



VccSSe – National level evaluation of the 2nd year of the project

Summary Report

0. Introduction

Every partner institution was asked to fill in the form concerning the National level evaluation of the second year of the project (see the Annex). The filled-in evaluation reports done by every participating institution were received by the Project Coordinating Institution (Valahia University) as well as by the Bielsko-Biala team who processed the data and came out with the results presented below.

Eight different aspects have been investigated and concluded:

- *Management of the project*
- *Significance of the coordinating meetings*
- *Cooperation with the coordinator and partners in/between meetings*
- *Cooperation and support within the institution*
- *Progress of the project*
- *Commitment to the project during the second year*
- *The strengths and weaknesses of the project*
- *Future of the project and some considerations*

The following Report tries to gather all the opinions given by the partnership and provides us with the feelings and guidelines to continue and improve our collaborative work as regards the use of Virtual Instrumentation in Science Education.

I. Management of the project (both on the international and institution level)

The management of the project on the national level has been considered excellent highlighting, professional and competent monitoring and guidance through the stages of the project, good communication, helpful attitude, dedication, very well prepared transnational meetings, fast response to enquiries, encouragement.

The management of the project on the institutions level has been assessed as very good on the whole, which results from competent monitoring the fulfillment of all the tasks as well as the progress of the project on its national level, the encouragement aimed at the institution staff, also the considerable involvement of the staff. Nevertheless some difficulties occurred caused by the time shift of task execution (there were still some first year activities going on in the second year). Also, in one case, the results of the teacher training courses were regarded as poor.

As regards the question: **“How easy or difficult do you find the paperwork?”**, some consider the paperwork quite difficult, others not so difficult but bureaucratic, tedious and boring, whereas two institutions consider it easy. The coordinating institution points out that the work reporting and checking involved a lot of time.



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II. Significance of the coordinating meetings

- **Gijon meeting (Spain, 21-25 November 2007)**

VERY IMPORTANT for the future managing and developing of the project because:

- it was dedicated to the analysis of the materials prepared in the first year of the project, including all the assessment tools;
- a lot of tasks for future activities were clearly defined;
- a second edition of the training course;
- the possibility to use new software in the next teacher training courses.

- **Joensuu meeting (Finland, 18-22 April 2008)**

VERY MPORTANT because it was dedicated to the analysis of the training stage and future improvements of the training process:

- results of the first year of the project were discussed and evaluated.

- **Patras meeting (Greece, 10-14 September 2008)**

VERY IMPORTANT because it was dedicated to the second year of the project, especially to:

- the Testing Phase concerning the implementation of the Virtual Experiments in the classroom;
- evaluation questionnaires were designed;
- the discussion about the following issues:
 - Database for Virtual Experiments;
 - the specific frame for presenting the on-line labs and the Virtual Instrumentation e-Space Exhibition;
 - the Guidelines for Best Practices;
 - specified undertakings concerning Project Dissemination.

III. Cooperation with the coordinator and partners in/ between meetings

The **cooperation with the coordinator** has been regarded very good and good, as well as very competent and fruitful, especially during the meetings, when the cooperation was much more intensified. The coordinator's quick response to problems was highly appreciated. All members of the VccSSe team were informed in a due time of their duties and responsibilities regarding papers/materials.

The **cooperation with the other project partners** has been very good, satisfactory, effective, in some cases (those concerning the teams coming from same country) excellent. Cooperation with teams working with the same software was much more intensive. Exchange of the project course



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experience as well as materials and other projects has taken place. From the point of view of the coordinating institution some partners were assigned more responsibility in carrying out tasks and respecting timesheets established in the project plan, which they fulfilled accordingly.

IV. Cooperation and support within your institution

The **cooperation with the technicians** has been excellent, very good, good and satisfactory with full support and every request responded to and every problem solved promptly.

The cooperation with other members of the local project team has been excellent with the colleagues always ready to collaborate and to be efficient. Good understanding as well as friendly and helpful attitude with the readiness to discuss and re-discuss project issues has been highlighted. Dynamic involvement of the coordinator and local coordinator has made the tasks for the project team easier.

The cooperation with the financial department has been excellent and very good with full support to enabling partners to carry out the project tasks.

The overall support of the institution towards the project during the second year has been very good, satisfactory and correct and, generally, without any problems; in one case the support has been within the project team only but, nevertheless, has been excellent.

V. Progress of the project

Progress of the project has been rated in ten categories, six of which have been processed quantitatively (poor, quite good, good, very good, excellent) and four qualitatively:

To the question: **How do you assess the outcomes in relation to the timetable of the second year?** There are three “very good” answers and four “good” answers.

To the question: **How would you evaluate the efficiency of the “students’ classroom impact” assessment tool?** There are two “very good” answers and five “good” answers.

To the question: **How would you evaluate the efficiency of the “teachers’ classroom impact assessment tool?** There are two “very good” answers and five “good” answers.

To the question: **What is your opinion on the quality of the project web page contents after the second year of the project?** There are three “excellent” answers, two “very good” answers and two “good” answers.



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To the question: **What is your opinion on the quality of the VI exhibition contents after the second year of the project?** There are two “very good” answers, four “good” answers and one “poor” answer.

To the question: **How easy or difficult did you find identifying the teachers that participated to the training program?** Project partners did not have problems with persuading teachers to participate in the courses because they were fully informed about the course either via e-mails, local media or by visiting schools, discussions on local staff coordinating teachers’ level, also teachers shared the information among them. In one case it was very difficult to get teachers responded.

To the question: **How easy or difficult did you find motivating teachers for accomplishing the tasks during the training period?** Project partners’ answers differ, ranging from “*primary school teachers were highly motivated, especially while using GeoGebra*”, “*it was not hard, most of them were very interested*”, through “*it was easier it time when teachers understand better the role of ICT to support their own work in meaningful ways*”, to “*the task was very difficult to accomplish due to their lack of computing experience*” or “*rather difficult, but the reasons lie behind the Project and do not depend on the quality of the Project activities*” or “*teachers have no motivation – by the government – to improve their teaching practices; in our school there is no adequate infrastructure; our teachers like to and access all the training materials included in the web-page of VccSSe but they did not prefer to perform the demanded activities (to construct a VI, to form a lesson plan, to perform a lesson in the classroom using VIs and to follow the timetable of the course*”.

As a form of **improving the manner of presenting the products of the training sessions on the project web page** there are suggestions of using multimedia, without overloading the web page by details, setting a drawing in the link. Nevertheless, the training sessions’ products are regarded by most partners as easy to access and well-structured and a real support in the training process.

Most partners have found the project phases and activities in the second year very clear and easy to follow as well as justly distributed. Only in one case they seemed a little unclear at first “*as materials and goal were being defined as the course developed*”

VI. Commitment to the project during the second year

Commitment to the project during the second year ranges from “*total*” (1 institution) to “*sufficient*”. On the whole, the partners have been involved in various tasks and activities of the projects and have been doing their best to accomplish them successfully and on time.

In most cases partners **allocate more of their regular working time for the project**, stating that it depends on the workload they have as well as the project tasks. In one case “*the training was developed in extra time out of teaching hours*”.



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VII. The strengths and weaknesses of the project

Weaknesses pointed out by the partners:

- Different virtual instrumentation (it would have been better not to focus on so many different virtual technologies);
- The tasks were divided inadequate to possibilities - they should be differentiated according to the specific character of the institution;
- Low outputs - some institutions do not seem to have made contact with teachers and students;
- Difficulties to find teachers interested in the project and to get experiments to put in the matrix;
- No response from the course participants as far as on-line discussions and filling-in questionnaires is working;
- Not enough motivation for the teachers in terms of paying them some money for their participation;
- Not many VIs provided by the Project webpage.

Strengths:

- Excellent collaboration among partners;
- Engagement of all participants;
- Usefulness of the Project results;
- high level of requirements: *Moodle* platform knowledge, *Crocodile Clips*, *PHP Groupware*, knowledge of English;
- Implementation in the classroom (number of students that participate - over 3000);
- High dissemination possibilities due to the good organization and the courses offered;
- Very good team, interested institutions and a group of people capable to cope with everything;
- *GeoGebra*, which is friendly and suits perfectly the didactic needs of teachers;
- FREE for teachers learning materials and training about using ICT in education.

VIII. Future of the project and some considerations

As to the expectations of the project in its final year the partners, the partners hope to:

- help the in-service teachers to finalize their work;
- make a very good and impressive *Virtual Experiments Exhibition*;
- fill all the remaining tasks and receive high satisfaction from the EU evaluators;
- get more works and more teachers via web;



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- settle the training modules to continue disseminating in future;
- disseminate the didactic prerogatives and results of the project;
- promote and deal with the *Moodle* platform in depth;
- analyze the weak points of the training course for teachers with the aim of developing new / second editions;
- assess the developed resources, *Moodle* platform and implementation in the classroom;
- continue the way of working, but taking into account all the weak points;
- evaluate the implementation of the project's results / experiments;
- evaluate the whole project.

The suggestions concerning the **dissemination of the project** are as follows:

- Videoconference (one of the scheduled channel);
- CD/DVD materials;
- Papers presented in educational conferences and journal;
- Leaflets / booklets;
- Virtual Experiments Space Exhibition;
- Seminars for teachers - course participants;
- Congresses in EU countries.