

# The impact evaluation of the CroCooS project



 **crocoos**  
Prevent drop out!

# The task



## The purpose of the evaluation

(Reminder)

### ***Overall purpose:***

Contributing to the results of the policy experiment by accumulating „what works in which context?“ knowledge

### ***Specific purpose:***

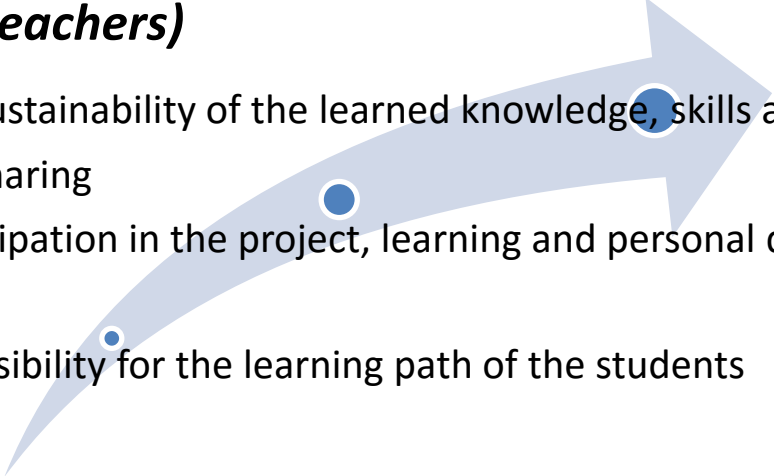
The evaluation of the change of the institutional and personal capacities of schools in relation to early warning and drop-out prevention

# Impact

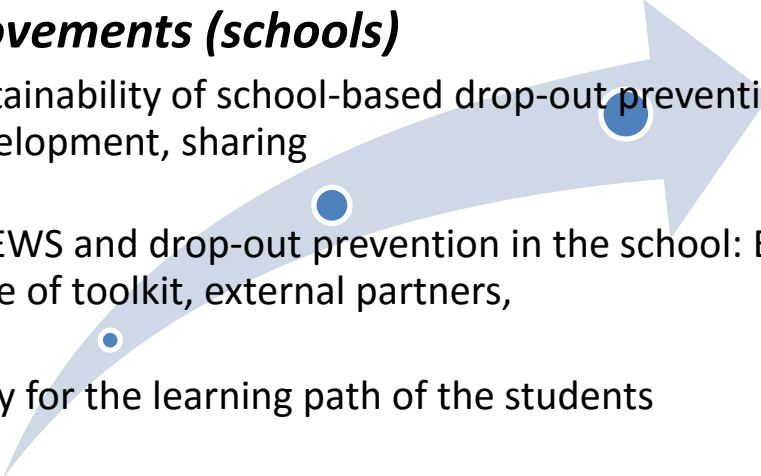


# Expected improvements

## ***Personal level improvements (teachers)***

- 
- Sustainability of the learned knowledge, skills and attitudes, sharing
  - Personal participation in the project, learning and personal development
  - Feeling personal responsibility for the learning path of the students

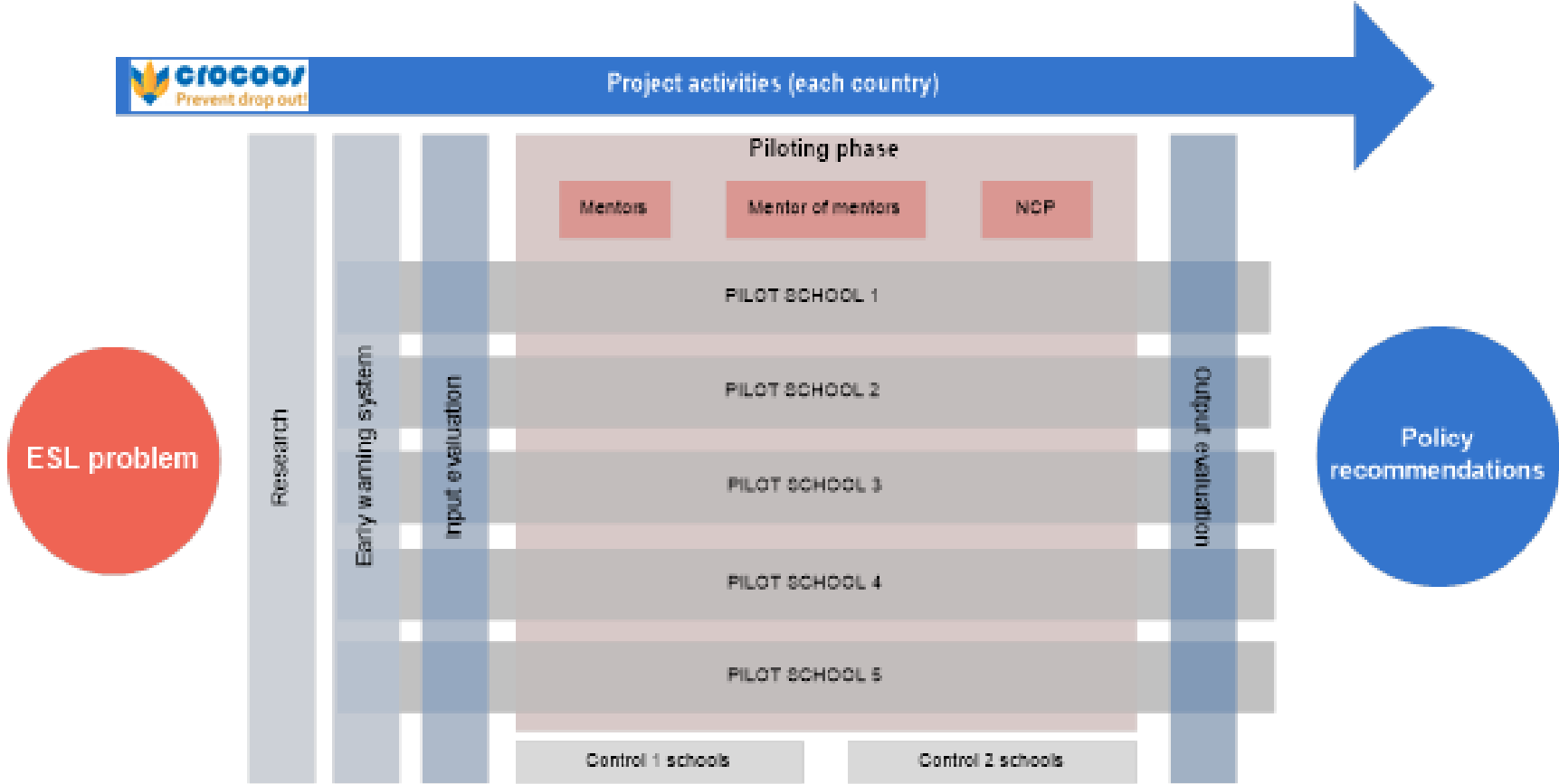
## ***Institutional level improvements (schools)***

- 
- Sustainability of school-based drop-out prevention, systematic learning and development, sharing
  - Institutionalization of EWS and drop-out prevention in the school: EWS, cross-sectoral team, regular work, use of toolkit, external partners,
  - Taking institutional responsibility for the learning path of the students

# Conflicting interests in an impact evaluation

- **Local coordinators:** getting friendly and well known schools involved
- **School directors:** getting external resources and satisfying evaluators while maintaining internal balance
- **Teachers:** learning new things while maintaining personal balance
- **School developers and trainers:** stimulating free and autonomous local initiatives
- **Evaluators:** creating a sterile environment for impact measurement
- **Project management:** implementing the contracted obligations while keeping the internal balance of the project

# Process of the CroCooS project



# Macro level analysis of the two e-surveys

*The planned and actual size of the input evaluation samples in the three pilot countries*

Input evaluation

	Planned	Hungary	Serbia	Slovenia
School directors	10	14	8	16
Teachers	50	55	55	334
Students	100	252	95	1217

Output Evaluation

	Planned	Hungary	Serbia	Slovenia
School directors	15	14	8	17
Teachers	60	87	44	218
Students	100	178	87	853

# Two directions of the evaluation

## Quantitative survey: what?

- E-survey and interviews
- Country focus
- A1 – A1, A1 – C,
- C1 – C1 no results
- Draft report and further analysis

## Qualitative analysis of documents: why?

- The Hungarian case as a sample
- 5 schools
- Report



# 1. Perceived reasons for dropout

## *Project impact*

Terrain	Hungarian schools	Serbian schools	Slovenian schools
Perception of reasons for dropout	Positive impact	No impact	No impact

## *Issues:*

- Top reasons among directors: lacking family support, low motivation of students (all countries), poverty (Serbia and Slovenia), learning failures (Hungary and Slovenia), bad school choice and outside peer group pressure (Slovenia)
- Top reasons among teachers: low motivation and lacking family support (all countries), poverty (Hungary, Serbia), learning failures (Hungary, Slovenia), bad school choice (Serbia, Slovenia), outside peer group pressure (Hungary, Slovenia).
- Impact of the pilot projects: **the views on reasons of school directors became more diversified in Hungary and Serbia**, that of teachers in Hungary

## 2. Attitudes towards dropout

### *Project impact*

Terrain	Hungarian schools	Serbian schools	Slovenian schools
Attitudes towards dropout	Negative impact	Negative impact	No impact

### *Issues:*

The potential reasons for **stronger responsibility shift**:

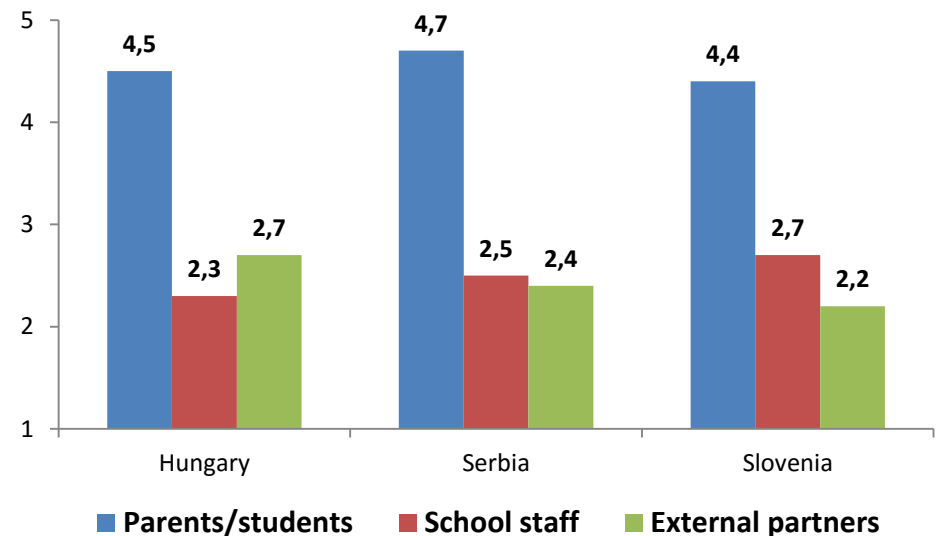
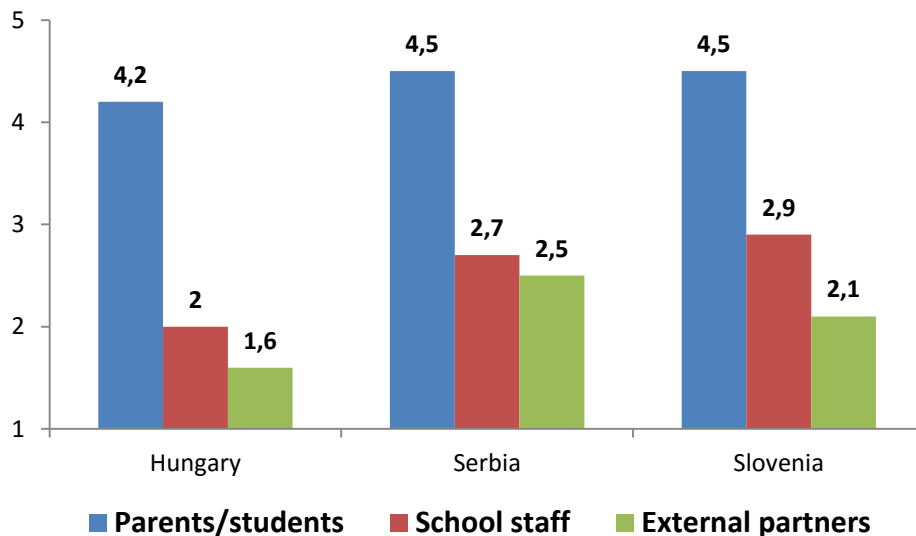
- The strong focus of the pilot projects on EWS, relatively weak focus on prevention
- The sense of powerlessness among teachers caused by weak pedagogical evaluation and instruction preparedness

## 2. Attitudes towards dropout

*The strength of responsibility shift among school directors and teachers: the average responsibility score of clients, schools staff and external partners (output evaluation, all schools, average score on a 1-5 scale)*

*School directors*

*Teachers*



# 3. Preparedness of teachers

## *Contextual terrain*

Terrain	Hungarian schools	Serbian schools	Slovenian schools
Preparedness of teachers: instruction and evaluation	Poor conditions	Poor conditions	Poor conditions

## *Project impact*

Terrain	Hungarian schools	Serbian schools	Slovenian schools
Preparedness of teachers: capacity to recognize distress signals	Moderate positive impact	Moderate positive impact	Moderate positive impact

## *Issues.*

- Contradiction between shared modern principles and traditional instruction practice in the classrooms (results in frustration and in sense of powerlessness)
- Typical distress signals identified: are behavioral changes, absenteeism, declining learning achievement, low motivation and social isolation in the class
- **Widespread optimism among directors and teachers** about the capacity of teachers to recognize distress signals

# 4. Preparedness of schools

## Quality of relationships

### *Project impact*

Terrain	Hungarian schools	Serbian schools	Slovenian schools
Quality of relationships (trust)	No impact	No impact	No impact
Quality of relationships (access to student information)	Moderate positive impact	No impact	No impact
Quality of relationships (informal protocols)	Moderate positive impact	Moderate positive impact	Moderate positive impact

### *Issues:*

- The climate in schools of the three countries creates a favorable environment for improving leadership and co-operation among teachers.
- The relationship among teachers, students and parents are to be further improved for a safer and more supportive environment for students at risk
- The impact of the pilot projects on the overall school climate is negligible in the three countries.
- **Form masters** play an interface role in all sorts of relationships
- The pilot projects were instrumental in **intensifying the involvement of school directors**

# 4. Preparedness of schools

## Institutionalization

### *Contextual terrain*

Terrain	Hungarian schools	Serbian schools	Slovenian schools
The framework for self-evaluation based school development	Poor conditions	Medium conditions	Good conditions

### *Project impact*

Terrain	Hungarian schools	Serbian schools	Slovenian schools
Institutionalization of co-operation	No or moderate impact	No or moderate impact	No or moderate impact

### *Issues:*

- In terms of self-evaluation based school development there are large differences among the three countries that are determined by the very different governance context.
- The pilot projects impact on the institutionalization a support mechanism around the students with any problems was limited. Co-operation is intensified **when there is an actor in charge of coordination** (a member of school leadership or form masters).

# 4. Preparedness of schools

## Student monitoring system

### *Project impact*

Terrain	Hungarian schools	Serbian schools	Slovenian schools
Student monitoring systems	Positive impact	Moderate positive impact	Positive impact

### *Issues:*

- Student monitoring instruments can be: the records of students with learning difficulties, records of disadvantaged students and students at risk of dropout. It largely depends on the policy and regulatory context.
- In Serbia regulations prescribe mandatory regular data collection in schools. In Hungary and Slovenia the proportion of schools collecting data on students at risk of dropout has increased, as the proportion of schools collecting information on disadvantaged students in Slovenia. In these cases it is the **positive impact** of the pilot projects.
- Operating student records serves more internal and external reporting than informing other teachers
- The use of the monitoring instrument developed by Tempus is too complicated and extremely time-consuming. Most teachers prefer this integrated into the electronic diaries that are already in use in the schools.

# 4. Preparedness of schools

## Available resources

### *Contextual terrains*

Terrain	Hungarian schools	Serbian schools	Slovenian schools
Available of resources (specialist)	Poor conditions	Poor conditions	Medium conditions
Available of resources (financial resources)	Poor conditions	Poor conditions	Medium conditions
Available of resources (teachers providing individual support)	Good conditions	Good conditions	Good conditions

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Terrain	Hungarian schools	Serbian schools	Slovenian schools
Available resources (facilities)	Positive impact	Positive impact	Positive impact

### *Issues:*

- Due to the lack of a normative financing there are no built-in incentives for dropout prevention, nor a transparent and sustainable mechanism for allocating supplementary funds. Systems are under-funded.
- The proportion of teachers who are providing individual support to students is relatively high in each country.
- The **grant component of the pilot projects positively contributed** to the improvement of the facilities of schools.



# 5. Co-operation with external partners

## *Contextual terrains*

Terrain	Hungarian schools	Serbian schools	Slovenian schools
Availability of necessary professional development opportunities	Poor conditions	Poor conditions	Medium conditions
Availability of necessary professional support services	Poor conditions	Poor conditions	Medium conditions

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Terrain	Hungarian schools	Serbian schools	Slovenian schools
Co-operation with external partners	Moderate positive impact	No impact	No impact

*Issues.*

- The lack of unambiguous patterns in the directors' perception of the importance of the various external partners indicates the lack of steady routine external co-operation activities of schools
- Most important partner identified by teachers: guidance services, local self-governments, parent associations, health services, student organizations and local business organizations

# Lessons learnt

1. Existential fear combined with per capita funding is the best stimulus for ESL improvement.
2. Building on school directors and form masters is the key.
3. Providing the necessary time for full school improvement cycles.
4. The use of financial incentives is important.
5. Big emphasis on the sustainability of improvements.
6. National policy context is important, you can't innovate against the system
7. Mentors and tools are popular and they provided a step by step approach.
8. Team making is easy, defining and implementing goals is difficult.
9. Time, again.