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# Preparing and Managing European Projects for Socially Excluded Individuals – Guide

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## 1. Introduction

In the face of social challenges, particularly affecting socially excluded individuals, European projects have become crucial tools for supporting inclusion and developing the potential of individuals and local communities. Our guide, "Preparing and Managing European Projects for Socially Excluded Individuals," serves as a roadmap for those who wish to effectively engage in initiatives aimed at improving the living conditions of individuals affected by social exclusion. It is one of the outcomes of the "Competences on Time" project implemented by a partnership of non-governmental organizations from Poland, Croatia, Serbia, Italy, and Ukraine. This guide is a result of shared reflections and experiences aimed at supporting the process of preparing one's own project to assist socially excluded individuals. This project is co-financed by the Adult Education sector under the Erasmus+.

### Why is This Guide Important?

Socially excluded individuals often face numerous difficulties and barriers that hinder their full participation in society. European projects provide a unique opportunity to focus on their needs, offering tools for effective action to improve the quality of life and build their key competencies.

### What to Expect?

In our guide, we emphasize the practical aspects of preparing and implementing European projects. You will find tips on identifying community needs, establishing effective partnerships with local institutions, and working with the target group. We also present proven methods for monitoring progress and evaluation, ensuring that the project is not only effective but also sustainable and scalable. Without unnecessary elaboration, you will understand the project's structure and address key questions in the project context. Through a concise approach to the topic, the guide will become a checklist for creating new project proposals.

### Who is This Guide For?

This guide is addressed to non-governmental organizations, local governments, educational institutions, and all those involved in creating projects aimed at supporting socially excluded individuals. Regardless of experience or field of activity, this guide provides practical tips that will assist in planning and implementing European projects for the benefit of the local community. We wish you fruitful reading and inspiring work on projects that positively change the lives of socially excluded individuals.

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Caritas Archdiocese of Przemyśl, Caritas sv. Anastasia Sremska Mitrovica, CIVITAS Association, NGO ENAS, EUROSUD.

## **2. Why are European projects important for socially excluded individuals?**

European projects play a crucial role in improving the situation of socially excluded individuals for several significant reasons:

- **Social support and needs evaluation:**

European projects enable a thorough analysis of the needs of socially excluded individuals, allowing for targeted actions addressing specific challenges and difficulties they face. Through a participatory evaluation process, the project can better align its goals with the actual needs of the community.

- **Development of key competencies:**

These projects offer unique opportunities to develop key competencies among socially excluded individuals. Through participation in various educational activities, training programs, and activation initiatives, participants gain skills necessary for effective functioning in society.

- **Increased self-esteem and motivation:**

Participation in a European project can contribute to an increase in self-esteem among socially excluded individuals. Experiencing success, acquiring new skills, and actively participating in the project community can serve as strong motivational stimuli for further development.

- **Social inclusion and relationship building:**

European projects create spaces where socially excluded individuals can actively participate, establish relationships, and build social support. Collaborative activities promote inclusion, counteracting social isolation.

- **Expansion of social networks:**

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Participation in European projects opens the door to establishing connections both at the local and international levels. This, in turn, contributes to expanding social networks, which can be crucial for long-term support and development opportunities.

- Raising awareness in the local community:

These projects have the potential to change the societal perception of socially excluded individuals. By showcasing the achievements and talents of participants, the project can contribute to increased acceptance and understanding in the local community.

- Promotion of the lifelong learning concept:

Through participation in European projects, socially excluded individuals have the chance to experience the benefits of lifelong learning. This may result in a lasting interest in developing their skills even after the project concludes.

### **3. Brief characterization of the target group**

To create a successful project, it is essential to answer the question of whom we aim to help and how we plan to address the identified and diagnosed problem. In the language of project development, it is crucial to define "who our target group is." The target group of a project aimed at socially excluded individuals typically comprises individuals facing various difficulties that hinder their full participation in social life. The group is characterized by specific features and challenges that the project aims to address. Below is a brief characterization of such a target group:

- Social Exclusion:

Individuals targeted by the project experience social exclusion in various forms. This may include individuals affected by unemployment, poverty, or social marginalization.

- Low key competencies:

They often exhibit a low ability to use basic skills such as reading, writing, or computer literacy. The project aims to strengthen these competencies to increase their chances of active participation in society.

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- Lack of access to education and training:

The target group may have limited access to educational systems and training, resulting in a lack of certain skills necessary for effective functioning in society.

- Occupational challenges:

These individuals often face difficulties in the job market. They may have low vocational qualifications, making it challenging for them to find stable employment.

- Health and psychosocial challenges:

The target group may experience health issues, both physical and psychological, further complicating their daily functioning.

- Low awareness of development opportunities:

Often, these individuals have limited knowledge about available support programs and personal development opportunities. The project aims to increase their awareness and motivation.

- Cultural and social diversity:

The target group may be diverse in terms of culture and social background, requiring consideration of various experiences and needs in the planning and implementation of project activities.

- Motivation for change:

Despite difficulties, these individuals often possess internal motivation to improve their life situation. The project aims to support this motivation and facilitate positive changes.

A brief characterization of this group forms the foundation for an effective project focused on providing support, developing competencies, and promoting social inclusion.

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#### 4. Project Planning

To systematize work on the project, we recommend adhering to the framework developed by us:

- Identification of needs and project goals:

Conducting an analysis of the needs of the local community and identifying the main challenges faced by socially excluded individuals. Defining specific project goals, considering expected outcomes and impact on participants.

- Establishment of partnerships:

Initiating collaboration with local authorities, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, and businesses. Defining the role of each partner and establishing collaboration guidelines.

- Analysis of activities and educational methods:

Developing a training program covering key areas such as vocational skills, social competencies, and digital literacy. Applying diverse educational methods, including interactive workshops, practical training, and international exchange of experiences.

- Recruitment and participant selection:

Creating transparent participation criteria. Initiating the recruitment process, considering the diversity of the target group. Establishing mechanisms for social support:

- Establishing a psychosocial support system for participants. Ensuring access to career counseling, legal assistance, and other necessary services.

- Preparation of evaluation tools:

Developing evaluation tools to monitor participants' progress. Conducting regular assessments of the effectiveness of project activities and making necessary adjustments.

- Social activation:

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Organizing social activities, such as cultural events, festivals, or exhibitions, to promote the social inclusion of participants. Introducing social activities as an integral part of the project.

- International experience exchange (if applicable):

Organizing international meetings to facilitate the exchange of experiences between project participants and foreign partners. Utilizing diverse perspectives to enrich the educational program.

- Project promotion:

Developing a project promotion strategy using social media, local media, and collaboration with partners. Creating informational materials and campaigns to increase awareness of the project in the local community.

- Reporting and documentation:

Regularly reporting project progress to partners and funding institutions. Creating photographic and video documentation for promotional and evaluative purposes.

- Sustainable development:

Developing a sustainable project development plan, considering the possibility of continuing activities after the end of funding. Considering the potential replication of the project in other communities.

## **5. Needs identification**

Identifying the needs of socially excluded individuals is crucial for the effectiveness of a project or program supporting this group. Below are several steps that can aid in this process:

- Analysis of documents and social research:

Reviewing existing social research, reports, and analyses concerning the local community can provide a general understanding of the problems and challenges faced by socially excluded individuals.

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- Consultations with experts and local institutions:

Engaging in discussions with representatives from local institutions, non-governmental organizations, social assistance centers, or municipal authorities can yield valuable information regarding the current needs of the community.

- Surveys and interviews:

Conducting surveys or interviews with individuals directly affected by social exclusion. Questions should focus on daily challenges, educational, vocational, and social needs.

- Participatory group activities:

Organizing participatory group meetings where participants can share their experiences, express their needs, and propose solutions.

- Analysis of social infrastructure:

Assessing the accessibility and quality of social services such as healthcare, education, housing, and employment can provide information about areas in need of improvement.

- Field observation:

Directly observing the living conditions and the community environment can provide information about the daily challenges faced by socially excluded individuals.

- Collaboration with non-governmental organizations:

Collaborating with non-governmental organizations already working for socially excluded individuals can be a valuable source of information about the current needs and challenges of the community.

- Mapping local resources:

Identifying existing social resources, such as support programs, vocational training, or employment programs, can help identify gaps in access to existing opportunities.

- Analysis of demographic data:



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Analyzing demographic data for the community, such as age structure, educational level, or employment status, can provide information about the profile of socially excluded individuals.

- Support from specialists and social psychologists:

Collaborating with experts in social psychology can help understand the hidden needs and challenges that socially excluded individuals may face.

In summary, identifying the needs of socially excluded individuals requires a multifaceted approach that considers diverse sources of information and engages the local community in the diagnostic process.

## **6. Analysis of Local Communities and Their Specific Challenges**

Analyzing local communities and their specific challenges is a crucial stage in planning a project aimed at socially excluded individuals. Below are steps and aspects that can be considered in such an analysis:

- Demographics of the community:

Studying the demographic structure of the community, including age, gender, ethnicity, and family status, can provide information about social diversity.

- Education:

Analyzing the accessibility and quality of the education system, identifying potential barriers to participation in education, especially for adults.

- Employment and Economy:

Assessing the labor market situation, employment levels, types of available jobs, as well as the presence of industries or sectors that may be crucial for the community.

- Housing:

Examining access to adequate housing, identifying areas at risk of housing poverty, analyzing access to social infrastructure.

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- Healthcare:

Evaluating access to healthcare services, identifying the main health issues in the community, analyzing access to prevention and treatment.

- Social infrastructure:

Examining access to social infrastructure, such as educational facilities, health centers, cultural or sports facilities.

- Social phenomena:

Identifying social phenomena such as unemployment, crime, addiction, or migrations that may impact the functioning of the community.

- Culture and traditions:

Understanding local culture, traditions, and existing social bonds that can be used to better tailor the project to the community's specifics.

- Social participation:

Assessing the level of social participation, identifying social organizations, civic groups, or social initiatives already operating in the community.

- Analysis of access barriers:

Identifying barriers to access existing social, educational, vocational, health, or cultural resources.

- History and social context:

Understanding the community's history, its past, key events, and changes that may have influenced current challenges.

- Consultations with the community:

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Direct conversations with residents, community leaders, representatives of marginalized groups to gain a firsthand perspective.

Analyzing these areas will provide a more comprehensive picture of the community's specificity and help tailor the project to the real needs and challenges of local residents. It's essential to note that the analysis process should be dynamic and flexible, allowing for adjustments to the changing community situation.

## **7. Specific goals achievable in a project for socially excluded individuals**

The goals of a project aimed at socially excluded individuals can encompass various areas with the aim of improving the quality of life, increasing opportunities for active social participation, and developing essential skills for independent functioning. Below are sample project goals in this context:

- **Development of vocational skills:**

Goal: Increase competitiveness in the job market by providing participants with practical skills and vocational qualifications.

- **Elevation of education levels:**

Goal: Ensure access to education and support in acquiring basic or specialized education.

- **Psychosocial support:**

Goal: Enable participants to develop interpersonal skills, build healthy social relationships, and cope with emotional difficulties.

- **Social integration:**

Goal: Facilitate active participation of participants in the local community through the organization of social and cultural activities.

- **Access to health services:**

Goal: Improve participants' access to basic healthcare and provide education on health care.

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- Financial independence:

Goal: Support participants in developing financial management skills and seeking stable sources of livelihood.

- Promotion of the concept of lifelong learning:

Goal: Foster an attitude of openness to learning and the development of lifelong learning skills.

- Reduction of digital exclusion:

Goal: Facilitate participants' access to digital technologies to minimize digital exclusion.

- Shaping citizenship attitudes:

Goal: Strengthen participants as active citizens, promote social values, and encourage civic participation.

- Building social capital:

Goal: Create a network of social support, including local partnerships, to support participants after the project's conclusion.

It is important for project goals to be tailored to the specific needs of the community and consider the diversity of participants' life situations. An effective project should also include plans for monitoring progress and evaluation to ensure the effectiveness of actions and adapt strategies during the project's duration.

## **8. Anticipated changes in target communities**

A project aimed at socially excluded individuals can bring about a range of expected changes in target communities. Below, I present several potential changes that such a project may induce:

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- Increased independence and autonomy:

Participants in the project may acquire skills that enable them to better cope with daily life, contributing to an increase in their independence and autonomy.

- Improvement in employment conditions:

Participants acquiring new vocational skills have the opportunity to improve their employment conditions or find new job opportunities.

- Rise in social participation:

Community and cultural activities organized as part of the project may foster greater social participation among participants, strengthening their ties to the local community.

- Reduction of digital exclusion:

Through providing digital skills to participants, the project may contribute to reducing digital exclusion within the community.

- Enhancement of mental health:

Psychosocial support offered as part of the project can lead to improved mental health among participants, helping them cope with emotional challenges.

- Increase in social competencies:

Through participation in diverse project activities, individuals can develop interpersonal skills and build the capacity for effective collaboration within the community.

- Expanded access to education:

The project may open up new educational opportunities for participants, contributing to an increase in their access to knowledge and skills.

- Rise in social awareness:

Project activities can heighten social awareness among participants, inspiring them to take a more active role in community life.

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- Creation of positive behavioral patterns:

By promoting social values and building positive relationships, the project can influence the creation of positive behavioral patterns within the community.

- Development of social capital:

Establishing social support networks as part of the project can contribute to the growth of social capital in the target communities.

## 9. Partnerships and collaboration

Choosing partners for collaboration is a crucial step in planning and implementing a project. Here are a few steps to help in the effective selection of partners:

- Identifying potential partners:

Conduct market research on potential partners, including non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, businesses, or other entities with experience in areas related to the project.

- Assessing mission and value alignment:

Ensure that the mission and values of potential partners align with the mission and goals of your organization. A shared vision facilitates harmonious collaboration.

- Analyzing experience and competencies:

Evaluate the competencies and experience of potential partners in key project areas. Reviewing references and past projects can provide valuable information.

- Transparency in organizational structures:

Familiarize yourself with the organizational structure of potential partners, paying attention to their ability to effectively manage projects.

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- Analysis of financial resources:

Assess the availability of financial resources of potential partners to ensure they can contribute to the implementation of the project.

- Consultations and discussions:

Conduct consultations and discussions with potential partners. This is a good time to learn more about their approach to collaboration, flexibility, and communication.

- Transparency of partner goals:

Understand how partners envision the benefits of participating in the project and what their own goals and expectations are.

- Ensuring sustainable collaboration:

Make sure that potential partners are committed to long-term collaboration and have the capacity to sustain engagement after the project concludes.

- Consideration of cultural aspects:

If the project involves international collaboration, be aware of cultural aspects and differences in approaches to work.

- Signing a partnership agreement:

Once you have selected partners, sign a partnership agreement that clearly defines roles, responsibilities, goals, and conditions of collaboration. Partnerships and financial matters often test even the strongest friendships.

Choosing partners requires diligence and an understanding that enduring collaboration is key to the success of the project. Regular communication, shared goals, and clearly defined roles support effective collaboration among partners.

## **10. Methods of Working with the Target Group**

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Working with the target group within a project can be effective when employing diverse methods that take into account the specific needs and characteristics of the participants. Here are several methods for working with the target group:

- Workshops and training:

Conduct interactive workshops and training sessions that enable participants to acquire new skills and knowledge.

- Group discussions:

Stimulate open discussions that allow participants to express their views, share experiences, and collaboratively solve problems.

- Small group work:

Divide participants into smaller groups to facilitate more direct interaction and collaboration.

- Games and simulations:

Utilize games and simulations to deliver important information in an engaging manner and allow for the practical application of knowledge.

- Individual counseling sessions:

Provide individual counseling sessions to tailor support to the individual needs of participants.

Practical projects:

Encourage participation in practical projects that allow for the direct application of acquired skills in real-life situations.

- Action research:

Implement action research engaging participants in identifying issues in their community and collaboratively developing solutions.



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- Creative expression methods:

Use creative expression methods such as art, music, or theater to allow participants to express themselves in diverse ways.

- Mentorship and coaching:

Organize mentorship or coaching sessions to provide individual support and inspiration for participants.

- Application of technology:

Leverage technology, such as e-learning platforms, to provide access to education and online resources.

- Field trips, urban games:

Organize field trips that allow participants to gain experiences beyond traditional environments, and incorporate urban games for interactive learning.

- Exchange programs:

Introduce exchange programs that enable participants to connect with other communities and cultures.

- Monitoring progress:

Regularly monitor the progress of participants and adjust working methods based on their needs and feedback.

## **11. Utilizing educational and engaging tools**

In a project aimed at socially excluded individuals, the effective use of educational and engaging tools can significantly contribute to the success of the initiatives. Here are several tools that can be beneficial:

- E-learning platforms:

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Utilize e-learning platforms to deliver educational content, enabling participants to learn online from any location and at any time.

- Educational games:

Employ board games, educational puzzles, or computer games that combine learning with fun, develop social skills, and enhance strategic thinking.

- Social simulations:

Organize social simulations that allow participants to experience real social situations and develop problem-solving skills.

- Online courses:

Provide access to online courses that can help improve professional qualifications and develop skills needed in the job market.

- Mobile applications:

Use mobile applications tailored to adult education, enabling interactive learning adapted to individual needs.

- Hands-on activities:

Design practical activities such as workshops, hands-on exercises, or social projects that engage participants in direct actions.

- Webinars and virtual meetings:

Conduct webinars and virtual meetings to enable participants to participate in training and discussions without the need for physical attendance.

- Training journals:

Encourage participants to keep training journals, helping them track progress, reflect on acquired knowledge and skills.

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- Creative methods:

Employ creative methods such as drawing, music, or theater to allow participants to express themselves in diverse ways.

- Social projects:

Engage participants in real social projects that not only develop skills but also allow them to actively contribute to their community.

- Social media platforms:

Use social media platforms to build a community among participants, facilitating the exchange of experiences, support, and inspiration.

- Interactive scenarios:

Create interactive scenarios that engage participants in dynamic and immersive stories, requiring decision-making and problem-solving.

- Community portals:

Establish community portals to centralize information, resources, and facilitate communication among participants.

- Interactive debates:

Organize debates and discussions that stimulate critical thinking and the ability to articulate arguments.

## **12. International Experience Exchange**

International experience exchange is a process in which individuals, groups, or organizations from different countries share their ideas, knowledge, skills, and perspectives. This exchange can occur in various areas such as education, culture, science, business, or society. The goal is typically to increase mutual understanding, build relationships, develop skills, and broaden perspectives through direct contact with people and their living environments. As a result,

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international experience exchange contributes to the creation of a global community, promotes intercultural dialogue, and fosters the personal and professional development of participants.

### 13. Financial Issues

Financial aspects in projects require special attention and diligence. Ensuring proper financial management is crucial for the effective implementation of a project. Here are several points to consider, summarized in 14 key points:

- Budget planning:

Develop a realistic budget plan that includes all costs related to the project, such as salaries, operational costs, training, materials, promotion, etc.

- Tenders and contracts:

When purchasing goods or services, apply principles of openness and competitiveness to select the most favorable offers. Carefully analyze contracts before signing.

- Monitoring expenditures:

Regularly monitor the budget's implementation. Provide systematic financial reporting to track whether expenses align with the plan.

- Financial reserves:

Introduce financial reserves for unforeseen expenses or changes in the project plan.

- Reporting budget changes:

In case of necessary budget changes, report them following project procedures and obtain appropriate approval from the funding institution.

- Financial reporting:

Prepare regular financial reports containing accurate information about project expenditures and achievements.

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- Funding principles:

Be well-acquainted with the funding principles of the project, both from the funding institution and any other legal commitments.

- Financial audit:

Prepare for financial audits. Maintain accurate and organized documents to facilitate the audit process.

- Control and accountability:

Define clear procedures for financial control and accountability. Avoid situations where one person is solely responsible for all transactions.

- Staff training:

Organize training for staff responsible for financial management to ensure understanding and adherence to financial procedures.

- Financial risk management:

Identify potential financial risks and develop a plan to manage them.

- Transparency:

Maintain transparency in financial matters, both within the project team and in relations with partners and the funding institution.

- Compliance with the law:

Ensure that all financial activities comply with applicable laws, both local and international.

- Preparation for changing conditions:

Be prepared for changing financial conditions. Plan flexible solutions that allow adjusting the budget to eventual changes.

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Managing finances in a project requires precision, planning, and integrity. A meticulous and responsible approach to financial aspects contributes to the effective implementation of the project. Additionally, in the context of European Funds, it's crucial to be familiar with the issues related to the proper and correct selection of suppliers of goods and services:

In the context of projects, especially those financed with public funds, special attention should be paid to the way suppliers of services, goods, or contractors are selected. Key elements of the principle of competitiveness include:

- Equal opportunities
- Openness and access to information
- Price competitiveness
- Clear selection criteria
- Avoidance of conflicts of interest
- Transparency of the process
- Scope of competition

## **14. Project promotion**

In a project funded by the European Union (EU), promotion should be well thought out and effective. This means that information about the project should be accessible to as many people as possible. It's valuable to use various communication channels such as websites, social media, or promotional materials to reach different target groups. It's also essential to include clear and accessible messages so that people can easily understand the project. Collaborating with local media or social partners can further help reach communities and enhance the promotion's reach. Organizing events, presentations, or workshops to personally share information with interested groups is also beneficial. Key is to maintain transparency and information accessibility so that the project can benefit from maximum support and interest.

## **15. Effective project promotion strategies among local communities**

To effectively promote a project among local communities, it's important to employ diverse communication strategies. First and foremost, clarity and simplicity in communication are crucial, ensuring that residents easily understand the project's purpose. Utilizing social media, local newspapers, or posters are effective tools to reach various audience groups.

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Engaging the community through meetings, workshops, or community events where information about the project can be directly shared is important. Collaborating with local community leaders and organizations can help build trust and increase residents' engagement.

Good practice also involves using clear and appealing promotional materials that capture the community's attention. By prioritizing openness and information accessibility, the project can gain better understanding and support from local residents. Finally, maintaining constant communication, listening to community opinions, and responding to their needs aid in building a positive image of the project in the local context.

## 16. Encouraging participation and engagement

Encouraging people to participate and engage in a project is a key element of effective initiative management. Here are some proven strategies that can help attract participants:

- Clear communication:

Formulate clear and accessible messages explaining the project's goals, benefits for participants, and how they can get involved. Avoid overly complex language.

- Tailoring to needs:

Identify the real needs of potential participants and tailor the project to meet their expectations. Show how participation can positively impact their lives.

- Participation in planning:

Encourage participation in the project planning process. Allow participants to contribute their ideas and suggestions, making them feel connected and engaged from the beginning.

- Inspiring success stories:

Share inspiring success stories from previous projects, illustrating how participation in similar initiatives contributed to positive changes in other people's lives.

- Building community:

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Create a platform for the exchange of experiences and communication among project participants. Establishing an online or offline community enhances a sense of belonging.

- Adaptation to skills:

Ensure that the project offers various tasks adapted to different skills and interests of participants. Everyone should find something that interests them.

- Rewards and recognition:

Plan rewards and recognition for engaged participants. This can be a motivation for participation and a way to show appreciation for their effort.

- Active project promotion:

Use various communication channels, such as social media, posters, or community meetings, to reach different groups of people. The broader the reach, the greater the chance of interest.

- Friendly environment:

Creating an open and friendly environment fosters engagement. People are more likely to participate in projects where they feel accepted and supported.

- Practical and concrete goals:

Plan tasks that are specific and have practical applications. Participants are more willing to engage when they see that their efforts translate into real results.

Remember that the key is to build relationships, listen to participants, and respond to their needs. Care for transparency and open dialogue will make people more willing to participate and engage in the project.

## **17. Encouraging participation and engagement**

In a project, it's valuable to focus on encouraging people to participate and get involved. Creating an atmosphere where the community feels invited and willing to participate is crucial.



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Using open and friendly communication helps build trust and encourages active involvement in project events or activities. It's also important to consider diverse perspectives and the needs of the community so that everyone feels understood and appreciated. Organizing meetings or consultations allows for direct sharing of ideas and building a common understanding of project goals. Striving for inclusion and considering different points of view is key to effective community engagement.

## 18. Evaluation and Reporting

Evaluation and reporting are key elements in the project management process. Evaluation involves assessing the effectiveness, achievements, and processes of the project, helping understand what works well and what can be improved. Reporting, on the other hand, involves collecting, analyzing, and presenting data and information related to the project's progress and results. Here are some essential aspects related to evaluation and reporting:

### Evaluation:

- Purposeful assessment:

Evaluation should focus on achieving project goals and assessing the degree to which expectations are met.

- Mutual communication:

Involve the project community in the evaluation process to obtain diverse perspectives and opinions.

- Outcome indicators:

Define clear outcome indicators that allow an objective assessment of project progress.

- Learning from mistakes:

Evaluation should enable the identification of errors and shortcomings, serving as a starting point for more effective actions.

- Corrective actions:

Based on evaluation results, introduce corrective actions during the project if necessary.

### Reporting:

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- Transparency:

Reports should be transparent, contain reliable information, and present both successes and challenges.

- Regularity:

Report regularly according to the established schedule. Consistent reporting enables stakeholders to track project progress.

- Audience-centric communication:

Tailor communications in reports to different audience groups, providing them with information relevant to their interests and roles.

- Suggestions for the future:

Include proposals and recommendations for further actions in reports so that the project can develop effectively.

- Corrective actions:

If reports reveal areas that require improvement, implement appropriate corrective actions.

Both evaluation and reporting are indispensable for effective project management, enabling close monitoring of progress, adjusting actions to changing conditions, and informing stakeholders about project outcomes.

## 19. Evaluation tools

There are various evaluation tools that can be adapted to the specific nature of a project. Below are a few popular types of evaluation tools:

- Surveys and questionnaires:

Used to collect opinions and data from project participants and other stakeholders. Surveys may include open-ended and closed-ended questions.

- Interviews:

Individual or group conversations aimed at gathering detailed information from project participants. They can be conducted in person, over the phone, or online.

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- Focus groups:

Group sessions involving representatives from different stakeholder groups. They are used to gather deeper insights and generate discussions.

- Document analysis:

Examining project documents, reports, process documentation, etc., to assess progress and effectiveness.

- Field observations:

Personally observing project activities can provide real-time data on the implementation of actions, effects, and interactions.

- Cost-benefit analysis:

Evaluating the costs and benefits associated with the project to understand whether it is economically effective.

- Rating scales:

Using rating scales (e.g., from 1 to 5) to subjectively assess various aspects of the project by participants or an evaluation team.

- Monitoring and Measurement systems:

Utilizing information systems to collect data in real-time and monitor project progress.

- Risk assessment tools:

Assisting in identifying and assessing potential threats to the project, enabling appropriate risk management.

- Knowledge and skills tests:

Assessing the knowledge and skills acquired by participants through the project.

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The selection of evaluation tools depends on the goals of the evaluation, the type of project, and the data needed. Combining multiple tools often provides a more comprehensive understanding of the project's impact and effectiveness.

## **20. Fulfilling financial and substantive requirements – eligibility of expenditures**

The eligibility of expenditures in European projects refers to the principle that determines which expenses are permissible and can be considered in the financial settlement of a project financed with European funds. This principle aims to ensure the appropriate and regulation-compliant use of public funds, as well as effective project management. The fundamental principles of expenditure eligibility in European projects include:

- Alignment with project objectives:

Expenditures must be related to the objectives of the project as defined in the agreement or framework agreement that finances the project.

- Compliance with funding principles:

Expenditures must comply with the funding principles of the specific European program under which the project is financed.

- Compliance with legal regulations:

Expenditures must adhere to the applicable legal regulations at both the national and European levels.

- Accountability and documentation:

Each expenditure must be documented in a way that allows verification and audit. Invoices, contracts, or other documents must be available and compliant with the requirements.

- Equal opportunities:

Expenditures should not lead to discrimination or favoritism of specific project participants. All participants should be treated equally.

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- Direct relevance to the project:

Expenditures must have a direct connection to the project's implementation. Indirect expenses that are not directly related to the project may be considered ineligible.

- Compliance with the project budget:

Expenditures must align with the approved project budget. Any changes to the budget must be agreed upon and approved by the relevant institutions.

- Necessity of expenditures:

Expenditures must be necessary to achieve the project's objectives, and their incurrence must be justified.

- Compliance with the schedule:

Expenditures must be incurred within a specified timeframe, following the project schedule.

- Beneficiary responsibility:

The project beneficiary is responsible for the proper management of funds and compliance with eligibility principles.

These principles are specified in documents governing the particular initiative financed with European funds, and adherence to them is monitored during evaluation processes, controls, and audits. Ensuring the eligibility of expenditures is a crucial element of effective project management and maintaining compliance with European funding requirements.

## **21. Perspectives on continuing activities and the long-term impact of the project**

The perspectives on continuing activities and the long-term impact of a project are a crucial element in the planning of European projects, especially those aimed at socially excluded individuals. Below are several perspectives that can ensure a lasting impact of the project on the community:

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- Building partnerships and networks:

Continue collaborating with project partners, local non-governmental organizations, businesses, and institutions. Strong partnerships enable the development of new initiatives and projects.

- Maintaining a supportive community:

Long-term project impact can be maintained by creating and sustaining a community that supports each other in the learning and development process.

- Ongoing training and development programs:

Develop continuous training and development programs accessible to individuals who have benefited from previous projects. This allows them to continue learning and developing skills.

- Integration with local programs:

Integrate projects with local social programs and initiatives to leverage existing structures and resources.

- Community monitoring:

Establish a community monitoring system to track the long-term impact of the project on participants. Analyze changes in their lives and environment.

- Psychosocial support:

Continue offering psychosocial support to help participants cope with difficulties and develop in various aspects of life.

- Building social capital:

Focus on building social capital by developing interpersonal relationships, increasing trust, and strengthening community.

- Teamwork skills development:

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Continue developing teamwork skills that participants can use in various areas of their lives.

- Building active citizenship:

Shape civic skills by encouraging active participation in society, engaging in local initiatives, and taking actions for the common good.

- Long-term impact tracking:

Establish a results tracking system to regularly assess the long-term impact of the project on participants and the community.

Continuing activities after the project concludes is crucial to ensuring that the project's impact is lasting and sustainable. Collaboration with local partners, maintaining community relationships, and adjusting activities to current needs are key to achieving long-term success.

## **Conclusion**

Preparing and implementing European projects for socially excluded individuals is not only a challenge but, above all, an opportunity for real change and improvement in the quality of life for those who need it most. Throughout the development of this guide, we aimed to provide comprehensive and practical knowledge to help you effectively plan, implement, and evaluate projects that have a significant impact on communities affected by exclusion.

Remember that the key to success lies in careful planning, flexibility in adapting to changing conditions, and, most importantly, empathy and dedication to working for the benefit of others. By implementing European projects, you have the chance not only to build the competencies and skills of participants but also to create more open, sustainable, and just societies.

Establishing collaborative relationships, both with non-governmental organizations, public institutions, and local communities, is of utmost importance. Joint work and the exchange of experiences make projects more effective and sustainable. We believe that our guide has provided you with essential information, inspiration, and practical tools that will assist you in fully realizing the potential of European projects for the benefit of socially excluded individuals. Thank you for your commitment and contribution to building a better future for all. Good luck in your future initiatives!