

## ***Report from the Stakeholders consultation for the Programme "Education" within the EEA Grants 2014 – 2021***

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The Stakeholders consultation process in Poland consisted of two parts:

- A. On-line Questionnaire (OQ)
- B. Stakeholders Consultation Meeting (SCM)

These two parts were independent from each other. Although the OQ was closed before the SCM and the analysis of its results could be shared with the participants of the SCM, the Programme Operator (PO) in consultation with Donor Programme Partners (DPPs) and Financial Mechanism Office (FMO) decided that the OQ results will not be disclosed for the SCM participants in order not to influence stakeholders' discussion and formulation of their conclusions.

While preparing the Concept Note (CN) - a key document in which the programme objectives, outputs and outcomes will be defined, PO will equally take into account conclusions from the on-line questionnaire, stakeholders consultation meeting as well as DPPs' and FMO's opinions expressed during the process of the CN preparation. The objective for the programme area 3 (enhanced human capital and knowledge base) was treated as the main signpost in the consultation process. The intention to build the programme as a complement and not just a duplication of what is offered under other educational programmes, both international and national, available for the Polish educational institutions is another important assumption for the preparation of the Programme's CN.

### **A. On-line Questionnaire (OQ)**

#### **Summary of results**

**694 respondents** participated in an online survey related to the consultation on the scope of "Education" programme financed from the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021. The Project Promoters who currently undertake or carried out projects funded under the programmes managed by the Foundation for the Development of the Education System (FRSE), which performed a role of the Programme Operator within the previous perspective of the EEA grants were invited to participate in the survey. The information about the possibility of the fill-in the questionnaire was sent also in the Newsletter of the FRSE and link to the questionnaire was also available via webpages of the FRSE, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, the Ministry of National Education. Invitation to

The questionnaire was filled in by using the service available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey>.

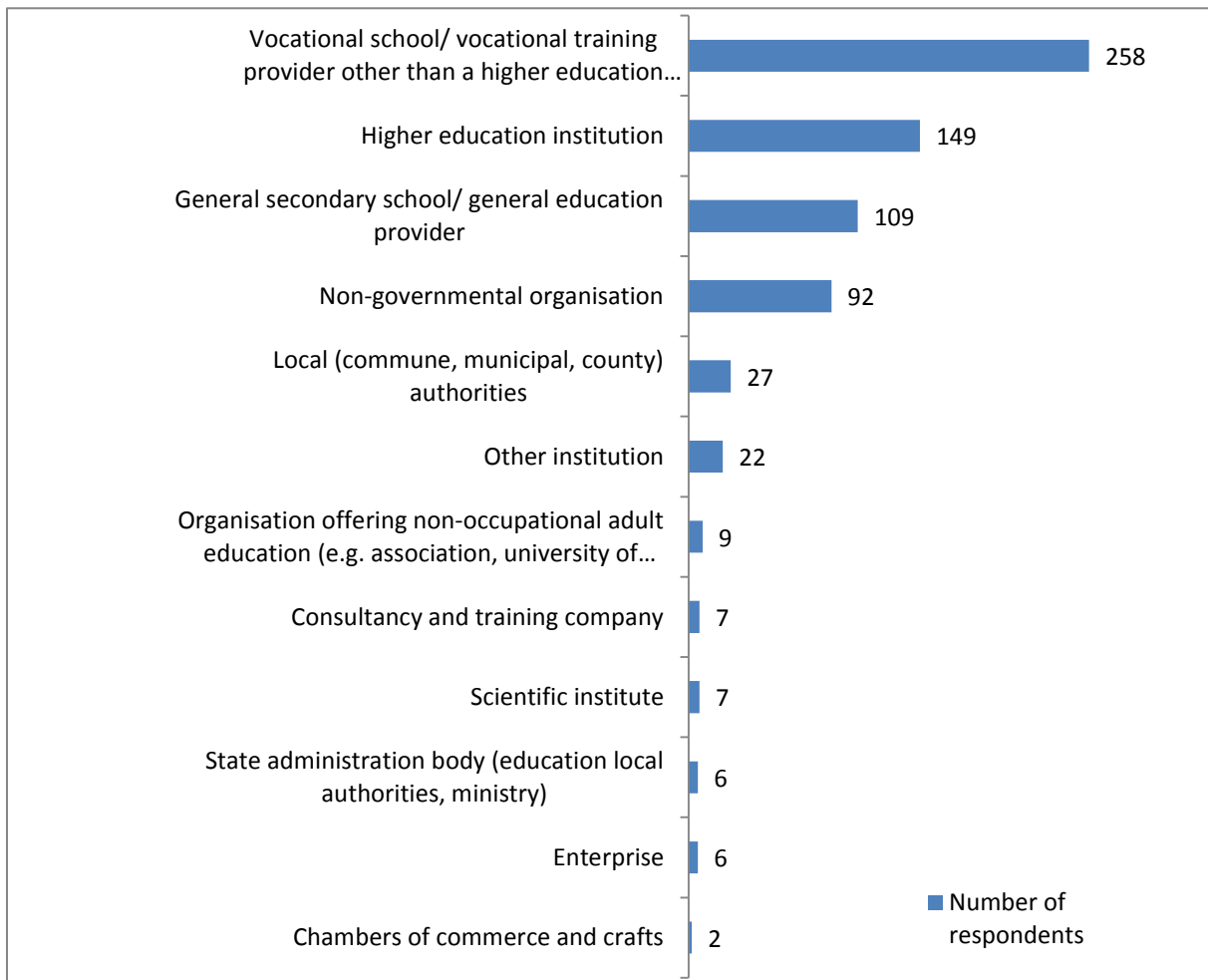
The following questions were asked in the questionnaire:

1. *Which areas of support should be considered in the "Education" programme in particular? Please select up to 3 suggestions from the following list of areas of support presented in the "Blue Book".*
2. *Which suggested measures should be supported within the "Education" programme in your opinion? Please select up to 5 suggestions from the following list of measures presented in the "Blue Book".*

3. *Which competences should be first of all developed by the implementation of projects within the "Education" programme? Please list two competences at most.*
4. *Which forms of international mobility usually offered as part of educational projects do you consider to be the most effective? Please list no more than two forms.*
5. *Please indicate project duration, which would be the most appropriate for the institution/organisation you represent?*
6. *Please offer additional suggestions/proposals concerning the future scope of the "Education" programme under the EEA Financial Mechanism for the period 2014 - 2021, if you have them.*
7. *What institution/organisation do you represent?*

#### **RESPONDENT GROUP (QUESTION 7)**

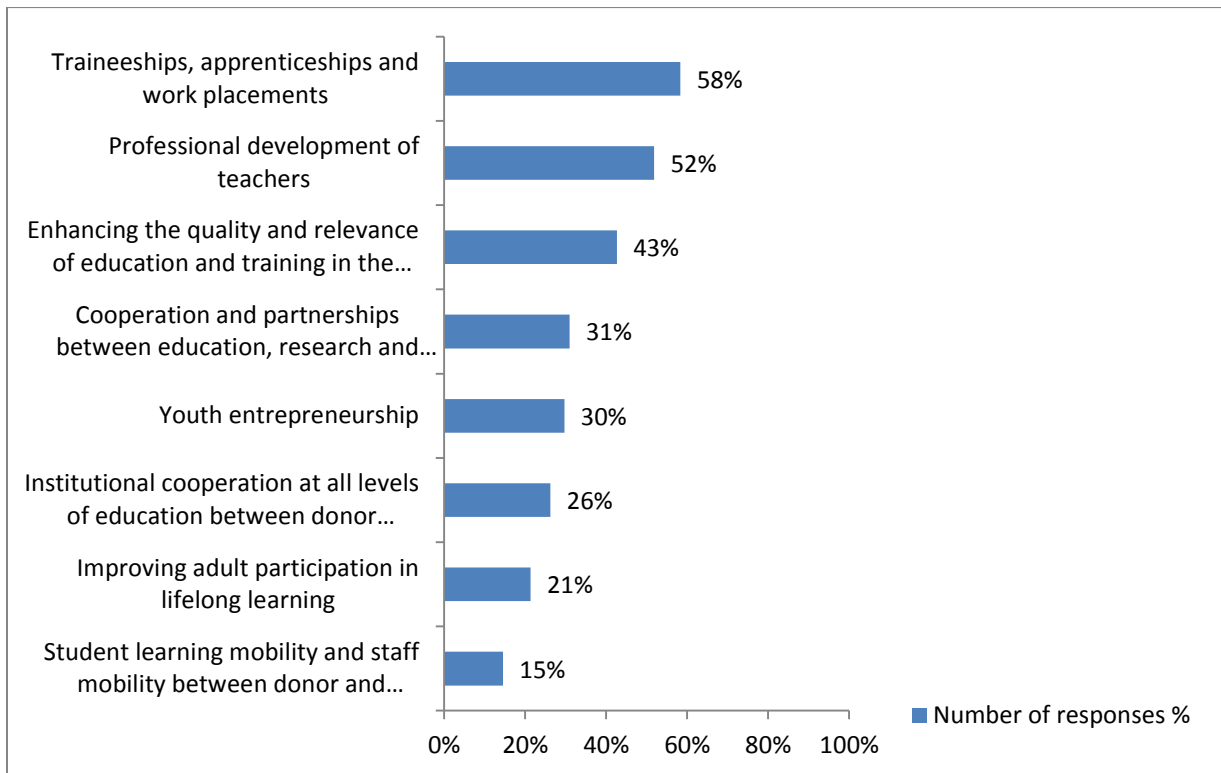
Over 37% of the respondents were representatives of schools and vocational and trade institutions; 21% of them represented higher education institutions, and 16% of them worked at general education schools. Representatives of non-governmental organisations (92 persons) and local government bodies (27) also formed a large group of respondents. Only two representatives of chambers of commerce and crafts and six entrepreneurs and representatives of state administration bodies (school inspectorates, ministries) completed the survey.



**Graph 1** Types of institutions participating in the questionnaire

**QUESTION 1**

Answering the question No. 1 *Which areas of support in particular should the "Education" programme include?* The majority of respondents indicated traineeships, apprenticeships and work placements (405), professional development of teachers (360), and improving the quality and relevance of education at all levels (296). The fewest respondents indicated the need for additional support under the new programme concerning higher education students and staff mobility between Donor States and Poland (101).



**Graph 2 Areas of support, which the "Education" programme should include**

**QUESTION 2**

Answering the question No. 2 *In your opinion, which suggested measures should be supported within the "Education" programme? Please select up to 5 suggestions from the following list of measures presented in the "Blue Book",* the respondents indicated:

- Joint projects with national and regional partners as well as Donor States (318),
- Development of relevant job skills (269),
- Introduction of educational innovations - use of new technologies in education and training, preparation and implementation of the new tool and modes of teaching and training (246),
- Exchange of knowledge and best practices between stakeholders and professional networks (187).

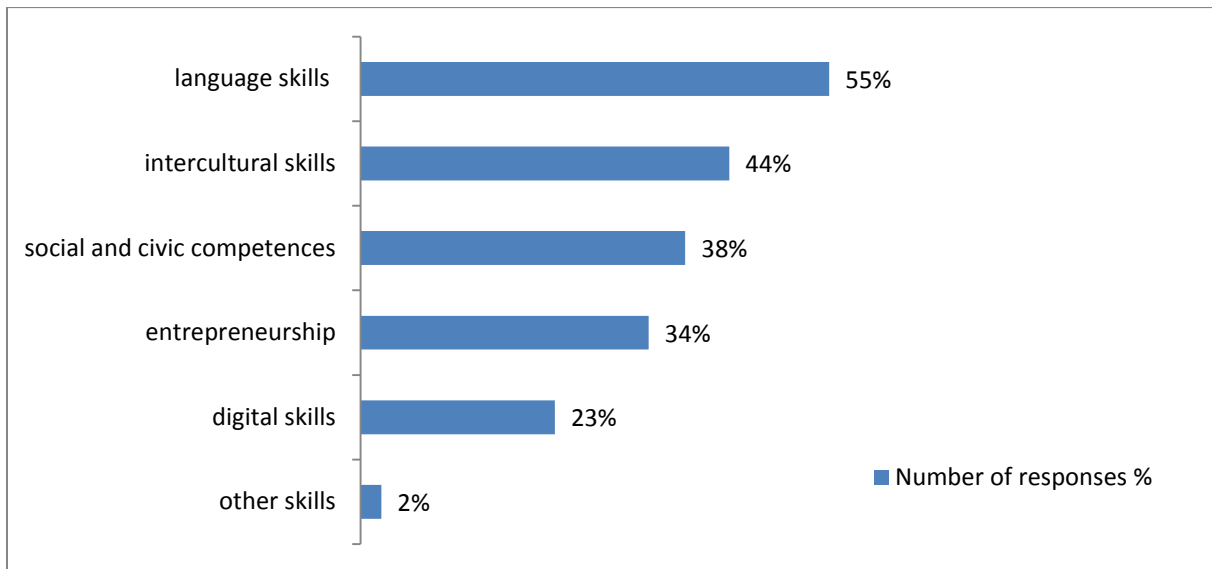
The least often suggested measure concerned inclusive education (16), higher education student and staff mobility (15), support for public-private partnerships (6), and recognition of competences acquired through non-formal and informal education and training (11).

<b>In your opinion, which suggested measures should be supported under the "Education" programme? Please select up to 5 suggestions from the following list of measures presented in the "Blue Book".</b>	<b>Number of replies</b>
Joint projects with national and regional partners as well as Donor States	<b>318</b>
Development of relevant job skills	<b>269</b>

Introduction of educational innovations - use of new technologies in education and training, preparation and implementation of the new tools and modes of teaching and training	<b>246</b>
Exchange of knowledge and best practices between stakeholders and professional networks	<b>187</b>
Curriculum development and development of joint programmes and degrees	<b>111</b>
Fostering youth entrepreneurship through education and training	<b>101</b>
Public awareness raising activities on importance of education	<b>76</b>
Sharing innovative solutions for inspiring and recruiting young people to studies, work or entrepreneurship	<b>56</b>
Projects supporting synergies between research, education and the world of work	<b>36</b>
Developing and supporting quality dual learning, trainee, apprenticeship and work placement systems	<b>32</b>
Training of teachers and trainers, staff exchanges and job shadowing	<b>18</b>
Inclusive education: addressing the needs of disabled people, and socio-economic disparities in access, retention and completion of education	<b>16</b>
Higher education student and staff mobility	<b>15</b>
Recognition of competences acquired through non-formal and informal education and training	<b>11</b>
Support for public-private partnerships	<b>6</b>

### QUESTION 3

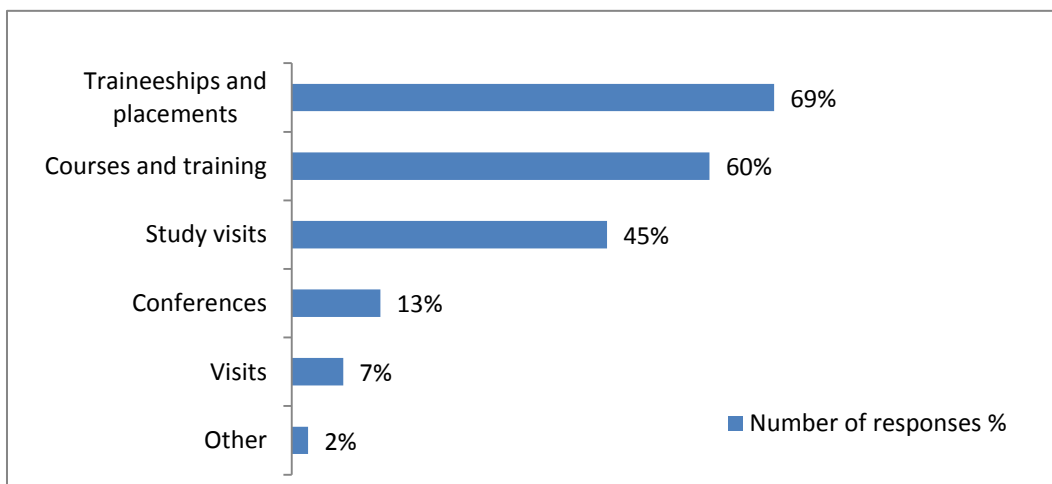
Answering the question No. 3 *What competences should be first of all developed during the implementation of projects within the "Education" programme? Please indicate up to two competences*, the majority of respondents indicated the need to improve project promoters' language skills, intercultural skills, and social and citizen competences. Generally, digital competence and entrepreneurship were the ones least frequently indicated. However, it is worth noting that the largest group representing the VET sector (vocational schools and professional/trade organisations) and higher education (higher education institutions) indicated the digital competence as the third most important competence to be developed by the participants of EU projects. Responders also pointed the need for developing competences in sports, creative and critical thinking and egalitarian competences (including the development of sensitivity to disadvantaged groups and people with smaller social, economic and cultural capital).



**Graph 3** Competencies, which according to the consultation participants should be developed by the implementation of projects within the “Education” programme

**QUESTION 4**

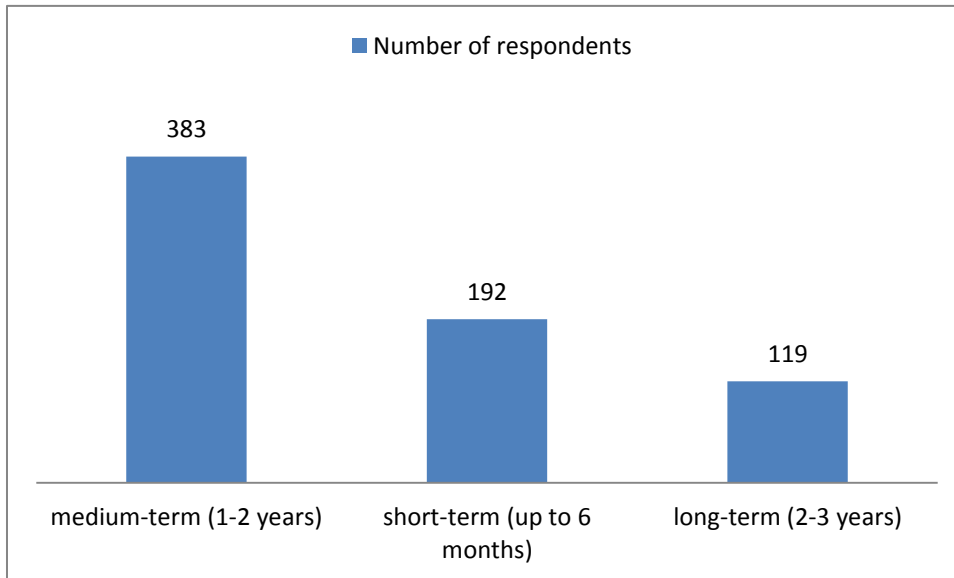
Answering the question No. 4 Which forms of international mobility, which are usually offered as part of educational projects, do you consider to be the most effective? – the majority of respondents indicated traineeships and work placements (479), courses and training (415) and study visits (313). The respondents also listed among the most effective forms of foreign mobility (the answer *Other*): research visits, field studies, international youth exchanges, school exchanges, student exchanges, trainers’ visits, trips taken by teachers and students to meet their peer groups (following the model of mobilities as part of the Grundtvig and Leonardo da Vinci programme).



**Graph 4** The most effective forms of international mobility

### QUESTION 5

Answering the question No. 5, more than one half of the respondents (55%) said that the most appropriate project duration would be 1-2 years. 17% of respondents prefer long-term projects (lasting 2-3 years), whereas 28% opt for short-term projects (lasting up to six months).



*Graph 5 Preferred project duration*

### QUESTION 6

Due to big interest in participating in the survey, which resulted in large number of presented comments, with their complexity and diversity, it was necessary to classify them as comments to “Education” programme and as opinions/suggestions/ideas.

44% responders expressed additional suggestions/ideas concerning the scope of the “Education” programme within EEA Grants 2014-20121. The most frequent comments and opinions concerned the following issues:

#### **Vocational Education and Training**

1. using Norwegian experiences related to social dialogue (cooperation of employers, trade unions and education administration) for determining the demand for specific occupations (including the establishment of patron forms, new workrooms and introducing pedagogical innovations);
2. VET teacher training using new IT technologies and language courses, including language for occupational purposes;
3. traineeships and placements abroad for students and teachers of vocational schools;
4. cooperation of schools in partner countries implementing the programme;
5. exchange of experiences between the management of vocational schools, VET teachers and representatives of school governing authorities and institutions in Donor States;
6. including in the new programme measures aimed at enhancing social capital and civic activities directed to place and role of parents in the education system i.e. broadening the knowledge of parents (both legal matters and soft skills), which will allow them to effectively cooperate with all school stakeholders.

7. additional funds for equipping schools in required equipment, in-service training of VET teachers with employers as well as expert technical literature (e.g. in English), language classrooms, and workrooms.
8. participation in conferences, study visits, seminars (1-2 days; weekends).
9. preparatory visits in partner institutions in order to prepare project proposals;
10. courses and training, exchange of experiences, projects addressing the issues of environmental protection;
11. allocating separate funds for schools operating at prisons, which are completely omitted in other programmes.
12. specialist courses for young people combined with apprenticeship; blended-type training;
13. offering training in the area of competences needed in the 21st century; new technologies, creative industry, shaping critical thinking skills and creativity.
14. experts' visits to Poland in order to conduct training and occupational workshops;
15. supporting adult education in the framework of Occupational Qualifications Courses (Polish: KKZ), retraining of adult workers;
16. funding the organisation of science camps for young people from partner countries, joint implementation of work placements by students from partner countries. This will help to form civic and social competences and blur cultural differences among students.

### **Higher education**

17. the development of university's third mission - CSR; e.g. workshops, local events with cultural profile;
18. joint second cycle and doctoral programmes;
19. short research stays (approx. 30 days) to complete specific research based on a detailed plan;
20. short-term stays for students in the framework of mobility component (e.g. 3-4 weeks); students exchanges;
21. bilateral cooperation aimed at enhancing the quality of higher education in Poland;
22. research projects concerning inclusive education;
23. longer interships (> 5 days) for HEI staff;
24. a possibility of establishing a network of cooperation between universities and scientific establishments;
25. a possibility for implementing projects on the basis of two tracks: scientific (research) and relating to teaching.
26. exchanges, teaching innovations related to increasing autonomy and engaging students in research projects, readiness to teach foreigners;
27. exchanges of academic and research staff as well as administrative staff in order to share good practices.

### **Other**

28. promotion of employment of people aged 60+, education related to preparation of senior workers and employers (psychological and technical aspects, e.g. adjusting the workplace to the needs and capabilities of senior staff);
29. offering volunteering programmes to adults (i.e. seniors). They could share their knowledge and experience, also at an international level; keeping adults/seniors active;



30. taking into account the needs of disabled adults, including their careers, trainers, and educators;
31. exchanges of general secondary school students.

### **Formal/organisational issues**

32. limiting the volume of project documentation; documents in digital form;
33. clarifying the issue of tax and social security payments on scholarships paid to project participants;
34. training, seminars outside of Warsaw; a larger number of training before project implementation; bigger promotion of the programme;
35. transparent and clear formal requirements; simplifying the application and project settlement procedures; introduction of unit rates, introduction of budget calculator; dropping the requirement to have over a dozen long-term partners at the stage of submitting applications; the appeal procedure and possibility for re-evaluation of the application by another expert; addressing the issue of access to the program (a limited number of projects approved by one institution throughout the duration of the programme);
36. allowing associations to apply for funding; not allowing commercial institutions: limited liability companies, corporations, businesses and large organisations to participate in the programme.
37. introducing national priorities and awarding additional points to projects involving people with fewer opportunities, persons at risk of social exclusion; additional points for NGOs, organisations operating in small localities or towns becoming depopulated; novice organisations;
38. 3-4 deadlines to submit the applications;
39. Using financial mechanisms similar to the ones applied in the Erasmus+ programme;
40. adapting financial support to the realities of Donor States;
41. support from NA in looking for project partners abroad; establishing a database of institutions; an interactive database of schools in Donor States willing to cooperate under the programme;
42. promotion of Polish HEIs in Donor States by NAs operating there in order to increase the number of mobilities from these countries and strike a balance between incoming and outgoing mobilities (especially these of students).

### **B. Stakeholders Consultation Meeting (SCM)**

The SCM was organised on the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2018 in Warsaw. Invited institutions to the SCM were jointly identified by the PO, DPPs and FMO. Representatives of PO, DPPs, FMO and the Ministry of Investments and Developments (the National Focal Point for the Education programme, NFP) took part in the meeting only as observers and/or facilitators.

The confirmed participation in the SCM:

1. Ministry of National Education
2. The National Centre for Research and Development (NCBiR)
3. The Centre for Education Development (ORE)
4. Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (PARP)
5. The Government Plenipotentiary for Disabled People
6. Board of Directors of Vocational Schools
7. Central Examination Commission
8. Polish Craft Association
9. National Chamber of Commerce

10. International Relations Offices Forum
11. The Students Parliament of the Republic of Poland
12. International Exchange Erasmus Student Network
13. The Educational Research Institute (IBE)
14. Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland (CRASP)
15. Conference of Rectors of Higher Vocational Schools in Poland (KRZASP)
16. Dolnośląskie Local Education Authority
17. Kujawsko-Pomorskie Local Education Authority
18. Śląskie Local Education Authority
19. Research Council of Norway
20. Innovation Norway
21. Association of Polish Universities for Internationalization – APUI
22. Federation of Educational Initiatives
23. The International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience (IAESTE)  
Polska
24. Association of Norwegian Students Abroad (ANSA) Poland

Eventually, 17 confirmed representatives took part in the SCM – they represented 14 different institutions/organisations. Opinions and contributions of those who took part are valuable, interesting and in line with the EEA Grants 2014-2021 assumptions.

All participants were divided into 3 working groups by the organizer in order to ensure representation of different types of institutions/ different sectors at each working table.

Each table appointed the chairperson who delivered the discussion's conclusions at the plenary sessions.

The aim of the meeting was to obtain participants' input as answers/ comments to the following topics:

- What are the main problems/needs that could be answered by this Programme?
- What are the main challenges/barriers interfering with solving the problems/needs?
- What is the solution to the problems/needs and how could the needs be solved/answered by this Programme?

Although each table discussed the same topics, conclusions from each discussion group were focused on different aspects.

Group A focused its discussion on the necessity to apply holistic approach to educational policy in a given commune/town/region and to treat education as an important factor for local/regional development.

Group B focused its discussion on different needs and roles in the teaching/learning process of students, teachers and schools environment, in particular around VET.

Group C focused its discussion on digital competences – evident needs for their enhancement not only as such but their wider and interactive use in the teaching and learning process.

All conclusions formulated during the SCM are presented in the graphical form in the attached document "Raport SCM"