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

Research report

RESEARCH TEAM

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents theoretical background of the research *Impact and sustainability of the ERASMUS+ Programme Key Action 1 (KA1) learning mobility of individuals, mobility projects for school education staff* a brief introduction of the research strategy, methods of data collection and analysis, results of the empirical research in Lithuania. The report consists of the following parts: (1) introduction with main characteristic of the research design; (2) analysis and results of ERASMUS+ KA1 project application forms (schools granted in 2014); (3) analysis and results of survey (mobile staff[1], non-mobile staff[2], pupils, parents of schools granted in 2014); (4) the findings of content analysis (focus group discussions with school principals and mobile staff of schools granted); (5) findings of the case study research; (6) conclusions and recommendations.

1.1. THE MAIN CHARACTERISTCS OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN

RESEARCH AIMS (1) to reveal the situation of teacher professional development through participation in ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility. *KA1 mobility of staff is treated as the source of teacher professional development*; (2) to evaluate the impact and recognition of teacher professional development through the KA1 mobility of staff in the school community (mobile staff, non-mobile staff, pupils, parents, and school principals), and correspondence of teacher professional development to strategic goals of a school; (3) to evaluate leadership for learning of mobile staff. *This aim is based on the assumption that for impact and sustainability of KA1 mobility of staff activities teacher leadership is needed in bringing school to change*, (4) to identify school and school leader's involvement and support of mobility-related ideas to be implemented and sustained. *School context is treated as central to foster teacher leadership and bringing school to change.* (5) Estimate the alignment of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility actions with strategic aims of school, identifying good transferable practices of ERASMUS+ KA1 in terms of impact and sustainability so, that these practices could be transferred to foster motivation of pupils for learning, quality of education, openness and internationalization of other schools.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH The research idea is based on the notions of the ERASMUS+ Programme (Programme aims and expected outcomes) and grounded on the following theoretical concepts: Teacher Professional Development, International Dimension of Education, Leadership for Learning, Evaluation and Recognition of Professional Development, Strategic Staff Management.

RESEARCH METHODS. The research is based on the mixed research approach that combines qualitative and quantitative research methods and techniques (see table 1).

Qualitative research methods (document analysis, focus groups and in-depth interviews) are used in accordance with the following methodological provisions: (1) social reality is perceived and interpreted individually; (2) each individual creates reality actively on the basis of personal experience; (3) the social reality is different for different individuals, but it is shared through interaction with others (according to Berger, Luckmann, Walliman, 2006).

Quantitative research methods (on-line survey) allow collecting numerical data to explain a particular phenomenon, particular questions. Quantitative research is objective in approach in the sense that it seeks precise measurements and analysis of target concepts to answer his inquiry. Quantitative research strategy will be used to evaluate the impact and recognition of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility of staff in the selected

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[1] Mobile staff – teachers, school administration, and other school support staff who participated in ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility programme
[2] Non-mobile staff – teachers, school administration, and other school support staff who did not participate in ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility programme

target groups and countries. Usage of the standardized research instruments will allow data comparison across different countries.

<div align="right">Table 1</div>

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Research methods

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Research method	Description of the sample, research instruments	Outcome
Document analysis	The analysis of the application forms using data analysis matrix. N=31 (all granted applications, including consortium applications).	Institution's perception on European development. The alignment of project aims with the European Development Plan.
Survey	**On-line survey, 5 questionnaires for target audiences:** mobile teachers, non-mobile teachers, pupils (15 years and older), parents. $N_{\text{(mobile teachers)}} = 218$ $N_{\text{(non-mobile teachers)}} = 282$ $N_{\text{(pupils)}} = 549$ $N_{\text{(parents)}} = 231$ Totally 32 schools participated in the survey. Granted pre-primary institutions are excluded, consortium schools are calculated as separate items.	Impact and recognition of ERASMUS+ KA1 (staff mobility) in school's community (personal professional development, benefits for institution, alignment with institutional goals, institution's support to implement and sustain visit-related changes).
Focus group with school leaders of granted schools	**Target audience** – school leaders. N = 14 (2 focus groups)	Impact and recognition of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility of staff, forms of institutional support, alignment with institutional strategy.
Focus group with mobile staff	**Target audience** – mobile staff N = 24 persons (2 focus groups)	Staff experiences and benefits for professional development, alignment with institutional strategy
Case study	4 cases (2 consortiums and 2 schools) **In consortium case study:** 1 in-depth interview with leader of consortium and 1 focus group with school representatives, document analysis (analysis of strategic documents), interview with representatives of school authorities. **In school case study:** 1 in-depth interview with school leader, 1 focus group with mobile staff, 1 focus group with non-mobile staff, document analysis (analysis of school strategic documents).	Success factors of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility of staff recognition and sustainability. Experiences, challenges and opportunities in the process of integration of international dimension into the internal education policies. The role of the school authority for successful change implementation.
Interview with representatives of school authority	**In-depth interview** **Target audience** – representatives of school authorities (representatives from municipality)	

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Four questionnaires and two qualitative research instruments were prepared for this research.

Structure of the questionnaire for mobile staff:: (1) Professional profile of the respondent, school profile; (2) overall assessment of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility; (3) impact of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility on school (perception of the changes that are taking place in the school after mobility); (4) dissemination and sharing of mobility-related knowledge and experience, leadership of mobile staff; (5) assumptions about the school environment for implementation of mobility-related ideas at school (see Table 2).

Table 2

Structure of the questionnaire for mobile staff

Topics	Content
Professional profile of the respondent, school profile	Position at school; teaching experience; age of pupils taught; school size; community size in which the school is located; role in the ERASMUS+ KA1 project; personal experience of in-service training abroad (1-8 questions).
Overall evaluation of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility project (perceptions about application, preparation processes, satisfaction with mobility)	Opinion about the administration of ERASMUS+ programme KA1 action (availability and clarity of information provided by National Agency (NA), support provided by NA, opinion about application form, funding transparency); selection of mobility activities/forms; preparation for the visit; satisfaction with mobility (9-12 questions)
Perception about personal changes in professional competence and changes taking place in school after ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility	Perception about personal changes in general and professional competencies; perception about the changes, taking place in school (school culture, education processes) (13, 17 questions).
Dissemination and sharing of experience, teacher leadership	Dissemination and sharing of experience in and outside the school; teacher leadership (14, 15 questions)
Perception about school environment to implement and sustain gained experience	School leader support, support from colleagues (16 question)

In order to reveal the situation about recognition of professional competence of mobile staff in school's community, to estimate the existing school environment questionnaire for non- mobile staff was developed. The questionnaire consists of 4 sections: (1) professional profile of the respondent, school profile (2) impact of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility on school (perception of changes taking place in school after ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility); (3) dissemination and sharing of experience, teacher leadership (4) perception about school environment to implement and sustain ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility experience (see table 3).

Table 3

Structure of the questionnaire for non-mobile staff

Topics	Content
Professional profile of the respondent, school profile	Position at school; teaching experience; age of pupils taught; school size; community size in which the school is located.
Changes taking place in school after ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility	perception about the changes, takin place in school (school culture, education processes).
Dissemination and sharing of experience, teacher leadership	Dissemination and sharing of experience in and outside the school; teacher leadership
Perception about school environment to implement and sustain ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility experience	School leader support, support from colleagues.

Questionnaire for pupils allows them to reflect their expectations for teacher competencies, school's internationality, to estimate if pupils notice any changes taking place in teaching processes after their teachers return from mobility (see Table 4).

The aim of the **questionnaire for parents** is to reveal the situation about parent's awareness of the school international projects and activities, perceptions about school's internationality; to evaluate parent's perception about the benefits international projects give to school (see Table 4).

Table 4

Structure of the questionnaires for pupils and parents

Topics		Content
School profile		School size; community size in which the school is located.
Questionnaire for pupils	Expectations for teacher professional competencies, school's internationality	Foreign language; ICT skills; using foreign language to teach non-language subjects; teacher openness and tolerance to differences and other cultures; international collaboration.
	Changes taking place in teaching processes after teacher mobility	Sharing impressions; foreign language integration into subject; raising pupil's motivation; ICT usage in class; encouragement of pupils' international collaboration.
Questionnaire for parents	Awareness of the school's international projects and activities	Dissemination of project-related information; parent involvement; perceptions about school internationalization.
	Perception about benefits international projects give to school	Perceptions about benefits of teacher professional development abroad, school internationalization.

DATA ANALYSIS METHODS

Methods of quantitative data analysis. Statistical data is analysed by using descriptive and probabilistic methods. Discrete data is described in terms of percentages. When rank scale is used, the mean and standard deviation is presented. The characteristics of continuous variables are presented by providing overall mean score.

In order to evaluate the conditions and 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 proportion of variance and Cronbach's alpha. Totally 15 scales were developed.

Comparison of variables between different groups (statistically significant differences) were determined using Chi-squared, Kruskal-Wallis H, and *ANOVA* tests according to the scale type. Only statistically significant differences ($p < 0,05$) are highlighted and presented in this report.

To estimate an impact of preparation for the visit, school environment, teacher leadership and other independent variables to changes in personal processional competences, changes taking place in school regression analysis, multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed. To evaluate inter-correlations between variables different statistical models were tested, path analysis was carried out to test to determine the most likely cause and effect relationship between the variables. The calculations were made using IBM SPSS software.

Methods of qualitative data analysis. For the analysis of qualitative data content analysis was performed (Cropley, 2002; Denscombe, 2010). Audio records were listened to and selected units of analysis transcribed.

The strategy of mixed deductive and inductive content analysis techniques was applied (Tracy, 2013; Drisco, Maschi, 2015), when major themes of analysis are identified in the theoretical model, whereas minor categories and subcategories are found by distinguishing the key text units, splitting up them into smaller parts, and then dividing them into categories. The content of categories and subcategories are described, interpreted, followed by the researchers' comments.

RESEARCH ETHICS General Requirements for ethics in social research will be kept: research validity, research aim clarity and exposure, voluntary participation in the research, protection of privacy and confidentiality of research participants, avoidance of deceit and manipulation, and academic fairness.

CASE STUDY RESEARCH DESIGN

The aim of case study is to reveal and describe mobility experience and identify success factors and problems. Results of case studies of 2 secondary schools and 2 consortiums are provided in this chapter.

Topics for case studies: (1) organisation of mobility; (2) implementation and dissemination of the mobility experience; (3) school leader support and teacher leadership; (4) outcomes of teacher professional development abroad, their impact on pupils' achievements and school culture.

Data collection methods in school case study: Interview with the school leaders; focus groups with school representatives (mobile staff, non-mobile staff); document analysis (analysis of the strategic documents of the school), secondary data analysis of the surveys of schools. School's data is compared with the data of the rest schools in the sample.

Research methods in the case of consortium: interview with leader of consortium; focus group with representatives of school community of the consortium; analysis of the application form and strategic documents of the founder of consortium (see fig. 1).
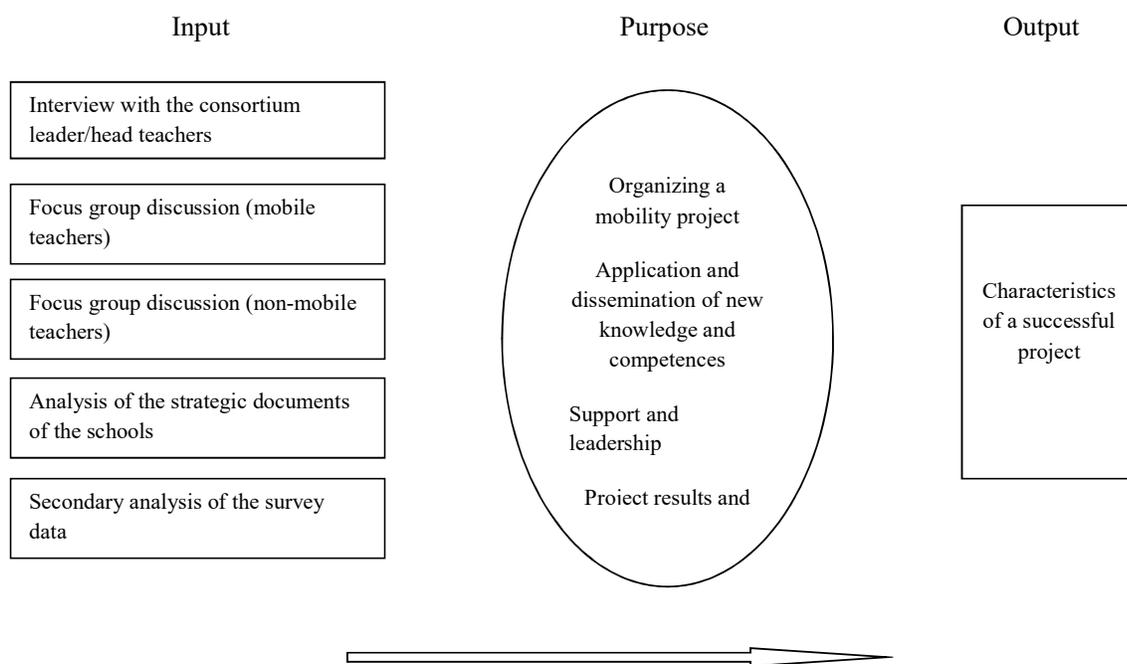
Input	Purpose	Output
Interview with the consortium leader/head teachers		
Focus group discussion (mobile teachers)	Organizing a mobility project	
Focus group discussion (non-mobile teachers)	Application and dissemination of new knowledge and competences	Characteristics of a successful project
Analysis of the strategic documents of the schools	Support and leadership	
Secondary analysis of the survey data	Proiect results and	

Fig. 1. Case Study Research Framework

2. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS OF ERASMUS+ KA1 PROJECT APPLICATION FORMS

Research sample. 31 application forms from organisations that received funding under ERASMUS+ KA1 action in 2014–2015 were analysed, of them 16 application forms from large schools (more than 500 pupils), 6 from medium schools (301–500 pupils), 3 from small schools (up to 300 pupils), 4 from pre-primary education institutions (nurseries-kindergartens), and 2 consortium applications. Rokiškis district consortium application covers 8 schools (6 small, 1 medium, and 1 large). Šiauliai district consortium application includes 7 pre-primary education institutions (nurseries-kindergartens) of Šiauliai district.

Objectives for analysis of application forms are: (1) to disclose how a school applying for funding under KA1 action project understands European development and schools internationalization; (2) to evaluate the alignment of mobility aims (the organisation's needs in terms of quality development and internationalisation) with the school strategy; (3) to determine how school is planning to integrate the competences and experiences acquired in mobility, into its strategic development (sustainability assurance activities planned by schools).

To attain these objectives content analysis of one of the parts of ERASMUS+ KA1 action application form, namely the *European Development Plan*, was performed. The content analysis was based on purposes of the European Development Plan as part of ERASMUS+ KA1 action application form: to ensure that the planned activities are relevant both for the individual participants and for the organisation as a whole, as activities have a higher impact on the quality of teaching and learning when they are well-integrated in the organisation's strategic development. According to the ERASMUS+ programme guide (2015), European Development Plan of an applying organisation must:

- state what are the organisation's needs in terms of quality development and internationalisation, identify the main areas for improvement name the European mobility plans and cooperation activities of the organisation and explain how these activities will contribute to ensuring implementation of the stated needs;

- outline the organisation's plans for European mobility and cooperation activities, and explain how these activities will contribute to meeting the identified needs.

- explain how the organisation will integrate the competences and experiences acquired by staff participating in the project, into its strategic development in the future.

Results of content analysis of all the application forms along with short evaluation of each application according above mentioned three criteria (organisation's needs in terms of quality development and internationalisation, their alignment with organisation's strategic plan, and planned actions to ensure sustainability of the gained experience) are given in the Annex 7 (Lithuanian version of the report).

SCHOOL PERCEPTION OF INTERNATIONALISATION AND EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT

The situation of how organisations understand internationalisation and European development is reflected by the categories given below.

On the individual level European development of organisation is understood as development of intercultural and professional competences of a teacher / manager. A teacher who successfully acts in a changed and changing society, embodies international mindedness through understanding political, economic, and social changes, understands one's own educational system, and has clear cultural, national, and global identification competences is viewed as important prerequisite for improvement of education quality and internationalisation of the organisation: *A teacher working at school must be open to changes and innovations, ready for international collaboration, and capable of putting the European experience into education of pupils*.

The other level of the perception of European development is the organisational one. **Schools understand the European development as transfer of the European experience into organisation.** This dimension of the European development perception reflects identification of similarities and differences between educational systems in different countries as a way to identify and understand the current problems, to improve existing educational system at school, and to satisfy the need of intellectual curiosity about other cultures and educational systems.

Development of foreign partnerships. The European development is viewed as establishment of new relations with foreign partners, strengthening of current partnerships, involvement in new projects, and initiating other joint activities. An important aspect observed in this category is empowerment and inspiration of other colleagues (who have not been involved in international activities) to undertake such activities. The schools see European development as: *Establishing European networks, strengthening relations between countries and schools; Ensuring continuity of activities with current partners; Running new projects, exchange programmes; Empowerment of teachers to initiate new inter-cultural activities.*

Changed, more open organisation. European development and internationalization is understood as qualitative growth of a school to meet the higher qualitative requirements of the European Education Area. Internationalisation is described as openness to higher quality requirements through integration of attitudes of other cultures and of international, inter-cultural, or global dimension into the institution mission, strategic organisation aims, and education processes: *A school must be open to changes, familiar with best international practices, and cooperating with other European schools in order to actively participate in joint European activities, be able to develop the European citizen identity of its staff and pupils; To modernise school so that it becomes a more European, learning organisation.*

Development of current strategic direction. In this case school internationalisation is seen as organisation's opportunity to strengthen the chosen direction and philosophy of education (for example, gifted or disabled pupils). Schools where this dimension of internationalisation is emphasised mobility's are aimed at development of specific competences in order to strengthen the chosen education strategy (for example, development of the international baccalaureate programme: *To integrate elements of international baccalaureate (Middle Years Programme) into basic education curriculum*).

When teacher professional development is seen as one of the most important ways of school internationalisation, identification and naming of professional development priorities are particularly important to organisation. In the analysed application forms many organisations ground needed competences with the reference to strategic plans, school self-assessment reports, recommendations of external experts, organisation's SWOT, however not all organisations clearly state their strategy and philosophy of education.

Based on analysis of the application forms the 3 groups of schools can be distinguished:

- *schools with a clear education philosophy and strategic direction*. They view ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility as a tool to facilitate its implementation (8 out of 31 cases analysed);

- *schools that search for their strategic direction by strengthening selected competences* (19 out of 31 cases analysed). Some schools in this group set very clear aims for ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility activities and name specific priorities expecting that development of the selected competences will help the organisation to strengthen that direction and in the long run this will become the school's strategic position. Other schools in this group search for their identity by planning for development of rather broad range of competences in mobility activities, i.e. their applications present many competences to be developed. In both cases ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility for schools in this group is an attempt to "step into" new quality and find their uniqueness;

- *schools that take their first steps in opening up and getting to know their own possibilities as well as that of others* (4 out of 31 cases analysed);

ERASMUS+ KA1 TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUSTAINABILITY ASSURANCE ACTIVITIES

The researchers grouped sustainability assurance activities and measures that are presented in the application form, and assigned descriptive names to these groups. The content analysis of the application forms allows to distinguish the following groups of actions planned by schools in order to sustain experience gained in ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility:

- **participation in framing education policy:** *The recommendations and (or) methodologies prepared could be applied in participating in discussions on modernisation of the system of education and encouragement of unconventional education; We will find new relations by offering priority activities for the system of education not only at district level, but also town- and nation-wide*;

- **preparation of documents (methodologies, recommendations, education plans, organisational strategy) regulating implementation of education policy at school:** *After professional development courses the staff will prepare methodologies and (or) recommendations for improving the process of education. Proven, adapted strategies of education, newly discovered spaces of education will be included into education plans and used in practice; International educational activities will become part of the institution's strategic development programme and one of the strategies of education; All experience gained during the mobility <…> will be included into next-year strategic plan for further development; After the visit the participants will present their proposals to the teachers' council and with its approval the proposals will be included into strategic plans of the institution by assigning the implementation period, persons in charge etc.*;

- **assessment of impact on pupils / teachers:** *After the courses the teachers will be doing monitoring of the influence of the new methods on children learning outcomes; School self-assessment group will identify and measure the quantitative and qualitative changes in education; Will carry out survey of improvement of competences, which will be dedicated to assessment of impact of the courses and planning of future courses of activities of the school*;

- **continuity of activities through participation in other international projects:** *Improved foreign language skills will enable more active participation of teachers and pupils in international projects, tenders and discussions, search for new areas of activity; Project participants will become initiators of new international activities; This project will open our organisation new ways and enable communication and collaboration with not only local, but also international educational organisations; This will encourage other teachers to initiate new projects; A strategic partnership project is planned with this school, therefore an shadowing and teaching visits would be continuation and development of already established partnership*;

- **experience dissemination in professional interest groups:** *Project participants will share their new competences in teacher working groups; Back from the courses the teachers will give open lessons, share their new knowledge in teacher's teams, conduct seminars*;

- **establishment of new working groups:** *Staff that participated in the project will be invited to different working groups already involved in developing the school's strategic plan and organising its implementation; Back from the courses the teachers will establish an international cooperation*

team that will seek ways to develop the European dimension of the institution, initiate new activities under ERASMUS+, and get the community of the institution involved into these activities;

- **consultations to colleagues:** *It is expected that very important transfer and integration of experience into school strategic development will occur through natural daily exchange of know-how with colleagues by communicating the results and getting the entire school community (including parents and pupils) involved into the process; Back from the mobility the project participants will present their experiences at the meetings of staff of the institution; The project participants will consult their colleagues on how to apply the project materials in their job and train at least 10 colleagues to use and apply new teaching methods*;

- **self-reflection / organisational reflection:** *Every day on the visit the participants will have to give their reflection using the prepared questionnaire, they will have to indicate what measures or methods they saw during day activities they will apply in their daily work and when, how and with whom they will implement that. At the end of the visit these commitments will be discussed with the entire team of participants and the partners*;

- **improvement of quality in lesson / educational environment:** *<…> will be practically applied in education process and implemented in classes or working groups; Key competences and experience gained by the teachers will be directly applied in day-to-day activities with pupils; Educational activities in unconventional spaces will be organised; Set-up of vision assessment room in accordance with the methodological recommendations of partner institution.*

Assessment of the number and repetitiveness of activities planned to ensure project outcome sustainability, which have been specified in the application forms, shows that the following **SUSTAINABILITY ASSURANCE ACTIVITIES ARE DOMINATING:**

- ✓ dissemination of gained experience in organised groups;
- ✓ improving lesson quality or changing education environment;
- ✓ preparation of documents (methodologies, recommendations, education plans, organisational strategy).

It is important to note that **only in 3 out of 31 analysed applications the text about measurement of pupils learning outcomes (as an indicator of project-related experience sustainability) is found.**

THE ORGANISATION'S NEEDS IN ERASMUS+ KA1 MOBILITY ACTIVITIES

Analysis of needs of organisations was carried out using deductive content analysis: the matrix of analysis was worked out with reference to the Description of Teacher's Professional Competences (2015) according to which teachers' professional competences consist of **general, didactic, and subject-specific competences**.

Teachers' general competences comprise:

- *personal improvement and learning competence* – knowledge and skills in managing personal career and lifelong learning, based on reflection on professional activities as well as regular updating of knowledge and skills;

- *cultural competence* – knowledge and skills in safeguarding and cherishing Lithuanian culture, building sustainable and responsible society, participating in processes of public and educational change by doing so in a creative and open manner;

- *new technology and information management competence* – knowledge and skills in using digital technologies and devices as well as information search sources in preparing textual and visual information, shaping pupils' informational and virtual communication culture through systematic development of their digital literacy;

- *professional communication competence* – knowledge and skills in establishing and fostering relations with school community, society, and representatives of related institutions and organisations by efficiently communicating in national and foreign language.

Teachers' didactic competences comprise:

- *competence of understanding differences and possibilities of pupils (recognition of special abilities and needs), providing assistance in learning, and motivating pupils* – knowledge and skill in using knowledge and understanding of the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development of pupils to determine their inclinations, take their different needs and abilities into consideration and encourage active learning by helping to strive for progress and encouraging to get to know things, processes, or phenomena, set educational and personal aims, and manage and contemplate own learning activities and their results;

- *competence of creating the diversity of (self)education environments, self-education content and situations* – knowledge and skill in creating an open and safe learning environment-stimulating and creative conditions for self-education by collaborating with pupils and their parents and applying various means and technologies;

- *competence of planning and improvement of the subject content* – knowledge and skill in defining aims and objectives for (self)education together with pupils and planning for and managing necessary resources to select and apply methods suitable for attaining the aims of education, preparing and conveying pupil-oriented related materials of educational activity while assessing efficiency of the methods and strategies of education, the assignments, and the aims set for education;

- *competence of assessment of achievements and progress of pupils* – knowledge and skills in selecting assessment strategies matching the aims of education and considering the needs of pupils / parents to provide efficient evaluation and feedback emphasizing personal progress;

- *competence of analysis of professional activity* – knowledge and skills in methodological assessment and analysis of outcomes of professional activity with a view to identify and resolve any problems and improve the quality in the process of education.

Analysis of application forms in the aspect of needed competences shows that **application forms of schools are predominated by the need for development / improvement of general competences** (55% of all applications). Talking more specifically about general competencies improvement *implementation of the content of education (education methods and strategies)* (90% of all applications) and *foreign language*

(English) (86% of all applications) competencies are in greatest demand. **The least expressed is the need for the competence of assessment of achievements and progress of pupils** (10% of all applications).

Comparing the needs of smaller and large schools differences were found in the following areas:

- small and medium schools (up to 500 pupils) emphasize mainly the need to develop such general competences as *personal improvement* (67%), *cultural* (56%) *and managerial* (78%) *competence*;

- large schools (more than 500 pupils) seek mainly improvement of *digital technology usage* (56%) and *subject-specific* (43%) competences during ERASMUS+ KA1 activities.

It is important to note that in naming the needs of organisations and revealing relations to strategic aims of schools great attention in the application forms is given to teachers' professional development *per se*. **Pupils' needs, pupils' learning quality and progress as a starting position for identifying areas of improvement is observed only at some applications.** Summary of organisation's needs in ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility activities is presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Organisation's needs in ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility activities (according to applications)

School size	Areas of competences		
	General competences	Didactic competences	Subject-specific competences
Large* (>500, N=16)	49%	45%	44%
Small and medium* (<500, N=9)	62%	56%	11%
Total (for all applications, N=31):	**55%**	**48%**	**35%**

Note: unit of analysis is ERASMUS+ KA1 application form.
* – cases of nurseries-kindergartens and consortium are not included, they are reflected in the "Total" category.

3. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS OF SURVEY DATA

3. 1. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH SAMPLE

3.1.1. Characteristics of the sample of mobile staff

In 2014, 25 secondary schools implementing educational programmes[3] received the funding allocated for ERASMUS+ KA1 action for school education staff. According to the project applications, totally 280 mobility visits were planned, on an average of 11visits per school. It was planned to survey all mobile staff from the granted schools (the year 2014). However, at the beginning of the survey, in 13 school projects were still not completed, not all planned visits had taken place, in some schools some teachers participated in several visits. With the recommendation of national agency 7 more schools were included in the research sample (schools participating in the project on the basis of the consortium (ERASMUS+ KA1 programme call of 2015). Totally the research sample consisted of 218 respondents (mobile staff) from 32 schools. Detailed characteristics of the research sample is presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Professional characteristics of mobile staff (N=218, 32 schools)

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Position	School Principal	14	6,4
	Vice Principal/ Assistant Principal/ Teacher Supervisor, Head Teacher	20	9,2
	Teacher	166	76,1
	Other (ex. Psychologist, Project manager, Librarian)	18	8,3
Experience of pedagogical work	Less than 5 years	13	6,0
	From 5 to 15 years	59	27,1
	From 16 to 25 years	61	28,0
	More than 25 years	84	38,5
Programme delivered	5 to 10 years old (primary level)	41	18,8
	11 to 13 years old	126	57,8
	14 years and older	129	59,2
Number of pupils in school	Less than 100	5	2,3
	From 100 to 300	40	18,3
	From 301 to 500	39	17,9
	More than 500	134	61,5
Type of school location	A village, hamlet, or rural area (fewer than 3,000 people)	47	21,6
	A small town (3,000 to about 15,000 people)	37	17,0
	A town (15,000 to about 100,000 people)	24	11,0
	A city (100,000 to about 1,000,000 people)	110	50,5

The results of the survey suggest that professional qualifications were improved abroad by staff holding different positions in schools. In 53 percent of all cases at least one school manager participated in the project: director, school principal, vice principal, head teacher, which accounts for 16 percent of the persons involved in the projects. 34 percent of all school cases, specialists providing support to pupils took place in mobility visits: psychologist, social pedagogue, librarian. Teachers constitute the largest part of the individuals who developed their professional qualifications abroad. However, comparing the characteristics of the sample and the national dispersion of teachers according to the work experience, it was found out that **visits relatively more involved teaching staff with less experience**.

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[3] Pre-primary education institutions which received funding did not participate in the survey.

For most ERASMUS+ KA1 action teachers, a mobility visit was not the first training abroad: 59 percent indicated that they had experience of teacher training abroad, 41 percent went for the first time. The majority of heads of schools (79 percent) had participated in qualification development events abroad prior to participating in the ERASMUS+ KA1, rather than teachers and specialists providing support (55 percent).

3.1.2. Characteristics of the research sample of non-mobile staff

In order to reveal the details of the school environment favouring implementation of ERASMUS + KA1 school staff mobility project ideas, school colleagues who did not take part in the mobility were also surveyed to assess their perception of leadership of mobile staff and project outcomes to school. The formation of the survey sample included 10 individuals (non-mobile teachers) from each school participating in the project. The survey involved 282 non-mobile teachers from 32 schools, on average 9 from one school. Detailed survey sample characteristics are provided in Table 7

Table 7

Characteristics of the research sample of non-mobile staff (N = 282, 32 schools)

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Position	School Principal	7	2,5
	Vice Principal/ Assistant Principal/ Teacher Supervisor, Head Teacher	20	7,1
	Teacher	233	82,6
	Other (ex. Psychologist, Project manager, Librarian)	22	7,8
Experience of pedagogical work	Less than 5 years	11	3,9
	From 5 to 15 years	69	24,5
	From 16 to 25 years	96	34,0
	More than 25 years	106	37,6
Programme delivered	5 to 10 years old (primary level)	37	13,1
	11 to 13 years old	165	58,5
	14 years and older	174	61,7
Number of pupils in school	Less than 100	20	7,1
	From 100 to 300	84	29,8
	From 301 to 500	39	13,8
	More than 500	139	49,3
Type of school location	A village, hamlet, or rural area (fewer than 3,000 people)	109	38,7
	A small town (3,000 to about 15,000 people)	37	13,1
	A town (15,000 to about 100,000 people)	35	12,4
	A city (100,000 to about 1,000,000 people)	101	35.8

It can be said that the survey sample basically reflects the population of school staff who did not participate in ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility programme; therefore, the results of the survey can be generalized at the school level.

3.1.3. Characteristics of the research sample of pupils and parents

In order to reveal the pupils' expectations in terms of teacher's competences likely gained during visits of professional development abroad and real changes that students observe in the work of teachers who participated in the visits, it was planned to question 20 pupils likely experiencing the project impact from each of the schools in the project. Detailed characteristic of the sample of pupils is presented in Table 8.

Table 8

Characteristics of the research sample of pupils (N = 549, 32 schools)

Feature	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Type of school location	A village, hamlet, or rural area (fewer than 3,000 people)	124	22,6
	A small town (3,000 to about 15,000 people)	131	23,9
	A town (15,000 to about 100,000 people)	134	24,4
	A city (100,000 to about 1,000,000 people)	159	29,0
Number of pupils in school	Less than 100	30	5,5
	From 100 to 300	114	20,8
	From 301 to 500	134	24,4
	More than 500	255	46,4
	Don't know	16	2,9

The study involved 549 pupils (15 years and older) from 32 schools, on average, 17 pupils from each school. Pupils represents all types of schools, which took place in the ERASMUS+ KA1 school staff mobility projects.

In order to reveal the parents attitude to teachers' professional development abroad, situation about the dissemination of information about ERASMUS+ KA1 programme and parent involvement in the school's international projects 10 parents from each school were surveyed.

Table 9

Characteristics of the research sample of parents (N = 231, 32 schools)

Characteristics	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Type of school location	A village, hamlet, or rural area (fewer than 3,000 people)	65	28,1
	A small town (3,000 to about 15,000 people)	40	17,3
	A town (15,000 to about 100,000 people)	39	16,9
	A city (100,000 to about 1,000,000 people)	83	35,9
Number of pupils	Less than 100	16	6,9
	From 100 to 300	60	26,0
	From 301 to 500	47	20,3
	More than 500	96	41,6
	Don't know	9	3,9

231 parents from the 32 participating schools took part in the survey with an average of 7 parents of pupils who are likely to experience the impact of professional development of teachers in foreign countries.

3.2 . OVERAL EVALUATION OF ERASMUS+ KA1 MOBILITY: MOBILE STAFF, NON-MOBILE STAFF, PROJECT COORDINATORS PERCEPTIONS

This section contains the results of overall evaluation of ERASMUS+ KA1 school staff mobility project: general satisfaction with mobility, preparation for the visit, selection of mobility activities/forms; support provided by National Agency.

General satisfaction with professional development activities. The results show that in general teachers are satisfied with the intercultural experience of the visit, visit organisation, responsiveness of the host institution (see Table 10). Slightly lower is rated the content of the courses in the context of prior expectations.

Table 10

General satisfaction with ERASMUS+ KA1 project mobility visits (N mobile staff =218)

	Exceeded my expectations	Met my expectations	Didn't meet my expectations
The content of the courses	21,2	76,3	2,4
Visit organisation (schedule, place)	33,8	64,1	2,0
Intercultural experience of the visit	34,3	64,3	1,3
Responsiveness of the host institution (understanding of Your needs and quick adjustment)	33,1	64,6	2,2

Overall satisfaction with mobility varies across teachers in different groups. Grater satisfaction is seen in the group of teachers from schools which are located in large cities to compare with teachers from small town or village schools.

o **Preparation for the visit**. Preparation for the in-service training abroad is an integral part of the ERASMUS+ KA1 projects. The results confirm that the majority of mobile teachers did some preparation before the visit: studied material about the culture of the country (88 percent), read about educational system in the country of mobility (60 percent), took foreign language courses (32 percent), (see fig. 2).
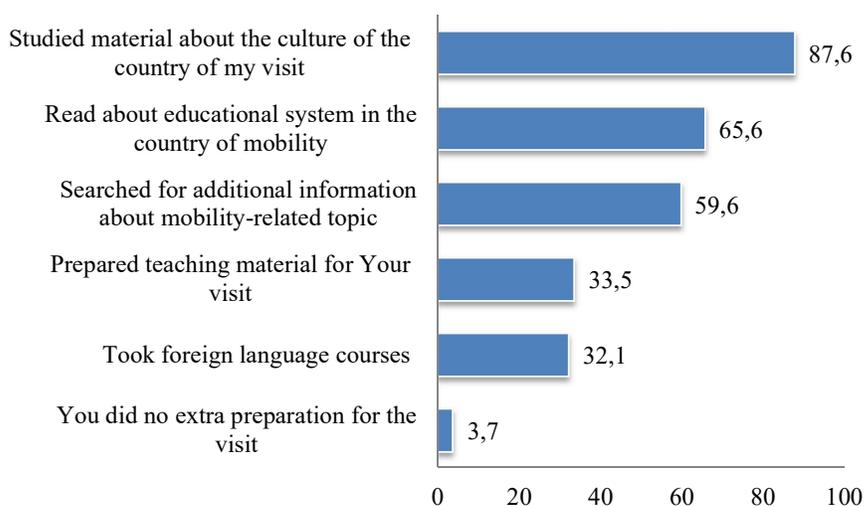
Fig. 2. Preparation activities for mobility visits (percent, N mobile staff=218)

Survey data suggests that school staff prepares differently for mobility visits: preparation for a development of professional qualification depends on the length of teaching experience: more responsibly are preparing teachers with more than 16 years of teaching experience than those who have teaching experience up to 5 years.

The results suggest that the *preparation for the visit is a significant factor for the better outcomes*. Teachers who put more effort for preparation are slightly more satisfied with the mobility experience ($r = 0.27$, $p < 0.001$), they rate higher development of general ($r = 0.41$, $p < 0.001$) and professional ($r = 0 41$, $p < 0.001$) competencies, more often act as leaders, disseminating and implementing gained experience ($r = 0.50$, $p < 0.001$).

Replies to the open question *What would you suggest to your colleagues who are going to develop and participate in ERASMUS+ KA1 staff mobility projects?* content analysis suggests that mobile teachers advise

to pay more attention to visit preparation. They believe that the quality of mobility and its success is assured by:

- **mobilising of teams** involving all stakeholders in mobility preparation, sharing tasks and responsibilities, inspire with the initiative other colleagues;
- **careful planning of the visit and the choice of courses/ institutions**, i.e. attention for the direction and duration of the courses, finding partners and course providers;
- **clear goal setting for professional development**, thoughtful selection what knowledge and skills you want to acquire, allocating enough time and effort for searching of appropriate training courses;
- **assurance of the training quality**, by carefully selecting courses, carefully analysing the benefits of the program, collection of information, direct contact with course providers, collection of advice and feedback about course providers;
- **knowledge of to the country of visit**, prior familiarity with the country's culture, people's communication features, the education system;
- **Foreign language improvement**, in order to improve practical communication skills needed for mobility purposes;
- **Self-confidence and readiness for challenge**, overcoming owns shyness, fears and complexes.

Selection of mobility forms. In the frame of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility for school staff projects teachers can choose from the following forms of professional development: participation in structured courses or training events abroad, a job shadowing/observation period abroad in a partner school, and teaching abroad. The survey results shows that training courses are dominating (77 percent), 13 percent of respondents attended both courses and job shadowing activities, 9 percent - solely job shadowing activities. Teaching in other country was selected only by 2 percent of respondents (see figure 3).
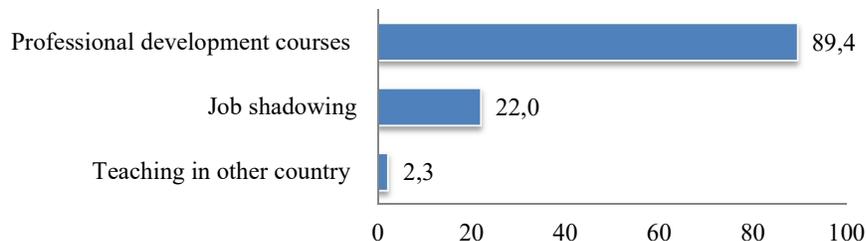

Fig. 3. Selection of mobility forms (N $_{mobile\ staff}$ =218)

It is important to note that the changes in **teachers' competence development depends on the form mobility**. The study revealed that the highest results were achieved by combining courses and job shadowing (see Table 11). In the respondents' point of view *job shadowing is more effective for broadening of the knowledge about the other country's education system, encouraging innovation for change* than training courses. On the other hand *courses are more suitable for learning new teaching methods, improving classroom management skills (pupils' discipline and behaviour problem-solving), developing ICT skills*. In summary it can be said that shadowing activities are more suitable for development of general competencies. Training courses are more reasonable for development of professional competencies.

Table 11

Dependence of form of mobility on teachers' competence development (N mobile staff=218, average in the scale from 1 to 5)

	Form of qualification development		
	Job shadowing N=20	Professional development courses N=187	Courses and Job shadowing N=28
Deepened my understanding of other cultures *	4,47	4,48	4,79
Expanded my knowledge and understanding of education system in other countries **	4,74	4,46	4,89
Developed my ICT skills for teaching **	2,89	3,73	4,14
Developed pupils' discipline and behaviour problem-solving skills *	3,00	3,50	3,57
I made a lot of contacts with colleagues from other countries	4,05	4,25	4,36
Acquired new teaching methods *	3,78	4,38	4,39
Improved the practical use of foreign languages	4,00	4,29	4,50
Improved teaching strategies for students with diverse learning needs	3,74	3,56	3,71
Improved the skills for working with people from different cultures	4,11	4,13	4,04
Became more open to changes and innovations **	4,74	4,34	4,75
Got a stimulus to change my teaching style	3,83	4,14	4,36

*p<0.05, **p<0.01

The selected form of mobility is related with the changes respondents are noticing at school after mobility. Changes in pupils' learning in the classroom, pupils' learning motivation are observed in the schools where teachers combine courses and job shadowing in ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility, but the curriculum changes, introduction of new methods got higher rates in the cases where courses were chosen.

When evaluating the usefulness of ERASMUS+ KA1 teacher professional development forms non-mobile teachers priority gave to courses. About half of the surveyed non-mobile teachers think so. About a third of them indicate higher expectations in terms of benefits from colleagues who had the opportunity to participate in job shadowing activities (see figure 4).
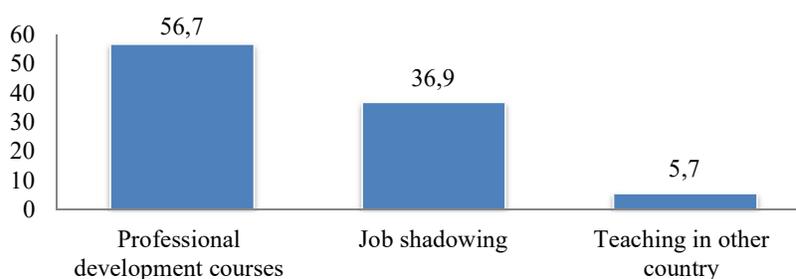

Fig. 4. Assessment of usefulness of a form of qualification development: opinions of non-mobile teachers (percent, N non-mobile staff =282)

Evaluation of National Agency support. The support of National Agency of the program by school project coordinators is rated as *good* or *very good* (see figure 5). Most respondents are satisfied with the National Agency support when preparing and realizing the project. The most difficult part in the opinion of school project coordinators' is filling the application form. This stage was treated as more difficult by schools located in small cities and villages to compare with project coordinators in larger towns.
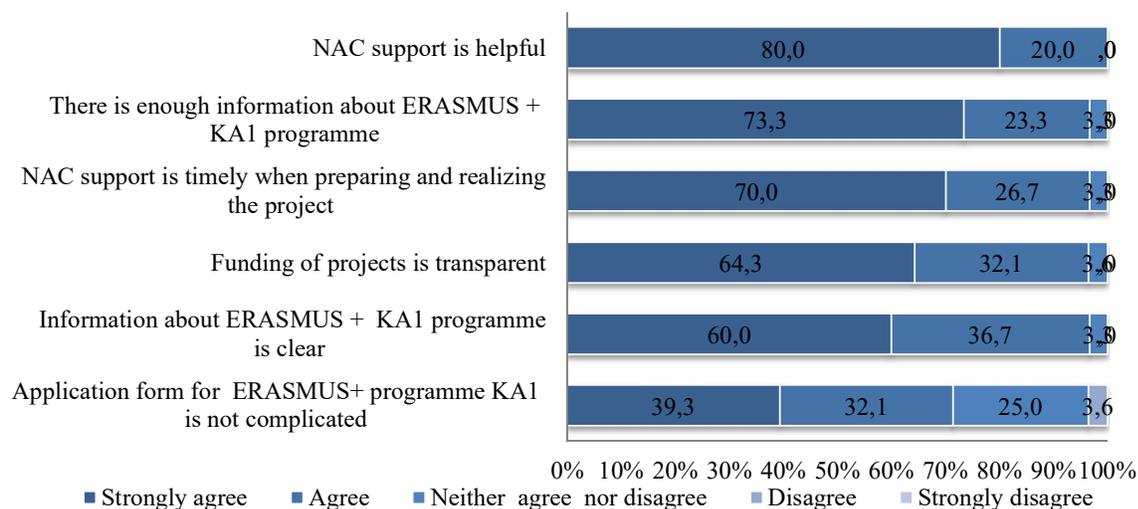
Fig. 5. Assessment of National agency support: project coordinators' point of view (N=30)

3.3 . IMPACT OF ERASMUS+ KA1 MOBILITY ON TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: MOBILE STAFF'S PERCEPTIONS

Impact of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility is analysed in two aspects: (1) perception about personal changes in general, didactical and subject-related competencies; (2) perception about the changes, taking place in school (education policy and student learning progress) after mobility.

Changes in general, didactical and subject-related competences: perception of mobile staff

New professional experience and teachers competence change is a direct result of teacher professional development. It is highly related with the objectives stated and possibilities to implement it in reality. The results show how teachers who participated in the ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility visits, notice the changes in their professional competencies (see figure 6).
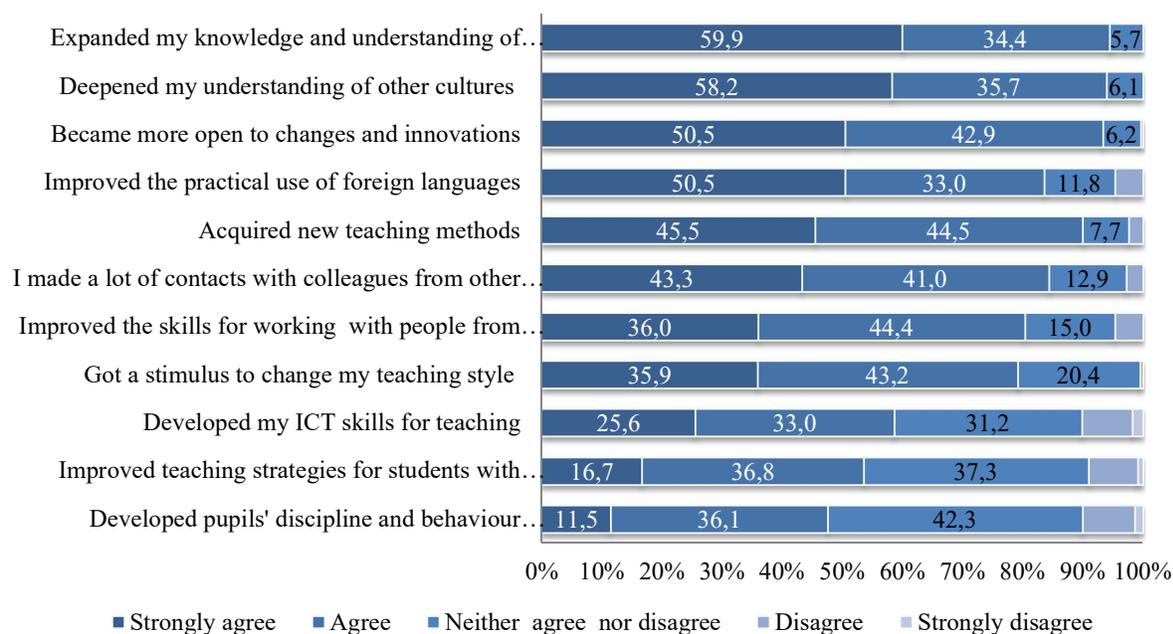
Fig. 6. Changes in teachers' competences caused by ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility (N mobile staff =218)

The biggest changes are noticeable in the area of general competences: over 90 percent of respondents say that mobility visits helped to better know and understand other cultures, expanded knowledge about educational systems in other countries. Qualification development abroad also increases participants' openness to change (*strongly agree* and *agree* 93 percent of the respondents), is the stimulus to change the style of teaching (*strongly agree and agree* 79 percent). Attitude and behaviour change as a result of mobility visits, teachers often refer to in their responses to the open-ended question of the questionnaire, e.g. *the project promotes innovations, inspires positive changes, allows feel part of a global world* (more answers can be found in Annexes of the report (in Lithuanian)).

According to the respondents, the outcome of development of professional competence is related to the content and purpose of the visit: introduction of new teaching methods was the most common result of professional development abroad, indicated by 89 percent of respondents. Another results were related with developed ICT skills for teaching, improvement teaching strategies for students with diverse learning needs, improvement of class management skills.

The answer to the open-end question reveals that teachers see a mobility as an opportunity of the verification of their professionalism and involvement (entrance) into the international educational teacher community. They state that it is *important to trust yourself, to not show complexes, because our country's teachers are excellent practitioners that could easily share and feel equal with others. Presume that Lithuanian teachers work well and can not only learn, but also must share their personal and school experience with international colleagues.*

Analysis of the results shows that the **perception of changes in professional competence depends on the length of teaching experience.** Teachers working for a shorter time in the school are more likely to establish contacts with colleagues from other countries, see a change in the foreign language proficiency, are more open to new teaching methods than those with shorter teaching experience (see. Table 12).

Table 12

Dependence of outcomes of ERASMUS+ KA1mobility on teaching experience (average in the scale from 1 to 5) (N mobile staff =218)

	Teaching experience			
	Less than 5 years N=13	From 5 to 15 years N=59	From 16 to 25 years N=61	More than 25 years N=84
Deepened my understanding of other cultures	4,50	4,55	4,47	4,53
Expanded my knowledge and understanding of education system in other countries	4,62	4,60	4,53	4,49
Developed my ICT skills for teaching	3,62	3,90	3,71	3,63
Developed pupils' discipline and behaviour problem-solving skills	3,38	3,57	3,58	3,35
I made a lot of contacts with colleagues from other countries*	4,54	4,24	4,22	4,22
Acquired new teaching methods**	4,54	4,51	4,37	4,14
Improved the practical use of foreign languages**	4,62	4,56	4,44	3,94
Improved teaching strategies for students with diverse learning needs	3,92	3,47	3,56	3,66
Improved the skills for working with people from different cultures	4,31	4,07	4,10	4,12
Became more open to changes and innovations	4,38	4,52	4,43	4,38
Got a stimulus to change my teaching style	4,15	4,27	4,12	4,08

*p<0.05, **p<0.01

The survey also reveals the correlations of preparation for mobility and developed competencies (see Table 12). Teachers who studied material about the culture of the mobility country before the visit indicate intercultural understanding, knowledge about the education system in other countries, establishment of contacts with colleagues abroad as a project result more often than other teachers. These who purposefully studied foreign language before the visit more often notice improvement in their foreign language skills. Teachers who searched for additional information about mobility-related topic, more often than others point out specific professional skills changes: e.g. application of the ICT in education process, new teaching methods, class management skills, foreign language proficiency. These results once again underline the importance of preparation for the mobility visit.

3.4. PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPACT OF ERASMUS+ KA1 ON SCHOOL: MOBILE STAFF, NON-MOBILE STAFF

ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility impact on school is a key issue of project performance. It is expected that mobility will contribute to meeting the identified school needs, will benefit for school's strategic development. In the view of respondents (over 90 percent of mobile staff), mobility helps to achieve school's goals. Project induced changes more or less are linked to the school's strategy (see figure 7).
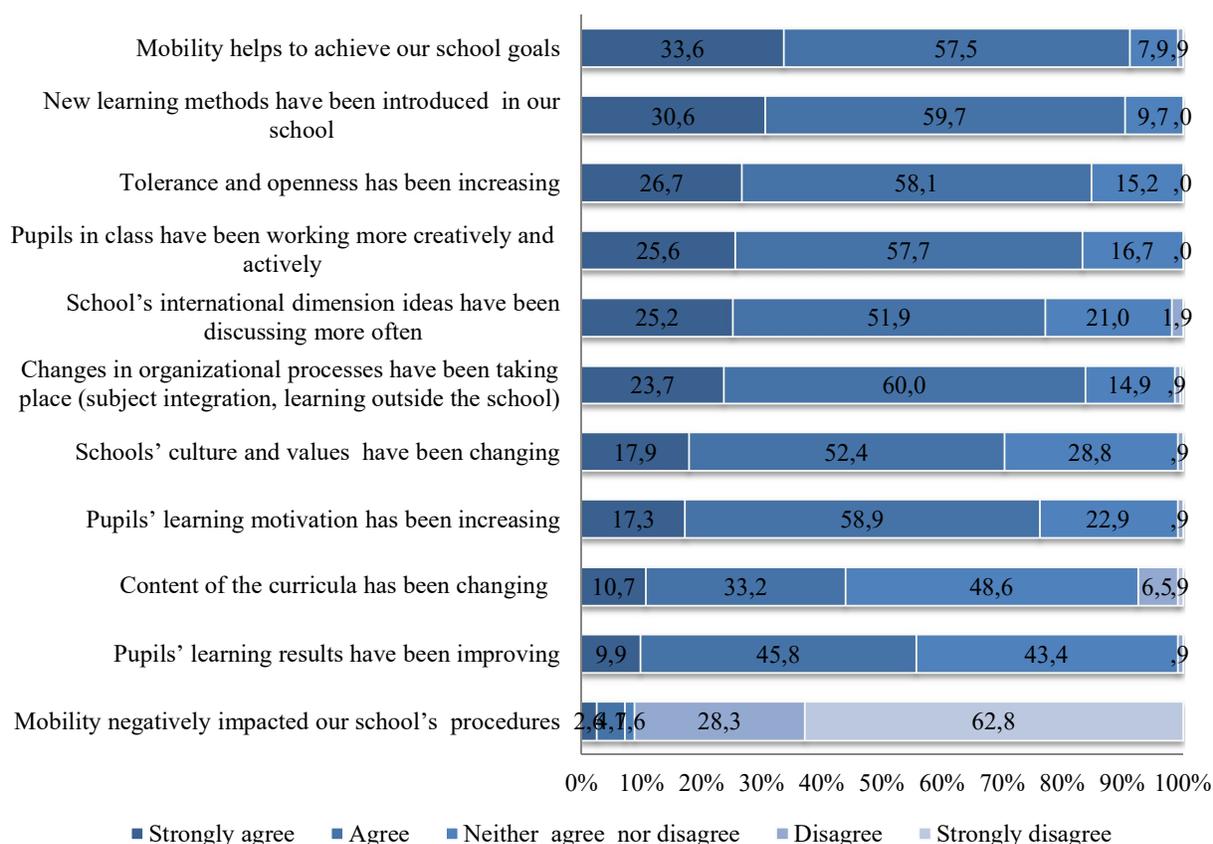

Fig. 7. The impact of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility on school (N mobile staff =218)

The changes taking place in school can be divided into three areas: (1) changes in school's culture (the increased debate about school internationalization, increase of school tolerance and openness); (2) changes in curriculum (changes of the curriculum content and educational process, application of new teaching methods); (3) changes in pupils' motivation and learning practices (pupils' motivation growth, increase of pupils' creativeness and activeness, improvement of pupils' learning results).

Respondents generally notice changes in the school culture, less often - the curriculum and educational process changes. These differences are small, but statistically significant. The most obvious change, according to respondents, is introduction of new learning methods, increase in pupils' learning motivation, pupils' creativity and activeness in class. The least noticeable are the changes in the curriculum and pupils' performance (learning results) improvement (see figure 7).

The results show that the teachers who did not participate in ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility visits observe the same tendencies of change as their mobile colleagues, nevertheless, the ratings of change in the group of non-mobile staff are lower than in the group of mobile teachers (see figures 7, 8). For example, 48 percent of non-mobile staff *strongly agree or agree* that *Pupils' learning results have been improving*, while 56 percent of mobile teachers *strongly agree or agree* with this question.
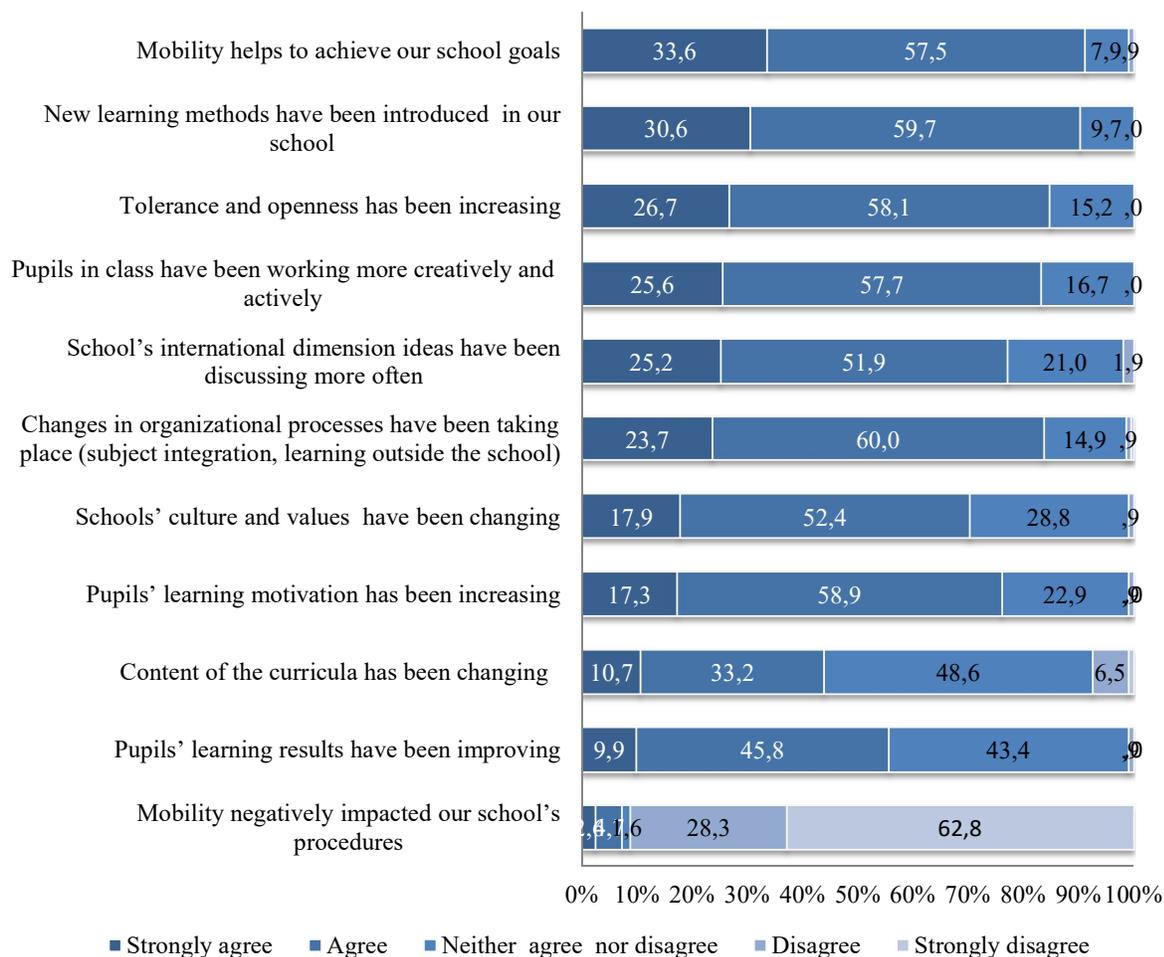
Fig. 8. The impact of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility on school (N non-mobile staff =282)

3.5. PUPILS' EXPECTATIONS FOR SCHOOL INTERNATIONALITY AND ASSESSMENT OF CHANGES TAKING PLACE IN TEACHING PROCESSES AFTER TEACHER MOBILITY

In order to reveal the pupils' expectations about the school's internationality, its development the study involved statements evaluating: (1) how much of the following are important to pupils: teacher's international competences, direct school contact with foreign schools, the organisation of international pupils' exchange and learning with pupils from other countries; (2) what changes are taking place in teaching processes after teacher mobility (teaching content, methods, motivational aids etc.).
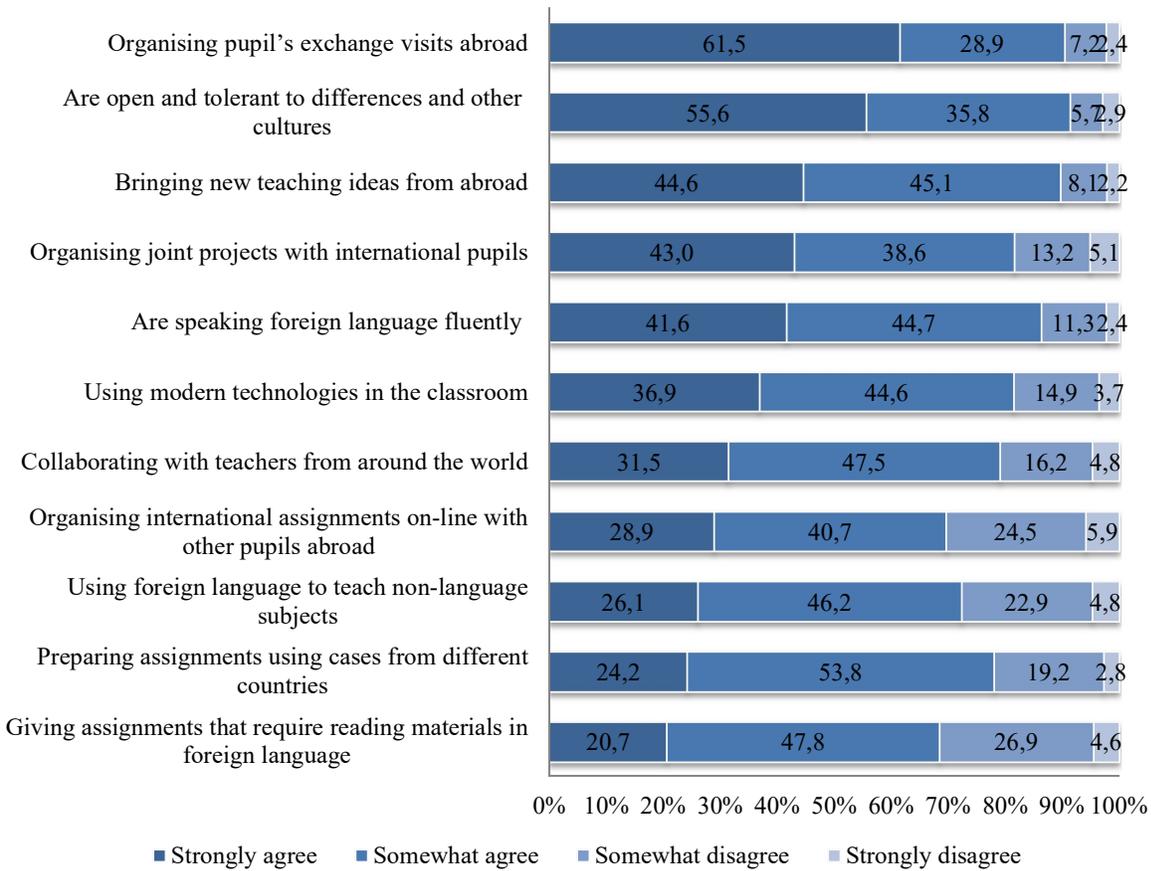
Fig. 9. Pupil's expectations for teacher professional competencies, school's internationality (N pupils=549)

The research results reveal that the pupils perceive the need for internationality in education as the need to strengthen the school's response to the global labour market challenges: *I think that the school, as a rather important institution in a young person's life, should be integrated into the globalised society and strive to integrate more subjects in a foreign language, which is important at the present* (one respondent's answer to an open-end question in the questionnaire).

Most of the pupils who participated in the survey, believe that teachers, who have good foreign language skills should not only cooperate with other countries, teachers (it is *very important* or *important* to 79 percent of the respondents), but also directly involve pupils in collaborative learning processes with foreign pupils (*very important or important* to 82 percent of pupils), and use the Internet for this purpose (*very important* or *important* to 70 percent of pupils) (see fig. 9).

It should be noted that the importance of pupil's exchange visits abroad, importance of learning with pupils from other countries is higher in rural areas and the smaller schools rather than in the big city schools.

Pupils were asked what changes they observed in activities of teachers who developed their professional competence abroad. Surveyed pupils' responses show that teachers usually share general information about the visit, tell about pupil's learning situation abroad (see fig. 10).
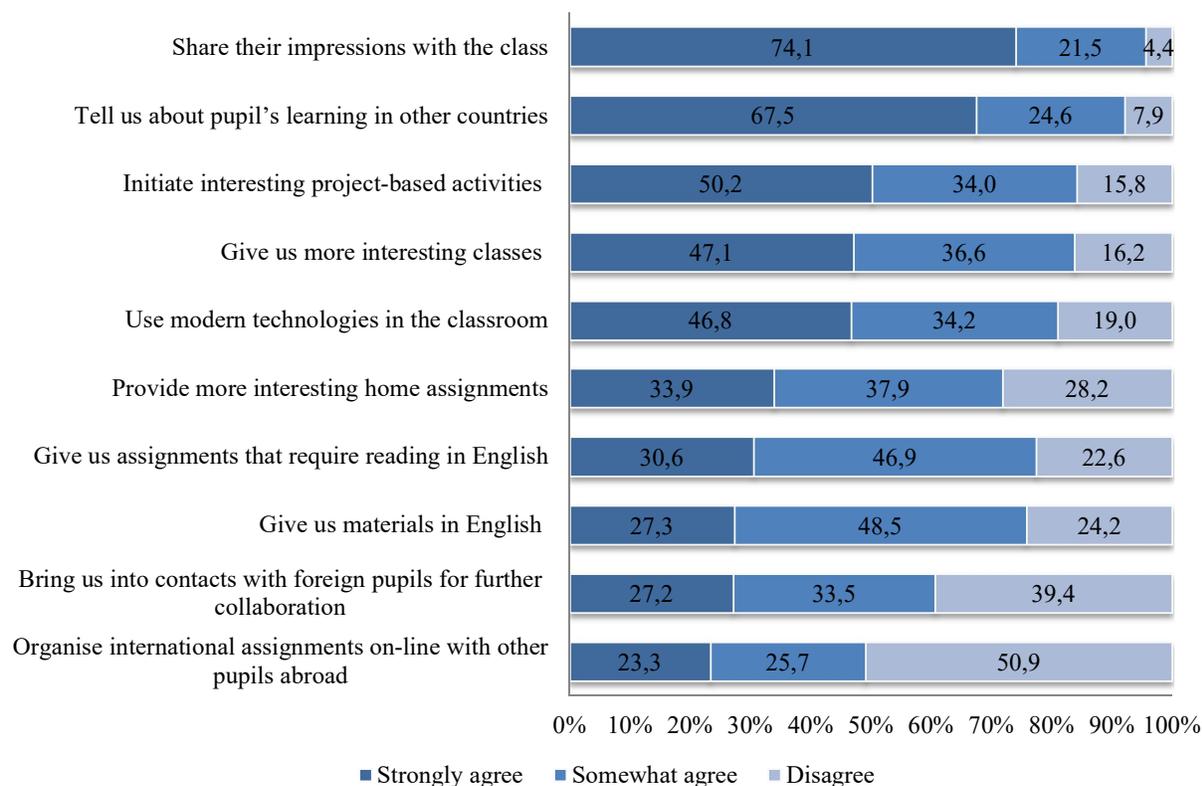
Fig. 10. Changes in teachers' performance after mobility visits (N $_{pupils}$=549)

It is important to note that the most significant change in teachers' performance after mobility is increased pupils' learning motivation (see. figure 10). Pupils say that teachers' professional development abroad makes lessons, projects, homework more interesting. The second significant change is associated with an increased usage of ICT in educational process, the third - the integration of foreign language in the subject. The smallest change observed in the area of organising joint projects, joint learning assignments with other pupils abroad. All those changes more noticed by pupils in smaller schools in smaller areas.

3.6. PARENTS' ATTITUDES CONCERNING INTERNATIONALITY OF SCHOOL AND TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ABROAD

The results reveal that more than half of the surveyed parents are aware of international projects implemented in schools, know objectives and benefits of the teacher's mobility. 23 percent indicate that the school is involving parents into school's international activities. Part of parents who filled out the questionnaires, believes that school's international activities (teacher's professional development abroad) disrupts educational process, when during teachers' mobility lessons are not delivered (20 percent of respondents *strongly agree* or *somewhat agree* with this statement).
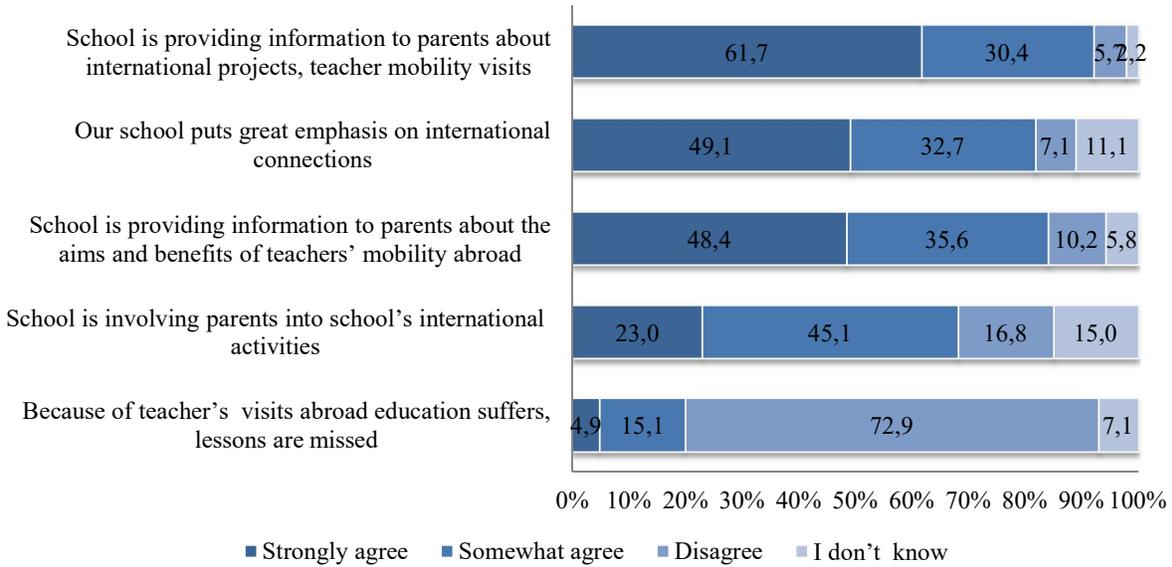
Fig. 11. Assessment of school's international activities (N parents=231)

Most parents support the development of school internationalisation, arguing that it is important to them that school applies best international practice, children get international competencies at school (see fig. 12). Teacher professional development abroad, to the parents' opinions, is an appropriate mean of reaching these objectives. More than 50 percent of respondents strongly agree that the mobility of teachers promotes school improvement, raises teachers' competencies. However patents were uncertain if teacher professional development abroad improves pupils' learning results. School internationalisation initiatives are rated as more important by parents in bigger cities than those in small ones.
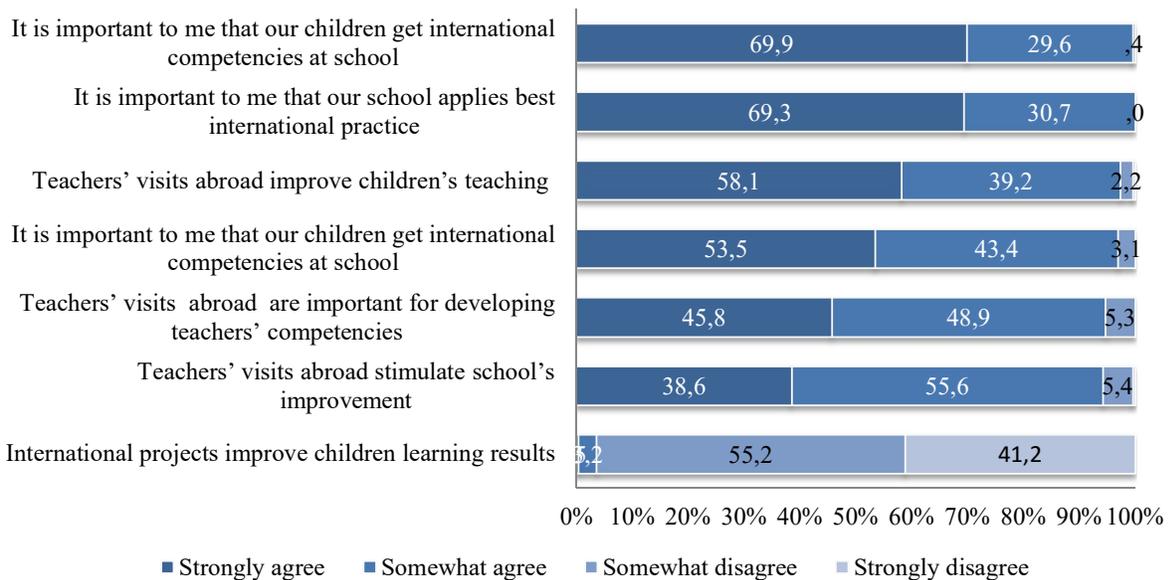

Fig. 12. Parents' opinions concerning school internationality, teacher professional development abroad (N parents=231)

3.7. PRACTICE OF DISSEMINATION AND SHARING OF EXPERIENCE, TEACHER LEADERSHIP (PERCEPTION OF MOBILE STAFF)

From the researchers' point of view, an essential part of the ERASMUS+ KA1 project's impact and sustainability of the results include: (1) dissemination and sharing of experience within the school; (2) dissemination and sharing of experience outside the school; (3) participation in the creation of a school vision, shaping school values and culture; (4) sheared learning and leadership; (5) implementation of innovations on the basis of mobility experience.

The results suggest that the most popular form of dissemination and sharing of experience is giving an oral report in teachers' teams/ teachers' council. Virtual environment is also used for this purpose: about 40 percent of surveyed mobile teachers indicated that they put the prepared material on-line. About 30 percent of mobile staff shared their experience in the activities outside the school (see fig. 13).
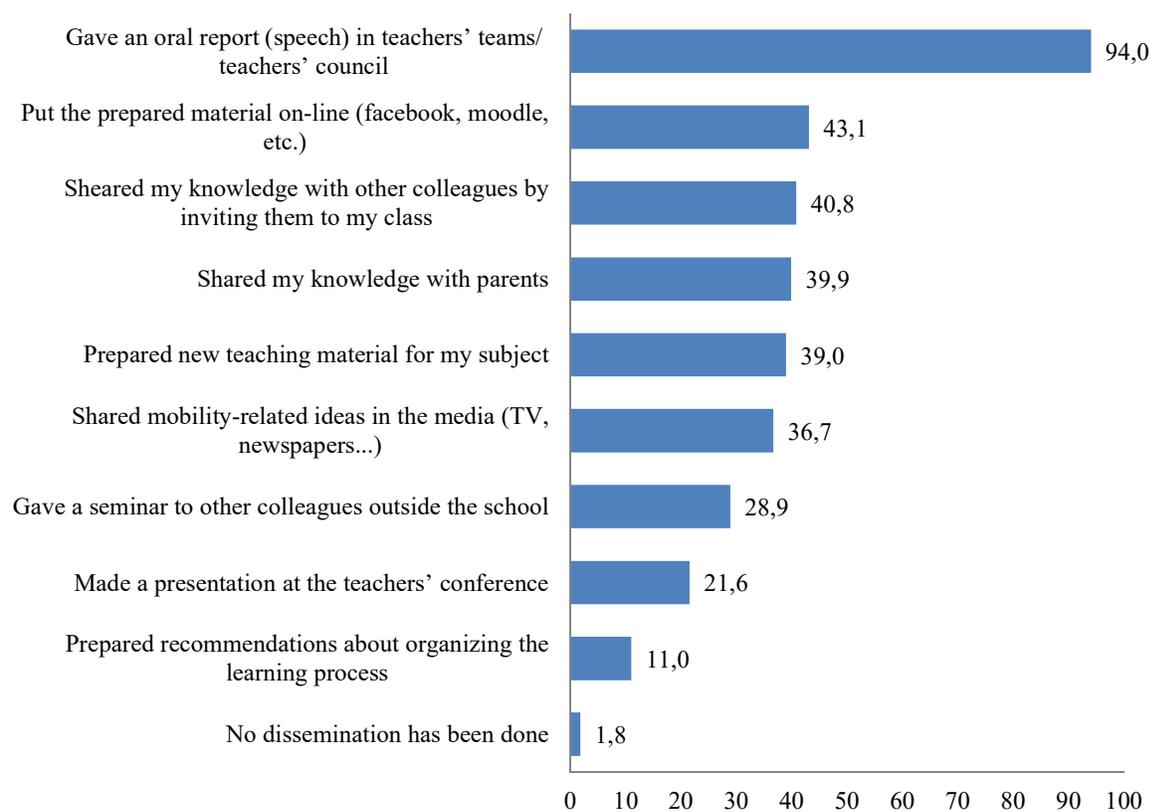

Fig. 13. Dissemination and sharing of experience on ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility (percent, N mobile staff=218)

It was found that forms of dissemination and sharing of experience depend on the length of teaching experience. Less-experienced teachers more often chose preparation of new teaching material, more-experienced teachers more often gave seminars to other colleagues outside the school.

The results confirm that the majority (94 percent) of mobile staff adapt their knowledge and experience in their daily work, 40 percent of mobile staff prepared new teaching material for their subject, 11 percent provided recommendations for improving the organisation of the educational process.

The results show that the activities of dissemination and sharing of experience reached the target audience. Non-mobile teachers acknowledge that they were introduced with mobility-related experience when participating in teachers' teams/ teachers' council, but the evaluations of the forms of dissemination and sharing of experience differed to compare with evaluations given in the group of mobile teachers. For

example, 78 percent of mobile teachers indicated that they prepared a new educational material, meanwhile only in 10 percent of schools their colleagues (non-mobile teachers) are aware about this fact (see fig. 14).

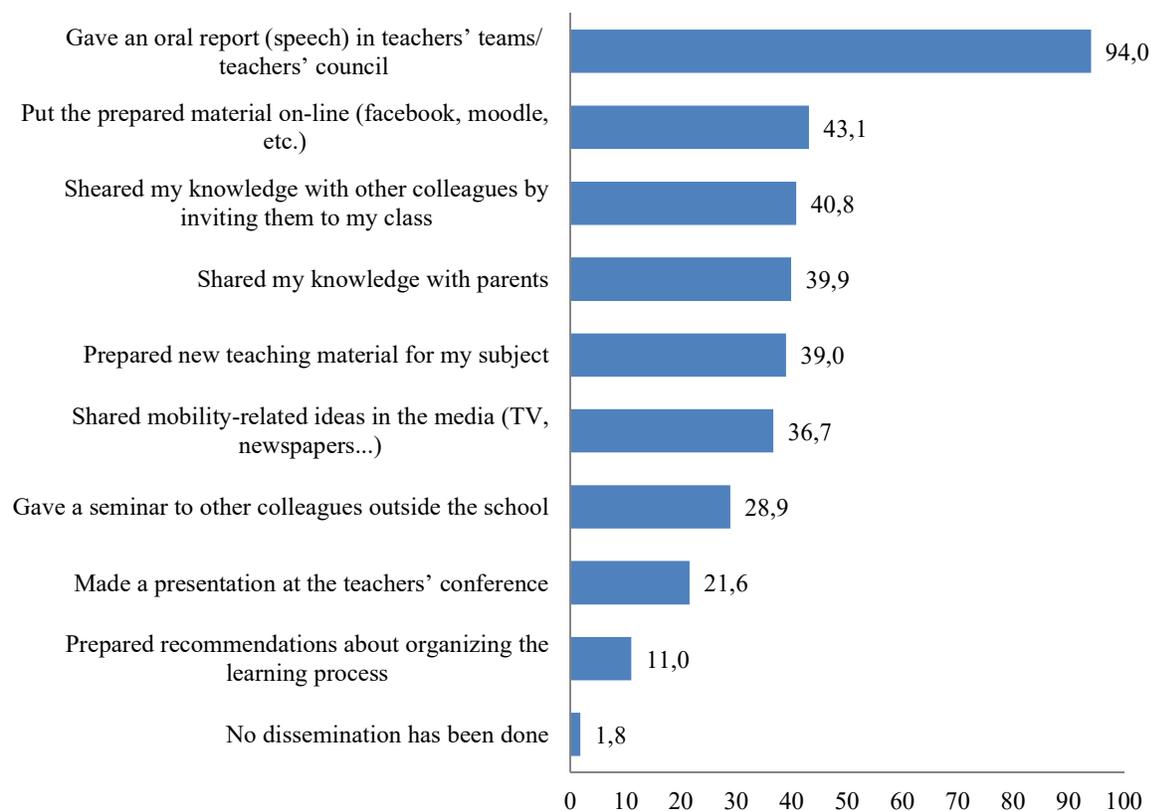| Dissemination form	%
Gave an oral report (speech) in teachers' teams/ teachers' council	94,0
Put the prepared material on-line (facebook, moodle, etc.)	43,1
Sheared my knowledge with other colleagues by inviting them to my class	40,8
Shared my knowledge with parents	39,9
Prepared new teaching material for my subject	39,0
Shared mobility-related ideas in the media (TV, newspapers...)	36,7
Gave a seminar to other colleagues outside the school	28,9
Made a presentation at the teachers' conference	21,6
Prepared recommendations about organizing the learning process	11,0
No dissemination has been done	1,8

Fig. 14. Dissemination and sharing of experience on ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility. Percentage of schools where more than a half of the non-mobile staff noticed particular dissemination forms (N schools = 30)

The study revealed that mobile teacher leadership in implementing the mobility related ideas at school most often has the forms of fostering school's culture and values (66 percent), planning and organizing learning of other colleagues (24 percent), inspiring other colleagues to apply new ideas in their work (65 percent), building teams to implement new ideas (44 percent), looking for support outside the school (see fig. 15).
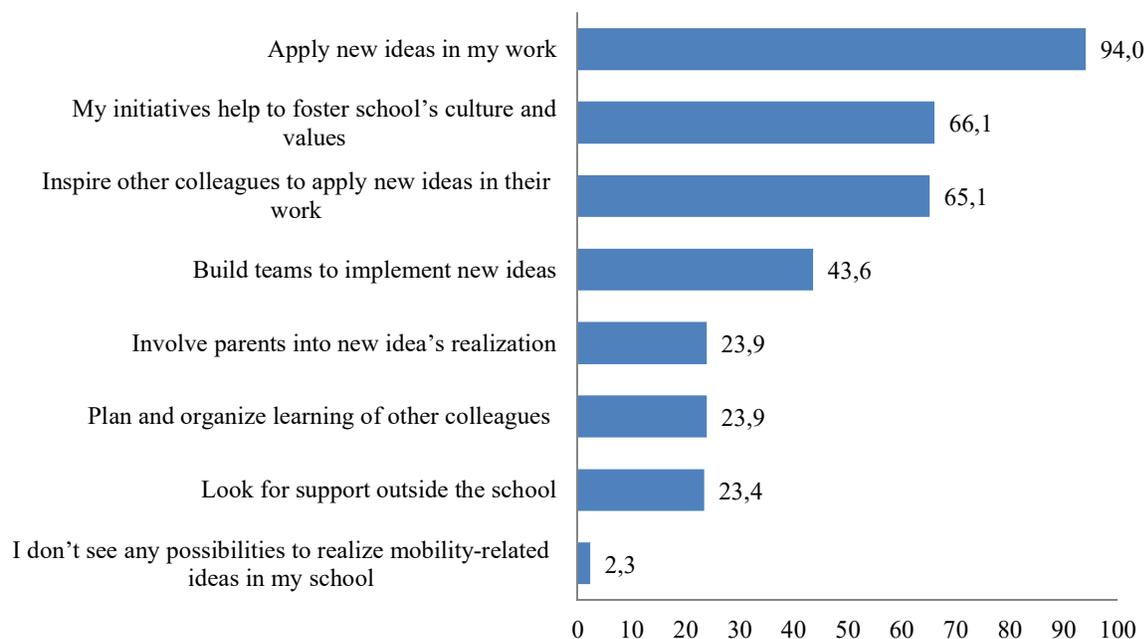
Fig 15. Leadership when implementing ideas of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility (percent, N mobile staff = 218)

The results confirm that teacher leadership is related with the person's position at school. The highest leadership is monitored in the group of school leaders who participated in mobility visits, lower - in teacher group (see figure 16).
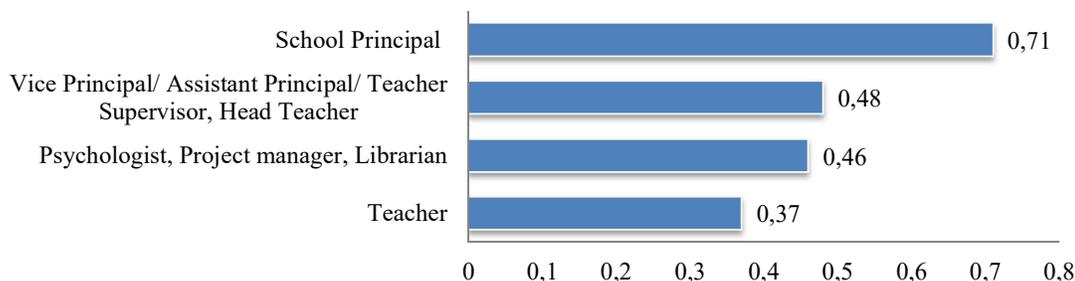

Fig. 16. Leadership when implementing ideas of mobility with regard to respondent's position at school (N mobile staff = 218, scale from 0 to 1)

Leadership of mobile staff is recognized in the group of non-mobile colleagues (see fig.16). Manifestation of teacher leadership is treated as significant, if at least half of the surveyed non-mobile staff indicate that the activity is being observed.

The survey results show that the majority of non-mobile staff notes leadership of mobile colleagues: they are changing and improving their work on the basis of professional development abroad. More than in 80 percent of schools the efforts to change some aspects of school culture and values are observed.

To the extent that one of the aspect of sustainable innovation is it's width, when the greater durability of change is ensured by number of people involved into its implementation. The results of the analysis show that 60 per cent of schools build teams to implement mobility- related ideas in their school. Parents involvement to innovations is not widespread (20 percent of schools).
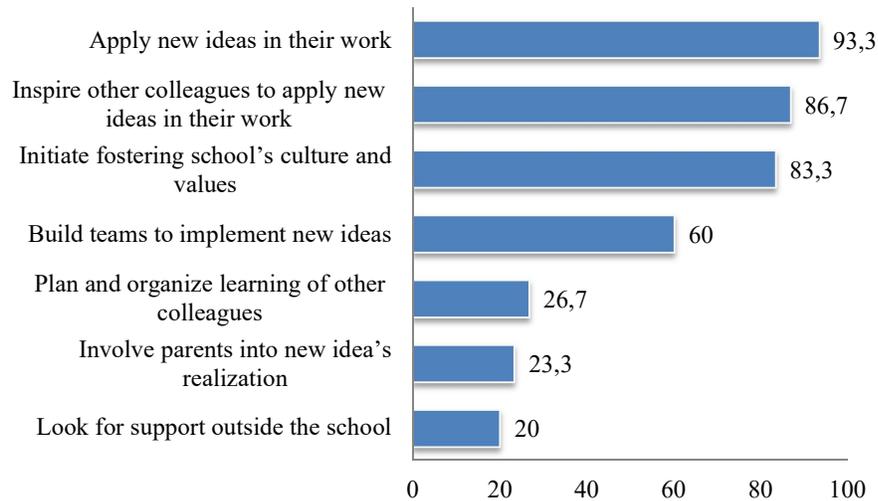
Fig. 17. Recognition of teacher leadership. **Percentage of schools where more than half of the non-mobile staff notice leadership activities (N subscript schools=30)**

3.8. PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL CULTURE AS A CONDITION FOR SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT OUTCOMES

The sustainability of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility outcomes to school is not possible without supporting school environment. Two important dimensions of school culture were identified in the study: (1) school leader's support, and (2) colleagues' support (see fig. 18).
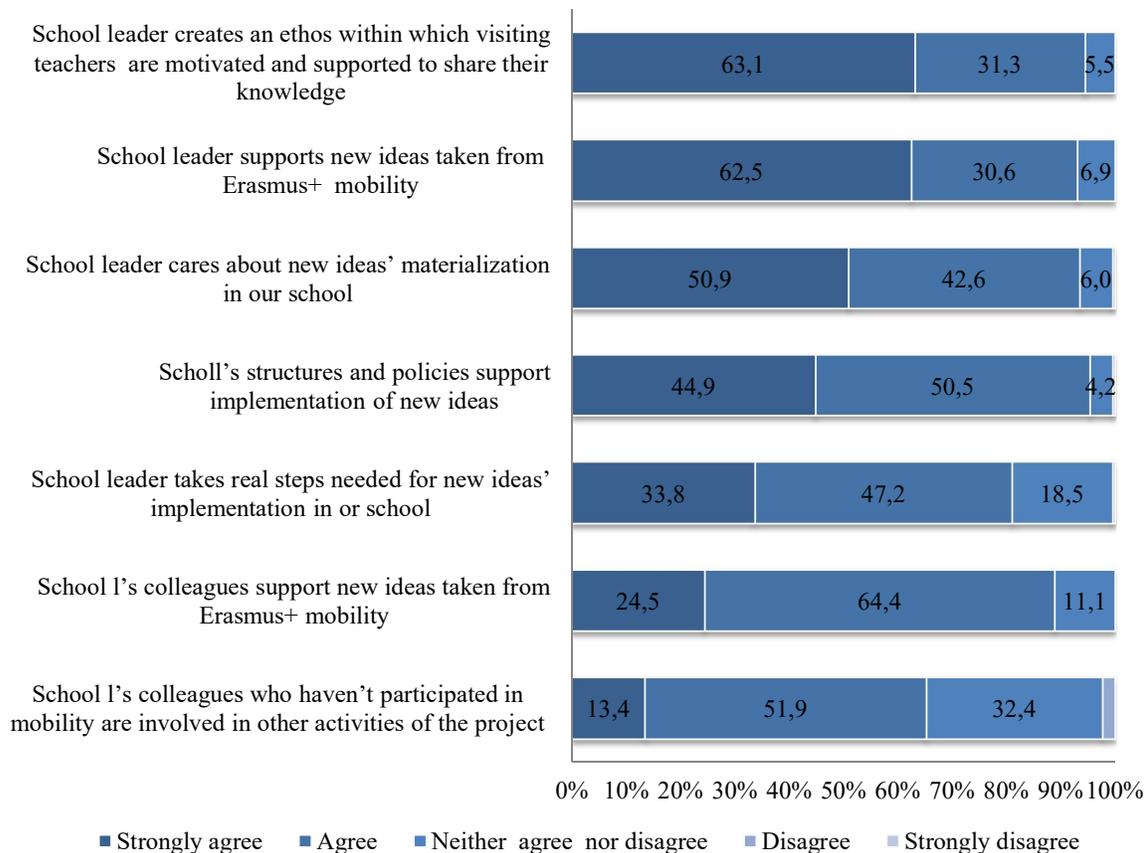

Fig. 18. Favourability of school environment for implementation of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility experience

(N subscript mobile staff =218)

School culture, which is determined by the support of school leader and other colleagues is treated as a significant condition for the sustainability of results of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility. The study reveals that school leader's support by the majority of respondents (90 percent) is evaluated very favourably. Support of other colleagues is rated slightly lower.

Non-mobile teachers also observe school leader's support when implementing mobility- related ideas, but the ratings are slightly lower that in group of mobile teachers (see fig. 19).
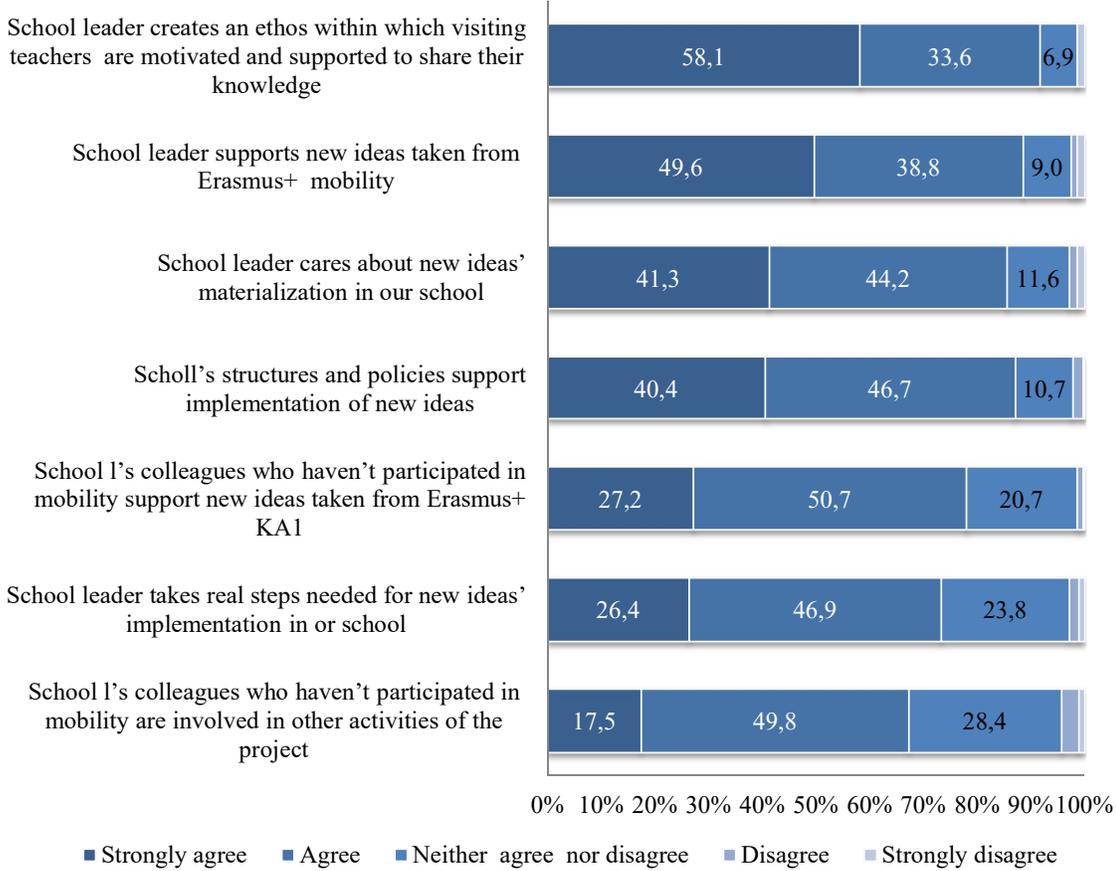

Fig. 19. Favourability of school environment for implementation of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility experience. (N $_{mon-mobile\ staff}$ =279)

3.9.THE FACTORS OF SUSTAINABILITY OF ERASMUS+ KA1 MOBILITY

The statistical model allows us to identify the factors that have the greatest impact on the outcomes of the ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility. They are: *preparation for the visit, dissemination of information within the school, teacher leadership, support of school leader and colleagues*. Multivariate dispersion model shows that *teacher leadership* **has the greatest impact on the ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility-related changes taking place in school.** In second place in terms of impact strength is *colleague support*, the third - the *preparation for the visit*. Dissemination of information within the school produces the weakest influence.

Table 13

Factors determining sustainability of results of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility in school
MANOVA results

Effect	Wilks' Lambda value	F(3;203)	p value	Partial sq. eta
Preparation for the visit	0,791	17,8	<0,001	0,21
Dissemination inside the school	0,891	8,2	<0,001	0,11
Teacher leadership	0,731	24,9	<0,001	0,27
School leader's support	0,821	14,7	<0,001	0,18
Colleagues' support	0,768	20,4	<0,001	0,23

The linear regression analysis allows to analyse cause and effect relationships more detail by gradually eliminating the variables that influence is not statistically significant. In all three cases, the data conforms with the requirements of the regression model.

Table 14

Factors determining sustainability of results of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility in school. Results of regression analysis

Results	Standardised regression equation coefficients β of					
	Preparation for the visit	Dissemination inside the school	Teacher leadership	School leader's support	Colleagues' support	R^2
Changes in schools' culture	0,21*	-	0,27**	0,26**	**0,31**	0,31
Changes in curriculum	0,16*	-	0,14*	0,22*	**0,24**	0,45
Changes in pupil's motivation and learning practices	0,30**	0,17*	0,10*	0,23**	**0,31**	0,51

*$p<0.05$, **$p<0.01$

The diverse influence of different factors is observed when analysing different type of changes caused by ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility. Regression analysis shows that the strongest impact on the *changes taking place in school* has *colleagues' support, their involvement in the project-related activities*.

In the case of *school culture change* the most powerful influencer is *teacher leadership* and *school leader's support*. For *changes in the curriculum, school leader's support* is essential. *Preparation for the visit* has the greatest impact on *changes in pupil's motivation and learning practices*.

It was found that impact of *dissemination of experience within the school* on *school culture changes, curriculum changes* is not statistically significant, on *changes in pupil's motivation and learning practices* - a weak statistically significant impact is observed. **Thus, dissemination of experience within the school is not a factor that helps to effectively ensure the sustainability of the project results.**

In order to reveal the details of factors influencing ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility results path analysis was performed. The model shows that the greatest direct impact on the sustainability of the project results has *colleagues' support, teacher leadership*, slightly lower - *school leader's support*. ***Dissemination and sharing of experience within the school has no direct impact on changes in pupil's motivation and learning practices.***
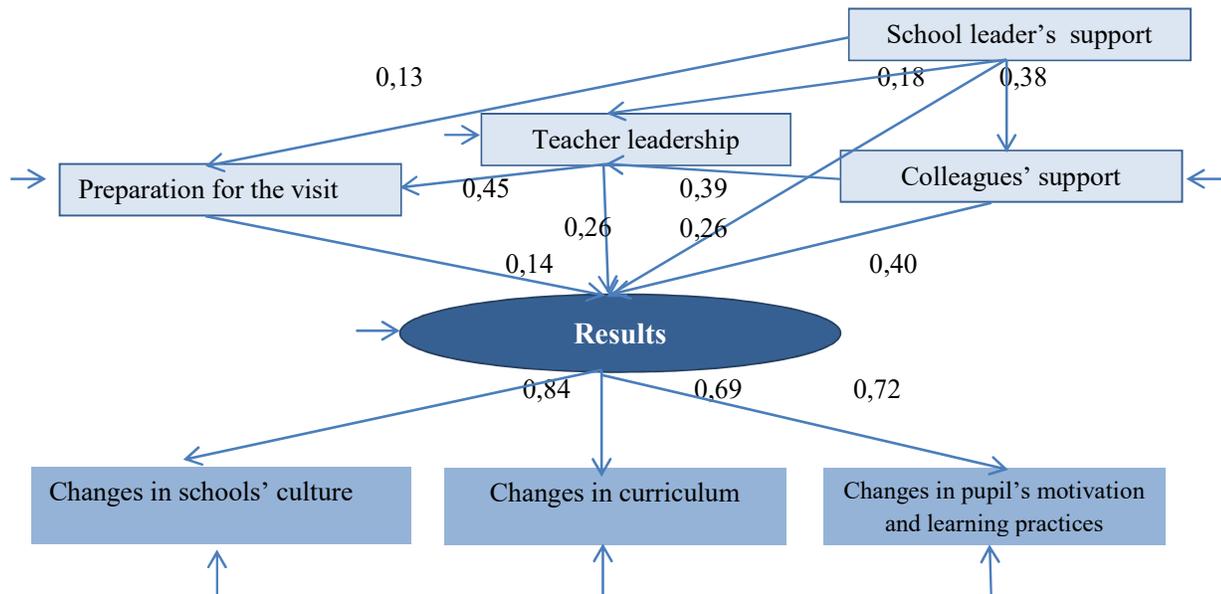
Fig. 20. Correlations between results of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility and influencing factors. Model 2

The analysis of the results suggests that school leader's support, colleagues' support and teacher leadership are important factors of **the sustainability of the project results. The study also confirmed the importance of preparation for the visit, but does not proved the importance of dissemination and sharing of experience within the school for the impact and sustainability of ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility results.**

4. RESULTS OF CONTENT ANALYSIS OF FOCUS GROUPS WITH MOBILE STAFF AND SCHOOL LEADERS

4.1. RESULTS OF ANALYSIS OF FOCUS GROUPS WITH MOBILE STAFF

Research sample. To better disclose the peculiarities of preparation and implementation of ERASMUS+ KA1 action projects and usefulness and sustainability of their outcomes at schools in Lithuania, focus groups of mobile staff and school principals of schools that received funding for projects in 2014 were organised. Two focus groups of mobile teachers were organised for the research. They included a total of **24** teachers from different educational institutions: gymnasiums, progymnasiums, secondary schools, multifunctional centres, and vocational training schools. Representatives of subject teachers, primary education teachers, social pedagogues, psychologists, librarians, and senior teachers were involved in focus group discussions.

Analysis of content of discussion shows that, from the point of view of the research participants, a distinguishing feature and advantage of ERASMUS+ KA1 action projects is **TARGETED SUPPORT FOR ACTIVITIES OF THE TEAM OF TEACHERS AT SCHOOL**. Group activities of teachers organised and supported at all stages of the project affect the project outcomes and their sustainability on the level of teacher, school, and school environment. The new procedure of funding teacher professional development in ERASMUS+ programme leads to:

- **support and recognition of teachers' joint activities needed for school cultural development and creation of a learning organisation:** *When a team is going, impression is bigger. If one teacher comes back – well, he's just one. Here a group comes back and the dissemination is all different. Being together on the courses leads to generation and sharing of ideas. When a school team participates it is better, because various groups are represented. The more people go and see, the easier it is to reach an agreement and implement various things afterwards. Our teachers are generally individualists: I am prepared, I have it, its mine. But being on those various courses they see that a team achieves more. And so openness appears at school;*

- **cooperation and collaboration of teachers of different subjects in order to achieve the aims of mobility and the implementation of its results:** *When a teacher and, say, head librarian go, they have very different views and so a true team with different approaches can be built: the views are diverse and more can be achieved. When a person who does not know the language goes, team enables such a person to receive help and he feels better. One of our teachers started to speak English that way. She would have never gone alone. If more school staff go, they form a core and you can talk to them and generate something, some ideas, initiatives, what you will bring to teachers that did not go together;*

- **greater possibility that the outcomes of professional development abroad will be lasting and sustainable:** *There's more value for the institution when a team goes: you can make greater influence on decision-making at the institution compared to what you could being alone, you can make a change. Team is more powerful than a single person is. It takes a team to convince the staff. There is interaction between heads and teachers when going together. If the school principal did not go together, we would have had problems convincing that we need a tablet classroom.*

Joint activities are also important in generating the project idea and preparing the project application. The research suggests that, in the opinion of the discussion participants, all their **ERASMUS+ KA1 ACTION PROJECTS FOR TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ABROAD ARE RELATED TO STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT DECISIONS OF SCHOOL**. The harmony between the programme aims and school management strategy is realized by:

- **searching for additional possibilities for implementation of strategic aims of school:** *As a new school we've been searching for funding to help us in realizing our strategic aims. Our project was initiated because we had to deal with strategic aims of the school: we were seeking ways to enable correction of the flaws of structural reform as well as to deal with undesirable psychological and social heritage*;

- **responding to school needs for improvement:** *The topic was taken from our strategic plan and was somehow purified. It was important to know what we want to improve, what the school actually needs, what the problems and weaknesses are, what you surely cannot get in Lithuania*;

- **meeting requirement for filling-out the application form:** *Talking to the school administration I became interested that the European [development] plan needs to be arranged so that the application covers the strategic aims, that the programme priorities match the priorities of our school, so it was very interesting for me to write.*

Statements by participants in focus group discussions suggest that ERASMUS+ KA1 action projects are not necessarily initiated by school principals: international project activities can be initiated by teachers too. The research results suggest that actually there are two **SCHOOL-LEVEL WAYS OF PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ABROAD:**

- **school administration initiative and decisions necessary for supporting development of strategic direction of school:** *The idea to prepare the application came from the administration, but later everyone contributed, there were many ideas. Our teachers give lessons in English at school, their main aim was to send teachers who already give lessons in English, so that they improve their subject-specific language*;

- **teachers' initiatives and needs regarding searching for more forms and opportunities for professional development:** *We went to the administration and told that qualification should be expanded, then the teacher supervisor said: OK, no problem. I noticed a new project and then came to the school principal with a proposal. I was leading that work, but I was not the only one writing. We were writing together, but it was me putting everything together and editing.*

According to teachers who participated in focus group discussions, selection of staff to be delegated to mobility visits is transparent and public at their schools. Results of content analysis of their statements suggest that schools follow the general recommendations and run selections under generally the same procedure: **INVOLVEMENT OF TEACHERS IN PREPARING THE APPLICATION FORM** and **ASSESSMENT OF MOTIVATION OF CANDIDATE TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERNATIONAL PROJECT**. At some schools **SCHOOL TEACHER COMMUNITY DECISION MODEL** or absence of selection procedure were identified:

- **involvement of teachers in application form preparation:** *Participation in preparation of the application form was one of the selection criteria. Those who had suggestions and visions of what to do in that project were sent. People who were selected are the strongest people at the gymnasium, the informal leaders*;

- **writing a motivated application for participation in the project:** *We held a mini competition at our school. Teachers had to submit applications. And we wrote motivation letters: why we want, how we would like it to be, how we would contribute. We were asked to write motivation letters and we presented our opinions on what we want to achieve. The main barrier was that all teachers lack English language skills*;

- **teacher community decision:** *Our methodological centres discussed who is worthy, who really needs professional development. Teacher teams [subject related teacher groups] offer that person, but, certainly, language barrier is also taken into consideration. Selection of teachers is subject to general agreement that candidates will be put up by teacher teams [subject related teacher groups]. This also gave those groups an opportunity to get familiar with the project. When the coordinating group was considering the results of the selection, no changes were made*;

- **absence of selection of participants:** *We generally had no selection, because three of us are the only specialists, so all three were delegated.*

Results of analysis of data from the focus group discussions suggests that, in the teachers' opinion, the most frequently chosen form of professional development abroad is "structured" professional development courses characterised by diversity of activities organised for their participants: *Courses usually include observation of lessons. When we observe lessons we usually later discuss with the teacher why things are done so, what methodologies are used,* that meets different needs of the participants: *Combination of courses and observation is the best. This is perhaps the most beneficial. You hear and receive something new and later you can see how it works. Because if the observation alone takes a long time, it would perhaps become boring.*

It must be noted that participants in the focus groups abstained from evaluating and rating usefulness of professional development forms available: *It is hard to tell which courses are better. Depends on what your aims are: courses give one thing, observation other.* As to evaluation of quality, only conformity of the event to the aims set for the mobility visit was indicated, for example: *The aim of our project was direct professional development. We purposefully wrote and selected courses based on what we would like to develop in ourselves. Teachers of English went to learn English language teaching methodology and observe activities.* It has been found that selection of forms of teaching and shadowing is restricted by teachers' lack of communication skills in foreign language: *Choosing teaching is too much of a challenge and too stressful to our teachers* and by personal qualities: *teacher closeness, them being too busy, reluctance to changes.*

Discussion of diversity of qualification development forms offered for ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility and reasons to choose them revealed the aspect of **QUALITY ASSURANCE IN TEACHER QUALIFICATION DEVELOPMENT**, which includes:

- **organisational problems with choosing a service provider abroad:** *It was not easy, because course database is not available, you just have access to the whole internet to choose wherever, whatever, however... it was really very difficult. You must exercise great consideration in choosing courses. With individual ones, there was a huge database and there was no problem, but now it is very difficult to decide on quality. The directory compiled by the Fund was very useful as you could refer to it to find what's verified and really good, so you could search with no problems. Now it definitely involves a risk. You go without knowing how you will like it there and how useful it will be*;

- **mismatch between the promotional description and content of courses:** *There are many commercial courses that are of no use: they give you a walking tour around the school building, then show a movie and say: that's it, you can go. I know courses that were nothing more than tourist trips (Malta, Cyprus etc.). There is a great variety of courses, and it is only during the courses that you can see if they are really good ones.*

- **personal efforts to verify quality in courses:** *You have to choose really good host institution and share online about what's valuable. We went to the courses that were recommended to us in one or another way. We did not go blindly. You have to be well aware of what is the organiser and view feedback or write to people who have participated already and ask for their feedback. Quality is*

gained through establishment of personal relations: we often use our network of schools in choosing. This way we can be sure that the partner is reliable.

According to the research, participation in international professional development courses is also related to recognition of the qualification and competence the teacher has gained. **FORMAL RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATION** is traditional and viewed as an ordinary event in a teacher's career: *Course certificate is one of the indicators. Yes, this counts as other courses.* Much more significant is **INFORMAL RECOGNITION OF TEACHER'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** that comprises:

- **pupils' respect and attention to the new experience of their teacher:** *International mobility spark pupils' respect: oh, the teacher was somewhere, saw something, communicated and can tell about that. They are also interested in the foreign system of education: how is it there? And they always wait for photos: show us what you saw. Once back the first lessons are dedicated to views, impressions, photos, emotions. Teachers become freer and pupils see it in changed interaction and attitudes*;

- **appreciation of foreign methods in a lesson:** *I do not deliberately tell that I was learning abroad, however sometimes I choose some method and say: well, this is how it is done here in the West. If I worked that out by myself, pupils would be like "oh, that teacher got another weird idea", however when I tell that this is taken from abroad and now we will be also doing so, pupils take that easier. If it is so over there, we will also do so*;

- **parents' respect to a teacher learning abroad:** *Parents start demonstrating respect to the teacher because he learns. When teachers of other subjects go to England and learn language there, parents particularly respect them. If the school is small and rural, but the teacher goes, is willing to learn, parents show respect*;

- **improved self-esteem of a teacher after participation in a mobility project:** *Mobility greatly raise self-esteem of teachers. Sometimes teachers see simple things they have been practicing for years. They start understanding their own value. We know really a lot, we just lack skills to present that in our lives and at our lessons, and the project teaches us openness and self-confidence.*

Results of analysis of the focus discussion groups confirm that at schools **dissemination of results of mobility visits is carried out in accordance with the obligations presented in the application form**: *All teachers do dissemination, because this was the requirement. We have already participated in two national conferences, organised two seminars in the town and one dedicated seminar to the neighbouring school, teachers at that school ask us to keep training them, they would also like to get KA1 and KA2 projects.* A less frequently mentioned dissemination form is **preparation of teaching material for colleagues**: *Each time we come back we write reports and such teaching material that colleagues can use, this teaching material includes our proposals for schools, for example, regarding improvement of the system of education of gifted children on the basis of our learnings and experiences.*

Results of analysis of teachers' answers to the main question at the meeting, which is about the **effect and sustainability of outcomes of professional development in other country**, suggest that participants generally appreciate their new experience and learning outcomes, although applicability of all of them [mobility experiences] is sometimes questioned: *Some things are sustainable, some naturally get cast aside. Experience is experience anyway. What you get remains and gets used somewhere. What remains is more, much more than what gets rejected.* Summarising the results of content analysis of teachers' statements led to identification of the following **PRECONDITIONS OF IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY OF OUTCOMES OF MOBILITY VISITS:**

- **changes in strategic development of school by integrating the experience gained at professional development mobility:** *We present our proposals and once the project is over those proposals will be all considered again and used as a basis to modify the strategic plan as well as put into practice. They will also make a great contribution to implementation of the strategic aims of our school: we will do make changes, some things will be changed radically*;

- **changes in the process of education as teachers apply new didactic practices:** *We set new goals for education, we write programmes and integrate certain topics. Our organisation of events and integrated lessons got revitalized. Those methods, what you learn, will stay year after year. New lessons, new methods, and integration of various things appear after the project. We are happy that with the application of the imported methods children become more open and not afraid to speak. Test results improve. We use other methods first. And children truly feel that, they sense that something is different, not like before. Lesson quality improves: you add something new and the children wake up – lesson is more interesting*;

- **changes in personal attitudes of mobile staff:** *Cultural awareness remains, no doubt about that. The most important in what we bring back is perhaps not the methods, but the tolerance, personal skills, social competence, freedom, speaking in a team, understanding that issues do not get solved in five minutes. Teachers really broaden their horizons, we discussed really a lot when on the trip, leading to understanding that teachers across Europe have similar problems and we should not be so unhappy*;

- **changes in school culture:** *Our European partnership expanded a lot and parents come in groups willing to take active part in school activities, which was not the case before. So for today we have brought an idea and school values is our topic of this year. At lessons we speak about creativity, responsibility, respect, and activeness. And such small things we try to implement are abundant: those principles of interaction, notifications to parents about child's progress. Yes, we were doing that before, but now we try to do that in a different way*;

- **initiation of new international projects:** *We will submit new applications, because we face new reality, we have migrant children, so the dimension of internationalisation is important. We got stronger, have new partners, we feel more self-confident: this year the school has three KA2 projects, basically all the project applications were granted. Now we face a great challenge, but without KA1 project we definitely would not have these results. All activities started under KA2 projects are generally based on experience in KA1: leadership in education management, eco education, education methods. After KA1 we plan to have projects that would include our pupils. Both parents and children would now like to participate in project, too. Now we are writing a new project as we have found partners. It will be a KA2 project*;

- **introduction of networking:** *We should not be afraid to share small things, too. We get requests from other schools to join us, offers to have a meeting and get explanations of how to do what. It seems to me that the project will never end, because we have brought so much and implementation gets so much attention: one thing needs to be done, then another, and we do all together.*

Participants in the focus discussion groups voiced their opinions about quality in administration of ERASMUS+ KA1 action projects countrywide. In their opinion, **THINGS TO BE IMPROVED IN ACTIVITIES OF THE EDUCATION EXCHANGES SUPPORT FOUNDATION** in administration of applications are related to:

- **flexibility in administration of implementation of applications:** *Maybe the Fund could be more flexible in this respect, that if the institution wants to make changes, it could be allowed to do so, because it may be so that something better is found by recommendations, but the Fund says "no, everything must be pursuant to the application form". It is definitely not easy to plan for the next two years: new courses become available, some go bankrupt. I understand that reestimating everything is extra workload, but if the institution does not go beyond limits, it should be allowed. Anyway this is driven not by some caprice, but by, say, the need;*

- **extension of the target group of projects participants:** *Projects are needed not only for teachers, but for other school staff as well. School teacher community is actually much wider. A driver bringing children with special needs every day is also an educator. A janitor or a driver are also part of the process of education, sometimes they are first, and it is a pity that this mobility project does not enable their improvement: they either need to be re-qualified to be able to go, or unfortunately they cannot participate, despite being very valuable in the process of education.*

4.2. RESULTS OF ANALYSIS OF FOCUS GROUPS WITH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Two focus group discussions with principals of schools that were granted support for implementation of ERASMUS+ KA1 action projects were organised. The groups included principals of **14** schools of different types and from different regions. Some of them have participated in project-related professional development visits abroad before. The main questions at discussions with school principals were related to coherence between the projects implemented and the school strategic management, attitudes of school principals to teacher professional development events abroad, benefits these events bring to professional development of teachers, and aspects of applicability and sustainability of outcomes of mobility visits.

According to the school principals, the changed procedure of funding projects intended for teacher professional development is useful as an **INSTRUMENT FOR MANAGEMENT OF STRATEGIC CHANGES AT SCHOOLS** that serves as a:

- **teacher activation measure:** *What interested me was that the project was focused mainly on teachers who are sometimes passive and not willing to participate anywhere as giving lessons is enough for them. The project is an opportunity to change teachers' motivation for work, therefore we want to include as much of the school community as possible, especially teachers, so that they can teach more once they come back;*

- **the mean for strengthening leadership at school:** *The participants on the visit have a possibility to become kind of teachers and helpers of administration staff when they come back and present a new method and include some other teachers in its implementation. Looking into future it is also a possibility for teachers to get involved into strategic planning of the whole school. We strive to achieve that people who go become kind of mentors for the newly conceived project;*

- **incentive for changes at school:** *That searching, that visiting is useful in that we can test ourselves to see what can be changed by our own efforts, and the main thing is to spark thinking in teachers' heads. Our teachers got united. Teachers and the teacher supervisor came back with lots of material and this is useful not only to the teachers who were on the visit, but also for everyone working at school. KA1 project is a possibility for teachers to get familiar with education systems of other countries, meet people of other countries, and see methods unfamiliar here in Lithuania;*

- **the mean of strategy implementation:** *Our strategy includes support and assistance for a pupil, mobility of our teachers was intended exactly for this aim, because we have an entire team of specialists providing such support and this team has to learn to work as a team, because now each*

specialist is very individual. When we do not find what our institution needs here in Lithuania, we look for answers and experience abroad. Lithuanians sometimes keep their professional secrets secret, while foreigners are willing to share them.

Results of analysis of material from the focus group discussions with principals of schools suggest that school principals give only positive feedback about all international projects, and teacher professional development visits abroad as part of implementation of ERASMUS+ KA1 action projects bring school **TANGIBLE BENEFITS SUPPORTING MANAGERIAL DECISIONS**. That is:

- **Positioning of school:** *We are the only gymnasium-type school in the region, so we have to demonstrate something new, give something more than normally expected. Dissemination is good for the school – it enhances the school image. We have to teach others, whose children will come to us for learning. The project ideas even enable influencing the reform of the education system. Implementation of a project helps to stay on the education market. To survive we have to maintain very high level of teaching and pupils progress, and this requires competence of teachers, which is what the project develops*;

- **Strengthening of international professional networking:** *Our school is part of an international network and we are very happy that this project gives teachers an opportunity to go on trips for mobility of teaching. They will be giving lessons at the network schools. We also had incoming teachers who were giving lessons for half a year, we are happy that the project opens these possibilities*;

- **Improvement of self-esteem of staff:** *Oftentimes you feel that you can be proud of yourself and your school. We do our jobs well, we just do not promote our work; we have to travel more and we will see that our competence is not bad. Our teachers lack self-confidence, though they are doing their job really well. Teachers see that they are not as useless as they think of themselves. It is nice that they gain experience of self-confidence. People in our community start seeing that they can*;

- **Changes in teachers' attitudes:** *After a few projects teachers truly unleash their potential, collaborative initiatives appear. Pupils trust teachers who teach to learn by their example. Pupils have really different views to teachers who go abroad, improve their competence, and can bring entirely new ideas. KA1 teacher is more active, modern, looking for innovations*;

- **Additional possibilities to fund development of teachers' competence:** *Financial situation of a teacher in Lithuania does not allow a teacher to improve like he would like to. Sometimes a teacher is unable to pay for seminars and professional development. Financial opportunities given by the KA1 project enables a teacher to bring different experience home and apply it at school, it also allows observation of and even participation in teaching. Travelling is expensive for teachers, we cannot send teachers on secondments or can do so only partially.*

According to the school principals, participation at a professional development events in other countries is also an exclusive **motivating factor for profession-related learning of a teacher**: *Small region offers fewer opportunities. However a teacher must always take a step up. Participation in the project is an incentive to step up,* **that also addresses the need for broader use of foreign language**: *Working environment is such that teachers have no possibilities to use that language actively, while pupils have great possibilities to get learning material not only in their native language thanks to possibilities offered by internet. A teacher also needs to get familiar with that material, check it and also give suggestions, because a child does not have to find everything by himself: he needs guidance, and this is where the project helps and provides encouragement.*

Results of analysis of materials of discussions with school principals confirm that their schools that received funding for implementation of ERASMUS+ KA1 action projects were striving to comply with the Fund requirements at all stages of implementation of the project. Criteria for selection of teachers for mobility visits were established at the schools, these criteria were referred to in selecting teachers, choosing different forms for professional development, and planning and implementing dissemination of results of mobility visits on different levels. It is important to note that the research revealed some specific aspects of implementation of the projects. These aspects are presented below, illustrated with statements by the research participants.

Selection of teachers at schools headed by principals who took part in the research was done on the basis of **SELECTION CRITERIA ESTABLISHED BY THE PROJECT ORGANISERS**. The following aspects of candidates were important to the project implementers:

- **language skills:** *We select those teachers who know English as you cannot take people who do not understand the language*;

- **writing of motivation letter:** *Teachers were writing motivation letters to the project coordinator and these were the basis in selecting our candidates. We had no defined criteria, we were just looking at what is emphasized in the letter. I have a staff of 70 teachers, but the number of letters was much smaller, perhaps 7 times*;

- **selection procedure based on specific stage of implementation of the project:** *People who can go naturally get extracted from all of those who want. We had 25 wanting applicant. The teachers had to get arranged in groups and find courses by themselves. A few of them got out immediately. Some more got out when portion of application had to be written. Some more got out when asked to describe how experience will be applied and disseminated. It may be that motivation letter has been written, but that person is not active at school, so interview and colleagues' evaluation are necessary*;

- **number of participants:** *When we asked to write applications, six out of twenty wrote them and they got sent. We had a conflict among teachers when internal selection at school was announced. There were several teachers who wanted to produce the same applications, there was competition*.

According to the research participants, **dissemination** regarding the mobility visits during the projects was **carried out actively and in accordance with requirements**: by producing a report, organising informational events at school, in town, and nationwide: *Teachers came back very happy and shared their experience with colleagues as well as regional schools really actively. Later everyone writes reports and must do publicising at meetings, lessons, to colleagues, friend to friend, and they did that in town too. In the reports they wrote what they saw, what the positive effect is, what could be applied at school. The teachers managed to spread the results very widely and immediately apply in their work as well as share with the community. The visits are followed by seminars: these take place not only at school, as there were two national-level conferences.*

It must be noted that implementation of international projects on professional development of teachers is also appreciated by both regional education policy makers and administrators. Discussions with school principals revealed that departments of education and politicians of the town / region find strengthening of internationalisation of schools important. However, the research results suggest that, on the one hand, international activities of school are recognized and evaluated rather formally, as integral parts of routine procedures of certification of school principals, on the other hand they are sometimes seen as the matter of pride of the town / region, so they are supported financially by finding unconventional solutions.

RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS OF SCHOOL ON THE LEVEL OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNANCE

- **Accreditation of school principals:** *During the accreditation internationalisation is highly appreciated. This is important in accreditation as results of activities of the principal are judged on the basis of the number of international projects per year and how much money the school attracts from the European Union*;

- **founder's approval and support:** *The Department of Education and politicians are very positive about that. We joined one more project that was not funded from anywhere, it included 14 EU member states, the government kindly welcomed the guests, talked to them*;

- **financial support to school:** *for a few successive years we were engaged in several international projects, so when there was not enough money available for the application the regional municipality always granted us extra funding, which we always refunded once the project was completed. The support is always like that.*

The most complicated topics at discussions were choice of forms of professional development of teachers abroad and usefulness of these forms for teacher professional development. Most mobile staff as well as school principals had no clear opinion on peculiarities of the possible professional development forms. To sum up the results of content analysis the topics mentioned below were identified. They relatively reflect and support the exclusiveness or appropriateness of one or another form of teacher competence development for satisfaction of the needs of school or teachers:

- **appreciation of job shadowing visits:** *Certainly, job shadowing would be the most useful thanks to seeing and being able to ask questions, though the easiest way is observation of a lesson. Job shadowing is even better than seminars, because it is during shadowing that you can see many backstage things, you can ask many questions, and you also talk both to children and teachers. While a seminar, when a lecturer stands in front of you and tells certain information, is narrower. The best way to learn is being with a colleague at a classroom a long time, getting into other environment – this is the best form of professional development*;

- **doubt if the chosen form was optimal:** *We preferred professional development courses, or maybe we did not even think about other options. Our selection of seminars could have been not the optimal way. We were doing what we could handle*;

- **reasons not to choose job shadowing:** *We mainly used courses, job shadowing is a great challenge to a teacher. If you go to give a lesson, you have to feel comfortable, at least from the perspective of foreign language.*

Considering appropriateness and match of qualification forms to the aims of mobility, it was found that school principals are best familiar with **professional development courses.** Although some teachers left disappointed with the course quality. The researchers hold an opinion that as to improvement of quality of the entire ERASMUS+ programme the following experiences of schools that have taken part in the project are important:

- **disappointment with quality in qualification events:** *According to the description the quality of the courses had to be much higher and the courses had to be prepared in the whole different way. What we actually found once there was primitive knowledge, total basics. The courses did not meet our needs and expectations at all, although the description was perfect, promotional. In the*

description, promotion everything seemed much better than what we actually found being there. It was rather primitive and not well prepared;

- **involvement in quality management:** *In the beginning there was some friction until we asked to give us knowledge that we needed. When we seriously announced our requirements and expectations the professionalism got really high and we received truly a lot. We had to corner the organisers: give us what we need*;

- **need for course quality assessment:** *Feedback on courses must surely be available. After I had written my feedback into the table, nobody talked to me on the last day. I was persona non grata after writing that the courses were not well prepared, there was not enough material provided, and that we were not happy with the courses.*

Just like mobile staff, school principals who participated in focus group discussions also expressed their opinions on collaboration with the specialists of the Education Exchanges Support Foundation who administrate preparation and implementation of project applications of schools as well as presented **PROPOSALS CONCERNING SUPERVISION OF PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS**:

- **evaluation of activities of specialists of the Foundation:** *The Foundation works correctly, consistently, we feel very well. All the information is provided concretely and clearly, perhaps only the time for applying is very short. When you send a question to the Agency you always get a specific reply that includes all instructions. The relationship is just perfect. They even call us back*;

- **need for help:** *Considering small schools that have no experience the Fund has to think how to help them with the application. Public procurement was not easy. It was bad that all weekends in the mobility were counted, 10 days of work, because the course providers count differently*;

- **need for the course catalogues:** the catalogue *is not available, you have to submit an application, but the courses are scattered all over the internet, you do not even find them at start. We really missed a catalogue and we still miss it. Without it it's very difficult to find and choose what the school and its teachers need.*

5. ANALYSIS OF CASE STUDY FINDINGS

The aim of case study is to reveal and describe mobility experience and identify success factors and problems.

Cases of Šiauliai S. Šalkauskis gymansium, Panevėžys J. Balčikonis gymnasium, Šiauliai district municipality consortium (pre-primary education institutions) and Rokiškis district municipality consortium were analysed.

Research topics: (1) organisation of mobility; (2) implementation and dissemination of the mobility experience; (3) school leader's support, teacher leadership; (4) outcomes of teacher professional development abroad, their impact on pupils' learning results and school culture.

Research methods: (1) document analysis (analysis of the strategic documents of the school/district, project application forms) for evaluating the consistency between the objectives set out in a project application and strategic documents; (2) secondary data analysis of the surveys of schools; (3) focus group discussions (mobile, non-mobile staff, school principals of Rokiškis district municipality consortium schools; (5) interview with leaders and founders of institutions implementing a project.

At the time of research part of the project had been completed by Šiauliai S. Šalkauskis gymnasium, mobility had been organised by Panevėžys J. Balčikonis gymnasium but dissemination activities were in progress. In both consortiums mobility was not completed, not all planned visits had taken place. Taking all that into account, analysis of secondary data of survey findings in the case of Rokiškis district municipality consortium was not done, survey in Šiauliai district municipality consortium was not organised.

A decision was taken to present only those findings that directly reveal project implementation peculiarities in the selected schools and consortiums. Findings that were provided in previous chapters revealing respondents' perceptions on project preparation and implementation are not repeated here.

5.1. INTERNATIONALISATION STRENGTHENING THROUGH TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ABROAD: ŠIAULIAI S. ŠALKAUSKIS GYMNASIUM CASE

THE CONSISTENCY BETWEEN THE OBJECTIVES SET OUT IN A PROJECT APPLICATION FORM AND STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS. Strategic goal of the school: teaching quality improvement so as to ensure success of each pupil and teacher. School priorities: continuous cooperative learning, teaching quality and effectiveness, international cooperation and collaboration, optimization of learning environment.

The objectives set out in the application form *(to acquire new competence, to update teaching programmes and learning environment, to maintain effective relations with partner schools)* **are in line with the activity priorities set out in the strategic plan for 2013-2015 and address the goals and tasks.** The following actions in order to sustain experience gained in ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility are outlined in the school's application (1) mobility experience and project outcomes will be disseminated; (2) teaching quality will improve; (3) a non-traditional learning space will be created; (4) non-traditional approaches to teaching will be implemented.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY SURVEY FINDINGS

12 mobilities were foreseen in the project application. Number of participants: 5 teachers (some took part in several visits, 4 teachers - in similar visits earlier). Forms of teacher competence development abroad: courses (3 participants), job shadowing (5 participants).

Satisfaction with visits. Quantitative survey findings show that overall satisfaction with visits was at very high level, visit programmes and other arrangements met all participants' expectations, intercultural experiences and responsiveness of the host institution - exceeded.

Mobility outcomes. Objectives of the project "Teaching in a different way": to teaching quality improvement through teacher competence development. Qualitative survey findings allow to state that the objectives have been achieved: new teaching methods have been mastered (3 respondents), class management methods have been mastered (2 respondents), teaching methods of pupils with special needs have been mastered (3 respondents). All respondents noted that they apply new skills in the daily life. They pointed out that their international communication skills have significantly improved (5 respondents), they have become more open to changes (5 respondents).

Main changes at school level. All respondents noted that the teaching process has been modified, new teaching methods used, pupils' creativity and involvement has increased but no changes in the teaching content (curriculum) have occurred, pupils' learning results have improved (3 respondents), all respondents noted bigger or smaller changes in school culture.

The majority of non-mobile staff noted bigger or smaller changes in the same areas except for improvement of pupils' learning results. Surveyed pupils (N=19) noted that mobile staff teaching has changed: teaching has become more interesting, they get project-oriented tasks, smart technologies are used, tasks that require foreign language skills are given (about 80%).

Leadership of mobile staff. School community survey allows to state that leadership of mobile staff was revealed in project dissemination activities: experience exchange for the groups of colleagues, open classes for the school community organised, subject teaching material produced, new ideas generated and teams to implement them built. **The majority of non-mobile staff also noted that mobile staff successfully motivate non-mobile staff to apply novelties in work.**

All respondents evaluated the organisational climate as favourable to innovations; school leader's support and involvement was evaluated lower than colleague's support, mobile and non-mobile staff described the organisational climate as favourable to change.

FINDINGS FROM FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS AND INTERVIEW WITH SCHOOL LEADERS

Research sample. 2 focus group discussions: (1) mobile staff (5 respondents); (2) non-mobile staff (7 respondents); (3) interview with the school leader (former and current school principals).

Project implementation peculiarities. (1) clear school principals' strategic understanding on the importance of the linkage between teaching process improvement and internationalisation; (2) well-organized and managed dissemination of mobility experience; (3) effective implementation of mobile staff experience by non-mobile staff.

SCHOOL LEADERS' PERCEPTION

School leaders' strategic approach to strengthening internationalisation: *If a school ignores the international context, that Lithuania is part of the world, then its pupils will face problems. If a teacher chooses to stay at home instead of taking courses abroad and exploring the world, if a school ignores European principles for teacher competence, we'll be side-lined, and our children will have to put much effort into finding their place in the global context, in a common cultural area.*

Purposive selection of project participants: *Project implementers were selected in several stages. At the beginning there were 20 candidates. And fewer when it came to particular activities because candidates has to have particular knowledge and skills. Firstly, foreign language skills, then how to find the necessary courses. Then project goals and objectives were defined, school strategy analysed, a visit programme drafted with focus on teaching and its quality.*

Project monitoring: *Firstly, acquired knowledge was intensively disseminated in teacher teams, and now, when the project has been implemented, those teams are very cooperative and collaborative, they are creating a culture of sharing. There was some little push by the school leaders, at a teacher council.*

Teaching process during a visit: *All know visit dates. It might be good to know them well in advance. For planning purposes. It wasn't possible to do courses during holidays. It wasn't easy to find suitable courses. Administration had to re-schedule classes. Did everything go on smoothly? At times yes, at times no. Before their visit some teachers handed over tasks to their colleagues. Some tasks were done, some not. Others gave self-study tasks to their pupils. Others asked their colleagues to have a look at their pupils. Administration could have staffed a substitute or a part-time teacher but that might have been difficult - you get the feel of the situation and all is over because a visit lasted 5 days. One or another class might have been missed but the teacher came back inspired, full of new ideas. Pupils felt that, absorbed his energy. The teacher has a huge influence on children, his words carry much weight.*

Sustainability of mobility outcomes: *Pupils are more involved in classes that are run in a new way. They show more interest in a subject, discuss, exchange emotions and experiences. No doubts, children's positive emotions are of great importance in the learning process. Project sustainability is what sticks in people's mind, it's their attitude and concrete actions within and outside the classroom. All that is passed over from one person to another, to colleagues, children, everything around. These outcomes don't and won't disappear. We hope we'll enjoy even more benefits in the future. Sustainability is when you bring, adopt and adapt a new idea, transport it into new settings. Our teacher of literature has mastered a new teaching method which will be used here, in Šiauliai. Most often experience is passed over to others through methods, and that's very important speaking in terms of goals.*

MOBILE STAFF PERCEPTION

Project uniqueness appreciation: *It was a good opportunity to involve many teachers into this project. A team was built, all worked together. When a call for project proposal was announced the topic wasn't clearly defined. We analysed the topic, took into account our school priorities and now it's "Teaching in a different way". Interested and enthusiastic teachers volunteered. Some who had no ideas left the project. Others had some fairs about going abroad, speaking a foreign language..*

Responsibility to colleagues and school: *Courses abroad are a matter of importance not only to a teacher but also to colleagues, school. Teachers took on responsibility. Classes run in a different way are interesting. We searched for courses, found and applied. We were curious what teachers abroad do differently. We brought here what we had tested ourselves, now we run training sessions were like workshops, group work. We all worked with new tasks. The point is not to tell stories but demonstrate, provide colleagues with hands-on experience. Probably not everything can be used but that makes one think what has to be changed, how it feels to try and use. Experience exchange draws on making an attempt and experimenting. Children approve experiments. One of our goals was to create a non-traditional teaching space. Setting up a consultation centre where a teacher can run classes in a new way is the result of two implemented projects.*

Evaluation of teacher competence development forms: *There was a lot of job shadowing. Job shadowing is a good opportunity to view the teaching process from inside, courses - to acquire subject knowledge, master new methods. When you get an insight into teaching abroad you understand that you can also teach*

in a similar way. Shadowing was a very good experience, now I want to use those models and see how they work and build relationships, run classes in a different way. Shadowing makes you reflect on your work, look for new ways of building similar relationships, teaching in a different way .

Project implementation problems*: I was disappointed that there were so few courses. Not much time was given to find suitable courses, relevant to your topic, school goals. Some course administrators didn't bother to let you know that courses were cancelled. You apply but get no answer, and the you find out that courses were cancelled.*

NON-MOBILE STAFF PERCEPTION

Visit experience exchange: *Colleagues shared material they brought with them, as well as methods and tasks, all that can be used and we do use. Pupils like new methods. Those new methods arouse learners' interest in a subject. After their visit to Italy colleagues spoke much about community spirit, I got interested, saw some drawbacks of my approach to community building. She has adopted a new approach to that and now I'm learning from her, we're working together. I see many benefits of the project, firstly, it's new methods and how they can be used. A consultation centre has been set up where a teacher can run classes in a more interesting way, not only following a traditional textbook, in the classroom.*

5.2. IMPROVEMENT OF TEACHING GIFTED PUPILS THROUGH COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT ABROAD: PANEVĖŽYS J. BALČIKONIS GYMNASIUM CASE

CONSISTENCY BETWEEN THE OBJECTIVES SET OUT IN THE STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS AND THE PROJECT APPLICATION FORM

The objectives set out in the application form *(to use innovative methods teaching gifted pupils, to develop core and subject-specific teacher competence, to integrate smart technologies and open resources into the teaching/learning process, to expand the range of extra-curricular activities and project work using social media, to develop management competence)* **are in line with the goal set out in the strategic plan for 2014-2016** (*teacher competence development seeking to meet gifted pupils' educational needs).*

For the assurance of mobility outcome sustainability the following activities have been planned in the application form: effective integration of ICT and use of active and innovative teaching methods, experience exchange, identification of gifted pupils and their teaching, modification of the educational and strategic plans. However, no measurable indicators have been provided in the strategic plan and the proposal form.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY SURVEY FINDINGS

20 visits had been planned in the application form. Number of participants: 13 teachers (some took part in several visits, 9 teachers - in similar visits earlier). Forms of teacher competence development abroad: courses (13 participants), job shadowing (2 participants).

Satisfaction with visits. The findings show that overall satisfaction with visits was at average level, the programme, other arrangements, intercultural experiences and responsiveness of the host institution met the expectations of the majority of the respondents.

Mobility outcomes. Teacher competence development seeking to improve the quality of teaching gifted pupils had been set out in the application form. Survey findings allow to state that the objectives have been achieved: gifted pupils' achievement has improved (10 respondents), new teaching methods have been mastered (12 respondents), class management methods have been mastered (8 respondents), ICT integration into the teaching process skills has improved (7 respondents), teaching methods have changed (7 respondents).

Main changes at school level. All respondents noted that the teaching process has been modified, new teaching methods have been used (11 respondents), the teaching content has changed (6 respondents), pupils' involvement and motivation have increased (8 respondents), pupils' creativity has increased (11 respondents), pupils' achievement has improved (8 respondents), the value system and school culture have changed (7 respondents), all respondents noted that they apply new experience in the teaching process.

Non-mobile staff stated that the teaching/learning process has changed, new teaching methods have been mastered but not less than half of the respondents noted that pupils' motivation had no impact on pupils' achievement.

Surveyed pupils (N=29) indicated mobile staff teaching has changed: teaching has become more interesting, they get project-oriented tasks (about 80%), smart technologies are used (about 70%), tasks that require foreign language skills are given (60%).

Leadership of mobile staff. A school community survey allows to state that effective project dissemination activities have been organised: experience exchange sessions with colleagues and open classes for school community have been run (8 teachers), subject teaching material has been produced (6 teachers), guidelines for teaching gifted pupils have been developed (5 teachers), project presentation at parents' meeting has been organised (4 teachers). Other activities organised by mobile staff: generation of new ideas and building teams to implement them (7 respondents), parents' involvement into initiatives (5 respondents), support outsourcing (9 respondents). The majority of non-mobile staff noted that mobile staff demonstrate leadership.

Almost all respondents evaluated the organisational climate as favourable to change. They noted that the school leader is interested in and strategically supports competence development abroad. The majority of the respondents (mobile and non-mobile staff) noted that innovative ideas are supported, about half of the respondents - that non-mobile staff actively implement project outcomes. All respondents described the school community as supportive.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION AND INTERVIEW WITH SCHOOL LEADER FINDINGS

Research sample. 2 focus group discussions: (1) mobile staff (6 respondents); (2) non-mobile staff (5 respondents); (3) interview with school leader and Education Department specialist.

Project implementation peculiarities. The school has a deep and long tradition of teaching gifted pupils. Teacher visits abroad, international relations at various levels (school leader, teacher, pupil) are school common activities. Teacher visits abroad are scheduled. Project implementation peculiarities: (1) clear linkage between project topic, approach to teaching and strategic goals; (2) well-established implementation of mobile staff experience.

SCHOOL LEADER PERCEPTION

Assessment of school potential: *We're teaching gifted pupils so we wanted to be certain about our place in the European context. These explorations, visits abroad to be used like self-assessment what you can change on your own with the aim to assure teachers that they are able to add some details, implement some elements.*

Appreciation of long-term benefits of competence development abroad: *Pupils enjoy going abroad but they leave school after 2-3 years, meanwhile the teacher comes back and uses that in teaching and all that stays. The teacher is here, will be here, he'll apply his experience which will stay long.*

Benefits of a consortium implementing municipality education policy: *When a school gets involved in some international initiative or project the Education Department should provide support. The consortium should generate change in the education system. All can have their point of view but what really matters is*

looking outward in the same direction. The consortium could ease tension between various types of schools: although they are part of different structures their goal is one. Different schools could collaborate in consortium international undertakings and build strong partnerships. A consortium founder should be a leader and coordinator. Shouldn't be corrupt, should be able to resist Education Department pressure, have a clear education strategy for the district and a firm stance. The consortium should be guided by strict project selection criteria, participants should be given sufficient time to prepare.

MOBILE STAFF PERCEPTION

Appreciation of teacher team mobility: *Team visits matter more than one visitor. The level of project dissemination is higher. Trust is higher. Team participation in a visit adds value to the institution: a team is more empowered than one individual in decision making, initiating changes. Ideas brainstormed in courses are shared. Team members share ideas, such an activity carries more weight, is of a higher quality..*

Self-verification of competence: *My self-esteem was boosted: I'm proud that my ways of teaching aren't worse than there. It was great to see where and how teaching is organised, spaces, facilities, gadgets, equipment, materials scattered around. We're teaching in a very similar way: group work, pupils are talking and moving freely.*

NON-MOBILE STAFF PERCEPTION

Systemic experience of dissemination: *After a visit a presentation was given, teachers spoke, one was explaining, one or two were demonstrating. Slides were shown, materials, things were compared and discussed, it was kind of a workshop. Each month, on some two Tuesdays we would gather in the morning, a group would present a project, how everything went on, what surprised them or what we are doing better. Such presentations are also given in the subject-related teacher teams, we develop tasks for pupils, use the material brought with us.*

5.3. SCHOOL COOPERATION SEEKING TO IMPLEMENT STRATEGIC GOALS IN EDUCATION: ROKIŠKIS DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY CONSORTIUM CASE

CONSISTENCY BETWEEN THE OBJECTIVES SET OUT IN THE STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS AND THE PROJECT APPLICATION FORM

Consortium members: 8 secondary schools of the district. **The objectives set out in the proposal form are in line with one of the priority goals set out in the district strategic plan by 2020** *(to ensure the quality of education services)*. Measures seeking to achieve the goal: (1) to develop teacher competence; (2) to promote international mobility; (3) to foster creativity and leadership project implementation in schools.

Project aims were grounded with the self-assessment reports prepared by district schools in 2010-2014, surveys on pupils' achievement, reports prepared by the National Agency for School Evaluation, in the application form: low motivation, of form 5-8 and 9-10 pupils, a decreasing pupils' achievement, need for general and professional competence improvement of teachers working with teenagers aged 10-16. **It is important to note that all mobility activities address competence development of teachers teaching that age pupils.**

Experience dissemination activities (workshops) had been outlined in the school's application as the needed actions in order to sustain experience gained in ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility. **Differently from other cases, concrete management decisions had been set out in the project application seeking to monitor and evaluate changes in schools participating in the consortium: teacher, pupil and parent surveys, teaching process observation by visits to the lessons, document analysis (orders, meeting minutes, working group reports).**

FOCUS GROUPS DISCUSSION AND INTERVIEW WITH SCHOOL LEADERS FINDINGS

Research sample. 2 focus group discussions with: (1) school leaders of consortium members (8 respondents); (2) mobile staff (8 respondents); (3) interview with district municipality mayor and deputy mayor, Education Department head and specialist, project coordinator (5 respondents).

Project implementation peculiarities: Education Department specialist demonstrates a strong position so as to ensure the quality of the education system in the district through project work, mobility programmes. Education Department specialist has a clear position on monitoring dissemination activities, as well as using school performance evaluation by clearly defined criteria.

PERCEPTION OF EDUCATION POLICY MAKERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Project success factors: *The consortium put much effort into project proposal preparation so as to the win a project. Education Department specialist's input is huge: she has experience and know-how, had worked with other projects that had brought benefit to schools. The problem that the district municipality has to deal with in the education system has been well-defined in the project application: motivation of form 5-8 pupils. Not all teachers know how to use methods so as to handle the problem.*

Advantages of having the consortium in a district: *Setting up a consortium in a small district is a wise decision. A problem can be approached from a wider perspective and solved. A consortium allows to take a wider view. It provides a possibility to share mobility experiences not only with your school colleagues but also in the district. One of the drawbacks is that only 2-3 members from school can participate, it is a tough task to select the right charismatic people, to be sure that he will want to share experience, not to sit in corner saying: well, went on a visit... so, what?*

SCHOOL LEADER'S SUPPORT AND RECOGNITION

Strategic strengthening of the education system in the district: *If a project helps to increase outgoing mobility and reach the national average that will mean success. This project is beneficial to teachers in our district, not many have a chance to go abroad. Now they get a chance to share experiences. We were very surprised that people learned so much. A teacher's from a village school mobility increases prestige, parents' trust, if a teacher travels a school is good. Local government leaders were an inch higher than we, somebody went somewhere. Now teachers get an opportunity to take the lead, see things from another perspective.*

Benefits of the consortium to small schools: *Higher value is created in a consortium, it's when a number of visits rises, a wider territory is covered, more dissemination. Many Erasmus projects are too complicated for a small village school. Central project administration is very helpful. We can't afford that somebody would organise accommodation, catering. It wouldn't be fear to ask a teacher of English to organise a trip for 5 persons.*

Benefits of networking: *It's good to have a consortium, teachers can interact, discuss what they saw. We see a schedule, how experience will be shared with teachers from other schools, that's also competence development. Teachers present an opinion of not one individual but of team members. If half of staff goes on a visit, who will teach? Almost all schools in the district share teachers, if dissemination is organised properly all the district will get enough knowledge.*

MOBILE STAFF PERCEPTION

Value of networking to school and teacher*: It's very important that we're from the same district. We feel each other, understand, support and cooperate. That's very good. We don't socialise much, and that's an opportunity to meet other subject teachers and interact with them, find out their opinion. It's not so important*

to go abroad, firstly you get to know your own people, learn about their problems, pleasures. When we began giving our presentations we understood that we see things differently. It's important to reveal different approaches. It would be difficult for one school to organise dissemination. Interests would be one-sided. Project outcomes would less significant.

Advantages of the consortium: *School leaders are happy and encourage to take part, teachers shouldn't shut themselves off. Giving presentations in other schools we improve ourselves and competence. A project is a matter of prestige for school, leadership development. Then parents and pupils change their opinion. The advantage of a consortium is that the teacher doesn't have to do much paperwork, shouldn't bother about formalities, public procurement.*

Scope of dissemination at district level: *No mistakes were made, everything was well organised. There could have been a little less of dissemination, in school and after school, for the whole month. We're from the district, problematic to reaching the place, find transport, manage time. But that's an insignificant disadvantage. But when schools are satisfied with dissemination, we are too.*

5. 4. CREATING A NETWORK OF PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: ŠIAULIAI DISTRICT CONSORTIUM CASE

CONSISTENCY BETWEEN THE OBJECTIVES SET OUT IN THE STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS AND THE PROJECT APPLICATION FORM

Consortium members: 7 pre-school education institutions of the district. **The objectives set out in the application form** *(to deepen general and subject-related competence (intercultural communication, foreign language skills, use of new teaching methods)* **are in line with one of the priorities set out in the district strategic plan for 2011-2017** *(to create a civic, educative, creative, healthy and safe society* with the goal *to create an accessible and effective modern education system in the district).*

Concrete measures so as to measure the achieved changes are not provided in the application form. Expected changes: better understanding of the development direction of institutions, problem identification in institutions, effective activity planning, effective experience exchange, better understanding of the role of an employee in the institution.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION AND INTERVIEW WITH SCHOOL LEADERS FINDINGS

Research sample. (1) 1 focus group discussion with leaders of pre-primary institutions who participated in mobility (7 respondents); (2) interview with Education Department specialists, project coordinator, district municipality deputy mayor (5 respondents).

Project implementation peculiarities. At the time of a meeting with the respondents the project was in progress, one visit had been organised, English language course had been started, competence development abroad dissemination had been done at institutional level. Project implementation peculiarities: (1) founder's initiatives implementing national education policy through an international project; (2) setting up a team for international project implementation in education institutions.

EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS' PERCEPTION

National policy implementation through project activities: *The project is linked to national document changes. The research topic is liked to changes in pre-school education programmes: what and how to change, it's necessary to know the situation not only in other districts but also abroad. District educators should look in one direction. They can gain exchange experience while travelling.*

MOBILE LEADERS' PERCEPTION

Development opportunities: *Because we haven't taken part in any international project, now it's our lucky chance. This project is an opportunity to develop, it'll be great to master new methods, get to know initiatives, changes, strategies, novelties, what can be used to implement change, we want to improve. It's a unique opportunity to join, it's a lesson for the institution how to write an international project. A benefit is clear - moving experience here.*

Benefits of group work: *It's good to work in a group - we can discuss and give an opinion. We are fresh institution leaders and lack experience, and some courage, encouragement in needed. This project is encouragement and an opportunity, demonstration. I like team work, want to know other heads of institutions, learn together.*

Barriers to taking part in international projects: *The main reason for not taking part is a foreign language. There aren't many young people in our institutions who could communicate in English. If proposals could have been filled out in Lithuanian it could be easier. Schools have English teachers who help but we haven't. Our kindergarten is small, we can't write a project, we've got only 4 groups, children can't be left unattended*.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RESULTS OF ANALYSIS OF ERASMUS+ KA1 APPLICATIONS SHOW THE FOLLOWING:

Usually, in project applications the development of the European dimension in schools is understood and planned to be implemented at the individual's level, i.e. development of teacher's/school leader's intercultural and professional competences. A teacher, well-acting in a constantly changing society, understanding political, economic and social changes, aware of the state policy of education, its European and global contexts, having clear own competences of cultural, national and global identification, is considered as an important pre-condition for the increase of internationalisation of an organisation.

Dissemination of gained experience in the groups of colleagues, integration of new knowledge while improving quality of a lesson, preparing/altering documents required for implementation of educational policy: recommendations, education plans, dominate as the selected activities for assuring project outcome sustainability. It was found out that only small number of schools (3 out of analysed 31 cases) in their ERASMUS+ KA1 applications are planning to assess the impact of mobility-related ideas on pupils' learning outcomes which, from the researchers' point of view, is significant indicator of sustainability of teacher professional development.

The need for development of teachers' general competences is dominant (55 percent of all applications). Talking more specifically about general competencies, improvement implementation of the content of education (education methods and strategies) (90% of all applications) and foreign language (English) (86% of all applications) competencies are in greatest demand. **Less expressed is the need for the competence of assessment of pupils'** learning outcomes **and progress** (10 percent of applications**), which means the lacking attitude of teachers' professional development as the means for improvement of pupils' learning outcomes and progress.**

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY ALLOW STATING THE FOLLOWING:

Participants of ERASMUS + KA1 mobility programme for school staff are satisfied with organisation of mobility visits, obtained experience of intercultural collaboration, responsiveness of course providers to the needs of participants.

Preparation for the visit is a significant factor of success. Some 60 percent of participants were preparing for the mobility: were searching for information about the system of education of a country they visited, searching for information on the topic of the mobility. One third of the respondents indicated that they attended foreign language courses. The staff with longer teaching experience was preparing more thoroughly. The importance of administrative preparation for a mobility (forming mobility aims, purposeful and thorough selection of courses, team work, staff involvement into project preparation, sharing responsibilities) was emphasised by the respondents.

The research revealed that preparation for a mobility determines higher satisfaction with qualification development, higher level of obtained competences, and higher rates given when evaluating outcomes at class and school level. Individuals who put more effort for preparation more often act as leaders, disseminate and implement gained experience.

The purposefulness of mobility is rated quite high in the survey. Respondents see actual links between mobility aims and school strategy. Some 90 percent of participants and over 70 of those who did not participate in the mobility agree that the project ideas contribute to implementation of the school strategy, one third of mobile staff and one fourth of those who did not participate are sure about this.

Project outcomes partially depend on a chosen form of professional training. Job shadowing provides more contribution in developing general competences, whereas courses are more suitable for development of professional competences. Courses more often than job shadowing stimulate teachers to apply new teaching methods, change the educational content, change pupils' motivation. Higher results of teacher professional development are achieved when combining job shadowing and courses.

Majority of school project coordinators assess performance of the Education Exchanges Support Foundation administering ERASMUS+ KA1 programme as good or very good. More problems are caused by the filling-in of applications to coordinators of a project from schools in rural areas and smaller schools.

According to perception of mobile staff biggest changes are achieved in development of general competences, almost all participants indicate alteration of attitudes: teachers become more open to changes and innovations. Changes in the area of professional competences are related to a particular content of professional development. New knowledge on teaching methods is the most frequent outcome of teacher professional development in ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility.

School staff, both these who participated in the mobility and who not, usually notice changes caused by mobility in the area of school culture: more discussions on the idea of internationality of school are held, more openness, tolerance appear with the school community. **The lowest rates when evaluating changes taking place in school after mobility by the respondents of both groups are in the area of pupils' learning.** 10 percent of respondents notice that pupils work more actively and creatively during lessons, motivation of pupils for learning increases.

Changes caused by mobility as outcomes of a project are acknowledged by pupils. Over 80 percent of pupils notice changes in the process of education. They state that **lessons of teachers who participated in qualification development courses abroad become more interesting, smart technologies are used more often.** A lesser part of pupils point out changes related to integration of a foreign language into the process of education. Majority of the mentioned changes are more often noticed by pupils from schools in rural areas.

The research revealed parents' positive attitudes towards teacher professional development abroad. For all respondents of this group, it is important that a school would be based on good international practice. **Parents treat teacher professional development abroad as a factor of teaching improvement and a mean for improvement of pupils' learning outcomes**, which should be not only a goal of school, but also an object of accountability for parents.

The research revealed pupils' high expectations concerning teachers' competences of internationality. **Approx. 90 percent of pupils note that teacher's abilities to organise international learning, implement good foreign practices, be fluent in foreign language are important for them.** Such responses from pupils reveal the demand for common European Education Area caused by common labour market.

The most popular form of experience dissemination - oral presentations inside the school. This form is chosen by all schools that participated in the research. Approx. 40 percent of participants shared their gained experience through open lessons, shared knowledge with parents, prepared materials for the subjects taught. These activities were carried out in more than 75 percent of schools. However, in part of schools they were not recognised as such by peers who did not participated in the mobility. Such situation presupposes a conclusion that **accountability for the outcomes of the teacher mobility in part of schools was limited by formal dissemination of information.**

When implementing ideas of mobility visits in schools, leadership manifests through teachers' endeavours to change attitudes within an organisation, purposeful involvement of colleagues into learning, arrangement of group work, involvement of interested individuals and search for support for implementation of ideas.

Leadership of staff who participated in professional development abroad is recognised by colleagues who did not take part in the project in almost 90 percent of schools, teams for implementation of new ideas are brought together in 60 percent of schools. The research revealed a significant impact of teacher leadership on outcomes of teacher professional development (changes taking place in school after mobility). Teacher leadership has higher impact on changes in schools' culture, a lesser impact on changes in the curriculum, pupil's motivation and learning practices.

Favourable school environment for implementation of ideas of the ERASMUS+ KA1 staff mobility manifests through support of school leader and other colleagues. In majority of cases, teachers who both participated and did not participate in the mobility notice bigger or lesser school leader's support, his/her concern about dissemination of project ideas in school, interest in its implementation.

The research revealed significant influence of supportive environment of a school on project outcomes. **Approval, support and involvement of school leader and colleagues are the strongest factors making impact on sustainability of project outcomes.** It is important to note that direct influence of a school leader is not high; however, his/her favourable and demanding position has an impact on other factors that directly influence project outcomes: encourages teachers to properly prepare for a visit, supports teacher leadership, helps to create a favourable attitude towards mobility-related ideas in the eyes of other colleagues. Dissemination of information inside school has almost no impact on project results.

RESULTS OF THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH REVEAL THE FOLLOWING:

An exceptional characteristics and advantage of ERASMUS+ KA1 action projects is purposeful and targeted support for teacher/school teams' activities. Team activities arranged and supported in all stages of the project enable achievement of higher project outcomes and ensure their sustainability at the levels of individual teacher, school, district education system.

Initiation of ERASMUS+ KA1 action projects is not only a prerogative of school leaders: initiation of international projects is seen a role of individual teacher as well. From the point of view of school leaders, changed procedures of organisation of teachers' professional development abroad act also as an instrument of management of strategic changes in school, enabling to look at the European dimension as a part of school's development strategy.

According to the participants' opinion, teacher professional development abroad is related to the increase of teachers', school leader's and school image in the society. Formal recognition of professional development abroad is equal to a regular (local) teacher professional development event, whereas **non-formal recognition of participation in international professional development events among pupils, their parents, is much higher. It enhances prestige of both teacher and school, increases the school competitiveness in the market of education services.**

Schools that received support for implementation of ERASMUS+ KA1 action projects strive to follow the requirements of the Foundation in all stages of implementation of a particular project. Schools have set criteria for selection of teachers to take part in mobility; following the criteria, selection of teachers proceeded, dissemination of outcomes of mobility visits was implemented at different levels. Essentially, participants are satisfied with the administering of projects at the national level. **Dissatisfaction was**

expressed only with the quality of some of courses, the lack of systematic information about professional development courses.

From the point of view of research participants, all forms of teacher professional development abroad are useful. Selection of forms of job shadowing is essentially limited by teachers' foreign language skills. **A consortium as a new form of participation in professional development abroad, is acceptable to participants of the project.** It meets the needs of municipality administration at the local level of implementation of the educational policy, is very helpful for increase of possibilities for participation of small educational institutions in international projects.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For national level politicians and administrators in education. For an institution coordinating the activities of ERASMUS+ KA1 action it is recommended to prepare, periodically revise and issue a catalogue of teacher professional development course organisers abroad, thus increasing possibility for schools to choose courses better meeting their needs.

Seeking for greater impact of teacher professional development to school strategic development and its sustainability it is recommended to change the dominating form of experience dissemination activities. **The priority should be given to the more proactive experience sharing forms based on the value co-creation perspective with the aim to more actively involve other colleagues to work together as a learning community with shared responsibility to create learning experiences necessary to achieve the desired outcomes. It can take the forms of professional workshops, co-creation labs, other events of qualification development.** I.e., it is recommended to switch the prevailing quantitative approach (number of conferences organized, oral presentations given inside and outside the school) to more qualitative approach.

For municipality level politicians and administrators in education. For administrators of the municipalities where ERASMUS+ KA1 projects were implemented on the consortium model, it is recommended to monitor the impact of the project at the local level of the education system and create favourable conditions for joining into experience dissemination activities.

For school managers and teachers. The aspects of the impact and sustainability of the ERASMUS+ KA1 project in terms of changes in pupils' learning performance and school progress should be analysed and assessed in the quality self-assessment of school. Schools which implemented the ERASMUS+ KA1 mobility projects are recommended to integrate questions of monitoring of project outcomes into the process of quality self-assessment, finding the links between aims reached by the project and school performance indicators, foreseeing support and development of project outcomes in the plans for improvement of school performance.

For school leaders in order to ensure sustainability of project results, managerial decisions directed to improvement of teachers' professional performance in class, their collegial collaboration, assessment of pupils' achievements are recommended.

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