Final Quality Report

THE
MISSING
ENTREPRENEURS

Index

Introduction

This final quality report comprises the period from October 2021 to January 2023, the second year of the project implementation period. The report is part of the evaluation of the project, and it is made with the information and comments provided by the partnership. The information has been collected through an online survey, which has been answered by six representatives (one from each project's partner). Since this will be the final quality report of the project, an analysis of the evaluation of the five Intellectual Outputs (IOs) of the project will also be included, once they also reflect the general evaluation of the project.

Therefore, this document is structured in six sections.

Sections one to five aimed to assess the projects' Intellectual Outputs (one section for each IO). All IOs were evaluated through the same questions, intending to acknowledge what is the opinion of the partnership in regard to the objectives, difficulties, solutions, benefits and general view of each IO of the project. It includes yes or no questions, open-ended questions and a multiple-choice chart with 5 levels of assessment of the entirety of each IO, from very bad to excellent.

The sixth and last section provides a general overall assessment of the project. A first question about the partners' expectations regarding the project (if the project met or not their expectations or if they were exceeded). Then, a general appreciation of the project is done through with five level rating (very bad to excellent) and a third question about the most positive aspects of The Missing Entrepreneurs project.

After the interim report, which helped to keep the project on track and find out what needed to be improved, this final report works as the confirmation if the project was successful from the partner's points of view as well as its benefits and suggestions of improvement.

Section I – IO1 Quality Evaluation

Regarding the first Intellectual Output of the project: Report of concrete digital skill gaps of under-represented population groups in digital entrepreneurship. CSI was the leading institution. The first question aimed to know if the objectives of the IO were reached. Partners could have answered "yes", or "no" or selected "other" and been more specific. 100% of the partners answered "yes", meaning that all goals were achieved.
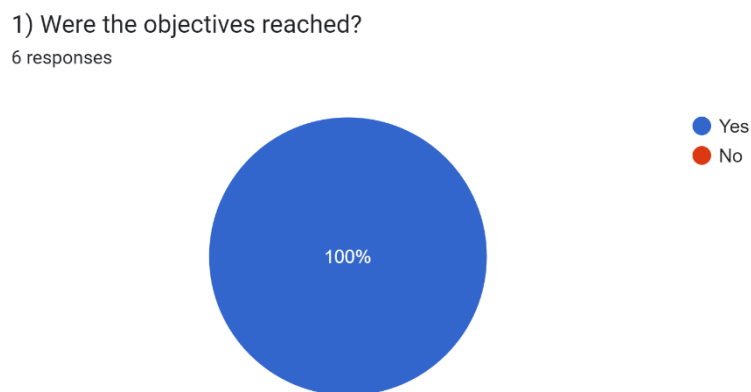
1) Were the objectives reached?
6 responses

Figure 1 – "Were the objectives reached?"

When asked "What were the main difficulties/problems you found in this IO?", partners had the possibility to expand their answers. Two of the partners mentioned there were no main difficulties nor problems. Others gave the following answers:

- The difficulties/problems that were found for the development of this report was the specific target group that was needed to reach, that has been excluded from digital entrepreneurship. Although all partners have reached the number of questionnaires that needed to be gathered, in order to collect the data and build the report. Some delays from the consortium caused the delay in the delivery of the IO, possibly also in the extension requested at the end of the project. Nevertheless, the material was delivered, and the results showed that the most important skills that respondents are not familiar with the Data analytics area, Web Development, Finance, Digital Marketing, and Product service development;
- Initial problems to start working on the IO due to staff issues of IO Leader;
- Delays in the implementation; apart from this, the desk-based research on the topics was not problematic, as there has plenty of resources and materials on the topic;
- During this Output, we realize on the difficulties to reach the different target groups.

In regards to the third question, "What possible solutions are there for each of the previous questions?", partners had also the possibility to extend their answers. Some partners said everything was solved or that there was nothing to add. Others mentioned the following:

- Better planning and organizing from the beginning of the project are very important for the smooth operation of the project's activities and tasks. Even though there was a Gantt Chart which was followed by the consortium for the smooth operation of the project, there were some important delays which caused some misunderstandings between partners;
- Timely creation of guidelines and templates;
- We decided to focus on the necessities of each target group.

The fourth question was also an open-ended one, concerning the question "What are the benefits of the present IO for the target groups?". The partners' answers were the following:

- Intellectual Output 1, aimed to take a narrower focus on those skill gaps at the national level of the partner countries, as well as other not identified skill gaps. The report aided the consortium to develop the knowledge that result in IO5 "Personalised training materials", which is one of the policy recommendations of the OECD report. Furthermore, the main output is a "Skill Training Path" - a comprehensive framework of the skill gaps of under-represented population groups (women, youth, seniors, migrants) in digital entrepreneurship. After the completion of this output, the online platform was developed, and it can benefit people from the target group who are interested in practising the software and online digital tools that are provided;
- Detection of the concrete training needs and skills gaps in the participating countries;
- A constant evaluation makes it possible to improve while still in the process of development;
- The target groups can have a quite detailed overview of the difficulties, resources and tools and initiatives in the field of digital entrepreneurship at a national level. At the same time, they can have an insight into the situation at the European level, in other countries;
- A deeper knowledge of their own current situation;
- We had an overview of the gaps for each target group and what will be necessary to develop the upcoming outputs.

The last question aimed to get a general view of the IO1 from the partners. In conclusion, the IO1 was a very positive one, once only one of the partners voted "very good" and the rest "excellent".

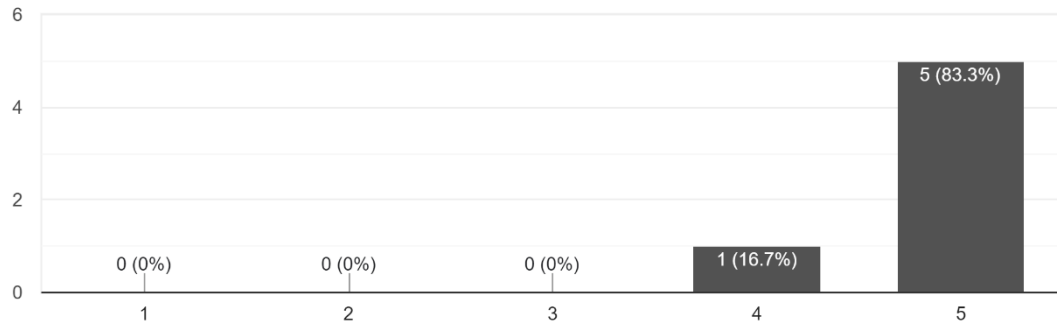5) What is your general view of the IO?
6 responses

Figure 2 – "What is your general view of the IO?"

Section II – IO2 Quality Evaluation

The second Intellectual Output of the project: Development of a database on e-learnings on entrepreneurship. BRI was the leading institution. The first question aimed to know if the objectives of the IO were reached. Partners could have answered "yes", "no" or selected "other" and been more specific. 100% of the partners answered "yes", meaning that all goals were achieved.
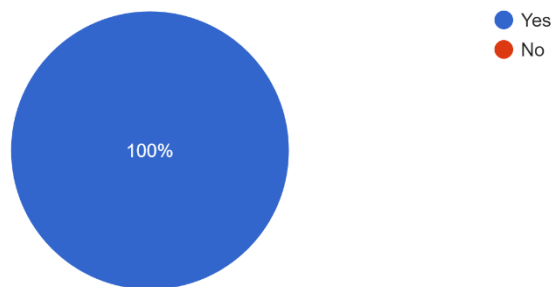
1) Were the objectives reached?
6 responses

Figure 3 – "Were the objectives reached?"

When asked "What were the main difficulties/problems you found in this IO?", partners had the possibility to expand their answers. One of the partners mentioned there were no main difficulties nor problems. Others gave the following answers:

- IO2 - Development of database on e-learnings on entrepreneurship, started from the ''Skills Training Path'' and from the other lessons learned from the IO1, and implemented this training platform. There were no specific difficulties/problems in the specific output. The consortium was better prepared and organized for these tasks. The division of work started from the beginning and each partner knew exactly what they had to develop;
- It was a large IO (platform) to develop and the partners worked well to deliver it;
- There were a lot of information ideas. It was challenging to put them into the most important categories and tools;
- Finding open resource material on the topics, most of the resources that come out of the research are from university/school courses. However, the result was satisfying;
- The amount of information found on the net and the copyright.

In regards to the third question, "What possible solutions are there for each of the previous questions?", partners had also the possibility to extend their answers. Some partners did not have anything to recommend and no major difficulties were found. Others mentioned the following:

- All went as planned;
- All work was well organised;
- It was challenging but we did it anyway; no solution was needed;
- Develop the material from scratch;
- To filter the information and to give the rights of the authors in the platform.

The fourth question was also an open-ended one, concerning the question "What are the benefits of the present IO for the target groups?". The partners' answers were the following:

- A repository of online training materials on Digital Entrepreneurship, connected to a dynamic and personalised "Skill Training Path" that guides each trainee through his/her own training path. The training courses and the training platform is available in all the national languages of the project partners as well as in English;

- The platform is user-friendly and accessible for everyone;

- Research of many tools;

- They can get acquainted with digital entrepreneurship topics at a basic-intermediate level;

- A wider knowledge of innovative tools in Entrepreneurship; better guidance on their own path for creating new businesses;

- Complete training and material to give support on their entrepreneurship project.

The last question aimed to get a general view of the IO2 from the partners. In conclusion, the IO2 was a very positive one, once only one of the partners voted "very good" and the rest "excellent".
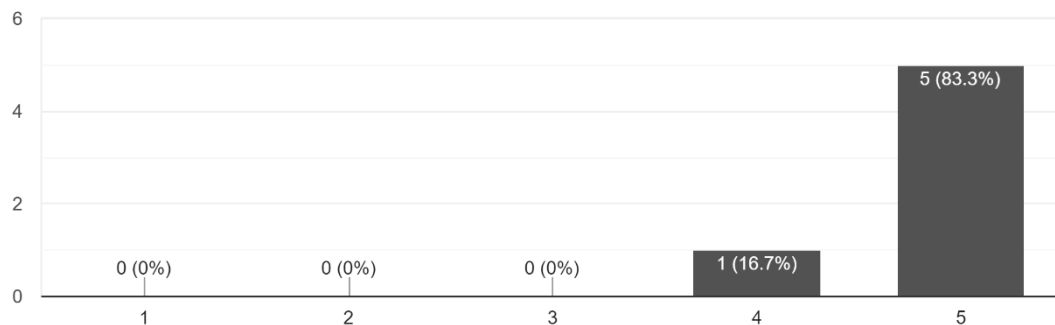
5) What is your general view of the IO?

6 responses

Figure 4 – "What is your general view of the IO?"

Section III – IO3 Quality Evaluation

Regarding the third Intellectual Output of the project: Training modules on practical online tools for digital entrepreneurship and digital transformation of businesses. AMARIS was the leading institution. The first question aimed to know if the objectives of the IO were reached. Partners could have answered "yes", "no" or selected "other" and been more specific. 100% of the partners answered "yes", meaning that all goals were achieved.

1) Were the objectives reached?
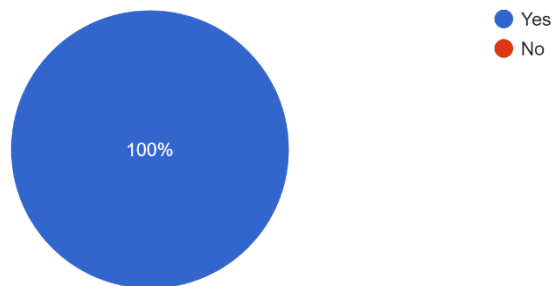6 responses

Figure 5 – "Were the objectives reached?"

When asked "What were the main difficulties/problems you found in this IO?", partners had the possibility to expand their answers. Some of the partners said they didn't find any particular issues. The rest of the partners gave the following answers:

- IO3 - Training modules on practical online tools for digital entrepreneurship and digital transformation of businesses. The difficult part of this intellectual output was to find mainly free digital tools and tutorial videos that will help people from the target group to upskill and upgrade their skills. Furthermore, the translation of each digital tool was a bit tricky but not impossible;
- Translating many documents;
- The main difficulty was finding good resources, especially videos, with subtitles of the partner languages. The translations also required a lot of time and technical knowledge How to ensure that the materials were useful for the target groups. The amount of material to be translated.

In regards to the third question, "What possible solutions are there for each of the previous questions?", partners had also the possibility to extend their answers. Some partners haven't referred to any solutions, others mentioned the following:

- A lot of research and testing of specific tools was needed. Hopefully, all material that is uploaded will still work for a long period. The solution for this is to check and update the platform every 3 months or 6 months period;
- Extra budget for translation;
- Try to use more general content with less technical terms;
- To include materials for different levels.

The fourth question was also an open-ended one, concerning the question "What are the benefits of the present IO for the target groups?". The partners' answers were the following:

- While the IO2 focused mostly on skills, this IO3 focuses on the development of training on existing digital tools to support the acquisition of practical skills for digital entrepreneurship and digital business transformation. This training will be elaborated for different complexity levels (basic, intermediate and advanced), in order to enhance their contribution to the personalised training path of each user. This training will also be included in the training platform of the IO2;
- There is a wide range of different training tools on relevant areas in business, and available in 8 languages;
- A better overview of the categories and having them in their own language;
- The target groups have access to a wide-enough database of online tools to broaden or start their business. Moreover, starting from these, they may come to know similar tools that are specifically useful and tailored for their business. The forum is a powerful and useful tool for this scope;
- This IO3 is the content included in the training platform, therefore, it is the training course itself and an important part of the project. This IO provides a wide data-base with a lot of tools and resources, from articles to videos, available in all partners' languages.

The last question aimed to get a general view of the IO3 from the partners. In conclusion, the IO3 was extremely positive, once all partners rated it with an "excellent".

5) What is your general view of the IO?
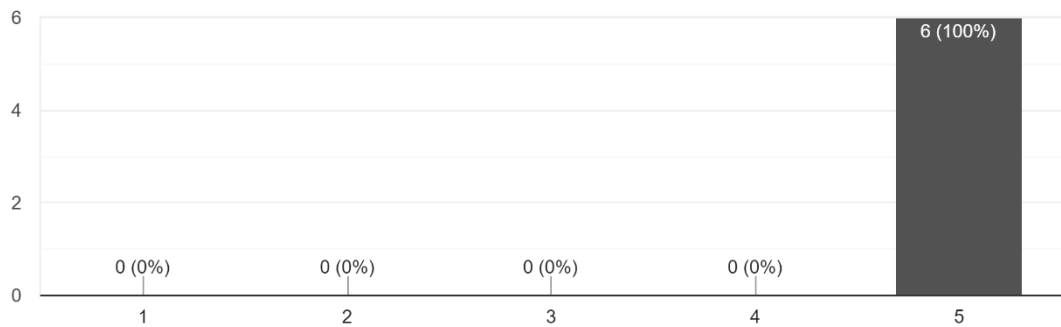
6 responses

Figure 6 – "What is your general view of the IO?"

Section IV – IO4 Quality Evaluation

Regarding the fourth Intellectual Output of the project: Missing Entrepreneurs: Educational campaign on inclusive digital entrepreneurship. EGINA was the leading institution. The first question aimed to know if the objectives of the IO were reached. Partners could have answered "yes", "no" or selected "other" and been more specific. 100% of the partners answered "yes", meaning that all goals were achieved.
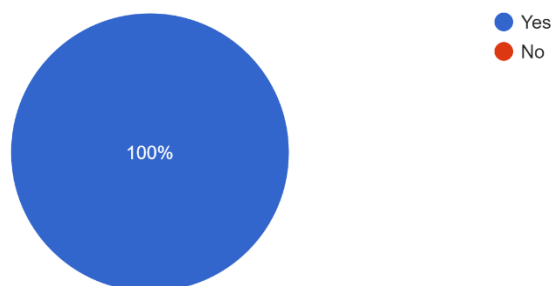
1) Were the objectives reached?

6 responses

Figure 7 – "Were the objectives reached?"

When asked "What were the main difficulties/problems you found in this IO?", partners had the possibility to expand their answers:

- IO4 - Missing Entrepreneurs: Educational campaign on inclusive digital entrepreneurship consists of an empowerment and motivational campaign on digital entrepreneurship, targeted to the social groups under-represented in digital entrepreneurship, as referred to in the IO1 (typically women, immigrants, youth, and seniors). This campaign is focused on conveying a positive message and combating the stereotype that young entrepreneurs are young males, which follows a policy recommendation of the OECD report "The Missing Entrepreneurs 2019". The campaign passes directly the message to the target groups that digital entrepreneurship is for everyone, every social group, and that with the right training, everyone can succeed as a digital entrepreneur. The only difficulty that perhaps was faced during the development of this output was that some interviewers were not speaking so good English and thus it needed to be translated. Although this was not a problem during the interviews;
- The challenge was to encounter volunteers to provide their testimonials, yet all partners attain to accomplish it;
- Finding interview partners;
- It was challenging to involve entrepreneurs in interviews. The ones that would be of the most interest and inspiration to the target groups addressed, were hard to reach and not available for interviews. It would be interesting to have follow-up interviews of people that start their learning path on the Missing Entrepreneurs Learning platform, to get to know the impact it had on a personal and business level;
- Some partners faced some difficulties finding participants for the interviews, especially regarding some target groups (migrants and seniors). In the end, all partners engaged the needed participants for the IO4 who provided very interesting testimonies;
- To produce the videos on time.

In regards to the third question, "What possible solutions are there for each of the previous questions?", partners had also the possibility to extend their answers. Some partners haven't referred to any solutions or recommendations, others mentioned the following:

- All partners worked hard to recruit participants for interviews;
- Broaden the research of possible interviewees;

- One of the solutions was to talk with several people and instead of doing actual interviews with them, participants opted to film videos answering the needed questions;
- To have better organisation.

The fourth question was also an open-ended one, concerning the question "What are the benefits of the present IO for the target groups?". The partners' answers were the following:

- The testimonial videos of successful entrepreneurs are highlighting the difficulties that these successful entrepreneurs had, how they overcame them and how they proved false the stereotype that digital entrepreneurship was only accessible to young males. These videos can be a good example for other people that would like to enter the digital world;
- Testimonials of numerous entrepreneurs from all over Europe on their successful businesses;
- Making it visible, sharing real stories;
- They can get inspired by "peer" entrepreneurs, have an insight into similar experiences and/or find possible solutions to similar issues;
- This IO gives voice to many entrepreneurs and their businesses. It brings benefits to the testimonials themselves and to the target groups of the project who will be able to know more about digital entrepreneurship and good practices;
- To inspire them by knowing the history of different testimonials.

The last question aimed to get a general view of the IO4 from the partners. In conclusion, the IO4 was very positive, once only one partner rated the IO as "very good" and the rest rated it as "excellent".
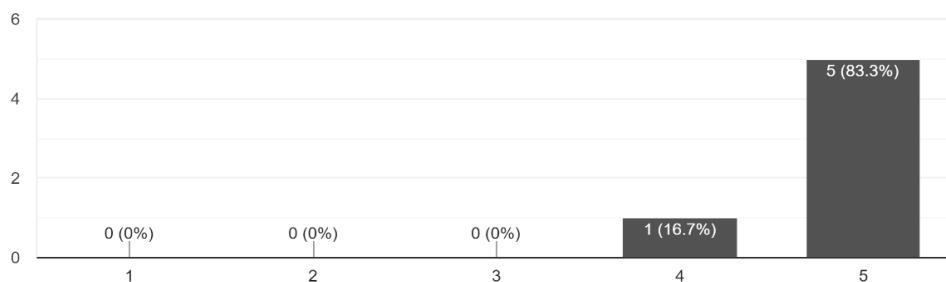
5) What is your general view of the IO?
6 responses

Figure 8 – "What is your general view of the IO?"

Section V – IO5 Quality Evaluation

Regarding the fifth Intellectual Output of the project: Personalised training courses. APSU was the leading institution. The first question aimed to know if the objectives of the IO were reached. Partners could have answered "yes", "no" or selected "other" and been more specific. 100% of the partners answered "yes", meaning that all goals were achieved.

1) Were the objectives reached?
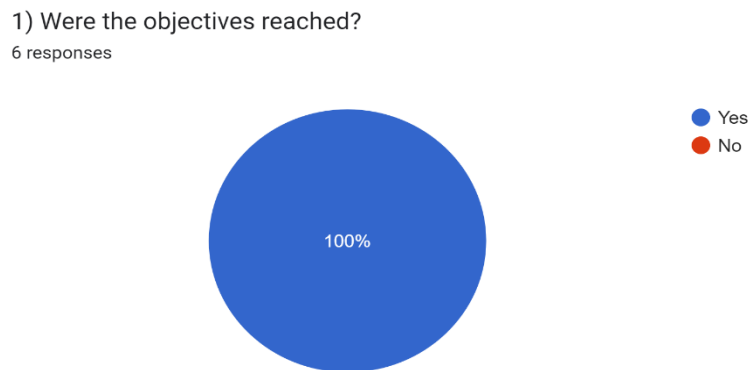6 responses

Figure 9 – "Were the objectives reached?"

When asked "What were the main difficulties/problems you found in this IO?", partners had the possibility to expand their answers:

- IO5 - Personalised training courses. The IO5 pools the results of IO1 to IO4 and organizes them into a comprehensive structure, creating personalised harmonious training paths. This IO5 not only created a complete training programme in digital entrepreneurship and digital business transformation, but it also took action to embed the materials in currently ongoing digital entrepreneurship education programmes. There were no specific difficulties or problems faced during this output. Although we had to find a particular target group for the roundtable with from non – national stakeholders;
- The need to organise all courses in a coherent and functional way;
- The piloting, finding seniors especially;
- It was hard to involve specific target groups in the piloting of the course. In our case, seniors, because they are not very digitally skilled nor interested in the matter;
- Some target groups were harder to involve and more time to prepare the reports would be beneficial;

- To reach the target groups.

In regards to the third question, "What possible solutions are there for each of the previous questions?", partners had also the possibility to extend their answers. Some partners haven't referred to any solutions or recommendations, others mentioned the following:

- Joint work of the consortium allowed to have functional training courses, that are available for anyone interested;
- It was during COVID times - don't know what solution would have worked out;
- Narrow the addressed target groups to involve in the piloting and development of activities according to the ones that are most suitable/addressable in each country;
- Extend the pilot tests to other people besides the target groups, in order to get more feedback and complement the lack of people from certain target groups;
- To collaborate with different public administrations, to promote and reach the main target groups.

The fourth question was also an open-ended one, concerning the question "What are the benefits of the present IO for the target groups?". The partners' answers were the following:

- Target groups benefit from the discussion between partners and stakeholders. They discussed improvements to the training platform as well as they can disseminate the platform in non-national countries;
- Free to access training pills to boost digital skills in the concrete business-related areas;
- Real testing experience and also evaluation of the platform to improve it;
- They get an indirect benefit, as thanks to the evaluation the platform will be improved and tailored to their specific and personalised needs;
- This IO provides a testing experience and evaluation of the training platform for the target groups who were able to be directly involved in the project and the improvement of the platform. This way, they see their opinions heard, and they can disseminate their own projects and be involved in the progress of the project.

The last question aimed to get a general view of the IO5 from the partners. In conclusion, the IO5 was very positive, once only one partner rated the IO as "very good" and the rest rated it as "excellent".

5) What is your general view of the IO?
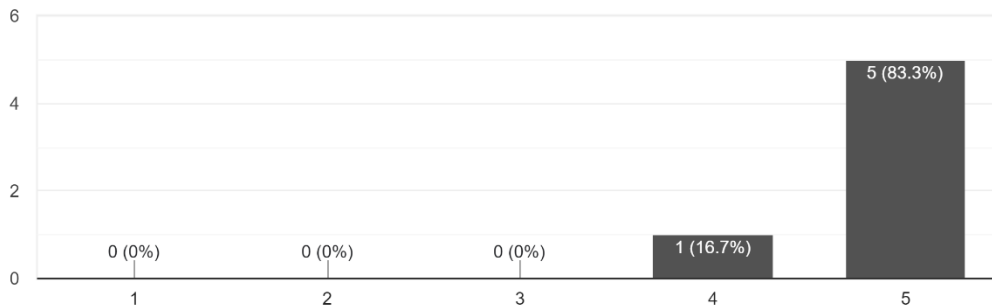
6 responses

Figure 10 – "What is your general view of the IO?"

Section VI – Project General Evaluation

After the assessment of each Intellectual Output of the project, some questions were made regarding the general evaluation of the project. Since the assessment of the IOs gave already some suggestions and conclusions in terms of quality assurance, these questions were less specific and simpler.

In the first question, "Think about the project in its entirety, what can you say about your expectations?", 50% of the partners answered "The project met my expectations" and the other 50% "The project exceeded my expectations", being both very positive. This feedback can mean that the partners had already high considerations about the final results of the project, thus, their expectations were just reached, and, for others, the project ended up being a very happy surprise.

1) Think about the project in its entirety, what can you say about your expectations?
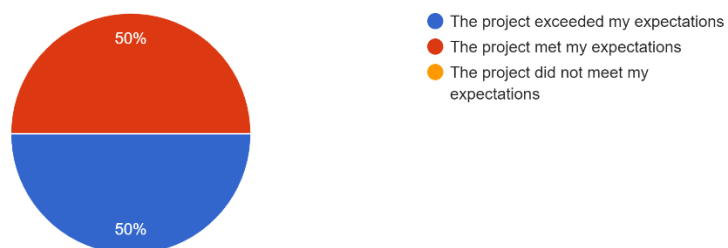
6 responses

- The project exceeded my expectations
- The project met my expectations
- The project did not meet my expectations

Figure 11 – "Think about the project in its entirety, what can you say about your expectations?"

In the second question, partners gave their general appreciation of the project, rating it from "very bad" to "excellent". A very positive result can be observed:

2) What is your general appreciation about the project?
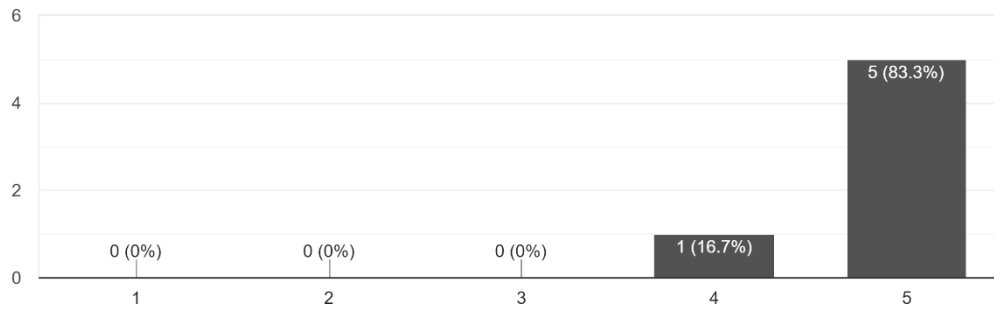6 responses

Figure 12 – "What is your general appreciation about the project?"

Regarding the third question, partners were asked to answer the following question: "What was/were the most positive aspects about The Missing Entrepreneurs project?". These are some of their answers:

● The training platform of the project and the partnership functioned really well;
● The learning platform developed has some good potential, as well as the partnership formed;
● The consortium and the product we have produced, it can be improved for future projects!
● The partnership!!

Conclusion

From the results of this survey, it is factual that the partners are generally happy about the overall progress of the project, as well as the developed Intellectual Outputs. There were some difficulties brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, including the difficulty to involve certain target groups like migrants and seniors during the IO4 and IO5. Even so, the partnership managed to complete the tasks planned successfully and with few constraints.

Regarding Management and Coordination, partners were also generally satisfied with the whole organisation and the mechanisms adopted. The online meetings happened each month and were always very effective and productive. The coordination kept the efforts to maintain good cohesion and workflow and the good atmosphere within the partnership was very emphasised and was actually one of the main positive aspects of this project.

In terms of Intellectual Outputs, every activity and objective was successfully accomplished. Even when some difficulties came up, like the increase in workload, the difficulties in involving certain target groups in the activities or the constant translations and refinement of the training platform. The truth is that the partnership's work has been praised throughout the various tasks, such as the testimonial videos and pilot tests, where direct interaction with the population was observed. All of that has also contributed to the motivation of the partnership and the successful completion of its mission.

The balance of the final months/second year of work of The Missing Entrepreneurs partnership is, according to the results of this survey and other feedback, extremely positive. It is true that some difficulties were mentioned and some points for improvement were pointed out, but, in the end, the partners are happy with the development of the project, its coordination, its results, and with the team as a whole.