

### 3. DEFINITIONS-an understanding of terms within the SOCCER project

#### 3.1 Evidencing

##### i) *What do we mean by evidencing?*

By evidencing we mean gathering proof of any activity carried out to reach previously set up goals. It demonstrates or shows someone's' achievements, acquired and developed knowledge and skills in relation to a course or an active participation in an exercise / citizenship activity

Evidence is part of the personal portfolio can be a very broad concept, since it can be any proof (for instance certificates, photo's, video's) of any achievement (for instance a contributions in events, developments of certain skills)

Evidencing can be carried out through portfolio or assessments. These assessments should be focusing on showing the competence

Some would argue that the necessity of gathering "Proof" implies that we can't trust either the opinion of the teacher nor the goodwill of the student to assess that citizenship values have been really internalised. In other words we need objective proof of that.

Nevertheless by "Evidencing" we make it clear and obvious to the learner what the expectation or goals of the learning or education is.

Evidencing of Active Citizenship is a process, which requires the following steps:

- Identification of what is to be achieved—the goals and targets of the Citizenship activity
- The carrying out of the Citizenship activity
- Gathering of facts, testimonies, signs, proofs (evidences)
- Measuring the evidence Activity against the set goals and targets

##### ii) *Why gather evidence?*

Gathering evidence is necessary to follow the activity and to be able to show the individual progress achieved during this activity. We gather evidence in order to become aware of progress and to help to the learners to become aware of his / her personal evolution.

Evidencing enables students to show what they can do, it builds confidence and is a superb alternative for written exams, which only test knowledge instead of competence. Evidencing creates awareness, it is a tool for reflection, gives insight, and show developments. It can also be used as a tool to present oneself.

Main reason, is to check the viability of the learning methodology and process. Without evidence, we can't be sure whether we are really teaching citizenship values or just passing time.

Gathering evidences guarantees some objectivity. This is essential as it provides undeniable signs/elements which - will make the person for whom evidence has been gathered, aware of what has been achieved, enhancing therefore a sense of reality.

Evidence gathering will also constitute a memory for the person who has gathered it. This memory being the property of this person, which will, when evidencing is positive, enhance self confidence.

### *iii) Examples of evidence*

The SOCCER partners used some of the following methods and tools in the evidencing process:

- Reflective Diaries
- Questionnaires
- Practical Assessments
- Simulated assignments
- Real assignments
- Photos
- Videos
- Recorded dialogues
- Pictures
- Films
- Exhibitions
- Recording
- Reports
- Tutor Observations
- Peer assessments
- E-portfolio
- Portfolio
- Role-Play
- Logs

Evidence is gathered together in a portfolio or e-portfolio. By using a full range of evidencing methods the partners were able to support the learners in gaining a 360-degree feedback on what they had achieved—from their peer groups, from the teachers and through self-assessment.

### 3.2 Measuring

*i) What do we mean by measuring learning?*

Measuring learning means measuring the acquisition of knowledge, skills, competences, that is, qualifying or quantifying a persons' achievement and developments in his or her learning process over a specified length of time.

Measuring is:

- To define the goal to be achieved at the beginning of the learning process
- To define the common goal in separate parts (competencies)
- To determine the distance travelled according to each competence on fixed moments during the learning process
- To give a final "qualification" at the end of the learning process on all relevant competencies

Measuring, in terms of SOCCER:

- is an action that is intended to achieve or deal with Social and Citizenship Competences
- shows how evidence of learning can be aggregated
- improves our understanding of the learning process
- enables us to plan more effective learning environments and opportunities
- enables us to demonstrate our value as Active Citizens.

In a perfect world it should mean to be able to numerically qualify the learning evolution of the student. However we are analysing qualities, (soft skills) which are difficult to quantify. Soft skills (many of them are required in order to integrate the notion of citizenship) are also difficult to evidence e.g. "Good behaviour" at a specific time or on specific occasions, can sometimes be evidenced, but it may also testify to the understanding of the behaviour expected from the trainee.

*ii) Why measure social skills and citizenship competence?*

Social skills and citizenship competence are linked to knowledge as a natural triangle. These elements should be seen as a natural unity. All elements therefore should be measured

As stated previously, positive social skills behaviour (empathy, assertion...) are linked to citizenship competences. Measuring is required in order to

- Evaluate progress and verify the level of acquirement of knowledge / development of skills
- Detect problems and identify the needs for improvement
- Adjust training, modify and adapt the teaching ways

However, it is important to note that one of the difficulties of measuring social skills is being able to accurately identify what variables may be affecting the results.

Measuring social skills and competence can be done for the purpose of comparing and used as proof that progress has been made in a “well founded way. This is a key element--to be able to state progress, not just to say “ This person is a qualified citizen and this one isn’t” but rather to state that “ this person has really change his/her attitude towards, for example, migration issues”, and you see the progress here. On the other,” this other person didn’t make much progress”.

*iii) Examples of measuring tools*

The SOCCER partners used a range of measuring tools; commercially available products and in-house produced materials, either paper or ICT based. The following are some examples of the methods and tools used by various partners:

*1. In our training course based on the realisation of a collective project, we used only a self-evaluation questionnaire, reconstructed (and simplified) using the measurement tool developed within the project*

*The skills are re-organised in 3 categories:*

- *Competencies aimed at citizenship development*
- *Relational skills*
- *Operational skills [as developed during the collective project]*

*The evaluation was based on the self-appreciation of the trainee and underlined the discussion with the trainer. Finally the trainer wrote an evaluation report, validated by the trainee.*

*2. Our method was to track how a student uses a computer program from the beginning to the end and check if the student is more focused on the purely entertaining parts of the game or is also using the more pedagogical parts. The teacher can even make some numerical analysis viewing how the ratio entertainment/pedagogical evolves during the time the student plays with the game.*

*3. We undertook qualitative measure of social behaviour through interviews and observations. Students completed a self-evaluation as regards self-esteem.*

*4. We used Tests, teacher reports, self-assessments, peer assessments, tracking paths, web logs*

*5. Another method is to repeat a similar test (for example reactions to a role-play situation) at the beginning, middle and end of the teaching process in order to see whether the student is improving or not.*

**6.** *Our method was to use some numerical or qualitative notation to evaluate each entry in an e-portfolio, in order to measure achievement from the students*

### **3.3 Recognising Achievement**

*i) How can we recognise and celebrate achievement?*

The SOCCER partners agreed that recognising and celebrating achievement should not be just through formalised qualifications or end-of-course certificates but should be an ongoing process that used a variety of innovative and informal methods. It was also recognised that evidencing and measuring were not exclusive from recognition of achievement but that all three stages were interrelated; achievement could not be recognised unless evidence of activity was presented, evidence was not valid unless some form of measurement was used to identify the “distance travelled”, thus is turn proved achievement.

Regarding social skills and citizenship competences, the first proof of achievement consists of identifying these skills and competences across the whole curriculum and for all trainees/students. This will avoid some kind of stigma, as acquiring social skills and also citizenship competences is often considered only essential to disadvantaged youngsters or people. Once this is granted, according to the importance given to grades, various types of recognition may exist.

It is also important to note that you can overdo it; too many certificates and too frequent recognition may not be motivating anymore

*ii) Benefits of recognising achievement*

The benefits of recognising achievement with disadvantaged groups cannot be overstated. There are benefits for the individual, for the trainers and for society in general.

The learner benefits are obvious in building self-confidence and self-esteem. Seeing evidence of their progress the person is encouraged to work further towards improvement of their social skills.

Recognising achievement is undeniably, a factor of motivation: human beings need to be recognised. It produces an increase in self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-reliance. Besides, becoming aware of his / her progress towards adult hood, social inclusion and citizenship, the learner can be involved in a process of recognition of his / her duties and will be motivated to proceed as responsible citizen.

This empowers the trainees to face new challenges and therefore, pushes back their limits as well as creates new expectations. In short, their learning potential may increase.

Recognition may also have an effect on social skills: aggressiveness is often due to frustration and a feeling of not being “as good as others”. Although this approach is aimed to improve the self-esteem of the young people it can also contribute to modification of the perception that the wider public has concerning the group.

Celebrating achievement also motivates the teacher when he/she sees how their students are actually progressing. Monitoring achievement is also a good way to check the functionality of the learning method. By recognising the students’ achievements, the trainer will see a more motivated student; this in turn is a benefit to the trainer as well.

Regarding benefits to society: by recognising competences learned via informal and non-formal learning society is enriched. Social competences and citizenship skills become more visible and hopefully also more valuable to society when they are recognised.

*ii) Examples of recognising achievement*

The following are some of the methods used by the SOCCER partners to recognise achievement:

- Celebration through certificates and diplomas, presentations, media-attention, awards etc.
- Through a mark, a grade, a certificate In an informal way, for instance, congratulating trainees on a SPECIFIC achievement, while naming this specific achievement
- Public recognition of a success (school newsletter.)
- Publicly praising, giving some rewards that are motivating, giving certificates that are socially accepted.
- Achievement could be recognised verbally: praising the person publicly in front of the group, during bigger celebration in the organisation or in writing presenting the person with a certificate
- Celebrating the end of the collective project during a communication event, insisting on the involvement of each participant:
- Awarding “Best marks”,
- CV update including evidence of achievement
- Newspapers’ articles
- Inviting students to a formal meeting in which they present their own experience, to show how they have improved.
- To convert the different role-play situations used for training into a work play and present it in a local theatre.
- Giving more ambitious tasks.
- Picture exhibitions, illustrating the work carried out by the trainees.