Longitudinal study on the IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY OF THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME KEY ACTION 1 MOBILITY PROJECTS FOR SCHOOL EDUCATION STAFF

FINAL REPORT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

The longitudinal study ***Impact and sustainability of the Erasmus+ Programme Key Action 1 (KA1) learning mobility of individuals, mobility projects for school education staff*** aims to identify the long-term impact of teacher mobility on the school as an organisation looking for the success factors of project result sustainability.

Unlike the previous programmes (SOCRATES, Lifelong Learning Programme), the financing mechanism applied under the Erasmus+ Programme does not support project applications for individual, teacher's qualification development. Only institutions (schools) or consortium set up from different educational institutions who have to propose and implement an internationalisation strategy, and draw up a European Development Plan, setting out how the proposed mobility project fits with the needs of the institution and its overall development were eligible for the programme grant. Such a financial mechanism resulted in a significant increase in the amount of grant per school.

The idea of the research which was initiated as a part of the ERASMUS+ programme School Education Transnational Cooperation Project (TCA) was to analyze if such strategic approach to mobility is creating more sustainable added value.

The focus of the first research carried out in 2016 was the impact and sustainability of the Erasmus+ Programme Key Action 1 (KA1) right after the completion of the projects, while this follow-up research performed in the year 2019 (two years after the end of the projects) focuses on the analysis of the long-term impact of the mobility.

The designation of long-term impact evaluation can vary depending on the sector or the program, the long-term impact evaluations typically take place after a program has completed implementation. While impact evaluations typically measure outcomes that materialize during program implementation, or immediately after, the long-term impact evaluation would measure the impact on the same or other outcomes well after implementation of the program has ended. This type of evaluation provides critical information on whether observed changes are sustained over time, or whether other anticipated, long-term, outcomes result from the program (Guide for planning long-term impact evaluations (LTIEs) 2018).

Research aim – to identify what sustainable systemic impact for institutional development was achieved by the "Erasmus+ Programme Key Action 1 mobility projects for school education staff".

Research questions: What is the long-term impact of the Erasmus + KA1 staff mobility on personal, professional success and school as an organisation? What are the most important factors sustaining the long-term impact?

Theoretical concepts

Effects that are both short term and long term can be considered to be sustainable (Zehetmeier & Krainer (2011). Sustainability can be defined as the lasting continuation of achieved benefits and effects of a professional development program beyond its termination (Zehetmeier & Krainer, 2011) or as provided in the ERASMUS+ guide, sustainability is the capacity of the project to continue and use its results beyond the end of the funding period (ERASMUS+ guide).

The expected outcomes of professional development projects are not only focused on short-term effects that occur during or at the end of the project, but also on long-term effects that emerge (even some years) after the project's termination (Zehetmeier & Krainer, 2011). It is expected that the

project has an impact on people, practices, organisations and systems after the end of the project, i.e. the project results have been continuously used and exploited in the longer-term. The project is considered sustainable if the outputs (or the relevant activities) are maintained, and/or enhanced in the long-term.

This study was designed to find out the long-term impact the Erasmus+ KA 1 mobility had on participants' professional practice and their school, and what factors affect the sustainability of the mobility outcomes. For the purposes of this study, the long-term impact is examined as the self-reported changes in teachers' professional behaviour and perception of organisational change (changes in teaching and learning, changes in school culture).

Methodology and samples

The research is based on the combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods: 1) secondary data analysis from the EU project databases (EplusLink and Mobility Tool+), N=1344; 2) follow-up survey with mobile staff N=604; 3) interviews and focus groups with school leaders and mobile staff; and 4) case study (focus group with mobile staff, interview with school principal, document analysis).

Structure of this report

The international report of a longitudinal study consists of the following parts: (1) research methodology; (2) changes of the educational context in the countries; (3) results of the follow-up survey with mobile staff and school administration; (4) findings of content analysis of focus group discussions with mobile staff and school leaders); (5) findings of the case studies; (6) conclusions and recommendations.

It is expected that the findings and recommendations will be beneficial for the schools and other educational institutions leading to improvement in future ERASMUS+ projects, the national ERASMUS+ programme agencies in other countries and the European Commission.

1. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methods

The research is based on the mixed research approach that combines qualitative and quantitative research methods and techniques.

<div align="center">QUANTITATIVE APPROACH</div>

The aim of the quantitative approach- to evaluate the sustainability of Erasmus + KA1 staff mobility results after two years of the project end on the personal and organisational levels, identifying the most valuable factors of the dissemination practices and institutional support for sustaining the long-term impact, estimating the patterns of the planned steps for sustainability assurance (how mobility participants were planning to share their experience after the end of the project, what were the expectations / predictions about the long-term impact of the project results on the school).

The quantitative approach consists of:

- **the secondary data analysis** from the EU project databases (EplusLink and Mobility Tool+);

- **follow-up (on-line) survey with mobile staff**.

The secondary data analysis was based on the information which has been stored in the EU project databases (EplusLink and Mobility Tool+). These databases are operated by the European Commission aiming to collect the detailed data on each mobility project implemented under Erasmus+, as well as on every school which has been involved in the implementation of such project.

The follow-up questionnaire for mobile staff was designed to cover:

- data about the respondents' professional attributes (position, teaching experience), and school characteristics

- data about the overall impact of the Erasmus project on personal professional success

- data about the usage of the professional competencies developed during Erasmus + KA1 staff mobility

- data about the overall impact of Erasmus + KA1 staff mobility project on the organisation

- data about changes, taking place at school as a result of Erasmus + KA1 staff mobility in the areas of school culture, teaching and learning, and teachers' networking

- data about the most valuable project result dissemination practices and institutional support for sustaining the desired project-related change

- an open-ended question about the suggested actions and means of support needed to ensure the sustainability of project results

The Questionnaire for the follow-up survey with mobile staff is provided in Annexe 1.

Research organisation and sampling

The research was carried out in 2018 December - 2019 February. The national researchers in each country conducted the research, according to the agreed research methodology which was prepared by the leading research experts in Lithuania. To ensure meaningful comparisons research methodology and research instruments were discussed during the partner meetings and commonly agreed.

The secondary data analysis. The information in the EplusLink has been drawn directly from the application forms of the institutions from the research sample. The data stored in Mobility Tool+ has reflected the individual reports of the participants and the final reports, submitted by the beneficiary organisations. The raw data matrixes provided by the national agencies were combined and analysed by the leading experts.

It should be noted that EplusLink / Mobility Tool+ has the ability to track respondents, i.e. the values of the data could be affected by the social desirability bias (the tendency to answer questions in a manner that will be viewed favourably by others).

The follow-up survey was carried out between October 2018 - January 2019. In each country, the online questionnaire was addressed to all schools, that took part in the first stage of the longitudinal study. The invitation with the link to the questionnaire was sent to schools with the kind request to forward the link to all former participants of Erasmus+ KA1 mobility (call 2014). The general sampling rule was an attempt to reach the same group of respondents as in the first stage of the longitudinal study (the year 2016).

In all countries except Finland questions in the follow-up questionnaire were translated into national languages and if necessary rephrased so that respondents have no difficulties recognising and understanding the question stimulus. The determined response options were unique for all countries to represent the same measure. The collected data was exported to the SPSS format (.sav) and adjusted to the common data matrix. The national data sets were provided to the leading experts and merged to form cross-nationally comparable dataset.

The provided data was anonymized (the information about participants' sending institutions, personal IP and other individual details have been removed from the data file).

Table 1. Follow-up survey sample (mobile staff)

		EE	FI	LT	PL	Total
Sample size		N=92	N=121	N=235	N=156	N=604
Position	School Principal	4,3	5,0	6,0	7,7	6,0
	Vice Principal/ Assistant Principal/ Teacher Supervisor, Head Teacher	5,4	7,4	12,4	5,1	8,5
	Teacher	80,4	86,0	72,2	78,2	77,8
	Other (ex. Psychologist, Project manager, Librarian)	9,8	1,7	9,4	9,0	7,8
Teaching experience	Less than 5 years	7,6		2,6		2,2
	5 to 15 years	33,7	30,8	23,0	25,6	26,9
	16 to 25 years	33,7	45,8	38,3	48,7	41,8
	More than 25 years	25,0	23,3	36,2	25,6	29,2
What age pupils are you teaching?	5 to 10 years old	46,7	54,5	30,2	32,7	38,2
	11 to 13 years old	73,9	51,2	55,7	44,9	54,8
	14 years and older	72,8	50,4	53,6	80,8	62,9
School locations	Village, hamlet, or rural area (fewer than 3,000 people)	12,0	10,1	17,9	11,5	13,8
	Small town (3,000 to about 15,000 people)	9,8	17,6	14,5	21,2	16,1
	Town (15,000 to about 100,000 people)	16,3	36,1	19,1	34,0	25,9
	City (100,000 to about 1,000,000 people)	62,0	36,2	48,5	30,8	43,2
	A large city (with over 1,000,000 people)				2,6	1,0

School size (number of pupil's)	Less than 100	18,5	2,5	5,1	3,8	6,3
	100 to 300	2,2	17,4	28,1	21,8	20,4
	301 to 500	21,7	35,5	21,7	35,3	28,0
	More than 500	57,6	44,6	45,1	39,1	45,4

QUALITATIVE APPROACH

The aim of the qualitative approach was to identify the evidence of the long-term impact of Erasmus+ KA1 staff mobility projects on school and explore the factors of project results' sustainability.

Focus groups with school managerial personnel, mobile staff and a case study analysis were conducted for this purpose.

The focus group discussions were structured around the main four themes:

- The changes in the institution after the end of the project
- Institutional support to sustain the impact of the project results
- Expansion of the results to new areas
- Success factors and challenges of sustainability

It was agreed that the issues on the provided themes should be covered in the discussions and interviews. The guiding questions were discussed and agreed with national researchers (see Annexes 2, 3) with a notion that they are not tightly structured and fixed. It means that national researchers were free to explore other particular topics under the agreed themes if it comes up in the discussion.

The Estonian research team have chosen a more in-depth focus on three case studies instead of organizing focus groups with mobile staff from various schools.

Table 2. Qualitative research sample

	Estonia*	Finland	Lithuania	Poland
Focus groups		Focus group with school leaders (N=7) Focus group with mobile teachers (N=8) *Online meetings via Skype (December 2018)*	2 focus groups with school leaders (N=13) 2 focus groups with mobile teachers (N=15) *Face-to-face meetings (January-February 2019)*	Focus group with school leaders (N=5) Focus group with mobile teachers (N=7) *Face-to-face meetings (December 2018)*
Case study	3 interviews with school leaders (N=4) 3 interviews / focus groups with mobile staff (N=12) *Face-to-face meetings (January-February 2019)*	Interview with the school leader and two mobile teachers *Face-to-face meeting January 2019*	Interview with the school principal and a focus group with mobile teachers (N=7) *Face-to-face meetings (January-February 2019)*	Interview with deputy school head and a focus group with mobile teachers (N=12) *Face-to-face meetings (January-February 2019)*

*Interviews and focus groups in Estonia were performed in the frame of a Case study, where 3 schools as cases were chosen.

In Finland, both focus groups included respondents who participated in the previous research in 2016, but both groups also had some new participants.

Polish focus group participants were the participants of the job shadowing, and mostly the representatives of initial (mainly primary) schools. For the majority of them, it was the first experience of professional development abroad.

In the case of Estonia, data from the three case studies were used.

Case study analysis. *The aim* - to estimate the success factors of sustainability of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility, the causal mechanisms, processes, and factors that contribute toward sustaining project results in and beyond the organisation.

Methods: document analysis (Application form, Final Beneficiary Report) one in-depth interview with the school leader, one focus group with mobile staff.

Document analysis was used for the description of the analysed organisation and as an additional source of questions that deepen and specify the focus group discussion.

An in-depth interview with the school leader and focus group discussion with mobile staff were structured around the following topics: (see Annexes 2, 3):

- The changes in the institution as the result of the Erasmus+ staff mobility project
- Staff development policy (topic for school leaders)
- Institutional support as actions taken to sustain the impact of the project results
- Expansion of the results to new areas
- Teacher leadership for sustaining project impact
- Success factors and challenges of sustainability

Upon the recommendation of the National agencies, one case from the three analysed in the year 2016 was selected for the case study analysis two years after the project end.

Data analysis methods

Quantitative (statistical) data is analysed by using descriptive and probabilistic methods. Discrete data is described in terms of percentages. When the rank scale is used, the mean and standard deviation is presented. The characteristics of continuous variables are presented by providing an overall mean score.

To evaluate the anticipative effects on results of ERASMUS+KA1 staff mobility, scales indicating input and output variables were constructed. Scale unidimensionality was tested with principal components analysis. Scale reliability was estimated by the proportion of variance and Cronbach's alpha. Totally 15 scales were developed.)

Comparison of variables between different groups (statistically significant differences) was determined using Chi-squared, Kruskal-Wallis H. Only statistically significant differences ($p<0,05$) are highlighted and presented in this report.

To estimate the effect of the factors of sustainability on the long-term impact on teaching and learning processes, a regression analysis, structural equitation modelling (SEM) was performed. To evaluate inter-correlations between variables different statistical models were tested, path analysis was carried out to determine the most likely cause and effect relationship between the variables. The calculations were made using IBM SPSS and IBM AMOS software.

Interview and focus group data were analysed by using a combination of inductive and deductive content analysis approaches, i.e. searching, identifying and exploring codes that emerged from the

data as an illustrative description to the predefined themes. The themes with the guiding interview questions were developed prior to research, were discussed and agreed with the national researchers.

Data collection and initial analysis were carried out by the national researchers in Estonia, Finland, Lithuania and Poland. National researchers performed the initial data analysis of the interviews and focus group discussions identifying meaning units. Meaning units were condensed, coded and grouped together into higher order categories and / or subcategories with textual citations of individuals representing the category / subcategory. The results of content analysis were provided in each country's national reports followed by insights and comments of the national researchers'.

The result of each country's content analysis was synthesised by the leading experts. The horizontal analysis of each country's content analysis was performed to explore recurrent themes. When reading each country's report, the objective was to look if some similar (meaningfully close) categories representing the perceived evidence of the long-term impact and factors of sustainability could be identified, as well as to collect the country-specific representations of the identified commonalities.

National experts' comments and insights that were provided in each country's national reports and during the 6th NAs representatives' and experts' meeting are used to comment the qualitative and quantitative research results, when formulating conclusions and recommendations.

Research ethics

General requirements for ethics in social research were kept: research validity, research aim clarity and exposure, agreement to participate in the research, protection of privacy and confidentiality of research participants, avoidance of deceit and manipulation, and academic fairness. During the follow-up survey the participants, however, were asked to log in to the questionnaire using the *institution code* provided by the research team. Using such an approach allowed to link the results of participants from the same school without having to identify the school's data. In the case of focus group discussions and interviews, personal data or data on institutions participating in the study was not revealed in the report too.

All institutions which are provided as success cases gave permission to use the institution's name and other identifying information in the report. Due to the national research ethics, the institutions' names of the selected case studies in Poland and Finland were not revealed in this report.

Limitations

The most significant limitation of the longitudinal analysis was the **scope of** the **research sample**, i.e. lack of full access to all participants of the 1st phase of the study. This barrier stemmed from various obstacles, including changes of school management, structural changes (being the results of the implementation of the education reform), permanent and temporary staff changes (teachers moved to work to other schools or left teaching career). Moreover, there were also other circumstances (e.g. closing or merging schools) or absence of the needed respondent because of the maternity or planned annual leave, conflicting schedules.

Another limitation of research stems directly from its methodological assumptions. The results might be affected by the **self-reported data bias** (i.e. selective memory, telescoping, attribution and participants' exaggeration).

Interpretation of the findings of the research could be impacted by **socio-economic or cultural bias**. Comparison of the research results between the countries and interpretation of research results should be made in the light of country-specific education system and socio-cultural situation. It means that

the response scales in the follow-up survey could have been perceived slightly differently by the respondents in different countries (when the respondents in one country happen to have comparatively higher standards for what constitutes the definition of „strongly agree", systematically lower levels of agreement are reported in that country).

Language bias. The research methodology and research instruments were developed in English, though in each country except Finland the research instruments were translated into national languages. Qualitative data (focus group and interview texts also were translated from national languages into English) where a probability of some discrepancies and inaccuracies is existing.

2. CHANGES OF THE EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT IN THE COUNTRIES PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY (2016-2019)

ESTONIA

Over the past ten years, the **number of schools in Estonia has decreased** by 52 (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research, 2018). The decline has concerned mainly the municipal schools with upper secondary level – from the schools operating ten years ago, 2/3 still operate as upper secondary schools. At the same time, the number of upper secondary school students has decreased even further – by 40% on average in the counties. These changes create great expectations for the continuation of the school network reform. The aim for 2020 is to organise the school network even better, so Estonia would have approximately 100 schools with upper secondary level (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research, 2018).

Teachers' salaries have increased by more than 60% over the last years: if the average gross monthly salary of a municipal school teacher was just over 800 euros in 2012, then by 2017 it had increased to 1,281 euros and comprised 105% of the average salary in Estonia (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research, 2018). Increasing teachers' pay continues to be a strategic goal of the state. The aim is that by 2020, the average salary of a teacher would be equal to or higher than the average salary of an employee with higher education and 120% of the state average.

Regardless of the pay rise for teachers, **the job of a teacher is not very attractive** and the indicators of teacher training (share of young teachers, gender division, etc.) have not improved (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research, 2017). A survey carried out by TNS EMOR in 2016 indicated that 16% of upper secondary school students would like or rather like to work as a teacher in the future, and a little over half (55%) of teachers would choose to teach as their profession again. The reputation of teaching is "not associated with the respectability and social contribution of the profession, but the large workload, stressful communication with various stakeholders, and low wages" (EMOR 2016). Looking at the ratio of teachers and students in Estonia, the uneven distribution of the workload in different schools and regions seems to be a problem (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research, 2017).

A small positive change, however, has happened with the **competition for places in teacher training**, which in 2016 was less than average of all curricula (average – 1.0, teacher training competition – 0.9), but reached the average level (1.0) in 2017. The competition increased on the curricula of preschool teacher training and on the curricula of general education and vocational education teacher training (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research, 2018).

Estonian students demonstrated excellent **knowledge and skills on the basis of the 2015 PISA Survey**. In natural sciences, Estonian students were ranked first in Europe and third in the world after Singapore and Japan; in mathematics, we were second in Europe after Switzerland (sharing places 1 and 2) and ninth in the world. The functional reading skills of Estonian students rank third among European countries after Finland and Ireland, and sixth in the world. In addition to excellent results, it is at least as important that schools are managing to guarantee equal opportunities for students from different backgrounds: the impact of the parents' background on the student's performance is among the smallest in the world and many students from families with a weak socio-economic background

achieve good results. Differences between schools are small, incl. those between country and city schools (Estonian Ministry of Education and Research, 2017).

FINLAND

Since the year 2016, there have been quite significant national policy developments in the Finnish school education sector. Most importantly, curriculum reform has taken place in both basic education as well as the upper secondary education.

The new Core Curriculum for Basic Education took effect in December 2016 and was implemented gradually starting from August 2016. As off 2019 (spring term 2020 in practice) foreign language instruction starts at the first grade of basic education. The Core Curriculum development for this is under the finalization process for the moment.

The Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Education took effect in October 2015 and was implemented gradually starting from August 2016. In the case on upper secondary education, the policy changes go even further than the Core Curriculum, as the legislation on upper secondary schools is also under reform. The new Act on General Upper Secondary Education will enter into force in 2019, and teaching under the requirements set by the new Act will commence in August 2021, after the local curricula are reformed to comply with the new requirements. The new Act on General Upper Secondary Education will increase cooperation of upper secondary schools with institutions for higher education, as well as working life. International cooperation activities will also have a stronger standing in the reformed upper secondary education; according to the new Act, every student shall have a possibility to participate in international activities in the course of their education path. The updating of the General Upper Secondary Education comprises as well structural changes in terms of moving from study courses to study points thus bringing general upper secondary education closer to higher education. The role of matriculation examination is enhanced as an entranceway to HE studies.

In 2015 the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture launched a Key Project, which aimed at developing Finnish field of education. One goal of the Key Project was to have Tutor Teachers in all 2500 basic education schools. The Tutor Teachers are members of the school's own teaching staff who are trained to serve as tutors for their colleagues and take an active part in the development of the school. The Tutor Teachers are funded largely by the government, and the first Tutor Teachers started their work in the autumn of 2016.

Finnish teacher education has also been through a reform. In January 2016, also as a part of the Key Project, the Ministry of Education and Culture appointed the Teacher Education Forum, with nearly 100 members and experts, to reform the training of teachers in Finland. The Teacher Education Forum, along with thousands of educational experts, teachers and students have worked on a Teacher Education Development Programme, which aims to develop the structures, objectives and operating methods of Finnish teacher education to further increase teachers' competence and make the teacher education in Finland well-functioning as possible.

The term for the first Teacher Education Forum ended in 2018, and a new Teacher Education Forum has been appointed for the term from 2019 to the end of 2022. The objectives for the new Forum are to further promote the execution of the Government's teacher education development programme, to work with current research and other topical issues on teacher education and training, as well as support the development projects related to teacher education.

LITHUANIA

During the 3-year period from the first analysis, the Lithuanian education system saw the following shifts (Švietimo būklės apžvalga, 2018): the decline in reading outcomes of primary-school pupils, which lasted for ten years, has stopped and reading competences of fourth-graders and competences in mathematics and natural sciences of eighth-graders now exceed the average of the countries that participated in PIRLS and TIMSS studies; access to pre-school education has improved; the number of pupils involved in informal education activities has increased; and supply of schools with modern teaching and learning aids has been improving.

From 2016 onward the population of Lithuania continued decreasing: in some municipalities, the number of pupils decreased by one fifth over three years, which keeps education decision-makers busy with dealing with issues relating to school network optimisation, rational distribution of teacher jobs, as well as assurance and improvement of quality in education. For example, in rural areas school founders efficiently use the free rooms in comprehensive schools (vacant as a result of pupil number decrease) for the needs of pre-school education; as a result of improvement of informal education funding scheme the number of pupils involved in informal education activities has significantly increased and does not decline, which helps to address the problem of decreasing workload for teachers in rural areas.

Over the three years, the problem of balance in teacher supply and demand has become even more urgent: there is a great lack of teachers of certain specialisation in quite a number of municipalities of Lithuania. The greatest lack is of teachers of pre-school education: in 2017 there was a lack of them in half of the municipalities. Teacher profession is not popular, school teacher community is rapidly ageing, many teachers are about to reach pension-age, while young people filling admission applications to higher education institutions do not choose education studies very actively.

Lithuania is still struggling with teacher remuneration system improvement issues: the full-time payment system introduced in autumn of 2018 caused resistance in many schools leading to the strike organised by teacher trade unions and subsequent resignation of the minister of education and science of Lithuania as well as complications in discussions and decisions regarding the update and reform of the national education content.

Education improvement measures that are being implemented under the Lithuanian National Education Strategy 2013–2022 and the programme by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and included in the structural reform of education help to deal with the problems that the national education faces. These measures encompass update of curriculum, expansion of informal education of pupils, improvement of school climate, establishment of all-day schools and joint schools, set-up of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) open-access centres, improvements to teacher education and their work conditions, and strengthening of accountability of schools and local governments.

POLAND

In the last three years, the Polish education system experienced significant changes in general and vocational education sectors. The vast number of those changes concerned the primary and secondary schools. The most important systemic change stemmed from the Educational reform which has been

implemented in Poland since the beginning of 2017. The main goal of the reform was to offer the learners more solid background of general education required for further personal development and the needs of the contemporary labour market. The key elements of the reform are as follows:

- change in the school structure: introduction of a long, 8-year primary school, 4-year general and 5-year technical upper-secondary school;
- an obligation for 6-year olds to attend one year of pre-primary education in order to acquire basic skills before they start school at 7 (this education, as it is the case for the school education, is financed from the general subvention from the State budget);
- provision of textbooks free of charge;
- strengthening secondary education - both general and vocational -through the extension of secondary programmes by one year (see point 1);
- introduction of 3-year sectoral vocational learning (to obtain a professional qualification) with a possibility to continue education for further 2 years at the second stage of sectoral vocational school in order to upgrade qualifications and to prepare for the matriculation exam;
- promotion of dual vocational training in cooperation with the business sector;
- extending the participation of employers in co-financing of vocational education through the establishment of the Fund for Vocational Education Development.[1]

The reform has been implemented since 1 September 2017, and the whole set of changes should be fully introduced to Polish education institutions by the end of the school year 2022/23. On the 1 September, 2017 pupils graduating from year 6 of the primary school become pupils of grade 7. At the same time, *gimnazja* (lower secondary schools) will be gradually phased out. In the school year 2018/19 *gimnazja* will cease to operate as the last cohort of pupils will graduate. The changes in the structure of schools are also associated with the development of new curricula that involve more independent work of students and more using of project methods.

Both the officials and the professionals responsible for education reform also pay attention to problems related to continuous decline of Polish population. In previous years, the issue of labour migration to western UE countries made this problem even more difficult. Since this kind of migration applies to entire families, the number of pupils in some Polish regions has also been decreased. It means that, in the future, there may be a risk of closing the significant number of schools (i.e. in smaller towns and rural areas). The current statistics already reveal that almost 60% of *gimnasia* failed to achieve initially assumed number of students. In the opinion of experts responsible for the reform, creating joint schools by combining primary schools with *gymnasia* may bring a temporary solution to this problem[2].

There are also opposite opinions that the systemic changes might be implemented too rapidly[3]. These opinions are most vocal among the teachers and parents of pupils from *gimnasia*, which are not going to exist in the new school system after 2019. Nevertheless, regardless of the position taken on the reform, both sides admit that there is a need to modernise Polish education and the changes outlined

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[1] The System of Education in Poland 2018, Ewa Kolanowska, Foundation for the Development of the Education System, Warsaw 2018

[2] *Dobra szkoła. Reforma Edukacji. Najważniejsze zmiany. Pytania i odpowiedzi,* Ministerstwo Edukacji Narodowej (internet access: http://www.reformaedukacji.men.gov.pl/)

[3] Dudkiewicz M., Wolontariat młodzieży, [In] Polityka młodzieżowa w Polsce, Jeżowski, M. (red.) Warszawa, Fundacja Rozwoju Systemu Edukacji, 2019

in the new laws, have opened public discussion in media and important debate among education experts.

In recent years, there have also been many discussions that the changes in the Polish society (including the increasing number of workforce from other countries) require entirely new competencies, such as soft, social, leadership, emotional and intercultural skills[4]. This has been also accompanied with debate about the role of teachers and the declining prestige of this profession. Also, the teachers' remuneration continuously remains the significant topic of public discussions since the average basic salary in education remains significantly lower than in the West of UE[5]. Many discussions also concerned the financial aspects of school functioning. According to data, Poland heavily invests in its education system, but spending per pupil still remains below the leading EU and OECD countries[6]. In late 2017, the new law on the financing of education was adopted by the Polish Government. The most significant changes related to the 'Teachers' Charter' (*Karta Nauczyciela*) and to the adjustments to the methodology for calculating the state grant for schools. This law is also expected to have some future impact on the teachers' salaries[7].

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[5] European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2018. Teachers' and School Heads' Salaries and Allowances in Europe – 2016/17. Eurydice Facts and Figures. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union 2018

[6] EUROPEAN COMMISSION 2018, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture*, Education and Training Monitor,* Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2018

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3. RESULTS OF THE FOLLOW-UP SURVEY

3.1. THE LONG-TERM IMPACT OF ERASMUS + KA1 STAFF MOBILITY ON PERSONAL PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS

According to Hargreaves and Fink (2003), "Sustainable improvement requires investment in building long-term capacity for improvement, such as the development of teachers' skills, which will stay with them forever, long after the project money has gone".

In this chapter, we provide the follow-up survey results, which indicate teachers' perceptions about the overall impact of Erasmus + KA1 staff mobility on the personal, professional success after two years of the project end and the continuance of using the developed competencies.
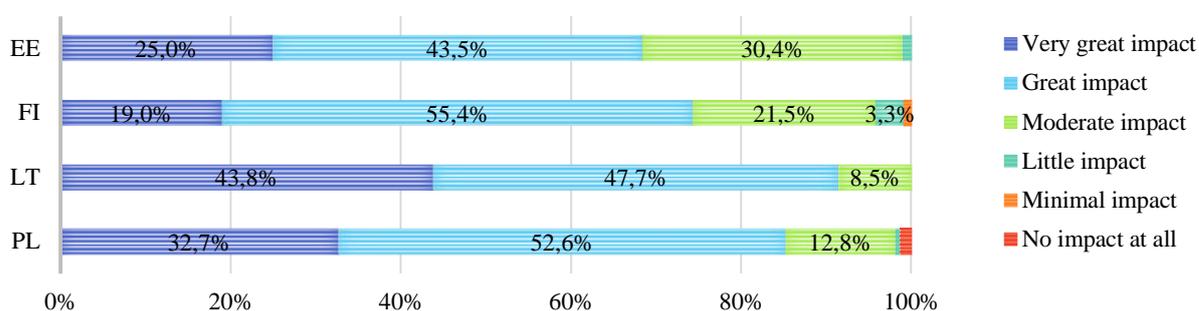
Figure 1. How would you rate the overall impact of Erasmus + KA1 staff mobility on your personal professional success? (Follow-up survey, 2018 Dec. – 2019 Jan.)

Two years after the completion of the Erasmus + KA1 project, the majority of the staff involved in the mobility appreciate the mobility as relevant for their professional success. More than 95 respondents in all countries consider that the mobility experience generated an impact on their personal professional success, and assessed it to be in the range from *Moderate* to *Very great.*

There is a tendency for school leaders to better assess the overall impact of Erasmus + KA1 staff mobility than teachers ($\chi^2(2)=7,2$, p=0.027). A very great impact was noted by 50% of school leaders and 29% of teachers. The mentioned trend is observed in all countries except Estonia (due to the low number of respondents in the survey, the difference is not statistically significant).

The assessment of the impact of professional development depends on the age of the children the teachers worked ($\chi^2(2)=9,1$, p=0.011, V=0,14). There is a tendency for teachers working with primary school pupils (5-10 years of age) to notice a greater impact of the Erasmus + KA1 staff mobility on their personal professional success. The trend is observed in all countries except Estonia (due to the low number of respondents in the survey, the difference is not statistically significant).

Survey participants were asked to report the types of competencies developed during Erasmus+ staff mobility. Participants had to respond *Yes* or *No*. Figure 3.2 presents the percentage of *Yes* for each competency.
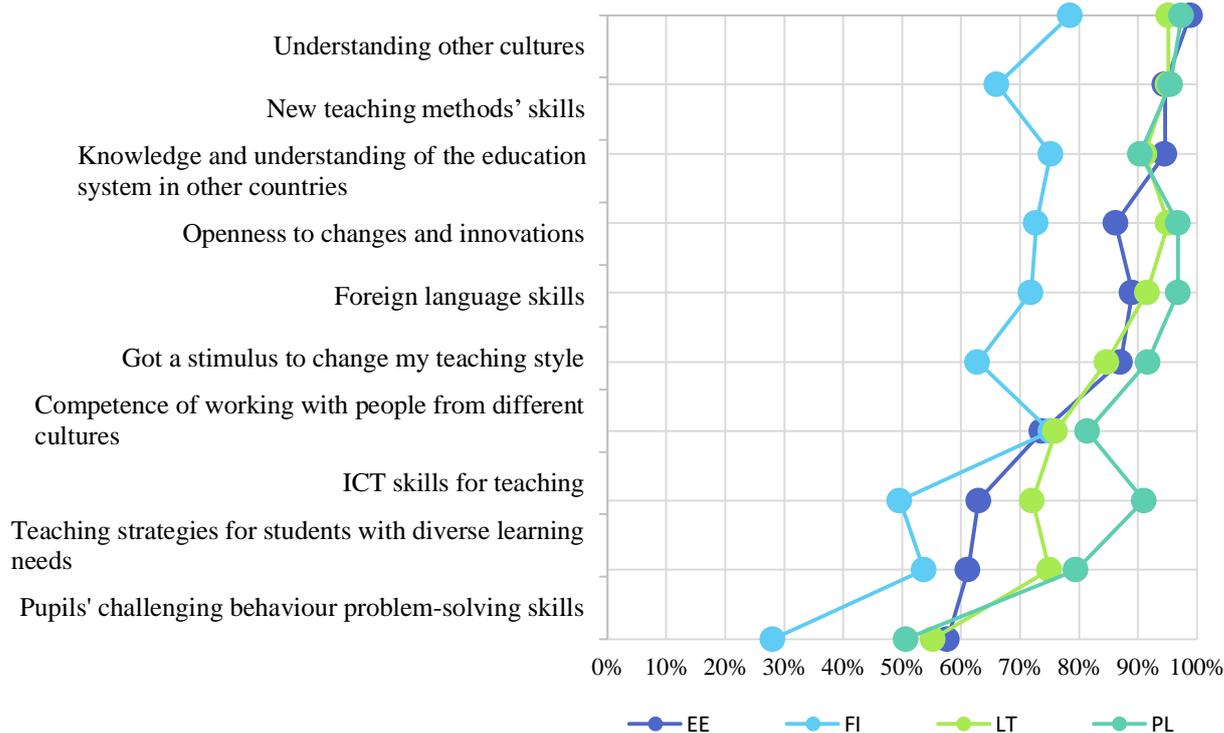
Figure 2. "During Erasmus + KA1 staff mobility you have developed…" (Yes / No scale, percentage of Yes, Follow-up survey, 2018 Dec. – 2019 Jan.)

The *understanding of other cultures*, the *knowledge and understanding of the education system in other countries*, the *new teaching methods' skills*, the *openness to changes and innovations* were by far the most frequently developed competencies stated by participants in the follow-up survey. The relatively lower number of respondents reported developing *Pupils' challenging behaviour problem-solving skills, Teaching strategies for students with diverse learning needs, ICT skills for teaching*. The responses of Finnish teachers differ from others in that the agreement on all items is relatively lower to compare with other countries. Such responses (estimation that teachers didn't learn many new things about their job) could be related with the existing in-service training policy in Finland where an annual in-service training is compulsory for every teacher working in general education.

Participation in all kind of continuing professional development including mobility programmes is rather high in Finland – 80-90 % of teachers in basic and general upper secondary education enhance their professionalism every year.

Mobility participants taking the survey were asked to provide their estimations on the question *How often have you used the developed competence during this year?* The data from respondents who reported to develop these competencies during the Erasmus + mobility are provided in figure 3.3.
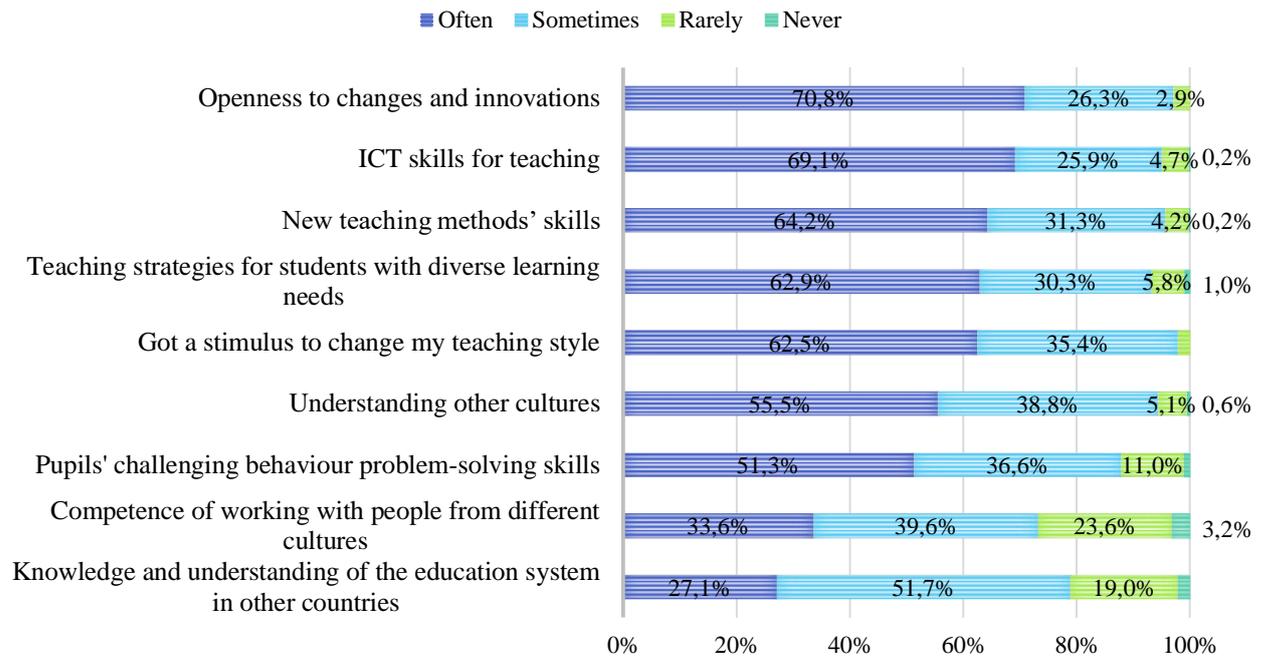
Figure 3. How often have you used the developed competence during this year? (Follow-up survey, 2018 Dec. – 2019 Jan.)

As shown by the figure above, the most commonly mentioned use of the mobility experience is on *Openness to changes and innovations* (71% of respondents). It means, that two years after the project, teachers feel, that "an opening" learning experience and changes in their mentality towards teaching is one of the core persisting outcomes of the mobility. It may be that the change of attitude leads to more frequent *application of ICT technologies*, *usage of new teaching methods*, *application of different teaching strategies for pupils with different needs*. Teachers report using the mentioned competencies quite often.
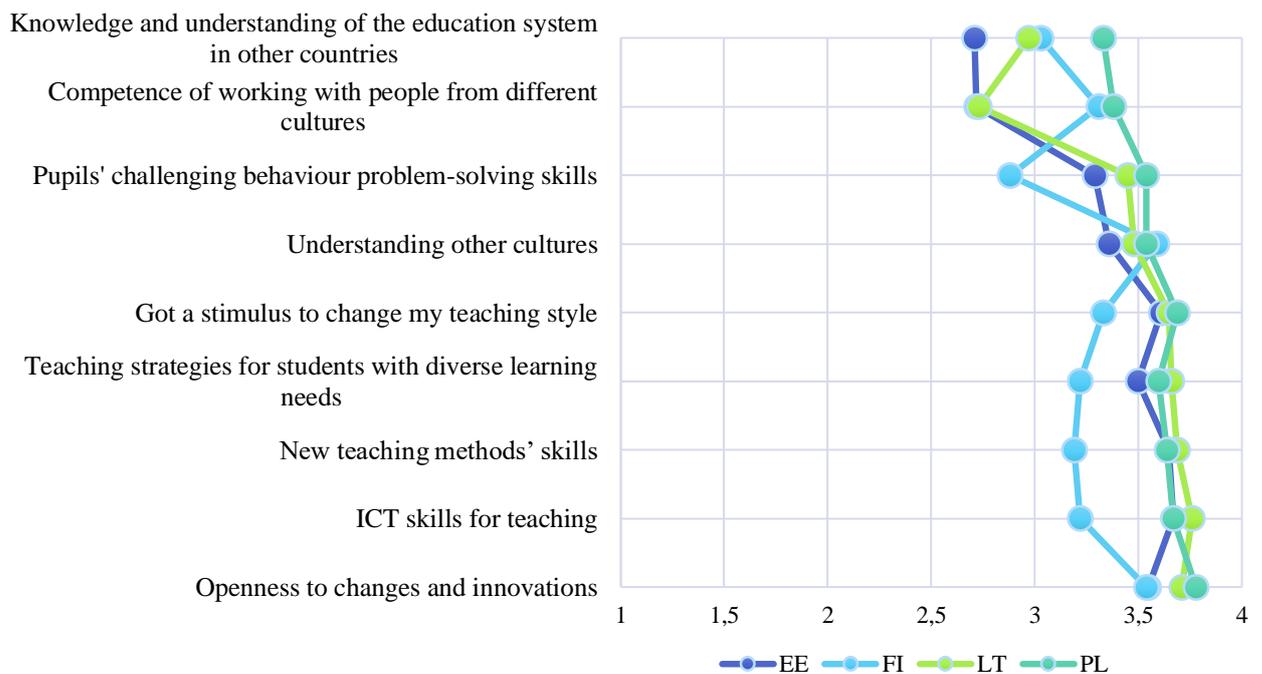
Figure 4. Cross-country comparison of usage of the developed competencies (Follow-up survey, 2018 Dec. – 2019 Jan.)

When comparing the situation of usage of the developed competencies during Erasmus+ mobility in the participating countries, the closest match is observed in *Openness to changes and innovations*. This is an attitudinal competency and teachers from all countries report that it is used most often in their daily practice.

Estonia and Lithuania vary from Finland and Poland in terms of relatively lower usage of the competence *Working with people from different cultures*. These data can be explained by the possible situation of low rate or non-existence of foreign-born students in the classes of Lithuanian and Estonian respondents. It could be that this competency is not so actual at the moment as teachers are less likely to teach immigrant children.

The most different response pattern of the use of the competencies acquired during the Erasmus + visit is observed in Finland, where teachers report less frequent usage of the didactic competencies *(Teaching strategies for students with diverse needs, ICT skills for teaching, Pupils' challenging behaviour problem-solving skills)* developed during Erasmus+ mobility. The reason of such evaluation might be the fact that Finland provides many possibilities for teachers to develop their competences at the national level and by using other programs, so the usage of the competencies developed during Erasmus KA1 is not overemphasised by teachers from Finland. Because of the high-quality Finnish education system, teachers are more critical or demanding on the training they receive, and it could be that they did not necessarily found valuable things they wanted to bring to their teaching practice.

3.2. LONG-TERM IMPACT ON INSTITUTION

Upon completion of the project in 2016, participants were asked about the estimated contribution of the Erasmus + to their institution in the future (EU project databases (EplusLink and Mobility Tool+, see 3.5 Figure). It means that participants right after the completion of the project were reflecting their expectations / predictions about the long-term impact of the project results on their school.

Most of the participants indicated that in the long run, the project would lead to the *usage of new teaching methods / approaches / good practices, improvement of students' motivation and internalization of the school*. The least respondents expect (or believe) that it will lead to the introduction of changes at the organisational / managerial level. Polish teachers were the most optimistic and Finnish teachers - the most reserved when predicting / estimating the expected future changes at the organisational level.
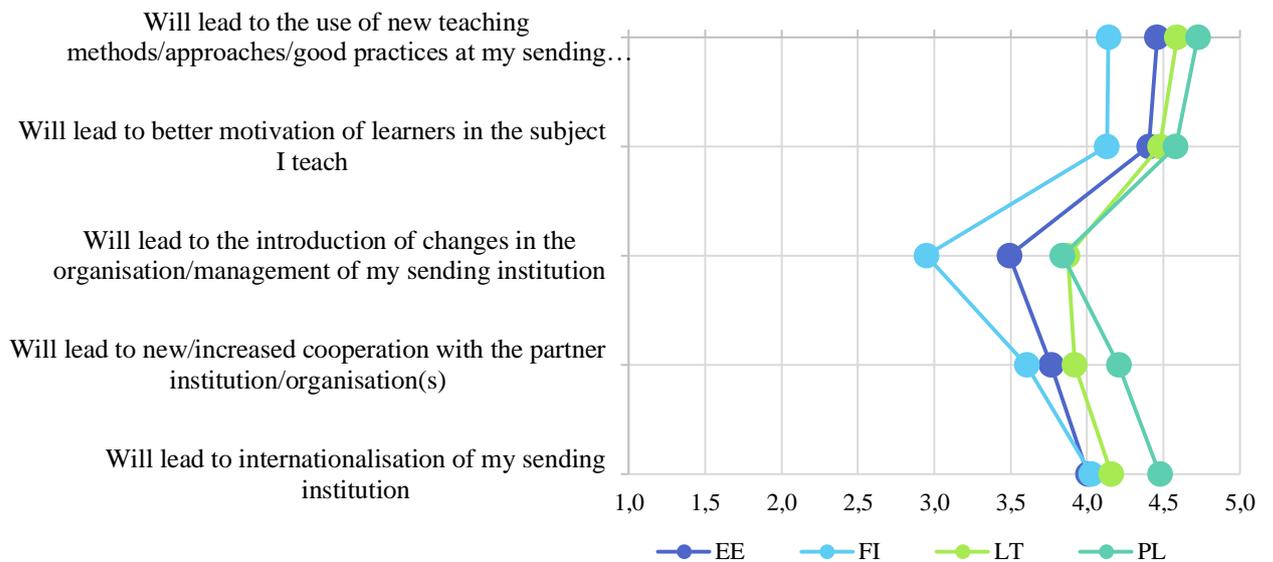
Figure 5. Project participants' opinion on future changes at the institutional level after the completion of the project (Scale from 1= *Strongly disagree* to 5= *Strongly agree,* EplusLink and Mobility Tool+, 2016)

The same Erasmus+ mobility participants were contacted two years after the end of the project (2018 December – 2019 January) and asked about their perception of the impact of Erasmus+ mobility on their school. More than 90 percent of respondents in all countries acknowledge that ERASMUS + had a moderate or greater impact on their institution (Figure 3.6). Polish and Lithuanian teachers report higher perception of the impact (over 30% say that the impact was very high) than Estonian and Finnish teachers.
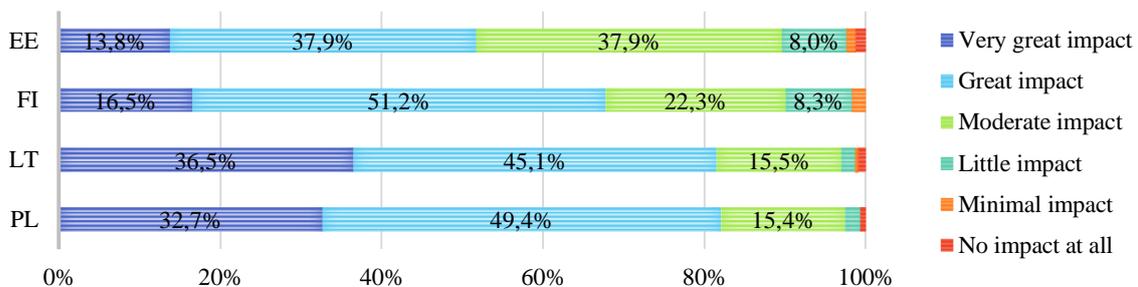
Figure 6. How would you rate the overall impact of Erasmus + KA1 staff mobility on your school as an organisation? (Follow-up survey, 2018 Dec. – 2019 Jan.)

The assessment of the impact depends on the size of the school. Teachers from small schools the overall impact of Erasmus+ staff mobility on their school rate higher than teachers from bigger schools ($\chi^2(2)=6,4$, p=0.039, V=0,14). This tendency is more obvious in Estonia and Lithuania schools.

Similarly, as right after the project end (in 2016), respondents were asked about the specific areas of change two years after the project completion (2018 Dec. – 2019 Jan.).
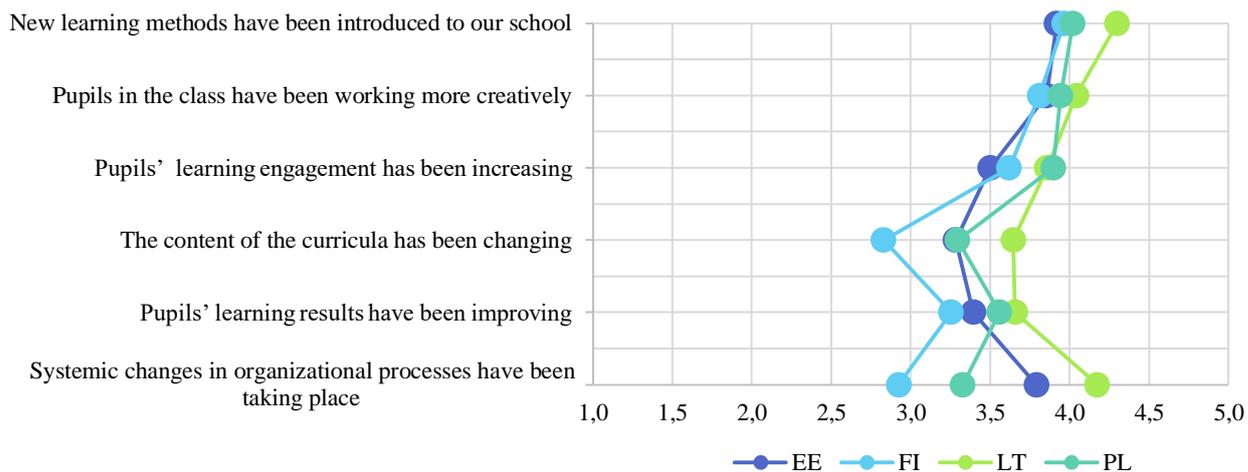
Figure 7. Project participants' opinion about the changes at the institutional level after two years after the end of the project (Scale from 1= *Strongly disagree* to 5= *Strongly agree,* Follow-up survey, 2018 Dec. – 2019 Jan.)

The results show, that the project has triggered not only the introduction of new teaching methods (84% of teachers more or less agree on the statement *New learning methods have been introduced to our school*) but also affected pupils' behaviour in the class. More than one-third of the respondents are in the opinion that pupils became more involved in the learning process, work more creatively, however, only 11% of teachers strongly agree that teachers' learning abroad had an impact on the improvement on pupils' learning results.

In all areas of change analysed, statistically significant differences are observed between countries. At the school level, the project had a relatively high impact on the school. It can be said that part of the school project has stimulated school activity in the chosen direction. As academic achievement is one of the most important indicators when measuring the success of a school and /or education system, obvious that it is one of the most desirable results in education projects.

As national experts mentioned, the relatively low assessment on the improvement of pupils' learning results may be the result of the absence of common understanding what the term "learning results" stands for. Most often teachers associated this with grades. As Finnish experts noted, teachers usually are very cautious in drawing conclusions about the factors of grade improvement because the „pure" effect of one or another factor is hardly distinguishable.

3.3. FACTORS OF SUSTAINABILITY

3.3.1. Dissemination

Dissemination is not just about informing other teachers and other audiences outside the school about the project's outcomes. Knowledge dissemination is needed for sustaining the project results in the long run in organisation and expanding the results to new areas. Knowledge and project results are shared not only during the project but also after the project is completed. Right after the project end, Erasmus+ mobility participants were asked *How do you plan to share your experience?*
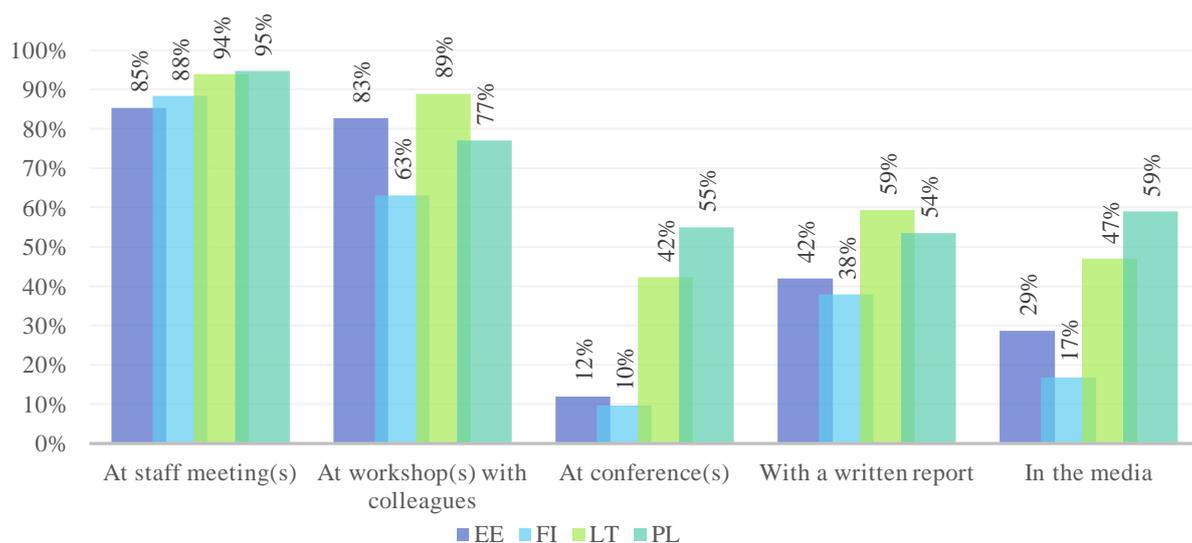
Figure 8. Dissemination plans (data from the EplusLink and Mobility Tool+, 2016)

Dissemination intentions vary across countries. Poland and Lithuania distinguish themselves from other countries by the high percentage of teachers, who were planning to use various forms of dissemination activities. Finnish teachers are less likely to share their experience than teachers in other countries. The most common forms of dissemination of experience in all countries are: *At staff meeting(s)* and *At the workshop(s) with colleagues*. Conferences as a form of dissemination of experience were more often planned by teachers from Lithuanian and Polish schools.

After two years of completing the project, participants were asked what forms of dissemination activities that triggered the real changes in the school were most valuable.

Summarizing the results of the follow-up survey, the most effective forms of dissemination , in the opinion of the participants from all countries, were *Reporting in Teachers 'Teams/Teachers' Councils* and *Preparing new teaching material for a subject.*
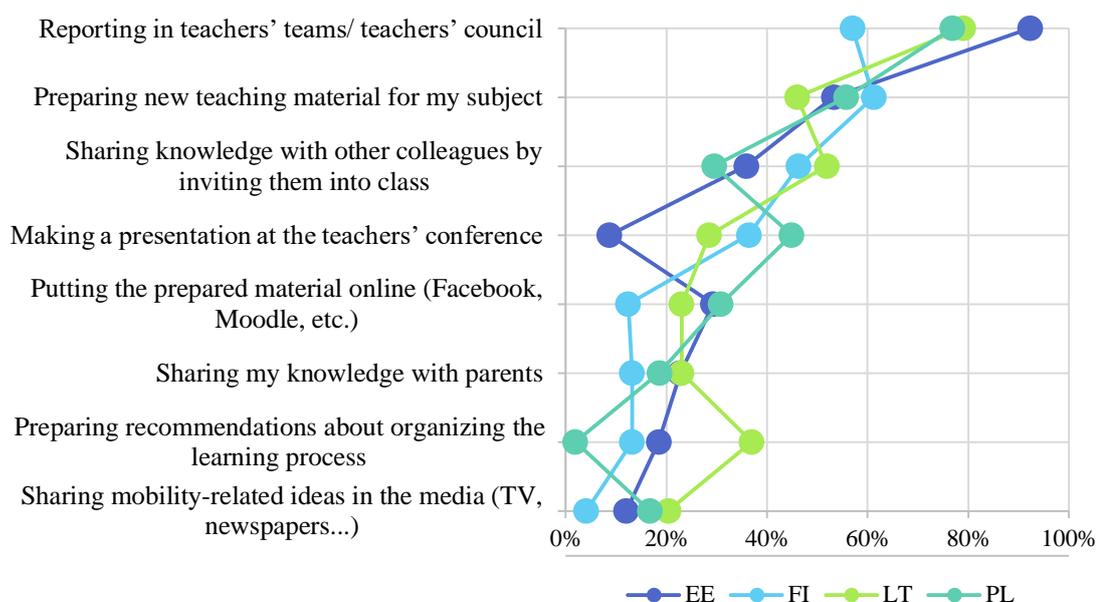
Figure 9. The most valuable dissemination activities that triggered real changes in the school (Follow-up survey, 2018 Dec. – 2019 Jan.)

Analysing the profile of assessment of the impact of dissemination activities on school change across countries we observe that teachers' attitude towards the value of *Preparing new teaching material for my subject* and *Sharing my knowledge with parents* is very similar, rating P*reparation of new teaching material for the subjec*t as a highly valuable activity for school change. Finnish teachers the dissemination activities *Reporting in Teachers' Teams/Teachers' Councils, Putting the Prepared Material Online (Facebook, Moodle, etc.)* see as less valuable to compare with teachers from other countries.

The usefulness of *Making a presentation at the teachers' conference* and *Preparing recommendations about organising the learning process* is rated relatively lower by the Polish school staff, who attended the mobility visits, than by the colleagues in other countries. On the contrary, Lithuanian teachers the *Preparation of recommendations on organising the learning process* see as more valuable. Compared to the respondents in other countries, the Estonian teachers perceive *Making a presentation at the teachers' conference* relatively less effective.

3.3.2. Leader's support
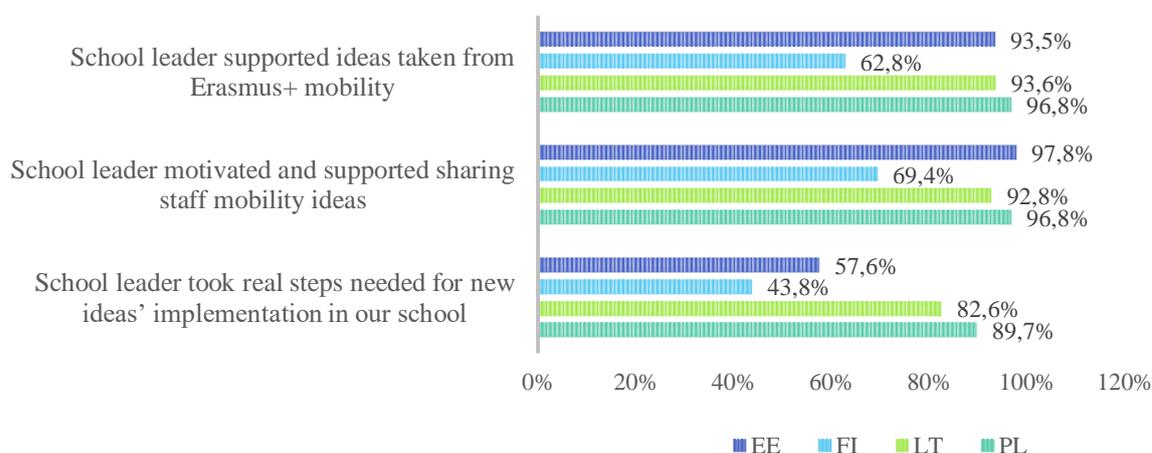
Figure 10. Leader's support (Follow-up survey, 2018 Dec. – 2019 Jan.)

Leader's support is a major factor in the successful implementation of school change. More than 90 percent of respondents in Estonia, Lithuania and Poland agree that *School leader supported ideas taken from Erasmus+ mobility*, *motivated and supported sharing staff mobility ideas*. In Finland, nearly two-thirds of respondents declared support of a school leader. This may be explained by the fact that Finnish teachers have greater professional autonomy, are free to act in a chosen way without waiting for support or permission from the leader to compare with the situation in other countries.

The real steps of the leader taken in implementing new ideas at school are more often mentioned by Lithuanian and Polish teachers, less often by teachers from Estonia and Finland.

Teachers who took part in Erasmus+ learning mobility were asked how valuable leader's support was to sustain the project results in the long run.
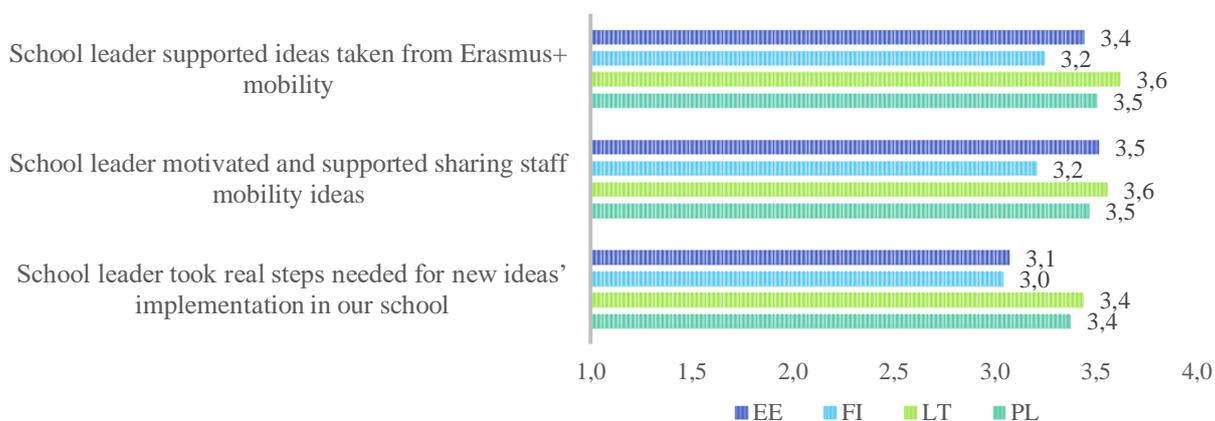
Figure 11. How valuable was the school leader's support to sustain the change in your school? (Mean, where 1 – *Invaluable*, 4- *Very valuable*, Follow-up survey, 2018 Dec. – 2019 Jan.)

When evaluating teachers' attitude about the *importance* of the leader's support, we see, that the situation is very close to the previously presented (factual leader's support). The tendency is that in countries where teachers felt more supported by leaders (in Lithuania, Poland, Estonia), the importance of such support is more valued. Estonia is slightly different by reporting relatively high importance of leader' support but giving less importance to the real steps of the leader in implementing the project ideas in the school. That could be explained by the fact, which was revealed during case studies, that Estonian schools didn't overemphasise the importance of change, highlighting the significance of preserving old practices versus the introduction of new.

3.3.3. Coleagues' support and institutional reinforcement

A particularly important factor for sustaining the project results is the involvement of colleagues in the implementation of ideas, taken from the Erasmus + learning mobility.
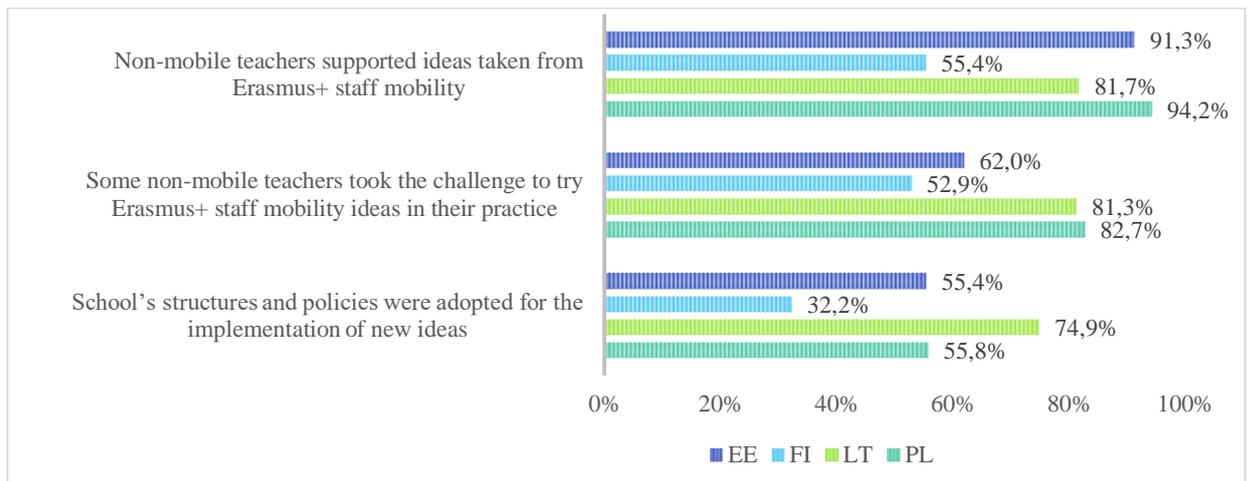
Figure 12. Agreement on the statements about colleagues' support and institutional reinforcement (Scale: *Yes, No*. Follow-up survey, 2018 Dec. – 2019 Jan.)

More than 90 percent Estonian and Polish teachers and 80 percent Lithuanian reported that colleagues supported the implementation of Erasmus+ ideas at school. Finnish teachers were the most reserved when evaluating this question. About 80 percent of Erasmus+ participants from Poland, 60 percent from Lithuania, and around 50 percent of Estonian teachers address that teachers who have not attended mobility visits abroad *took the challenge to try Erasmus+ staff mobility ideas in their practice*.

Teachers were invited to express their opinion on how valuable the colleagues' support was for sustaining the change in an organisation. The observed trend is the same as in the previous question: the colleagues' support and involvement are the most important for teachers from Poland, Lithuania and Estonia. Finnish teachers' assessment of the importance of their colleagues' involvement is more reserved.
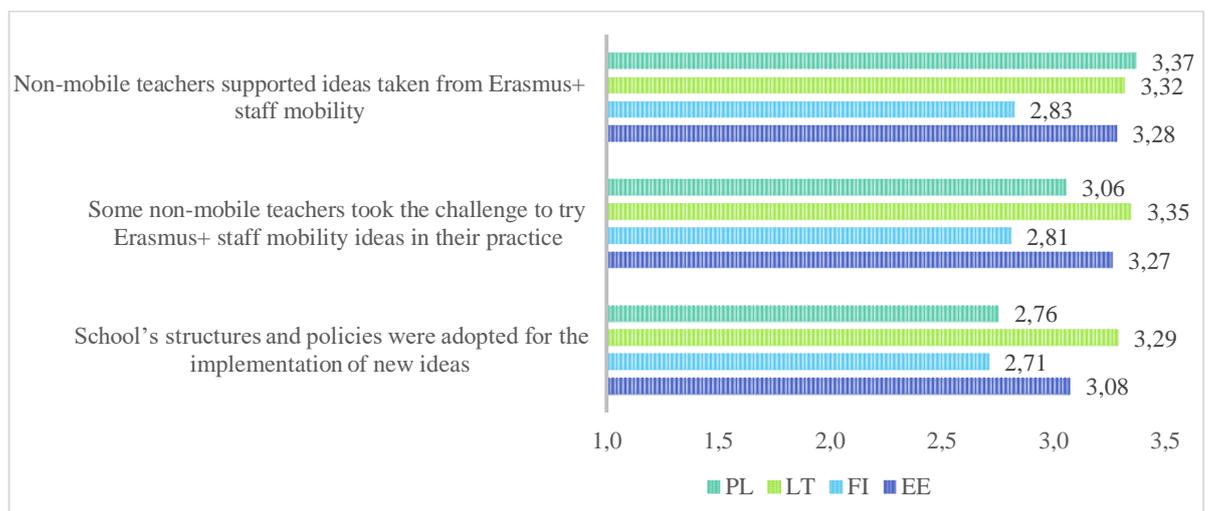
Figure 13. How valuable they were to sustain the change in your school (Mean, where 1 – *Invaluable*, 4 – *Very valuable*, Follow-up survey, 2018 Dec. – 2019 Jan.)

75 percent Lithuania and 55 percent Estonian and Polish teachers indicated that School's structures and policies were adopted for the implementation of new ideas, which can be interpreted as the institutionalisation of the change at the systemic organisational level. On the other hand, it also could

be treated as the supportive managerial decision reinforcing the persistence of newly introduced practices.

3.3.4. Teachers' networking

One of the results of international mobility is that international professional networks are expanding but on the other hand, the development of the professional network is also seen as one of the important factor contributing to the long-term sustainability of the ideas implemented. Teachers' professional network where people support and work together finding ways, inside and outside their community, enquire on their practice and together learn new and better approaches that will enhance all pupils' learning according to Stoll et al. (2006) is one of the descriptions of teachers' of the professional learning community.

Two years after the end of the project, more than 50 percent Finnish, Lithuanian, and Polish respondents *strongly or somewhat agree* that the *International professional network of mobility colleagues has been functioning actively.*
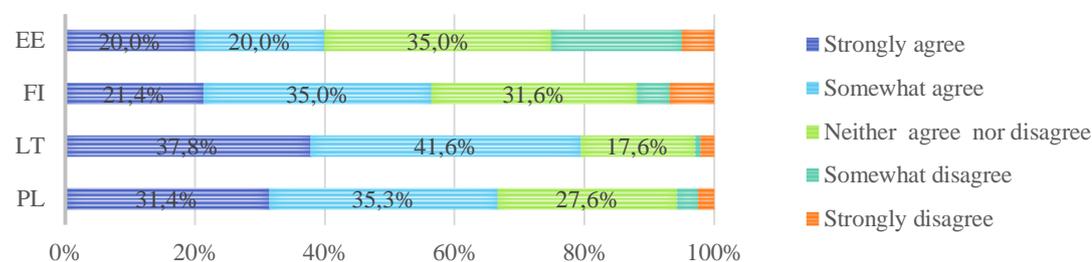
Figure 14. International professional network of mobility colleagues has been functioning actively (Follow-up survey, 2018 Dec. – 2019 Jan.)

More than half of the teachers in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia have agreed that other schools are *taking over the ideas taken from their staff mobility.* This is also supported by more than a third of Finnish teachers.
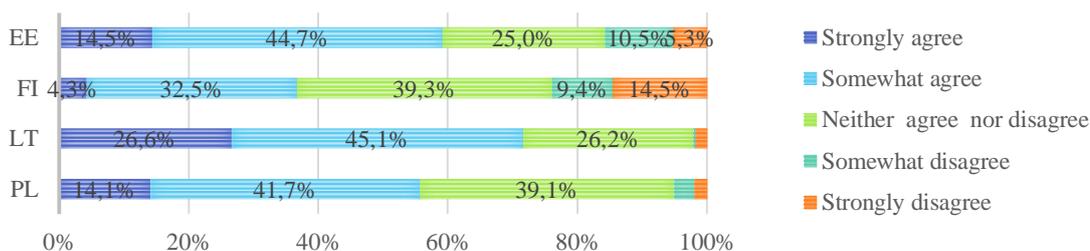
Figure 15. Other schools are taking over the ideas taken from our staff mobility (Follow-up survey, 2018 Dec. – 2019 Jan.)

3.3.5. Factors affecting the perceived long-term impact

In order to reveal in more detail what factors determine the long term impact of Erasmus+ mobility, a linear stepwise regression analysis was conducted. Dependent variable - *How would you rate the overall impact of Erasmus + KA1 staff mobility on your school as an organisation*?, independent variables – questions, representing school leaders' support (three variables), colleagues' involvement (two variables), and the adaptation of schools' structures and policies for the implementation of new ideas (one variable). Only independent variables which have a statistically significant impact on the outcome variable are provided in the 3.1 table.

Table 3. School-related factors determining the long term impact of Erasmus+ mobility. Dependent Variable: „How would you rate the overall impact of Erasmus + KA1 staff mobility on your school as an organisation?"

Independent variables		Beta	t	p	VIF
School leader took real steps needed for new ideas' implementation in our school		0,223	5,1	<0,001	1,36
Some non-mobile teachers took the challenge to try Erasmus+ staff mobility ideas in their practice		0,176	4,3	<0,001	1,20
Scholl's structures and policies were adopted for the implementation of new ideas		0,148	3,4	0,001	1,31

R^2=0,17, $F(3, 586)$=42,3, $p<0,001$

It was found that the variable representing the *real steps taken by the leader* had a higher impact on the overall long-term impact of the project results than the s*chool leader's support of ideas taken from Erasmus+ mobility.* The variable *Some non-mobile teachers took the challenge to try Erasmus+ staff mobility ideas in their practice* predicts higher evaluations of the overall long-term impact of the project results than *Non-mobile teachers supported ideas taken from Erasmus+ staff mobility.* For the overall long-term impact, the *adaptation of school's structures and policies for the implementation of new ideas* was also important. The regression analysis results emphasise the importance of action (real steps taken by colleagues and the school leader) to compare with the "silent support" (showing concern, listening, giving affirmation).

The first structural equation model (SEM) shows how school-related factors in interaction with each other influence the overall impact of Erasmus + KA1 staff mobility on school. The factors tested in this model were: *Peer support* (Non-mobile teachers supported ideas taken from Erasmus+ staff mobility; Some non-mobile teachers took the challenge to try Erasmus+ staff mobility ideas); *Leader's support* (School leader took real steps needed for new ideas' implementation in our school; School leader supported ideas taken from Erasmus+ mobility; School leader motivated and supported sharing staff mobility ideas) and the *Adoption of school's structures and policies* (School's structures and policies were adopted for the implementation of new ideas).
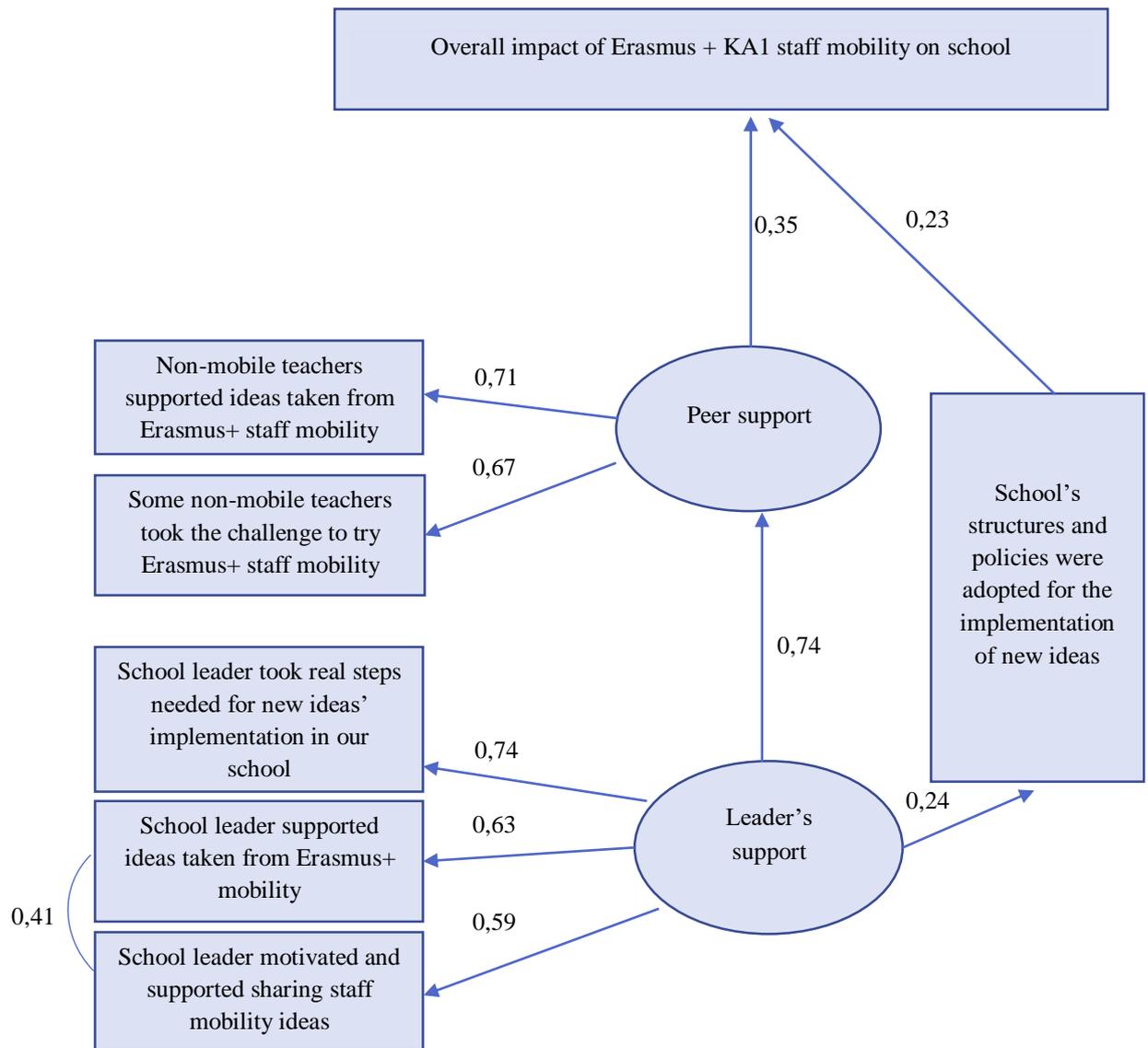
Model fit: $\chi^2(11) = 48,1$, p<0,001, NFI=0,96, IFI=0,95, TLI=0,90, CFI=0,96, RMSEA=0,075

Figure 16. The relationship between Peer support, Leader's support, Adoption of school's structures and policies and Overall impact of the Erasmus + KA1 staff mobility on school

SEM model shows that *Peer support* (0,35) and *Adaptation of school's structures and policies* (0,24) have a direct influence on the overall impact of Erasmus + KA1 staff mobility on the school as an organisation. *School leader's support* have an indirect impact (0,74*0,35+0,24*0,23=0,32) through significant direct influence on *Peer support* (0,74) and changes of *school structures and policies* (0,24). The mentioned factors explain 21 % of the variance of the perceived overall impact of Erasmus + KA1 staff mobility on school.

The second model reflects causal or correlational relationships of the same school-related variables (*Peer support, School leader's support, Adoption of school structures and policies*) that interact with each other to influence the *Perceived changes in teaching and learning*.
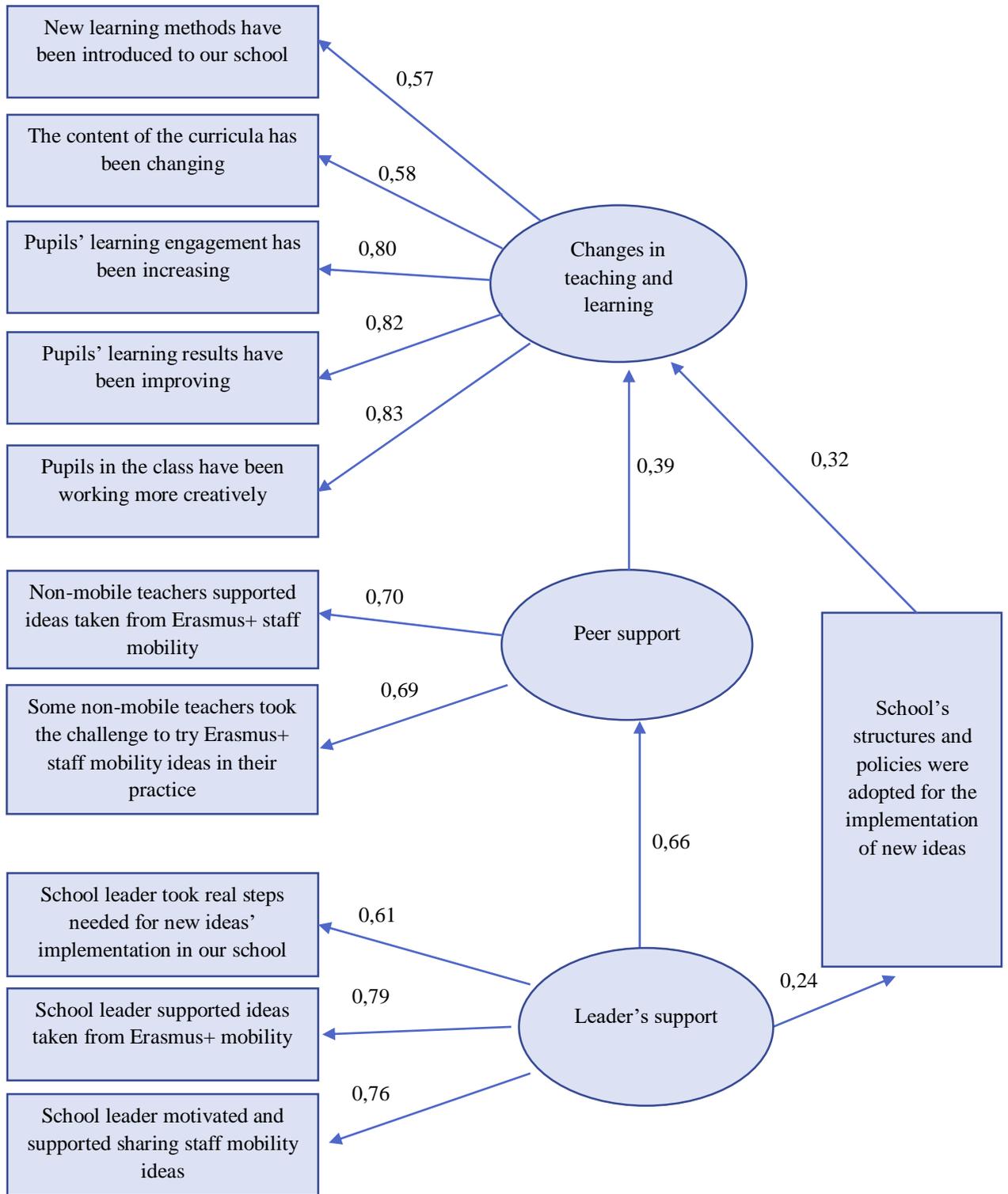
Model fit: $\chi^2(41) = 161,2$, $p < 0,001$, NFI=0,93, IFI=0,95, TLI=0,91, CFI=0,95, RMSEA=0,070

Figure 17. The relationship between Peer support, Leader's support, Adoption of school's structures and policies and Changes in teaching and learning

SEM reveals that the perception of *Changes in teaching and learning* are also directly affected by *Peer support* (0,39), and *Adoption of school's structures and policies* (0,32) and indirectly influenced by the *School leader's support* (0,33) through the mediating variables *Peer support* (0,25) and *Adoption of school's structures and policies* (0,08). The mentioned factors explain 30 % of the variance of Changes in teaching and learning.

In the third model tested the factors influencing *Changes in school culture*.
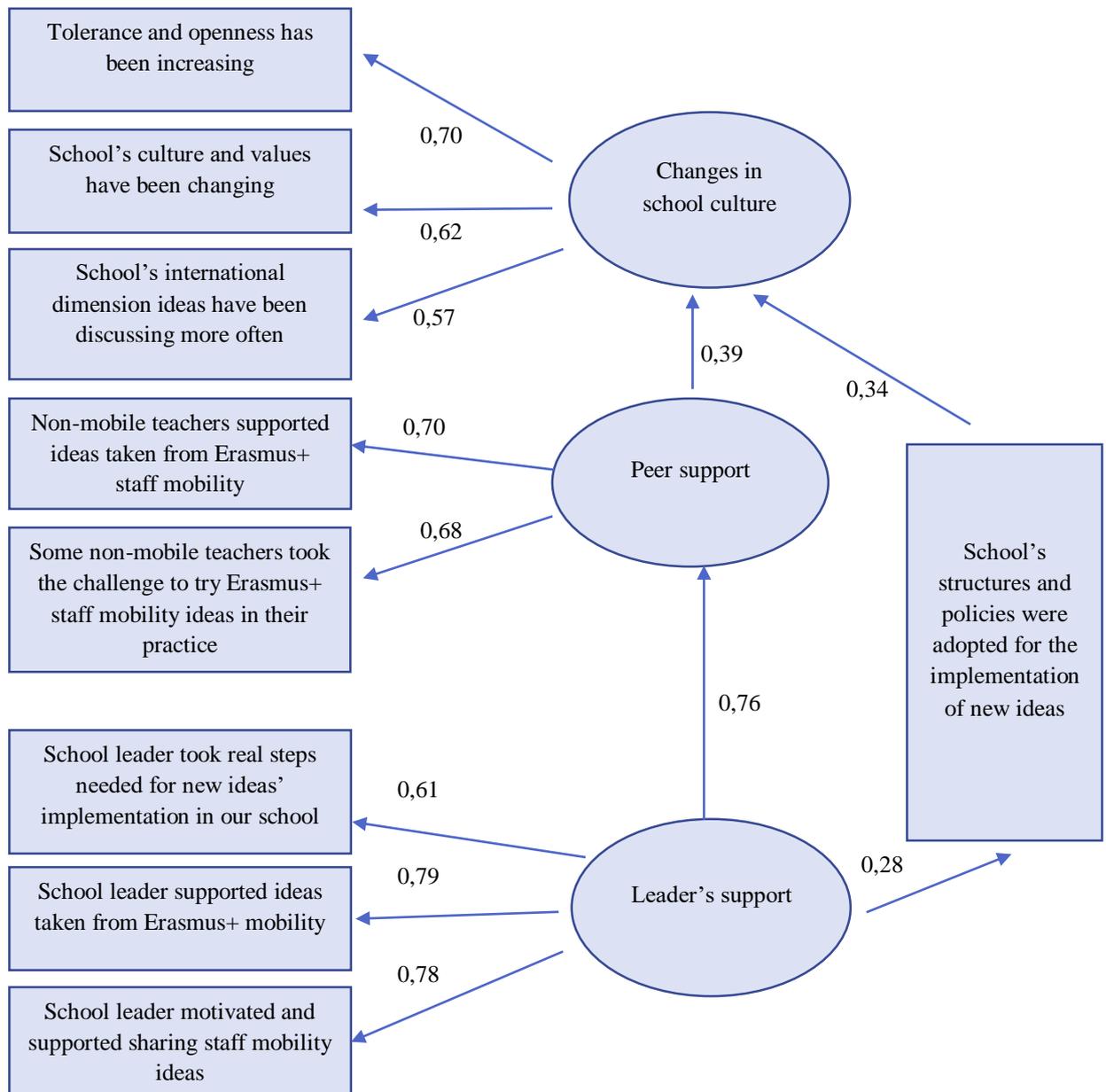
Model fit: $\chi^2(24)$ =94,9, p<0,001, NFI=0,93, IFI=0,95, TLI=0,90, CFI=0,95, RMSEA=0,070

Figure 18. The relationship between Peer support, Leader's support, Adoption of school's structures and policies and Changes in school culture

As we see, the same pattern of influence was revealed: *Changes in school culture* is directly affected by the *Peer support* (0,39) and *Adoptions of school structure and policy* (0,34). School leader's support also has an important but indirect impact.

The repetitive direct influence of peer support and adaptation of the organisation's structures and policies on the overall school's changes and the specific areas of changes could be explained by the fact that to achieve organisational change the involvement and active support from other members of the organisation are needed. The school leader's indirect impact on the organisational change evidence that his or her primary role is the managerial one: to encourage participation, to initiate the decisions at the school policy level that will contribute to the implementation and sustainability of the initiated changes.

3.3.6. Means of support suggested by the respondents for ensuring project result sustainability

The participants of the survey were asked an open question *What activities/means of support/actions would you suggest ensuring the continuance of development of mobility-related ideas in your school?* Answers to this question were provided by 272 respondents or 45 percent of schools' staff involved in the survey. During the content analysis, the retrieved 306 meaningful text units were grouped into 13 categories expressing sustainability factors of ERASMUS + KA1 school staff mobility. Three groups of factors have been distinguished: **(1) professional interaction** (dissemination of good practice, involvement of colleagues, networking, leadership of mobility participants); **(2) development of project idea** (development of school internationalization, operational consistency and purposefulness, continuity of the idea in other projects, evidence of the positive results); **(3) administration of activities** (time management, financial support, freedom and courage to act, self-assessment of the performance, sustainability planning).

The content of sustainability factors with some illustrative quotes is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Factors retrieved from the content analysis on the open-ended question in the follow-up survey

Category	Number of semantic units				Illustrative quotes
	EE	FI	LT	PL	
Professional interaction					
Dissemination of good practice	7	3	22	19	*Workshops between teachers where experience is exchanged (EE); To organise training meetings and seminars for schools that implemented projects aiming at sharing their experience (PL); More sharing, involving more the non-mobility staff, parents and students (FI)*
Involvement of colleagues	5		28	5	*All teachers' acceptance and willingness to work in a team (LT); Greater colleagues' interest first and foremost to participate, to share and to work together (EE)*
Networking		4	1	12	*Flexibility to build a learning experience in another country using the international Network of school/town/ teacher (FI), Don't lose contact with the organisations involved in the project (LT); The continuous cooperation with the project partners, exchange of experience (PL).*
Leadership of mobility participants	2		9	3	*It is very important that teachers involved in mobility visits are teachers leaders (LT). There may be a project manager who would deal with these ideas and projects (EE).*
Development of project idea					

Category	Number of semantic units				Illustrative quotes
	EE	FI	LT	PL	
Development of school's internationalisation	2	7	17	23	*Implementing strategies for internationalisation of the institution (PL); More teachers should be involved in learning mobility (EE); International contacts and ideas are continuously needed (FI); Continuity of mobility programs; involving other colleagues in similar mobility programs (LT); The teaching staff should be active (PL).*
Operational consistency and purposefulness		1	12	21	*It is necessary to work soundly, use the work skills obtained during the project and acquire new skills (PL); Bringing up ideas to the school, discussing possible outcomes for the community (LT).*
Continuity of the idea in other projects			10	25	*Other visits and continuing professional development (LT); Establishing contacts, participating in other similar activities (PL); To write new applications, to maintain cooperation with teachers from other countries (PL).*
Evidence of the positive results			5		*If the ideas prove themselves, people feel good, the ideas stay alive, even become an integral part of education (LT).*
Administration of activities					
Time management	6	4	6		*There may be more time for collective collaboration needed (EE); Time for teachers to develop their teaching (FI); In order for teachers to apply new ideas, they must have extra time to prepare for the lessons (LT)*
Financial support	3	2	11	3	*To obtain funds for implementing the techniques learned during the training (PL); More flexible ways to pay for work and other extra-incentives of teachers (LT). The school would need more IT resources (EE)*
Freedom and courage to act			13		*Possibility to flexibly adjust compulsory curriculum (LT); Greater freedom to change the content and forms of the educational process, perhaps by abandoning the traditional lesson, its duration. (LT); Courage to implement new ideas and a realistic approach at the same time (LT)*
Self-assessment of the performance	1	2	3	3	*...to analyse which innovations have produced results and which have not (EE); We should have a meeting again after a year or two the check how things are now: what is working and what is not and what could we learn about that (FI); Periodic reflection of retired mobility ideas (LT); Continuous observation of how the method works, and then drawing conclusions and making improvements. (PL)*
Sustainability planning	2		2	2	*More support for finding appropriate training and trainers (EE); Before writing a project, you must plan and discuss what each participant will do and how it will contribute to the project's long-term benefits (LT); Further mobility consistent with the real needs of teachers.(PL)*

It is noteworthy that there are some country-specific aspects of professional interaction suggested by the participants in different countries: the Lithuanian teachers more often indicate the importance of the involvement of colleagues and the leadership of the participants. The importance of cooperation networks, especially with foreign partners, is more often noted by project participants from Poland and Finland.

The second set of factors leading to long-term effects is related to the implementation and follow-up activities of the project. The sustainability of the results in the opinion of respondents is ensured by consistent and targeted work of the participants, not only by testing but also by developing the acquired competencies, aligning the idea implementation with the strategic goals of the school, and ensuring its continuity in other projects. Participants in Erasmus + KA1 school staff mobility in all countries considered the importance to further develop the school's international dimension through participation in Erasmus and other international programs. Respondents from Lithuania and Poland more often referred to the continuation of project ideas in other projects, as well as the further development of acquired competencies as a sustainability factor.

Managerial activities are also mentioned as having a direct impact on the sustainability of project results. All participants outlined that the implementation of the project, dissemination of experience after the end of the project and further development of the idea requires financial support and time resources. An essential aspect of quality management is regular monitoring of achieved results, school performance evaluation. Respondents in Lithuania noted that the revision of measures of pupils' achievements, the more liberal school's approach to curriculum and the courage to change would help to make the impact more sustainable.

4. LONG-TERM IMPACT AND FACTORS OF SUSTAINABILITY: RESULTS OF CONTENT ANALYSIS OF FOCUS GROUPS AND INTERVIEWS

This chapter intends to present a cross-national overview of focus group and interview analysis. Focus groups with mobile staff and interviews with school management staff were performed in each country to determine the respondents' views on the evidence of the long term impact of the Erasmus+ staff mobility projects and identify the factors of sustainability.

Data collection and analysis was carried out by affiliated national researchers in Estonia, Finland, Lithuania and Poland on the themes: the changes in the institution after the end of the project; institutional support to sustain the impact of the project results; expansion of the results to new areas; success factors and challenges of sustainability.

The horizontal analysis of each country's content analysis results and findings was performed by the leading experts to identify the commonalities across the countries as well as provide the country-specific representations of the long term impact and sustainability factors. For this, the similar initial topics across the countries were grouped, named and presented in the separate tables, providing the country-specific representations of evidence down the column with an illustrative example of direct quotations.

Findings obtained from the interviews with school principals and focus groups with mobile staff were combined due to the repetitive nature of the topics that emerged.

The participants of the focus groups and interviews provided numerous examples of changes that have been implemented in their school during and after the project and are persisting. The provided examples were treated as the indicators of evidence of the long-term impact of the project and were grouped into two levels: personal and organisational (long-term impact on teachers' professional life and long-term impact on a whole school).

4.1. LONG-TERM IMPACT ON TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL LIFE

The change of attitude towards teaching and learning was mentioned as the most significant long-lasting impact of Erasmus+ KA1 staff mobility in all countries (see table 4.1).

Table 5. Country-specific representations of the topic *Attitude change towards teaching and learning*

ATTITUDE CHANGE TOWARDS TEACHING AND LEARNING			
Estonia	Finland	Lithuania	Poland
Change of the attitude towards teaching	Changes in the interaction between staff and students ("home-like" atmosphere)	Opening teachers as learners	Changes in teachers' attitude towards language learning and international cooperation
Assessing existing possibilities, triggers	Realization that many aspects of school life are universal	Motivation to learn English	Greater awareness of what modernisation of education is happening outside Poland

ATTITUDE CHANGE TOWARDS TEACHING AND LEARNING			
Estonia	Finland	Lithuania	Poland
New ideas and changes in the teachers' ways of thinking	Focus on a student-centred approach	More appealing teachers for students	*„And the teachers were convinced to learn a foreign language. Earlier, they were afraid to go abroad because they thought that it would be difficult to take part in such activities without a very good knowledge of the language"* *"Our attitude towards caring for children also changed."*
"I gained such knowledge from my learning mobility that the music and dancing classes indeed are different: in these classes the pupils must feel free and be able to express themselves freely by using various tools."	*"Our principle now is to do things 'children first', so that the children have fun, because that was something that we really saw in our job shadowing: everyone was having fun!"*	Changing communication with students	
		„This is the word that comes to my mind "break-through" or "exit from the safe area" and the opening of the horizons…"	

Focus group participants (both, teachers and school leaders) admitted that teachers, who have participated in mobility are more opened and willing to try and use innovative teaching methods, use ICT technologies and integrate foreign language into their teaching practice.

Polish teachers emphasised that they now have a greater awareness of what is happening outside Poland, in terms of modernising the education, often mentioned the significance of foreign language learning which they are trying to realize themselves as well as they are introducing the elements of a foreign language into the teaching process.

Finnish participants emphasised how they shifted the perspective in the communication and interaction between teachers and students, that had a significant impact on the overall atmosphere at school. According to Finnish teachers, the learning experience abroad gave the participants an example of a warm, home-like school atmosphere, a student-centred approach to the interaction between staff and students, inspired the re-organisation of school spaces to make them as student-centred as possible what the students really enjoy.

Focus group and interview participants in all countries emphasized that mobility **increased teachers' self-esteem**, which further on facilitated transformation of their own teaching practices.

Table 6. Country-specific representations of the topic *Increase in teachers' self-esteem*

INCREASE IN TEACHERS' SELF-ESTEEM			
Estonia	Finland	Lithuania	Poland
Satisfaction from being professionally up-to-date	Seeing and appreciating what already works	The feeling of self-esteem	Gaining self-confidence in dealing with foreign partners
Openness and courageousness to share one's experience	Proven ability to use a foreign language	Courage to act	Overcoming language barriers

INCREASE IN TEACHERS' SELF-ESTEEM			
Estonia	Finland	Lithuania	Poland
Confirmation of good work		Openness to innovations	Encouragement to start learning a foreign language
More confident and more actively engaged		Self-confidence when meeting the international standards	Teacher as a role model and authority for learners
"I gained confidence that we also do a great job; we are on a quite similar level; we do things quite similarly also in the ICT sphere" *"I also gained confidence for presenting myself and my work to others. This is important because I would not do this without my experience of learning mobility."*	*"We can now appreciate the Finnish special education field and the expertise therein. We really don't have anything to be ashamed of there."*	*"What they brought is the ideas and the self-esteem"* *"When they left, they told that we have top-level leaders, and said they would come with their team to learn from our teachers and directors. It is also a great achievement."*	*We had 2 teachers from Portugal visiting our school (...) We randomly picked some classes to show them how the classes look in our school and we suddenly entered the chemistry lesson. The teacher started to chat with them although she wasn't neither prepared nor even warned about their visit. If such thing happened a few years ago, it would have caused only shock and awe from her side."*

Increased teachers' self-confidence was pointed out as a lasting change in all countries. In many cases, the rise in self-confidence is highly related to the development of foreign language skills. The KA1 mobility projects helped many of the participants to realize that they are able to communicate in a foreign language, even if they had been very self-conscious about their language skills before. This was as a very empowering experience, encouraging teachers to use foreign language more in their professional practice.

Many respondents also stated that professional development experiences in other countries allowed them to shift from "problems to solve" to "possibilities to see" and "appreciating what already works" mode. The time when from the busy work days' teachers were able to really focus on their professional development was very valuable. Teachers have realized how much they already do, so the sense of professional satisfaction on the proven teaching practices that already work in their education system /school have increased teachers' professional self-esteem. It helped teachers to reassess their situation, figuring out which changes to prioritise and appreciating what already works.

Focus group and interview participants reported that an Erasmus+ staff mobility "opened" teachers for the **more frequent usage of the innovative pedagogical approaches and practices** and that it is a continuous process.

Table 7. Country-specific representations of the topic *Innovative pedagogical practices*

INNOVATIVE PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES			
Estonia	**Finland**	**Lithuania**	**Poland**
New ideas (test and try innovations)	New learning environments	Teaching outside the class	Increasing the role of non-formal methods
Changes in the teachers' habits: use of technological tools	Growing amount of technology used by the teachers	Consultancy centre (teacher – to student, student – to student)	Introducing teaching in foreign language into classes of other subjects
"Innovation thinking is definitely our topic. We might not apply everything but we test everything and talk about everything that is put on table, we think it all through" *"We created the position of educational technologist to deal with the topic in a systematic manner and coordinate any related issues"*	Learning differentiation	Increased use of technologies	Project thinking or using the project method
	Models of co-teaching or collaborative teaching	Two teachers in the class	Introduction of certain elements of "international character" (ex. CLIL)
	International cooperation in the classroom	Theatre method in different lessons	Introduction of additional hours of classes outside the class schedule
	Displaying information on books the students have read	Instrument for monitoring student's personal progress	The extracurricular activities
	Presentations and displays of artwork made by students	*"Creating virtual classes, downloading programs, using simple things that are obvious to us today, like the Kahoot application or quizzes organized during lessons, which were new to us. The innovations of that time have become the norm for us."*	*"Our lesson moved out from the classroom. This is perhaps the most sustainable outcome. And it was planned to set up a consultancy centre. It was expanded to pupils' level, - not only the teacher gives consultation, but also pupils."*
	Action-based teaching		
	"After our mobility visit it was much clearer for us how we should start spreading the use of technology to the whole school." "We sent letters and videos back and forth, for example of our students sledding and playing in the snow."		

The undertaken mobility was, most of all, considered as a tool to draw from European best practices, from the new systemic solutions as well as from the newest educational trends. Assumptions about the increased use of new teaching methods, a growing amount of technology used by the teachers and the students were evident in all the countries' focus group discussions and interviews.

Participants in all countries mentioned that some methods were introduced to the schools for the first time after the project, whereas others were already in use, but were revised or developed and are still successfully used. Worth to mention, that Estonian teachers stressed the importance of stability (preserving and strengthening what is proven and works) versus the continuous introduction of new things.

Finnish respondents also emphasised the development of models of co-teaching or collaborative teaching, where teachers teach a group together as a team.

In Poland the reported modifications concerned mostly an introduction of some aspects of "international character", such as the introduction of elements of the CLIL (*Content and Language Integrated Learning*) method in teaching the non-language subject and increasing the role of non-formal methods in teaching and learning.

While the above-mentioned aspects (teachers' attitude change, increased teachers' self-esteem and pedagogical innovations) described the long-lasting changes at the individual teacher level, the following themes that emerged during the focus group discussions and interviews reflect a long-lasting impact on the organisational level.

4.2. LONG-TERM IMPACT ON THE SCHOOL

Table 8. Country-specific representations of the topic *School's internationalisation*

SCHOOL'S INTERNATIONALISATION			
Estonia	**Finland**	**Lithuania**	**Poland**
Continuation of learning mobility projects	New projects followed	Partner networking	New transnational initiatives implemented
Joint school visits for the whole school (visiting partner schools)	Increase of international visitors as an international experience for students	Partner "base" for the future	Receiving proposals regarding further bilateral projects
Participation in the work of international networks	New international contacts	New projects	Increased awareness on international cooperation standards
Finding cooperation partners			Trips abroad for pupils
			Virtual mobility projects for pupils
"We have already participated in three learning mobility projects, and in one networking project as a partner" *"This cooperation continues still now: the Swedish teacher will come here soon with her pupils."*	*"One really concrete thing that impacts the students as well is that we have received lots of international visitors <...> That brings internationality home to our students!"*	*"The contacts created in the KA1-project have resulted in new Erasmus+ project applications!"*	Foreign internship and apprenticeship projects
			International exchanges that involve the families
			„I think that we are going in the right direction, and that we are becoming a school, that could be called an 'international school" „Erasmus+ initiated further activities, the effect of which is the continuation of cooperation with our partner.s"

In the participants' opinion, one of the most significant long-term impact of mobility was the **school's internationalisation**. It means that international activities and European identity have become an integral part of the schools' culture. According to Finnish respondents, international cooperation is

now perceived as a normal part of the everyday activities in many schools, resulting in new projects followed (KA2-project, eTwinning-projects), and the increase of international visitors at school which is an excellent opportunity for the students to get international experiences without leaving their own school.

Polish respondents also noted that it was the Erasmus+ recommendations that served as a pattern for the follow-up activities (new transnational initiatives implemented, receiving proposals regarding further bilateral projects, etc.). The participants claimed that, as a result of an experience gained during project implementation, they learned how the international cooperation should look like (the standards for hosting partners, organizing international events, communication between partners etc.).

The significant result of the mobility of the teaching staff is also an attempt to incorporate mobility models in the student learning process. These activities concern trips abroad for pupils, and virtual mobility projects, international internship and apprenticeship projects, pupils are much more interested in learning a foreign language.

The awareness of being more internationalized seems to be a factor that positively distinguishes schools in the local educational field and is considered as a value-enhancing factor in terms of school competitiveness. The fact that a school acts internationally **rises schools' professional image** in the community and may become one of the "trademarks" of the school. This aspect was especially emphasised by teachers from small-town schools.

Table 9. Country-specific representations of the topic *Better school image*

BETTER SCHOOL IMAGE			
Estonia	**Finland**	**Lithuania**	**Poland**
Satisfaction of teachers and parents	International activities as the school's "trademark"	Increase in school competitiveness	The rise of schools' image in the community
"Parents are satisfied with the school, and 100 % of our parents are satisfied with their child's teacher."	*"The appeal of a small upper secondary school increases with active international cooperation."*	*"Image of our school has grown dramatically. The number of pupils almost doubled. There were 260, and now we have 600 students"*	The increased feeling of employees that they work in a more international institution *„I think that we are going in the right direction, and that we are becoming a school, that could be called an "international school."*

Polish researchers, when interpreting the data noted that in Poland the aspect of school image was mentioned by far less frequently, than in the previous stage of research. This may indicate that activities following the investigated mobility experience had an impact on the strategic approach on how the schools should benefit from the projects. While in the case of the first mobility, the decision to submit a project proposal was made to increase the school's competitiveness on the education market, the current approach is much more related to the institutional development. Being recognised as "already internationalised", the schools would instead fully take advantage of international

experience, then put so much effort into staff mobility, aiming only to achieve esteem among local education institutions.

Another long-lasting effect of the Erasmus+ staff mobility that is beneficial for the school as an organisation – **community-based learning**. There were common observations in all countries that some projects have inspired the schools to start or increase cooperation with other institutions in the community (Caritas, animal shelters). This allowed the deeper connection of what is being taught in schools to the surrounding communities (natural environments, literature, history, cultural heritage, and other local institutions). Near-by community institutions benefit the schools by providing knowledge, materials and assets that are more familiar, understandable, accessible, or personally relevant to students which allows enhancing student learning experiences.

Table 10. Country-specific representations of the topic *Openness for community-based learning*

OPENNESS FOR COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING			
Estonia	**Finland**	**Lithuania**	**Poland**
[as there was no such a direct question, the respondents in Estonia haven't expressed their opinion on this topic]	Involving the community around the school	Learning activities for the town community	Cooperation with other institutions outside the school
	"During the mobility in Spain the involvement of the whole community made a real impact. Since then we have also increased cooperation with the surrounding community, for example a nursing home."	*"In December we invited the whole city community to school and had the all day, Saturday, full of innovative creative learning activities."*	*„We are involved in volunteering, we cooperate with local social care institution (…) We work with Caritas and with one of animal shelters."*

Erasmus+ staff mobility projects **facilitated school development** and a variety of positive long-term outcomes (teambuilding and staff's integration, enhancing the institutional knowledge, raising the quality of teaching, strengthening project management competence etc.) were reported by the schools' principals. As the organisational development is concerned with facilitating change in organisations, according to schools' principals Erasmus+ staff mobility served as a trigger or as a precious resource in fostering structural, cultural and strategic development of the organisation.

Table 11. Country-specific representations of the topic *Facilitation of school development*

FACILITATION OF SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT			
Estonia	Finland	Lithuania	Poland
Learning from the model of other schools	New skills and knowledge – a valuable resource where local training opportunities are scarce	Institutional motivation towards change	Diversifying funding resources for international initiatives

FACILITATION OF SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT			
Estonia	Finland	Lithuania	Poland
Implementation of the ideas at the systemic school level	*"It is actually a pretty major resource for us teachers, as these types of in-service trainings are not often available where we are situated"*	Improved relationships among colleagues	Teambuilding and staff's integration
"We have implemented digital competency in a systematic manner" *"During learning mobility, it was possible to get acquainted with and learn from the experience of other schools, and get confirmation to one's own ideas and compare them to other possibilities"*		Staff meetings using the methods taken from KA1	Enhancing the institutional knowledge
		Mobile staff – a strategic resource in school management	"Project thinking"
		Innovations becoming an institutional norm	Rising the quality of teaching
		"It is the international experience and the comparison with others has given us a lot of stimulus to change. We saw our weaknesses. This is a topic of our new project application."	*"I also wanted to pay attention to the consolidation of the team that participates in the project. Such integration has a lot of good values and can be a starting point for any further activities."*

Focus group and interview participants see the Erasmus+ KA1 programme as a valuable resource for school development claiming, that in some cases it would be rather challenging to modernise the school without the use of patterns and experience gained in other European countries. Many respondents emphasised that the Erasmus+ KA1 projects enabled teachers to get in-service training in places where local training opportunities are scarce (in the more remote locations). The international mobility also contributed to ideas of diversifying funding resources for international initiatives using completely different sources than Erasmus+.

Estonian teachers and principals highlighted that learning mobility has deepened the understanding of what is proven to work well in the school and to some extent facilitated the institutionalisation of those good old practices.

4.3. FACTORS OF SUSTAINABILITY

This chapter focuses on the respondents' opinion about the factors of sustainability of the Erasmus+ KA1 staff mobility projects' results.

It was remarkable that nearly all focus group and interview participants recognised the importance of **active leadership role of the teachers who have participated in the mobility**: **sharing knowledge and experiences, inspiring and empowering others** in sustaining the change in the organisation. In table below the evidences about the country-specific aspects of this factor are presented.

Table 12. Country-specific representations of the topic *Teachers' leadership: inspiring and empowering others*

TEACHERS' LEADERSHIP: INSPIRING AND EMPOWERING OTHERS			
Estonia	**Finland**	**Lithuania**	**Poland**
Teachers' motivation	"Exposing" all members of staff to project results	Teacher's self-motivation	Positive attitude towards changes
Applying and spreading what you have learned	Sharing insights in teams and meetings related to school development	Targeted dissemination at school	Information and dissemination of project outcomes
Training other teachers	Empowering new people to participate	Finding followers	Initiation of international projects
Persuasiveness passing ideas to others	Expanding results outside of school	Clear communication about vision and resources needed to the school administration	Entailing others and inspiring them to act
Showing many different exercises	*"We have talked about the project and our experiences at the teachers' meetings, and I'm sure that it has inspired other teachers to think that 'Hey, I want to do this too!'"*	Peer-to-peer learning	Support to other teachers in implementing new initiatives
Broadening the circle of engaged teachers		Shared leadership	Courage to open up for new proposals
Control of the application of ideas		Informal	„*We became more tolerant, we started to teach the other teachers who did not participate in the project"* *"This kind of courage to open up for such proposals also stemmed from the fact that we had such an experience to go abroad. So, we invited the foreign students to conduct classes in our school. Earlier, this idea did not come to us at all."*
Participation in organising school life: making proposals		*"To find followers. It "To find followers. It is most important. And now those followers are doing such things! It's amazing to see! And we encourage teachers to engage further."*	
Initiative finding new cooperation partners			
Introducing experiences (accept visitors from Estonia and from abroad)			
"Thanks to sharing experience, we could form one whole from the experiences of different teachers, and this whole can be used in all subjects and by all the teachers." "Given that our team is very small, sharing of experiences has always worked in our school."		*lesso... And I said my vision of how I imagine how I will build a community, how I will involve children...And I say I don't have the final result yet, I am still working on. And I got that freedom and I had a year!*	

Active leadership involves open and honest knowledge sharing, inspiring and involving others, mentoring them, at the same time allowing others to have their "own" bottom line or, if needed, taking control on the implementation of the ideas.

According to the focus group and interview participants, the above-mentioned behaviour of teachers who participated in the learning mobility had a significant impact on the final success of the project and sustainability of its outcomes.

The project participants shared their knowledge/insights with other colleagues during pedagogical councils, training, workshops, "pedagogical cafés" or other less formal events. Sharing of experience (especially in the form of teaching and mentoring) served project result sustainability in three ways: 1) As the means of inspiring and engaging others taking into consideration that for changes from learning experiences to be transferred to organisation and make the impact of the project more widely spread, the interest of other teachers is crucial. The focus group respondents gave many examples of colleagues, or even school leaders, who initially were not interested in participating in the international projects but changed their minds after being "exposed" to the results of the project.

2) strengthening and empowering professional learning community (support of organisational learning). Many of the provided examples concerned the efforts to increase the cooperation between teachers inside the school and beyond in terms of peer-learning. Many teachers used their own networks in other schools to share their learning experience with a wider professional audience. Participants claimed that they offered support to other institutions (i.e. by providing training to other school teachers, providing open classes and scripts for model lessons).

3) reconsidering and self-reflecting the change of own teaching practice and assigning more profound meaning to this. Through the peer-teaching and peer-reflection mobile teachers were able to understand more about the positive impacts of the applied teaching strategies on students' learning and with the stronger courage to continue applying this.

Another important aspect which is related to the administrative support is the pro-activeness of the teacher: courage and self-confidence when communicating the vision and discussing the resources needed tor the idea implementation.

The perception of the focus groups was that the **support of the whole school community** plays a vital role in sustaining the results of the project. It is rare that all members of staff are able to participate in the mobility, but it is essential for the project to have an impact on other members of the community, not only the mobile staff. The level of community support determines whether a project becomes a part of the institution's life.

Table 13. Country-specific representations of the topic *Support from all school community*

SUPPORT FROM ALL SCHOOL COMMUNITY			
Estonia	**Finland**	**Lithuania**	**Poland**
Systematics and qualified staff	Non-mobile teachers inspired to participate in the future	Expression of interest from colleagues	Staff, who is open to new ideas and flexible
Support from the rest of the school employees	*"It was nice to notice that people who previously were not interested in participating were suddenly inspired and had a positive experience!"*	Overtaking leadership role	*„All those who were not related to the project implementation wanted to take part in the following one, when we wrote the next proposal."*
"The will of the teacher is not enough to implement a change – the rest of the school employees, incl. the management, must also support and take interest of the		*"Now I have passed the initiative to another teacher. We are, of course, working together, but she is now leading."*	

The organisational change always requires investment in terms of managerial time, commitment and decisions made. Focus group and interview participants highlighted that to achieve sustainability, the **project needs to be implemented through a strategic approach**. It means that the effective management decisions, the commitment to find the needed resources are required from the beginning till the end and even after the project completion.

Table 14. Country-specific representations of the topic *Strategic approach*

STRATEGIC APPROACH			
Estonia	**Finland**	**Lithuania**	**Poland**
Substantial prior work	Project design based on the development plans of the school	Continuity of the ideas in other projects	Compatibility of the project topic with the previously diagnosed needs of the school
Noticing one's own development needs	Planning the project together with the school community	Selecting courses according to the strategy	Links between the project results and the school development strategy
Planning activities and comprehensive analysis	Transparent criteria for selecting the participants	Limiting the number of projects executed at the same time at school	Careful selection of the members of the project team
Selecting appropriate focus for learning mobility [according to development plan]	Equal opportunity to participate	*„We have a clear strategic direction how to use programming elements in lessons. We invest in this area. And we choose courses according to the school strategy."*	*„All schools have a vision and a development mission at the project development stage. Therefore, they set goals that we want to achieve over a dozen years. This project was part of it: we want to educate children, show them Europe, encourage them to learn languages, motivate and open them to new experiences."*
Connection of learning mobility with the school's real needs	International activities as part of a school's everyday life		
"Selecting the focus is very easy: there is no need to look far for it, as it arises from the development plan. (…) And this, indeed, is the focus. There is no need to invent something new."	Projects' roots in the curriculum		
	Maintaining continuity with projects		
	"It is important that the project is part of the school's regular operations, and included in the annual development plan, so that everyone feels that it is part of 'normal work' instead of something detached and extra."		

According to the focus group participants, the institutional support in project planning and administration is critical when pursuing sustainable project results. Finnish respondents stressed the importance of planning the project together with a school community from the start and giving everyone an opportunity to participate. That way the project can become the project of the whole school instead of only a few individuals. Equal opportunity to participate is also very related to further

support from the community and helps to ensure the alignment of the project aims with the whole school development path.

For an international project to have a sustainable, lasting impact, the project needs to be connected and embedded in the strategic development of the school. When the project is officially a part of the school's yearly development plan, and its aims correspond with the aims set in the curriculum, it may become a natural element in the strategic development of the school, and therefore is more likely to have a lasting impact.

Some participants in the focus groups also pointed out that the sustainability of the project results is more likely assured if the project is somehow linked to another project; either a previous one or the following one. That way the projects are not merely individual, short-term activities but instead create a continuing pattern and tradition of international projects at the school.

The focus groups also discussed the importance of the alignment of project activities with the school's other activities so that they become a natural part of everyday life at the school. When the international activities are considered just another aspect of school life instead of something extra, its results are easier to sustain as the importance and impact of the results may be more evident to the whole community.

Results of the content analysis confirm the findings of the follow-up survey where the importance of a school leader's active role was emphasised. Focus group participants also put the emphasis on the **school principal's personal commitment and engagement** for sustaining the long-term impact of project results.

Table 15. Country-specific representations of the topic *Leader's personal commitment and engagement*

LEADER'S PERSONAL COMMITMENT AND ENGAGEMENT			
Estonia	**Finland**	**Lithuania**	**Poland**
Willingness to cooperate and learn	Active role of a leader from the initial to the final stage of the project	Provision of the needed resources	Encouraging support and active engagement of director
Interest in international contacts	Ensuring the match with overall school development	Supportive work-load arrangements	*"The director encourages, announces and informs. He always has something positive to say. He even takes part in the initiatives, writes projects. He has no problem with such an engagement and teachers become the part of this process."*
Trusting the teacher as an expert of her or his field	Decisions about budgeting	Working on a bottom-up approach	
"If the school's management is interested in international interaction and international training courses, it will support its teachers and show its interest in participation in projects, and then, indeed, it will all become possible."	Facilitation of the planning of new projects	Financial bonuses for involved teachers	
	Encouraging all members of the staff to take part	Appreciation of teachers	
	Ensuring the opportunity to share the experiences as widely as possible	Creating a plan to cover the institution's part of finances	
	"It is clearly about the will and intent of the school leader to support the international in-service training projects."	*"Me, as a principal, I was "pushed" to look for the needed resources."* *"In fact, within two weeks those tablet computers were bought because the director himself saw the need."*	

The perception of the respondents is that if the school leaders take an active role in the initial planning of the project and are involved throughout its lifespan, the chances of the project resulting in sustainable changes are much more significant. The school principal's role is very important trusting the teacher as an expert of her or his field, ensuring the alignment of the project with the overall development of the school, making budgeting decisions, encouraging all members of the staff to take part in the different phases of the project, thus making the project part of the whole school's activity.

Focus group and interview participants commonly agreed that **institutional support** is a highly important factor for project result sustainability. Participants discussed and provided a variety of ways how mobility projects have been or could be supported in their respective institutions.

Table 16. Country-specific representations of the topic *Institutional support*

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT			
Estonia	**Finland**	**Lithuania**	**Poland**
Keeping the topic on the agenda	Institutional support in project planning and administration	Making ideas accessible to others	School requirements for a new model of teaching work
Giving additional tasks for the teachers - seeking for new contacts	Careful self-evaluation of project's successes and challenges	Arranged time for the meetings	Flexibility to introduce new solutions
Motivating and inspiring teachers to participate	*"I think that it is very important from the point of view of sustainability that the person who goes to the in-service training is not alone with the issue (…)".*	Initiatives from administration	Support in organizing dissemination
Allocating regular time for the staff meetings		Existence of the structure (group) responsible for the project implementation	Supporting more members of the staff, not only the teachers
Assuring different formats for teamwork		*"And the teachers write what they are trying out new. Then if someone is interested, you can go to that teacher and ask to teach you. Then we collect the written facts in one file to have "the innovative ideas" in one place. This was the idea of one teacher who was in the mobility. And we took over this."*	Continuous verification of the project outcomes
Comprehensive discussion of ideas with teachers' community			Verification (and sometimes redefinition) of the school's needs
System of regular inside training			*"The management supported us, we sent invitations to schools, we wanted to share knowledge about the use of ICT tools with teachers, linguists from other schools in our city. The management was able to take the telephone handset and call the schools so that their representatives could take part in the training."*
Encouragement to visit each other's classes			
Common agreements on changes			
Noticing and supporting the teacher's potential			
Acknowledging teachers			
Ensuring substitutions			
Making space for flexibility and keeping it simple			
Assurance of professional support (position of educational technologist)			
"We have formed class-based teams for planning integration and conducting studies, and these teams meet on a weekly basis to analyze the results of the past week and plan for the activities of the coming week."			

At the institutional level, there is a need to establish the internal systems, structures, and work culture that promote openness, flexibility to introduce new solutions, foster engagement of everyone. Few of the ways to support and facilitate the maintenance of the teaching innovations taken from the mobility is keeping the processes as simple and convenient as possible and establishing a functioning organisational framework. One possible solution that was mentioned many times is to make sure that there is enough time and opportunities allotted for teachers to meet, work and learn together.

According to the focus group participants, the existence of a regular internal training format that is integrated into the teacher's work time would contribute to passing on experiences to others.

Participants also emphasised the importance of managerial support after the active phase of the project, i.e. when evaluating the results and learning from the successes and challenges that occurred during the project. The focus group participants pointed out that careful (self-)evaluation also creates a good foundation for planning new projects.

The content analysis of focus group discussions and interviews showed that the **joint participation in the learning mobility with a group of colleagues** is one of the most critical factors for the long-term nature of changes and sustainability of project results.

Table 17. Country-specific representations of the topic *Power of the team, participating in the mobility*

POWER OF THE TEAM, PARTICIPATING IN THE MOBILITY			
Estonia	**Finland**	**Lithuania**	**Poland**
Forming a whole	At least two people participating in the same mobility	Synergy of the group competencies	Integration and joint participation within a group
"From our school several different teachers participated in learning mobility, while always the same teachers came to visit us from other countries. Thanks to sharing experience, we could form one whole from the experiences of different teachers, and this whole can be used in all subjects and by	*"(...) and that is why I think it is important that a team goes to the same training; two people or sometimes even three"*	*"This is a great thing when not a single person but a group of people goes. Then they are collegially helping each other. Well, it is very useful."*	*„If there are two or three people in such a team, then this is indeed a good situation (...) Finally, there is "a brain" of the team, who comes up with the ideas. And this is how the team works and shares with tasks."*

It was suggested that it would be beneficial always to have at least two people participating in the same mobility so that they have someone to share, not only the experience but also the responsibility of implementing and disseminating the results.

It is evident that to implement transformation initiative and to make it long-lasting the number of people is required. Implementation of change at the individual level is not a sufficient condition for organisational development. So, teams of people working together with a common sense of ownership and motivation are necessary to make it happen and sustain it long-term.

When asked about the challenges or obstacles that hinder project results from being sustained, focus group and interview participants noticed a number of factors that are provided in the 4.14 table.

Table 18. Country-specific representations of the topic *Challenges of sustainability*

CHALLENGES OF SUSTAINABILITY			
Estonia	**Finland**	**Lithuania**	**Poland**
Implementing the results takes time	Getting the non-mobile staff interested	Finances	Still many teachers "of the old date"
Excessive workload	Lack of principal interest	Municipality support	Financial obstacles
Preserved only individual-based knowledge but not shared	Lack of time and the hectic nature of teachers' workday	*For example, a project's budget is 40-50 thousand EUR and one fifth of it is needed to have, that is 10,000, which is a lot for school. We are trying to talk to the municipality, but we have not succeeded. ..."*	Difficulties with the school staff recruitment
Bureaucratic and complicated system of raising level of teacher professionalism	Getting the whole school community behind the project		Not involvement because of work in different schools
Limited flexibility because of the external pressure: comparison to other schools	Paperwork (applications, reports, financial administration)		Much time to prepare an application
The need to meet the curriculum			Language barrier
Discerning multiplicity of options	*"Unfortunately the principal of one of the schools was not interested in supporting the project in any way. [...] It was a real challenge."*		*„Perhaps such a model of a modern teacher will come when the generation that is afraid of a foreign language and international contacts will leave. This old generation is very introverted, brought up behind the iron curtain."*
"Flexibility of our teaching is hindered by the expectations set by the standard-determining tests."			

While various efforts have been made by organisations to ensure post-project sustainability, most of the mentioned challenges reflect vice versa situation of the mentioned factors of sustainability. Probably the most common challenge for sustainability that was mentioned in the focus groups was how to get the non-mobile members of staff also interested in the project, and its results and that way make the impact of the project more widely spread. Among the other common challenges, the excessive workload and time issue was mentioned, having in mind the situation when project activities are not aligned with the strategic school development and are not synced with everyday school life.

According to participants, the modernisation of schools requires favourable employment conditions that could attract modern staff. However, the Lithuanian and Polish participants also drew attention to the challenges schools are facing as potential employers. School is not an attractive workplace to work in terms of salary. The financial situation forces teachers to work at several institutions. Lack of time and lack of sense of belonging to the school's community make the engagement of other teachers' mode difficult.

5. CASE STUDIES

ESTONIA

General description of the beneficiary institution

The Gustav Adolf Grammar School (hereinafter also GAG) is an old school with long traditions, which was founded by King Gustav II Adolf of Sweden in 1631, and as from 1991, the school again bears the name of Gustav Adolf Grammar School. The school is located in the city centre. In the 2018/2019 academic year, there are 1,343 pupils studying and 80 teachers working in the school. The school has two academic directions: languages and sciences. The school participated in Erasmus+ learning mobility projects both in 2014 and 2015.

Short description of the Erasmus+ KA1 mobility project

One of the strategic goals and main directions of school development of GAG has been in the past and will also be in the future the ensuring the best study and work environment via developing their staff members, as well as the integration of novel teaching methods and technologies throughout the teaching processes of all the subjects. In the 2015/2016 learning mobility project, GAG wanted to focus above all on providing training to teachers of foreign languages, natural sciences and primary instruction in order to develop the GAG sciences and humanities study directions spectrum and ensure, at the same time, the integration of ICT consistently into various subjects throughout all age groups (from primary school to grammar school). With the project, they aimed to develop the competencies of teachers of different chairs and different school grades to integrate technologies and new teaching methods into their subjects, to teach their subjects in a practical and exciting way, by coming closer to the pupils' everyday worlds via the use of technology.

Three teachers of English, three teachers of French, one teacher of Swedish, two teachers of mathematics, one teacher of natural science, two class teachers and the principal, who all put value on development and innovation in their work, participated in this two-year project. They can be characterised by their will to learn from the best practices of others, as well as their willingness to share their own experiences and knowledge with their colleagues. Teachers who participate in learning mobility are actively engaged in the school's development work: they are members of the workgroup for the development of the ICT curriculum who enjoyed all-inclusive support from the school management for their participation in the project. International training courses for the teachers participating in learning mobility were selected in close cooperation between the teachers, the heads of chairs and the school management. The training courses met both the teachers' wishes and the school's needs, as well as the school's formulated goals for the academic year.

Thanks to the GAG teachers' grown role in the European teachers' cooperation networks and consistent work on the development of a curriculum that takes account of development trends in Europe, it has been possible to make the GAG's study directions sustainable and popular and take account of the expectations of the society. In cooperation with the Gustav Adolf Training Centre, the Gustav Adolf Grammar School has conducted seminars and conferences for the teachers and the educational public of the country for several years already. In a conference called "Use of ICT on the example of the Gustav Adolf Grammar School" the teachers who had participated in a learning mobility project shared their knowledge and experiences to their colleagues from all over Estonia.

Through their conference presentations, the teachers spread what they had experienced and heard during their learning mobility trips to the teachers' community, and shared their ideas of how to integrate technologies and new teaching methods, as well as the development of the pupils' digital competencies, into everyday teaching processes.

ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS WITH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS: THEIR VIEWS ON FOUR DIFFERENT TOPICS

Changes made in the educational institution as a result of the Erasmus+ staff mobility project: preserving old practices versus introducing new practices

- **Becoming more confident and more actively engaged**

When any kind of conferences take place in Tallinn, our teachers are invited to make presentations, and they are happy to go and make their presentations. When a teacher has participated in learning mobility, she or he feels more confident when invited to train other teachers: she has seen how thing are done elsewhere as compared to how we do them; she discerns whether she is competent enough to make a presentation to others. The teacher gains more self-confidence and knows that she keeps herself up-to-date and sees a broader picture of the system.

- **Openness and courageousness to share one's experience**

Many teachers who have participated in learning mobility have shared their experience also on the level of the city of Tallinn. They attend various conferences, and, generally, move to the next level: they do not keep this knowledge only to themselves but share it both in house and beyond. And from there, perhaps, totally new offers and training ideas may emerge.

- **New ideas and changes in the teachers' ways of thinking**

Every training course, every school visit gives some kind of new knowledge. You go there and come back and tell about it to your co-workers; you can discuss with them whether such a thing could be appropriate for us as well or not. Something for application, e.g. different way of thinking. Or receiving confirmation that we are doing quite well here or even better or just in a different way.

Joint school visits for the whole school

School started visiting partner schools jointly with the whole of our staff of teachers, management and heads of chairs: teachers have already been to Helsinki, Finland, and Riga, Latvia.

Managerial support and actions taken to permeate the impact of project results

- **Interest in international contacts**

If the school's management is interested in international interaction and international training courses, it will support its teachers and show its interest in participation in projects, and then, indeed, it will all become possible.

- **Support**

Concerning the school's support, it is also very important how the teacher feels about being absent for a week or two: whether the school is prepared for this or would it be a problem. For example, how the replacement is going to be organised, given that being away definitely implies additional work. The head of the chair is responsible for ensuring that all the classes are substituted. In school,

this has never been a problem. Teachers have always been given the opportunity to attend various training courses on whatever level – either in Estonia or abroad. They have always received support and substitutions have been found for all their classes.

Staff development policy

- **System of regular inside training courses**

Regular training courses from co-worker to co-worker were triggered by the first learning mobility project. School set the goal to develop a functioning system of inside training courses already when created the chair persons but the Erasmus+ project provided even more support to this, gave more impetus so that school indeed made it work. Learning mobility provided the subject matter, but it is also important that I, as the project manager, went to listen to it – from there it actually started working on a regular basis.

- **Visiting each other's classes**

The school very much encourage teachers to go and watch each other's classes and have discussions afterwards. This is one of our general aims but, of course, it could be even better, and this could be used in the coming projects that a teacher not only teaches her co-workers but also invites them to watch her classes: e.g., today I am going to apply those things that we talked about, just come and see, if you are interested. Visiting one another's classes has emerged in parallel; again, it could have gained more impetus from there, but this is one of the goals that we set when we wrote the first development plan: learning from co-workers and openness, including open classes.

Success factors and challenges to sustainability

- **Increasing openness and broadening cooperation**

The school has received very many requests for visiting our school, especially under the Erasmus+ programme. Then we have always said that we are ready to host visitors but given that we also participate in Erasmus+ projects, then maybe we could cooperate and send our teachers to your school if we find a topic of common interest. This is one of our conditions.

- **Seeking for new contacts**

In the last projects, we have given our teachers an additional task to their courses to gather contacts, so that in case of finding a good contact, we could consider the option of going to that school job-shadowing. It is often the case that a teacher who has attended a training course somewhere agrees to take on a job-shadowing and is able to introduce the idea to the management of her school.

- **Broadening the circle of engaged teachers**

We have extended the circle of participants with each subsequent project; only very few teachers have attended repeatedly. Directed offers personally to specific teachers have often come in case of job-shadowing. If we already know what is the strength or specific feature of a school, we can bind our learning mobility with this factor. For example, Sweden had special approach to physics, and we had already cooperated in sciences – so we decided to send a Physics teacher of ours for a job-shadowing and bring the knowledge of the specificity of sciences back to the school.

ANALYSIS OF MOBILE STAFF MEMBERS FOCUS GROUPS INTERVIEWS

Changes made in the educational institution as a result of the Erasmus+ staff mobility project: preserving old practices versus introducing new practices

- **Increased satisfaction**

I now think more highly of the discipline in the school, as in my opinion, the Swedish pupils had (too) much of freedom at school. I now use ICT tools with my pupils, and the pupils can act more independently (than before).

Most of all I appreciate the fact that hundreds of kilometres away the same principles are followed that are also used by me. I got confirmation to my approach: I use making lots of presentations and interaction, I conduct discussion classes. Earlier I sometimes was not sure: maybe I should have covered more of grammar.

I gained confidence that we also do a great job; we are on a quite similar level; we do things quite similarly also in the ICT sphere.

Institutional support and actions taken to implement the project results

- **Trust and support**

The school's management has left the teachers a great deal of freedom to decide on their own how to do things and choose the approach that is most suitable to them. The main thing is that the result is achieved. It was the same with Erasmus+: we introduced it within our chair at the teachers' general meeting −, i.e. we share our experience and what we have learned. However, each teacher can choose herself or himself what she or he is going to apply and what not. Sharing of experience takes place successfully in our school.

Heads of chairs are partly also in a similar role in our school: they visit classes; there are informal meetings, and development interviews take place every spring.

Expanding the results to new areas

- **Change of attitudes takes time**

We are moving towards the principle of taking account of the pupil, although taking over an innovation cannot be implemented by giving orders but when we see how it works elsewhere, then we slowly also move in the same direction.

- **Focusing on improving everyday work**

We have rather gained more specific methods or knowledge from our learning mobility, and not that much of experience that could be applied to the whole school or that would change the world.

- **Confirmation of good work**

No fundamental changes were necessary after learning mobilities. Similar things were also being done elsewhere, although pupils had more freedom. I received confirmation that what we were doing was good, and we could focus on improving smaller details.

Success factors and challenges to sustainability

- **Success of pupils**

I can draw the attention of my pupils in my classes to the aspects I learned, and the pupils speak up more as compared to other classes.

- **Learning from co-workers**

Other teachers remember what was talked about in the introduction session after learning mobility, and they use these things also in their classes.

- **Challenges: bigger workload**

As compared to, e.g. Swedish teachers, our teachers' workload is significantly bigger. The French pointed out that they have extra teachers to keep order during breaks, and the main teachers can rest during breaks between classes.

Language teachers cannot visit each other's classes as the classes, in most cases, take place at the same time.

Teachers leadership for the implementation of project results

- **Participation in organising school life: making proposals**

After our learning mobility, we could introduce our experience to the whole school, and make proposals for changing our school life. I made a proposal that on the last school day when there is no substantial studying any more, there could be such activities where all pupils would be engaged, and that would be interesting for everyone. We have a hiking day at the end of our school year.

Finding cooperation partners

The school that I visited was engaged in an international project that I myself led, and we concluded our agreements on future cooperation. This cooperation continues still now: the Swedish teacher will come here soon with her pupils.

FINLAND

General description of the beneficiary institution

This case study involves a consortium of two schools; an elementary school of about 500 students and 37 staff members, as well as a lower secondary school of about 340 students and 38 staff members. The schools are located in a city of about 20 000 people in the Pirkanmaa region in Finland. At the time of the Erasmus+ project, the schools were separate units, but since then they have undergone an administrative merger and become a single comprehensive school of approximately 900 students and 70 teachers.

The Erasmus+ project in question was a job shadowing project with an emphasis on music education, arts and crafts education, as well as foreign languages and cultural education. Another main goal was to get new ideas and perspective for the teaching of arts, crafts and foreign languages. A total of six teachers took part in job shadowing for one week in Spain, where they visited several schools. The teachers visited both public schools as well as private schools. According to the final report of the project, the major differences between the public and private schools was one of the things that the participating teachers found very interesting. When it comes to foreign language teaching, the teachers found that they did not get many new ideas to bring back to Finland. In teaching arts and crafts, however, the Spanish schools used more project-type learning, which the Finnish participants thought might be useful in Finland in some ways as well.

In addition to the initial aims and goals set in the project application, the project also produced other, unanticipated results. In their final report, as well as in the interview for this study, the participants described a new perspective in the communication and interaction between teachers and students, as well as the overall atmosphere at school. The experiences in the Spanish schools gave the participants an example of a warm, home-like school atmosphere and a student-centred approach to the interaction between staff and students. According to the participants, this experience had an impact on developing the atmosphere, school culture and learning environment of the newly merged comprehensive school as well.

The interview for the case study was conducted in January 2019. The original plan was to conduct separate interviews for the school leader and the mobile teachers, but instead, only one interview was carried out, in which both the school leader and mobile teachers were present. The timeframe for the interview made it challenging to arrange for the interview, as it coincided with a hectic time in the school year, as well as Christmas break. In addition to the intensive schedule, some of the mobile teachers had also changed schools or were on leave, so finally, there were only three people available for the interview: the school leader and two mobile teachers. The interview consisted of questions for both the school leader and the mobile teachers.

The results of the case study analysis are presented with the same four themes as the focus group analysis, as well as one additional theme:

1. The changes in the institution after the end of the project

2. Institutional support to sustain the impact of the project results

3. Expansion of the results to new areas

4. Success factors and challenges of sustainability

5. *Teacher leadership for sustaining project impact*

Each of these themes will be described in detail. The themes are further divided into broader categories and those in turn into more specific subcategories. The themes, along with their categories and subcategories are demonstrated in the tables below, with citations from the interview data (translated from Finnish by the researcher). Each category and subcategory will also be described in their respective chapters.

Changes in the institution after the end of the project

The interviewed teachers identified several changes that have taken place at the schools after the mobility projects. The most noticeable changes can be divided into three categories: **making learning visible at school, changes in the interaction between staff and students**, and **increased international cooperation.**

Table 19. Changes in the institution after the end of the project (Case study)

Categories	Subcategories	Citations from the original data (translated from Finnish)
Making learning visible at school	Displaying information on books the students have read	*"We saw lots of examples of managing a school library and the different kinds of ways they had displayed all the books that the children had read; they had a 'reading tree' and a 'reading train', and all kinds of ways to make the reading visible."*
	Presentations and displays of artwork made by students	*"In Spain, they had done such colourful things, I mean how they had displayed the children's work, that I felt like I want to do something like that as well."*
Changes in the interaction between staff and students	Learning environments developed to support a "home-like" atmosphere	*"We didn't want to have a teachers' lounge anymore, because we wanted to blur the distinction between teachers' space and students' space. We wanted it to be more like we are all one big family and everyone is welcome everywhere."*
	School culture developed to promote equality and a sense of community	*"The school has become much cosier and home-like. It is now easier for the students to approach teachers; there is no door that you have to knock on, but instead, you can just walk in and sit on a couch just like at home."* *"We wanted to promote warm, spontaneous interaction between everybody at our school; that every teacher is there for every student, not just their 'own'."*
	Focus on the student-centred approach, e.g. in school events	*"When it comes to school events, we started really focusing on letting the kids design them so that they would reflect the things they enjoy and like."* *"Our principle now is to do things 'children first', so that the children have fun because that was something that we really saw in our job shadowing: everyone was having fun!"*
Increased international cooperation	Visitors from partner schools	*"We kept in touch with the Spanish partners, and they ended up coming here to visit as well!"*
	International cooperation in the classroom	*"We also did projects together, and one of the teachers used eTwinning as a platform for cooperation."* *"We sent letters and videos back and forth, for example of our students sledging and playing in the snow."*
	Internationality as an "official" part of the school's operation	*"One of the biggest impacts for the lower secondary school was that after this project they got a designated internationality team that is responsible for these things."*

- **Making learning visible at school**

The Finnish teachers were impressed by the way the Spanish schools had made the students' learning visible all over the school; there were different types of **visualizations of the books that the students had been reading** and colourful **displays of the students' artwork**. Many of the ideas were also taken back to Finland and put to use there.

- **Changes in the interaction between staff and students**

According to the interviewed teachers, the most significant impact of the whole project was the inspiration they got for developing the interaction between staff and students, and the atmosphere of the school culture in general. Although this was not one of the initial goals set for the project, it turned out to be the most significant outcome. At least partly because of the inspiration from the job shadowing schools, the Finnish school has given up a traditional teachers' lounge and instead has **a common space that is free to use by everyone: students as well as teachers**. The idea is to create an atmosphere where everyone is welcome everywhere, and **a sense of a real community within the school.** Events organized at the school are now **also designed together with the students** so as to make them as student-centred as possible and reflect what the students really enjoy.

- **Increased international cooperation**

As a result of the project, international cooperation has increased and continued even after the project has officially ended. The Spanish **partner schools have in turn sent visitors** to Finland, and **smaller projects have been carried out by individual classes** using, e.g. eTwinning as a platform.

Institutional support to sustain the impact of the project results

The institutional support that the interviewees described in terms of sustainability of the project results are divided into two categories: **school leader's support** and **support from the whole school community.**

Table 20. Institutional support to sustain the impact of the project results (Case study)

Categories	Subcategories	Citations from the original data (translated from Finnish)
School leader's support	Support from school leader is essential; lack of it causes difficulties	*"The expenses that are not covered by the Erasmus grant can become a real obstacle for participation, for example, the substitutes' salaries for the time of the mobility. If the school is not ready to pay for that, it puts people in unequal position as not everyone is able to take unpaid leave for the mobility."* *"The teachers are working during those mobilities, so I think it goes without saying that the mobilities should be considered workdays."* *"Unfortunately the principal of one of the schools was not interested in supporting the project in any way. […] It was a real challenge; I remember a couple of very difficult discussions that we had to go through. There are lots of information that only the principal has access to, so it does make things difficult."*
	School leader's role in effective dissemination of project results	*"School leader should intentionally try to have the mobile staff members' experiences spread as widely in the school community as possible."* *"Supporting and facilitating new projects will always help to keep the previous projects alive as well because they usually always benefit the new projects in some way."*
Support from the whole school community	Equal opportunity to participate and openness of participant selection	*"There was no sign of jealousy towards the teachers who got to participate in the mobilities. After all, everyone was free to sign up, and everyone was given the same opportunity to participate in the project."* *"Nobody was left behind; everyone who wanted to take part [in the project].*
	Non-mobile teachers inspired to participate in the future	*"We have talked about the project and our experiences at the teachers' meetings, and I'm sure that it has inspired other teachers to think that 'Hey, I want to do this too!'"*

- **School leader's support**

The interviewees **deemed the school leader's support essential** for carrying out a successful project, and also when it comes to sustaining the results after the project. Lack of support from the school leader can cause **major hindrances or obstacles for the project.** The interviewed teachers pointed out that there are **many aspects of the project that only the school leader has a say in or access to;** for example, the decisions about budgeting for the project.

The school leader can also **contribute to the successful dissemination of the project results**, and thus their sustainability, by facilitating the planning of new projects and making sure that the mobile staff members have the opportunity to share their experiences and new ideas as widely as possible.

- **Support from the whole school community**

According to the interviewees, openness and transparency of the planning process and the participant selection process are important aspects in ensuring the support of the rest of the school community

other than the mobile teachers. It is vital that everyone is given **an equal opportunity to participate**, and when the **criteria for selecting the participants are transparent**.

Expansion of the results into new areas

Three categories of project results' expansion into new areas were identified from the interview data: **integration of project results into school development, participating in and applying for new international projects,** and **dissemination of project results outside of school.**

Table 21. Expansion of the results into new areas (Case study)

Categories	Subcategories	Citations from the original data (translated from Finnish)
Integration of project results in school development	Communication and interaction as a focus point for strategic development	*"We have had communication skills as the strategic focus point for a couple of years already, and that has come after this project."* *"Yes, and I actually remember when we talked about the focus points, and we brought up the experiences we had in Spain. So I really think it was because of the project experiences that we decided on that theme."*
	Perspective on and appreciation of aspects that already work well	*"The mobility was also eye-opening in that you could also see the good things that we already do and have, and appreciate that."*
	Project experiences used when designing a new school building	*"We wanted to focus on that the environment supports the sense of a community. The teachers can talk about teacher things in the common space, and a student can come in and relax on the couch all the same. The idea is that we are all one big family."*
Participating in and applying for new international projects	Continuing cooperation with previous project partners	
	Using ideas and experiences from previous projects when planning a new project	*"Facilitating new projects always brings forth also something from the previous projects, which are kept in fresh memory and perhaps the new project deals with the same points of view."*
	Engaging staff members who previously did not participate	
Dissemination of project results outside of school	Inspiration for other schools in the community to participate in international projects	*"In the municipal level, it can inspire other schools to participate when they see that someone has done this and that this kind of project is indeed possible! So in that way, it can promote the international activities throughout the municipality."*
	Engaging parents to participate in school activities	*"In Spain, it felt so nice to see how much the parents were involved in all sorts of activities at the school. So now we think if we could do something similar at our school. And if we succeed in it, that would be something I would gladly try to disseminate to other schools as well."*
	Discussions with teachers from other schools effective also in more informal settings	*"We, of course, meet teachers from different schools in all kinds of informal events, for example at the textbook promotion events; I have noticed that those discussions are often very fruitful! We share lots of good practices, and I know that some of them have been put to use in other schools, too!"*

- **Integration of project results in school development**

In the interview, the Finnish teachers brought up many examples of how the project results have been integrated into the strategic development of the school. Communication and interaction skills were chosen as one of the focus areas in the school's strategy, and the experiences from Spanish schools were used as inspiration when designing the learning environments of the new school.

The teachers stated that in addition to giving new ideas, the mobility abroad also gave them a new perspective on their own work and also the things that are working fairly well in Finnish schools. In fact, an important aspect that contributes to the development of the school is appreciating and taking into account the already existing features of the school that actually work well.

- **Participating in and applying for new international projects**

The project results can expand into new areas also by **applying the knowledge acquired** from them into new projects. **Experience from previous projects is useful,** and especially if the theme of the new project is related to the previous one in some way, the results can be developed even further.

- **Dissemination of project results outside of school**

In addition to dissemination within the school community, the project results can be spread further by taking them outside the school walls. The interviewees mentioned that even just the fact that a school has participated in an international project can inspire other schools in the municipality to do the same. The job shadowing project in Spain gave the participating teachers an example of active involvement of parents in the school life. Including parents actively in school, activities are also another way of spreading the project impact outside of the school.

According to the interviewees, one significant channel for dissemination is also the informal discussions between teachers from different schools, when they meet in their free time, at a training session, at an educational fair or perhaps an event to promote new textbooks. Those settings are a precious way of spreading information on what kinds of things are going on in the different schools, say the interviewed teachers.

Success factors and challenges for sustainability

Table 22. Success factors and challenges of sustainability (Case study)

Categories	Subcategories	Citations from the original data (translated from Finnish)
Success factors	Participating staff members represent a variety of subjects or teams	*If the mobile teachers just continue working amongst themselves, then obviously it is more difficult for everyone else to get that information or get involved."*
	Active participation voluntary, although everyone is encouraged to participate	*"Forcing people to participate is never a good idea."*
Challenges	Lack of time for careful planning of dissemination and application of project results	*"The biggest challenge was that when we came back, the everyday life of the school was waiting right away, so there simply wasn't enough time to properly reflect on what you just experienced and disseminate it to others as well as you would have wanted to."*
	Engaging also the staff members who are less interested in participating	*"Making active participation mandatory for everyone is not going to work."*

Categories	Subcategories	Citations from the original data (translated from Finnish)
		"Some people may participate only when there is a dissemination activity for all staff set up by the principal, and that's it. But they may bring something else valuable to the school! Everyone doesn't have to be interested in the same things."
	Lack of time for dissemination activities within the work day	*"The "mandatory" dissemination activities should happen within the joint working hours because it is understandable that people have lives and things to do after work, and not everyone can stay for long hours in the afternoon."*

Success factors

The project results have a good chance to spread widely in the school community if the participating teachers **represent different subjects, grade levels and teams**. Having participating staff members from a variety of teams can thus be one of the success factors for successful dissemination and sustainability of the results. The interviewed teachers emphasized that it is important for the sustainability of the project results that **active participation in the project is voluntary** even when the aim is to have the results spread to the whole school.

Challenges

Lack of time and the hectic nature of teachers' work is one of the biggest challenges for the sustainability of the project results. The teachers feel that there is not enough time to carefully plan the dissemination activities and properly reflect on the impact of the project since as soon as the mobility is over, the hectic everyday routine of school life starts again. The interviewees suggested that it would be beneficial to have **a day or two after the mobility is over to carefully reflect on the experience and plan the activities** for applying the new ideas as well as the dissemination activities. The interviewees also stated that there should be more **opportunities to disseminate and implement the project during the regular working hours**, as a big part of the work is now done as an "extra work" on top of everything else. This, according to the interviewees, can be one of the reasons some teachers opt not to participate actively in the project. Another challenge for sustainability is indeed **how to get those non-mobile staff members involved, who are not interested in the project.**

Teacher leadership for sustaining project impact

In terms of teacher leadership for sustaining project impact, two main categories were identified: **sharing project experiences and insights in different contexts** and **participants are often active in other areas of school development.**

Table 23. Teacher leadership for sustaining project impact (Case study)

Categories	Subcategories	Citations from the original data (translated from Finnish)
Sharing project experiences and insights in different contexts	Sharing experiences with colleagues	*"The most effective way to spread the information to our own colleagues was at the teachers' meeting."*
	Sharing experiences with students	*"We told the students a lot about the mobilities and showed them pictures."* *"It helps to give the students a whole new perspective when you have actually experienced what you are talking about instead of just reading about it."*
	Sharing insights in teams and meetings related to school development	*"There are lots of things relating to the project that is being developed now."* *"They are little things of course, but when someone has experienced something or has a good idea, they may get the others in the team inspired about it, too. It is difficult to say what has been a cause to what effect."*
Participants are often active in other areas of school development	New ideas can be implemented in other contexts	*"Some people like to spend also their free time developing themselves and the school, and then they bring what they learn for the benefit of others, too."*
	Active participation "piles up" on same people while others do not participate	*"Those who are motivated and interested, they do all sorts of things, but from the school leader's viewpoint, those who should at least sometimes do something like this… they don't participate unless it is mandatory."*

- **Sharing project experiences in many different contexts**

The teachers who participate in the mobilities can influence the impact of the project, as well as its sustainability, by sharing their new ideas and insights in as many different contexts at the school as possible. **They can share their experiences with their colleagues and their students**, but also with other teachers from other schools. They can also present their ideas in teams and meetings that have to do with different types of school development.

- **Active participants often active in other areas of school development**

Many teachers who participate in international projects **tend to be active in other areas of school development as well, which creates an excellent opportunity to share ideas** acquired from the project in other contexts as well, for example in the school board or during curriculum work. While this is indeed a good opportunity, the situation is also somewhat problematic in that **active participation tends to "pile up" on certain individuals** who are actively involved in several things, whereas some are not involved in anything at all.

LITHUANIA

General description of the beneficiary institution

The school selected for the case study was one of the schools that participated in the first analysis: Stasys Šalkauskis Gymnasium. The school is located in Šiauliai – fourth Lithuanian city by size (approx. 100 575 residents). The school was established in 1938 as a primary education institution. Secondary education curriculum has been implemented at this school since 1956. In 2009 the school was given the status of a state gymnasium and only the upper-graders coming from lower-secondary

schools of Šiauliai attend it for their final four school years. The school runs state comprehensive education programme, however, depending on their interests, students can opt for classes with engineering education or military-patriotic (riflemen) training where specialised targeted education is implemented via supplemental non-formal education activities, optional subjects, project and volunteer activities.

Currently, the school has 458 students as well as 50 teachers and student-support specialists (including managerial staff). *The vision of the future of the gymnasium* is a modern, continuously learning school attractive for the city community, which bases its activities on the principles of total quality management, universal human values and nationality. *The priorities of the activities of the gymnasium* are continuous learning altogether and from each other, quality and efficiency in each lesson, fostering of communication and cooperation culture, and optimisation of the environment of education.

General description of the project

Project name: A LESSON DIFFERENTLY (Lt. "Pamoka kitaip")

*The project aim*s to encourage teachers to pick up the experience of conducting non-traditional lessons that the EU teachers have, to practice it and pass it on to the colleagues who could apply the experience in daily lessons, involving students into various activities, teaching them to use non-traditional ways of learning. *The objectives of the project:* 1. To pick up the experience of conducting non-traditional lessons that the EU teachers have. 2. To practise non-traditional ways of teaching during the lessons at school. 3. To pass the experience of conducting non-traditional lessons to the colleagues during a seminar. 4. To establish a system of conducting non-traditional lessons at school. 5. To share the experience gained in the project during the conference for the teachers' community of the city.

Participants: six teachers took part in the project: teachers of German, English, Ethics, Lithuanian and Theatre with 10 to 22 years of working experience. For two of them, it was the first international exchange program. Participant selection criteria were: the importance of the need for professional development in educational activities, including different subjects, motivation for professional development, and sufficient foreign languages skills. *Destination countries:* Italy, UK, Greece, Malta, and Germany. Totally 13 mobility visits were organized.

Preparation for implementation of the project. Before the start of mobilities, a survey of students and teachers at the gymnasium was conducted to disclose their understanding of a different lesson. Three participants in the project were expanding their foreign language knowledge on their own and consulting with fellow foreign language teachers to maximise their involvement in qualification improvement courses abroad. All participants who took part in mobilities were gathering details about training programmes from course organisers on their own and carried out personalised preparation tasks provided by training organisers.

The impact on the participants of the project according to the project implementation report supplied by the school: teachers-consultants assess the effect of new teaching methods on students. Teachers of the school pick up the experience and use it in teaching. The experience is passed on to the teachers of Šiauliai city during a seminar. They have a possibility to pick up the systematised experience and apply it to improving the quality of non-traditional lessons.

The results of the project according to the project Beneficiary report supplied by school: new non-traditional teaching methods and better quality of a lesson make students learn more creatively, get them more involved in lesson activities and enable them to use theoretical knowledge in practice. The teachers having gained experience in courses and partner-schools apply it in their lessons; students, together with their teachers, create non-traditional learning space at school. Having assessed the impact of non-traditional lessons on students, the teachers, who have participated in the project, form their system of conducting them and share their experience with teachers from other schools during seminars.

Dissemination of the project's results according to the project implementation report supplied by school: after each visit, teachers used to present course material at teachers' team meetings at the gymnasium. Midway through the project, the team of mobility participants shared their experience and summarised the past and future activities during the session attended by all teachers at the school. When the project was over, the teachers who participated in mobilities organised a series of seminars for the city schools' teachers and shared their experiences. Information on the progress of the project was regularly posted on the school website throughout the entire project.

INTERVIEW WITH THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

An in-depth interview with the school leader was structured around the following topics:

- The changes in the institution as the result of the Erasmus+ staff mobility project
- Staff development policy
- Institutional support as actions taken to sustain the impact of the project results
- Expansion of the results to new areas
- Teacher leadership for sustaining project impact
- Success factors and challenges of sustainability

The school principal is the holder of master's degree in management of leadership in education, 16-years' experience in serving as a school principal and Lithuania's top (first) qualification category of school principal certified by external experts of education management. The school principal is also an expert of education management herself and conducts assessments of other school principals and quality in school operation.

The principal selected for this case study has been the head of the school since 2015. She started working when the KA1 action project was over. *The respondent described the situation on the sustainability of the KA1 project outcomes and relationship with strategic development of school as follows*: "*my role in this project is somewhat arbitrary, because I took office when the project had just finished, and now I can only judge the continuation of the project over those three years when I already served as the principal of the gymnasium*".

The interview also revealed that the assurance of the sustainability of the KA1 project outcomes had been integrated into the Strategic school plan for 2018-2019. The plan includes the objectives to develop the monitoring system of students' individual progress, get to know students better, and develop their social competences for the improvement of their learning outcomes.

Teachers' knowledge and competencies in organising the process of education in a different way, which were acquired during the mobility visits, are planned to be applied in advancing students' social and emotional intelligence and developing their social competence. Moreover, the methodological materials brought from the mobilities will be used for updating the content of education with

increased access to STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). It helps teachers to creatively link students' academic and experiential competencies, technologies and creativity, and knowledge from different subjects in formal and non-formal education by organising integrated, topic-based days outside the school. The principals say that "*certain subjects brought from the project have become a natural part of what we do. The words a LESSON DIFFERENTLY are alive and true at our gymnasium. Now we often use them when talking about other spaces of education, different methods of education, and integrated education days*".

The following text is the presentation of the key findings from the interviews with the school principal, arranged under topics covering different aspects of sustainability assurance of project outcomes at school.

Staff development policy

Reflecting on factors of the project outcome sustainability, the school principal emphasised the necessity of new leadership concept in school culture and noticed school teachers' potential for leadership:

My approach to leadership is a bit different [unconventional]: *school needs the development of empowered, shared leadership. I brought this approach to school myself a few years ago, and I have been applying the idea of the shared leadership there. Involvement of other people is particularly relevant here. If the principal manages to recognise a teacher-leader, then the school sees a continuation of the delegated activities.*

All those people, the teachers who participated in mobility visits under the project, are in a way leaders in their fields. They are reliable, and they can bring [knowledge to school]. There are those who receive and keep [the new experience] to themselves, and then there are those who can share. All these people have certain qualities of shared leadership, but conditions to expose them must be created.

Expansion of the results to new areas

According to the school principal, application of the project results at the gymnasium is bidirectional: new international project activities transcending the KA1 project and inclusion of new participants (students, parents) and the application of ideas and methods brought as a result of the project continues:

Teachers of our school are participating in the courses under the ERASMUS+ KA1 project "STEM – future PIN code", furthermore we recently had a meeting of partners in international ERASMUS+ KA2 project "MET inside the class".

We have applied the project ideas in the school project INTERNETLESS: less internet means being without a phone, offline. We have a wonderful tradition: spending one night at school without internet connection: we engage in various activities, have guests, classes.

Thanks to our theatre studio [led by a theatre teacher who has participated in mobility], a consultation centre where children consult each other has been established. So far, it is only the beginning, but the idea is truly alive.

Everything progressed to the point where lessons differently are given not only to students but also parents. We also give lessons for parents (similar to those given to our students) so that they are

familiarised with and aware of the work at the gymnasium, the new things their children learn, and the new highlights placed.

Institutional support as actions taken to sustain the impact of the project results

According to the school principal, when she took the office sustainability of the results achieved with the KA1 project was ensured, among other means, by traditional managerial decisions. The project team ideas and leadership initiatives were not only supported by the new principal but also **systematically institutionalised in school plans** by **linking monitoring with quantitative indicators** pointing to dissemination and transfer of new ideas to lessons by other teachers:

We have even included the percentage in our school plan: 20% of lessons are given in an unusual setting, that is, differently. This is the minimum. In general, nearly one-fifth of the lessons must be given using the ideas brought from the project.

We have also established a system specifying the types of those hours, and where those different activities must be carried out: some at school, some in town, some with parents, some with the class master.

Now the strategic plan provides for the creation of a system how those unusual things (what is interesting, attractive for children, what is different) are embedded in general education. We are thinking of how those things could be evaluated. There will be even a particular evaluation system established under which a kid receives a grade or part of the grade for what he did differently, in a non-standard way.

Sustainability success factors

According to the school principal, the unconventional teaching strategies and activities brought from mobility visits by teachers are alive. Moreover, their application is being expanded and improved for two reasons.

First, the school decision to implement the KA1 project to search for student motivation-increasing unconventional teaching methods and activities abroad was an excellent strategic insight. When the project was over, and the new ideas and lessons in unique spaces have been tried out at school, municipal and national documents appeared that obligate schools to have a certain amount of unconventional integrated lessons at all schools throughout the city and the country.

Second, the international project intended for teacher qualification improvement abroad is an excellent tool for creating a new quality in school-based education by making it unique, leading to gaining of competitive advantage against other schools in the city.

During those three years, certain new documents appeared even on the national level. For example, the general plan of education included the days of non-traditional education.

We were ready; it was no surprise for us that the Ministry of Education decided to include days of different education in the education plan. When the municipality assigned those days, it was not something unexpected for us, we were ready, and I can say that our start was marked with quality. Based on what we heard from nearby schools, we had indeed made good progress by the time they got on tracks and understood what different education actually is about, and their dissatisfaction ceased.

We are well aware that academic-style education alone is really boring, outdated and not suitable for us anymore. We are searching for uniqueness of our gymnasium, and we see that our strength and uniqueness can come from our continuation with the different lesson/activity.

THE CHANGES IN THE INSTITUTION AS THE RESULT OF THE ERASMUS+ STAFF MOBILITY PROJECT: THE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH THE STAFF

The Focus group was carried out with teachers who took part in the mobility project and other staff who did not take part in the mobility, but who support the implementation of new ideas at school.

Changes, as a sustainable outcome of teacher professional development abroad, were identified in three areas: 1) paradigm shift in education - from teaching to learning; 2) development of school and other educational settings conducive to learning; 3) teacher qualification development by focusing on the qualities and skills of the modern and inspiring teacher.

Teachers from the focus group noted that using methods adopted during mobility the school curriculum was updated, content and language integrated learning was put into practice, CLIL method was promoted among other teachers who did not take part in the mobility project.

According to the teachers, non-traditional methods taken from mobility, are particularly sustainable in non-formal education because the content in non-formal education is not limited by the subject content of the national curriculum, pupils' preparation for school-leaving examinations. In non-formal education, teachers dear to experiment with non-traditional methods more openly, and the potential of sustainability of the adopted novelties is higher.

During the days of integrated teaching-learning drama techniques, the school environment, institutions and organisations in the school neighbourhood are creatively used, e.g., the church and the regional park welcome teachers and students to their spaces for educational purposes. Non-traditional teaching methods and settings help students to become more independent, more motivated taking decisions about their learning.

Almost three years after the project a non-traditional learning space, developed in our school, is still used and being continually upgraded. According to the teachers, students enjoy it and feel great there.

The project has noticeably changed teachers' behaviour at school. The focus group participants clearly stated that teachers have become more independent, creative and open with their colleagues. It was evident when they told what non-traditional forms they use building relationships with students' parents, setting up teacher partnerships, how they put innovative ideas into action. It was also noticed that teacher professional development abroad significantly boosted their professional self-esteem.

Table 24. Changes in the institution as the outcome of the Erasmus+ staff mobility project

Categories	Subcategories	Citations from the original data (translated from Lithuanian)
The paradigm shift in education	School curriculum update	*This year programs have been updated again. Several CLIL programs have been introduced: German and Physics, German and Ethics.*
	Non-formal education in out-of-school settings	*A camp was organised in Kurtuvėnai. Activities in Kurtuvėnai, many of them, were initiated by this KA1 project.*
	"New" learners within the project framework	*Last year we had a parents' class. One afternoon a Lithuanian language teacher and I ran a Lithuanian*

Categories	Subcategories	Citations from the original data (translated from Lithuanian)
		language class for parents. They had to play a tale. They formed groups, chose a Lithuanian folk tale, created its modern remake, made a presentation, described it, supported their idea. A similar class was run in a foreign language.
	Experiential learning	*No theory is told, that would be boring. You are in the real world; you can touch, communicate. You meet people in their job places, watch them working. We go to the courtroom not as we go to a museum, we attend court hearings, talk to judges.* *Pupils had to stop passersby, tell them what is happening in our school, about an [carrier] orientation day, a cultural orientation day. Their task was to find some cultural object, find out information about its history, create a story how it was founded, play it, shoot a film, make its presentation and send it to us.*
	Students' independence	*Our pupils choose activities themselves, form groups, invite interesting people.*
Educational settings	School settings	*One of the project outcomes is a social space for kids in our school, and it differs from a typical classroom, there are no desks and board. A cosy, pleasant space. Well, [teacher's name] classroom is next to it; she sees and hears that kids don't want to leave it, they like it.* *This social space inspired us to take action. We pooled our financial resources, bought some games and started using them as educational tools. Those games are still very popular, we buy new ones, renew some and use them in various activities.*
	Out-of-school settings	*We realised that any setting - church, cathedral, park - can be used for education. That's what we learned in the course. We used to think that it's not appropriate to teach in the church building, it's a spiritual place, where people pray. But, for instance, the priest from Kurtuvėnai is fantastic, he opened the church for us. Now we hold poetry evenings in the church building.* *Since the subject I teach is law, we go to court hearings. We also go to the municipality [administration building] where pupils familiarise themselves with its activities.* *Also to the remand prison nearby, thus we use all institutions for educational purposes.*
Teacher qualification development	Thirst for knowledge	*It means that you get the hang of something and carry on. You collect some information, return inspired and want to share. You start looking for tools that would really work, could be put into practice, used in the classroom.*
	Creativity	*However, those chances and places probably depend on us. You let your fantasies unwind, put together what you have learned in the course and involve your peers.*
	Freedom	*[Teacher's name] spoke how, for example, we ran this orientation game with our first-formers. [Teacher's name] and I were just sitting in a coffee shop and listening to their stories.*
	Spirit of venture	*Actually, you learn something and start doing, immediately, not thinking that it could be done sometime*

Categories	Subcategories	Citations from the original data (translated from Lithuanian)
		later, otherwise you will completely forget everything.
	Knowledge dissemination	*When you involve your peers, who didn't participate in the training course, it's already dissemination. They share information with others. Probably it's the best way to disseminate knowledge.*
	Self-esteem	*It's always like this: schools in other countries always seem to be in a better situation. Then we want to go somewhere and learn from others. But finally, you see that we also have what to show, we aren't worthless and can teach others.*

Institutional support as actions taken to sustain the impact of the project results

The focus group acknowledged that institutional support is crucial for the sustainability of KA1 project outcomes. As a key factor of sustainability, the teachers firstly mentioned, - planning of the continuity of activities, and their consistent implementation.

Another factor is the trust of school authority in teachers' creativity, their freedom given to the teachers to test their new methods on a volunteer basis. Peer and school administration support is necessary for seeking sustainable outcomes.

Teacher professional development abroad contributes to school development, help to achieve synergy of international project activities, help to prepare and implement new projects using the experience gained and networks of the colleagues met during the mobility.

Table 25. Institutional support seeking to ensure the sustainability of the project outcomes

Categories	Subcategories	Citations from the original data (translated from Lithuanian)
Management decisions	Consistent planning	*Actually, a system exists: writing a plan for each day, planning topics. Some plans will be prepared by the municipality, others by ourselves taking into account the school's strategic plan and measures. Each day will be organised by a different person, methodology group. Really, a system exists.*
	Trust in people	*In the beginning, when everything was new, we relied on the teachers' initiative.*
	Volunteer motivation	*Do you remember how it all that began? Each made a list of activities she would like to arrange and how. I think it's our greatest achievement - a teacher who volunteered had to unleash her creativity and take responsibility for that day.*
	Support	*We got support at all levels, from administration, peers.*
Project work	Integration	*Our KA1 project was integrated into "Internetless" project. Thus we pooled our financial resources, bought games for our non-traditional learning space and started using other teaching methods. Those games are still popular, we buy new ones and use them in various activities.*
	New international projects	*Other countries take part in new international projects. New activities (such as robotisation) – were integrated into the new project. We bought robots, started working with them, have got a 3D printer, some other things. Thus we undertake new activities.*

Success factors of sustainability of the project results

According to the teachers, the critical factor that contributes to the sustainability of the project outcomes is whether the school is competent to prepare a project application and have project management skills needed to implement the project. Sustainability of project outcomes depends on the purposeful selection of the project theme. It is important that the gained knowledge and skills are used to improve teaching quality in the desired direction. It means that the selected topic must be relevant for improving students' learning.

The selection of courses and trainees is crucial for the sustainability of project outcomes as well. The content of the course must be in line with school development aims. The trainees must have communication in foreign language skills, be inspiring, innovation-driven leaders, willing to share knowledge. According to the teachers, the school will derive long-term benefit from teacher qualification development abroad in the future if the selection of courses and trainees will be well considered.

Another factor of sustainability of mobility results in this school – knowledge dissemination activities that inspired and empowered other teachers to join. Careful planning and selection of appropriate dissemination forms when preparing an application were considered a very important aspect. Course

participants took responsibility for the content and forms of dissemination the most suitable for the involvement of other colleagues.

Alongside motivation of the mobile teachers to share their knowledge, the involvement of non-mobile staff, a willingness to try the new practices in their class is also of great importance. In the case of this school, it was found that there was a "chain reaction" of spreading information and teachers' networking activities in the whole school community.

It can be stated that the authority of this particular school makes a significant impact on the sustainability of new teaching-learning methods and forms, it is committed to building a supportive and collaborative culture, to supporting non-traditional dissemination activities organised for teachers of the town to motivating project participants within and outside the school.

Table 26. Success factors ensuring the sustainability of the project outcomes

Categories	Subcategories	Citations from the original data (translated from Lithuanian)
Preparation for KA1 project	Topic relevance	*The relevance of the topic is the first step towards the sustainability of the project outcomes. As well as knowing your aim, what you want to achieve. We called our project "A lesson differently" because we saw that a traditional lesson is no longer valid. Therefore, we came up with the idea that we need to do something in a different way. A lesson must be run in a different way.*
	Course selection	*I think it's essential to select the right training course. A course should be of some value, sometimes we think, well, I want to attend some course, go somewhere, but you should have a specific aim, want to enrich yourself. I looked for a course namely on teaching differently. I didn't want to attend any seminar. I thought over what I wanted to adopt, how I would change my lessons.*
	Participant selection	*As my colleague pointed out, it's essential to select the right course. Selection of the right participants isn't less important, and they should be willing to share, bring information and use it.* *[Teacher's name] and [Teacher's name] are subject teachers, but they took up the challenge and brushed up their English since the course was run in English.*
	Participants' leadership	*Project leaders: [Teacher's name] said - let's try, I said - why not. I invited a teacher of Russian to join me <…> [Teacher's name] tried and liked and invited a teacher of Arts, and she joined. That's how we all started trying new methods.*
Content dissemination	Proper preparation	*I brought a method and laid it out on a paper. We tried it in a team and with peers. It will be sustainable if you start using it, demonstrate how it can be used and finally, it will become a school-wide matter. It's effortless and good for you because you check yourself. Before making a presentation at the city conference, I thought over the course input and spent several days in the library refreshing everything.*
	Networking	*I interact with the people around me, and we exchange information. Being open leads to easier dissemination of information. Everyone adds something, and the result is sustainability. We, teachers, mainly observed methods brought from the course. Then we used them in*

Categories	Subcategories	Citations from the original data (translated from Lithuanian)
		our classes, language teachers observed them and developed. *Sustainability is when many people network and add something of their own. Later the method was used school-wide.* *I did not take part in the mobility program; I adopted my colleagues' best practice. We talked, discussed, and they shared information, demonstrated those methods in practice, prepared a slide show and handouts.*
	Favourable atmosphere	*Probably our staff are flexible, there are no closed groups. We are open to ideas and try to do our best.* *Our staff is willing to share, we listen to each other's opinion, we don't want to stand out and make a show, but we seek others to follow our example.*
	School authority support	*Certainly, school authority's position is also significant [for dissemination] because if your idea doesn't get the support, you may be just left alone with that idea.*
	Sharing	*We ran a seminar for teachers in the city. We shared our teachers' experience. We keep material [in our school] and share it.*
	Non-traditional forms	*This year, before showing a play we have put on, [teacher's name] and I planned to run a seminar for teachers of Lithuanian from other schools. We are going to run it in a new way. Last year teachers and students saw a play our gymnasium put on and provided teachers with instructional material on how to discuss that play with their students.*

POLAND

General description of the beneficiary institution

The school selected for the case study analysis was a large school in which two education units operate together (general secondary school and vocational-technical secondary school). Both of them have their specialization related to IT subjects. The school is located in a medium-sized town (approx. 50,000 residents) in the North-Western part of Poland (Zachodniopomorskie region). There are also many other public and private schools in the city. The specificity of the region is a health resort character, attracting crowds of tourists especially in the summer season. Due to the close location to the border with Germany it hosts many German tourists, especially in a high season. Noteworthy, the city has not only a well-developed tourist infrastructure but also has access to the commercial ports.

The case study was carried out at the school's headquarters on 7th of December 2018. The following activities were undertaken under this part of the research:

- analysis of documents,
- an interview with the deputy school head,
- an interview conducted with the school staff (participants of mobility),
- complementary discussion carried out with project coordinator.

General description of the project

The main topic of the project concerned the modern ways of the schools' management and functioning of the school in terms of using the advanced managing tools, information and communication technologies. The main substantive areas of the project were related to the improvement and self-education of the teaching staff, administration staff and the school management. Although the project allowed primarily to improve professional skills of the teachers of IT and STEM subjects, it also contributed to other teachers' professional advancement.

The outcomes of the project concerned the implementation of new solutions as to the organisation of the school's work, the use of new information technologies and the increase in the ability to use English language by all project participants. The experience gained by the beneficiary institution also contributed to raising the quality standards of the performance of the school staff. The quality factors of ensuring the project sustainability was related mostly to enhancing the institutional capacity of the school (the association of the school staff was created and gained its legal entity in order to obtain funds for the schools) and to modernise its infrastructural capacity (i.e. establishing the 3D printing workshop with the modern equipment of printers to be used by the learners).

The cooperation with the Turkish host institution was a result of the previously implemented Leonardo da Vinci project and the joint initiatives under the Youth in Action programme. However, it was the change of the general rules in the Erasmus+ (comparing to previous programmes) that allowed for the implementation of the staff development strategy in the school (due to the possibility to submit institutional projects for a larger number of mobilities).

INTERVIEW WITH THE SCHOOL DIRECTOR

The interview was conducted with the deputy head of the school, who is responsible for managing the school unit, to which the project referred. This stemmed from the fact that the previous school director (with whom the previous interview in 2016 was carried out), got retired and the current school head was not involved in the former project activities and, therefore, could contribute to the study. It should be noted, however, that the deputy head of the school was present during the previous case study activities (as a part of FGI with mobile teachers).

Changes within the institution resulting from project implementation

The changes that have taken place in the institution after the implementation of the project were closely related to the openness of the teaching staff, changes in the management process and to general institutional changes. They also referred to further using of external grant resources, to cooperation with other entities from the region and to increase of the school prestige.

- **Raising additional funds for activities**

We sometimes complain that there are too many things to do because there is a lot of ideas. But there is a connection between the project and the activities that followed it. Many of the activities that we are currently undertaking are the result of the exchange of experiences. The word 'project' doesn't scare anymore and writing a project for a new gym is not a problem now, I just sit down and write it (…) Currently, we obtain funds from various sources.

- **Overall institutional development**

We have great recruitment of new learners, great exam results, great interest in cooperation with various institutions, we have been chosen as leaders, we are certainly appreciated by our activities, and we are involved in various projects.

Institutional support to maintain project results

The school director positively assessed the scope of cooperation and institutional support of the school managing bodies. Attention was also paid to the appreciation of the authorities as to the activities carried out and the transfer of funds to the technological development of the school.

We have the favour of the city authorities, the Starost Office, the Voivodship Office. We obtain some of the funds from the Marshal's Office, mainly for projects related to 3D design. We run classes using new technologies because we saw that the school could be completely different.

The use of results in the new areas

The implementation of international projects has opened a school to another extra activities, to cooperation with other institutions and to participation in various events outside the school. The greater openness of the institution increased the awareness of the benefits that come from undertaking activities in the field of non-formal education. The result of the project, which ensures sustainability, is the creation of the teachers' association, aiming to implement educational projects. The initiative gives the school and its employees' new opportunities to develop and implement grassroot and non-systemic projects.

We are involved in volunteering, we cooperate with local social care institution (…) We work with Caritas and with one of the animal shelters.

„Others look at our school as a model of development, because they see what is happening here. We established this association because we just want to work to help various social groups."

Factors of success and challenges for sustainability

The three main factors to ensure the sustainability of project results were mentioned during the interview: the teachers participating in the project, the strategical approach as to the development of the school and the continuous verification of the project outcomes. The last factor turned out to be the most important according to the director. She claimed that, in general, the assumptions as to planned results might be already outdated after the implementation of mobility. This is why the greater attention should be paid to such verification (and sometimes to redefinition) of the school's needs. The similar validity of the outcomes should be carried out also after the passage of time which contributes to the general strategy of the school and its coherence with the real needs, aiming at its further development. Such opinion stemmed from the fact that the school decided to stop using some of the project outcomes (e-textbooks) because it did not contribute to better school performance.

- **Teachers' work vs project sustainability**

Mobility released us and opened to many possibilities of personal development. Some of us did some studies, some people were involved in the school's activities. We become more modern....

Teachers are incredibly involved in projects. People, who did not participate, were also attracted by the group leaders, which resulted in a great involvement in the school's activities: our own internet TV is a real phenomenon– only few schools can set their own television!

- **School development strategy**

We have a school development strategy to make our school more open to various types of activities (volunteering, promotion of education, training of staff, regional and international cooperation). We must remain open, mobile and we must educate ourselves to keep up with all systemic changes.

We decided many years ago that we would be the modern school, we had the first online journal that was worked out by our student together with his professor. We equipped the school and used the 'modernity' as our slogan.

In our statute documents, we included the activities that oblige us to work in the region, to promote the school, but also to cooperate with the units that are in this area. We are involved in volunteering.

- **Redefinition of the school's needs after the project**

After introducing e-textbooks, as one of the results of the project, we noticed that there are no real positive outcomes for the high school students. You have to practice and then find out if it really contributes to positive effects. In fact, the students became too distracted by this technology. You need to modify the solutions, and sometimes it is only after 3 years that you can see if the changes turned out to be successful.

GROUP DISCUSSION WITH THE MOBILE STAFF

The FGI was carried out with almost all teachers that took part in the former mobility project. There were 12 participants who took part in the discussion, including the project coordinators. Generally speaking, the participants were very enthusiastic about the project and its results. The discussion concerned various outcomes of the trip and the participants also mentioned about subsequent plans for their future project, which was to be submitted under the current programme selection round. It was also pointed by the mobile staff, that many of the follow-up activities are related to entirely new areas, and other teachers of the school are also involved in such activities.

Changes within the institution resulting from project implementation

According to mobile teaches, the implementation of the project has contributed to the increase of activities and operations carried out by the school. The teachers returned to work with many ideas, however, what was frequently raised during the conversation, there was a common need of the staff to calm up with activities as too many of them happened at the same time right after the project completion.

When we got back from there, we came with ideas for the next two years. It is already quite usual that there are classes conducted in English, that we introduced technological innovations during lessons. For our students it all became obvious.

At the moment the possibilities are big, but sometimes there is so much that everything needs to be calmed down.

The role of institutional support to maintain project sustainability

During the discussion, the participants mentioned about quite a significant barrier as to the project financing by the municipality (lack of funds for own contribution to projects financed from the grants) and lack of substantive administrative support (no one is delegated to support international projects in the municipality). Despite their great commitment, the teachers face systemic problems and lack of funds for the implementation of smaller projects aiming to gaining their soft skills. Noteworthy, such a problem was not of the importance of the head of the school, who was rather focused on the support that school gets from the managing municipality institutions.

First of all, we have financial barriers. Even if we wanted to „jump" into a new project, for example, as an association, we didn't have such resources for our own contribution. It often blocks us, and we are not able to implement large scale projects because the municipality has no money for us.

Schools do not have local leaders who would help them to carry out projects. Fortunately, we have our school coordinators who have a lot of experience.

There is no one to turn to… If we have an idea and if we want to write a project, unfortunately, there is no one there to help us. And this financial barrier is unbeatable. There is no support in the implementation of smaller projects, like the exchange of teachers or youth.

Our school is very open to international contacts, but when it comes to internationalisation, I get an impression that we do not do enough. If there were fewer obstacles, there would be more projects.

The use of results in new fields

The main result of the project was an opening of the teaching staff to new technologies, and to possibilities of their own personal development. Although these effects were difficult to measure, their range is quite noticeable in the following initiatives implemented by the school: the creation of a school internet TV, the modernisation of the school's newspaper, the well-equipped 3D printing workshop. Finally, due to the lack of funds for all school's initiatives in the municipality, the teachers decided to create its own non-governmental organisation. The association has its own legal entity and, therefore, it is eligible to apply for the funds independently from the municipal authority. It is also able to secure the funding aiming to provide the school's own contribution to the implementation of the future project grants.

The topic of the new project has not been worked out yet, but we think about it. It will certainly refer to new technologies.

Young people arrive at our technical school because they want to learn in specific IT professions, while high school students rely on „attractions" related to the teaching of science in a modern way.

Our school TV was initially created by teachers who didn't take part in the project. The association also has members who didn't participate in the trip, but the new ideas make them more active. The association has 25 members now, and we have been operating only since last year. Surely, no one

can force anyone to additional work, but when teachers see that others are doing something, they also want to contribute. And if there would be no motivation, then nothing would be done.

There is this systemic barrier, and sometimes it is hard for the schools to cover the entire project under some of the programmes fully. Sometimes the teacher can be lost in all those financial aspects. For us, the association is like a safety-valve. If the school organizes the project, then it will help us to apply for the missing costs.

Success factors and challenges for sustainability

It can be concluded that the primary factor of the success and project sustainability were the teachers themselves - their leadership skills and positive attitude towards changes. It was the school staff team that contributed most to the implementation of new ideas which emerged after the project. Such a situation may stem from the fact that the project was created because of the real participants' needs and most of the project team was fully involved in setting the objectives of the mobility. The same pattern also applied to changes in the teaching methods and curricula (which mostly applied to IT and STEM subjects). According to participants, the new project ideas will also be drawn from the analysis of the current school's needs (the proposal for the staff mobility project with Islandic school is planned to be submitted under next selection round).

The information collected from the participants proves that the teachers are real continuators of the project outcomes as they implement most of the changes and ideas by themselves. Most of the group claimed that thanks to participation in the project, they changed their own approach towards learning and personal, professional development. The significant number of teachers also took part in postgraduate studies and professional courses. Finally, the most important outcome from the implementation of the projects is the creation of the school's association, that may facilitate the fundraising and implementation of projects in the future.

It should be noted, however, that while the teachers were responsible for the project outcomes, it was only the two coordinators who dealt with the project administration (including dealing with proposals, documentation, logistics and reporting). Noteworthy, the same persons are responsible for dealing with most of the other proposals. This may put at risk the further school's development in this respect (i.e. if the coordinators left the school). Nevertheless, the recent initiatives (including establishing the association) may contribute to greater involvement of other teachers in the administrative tasks, which may be a solution for this problem.

- **Teacher leadership and enthusiasm**

It is difficult to assess whether the school's participation in mobility is as attractive to students as it used to be, but sometimes the participation in the exchange or conference can be really valuable. One sentence that is heard can change a lot. For example, you can learn how to conduct classes, how to think.

The project needs to hit the enthusiasts. Each trip abroad introduces some new energy in the school.

After the end of the project, we had meetings. Among the pedagogical council we talked about the effects, the film was created, we shared information with other school staff. The new ideas appeared, and there were also new people willing to act.

- **Raising the professionalism of project coordinators**

It took a lot of time to prepare the documentation on my own, to go around offices, arrange all those stamps and to prepared additional documents.

Nobody refused help if I asked for it. But, probably, I'm such a person, that needs to have it under control. If I'm signing something and if I still have to correct someone, I would not let anyone help me.

The problem is with the division of tasks, I do not involve anybody in formal matters, I would have to devote a lot of time to collect information from others, and I'm not sure if they did it on time.

One person is not able to comprehend it, and everyone is afraid to be the coordinator, no one wants to sign documents, etc.

The last year is out of the question when it comes to project implementation because we were both undertook our postgraduate studies. We focused only on this. Not everyone can deal with the project proposal. I realize and understand how much time has to be spent on this.

The coordinator must have good knowledge about visas, insurance, rules, must have a cash supply. It turns out that the teacher who wants to focus on this must be 'alpha and omega'. Each project teaches us what to do better next time, because each problem we face, raises our awareness not to commit similar mistakes in the future.

- **Continuous professional development of teachers**

Most of us are multi-disciplinary teachers, and some of us work in different schools. I teach the Economy and IT here, and the entrepreneurship and business subject in another school. The students can observe that I learn, that I read books and they can realise how education and science are important.

Teachers' participation in mobility allowed us to gain new information and ideas to develop ourselves for the next couple of years.

The students who came to our school can rely on us as teachers, on what we have done, on what experience we have got. In retrospect, our former students come to see what is happening in the school now, and they appreciate the methods of our work.

During my classes, I talk about leadership and how it all pays off. I talk about networking and establishing relationships. And I encourage my students to participate in Erasmus+ projects, and students can use it in their future studies.

- **Self-organisation of the school staff (establishment of the association)**

We want the association to grow by organizing training for teachers and other groups, to obtain additional funds to support the school.

One on the greatest moments for us, was when we established the association. This allowed us to apply for the project funds independently form the municipality.

6. CONCLUSIONS

LONG-TERM IMPACT OF THE ERASMUS+ KA1 STAFF MOBILITY ON TEACHERS' PERSONAL PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS

The results of the longitudinal study showed that the Erasmus+ KA1 staff mobility had a positive long-term impact on the professional life of the teachers. Two years after the completion of the Erasmus + KA1 project, the majority of the staff involved in the mobility appreciated the mobility as relevant to their professional success. The most commonly mentioned area of the long-term impact of the mobility experience was **the attitude change** (openness to changes and innovations) which translated itself into the behavioural change (more frequent application of ICT technologies, usage of new teaching methods). Teachers often reported that such an attitude change was transferred to the learners having a positive long-term impact on the communication and interaction between teachers and students, as well as the overall atmosphere at school.

The longitudinal study revealed that the **increase in teachers' self-esteem and self-confidence** was another long-lasting change pointed out by the participants of the research. The positive change in teachers' self-esteem and self-confidence often resulted from the development of foreign language competences and increased awareness about the education system in other countries. The higher self-esteem and self-confidence was highly determined by the acquired perspective of the appreciation of their personal, school's or national educational system's adequate professional mastery (the proof of meeting the required professional level) needed to ensure the excellent teaching quality.

Finnish teachers' self-esteem was mostly driven by the appreciation of the advancement of the national education system. Estonians, Lithuanian and Polish teachers were more proud of the institution's or teacher's individual proficiency.

LONG-TERM IMPACT OF THE ERASMUS+ KA1 STAFF MOBILITY ON SCHOOL

Two years after the end of the project, the majority (more than 90 percent) of Erasmus+ mobility participants in all countries acknowledged that learning mobility had a long-term impact on their institution.

Mobility experience undertaken by the staff had significantly contributed to the **schools' internationalisation.** The wide range of the post-project international activities, with various partner institutions, had been carried out by the schools (visiting partner schools, continuing learning mobility projects, initiating and applying for the new project grants). In many cases, the mobility of teachers had contributed to similar international learning experiences organised for learners.

The implementation of Erasmus+ KA1 projects contributed to the **improvement of the schools' image.** The awareness of being more internationalised seems to be a factor that positively distinguishes schools in the local educational field and is considered as a value-enhancing factor in terms of school competitiveness.

According to the research participants, the long-term contribution of mobility was the enhancement of teaching quality. The persistent **application of new teaching methods**, increased usage of ICT, the introduction of different elements of a foreign language into non-language subjects). This had the positive impact of the learners' involvement and motivation, though, the agreement that Erasmus+ staff mobility contributed to better learning outcomes of students was much lower.

The modernisation of the schools' equipment was also mentioned as the direct long-term project outcome. In the participants' opinion, the vast majority of the needs to modernise the equipment stemmed directly from the new knowledge and competencies acquired abroad. In can be concluded, that the new knowledge and international experience, gained during the project, required modern tools and new equipment resulting in higher teaching quality.

Some country-specific aspects of the perceptions of the long-term impact on the institution in the area of teaching innovations were revealed. While Polish and Lithuanian teachers declared the higher long- term impact of the mobility on the institution in terms of organisational changes, Finnish and Estonian teachers emphasised the importance of focusing on preserving the existing good practices instead of the radical introduction of new ones.

Perception about the long-term benefits of Erasmus+ KA1 staff mobility for the strategic development of the school is partly determined by the consistency of the national education policy and its implementation. In Finnish and Estonian schools, the anticipation for the changes brought by the staff mobility was relatively lower, meaning that the need to change existing teaching practices and /or the school's strategic direction was not the primary focus. Teachers from Poland and Lithuania had relatively higher expectations about using mobility results in the strategic development of the school. This difference in attitudes can be explained by the different achievements of national education systems. The educational achievements of Estonia and Finland are highly rated, and education systems are valued as advanced in a European context.

FACTORS OF SUSTAINABILITY

The longitudinal study pointed out to the outstanding relevance of the factors ensuring the sustainability of the Erasmus+ staff mobility outcomes. All the heads of school and teachers placed high importance of the **strategic approach** for the project's results to have a long term impact and sustain in the organization. The alignment between the strategy of the organisation and goals of the professional development programmes plays a vital role in the changes to become permanent. Organisational stability in terms of clear vision and strategic focus approaching professional development abroad individually, according to the school's developmental paths and current needs is a precondition for achieving permanent results.

Institutional support in the form of managerial decisions was pointed out as an important factor for the learning mobility results to sustain. The management plays an essential role at analysing the needs of a school in terms of professional development, planning of activities, ensuring regular learning and cooperation opportunities to all teachers, allocating time for activities that support the regular and systemic application of innovations, peer-to-peer learning. The time and other resource management activities are needed for implementing innovations as available, simple and convenient as possible.

Sustainable implementation of the project results requires **teacher leadership**. Both teachers and school heads claimed that the positive teachers' attitude, initiative, open and honest knowledge sharing, inspiring and involving others, mentoring other teachers had the significant impact on the final success of the project and sustainability of its outcomes'.

For the project results benefitting the whole school in the long term **knowledge sharing in the form of peer-to-peer learning,** is essential. Sharing of experience in the form of peer-learning served project result sustainability in the way of transferring the learning experiences to the broader organisational context, strengthening and empowering professional learning community (supporting

organisational learning), and helping for re-consideration and self-reflection of new teaching practices, assigning more deep meaning to this. The methods that the teachers found the most effective and useful were the more informal discussions with colleagues in this way emphasising the fact that the value of the informal mode of sharing information over a cup of coffee is currently slightly underestimated in the formal evaluation of the projects.

Some country-specific aspects of sharing experience were determined during the study. The results indicate while Lithuanian teachers saw a deep meaning in sharing the experience, communicating, collaborating, engaging in joint professional networks with other schools, Polish teachers showed a great interest in strengthening teamwork at school and collaborating with foreign partners. Estonian schools emphasised the importance of the win-win situation when sharing the experience (sharing expertise with hopes of mutual benefits offered for the school development). Finnish teachers were also more inclined toward cooperation within the institution colleagues when working together for the advanced implementation of the national curricula.

Support from the school leader in the way of a leader's personal commitment and engagement was considered as another significant factor for the sustainability of the project results. Support from the school leader from the initial to the final stage of the project and after the project end (ensuring the match of the professional development with overall school strategy, trusting the teacher as an expert of her or his field, providing the needed resources, making the supportive work-load arrangements, etc.) was found as the vital aspect for the project result sustainability. It was found that the behavioural support (the real steps taken by the leader) to compare with the attitudinal support had a higher impact on the overall long-term impact of the project results on school.

The supportive role of school colleagues' is another important determinant factor of sustainability of the project results. The majority of teachers reported that colleagues supported the implementation of Erasmus+ ideas by taking over the ideas of mobility. It was revealed that the real steps taken by the colleagues (taking the challenge to try Erasmus+ staff mobility ideas in their practice, overtaking leadership role) had a stronger impact on the overall long-term impact of the project on an organisation than the attitudinal support (expression of interest from colleagues). The level of community support determines whether a project becomes a part of the institution's life.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Seeking to ensure the long-term impact and sustainability of the results of Erasmus+ KA1 staff mobility projects, the following recommendations are provided:

For school stakeholders and municipality-level politicians

To be more interested in and support schools' projects that develop schools' international dimension, improve schools' image and enable teachers for the teaching paradigm shift.

For the institutions coordinating the activities of ERASMUS+ KA1 (the European Commission and National Agencies)

(1) To further support the grants for the professional development of joint teams because learning and working in teams are one of the features of a learning organisation that must be maintained and strengthened. Such an approach proves to have a more significant long-term impact on organisation development.

(2) To prioritise the activities of the dissemination of project results, which have the nature of collegial interaction and peer-to-peer learning (workshops, laboratories, academies, etc.) to compare with the valorisation activities (messages in the media).

(3) For supporting the sustainability of the project results to develop a financial support mechanism for the schools that have implemented Erasmus KA1 staff mobility projects and have achieved exceptionally excellent results.

(4) Special measures could be considered by the programme or national authorities for enhancing sustainability of the project results (ex., extra day after mobility for reflecting and planning the dissemination activities).

For school managers and teachers

(1) Emphasising the maintenance of the coherence with the school's strategic goals in all phases of a project (preparation of the project application, planning and implementation of the project activities, monitoring and evaluation of the results, ensuring sustainability).

(2) The sustainability aspect should be more emphasised in the project planning phase and be more clearly described in the application.

(3) When planning the dissemination of the project, the main focus should be paid to the events whose format entails peer-to-peer interaction and learning from the professional practice (workshops, academies, laboratories, etc.).

(4) Testing the new ideas leaving the individual freedom for teachers to make choices. The proven ideas that are suitable for achieving the desired goals, to integrate into the long-term plans (e.g. curricula).

(5) Considering the Erasmus+ KA projects as an instrument for improving the general school community competences (project management, language, networking).

(6) Looking for financial and other resources' management solutions (teacher workload allocation, payroll, educational equipment and environment) required for the continuous implementation of project ideas and the long-term delivery of the results. The modifications of the arrangements of school schedule by allocating time for joint testing of teacher-led innovations in professional practice,

collegial feedback, assessment and reflection of the achieved results, discussions and the acceptance of the agreements on the continuity (restructuring timetable, adjustment of form and content of staff meetings).

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ANNEXES

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MOBILE STAFF

MOBILE STAFF FOLLOW-UP SURVEY

What still works after 2 years of completion of ERASMUS+ KA1 (staff mobility) to you and your school?

DEAR COLLEAGUE,

You have been selected to be part of the Mobile Staff Follow-up survey because you participated in the ERASMUS+ KA1 Staff mobility (period 2014-2016) and completed the Mobile Staff Survey.

Please take a few minutes to fill out this survey concerning **the long-term impact of the ERASMUS+ KA1 (Staff mobility) to you and your school**. Your participation is very important!

The information you provide will be used in statistical reports. No individually-identifiable data will be included. This longitudinal research is carried out in Estonia, Finland, Lithuania, and Poland.

SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU AND YOUR SCHOOL:

1. You are:
- o School Principal
- o Vice Principal/ Assistant Principal/ Teacher Supervisor, Head Teacher
- o Teacher
- o Other (ex. Psychologist, Project manager, Librarian)

2. Including this year, how many years of teaching experience do you have?
- o Less than 5 years
- o 5 to 15 years
- o 16 to 25 years.
- o More than 25 years

3. What age pupils are you teaching? (you may check several options)
- o 5 to 10 years old (primary level)
- o 11 to 13 years old
- o 14 years and older

4. What is the number of students in your school?
- o Less than 100
- o 100 to 300
- o 301 to 500
- o More than 500

5. Which of the following definitions best describes the community in which your school is located?
- o A village, hamlet, or rural area (fewer than 3,000 people)
- o A small town (3,000 to about 15,000 people)
- o A town (15,000 to about 100,000 people)
- o A city (100,000 to about 1,000,000 people)
- o A large city (with over 1,000,000 people)

6. **How would you rate the <u>overall impact</u> of <u>Erasmus + KA1 staff mobility</u> on <u>your personal professional success</u>?**

- o Very great impact
- o Great impact
- o Moderate impact
- o Little impact
- o Minimal impact
- o No impact at all

7. **Please consider <u>to what extent</u> you <u>have used</u> the competencies developed <u>during Erasmus + KA1 staff mobility</u> this year? Please check the competencies you have developed during the project (first column) and then evaluate how often you have used them this year.**

During Erasmus + KA1 staff mobility you have developed…			How often have you used this competence during this year?			
			Often	**Sometimes**	**Rarely**	**Never**
	Yes	**No**				
Understanding other cultures	☐	☐	○	○	○	○
Knowledge and understanding of the education system in other countries	☐	☐	○	○	○	○
Pupils' challenging behaviour problem-solving skills	☐	☐	○	○	○	○
Teaching strategies for students with diverse learning needs	☐	☐	○	○	○	○
New teaching methods' skills	☐	☐	○	○	○	○
Foreign language skills	☐	☐	○	○	○	○
Competence of working with people from different cultures	☐	☐	○	○	○	○
Openness to changes and innovations	☐	☐	○	○	○	○
Got a stimulus to change my teaching style	☐	☐	○	○	○	○
ICT skills for teaching	☐	☐	○	○	○	○
Other (write, please).......						

8. **How would you rate the <u>overall impact</u> of <u>Erasmus + KA1 staff mobility</u> on <u>your school as an organisation?</u>**

- o Very great impact
- o Great impact
- o Moderate impact
- o Little impact
- o Minimal impact
- o No impact at all

9. **In your opinion, what changes have been taking place in your school <u>as a result of Erasmus+ staff mobility.</u>**

As a result of Erasmus+ staff mobility…	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Systemic changes in organisational processes have been taking place	○	○	○	○	○
New learning methods have been introduced to our school	○	○	○	○	○
The content of the curricula has been changing	○	○	○	○	○
Pupils' learning engagement has been increasing	○	○	○	○	○
Pupils in the class have been working more creatively	○	○	○	○	○
Pupils' learning results have been improving	○	○	○	○	○
Tolerance and openness has been increasing	○	○	○	○	○
School's culture and values have been changing	○	○	○	○	○
School's international dimension ideas have been discussing more often	○	○	○	○	○
School have been actively looking for other projects to continue the ideas, taken from the staff mobility	○	○	○	○	○
International professional network of mobility colleagues has been functioning actively	○	○	○	○	○
Other schools are taking over the ideas taken from our staff mobility	○	○	○	○	○

10. **In your opinion, what were the <u>most valuable</u> project dissemination activities, that <u>triggered real changes</u> in your school? (Please check up to 3 most valuable activities)**

   o Reporting in teachers' teams/ teachers' council
   o Sharing knowledge with other colleagues by inviting them into class
   o Giving a seminar to other colleagues outside the school
   o Making a presentation at the teachers' conference
   o Preparing new teaching material for my subject
   o Preparing recommendations about organizing the learning process
   o Sharing my knowledge with parents
   o Putting the prepared material online (Facebook, Moodle, etc.)
   o Sharing mobility-related ideas in the media (TV, newspapers...)
   o Other (please fill in)…………

11. Please consider how valuable the following factors to keep Erasmus + KA1 staff mobility ideas alive in your organisation were? Please check the factors you <u>have evidenced</u> in your school (first column) and then estimate <u>how valuable</u> they were to sustain the change in your school.

You have evidenced in your school…			How valuable was this for sustaining the change?			
	Yes	**No**	**Very valuable**	**Valuable**	**Somewhat valuable**	**Invaluable**
School leader supported ideas taken from Erasmus+ mobility	☐	☐	○	○	○	○
School leader motivated and supported sharing staff mobility ideas	☐	☐	○	○	○	○
School leader took real steps needed for new ideas' implementation in our school	☐	☐	○	○	○	○
Non-mobile teachers supported ideas taken from Erasmus+ staff mobility	☐	☐	○	○	○	○
Some non-mobile teachers took the challenge to try Erasmus+ staff mobility ideas in their practice	☐	☐	○	○	○	○
School's structures and policies were adopted for the implementation of new ideas	☐	☐	○	○	○	○

12. What activities / means of support / actions would you suggest ensuring the continuance of development of mobility-related ideas in your school?

Thank you for participation ☺

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS FOR MOBILE STAFF

THEME 1. THE CHANGES IN THE INSTITUTION AS THE RESULT OF THE ERASMUS+ STAFF MOBILITY PROJECT (CONTINUED EXISTENCE AND/OR EMERGENCE OF NEW PRACTICES)

- What project-related changes have been implemented in your school on the following levels: teacher, classroom, school and local community level (e.g. in class, extra-curricular activities, relations with teachers, pupils, parents, etc.)? What new practices were introduced? Please provide some examples.

- How important is the change for your school? Why?

- What are your thoughts on the project-related impact on pupil motivation and learning outcomes? Could you provide some examples?

- How is the teaching/learning process changing in your school as a result of Erasmus+ staff mobility?

THEME 2. INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT AS ACTIONS TAKEN TO SUSTAIN THE IMPACT OF THE PROJECT RESULTS

- How was your mobility project aligned with the school strategy, other projects?

- How did you support other teachers in your school to be active and put the initiatives in place?

- How (in what way) the current organisational culture, structure, and policies were helpful to sustain the impact of mobility? What limitations?

THEME 3. EXPANSION OF THE RESULTS TO NEW AREAS

- What were the most beneficial information sharing and dissemination initiatives? Why?

- In your opinion, which results of your project could be implemented/transferred by other schools? How is that done/should be done?

THEME 4. SUCCESS FACTORS AND CHALLENGES OF SUSTAINABILITY

- What was the most beneficial outcome of the mobility project which was implemented and is still used at your school?

- What steps have you taken to sustain the impact of the mobility project? What succeeded, what not, why?

- What would you do in a different way next time in order to achieve a more significant success?

- Do you feel that after the project you and your school are more European? Please give some illustrative examples.

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

THEME 1. THE CHANGES IN THE INSTITUTION AS THE RESULT OF THE ERASMUS+ STAFF MOBILITY PROJECT (CONTINUED EXISTENCE AND/OR EMERGENCE OF NEW PRACTICES)

- What project-related changes have been implemented in your school on the following levels: teacher, classroom, school and local community level (e.g. in class, extra-curricular activities, relations with teachers, pupils, parents, etc.)? What new practices were introduced? Please provide some examples.

- How important is the change for your school? Why?

- How is the teaching/learning process changing in your school as a result of Erasmus+ staff mobility?

THEME 2. MANAGERIAL SUPPORT AND ACTIONS TAKEN TO SUSTAIN THE IMPACT OF THE PROJECT RESULTS

- How was your mobility project aligned with the school strategy, other projects?

- How (in what way) the current organisational culture, structure, and policies were helpful to sustain the impact of mobility? What limitations?

- What managerial actions/ decisions were needed to sustain the impact of the project? What succeeded, what not, why? What would you suggest for other schools to sustain a long-term impact?

THEME 3. STAFF DEVELOPMENT POLICY

- How Erasmus+ KA1 mobility impact your staff development policy?

- How did you use Erasmus+ KA1 mobility to achieve the strategical staff development aims?

THEME 4. SUCCESS FACTORS AND CHALLENGES OF SUSTAINABILITY

- What your decisions were the most successful ensuring the sustainability of the project?

- What would you do in a different way next time in order to achieve a more significant success?

- Do you feel that after the project you and your school are more European? Please give some illustrative examples.

THEME 5 (additional topic for the case study). TEACHER LEADERSHIP FOR SUSTAINING PROJECT IMPACT.

- How were successful to develop yourself, to spread mobility ideas in the organisation, to inspire other colleagues to join?

- What were the most successful actions taken? What should be done in another way?

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

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PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES' PROFILE IN ERASMUS+ BASED ON FINALISED KA1 CONTRACTS FROM 2014 TO 2016 ACCORDING TO webgate.ec.europa.eu

|	Poland	Finland	Lithuania	Estonia	Europe
Success rate of KA1 projects' by country (Contracted/Received applications)	46.2%**	69.3%*	51.4%	58.1%	44.8%
Number of Finalised Staff Mobilities based on KA1 contracts from 2014 to 2016 (14.06. 2019)	4,549	2,424	1,056	520	63,545
Participants Average Age (years)	42.0	44.8	44.1	43	43.4
Female %	86%	82%	91%	88%	75%
Male %	14%	18%	9%	12%	25%
Non-teaching staff among staff mobility's (%)	0.7%	0.9%	2.6%	1.3%	1.8%
Average duration of mobility (in days)	9.0	6.1	6.3	6.6	6.8

*The figure includes national funding, approx. 500 000 €/year.

**In Poland, the significant number of projects on reserve list is supported with additional ESF financial sources which accounts for higher actual success rate.

School Education Participants by Activity Type - Mobilities Finalised
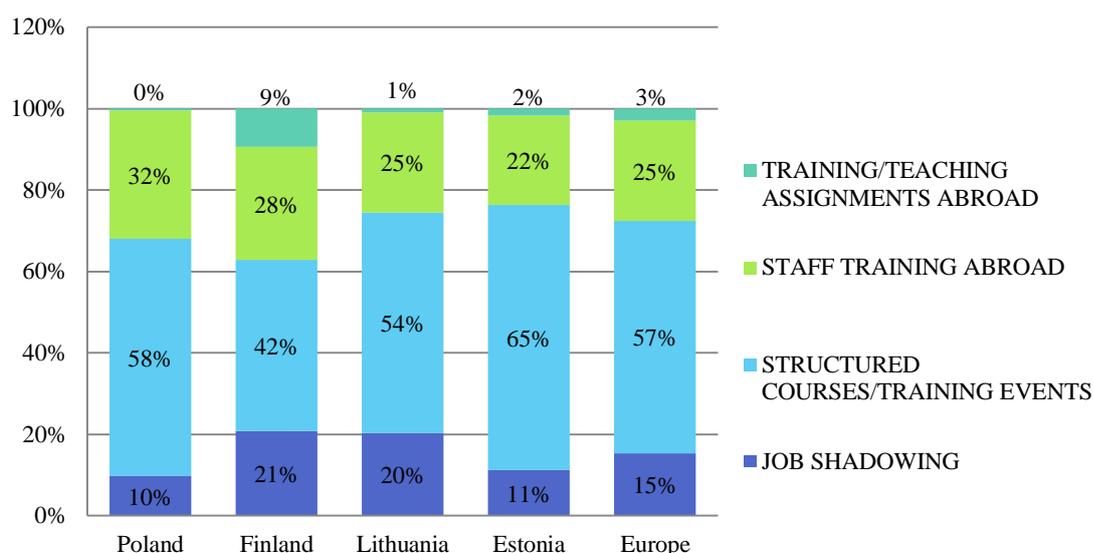
Flows by Receiving Country Name
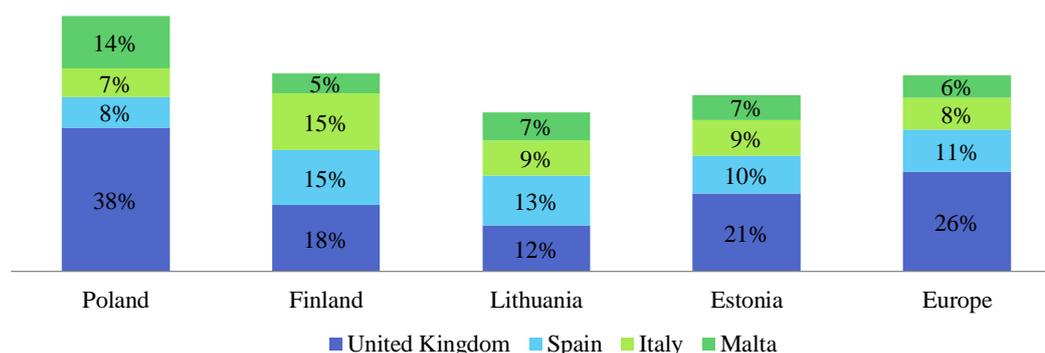
THE FRAMEWORK OF SUGGESTED EXPERTS' RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

WHAT IS NEEDED TO SUSTAIN ERASMUS+ KA1 MOBILITY RESULTS?

What should mobile teachers and school principals do?

STRATEGIC APPROACH

Teachers

- Choose the topics that are in line with the school strategic European development plan
- Constantly reflect the implementation of mobility ideas in your class through the lens of students' learning

Principals / managerial team

- Analyse the needs of your school in terms of teachers' professional development
- Initiate those staff mobility projects, which would ensure the development of staff competencies needed for implementation of school strategy
- Monitor and evaluate the results of mobility. Select to sustain ones that help to achieve school strategic goals

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT IN THE FORM OF MANAGERIAL DECISIONS

Teachers

- Speak up openly and clearly to school administration what means of support are needed to sustain the valuable mobility outcomes

Principals / managerial team

- Supply educational materials needed to implement and support the continuance of the proven mobility results.
- Plan the supportive measures (financial resources, substitute of the teachers, etc.)
- Continue to develop proven mobility ideas in future projects

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Teachers

- Find one/two/three like-minded colleagues and involve them into mobility idea's implementation
- Dare to teach other colleagues, so enabling them to join you

Principals/ managerial team

- Support the shared leadership approach
- Leave the teachers individual freedom to make choices on mobility ideas' implementation
- Motivate and reward (financially) teachers who implement, sustain and develop the proven mobility ideas

KNOWLEDGE SHARING IN THE FORM OF PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING

Teachers

- Foresee and prepare for knowledge sharing in peer-to-peer learning form
- Learn, how to give and receive feedback

Principals/ managerial team

- Ensure regular peer-to-peer learning (allocate time, place) for the development the proven mobility ideas