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## Table of Contents

Glossary of acronyms and abbreviations.....	5
1. Introduction.....	6
1.1. Purpose, Scope and Context of the Dissemination Plan.....	6
1.2. Content and structure.....	6
2. External Communication Strategy.....	7
2.1. Target Groups.....	7
2.1.1. T1: Employer stakeholder groups.....	7
2.1.2. T2: National/European policy makers.....	7
2.1.3. T3: SMEs and VET actors.....	7
2.1.4. T4: VET stakeholder groups.....	8
2.1.5. T5: FOSS4SMEs partners.....	8
2.1.6. T6: Media.....	8
2.1.7. T7: Specific FOSS4SMEs partner networks.....	8
2.2. Channels.....	8
2.2.1. Website.....	9
2.2.2. FOSS Learning Platform.....	10
2.2.3. Project Brochure.....	10
2.2.4. Newsletters.....	11
2.2.5. Twitter.....	12
2.3. Messages.....	12
2.4. Multiplier Events.....	13
2.5. Dissemination Events / Dissemination Activities.....	14
2.6. Language.....	15
2.7. Project Partner Specifics.....	15
2.7.1. ATL.....	15
2.7.2. DLEARN.....	16
2.7.3. OFE.....	16
2.7.4. DIT.....	16
2.7.5. FSFE.....	16
2.7.6. SKUNI.....	17
3. Internal Communication.....	17
3.1. Dissemination and stakeholders' matrix.....	17
3.2. Mailing List for Coordination.....	18
3.3. Regular Calls.....	19

## Glossary of acronyms and abbreviations

<b>FOSS4S</b>	Free and Open Source Software for Small Medium
<b>MES</b>	Enterprises
<b>PM</b>	Project Manager
<b>PC</b>	Project Coordinator
<b>MC</b>	Management Committee
<b>AB</b>	Advisory Board
<b>QM</b>	Quality Manager
<b>FOSS- BU</b>	Free and Open Source Software – Business User
<b>ATL</b>	Atlantis Engineering S.A.
<b>Dlearn</b>	EUROPEAN DIGITAL LEARNING NETWORK
<b>SKUNI</b>	University of Skövde
<b>OFE</b>	OpenForum Europe
<b>FSFE</b>	Free Software Foundation Europe
<b>DIT</b>	Dublin Institute of Technology
<b>VET</b>	Vocational Education and Training
<b>ECVET</b>	European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training
<b>NA</b>	National Agency

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Purpose, Scope and Context of the Dissemination Plan

The Dissemination Plan forms the foundation of the communication of the FOSS4SMEs consortium's research and development results to potential users and stakeholders. The plan is to serve all partners in finding their own communication strategy and setting priorities for audiences and used channels. However, each partner is supposed to create a separate dissemination plan according to its field of competence and location.

Dissemination is a key element for the FOSS4SMEs project. None of the consortium's work would be worth anything if the partners weren't able to achieve a wider impact and promotion of FOSS in small and medium-sized businesses by improving the employees' and management's particular skills. In order to reach this goal, the knowledge about the project as well as the relevant results have to be well communicated externally and internally within the group.

This is to be a constant endeavour of every of the FOSS4SMEs partner. Throughout the project, external stakeholders have to be informed about the current status, the recent achievements, and the next milestones. Internally, all participants have to be up-to-date with the others' external communication. After the project, it is important to be available for questions of stakeholders to not let the project's results seem irrelevant.

This document will be constantly kept up-to-date according to the latest project developments and experiences by the consortium. While P5 (FSFE) will keep the oversight of this activity, all partners will contribute input, efforts, and certain activities to complement the strategy.

There is a close link between Dissemination and the upcoming Exploitation plan. While the former is mostly about sharing results with potential users, peers in the research field, industry and other commercial players, and policymakers, the latter is about using the results for public policymaking or commercial purposes.

## 1.2. Content and structure

This plan is roughly divided into two main areas: external communication and internal communication. Both are equally important to spread the results most efficiently and effectively. The external communication strategy covers potential target groups, the most promising channels, the message we would like to transfer, and the used languages. The internal

communication will help the team to work more efficiently with each other and share experiences.

## 2. External Communication Strategy

### 2.1. Target Groups

With the FOSS4SMEs group's external communication we target certain audiences. This will help us to concentrate on reaching specific groups instead of an undefined mass. Each audience mentioned in this section will be presented with a reasoning why it is relevant for the project.

#### 2.1.1. T1: Employer stakeholder groups

We target sector employer and trade associations, incubator centres, enterprise agencies, chambers of commerce and start-up organisations on national and international levels. With the communication to this audience we aim to reach more SMEs as many of them are represented in these organisations. They can also help us to transfer the group's results to other levels we cannot effectively reach with our communication channels. This encompasses also lobbying policy actors in states and areas we have little access to.

#### 2.1.2. T2: National/European policy makers

For our strategy on a larger scale we will also aim to reach policy makers on the national and European level. This includes Government officials in ministries and agencies, funding bodies, regional development agencies, and the Erasmus National Agencies. Furthermore, politicians working in digital and educational areas will be relevant receivers of our communication. With targeting this audience we plan to stimulate debates about FOSS adoption and its necessary skills as well as open knowledge in VET trainings.

#### 2.1.3. T3: SMEs and VET actors

This audience will mostly be the closest participants of the FOSS4SMEs training courses and represent the SMEs market. It contains all SMEs in Europe, VET centres and their trainers. The group is highly relevant for the sustained, long-term use of the project results and will provide us with useful feedback.

#### 2.1.4. T4: VET stakeholder groups

This audience included awarding bodies, professional bodies and associations with a significant and relevant membership, research centres engaged in SME business support and ICT, as well as HE institutes. This audience will help us to reach VET actors we are not able to reach by our own networks.

#### 2.1.5. T5: FOSS4SMEs partners

Obviously, the FOSS4SMEs partners are supposed to keep their own organisation updated with the project's results and progress. Therefore, it is important for each partner to provide relevant updates to principals, managers, other staff, and associated companies/organisations in a timely manner. This will help each project partner to experience a better support and understanding in the own organisation and receive helpful comments about the project.

#### 2.1.6. T6: Media

To transfer the project results to even larger audiences, it is important to develop connections to media contacts as well. This included but is not limited to industry/sector journals, national and international news agencies, tech magazines, relevant websites and broadcasting agencies. These bodies are important to reach as they will significantly increase our network.

#### 2.1.7. T7: Specific FOSS4SMEs partner networks

Each of the project partners has its own networks he can reach out to. This may include audiences mentioned above but is probably limited to the partner's state or focus group. However, since the channels are already established, they will form the easiest to reach target groups and can be used to build the foundation of our external communication targets. Section 2.7 lists the specific target groups and channels to be used by each partner.

## 2.2. Channels

For the FOSS4SMEs project we use various channels to reach our audiences and disseminate the results. Just like Free and Open Source Software itself, we rely on the internet in our external communication. The whole software market – regardless of whether FOSS or proprietary

software – is highly interconnected and cross-border, and learning about the usage of a software often starts with an online research therefore. However, we will also use offline communication as soon as we are in closer contact with our audience.

We identify five key channels for the FOSS4SMEs dissemination. The project website, regular newsletters, social media (Twitter), and the partners' individual internal networks, as well as offline Multiplier Events. Each channel has to be used differently in order to be most efficient for the project.

### 2.2.1. Website

The FOSS4SMEs website is essential for the project's public image. In the best case, it will inform a interested parties about FOSS4SMEs and motivate them to join, reuse and support the efforts. In the worst case, it will make the impression of an inactive, uninspired, and eventually failing project. Most of our other channels refer to this source, and therefore it is crucial to make it as appealing as possible.

The website should at least provide following information for its readers:

- The project logo to create a recognisable visual element.
- A short description visible on first sight which explains the purpose and the setup as a joint EU project run by six diverse partner organisations.
- Information about the results of the project so far, especially as soon as learning courses are available.
- Information about the roadmap of the upcoming milestones.
- Information how different bodies – individuals, companies, civil organisations, VET providers and others – can profit from, reuse and contribute to the project.
- Information about the different project partners and their role in the project.
- A reference to the Multiplier Events (see 2.4) and how people can participate.
- An up-to-date news sections with the latest newsletters (see 2.2.4) and other interesting updates to make clear that the project is running and in a good shape which will in turn increase the probability that other entities will be convinced of FOSS4SMEs.

Other information can be added but the editors shall concentrate on these issues foremost.



The website has to be accessible for a wide range of people. This entails technical as well as editorial requirements:

- All content should at least be available in English. Other languages can be added but English is the priority. This way we make sure to avoid information being only available in one language which is harder to get translated, and we assure that the results can be transferred by people who are from other regions in Europe and the world.
- The website shall be accessible to visually impaired people. To help these people, the website shall not rely on JavaScript for displaying essential information since this makes the usage of screen readers harder. It should also be possible to zoom the texts, i.e. no essential text should be hidden inside of images.
- More and more people rely on mobile phones when browsing the internet and searching for information. That's why a responsible view of the website for small screens is a must.
- As an European project we should make the website GDPR compliant and privacy-friendly. That's why we will try to avoid or at least reduce the inclusion of external resources

### 2.2.2. FOSS Learning Platform

Another core of the dissemination strategy will be an open and interactive learning environment, where the training modules and contents will be available. It will be developed in respect to the results of the needs analysis and according to the specific training goals. It will be user-friendly and accessible for recipients and users, a training area and a support area.

To lead with good example, the learning platform will be Free and Open Source Software itself.

### 2.2.3. Project Brochure

Beside our online resources, we will also create offline material to hand out at events, personal meetings, and sent to important stakeholders we identified. The project brochure will be the a tool to showcasing the project, the main objective being to foster awareness about the project through the key actors and public in general. The brochure shall be drafted in English and translated into all the national languages of the partners.

It will contain condensed information about the project, the project activities and results, target groups, information on the project website and all relevant contact details. Brochures will be distributed at

dissemination events as appropriate and also made available on the project website as a downloadable file in PDF format.

OFE takes the lead in creating the brochure with feedback and input by all partners.

#### 2.2.4. Newsletters

Newsletters are useful means to efficiently spread the project's recent achievements and reusable results to a wide audience and almost all target groups we outlined. They summarise the latest evolvments and also serve the consortium to get aware of what the group has accomplished in the past months. FOSS4SMEs will release 4 newsletters, each of them shall contain the recent results and an outlook to the next activities.

The project partners are aware of the fact that newsletter do not serve a strong purpose on their own. The number of readers signing newsletters is declining as the amount of information of a broad band of communication channels constantly rises. Therefore, newsletters for our project have to be embedded in the other communication channels we maintain. However, it is an important task in the dissemination strategy to redirect interested parties to the possibility of receiving the newsletters to keep them informed and establish an open channel and automatic reminders for them.

Newsletters shall summarise the current status of the project at the time of writing, bring people up-to-date with FOSS4SMEs, and also enable readers to get to know the project even if they never read any other publication before. Therefore, they have to be written in a lively but informative language style, concise, and for a mixed audience from SMEs workers and managers to political decision makers.

To transfer the messages to an as broad as possible audience we will focus on releasing the newsletter in English and this will be the primary language for drafting. In a second step, as soon as the publication is ready to be released, we open the text for translations in the primary languages of the partners' countries.

For each newsletter, we have to find a balance between certain poles. These are:

*short and concise* ↔ *informative and encompassing*  
*up-to-date with fresh information* ↔ *well prepared and translated into many languages*  
*targeted to: business users* ↔ *education sector* ↔ *policy makers*

The spread of the newsletters will happen through any channel discussed in this document as soon as one has been released. It is also worthwhile to refer to it more often than just once to reach people who have missed its first announcement. The project partners will also take care of referring to the newsletter through their own newsletters and channels.

### 2.2.5. Twitter

No other social network is as suitable for the dissemination of the FOSS4SMEs project results as Twitter. Although it is proprietary and privacy unfriendly, its relatively transparent communication structure attracts the technical community, people from the educational and science sector, policy makers, NGOs, business people, and the average software user.

The project already has a Twitter account ([twitter.com/FOSS4SMEs](https://twitter.com/FOSS4SMEs)) which we will start to use more frequently as soon as the first tangible project results have been generated and are ready to be published. Especially in combination with the website and the downloadable brochure, Twitter is a powerful tool to reach our identified audiences.

Messages on Twitter are limited to 240 characters, therefore communication has to be on the point yet rich of content. To stand out of the mass of messages, usage of suitable media like pictures and screenshots of our usable platforms is highly recommended.

To build up a large base of followers, the FOSS4SME project relies on its partners. Each organisation, if it is represented on Twitter, is asked to retweet at least one message from the FOSS4SMEs account per month to contribute to the growth of authentic audience. In turn, the FOSS4SMEs account shall retweet relevant messages of its consortium's accounts as well to highlight the strong network. All of this will make advertisement of dissemination events and publications much easier and establish a communication channel in an interesting medium.

The Twitter account is managed by ATL as project leading partner. However, other partners can also contribute message or have permanent access to the account in coordination with ATL.

## 2.3. Messages

The main messages the external communication of the FOSS4SMEs project should transfer are simple yet important:

- Free and Open Source Software is the solution for many challenges the digital transformation opened up. Especially SMEs can profit from it and their employees' knowledge about it.

- For VET providers and other entities in the educational sector, FOSS and FOSS4SMEs is a great chance to develop new courses satisfying the economy's demands.
- Policy makers are enabled to pick up the latest trends and transfer the results in their agenda.
- The general public and workers in many sectors will experience that vocational training serves a great deal of advantages for their career, especially when it's about emerging technology developments.

Each and every piece of external communication should disseminate these core messages. The focus can vary of course, depending on the audience of a particular communication, for example when a partner talks to his own peer network. However, also including other aspects is important to show the overall dimension and target of the FOSS4SMEs project.

## 2.4. Multiplier Events

Multiplier events are elementary for the spread of project results. Therefore, we will organise 4 multiplier events throughout Europe, one in Greece, Italy, Ireland and Brussels each. These will be executed by all partners except the FSFE and Skovde University.

The main aim of the multiplier events will be to disseminate the intellectual outputs and raise awareness on the opportunities available for SMEs as for the usage of FOSS. The project assumption is that SMEs are not aware of the alternatives to proprietary software available as FOSS and/or they are afraid that FOSS may be difficult to use. Therefore, the event will be focused on the presentation of the various opportunities and the training tools freely accessible to any interested user. This way it is intended to inform participants about the different types of migration to FOSS available, so to decide what is the best for their business.

The events will have a double nature, on the one hand they will be informative, on the other hand they will be demonstrative, allowing participants to try the platform and tools. Specific aims are:

- Raise awareness of the project and its results.
- Present the ECVET profile and the possibility to get the competences acquired recognised through ECVET.
- Encourage exploitation of results by the direct and indirect target groups.
- Present plans for exploitation of project results.

Each partner will use its own network and channels to reach and involve the target group and relevant project stakeholders. But the events are part of the overall dissemination strategy, therefore the whole project's channels will also be used to advertise these event, e.g. by using newsletters or social media.

The 4 events, E1, E2, E3, and E6, have a focus on local participants. The amount of granted participants varies, while each participant generates an approved grant of 100,00 €.

<b>Name of Organisation</b>	<b>Event ID</b>	<b>Local Participants</b>	<b>Grant Approved</b>	<b>Date</b>
ATL	E1	40	4.000,00 €	05/2019
DLEARN	E2	30	3.000,00 €	05/2019
DIT	E3	40	4.000,00 €	05/2019
OFE	E6	45	4.500,00 €	09/2019

## 2.5. Dissemination Events / Dissemination Activities

Apart from the fixed Multiplier Events, each partner will also take care of spreading the word and project results at other occasions through Dissemination Events. This can be done by presenting the project at a public event or conference and will help reaching stakeholders who haven't been reached so far.

The options for Dissemination Events are manifold. For example a partner can include a slide and some words during a presentation at a conference, show a poster at the booth during a trade fair, or hand out the brochures to the participants of a seminar.

It is important to document these events. The partners have to make sure to take at least one photo of the dissemination.

Of course, the project partners are also welcome to conduct further Dissemination Activities which are optional but helpful for the project. They don't underlie the tougher requirements Dissemination Events do but should also be documented.

Each project partner is supposed to organise at least one Dissemination Event per project year. The consortium keeps track of these activities in the Dissemination spreadsheet:

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1vgjD1UuzFo\\_sE-LAogX8lnk1g4pFC-AOo1NTQ4asl-U/edit#gid=0](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1vgjD1UuzFo_sE-LAogX8lnk1g4pFC-AOo1NTQ4asl-U/edit#gid=0)

## 2.6. Language

Generally, we prefer to communicate to audiences in as many languages as possible. This mainly includes English, Italian, German, Greece, and Swedish while the primary focus is English as a more or less universally understood language in all partner countries. Secondly also other languages can be supported depending on the project partners resources and certain strategic considerations. This can be decided on a case-by-case basis.

The language style must be coherent to the used channel and targeted audience. While for instance Twitter can be used in a more easy language, more official publications will use a serious, neutral but convincing tone.

## 2.7. Project Partner Specifics

Each project partner is required to think of a national dissemination and exploitation strategy which will manage and coordinate the dissemination activities at local levels. Once every 6 months the consortium will analyse the progress to date and provide partners with detailed tendencies and recommendations. This will take place under the coordination of FSFE.

The FOSS4SMEs project benefits from the diversity of the group. This also applies to the results' dissemination. The consortium can count on the partners' special networks.

To provide an overview of the national Dissemination strategies, the project partners insert their strengths and individual special assets they can contribute to the overall communication. This happens via the Dissemination spreadsheet in a separate table:

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1vgjD1UuzFo\\_sE-LAogX8lnk1g4pFC-AOo1NTQ4asl-U/edit#gid=1532568444](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1vgjD1UuzFo_sE-LAogX8lnk1g4pFC-AOo1NTQ4asl-U/edit#gid=1532568444)

### 2.7.1. ATL

ATL plans to address SMEs and young entrepreneurs via VET schools or technical schools, thanks to its close links with the local community. VET students are the next generation of users and they are usually more familiar with IT and could adopt easier FOSS solutions. ATL will reach also companies engaged in training activities, as well as training companies and institutes via the professional associations that it takes part in and collaborate with.

The company will disseminate the results of the problem to the maintenance and asset management community, to industrial manufacturers and to IT specialists. ATL profits from the excellent connections of its key staff in several associations.

### 2.7.2. DLEARN

DLEARN will address small businesses at the national and European levels in the 10 countries of its associates. Dlearn provides consultancy and training to dozens of enterprises. Plus in Italy, DLEARN works closely with Confindustria (National Employer's Association) and its sectorial branches: tourism, manufacturing, food & beverage, accommodation, education, etc.; ANCE (National Association of F Building Industries) and its local branches; FederManager (National Association of Managers) and its 58 local branches. All of these will be used to contact dissemination targets.

### 2.7.3. OFE

Having built its network in Brussels and across Europe for the past 14 years means that OFE has a database of more than 1,500 contacts, which covers both national and European level, with a wide range of stakeholders from SMEs, civil society organisations, consultancies, companies and policy makers.

### 2.7.4. DIT

DIT will work with ISME, as the representative voice of the SME sector in Ireland, providing the perspective of non-Software SMEs in particular and of the challenges faced when SMEs approach software innovation. ISME has 9,500 members (SME owners) and runs an annual conference attended by 400 people. Moreover, targets and channels of DIT dissemination activities will be:

- Major organizations who are advocates of Open Source Software, located in Ireland, include Red Hat and Bearing Point.
- Annual events such as Project Fair which are well attended by staff, students and invited industry representatives.
- Academic Schools with links into other sectors, in particular sectors where Ireland is strongest (Food, Agriculture, Medical Devices, Pharmaceuticals and Tourism)
- Local dissemination events for staff and local stakeholders including invited expert speakers on topics related to FOSS.

### 2.7.5. FSFE

FSFE Within the organisation, the FSFE will disseminate the project results to its volunteers and supporters first and foremost. Through its regular meetings and events, FSFE will show the work which is being done and the results of it. On a regional and national level, the FSFE has contact with

business associations whose members are suppliers of Free and Open Source Software. By disseminating the project results to those business associations and their members, the FSFE will ensure the information will reach also the customers of those members, which will in most cases be SMEs within various fields.

At the European level, the FSFE is working in close partnership with other non-profit organisations that work to influence European policy on Free and Open Source Software and related issues. It will use those channels to disseminate the project results and to the extent that there is information coming from the project which has a policy implication, it would make this known in particular to members of the European Parliament and relevant directorates of the European Commission.

#### 2.7.6. SKUNI

For the dissemination, Skövde University will make sure that the project will benefit from established contacts and the local business park (GSP). At national level the project will profit from strong links with small companies in Open Source Sweden and the association as a whole. For example, workshops and seminars may be organised in collaboration with the industrial association Open Source Sweden. Further, the project may also significantly benefit from seminars organised in the Almedalen week (which is the most important policy event in Sweden).

At EU level, as one member of SSRG who is involved in the proposed project is also a fellow of Open Forum Academy (an organisation which has been set up by Open Forum Europe, which is also a FOSS4SMEs partner), high profile opportunities for dissemination are anticipated.

### 3. Internal Communication

This section focusses on making the consortium's communication as efficient and effective as possible. While good communication entails an uncountable number of tweaks one has to take, we identify three tools which will help us to reach milestones and be able to disseminate them in a positive and timely way: A dissemination and stakeholders' matrix, a mailing list, and regular calls for coordination.

#### 3.1. Dissemination and stakeholders' matrix

To develop and maintain a flexible but efficient dissemination strategy, a well-usable database of contacts is essential. The Free Software Foundation Europe (FSFE) set up such a database which the partners will fill with potential contacts in their own country as well as outside of their borders.



The essential structure of the matrix looks like the following for each stakeholder.

- **WHO:** the identification of direct and indirect beneficiaries and potential users of the project, detailing per each person/organisation the type and direct contacts (if available, otherwise the way to reach it/them)
- **WHY:** value proposition. Per each identified stakeholders, it will be detailed what type of value it can bring to the project or receive to it.
- **HOW:** how to reach them? Which kind of communication style? Which are the core messages and keywords to be used per each of them. This will also take into account the relevance (High/middle/low) the type of relation and the channels available
- **WHAT:** which activities, which resources to be used to develop channels and relations with each stakeholders at local, national and European level
- **WHEN:** Timing. Which is the right time for dissemination and exploitation, detailing what to do before, during and after the project
- **WHERE:** How to multiply the impact of the dissemination using networking effect? (Which network, which impact)

Each contact can also be tagged with certain attributes depending on their audience group. This document will also help to track if, when and why a contact has been approached in the past. The partners are aware of the fact that to be useful, the database has to be updated regularly, ideally especially before and after events.

The matrix can also be used to spot audiences which the FOSS4SMEs partners lack so far, and therefore help to set priorities in reaching out to those. The dissemination manager will take care of reminding the consortium regularly to have a look at the database and its information and update and add entries.

The matrix can be found in a shared online spreadsheet:  
[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1vgjD1UuzFo\\_sE-LAogX8lnk1g4pFC-AOo1NTQ4asl-U/edit#gid=244445762](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1vgjD1UuzFo_sE-LAogX8lnk1g4pFC-AOo1NTQ4asl-U/edit#gid=244445762)

### 3.2. Mailing List for Coordination

The FOSS4SMEs project already has established a mailing list for the purpose of coordinating activities. While it proved to be quite useful, certain aspects can be improved or have to be taken care of during the duration of the project:

- All people involved in the project shall be member of the mailing list. This helps to avoid people not being informed about activities and important information. The list of receivers can be reviewed on a regular basis by the project coordinator and each member.
- The partners shall take care of always using the mailing list except in special circumstances. This will foster transparency and a well-informed partnership internally. By everyone being up-to-date with all activities, each partner will be better in disseminating the results, also those lead by other partners. Therefore, we will also abstain from creating further internal channels like multiple mailing lists or team chats to be able to concentrate on one medium for the consortium.

Although it might make sense to include other people in the mailing list, for example interested VET provider and SMEs, we will avoid mixing the channels and distracting the readers of this main channel of internal communication. The mailing list is a working list.

### 3.3. Regular Calls

Although the mailing list also is a great tool for asymmetrical communication, regular real-time conversations will help the group to keep on track of current activities and priorities. Therefore, the project manager will take care of making sure to organise a regular meeting at least once a month. This can be either transnational meetings or video/audio calls.

It is wished to limit the length of the call to 1 hour. The date can be either found by the consortium sharing their availability in a certain timeframe, or by setting a recurring day of month. The eventual procedure can be defined by the project manager based on past experiences and general availability.

All project partners are supposed to participate in these events. If the main contacts are exceptionally not available, they are supposed to invite a coworker knowledgeable of the current project status and/or inform the project manager about their points on the agenda which has been sent beforehand.