



Innovative Photonics Education
in Nanotechnology
586165-EPP-1-2017-1-EL-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

Title:
iPEN: understanding group
processes and achievements of
the project at the end of year 3

Version : 1.0
Date : 10/10/2021

Authors:
Ania Skowron, Katerina Zourou

WP Leader:
Katerina Zourou, Web2Learn,
Greece



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

information contained therein

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the

Status:

Draft
 To be reviewed
 Final / Released

Confidentiality:

Public - Intended for public use
 Restricted - Intended for consortium only
 Confidential - Intended for individual partner only

Deliverable ID: 3.1.4. (not foreseen in the project proposal)

Title: Assessment of teamwork and coordination at the end of year 4 of the project

Summary / Contents:

A quality assurance mechanism regarding teamwork and coordination has been in place as part of the work package Quality Assurance (WP 3) of the iPEN project (WP leader: Dr. Katerina Zourou, Web2Learn, Greece). The purpose of this mechanism is to offer an insightful look at the internal processes regarding team coordination from the project launch (in October 2017) until its end. **4 evaluation reports have been released, in 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021. This report corresponds to the 4th and last year of the project.** Results of this report will be communicated to the project manager and all partners and action points (from the Synthesis) will be implemented.

	iPEN: understanding group processes and achievements of the project at the end of year 3 Deliverable ID: D.3.1.1	Page : 2 of 20
		Version : 1.0
		Date : 10/10/2021
		Status : Approved Level : confidential

CHANGE LOG

Vers.	Date	Author	Description
0.1	13.09.2021	Ania Skowron	Data analysis
0.2	02.10.2021	Katerina Zourou	Review #1
0.3	09.10.2021	Konstantinos Petridis	Review #2
1.0	10.10.2021	Katerina Zourou	Final version

Table of Contents

1.	SCOPE	2
2.	STRUCTURE OF THE ASSESSMENT MECHANISM	3
3.	PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS	3
4.	ANALYSIS OF REPLIES	4
4.1.	DECISION MAKING PROCEDURES AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT	4
4.2.	DISTRIBUTION OF TASKS	6
4.3.	TIMETABLE AND COORDINATION	9
4.4.	PLANNING AND COORDINATION	12
4.5.	ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE PROJECT COORDINATOR	14
5.	SYNTHESIS	16
6.	ANNEX	17

1. SCOPE

A quality assurance mechanism regarding teamwork and coordination has been in place as part of the work package Quality Assurance (WP3) of the iPEN project (WP leader: Dr. Katerina Zourou, Web2Learn, Greece). The purpose of this mechanism is to offer an insightful look at the internal processes regarding team coordination from the project launch until its end, **at 4 intervals** (2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021) and to identify issues that need to be improved or reconsidered (cf. Synthesis). It is thus a feature leading to the ongoing improvement of the project. Results of this report will be communicated to the project manager and all partners and action points (from the Synthesis) will be implemented.

The same survey has been launched in 2018, 2019 and 2020.

	iPEN: understanding group processes and achievements of the project at the end of year 3 Deliverable ID: D.3.1.1	Page : 3 of 20
		Version : 1.0
		Date : 10/10/2021
		Status : Approved Level : confidential

2. STRUCTURE OF THE ASSESSMENT MECHANISM

Among other assessment mechanisms (brainstorming session, individual interviews), we opted for an online survey which has been delivered as a Google form (see annex). Partners were identified by name, but their identity is kept secret as data has been anonymized by the author of this report. Full identity can be disclosed to EACEA upon request.

The assessment form contains 5 sections, each addressing a dimension related to project coordination and leadership, namely:

1. Decision-making procedures
2. Distribution of tasks between partners
3. Timetable and communication
4. Planning and coordination
5. Advantages and disadvantages of the coordinator

Each section is composed by specific questions whose replies are analyzed hereafter. A Synthesis (last part of this report) completes the analysis. For each question we offer raw data in the form of charts or tables accompanied by a short analysis produced by the author of this report. The approach of data analysis gives floor to divergent points of view in a constructive way and translates partners' comments into improvement actions (cf. Synthesis).

3. PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

13 individuals replied to the questionnaire from each of the 14 partners of the iPEN consortium. This distribution is extremely positive, firstly because replies cover almost the full partnership (except for two partners), therefore representativeness is high. Secondly, because all respondents are different (we were able to check this through the names in each questionnaire- they were anonymized at reporting stage), as individuals from the same institution but with different backgrounds (scholars, administrative staff) were able to express their opinion on common issues.

	iPEN: understanding group processes and achievements of the project at the end of year 3 Deliverable ID: D.3.1.1	Page : 4 of 20
		Version : 1.0
		Date : 10/10/2021
		Status : Approved Level : confidential

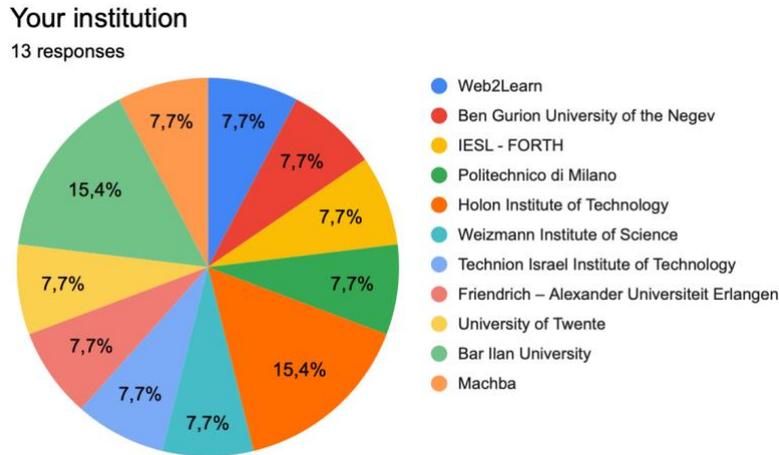


Figure 1: profile of respondents

4. ANALYSIS OF REPLIES

In this part of the report, we analyze replies to the survey section by section.

4.1. DECISION MAKING PROCEDURES AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

This section corresponds to questions (Q) 3 to 6 and aims to give a general appreciation of team coordination and project management. It is the next sections that give a more detailed and nuanced picture of internal working processes of the project team.

Replies to this section show a very satisfactory image. Partners' understanding of their contribution to the project (Q3) receives a very high score. All respondents claim that they are able to contribute to the project outcomes at some extent. This element may be compared to Q10 ("are you aware of your responsibilities?") also receiving a top score (see section 4.3).

Q3 From your investment to the project so far (until October 2021) do you feel you are able to contribute to the project outcomes to same extent?

	iPEN: understanding group processes and achievements of the project at the end of year 3 Deliverable ID: D.3.1.1	Page : 5 of 20
		Version : 1.0
		Date : 10/10/2021
		Status : Approved Level : confidential

13 responses



Figure 2: partners' investment

Partners also believe that almost all relevant information is available in due time (Q4).

Q4 Is all relevant information available in due time?

13 responses

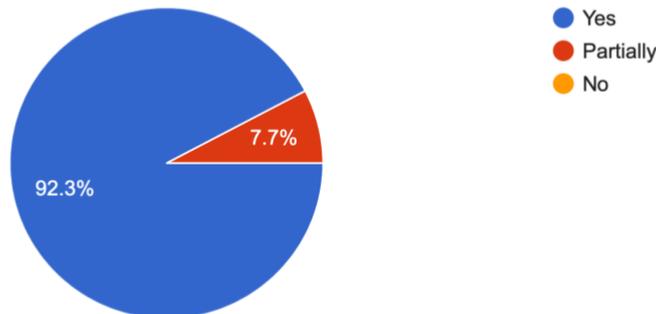


Figure 3: Availability of information

The overall quality of project management receives an outstanding score. In Q5, with 5/5 as maximum score, 2 respondents gave a 4/5 score, and 11 respondents gave a 5/5 score for project management. This is a rare and outstanding score for a partnership with the originality of a Programme - Partner countries cooperation as in iPEN, plus the complexity of managing a big consortium (14 partners) composed by various profiles of partners (HEIs and SMEs) and disciplines.

	iPEN: understanding group processes and achievements of the project at the end of year 3 Deliverable ID: D.3.1.1	Page : 6 of 20
		Version : 1.0
		Date : 10/10/2021
		Status : Approved Level : confidential

Q5 Can you rate the overall quality of project coordination until now?

13 responses

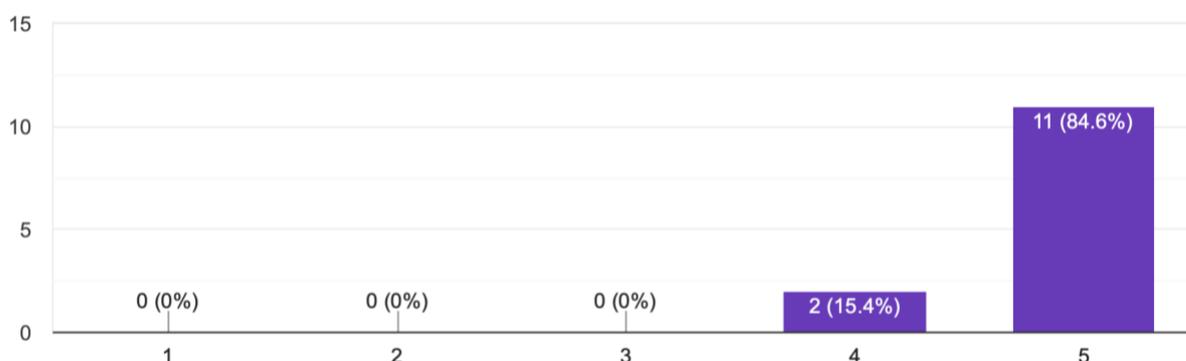


Figure 4: overall quality of project coordination

The most significant outcome of this first section of the survey is that all replies are fully positive about project management and team coordination, and in some cases the team fully agrees on methods and procedures developed so far.

Partners were invited to express their opinions about project coordination in an open-ended question. All replies are provided below, without any interference of the author.

Q6 If you wish to make any comment regarding to the project coordination please use the box below

- *The coordinator has extraordinary leadership qualities and a charming and warm personaliy, which are an asset to any project or institution. However, an overload has been obvious from day one and has only increased with time.*
- *I see that the organization and the leading role of the Project is conducted by the coordinator in a well organized manner.*
- *made very high professional*
- *Kostas has been very energetic en enthusiastic*
- *This was one of the best managed/coordinated projects we have ever worked with. The Coordinator was deeply committed to quality and success on every level.*
- *We had the privilege of working with an exceptional coordinator who gave his all to the success of the project*

4.2. DISTRIBUTION OF TASKS

A positive majority reigns in the set of questions regarding the distribution of tasks. Partners have a very clear understanding of the work plan and the timetable Q7. This also

	iPEN: understanding group processes and achievements of the project at the end of year 3 Deliverable ID: D.3.1.1	Page : 7 of 20
		Version : 1.0
		Date : 10/10/2021
		Status : Approved Level : confidential

echoes Q8 results, which is the degree of awareness of common project goals as well as the specific goals per institution.

Q7 Is the work plan and timetable clear for all partners?

13 responses

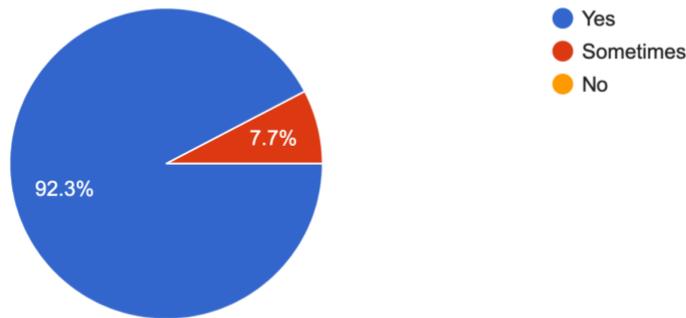


Figure 6: clarity of work plan and timetable

Q8 Are you, as partner, aware of the common project goals and the specific goals for your institution?

13 responses

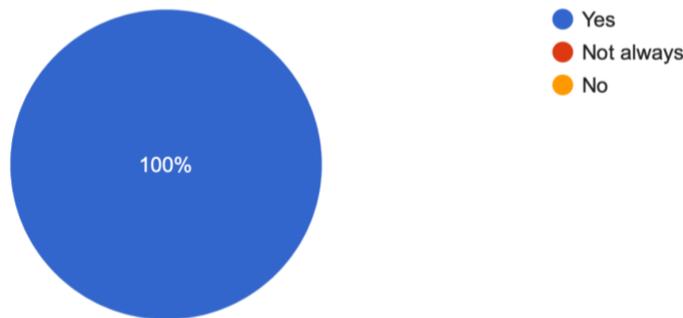


Figure 7: degree of awareness of shared project goals

This is a largely positive result, showing clear definition of scope, duties on the team level and on the partner level. It is very optimistic that respondents from different countries, backgrounds and degree of contribution largely converge in their replies. There is a high level of confidence among respondents.

	iPEN: understanding group processes and achievements of the project at the end of year 3 Deliverable ID: D.3.1.1	Page : 8 of 20
		Version : 1.0
		Date : 10/10/2021
		Status : Approved Level : confidential

A very similar result is conveyed in Q9 (degree of awareness of responsibilities) and Q10 (existence of a clear and realistic description of task of both the coordinator and each partner). Partners seem to be fully aware of their tasks, they consider that the coordinator communicates clearly his tasks, and that partners know well what is expected from them and when.

Q9 Are you as partner aware of your responsibilities?

13 responses



Figure 8: degree of awareness of partners' responsibilities

Q10 Is there a clear and realistic description of the tasks of the project coordinator and each partner?

13 responses

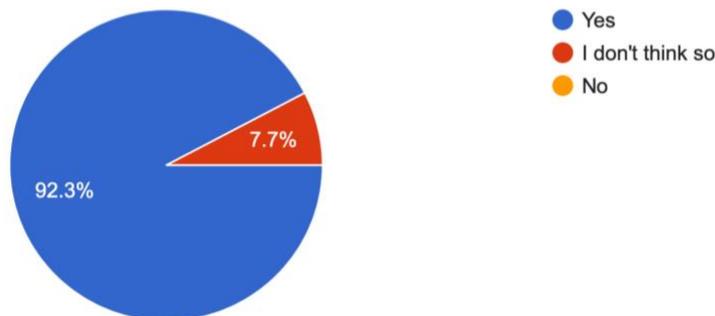


Figure 9: clarity of tasks for partners and for the project coordinator

Regarding division of tasks, partners were able to reply to an open-ended question and all replies are shown below.

Q11 If you wish to make any comment regarding to the "Division of tasks" issues, please use the box below

	iPEN: understanding group processes and achievements of the project at the end of year 3 Deliverable ID: D.3.1.1	Page : 9 of 20
		Version : 1.0
		Date : 10/10/2021
		Status : Approved Level : confidential

- *Distribution of tasks is clear and it seems that tasks have been increased during the pandemic (in online mode) to keep the connection and the networking dimension strong.*
- *The coordinator was quite overburdened on the one hand and very flexible on the other, which meant he wasn't always strict enough when needed.*
- *I felt that I was able to contribute my part in the project. This part was pre*

4.3. WORKPLAN AND COORDINATION

Overall, the survey respondents answer very positively on the issue of timetable and coordination. 12 responses were collected in Q12. All respondents believe that the timetable with the activities divided by each partner is clear.

Q12 Is there a clear timetable with activities for each partner?

12 responses

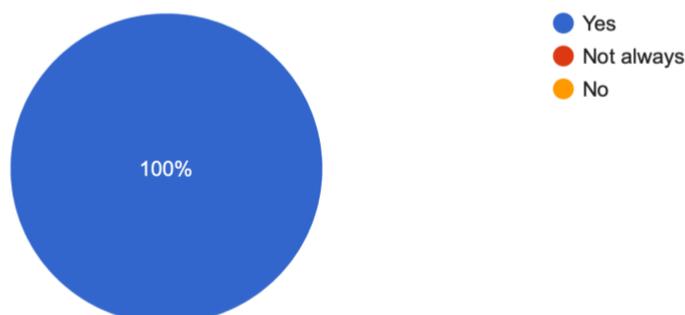


Figure 10: existence of clear timetable with activities per partner

Q13 echoes this picture, where the time schedule for communication between partners and for exchange of materials is available for 12 respondents, but “not always” for only one of them.

Q13 A time schedule for communication between partners and for exchange of material is available.

	iPEN: understanding group processes and achievements of the project at the end of year 3 Deliverable ID: D.3.1.1	Page : 10 of 20
		Version : 1.0
		Date : 10/10/2021
		Status : Approved Level : confidential

13 responses

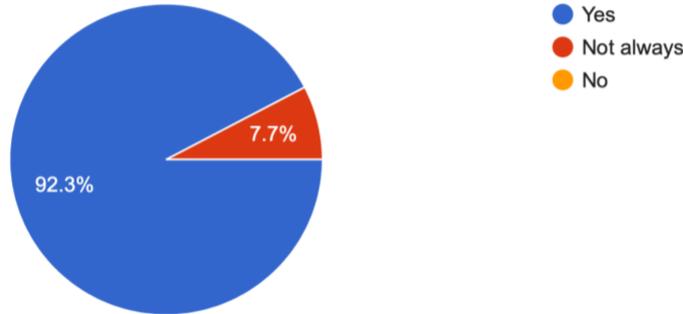


Figure 11: existence of a time schedule

As for meeting deadlines by the coordinator himself, the majority partners believe so totally and only two partners believe that the coordinator “not always” respected the deadlines.

Q14 The coordinator respects the deadlines

12 responses

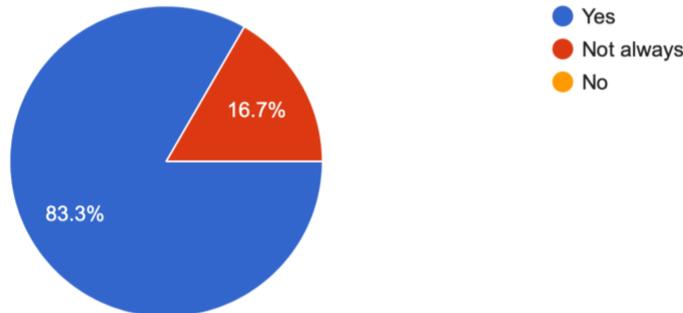


Figure 12: respect of deadlines by the coordinator

When it comes to communication means and methods, almost all partners agree that the frequency of internal communication (Q15) is suitable (12 respondents) or too low (1 respondent).

Q16 The frequency of internal communication is...

	iPEN: understanding group processes and achievements of the project at the end of year 3 Deliverable ID: D.3.1.1	Page : 11 of 20
		Version : 1.0
		Date : 10/10/2021
		Status : Approved Level : confidential

13 responses

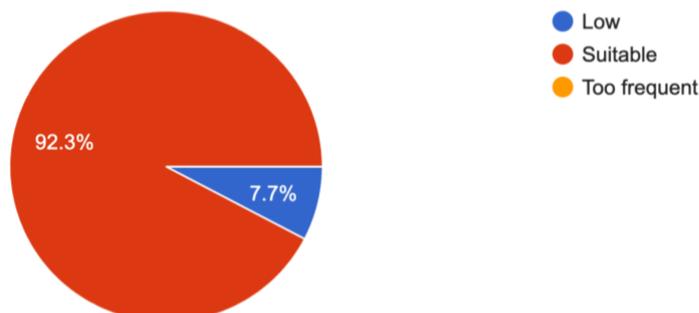


Figure 13: frequency of internal communication

All partners find means of communication appropriate (Q16), one respondent replied “Other” [means of communication possible], and he/she filled in the open-ended question Q17 below.

Q16 The means (email, platform, other types of communication) are

13 responses

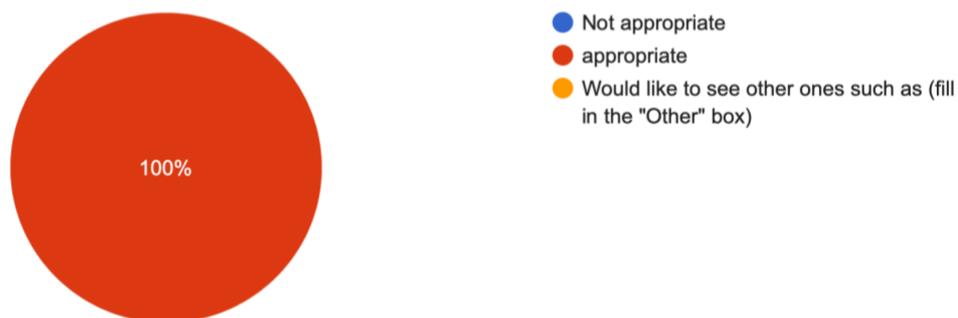


Figure 14: appropriateness of communication means

When asked about other means of communication partners would like to see, they replied with the following comments (presented below, without any interference of the author):

Q17: other (means of communication) you would like to see?

- *When needed Kostas initiate a zoom meeting to discuss emergent issues.*
- *Email was the most ideal method for communication. What's app might have been also been helpful, but was not necessary.*

4.4. PLANNING AND COORDINATION

This section corresponds to Q18 to Q21 of the survey. Planning and coordination seen as a coordinator’s task receive very high scores, as the following charts demonstrate. For Q18, project members believe that there is a clear planning and management guidelines. 10 respondents give a 5/5 score and 3 respondents a 4/5 score, both very high in this question.

Q18 Clear planning and management guidelines in the project plan

13 responses

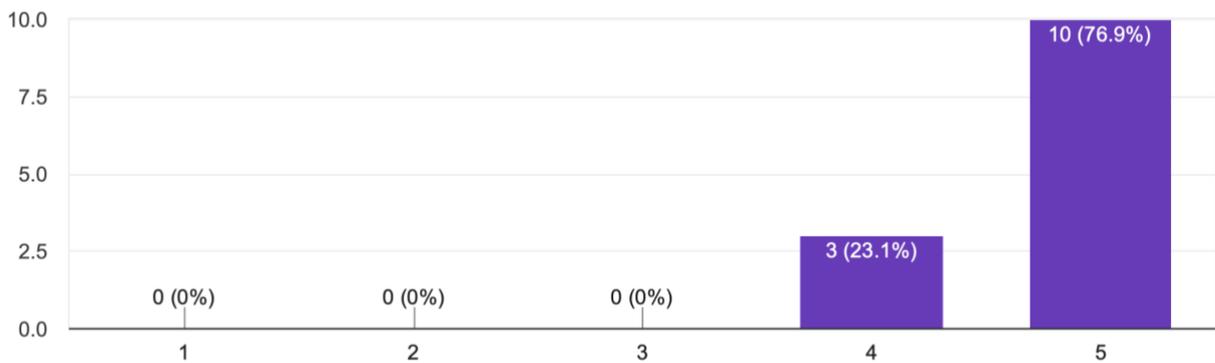


Figure 15: clear planning and management guidelines

Equity of participation (Q19) is also highly valued in the project, with 6 respondents giving a 5/5 score, and 5 respondents a 4/5 score, one participant a 3/5 score. The strict majority thus believes that partners contribute equally.

Q19 Equality of participation

12 responses

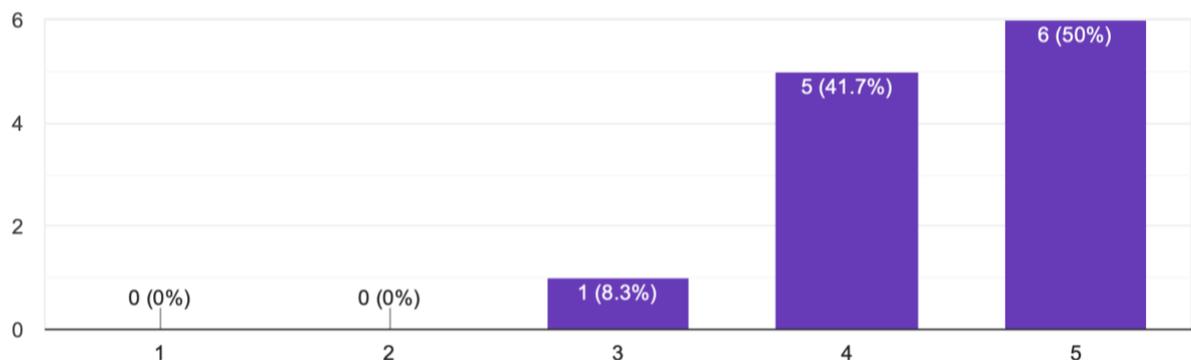


Figure 16: equality of participation

	iPEN: understanding group processes and achievements of the project at the end of year 3 Deliverable ID: D.3.1.1	Page : 13 of 20
		Version : 1.0
		Date : 10/10/2021
		Status : Approved
		Level : confidential

Partners believe, as in section Distribution of tasks, that roles and responsibilities are well defined (8 respondents giving a 5/5 score, 4 respondents a 4/5 score).

Q20 Clarity of roles and responsibilities

12 responses

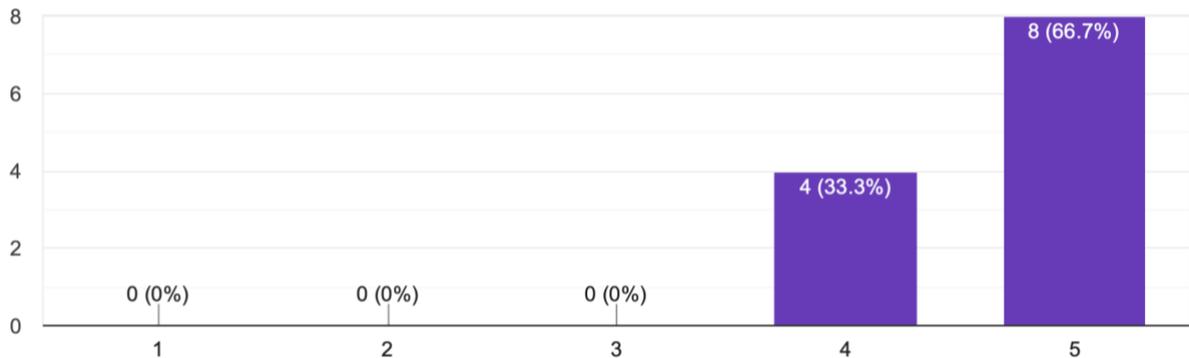


Figure 17: clarity of roles and responsibilities

As for the collaborative effort of sharing knowledge and expertise, project members largely believe that teamwork is promoted effectively (10 persons give 5/5 points, 2 give 4/5 points and 1 respondent give 3/5 points).

Q21 Promotion of teamwork, sharing of experience and expertise

13 responses

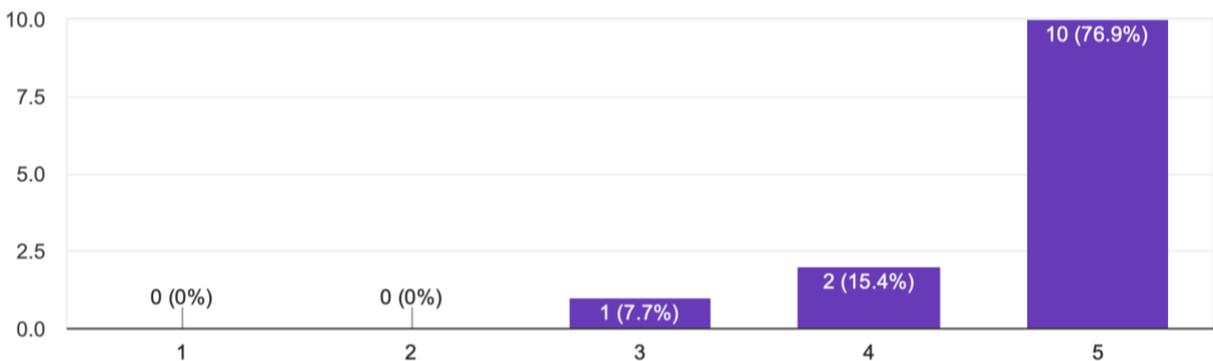


Figure 18: Promotion of teamwork, sharing of experience and expertise

	iPEN: understanding group processes and achievements of the project at the end of year 3 Deliverable ID: D.3.1.1	Page : 14 of 20
		Version : 1.0
		Date : 10/10/2021
		Status : Approved Level : confidential

4.5. ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE PROJECT COORDINATOR

Partners were asked to give their appreciation of the strongest and weakest point of the coordinator. All data are available to EACEA upon request and, by precaution, the identity of respondents has been removed for the principle of anonymity.

Regarding the coordinator's strongest points, firstly one can mention his organizational and managerial skills ("high professional management", "The project coordinator manage to control and achieve the projects goals"). Dr. Petridis is also valued for his communicative competence "Has high communication ability", "Highly professional and experienced, combined with perfect rapport with people"). It should not go unnoticed that partners also appreciated for his passion and energy ("Prof. Petridis encourages and triggers us to become better humans and better professionals, through the energy that he puts in the project.", "passion and energy")

Q22 What is the coordinator's strongest point?

- *Prof. Petridis encourages and triggers us to become better humans and better professionals, through the energy that he puts in the project.*
- *Organization and planning*
- *passion and energy*
- *Highly professional and experienced, combined with perfect rapport with people*
- *Leadership*
- *Clear goals and targets*
- *friendly and high professional management*
- *Energy*
- *Articulating regulations of the EU and responsibilities of partners*
- *The project coordinator manage to control and achieve the projects goals.*
- *Excellent management in a good atmosphere*
- *Has high communication ability, accessible, stimulating*

Regarding Dr. Petridis' weakest points, it is worth mentioning that several respondents find no weak point at all ("none", "nothing specific", "n/a", "No real weak points") or the weak points mentioned by the partners might be considered by anyone as positive features ("A person with a wide heart and sometimes taking on the tasks of other partners"). All replies are provided below, without any interference of the author.

Q23 What is the coordinator's weakest point?

- *A bit too demanding for partners to be as active and energetic as Kostas is:-)*
- *nothing specific*
- *OVERBURDENED!!!*

	iPEN: understanding group processes and achievements of the project at the end of year 3 Deliverable ID: D.3.1.1	Page : 15 of 20
		Version : 1.0
		Date : 10/10/2021
		Status : Approved Level : confidential

- *Takes too much on himself*
- *n/a*
- *Not all partners respond in time*
- *No real weak points*
- *multitasking*
- *A person with a wide heart and sometimes taking on the tasks of other partners*

Partners were asked for advice on how the project coordination can be improved. Replies are useful in the sense that partners give positive indications on how this can be realized. As in the question above, several persons consider that there should be no change whatsoever (“Coordination is excellent, no need for improvements”, “There is no better”). This is highly positive considering that all partners are experienced team members with previous experiences in trans-national cooperation projects, and they consider project coordination outstanding.

Q24: please add an idea on how to make the iPEN project coordination better

- *Coordination is excellent, no need for improvements*
- *Having greater buy in from Israeli HEI's to help manage the project, rather than just deliver the required content*
- *There is no better*

Due to the current situation, the final question focused on partners’ opinions on the way the project manager handled the coronavirus pandemic for the iPEN partnership. All partners categorised the way the project manager handled the coronavirus pandemic only under very positive or positive categories.

Q25 How do you qualify the way the project manager handled the coronavirus pandemic for the iPEN partnership?

- *I think that Prof. Petridis managed this very successfully, with a series of international events throughout the pandemic. Congratulations!*
- *suitable*
- *In general the coordinator was quick to adapt to the changing times and realise what was required to keep things together. As the pandemic prolonged - it seemed to have lost momentum. A plan B should have been considered and its possible implementation examined from time to time*
- *Highly positive. We had a webinar and we were able to employ our experience from the project (regarding online teaching) to additional audiences.*
- *very well*
- *Very good*

	iPEN: understanding group processes and achievements of the project at the end of year 3 Deliverable ID: D.3.1.1	Page : 16 of 20
		Version : 1.0
		Date : 10/10/2021
		Status : Approved Level : confidential

- *extremely well handled. Israel was particularly strict with travel so this made things very hard*
- *Very good*

5. SYNTHESIS

The overall picture of team performance is extremely positive. Having to deal with 14 partners in a short-term project, from several EU and non-EU countries, and from different disciplines, it is reasonable to claim that the iPEN project ends with a team that performs extremely well, on task and on time.

The project coordinator carries out an outstanding task through the very positive assessment from team members.

	iPEN: understanding group processes and achievements of the project at the end of year 3 Deliverable ID: D.3.1.1	Page : 17 of 20
		Version : 1.0
		Date : 10/10/2021
		Status : Approved Level : confidential

6. ANNEX¹

iPEN: understanding group processes and achievements of the project at the end of year 4

Dear iPEN project partners,
this is a short evaluation form with regards to project coordination and leadership of the iPEN Erasmus+ project. It is conducted at the end of year 4 (October 2021, as the deadline after an extension to the project has been awarded in light of the pandemic).
It has been prepared by the WP3 (Quality Assurance) leader, Katerina Zourou, with the aim of collecting data and improving any ill-defined areas. Your feedback is therefore invaluable. All data provided will remain anonymous.
The form contains several sections, each addressing a dimension related to project coordination and leadership, namely: the distribution of tasks between partners • the work plan and timetable • partners' knowledge of the main goals and results being aimed at • the distribution of responsibilities among partners • the decision-making procedures • the methods of communication between partners and frequency of communication.

We ask you to kindly fill in all fields.

*Required



Your data

1. Your name (Your name will be not communicated)
2. Your institution * (Your institution will not be communicated)

Mark only one oval.

Technological Educational Institute of Crete

Politecnico di Milano

University of Twente

Friendrich – Alexander Universiteit Erlangen

IESL - FORTH

Web2Learn

Bar Ilan University

Weizmann Institute of Science

¹ (online form available at <https://forms.gle/1dFdwQNLymaRFi7w9>)

	iPEN: understanding group processes and achievements of the project at the end of year 3 Deliverable ID: D.3.1.1	Page : 18 of 20
		Version : 1.0
		Date : 10/10/2021
		Status : Approved Level : confidential

Sami Shamoon College of Engineering
Holon Institute of Technology
Machba

Ben Gurion University of the Negev
Technion Israel Institute of Technology
Decision-making procedures and project management

3. From your investment in the project so far (until October 2021) do you feel you are able to contribute to the project outcomes to some extent?

Mark only one oval.

Yes

I don't think so

No

4. Is all relevant information available in due time?

Mark only one oval.

Yes

Partially

No

5. Can you rate the overall quality of project coordination until now?

Mark only one oval.

1 Not suitable

2

3

4

5 Very suitable

6. If you wish to make any comments regarding the project coordination please use the box below

Leadership

7. Is the work plan and timetable clear for all partners?

Mark only one oval.

Yes

Sometimes

No

8. Are you, as partner, aware of the common project goals and the specific goals for your institution?

Mark only one oval.

Yes

Not always

No

9. Are you, as partner, aware of your responsibilities?

Mark only one oval.

Yes

I don't think so

	iPEN: understanding group processes and achievements of the project at the end of year 3 Deliverable ID: D.3.1.1	Page : 19 of 20
		Version : 1.0
		Date : 10/10/2021
		Status : Approved Level : confidential

No

10. Is there a clear and realistic description of the tasks of the project co-ordinator and each partner?

Mark only one oval.

Yes

I don't think so

No

11. If you wish to make any comment regarding to the "Distribution of tasks" issues, please use the box below

Timetable and communication

12. There is a clear timetable with activities for each partner

Mark only one oval.

Yes

Not always

No

13. A time schedule for communication between partners and for exchange of material is available. *

Mark only one oval.

Yes

Not always

No

14. The co-ordinator respects the deadlines

Mark only one oval.

Yes

Not always

No

15. The frequency of internal communication is...

Mark only one oval.

Low

Suitable

Too frequent

16. The means (email, platform, other types of communication) are

Mark only one oval.

Not appropriate

appropriate

Would like to see other ones such as (fill in the "Other" box)

17. Other (means of communication) you would like to see?

Planning and coordination

18. Clear planning and management guidelines in the project plan

Mark only one oval.

1 Poor

2

	iPEN: understanding group processes and achievements of the project at the end of year 3 Deliverable ID: D.3.1.1	Page : 20 of 20
		Version : 1.0
		Date : 10/10/2021
		Status : Approved Level : confidential

3

4

5 Very good

19. Equity of participation

Mark only one oval.

1 Poor

2

3

4

5 Very good

20. Clarity of roles and responsibilities

Mark only one oval.

1 Poor

2

3

4

5 Very good

21. Promotion of teamwork, sharing of experience and expertise *

Mark only one oval.

1 Poor

2

3

4

5 Very good

22. What is the coordinator's strongest point?

23. What is the coordinator's weakest point?

24. Please add an idea of how to make the iPEN projects' coordination better

25. How do you qualify the way the project manager handled the coronavirus pandemic for the iPEN partnership?