



## PROJECT

**EARLY identification, INDIVIDUALIZED targeting  
and TAILORED intervention for young people at  
risk of NEET**

*Flexible pathways and an effective methodology for  
the transition into the labour market*

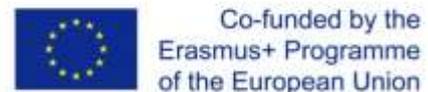
### IO2 –A5

**Preparation of staff to apply the pilot testing and the measures  
foreseen in the methodology**

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Promoter:



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**Title**

Preparation of staff to apply the pilot testing and the measures foreseen in the methodology

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## Executive Summary

The main objective of IO2 is to develop an innovative methodology to identify and support young people at risk of being NEET and to implement and test it in three pilot locations (Spain, Italy and Portugal) – this methodology will provide an individualized and tailored approach to meet the particular needs of each young person at risk of being NEET, adaptable to different local contexts. The methodology aims to be preventative – identifying at risk young people and providing them with a smoother transition into the labour market and/or further learning or training.

This document builds on IO2-A1 which set out the proposed methodology and core intervention measures of the NEET at Risk project as part of the overall Project Theory of Change (see Figure 1, IO2-A1). As such it aims to outline the main measures to be used by project partners to:

- Establish the context and baseline of the three pilot projects
- Monitor the implementation of pilot project activities
- Evaluate the qualitative impact of the testing phase on key stakeholders.

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This document therefore sets out:

- The methodology for the collection and analysis of data relating to pupils at risk of NEET
- An inventory of measures to be used in partner countries
- A framework of reporting the findings as part of the testing phase.

## 1. The methodology for the collection and analysis of data relating to pupils at risk of NEET

The Unit of Analysis – i.e. the object of the research – is defined by geographic location. We are interested in researching in depth the implementation and impact of a particular model aimed at preventing young people from becoming NEET in three distinct geographical settings – in Portugal, Spain and Italy.

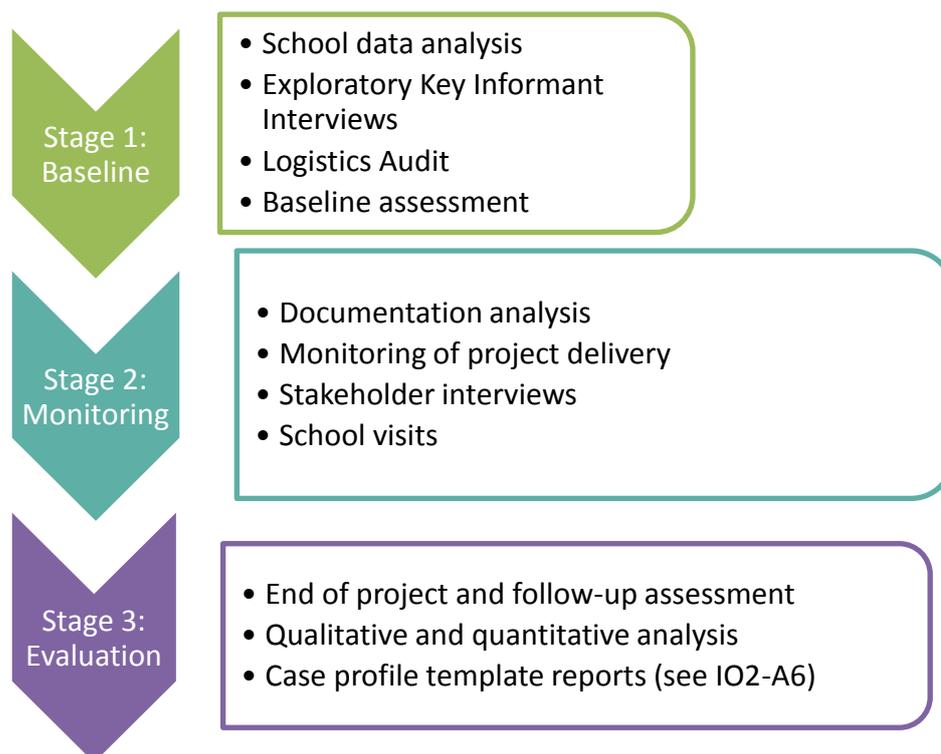
This can be tightly bounded – for example a specific school – or can extend to a larger scale, encompassing several schools or providers. What we are therefore hoping to do in this testing phase of the study is to carry out a set of ‘mini case studies’ – or case examples – of the NEET model in different countries. These, aggregated together, will then constitute the integrated thematic case study of ‘the NEETs at risk project’.

As noted above, this documents sets out to establish the key methodology and tools to allow project partners to:

- Establish the context and baseline of the three pilot projects
- Monitor the implementation of pilot project activities
- Evaluate the qualitative impact of the testing phase on key stakeholders.

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Figure 1 shows the over-arching methodology suggested for the testing phase.



**Figure 1: Methodology Design**

As Figure 2 shows, the case study methodology is based on three inter-connected stages:

- Baseline

- Monitoring
- Evaluation.

Table 1 summarises the objectives of each stage together with some of the suggested methods and tools used to implement it.

**Table 1: Case Study activities, objectives and methods**

Stage 1: Baseline		
Activity	Objectives	Methods and Tools
<b>School data analysis</b>	To understand and summarise the background and context of each case study school as well as the characteristics of pupils in general and specifically those involved in the pilot project	Desk research: collection and analysis of school data, including total numbers of pupils, age range, gender, country of origin, percentage with special educational needs, socio-economic origin, levels of attainment, non-attendance etc.  Collection of similar data for the group of 15 pupils selected for the pilot
<b>Exploratory Key informant interviews</b>	To contact key informants and 'gatekeepers' in the school to explore existing provision for target group (at risk NEET), expected barriers to success of pilot, characteristics of staff delivering pilot and views on the types of students selected.	Face-to-face or Telephone interview (semi-structured) – see IO5-A5
<b>Baseline assessment</b>	To collect quantitative data on the characteristics and attitudes of the 15 students in each setting of relevance to the three key objectives of the pilot: to improve their social capital, to improve their attitude to school / learning; to increase their ability to make informed choices about their EET after leaving school.	Self-completion questionnaires completed by students on their own or with assistance (see IO4).
Stage 2: Monitoring		
Activity	Objectives	Methods and Tools
<b>Documentation collection</b>	Collect any key documentation relating to the delivery of the pilot – including for example lesson plans, student portfolios, photos etc.	Desk research
<b>Monitoring of project delivery</b>	Collect key data on progress towards achieving the expected	Design of bespoke monitoring form in each pilot area

	project outputs, including number of sessions delivered, attendance levels of students, work placements or visits carried out, etc.	
<b>Stakeholder interviews</b>	Collect in depth data on experiences of students and staff of the pilot during and/or towards the end of the pilot	Face-to-face interviews with a selection of stakeholders using student/staff Interview schedule (see IO5-A5)
<b>School visits</b>	Observe the implementation of pilot activities in schools or in work-place	Observation – record of observation
<b>Stage 3: Evaluation</b>		
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Methods and Tools</b>
<b>End-of-project and follow-up assessment</b>	To collect quantitative data on the impact of project on the characteristics and attitudes of the 15 students in each setting of relevance to the three key objectives of the pilot	Self-completion questionnaires completed by students on their own or with assistance at the end of the project and six months later (see IO4)
<b>Documentation analysis</b>	To analyse the data from the documentation review	Content analysis
<b>Key Informant and Stakeholder Interviews</b>	To analyse the data from the stakeholder interviews and focus groups	Content analysis
<b>Case Summary</b>	To integrate the analysis from all data collection instruments	Case summary template (see IO2-A6)

## 2. Baseline data collection

### 2.1 School data analysis

The purpose of this activity is to understand and summarise the background and context of each case study school as well as the characteristics of pupils in general and specifically those involved in the pilot project.

The focus is collecting and reviewing background information on:

- the location and setting of the school (type of school and catchment area)
- the numbers and characteristics of pupils attending the school, including age range, gender, country of origin, percentage with special educational needs, socio-economic origin, levels of attainment, non-attendance etc.
- the characteristics of pupils selected for the pilot, including their age range, gender, country of origin, number with special educational needs, socio-economic origin, levels of attainment, non-attendance etc.

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The outputs of this review is a brief summary report to be shared with project partners setting out any qualitative and quantitative data on the school and pupils involved in the pilot. The Review Report should contain:

- the school name and address
- date the review was carried out
- reviewer name
- a brief qualitative summary of the location and setting of the school
- a brief qualitative and quantitative summary of the characteristics of students overall and those 15 selected for the pilot project.

It is important to note that any quantitative data provided on schools and the students selected for inclusion in the testing should only be regarded as an illustration of the situation, helping the reader to get an idea of the situation. They will not be useful in strictly analytical terms as such data can only be interpreted when contextualised in the education system and in relation to other comparative data (collecting such data goes beyond the objectives of this study).

What should instead be included is a short description about the “normal” expected pathways of students, so that external readers can understand the background in which the intervention takes place. The baseline analysis should help the reader as much as possible to understand the setting within which the pilots take place.

### 2.2 Exploratory Key Informant Interviews

The main objectives of the Key Informant Interviews are:

- to explore the views of school staff and other stakeholders of the pilot model – what impact they hope it will make and any barriers to anticipate
- to find out how staff were selected for delivering the programme and how they were prepared for doing so
- to find out what provision already exists for pupils at risk of being NEET in the school; how pupils are selected for this and what it involves



- to ask them about how students were selected to be included in the pilot and what their characteristics are from their perspective (compared with other students in the school).

The instrument used for data collection is a semi-structured interview schedule (see IO5-A5). This allows scope for the interviewer to shape the questions according to the expertise and background of the interviewee and to tailor the question content to the interviewee's responses as the interview progresses. It can therefore be used for headteachers, teachers and guidance staff involved in the programme or other relevant informants. In essence, the aim of the interview is to allow the interviewee to express his or her opinions as they emerge, with the interviewer steering the course of the interview by asking open-ended questions that are nonetheless structured to reflect the common research areas of the case study.

As set out in IO5-A5, this activity aims to document the subjective reaction of key actors of the piloting experience to the piloting. As key actors we understand all people (teachers, tutors, principals etc., depending on circumstances and setting) who are involved in the testing. They are invited to share their perspective and assessment of key quality indicators of the exercise before, at the end and six months after the piloting. They should be interviewed by the same representative of the partner organisation each time, to reflect a continued conversation about the experience.

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Each partner should conduct and document the interviews in the national language and translate the documentation (not word by word, but key information and statements) into English. The documentation should be complemented by a 1 page assessment/comment by the partner/interviewer (overall, not for each interview). The documents will be analysed by ISOB.

### 2.3 Baseline assessment

The baseline will be used to collect quantitative data on the characteristics and attitudes of the 15 students in each setting of relevance to the three key objectives of the pilot: to improve their social capital, to improve their attitude to school / learning; to increase their ability to make informed choices about their EET after leaving school. The self-completion questionnaire used for this purpose is being designed as part of IO4 and will be shared with pilot partners.

## 3. Monitoring

### 3.1. Documentation collection

The purpose of this activity is to collect any key documentation relating to the delivery of the pilot (including for example lesson plans, student portfolios, photos etc.) in order to develop a comprehensive record of the pilot. This information will also be useful for illustrative purposes when reporting on the case studies – for example, by using photos to illustrate online case study reports.

Partners and staff must be aware that this will require quite some work. But it is important to keep in mind that for external observers the project only exists in what is recorded, observed and reported! So it is vitally important that enough time is spent



by partners in recording all relevant details throughout the project to be able to document what was done and has been achieved.

### 3.2 Monitoring of project delivery

This activity aims at collecting mainly quantifiable data or facts relating to the actual delivery of the pilots to assess the extent to which they were able to implement the expected outputs as outlined in IO2-A1. This includes, collecting data on the extent to which the following outputs were achieved or what progress was made towards achieving them:

- School staff trained in delivering intervention
- Multi-agency project group established and working
- 15 pupils per pilot area identified and selected
- 15 portfolios started
- 1 preparation session organised
- 15 work placements arranged per pilot area
- 15 short-term VET placements arranged per pilot area
- 3 meetings or visits organised with local EET providers per pilot area
- 15 portfolios completed
- Consolidation sessions organised.

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Each partner should design their own spreadsheet to collect such information and to share it with other project partners.

### 3.3 Stakeholder interviews

This activity focuses on contacting the same stakeholders as at the start of the pilot (see Section 2.2), using the end-of-pilot topic list developed as part of IO5-A5.

Where possible, and in addition, this should also include conducting interviews with company owners who provided or were asked to provide work placements or work visit opportunities. Those prepared to host students as well as those invited, but who refused to do so should be asked:

- Why were they/were they not prepared to take a student?
- Would they consider employing these students? If no, why not?
- What are their expectations towards VET providers concerning cooperation?
- What do they see as the main drivers and inhibitors of smooth transitions from school to work and continuing closer cooperation with schools?

### 3.4 School visits

Where possible and this is not already done as part of the testing, partners should also try to visit and observe the implementation of pilot activities in the schools or work places. The evidence from this is not intended to be formally assessed but to provide illustrative, hands-on data to use in putting together the final results of the pilot.

## 4. Evaluation



The final stage of the case study methodology as described in Figure 1 above is to collect and analyse student self-completion questionnaires (see IO4) at the end and six months after completion of the pilot, as well as analyzing all the other data and evidence collected by partners.

This includes analyzing the data from the documentation review, monitoring of the pilots, and from the stakeholder interviews before and after the pilot. Data collected using these methods will be analysed using qualitative content analysis. In a nutshell, content analysis of this material is aimed at scanning the material to find examples of 'evidence' that will enable us to answer the research questions. This can be done in two ways – manually, or by using software (either using 'Word' and then searching the text for key words or using a specialist content analysis software package like NVivo). The manual approach uses a method based on 'reduction' (Creswell, 1998). In practice, this requires:

- an initial reading of the item being analysed, looking for examples of the key themes and research questions outlined above and any additional themes suggested by the Key Informant interview
- making a note of the substantive points and issues that crop up as the reading progresses in relation to these themes, and the 'emerging constructs' that can be identified that define these substantive points and issues
- returning to the notes made of the reading, and the list of constructs identified and clustering together those that are similar to make a 'master list' of key constructs.
- re-reading the item and analysing it more systematically to find examples of the 'master list' of constructs, and recording in the content analysis template descriptors of examples of each construct that can be identified in the text.

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Ultimately, the aim is to develop case summaries of each of the three pilot testing sites to provide a record of:

- What was the starting point in each site?
- Who was involved in each site (teachers, students, etc.)?
- What was delivered as part of the pilot?
- What was learned by those involved in each site?
- What impact did the pilots have for those involved?
- What plans are there for the future sustainability of the model in the sites?

These will be presented as part of IO2-A6 using a customized reporting template.

