

Capacity building for a European Graduate Tracking Initiative

Task 2 – Country Roadmaps Summary Report

Framework Contract to Provide Expertise and support for European cooperation in Education, Training, Youth, Culture, Sport, Research and Innovation (EAC-02-2019)



Contents

1.0	Introduction.....	4
1.1	Background and aim of the project	4
1.2	Aims and structure of this report	5
2.0	Methodology for Task 2.....	6
2.1	Developing the template for data collection	6
2.3	Online interactive workshops	8
2.4	Developing Key Performance Indicators.....	8
2.5	Drafting of the Roadmaps.....	8
3.0	Analysis of country roadmaps.....	9
3.1	Prioritisation of capacity building needs	9
4.0	Implications of the results of Task 2 for the capacity building programme	13

Tables

Table 1: Overview of the project	4
Table 2: Breakdown of stakeholders recommended by DGHEs.....	7
Table 3: High priority needs identified in strategic roadmaps	9
Table 4: Medium priority needs identified in country roadmaps.....	11
Table 5: Low priority capacity building needs identified in country roadmaps.....	11

Annexes

Annex I: High priority capacity building needs identified in each EEA country's strategic roadmap.....	17
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background and aim of the project

This summary report is the second deliverable for the specific contract on Capacity Building for a European Graduate Tracking Initiative (ETGI)¹. It addresses the second main task of the project to develop tailor-made strategic roadmaps for each EEA country outlining how the country will address the capacity gaps that will help it to fully participate in the ETGI.

A comprehensive graduate tracking² mechanism on a European level should collect data on employment, further education and/or training, career progression and relevance of education to the above. Moreover, individuals' social, ethnic and economic backgrounds can influence career and personal development. To obtain a complete picture of graduates' current employment, personal development and behaviour as a citizen, cross-referencing data about the socio-biographical and socio-economic backgrounds of individuals is necessary. Gathering and comparing data at a European level will allow countries to overcome challenges such as tracking the increasingly high number of internationally mobile graduates, to exchange best practices, and to understand the relevance and performance of the European higher education offer against the demands of its labour market. In that context the ETGI calls for the development of the necessary conditions for the implementation of comprehensive longitudinal graduate surveys, the collection of anonymised statistical data from administrations or statistical institutes, and for the possibility of combining qualitative and quantitative data in order to obtain a comprehensive overview of graduates' situations as they develop their careers.

The overall aim of the capacity building project is to design, coordinate, implement and monitor a coordinated programme of country-focused activities which help progress towards the eventual roll-out of the ETGI. The capacity building programme will enable stakeholders in each country to strengthen their skills and abilities needed to implement the eventual ETGI and stimulate strong international cooperation on this issue.

The project covers EU27 Member States, and EEA countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway). The sector concerned is higher education (HE) including education and training at EQF level 5, covering HE e.g. short cycle tertiary programmes, EQF levels 6, 7 and 8. Overall, the capacity building project consists of four key tasks.

Table 1: Overview of the project

Overview of the project	
Objectives of the project	Enhance and build EU and EEA countries' capacity in order to prepare the ground for a European graduate tracking mechanism.
Key tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Baseline analysis of capacity shortages in individual countries • Task 2: Development of tailor-made strategic roadmaps for each country to meet capacity requirements • Task 3: Implementation of the roadmaps through a capacity building programme

¹ EAC-2020-0312

² In line with the Council Recommendation on Tracking Graduates from 20 November 2017, the term 'graduate' refers to a person completing any level of higher education which is offered at EQF level 5 or above, it might also include people leaving higher education without graduating.

Overview of the project

- **Task 4:** Final assessment of the state of readiness for a European graduate tracking mechanism.

1.2 Aims and structure of this report

This short report provides an overview of the strategic roadmaps produced by EEA countries as part of Task 2. Although the main output of the second task are the roadmaps themselves, this short summary report highlights the main findings of Task 2 and implications for Task 3. The roadmaps provide the 'detail' of second task whilst this report helps to highlight key patterns and reoccurring issues picked up during Task 2.

Section 2 of the report details the methodology applied in Task 2, describing how the task was completed and the different stages contained within it.

Section 3 contains a thematic analysis of the high, medium and low priority capacity building needs identified by countries in working towards the EGTI. For ease of reference, Annex I contains verbatim 'high priority capacity building needs' text from each country's strategic roadmap.

Section 4 describes the implications of the results of Task 2 for the next stage of the capacity building project (Task 3) which relates to the actual implementation of the roadmaps through the capacity building programme.

2.0 Methodology for Task 2

The main objective and output of Task 2 was to produce a tailor-made strategic roadmap for each country in the scope of the project. The roadmap **sets out what capacity building measures the country needs to participate in an EGTI**. The roadmaps build on the baseline analysis conducted in Task 1 which looked at the capacity gaps that exist in each country and outline how countries will improve their graduate tracking capacity to prepare the ground for an EGTI.

Much of the work for Task 2 was undertaken by the country level researchers. A briefing session for country experts was held on 25 September 2020 with written guidance on Task 2 provided to all experts.

2.1 Developing the template for data collection

The roadmap template was divided into the following sections:

- **Overview**

Country experts were asked to provide a high-level overview of the existing graduate tracking capacity in the country, and the existing capacity gaps that would need to be overcome in order for the country to participate in the EGTI.

- **Needs assessment**

This section contained six capacity building themes which were included in DG EAC's tender for this project³:

- Building a common vision among “user groups”
- Raising the capacity of higher education institutions to participate in graduate surveys
- Sketching out country-specific solutions for the coordination of existing national graduate tracking measures with the future European graduate survey
- Establishing central database(s) for the collection of graduates' contact information and consent
- Developing methodological, IT and statistical capacity (preparing the sampling frame, establishing data sharing agreements, linking administrative data from different registers/databases and to surveys)
- Developing a strategic framework for countries joining a European graduate tracking mechanism

Within each theme, a number of possible capacity building needs were identified. With the support of the country expert, countries were asked to populate this section of the roadmap by assessing whether they were in a 'strong', 'medium' or 'weak' position with respect to each of these six themes, and to identify what capacity building needs existed.

- **Prioritisation of needs**

In this section, countries were asked to prioritise their capacity building needs into 'high', 'medium' and 'low' requirements. For 'High priority capacity building requirements', countries were asked to identify their three greatest capacity building needs, and to be as specific as possible in terms of the exact support required. Countries were reminded that the purpose of the assignment was to build their capacities to participate in a European initiative, and not to strengthen existing or nascent

³ The capacity building themes are also based on the recommendations of the Council Recommendation on Graduate Tracking (2017/C 423/01).

national graduate tracking initiatives which would not be used for tracking graduates at European level.

- **Delivery methods**

Countries were asked to outline whether they thought capacity building measures could be delivered face to face, remotely, or as part of a peer-to-peer process (either remotely or in person).

- **2021 timeframe**

Countries were asked to schedule the capacity building activities into four quarters of the year 2021-2022, and to identify the most suitable times to carry out activities.

- **Monitoring and Evaluation: Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

There are some overarching expected outcomes of the capacity building project against which countries were asked to develop KPIs. Countries were asked to develop a set of 'SMART' KPIs which were linked to the overarching objectives above, but which took into account the country's graduate tracking capability at the end of Task 1, and which set out how the country's progress could be viewed and measured as we carry out capacity building in Task 3.

2.2 Initial meeting with a lead stakeholder(s) in each country

The first step of Task 2 was for the country experts to reach out to a key stakeholder to conduct an initial meeting to start the process of getting the country's engagement in, and ownership of, the capacity-building agenda.

DG EAC supported the country experts in this task by requesting the Directors-General of Higher Education (DGHEs) in EEA countries to provide the contact details of key national stakeholders who could be the initial points of contact for the EGTI. This ensured that the project was involving national level stakeholders who had the power and responsibility to make the EGTI a reality in the country. These stakeholders' profiles varied from country to country, but mainly included Ministry officials (primarily Ministries of Education and Labour), Higher Education Institutions, Statistics offices and in some cases Research Institutes. The common thread was that these stakeholders should be clearly identifiable within the country as having authority over higher education and graduate tracking issues.

Table 2: Breakdown of stakeholders recommended by DGHEs

Stakeholder type	No. of contacts
Government officials – Ministry of Education	44
Government officials – other government agency	4
Office of Statistics	8
Higher Education Institution	11
Education research institute	2
Careers office	2

In some countries, this first step required more time than initially foreseen, mainly due to:

- Delays in getting a response from DGHEs to the EC's request to provide contact details of national stakeholders to the country experts.
- In a few countries, the experts faced other challenges in engaging with key stakeholders, ranging from the coinciding resurgence across European countries of Covid-19 (which dominated attention and resources in many countries).

Where details on country stakeholders did not come through from DGHEs, activity on Task 2 was paused to ensure the correct stakeholders were engaged before progressing with the development of the Roadmaps.

2.3 Online interactive workshops

Following the initial meetings with key stakeholders, country experts invited a wider pool of stakeholders to interactive workshops to discuss in detail each aspect of the strategic roadmaps. Country experts ensured the participation of as broad a range of stakeholders as possible, while still prioritising the involvement of those stakeholders who had the real ability to make the changes necessary to improve graduate tracking in the country in line with the needs of an EGTI. The online workshops were designed to have a participatory approach and to allow each stakeholder to voice their opinions and contribute significantly to the final drafting of the roadmap.

Following consultations with the country experts and the agreement of DG EAC, a flexible approach to the Task was developed. Country experts had explained they were facing difficulty in finding suitable common dates to hold virtual workshops, so it was agreed that experts could organise several one-to-one meetings with key stakeholders, or hold smaller workshops. This flexible approach allowed the country experts to adapt to national contexts and realities and to be more effective in carrying out the task.

2.4 Developing Key Performance Indicators

One of the key tasks in producing the strategic roadmaps was for the country experts to develop jointly with stakeholders specific intermediate and final performance targets. These targets were based on each country's specific needs and challenges in reaching the expected outcomes for each capacity building action. Once the targets were agreed, the experts developed key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure progress towards achieving those targets.

Following consultations with national stakeholders, some country experts have preferred indicating performance targets but have held back on developing KPIs for the moment. This was due to the fact that some stakeholders would like to have further understanding of the EGTI before KPIs are agreed.

2.5 Drafting of the Roadmaps

After the workshops and meetings, the country experts developed the roadmaps further by analysing and compiling the information collected with the stakeholders using the common template provided by Ecorys at the beginning of Task 2. Once the roadmaps were finalised, the country experts circulated them to the stakeholders who participated in the national level workshops and consultations. This was done in order to obtain their 'sign-off' on its contents and ensure that they were fully aware of what the result of the exercise was.

3.0 Analysis of country roadmaps

This section presents a short overview of the capacity building needs that have been prioritised by countries in their Task 2 strategic roadmaps. Strategic roadmaps are provided for 28 EEA countries (there are two roadmaps for Belgium to reflect the different regional HE systems). The Netherlands chose not to produce a strategic roadmap at this stage, while a roadmap for France is still being finalised.

3.1 Prioritisation of capacity building needs

The strategic roadmaps contain a 'Prioritisation of needs' section in which countries were asked to break down their capacity building needs into 'High', 'Medium' and 'Low' priorities. Some countries have prioritised the same capacity building needs/issues differently, so that same needs/issue may appear at different levels or be worded slightly differently. The table below provides a thematic overview of the high priority capacity building needs identified by countries. The most-identified high priority needs are listed first. These relate primarily to gaining a good understanding on the fundamentals of the EGTI in terms of what it is intended for, how should it be implemented at national level, and how will it be funded.

Table 3: High priority needs identified in strategic roadmaps

- **Coordinating national stakeholders and allocating responsibilities for implementing the EGTI (DE, DK, EL, ES, HR, HU, IC, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, PL, PT, RO, SI)**

This need relates to helping countries (and regions within them) structure themselves properly to implement activities in connection to the EGTI (and graduate tracking more generally in countries where no system currently exists) and helping them discuss and agree who, within their country, will be responsible for tracking graduates at a European level both strategically and operationally.
- **Obtaining more information and clarity on the EGTI (AT, BE-FR, BE-NL, BG, CY, DE, DK, EE, FI, LI, LT, NO, PL)**

Countries see it as a high priority to gain greater clarity on what the EGTI will look like, i.e. will it comprise an online survey, collection and transfer of administrative data, or a mixture of methods? This means the capacity building programme will need to spend time clearly describing what the EGTI actually is to a range of national level stakeholders in terms of its main goals, structure and added value.
- **Complementarity of the EGTI to existing graduate tracking practices (AT, BE-FR, BE-NL, BG, CY, DE, DK, EE, FI, LI, LT, NO, PL)**

There is also a need to prioritise capacity building to ensure comparability with existing graduate tracking mechanisms, and particularly with existing surveys as some national stakeholders see a risk of duplication and confusion among stakeholders and students. Most stakeholders saw that it was possible for national and European tracking to coexist but that the capacity building support will need to help stakeholders 'work around' such issues.
- **Calculating the financial cost of participating in the EGTI and identifying sources of funding (AT, BE-FR, BE-NL, EL, FI, IC, IE, IS, IT, LV, MT, PL)**

Countries are keen to identify the funding implications of participating in the EGTI for their existing national graduate tracking systems, and to identify alternative sources of funding (particularly at EU level) to support the strategic and technical investment needed for full

participation. The capacity building could usefully signpost them to various funding opportunities and highlight which pots might be useful to fund activities like designated post for the EGTI, supporting the building of databases and helping update graduates contact details.

- **Collecting and storing graduates' regularly updated contact details (EE, HR, HU, MT, SE, SI, SK)**

Some countries already have well established systems at national or HEI level for contacting graduates, but the roadmaps show there is uncertainty about what type of contact details the EGTI will require and whether existing systems will suffice e.g. will postal addresses be sufficient, or will email addresses be required? Countries also highlighted the capacity building could help national stakeholders maintain the validity of the contact details for the purposes of the EGTI.
- **Developing/clarifying normative framework to address GDPR issues (DK, LI, NO, PL, SI)**

This is a multi-faceted capacity building need all linked to GDPR issues. It covers the process of firstly collecting graduates' contact details, to storing them, and then using them for graduate tracking purposes. It relates to both survey data and administrative data. While EU GDPR legislation provides an overarching framework within which the EGTI can operate, there is a myriad of national concerns and challenges that can be dealt with through the capacity building support.
- **Sharing of experience in developing surveys (sampling, questions, data analysis) (LI, SI, SK)**

Almost all countries identified the sharing of experience as a high priority, but a number of countries highlighted specifically the need to share experience in developing graduate tracking surveys for use at the European level. This includes, for example, developing survey content, methodology, sampling, method and frequency of implementation, method of data collection, method of analysis and data sharing for European level surveys. The capacity building should help national stakeholders explore such issues.
- **Methodological support on making the best use of existing administrative data, and how to match/link it with survey data (AT, EE, IE)**

Some countries highlighted a specific need for capacity building to make the best use of their existing administrative data and to align it to EGTI survey data to create a more comprehensive graduate tracking system. In particular, the capacity building should help stakeholders to understand how surveys could be used to get answers to qualitative and subjective questions that cannot be answered by administrative data, thereby getting a more comprehensive picture of graduates' lives after graduation.

Source: Analysis of strategic country roadmaps by Ecorys

For further information on the above issues please see Annex I which contains the verbatim text of the 'high priority' aspects of each country roadmap.

Tables 4 and 5 below provide an overview of the medium and low priority capacity building needs identified in the country roadmaps. As mentioned previously, the same capacity building needs are sometimes listed at different levels of priority by different countries, or worded slightly differently. In general, however, the 'medium' and 'low' priority needs are more detailed and specific than the 'high' priority needs, with GDPR-compliance featuring quite heavily. We take note of the fact that that EEA countries have identified more technical capacity building needs around the 'machinery' of the EGTI as

being a lower priority than the more basic informational needs about the EGTI which are identified as a high priority.

Table 4: Medium priority needs identified in country roadmaps

- **GDPR and data collection requirements (BG, DE, DK, EE, ES, HR, IE, IT, LU, MT, PT, SE)**
While some countries identified this a high priority, countries identified it more frequently as a medium priority.
- **Capacity building of individual HEIs and organisations to deal with all aspects of EGTI (BE-FR, BG, EL, IC, IT, LT, LV, PL, RO)**
This needs relates to how individual HEIs (and departments and offices within them) will be taught about the EGTI and how they should participate in and benefit from it. Capacity building for individual HEIs is not within the scope of this project, but we will seek to involve stakeholders who themselves can work with individual HEIs at a later stage.
- **Maintaining contact details of graduates and quality of alumni data (DK, EL, HR, HU, LT, LV, SE)**
See high priority text.
- **Survey design and correlation with administrative data (BG, CY, CZ, DK, HR, HU, IE, IT, EL)**
See high priority text.
- **Funding of the EGTI (AT, ES, IC, MT, NO, SE)**
See high priority text.
- **Deciding which organisation(s) should host and operate the EGTI in-country (AT, ES, EL, LU, MT, PT, SI)**
See high priority text.
- **Increasing survey response rates (DE, EE, HU, PT, SE)**
This need relates to maintaining or improving the response rate to graduate tracking surveys. Countries are concerned that the EGTI may lead to reduced response rates for existing national surveys, and so they are keen to learn and to share good practice on this issue.
- **Peer learning and sharing of experience on graduate tracking (BE-FR, BE-NL, SI, SK)**
See high priority text.
- **Integration of the EGTI into existing graduate tracking surveys to avoid duplication (AT, CZ, PT)**
See high priority text.

Source: Analysis of strategic country roadmaps by Ecorys

Table 5: Low priority capacity building needs identified in country roadmaps

- **Creating a survey sample that will enable comparison across EEA countries (BE-NL, BG, EL, HU, IE, IT, LU, MT)**
- **Building HEIs capacity to be able to use graduate tracking results for designing better programmes, conducting quality assurance, improving HEI-business cooperation (CY, DE, EL, HR, IE, LT, SI)**

- **Peer learning and sharing of experience (EL, LU, PT, SI, SK)**
- **Conducting longitudinal surveys (AT, CZ, EE)**
- **Database management, GDPR and other IT issues (BE-FR, HU, IC)**
- **Linking administrative data with survey data (DK)**
- **Dealing with legal obstacles to setting up a central contact database (DE)**
- **Funding of the EGTI (SE)**
- **Deciding which organisation(s) should host and operate the EGTI in-country (PL)**
- **Improving dissemination of results and building EGTI brand (ES)**

Source: Analysis of strategic country roadmaps by Ecorys

4.0 Implications of the results of Task 2 for the capacity building programme

Drawing on the results of the Task 2 work, this summary report concludes with a set of overarching implications for Task 3 of the project which involves the actual implementation of the capacity building support to countries.

4.1 Countries would value more detail about the EGTI

Through the development of the strategic roadmaps it is clear that in-country stakeholders would value more detail on what the EGTI is (or will be) before fully understanding what their needs are in terms of capacity building support.

Based on the findings of Task 2 but also Task 1, the capacity building programme will need to spend time clearly describing what the EGTI actually is to a range of national level stakeholders. To achieve the full buy-in of countries into the EGTI it will be important that stakeholders are firstly aware of the EGTI and secondly understand its main goals, structure and added value. This means the capacity building programme in Task 3 should ideally focus some of its resources on educating, disseminating and describing the plans for the EGTI. This focus on information sharing has a slightly different emphasis than a capacity building programme which provides technical support on, for instance, establishing databases or agreeing sample sizes.

This information sharing on key aspects of the EGTI also recognises that there are many stakeholders in countries (beyond those involved in the Expert Group) whose buy-in is needed to ensure the EGTI moves forward and gains momentum at the national level. Our work in Task 2 has started to reach the 'next layer' down within countries and it is clear that their understanding of the EGTI is mixed. Information sharing through the capacity building programme could include a planned webinar (or set of webinars) with interested parties scheduled for March 2021, a short publication explaining the goals, structure and added value of participating in the EGTI as well as detailed slide sets which countries experts could deliver as part of their work.

4.2 Timing of the capacity building support

The above issue links to a wider point highlighted by stakeholders which recognises that the capacity shortages of countries depend on the actual design (and therefore requirements) of a potential EGTI.

This means that some countries would prefer to see their capacity building support starting after some of the main building blocks of the EGTI are in place. These building blocks include clear plans for the next wave of the Eurograduate survey (and ideally a definitive list of countries wishing to participate), decisions on what support they may expect to see from a suggested secretariat, and what resources might be made available at EU level to support countries in their activities. Having these aspects in place means that there are more definitive issues for the capacity building to focus on (for example, the capacity building can focus on supporting countries approach *the* EGTI graduate survey as opposed to a possible graduate survey).

A less significant factor but also one worth highlighting as a further reason for slightly delaying the capacity building support is linked to Covid-19. Stakeholders involved in Task 2 highlighted that the

pandemic is proving resource intensive and many HE stakeholders and institutions are working hard to overcome challenges including final year grading, student welfare and next years' academic intake meaning tracking graduates at the European level is less of a priority at present.

Despite the above, most countries suggested that they would be keen to start their capacity building support in June 2021 which is only around three months after the capacity building programme was due to originally start. A slight pausing of Task 3 in some countries therefore seems useful.

Having said the above, certain countries have shown a keenness to start their capacity building support quickly which should be encourage, recognising that momentum in some of the more advanced countries has been built up during Task 1 and 2 of this project.

4.3 Decentralising the capacity building support

The contents of the strategic roadmaps indicate that a relatively bespoke programme of capacity building will be required in Task 3. While the roadmaps identify some overarching common themes across countries, and while there is definitely scope to carry out peer-to-peer learning, each country's needs are all slightly nuanced and different. For example, even though 'data collection processes linked to a survey' was identified as a general capacity building need there are many different aspects to this single issue coming out of Task 2 across different countries including help with sampling, weighting, increasing response rates and ensuring hard-to-reach groups respond. This means that although countries seemed to have the same general needs, there were a variety of issues below these needs that the capacity building should address.

The above point therefore means that the capacity building in Task 3 will to some extent need to be decentralised down to country experts and that 'general' capacity building on broader topics will only be part of the overall support on offer. This in turn means that the capacity building programme will need to be very bespoke and although there will be some general 'core' capacity building material produced by the central team, the majority of the activity will be at the country expert level. This was foreseen at the inception of the work but results from Task 2 supports this point.

4.4 Funding of the EGTI

The question of funding of the EGTI is prominent in the Task 2 strategic roadmaps across many of the countries. At the commencement of Task 2, there was some general information given to stakeholders about potential EU funding opportunities for graduate tracking in the future, but the roadmaps show that there is a clear appetite for more information in this area. Although the capacity building programme will directly provide additional capacity to countries, there will be a need for national stakeholder to invest relatively heavily to fully prepare themselves for participation in the EGTI. This might include funding a designated post for the EGTI, supporting the building of databases and helping contact graduates to gain their permission to use their data - all of which will require additional resources.

Although the capacity building cannot provide support to implement all of the above examples, it can usefully help countries understand what financial and non- financial support is available to them which they can lever to help them fully participate in the EGTI.

4.5 Compatibility with existing graduate tracking systems and the use of administrative data

Another key finding coming from the content of the roadmaps is around the capacity building support 'working through' how the EGTI links in with existing national level graduate tracking systems. The strategic roadmaps from countries with existing well-functioning graduate tracking systems that meet their countries' needs (for example, Austria, Denmark, Germany, Sweden, Slovenia and Norway) stressed the importance of the EGTI being compatible with these systems and not duplicating effort. There is a clear desire that any EGTI does not 'confuse' existing national systems meaning there is a body of work which the capacity building could usefully facilitate to discuss and debate how the EGTI can work with surveys and admin data that already exist. This support could include the facilitation of various meetings to discuss complementary issues and also highlight good practice from other countries on how they achieved alignment between European and national systems.

4.6 Strengthening GDPR and data collection and protection issues

All strategic roadmaps identified data collection and protection as a relatively large potential obstacle to participating in an EGTI and a need that the capacity building could usefully support on. The issues raised here ranged from receiving the consent of graduates to be contacted for the purposes of tracking them, the gathering and updating of contact information, and the safe storage of graduates' contact information. Graduates' contact details often lie at the heart of the graduate tracking agenda and are relevant when both conducting surveys and also using administrative data (i.e. without contact details graduates cannot be tracked). Questions also arose in Task 2 about anonymity, especially when potentially analysing relatively small numbers of graduates. Hence, a key part of the capacity building programme is needed on issues connected with GDPR, data protection and gaining access to graduates' contact details from HEIs.

The challenge for the capacity building in this area is that GDPR and data protection have to be built around national regulations. Hence, target groups of such capacity building should be HEI representatives, research institutions that will be in charge of conducting EGT, but also national legal experts able to reflect on how European legal guidelines in this area could be integrated or adapted to the national legal context. Some roadmaps point to examples of existing data sharing practices and exemptions in GDPR legislation which could be potential solutions.

4.7 Methods of delivery of the capacity building in Task 3

Given that the Task 2 roadmaps were completed during the second/third wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is not surprising that the 'Delivery Methods' aspect in most strategic roadmaps calls for the capacity building activities to be carried out virtually and online over the course of 2021. There may be some face-to-face work planned for later in the year although this is unlikely to be significant in volume.

The strategic roadmaps also indicate that some countries are interested in peer-to-peer learning. For example, Slovakia put as one of its high priorities the organisation of a webinar/conference on the benefits and ways of exploitation of graduate tracking data, including examples of good practice abroad (international support appreciated), in cooperation with higher education authorities and representatives of academia (e.g. Rector's conference). Austria said it would be interested to share experience from its Student Social Survey (*Studierendensozialerhebung*), as well as the Eurograduate pilot. It is also keen to share its experience of the Austrian Graduate Tracking project ATRACK, which is based on administrative data.

The above point means that peer-to-peer support should factor as an important method of delivery across Task 3 and that organising workshops across countries should be part of the capacity building support provided.

Annex I: High priority capacity building needs reported in each EEA country roadmap

Country	High priority capacity building needs identified
Austria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buy-in from relevant stakeholders. Quite some communication and awareness-raising for the use of an EGTI has already been carried out by the Ministry of Education, Science and Research. Now European level initiatives, e.g. webinars/events, e.g. in cooperation with the European University Association (EUA) and in consultation with national authorities, would be appreciated for raising awareness and support of national coordinators of GT. Here also aspects such as the possibility of modularity of the EGTI in order to adapt to national and/or institutional contexts would be of interest. These webinars/events should provide a clear picture on the design, methodology and added value of an EGTI Raising awareness on how such data could be used by HEIs in quality assurance and provide incentives for HEIs to do so. In Austria a combination of available administrative data and a survey would be very much appreciated. Hence, once the general setting and roadmap for implementing the EGTI is clearer it would be necessary to check how the EGTI could be combined with ATRACK data, whether the structure of ATRACK allows for answering certain topics of the EGTI or whether adaptations to the system would be required. National legislation in form of an amendment to the Education Documentation Act ("Bildungsdokumentationsgesetz") is in its final stage; this provides the legal basis for universities to collect e-mail addresses of their graduates at the end of their studies; furthermore it includes the obligation for universities to participate in such surveys. This amendment shall also provide the framework for a future EGTI. European funding in case of participating in an EGTI of course also would be a driver (e.g. will funding be available for national implementation, will there be an Erasmus+ call for it etc.).
Belgium (FR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy level, developing a common vision and a strategic framework. Stakeholders need to be convinced of the added value of a survey at European level, its precise relevance to the FWB at system level, individual HEIs and students/graduates. The question of resourcing the initiative (funding, staffing) also needs to be addressed without which securing buy-in will be very difficult to achieve.
Belgium (NL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy level and buy-in from stakeholders. Stakeholders will need to be convinced of the added value of a survey at European level, its precise relevance to Flanders, at system level, at the level of individual HEIs and for students. The question of resourcing the initiative will also need to be addressed without which securing a buy-in will be very difficult to achieve.
Bulgaria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders will need to be convinced of value of the survey, the need for it to be carried out and how its credibility can be ensured, as there are concerns

	<p>about the potential level of representativeness that could be achieved in the specific context of the country. The complementarity to the existing mechanism of data collection will need to be clarified and evidence provided.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity on resourcing is a major concern as it supplements a system of graduate tracking via administrative data. Resourcing is the biggest challenge in Bulgaria. Resourcing refers to individual HEIs and to the national level capacity in co-ordinating, collating and publishing data.
Croatia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a common vision for graduate tracking at the national level. • Designing strategic approach to the implementation of GT and participation in the EGTI. • Design of central database on graduates with regularly updated contact information.
Cyprus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details and further clarifications regarding the EGTI: In Cyprus the pilot small-scale implementation of a national GT system has just begun. Decisions will be taken in near future regarding the final content and procedures of the national GT system, based also on the results of the pilot phase. Any further details (procedures, timing, type of data, financial resources) regarding the EGTI will help the development of a more compatible national GT system and will lessen possible incompatibilities between the national and the European GT mechanism.
Czech Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement of stakeholders is a prerequisite to achieve all the targets (1-12) of the Capacity Building Project. ECORYS role - especially delivering up-to-date information, participation at seminars, networking etc. • Improvement of legal environment is directly connected to target 4 and touches in some of aspects all the targets. Options to improve legal environment for national and European dimension of GT (admin and survey) should be proposed to help with the implementation EGTI in CZ. ECORYS role - especially in communication of possible legal support from the EU if needed. • The solution of data sharing touches all the targets (1-12) in the capacity building project and is especially important for the willingness of stakeholders to participate in GT. ECORYS role - delivering up-to-date information, participation at seminars, best practice especially in sharing data with the EU by other countries if needed. • Use of administrative data is a cornerstone of the GT covering in some of the aspect all the targets (1-12). ECORYS role - providing information of possible solutions of using administrative data for the EU level (good practices etc.) • Solving funding and human resources capacity shortages is closely connected to target 5. ECORYS role - delivering up-to-date information on joint projects with other countries, participation at seminars if needed. • Building common knowledge about GT is associated with 1, 2, 3 and 6. ECORYS role - especially delivering up-to-date information, participation at seminars, networking etc.
Denmark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build buy-in from stakeholders. Stakeholders will need to be convinced of value and relevance of the survey. Danish stakeholders call for more information about expected methodology, clarification of legal aspects (GDPR), and who will manage the database (and will it be central or decentral).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity builders should work to ensure that the survey methodology is clearly described in a memorandum which covers also the legal aspects and storage and ownership of data.
Estonia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In order to join the EGTI and make a decision, the MER, as the body responsible for the national GT scheme, needs information on the EGTI's specifics compared to the national GT framework. Detailed Information and guidelines from the European Commission as well as the EGTI Action Plan with timetable is necessary to plan resources and update the national GT scheme. Increasing the capacity of HEIs to collect, store and share contact data of graduates in accordance with data protection requirements. For the 2022 survey, it is necessary to collect contacts no later than May-June 2021. Development of a functionality for the educational information systems of educational institutions (Tahvel and others), where a graduate can leave his / her contact details (e-mail address) with the consent to use these data for certain purposes (incl. research) after graduation. Methodological development work for more efficient use of administrative data, taking into account data protection conditions: 1) use of the employee register (TÖR) data for graduate tracking; 2) use of registry data in the conduct of the survey to facilitate the response; 3) aggregation of data collected through surveys and from registers.
Finland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convincing stakeholders of the necessity of an overlapping survey with the existing national survey. There is a need to convince the stakeholders of the value of the survey, and its relevance to Finland. Existing financial resources are not sufficient in Finland; although the technical capacity for distribution exists. The pending need is to clarify timing and content, and the extent of overlap with existing national surveys (universities and universities of applied sciences) in same time sequence in Finland. If the surveys can overlap, this would ease the acceptance and delivery. If the EGTI can be connected to be a part of the existing national/system level survey, then the existing technical and financial resources could be sufficient. If the EGTI is to result in a separate questionnaire, then resources for the survey are very limited. In any case there is a need for the human resource and operational (e.g. postal fees) funding. Stage 1. Official Publication of the Expert Report / Stage 2. Opening up national discussion among the national expert group and stakeholders / Stage 3. Official proposal from the European Commission / Stage 4. National Expert group and stakeholder round table discussions; challenges and options / Stage 5. In summary to review each country's capacity building status
France	<i>[Roadmap not yet finalised]</i>
Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that national-level data suitable for an EGTI can be gathered by the SLC: In order to coordinate existing graduate surveys with an EGTI, it is envisaged to integrate the EGTI data collection with the SLC survey of graduates. For this, comparability/compatibility of data needs to be ensured. The survey programme of the SLC covers the topics envisaged for an EGTI but the survey instruments would need to be checked for comparability upon availability. The SLC and the EGTI target the same cohort of graduates, i.e. the cohort of 2021. If the EGTI will be conducted at a later stage, flexibility in using

	<p>a target cohort of +/- 1 year should be granted which could well help several countries with existing surveys to participate in an EGTI. Legal prerequisites and technical processes for integrating the SLC data with the EGTI need to be checked. The expertise and experience of the Research Data Centre of the DZHW in managing and hosting large international datasets could prove helpful in this regard. Workable ways for coordinating the national-level survey of the SLC with the KOAB survey need to be identified to ensure widespread participation among German HEIs. The collaboration with KOAB/ISTAT in collecting graduate data for the cohort 2021 needs to be clarified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure widespread support among HEIs and decision makers at federal level as well as at Länder level: The support of HEIs is indispensable for conducting graduate surveys in Germany. Therefore it is important to involve HEIs at an early stage and take their needs into account. Costs and benefits of the EGTI for HEIs need to be in good balance and clearly communicated. If data collection for an EGTI is integrated in the SLC there is no or only little additional work for HEIs. Institutional-level data for the exclusive use of the respective institution would be a tangible added value for HEIs. It needs to be clarified if the SLC/EGTI could offer such data. • Germany is a federal state and the Länder are responsible for higher education. A capacity building needs to gain the support of the decision makers at both levels. Similarly, Germany's HEIs are organised at the federal level (German Rectors Conference) and at the Länder level (states rectors' conferences) and organisations at both levels are of crucial importance for the support of HEIs.
Greece*	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Persuade policy makers and the officials at the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs (MoERA) of the importance and expected benefits of a GTI and get them to commit. It is important to focus not only on the government, but on all political parties. It is not uncommon to change a policy following the change of a minister. It will, then, be easier to persuade them of the benefits of a European GTI that will allow comparisons and possibly coordination of actions across countries. This is the only way to create a steady policy framework that is currently missing. 2. Support the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education tasked with coordinating and monitoring graduates tracking operations across HEIs with whatever means necessary; equally important is to allocate the necessary funds from the beginning (preferably from national sources to ensure longevity). At least some members of the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education should have experience on GT. 3. Provide all the necessary advisory services and support to HEIs' career offices including funds, experienced personnel, training of the existing staff, infrastructure, legal expertise, methodological support, etc., to complete the task efficiently and successfully. This is already under way through a relevant ESPA call (see https://www.espa.gr/el/Pages/ProclamationsFS.aspx?item=4983) that is aimed at supporting the Career Offices and setting up a network for exchanging expertise and good practices among Career Offices.
Hungary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a vision on EGT among government actors and HEIs (facilitate a better understanding of aims, content, and benefits of EGTI, awareness raising) by organising conferences, workshops, seminars; and initiating and facilitating debates, discussions on key issues; [the country expert could

	<p>contribute as facilitator to debates, and as a presenter on EGT features in conferences, workshops.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the commitment and involvement of HEIs; raising and developing data-based awareness and capacity to analyse and interpret data in HEIs. [The country expert may encourage the officials of the ministry responsible for higher education and the data experts of the Hungarian graduate tracking system in the Educational Authority to encourage HEIs to employ data officer(s) and to use the data more intensively in the decision-making process. If a guide/repository of good practices for data-based decision-making has been, or will be prepared, the country expert can present it and discuss on it with the management of HEIs at conferences and workshops. Improving access to graduates (updating contact details) [by collecting and disseminating good practices on networking, alumni services, and data management among HEIs, as well as by developing institutional practices and sharing experiences; the country expert can contribute to which by facilitating workshops, events.
Iceland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The primary challenge is to manage stakeholders and motivate politicians to provide resources. These two go hand in hand. It is somewhat delicate work as it must take the various motivations and interests of stakeholders (politicians, public servants, universities and possible data collectors) into consideration. The challenge is thus primarily to navigate this environment and bring everyone on board.
Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building a common vision among “user groups”. A process of motivation and persuasion is required to demonstrate the value add of an EGTI. What balance can be reached between the use of administrative data and survey data? What issues/themes can be addressed through an administrative data approach and then what would be required in a survey. It is critical that the national survey would not be disrupted by any EGTI survey approach. Of equal importance to the 'value' question is the challenge of additional time and resources that will be required for an EGT, the level of funding/resourcing required and how that will be funded. The question of the value of the graduate outcomes tracking five years after graduation versus using country level economic statistics as proxy for graduate outcomes needs to be interrogated.
Italy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build buy-in from stakeholders. Stakeholders will need to be convinced of value of the survey, relevance to Italy and clarity on resourcing. Co-ordination is the biggest challenge in Italy and clarity on this issue would go a long way to delivering buy-in.
Latvia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working out a common strategy (clarifying expectations, defining reachable goals and deadlines, distributing responsibilities) and agreeing on the action plan by all parties involved at the national level. The following participants should be invited: the Latvian Employers Confederation, Ministries with profile HEIs (Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Economics), major universities, CSP, VID and NVA. Assessing financial needs, agreeing on the budget and resources. Ensuring technical solutions and training of the staff for the systematisation, analysis and presentation of the data received.

Liechtenstein*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the benefits and added value of a EGTI clearer: why does it make sense to participate, what can be done with the data and how can it be used by HEIs and on policy level? • European Peer-Learning on methodology, benefits of, or how to increase own surveys would be interesting for LI and the University of Liechtenstein. • Necessary to clarify aspects like what classifications will be used, methodology that will be applied, data gathering, cleaning and general data quality as this is important to compare the data. • Exchange on best practices regarding data protection (what options are there, when to ask students/graduates on their consent to be contacted for graduate tracking, etc.).
Lithuania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To draft and discuss a common vision for Lithuania's participation in the EGTI, explaining the advantages of EGTI to graduates, HEIs and social stakeholders. • To decide which institution will coordinate / carry out the EGTI activities at national level and which institution would organise the graduate tracking surveys and support HEIs in this field. • To prepare a conceptual document and plan for the implementation of EGTI in Lithuania, which would clearly define the activities of the responsible institutions and stakeholders, foresee the necessary financial, material and human resources and funding mechanisms for the execution of EGTI activities.
Luxembourg*	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Official recognition (communique or acceptance by the MESR, of the importance of the EGT for LU and openness to its potential implementation in the future. 2. Initiation of the preparatory work for setting up the legal framework. 3. Set up of an official or informal working group with major actors in HE and data production.
Malta	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensuring proper coordination between stakeholders to link data from multiple data sources while keeping practices in line with GDPR (this could take place as Peer Learning activities to share good practices among different EU countries) 2. Developing an adequate regulatory and legislative framework for Malta to participate in an EGTI 3. Ensuring proper funding to cover resources and costs related to conducting and EGTI (developing EC funds to cover EGTI)
Netherlands	<i>[The country has chosen not to produce a strategic roadmap at this time.]</i>
Norway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data protection and GDPR requirements. As the Norwegian data collection will be a combination of survey and registry data, further exploration of what will be required in terms of data protection will be of essence. This will be done nationally, as it adheres to national laws and regulations. • Nationally, the timeframes for accessing registry data will have to be explored and long-term agreements have to be reached.
Poland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build buy-in from stakeholders by addressing questions related to EGS/EGTI methodology and formal requirements at the national level: There are concerns among key stakeholders whether the European Graduate Survey (EGS) can collect reliable and comparable data (particularly in a longitudinal study). Therefore, convincing the relevant decision-makers, experts and HEIs that the

	<p>EGS results can be useful for the ELA system without compromising high methodological standards is a priority. This is combined with two other issues:</p> <p>1) coordination or merging the EGTI system with the national initiatives (mainly ELA, but also with surveys implemented by HEIs);</p> <p>2) clarifying the methodological assumptions of EGTI and its cost-effectiveness. Assure the representative sample: The level of sample implementation achieved by Polish HEIs - approx. 15-25% - disqualifies meaningful conclusions. After graduation, the graduates break off their ties with their universities (in a non-random manner - autoselection). The level of sample implementation will vary dramatically between universities and will depend on various factors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address GDPR and financial requirements: In terms of priorities of a formal nature, gathering and access to graduates' data by a third party and anonymisation of respondents remains a challenge. Putting in place or adjusting existing funding structure is required as the national system runs at low cost and has no funds envisioned for other activities. Only after introducing relevant legal changes it would be possible to collect graduate contact information.
Portugal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political prioritisation of the national government to implement, fund, and take the benefits of graduate tracking in the country and in participating in the EGTI, honouring the Council recommendation of 2017 and 6) The attribution of responsibilities by the government for every step of process of GT, both on collecting, treating and owning administrative and survey data. • The most important step in capacity building seems to be the role of the government and its political commitment to this European initiative. The difficulties do not seem to be due to its European dimension, which in fact may trigger significant progress. The main issue is that GT has not been regarded as political priority by the government. Hence, institutions will continue to do this in a isolated manner and without the coordination, and the financial and legal background required to conduct Graduate Tracking at the system level. Hence, the highest priority should be persuading the government to act towards the fulfilment of this goal. In addition, the government needs to attribute responsibilities, in the sense of choosing which governmental entity is going to be responsible for the GT exercise. This prioritization is particularly challenging because it requires the coordination between several ministries, namely, the Ministry of Higher Education and Science; the Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs; and the Ministry of Science. In this second phase of the project, the workshop we conducted showed that all the stakeholders were relatively committed to the idea of having a national GT, and therefore to participate in the EGTI. Therefore, our role as experts is, throughout the third phase of the project, to persuade further the ministries to take advantage of the stakeholders' involvement and to make GT a political priority.
Romania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to establish the legal and technical framework of EGTI at national level in Romania, stakeholders have to be convinced to initiate the needed changes in the legislation as soon as possible, to establish a responsible body for the construction and implementation of the EGTI, to identify the necessary financial and human resources for EGTI.

Slovakia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving access to higher education graduates (survey respondents) by replacing postal mail with e-communication is urgently needed. International assistance and experience sharing concerning the practice of contacting graduates as well as concerning regulations (introduction of the European unique identifier) are appreciated.
Slovenia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic dimension: stakeholder coordination on how the survey will be conducted (at the level of HE institutions or nationally) and how the EU module will be included. Operational dimension: conceptual establishment of a survey (depending on whether at the level of institutions or national), which includes the European part. The operational level includes: survey content, methodology, sampling, method and frequency of implementation, method of data collection, method of analysis, data sharing. Preparation of a framework for surveying graduates and coordination between all higher education institutions. The framework includes the technical part (eg what data is collected, when, how), and the legal part (eg possible changes in the acts of institutions and possible changes in the consent of graduates). So this part covers the methodological, technical, and legal establishment of the survey. Legislation: amendments to the legislation that will enable the capture, updating and use of graduates' contact details for the purpose of tracking graduates. Or at least an agreement on when legislation changes. Learning good practices and training: training of the main stakeholders (ministry, HE institutions, national quality assurance agency) on how the data (contact data of graduates and survey results) will be protected, shared, used.
Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating clear leadership by the Ministry of Universities. Generating articulation mechanisms among the stakeholders and the leaders in three dimensions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining uses of results linked to objectives established according to the needs of stakeholders Improving coordination for data use among Ministry/Agencies/Universities Generating acceptance of interested parties (Ministry, National Statistics Institute, Agencies, Universities) to have a common approach and shared responsibilities.
Sweden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current graduate tracking is considered to work well in Sweden and there is no urgency to increase the scope of tracking although stakeholders acknowledge the value of a European perspective and of tracking graduates that have left the country. It is therefore of great importance that a proposed European tracking system does not result in a decrease of data quality and scope and that the benefits of a new system are large enough to accept the costs. A high priority is therefore to construct a document analysing the cost/benefit of participation. This should be done in a collaboration between stakeholders and should be preceded by contact with HEIs and other stakeholders to map current state of tracking performed by these stakeholders as well as their thoughts about the proposal of an EGTI. The analysis performed should then be discussed with stakeholders to gain acceptance. A high priority is also to discuss solutions concerning the overall national organisation concerning participation in the EGT. A proposal should be

presented by a working group of stakeholders including the Ministry, relevant agencies and HEIs.

**These roadmaps are awaiting final sign-off from in-country stakeholders.*

