



SOCRATES ODL/MINERVA DISSEMINATION GUIDE

SUSTAIN PROJECT

January 2000

INTRODUCTION

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THE SOCRATES ODL/MINERVA DISSEMINATION GUIDE

The present dissemination Guide represents one of the products of the SUSTAIN project, approved in the frame of the SOCRATES ODL Programme of DG XXII. SUSTAIN was essentially conceived to support the sustainability of SOCRATES ODL outputs through dissemination.

The methodology used and the results obtained make SUSTAIN of extreme interest and applicability also for the MINERVA Action, within the SOCRATES II Programme, for the period 2000-2007. In particular, the MINERVA Action, addressing all those actors particularly involved in the promotion of European co-operation in the field of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in education, represents the natural "heir" of the SOCRATES ODL Programme.

Generally speaking, the approach used for implementing SUSTAIN represents an innovative way to access two of the most demanding issues connected with funded projects: their sustainability after the last "instalment" has been signed off (by the funding institution!), and the dissemination of the results attained through a complex experimental activity of pilot projects.

That is why the present Dissemination Guide, a product of another EU-funded project (as it is described in the following lines), contains elements which can be exported, *mutatis mutandis*, in other contexts and serve as a clarifying starting point for further developments and deepening of the fine art of disseminating.

The present Dissemination Guide has been adapted from one of the handbooks developed under the Tempus Output Promotion (TOP) Project, which was launched in 1995 by the European Training Foundation at the request of the European Commission. The aim of the project was to maximise the added value of Tempus through analysis and dissemination of the achievements of the programme. The TOP Handbook was produced in 1997 by SCIENTER, in collaboration with the Latvian Tempus Office and the European Training Foundation.

Permission to adapt the TOP Handbook to the SOCRATES ODL context and to the needs of SOCRATES ODL project promoters has been granted by the European Commission, DG XXII, and the European Training Foundation, to whom we would like to express our gratitude.

The SOCRATES ODL Dissemination Guide has been drawn up by the SUSTAIN consortium co-ordinated by SCIENTER (I) and also comprising:

- ◆ FIM Psychologie, Universitaet Erlangen, D;
- ◆ Lambrakis Research Foundation, GR;
- ◆ Technologies for Training, UK;
- ◆ Coimbra Group, EUR
- ◆ Eden, EUR
- ◆ Europace 2000, EUR
- ◆ EADTU, EUR
- ◆ Associazione Campo, I

THE SOCRATES ODL PROGRAMME AND THE SOCRATES II MINERVA ACTION

SOCRATES was the European Commission Action Programme for co-operation in the field of education, in the period 1995-1999. It aimed at developing the European dimension in education and at enhancing its quality, through partnership across national boundaries.

ODL measures within SOCRATES pursued four objectives:

- ◆ facilitating co-operation between organisations and institutions in the field, based on the exchange of information and experience;
- ◆ responding to the need to enhance the skills of teachers, trainers and managers in the techniques of open and distance learning;
- ◆ improving the quality of distance education products and their user-friendliness;
- ◆ encouraging the recognition of qualifications obtained in the context of open and distance learning

The SOCRATES II Programme is now operating for the period 2000-2007. Within it, the MINERVA Action aims at supporting transversal measures relating to open and distance learning (ODL) and the use of information and communication technologies (ICT), including multimedia, in the field of education. In so doing, it complements and enriches the corresponding measures provided for within the other Actions of the SOCRATES II Programme.

More in detail, the MINERVA Action focuses on three main issues:

- ◆ the promotion of understanding among teachers, learners, decision-makers and the public at large of the implications of ODL and ICT for education, as well as the critical and responsible use of ICT for educational purposes;
- ◆ the enhancement of proper pedagogical consideration of the development of ICT and multimedia-based educational products and services;
- ◆ the facilitation of access to improved methods and educational resources as well as to results and best practices in this field.

The SOCRATES Programme was the first European initiative covering education at all ages and forms part of a broader approach to the concept of lifelong learning. The present SOCRATES II is its natural successor, taking on its achievements and continuing its evolving mission.

As can be easily inferred, SOCRATES ODL and MINERVA pursue the same range of objectives. That is why, for the purposes of the present Dissemination Guide, the acronym SOCRATES ODL/MINERVA will be used to address both programmes.

Overall responsibility for implementing Socrates lay within the European Commission (Directorate-General XXII: Education, Training and Youth; Directorate A. At present,

following the Commission's overall reform, the responsible DG has changed its name into "Education and Culture Directorate-General").

Some actions are managed centrally by the Commission while others are managed on a decentralised basis by the National Agencies in the participating countries.

The participating countries are the 15 Member States of the European Union as well as the EFTA/EEA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. SOCRATES is now being extended to several associated countries in Central and Eastern Europe and Cyprus.

There are two sets of measures designed to financially support projects on Open and Distance Learning (ODL) in Europe, with a view to improving the quality of the organisational environment in which ODL takes place and the availability and quality of the teaching media and resources for this type of learning:

1. ***Support for European cooperation in the field of ODL:*** In the frame of this measure grants are provided for projects carried out by European partnerships. The projects are divided into:
 - ◇ Transnational projects oriented towards exchange of experience and dissemination of innovative methods of distance learning, exchange of information and experience on the use of new technologies in education and the conception (though not the large scale production) of new teaching materials based on these technologies.
 - ◇ Observatory projects designed to produce a comprehensive picture of a particular aspect of ODL or the use of new educational technologies in several European countries.

2. ***Support for the application of ODL to activities within other parts of Socrates:*** ODL approaches are encouraged within other Actions of Socrates, particularly where this will improve the quality of teaching or extend access to European cooperation for groups of teachers or learners who would not otherwise be able to benefit. Projects with a strong ODL component submitted under the Erasmus and Comenius sections of Socrates may qualify for additional financial support.

For more detailed information on the SOCRATES and SOCRATES II Programmes please refer to the following web site:

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/socrates>

THE SUSTAIN PROJECT

The SUSTAIN project, approved as observatory project in the frame of the SOCRATES ODL Programme in 1998, aims at supporting the sustainability of SOCRATES ODL/MINERVA outputs through dissemination actions. The project intends to create a collaborative approach among operators in the field of ODL, facilitating the circulation of information and developing a specialised network allowing operators to share working tools and services. It also aims at fostering the creation of synergies among projects with similar characteristics as regards dissemination purposes.

The three main target groups of the SUSTAIN project are SOCRATES ODL/MINERVA project promoters, people involved in ODL and operating in Education and Training bodies and potential users who may become aware of new resources, approaches and policy actions relevant to their needs.

SUSTAIN operates on the principle that in order to guarantee effective and efficient dissemination of SOCRATES ODL/MINERVA outputs, top-down dissemination actions implemented on the initiative of the European Commission should be accompanied by direct actions by project promoters. In order to encourage promoters' initiative and to enhance their competences in dissemination, a substantial part of the SUSTAIN project is devoted to provide guidance, working tools and training to project promoters, who should be greatly interested in the sustainability of their project results. In this way a multiplier effect is likely to be generated and the results of the SOCRATES ODL/MINERVA Programme investment can be maximised.

The implementation model underlying all project activities has been developed with the intent to help project promoters to perform a variety of activities, such as:

- ◆ to identify themselves and the characteristics of their environment;
- ◆ to develop a feasibility exercise on their actions oriented towards dissemination and sustainability;
- ◆ to utilise scenarios on future developments; and
- ◆ to implement and assess their action.

With this view in mind, the SUSTAIN project has developed a set of products, among which the present "SOCRATES ODL/MINERVA Dissemination Guide".

THE SOCRATES ODL/MINERVA DISSEMINATION GUIDE: TARGET, AIMS AND STRUCTURE

The SOCRATES ODL/MINERVA Dissemination Guide is addressed to project promoters interested in maximising the use and impact of SOCRATES ODL/MINERVA outputs and their sustainability.

Although specifically adapted to the SOCRATES ODL/MINERVA context and outputs, the Dissemination Guide represents a valuable tool also for project promoters and other stakeholders active in different contexts and programmes interested in the issue of dissemination and sustainability.

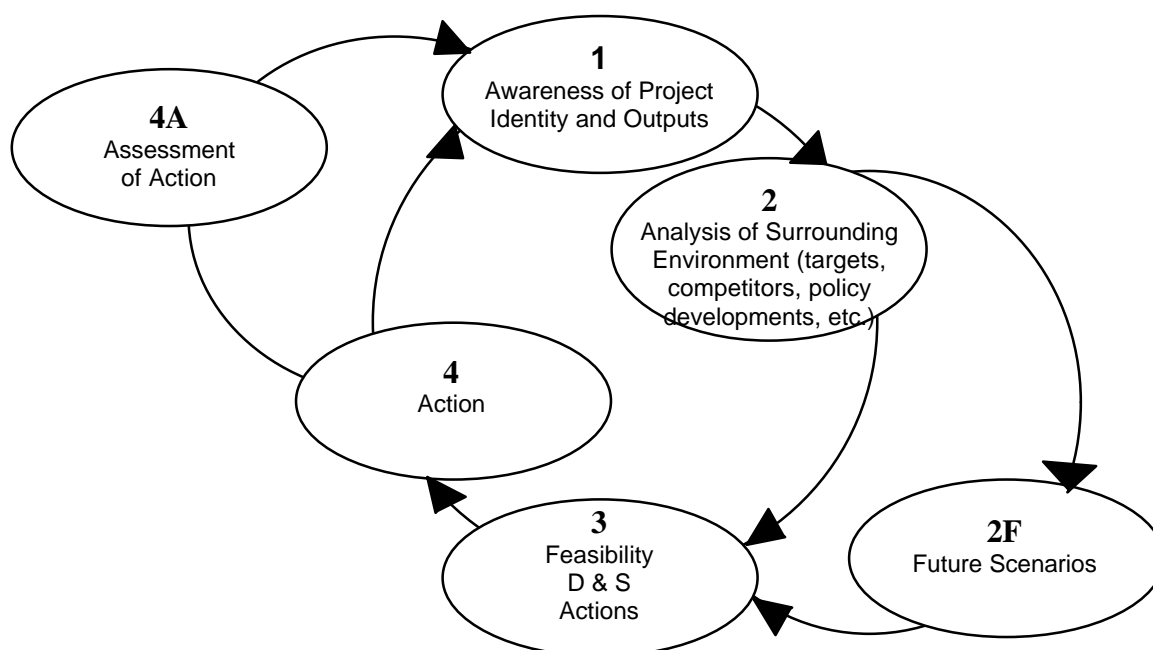
The structure of the Guide is the following:

Part I is based on the implementation model for Dissemination and Sustainability actions. In its basic structure, the implementation model should allow project leaders to identify themselves and the characteristics of their environment, to develop the feasibility of actions oriented towards dissemination and sustainability, to utilise scenarios on future developments and to implement and assess their actions.

The following scheme illustrated in Diagram 1 below is intended to give a preliminary idea of the implementation model that has been used to structure both the study and the Guide. The iterative nature of the scheme is intended to demonstrate that effective action would most probably modify the project identity and would require a new cycle of action.

Each of the ten short chapters is therefore related to one of the steps of the implementation model; in each chapter the diagram is reproduced showing where the chapter is positioned in the model.

Diagram 1: SUSTAIN IMPLEMENTATION MODEL



Legend

Stage of the Model	Related chapter	
GENERAL	What is dissemination? What is sustainability?	1.
1	Identification of the project and its outputs	2.
1	Target users and project stakeholders	3.
2	What are present strengths and weaknesses?	4.
2F	What about future scenarios?	5.
3	What are the options for D&S actions?	6.
3	Resources and priorities	7.
4	How to “embed” D&S in existing initiatives	8.
4A	How to assess D&S actions?	9.
1	D&S actions changed the project identity: what is the next step?	10.

Part II contains practical information on SOCRATES/MINERVA National Agencies, on relevant initiatives and existing ODL Networks and Associations at European and national level.

Internet addresses are also listed in order to stimulate new ideas for future project development, to find partners and to benefit from existing project outputs.

Characteristics of the Dissemination Guide include:

- ◆ The Guide may be read sequentially, but does not need to be handled this way; it allows different points of entry according to the “life-cycle” phase of the reader’s project or according to specific needs;
- ◆ The Guide is not prescriptive: it does not prescribe the “one best way”, but suggests a context-based method of work, and stimulates the reader to work on her/his specific project and undertake some activities that, at the end of each chapter, correspond to the planning of the different phases of dissemination action in view of output sustainability;
- ◆ The Guide is intended to be easy to use and informal in its communication style: its main intended quality is usability, so readers should not expect here the originality of an academic paper.

Many of the considerations and suggestions may appear obvious if taken individually, but the systematisation of approach seems to be an important requirement in the current dissemination practice of SOCRATES ODL/MINERVA and other programmes related to innovation in education and training.

In fact, the “island” character of many SOCRATES ODL/MINERVA projects, that is their modest capacity to diffuse the innovation that they generate, has been pointed out in several occasions and is a major concern of the European Commission.

The Dissemination Guide intends to contribute to the solution of this problem, but it will only succeed if motivation to disseminate results is generated among project leaders and other project stakeholders.

PART I

**GUIDELINES FOR THE DESIGN OF DISSEMINATION AND
SUSTAINABILITY ACTION IN SOCRATES ODL/MINERVA**

1. WHAT IS DISSEMINATION? WHAT IS SUSTAINABILITY?

One of the fundamental objectives of the present Dissemination Guide is to give a clear definition of “dissemination “ and “sustainability”.

DISSEMINATION AND SUSTAINABILITY IN GENERAL

The following definitions of the two concepts are for the specific purpose of the Dissemination Guide and are not necessarily the only possible definitions. The concept is clearly based on the point of view of the project promoters, who are the priority target public for the Dissemination Guide, even if it is addressed also to other projects’ stakeholders.

Dissemination

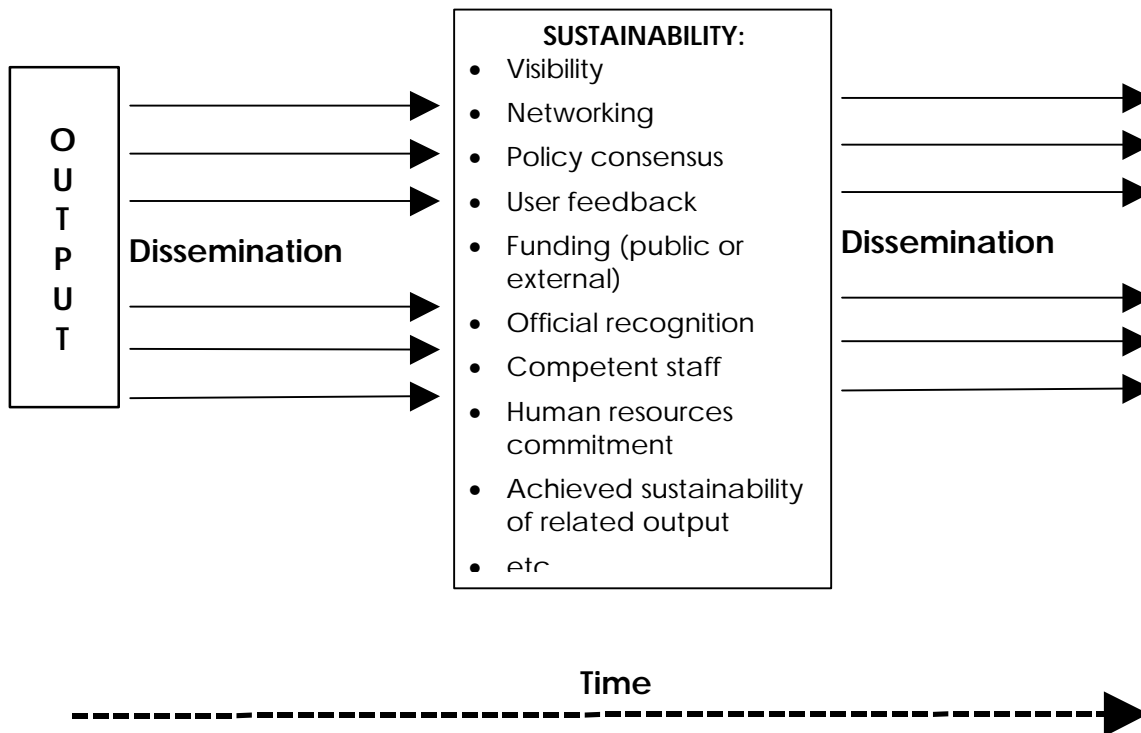
is a **process** of making results of projects available for a target public, which has not been directly implicated in the project.

Sustainability

of project results can be defined as **the result of a process** which ensures that the outputs of a project are maintained after project funding has stopped.

The following diagram illustrates the concept:

Diagram 2: **DISSEMINATION AND SUSTAINABILITY**



Outputs

Dissemination results from a project, not necessarily of the entirety of a project but possibly of single outputs. The overall results of a project can thus be disseminated in part and be sustainable in part. The outputs are defined by the individual project circumstances. In each individual project they will vary in nature, in possible target groups, in terms of dissemination and in necessary conditions for sustainability.

Sustainability

Sustainability can be envisaged as being composed of various elements or “ingredients”. They comprise visibility, networking, policy consensus, users’ feedback, funding (public or external), official recognition, competent staff, human resources commitment, and achieved sustainability of related output. These elements are not independent from each other and are difficult to measure in precise terms. In fact the sustainability of a specific output may depend, to a large extent, on the achieved sustainability of a more general output such as a new institution; but a number of elements will need to be present if a given output is to be defined as sustainable. The type of necessary elements very much depends on the type of outcome. For example: the sustainability of a new curriculum can be measured in terms of official recognition, funding and users’ feedback (i.e. the

presence of students), while cooperation structures with industry will depend more on networking and policy consensus than on official recognition.

These elements are also not static in their nature, i.e. sustainability is not an eternal state. This reflects the need for sustainable project outputs to continue developing and adapting. An institutional cooperation agreement between two universities which has some medium term funding will still depend on long-term policy consensus if it is to remain alive. In the same way a new curriculum will need visibility and networking if it is to be up-dated regularly instead of becoming obsolete after some years.

Dissemination Dissemination is described generally as the range of actions which make project outputs available to persons who are not directly involved in a project. Availability of project results is understood to comprise a full range of elements from pure information up to training exercises or involvement in decision-making.

The achievement of sustainability, as defined above, therefore presupposes dissemination.

Given that project outputs are variable, the target public will also be variable. It can vary from colleagues in the same department to persons in external organisations, e.g. industrial partners or parents' associations. The main motivation for dissemination, from the point of view of a project, is the achievement of sustainability.

2. IDENTIFICATION OF THE PROJECT AND ITS OUTPUTS

As already mentioned in the introduction, the aim of the SOCRATES ODL/MINERVA Action is, by using teaching innovations, to make a contribution to the quality of education and to increase access to all levels of education, in particular for those who, because of their geographical or personal situation, have no other options open to them. The Action aims at enhancing European cooperation among the “actors” or “players” who are involved in:

- ◆ integrating new technology and new media into the educational process including the training of teachers and managers;
- ◆ promoting and providing open and distance learning services.

The number and type of institutions involved are also elements of project differentiation. Furthermore the different nature of the SOCRATES ODL/MINERVA projects influence the needs of dissemination and the actors’ performance in dissemination.

The most significant issue in this chapter is the nature of the project outputs to be developed, which may be classified as follows:

- ◆ hard outputs in terms of “products” from projects (such as curricula, courses, books, open learning materials, databases etc.);
- ◆ know-how in terms of expertise (such as project management, university management, etc.);
- ◆ ideas for policy making.

Not all outputs are physical; when identifying project outputs, we have to think of them as elements of a continuum, ranging from totally tangible and “material” products, at one end, and totally “immaterial” results, at the other end. A long list may result from the project analysis, combining a few or many of the following categories of outputs:

- ◆ teaching materials;
- ◆ upgraded courses;
- ◆ curricular innovation;
- ◆ publications;
- ◆ management experience developed;
- ◆ impact on national policy;

- ◆ seminars/workshops/conferences;
- ◆ research reports.

A common mistake is to assume that the only outputs which may have a potential for dissemination are **final outputs**. In fact, during the project life-cycle several products are developed as **intermediate or supporting outputs**. These have functions in relation to the project and its product development but may also have a potential for dissemination independently from the final outputs. Obviously some outputs may not be suitable for dissemination, either because they are intended for partners' use only or because their quality or content makes them inappropriate for dissemination. The “**potential**” for dissemination can be defined as a combination of three factors:

- ◆ intrinsic innovative value of the output;
- ◆ ease of dissemination;
- ◆ number of potential users.

A further important consideration is the differentiation of projects according to the phases of their life-cycle. An appropriate dissemination strategy can be designed from the beginning of the project, planning for dissemination actions related to the first intermediate results. Very frequently, however, dissemination is a concern of the later phases: if nothing has been done earlier, a “frenetic dissemination” tends to emerge when the final outputs are about to be produced.

It is important to understand that, although dissemination can be started in any phase of the project life-cycle, having a dissemination plan from the beginning helps considerably the shared and effective distribution of effort over time to guarantee sustainability of outputs.

Example

The project, having as **final output** the establishment of a Centre for Innovative Specialised Studies, needs to be supported by several **intermediate outputs** such as:

- ◆ development of training of trainers courses on the studies' subjects
- ◆ upgrading of electronic facilities (computer laboratories, software and specific tools)
- ◆ development of training courses to facilitate the use of new or upgraded tools
- ◆ development of a training course on foreign languages.

These outputs are aimed at developing staff skills and improving working conditions in order to facilitate the Centre's establishment and its functionality. But they can also be designed and implemented in a way that makes some of them (e.g. the trainers' training course) relatively independent and potentially replicable and self-sustainable outputs.

CHECKLIST

- ◆ Recall the main aims and structure of your project (in terms of organisational aspects, process development and timing)
- ◆ Identify the outputs of your project and place them into an ideal life-cycle
- ◆ Distinguish between final outputs and intermediate/supporting outputs

Once you have answered the previous checklist, please complete the following template:

2.1 Please identify the 4 main characteristics of your project (in terms of: aims, partnership, outputs, innovation)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

2.2 Please write a long list of outputs of your project; write the date at which they are/were expected to be produced (if this exercise is applied to a new project this is particularly useful) and give a preliminary statement of their potential for dissemination*

Output	Date	Potential for Dissemination				
		Low 1	2	3	4	High 5
A. _____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. _____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. _____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. _____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. _____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F. _____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G. _____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H. _____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I. _____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
L. _____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

* See definition of “potential for dissemination” above in this chapter

3. TARGET USERS AND PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS

Dissemination actions will always be unsatisfactory if their target audiences are not clearly defined. The process of identification of these targets, however, is not a “neutral” task: conflicts as well as synergies between the project leader and other “stakeholders” may arise from it, and these can affect dissemination results.

When identifying target groups for dissemination a preliminary distinction should be made between “*target users*” - who are those who should make direct use of project outputs - and “*project stakeholders*” - who are those (local government, university rectorate and administrative staff, local companies, etc.) who, although not always directly involved in any project activity, share an interest in the success of the initiative. Stakeholders are particularly important in terms of sustainability because they can direct additional support towards your project or, if unsatisfied, can withdraw the support that they gave in earlier phases.

For the definition of more effective dissemination actions, “target users” can be divided into the following categories:

- a. **learners**, who should be informed about new curricula, equipment, mobility opportunities available. Learners are at the same time targets for dissemination and for sustainability: in fact the number of students is often the key criterion used to allocate funding to universities, schools, training centres and, in some countries, through subscription taxes, it is a determinant of direct income.
- b. **other parts of the university, school, training centre, research institute, company involved in the project**, including management levels; these could benefit from new equipment available, but also from the experience gained by running a transnational innovative project;
- c. **other universities, schools, training centres, research institutes, companies in the country**, which might benefit from both experience gained and specific outputs of projects developed in the same country.
- d. **other universities, schools, training centres, research institutes, companies in other countries**; this is a target of potential interest for institutions in the most advanced countries, particularly those which seek collaboration with other institutions. The transfer of successful curricula or learning materials to countries that have a shorter history is a promising area in which to capitalise the new experience gained;
- e. **policy makers** in national and regional governments and in industry, who can provide additional support and follow-up opportunities to successful projects

which can show specific outputs of their work and potential benefits of future developments;

- g. public opinion** which needs to be made aware of specific results in order to back up policy decisions for continued investment. This is obviously a target that cannot be addressed by individual projects, but rather at Programme level; however, it requires the mobilisation of projects if it is to be credible.

The importance of each target category in the definition of a dissemination plan varies from project to project. It is essential that the **primary target group** be identified as the most important beneficiary of the dissemination actions. The primary target group for each output is the category of users for which the output is designed and developed, hopefully on the basis of a needs analysis or an expressed demand. The primary group may be a 'closed' and known one (*e.g.* a specific group of university students who have registered to follow a new curriculum; a group of academics teaching a specific topic). In other cases, the primary target group may be an 'open' one (*e.g.* students who wish to follow an innovative course; academics who need re-training).

The concept of **secondary target groups** is also important to define those categories who could use part or all of the products/services originally designed for another group, therefore adding value to both your dissemination and sustainability plans.

Whilst the primary target group is usually clear from the start, often little attention is paid to identifying possible secondary target groups. For universities needing to justify a new curriculum, identifying secondary target groups is particularly valuable because, for example, new academic positions must be institutionally recognised, a wider group of students has to be attracted, new teaching materials may have a commercial potential.

Example The primary target group of a new curriculum is normally represented by a group of target students who intend to take a degree in innovative subjects. The academic staff are also generally involved in the development of a new curriculum but their interest is completely different from the students. They are interested in exploiting new opportunities offered by transnational cooperation as well as obtaining official recognition for their innovative studies and results. Finally, the University has its own interest in the development of a new curriculum, which may improve its image at local, national and international levels, as well as enlarging the existing number of students who are attracted by such an innovative course of study.

Stakeholders may belong to any of the categories already mentioned as examples of user groups, but, as previously stated, a stakeholder may or may not be a user of the main outputs of one project, but may have an interest in the success of the project itself (as a partner, a sponsor, a relevant authority, etc.).

CHECKLIST

- ◆ Recall your project results and try to identify those who could make a direct and/or an indirect use of each one of them.
- ◆ Identify elements/characteristics of your project that will help you assess whether a target group is primary or secondary.
- ◆ Identify potential synergies and/or conflicts that might arouse among different target groups sharing interest in the same output/s.

Once you have answered the previous checklist, please complete the following template:

3.1 After transcribing from the previous chapter your project outputs with a potential for dissemination, please write down for each output primary or secondary target groups.

Outputs	Primary target users	Secondary target users
A _____	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
B _____	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
C _____	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
D _____	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
E _____	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

3.2 Please try to analyse the relevance of project outputs to classes of stakeholders that you identify as appropriate to your project.

Output	Relevance to project stakeholders					Which stakeholders
	Low 1	2	3	4	High 5	
A. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ _____ _____
B. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ _____ _____
C. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ _____ _____
D. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ _____ _____
E. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ _____ _____

3.3 Please re-write the outputs already identified in activity 2.2 and indicate for each of them their potential for sustainability

Output	Potential for Sustainability				
	Low 1	2	3	4	High 5
A. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
L. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. WHAT ARE PRESENT STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES?

When defining a dissemination plan, which is also a strategic plan for the achievement of sustainability (when results are maintained after project funding has stopped), one needs to analyse products/outputs in order to estimate their strengths and weaknesses for dissemination and sustainability. This follows a description of what project outputs will be and which will be their identified target groups for dissemination.

Because of the likely scarcity of financial resources for dissemination it is imperative that all available resources be invested in outputs which have a high potential for dissemination and are more likely to be sustainable. These outputs should contain valuable elements or characteristics that can be easily disseminated and, through dissemination, may achieve sustainability. By identifying strengths and weaknesses of project outputs, there should be an initial evaluation of the influence and transfer levels of results in order to define suitable intervention to counteract present weaknesses.

STRENGTHS

This needs to be a list of strengths from the point of view of the ‘customer’, i.e. the target users and the project’s stakeholders; it therefore should not include strengths such as ‘expertise’ or ‘experience’ if they are not perceived as such by target users.

The strengths considered here may refer both to intrinsic characteristics of the project’s outputs/products (quality, technology, image, etc.) and to other external factors that may depend on the context in which the project is being developed, but directly affect its identity and capacity to influence others.

The “surrounding environment” as it is today, and its future development, as well as synergies between direct users and stakeholders, should always be taken into consideration when drawing up dissemination and sustainability plans.

An example of strength combined with synergy would be that of innovative and up-to-date teaching materials in a field of study which is becoming a priority for local government (e.g. environmental protection).

WEAKNESSES

These are characteristics or features the ‘customer’ wants, but the project cannot provide at present or where the output is less successful than that of competitors. Weaknesses mainly refer to intrinsic characteristics of project outputs/products but also relate to other factors in the surrounding environment which directly affect the likely success of the outputs.

Once weaknesses that might restrict dissemination of results and undermine their sustainability have been identified, the nature of these weaknesses should be analysed and there should be an effort to see whether it is possible to take action now to reduce their importance.

Example A project dealing with the increase of access to learning opportunities in rural communities may have as strengths a direct contact with the local community, support from local authorities, high level of teachers professionalism and involvement of European experts.
On the other hand, weaknesses are represented by the difficulties in enlarging the local network to other rural communities in the same country as well as in attracting interest of the national authorities.

CHECKLIST

- ◆ Identify all the intrinsic strengths and weaknesses of your outputs.
- ◆ Consider your project’s “surrounding environment” (economic, political and social context) and reflect on the impact it has on the dissemination and sustainability of your results. Does it strengthen them? Does it weaken them?
- ◆ Recall previously identified conflicts and/or synergies that exist between the needs of your target users and the project’s stakeholders and reflect on whether they act as strengths or weaknesses in the dissemination and sustainability of your project results.

Once you have answered the previous checklist, please complete the following template:

4.1 Identify strengths and weaknesses of your project, both intrinsic and external, that can affect the dissemination and sustainability of its results.

Outputs	Strengths		Weaknesses	
	Intrinsic	Deriving from external factors	Intrinsic	Deriving from external factors
A. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____
B. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____
C. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____
D. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____

5. WHAT ABOUT FUTURE SCENARIOS?

As we have seen in the previous chapter, dissemination and sustainability of project outputs is, to some extent, influenced by external factors, i.e. the project's surrounding environment can facilitate or, on the contrary, hamper the level at which results can be transferred and become sustainable.

The surrounding environment is subject to continuing changes and can be classed as an unstable factor. Its changes can modify the conditions on which the project is based and can lead to changes in the dissemination and sustainability of outputs.

Changes in the external conditions (economic, social and political context) may act either as an opportunity, if they provide project outputs with positive benefit to their Dissemination and Sustainability, or as a threat/constraint if the effect is negative.

In a strategic approach to Dissemination and Sustainability, it is important that future developments in the project's surrounding environment are anticipated and their impact evaluated.

OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities are usually external factors, which may occur in the near future and provide new occasions to strengthen the dissemination and/or sustainability potential of the project output.

What is a weakness at present (e.g. novelty of approach, not yet understood by target users) may become an element of strength in the future when new legislation or political strategies are adopted which favour the approach adopted.

An example would be that of an open and distance learning programme in a country where there is no official recognition of this learning approach yet but where it is likely to be a priority in a couple of years. Obviously original strengths may also benefit from opportunities deriving from external change.

THREATS

These are exogenous trends or developments which are likely to reduce dissemination and sustainability potential of project outputs. As in the above mentioned case, both original strengths and weaknesses may be affected by external threats.

Example A distance learning scheme may be addressed not only to students and university management but also to private business and public management for their internal training and/or up-dating. In the surrounding environment both industries and government are struggling with scarce resources and a fall in production: at present these targets/stakeholders are not likely to back up the programme but, as soon as the local economy recovers, the government might recognise the importance of ODL and make it a priority for the national education system, bringing additional support to it.

Scenarios of possible future developments can help to forecast the sustainability of outputs; their sustainability factors (see Chapter 1) need to be studied from an evolutionary point of view, to assess if they are more or less likely to be achieved in the near future.

CHECKLIST

- ◆ Try to foresee what changes in your project's economic, social and political context might take place and which of them could be considered as an opportunity or as a threat to your project outputs dissemination and sustainability.
- ◆ The adoption of new legislation or political strategies, the emergence of new actors may represent Opportunities and Threats for your project's output D&S. Try to identify the phases of your project life-cycle in which they may damage or facilitate your D&S action.

Once you have answered the previous checklist, please complete the following template:

5.1 Identify opportunities and threats to your project’s results, dissemination and potential for sustainability.

Outputs	Opportunities	Threats
A. _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
B. _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
C. _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
D. _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____

5.2 Please try to establish a connection between the identified Opportunities and Threats on one side and the points of Strength and Weakness that you recognised in Chapter 4.

Opportunities/Threats	Strengths/Weaknesses

5.3 Please enter in the first column the full list of outputs and identify for each of them the factors which may guarantee their sustainability (please use the list of sustainability factors reported in chapter 1). Then try to assess if the future evolution (Opportunities and Threats) will, as a whole, have a positive (+), negative (-), neutral or minimal impact on the sustainability of the output.

Output	Factors of Sustainability	Future Perspective
A	A1 A2 A3 A4	
B	B1 B2 B3 B4	
C	C1 C2 C3 C4	
D	1D 2D 3D 4D	
E	E1 E2 E3 E4	
F	F1 F2 F3 F4	
G	G1 G2 G3 G4	
J	J1 J2 J3 J4	
K	K1 K2 K3 K4	
H	H1 H2 H3 H4	

6. WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS FOR DISSEMINATION AND SUSTAINABILITY ACTIONS?

In the first chapter Dissemination has been described as a process of making results of projects available for a target public while Sustainability of project results has been defined as the result of a process which ensures that the outputs of a project are maintained after project funding has stopped.

The dissemination process consists of “actions for dissemination” which may be classified according to several criteria. The most obvious is the type of activities, but it is also possible to distinguish between “extensive” and “intensive” actions, as well as between “ad hoc” and “embedded”.

In general terms “extensive” actions refer to infrastructural actions supporting dissemination, while “intensive actions” include those which may produce specific dissemination results, such as influence on university management or dissemination of good practice in project management.

In our terminology, “ad-hoc” actions are those that are generated/designed explicitly to promote one given output or series of outputs of the same project: *e.g.* a conference to present the project results, a publication summarising a completed survey, etc; “embedded” actions include all those approaches which inject dissemination of a SOCRATES ODL/MINERVA output into existing activities (*e.g.*: events, publications, networks, etc.) which are already addressing a given target. The latter actions have the advantage of reducing dissemination costs, and capturing broader audiences, including those that are not specific to the output subject area. To this end they are more suitable to non-material outputs rather than to material outputs.

As one of the aims of the present Dissemination Guide is to be user-friendly, the classification based on the type of activities seems to be the most appropriate.

Possible activities are listed below, with a note on the advantages and disadvantages of each:

- ♦ **Conferences and Workshops;** they constitute the most traditional way to present results of innovative projects. They have the big disadvantage of being organised in a definite place and at a definite time, so they are not sufficient to guarantee long term access if not accompanied by publications (proceedings). If well organised, they can be a “warm” and interactive way to discuss results and possible future developments; their cost may be reduced to very little when organised within an institution.

- ◆ **Publications** (reports, newsletters, printed directories of outputs, collection of case studies, etc.); they are another traditional way of disseminating results, usually integrated with workshops/conferences in order to cope with their main disadvantage: they are “cold”, not interactive ways of presenting results and can be ignored and forgotten if insufficient attention is attracted to the publication. An additional disadvantage is the time required to prepare effective publications.
- ◆ **Exhibitions**; they may be extremely effective for presenting certain kinds of “material” outputs and for establishing personal contacts. A “permanent” variant of the exhibitions are the “Programme Output Showcases” that can be organised at European or national level to attract the attention of target groups for the whole of “material” Programme outputs. Their cost can be very low if they are embedded in existing institutions, but they need to be known and attended by the relevant audience, and this requires some investment for promotion and local support.
- ◆ **Training Actions**; they can be intensive, spaced over time and eventually take the form of open and distance learning. Training is not often considered a dissemination measure, because it goes deeper in the transfer of know-how and experience than classical dissemination; however, it can be very appropriate when the “output” is immaterial or is a methodological tool of a degree of complexity. The big advantage of training and distance learning is that they can be contextualised to the specific needs and work environment of each user/learner and that they build relatively solid networks of people. The possible serious disadvantage of training actions is that they are time - and resource - consuming compared with other measures that can reach more people more quickly.
- ◆ **Public access databases of outputs, projects and partner institutions**; they are a necessary resource for a dissemination activity at programme level, but do not guarantee a large uptake from potential users if not accompanied by other measures (network animation, workshops, etc.).
- ◆ **Innovation Networks**; they are a relatively new form of dissemination, based on the constitution of medium-long term networks of people interested in a certain thematic area or horizontal policy. They usually integrate researchers, policy makers and practitioners in order to reduce the gap between policy definition, research and implementation of innovative practice. Innovative networks can work in traditional ways, through periodic seminars, but are more and more based on continuing electronic communication. Their big advantage is that they may be well-targeted and inexpensive. Their relative disadvantage is that they need professional and continuous animation to be really effective.
- ◆ **Web sites**; due to the increasing importance of the Internet they are at the moment the most common dissemination tool and can guarantee a large visibility if promoted appropriately. Their advantages lie in the fact that they can contain a whole range of information and products and can be interactive and are therefore a ‘complete’ dissemination tool; their big disadvantage lies in the fact that they need updating and maintenance to be effective.

The following table summarises the general advantages and disadvantages of the most common dissemination actions:

	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS	<p>They can be a “warm” and interactive way to discuss results and future perspectives</p> <p>Their cost may be reduced to very little when organised within an institution</p>	They are not sufficient to guarantee long term access if not accompanied by publications
PUBLICATIONS	<p>They are a familiar way to publicise dissemination results</p> <p>They can reach target audiences over a long time</p>	They are not interactive ways of presenting results, can be ignored and forgotten if insufficient attention is attracted to the publication
EXHIBITIONS	<p>They may be extremely effective to present certain kinds of “material” outputs and to establish personal contacts</p> <p>Their cost can be very low if they are embedded in existing institutions</p>	They need to be known and attended by the relevant audience, and this requires some investment for promotional and local support activities
TRAINING ACTIONS	Training and distance learning can be contextualised to the specific needs and work environment of each user/learner, building relatively solid networks of people	They are time - and resource - consuming compared with other measures, that can reach more people in a shorter time
PUBLIC ACCESS DATABASES OF OUTPUTS PROJECTS AND PARTNER INSTITUTIONS	They are a necessary resource for a dissemination activity at programme level	They do not guarantee a large uptake from potential users if not accompanied by other measures (network animation, workshops, etc.)
INNOVATION NETWORKS	They may be well-targeted and inexpensive	They need professional and continuous animation to be really effective
WEB SITES	<p>They guarantee a large visibility and can contain a whole range of information and products</p> <p>They can be interactive</p>	They need to be promoted and need updating and maintenance

Example In the framework of a project focused on environmental issues, a series of training courses addressed to teachers belonging to all levels of the educational system (primary, secondary, university) is provided. These courses, having a clear dissemination purpose, aim to make teachers aware of the importance and complexity of this subject and its impact on the daily life (air and water pollution, waste disposal, etc.).

The importance of emphasising dissemination initiatives such as training actions is that they are not widely utilised by project managers. The most common are workshops, conferences, seminars and publications, that are mainly organised ad-hoc.

CHECKLIST

- ◆ Identify appropriate dissemination actions and place them into an ideal life-cycle
- ◆ Reflect on the impact on your project of the actions identified above.

Once you have answered to the previous checklist, please complete the following template:

6.1 Please write down the list of appropriate dissemination actions related to your project and try to identify the advantages and disadvantages of each of them, (maximum 3 dissemination actions per project output.)

Outputs	Dissemination action	When	Advantages	Disadvantages
A. _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
B. _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
C. _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
D. _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
E. _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____

7. RESOURCES AND PRIORITIES

A reconsideration of chapters already studied and the scenarios relating to the context of a project should now enable you to design a dissemination and sustainability strategy.

At this stage the following aspects should have been identified:

- ◆ outputs;
- ◆ targets;
- ◆ sustainability factors;
- ◆ and a long list of possible dissemination actions related to the project.

The degree of sustainability and dissemination potential for each output should also have been assessed and strengths and weaknesses of the project identified, as well as its opportunities and constraints.

In a nutshell, relevant information has been collected to:

- ◆ analyse resources already available and resources that can be activated (people, money, events, networks, institutional support, etc.)
- ◆ define priorities
- ◆ prepare a mini-feasibility study

The definition of the criteria that may lead to identify priorities for dissemination and sustainability actions is the most important issue to be analysed in this chapter.

From a pragmatic view point, it is absolutely necessary for the future of the project's outputs to decide whether to consider the complete list of them or to concentrate efforts only on one, or a few, of them. It is important also to consider that dissemination of some outputs can also be instrumental to the dissemination of others (e.g. one may decide to promote a new organisation through the dissemination of a specific new curriculum or learning materials, or vice-versa). In any case decision making depends on available resources in terms of:

- ◆ the possibility of using existing dissemination actions and infrastructures;
- ◆ the type of sustainability factors and their “achievability”, which one may rely on;
- ◆ the degree of partnership consolidation, necessary to support a strategy,
- ◆ etc..

Criteria for selecting target audiences are also important. As it is often the case that resources allocated to dissemination actions are limited a prioritisation of possible target audiences is necessary to optimise their effectiveness.

Example The development of innovative outputs (such as CD-ROM, software and specialised electronic tools as well as training materials for new subject areas) imposes heavy burdens on the project manager, mainly in terms of resources. These outputs need to be regularly updated, monitored and tested in order to convince users about their usefulness.

In this perspective, the lack of support from an institutional level (lack of relevant legislation or official recognition) may damage the good results obtained through project development because of the consequent lack of support and financial resources. This is one of the most obvious situations in which the dissemination strategy is fundamental to sustainability. In fact, only the involvement of a wide range of targets guarantees the necessary revenues for updating the outputs, allowing them to be competitive.

CHECKLIST

- ◆ Are you aware of the different resources you can rely on?
Considering the available resources and relating them to the information collected, are you able to state:
 - ◇ how you would choose among outputs?
 - ◇ how, within the chosen outputs, you would select target audiences and measures?

Once you have answered the previous checklist, please complete the following template:

- 7.1** Please list below the most important criteria (*e.g.* the influence of strategies, sustainability potential, partners satisfaction, contractual obligations, etc.) you might adopt for defining your priorities in terms of outputs. Then try to define an integrated priority list in which you try to take account of all the main criteria.

Criteria	Resulting priorities among outputs
A	A1 A2 A3 A4
B	B1 B2 B3 B4
C	C1 C2 C3 C4
D	D1 D2 D3 D4
Integrated priority list:	I1 I2 I3 I4

7.2 From the results of the previous activity and the resulting priority outputs, please choose the specific dissemination actions that you consider feasible after taking into account the availability of resources.

Output	Feasible dissemination action
1. _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
2. _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
3. _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
4. _____	_____ _____ _____ _____

8. HOW TO “EMBED” DISSEMINATION & SUSTAINABILITY IN EXISTING INITIATIVES

The scarcity of funding typically encourages synergies among initiatives. Consequently the combination of specific SOCRATES ODL/MINERVA dissemination initiatives with some others, which are developed and managed for different purposes and in different contexts, seems to be appropriate and is thoroughly recommended.

This approach requires a preliminary collection of information on all the events and actions, existing or scheduled, for which it would be possible to request time or space for presenting a project, objectives and outputs, and information on the partnership and how to get further details if required.

Obviously, this activity has to be accompanied by a careful selection of the most appropriate initiatives in terms of both contents and typology of measures. In summary, the initiatives selected have to be “suitable” for the chosen dissemination strategy and consistent with the action field of the project.

When selecting these initiatives each dissemination action (see Chapter 2) should be taken into consideration and looked at according to the project’s needs and the advantages and disadvantages should be assessed. This will facilitate the identification of the appropriate initiatives through which a dissemination strategy can be implemented.

For sustainability, the approach to be adopted is almost the same. A “systemic approach” aimed at the achievement of several goals, is, no doubt, the most appropriate. It allows a twofold level of analysis:

- ◆ a macro-analysis in which all the activities and initiatives are taken into consideration and placed in their specific context, as pieces of the same puzzle;
- ◆ a micro-analysis in which the special features of a project are considered.

This activity also involves careful preliminary information capture, as well as a selection of those initiatives which help identify actions which may guarantee the sustainability of the project and its outputs.

For this not only the opportunities available at local level but also those available at national and European levels should be considered.

It may be useful to consider the sustainability “ingredients” set out in Chapter 1. In this working phase they should lead to take into account both the indicators already achieved

and those needing to be achieved for the overall Dissemination and Sustainability strategy to be consolidated.

Example Annual meetings at academic level represent an opportunity for the project manager to disseminate project outputs. They are mainly seminars or conferences in which all the invited lecturers may inform the audience about the final results they achieved. The aim is to reach a wider target audience for market purpose or to enlarge the existing project network. University publications are also an important means of dissemination even though the dimension of the target audience is not appropriate for market purposes.

CHECKLIST

- ◆ What information channels give you information about all the initiatives and events which may represent opportunities for your dissemination actions?
- ◆ Have you taken into consideration the opportunity to exploit existing initiatives (at local, regional, national or international levels) to disseminate your project’s outputs?
- ◆ What kind of constraints can you identify in the exploitation of existing initiatives?
- ◆ What kind of constraints can you identify in the adoption of a “systemic approach” to the sustainability of your project’s outputs?

Once you have answered the previous checklist, please complete the following template:

8.1 Please list below the most important initiatives in which you might embed your dissemination actions and identify the influence on sustainability factors that the initiatives may guarantee you. Then describe the advantages and disadvantages the selected initiatives may have for your project.

Output A			
Initiatives	Influence on Sustainability factors	Other Advantages	Possible Disadvantages
1)	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____
2)	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____
3	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____
4)	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____
5)	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____

Output B			
Initiatives	Influence on Sustainability factors	Other Advantages	Possible Disadvantages
1)	_____	_____	_____
2)	_____	_____	_____
3	_____	_____	_____
4)	_____	_____	_____
5)	_____	_____	_____

Output C			
Initiatives	Influence on Sustainability factors	Other Advantages	Possible Disadvantages
1)	_____	_____	_____
2)	_____	_____	_____
3	_____	_____	_____
4)	_____	_____	_____
5)	_____	_____	_____

Output D			
Initiatives	Influence on Sustainability factors	Other Advantages	Possible Disadvantages
1)	_____	_____	_____
2)	_____	_____	_____
3	_____	_____	_____
4)	_____	_____	_____

5)	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
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9. HOW TO ASSESS DISSEMINATION AND SUSTAINABILITY ACTIONS?

Assessing Dissemination & Sustainability actions is an extremely useful exercise for acquiring information and feedback which will help to assess a strategy and to understand which actions have been successful and which have not. But collection of evidence of intermediate results of Dissemination and Sustainability can also be a substantial support to project management in general and the management of Dissemination and Sustainability actions in particular. Finally, if assessment is implemented by the direct participation of all actors who are involved it can generate substantial learning and improvement to processes.

In the first chapter we identified Dissemination as a “process” and Sustainability as a “result” of the dissemination. In this perspective, therefore, assessment is aimed at measuring changes produced by the dissemination actions, but also can affect the dissemination process.

Assessment of Dissemination and Sustainability encompasses four main issues:

- ◆ ***Target audience reached***
It is necessary to check whether target audiences have been reached by the dissemination actions, what kind of message they received, and if the message was exactly as foreseen. Finally, what is their perception and feedback?
- ◆ ***Actors’ performances in the dissemination process***
We are concerned with all people who were directly involved in the dissemination and sustainability strategy, who played an operational role at different levels: from analysis to design, from implementation to collection of feedback.
- ◆ ***Direct outcome of dissemination measures***
The impact produced by dissemination measures should be assessed and the results achieved should be compared against those expected or foreseen when defining the whole strategy.
- ◆ ***Impact on sustainability factors***
The approach to sustainability has to be assessed. This can be done by either checking which of the planned indicators were actually relevant or by assessing which was the real impact of some specific indicators to which a particular sustainability potential had been attributed.

Discrepancy between expectations and results achieved may be positive or negative, as well as “divergent”. It may happen that the impact is much bigger than the one planned in the design and the implementation phases. This may happen because of political,

economic and social changes or because of useful synergies among the different actions which are implemented or the highly skilled performance of actors.

Alternatively, they may be negative if some of the above mentioned elements were not properly selected, monitored and oriented; if channels of communication were not appropriate; and if unexpected political, economic and social changes occurred.

Moreover, there may be the need to deal with “divergent” results if they are totally different from those expected.

This danger of an unintended result means that all the phases described in the previous chapters should be developed carefully, channelling efforts into the right direction.

When considering the assessment criteria, the sustainability indicators acquired through dissemination actions need to be mentioned. “Efficiency” and “effectiveness” are also important “summative” criteria which need to be taken into consideration.

Efficiency refers to the relationship between results achieved and resources spent. When assessing dissemination actions it should be considered whether the ratio between the type /amount of resources utilised and the final results obtained is coherent.

Effectiveness refers to the relation between expected results and results achieved. This comparison will indicate whether the final results are close, or not, to those foreseen.

Example Assessing dissemination actions related to the development of a new curriculum can be relatively easy. The users’ feedback on their satisfaction is represented by the number of new enrolled students and by the real job opportunities they have on the labour market.
Positive impact may also come from the Government interest raised by project results.

CHECKLIST

- ◆ Have you identified the reasons why you want to assess dissemination actions?
- ◆ Have you decided which aspects and objects are more relevant for your assessment?
- ◆ Have you decided who should be involved?
- ◆ Have you clear ideas on what would be acceptable dissemination results?

Once you have answered the previous checklist, please complete the following template:

9.1 Please try to answer the following questions related to assessment of D&S actions for the four key outputs of your project. If you can answer, please specify on which sources/elements you base your judgement. If you cannot answer, try to define an approach that might help you to answer.

Output A	Questions	Yes/No	Sources/Elements of Information
	1. Do you know how many target users your dissemination actions have reached?		
	2. Do you know if those involved in the dissemination process have worked well?		
	3. Do you know the direct outcomes of your dissemination actions on the target audiences?		
	4. Do you know how dissemination has contributed to the sustainability of this output?		
	5. Are you aware of any unexpected positive or negative outcome of your dissemination actions?		
	6. Can you express an overall effectiveness judgement on the D&S actions related to this output?		
	7. Can you express on overall efficiency judgement on the D&S actions related to this output?		

Output B	Questions	Yes/No	Sources/Elements of Information
	1. Do you know how many target users your dissemination actions have reached?		
	2. Do you know if those involved in the dissemination process have worked well?		
	3. Do you know the direct outcomes of your dissemination actions on the target audiences?		
	4. Do you know how dissemination has contributed to the sustainability of this output?		
	5. Are you aware of any unexpected positive or negative outcome of your dissemination actions?		
	6. Can you express an overall effectiveness judgement on the D&S actions related to this output?		
	7. Can you express on overall efficiency judgement on the D&S actions related to this output?		

Output C	Questions	Yes/No	Sources/Elements of Information
	1. Do you know how many target users your dissemination actions have reached?		
	2. Do you know if those involved in the dissemination process have worked well?		
	3. Do you know the direct outcomes of your dissemination actions on the target audiences?		
	4. Do you know how dissemination has contributed to the sustainability of this output?		
	5. Are you aware of any unexpected positive or negative outcome of your dissemination actions?		
	6. Can you express an overall effectiveness judgement on the D&S actions related to this output?		
	7. Can you express on overall efficiency judgement on the D&S actions related to this output?		

Output D	Questions	Yes/No	Sources/Elements of Information
	1. Do you know how many target users your dissemination actions have reached?		
	2. Do you know if those involved in the dissemination process have worked well?		
	3. Do you know the direct outcomes of your dissemination actions on the target audiences?		
	4. Do you know how dissemination has contributed to the sustainability of this output?		
	5. Are you aware of any unexpected positive or negative outcome of your dissemination actions?		
	6. Can you express an overall effectiveness judgement on the D&S actions related to this output?		
	7. Can you express on overall efficiency judgement on the D&S actions related to this output?		

9.2 If you were able to answer at least one of the questions in the previous activity, please point out the most significant assessment results and try to provide an explanation; this will certainly contribute to the improvement of future actions.

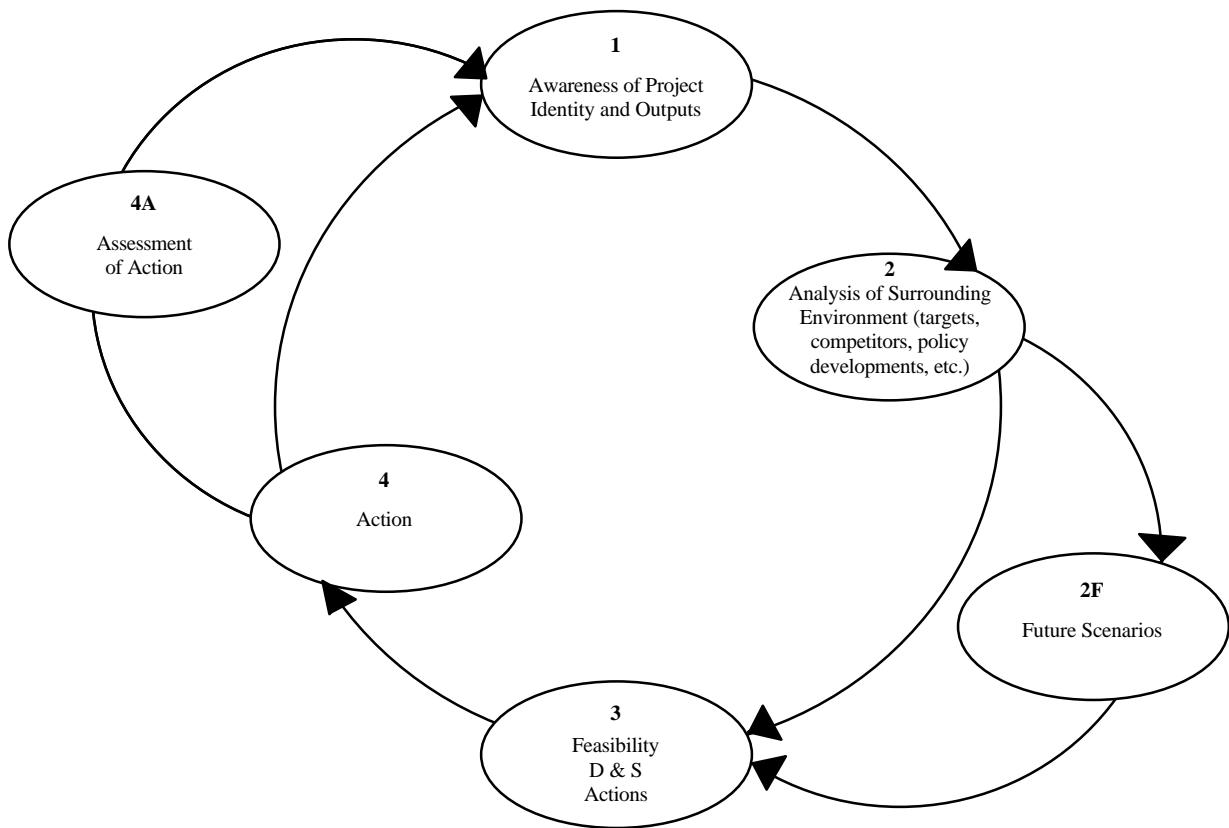
Main Assessment Results	Possible Explanations	Implications for future actions
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.
5.	5.	5.
6.	6.	6.
7.	7.	7.

10. DISSEMINATION AND SUSTAINABILITY ACTIONS CHANGED THE PROJECT IDENTITY: WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP?

The iterative implementation model underlying the present Dissemination Guide implies that the effective action would probably modify the project identity and require a new cycle of action.

For this reason the first step and the last one coincide as shown in the diagram below:

1- Awareness of Project Identity and Outputs.



This coincidence is not casual but has the aim of emphasising that after the first round sufficient information should be available to look at a project with a different perspective.

In fact, all the phases which the implementation model is composed of (from the research and analysis of each project component to the surrounding scenario; from the definition of a feasibility study to the design and implementation of a Dissemination and Sustainability strategy; from the assessment of the impact produced to the feedback collected) should help to become more and more aware of a project.

While the first cycle is carried out and completed, the overall context is subject to continuing changes, being an unstable factor.

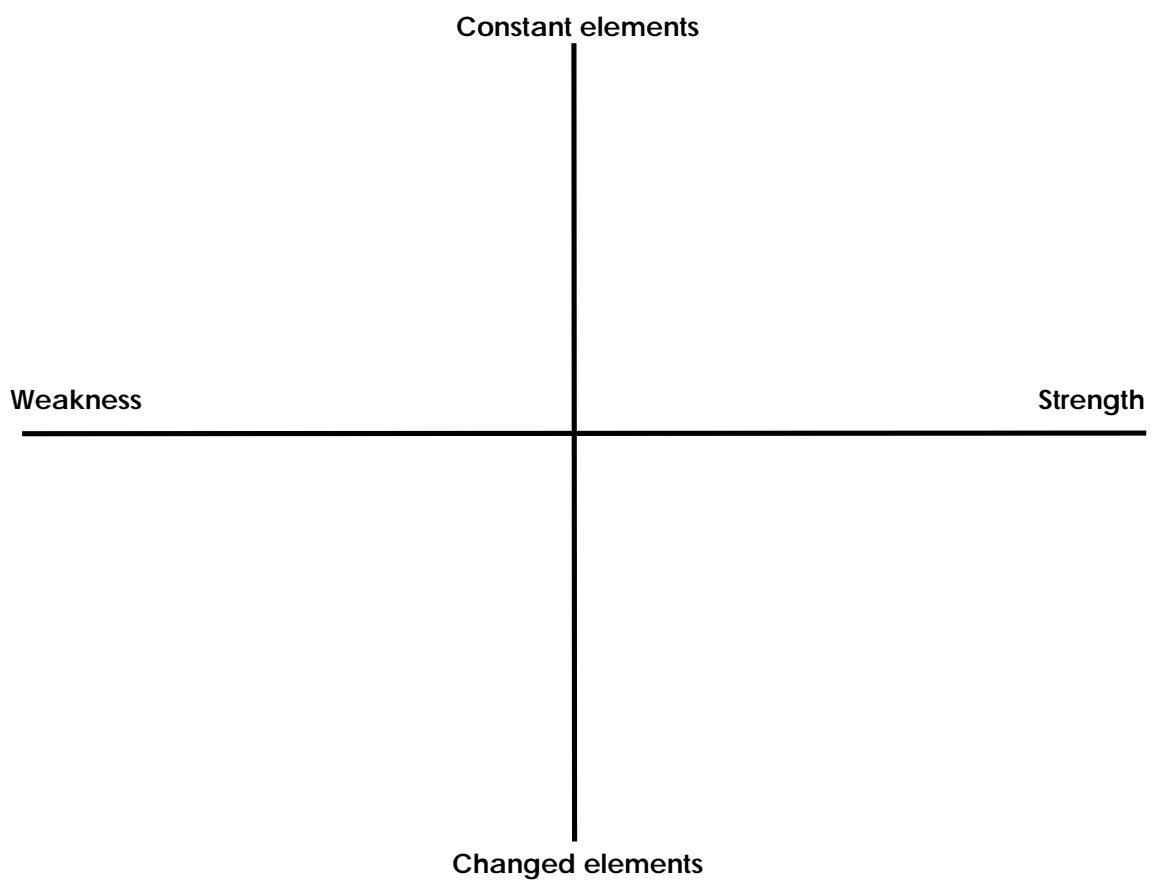
Moreover, developing each of the phases and reflecting on the single elements leads to viewing a project through a virtual “magnifying glass”. In this way the perspective can be enlarged and the cause and effect relationship of each action adopted can be evaluated. To this end, it should be possible to attribute a new identity to the project. Therefore, the dynamics of the implementation model suggests that the circle is reconsidered again, introducing the necessary modifications.

CHECKLIST

- ◆ Thinking about the analyses and scenarios which you have undertaken, can you confirm what you stated in the previous chapters with regard to outputs, targets, strengths and weaknesses, D&S actions, etc..?
- ◆ Do you consider amendments to your previous statements are necessary?
- ◆ If yes, what kind of changes would you introduce?
- ◆ To what extent are these changes due to external factors?

Once you have the answered the previous checklist, please complete the following template:

10.1 Please indicate below the “constant elements” and “changed elements” you identify in your project. At the same time, indicate whether they are a Weakness or a Strength



10.2 If you have observed positive changes in your project, please list below new opportunities and threats

New Opportunities	New Threats
A	
B	
C	
D	
E	
F	
G	

10.3 Please list below the actions you should undertake to guarantee “long term” sustainability for your outputs

Actions to be undertaken
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.

PART II
USEFUL INFORMATION

WEB SITES

OBSERVATORIES AND DATABASES:

- ◆ Datamonitor: [http:// www.datamonitor.com](http://www.datamonitor.com)
Information and database on different industrial sectors, consultancy service, case studies.
- ◆ EITO, European Information Technology Observatory:
<http://www.eto.org.uk/eito/index/htm>
EITO - the European IT Observatory - is an authoritative source of market information and forecasts about the sales and use of computers and telecommunications in Europe. Yearly reports are available through European Telework Online.
- ◆ ERIC database: <http://ericir.syr.edu/ithome/database.htm>
The ERIC Database, the world's largest source of education information, contains more than 950,000 abstracts of documents and journal articles on education research and practice. By searching the ERIC Database, users can access the ERIC abstracts which are also found in the printed medium, Resources in Education and Current Index To Journals in Education. The Database is updated monthly.
- ◆ EUROSTAT: <http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat> (statistical data and research on European issues): it is the statistical office of the European Union.
- ◆ EURYDICE: <http://www.eurydice.org>
(Information Network on Education in Europe – contains statistics on the educational system in European countries and useful links to national web-sites relevant to the education issue).
- ◆ Forrester Research: <http://www.forrester.com>
Independent research firm that analyses the future of technology change and its impact on businesses, consumers, and society.
- ◆ Jupiter Communications: <http://www.jup.com>
Jupiter Communications is a leading provider of research on Internet commerce. It's research, which is solely focused on the Internet economy, provides clients with comprehensive views of industry trends, forecasts and best practices.

- ◆ <http://www.observeTory.com>
high quality access point to educational technology resources and new developments in technology supported education and training systems throughout the world, OECD.

EUROPEAN PROGRAMMES:

- ◆ Fifth Framework Programme: <http://www.cordis.lu/fp5/home.html>
It gives all relevant information about Thematic and Horizontal Programmes existing within the 5th FP.
 - ◆ IST: <http://www.cordis.lu/ist/>
The Information Society Technologies Programme (IST) is a major theme of research and technological development within the European Union's Fifth RTD Framework Programme, (1998-2002). ISTweb is intended to be the primary information source and support environment for all interested in the programme.
 - ◆ LEONARDO programme: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/leonardo.html>
Action programme for the implementation of a European Community vocational training policy
 - ◆ Netdays Europe 1999 is a coming soon European Commission initiative to encourage schools, vocational training centres, museums and cultural organisations to set up educational on-line projects. <http://www.netdays99.org>
 - ◆ ODL Programme: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/socrates/odl/ind1a.html>
The aim of the action is, by using teaching innovations, to make a contribution to the quality of education and to increase access to all levels of education, in particular for those who, because of their geographical or personal situation, have no other options open to them.
 - ◆ Socrates Programme: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/socrates.html>. The European Community action programme in the field of education. It aims at developing the European dimension in education and at enhancing its quality, through partnership across national boundaries.
 - ◆ Telematics Application Programme (Educational and training sector): <http://www2.echo.lu/telematics/education/en>
Telematics for Education and Training Sector is supporting the development of access to lifelong learning for educators, learners, trainers and trainees alike through the use of new technologies.
 - ◆ TEMPUS programme: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/tempus/home.html>
The Tempus programme is the trans-European co-operation scheme for higher education. Tempus forms part of the overall programme of the European Union for the economic and social restructuring of the countries of Central and Eastern
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Europe (the Phare Programme) and for economic reform and recovery in the New Independent States and Mongolia (the Tacis Programme).

- ◆ European Commission YOUTH programmes:
<http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/youth.html>

EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS, AGENCIES, AND SERVICES:

- ◆ CEDEFOP: <http://www.cedefop.gr/>
Since 1976, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) has been involved in promoting and developing vocational training of young people, and the continuing training of adults, primarily through European-wide co-ordination of analysis and research activities. Today, the Centre represents the principal knowledge base on this subject having published hundreds of reports and sponsored research in all Community member states.
 - ◆ CORDIS, Community Research and Development Information Service (DG XIII):
<http://www.cordis.lu>
It contains latest news on R&D programmes, open calls, and a database to facilitate information search.
 - ◆ European Commission Directorates-General and Services:
<http://www.europa.eu.int/comm>
 - ◆ European Commission – DG Education and Culture (former DG XXII, Education, Training, Youth): <http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/education/socrates>
 - ◆ European Commission – Information Society Directorate-General:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/information_society
 - ◆ EC Information Society Promotion Office:
<http://www.ispo.cec.be>
The Information Society Promotion Office aims to promote co-operation and development in the various areas of the Information Society. ISPO acts as a bridge builder between Commission Services and external organisations interested in the Information Society. Raising awareness on the opportunities and impacts of the IS: conferences, seminars, workshops.
 - ◆ Educational Multimedia Task Force:
<http://www2.echo.lu/emtf/annex1members.html>
The Educational Multimedia Task Force aims are studying and developing educational and cultural products and services accessible via television sets, computers and networks in Europe. It provides the latest EU information on the European markets for multimedia content and electronic information.
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- ◆ European Telework on line: <http://www.eto.org.uk> (European and international focal point for information, news and discussion on telework, teletrade and teleco-operation)
 - ◆ European Training Foundation: <http://www.etf.it> (relevant information with regard to CEEC countries) The Foundation was established with the purpose of promoting cooperation and co-ordination of assistance in the field of vocational training reform in Central and Eastern Europe and the New Independent States and Mongolia (called the partner countries). In addition, the Foundation provides technical assistance for the implementation of the Tempus Programme for cooperation between the European Union and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the New Independent States and Mongolia in the field of higher education.
 - ◆ I'm Europe, Information market Europe (Directorate-General Information Society): <http://www2.echo.lu/home.html>
It contains reference to European programmes related to ICT and it offers a set of services and surveys to those interested in implementing projects in the framework of related programmes.
 - ◆ TAO Socrates Technical Assistance Office:
www.socrates-youth.be (it is an Intranet site, which means users need a password and a user id);
Address: Technical Assistance Office / Bureau d'Assistance Technique; Rue Montoyer 70, B-1000 Bruxelles; Tel: (+32 2) 233 0111 Fax: (+32 2) 233 0150
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EUROPEAN NETWORKS AND ASSOCIATIONS:

- ◆ Associazione Campo: It is a non-profit association which studies and promotes the development of multimedia activities, new educational technologies and new flexible educational systems in universities and enterprises. <http://www.campo.it>
 - ◆ BAOL, the British Association for Open Learning, aims at promoting quality and best practice in open, flexible and distance forms of learning throughout the education and training sectors of the UK, Europe and internationally. It is the national, cross sector association for open learning drawing its membership from the key areas of open and flexible learning activity including: <http://www.baol.co.uk/>
 - ◆ Coimbra Group: <http://www.coimbra-group.be/> (European University Network)
The Coimbra Group is a network of 33 European universities, with a common goal of strengthening and improving academic co-operation. As a group, the member-universities aim to establish special academic and cultural ties, as well as to set up privileged channels and concrete and advanced information and exchange facilities.
 - ◆ EADTU (European Association of Distance Teaching Universities), <http://www.eadtu.nl>
The mission of the Association is to promote and support the creation of a European network for higher level distance education.
 - ◆ EDEN, European Distance Education Network: <http://www.eden.bme.hu>
A network for the open and distance learning community in Europe
 - ◆ EuroPACE 2000 (University Network): <http://www.europace.be>
EuroPACE 2000 is a trans-European network of universities and their partners in education and training, i.e. private enterprises, regional and professional organisations and public authorities. Through the use of different models EuroPACE 2000 demonstrates and develops the potential of telematics for the European University of the future and thus contributes materially towards the realisation of the concept of lifelong learning.
 - ◆ European Federation of ODL: <http://www.ardemi.fr>
The European Federation for Open and Distance Learning has been established with the objective to set up a pan-European network of national networks for ODL that will provide value added services to the benefit of the professional actors involved (e.g. companies, training providers, experts, etc.).
 - ◆ European Schoolnet: <http://www.en.eun.org/front/actual/index.html>
News on Education and Technology in Europe covering developments, technologies, projects, policies, organisations and events.
 - ◆ French Forum for ODL: <http://www.ardemi.fr/FFFOD/ukforum.htm>
The forum is a not-for-profit association, financed by its members. It brings together the various players in the field of open and distance learning, with the
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aims to build up a network through the working commissions set up according to the needs of its members; to encourage co-operation through familiarity with each member's strategic complementarity ; to draw up policy proposals for the development of the open and distance learning sector ; to develop links and co-operation with European partners and those in the French-speaking world

- ◆ Norwegian Association for Distance Education:
<http://www.nade-nff.no/nade-nff/nadeindx.html> NADE aims to spread knowledge of distance education, to heighten its professional and pedagogical standards and to strengthen the position of distance education within the Norwegian educational system. NADE is a consultative and co-operating body for the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs in matters concerning distance education.
 - ◆ SEFI (European Society for Engineering Education) <http://www.ntb.ch/SEFI/>
SEFI's aims are: to promote information on engineering education, to improve communications and exchanges between teachers, researchers and students in Europe, to develop co-operation between educational engineering institutions, to promote co-operation between industry and educational institutions.
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INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND UNIVERSITIES:

- ◆ Council of Europe: <http://culture.coe.fr>
The CoE main activities concern the fields of Cultural Heritage, Education, Higher Education, Culture and Sport. Other activities: the Support Fund for the Co-production of cinematographic works "Eurimages", the European Centre for Modern Languages, the European Foundation for Heritage Skills.
 - ◆ CTU: www.ctu.dk Denmark's national information centre for technology supported learning. CTU's mission is to collate and disseminate all the information needed to create the basis for the introduction of information and communication technology in teaching.
 - ◆ ICDE (International Council for Distance Education): <http://www.icde.org>
The International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE) is the global membership organisation of educational institutions, national and regional associations, corporations, educational authorities and agencies in the fields of open learning, distance education, and flexible, lifelong learning.
 - ◆ OECD: <http://www.OECD.org/els/edu/index.htm>
Education and Human Resources Development section; it contains many reviews of national educational policies and resources for lifelong learning.
 - ◆ UNESCO Education Information Service: <http://www.education.unesco.org>
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (information about programmes and activities)
 - ◆ University of Plymouth: <http://www.fae.plym.ac.uk/tele/tele.html>
This site contains a complete section on distance education and related technologies. It also contains a set of useful links to distance education resources, related journals, distance education institutions and associations, related projects and conferences.
 - ◆ University of Wisconsin-Extension, Distance Education Clearinghouse <http://www.uwex.edu/disted/home.html> useful site containing lots of information on distance education.
 - ◆ U.S. Dept. of Education: <http://www.ed.gov>
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DIRECTORIES, CATALOGUES

- ◆ *CD-ROM Review*, published by “The Princeton Multimedia Group”, 1996
 - ◆ *DATAMONITOR – Multimedia in Training and Education, 1997**, 1998
 - ◆ EITO European Information Technology Observatory 1999 (Book + CD-ROM)*
 - ◆ *The Directory of New Media Market Research*, published by Multimedia Ventures, 1997
 - ◆ *Who’s Who in Distance Learning*, published by “International WHERE+HOW”, July 1998.
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NEWSLETTERS

- ◆ Coimbra Group newsletter: they publish 3 Newsletters a year; subscription is free. Users should write to Laurence Ernotte: ernotte@coimbra-group.be and ask to be put on the mailing list.
 - ◆ Eden Newsletter <http://www.eden.bme.hu/61.html> (information about how to subscribe. News on activities and initiatives promoted by EDEN network).
 - ◆ Eusidic Newsletter (European Association of Information Services) <http://www.asidic.org/publications.htm>
 - ◆ Inside Multimedia (weekly edition) <http://www.textor.com/cms/dPHIM.html>
 - ◆ International Journal of Educational Telecommunications, Sherry, L. (1996). Issues in Distance Learning. 1 (4), 337-365.) www.cudenver.edu/lsherry/pubs/issues.html
 - ◆ European Journal of Engineering Education <http://www.ntb.ch/SEFI/Publications/journal.html>
 - ◆ EURODL: European Journal of Open and Distance Learning <http://www.nks.no/eurodl>
 - ◆ The Journal of Distance Education is an international publication of the Canadian Association for Distance Education (CADE). Its aim is to promote and encourage scholarly work of an empirical and theoretical nature that relates to distance education in Canada and throughout the world. www.hil.unb.ca/texts/JDE
 - ◆ Journal of Interactive Media in Education: www-jime.open.ac.uk
 - ◆ The Distance Learning Resource Network Electronic Journal- DLRN-J www.wested.org
 - ◆ Tech-learning: Serving educators with ideas, tools, and resources for integrating technology into the school, classroom and curriculum. <http://www.techlearning.com/>
 - ◆ TRACKS (CTU Newsletter); www.ctu.dk
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NEWSPAPERS & MAGAZINES

- ◆ BUSINESS WEEK (magazine) <http://www.businessweek.com/>
 - ◆ ECONOMIST (magazine) <http://www.economist.com/>
 - ◆ E-MEDIA PROFESSIONAL (magazine)
<http://www.lib.msu.edu/dbases/item/pqd14010.html> Michigan State University Libraries
 - ◆ FINANCIAL TIMES (newspaper) <http://www.ftmanagement.com/catindex.htm>
It contains a catalogue of distance learning and training and development resources
 - ◆ FORBES (magazine) <http://forbes.clearink.com/>
 - ◆ Il Sole 24 ore (IT section) <http://www.ilsole24ore.it/>
 - ◆ La Repubblica (IT section) <http://www.repubblica.it/>
 - ◆ The Times Higher Education Supplement: <http://www.ntu.ac.uk/lis/thes.htm>
 - ◆ WIRED (magazine) <http://www.wired.com/news/>
 - ◆ IEEE Computer Society <http://computer.org/magazines.htm>
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EVALUATION GRID

Please help us evaluating the Dissemination Guide you have examined in order to determine if it contains all the necessary information to fulfil its aim. Your comments and suggestions are welcome as they will be a key factor to improve it and to help us understanding the user's expectations.

Please answer the following questions by ticking a number: 5 is the highest score (highest coherence and utility) and 1 is the lowest (lowest coherence and utility).

	1	2	3	4	5
1) Do you consider the Dissemination Guide as useful from a general point of view?					
2) Do you consider the Dissemination Guide as useful for you and your work?					
3) Do you think it is complete and exhaustive?					
4) Do you think the theoretical parts are clear enough?					
5) Do you think the exercises are useful?					
6) Do you think the second part of the Guide contains complete and useful information?					

Please answer briefly to the following questions:

1) Which are the aspects of the Dissemination Guide that you consider most convincing?

2) Which are the elements of the Dissemination Guide that you consider less convincing?

What did you expect to find that you have actually not found?

3) What are your suggestions for improving this tool?

4) Do you think the Dissemination Guide could be useful also outside the SOCRATES ODL/MINERVA context? Apart from eventually deleting specific references to the Programme, how should the Guide be changed to be suitable also for other contexts?

5) As you know the Guide is freely available on the SUSTAIN web site. Would you be willing to pay a minimum fee to receive a printed version of the Guide?

yes

no

Why?
