



Directorate-General for Education and Culture

## A HANDBOOK FOR SUSTAINABILITY

### Use and users

The Handbook is intended for project managers applying to the Tempus or the EU-US/Canada programmes. It provides guidance and advice for achieving sustainable outputs, in line with the project objectives.

In the Handbook **Applicants** will find:

- Advice on considering and gauging the future sustainability of their project in order to help them to design it effectively and fill in the application form.

The ability to anticipate and ensure the sustainability of projects will be taken into account by the European Commission in its assessment of applications.

**Project managers** will find advice to ensure the sustainability of their project during its implementation.

### Content

The Handbook provides:

- A description of the various features of sustainability to bear in mind when designing or managing a project.
- A presentation of the key factors of sustainability to take into account in order to anticipate threats or opportunities for safeguarding project activities and/or outcomes.
- Useful recommendations for project leaders to design and manage their Higher Education cooperation project with a view to enhancing its potential sustainability.

### Where to obtain?

- On the Tempus website you can download the Handbook or use the contact link to order a paper version.
- Contact your National Tempus Office, its coordinates are on the country pages of the Tempus website.

### European Commission Directorate-General Education and Culture

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/tempus/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/tempus/index_en.html)

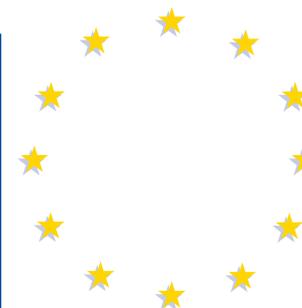
[http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/eu-usa/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/eu-usa/index_en.html)

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/eu-canada/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/eu-canada/index_en.html)

This work on sustainability has benefited from a study on the sustainability of higher education cooperation projects, undertaken by Eureval for the European Commission.

A project is sustainable when it continues to deliver benefits to the project beneficiaries and/or other constituencies for an extended period after the Commission's financial assistance has been terminated

# Sustainability of Higher Education and Vocational Training Cooperation Programmes



European Commission



# STUDY AND NEW TOOL FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION COOPERATION PROJECTS

The European Commission emphasises the importance of sustainable partnerships in the field of higher education and vocational training. It wants to guide the applicants and project coordinators towards more sustainability. This aspect will receive more attention in the selection process and throughout the life-cycle of the projects.

The European Commission has therefore contracted out a study that will enable the Commission, applicants and project coordinators:

- to identify those factors that support and ensure the sustainability of international projects, and those that hinder sustainability;
- to take appropriate measures to support and ensure sustainability of international cooperation projects in higher education and vocational training.

## This study concerns two programmes

- The Tempus programme of cooperation with non-EU countries
- Cooperation agreements with the USA and Canada

## It provides a new tool

A **Handbook** on sustainability for applicants and grant-holders



Photo: ETF/E. Decorato

## MAIN FINDINGS

### How to describe a sustainable project

**The sustainability of a project implies that the relevant outputs and/or the activities are maintained after the end of the EU funding.**

Two types of criteria can be used to describe the predicted or achieved sustainability of a project:

#### A. Diversity/Intensity of activities/results maintained or developed after the end of the funding

- Activities/Results are maintained
- Activities/Results are developed
- Activities/Results are disseminated

#### B. Intensity and diversification of cooperation

- International network continues
- Local network continues
- Initial network has been enlarged (to other domains or actors)

### The main sustainability factors

The study has identified the main sustainability factors:

- **5 Project-level factors**, depending on project monitoring: quality of the project's design corresponding to needs, involvement of consortium members, effective management and leadership, active participation of the audience, capacity for securing adequate resources for continuation.
- **3 Context-level factors**, depending on the environment: academic/institutional support, national support and socio-economic support.

## METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

In order to identify the main sustainability factors in Tempus and US/Canada projects, the following methodology has been developed:

- **Exploratory study:** definition of sustainability and work plan.
- **Data Base analysis** (Tempus): identification of the most frequent sustainability criteria and factors in all 2000-2002 Tempus projects.
- **NTO and NCP Workshops** (Tempus): establishment of a specific list of criteria and indicators weighted for each area (Taxis, CARDS, MEDA).
- **First meeting of the peers and expert panel:** test and validation of the sustainability criteria and factor grids depending on the types of area, and selection of 10 case studies.
- **10 Case studies** (Tempus and US/Canada): identification of the effective sustainability of 10 projects a few years after the end of the EU funding and identification of the most influential sustainability factors for each case.
- **Questionnaire survey** sent to project managers (Tempus and US/Canada): identification of quantitative evidence on sustainability, identification of correlations between effective sustainability, factors and types of projects (106 project coordinators answered the questionnaire)
- **Second meeting of the peers and experts panel:** validation of the conclusions of the study and main recommendations.



Photo: ETF/E. Decorato



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