

**COMMIT**

Committing to the social  
dimension in universities

**EMBEDDING THE LLL CONTRIBUTION  
FOR SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT  
INTO UNIVERSITY STRUCTURES  
AND PRACTICES**

**STRATEGY  
PROCESS  
TOOL**

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**HEI** = Higher Education Institutions

**LLL** = Lifelong Learning

**ULLL** = University Lifelong Learning

**LLLU** = Lifelong Learning University

**SD** = Social Dimension

Publisher: EUCEN, Barcelona, Spain, 2015, <http://www.eucen.eu>

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Citation: de Viron, F., on behalf of the COMMIT consortium (Ed.) (2015): *Embedding the LLL contribution for social engagement into University structures and practices - Strategy Process Tool*.

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An electronic version of this document can be obtained at the project website

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*The COMMIT project (539519-LLP-1-2013-1-BE-ERASMUS-ESIN) has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the authors, and the European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.*

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## Welcome to COMMIT’s Tool 1: First self-analysis tool – Strategy Process

This tool is a first familiarization with a strategic approach. The tool offers you various possibilities to initiate and deploy a strategy process regarding lifelong learning and social engagement in your institution. The tool aims at supporting a collaborative work within your institution in order to define for the first time a LLL/SD strategy or to review or revise an existing one. In that sense, the tool supports a potentially recurrent and collaborative work of reflexion about LLL and Social engagement. It helps to include newcomers in the strategy work.

Please find in the table of contents below the sections and the objectives envisaged in each section, as well as the type of activity you will need to undertake in order to get the maximum benefit out of the tool use.

### Contents found in Tool 1 and their use

Section	Page	Objective of the section	Type of activity
<b>Rationale behind this self-analysis tool</b>	4	To introduce the basic idea of the use of the tool.	Reading
<b>First self-analysis tool (strategy process) – Questionnaire</b>	5	To describe the use of the questionnaire.	Reading and deciding your way of using the questionnaire
<b>What do we understand by ULLL?</b>	5	To provide a clear definition of university lifelong learning.	Reading Considering the relevance of the definition in your context
<b>OPEN QUESTIONS (15 minutes)</b>	6	To give an overview of the different questions to be addressed in order to carry out the self-analysis.	Reflect on the questions proposed and eventually provide an open reply to them
<b>Part 1: WHY?</b>	7	This key question concerns the two main groups of factors that may be influential for the LLL strategy of the university: external drivers and internal drivers. It invites respondents to reflect on what forces your university to develop a Lifelong Learning/Social Dimension Strategy and which factors (internal or external) are driving your university to start this Strategy Process.	Grade the different items from -3 to +3
<b>Part 2: WHO?</b>	9	This key question concerns the people driving the strategizing process. Two different types of actor are usually involved in a Strategizing process: internal and external actors.	Grade the different items from 0 to 3
<b>Part 3: HOW?</b>	11	This key question concerns the formalization of your Lifelong Learning strategizing process.	Tick the appropriate items referring to the formal and informal strategizing processes in use in your university
<b>Part 4: WHICH TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES?</b>	13	This key question concerns the tools used in the strategy development.	Grade the tools used in your university from 0 to 3.
<b>Part 5: HOW ARE THE STRATEGIZING and STRATEGY COMMUNICATED?</b>	14	This key question concerns the internal and external communication of the Lifelong learning/Social Dimension strategizing process and/or the communication of the final result of this process. It invites respondents to reflect on the different targets and different communication methods used in your university.	Grade the different targets and communication methods from 0 to 3.

## Decoding Tool 1

The potential usefulness of this tool to the universities:

Code	Purpose	Description
A	Involve diverse actors in LLL and SD reflection	As LLL is a major cultural and organizational change for universities, it is recommended to enroll several people around the strategizing process in order to get a collective view of the reasons to developing it and the ways of doing it. The tool suggests including a large diversity of potential actors, sponsors and/or leaders. The people involved in this reflection could change from year to year.
B	Develop a common understanding and vision of LLL and SD within university	Doing collectively the exercise to identify the main internal and external drivers of LLL/SD strategizing permits the university to get a common understanding of the needs and expectations of the environment and of the capabilities and aspirations of the university.
C	Promote in-depth discussion on ULLL and SD	Answering the 5 key questions allows the university to have a better understanding of the reasons to develop specific actions (why?) and to identify scenarios of development  Strategizing process, reasons for carrying it out, factors and actors intervening in it, tools and instruments used.
D	Adopt an explicit, formulated, shared and communicated way of doing strategy ...	Answering the last question on communication allows the university to define a relevant process of communication and support the LLL/SD promotion and to make explicit the way of implementing the strategy

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### Rationale behind this self-analysis tool

As a main conclusion of the ALLUME project, not only is the content of the LLL strategy important (see content tool), but the process of doing it is also crucial. This is aligned with the strategy-as-practice approach proposed by Whittington (1996, 2002), viewing strategy as something that is *done* within an organisation – and not something an organisation *has*.

The self-analysis strategizing tool is based on five key questions:

1. Why does the process of LLLU/Social Dimension strategizing begin? What are the external and internal drivers of change?
2. Who are the people involved in LLLU/Social Dimension strategizing? Who are the internal actors? What are their roles: are they doers, influential people, researchers, decision makers? Who are the external actors? What are their roles?
3. How is the process of LLLU/Social Dimension strategizing done and organised? Is it a formal or informal process? What is its level of development?
4. What are the tools and techniques used for LLLU/Social Dimension strategizing?
5. How are the products of LLLU/Social Dimension strategizing communicated?

The tool could be applied at any stage of a strategy process, usually compound by the following phases: strategic analysis, strategic plan, development, implementation and monitoring phases<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The phases - analysis of the context and the internal situation, design of objectives and action plans, operational development, implementation and monitoring of the action plans - are the ones commonly agreed in any change process even if specific content or boundaries vary in the literature (Johnson et al 2011).

The objective of the self-analysis strategizing tool is to highlight five permanent guiding principles during the process. These five principles are represented in figure 1 below.

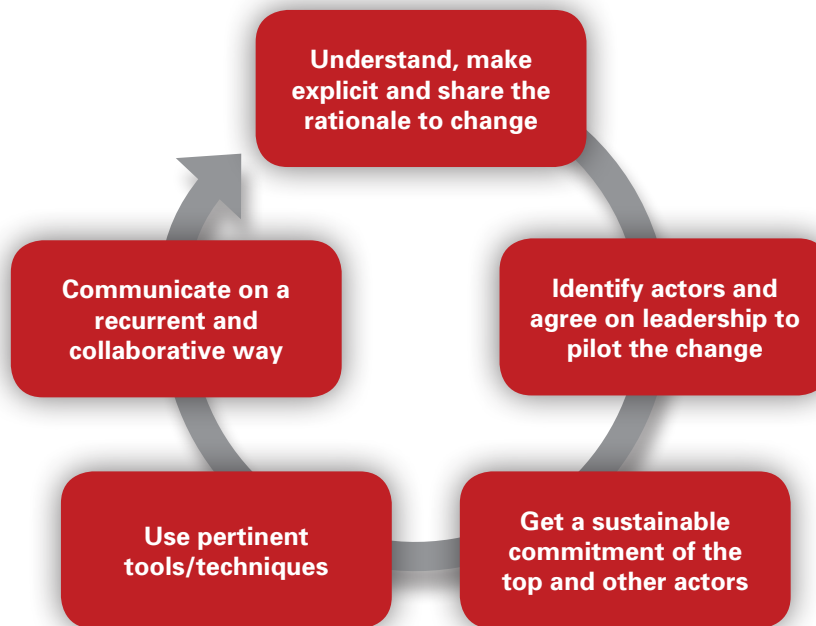


Figure 1. Five principles in the LLLU/Social Dimension strategy process [inspired from de Viron & Davies, 2015].

## First self-analysis tool (strategy process) – Questionnaire

### The methodology

We recommend using this questionnaire in two steps:

- 1) First pose the five open questions and give people 15 minutes to think about them and write down their thoughts.
- 2) Second take 30 minutes to fill in the questionnaire.

The tool could be filled in on an individual or collective basis.

If filled in collectively, it is advisable to proceed by focus groups: the focus groups discuss the questions and summarize their answers before completing all the items of the questionnaire. The procedure would thus involve three steps:

1. Collective discussion of the answers
2. Focus group summarizes the answers collected
3. Only one final document is produced

If you adopt an individual approach, please use one document per person. If you adopt a group approach, please indicate the name, position of all people involved in the discussion.

**Reminder:** The goals for this tool are twofold: on the one hand, to involve people within universities and help them to start and reflect on their strategizing process and on the other hand, to collect information on the strategizing process within universities.

### What do we understand by ULLL?

*ULLL is the provision by Higher Education Institutions of learning opportunities, services and research for: the personal and professional development of a wide range of individuals - lifelong and lifewide; and the social, cultural and economic development of communities and the region. It is at university level and research-based; it focuses primarily on the needs of the learners; and it is often developed and/or provided in collaboration with stakeholders and external actors.*

Definition from the BeFlex project (Agreement number 2006/0073-001-001, Socrates)

**OPEN QUESTIONS (15 minutes)**

NAME: ..... POSITION: ..... UNIVERSITY/FACULTY: .....

■ **WHY?** What forces you to develop a Lifelong Learning/Social Dimension Strategy? Which factors (internal or external) are driving your university to start this Strategy Process?

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■ **WHO?** Who are the drivers of this Strategy Process? Who are the internal and the external actors initiating it and/or taking part in it?

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■ **HOW FORMAL or INFORMAL?** How is this strategizing process done and organised? Is it a formal or informal process?

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■ **WHICH TOOLS and TECHNIQUES?** Are you using some specific tools and /or techniques for your strategizing process?

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■ **HOW COMMUNICATE?** How are the results of your strategizing process communicated?

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.....  
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**QUESTIONNAIRE (30 minutes)**

NAME: ..... POSITION: ..... UNIVERSITY/FACULTY: .....

The questionnaire is about five aspects of the strategy process.

These main questions are divided into different sub-questions, most of them being scale questions going from 0 (not relevant) to 3 (Highly relevant) (or -3 to 3 when the drivers may have a negative impact), or questions with different boxes to check. A few open questions will be asked to seek further information that couldn't be extracted from the closed questions.

**Part 1: WHY?**

In this section of the questionnaire, we will discuss the reasons why your university implemented and is improving its Lifelong Learning or/and Social Dimension strategy. There are two main groups of factors that may be influential: The external drivers and the internal drivers.

These influential factors may have had a positive influence on the development of the Lifelong Learning or Social oriented program or on the contrary be barriers to its development.

For each of them, we ask you to note on a scale from -3 to +3 how much these drivers have influenced and may still influence your university for the implementation of Lifelong learning or Social Dimension in its structure (-3 meaning that they have had a highly negative influence, 0 meaning that these drivers are irrelevant and +3 meaning that these drivers have had a highly positive influence on your university when developing its Lifelong Learning/Social Dimension strategy).

**External drivers:** external drivers are influences coming from outside the university. Some examples are listed below. If other external influences have impacted the institution and the development of your strategy, please list them at the end of the section.

<b>External drivers</b>	<b>-3</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+1</b>	<b>+2</b>	<b>+3</b>
The European legislation							
The National legislation							
The National Public finance							
The economy							
The duty to support the development of society							
The labour market							
The problem of funding							
The demography (age, social background, migration...)							
<i>If any other external factors have influenced your university when it was developing its LLL strategy, please name them here:</i>							
<i>Comments:</i>							

**Internal drivers:** internal drivers are influences coming from the university itself. Some examples are listed below. If other internal influences have impacted the institution and the development of your Lifelong Learning / Social Dimension strategy, please list them at the end of the section.

For each of them, we ask you to note on a scale from -3 to 3 how much these drivers have influenced and may still influence your university for the development of its Lifelong learning strategy (-3 meaning that they have had a highly negative influence, 0 meaning that these drivers are irrelevant and +3 meaning that these drivers have had a highly positive influence on your university when developing its Lifelong Learning/Social Dimension strategy).

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<b>Internal drivers</b>	<b>-3</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+1</b>	<b>+2</b>	<b>+3</b>
The previous experiences with Lifelong Learning							
The previous experiences of LLL's contribution to Social Engagement							
The culture of Lifelong Learning within your university							
The culture of Social Engagement within your university							
The necessity/ demand for Lifelong Learning programmes							
The necessity/ demand for Social Engagement							
The university structure							
The desire to improve the access to university							
The desire to make people aware that the university offers these programmes							
A change in internal organization or a structural change							
<i>Explain these changes (optional question):</i>							
The University finances							
<i>Amount available for Lifelong Learning strategies (optional)?</i>							
<i>Amount available for Social Engagement strategies (optional)?</i>							
The personnel devoted to these tasks							
<i>Approximate number of persons (Full Time Equivalent) dedicated to Lifelong Learning (optional)?</i>							
<i>Approximate number of people (Full Time Equivalent) dedicated to Social Engagement (optional)?</i>							
<i>If any other internal factors have influenced your university when it was developing its Lifelong Learning strategy, please name them here:</i>							
<i>Comments:</i>							



## Part 2: WHO?

The second part of the questionnaire is about the people driving the strategizing process. Two different types of actor are usually involved in a Strategizing process: Internal and external actors.

For each of them, we will ask you to note on a scale from 0 to 3 how much these drivers have influenced and may still influence your university for the development of the Lifelong learning/Social Dimension strategy (**0 meaning that these actors are not involved in the strategy development and 3 meaning that these actors have highly influenced your university when developing its strategy**).

**Internal actors:** Internal actors are people within the university who design and implement the strategy and reinforce its development. They are classified as doers (practitioners, researchers involved in the process) and decision makers.

### *Doers (practitioners and researchers):*

Who are the doers in your University LLL/SD strategizing? **Rate all boxes from 0 to 3:**

Responsible person of specific Lifelong Learning structure	
Responsible person of specific Social Engagement structure (e.g., office for funding system for student fees, psychological consultation office, ...)	
Project managers	
Teachers	
Specific units created for strategizing	
Researchers in Lifelong Learning Education	
Researchers in Social Engagement (of ULLL Of the University)	
Researchers on other topics	

### *Decision makers:*

Who are the decision makers involved in LLL/SD strategizing process? **Rate all boxes from 0 to 3:**

Rector	
Vice Rector in charge of LLL or Social Engagement	
Teaching council	
Lifelong Learning council	
Social council	
Head of specific LLL/SD unit	
Administration	
Outreach council or unit	
<i>Other? Please name them here</i>	

Approximately how many internal actors (Full Time Equivalent) are involved in your University LLL/SD strategizing? <i>Rate all boxes from 0 to 3:</i>	
Doers - Practitioners	
Doers - Researchers	
Decision Makers	

**External actors:** External actors are people external to the university who influence the Lifelong learning/ Social Dimension strategy of your university

*Influential people:*

Who are the people influencing the LLL/SD strategizing process? <i>Rate all boxes from 0 to 3:</i>	
Private enterprise	
Public administration	
Specific ministry	
Government – national or regional authorities	
Other stakeholders	

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*Researchers:*

Researchers in what kind of institutions? <i>Rate all boxes from 0 to 3:</i>	
Other national universities	
International universities	
Specific research units created at national or regional level	
<i>Others: If any other external actors are playing a role in LLL/SD strategizing in your organization, please name the role of this person here</i>	
<i>Comments:</i>	

### Part 3. HOW?

This part of this questionnaire concerns the formalization of your Lifelong Learning strategizing process.

Let's talk about the characterization of the process of strategizing. Is it an informal or formal process? In your university, what is the dominant process used?

#### Informal processes

What are the informal processes used to develop the LLL/SD strategy? <i>Tick all the appropriate boxes:</i>	
University teaching Culture (values shared by the university members and/or the educational system in general (e.g. response to individual objectives of students, increase accessibility, ...))	<input type="checkbox"/>
University research culture	<input type="checkbox"/>
Culture of Administration	<input type="checkbox"/>
Culture of dealing with central units	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mobilization – Motivation of all people involved into the strategizing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recognition (giving the opportunity to all kind of learners and staff to gain recognition for their work)	<input type="checkbox"/>
General tendency to support cooperation within university	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cooperation with external partners (profit or non-profit organisations) are welcome but the interactions do not occur according to a fixed agenda and are not formalized)	<input type="checkbox"/>
General tendency to support competition within university	<input type="checkbox"/>
Global trend, but not formalized	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interaction with the society (factual, random interactions, not formalized)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Various funding bodies (different sources of revenues enable the development of the Lifelong Learning strategy as well as its implementation but there are no clear and fixed sources and/or amount dedicated to the development of the Lifelong Learning Strategy)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evaluation by the university itself (The university evaluates its Lifelong Learning strategy itself, but informally, without a specific framework)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Others:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### Formal processes

What are the formal processes used to develop the LLL/SD strategy? <i>Tick all the appropriate boxes:</i>	
Research based (Specific research is carried out within the university based on the specificities of the LLL/SD strategy and how it could be integrated in the university)	<input type="checkbox"/>
University strategy (There is a clear LLL/SD strategy awareness and set of skills within the university enabling the development of this Strategy)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mainstreaming holistic (There are no separate LLL/SD strategy but the LLL/SD strategy is clearly included in the relevant part of the <u>university's</u> overall strategy)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Global Learning strategy (Lifelong Learning strategy is part of the government's educational strategy)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Global Learning strategy (Social Dimension is part of the government's educational strategy)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creation of working groups (in order to develop a clear strategy)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Collaboration – Partnership (Interactions and partnership with external entities. However in opposition to the cooperation described in the informal process part, these interactions are much more formal such as bilateral agreements with other universities, profit or non-profit organisations)	
Specific council (specific bodies supporting the development of a University LLL/SD Strategy)	
Allocation contracts (contract with other bodies such as the whole university of the government regarding LLL/SD strategy funding and allocation of resources)	
Implementation plan	
Academic reinforcement – academic staff involvement	
Evaluation of the LLL/SD strategy by external institutions	
Evaluation of the LLL/SD strategy by external private structures	
<i>Others:</i>	

**Part 4: WHICH TOOLS and TECHNIQUES?**

Some tools are listed: for each of them, we will ask you to note on a scale from 0 to 3 how much these tools are used when you define or reflect about the Lifelong learning/Social Dimension strategy (0 meaning that these tools are not used in the strategy development and 3 meaning that these tools are intensively used in your university when developing its strategy).

*What are the tools and methods used to define the LLL/SD Strategy in your university?*

<i>Rate all boxes from 0 to 3:</i>	
Strategic plan	
SWOT analysis	
PESTEL <sup>2</sup> analysis	
Resources Based Approach (Talents based e.g.)	
Benchmarking	
Cost management	
Cost model	
Collecting Statistical data	
Monitoring Statistical data	
Quality procedure	
<i>Others:</i>	

<sup>2</sup> 'Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental and Legal analysis'

**Part 5: HOW ARE THE STRATEGYING and STRATEGY COMMUNICATED?**

The last part of the questionnaire is about the internal and external communication of the Lifelong learning/ Social Dimension strategizing process and/or about the communication of the final result of this process.

Different targets and different communication methods have been identified. For each of them, we will ask you to note on a scale from 0 to 3 how intensively these people are informed and how intensively methods are used for this communication (0 meaning that these actors are not targeted by the communication or these methods are not used in communication and 3 meaning that these actors have highly targeted or these tools are intensively used).

**Communication on LLL/SD Strategy (Process and/or Content)**

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Internally, to whom? <i>Rate all boxes from 0 to 3</i>	
Deans and Departments heads	
Teachers	
Researchers	
Students	
All University members	
Trade Union	
Alumni Organisation	
<i>Other? Please comment:</i>	
Internally, how? <i>Rate all boxes from 0 to 3</i>	
Meeting (specific)	
Internal Newsletter	
Intranet	
<i>Other? Please comment:</i>	
Externally, to whom? <i>Rate all boxes from 0 to 3</i>	
Policy Makers	
Other Universities	
Enterprises	
Social Associations	
Social Partners	
Press	
Scientific Publications	
<i>Other? Please comment:</i>	

Externally, how? *Rate all boxes from 0 to 3*

University communication paper (newsletter, journal, brochure, ...)	
University Web Site	
Round table Consultation	
Events, conference	
<i>Other? Please comment:</i>	



**The Strategy Process Tool uses the strategy-as-practice approach developed by Whittington to support universities in analysing in detail their way of 'doing strategy' including social dimension. The Tool has a strong organisational focus and helps identify key internal and external actors involved in the strategy process, as well as steps in making a strategy, methods, communication.**

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**Associate partners:** Mykolo Romerio Universiteto (LT); Instituto Politecnico de Leiria (PT); Université Rennes 2 (FR); Dokuz Eylül University (TK); Tallinna Ülikool, Open University (EE).



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Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

Project funded with support from the European Commission.  
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