- c) **Clear definition of advantages for users:** A high degree of use is, in our opinion, mainly dependent on the capacity of the project and the partnership to clearly show the advantages of using the instruments and outputs for the final target group. For this reason all partner institutions should always try to make the advantages of the project and its results transparent and evident, in relation to all events and possibilities. In particular the project website should make very clear what the added value of the output is and its use to the potential customer.
- d) **Early identification of stakeholders and potential users:** It is vital that relevant stakeholders and potential users (customers) of the project results are clearly identified and defined very early in the project's life. It is not advisable to change user groups during the project process. Identified stakeholders should be contacted and kept informed throughout the whole project process so as to ensure the sustainable use of results after the project ends.

4. Background, objectives and aims of the IsoQuam project

The background for the ISO QUAM project (ISO 17024:2003 certification for qualified metal worker) is the current and probable future situation in the metal sector in Europe, which due to the economic crisis produces a high risk of low-skilled or unskilled workers. Currently there is no possibility to certify the competences of this target group, which have been acquired mainly through non-formal or informal ways.

The European Qualification Framework (EQF) currently provides no clear strategy on how to certify and recognize competences lower than the regular skilled worker (apprenticeship level), which leads to a strong need for a certification approach for the lower levels of EQF (EQF 1 and 2).

The project ISO QUAM provides an approach for a competence certification for a qualified metal worker (EQF levels 1 and 2) through a transfer of an existing model for competence certification schemes on the basis of the norm ISO 17024:2003. This project will transfer this norm, which is already successfully used in other sectors, into the metal sector providing the first reliable and internationally recognized competence certification approach for low skilled or unskilled workers. A European-wide recognized approach for certification of their competences would provide them with an ISO 17024:2003 competence assessment certificate, valid in all European countries (and beyond), which will significantly improve their job chances and their possibilities for job mobility.

Main aim: The project ISO QUAM is aiming at providing low skilled or unskilled workers in the metal sector with an approach for certification of their personal skills and competences (mainly acquired through on the job training and other non-formal or informal ways) on the basis of the worldwide recognized approach of the norm ISO 17024:2003.

Sub aims:

- Adaptation of a competence matrix for low skilled and unskilled metal workers
- Adaptation of the norm requirements of ISO 17024:2003 to the needs of the metal sector
- Adaptation of the certification documents on the basis of ISO 17024:2003 (competence catalogue, examination approach, materials for examination etc.)
- Piloting of the certification approach in all participating countries
- Modification of documents and outputs on the basis of the pilot phase results
- Mainstreaming and valorization of results, establishment of ISO 17024:2003 certification centers in the partner countries and beyond

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- Permanent reflection and integration of the project approaches in the discussions and developments around EQF and ECVET on national level of the partner countries.

4.1. Impact

The short-term impact expected is a number of 100 certified qualified metal workers at the end of the project and a huge long term impact on VET providers, certifying bodies, political decision makers and the VET systems as a whole. This will provide a valuable contribution to the approaches for transparency and recognition of competences and learning outcomes for a very disadvantaged target group.

4.2. Target groups and beneficiaries

The ISO QUAM project addresses the following target groups and beneficiaries:

- interested learners (low skilled or unskilled workers)
- metal companies (SMEs and industry)
- teachers, trainers, VET providers, policy makers
- LLL national agency
- social partners

4.3. Stakeholders

According to the project results and to the impression won within the national dissemination templates, it can be said that a various kind of organisations are affected by IsoQuam.

It can be considered as valuable if stakeholders, apart from organisations in the metal sector, act in the fields of 'political empowerment'. Within the national dissemination templates, some of the partners of the project already involved chambers (i.e. the Greek partner), and unions. These relations can be of very high relevance regarding the dissemination and the sustainability of the project products.

4.4. Project Results

To find the best time for dissemination it is very important to know the project outcomes and the time when their development is completed. All partners are expected to disseminate these results through their individual dissemination channels.

The results of the IsoQuam project in chronological order are as follows:

Project Results	
Date	Result
01/10	National Competence Matrix
03/10	- European Competence Matrix - European Report on Metal Sector and VET
11/10	- Testing and Certification Procedure - Person Certification Scheme - ISO Certificate on Metal Workers
06/11	6 Pilot Test Beds
08/11	Convergence Strategy

5. Dissemination in the IsoQuam project

The dissemination strategy of the IsoQuam project follows the general guidelines of valorisation as explained above as well as the facts provided in the project proposal.

The strategy was developed with the support of all project partners. After the first project meeting templates to identify the dissemination channels of each partner were distributed and were used as the basis for the development of the IsoQuam dissemination and exploitation strategy. The dissemination of IsoQuam consists of individual national dissemination plans that can be enlarged and adjusted by each partner at any time. The annex shows the first versions of these individual plans. The other part is the activities already predetermined in the work packages of the project. The results of IsoQuam are very well defined and embedded in a realistic timetable; hence it is easy for all partners to implement their dissemination activities.

1) Why disseminate?

- To tell end users about the project
- To contribute to policy development (local, regional, national or European)
- To inform and advocate to sponsors and funding bodies
- To support and enhance the image of their own organisation
- To increase the impact of the project by extending it to multipliers
- To tell commercial organisations that you have a product to sell

2) What to disseminate?

- The project mission or message
- The deliverables
- The project process
- The methodologies
- The European partnership

3) Who to disseminate to?

- End-users
- Organisations that can help to reach others
- Organisations that can enhance the impact of the project in other ways

4) Who will do it?

All partners are responsible for their national dissemination plans including the involvement of stakeholders. The partner organisations have at their disposal good networks and contacts and have rich experiences in the field of European project management.

Furthermore, E.N.T.E.R. will support the dissemination activities at European level through the services of the European network (e.g. Email Alerts).

5) When will it be done? (see also annex I)

The project proposal presents an initial time schedule with regard to the completion of project results and dissemination instruments. E.N.T.E.R. gives additional suggestions to achieve best possible results. A timetable for all activities is provided in the annex.

6) How will it be done? (see also 5.1.)

The project proposal already gives specific instruments to be used for dissemination activities such as project brochures, papers and the project website. The project website has already been created and plays an important role in providing all relevant information about the project, including the main aims and a download area, in all partner languages.

Each partner also presented individual instruments in the national dissemination plans that show great promise for the implementation of the dissemination and exploitation phases.

Additionally to these instruments E.N.T.E.R. recommends further dissemination tools to keep stakeholders, key-actors and the target group up-to-date.

To raise awareness for the activities and objectives of IsoQuam within *one* brochure might be a great challenge. Therefore E.N.T.E.R. suggests creating a news-line on a regular basis. This can be a newsletter, a bulletin or any other written and digital available document which provides news about the projects progress

Furthermore, special promoting activities for the pilot tests are recommended (i.e. local seminars, an open day ...). The individual implementation of such an activity should be planned by each partner with a focus on the individual preferences and country contexts (what is most appealing to the target group for the relevant country).

Another dissemination tool is the registration of a Facebook group. This can be of great benefit in order to raise awareness as well as to reach stakeholders, organisations and, last but not least, the projects target group. It has to be discussed if the target group of

stakeholders can be reached with Web 2.0 tools. If this is not the case the dissemination activities should have more focus on paper-based activities.

7) How will it be evaluated? (see also 6.)

A very useful way of evaluating the dissemination and exploitation activities is the documentation of all activities by each partner. This documentation can be in form of lists of participants, presentations, agendas, meeting minutes, pictures, copies of documents such as emails, articles or newsletters. The documentation should be based on the use of quantitative and qualitative indicators. It is also recommended that the internal evaluation of the project has a focus on the dissemination activities during the project period.

5.1. Instruments of dissemination in the IsoQuam project

Some specific instruments are already defined in the project proposal. These instruments are available and all partners are expected to use them. Additionally the individual national dissemination plans for the partners include further instruments that will be used to disseminate the project outcomes (see Annex III).

The instruments of dissemination with their date of completion are as follows:

Dissemination Instruments	
Date	Instrument
01/10	Project Website
03/10	Folders, Posters, Roll-up

Further issues to be considered by using the dissemination instruments:

It is recommended to use a corporate design in all material produced within the project to support an effect of recognition. In addition it is of crucial importance to follow the rules of corporate identity given by the European Commission such as clear instructions on the use of logos and disclaimers.

The project logo should be used together with the logo of the Lifelong Learning Programme, the project number and the disclaimer declaring that the project is funded with European money and that the Commission cannot be held responsible for any contents. Depending on the dissemination instrument two different disclaimers can be chosen:

- **Visibility actions (notepads, folders, roll up etc):**

„With the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union“



- **Publications (reports, papers, website, leaflet, brochure...):**

“This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication [communication] and all its contents reflect the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.”

The disclaimer for publications is officially translated in the EU languages and should be used in this form. Also the LLP logo is available in all EU languages and should not be changed individually.

Further information can be found on following websites:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/about/eacea_logos_en.php

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/graphics/identity_en.html

5.2. Summary of dissemination activities of each partner in the IsoQuam project

(see also Annexes II and III)

The first version of the national dissemination plans show various activities that are additional to those stated in the project proposal. Partners also provided additional instruments of dissemination such as conferences, meetings, workshops, publications etc.

According to the first national dissemination plans **approximately 45.000 people and 407 organisations** can be reached. The given number is a high one, compared to other European projects and taken into account that these are the first versions of the national dissemination plans. Improvement, which means, enlargement of dissemination activities will certainly take place.

But, to put this result into perspective, some comments have to be made:

Those 45.000 people, reached within meetings, emails, flyers, conferences etc. do not belong to the projects main target group, beneficiaries and / or stakeholders. Only a fraction of those people will belong to one of these groups. Although the quantities of these first plans are impressive it has to be seen if all activities can be carried out as planned. The next step in the further dissemination activities of each partner organisations will be to identify most important key actors for the further activities and to allocate them with certain engagements.

There is no doubt that the dissemination activities and number of persons will be enlarged during the project period but it should be taken into account to support partners as good as possible and to watch the developments until the interim report when the first reporting of dissemination activities will be analysed.

Based on experience in other projects the national dissemination plans do change during the project lifetime. New channels will be added that will correspondingly influence the number of persons and organisations reached through the activities. Other instruments might occur or existing ones will be used more frequently. The dissemination plans can be changed and updated by each partner at any time. The summary of activities and the national dissemination plans for each partner are to be found in Annexes II and III.

6. Evaluation and Quality Assurance

To guarantee good quality and achieve the best possible results it is suggested to use different tools to measure the impact of the activities carried out. There are two main types of quality indicators, quantitative and qualitative data.

6.1. Quantitative data:

- number of enquiries about a product
- number of orders for a product
- number of brochures, DVDs etc. distributed
- number of visitors to a website
- number of visitors attending a conference, seminar, workshop
- amount of press coverage (number of articles and items on radio or TV)
- size of audience reached through dissemination activities

The national dissemination plans already include information about quantitative data. It should be an objective of the partnership to try to enlarge the activities implemented, meaning that it is possible to change the dissemination plans for each partner at any time.

6.2. Qualitative data:

These indicators are more specific and not so easy to implement. They could be in the form of short surveys as part of brochures or publicity hand-outs. They can be distributed to participants at a conference, seminar or workshop. In terms of evaluation and quality assurance procedures it might be useful to include a few questions in regard to dissemination material and/or activities in general surveys of project/process/product evaluation.

Qualitative indicators are useful:

- to obtain detailed, subjective feedback
- to give a general feeling of responses
- to offer specific ideas about what has been successful, how to do things differently next time or new ideas for future projects

6.3. Documentation

It is considered as very important to document all dissemination activities. On the one hand the documentation serves to keep an overview about dissemination activities in general and on the other hand it provides quantitative and maybe also qualitative data to

measure impact and ensure quality. Each partner is expected to document its own activities carried out in the field of dissemination and exploitation. The form of documentation can vary depending on the dissemination activity, e.g. pictures, presentations, hand-outs, list of participants, agendas, meeting minutes, notes, copies of emails, newsletters, press articles ...

During the project's lifetime there should be updates with regard to the partners' dissemination plans. This update is important in helping the project coordinator to coordinate the work packages for dissemination and exploitation as well as for the overall project management. This update basically concerns adjustments within the national dissemination plans. Before the interim and final reports are written each partner should summarise all dissemination and exploitation activities carried out. This feedback will include the actual state-of-the-art dissemination achievements of IsoQuam and should not show any significant variations from the national plans.

Administrative issues (see also Annex I)	
Date	Document
06/10	National Dissemination Templates
07/10	Dissemination Strategy
01/11 05/11	Recommended updates of dissemination plans

7. General recommendations and further steps in the IsoQuam project

According to the next work packages and development of results E.N.T.E.R. gives the following recommendations to the project consortium to support dissemination. These are only suggestions that can be taken into account in the project process.

- Continuous update of national dissemination plans
- Continuous involvement of stakeholders in project developments
- Continuous documentation of all dissemination activities by each partner
- Collecting feedback on dissemination material and activities
- Continuous enlargement of activities in national dissemination plans
- Use of dissemination templates provided by E.N.T.E.R. in order to make reports easy to analyse and to compare
- Connecting with other European projects working in the same thematic field
- Links from partner organisations' websites to project website
- Continuous communication within the project partnership
- Identification of concrete target groups, stakeholders and other multipliers
- Try to use dissemination target oriented instead of randomly
- Find additional dissemination instruments (e.g. newsletter, e-bulletins...) to cover dissemination actions through the entire project period
- Consider exploitation plans already by dissemination activities
- Clarification of IPRs (Intellectual Property Rights) during one of the following project meetings
- Follow rules of corporate design and graphic identity from IsoQuam project and European Commission

8. Conclusion

Project results can only be of sustainable value and use if the dissemination of them is well planned and implemented at different levels. The strategy aims to support all activities in the fields of dissemination by presenting general aspects as well as specific information to be used by each project partner according to the national dissemination plans. Furthermore, the strategy tries to highlight specific indicators for achieving high impact as well as for how high quality can be assured in the implementation of dissemination process.

As a result of E.N.T.E.R.'s experience in the field of dissemination and exploitation the communication within the partnership is considered as being very important for achieving the best results. Even if not all partners are equally involved in each work package they must be kept up to date about developments and outcomes. In general, dissemination can only be successful through close cooperation between all partners. Not only the communication but also the individual use of national dissemination channels, contacts and networks has great influence on the impact of a project.

Most partners of the IsoQuam project are experienced in European project business and the first versions of the national dissemination plans look promising. Although it needs to be monitored that the activities of each partner will increase during the project progress in order to raise the amount of persons and organisations informed about IsoQuam.

From the perspective of dissemination there is no cause for concern. E.N.T.E.R. sees its role as external expert as a provider of guidance and support to the partners to make dissemination for them as easy and as successful as possible.

E.N.T.E.R., Graz 07/10