

**Internationalisation Assistance Programme for Innovative SMEs
(INCONEXT)**

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**INTERNAL EVALUATION FRAMEWORK OF THE
INCONEXT PROJECT**

Work package: **WP6**

The WP6 leader: **International School of Law and Business**

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Vilnius, Lithuania

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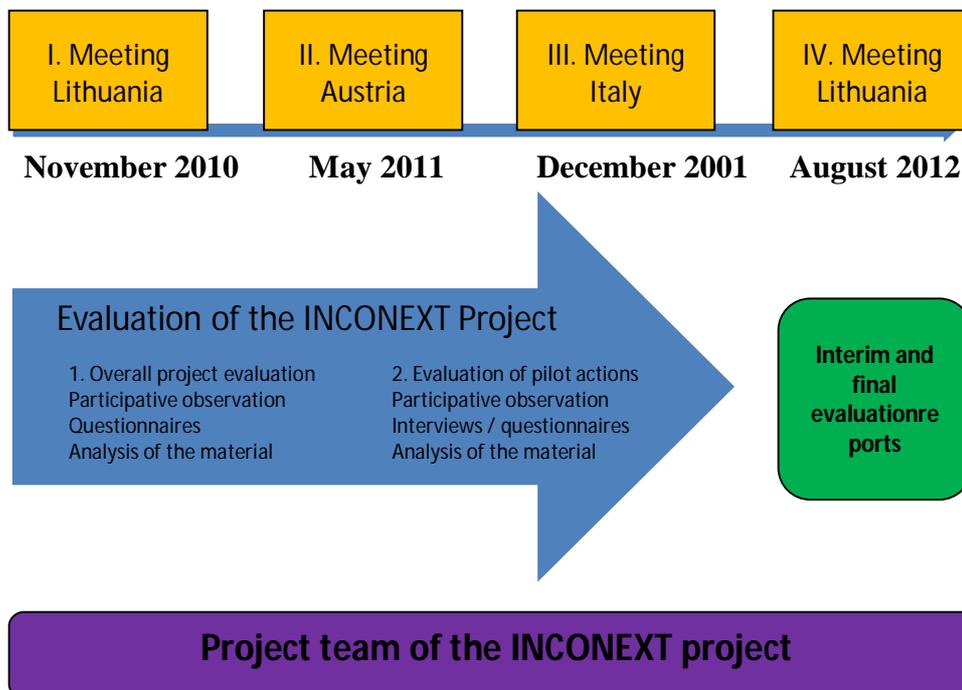
Evaluation framework

The INCONEXT consortium consisting of five project partners was established in October 2010. This transnational partnership is partly funded by the European Union through the Lifelong Learning Programme, Leonardo Da Vinci.

INCONEXT aims at adapting an e-learning package in order to develop individual and organisational competencies, to raise the qualification on strategic business management of innovative and technology oriented SMEs in the internationalisation context and testing as well as disseminating the e-learning package in Lithuania. The objectives of the project are focused on current e-learning material analysis, its adaptation to the needs of the target group as well as its transfer by developing new modules and enabling the use of the adapted material through an innovative e-learning platform.

The consortium members are from: Lithuania (3 partners), Austria and Italy. This transnational partnership is co-ordinated by the one of the Lithuanian partners, Kauno regiono smulki ir vidutinį verslininkų asociacija. The common objectives of the partnership and descriptions of the six work packages that will be completed during the project period are specified in the INCONEXT work programme.

Picture 1 describes the main tasks that were specified in the proposal concerning evaluation of the INCONEXT project.



Picture 1. Evaluation of the INCONEXT project

The main aim of evaluation of the project is to ensure the smooth implementation of the project and to make the developed training material valuable for the target groups and

potential beneficiaries as well as attractive for further exploitation. The evaluation of the INCONEXT project has three main objectives. First of all to conduct overall internal project evaluation and evaluation of sustainability of the INCONEXT project, secondly to perform a process and progress monitoring and thirdly to evaluate the developed materials as well as the content and usability of the Internationalisation Assistance Programme package, that will be developed during the project period. In the evaluation of the products main interest will be given to testing and evaluation of the training programme (e-learning material) with the target group.

Two pilot workshops will be organised in Lithuania, one in Kaunas and one in Vilnius.

Next the methodologies and time frame for the evaluation of the INCONEXT project will be discussed in more detail. Presentation starts with the overall internal project evaluation and is followed by the evaluation of the pilot actions. At this stage the evaluation of pilot actions cannot be described in detail, because it will be jointly developed with the leader of work package related to the testing of the products.

Overall project evaluation

When this kind of transnational project is being monitored and evaluated it is important that used evaluation methods capture the broad and heterogenic scope of activities carried out within the project. This means that for each activity being evaluated one has to consider what would be the best way to conduct it. For example, an in-depth-interview is an excellent tool when one wants to understand and interpret a complex phenomenon under examination. However, when one wants to know for example how many companies have used the products of the INCONEXT project, it is more convenient to use survey questionnaires. In some cases it is worthwhile to use more than one evaluation method. This way one makes sure that possible misunderstandings or subjective views do not give a false picture of the situation.

In the overall project evaluation of the INCONEXT project three main evaluation methods will be utilized. To track the work progress and to get feedback from consortium members after each meeting a **meeting evaluation** will be performed. All meeting participants will be asked to answer after each meeting a short questionnaire. The feedback will be treated confidentially and for each meeting one meeting evaluation report will be elaborated. This process will start with the second partner meeting, which will take place in May 2011 in Graz.

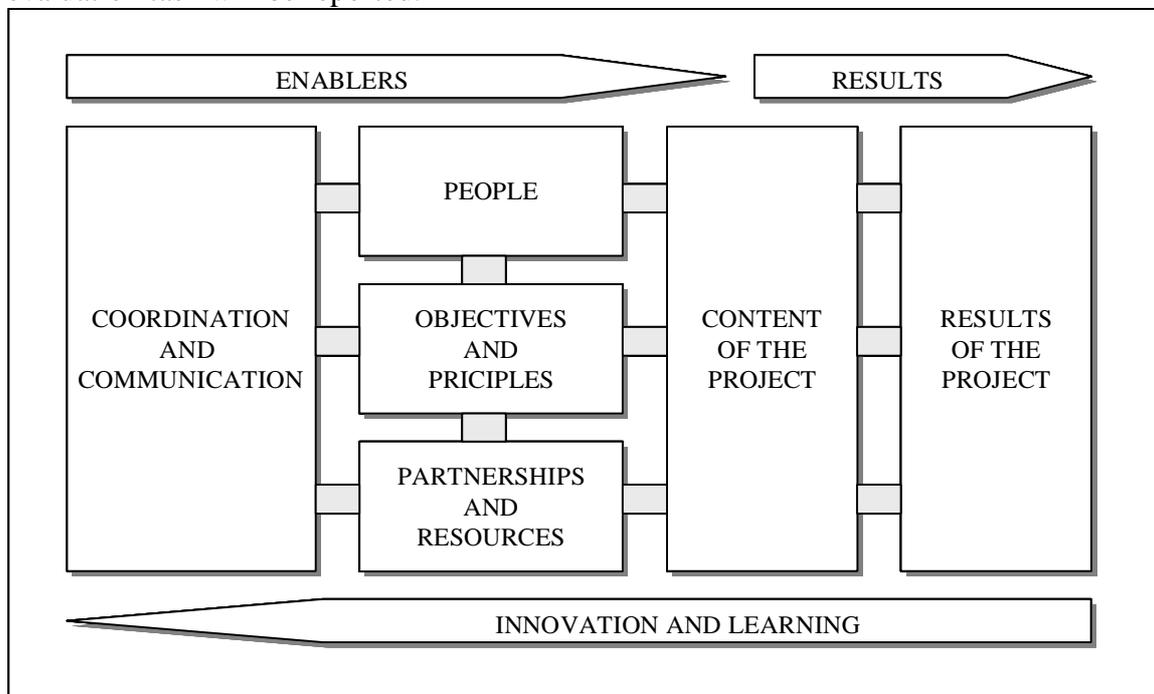
Quantitative data can be collected during two different stages of the project period through **survey questionnaires** which address activities and outcomes which are contemporary at that particular time. Prerequisite of successful evaluation process is that the consortium members fill these questionnaires thoroughly and return them within

agreed timeframes. Internet-based questionnaire tool is planned to be used for this purpose.

The INCONEXT project will produce a variety of materials and results (e.g. e-learning platform, learning materials, curriculum etc.) during the course of the project period. **The analysis of this material** is naturally an important part of the evaluation process. Expert opinions will be asked if that is considered necessary.

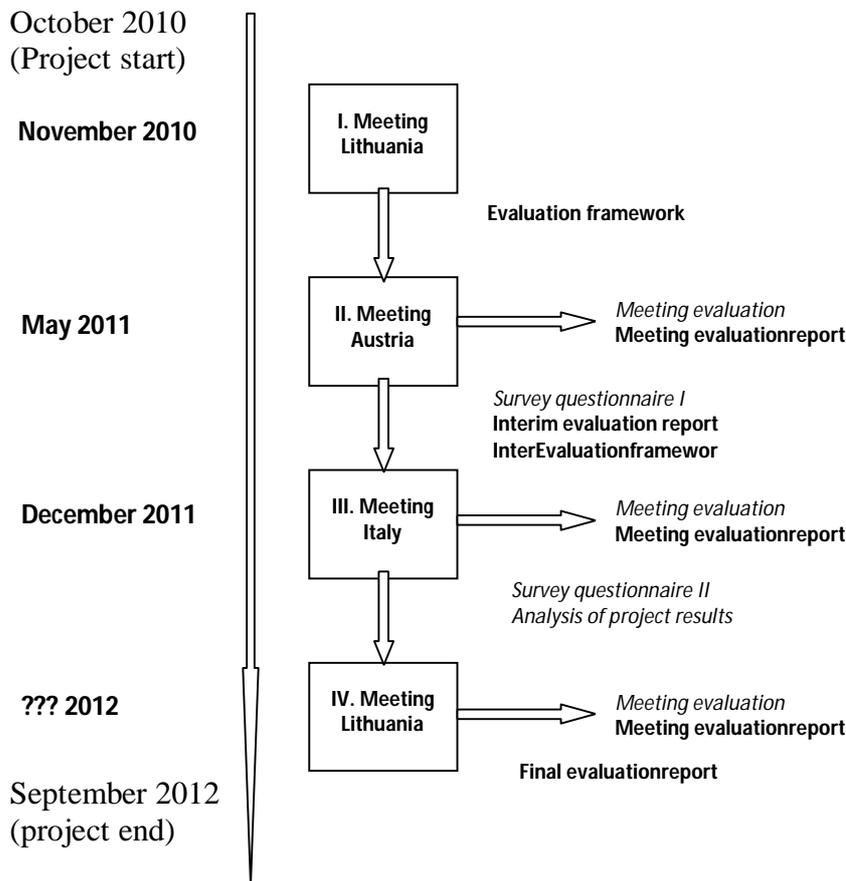
Implementation of the evaluation task will closely follow the overall schedule of the INCONEXT project. Project team meetings are occasions where all the consortium members meet and exchange information and experiences. Meetings are organized approximately twice a year and it is rationale to utilize these occasions for the evaluation purposes. The internal quality assurance manager of the INCONEXT project will also provide information about the latest developments for the consortium members, e.g. present the results of the meeting evaluation reports, etc. during project team meetings.

In order to ensure that evaluation task results in a holistic view of the INCONEXT project, a modified version of the EFQM Excellence Model will be used when evaluation data is gathered and analyzed. Picture 2 describes the main themes of this evaluation framework. These themes are also used when the results of the evaluation task will be reported.



Picture 2. Evaluation framework for the overall project evaluation of the INCONEXT project (A modified version of the EFQM Excellence Model).

Time frame for the overall project evaluation is described in picture 3 below. As was discussed above the time frame of the evaluation follows closely the overall schedule of the INCONEXT project. Expected written reports are marked with bold text and used methods with italic font.



Picture 3. Time frame for the overall project evaluation

Testing and Evaluation of the training programme (pilot actions)

In the evaluation of the pilot actions main focus is given to the feedback received from the end-users of the INCONEXT project i.e. SMEs in Lithuania. As was stated earlier, this part of the evaluation task will be done in co-operation with the work package leader (DIDA Network, P4) responsible for the testing of products. Thus, at this stage one cannot give any detailed descriptions of the evaluation procedures. However, the main objective is that selected evaluation methods are easy to use and do not require too much time and effort from SMEs. *Internet-based questionnaires* and *semi-structured interviews* are possible solutions, which would fulfill those previously mentioned requirements for the task.