

WP3 Interim Evaluation Report D.033 (1.4.2013-31.12.2014)



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The Joint Action Health Workforce Planning and Forecasting

The Joint Action on Health Workforce Planning and Forecasting is a three-year programme running from April 2013 to June 2016, bringing together partners representing countries, regions and interest groups from across Europe and beyond, but also non-EU countries and international organisations. It is supported by the European Commission in the framework of the European Action Plan for the Health Workforce, which highlights the risk of critical shortages of health professionals in the near future.

The main objective of the Joint Action Health Workforce Planning and Forecasting (JA EUHWF) is to provide a platform for collaboration and exchange between partners, to better prepare Europe's future health workforce. The Joint Action aims at improving the capacity for health workforce planning and forecasting, by supporting collaboration and exchange between Member States and by providing state of the art knowledge on quantitative and qualitative planning. By participating in the Joint Action, competent national authorities and partners are expected to increase their knowledge, improve their tools and succeed in achieving a higher effectiveness in workforce planning processes. The outcomes of the Joint Action, among other things, should contribute to the development of a sufficient number of health professionals, and contribute to minimising the gaps between the need for and the supply of health professionals equipped with the right skills, through to forecasting the impact of healthcare engineering policies and re-designing the educational capacity for the future.

This deliverable is an interim evaluation report that is based on the evaluation reports produced by Work Package 3 (WP3) between April 1, 2013 and December 31, 2014. The aim of the interim evaluation report is to give an intermediary overview of the evaluation activities and their results.¹

This deliverable has been approved by the Executive Board of the Joint Action on Health Workforce Planning & Forecasting on March 5th, 2015.

¹ Grant Agreement. Annex 1.

Contributors and Acknowledgements

The preparation of this deliverable was led by WP3 leader, Doctor Marjukka Vallimies-Patomäki, from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Finland and work package co-leader Mr. Andrew Xuereb, from the Ministry for Energy and Health, Malta. In addition responsible authors in the deliverable were Professor Johanna Lammintakanen and Researcher Alisa Puustinen, University of Eastern Finland.

We are grateful to all work package leaders namely - Zoltán Aszalós (WP4), Giovanni Leonardi and Rossana Ugenti (WP5), Matt Edwards (WP6) and Todorka Kostadinova (WP7) - and all their team members, for their fruitful and constant collaboration in all stages of the evaluation processes.

We would like to extend our thanks to all partners engaged in the Joint Action. We would like to specifically thank Programme Manager Michel van Hoegaerden, former Project Manager Lieve Jorens, Project Leader Tina Jacob and Project Officer Maria D'Eugenio (Belgian Federal Public Service of Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment; coordinator of the Joint Action) for their leadership and support.

Finally, the financial support from the European Commission is gratefully acknowledged and appreciated. In particular we would like to thank Caroline Hager, Leon van Berkel from the European Commission DG Health and Consumers, and Antoinette Martiat from the Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency (CHAFEA).

INTERIM EVALUATION REPORT

Executive summary

This interim evaluation report gives an intermediary short summary of the evaluation activities and their results based on the evaluation reports produced by Work Package 3 (WP3) between April 1, 2013 and December 31, 2014. The overall aim of the evaluation is to verify whether the Joint Action is being implemented as planned and reaches the defined objectives. The report is based on the two process evaluations and the output evaluation reports of six deliverables.

The first process evaluation focused on the process management tools and their usability and utility in monitoring the progress of the Joint Action. The second process evaluation noted the delays of the deliverables that are a threat to the timely execution of the Joint Action. It also pointed out that the management tools should help teams to keep on track but not serve as an administrative burden.

The output evaluation was conducted through structured evaluation tools covering three main perspectives, namely the status, the process and quality, and content of the deliverable. It transpired, however, that the deliverables of the core work packages were not delivered on time during the evaluation period.

The final evaluation of D051 Minimum Planning Data Requirements and D061 User's Guidelines on Estimating Future Needs was completed. Both were deemed to have met the objectives set out in the Joint Action. Pilot projects regarding testing the Minimum Data Set as part of D054 are expected to provide concrete further information on the applicability of the supply and demand side projections. Two deliverables were evaluated from WP7 including D071 Sustainability Strategy and D072 List of Experts (release 1). Both of these need to be revised further during the ongoing process of the Joint Action. Furthermore, pre-evaluation feedback was provided for the deliverables D041 Report on Terminology Mapping and D052 Handbook on Planning Methodologies.

According to the WP3 self-evaluation the main strengths and opportunities are the team's combination of expertise and the effective use of communication channels. These balance the weaknesses entailed in the geographical distance of the members and the lack of full-time members working on the Joint Action. The main threats to distributing the work of WP3 are changes in the core Work Packages Deliverables' delivery dates.

The continuous close watch by the project management team is of great importance to ascertain the timely delivery of the outputs and the high quality of the deliverables as well as the balancing of the budget. It is recommended that potential delays are reported by core work packages to WP1 as early as possible and that corrective actions are taken by the core work packages, when needed. The quality of deliverables can be ensured and improved through the process of continuous evaluation. In doing this the evaluation needs to stay at the same time objective yet developmental.

Introduction

The Evaluation Strategy² defines an interim evaluation report as follows: “An interim evaluation report on the progress of the EUHWorkforce in terms of the process evaluation and the output evaluation”. In doing this, the Interim Evaluation Report presents a short summary of all the evaluation exercises made and their results from April 2013 to December 2014. The report also appraises the overall process and deliverables of the Joint Action until the end of December 2014.

The report is based on the two overall process evaluations made by the end of December 2014 and the output evaluation reports of each individual deliverable that have been assessed by the end of December 2014. Deliverables officially evaluated are: 1) D051 Minimum Planning Data Requirements, 2) D061 User’s Guidelines on Estimating Future Needs, 3) D071 Sustainability Strategy and 4) D072 List of Experts (release 1). WP3 has also provided pre-evaluation feedback on the following deliverables: D041 Report on Terminology Mapping and D052 Handbook on Planning Methodologies. The Interim Evaluation Report is largely intended for internal development tasks, as defined in the Grant Agreement and Evaluation Strategy, and therefore it does not include an extensive introduction to the evaluation procedure or methods used. These will be covered in depth in the final evaluation report at the end of the JA period.

This report first presents an overview of the evaluation design and methods used. The main body of the text focuses on the summary and conclusion of the evaluation of the Joint Action concluded by the end of December 2014. The report also includes a self-evaluation of WP3. Finally, conclusions and recommendations for the second part of the Joint Action are provided.

² Evaluation Strategy for the Joint Action on European Health Workforce Planning and Forecasting. WP3, 2013.

1. Evaluation design and methodology

The overall aim of the evaluation is to verify whether the Joint Action is being implemented as planned and reaches the defined objectives. The objectives are as follows:

- (1) a better understanding of terminology
- (2) better monitoring of the health workforce by access to timely data
- (3) updated information on mobility and migration trends in the EU
- (4) guidelines on quantitative and qualitative health workforce planning methodology
- (5) increased quantitative and qualitative planning capacity
- (6) an estimation of the future skills and competencies needed in the health workforce
- (7) a platform of cooperation to find possible solutions for the expected shortage in the health workforce
- (8) a higher impact of the health workforce planning and forecasts on policy decision-making

The Interim Evaluation report covers the output evaluation of the deliverables produced in the Joint Action by the end of December 2014. Output is defined in the Evaluation Guidelines as being activities, services, events and products that reach people who participate in the Joint Action or who are targeted. At this point the focus of the evaluation is on the goal-attainment, whether the goals set for the Joint Action at this point have been met or not, and in the quality of the outputs (deliverables) produced. Hence it can be concluded that at the time of writing the interim evaluation, we are only partly able to assess the goal-attainment of one of the Joint Action objectives, number 4 ‘Guidelines on quantitative and qualitative health workforce planning methodology’.

The Joint Action consists of a set of planned activities directed towards bringing about specified change(s) in an identified and identifiable audience. Most of the objectives set for the Joint Action refer to specific outcomes of the intervention. An outcome is defined in the Evaluation Guidelines as a specific attitude, knowledge, behaviour, or skills of people that the Joint Action aims to influence or change positively (see also Owen & Rogers 1999; Quinn Patton 2002; Vedung 1997). An outcome evaluation will be the focus of the Final Evaluation Report.

The evaluation of the Joint Action for European Health Workforce Planning and Forecasting is described in the Evaluation Strategy and in the Evaluation Guidelines as following the principles of programme evaluation and being both summative and formative in nature (see e.g. Vedung 1997; Owen & Rogers 1999). The task of the evaluation is to assess the merit, worth and value of outputs and outcomes of the Joint Action, which are intended to play a role in the future, practical action situations in the health workforce planning and forecasting in Europe. WP3 is acting as an internal evaluation team, both judging the overall effectiveness and goal-attainment of the Joint Action, the accountability aspect, and acting as a change agent and developer in the process, i.e. developmental evaluation (see e.g. Quinn Patton 2002).

Research questions that the evaluation is addressing are:

- 1) Is the Joint Action meeting its goals and progressing according to the plan?
- 2) Are the work packages delivering the outputs according to schedule and are the deliverables meeting the goals set in the Grant Agreement?

Data used in the interim evaluation report consists of the following:

- Output evaluation reports of deliverables D051, D061, D071 and D072 (release 1)
- Pre-evaluation feedback given on deliverables D041 and D052
- Process evaluation reports
- WP-leader meeting minutes
- Executive Board meeting minutes
- Risk and issues registers by WPs
- Stage plans by WPs
- Self-evaluation as a form of SWOT analysis by WP3

The evaluation of the Joint Action is a continuous process that aims at ensuring the quality of the deliverables and the whole process of the programme. Evaluation tools are always adapted according to the specific needs of the deliverables at hand, and at the same time they encompass the same basic elements to ensure continuity and uniform quality (see e.g. Lewis 2001; Quinn Patton 2002) The evaluation team is part of the whole process of creating the deliverables, as presented in Figure. 1.

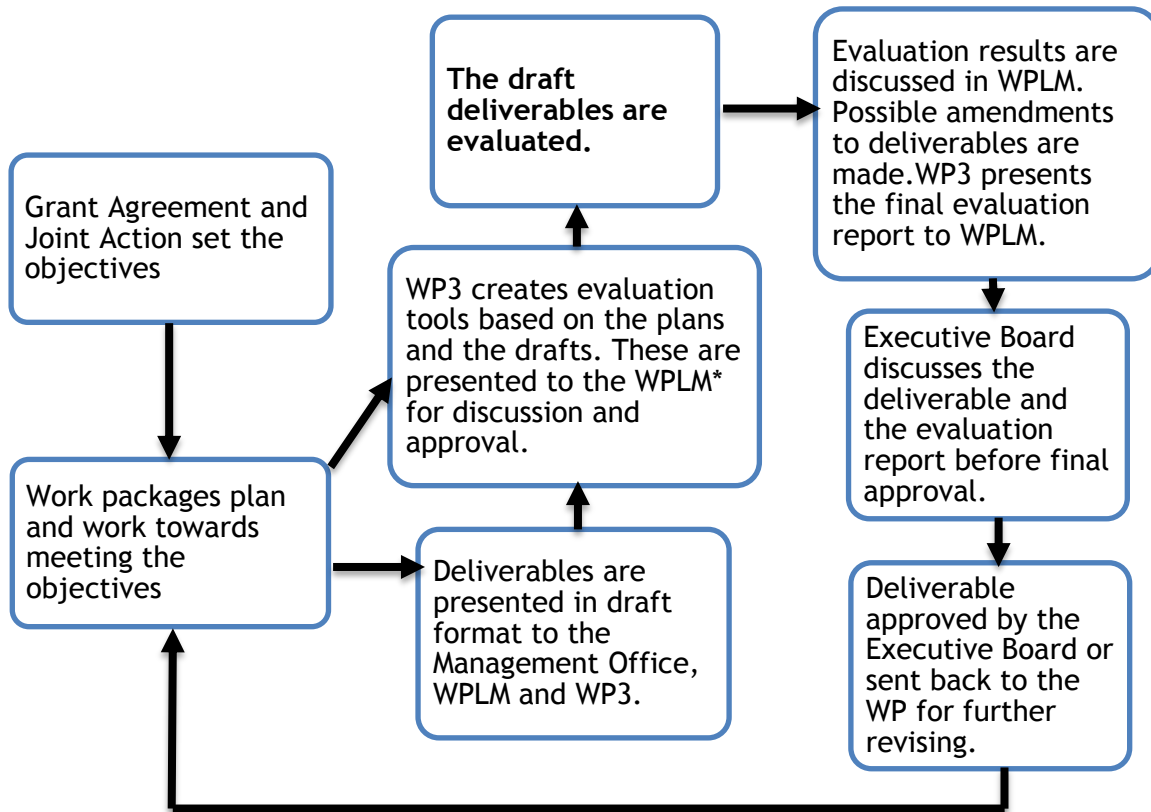


Figure 1. Simplified flow chart of the delivery process of the tangible outputs and their evaluation (deliverables) in the Joint Action. (* WPLM = work package leader meeting)

Evaluation tools used in the output and process evaluation are mainly in the form of structured check lists and questionnaires. Table 1 provides an overview of the evaluation approach, methods, tools and data used in the output, outcome and process evaluation respectively, as defined in the Evaluation Strategy (see also Foss Hansen 2005).

Table 1: Overview of the evaluation approaches, materials, methods and tools.

| Approach | Deliverable | Evaluation method | Evaluation tool |
|--|---|--|--|
| Process | Stage plans, progress reports, minutes of the meetings, and risk and issue templates by WPs 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 and MO; the revisor's reports by WP 1 | Review process of the formal reports | Check lists Structured criteria agreed with the WP leaders and MO |
| Output | Chapters in the guide by WPs 4,5,6 Technical recommendations for the sustainability of the JA by WP7 | Expert reference groups assess the quality of the selected deliverables | A semi-structured questionnaire Quality criteria agreed with the WP leaders and MO |
| | Deliverables of WPs 4,5,6,7 (Do they meet the criteria?) | Review process of the deliverables | Checklists for reviewing the WP and MO reports and minutes of the meetings Criteria agreed with the WP leaders and MO |
| Outcome (will be covered in the final evaluation report) | Deliverables of WPs 4,5,6,7 (What has happened as a result of the deliverables?) | Interviews of the focus groups for evaluating the changes and impact | Semi-structured themes for interviews agreed with the WP leaders and MO |
| | Deliverables of WP6 Deliverables of WP7 | Interviews with the knowledge-brokers and stakeholders on selected deliverables Interviews with the stakeholders on selected deliverables | Semi-structured themes for interviews agreed with the WP leaders and MO |
| | Deliverables of WPs 4,5,6,7 | Reviews of the changes made and planned changes on the basis of the reports | Checklists and questionnaires Structured criteria agreed with the WP leaders and MO |

2. Process Evaluation

Process Evaluation 1 focused on assessing the usability of risks and issues registers and the application of stage plans by all work packages. It was concluded that work packages were filling in the templates according to plans at the early stage of the project. Procedures on how to handle the risks and issues were deemed to be clear. WP3 raised two issues at the first process evaluation: 1) the amount of time that filling in the registers takes from the WP leaders and 2) whether some work was being done in duplicate, particularly in the case of stage plans. This issue was raised again during the second process evaluation.

Process Evaluation 2 focused on monitoring the use of project management tools and progress of the Joint Action. It was conducted on the basis of 19 items from three perspectives: 1) General progress of the Joint Action, 2) Progress of the core work packages and deliverables and 3) Follow-up on Risks & Issues. Findings of the Process Evaluation 2 are summarized in Figure 2.

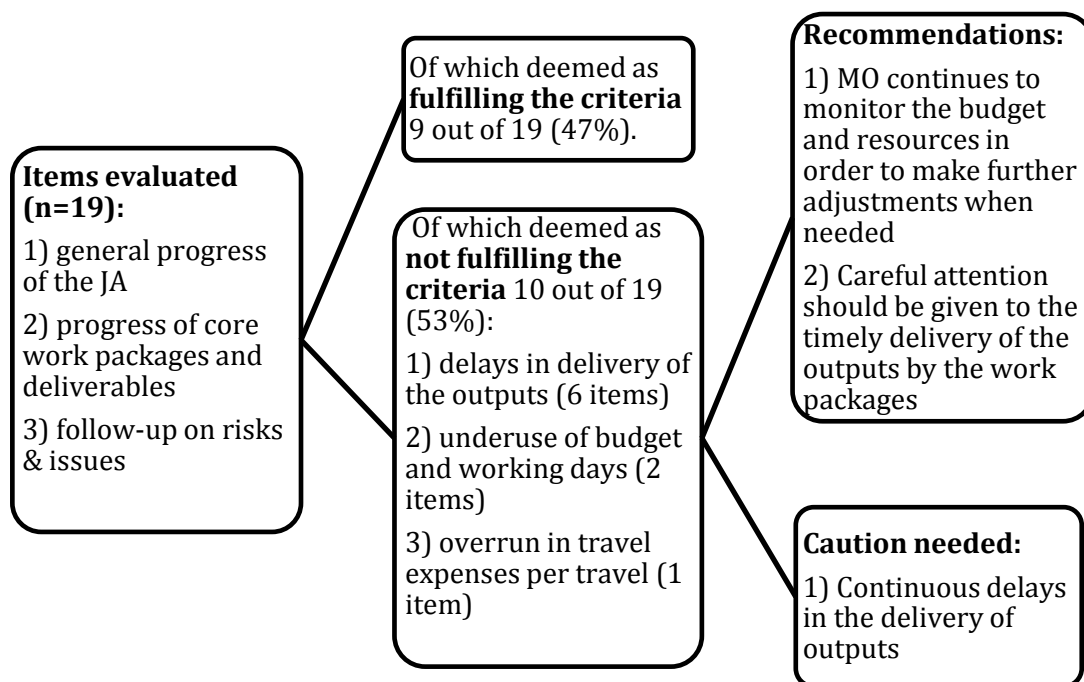


Figure 2: Summary of the process evaluation 2.

Based on the two process evaluation reports it can be confirmed that the Management Office and WP1 are using all necessary process management tools as appropriate to ensure the progress of the Joint Action as agreed on in the Grant Agreement. WP3 emphasises that the underuse of resources and the overuse of travel expenses are not alarming, but need careful attention. WP1 is monitoring the situation meticulously and corrective action has been taken where appropriate. The existing project management procedures are sufficient and new measures or protocols are not needed.

Conclusions:

1. The continuous delays in the delivery of outputs (deliverables) are noted by WP1, since it poses a threat to the overall execution of the Joint Action objectives. WP3 suggested that WP1 and the Management office continue to monitor the delays regularly and the potential delays are reported to the WP1 by core work packages as early as possible. All the delays are to be discussed in the Work Package Leader Meetings and potential rescheduling taken into Executive Board for approval, as has also been the procedure to date.
2. Based on the first process evaluation, it is important to carefully consider the use of existing project management tools (risk and issues registers, stage plans etc.) and to balance that with the core duties of all work packages. Project management tools are necessary for the management office to keep track of all the work packages, but at the same time they add administrative burden to work packages, on top of the core functions to deliver tangible results such as deliverables.
3. For the second period of the Joint Action such issues as resource adequacy and realistic timetables, regarding particularly pilot projects and final deliverables, as well as balancing these with the objectives of the Joint Action should be discussed among the management office and work package leaders.

3. Output Evaluation

This chapter presents the summaries of the evaluation reports and results from the first period of the Joint Action, from April 2013 to December 2014 (for a summary see Table 2). Results of the output evaluations are presented by the work packages, summarising each deliverable separately. Deliverables D041 Report on Terminology Mapping and D052 Handbook on Planning Methodologies are included in the interim evaluation report in their draft formats. WP3 has provided pre-evaluation feedback on both deliverables, but their formal evaluation will be done only in March 2015, which is out of the time frame of the interim evaluation report. These deliverables will be included in the final evaluation report.

Table 2. Summary of the progress, delivery and evaluation of the deliverables, from April 2013 to December 2014.

| Subject | Deliverable | Delivery planned ² | Delivery executed | Delivery on time | | Evaluation items | |
|---|--|-------------------------------|--|------------------|----------|-----------------------------|--|
| | | | | YES | NO | No. fulfilling the criteria | No. not fulfilling the criteria |
| WP4 Progress of the activity and timing | D041 Report on Terminology Mapping | Month 20 (Nov. 2014) | Delayed until month 22 (Jan. 2015) Will be submitted to EB, March 2015 | | X | | |
| WP5 Progress of the activity and timing | D051 Minimum Planning Data Requirements | Month 7 | Approved by EB#3, month 15 (June 2014) | | X | 16 / 31 | 7 / 31 (8 / 31 will be assessed later) |
| | D052 Handbook on Planning Methodologies | Month 18 | Will be submitted to EB, March 2015 | | X | | |
| WP6 Progress of the activity and timing | D061 User's Guidelines on Estimating Future Needs | Month 14 | Approved with minor revisions in EB#3, month 15 (June 2014) | | X | 18 / 18 | |
| WP7 Progress of the activity and timing | D071 Sustainability Strategy | Month 4 | | | X | 17 / 28 | 11 / 28 |
| | D072 List of Experts (version 1) D072 List of Experts (version 2) | Month 10 Month 22 | Version 1 (release 1) approved in the EB#3, month 15 (June 2014) | | X | version 2 19 / 29 | version 2 7 / 29 (3 / 29 will be assessed later) |

² As defined in the Grant Agreement, Annex 1.

3.1 Work Package 4

WP3 has twice provided WP4 with pre-evaluation feedback on the deliverable D041, Report on Terminology Mapping. The final evaluation will be conducted by using the structured evaluation tool as soon as WP4 has finalized the deliverable after the second round of feedback that took place in November 2014. D041 is scheduled for approval by EB in March 2015. The structured evaluation tool has been discussed through the Electronic Work Package Leader Meeting in December 17, 2014.

3.2 Work Package 5

One deliverable has been evaluated from work package 5 namely: D051 Minimum Planning Data Requirements. The method used in the evaluation is a content analysis of the written material as a means of creating a structured checklist. Furthermore, preliminary feedback was provided twice on D052 Handbook on Health Workforce Planning Methodologies. A structured evaluation tool for D052 was discussed in the Work Package Leader Electronic Meeting in December 17, 2014.

Minimum Planning Data Requirements D051 was appraised on the basis of 31 items from three perspectives: (1) the status of the deliverable, (2) process and quality of delivery and (3) the contents of the deliverable. From 31 items of the evaluation tool, 16 were deemed to have been completed and seven were considered to need further revision. In addition, eight items will be further appraised later. The findings and recommendations based on the evaluation are summarized in Figure 3.

The status of the deliverable, the international experience taken into account, the international participants and stakeholders included, a mechanism for testing as well as several general and specific aspects based on the contents of the deliverable were deemed to have been completed. Pilot projects regarding testing the Minimum Data Set as part of D054 are expected to provide concrete examples and further information on the applicability of the supply and demand side projections.

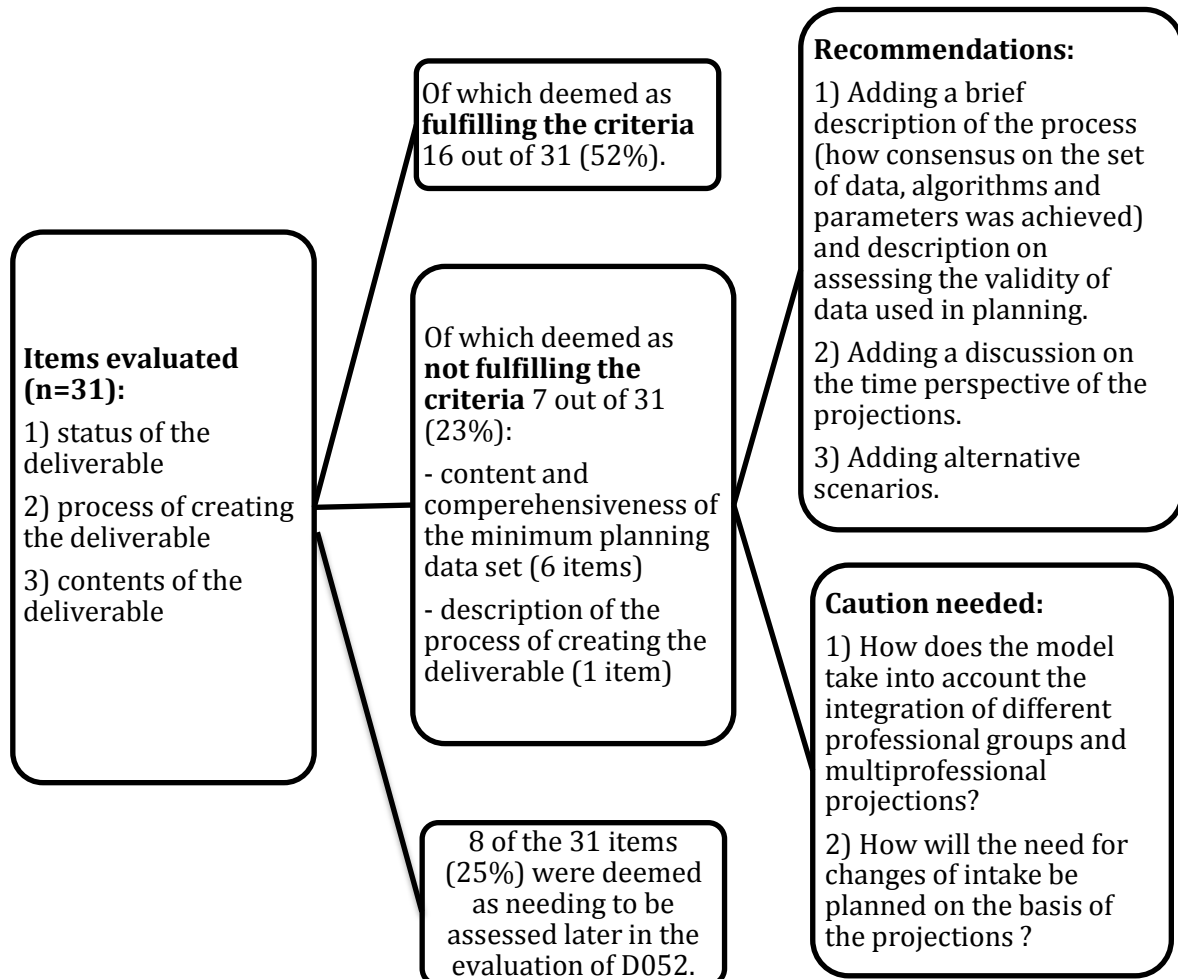


Figure 3: Summary of the evaluation on D051 Minimum planning data requirements.

Conclusions:

- 1) D051 Minimum Planning Data Requirements meets the objectives and has been approved by the Executive Board.
- 2) Pilot projects testing the Minimum Data Set as part of D054 will provide further information on
 - how the supply and demand side projections help to identify and analyse imbalances
 - how the MDS allows for taking into account changes in the indicators included in order to build alternative scenarios
 - how the supply and demand side projections can be used in designing the desired policy options required to sustain the health workforce

3.3 Work Package 6

WP3 provided WP6 with pre-evaluation feedback on the deliverable D061 once before the final evaluation. The pre-evaluation feedback was given in the format of the structured evaluation tool. A structured evaluation tool with the same indicators as in the pre-evaluation was used in the final evaluation. The method used in the evaluation is a content analysis of the written material as a means of creating a structured checklist.

The User's Guidelines on Qualitative Methods (versions April 2014 and draft 05, Sept. 3, 2014) was appraised on the basis of 18 items from four perspectives: 1) the status of the deliverable, 2) process and quality of delivery, 3) the contents of the deliverable and 4) scholarly base. Pre-evaluation was done based on the April 2014 version and the final evaluation on the draft 05, September 2014 and the tracking table provided by WP6 on the changes made in the earlier version.

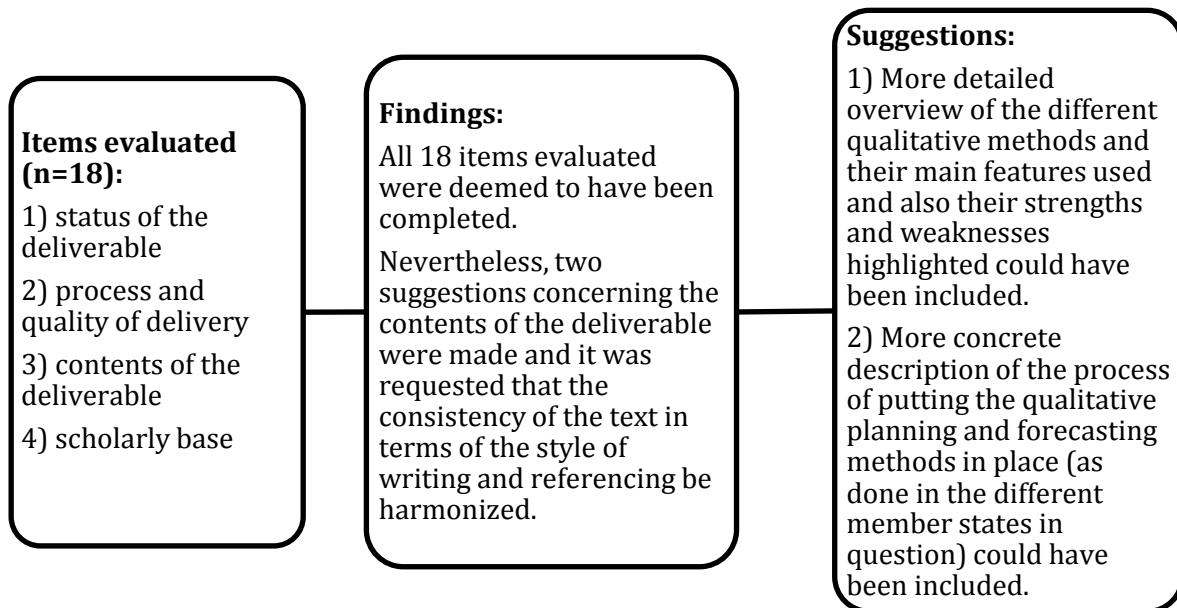


Figure 4: Summary of the evaluation on D061 User’s Guidelines on Qualitative Methods.

From 18 items of the evaluation tool, all 18 were deemed to have been completed (see Figure 4). The WP3 team concluded that draft 05 on the User’s Guidelines on Qualitative Methods is reader-friendly and compact. All the evaluation items were deemed as being complete, but some comments were provided for the consideration of WP6 to even further improve the deliverable and to be taken into account in the completion of the final guide.

Conclusion:

- 1) D061 User’s Guidelines on Qualitative Methods meets the objectives and has been approved by by the Executive Board.

3.4 Work Package 7

Two deliverables were evaluated from work package 7: D071 Sustainability strategy and D072 List of Experts, release 1. The method used in the evaluation of each of the deliverables is a content analysis of the written material as a means of creating a structured checklist.

D071 Sustainability Strategy

Sustainability Strategy, D071, was appraised on the basis of 28 items from three perspectives: 1) the status of the deliverable, 2) process and quality of delivery and 3) the contents of the deliverable. From 28 items of the evaluation tool, 17 were deemed to have been completed and 11 were considered to need further revision as they did not fulfil the evaluation criteria. The results are summarized in Figure 5.

The status of the deliverable, the process and quality of the deliverable, the relations between all the deliverables of WP7 and the relations of the deliverable with other JA WPs and deliverables were deemed to have been completed. The actual structures and activities promoting the permanent collaboration were deemed in part to be incomplete and were recommended for further revision. For example issues such as what are the specific roles of the Observatory, WHO, OECD, Eurostat and several EU organs and the collaborative structures between these actors are important for the sustainability of the collaboration (Health 2020; Siakas et al. 2010).

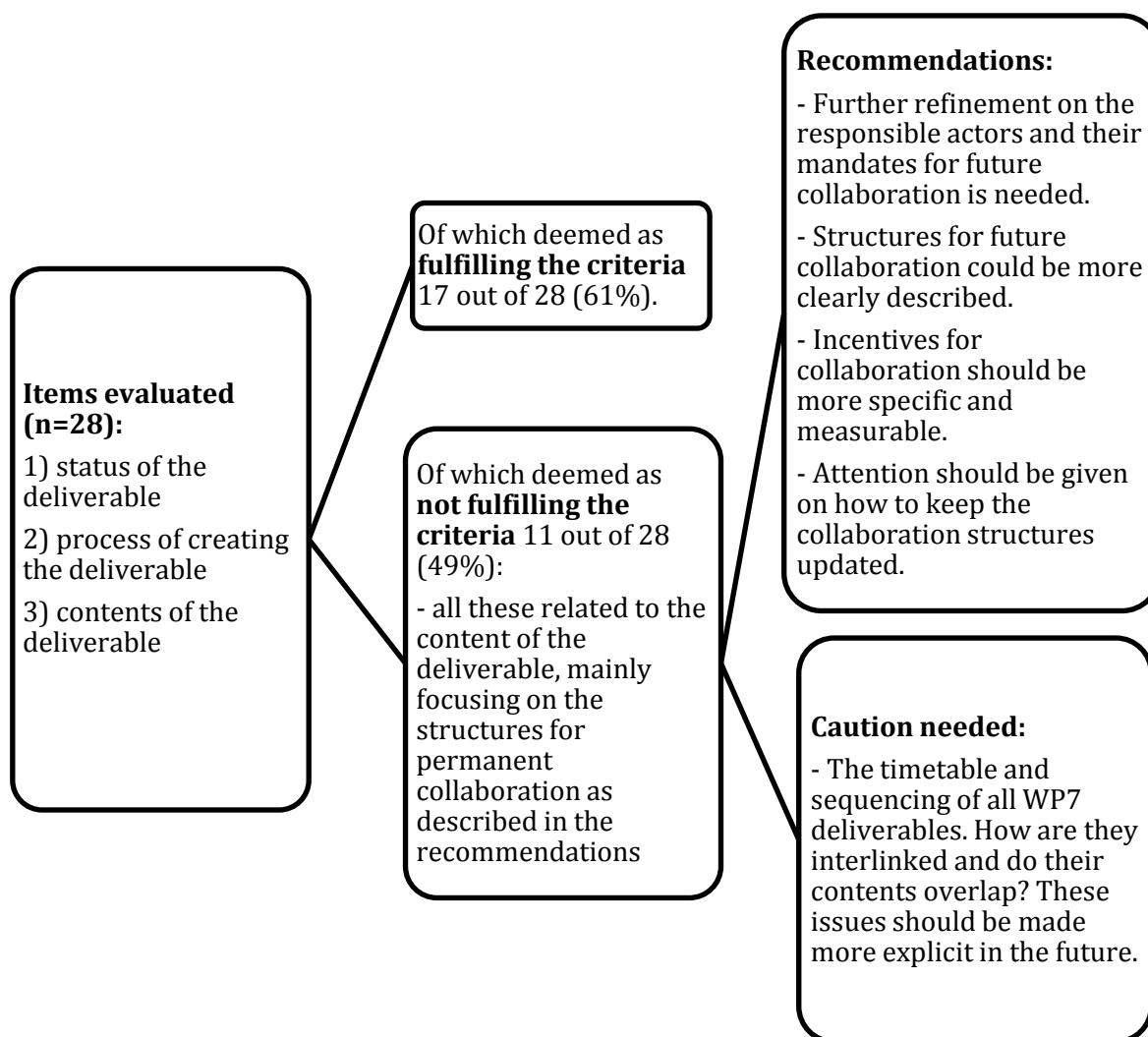


Figure 5: Summary of the evaluation on D071 Sustainability Strategy.

Conclusion:

- 1) The sustainability plan is very important for the continuous development of the health workforce planning capacities in the European context. The contents, structures and mechanisms for sustainable collaboration of several important stakeholders require further refinement.

D072 List of Experts

The List of Experts, D072 (release 1), was appraised on the basis of 27 items from three perspectives including 1) the status of the deliverable, 2) process and quality of delivery and 3) the contents of the deliverable. For version 1, from 27 items of the evaluation tool, 14 were deemed to have been completed, nine were considered as needing further revision and not fulfilling the evaluation criteria and 4 items were to be evaluated in the next versions of the List of Experts. For version 2, from 29 items of the evaluation tool, 19 were deemed to have been completed, seven were considered to be in need of further revision and three were to be evaluated based on the next versions of the deliverable. A summary of the evaluation results of version 2 of the List of Experts is presented in Figure 6.

For the next release of the List of Experts, the evaluation will focus on appraising the number of experts listed, the distribution (e.g. gender, geographical, professional background) and variety of their expertise and suggestions on how to maintain, update and develop the network of experts. The continuity of the expert network after the Joint Action period is of special importance for the European wide collaboration on health workforce planning related issues.

Conclusion:

- 1) List of Experts is an ongoing process and will be evaluated several times during the Joint Action period.

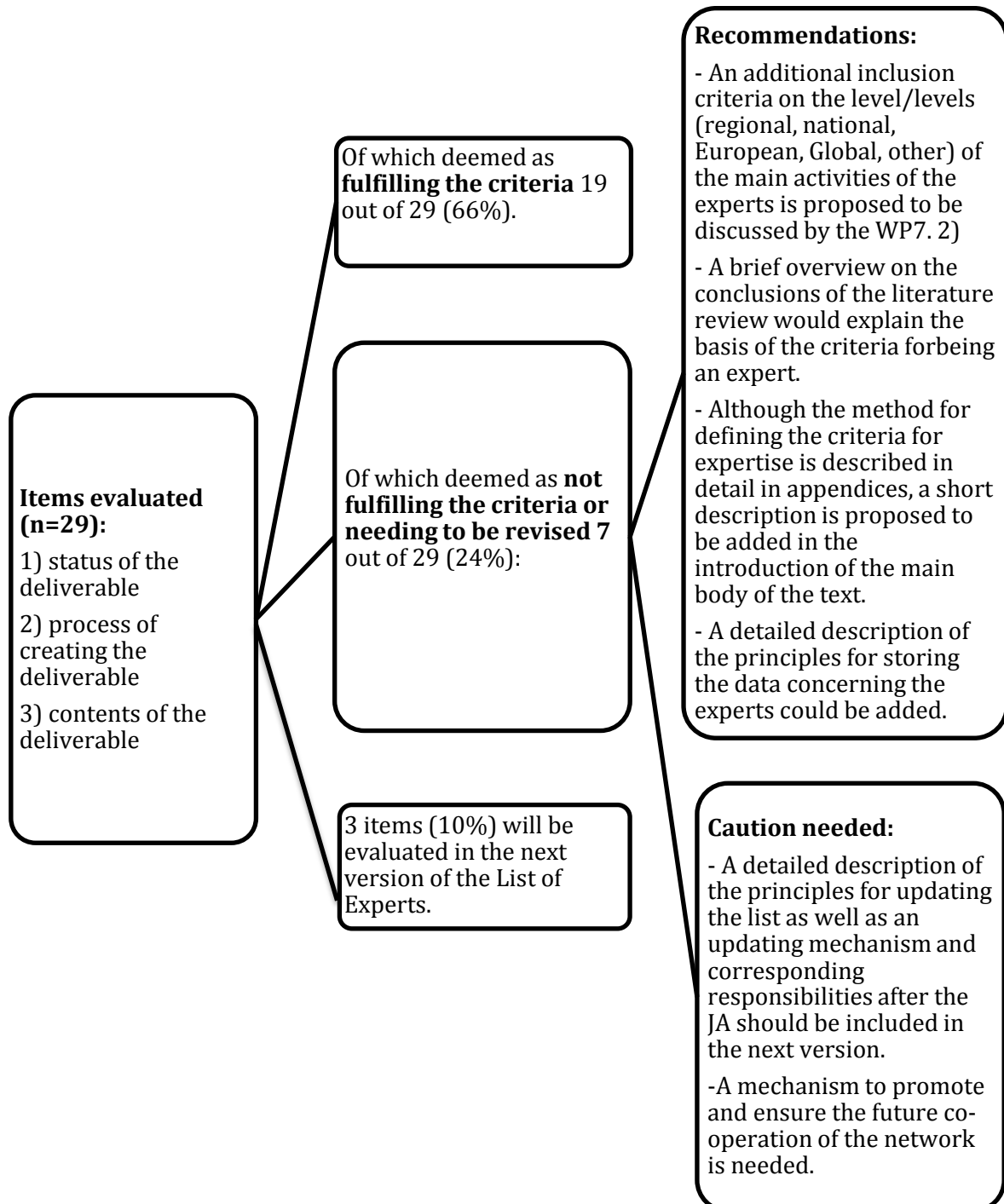


Figure 6: Summary of the evaluation on D072 List of Experts, release 1.

4. Self-evaluation of Work Package 3

As the Work Package 3 team we reflected upon our own work during the first half of the Joint Action (April 2013 - December 2014). We used a simple SWOT analysis to identify our strengths and opportunities, alongside weaknesses and potential threats in our own work that we should overcome in order to improve our work in the next period of the Joint Action. The SWOT analysis was completed first by all team members individually and then summarised, discussed and analysed as a group via a Skype connection on December 11, 2014. The results of the SWOT analysis are presented in Figure 7 followed by a development-oriented analysis of the results.

In general it can be stated that the role of Work Package 3 as an outside evaluator of the outputs and outcomes of the Joint Action has been changing as the project has progressed (see objectivity paper produced by WP3). At this time it would appear that the evaluation team should employ a more developmental evaluation orientation than originally planned. There is a need to take a more active part also in the making of the deliverables, since core work packages would benefit from more timely feedback on their work also during the process and not only after the deliverables have been produced. This however needs to be done without compromising the objectivity of the evaluation.

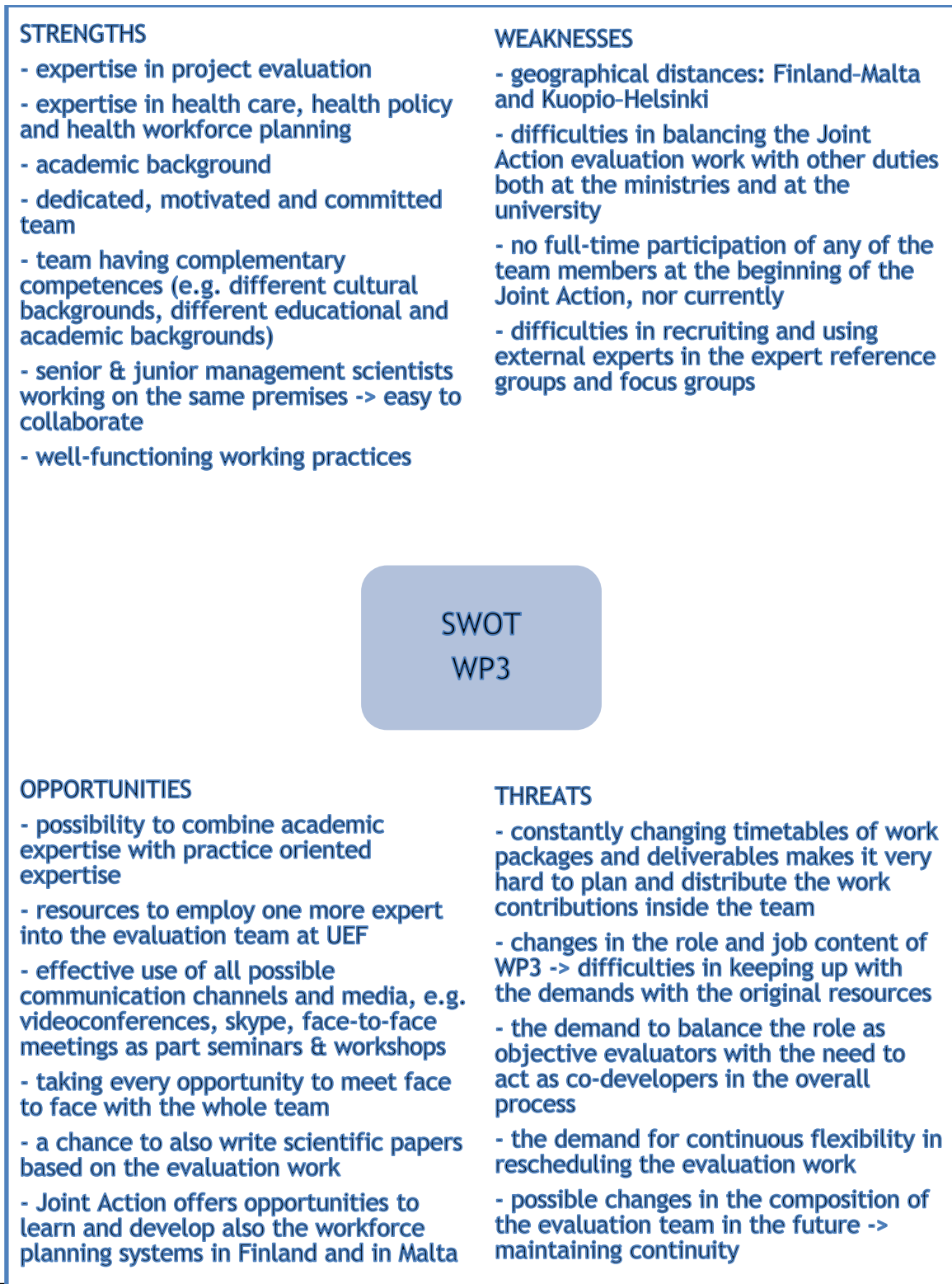


Figure 7. SWOT analysis of the work of WP3.

The biggest threats and challenges to the functioning of the evaluation team currently are the constantly changing timetables of the core work packages for producing the deliverables. Furthermore, during the evaluation process it has become evident that much more time is spent in travelling and being present at seminars and workshops than originally planned. This puts a lot of strain on the planning, organizing and balancing the work of the WP3 team. At the same time it is also clear that being present in the workshop and seminars is highly beneficial for both the quality of the evaluation and for the progress of the Joint Action. Work Package 3 is exploring the possibility of employing another (part-time) researcher at the University of Eastern Finland (UEF) during the first half of the year 2015.

Another weakness in the functioning of the evaluation team is the geographical distance between the team members. The team is exploiting all possible opportunities for face-to-face meetings, such as executive board meetings, seminars and workshops. Also electronic meetings and skype sessions are used as much as possible. By combining the expertise of different team members the evaluation team becomes strong both in the evaluation in itself and in the main substance of the Joint Action, in essence the health workforce planning. In addition, this is also supported by the academic background of the university.

Despite the clear weaknesses and threats in the functioning of Work Package 3, the SWOT analysis is adequately balanced. Strengths and opportunities produce the means for overcoming the weaknesses and turning the threats into opportunities or even strengths in the evaluation work.

Conclusions:

- 1) The role of WP3 on evaluation has changed during the first half of the Joint Action from summative evaluation, i.e. assessing the goal-attainment, to formative evaluation, where the team's role is more of a co-developer in all core work packages.
- 2) Continuous changes in the delivery timetables of the outputs by core work packages produces great instability in the work of WP3. The workload of the team is directly dependent on the functioning of other work packages, which makes planning of work and allocation of working time and resources hard for WP3.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions:

1. WP3 emphasises that the underuse of resources and the overuse of travel expenses are not alarming. The existing project management procedures are sufficient and new measures or protocols are not necessary.
2. The continuous delays in the delivery of outputs (deliverables) should be noted, since it poses a threat to the overall execution of the Joint Action objectives.
3. There is some variation in the quality of deliverables. They are in different stages of their lifecycle. Furthermore, some of the deliverables are evaluated continuously due to the nature of the deliverable (i.e. updated several times during the JA).
4. The evaluation focus of WP3 has been shifting from an output evaluation to developmental evaluation. This provides the evaluators with more contextual background information on the deliverables but at the same time it can compromise the objectivity if taken too far.

Recommendations:

1. The progress of the Joint Action and management of resources and expenses will be ensured by means of monitoring activities and appropriate corrective actions by WP1.
2. WP1 and the Management Office continue to monitor the delays regularly and the potential delays are reported to the WP1 by core work packages as early as possible. All the delays are to be discussed in the Work Package Leader Meetings and potential rescheduling taken to the Executive Board for approval, as has also been the procedure to date.
3. The quality of deliverables can be ensured and improved by evaluation being carried out as a continuous process. The tracking table by WP6 provides a good practice in how to respond to feedback made in draft versions of deliverables.
4. The roles of objective evaluator and interactive collaborator need to be recognised and balanced. Resources need to be reallocated on a regular basis in order to respond to the request of the changing role of WP3.

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