



NEW VET

NETWORK FOSTERING THE EUROPEAN WORK-BASED
LEARNING SYSTEM FOR VET PROVIDERS

2nd EVALUATION REPORT

WP2 QUALITY MONITORING

DELIVERABLE No: 10



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Executive Summary

The evaluation of the NEW VET project processes, deliverables and activities is essential for its continuous improvement. The main objectives of the evaluation are to systematically collect, analyze, and present data, to inform project effectiveness and performance. The D10. 2nd Evaluation Report presents findings and conclusions from the second semester (M7 – M12) of project implementation.

The 2nd project period, M7 – M12, has been definitely affected by the consequences of the global pandemic. While the pandemic has put severe constraints to project meetings scheduled and training hotspots to take place in partner countries during the second semester of the project (2nd project meeting in France in April 2020 and 3rd project meeting in Germany in September 2020), up to now the project implementation and coordination have run smoothly. The two project meetings were transferred online, in May and September 2020 respectively.

Considering the communication and coordination among the partners during the pandemic, we can easily say that the project partners' satisfaction remains high. Overall, partners are also satisfied with the online project meetings, although some partners highlighted that face-to-face meetings remain the best option. The main issues that were raised in regard to the online meetings, were with respect to technical matters, in other words, issues that partners can easily tackle and offer solutions.

As regards dissemination activities and the involvement of stakeholders and target groups, partners showed a lower level of satisfaction. This is not surprising since all scheduled project activities have been postponed. The transfer of trainings online was not considered a good idea by all partners, due to the limited impact they might have as compared to physical trainings.

The 2nd Evaluation Report concludes with a set of recommendations that could be deployed to maximize the benefits and efficiency for the next project period.

- Project partners should take initiatives and suggest ideas on how to increase the involvement of stakeholders and relevant target groups during the pandemic.
- The consortium should continue their excellent collaboration and exchange of best practices relevant to project activities and objectives. Partners should continue to share their complementary knowledge and expertise within the consortium.
- Instead of holding long single day online meetings, the consortium should consider spreading them in two or three consecutive days. If this is not possible, the organizers are advised to add short session breaks.
- To avoid any technical matters, all partners should submit their presentations one day in advance to the meeting organizer.
- Online project meetings should stick to one online platform in order to avoid confusion, technical issues and significant delays.

- Since face-to-face events and activities cannot be realised due to the COVID-19 pandemic, project partners should employ more efforts in digital/ social media project dissemination.
- Project partners should also deploy EU portals to disseminate the project activities (i.e. EPAL platform).
- Partners have already agreed that some project activities should be transferred online. In the next project period partners should remain in close contact in order to evaluate the pandemic situation and decide about the fate of the rest of the project activities and events.

1. INTRODUCTION

The project “**NEW VET: Network Fostering the European Work-based Learning System for VET Providers**” was initiated in November 2019 to implement and deliver a number of activities and outcomes which enhance Vocational Education and Training and work-based learning in five EU Member States participating in the consortium, namely Italy, France, Germany, Slovenia and Greece. NEW VET project is an Erasmus+ KA3 – Support for Policy Reform Networks and Partnerships of Vocational Education and Training (VET) providers.

1.1. Scope of this document

This evaluation report is an output of the NEW VET project. The objective of the 2nd evaluation report is:

- ✓ to identify outcomes;
- ✓ to examine the effectiveness of the project;
- ✓ to monitor its implementation and performance;
- ✓ to report risks and on time mitigation measures; and
- ✓ to suggest a set of recommendations on how to improve the project results and implementation.

The 2nd Evaluation Report is based upon the approach described in the NEW VET Quality Plan and Risk Management Toolkit (D8) for monitoring the project's processes and results. In accordance to the NEW VET project provisions, it monitors the quality standards of the project activities that have run from month 7 to month 12 of project delivery (May – October 2020) and makes recommendations on how project management and implementation can be improved.

Table 1 illustrates all deliverables and activities that, according to the NEW VET project proposal, are scheduled in the period under review (M7 – M12). In addition, this report will discuss deliverables which, according to the D9 1st Evaluation Report, have not been completed during the previous project delivery period, ie. from M1 to M6.

This report is a public deliverable and will be communicated through the official channels of NEW VET project dissemination. Its audience is primarily the members of the NEW VET consortium and their representatives at the project's Steering Committee, as well as other ERASMUS+ project implementors. Moreover, the report audience is the NEW VET project reviewers, EACEA and other European Commission services.

Work Packages	Deliverables	May 20	Jun 20	Jul 20	Aug 20	Sep 20	Oct 20
WP1 Management & Coordination	D2. 2nd Steering Committee Meeting Dossier						
	D3. 3d Steering Committee Meeting Dossier						
WP2 Quality Monitoring	D10. 2 nd Evaluation Report						
WP3 Transnational Capacity Building for VET Providers	D15. 2nd Training Hotspot Pack						
	D16. 3rd Training Hotspot Pack						
WP4 Empowering the Multilevel Cooperation	D19. Training Module						
WP5 Spreading the Attractiveness of the VET System	D23. "EU Vocational Skills Week" 2020 national winners packs						
	D30. 2nd NEW(VET)sletters						
WP6 Project Communication & Dissemination	D31. NEW VETworking café						
	D32. NEW VET Awareness Seminar						

Table 1. NEW VET Gantt diagram (M7 – M12)

1.2. Structure and methodology

The methodology used for the 2nd evaluation report is in line with the D8 Quality plan and risk management toolkit evaluation criteria and tools. The data deployed for this report is both quantitative and qualitative. The analysis relied on project's documents analysis, observation and online questionnaires distributed through google forms.

More specifically, in order to assess the second project semester, the 2nd evaluation report has used the following evaluation tools:

- Risk Management Toolkit (D8 Quality Plan and Risk Management Toolkit, ANNEX I).
- Internal project evaluation form (D8 Quality Plan and Risk Management Toolkit, ANNEX VI).
- Meetings and Events Questionnaire Template (D8 Quality Plan and Risk Management Toolkit, ANNEX VIII), and
- A special COVID-19 edition evaluation form which assesses the pandemic's impact on both the partner organizations and project implementation.

The report is structured as follows: in chapter two it presents the project activities that have taken place in the period under review per work package; in chapter three it presents the findings of the evaluation surveys for the period under evaluation; chapter four presents the potential risks and risk mitigation measures identified by the project Risk Manager and WP leaders, and concludes with a set of recommendations for a more effective project implementation in the next project phase.

2. OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Work Package 1: Management & Coordination

D2.2. 2nd Steering Committee meeting

The 2nd Steering Committee meeting, initially planned to be held in April 2020 in Le Puy en Velay, France, was postponed and transferred online due to the COVID-19 lock-down restrictions across Europe. The online meeting took place on 13 May 2020.

During the meeting, the Consortium:

- i. Monitored the project activities especially as regards *WP2 Quality Monitoring* and *WP6 Project Communication and Dissemination*.
- ii. Launched new project activities especially as regards *WP4 Empowering the Multilevel Cooperation* and *WP5 Spreading the Attractiveness of the VET System*.
- iii. Discussed the effects of the COVID19 emergency on project activities, especially as regards delays of project activities and outcomes caused by lockdowns and travel restrictions.

All three aspects are presented in more detail below, in the respective sections of this report.

D2.3. 3rd Steering Committee meeting

The 3rd Steering Committee meeting, initially planned to be held in September 2020 in Berlin, was organized online on 21st September 2020 due to the travel restrictions imposed by the COVID19 pandemic.

In the third project meeting, NEW VET partners gathered and discussed online important issues regarding the severe ramifications caused by the pandemic in the second project semester (May – Oct 2020). The Project Coordinator highlighted the financial impact of the pandemic emergency and suggested possible solutions (budget for travels, awards for share your story contests etc.).

Another urgent matter was the awards for the winners of the “Share your story contest” that have to be changed with the support and advice of EACEA. The trip to Berlin for attending the European Vocational Skills Week has been replaced by an electronic device (laptop or tablet) for attending the activities online.

In addition, a flash report was filled in and delivered to EACEA on the 15th of September 2020.

According to the project plan, the second period of the project foresaw the organization of meetings and events that had to be postponed as a direct consequence of the pandemic.

More specifically, each WP leader, based upon a template sent by the Project Coordinator, presented:

- the WP activities supposed to be implemented and the deliverables supposed to be produced, according to the project timetable
- the deviations occurred, and
- justifications and mitigation risk proposals, if relevant.

In addition, the Consortium coordinated its actions as regards important forthcoming project activities, such as:

- WP1.3: Reporting to EACEA and financial reporting by partners
- WP2.2: 2nd Evaluation report
- WP3.2: Training Hotspot on ECVET system
- WP3.3: Training Hotspot on WBL system
- WP5.3: National Vocational Skills Week collateral events.

The meeting was concluded by an Evaluation Session that presented to partners the findings of the 1st project Evaluation Report and made concrete recommendations for the continuation of a high-quality project delivery.

The specific items of the 3rd Steering Committee meeting are discussed in more detail below, in the respective sections of this report.

Work Package 2: Quality Monitoring

D10. 2nd Evaluation Report

During the period under review the present Evaluation Report has been prepared.

Evaluation Session during the 2nd Steering Committee meeting

ReadLab, the leader of WP2 Quality Monitoring thoroughly presented the *D8 Quality Plan and Risk Management Toolkit*, developed in M3 of project delivery, which describes the guidelines of the quality assurance processes that govern the project and discussed with partners specific provisions of the plan.

The presentation and discussion that followed have resulted in modifications, and improvements of the *D8 Quality Plan and Risk Management Toolkit*, as regards:

- the quality assurance and peer review procedure of project outcomes
- the contents and regularity of the internal project evaluation form and
- the social media and website management policy.

Evaluation Session during the 3rd Steering Committee meeting

ReadLab, the leader of *WP2 Quality Monitoring* presented to partners the findings of the 1st project Evaluation Report as well as its recommendations for quality project delivery.

Work Package 3: Transnational Capacity Building for VET Providers

Both *D15 2nd Training Hotspot Pack* and *D16 3rd Training Hotspot Pack* have been postponed due to the COVID19 pandemic to the end of September (28/9 -2/10/2020 – Le Puy en Velay) and to November 2020, respectively. Yet, in the 3rd Steering Committee Meeting, due to the continuation of travel restrictions/ precariousness, partners have agreed to hold the hotspot trainings online. The WP leader IHK has been closely cooperating with PP2 Greta in order to organize and deliver these events as soon as possible, in the best possible quality and format.

Work Package 4: Empowering the Multilevel Cooperation

The *D19 Training Module*, scheduled to be delivered in M12 of project delivery, has been delayed due to the postponement of the WP3 Hotspot Trainings. The WP4 leader, Lycée C. et A. Dupuy – Greta du Velay, with the contribution of all partners, has been working on the *D18 VET providers internationalization strategies*, scheduled to be delivered on February 2021, so that as soon as the WP3 Hotspot Trainings are concluded partners can catch up with D19: a 40 hours training module in English that will be translated in all partners' languages.

Work Package 5: Spreading the Attractiveness of the VET System

After the completion of the *D22 Share your Story Platform* during the previous period of project delivery and its continuous updates by PP5 ReadLab and all project partners, the Consortium had to face an important challenge: the *D23 "EU Vocational Skills Week" 2020 national winners packs* had to be modified entirely due to both the restrictions and overall unattractiveness of travel during the COVID19 pandemic and the online delivery of the European Vocational Skills Week 2020.

After consulting with the EACEA officer the Consortium has altered the D23 contents from participation in the EU Skills Week official events hosted in Berlin to a tangible award, ie. an electronic device, laptop or tablet.

In addition, during the period under review the Consortium, with the coordination and direction of Welcome Aps., leader of WP5:

- has determined the 'Share Your Story' contest award criteria;
- has been widely disseminating the 'Share your Story' contest in the consortium countries;
- has been collecting stories from adult VET learners, teacher/tutors and in-company trainers/mentors;

- has been preparing the D25 “EU Vocational Skills Week” 2020 national collateral events, scheduled to take place in November 2020.

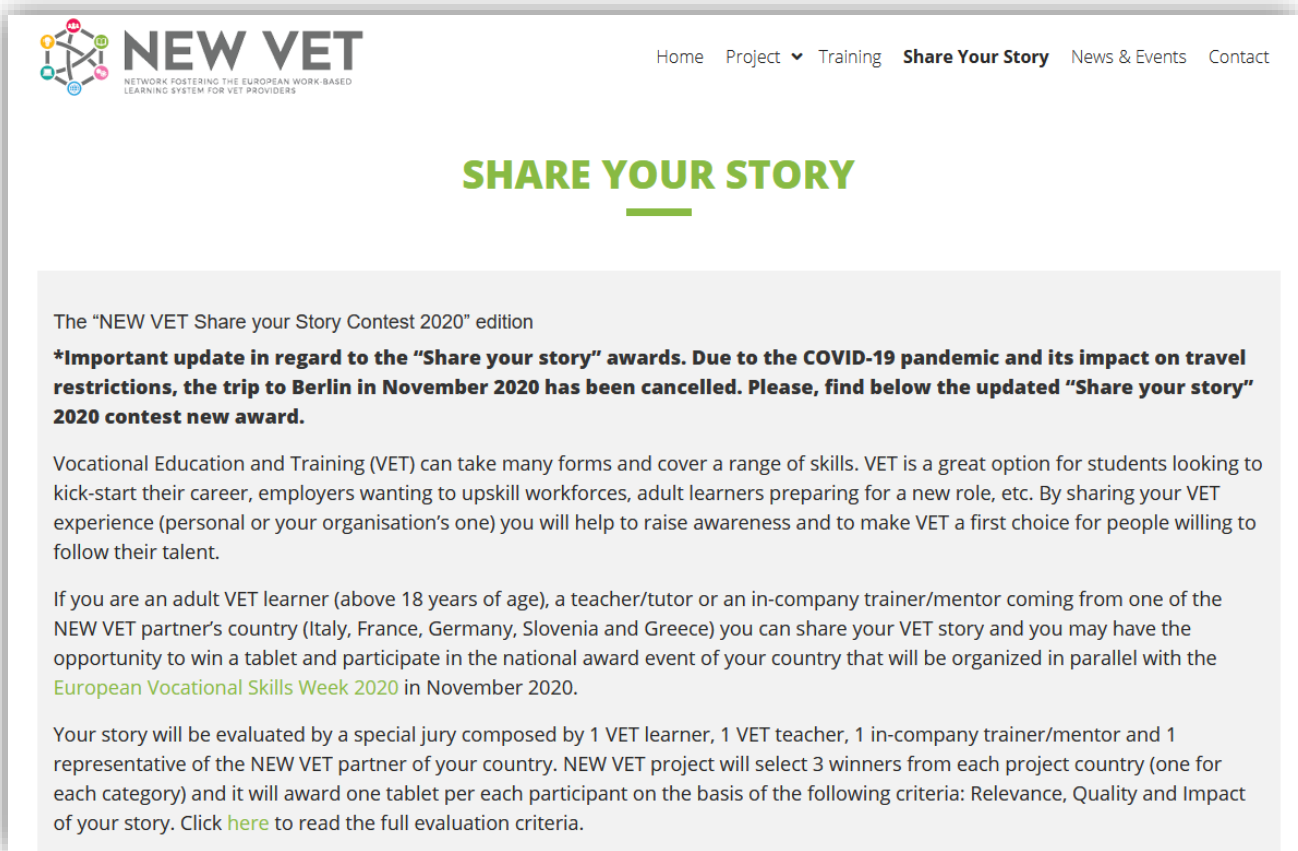


Image 1. Information on the ‘Share your Story’ Contest, NEW VET website

Work Package 6: Project Communication and Dissemination

D30. NEW(VET)sletters

During the period under review, the 1st project Newsletter has been compiled with the contribution of all partners, translated in all project languages (French, German, Greek, Italian, Slovenian) and widely disseminated through mail chimp to a variety of stakeholders identified under D27 Dissemination Action Plan and key audience list.

The 1st NEW(VET)letter:

- introduced the NEW VET project and its activities,
- presented the launching of the project website and social media platforms,
- shared news from the EU, such as updates regarding the fight against COVID19 and European Vocational Skills Week 2020 and
- presented the project partner organizations and their representatives.

The first issue of the Newsletter is estimated to have reached 322 stakeholders and organizations affiliated with project objectives and goals (VET providers, educational institutions, private and public bodies).

The 1st NEW VET Newsletter has been uploaded on the project website in both the News and Results sections.



Image 2. NEW VET Newsletter No.1

The delivery of the 2nd project newsletter scheduled for July 2020 has been postponed due to the postponement of the WP3 2nd Training Hotspot. The 2nd Newsletter is expected to present D25 "EU Vocational Skills Week" 2020 national collateral events, scheduled to take place in November 2020.

D31. NEWVETworking café

The delivery of the 2nd and 3rd NEWVETworking cafes scheduled for April and September 2020 respectively have been postponed due to the postponement of the WP3 2nd and 3rd Training Hotspots, respectively.

D32. NEW VET Awareness Seminar

The delivery of the Awareness Seminars has been postponed due to the postponement of the WP3 2nd and 3rd Training Hotspots.

3. EVALUATION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Evaluation of the 2nd Steering Committee Meeting

Project partners were invited to submit their views, comments and feedback in respect to the 2nd Steering Committee meeting which was hosted online on 13 May 2020. The purpose of this online survey was to collect project partners' perceptions and expectations from the II project meeting; address challenges; identify problems; and offer possible improvements. The survey, administered through google forms, was available online and all project partners were invited to reflect and provide their answers; we received back eight complete responses (at least one per each project partner).

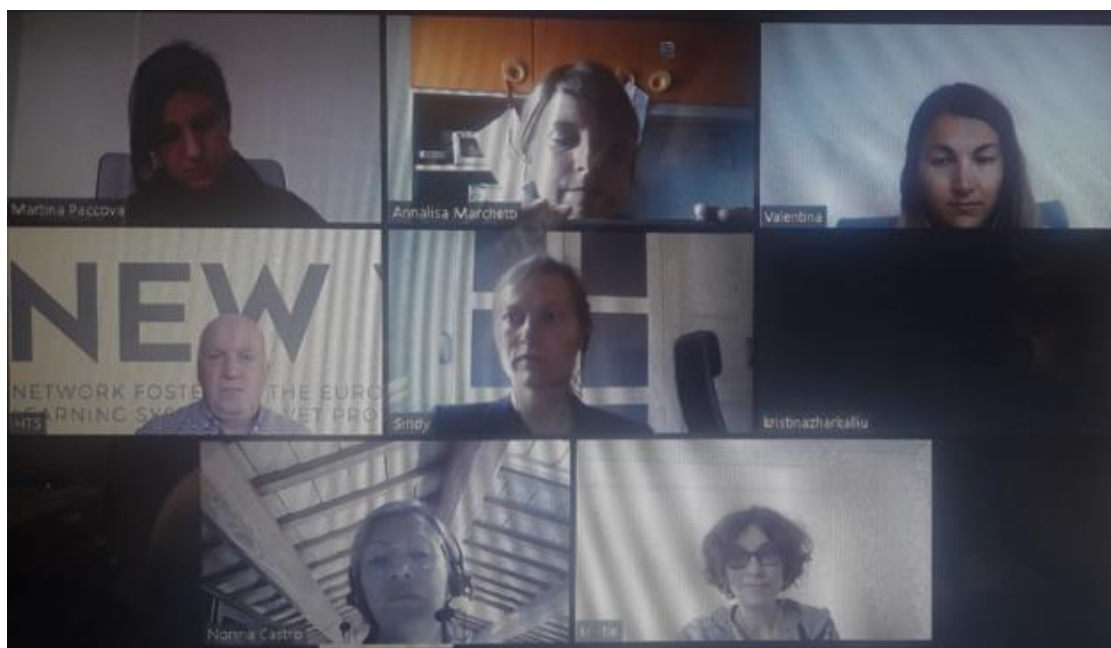


Image 3. Participants in the 2nd SCM

Main findings:

- The majority of respondents indicated “completely satisfied” and “satisfied” (five partners and two partners respectively) with the online meeting preparations.
- Partners rated the structure of the agenda very highly with the majority of partners being completely satisfied (75 per cent) and satisfied (25 per cent) from it.
- NEW VET partners had a similar attitude about the meeting's value in helping them achieve project goals, with all of them responding to the relevant question completely satisfied (62.50 per cent) and satisfied (37.50 per cent).

Figure 1 illustrates the answers provided by NEW VET partners (1=completely dissatisfied, 5=completely satisfied).

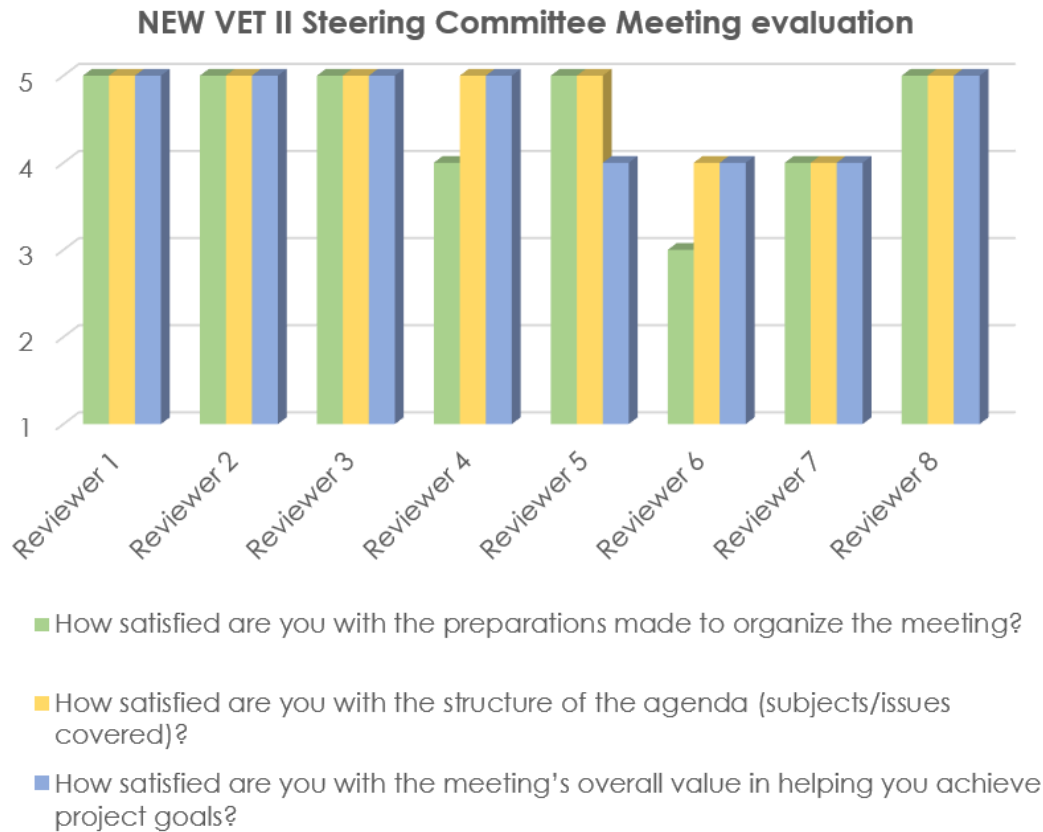


Figure 1. NEWVET 2nd SCM evaluation

Although the meeting was transferred online as a direct consequence of the travel restrictions imposed due to the pandemic, half of the project partners were completely satisfied (four partners in total), a smaller group of respondents claimed "satisfied" (three partners) and only one partner chose neutral. The same can also be said about the participation of project partners in the discussion and decision making during the 2nd Steering Committee meeting. Half of the survey participants stated they were completely satisfied, a relatively lower number of respondents mentioned that they were only satisfied (three partners) and only one partner remained neutral, without providing a negative or positive reply to this very question. None of the respondents selected lower values.

As for the scope of the information presented during the 2nd project meeting, it received mainly positive evaluation by the consortium with 62.5 per cent of them claiming they were completely satisfied and 25 per cent mentioning they were just satisfied. In terms of the II Steering Committee meeting quality, partners were positive and said they were satisfied (63 per cent) and completely satisfied (25 per cent). However, a smaller percentage of partners remained neutral about the same aspect of the meeting.

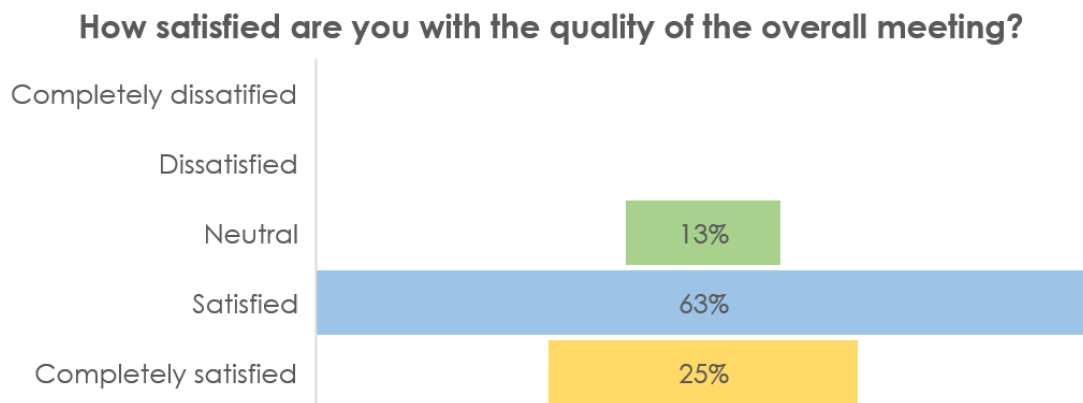


Figure 2. Partners satisfaction from the 2nd SCM

Alongside the structured survey questions, we considered important to get feedback on more general aspects of this meeting, namely its strengths and weaknesses. In three open-ended questions, project partners were invited to express their opinion and perceptions regarding the online meeting. Almost all project partners were satisfied and completely satisfied with the overall quality of the meeting. Partners found the coordination of the project meeting by the project leader, IAL Marche, as a considerable strength. In addition, all partners contributed and were actively involved in the discussion throughout the online meeting. A partner explicitly indicated that: *"The strong involvement of all partners in addressing the impact of the pandemic in the implementation of some of the project's activities, trying to find the most ideological solutions was among the main strengths of the project meeting"*.

Although the difficulties that have emerged due to the pandemic and the limitations of the face-to-face meetings, the partners cooperated without any particular problem during the online meeting. The meeting allowed the consortium to discuss and have a better understanding of the current state of play of the project and what to anticipate in the next months. Further to that, a partner praised the fact that colleagues respected the time management. In particular, a partner highlighted: *"The meeting was very helpful in a way that even though it was done online, it was enough to decide on important issues and continue the smooth implementation and coordination of the meeting"*.

The weaknesses of the meeting were also investigated in the evaluation form and all partners were asked to identify weaknesses. Partners complained about the duration of the meeting, which considered as too long and without breaks. While the partners are satisfied with the online meeting, they rather prefer face-to-face meetings. One respondent commented: *"The online meetings allow to continue the management of the project in this particular situation due to the pandemic, but the collaboration and interchange that takes place in an international meeting are reduced, as well as the consolidation of relations between the partners. However, despite being a new*

situation for all, the partners have tried to effectively provide ideas to continue with the planned activities".

Evaluation of the 3rd Steering Committee Meeting

After the completion of the third Steering Committee meeting, project partners were asked to fill in an online survey and indicate their satisfaction or not from the online meeting. The online survey was administered through the google forms platform. We received eight responses (at least one from each partner organization). The online survey included structured questions where partners were asked to rate their level of satisfaction (lowest value=completely dissatisfied, highest value=completely satisfied) and three open-ended questions to submit their comments, suggestions for improvement and feedback.



Image 4. Participants in the 3rd SCM

To begin with, partners rated the preparation for the third Steering Committee online meeting as "satisfied" (37.50 per cent) and "completely satisfied" (62.50 per cent). The same can also be said with regards to the structure of the agenda which was rated very positively with six out of eight partners mentioning that they were completely satisfied, and the rest two said they were satisfied. The figures below illustrate partners' responses.

As for the online communication channel, which was deployed to host the online meeting, a large group of participants (six in total) reported a high level of satisfaction with the GoToMeeting platform. However, one partner remained neutral about this choice, while another partner mentioned that he/she was dissatisfied. In terms of the time allocation that was given to important issues, responders reported a diverse level of satisfaction. Half of the participants (four

in total) claimed to be completely satisfied from the time allocation for discussing important issues, fewer of them were satisfied (two partners), one partner remained neutral and another partner indicated the value "dissatisfied". The graph below (Figure 4) shows partners' satisfaction from the time allocation to important issues.

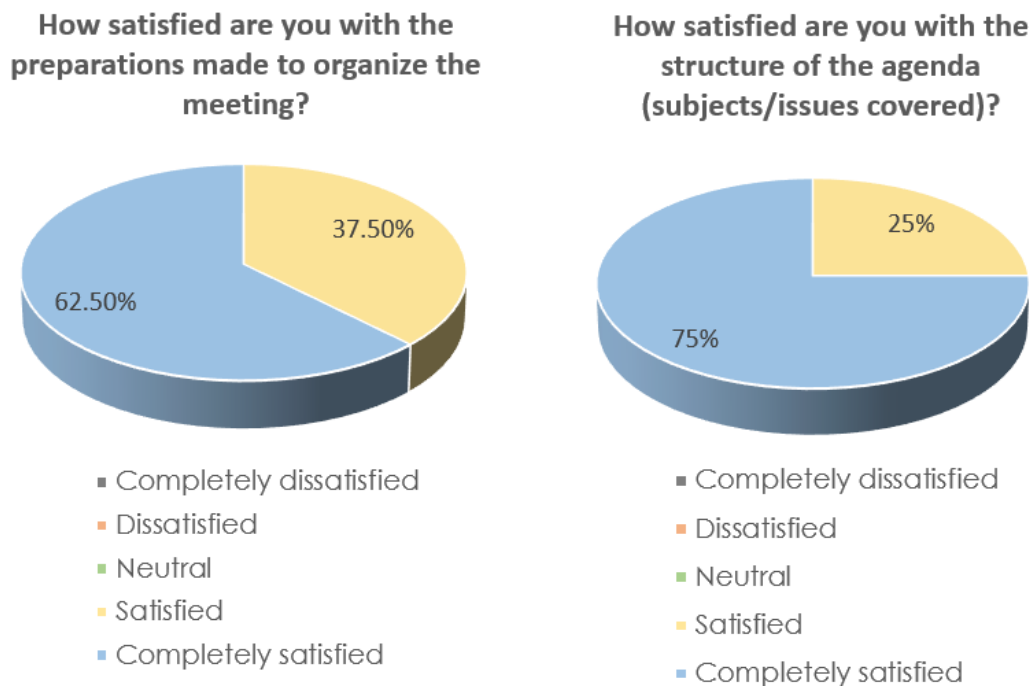


Figure 3. NEW VET partners satisfaction from the 3rd SCM

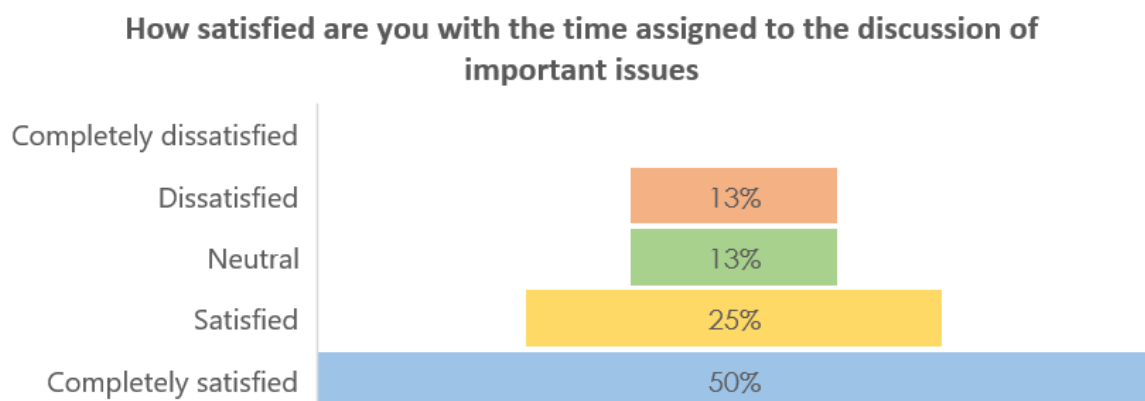


Figure 4. Partners satisfaction with time allocation

The project partners were also asked to express their opinion about the overall quality of the III Steering Committee meeting. Half of the participants were completely satisfied with the quality of the meeting. Two partners marked "satisfied" and two others remained neutral to the very same question. With regard to the scope of information presented during the III project meeting, 50

per cent of participants reported that were completely satisfied, 37.5 per cent of them said they were satisfied and only 12.5 per cent remained neutral. The data below indicates participants responses. None of the respondents selected lower values.

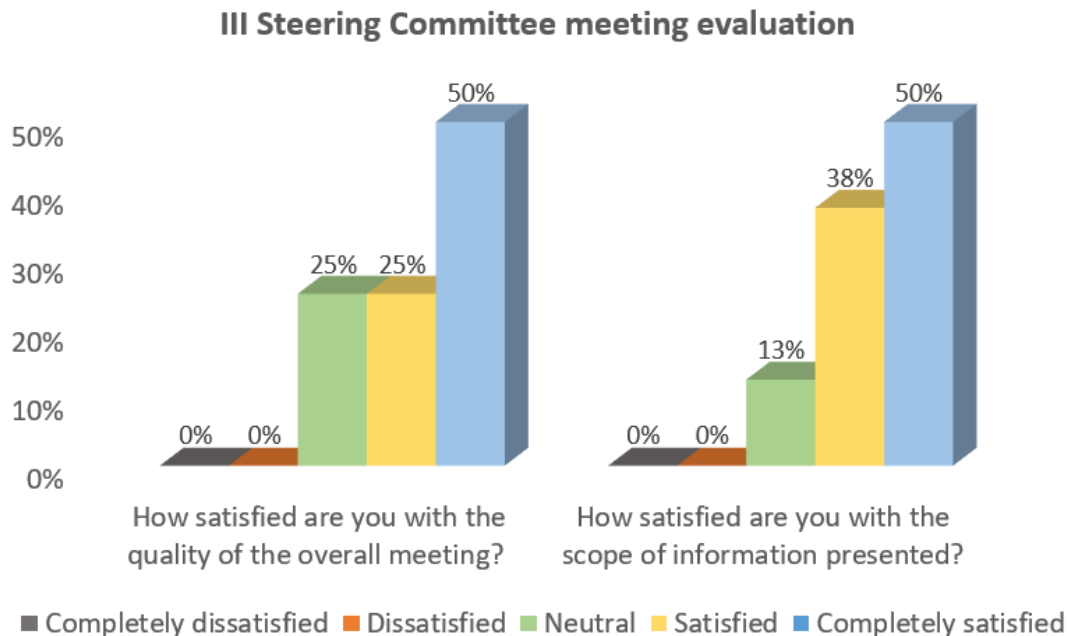


Figure 5. Overall valuation of the 3rd SCM

From the point view of the structure of the meeting, it was well prepared, and all partners contributed to the discussion and participated actively both with their presentations and inputs during the whole duration of the meeting. The successful participation of project partners in the discussion and decision making is reflected in the answers project partners provided: more than half of responders (62.5 per cent) said they were completely satisfied from the involvement of the project partners in the discussion and decision making, a lower percentage indicated "satisfied" (25%), while one partner chose "neutral" as an answer. Partners were also satisfied with the overall value of the meeting in helping them achieve the project goals. Seven out of eight responders said they were satisfied and completely satisfied; one partner indicated "neutral". None of the respondents selected lower values.

Further to that, project partners were asked to provide their opinion about the aspects they liked the most and some challenges in regard to the third Steering Committee meeting in the form of open-ended questions. When it comes to the strengths of the meeting, partners highlighted the good preparation of the meeting and the informative character of the project partners' presentations. One responder characterized the preparation and presentations as "perfect". Another partner particularly mentioned as a positive aspect of the meeting the "partners' commitment and shared vision". Although the meeting lasted longer

than it was expected, some partners appreciated the fact that more time was invested for important issues.

Contrary to the first project meeting where an important number of participants had mentioned the time management as the main weakness of the meeting, the III Steering Committee meeting received positive feedback about time management. Especially a partner commented: "good level of active involvement of partners, good efforts in time management, effective decision-making process". A similar view was shared from another partner who stated: "Time management has been adequate and has allowed all partners to present WP in charge issues". In addition, partners found particularly useful the meeting in terms of helping them to follow up the project progress and discuss current problems altogether.

As for other strengths of the third project meeting, project partners praised the meeting overall because it allowed them to discuss priority issues, take important decisions about the next steps of the project and share views on the COVID-19 impact on the project progress and the relevant adjustments that have to be taken into consideration. More particularly, a partner highlighted: "All PPs collaborated sharing PPTs with WP in charge, with right contents and focused on critical issues. This meeting was crucial because it allowed the partnership to make important decisions regarding the implementation of certain activities that have suffered the effects of the pandemic (i.e. WP 3- 2nd Training Hotspot, Transferring ECVET system and tools to the national WBL experiences, WP5. Share your story contest)".

The largest number of comments mentioned as weaknesses the technical matters that occurred during the online meeting. While some partners appreciated the fact that the meeting lasted longer, for others the long duration of the meeting was characterized as a negative element. A partner said that the meeting was "too long without breaks". The long duration and lack of breaks during the meeting were commented by other partners as well. Another negative feedback was dedicated to the communication platform used for the meeting. Not all partners were familiar with the online tool and thus they suggested "to stick to the same video conference provider, otherwise it takes time to figure out its functionality". Another partner said that while he/she is satisfied with the online meeting, the face-to-face meetings still remain the best option.

Internal Evaluation Survey Findings (M7 to M12)

Following the 2nd project evaluation period, an online questionnaire has been developed and made available for all project partners administered by google forms. The internal evaluation form, submitted every project semester by the consortium, was available online for all partners and who were kindly requested to provide their input and reflections on the past six months of the project.

According to the partners' responses, six out of eight claimed to be satisfied by the work plan and the organization of the NEW VET activities; one partner was completely satisfied; while only one partner was dissatisfied. As far as the cooperation within the consortium for the second period of the project (M7 – M12) is concerned, project partners marked only “satisfied” (five partners) and “completely satisfied” (three partners) values. None of the respondents selected lower values.

How satisfied are you with cooperation among partners?

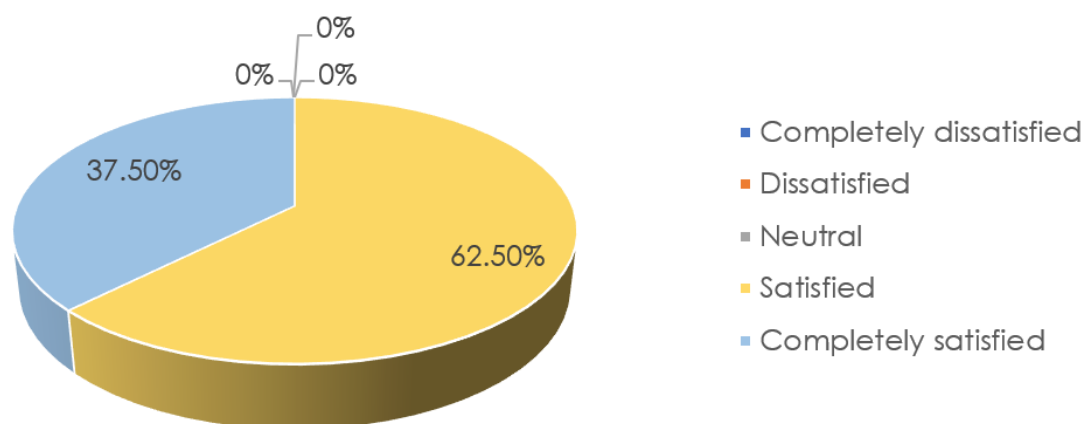


Figure 6. Partners' satisfaction from the cooperation within the consortium

NEW VET partners were also invited to respond to the question “How satisfied are you with the way the activities and tasks are distributed among partners?”. Half of the responses revealed that partners are satisfied with the distribution of activities and tasks within the consortium; three partners were completely satisfied; and one only partner remained neutral. While the communication among the consortium has taken place exclusively via online platforms, more than half of the partners (six in total) stated that they are completely satisfied, the rest two remained neutral on the very same issue.

What's more, we were interested to get insights regarding the satisfaction of partners about the ideas the consortium deploys in order to improve cooperation and communication partners. The majority of the responses revealed that partners are either satisfied (three partners) or completely satisfied (three partners), two partners however reported just neutral.

As it has stressed out in this document, the dissemination of the project activities has occurred only online. This has at some extent restricted the impact and the involvement of stakeholders in NEW VET activities. This situation was also reflected in the answers project partners provided. According to the responses submitted, half of the partners were neutral about their satisfaction from the involvement of stakeholders in project activities; three partners said they were satisfied; while one partner marked “dissatisfied”. The partner who said to be dissatisfied explained that “Some results due to Covid-19 are not as they were

planned, this is why we chose dissatisfied". Another partner particularly commented, "Due to COVID-19 stakeholders cannot be reached through face to face events".

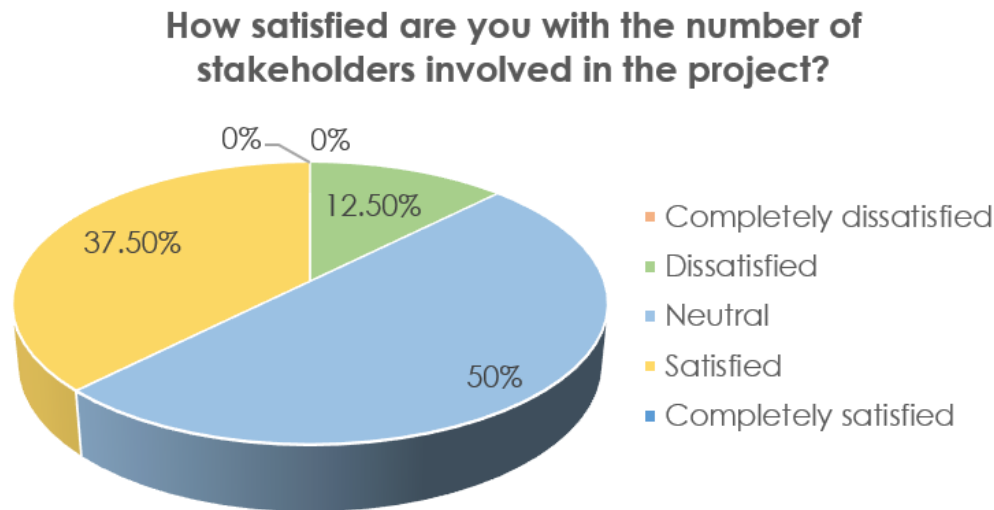


Figure 7. Partners' satisfaction from the involvement of stakeholders

In regard to the question "How satisfied are you with the way project results are communicated to target groups", the majority of the partners were satisfied (five out of eight), two partners said that they were completely satisfied. However, one the partners highlighted that: "In these times of crisis everything is more difficult to organize, in particular what concerns communication/cooperation to the target groups and stakeholders. Due to the restrictions imposed, they are more difficult to involve or efforts to involve them are much higher".

Further to that, project partners were also asked to comment and provide their insights about the deliverables that the 2nd project period foresaw. In the question "How satisfied are you with the degree to which the outcomes implement fully the requirements/functions envisaged in the project plan?", seven out of eight partners were either satisfied or completely satisfied, one partner, however, marked "neutral". When it comes to the question "How satisfied are you with the results that correspond to the stated objectives of the activity?", the responders provided different responses. Two partners said that are completely satisfied, two claimed to be just satisfied, two others remained neutral and the rest two marked "dissatisfied". The graph below illustrates their responses.

The project period under evaluation foresaw several activities (trainings, face-to-face meetings, dissemination) that were not able to be realized due to the pandemic. Some of these activities have been transferred online (namely the II and III Steering Committee meetings), while for the rest partners are still discussing and find the best possible alternatives without compromising the

quality and the impact. Some the pending activities will be delivered digitally while for others will move at a later date within 2021.

How satisfied are you with the results that correspond to the stated objectives of the activity?

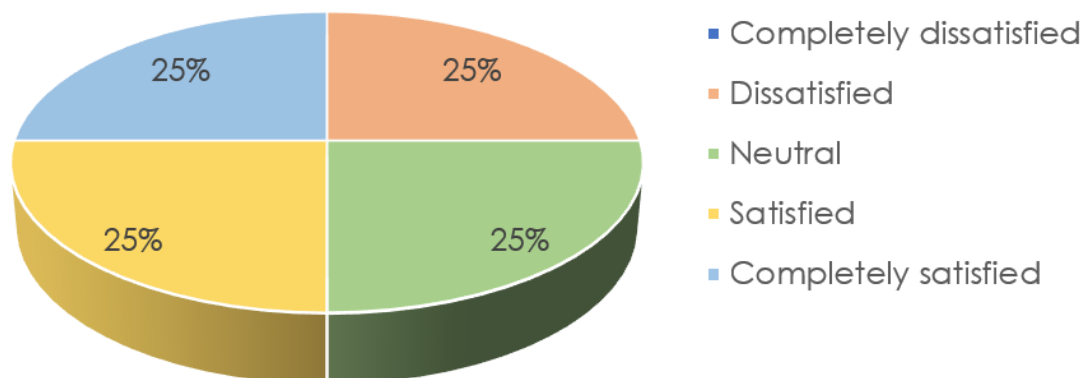


Figure 8. Partners' satisfaction with the results of the stated objectives of activities

The next section discusses the COVID-19 impact on project activities and the daily work of NEW VET partners. Partners' opinions and perspectives are discussed thoroughly in the next section.

Impact of COVID-19 on project activities (M7 to M12)

The 2nd Evaluation Report is accompanied by a special assessment in regard to the COVID-19 pandemic impact on partner organizations' generally and on project activities and implementation especially. Project partners were invited to fill in a special edition online survey administered through google forms and provide their input about the impact of the pandemic in their daily work. Partners were asked to provide answers for a mix of structured, semi-structured and open-ended questions and share their experiences and views. We have received eight responses (at least one response from each project partner). The section below is focused on the responses submitted by the NEW VET project partners.

Impact on the overall work and organization

The first set of questions was about the impact of the pandemic on the partner organizations in general. Partners were asked to answer at what extent the COVID-19 pandemic has affected their organization activities and daily operation. The responses we received, although divided as the chart below illustrates, demonstrated that the pandemic has definitely caused disruptions,

although at different extent for each partner organization; for some partners, these disruptions were severe, for others modest and for some others mild.

Has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your organization's activities?

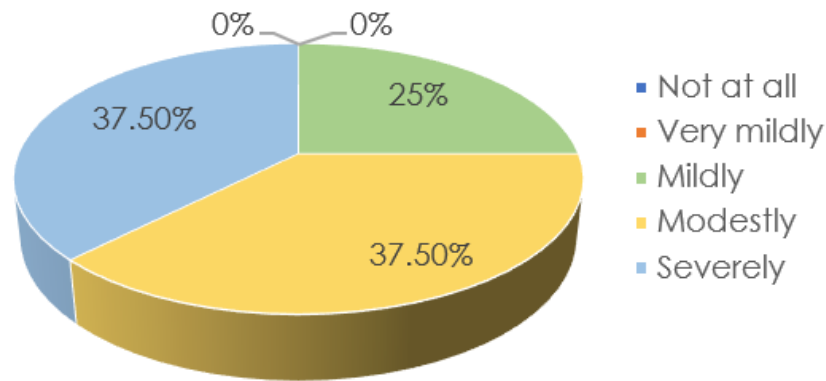


Figure 9. COVID-19 impact on partner organizations

In addition, partners were given the opportunity to provide concrete answers about the adjustments that their organizations have undergone through during the pandemic. A large number of respondents said that they have transferred they work at home, with teleworking and distance working being among the most common practices. Some partners pointed out that they are allowed to return to their offices in incremental steps. More particularly, P5, Welcome Aps., commented: "[Our] staff had to operate in smart-working from home during the lock-down and we are partially returning to the office-based working by October". A similar practice is followed by another partner who works partially from home (four days) and from office (one day).

Those who have already returned to their offices use face masks and avoid large gatherings, such as skipping catering from meetings and events. Partners have also re-organized courses and have developed for them online support. While some partners are satisfied with the adjustments that have undergone in their organizations, for some others these changes are not always pleasant. A partner highlighted that now remote work has added more work than before. "Remote work during [pandemic] has increased more days of the week than before", pointed out the same partner. In the same tone, was also mentioned that now is required more "organizational efforts to move and engage participants; more investment in trust-building activities with new cooperation partners". Figure 7 illustrates NEW VET partners responses with regards to the adjustments their organizations had to make during the pandemic (1=completely dissatisfied, 5=completely satisfied).

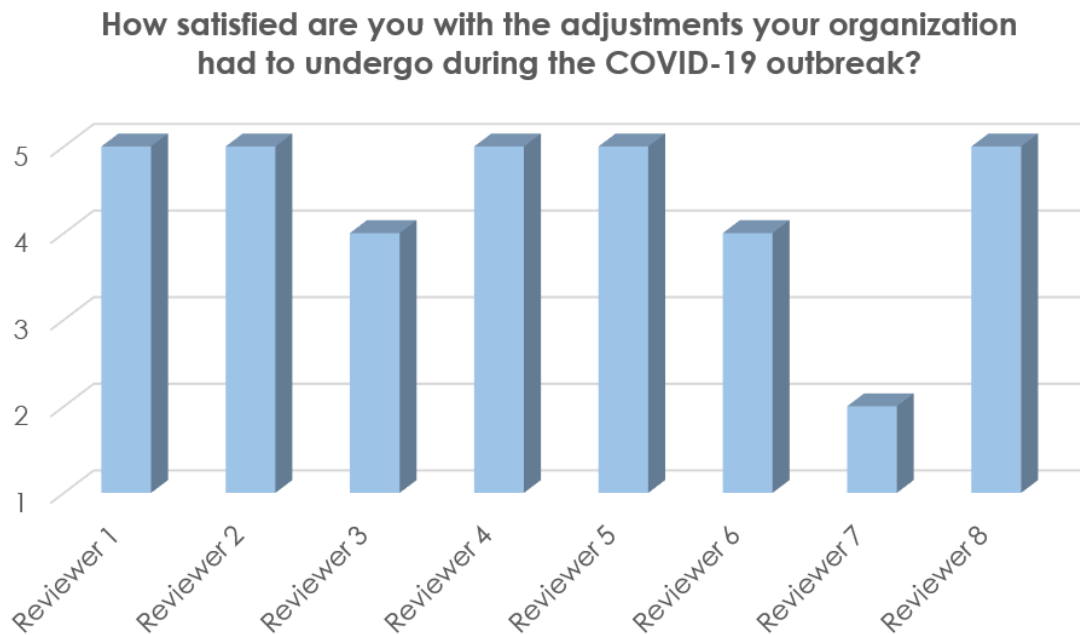


Figure 10. Partners' satisfaction from the COVID-19 adjustments

Impact on the NEW VET project

The COVID-19 pandemic and its ramifications on travel restrictions and strict social distancing rules with regards to events and meetings for large groups of people, have unequivocally brought about the tremendous impact on NEW VET activities that otherwise would have run in the period May – Oct 20. The following section elaborates on partners' attitudes towards the changes that have occurred during the pandemic with respect to NEW VET activities and objectives.

We were very interested to investigate the views and perceptions of our colleagues in regard to the communication within the consortium during the pandemic. To this end, partners were asked to reply to two questions around the digitalization of their work on the NEW VET project and how the communication has unfolded so far. As far as the digitalization of their work is concerned, the majority of respondents claimed to be completely satisfied (50 per cent), few of them stated just "satisfied" (25 per cent) and another 25 per cent remained neutral about the very same aspect. A similar trend was revealed as for the communication flow and online project meetings. Half of NEW VET partners are completely satisfied (four partners), the other four were divided between options "satisfied" and "neutral". The graph below demonstrates NEW VET partners attitudes toward communication during the pandemic.

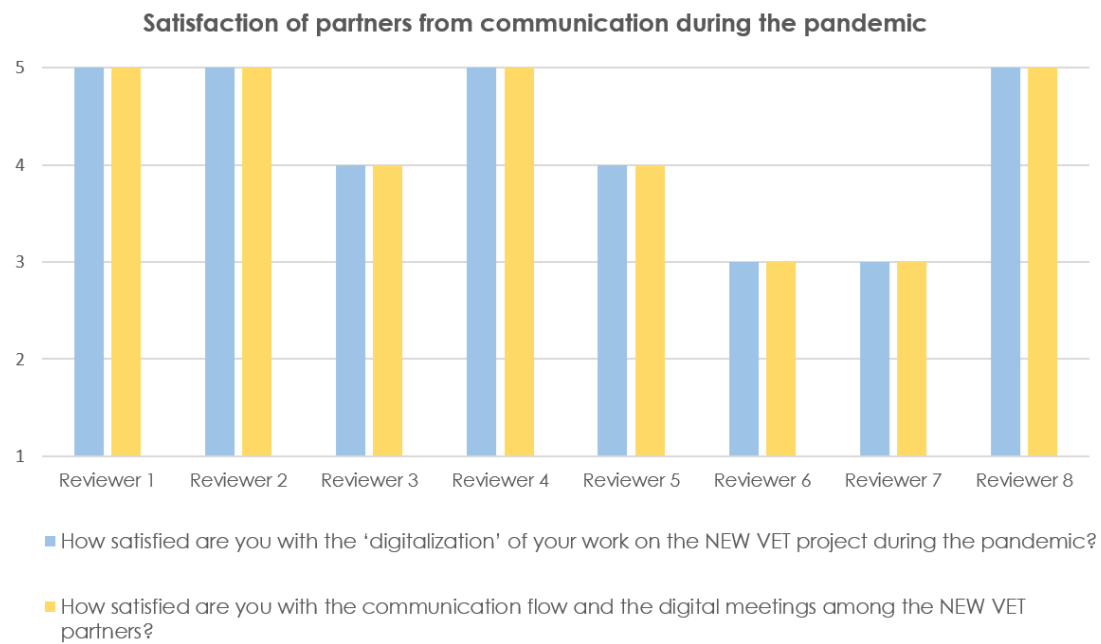


Figure 11. Partners' satisfaction from communication during the pandemic

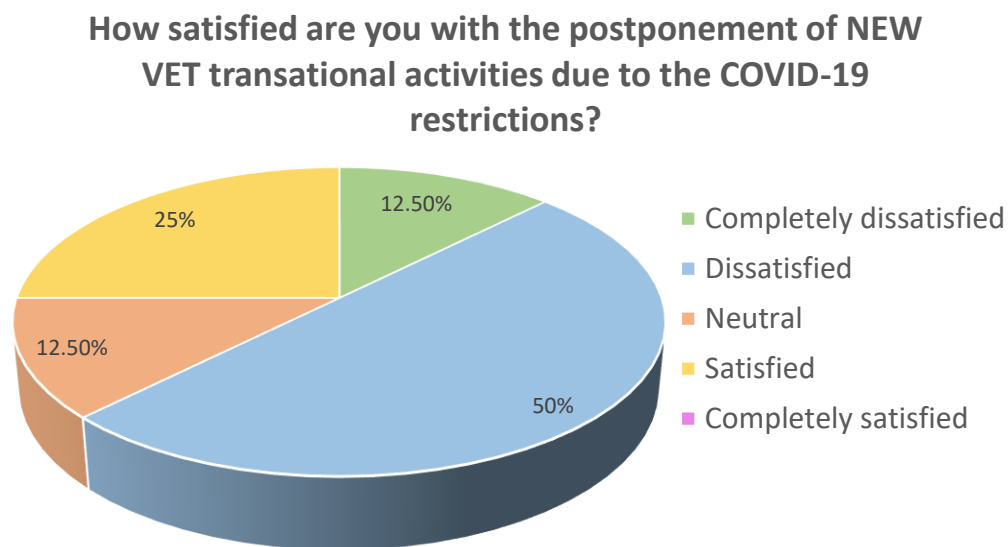


Figure 12. Partners' satisfaction from the postponement of transnational activities

Travel and project meetings are among the project aspects that have been affected the most by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. While the second and third Steering Committee meetings were transferred online (in May 2020 and September 2020 respectively), the NEW VET training hotspots planned for May (France) and September (Germany) had to be temporarily postponed. As it was revealed in the answers provided by project partners, the postponement of project translational activities has not definitely satisfied the consortium. Especially, half of the project partners said that they are dissatisfied

by the postponement of transnational activities due to travel restrictions, whereas one partner is completely dissatisfied and another one remains neutral.

When it comes to the availability of project partners to travel in order to participate in the project activities and meetings, the majority of responders did not agree to travel under the current conditions (five out of eight). However, some partners stated that are available to travel and two other partners are neutral about the very same issue.

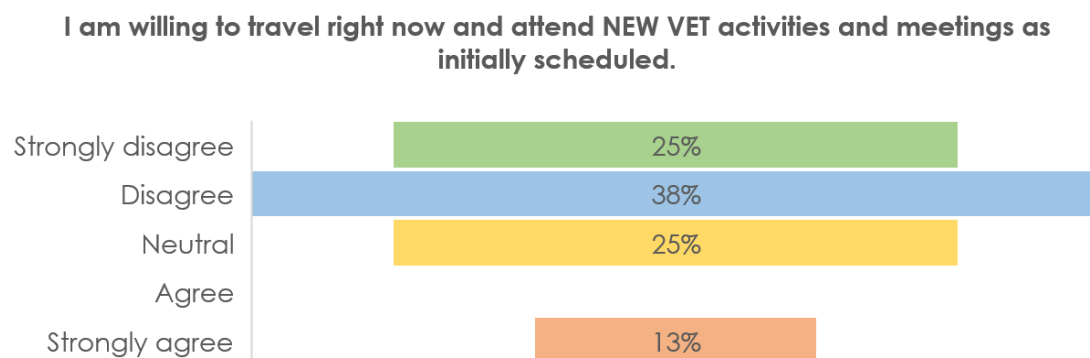


Figure 13. NEW VET responses to their availability to travel during the pandemic

Partners were divided when asked about the online transfer of NEW VET activities online. From the responses we have received, they cannot draw to any particular conclusion since partners provided different answers. Half of the responses are marked as “completely satisfied” and “satisfied”. Meanwhile, three partners (out of eight) rated the online transfer of project activities as a dissatisfied alternative. One partner remains neutral.

How satisfied are you with the impact of the online dissemination activities during the pandemic?

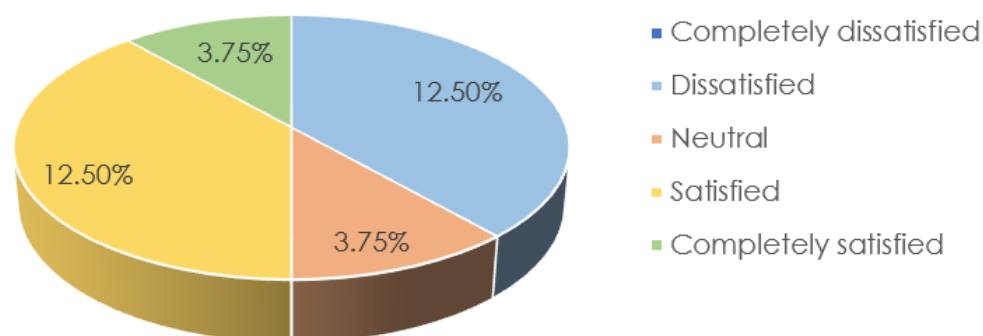


Figure 14. Partners' satisfaction from the online dissemination activities

A similar trend goes for the dissemination activities during the pandemic. Having in mind that the dissemination during the pandemic has been only online, some partners seem to be more satisfied than others. More particularly, three partners said that they are satisfied by the dissemination activities during the pandemic, one partner marked “completely satisfied”, while the rest half of consortium partners were divided between “neutral” (three partners) and “dissatisfied” (one partner). A partner highlighted that *“Online activities are not as much convincing as the personal contact, plus the impact is smaller.”*

4. RISK IDENTIFICATION AND MITIGATION

Based on the D8 Quality Plan and Risk Management Toolkit, project partners were asked to identify risks and propose mitigation actions for the 2nd project period. The risks that have mainly been identified for this project period are related to the delays and postponement due to COVID-19.

Overall Project Risks			
Activity	Possible risk	Risk	Mitigation
Inconsistent dissemination impact of project outcomes	Several Dissemination activities (i.e. National Seminars, Networking café, ESW collateral events) have been postponed due to pandemic emergency.	Medium	Identification of high-impact communications channels and specific audiences-tailored tools will reach the largest possible target audience; furthermore, project partners have huge experience in dissemination of EU funded project results and in carrying out networking activities.
Travelling activities and Training Hotspot budget	Inability to absorb the budget allocated for the activities (travelling and training hotspots) due to the COVID-19 pandemic.	High	Reschedule project activities for the 2nd year. Part of the budget could be also allocated for digital organization of some of the activities and Training Hotspots.
WP1. Project Management and Coordination			
Travelling activities and Training Hotspot budget	Inability to absorb the budget allocated for the activities (travelling and training hotspots) due to the COVID-19 pandemic.	High	Reschedule project activities for the 2nd year. Part of the budget could be also allocated for digital organization of some of the activities and Training Hotspots.
WP3. Transnational Capacity Building for VET Providers			
Training Hotspots	Date scheduled for the training to take place cannot be kept, e.g. due to force majeure	High	Hotspot training in blended modality is planned as an alternative, P4 to propose dates and activities for implementation
Training Hotspots	Less exchange among participants due to missing informal communication -> impact on lessons learnt/fruitful atmosphere	Low	Blended training activity should be prepared thoroughly by including parts for exchange and interaction
WP5. Spreading the Attractiveness of the VET System			
The "Share your story contest for VET learners and	Multilingualism	Medium	Risk has been mitigated by letting users submit their stories in national languages. partners will

teachers/trainers			translate into English only the 3 winning stories.
The "Share your story contest for VET learners and teachers/trainers	Interoperability with the https://ec.europa.eu/social/vocational-skills-week/success-stories_en page	Medium	Risk has been mitigated through the manual intervention of partners. Only winners' stories will be published in the EU skills week official web page after they have been translated into English.
EU Vocational Skills Week national awards	Limited number of applications to the award	Medium	Risk has been partially mitigated by implementing a social media adds campaign to promote the contest more efficiently and among relevant target groups.
EU Vocational Skills Week national awards	Winners can't attend the final conference of the EU Vocational Skills Week due to force majeure (i.e. COVID-19)	High	Risk has been mitigated through the decision to award the winners with an electronic device (i.e. tablet/laptop) to be delivered during an awarding ceremony (organised only at national level) linked with the EU Skills Week event
WP6. Project Communication and Dissemination			
Social Media activities before/during/after each collateral event for EU skills week	Collateral events not organised due to force majeure	High	Online dissemination
Organise Networking Café for VET teachers and trainers	Some networking café not organised due to force majeure (i.e. COVID-19).	High	Postpone for a later date or transfer them online
Organise Awareness Seminars for network members	Not organised due to force majeure (i.e. COVID-19).	High	Postpone for a later date or transfer them online

Table 2. Identification of risks and risk mitigation

5. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2nd project period, M7 – M12, has been definitely affected by the consequences of the global pandemic. While the pandemic has put severe constraints to project meetings scheduled and training hotspots to take place in partner countries during the second semester of the project (2nd project meeting in France in May 2020 and 3rd project meeting in Germany in September 2020), up to now the project implementation and coordination have run smoothly. The two project meetings were transferred online, in May and September 2020 respectively. Project partners will discuss again in the upcoming weeks and months whether they organize the trainings or one of the training online. Further discussion is required about the type, method and the effective delivery of the digital training/trainings.

Considering the communication and coordination among the partners during the pandemic, we can easily say that the project partners' satisfaction remains high. Overall, partners are also satisfied from the online project meetings, although some partners highlighted that face-to-face meeting still remain the best option. The main issues that were raised in regard to the online meetings, were with respect to technical matters, in other words, issues that partners can easily tackle and offer solutions.

From the point of view of dissemination activities and involvement of stakeholders and target groups, partners recorded a lower level of satisfaction. Taking into consideration all project activities that had been scheduled to occur, they have been postponed and a new date is still to be confirmed within the consortium. As regards the transfer of trainings online, not all partners considered it as a good idea, due to the fact that some partners are afraid of the limited impact that online training could bring.

From the table below, it is clear that the unprecedented reality shaped by the pandemic has disturbed the sequence of NEW VET activities for M7 – M12. With the pandemic still ongoing, it is difficult to schedule activities and events. However, as discussed in the 3rd Steering Committee meeting, project partners will put efforts to organize some of the activities online. The table below presents the status of all project deliverables and activities planned to be finalized in the period under evaluation, i.e. from May 2020 to October 2020 (M7 – M12) as well as the deviations that have occurred due to the COVID-19 for the same reporting period.

WP	No.	Deliverable	Due date	Status
WP1	D1	1st Steering Committee Dossier	January 2020	Completed
	D2	2nd Steering Committee Meeting Dossier	April 2020	Completed
	D3	3d Steering Committee Meeting Dossier	September 2020	Completed
WP2	D8	Quality Plan & Risk Management Toolkit	December 2019	Completed
	D9	1st Evaluation Report	May 2020	Completed
	D10	2nd Evaluation Report	October 2020	Completed
WP3	D14	1st Training Hotspot Pack	January 2020	Completed
	D15	2nd Training Hotspot Pack	May 2020	Postponed due to COVID19
	D16	3rd Training Hotspot Pack	September 2020	Postponed due to COVID19
WP4	D19	Training Module	October 2020	In progress
WP5	D22	"Share your story" digital storytelling platform	April 2020	Completed
	D23	"EU Vocational Skills Week" 2020 national winners packs	September 2020	Completed
	D27	Dissemination Action Plan and key audience list	December 2019	Completed
WP6	D28	Brand identity pack for NEW VET	April 2020	Completed
	D29	NEW VET website and social media profiles	December 2019	Completed
	D30	NEW(VET)sletter no 1	February 2020	Completed
		NEW(VET)sletter no 2	July 2020	In progress
	D31	NEW VETworking cafés	December 2019	Completed
			April 2020 September 2020	Postponed due to COVID19
	D32	NEW VET Awareness Seminars	January 2020 May 2020 October 2020	Postponed due to COVID19

Table 3. Project progress (M1 - M12)

Recommendations

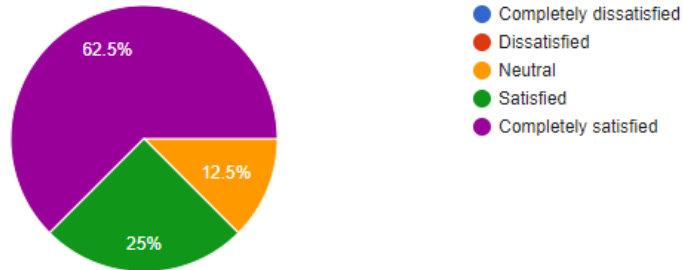
The 2nd Evaluation Report concludes with a set of recommendations that could be deployed to maximize the benefits and efficiency for the next project period.

- Project partners should take initiatives and suggest ideas on how to increase the involvement of stakeholders and relevant target groups during the pandemic.
- The consortium should continue their excellent collaboration and exchange of best practices relevant to project activities and objectives. Partners should continue to share their complementary knowledge and expertise within the consortium.
- Instead of holding long single day online meetings, the consortium should consider spreading them in two or three consecutive days. If this is not possible, the organizers are advised to add short session breaks.
- To avoid any technical matters, all partners should submit their presentations one day in advance to the meeting organizer.
- Online project meetings should stick to one online platform in order to avoid confusion, technical issues and significant delays.
- Since face-to-face events and activities cannot be realised due to the COVID-19 pandemic, project partners should employ more efforts in digital/ social media project dissemination.
- Project partners should also deploy EU portals to disseminate the project activities (i.e. EPAL platform).
- Partners have already agreed that some project activities should be transferred online. In the next project period partners should remain in close contact in order to evaluate the pandemic situation and decide about the fate of the rest of the project activities and events.

ANNEX I. NEW VET II Steering Committee meeting evaluation form

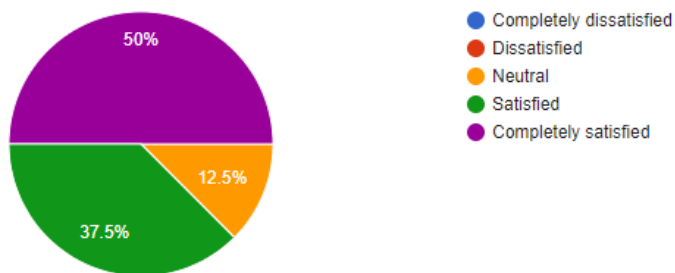
1. How satisfied are you with the preparations made to organize the meeting?

8 responses



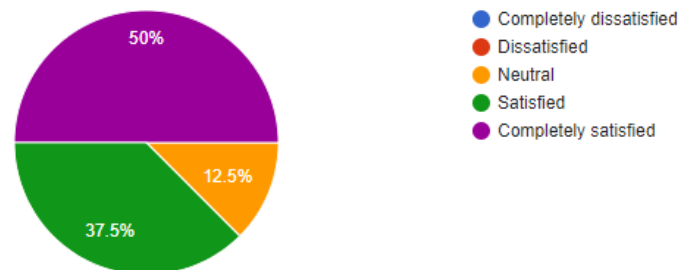
2. How satisfied are you with the online communication channels used during the meeting?

8 responses



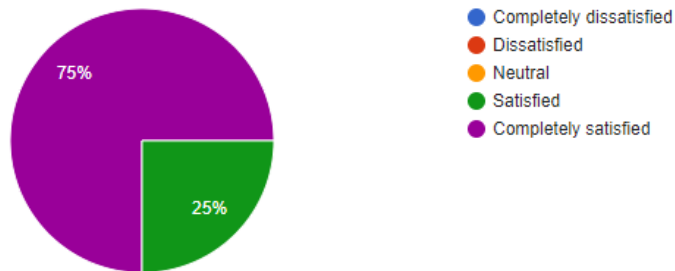
3. How satisfied are you with the participation of project partners in discussions and decision making?

8 responses



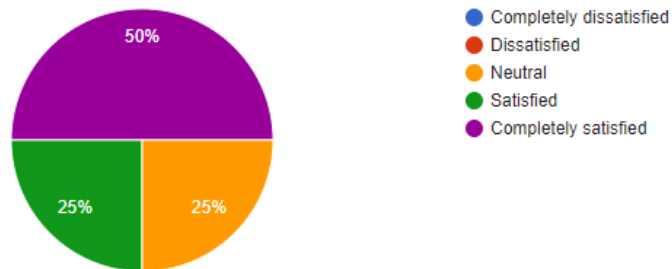
4. How satisfied are you with the structure of the agenda (subjects/issues covered)?

8 responses



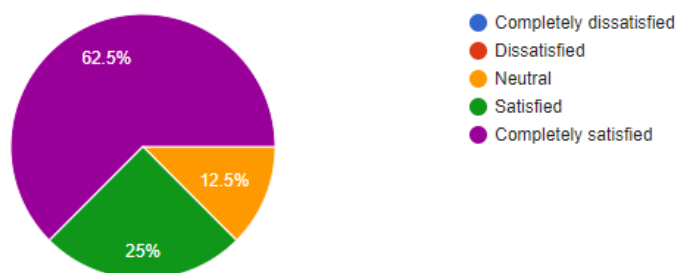
5. How satisfied are you with the time assigned to the discussion of important issues?

8 responses



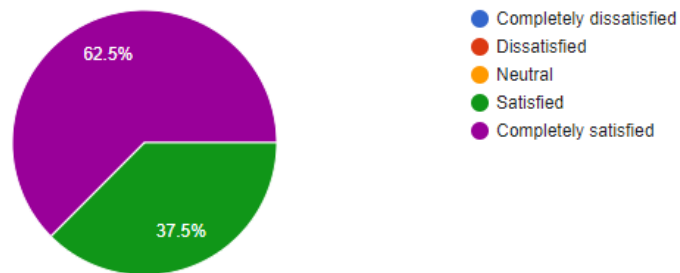
6. How satisfied are you with the scope of information presented?

8 responses



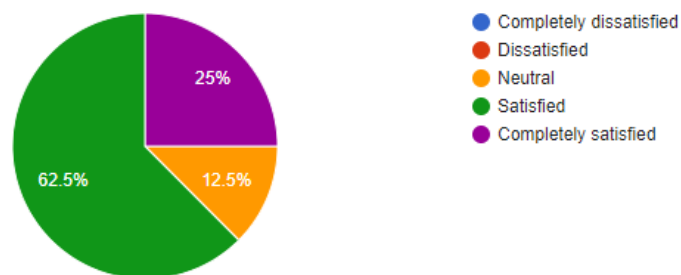
7. How satisfied are you with the meeting's overall value in helping you achieve project goals?

8 responses



8. How satisfied are you with the quality of the overall meeting?

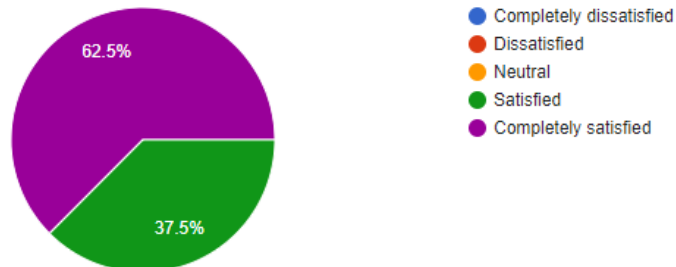
8 responses



ANNEX II. NEW VET III Steering Committee meeting evaluation form

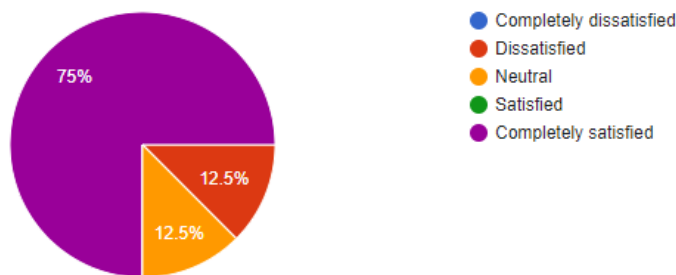
1. How satisfied are you with the preparations made to organize the meeting?

8 responses



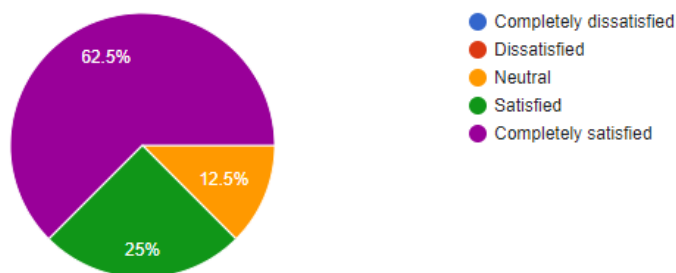
2. How satisfied are you with the online communication channels used during the meeting?

8 responses



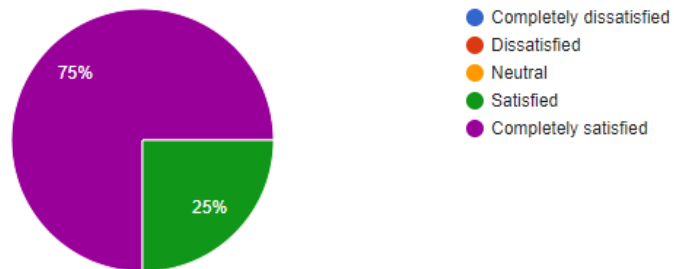
3. How satisfied are you with the participation of project partners in discussions and decision making?

8 responses



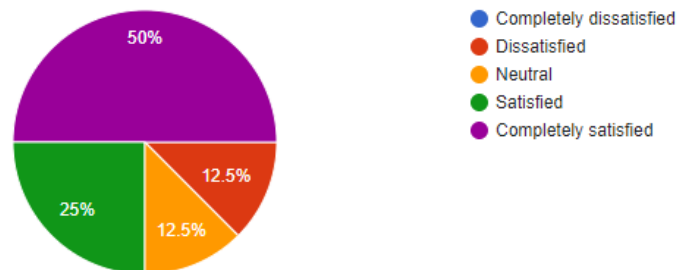
4. How satisfied are you with the structure of the agenda (subjects/issues covered)?

8 responses



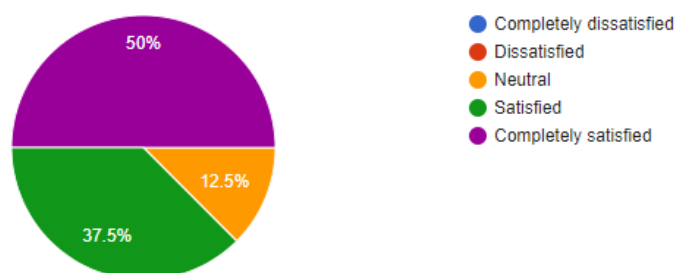
5. How satisfied are you with the time assigned to the discussion of important issues?

8 responses



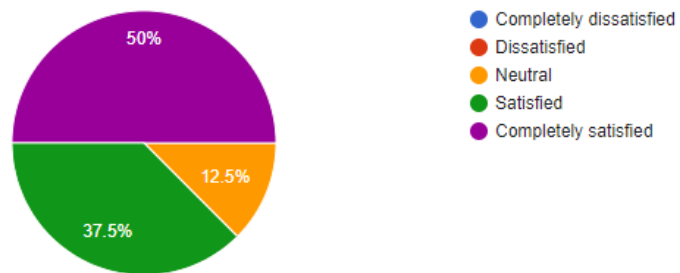
6. How satisfied are you with the scope of information presented?

8 responses



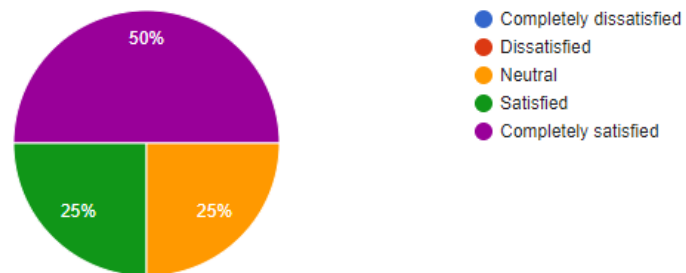
7. How satisfied are you with the meeting's overall value in helping you achieve project goals?

8 responses



8. How satisfied are you with the quality of the overall meeting?

8 responses

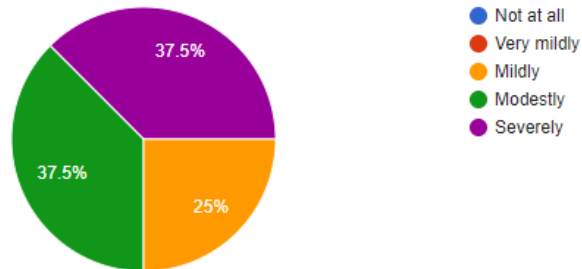


ANNEX III. NEW VET COVID-19 special edition evaluation form

A. COVID-19 IMPACT ON THE OVERALL WORK AND ORGANIZATION

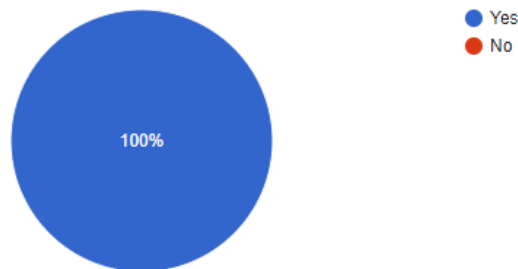
1. Has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your organization's activities?

8 responses



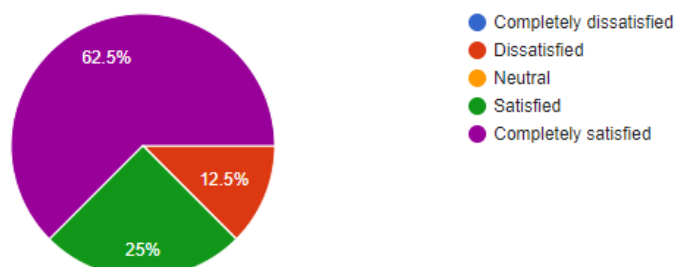
2. Has your organization made adjustments to its day-to-day functioning?

8 responses



4. How satisfied are you with the adjustments your organization had to undergo during the COVID-19 outbreak?

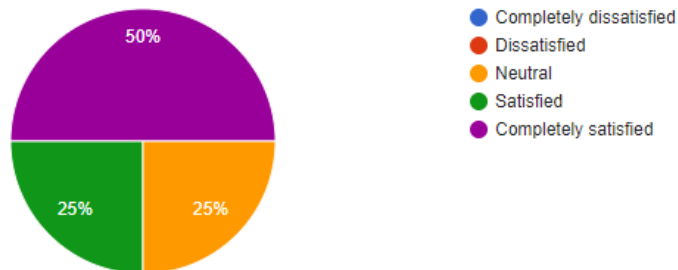
8 responses



B. COVID-19 IMPACT ON NEW VET PROJECT

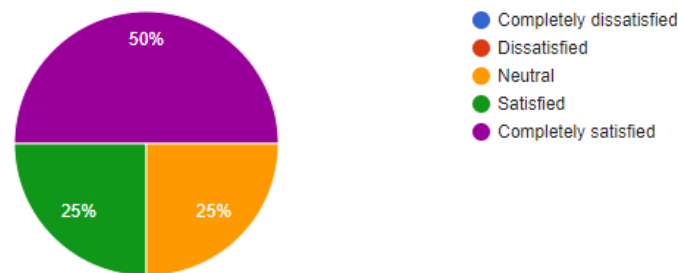
5. How satisfied are you with the 'digitalization' of your work on the NEW VET project during the pandemic?

8 responses



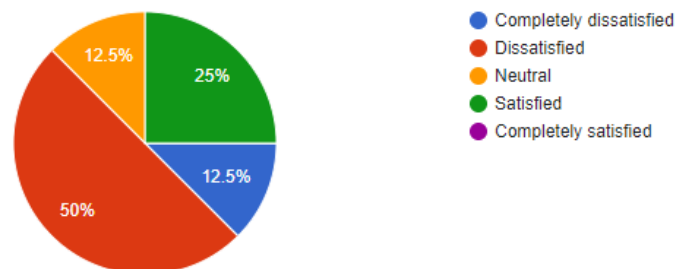
6. How satisfied are you with the communication flow and the digital meetings among the NEW VET partners?

8 responses



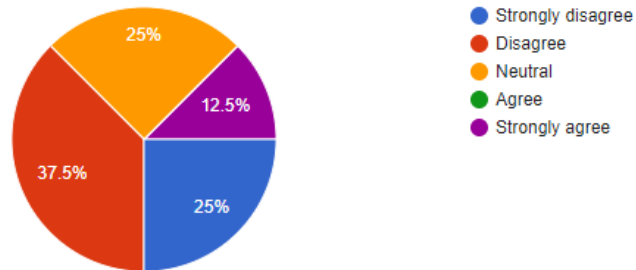
7. How satisfied are you with the postponement of NEW VET transnational activities due to the COVID-19 restrictions?

8 responses



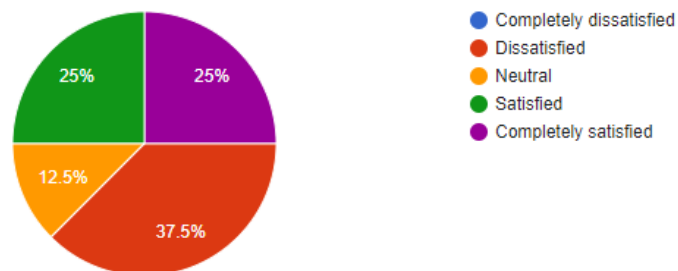
8. I am willing to travel right now and attend NEW VET activities and meetings as initially scheduled.

8 responses



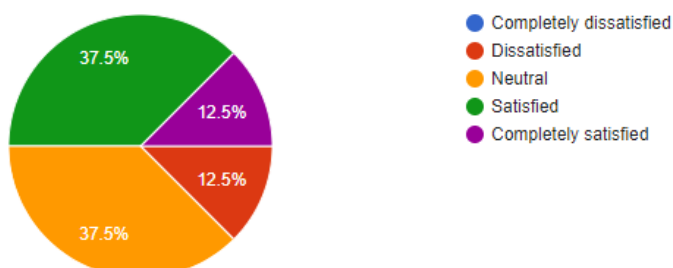
9. How satisfied are you with transferring part of the NEW VET activities online?

8 responses



10. How satisfied are you with the impact of the online dissemination activities during the pandemic?

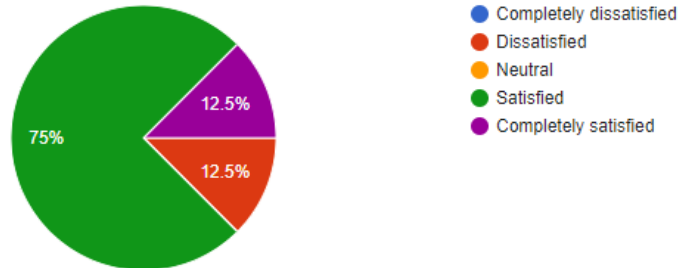
8 responses



ANNEX IV. NEW VET Internal Project Evaluation Form No. 2

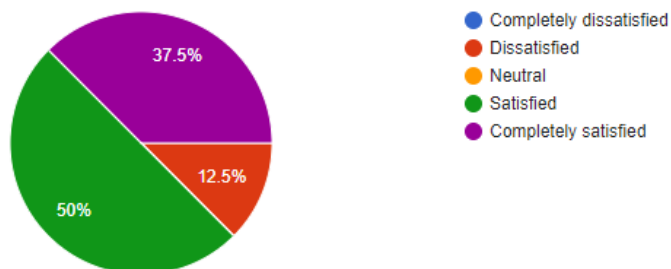
How satisfied are you with the work plan and the organisation of the activities?

8 responses



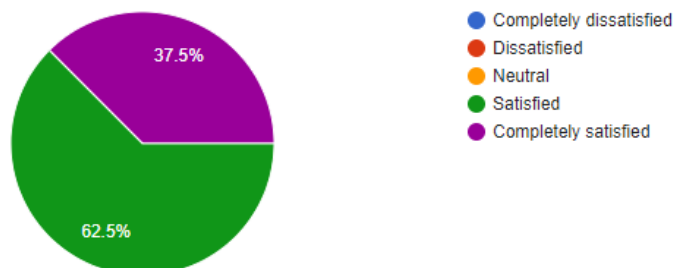
How satisfied are you with the way the project proceeds to meet the planned objectives?

8 responses



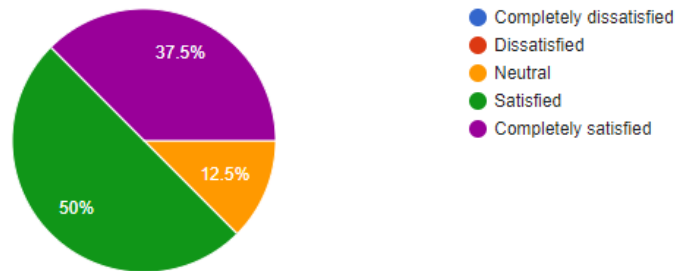
How satisfied are you with cooperation among partners?

8 responses



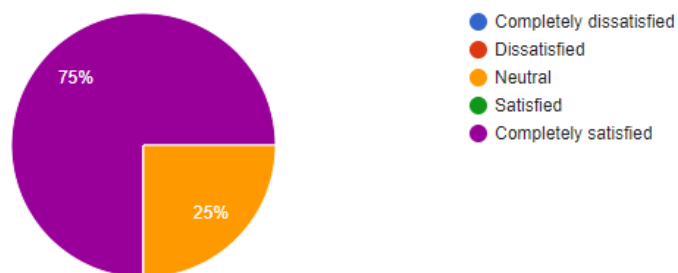
How satisfied are you with the way the activities and tasks are distributed among partners?

8 responses



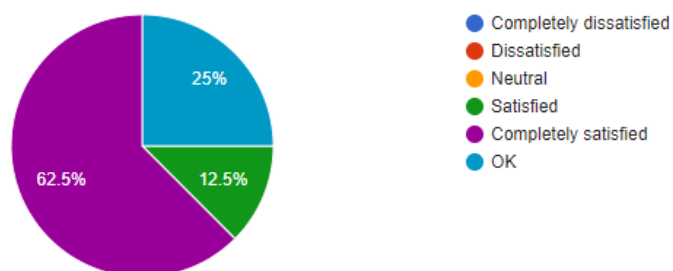
How satisfied are you the communication and information flow within the consortium?

8 responses



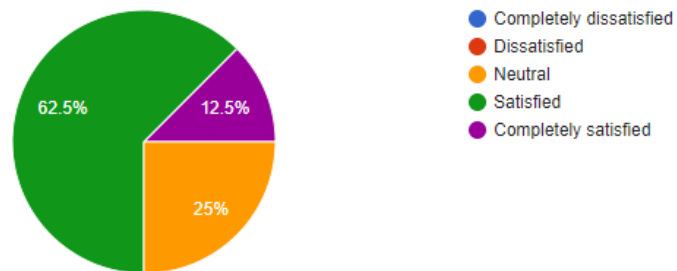
How satisfied are you with the procedures used for reaching decisions?

8 responses



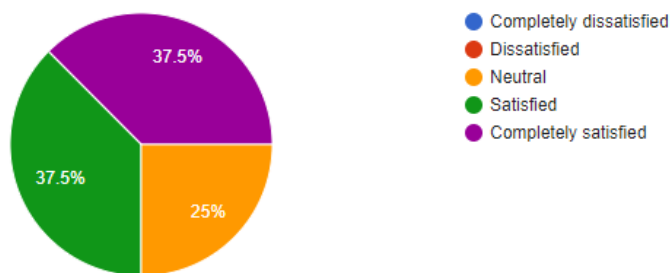
How satisfied are you with the use of resources for achieving project objectives?

8 responses



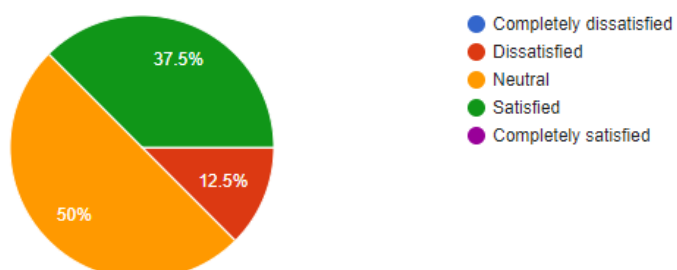
How satisfied are you with ideas for improving cooperation and communication between partners?

8 responses



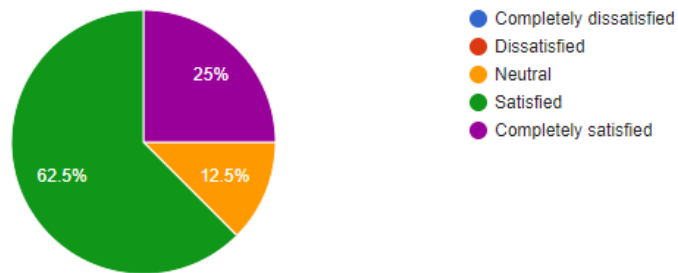
How satisfied are you with the number of stakeholders involved in the project?

8 responses



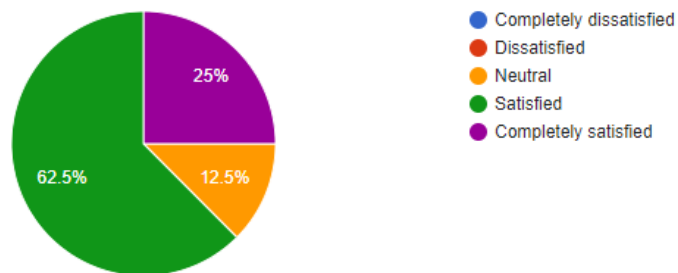
How satisfied are you with the way project results are communicated to target groups?

8 responses



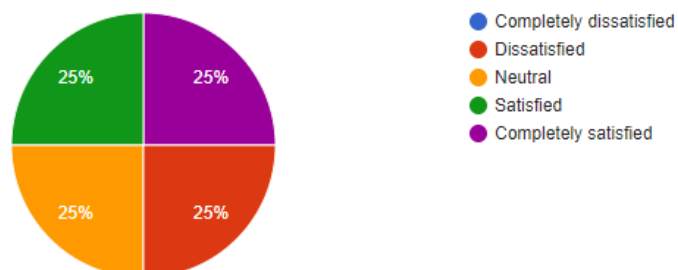
How satisfied are you with the degree to which the outcomes implement fully the requirements/functions envisaged in the project plan?

8 responses



How satisfied are you with the results that correspond to the stated objectives of the activity?

8 responses



How satisfied are you with the effect of project results to wider sectorial objectives?

8 responses

