



COMMUNITY INITIATIVE EQUAL
NATIONAL THEMATIC GROUP



“Accreditation of Vocational Qualifications & Skills”

**COOPERATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION
OF ACCREDITATION TOOLS AND SYSTEMS OF
VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS**

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

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It is a pleasure to present the Good Practice Guide, produced from the work of the National Thematic Group on Accreditation of Vocational Qualifications and Skills of the EQUAL Community Initiative. Nine Development Partnerships, which realized EQUAL projects during Round 1 of the Initiative, cooperated to elaborate this Guide.

The National Thematic Group for Vocational Qualifications and Skills aims at highlighting the most innovative and effective tools and systems for Diagnosing, Evaluating and Accrediting Vocational Qualifications and Skills, resulting from the pilot applications of the nine Development Partnerships projects.

Based on the thematic priorities of the projects as well as European and national policies on vocational qualifications and skills accreditation, the Development Partnerships exchanged and compiled experiences round the following common thematic pillars, focusing and highlighting the major significance of methodologies and suitability of tools for the Accreditation of vocational qualifications and skills:

Thematic pillar I: Profession Directory – Job Profile Analysis – Definition of Vocational & Training Standards.

Thematic pillar II: Diagnosis, Evaluation and Review of Vocational Skills in a context of Individualized Life-long Learning approach.

Thematic pillar III: Standards, Criteria & Methodology of Accreditation of Vocational Qualifications & Skills

This Guide outlines the accumulated experience as well as the results of cooperation of the nine Development Partnerships on the basis of the above thematic pillars. We hope that it will not only be a milestone for qualifications and skills accreditation issues, but that it will also reinforce National Policies on promoting development of human resources, Life-long Learning and linking of vocational training to employment.

Prof. Spyros I. Vliamos

Secretary General for the Management of European Funds

1. THE EQUAL COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

Over the last years Europe has been hit by high unemployment and an increasing long-term exclusion from the labour market, adding to the difficulties of disadvantaged social groups for inclusion in employment. Moreover, in the last decade a lot of European countries including Greece face a new status resulting from migrants' streams. Therefore, socio-economic problems of inclusion that migrants, repatriates and refugees have to cope with are increasing.

Following the Council for Employment, which took place in Luxemburg, the European Commission undertook the task of promoting a series of priorities concerning employment to member states. The new strategy for employment adopted guidelines to be taken into consideration during planning of National employment policies. This strategy aims at developing entrepreneurial spirit, promoting entrepreneurship, creating an employability environment, encouraging and promoting adaptability of employees and enterprises and providing for equal opportunities in the labour market. One of the basic targets of the European strategy is the achievement of high employment rates for all social groups. On the other hand, an integrated strategy for combating discrimination and social exclusion, exceeding the limited field of labour market, is present at E.U. level.

One of the implementation tools of this strategy is the EQUAL Community Initiative, which was planned to function complementarily to the European strategy for employment as well as to the other policies combating social discrimination.

Therefore, the Community Initiative EQUAL, focusing on the labour market, is meant to play a critical role in connecting actions supported by E.U. with projects supported by the European Social Fund (E.S.F.) and political targets sought in the framework of the European strategy for employment.

Primarily the EQUAL Community Initiative aims at developing and promoting new ways and practices in the field of employment to tackle all forms of discrimination and inequality suffered by those who either seek access to the labour market or are already in it, utilizing the experiences from the previous "EMPLOYMENT" and "ADAPT" Initiatives. The EQUAL Community Initiative, as planned and declared by the Commission, aims at functioning as experimentation ground for the development and dissemination of new ways of implementing policies in the field of employment.

The ultimate objective of EQUAL is to achieve that innovative approaches developed by the funded projects influence National and European policies for employment, vocational training and combating social exclusion. The basic aim is the good practices produced, even if not transformed to mainstreamed policies, to be adopted by a larger range of actors (enterprises, social partners, local authorities etc), who can benefit from valuable results even without participating in EQUAL.

The implementation strategy of the Operational Program of the EQUAL Initiative adopts the four pillars of European policy for employment (employability, entrepreneurship, adaptability, equal opportunities for men and women) and follows the guidelines for employment aiming at contributing to the policies established and supported by the National Employment Action Plan (ESDA). More specifically, through the implementation of the Development Partnerships projects, the Initiative intends to contribute to the specification of ESDA targets and measures on local, regional and sectoral level in order to develop innovative implementation methods of ESDA targets and policies. The innovative approaches and practices developed within the Initiative framework can

become significant tools for the improvement of both quality and effectiveness of specific ESDA policies through dissemination and mainstreaming in National policies.

In this framework, the ability of Development Partnerships and National Authorities to promote results and outcomes of the projects at a larger scale and bring changes in the existing policies and practices, thus improving the conditions of labour market inclusion and function, will judge the overall success of the Initiative.

The present Guide on Good Practices of the National Thematic Group for the “Accreditation of Vocational Qualifications and Skills” attempts to contribute to the above mentioned outcomes and conclusions.

2. FOR A HIGHER SKILLED LABOUR MARKET - COOPERATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT & PROMOTION OF TOOLS & SYSTEMS FOR VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS ACCREDITATION

Dr. E. Karpodini – Dimitriadi,
Coordinator of KPE «Accreditation of Vocational Qualifications & Skills»

National Thematic Group “**Accreditation of Vocational Qualifications & Skills**” is the cooperation of nine (9) Development Partnerships with 138 partners (State and Private bodies, Social partners, Representatives of trade bodies of people with disabilities, Trade Unions, Universities, Vocational Training centers, Consultant Enterprises, Chambers, Employer Organizations, State Organizations), coordinated by the Development Partnership “*Initiative for Quality of Working Life*”.

The main aim of the National Thematic Group is the emergence of Tools and Systems of Diagnosis, Evaluation and Accreditation of Qualifications & Skills, arising from the participating Development Partnerships projects, virtually intervening in human force development.

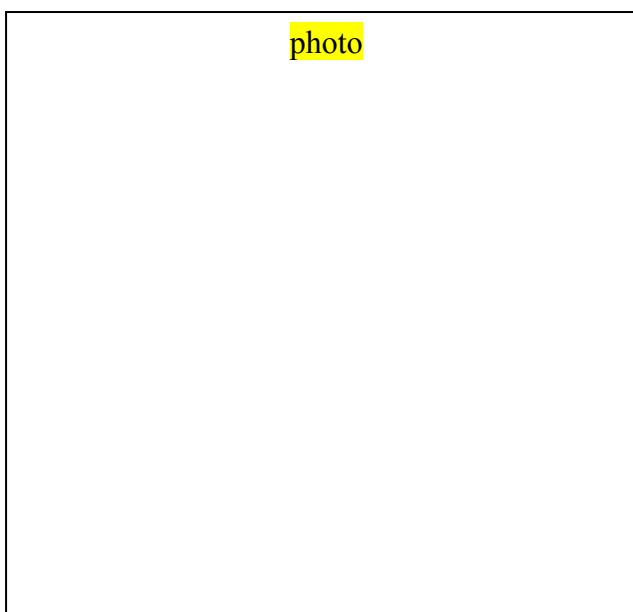
National Thematic Group contributes dynamically in a field which according to Life-long Learning principles, is of high eventuality on a:

1. National level, where an integrated law framework concerning a system of vocational skills and competences ACCREDITATION to meet the needs of labour market and link vocational Training with Employment does not exist.
2. European level, where there is an effort for faster integration of Life-long Learning principles in training systems of member-states, in the framework of the European Councils of Lisbon and Barcelona Principles as well as the Bologna Declaration.

PARTICIPATING DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS COMMON FEATURES AND PRIORITIES

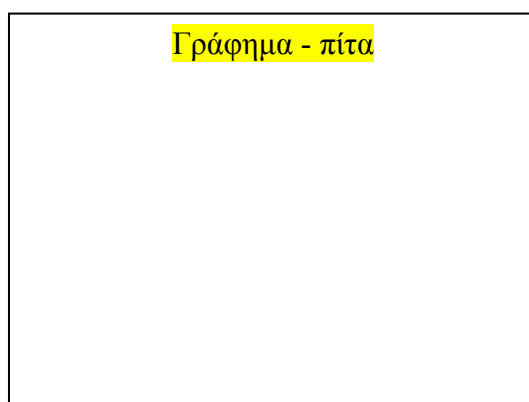
The Development Partnerships that participate in the National Thematic Group are:

1. PATHS TO EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER – DESPA
2. FOR EQUALITY AND SOCIAL COHESION – FORUM FOR SOCIAL COHESION
3. DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF JOB ROTATION
4. NEORION II – PROMOTING COMPETITIVENESS &



- SECURING EMPLOYMENT IN THE SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY
5. DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN OPEN SYSTEM FOR ACQUISITION AND ACCREDITATION OF QUALIFICATIONS & SKILLS IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION SECTOR
 6. INITIATIVE FOR QUALITY OF WORKING LIFE– P.P.E.Z.
 7. ADAPTATION OF TARGETED WORK PLACES FOR PEOPLE WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES – PROTEAS
 8. UNIFIED SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR UNEMPLOYED VIA ACCREDITATION OF VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS – SPARTAKOS
 9. NETWORK FOR PROMOTING LIFE-LONG LEARNING & DISTANCE ACCREDITATION OF SKILLS IN SMEs – TECHNOMATHEIA

The following graph illustrates the Development Partnerships and the numbers of their partners.



Participating Development Partnerships featuring their partners

From the analysis of the Development Partnerships projects and on the basis of the ascertainments made leading to the participation in the specific group, the following common features running all projects arise:

1. Analysis and recording of vocational outlines based on the diagnosed needs of the labour market.
2. Development and implementation of training programs (conventional and distance training) to empower human resources.
3. Exploration of implementation ways for modern employment methods (e-learning) and integration of Life-long Learning mechanisms (learning organization model)
4. Development and implementation of reliable systems of diagnosis, evaluation and accreditation of skills & competences as well as advisory support.
5. Emergence of tools to support groups facing multiple exclusions (women, the disadvantaged, migrants, etc).

The Development Partnerships projects apply to more than one group, particularly classified as follows:

1. Workers of incomplete skills or insecure working place, part-time and short-term employed
2. Unemployed
3. Self-employed

As far as the target groups are concerned, the following are included:

- ◆ Individuals with physical or other disabilities (visual impairments or thalassemia).
- ◆ Migrants, repatriates, refugees.

The Development Partnerships, apart from the actions developed on national level, contributed also to the National Thematic Group and know-how which has arisen:

- ◆ From transnational co-operations, mainly when transnationality was developed with countries which had already implemented integrated systems of vocational skills accreditation (UK, Ireland, Finland, Denmark, Holland and Germany) and,
- ◆ From joint implementation of actions and product development with countries that face similar needs concerning adoption of methodologies and systems for vocational skills accreditation (Portugal, Italy, Belgium).

Based on the above, a wider classification of the Development Partnerships actions arises concerning the following areas, on national and European levels:

1. Methodologies of professional profile analysis and definition of vocational and training standards.
2. Planning of corresponding vocational curricula (conventional and distance training).
3. Elaboration of criteria, standards and methodology of vocational skills accreditation, development of evaluation tools and skills review as well as monitoring skills development.
4. Emergence of entrepreneurial practices to integrate Life-long Learning and modern forms of employment.

MAIN THEMATIC PILLARS

The D.Ps' cooperation was based on a Joint Action Plan (KPE) developed under three main Thematic Pillars (TH.Ps.):

TH.P. I: Profession Directory – Job Profiles Analysis – Definition of Vocational and Training Standards

The main aim of the Pillar was to emerge:

- ◆ a methodology of professional profile analysis and tasks of the respective work positions within each profession,
- ◆ a methodology of vocational and training standards and a respective rating of required qualifications and skills based on the task content and level,
- ◆ a methodology of vocational and training standards in the actions of training, accreditation and counseling support, within each profession.

TH.P. II: Diagnosis, Evaluation and Review of Vocational Skills in the context of Individualized Approach of Life-long Learning

The main aim of the Pillar was to emerge reliable tools concerning:

- ◆ Individualized evaluation and review of vocational skills according to the principles of individual skills and qualification transparency.
- ◆ Individualized support and counseling of persons aiming at widening Life-long Learning potential and skills acquisition.

- ◆ Vocational skills diagnosis, monitoring and evaluation in the framework of overall entrepreneurial strategies.
- ◆ Techniques for essential assessment and adaptation of vocational skills review tools to the specific needs of individuals facing increased problems of labour market inclusion.

TH.P. III: Standards, Criteria and Methodology of Vocational Qualifications and Skills Accreditation

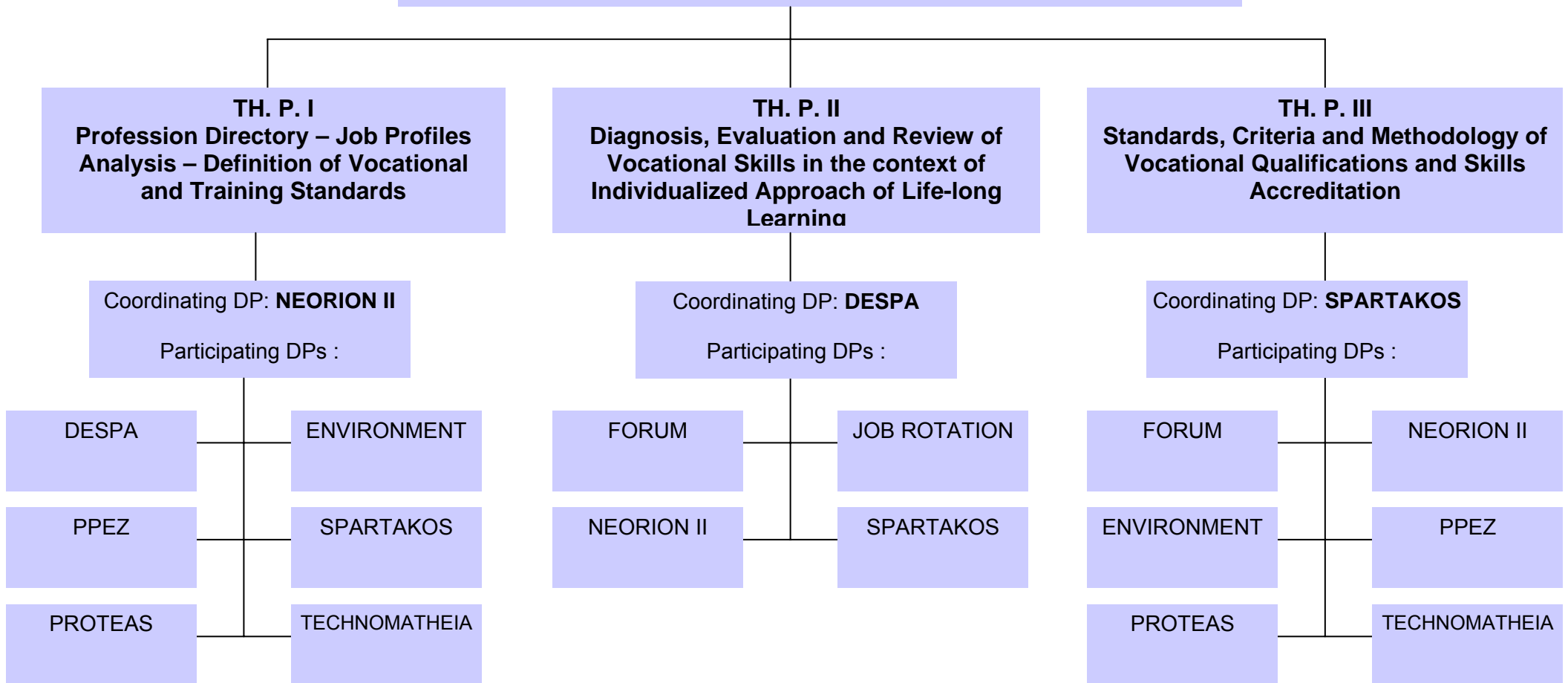
The main aim of the Pillar was to emerge reliable tools concerning:

- ◆ Accreditation of knowledge obtained through vocational training or other form of training or work experience.
- ◆ Adoption of matching methodology and accreditation rating in levels and areas according to the required knowledge and skills level.
- ◆ Definition of evaluation and verification means of obtained qualifications and skills, as well as the procedure and stages of vocational skills accreditation.
- ◆ Analysis of the various parameters and the required adjustments in order to apply a system of skills accreditation.
- ◆ Development of vocational skills accreditation system using new technologies and distance learning applications.

To achieve the aims and objectives of K.P.E., specific actions in the form of work packages were designed in every TH.P. Moreover, a common methodology was adopted including work groups coordinated by a specific Development Partnership represented by partners defined by the D.P. itself.

In the following chart the main Thematic Pillars and the participating Development Partnerships for each TH.P. are shown.

MAIN THEMATIC PILLARS OF NTG
“ACCREDITATION OF VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS & SKILLS”



Throughout the NTG work, eight (8) thematic workshops and work group meetings took place, and three (3) synthesis reports were developed in which one can see the overall work of the Development Partnerships in connection to the issues emerged during pilot applications of vocational qualifications and skills accreditation. Furthermore, for mainstreaming reasons and broader information of the public, three (3) newsletters were edited and an international conference was organized. Both activities aimed at presenting and disseminating the results achieved, as well as networking with similar activities on a European level and exchanging experience on issues of human resources skills reinforcement and promotion of employment leading to effective policies.

On the whole, the synthesis work of the National Thematic Group includes the following:

1. Recording and analysis of **48 job profiles** of different fields (Management – Administration, Informatics, Tourism, Environment, Technical, Culture), in which 6 new professions are included.
2. Design of **27 counselling support** and promotion to employment tools.
3. Planning and implementation of **14 training curricula** (both conventional and distance learning).
4. Design of **6 accreditation systems**.

Συγκριτικό γράφημα προϊόντων

The direct beneficiaries comprised 300 individuals (unemployed, employed, short-term employees, self-employed) including those of disadvantaged groups and those who experience more intense and/or multiple exclusions (people with disabilities, migrants, women) as well as more than 150 enterprises. In the following graph one can see the beneficiaries distribution in the whole of the reference group.

γράφημα πίτα με ποσοστά ωφελούμενων

CONCLUSIONS

The synthesis work of the Development Partnerships, studied in the context of the National Thematic Group, revealed that the critical point for Qualifications and Skills Accreditation is the proper, well documented **recording and analysis** of the labour market needs, the exact **definition of job profiles** and their inclusion in integrated **systems of vocational training** (conventional and distance type), which will absorb the labour market demands taking into account the needs of disadvantaged groups and essentially contributing to the adaptability of human potential and the competitiveness of enterprises.

Based on the synthetic work carried out, among other issues, the following are identified:

1. The need for dynamic knowledge of a sector or a field potential.
2. The integration of vocational standards in training, accreditation and counselling support.
3. The emergence of Counselling as essential procedure of self-knowledge, personal development, inclusion and career.
4. The promotion of Life-long learning as a model reinforcing Employment and investing of enterprises on human capital.
5. The building of an Accreditation System of Vocational Qualifications and Skills (non-formal learning and training), which is a dynamic tool for:
 - ◆ Human potential skills reinforcement
 - ◆ Personal development
 - ◆ Knowledge capitalization
 - ◆ Effective inclusion in the labour market

The rapid advances taking place in a continuously changing economic and social environment characterized by the globalisation of economy and the rapid spread of new technologies create new data and challenges for both companies and employees. However, taking for granted that **society turns into a knowledge society and Life-long learning procedures is an one-way option**, the modern employee needs a variety of complimentary and renewing skills in order to face working life demands, increasing diverse social and cultural situations and the ability to adapt to changes.

The rapid advances of new technologies on the one hand and enterprise competition in the labour market on the other are basic factors of enterprises increasing needs for high-skilled personnel, who can cope with the daily demands of a job contributing to the increasing level of company performance. In this new socio-economic framework, education and training integrated in Life-long learning become essential and basic parameters to confront challenges playing an active part in economic development and social progress.

At the same time competition among those seeking employment is getting intense, whereas those belonging to disadvantaged groups and already having difficulties in seeking employment, feel more pressure. All these result in the realization that **accreditation** and particularly that at a European and international scale, is critical for the empowerment of human resources mobility and inclusion in the labour market leading to the abolition of inequality and exclusion due to lack of qualifications and skills.

The work of the Development Partnerships participating in the NTG, proved the critical importance of qualifications and skills accreditation, provided that it is based on effective methodologies and proper tools, to secure access of the beneficiaries into a labour market of higher skills.

3. JOB PROFILES

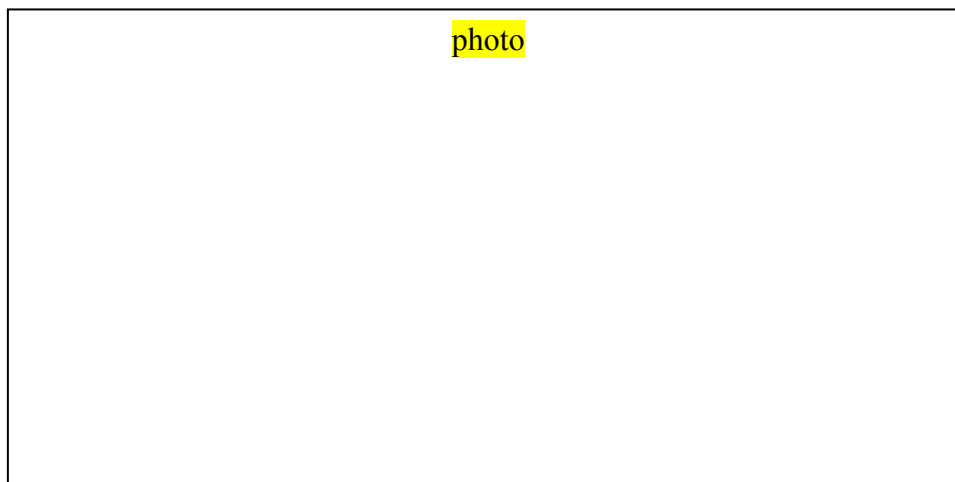
Athassios Kamosxos, NEORION II DP Consultant, Coordinator of Th.P. I of N.T.G.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The following report is the synthesis outcome of the work of the Thematic Pillar I (TH.P. I) “Profession Directory – Job Profiles Analysis – Definition of Vocational and Training Standards” of the National Thematic Group’s Joint Action Plan. In this particular TH.P, the following seven Development Partnerships participated:

- ◆ DESPA DP
- ◆ NEORION II DP
- ◆ ENVIRONMENT DP
- ◆ PPEZ DP
- ◆ PROTEAS DP
- ◆ SPARTAKOS DP
- ◆ TECHNOMATHEIA DP

According to the content of the National Thematic Group’s Joint Action Plan, the tasks of the particular TH.P. focused on and highlighted the following points (Thematic Modules):



- ✓ Ways of systematic recording of entrepreneurial fields and relevant professions, monitoring procedures of profession progress and updating vocational and training standards.
- ✓ Methodology of both job profile and relevant jobs task analysis for each profession.
- ✓ Methodology of defining vocational and training standards of professions and respective grading of required skills and competence on the basis of content and task level.
- ✓ Methodology of integrating vocational and training standards of professions in training, accreditation and counselling support actions.

In the above mentioned framework, the work and the tasks related to the thematic issues of P. I developed by the DPs were presented and discussed, based on a specific methodology developed by the Coordinating DP of the Pillar – NEORION II. More analytically, the Coordinating DP undertook the development of a methodology of recording the basic parameters of the relevant tasks and work of the cooperating DPs. On the basis of a specially elaborated questionnaire, all required data of each D.P. were gathered and then evaluated to produce the basic parameters which set the recording of the labour market needs in skills and professions, the description of the relevant job profiles and the definition of respective work tasks and vocational skills.

Thematic Module 1:

- ◆ Qualitative and quantitative definition of the DP project tasks, level of the approach specification and investigation of the intervention width (field, profession, training, complimentary training etc) as well as knowledge of the field being intervened.
- ◆ Level of cohesion of the specific intervention with the rest of the work
- ◆ Reasoning of the specific task implementation.
- ◆ Level of connecting the D.P. with the investigated entrepreneurial sector or/and field and evaluation of the DP's competency to carry out the specific task.
- ◆ Level of availability of the necessary know-how by the D.P. to carry out the specific task.

Thematic Module 2:

- ◆ Investigating level of clarity as far as the redesigned profile in the labour market (knowledge of professional structure of the field)
- ◆ Examining the approach level of completion and investigating the existence of a common belief in the D.P. concerning jobs profiles.
- ◆ Evaluation of job profile analysis completion and level of its specification.
- ◆ Investigating appropriateness of analysis results (level of proximity in the real profession needs).
- ◆ Defining the range and the prospects of the intervention (i.e. answering in an disjointed way to an instant labour market problem or taking into consideration the general needs and field prospects).
- ◆ Investigating the rate of technical efficiency of the bodies in the design of job profiles

Thematic Module 3:

- ◆ Examining skills rating based on content, profession or skill features and work ranks.
- ◆ Investigating the correlation between training content and vocational skills.

- ◆ Examining completion of training curricula on the basis of the produced material.

Thematic Module 4:

- ◆ Investigating adherence of acceptance procedures of intervention by the social partners.
- ◆ Examining broadness and effectiveness of implemented procedures.
- ◆ Investigating the rate of results integration in training procedures, accreditation and counselling.

Apart from the above information concerning tasks effectiveness, pilot application and its effectiveness were evaluated as well as general informative data about integrating the tasks into the whole project.

The result of the above mentioned research tasks is the following report, which composes the practices of the cooperating DPs, into a proposal on job profile analysis.

3.2. CONCLUSIONS – SYNTHESIS PROPOSAL

The current proposal is, as mentioned before, the synthesis outcome of 7 Development Partnerships cooperating in the work of the first Thematic Pillar “Profession Directory – Job Profiles Analysis – Definition of Vocational and Training Standards” of the National Thematic Group “Accreditation of Vocational Qualifications and Skills” in the framework of the EQUAL Community Initiative in Greece.

This specific proposal aims at documenting an integrated methodology on job profile analysis and defining vocational skills, thus contributing not only in the dialogue on the development of a vocational skills accreditation system in our country, but also in the effort made in Europe for a faster integration of Life-long learning principles in the training systems of E.U. member states in the context of the Lisbon European Council principles and Bologna Declaration.

As a common product of the 7 directly cooperating Development Partnerships, including 103 organizations dealing with vocational training and employment promotion in our country, this specific proposal is worth special attention.

Beyond that, the synthesis of a broad situational dimension of the labour market (different target groups, variety of professional fields, problems that each D.P. attempts to solve etc) and a variety of approach on several issues faced by the DPs during their work realization, adds to this work a special value.

On the basis of the particular practices of the DPs in the thematic modules of Thematic Pillar I approach, the synthesis proposal – guide for the setting of a system of Profession Recording, Job Profiles Analysis and Definition of Vocational and Training Standards is documented as follows:

- ◆ Taking for granted that every labour market needs form the job demands and thus the job profile of a profession, it is necessary to be aware of a sector’s progress so that effects on enterprises – both private and public - on organizational aspect can be mapped and therefore, their needs in skills can be anticipated.

The necessary information for the development description can be deduced from a sectoral research - study, also approached through cooperation with representative

sample of sectoral / enterprise organizations and data elaboration from sectoral / professional experts.

The utilization of other countries' experience in this context, is useful as it adds to obtaining more specific images about possible developments in the sector and jobs. However, it does not replace the local reality, which may be different from the existing conditions in other countries.

For sectors / entrepreneurial fields not clearly set yet as far as professions and skills employed are concerned and/or are going to employ in the future, an integrated study of the current situation is needed as well as the institutional framework and estimation of the expected developments, so that the sector's needs can be recorded and the necessary professions and skills defined.

The needs analysis of the existing enterprises, their integration in the framework set by the general study of the field and also the potential of information standardization on sectoral level is a particularly useful tool to describe the needed professions and skills. Respectively, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, the transnational experience is extremely useful aiding anticipating developments and confronting situations already solved in other regions.

- ◆ The above-mentioned procedures since they are carried out on a regular basis, depending on the developments and particular needs of every sector or entrepreneurial field, aid continuous updating of professions and therefore training contents and continuous adaptation of human resources in the current labour needs. The inclusion of these procedures in an integrated system of human resources development secures the continuous updating and adaptation of human resources in the changing labour needs.
- ◆ The methodology of approaching job profiles varies not only according to the targets set, but also to available study parameters. It is obvious, however, that since the job profile concerns working posts in companies, any approach should be made in accordance with them. Apart from that, the specific profile developed exceeds the needs limits of some specific companies and there is an attempt for a broader validation, as a description of a recognised and integrated profile in the production sector, its acceptance should be secured by the social partners of the field. As a result, particularly concerning new skills, any profile is under negotiations and presupposes the common consent of the social partners.
- ◆ Based on the targets that a profile covers, that is, whether it covers particular needs of specific enterprises or aims at establishing the framework / introducing a new profile in a sector, there should be a more general information on developments of a sector and the dominant tendencies, beyond the current needs of enterprises in skills, which can be recorded in the context of a certain labour market research and/or co operations with professionals of the sector. Thus, and provided that a skill should, if possible, be approached as a dynamic entity, with a prospect in time, the integration of vocational skills in a certain profession is attempted. This may not be directly needed in a certain company or it is likely to be needed in another company or at some other time. As a result, on one hand competitiveness of enterprises is reinforced and on the other, employability and mobility of employees are supported. Information about future developments and dominant tendencies should be available to a vocational expert and they can be taken from other countries experience. The availability of the above-mentioned information is of critical importance to any designed profile since it can cover current and future needs of companies.

- ◆ The profile concerns the description of both employee's basic tasks and work position, also the basic skills needed to cover an employee's tasks. The rate of task specialization together with the range of the profession's tasks results in job grading. Reference to the employee's required training level concerns the necessary skills for him/her, thus indicating the level of basic knowledge and skills considered to be necessary for carrying out the tasks.
- ◆ The job profile analysis presupposes, as above-mentioned, good knowledge of the specific profession's tasks and the required knowledge, competence and behaviour/attitudes. To obtain this knowledge one needs a very good analytical description of work tasks, operations or activities, in the context of the specific work post, as well as the desirable level of performing them. The above presupposes full analysis of work tasks into specific sub-tasks and defining the expected level of efficiency in performing each of them. Regularly, this entails the existence of clear standards about how to perform each task and when it is considered efficiently performed. This kind of standards can be, on the one hand, adopted by valid models (ISO, DIN, EURONORM etc) concerning technical professions, on the other, the enterprises themselves can produce them provided they have this potential.
- ◆ The analysis of work tasks into specific sub-tasks requires full knowledge of the employee's tasks in the specific work post. This knowledge can be acquired through various ways and methods, one of which is the thorough observation of a group of employees by a group of experts while the former perform their work. Another is the completion of a sufficient number of appropriately formed questionnaires etc. The results through analysing employees directly involved in the profession, supervisors and managers of the company responsible for the specific group of employees will add to the global image of the peculiarities of each task performed. The experience and the knowledge of the expert, on the one hand and the gathered data from on site study matched with other companies' data can standardize results, extracting the particular data of a company.
- ◆ The analytical description of the tasks performed combined with performance standards defines the required knowledge – competence and behaviour/attitudes of a work post. The definition of these vocational skills can be carried out by the vocational expert, who cooperates with a training expert, specialized in the particular skill and also in cooperation with professionals of the field (employees directly involved and managers).

The results of the above task are then matched with the training targets from which the quantity and the level of theoretical knowledge and practice needed for the required skills of trainees result. The synthesis of the required knowledge and the relative practice in the thematic modules emerge the range and depth of every training module, which is then matched with training duration and forms the training curriculum.

The training expert in cooperation with the vocational expert mainly does this task. The design of training modules in a way that form a relatively thematic independence in connection with the vocational targets to cover as well as the content extension with modules from relative professions, support procedures of life-long learning and also help employability and mobility of employees. The latter are critical factors for a continuously changing labour market and a society affected by high rate of unemployment.

- ◆ The introduction of a new profession and/or the introduction of task changes of a current profession presuppose the social partners' consent. Considering that these changes in an ever-changing economic environment constitute a continuous necessity, procedures informing both working sides on the necessity and the content of change are required.

This fact imposes continuous empowerment / information of social partners concerning changes in the sector and awareness of the necessity for the tasks to adapt to the new demands. Taking into consideration that the re-definition of tasks content of professions is of critical interest for both social parties, it is important to involve social partners in the above-mentioned described tasks of analysis and definition of job profiles.

Due to the fact that these tasks affect broader social groups, it is obvious that these groups should be involved in the specific procedures so that not only every challenge can be confronted but also both social parties can benefit. In the same framework, and to the extent that the state functions as the medium between the two parties as well as the body, which forms rules and provides training services, it is becoming important to be present in the above-mentioned procedures for the validation of the agreements of the two parties, the securing of results and also the adaptation and adoption of relative institutional framework and respective training content.

- ◆ The above-mentioned make development of mechanisms critical in order to inform the parties involved. The methods used in this direction are, the direct involvement of the partners in the above procedures, the development and operation of informative mechanisms and consultation, such as for a, thematic workshops, seminars, open dialogue as well as training procedures for the operation and significance of the above techniques. To realize all the above-mentioned, it is critical to establish various forms of continuous cooperation, such as networks and partnerships, and also dissemination and promotion plans.

4. VOCATIONAL COUNSELLING

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Coordinator of Thematic Pillar II of N.T.G.**

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the second Thematic Pillar “Diagnosis, Evaluation and Reviewing of vocational skills in the framework of life-long learning individualized approach” of N.T.G. K.P.E., five Development Partnerships, on the whole, participated. These DPs produced within their projects significant *tools of evaluating vocational qualifications and skills, thus providing essential content to the following systems: individualized counselling and vocational skills reviewing, individualized counselling support and monitoring, vocational qualifications and skills accreditation, Training and life-long learning.*

The Development Partnerships that participated in the Thematic Pillar are:

- ◆ Network for Vocational Counselling and Promotion to Employment D.P. - D.E.S.P.A.
- ◆ For Equality and Social Cohesion D.P. - FORUM for Social Cohesion
- ◆ For the Establishment of Job Rotation D.P.
- ◆ SPARTAKOS D.P.
- ◆ NEORION II D.P. – Promotion of Competitiveness and Securing of Employment in the Shipbuilding Industry

photo

The work of the abovementioned Development Partnerships resulted in the present Synthesis Report, in which the following are included:

- ✓ Brief information about the DPs and the target groups to whom the outcome – results are applied.
- ✓ Short report on the outcome – results of each D.P.
- ✓ General remarks on the products and work of each D.P., particularly on designing, good practice, strong points, pilot application, innovation and added value.

- ✓ Comments – remarks on the common or specific features of results and outcome of the DPs.
- ✓ Conclusions concerning particularly problems confronted through products, results and good practice of this Thematic Pillar, as well as policy messages formed that enrich current policies on tackling discrimination in employment and career.

The tools produced by the five Development Partnerships are classified in two basic categories:

The first one concerns **tools** used in the framework of **Counselling Services and Employment Promotion** and the second one involves tools used in the framework of **Training Services and Accreditation of Vocational Qualifications & Skills**.

The target groups to whom the tools are applied are also different and concern, naturally, the type and the tool targets. Thus, the Counselling Services and Employment Promotion tools (D.E.S.P.A., SPARTAKOS, FORUM for the social cohesion) apply to unemployed (long-term unemployed, newcomers) and support staff for migrants and refugees, whereas tools of Training Services and Vocational Qualifications and Skills Accreditation (Job Rotation, NEORION II) apply to various categories employees such as: human resources management staff, team work supervisors (Job Rotation), employees and newcomers of the shipbuilding sector in the professions of welders and platers (NEORION II).

The DP project tasks in the framework of which the abovementioned tools were produced, concern Individualized Evaluation and Vocational skills Reviewing (D.E.S.P.A., SPARTAKOS, NEORION II), Individualized Counselling Support and Monitoring (D.E.S.P.A., SPARTAKOS, FORUM, JOB ROTATION), Vocational Qualifications and Skills Accreditation (SPARTAKOS, NEORION II).

4.2. BRIEF REVIEW ON DPs' OUTCOME AND THEIR PARTICULAR FEATURES

- The projects of the first two Development Partnerships (“Employment and Career Paths”/D.E.S.P.A. D.P., “Forum for social cohesion”/ For Equality and Social Cohesion D.P.) focus on producing tools of Individualized Counselling Support, the former on a wider area and the latter on a smaller one. From the tools presentation of the second project and in particular of three questionnaires on vocational interests, vocational personality and self-esteem of mental competence, it is clear that the first two belong to the category of vocational counselling and only the third to vocational orientation.
- The tools of these two projects have computer databases for a faster and objective elaboration of data and results, whereas the tools of both projects are based on the identification of unemployed and disadvantaged social groups individual characteristics during various phases of counselling, without the potential for the supported individual to reach his/her conclusions. This role is undertaken by the medium, the tool and much less by the individual or the counsellor.
- The third project (“Unified Support System for Unemployed via Accreditation of Vocational Qualifications”/Spartakos D.P.), focuses on describing a system of individualized counselling support (a study) and producing a series of documents which refer more to the interest of the project to define through them procedures,

rather than evaluation and skills accreditation tools. Thus, the proposed evaluation forms reflect the supported people's opinion for themselves rather than secure an objective evaluation and even more skills accreditation.

- The methodologies applied for the development of outcomes generally follow the same significance line: Development, Pilot Application, Feedback, and Final Result. The design followed on most occasions the procedures of defining development stages or phases, in the framework of which particular methodological criteria were adopted, approaches and targets forming progress conditions and completion of works of final products.
- The different element of the Development Partnerships was – at a high or low rate – their adaptation during planning and development in the specific (spotted) needs of target-groups, their flexible, open and adaptable use of produced outcomes by other social groups.
- It is obvious that there are differences in the ways of development, application and feedback rate of the initial results. The qualitative and quantitative data for the abovementioned differences are recorded in the questionnaires completed by the Development Partnerships.
- Every Development Partnership mentions the strong points and good practices, of which the added value is obvious, since there has been neither a specific and integrated system of Individualized Counselling Support so far, nor any integral and reliable material of tools, means and procedures on which the abovementioned projects focus somehow. The same can be claimed for the product - outcome of innovation and added value concerning the TH.P 2, in relation to their deliverables.
- The last two projects (“Innovative Techniques of Life-long learning – The model of Job Rotation D.P., “Promotion of Competitiveness and Securing of Employment in the Shipbuilding Industry” / Neorion II D.P.) focus on producing tools of Training and Evaluation of training results, by giving input to the procedure of life-long learning and reinforcing the role of the company as “learning organization”. The project “Innovative Techniques of Life-long learning – The model of Job Rotation” produces two manuals for staff training where the most interesting is the one made for human resources management staff, as it promotes talents attraction, multi-skilling and active participation of employees in life-long learning. The project “Promotion of Competitiveness and Securing of Employment in the Shipbuilding Industry” produces guides and skills evaluation questionnaires for two job profiles, whose results give input to the system of life-long learning and accreditation used by the enterprises of the shipbuilding sector. It is interesting that this project presents the results of tools and evaluation for low-skilled workers.
- Finally, the products – tools developed by the DPs of the TH.P.2 “Diagnosis, Evaluation and Review of Vocational Skills in the context of Individualized Approach of Life-long Learning” *focus on the areas of vocational counselling, vocational training as well as improvement of employability and mobility of employed and unemployed.*
- *The approach of the tools concerned the contribution to formation and implementation of integrated systems of evaluation and accreditation of qualifications & skills.*

- *The innovation of outcomes is taken for granted, since they are developed for the first time, are applied and adopted by significant types of quality and quantity bodies on national and European level.*
- *The products per project comprise open, flexible and adaptable systems and methods of knowledge and competence evaluation for certain target groups, however, they can be adapted and applied to broader social groups.*

4.3. CONCLUSIONS

Tools

- *EVALUATION AND VOCATIONAL SKILLS REVIEW*
- *COUNSELLING SUPPORT AND MONITORING*
- *VOCATIONAL – WORKING QUALIFICATIONS / SKILLS ACCREDITATION*

When the unemployed are not aware of the informal knowledge and skills they have, when they do not realize their tendencies, real professional interests, values and prospects in the modern labour market, when employed people (as well as the companies where they work) do not realize the informal knowledge, competence and experience, then it is unlikely to function properly:

- ◆ Employment policies
- ◆ Policies of adaptation and competitiveness of employees and enterprises

The Equal Community Initiative that aims at confronting discriminations against vulnerable social groups (unemployed, migrants, refugees, women, low-skilled employees), provides an ideal framework for confronting the above problem, through the development and establishment of new methods of Individualized Counselling Support and Accreditation of Vocational Qualifications & Skills.

The problem

- ◆ There is a lack of tools and systems of Individualized Counselling Support and Promotion of disadvantaged social groups in the labour market. This lack affects the quality and effectiveness of Counselling, Training and Accreditation of Qualifications & Skills.
- ◆ There is a lack of evaluation and knowledge/competence accreditation tools and systems for the unemployed and the employed, which were achieved informally (training, work experience, self-learning etc). This fact leads to professional weakening, low self-esteem and withdrawal from a better labour future.
- ◆ There is a lack of tools and systems evaluation of employees “silent knowledge” on the part of companies, which often leads to meaningless training actions, underestimation of human capital, degrading of competitive features of the company.

Related actions

In the framework of the C.I. Equal, the (5) Development Partnerships were confronted by part of the abovementioned problems depending on the projects realized and the targets set, defining and applying solutions that can become good practice.

The National and Community strategy for Employment can integrate this good practice, which emphasizes the benefits gained by the unemployed, the employed and companies through the development and establishment of the following:

- ◆ New tools and systems of Vocational Counselling, Promotion to Employment and Career
- ◆ New tools and systems of individualized evaluation and skills review
- ◆ New tools and systems of accreditation of vocational qualifications & skills.

This good practice will give a new boost to the systems of Training, Counselling and Vocational Qualifications/Skills Accreditation, reinforcing the effectiveness of exercised policies.

Results

All Development Partnerships proved that the attempts made to develop functional and effective tools of Counselling; Training and Vocational knowledge/competence Accreditation were extensive. Through their involvement with the above-mentioned problems, they realized their roles, responsibilities as well as their potential, thus they built a collective culture emphasizing:

- ◆ Existing skills, evaluating and accrediting them
- ◆ Awareness of potential, knowledge and wishes
- ◆ Search of the necessary information and preparation
- ◆ Planning and participation in proper training types
- ◆ Individual development plan, integration and career
- ◆ Formation of continuous learning conscience
- ◆ Networking to empower human capital

Combining and utilizing old and new ideas, the Development Partnerships formed integrated interventions based on supply and demand, gaining added value through the projects of C.I. Equal.

4.4. GOOD PRACTICE

1. Converting Counselling into a critical procedure of self-knowledge, personal development, inclusion and career.

“D.E.S.P.A.” D.P. designed and developed 15 tools of vocational counselling which correspond to all phases, starting from hosting the supported (long-term unemployed – newcomers), their career orientation, vocational counselling, vocational information and Employment Counselling. The natural conclusion from the use of the proper tools is the skills evaluation and the action plan of the supported.

The pilot application of the tools in a broader sample of target groups was totally successful, confirming their necessity. The supported participated enthusiastically and at the end of the procedure they knew who they were, what they could do and what they

wanted to do. Their self-confidence was reinforced. In the end, with the help of organizations and their counsellors, who provided counselling services and networking with the labour market, they were placed in apprenticeships posts (70%) and in work positions (30%).

The **“Forum for Equality and Social Cohesion” D.P.** designed, developed and applied 4 tools of managing and vocational counselling of migrants and refugees. Their added value lies in specialization and tailor-making to the needs and profiles of migrants and refugees, as well as to the fact that through them and the elements they emerge and utilize; they are improved and give input to the applied policies in the benefit of target groups.

In both cases, the evaluation tools formed are based on the objective recording, analysis and evaluation of vocational knowledge, competence and experience. However, in the case of D.E.S.P.A., every phase of counselling support is approached at an integrated manner, attributing a full system of tools, procedures and means, which, according to the grade of use by experienced and trained counsellors, can become a model for many E.U. countries' counselling services.

II. Using the “training card” as a tool to promote the idea of a modular training system

The **“SPARTAKOS” D.P.** designed the training card, which is an information tool for the supported individual. On this card information of knowledge and skill levels are recorded, as well as the proposed (by the employment counselling services) training modules needing training, parallel to their time duration. The training card promotes the idea of a modular training system, in which the unemployed is trained on the basis of his/her individual needs and not on a training curriculum related to a profession, since it is possible for him/her to have part of the required by the labour market knowledge / skills.

III. Promoting the idea of life-long learning and the job rotation model in enterprises

The **“Life-long learning and Job Rotation” D.P.** designed a manual for human resources management staff, which promotes the idea of job rotation, among old and new employees and newcomers. Its content concerns various ways of utilizing “new employees' skills”, their integration in work teams and their acceptance to the promotion of multi-skilling and the value of learning in the activation of participation to life-long learning.

IV. Making evaluation a motive for companies investing in human capital

The **NEORION II D.P.** designed a series of assessment tools (guides-questionnaires) of technical skills aiming at giving input and updating training needs and life-long learning for specific low-skilled staff categories, so that the benefits of life-long learning for both the employees and the company can be secured, resulting in saving time and sources as well as improving work performance and adaptation in the shipbuilding sector.

5. CRITERIA, METHODOLOGY AND VOCATIONAL SKILLS ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

Panagiotis Maistros, Coordinator of SPARTAKOS D.P. and TH. P. III of N.T.G.

5.1. INTRODUCTION

The present Synthesis Report concerns the criteria, methodology and standards of accreditation of vocational qualifications & skills. It refers to the third Thematic Pillar (TH.P.) of the Joint Action Plan (K.P.E.) of the National Thematic Group (N.T.G.).

According to the initial design of the K.P.E. of the N.T.G. in the third Thematic Pillar, the following basic thematic priorities should emerge:

- ◆ Definition of criteria, reference points and assumptions of knowledge accreditation achieved through vocational training or other type of training or work experience.
- ◆ Adoption of matching methodology and rating accreditation in levels and fields according to the level of required knowledge and skills.
- ◆ Definition and pilot application of evaluation and verification ways of achieved skills and competence, procedure and stages of vocational skills accreditation.
- ◆ Analysis of all particular parameters and required adjustments in order to apply a skills accreditation system.
- ◆ Development of a vocational skills accreditation system with the use of new technologies and distance learning software applications.

Based on the abovementioned priorities and the answers of the Development Partnerships to a questionnaire elaborated and distributed by the Coordinator of the Thematic Pillar, the present Report was compiled.

From the 9 Development Partnerships participating in the Joint Action Plan (K.P.E.) of the National Thematic Group in the TH.P.3, the following 7 DPs took part:

- a) NEORION II D.P.
- b) D.P. for the Development of an Open System for Acquisition and Accreditation of Qualifications & Skills in the Environmental Protection SECTOR (Environment D.P.)

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- c) Initiative for Working Life Quality D.P. (P.P.E.Z. D.P.)
- d) PROTEAS D.P.
- e) SPARTAKOS D.P.
- f) Network for Promoting Life-long Learning and Distance Accreditation of Skills in SMEs - TECHNOMATHEIA (TECHNOMATHEIA D.P.)
- g) D.P. for Equality and Social Cohesion – FORUM for Social Cohesion (FORUM D.P.)

Five of the participating Development Partnerships developed systems of vocational skills accreditation, whereas one of them (PROTEAS D.P.) guided trainees to existing accreditation bodies (Ministry of Development and ECDL). The FORUM for Social Cohesion D.P. through procedures of “Social Capital” assessment, application of the “Adoption” system, and migrants and refugees Counselling and Support led interested migrants and refugees to the proper administrative services of knowledge accreditation and use of the Greek language of our country (KEG, DI.KA.TSA.) as well as for degrees obtained in the country of origin.

5.2. GENERAL REMARK

The design and the outcomes of the (7) abovementioned Development Partnerships’ (DPs.) projects as well as their proposals for the standardization of methodology they used results in the necessity to constitute an **Integrated System of Vocational Skills Accreditation (O.S.P.E.P.)**, as part of a more general national policy concerning the development of human force life-long learning and recognition of their skills, making feasible inclusion and re-inclusion in the labour market and professional progress.

5.3. TARGET GROUPS – PROFESSIONS – ASSUMPTIONS

The 7 DPs cover a wide area of target group cases, which O.S.P.E.P. should cover and therefore it is possible the standardization of conclusions.

Indicatively:

a) The target groups of the DPs are:

- ◆ Employed (without accredited skills)
- ◆ Unemployed (long-term, new and short-term employees)
- ◆ Newcomers in the labour market
- ◆ Disabled employed
- ◆ Disabled unemployed
- ◆ Self-employed
- ◆ Migrants, refugees

b) The selected professions by the DPs are:

- ✓ Technical professions: Welders, Platers, Machinery Operators in Solid Waste Disposal Facilities, Car Air-Condition Mechanics and Photo captures and printing by digital media.
- ✓ Administrative professions: computer aided accounting, web and multimedia applications developer, manager of tourist information, computer operator.
- ✓ Other professions: Call center agents, sport journalists, assistant insurance employees, industrial food catering assistants, and employees responsible for

planning and management of eco-tourist programs and environmental rendering systems.

c) The training level of the above is:

- ◆ Concerning technical professions, basic training or secondary technical training
- ◆ Concerning administrative professions, secondary training as a rule
- ◆ Concerning other professions, it varies (from primary to third grade training)

5.4 BASIC OPTIONS AND DOCUMENTATION – PATHS FOR OBTAINING SKILLS

The basic options for every D.P. are the following in brief:

- ✓ Vocational skills accreditation of specific technical professions based on operational needs of two large dominant companies of a sector (NEORION II D.P.)
- ✓ Profession coding and knowledge and skills accreditation obtained through training or work experience (ENVIRONMENT D.P.)
- ✓ Adoption of a European accreditation system of training curricula and teaching models as well as skills obtained through “conventional” training, distant training and on- the -job training. (P.P.E.Z. D.P.)
- ✓ Accreditation of customized training corresponding to training and other specific needs of people with disabilities and work posts demands, which were based on models of total training quality (PROTEAS D.P.)
- ✓ Vocational skills accreditation obtained through various routes of prior or continuing training, work experience after apprenticeship or regular work. (SPARTAKOS D.P.)
- ✓ Distant skills accreditation in the field of technical professions in SMEs, based on the model of vocational standards, expressed mainly on the logic of what the trainee can do after successfully attending relative training courses (TECHNOMATHEIA D.P.)

In conclusion, from the abovementioned brief data and the respective ones more analytically expressed by the DPs., it appears that both the employed and the unemployed as well as companies, and generally the labour market, need an Integrated System of Vocational Skills Accreditation (O.S.P.E.P.), which will be governed by the following rules:

- a) It will be based on **coding and describing professions and job profiles**, accompanied by analysis in knowledge, skills and competence and will be carried out with model methodology (preferably accepted by the E.U.), which will express the real needs of work posts created in companies and will ensure the consent of both employers and employees.
- b) It will provide **accredited curricula** of vocational training of different levels in order to obtain knowledge, skills and competence needed for the above-mentioned professions and vocational skills, which will be recognized (e.g. with training certificate and/or European diploma).
- c) It will provide **vocational skills accreditation**, which the above-mentioned professions need and vocational skills (of general and specific knowledge, skills

and competence), independently of the way they were obtained, in other words, through training and/or experience and/or informal learning and also independently of the path followed by the individual under accreditation.

- d) It will utilize the modern **Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)**.
- e) It will provide the potential of **Distant Accreditation**.
- f) It will anticipate rating (i.e. classes of accreditation) of the above (job description and professions, accredited training curricula, vocational skills accreditation), so that low-skilled people can certify their vocational skills on the basis of marked work tasks and demands.
- g) It will provide the necessary support to the employed and the unemployed for accrediting their professional skills and to companies to integrate results of accreditation systems into systems of human resources development.

5.5. CONTENT, CRITERIA, METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE – STANDARDS AND MODELS – ACCREDITATION CLASSES

Briefly, the most characteristic elements of the DPs are:

- ◆ Standards of work posts were used as models of job profiles by modelling their functions in the productive process and the model of work performance or functional analysis. In the procedure of accreditation representatives of employees, employers and training bodies participated. Knowledge was validated through a certain questionnaire, skills through practice exam and personal and social characteristics through interviews. The system of evaluation and accreditation was based on Accreditation of Prior Learning system (NEORION II D.P.).
- ◆ The accreditation procedure was based on relative principles of the French institutional framework for skills accreditation matching technological training, concerning the profession of solid waste disposal facility operator; and on European models of accreditation sectoral professions concerning protection and management of natural environment. The evaluated portfolio includes formal and essential skills: basic studies, additional studies, vocational training, work experience and critical skills for each profession (ENVIRONMENT D.P.).
- ◆ European quality standards concerning job profiles were adopted, designed on the basis of the international work profile system, as well as training and skills accreditation, as set by the European Federation of Direct Marketing (FEDMA), which cooperates with the European Committee for Standardization (CEN). The accreditation leads to either a certificate or a diploma (P.P.E.Z. D.P.).
- ◆ Models of job profiles were used based on the job definition and classification system “O*NET” (Occupational Information Network). About the accreditation of training curricula, the following were preceded: work posts specification, trainers – counsellors – trainees’ required skills specification, as well as respective content of training curricula according to the special needs of the target group (people with disabilities), with the use of Job Coaches. As models of skills accreditation the

already recognized systems were used: the ECDL system for trainees in Informatics and the one used by the Ministry of Development for the ones trained in insurances (PROTEAS D.P.).

- ◆ European and Greek models (O.E.E.K. and E.KE.PIS.) were used to define development methods of study programmes and teaching methods. The training curricula became modularised and concise, emphasizing key skills and authentic job applications; thus, resulting in a “context based” rather than a “traditional course”. The accreditation exams included written tests for the theoretical part and oral tests for the practical one, leading to either the trainees’ rejection or approval or approval after applying measures of substitution (SPARTAKOS D.P.).
- ◆ Every profession was analysed in basic activities, specific tasks and criteria of performance characterized as work standards. The job profile analysis was based on the necessary skills (knowledge, competence, values, behaviour) and on work performance standards. Accreditation took place to evaluate the theoretical knowledge (via an e-platform), basic skills transferred to practice (via Internet and in laboratories), formal qualifications (with a personal portfolio), general vocational competence (in a form of project) and individual characteristics/abilities (via personal interview) (TECHNOMATHEIA D.P.).
- ◆ An integrated intervention was followed for the special group of migrants and refugees, which included: Provision of counselling via “special desks” operating as hosting, needs diagnosis, informative, recording, and career advising centers to support and empower them. Moreover, provision of counselling about the competent public services and required documents for the recognition of the target group’s degrees in Greece (FORUM D.P.).

In conclusion, the above data confirm the rules described in the previous paragraph 5.4. Additionally, the following results emerge:

- a) In defining and validating job descriptions and professions **employees and companies of the respective sector participate**, mainly through their trade bodies. Particularly, about professions existing in dominant sectoral companies, their participation is of critical importance for the description of these jobs.
- b) On a European level, there is the tendency of standardizing job profiles and skills; however, it is believed that a lot of time is needed to generalize this throughout all professions. Therefore, O.S.P.E.P. should start mainly **from those skills and professions formed in European models**.
- c) **Vocational counselling and respective tools** should be an essential element of O.S.P.E.P. because they play a multi medium role connecting requirements of the System partners with employees’ needs and potential, and unemployed who wish to have their skills certified. The Job Coaches can play a critical role of connecting according to the international experience.
- d) In most cases, for skills accreditation a minimum level of **training**, a previous attendance of **vocational training** (general, specific or complimentary) and also **work experience** (even short) are considered essential.
- e) The models, standards and skills accreditation methodology that DPs use are not the same, however, they are governed by common principles and regulations, which are the following:

- ✓ In any case **representatives of employers and employees of a sector**, and sometimes, of respective training bodies and competent national body participate in forming or selecting models, standards and accreditation methodology.
- ✓ The personal portfolio of the individual to be accredited is examined. This portfolio includes documents of formal and essential skills and their evaluation takes place through **knowledge exam** (e.g. written or distance exams) and through **practical skills exam** (via labs or Internet). Sometimes, it is of critical importance to evaluate individual characteristics and competence through a **personal interview**. In many cases, the evaluated data are graded and for some of them there is a minimum threshold. Finally, all the data are given proper grading.
- ✓ The Accreditation Committee is **trilateral**, with the participation of experts appointed by employers and employees or their trade bodies and by relative training body and/or national body.
- ✓ When the accreditation procedure does not result in positive decision for the candidate, he/she is suggested following **substitution actions** for parts he/she lacks, either through training or work experience. In such a case training is optional, facilitated when the accredited training curriculum is modularised and context based.
- ✓ It is likely to have more than one **accreditation level** of the same profession matching different content and level of responsibility of relative jobs.
- ✓ **The accreditation document (certificate or diploma) is prompt for recognizing on European level.** In some cases, particularly when accreditation is linked to institutionally established rights, the individual accredited enter special registries.

5.6 VALIDATION AND RELIABILITY – ESTABLISHMENT OF ACCREDITATION

- a) Validation and reliability of the applied models, standards and methodologies for every D.P., are based on the following:
- ◆ They are based on internationally accepted and established systems (work performance standards and APL) and they have been approved by social partners and specialized bodies of skills accreditation (e.g. shipping registers) (NEORION II D.P.)
 - ◆ They lead to job rights validation. (ENVIRONMENT D.P.)
 - ◆ They have been applied on European level, in 11 countries coordinated by a European organization (trade body of sectoral companies) recognized by labour bodies and policy makers (P.P.E.Z. D.P.)
 - ◆ They are already accredited systems: ECDL and Greek Ministry of Development Accreditation (PROTEAS D.P.)
 - ◆ They follow European models (sustainable professionalization) and Greek ones, in which procedure proper national bodies (O.E.E.K. and E.KE.PIS.) participate together with representatives of employers and employees (SPARTAKOS D.P.)

- ◆ The curricula accreditation methodology is based on the expected learning outcome. Social partners and employers' trade federations take part in skills accreditation (TECHNOMATHEIA D.P.)
- b) Validation of vocational skills accreditation, for every D.P. is based on the following:
- ◆ It is directly validated by two large companies and indirectly by the relative sector due to the companies dominant position. Validation is pursued by appropriate social partners, State and competent European organizations (NEORION II D.P.)
 - ◆ Validation is pursued by creating a registry of accredited individuals (ENVIRONMENT D.P.)
 - ◆ The European character of the accreditation system in use will assure its validation by the labour market bodies and appropriate national bodies (P.P.E.Z. D.P.)
 - ◆ The accreditation systems in use are institutionally established (PROTEAS D.P.)
 - ◆ Appropriate social and national bodies participate in the accreditation procedure. The accreditation system can be linked to the prospect of European validation through Europass (SPARTAKOS D.P.)
 - ◆ Validation can be assured provided that an accreditation body is set with the active participation of social partners (TECHNOMATHEIA D.P.)

In conclusion, additionally to the results of paragraphs 5.4 and 5.5, there are the following:

- a) Validation and reliability of applied models, standards and methodologies are based on:
- ◆ They have been applied on **European level**
 - ◆ They have been accepted by **social partners** (employers and employees)
 - ◆ They have been applied by **competent accreditation bodies**
- b) Validation of vocational skills accreditation is based on being accepted by:
- ◆ Competent **European and national bodies**
 - ◆ The labour market and particularly the relative sectoral bodies (Chambers, associations etc)

5.7. TRANSFERABILITY AND STANDARDIZATION – REQUIRED ADJUSTMENTS

Briefly, the judgements concerning transferability and standardization of accreditation methodology as well as proposals about required adjustments, for every D.P., are as follows:

- ◆ Standardization of the used accreditation methodology is technically feasible, taking into account more general agreements among actors (employees, employers, state). The encouragement of companies to introduce internal

accreditation systems will aid promotion of accreditation systems on a national level (NEORION II D.P.)

- ◆ Standardization of the accreditation methodology is feasible provided that the relevant registry is set and will expand gradually to the total of job profiles of the sector of environmental protection and other professions needing registries (ENVIRONMENT D.P.)
- ◆ The accreditation methodology followed European models making integration into a national policy of vocational skills accreditation easy. Concerning teleworkers, it is presupposed to create the appropriate legal framework for teleworking (P.P.E.Z. D.P.)
- ◆ The accreditation methodology used people with disabilities can be applied in that order to other categories of disabilities (PROTEAS D.P.)
- ◆ In the prospect of standardizing the accreditation methodology, the participation of competent national bodies (O.E.E.K. and E.KE.PIS.) helps and the activation of the National System of Connecting Vocational Training with employment – E.S.S.E.E.K.A. – Act 3191/2003 - will definitely contribute (SPARTAKOS D.P.)
- ◆ In the prospect of standardizing the results so that a national vocational skills accreditation policy can be constituted, a critical element is the active participation of social partners in the field of vocational training and the contribution of the activation of the provisions of Act 3191/2003 – E.S.S.E.E.K.A. (TECHNOMATHEIA D.P.)

In conclusion, from the above data, it is obvious that the applied methodologies are transferable in other target groups and professions. Their standardization, however, does not lead to integrated models, standards and methodologies but only to **common principles and regulations**, as described in the results of paragraphs 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6.

Therefore, the basic required institutional intervention is the **establishment of an accreditation body**, in the framework of O.S.P.E.P., which will certify the bodies that apply these common principles and regulations.

5.8. BRIEF CONCLUSIONS

The vocational skills accreditation, as it was applied in the framework of the Development Partnerships projects of the National Thematic Group, is appointed to different target groups. The majority of the beneficiaries are low-skilled employees or disadvantaged ones, the unemployed, part-time or short-term employees and teleworkers. They are followed by self-employed, migrants, repatriates and refugees, people with visual impairments, thalassemia and physical disabilities.

The professions that the DPs' projects focused on include the following specific productive fields: Industry – Craft, Trade – Hotels, Other services and the majority of Services.

The above-mentioned professions are selected on the basis of company needs and relative studies highlighting their increasing demand in the labour market in specific professions.

The results of job profile analysis in nearly all D.Ps' projects were utilized in both designing training curricula and specific profession accreditation.

From the results of D.Ps' projects, the necessity of an **Integrated System of Vocational Skills Accreditation** (O.S.P.E.P.) emerges concerning skills obtained informally. Such an Integrated System should include the following functional modules:

- (A) Professions Coding and Description
- (B) Developing and Accrediting Training Curricula
- (C) Vocational Counselling
- (D) Vocational Skills Accreditation

In the previous paragraphs (5.4 to 5.7) the regulations governing O.S.P.E.P. are documented. These regulations result from the options, characteristics and proposals of the Development Partnerships.

Concluding these results, one realizes that O.S.P.E.P. should be governed by the following regulations:

- a) Updated classification of professions
- b) Vocational skills accreditation ruled by job profiles established by the competent national body, which expresses the labour market needs and includes the consent of appropriate social partners
- c) Possibility of creating adjustments set by the competent national body for job profiles and in case the job profiles do not match the established ones, by social partners
- d) Vocational training curricula accreditation of different levels (based on classified job profile standards), used to make up for skill shortages
- e) Development of mutually accepted by the state and social partners vocational counselling models
- f) Development of mutually accepted by the state and social partners diagnosis, recognition and vocational skills accreditation models in the framework of a total and cohesive policy allowing to bridge various learning paths (transparency and comparativeness of skills)
- g) Compatibility of common models of diagnosis, evaluation, recognition, grading and validation of vocational skills with the European reality and respective initiatives on a European level
- h) Accreditation should validate in an integrated and concise way, vocational efficiency for one or more professional activities with the prospect the particular accreditations can add to the efficiency accreditation of an integral profession. Accreditation should be knowledge, competence - based and not content - based.

6. THE GOOD PRACTICE OF C.I. EQUAL IN ACCREDITATION OF VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS

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6.1 INTRODUCTION

Accreditation of vocational qualifications and skills is a critical issue, in view of the new challenges of a “knowledge society” and the reinforcement of life-long learning of European citizens, which give a different dimension to the investment on human potential. The improvement of labour resources effectiveness and productivity is the basic priority of the European Social Agenda, and presupposes, in any case, high added value of education and vocational training policies.

In the framework of these policies, informal types of training and new methods of self-learning of employees take up a critical place, providing direct and flexible response to the changing needs of companies, as well as to the complicated demands of jobs multiple tasks and skills. In this context, accreditation of obtained knowledge and skills should become a means of capitalizing vocational skills, obtained through different experiences and learning forms, a passport for inclusion of the unemployed in the labour market and employees’ professional progress.

In the center of questioning on upgrading mechanisms of vocational training, lie the issues concerning accreditation, recognition and optimising knowledge, skills and competence of human resources, obtained in the framework of formal education, informal training and work experience, as well as the relative issues of methodology defining minimal common vocational standards of skills, diagnosis reliability and evaluating required skills, together with adoption of consensus procedures in developing and applying their accreditation.

Equally important aspects of accreditation of vocational qualifications & skills are the functional linking between the involved bodies in education and vocational training, the primary role of employers and employees’ sectoral associations to define vocational skills and competence as well as the need to adopt a specific institutional framework and transparent procedures to evaluate and accredit vocational skills.



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6.2 THE PROBLEM

The absence of validation models and effective mechanisms of accreditation and recognition of vocational qualifications and skills is one of the main deterrents to find work or for employees' mobility. The European Union has adopted some measures to reinforce transparency and recognition of vocational skills, as a basic parameter of the policy of upgrading educational and vocational training systems as well as an essential motive to promote life-long learning and facilitate vocational and geographical mobility of European citizens.

Pursuing promotion of life-long learning through integrating the whole range of formal education, non-formal and informal learning, the member states have agreed to develop cohesive and integrated strategies of life-long learning with gradual unification of formal learning fields and seeking new ways of validating obtained basic, technical and vocational knowledge, irrespective of the obtained way, thus, overcoming stiffness of educational and training systems. In this pursuit, it may be important the contribution of "individual skills card", which will report and certify a candidate's knowledge for a work place, allowing for direct skills evaluation and updating knowledge during all his professional and social life.

On the other hand, the total lack of an integrated institutional frame to evaluate, certify and recognize vocational qualifications and skills constitutes the most basic problem in our country and makes for a deterrent for effective application of vocational skills accreditation procedures. Vocational skills accreditation is limited in checking provided and obtained education; it takes place on the basis of study years and with internal training procedures of evaluation and not on the basis of confirming professional efficiency. The same applies to accreditation of obtained knowledge through informal training curricula, which is limited in formal evaluation of courses completion, appropriateness of trainers and trainees' participation.

The lack of a general vocational skills accreditation system in our country, highlights the fragmentary character and the limited effectiveness of actions investigating particular parameters of vocational skills accreditation, intensifies in particular the mismatching of supply and demand in the labour market – concerning mainly skills categories and profession content – and by extension, it perpetuates the limited connection of vocational education and training with the labour market needs.

As a consequence of the above, the framing of a national vocational skills accreditation system is still a basic policy priority to reinforce employment, as well as one of the basic parameters of National System of Connecting Vocational Training with Employment (E.S.S.E.E.K.A.), which will facilitate both the functional connection of Prior and Continuing Vocational Training with the labour market and cover the lack of conjunction between supply and demand of work.

The promotion of national and European priority policies in the field of vocational qualifications and skills accreditation was the primary objective of the National Thematic Group "Accreditation", developed in the framework of Action III of C.I. EQUAL. In sight of the coming framing of the integrated national vocational skills accreditation system, the work of the National Thematic Group "Accreditation" in the framework of C.I. EQUAL undoubtedly contribute to the required procedure of clarifying and defining particular parameters of accreditation system. In particular, the National Thematic Group contributed, on the one hand to the synthesis presentation of the strong points and results of practices, methodologies and outcomes developed in the Action Plans of the

DPs and can be integrated in respective policies, and on the other in producing the Good Practice Guide and mainly in defining Common Methodological Principles, which should govern job profiles analysis methodologies and required vocational skills, diagnosis methodologies, monitoring and evaluation of obtained qualifications and skills, standards and criteria of vocational skills accreditation.

6.3. EUROPEAN AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES

The European guidelines concerning vocational qualifications and skills, as deduced from the Task Force report of the European Commission regarding competence and mobility¹, could be summarized in the following:

- ◆ Upgrading of systems and strategies of education and training aiming at obtaining basic skills and competence relative to new information technologies and widening learning potential (*access to education and training/ obtaining basic skills*)
- ◆ Merging education and training in a life-long learning framework allowing individuals to move freely among learning frameworks, professions, areas and countries, utilizing greatly their knowledge and abilities (*geographical and vocational mobility*)
- ◆ Defining required skills on a parallel with job profiles and modernizing job classification (*defining vocational standards of professions and skills*)
- ◆ Developing common models of validating obtained skills based on the principle of individual skills and individualized learning path, on a parallel with elaborating modular education and training systems in clear thematic modules (*common diagnosis models, rating and skills evaluation*)
- ◆ Empowering cooperation of educational organizations with actors of labour market to define skills content and recognize vocational skills (*connection with market needs / cooperation and social consent*)
- ◆ Ensuring free access to information about content and matching of vocational skills (*dissemination of information on vocational skills*).

A national priority is the promotion of new policy strategy aiming at creating a national system of connecting vocational training with employment, applying an integrated system of recording labour market needs and redefining vocational education and training, as well as creating an integrated system of vocational skills accreditation with main pillars the national bodies of O.E.E.K. and E.KE.PIS. Social partners will play a critical role in the operation of E.S.S.E.E.K.A. by securing their participation in the National Council of Connecting Vocational Education and Training with Employment, that is the public body of forming and coordinating national policies on the basis of clear qualitative and quantitative targets, specific operational rules and steady procedures of monitoring and evaluating.

According to the above, the main pillars of national priorities for vocational skills accreditation, which is an integral part of the total strategy of connecting vocational education and training with employment, are the following:

¹ Commission Européenne, (2001), Task Force de haut niveau sur les Compétences et la Mobilité, Direction Générale de l'Emploi et des Affaires Sociales, Unité EMPL/A.3, Rapport Final en Décembre 2001, Cote: KE-43-02-082-FR-C.

- ✓ Efficient mechanisms of recording and anticipating vocational structure of employment in required professions and vocational skills
- ✓ Creating proper methodology of analysis and defining vocational skills standards and content of required vocational qualifications and skills
- ✓ Adopting appropriate methodology of defining training standards and rating knowledge, in accordance with vocational standards of skills and professions
- ✓ Developing commonly accepted diagnosis procedures, as well as evaluation and accreditation of vocational qualifications and skills, as the outcome of agreement and approval of labour market actors
- ✓ Functional networking and developing appropriate bodies of vocational education and training to assimilate the results of systematic recording of labour market needs and the respective adaptation of provided education and training

6.4 INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS – GOOD PRACTICE OF C.I. EQUAL

The choice and emergence of good practice of vocational qualifications and skills accreditation was based on five specific criteria adopted in the framework of the National Thematic Group:

1. Integrated intervention and facing the problem in connection with the confirmed needs of target groups and national and European priority policies.
2. Innovative aspects of practice, achievement grade of qualitative and quantitative results, beneficiaries advantages from their participation in innovative approaches.
3. Effectiveness, usefulness and added value of actions, methodologies and innovative approaches in connection to current practices of vocational skills accreditation.
4. Effectiveness of practice based on the contribution of partnership, added value of transnationality and essential participation of beneficiaries.
5. Transferability of practice results, added value in relation to policy incompleteness, integrated strategy of mainstreaming in respective policies.

The major contribution of the National Thematic Group “Accreditation of Vocational Qualifications and Skills” in promoting respective European and national priority policies was secured by the Thematic Group’s agreement not to emerge individual practices or outcomes, but to record the strong points of every applied practice by the Development Partnerships on the basis of the five criteria, for which there is specific evidence and documentation leading to the development of Common Methodological Principles.

The characteristics and the strong points of Development Partnerships applied good practice are the issue and are presented extensively in the Synthesis Reports produced for every Thematic Pillar in the framework of the Joint Action Plan of the National Thematic Group. The strong points of good practice were confirmed in total during on site visits to the Development Partnerships organized by the expert of the Thematic Group and are presented collectively, related to the confirmed needs and lacks of policy, emerging their contribution and added value in forming policy for accreditation of vocational qualifications and skills.

⇒ ***Direct and intensive need of complete development and application of the National System of Accreditation of Vocational Qualifications and Skills, as an organized entity of commonly accepted procedures and diagnosis, evaluation and skills recognition methods, which presuppose:***

- ✓ Clarification and accurate definition of target, form, extent and outcomes of the system: framing general minimum accreditation standards in the framework of a national and independent system or integration of special accreditation standards in sectoral or professional procedures of skills definition.
- ✓ Clarification and efficient definition of particular parameters of vocational skills accreditation system: which are the appropriate methodologies of job profile analysis, which are the most reliable methodologies of diagnosis, monitoring and evaluation of obtained skills and competence and how standards and criteria of vocational skills accreditation will be defined.

⇒ ***There is a need to record systematically and update skills, detailed vocational skills analysis and efficient definition of respective vocational and training standards (Thematic Pillar I), taking into account the following:***

- ✓ *The systematic recording of entrepreneurial fields and relative skills, as well as applying monitoring procedures of skills progress and required updating of content every three or five years is required:*
 - a) To document the structure of companies in sectors under crisis, as there is a lack of analytic profiles for the skills of the sector and their degrading due to new technologies of production and changing work demands (GR 71160 – “NEORION II” D.P.)
 - b) To record company categories and new work places created in newly set bodies of environment (GR 71163 – “For the development of an open system for acquisition and accreditation of qualifications & skills in the environmental protection sector” D.P.)
 - c) To investigate the current situation through questionnaires and interviews of employers and employees of the sector and to analyze a job profile of a new skill (GR 200836 – “Initiative for Quality of Working Life” D.P.)
 - d) To update the development of conditions, content and vocational skills standards (GR 200859 – “Network of Life-long Learning Promotion and Distant Accreditation of Skills in SMEs – “TECHNOMATHEIA” D.P”, GR 70069 – “SPARTAKOS” D.P.)
- ✓ *The effective job profile analysis and professional tasks of the respective work posts for each profession presupposes:*
 - Investigating the current situation through questionnaires and interviews of employers and employees of the sector, a case study, optimizing relative job profiles and European models of certified training (GR 200836 - “Initiative for Quality of Working Life” D.P.).

- Mapping of work place standards with an internal needs research of employees, bibliographic research of the structure of companies in the sector, optimizing experts' know-how, expressing and modeling work places functions in the production process, through a «bottom-up “ approach (GR 71160 – “NEORION II D.P. – Promotion of competitiveness and Securing Employment in the Shipbuilding Industry”).
- Direct participation of employees of various ranks in job profile development procedures by answering questionnaires, interviews – workshops and verifying data correctness (GR 71160 – “NEORION II D.P. – Promotion of competitiveness and Securing Employment in the Shipbuilding Industry”)
- Labour market demands research particularly for the case of new work places and newly set trade bodies of the environmental protection sector, recording company categories and work places, professions selection, job description, framing a minimum of required skills and designing the model of competence and knowledge accreditation developed through study, training and work (GR 71163 – “For the development of an open system for acquisition and accreditation of qualifications & skills in the environmental protection sector” D.P.)
- Describing jobs based on the system of jobs classification “O-NET”, defining vocational standards based on research among companies, certified trainers and training experts of social welfare bodies, confirming job description by elaborating data of job aptitude card and training evaluation results in a mechanism platform, which allows the development of a functional system of vocational knowledge and skills accreditation on people with disabilities (GR 180869 – “PROTEAS” D.P.).
- Active participation of trade sectoral federations to define sectors and vocational skills, recording and analyzing the general socio-economic framework of the investigating professions, documenting the current situation, analyzing vocational skills and therefore vocational skills accreditation (GR 200859 – “Network of Life-long Learning Promotion and Distant Accreditation of Skills in SMEs – “TECHNOMATHEIA D.P.”)
- ✓ *Defining vocational and training standards of skills and respective rating of required skills and competence is achieved by:*
 - Outlining synthesis methodologies of work places through questionnaires and structured interviews, creating reports, interviews with both the technique of Repertory Grid and critical incidents, aiming at combining the development of both work and personality characteristics, vocational activities related to the provided services (GR 200836 - “Initiative for Quality of Working Life” D.P.)
 - Analyzing vocational skills profile with the model of functional analysis, that is based on work posts per production stage, demands in every work post, skills functions, performance criteria and application conditions (GR 71160 – “NEORION II D.P. – Promotion of competitiveness and Securing Employment in the Shipbuilding Industry)
 - Analyzing vocational job profile of three new jobs based on the methodology of “Sustainable Professionalization” and Greek models, structuring of skills on different levels of duties and framing respective standards to the required skills

and competence, as a basic reference point of evaluation and accreditation systems of obtained experience and knowledge (GR 70069 – “SPARTAKOS” D.P.)

- Research and information collection in every profession – work post by companies and their staff, rating of vocational skills in three specialization levels and specific work posts with required skills, the proposed courses for every skills group, as well as proposed “routes” to build skills on every specialization level based on different levels of starting point (GR 180762 – “Network of Vocational Counseling and Promotion to employment - D.E.S.P.A.” D.P.)
 - Clarifying production stages of “job analysis”, sufficient analysis of specific skills as far as the main work objectives, formal qualifications, essential skills and competence as well as defining means and methods to evaluate and certify vocational skills (GR 71163 – “For the development of an open system for acquisition and accreditation of qualifications & skills in the environmental protection sector” D.P.)
 - Rating vocational skills of people with disabilities based on set jobs and vocational activities in the framework of a national and integrated accreditation system, also securing existing alternatives or rated accreditation systems adjusted to the needs of people with disabilities with the additional help of Job Coaches (GR 180869 – “PROTEAS” D.P.)
 - Defining analytically basic activities/functions of professions, particular work and performance criteria, vocational standards and respective knowledge, skills and competence in the framework of meetings-seminars among training and education experts and professionals, as well as updating procedures of results validation (GR 200859 – “Network of Life-long Learning Promotion and Distant Skills Accreditation in SMEs – “TECHNOMATHEIA” D.P.)
- ✓ *The integration of vocational and training skills standards in actions of education and training, accreditation and counseling support can be achieved with the following practices:*
- Analysis of job profiles is the basis to developing training packages for conventional and distance training, and design a system of accreditation of vocational qualifications and skills for the environmental protection sector (GR 71163 – “For the development of an open system for acquisition and accreditation of qualifications & skills in the environmental protection sector D.P.)
 - Developing Models of Total Training Quality for people with disabilities based on interlinking standards of a flexible trainer training system, job coaches and trainees with disabilities and description of accreditation system of obtained knowledge/competence. Combined utilization of job profile analysis, training standards definition and description of accreditation system with already established and formally recognized models, such as ECDL (GR 180869 – “PROTEAS” D.P.).
 - Analytical definition of job profiles based on the vocational standards model and utilizing respective vocational standards in designing training curricula and forming the accreditation system (GR 200859 – “Network of Life-long Learning

Promotion and Distant Skills Accreditation in SMEs – “TECHNOMATHEIA” D.P.)

- Utilizing job profiles analysis, respective evaluation tools of vocational skills levels and counseling tools and promoting employment in the framework of developing a system of an integrated and individualized approach and counseling support for target groups (*GR 180762 – “Network of Vocational Counseling and Promotion to employment - D.E.S.P.A.” D.P.*)
- Vocational standards of examined job profiles formed the framework for implementing courses of conventional and distance training, also developing training accreditation system (*GR 200836 - “Initiative for Working Life Quality” D.P.*), vocational skills accreditation (*GR 70069 – “SPARTAKOS D.P.”*), and vocational skills accreditation in the framework of an integrated System of Human Resources Development for the shipbuilding industry (*GR 71160 – “NEORION II D.P. – Promotion of competitiveness and Securing Employment in the Shipbuilding Industry”*)

⇒ ***Need of effective diagnosis, reliable evaluation and objective review of vocational skills in the framework of individualized approach of life-long learning (Thematic Pillar II), which can be achieved by the following tools and techniques:***

- ✓ *Reliable tools of individualized evaluation and vocational skills review, according to the principles of individual skills and skills transparency, are those which contribute to:*
 - Securing effectiveness and reliability of evaluation procedure of obtained knowledge, skills and competence through combined application of evaluation tools, such as written exams, tests on theory and practice, on-the-job applications– simulations, portfolio (*GR 70069 – “SPARTAKOS D.P.”*)
 - Object-oriented recording and analysis of trainees’ personal characteristics and formal skills, object-oriented evaluation of their primary knowledge and work experience together with object-oriented diagnosis of job interests, tendencies and abilities. Confirmation based on objective criteria of level and real image of supported trainees’ vocational knowledge and experience (*GR 180762 – “Network of Vocational Counseling and Promotion to employment - D.E.S.P.A.” D.P.*)
 - Essential utilization of transnationality in adopting successful and innovative tools for unemployed people’s skills and potentials, as well as experts’ and scientific associates’ in the fields of organizational psychology, career advising, vocational counseling and Employment counseling. Support of social partners and framing bodies, such as O.A.E.D. – K.P.A. to adopt evaluation and support counseling tools (*GR 180762 – “Network of Vocational Counseling and Promotion to employment D.E.S.P.A. D.P.”*)
- ✓ *Tools of individualized monitoring and relative support counseling aiming at broadening potentials of life-long learning and skills acquisition, are based on:*
 - Utilizing European and Greek models for the design of modularized training curricula promoting contextual learning and the adoption of cognitive-based

psychology of teaching methods for training. Training provision to acquire required vocational knowledge and key skills on the basis of context-based «framework» applications and not on a “traditional” course teaching, since the modular character of training courses facilitates the use of the “training card” and provides for adaptation flexibility in both the unemployed and the labour market needs (GR 70069 – “SPARTAKOS D.P.”).

- Cohesive development and broad application of evaluation tools and confirmation of vocational skills level and people’s characteristics, also individualized counseling tools and promotion in employment, based on vocational skills and competence, analyzed in job profiles. Securing of the investigating and evaluating ability of tools and final weighing of the project target group characteristics, according to evaluation of application results (GR 180762 – “Network of Vocational Counseling and Promotion to employment D.E.S.P.A. D.P.”)
- ✓ *Techniques of essential estimation and adaptation of vocational skills review tools for the specific needs of people facing increasing problems of inclusion in the labour market, are:*
 - Special Tools of Social Capital and Career Counseling Assessment, which through electronic database and relative manuals to elaborate results, give the possibility of drawing direct conclusions concerning vocational activities for which employment can be pursued and/or further vocational training of migrants and refugees (GR 200979 – “FOR EQUALITY AND SOCIAL COHESION D.P.”).
 - Combination of training tools and skill assessment tools to develop and evaluate human resources, tools adaptation to employees’ needs and forming feedback mechanisms and optimizing training packages (GR 71160 – “NEORION II D.P. – Promotion of competitiveness and Securing Employment in the Shipbuilding Industry”).
- ✓ *Diagnosis, monitoring and evaluation of vocational skill tools in the framework of entrepreneurial strategies of development and adaptation of human resources should be based on:*
 - Developing evaluation tools in question-fields, which analyze each performed task in specific quantitative and qualitative parameters functioning as evaluating criteria based on methods of the Accreditation of Prior Learning system (GR 71160 – “NEORION II D.P. – Promotion of competitiveness and Securing Employment in the Shipbuilding Industry”).
 - Development and combined application of specialized tools to educate company staff and support employees in charge of work teams in the framework of introducing job rotation and models of learning organization with the prospect of reinforcing life-long learning, promoting equality chances and continuous development of human resources skills, leading to informal recognition of the acquired competence by the company itself (GR 200979 – “Establishment of Job Rotation” D.P.).
 - Training-inclusion methodology oriented to long-term targets of the company. Combination of actions to promote life-long learning and integration of work practices, appointed to both employees and companies. Forming learning

organization models and designing interventions aiming at labour reorganizing and employees and company adaptation in demands drawn from the new productive and competitive work environment (GR 200979 – “Establishment of Job Rotation” D.P.).

- Combination of focused meetings with the company’s staff mainly in the framework of on-the-job training, which is needed particularly for social skills, cooperation competence, teamwork, etc (GR 200979 – “Establishment of Job Rotation” D.P.)

➔ **Need for defining Standards, Criteria and Vocational Qualifications and Skills Accreditation (Thematic Pillar III), which should include the following:**

- ✓ *Defining criteria, reference points and assumptions of knowledge accreditation, acquired through vocational or other type of training, such as:*
 - System of accredited training for call center agents based on the European accreditation system of FEDMA, aiming at curricula and teaching models accreditation leading to either a certificate (Basic level) or a European diploma (Advanced level) valid for 5 years, after attending a certified training program successfully. Prospects of developing a whole system of training curricula and bodies accreditation, applying accreditation of both training and examining procedure, as well as expanding accreditation in secondary education (GR 200836 - “Initiative for Quality of Working Life” D.P.).
 - Greater securing of accreditation effectiveness in cases of sectoral approaches, where it is ascertained greater response of job profile description and system of certified training in employers’ established needs.
 - Model of accrediting competence and knowledge acquired through work and studies and training with the methodology of portfolio, which includes evaluation of formal and essential skills and competence of employees in every profession. Securing reliability of evaluation and skills and competence accreditation methodology through procedure of evaluating candidates’ application forms by independent evaluators. A registration list is of critical importance not only for the elaboration of results of vocational skills accreditation, but also their recognition (GR 71163 – “For the development of an open system for acquisition and accreditation of qualifications & skills in the environmental protection sector” D.P.).
 - Methodological framework of vocational skills accreditation through a formal procedure coordinated by a recognized body on a national level, such as E.KE.PIS. in close cooperation with social partners, private companies and public organizations and is based on an open system of accreditation, which does not exclude anybody in a reliable procedure leading to consolidating vocational rights and recognition with the creation of a registration list (GR 71163 – “For the development of an open system for acquisition and accreditation of qualifications & skills in the environmental protection sector” D.P.)
 - It is critical for the development of review skills methodology, the participation of the training card, as well as the approval of methodology and informal validation from appropriate national bodies, OAED, OEEK, EKEPIS, and

appropriate social partners and bodies GSEVEE, POX, EPY, GSEE, OBES, according to the examined profession or skill. It is necessary to anticipate the function of a Trilateral Committee, which approves, with or without modifications the model profile to become the formal reference criterion for the portfolio evaluation (GR – 70069 “SPARTAKOS” D.P.).

- Development of vocational skills accreditation system with the participation of the most appropriate national bodies, OEEK and EKEPIS and on the basis of an already well-tried system of prior vocational training accreditation, leading to certified title and equivalence of titles, which can be further investigated in vocational skills (GR – 70069 “SPARTAKOS” D.P.).
- ✓ *Adoption of matching methodology and rating of accreditation in levels and fields, according to the level of required knowledge and competence, achieved by:*
 - Developing open System of Vocational Skills Acquisition (SAEP) in the field of environment protection based on results of studies recording entrepreneurial fields and skills training, as well as the analysis of respective vocational profiles. An important parameter in forming integrated proposal to develop a vocational skills accreditation system for skills of environment protection sector is the proposed model of training curricula accreditation (GR 71163 – “For the development of an open system for acquisition and accreditation of qualifications & skills in the environmental protection sector” D.P.)
 - Designing models of total training quality through a functional model of certified training and acquired knowledge and competence accreditation based on already established and formally recognized accreditation models for specific knowledgeable modules, such as ECDL for skills accreditation on computers and exams held by the Ministry of Development for the accreditation of intermediary in private insurance (GR 180869 – “PROTEAS” D.P.).
- ✓ *Definition and pilot application of evaluation and verification means of acquired skills and competence, procedures and stages of vocational skills accreditation, as for instance through:*
 - Integrated intervention to serve migrants, refugees and asylum seekers needs, through function of “special desks” for hosting, needs diagnosis, guidance and career advising, supported by an e-database and relevant manuals to elaborate results of specific tools application on estimating social capital and career counseling. Provision of counseling to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers to recognize their degrees in Greece, with the contribution of transnationality in the institutional framework and special procedures of recognition and formal skills accreditation for migrants and refugees, as well as transfer of know-how in relation to existing models of commissariat abroad (GR 200979 – “FOR EQUALITY AND SOCIAL COHESION” D.P.).
 - Evaluation model of job requirements and work competence, tool of distant vocational self-definition, work readiness Card and evaluation Tool of work performance, which compose the portfolio on an individualized basis and according to the special needs of the target group of people with disabilities (GR 180869 – “PROTEAS” D.P.).

- Critical cooperation of Welfare Bodies to develop vocational standards, and achieve social consent for the integration of job profiles and development of a functional model of certified training through the participation of representatives of people with disabilities, employers' representatives, employers themselves and Bodies of local authority (GR 180869 – “PROTEAS” D.P.).
- Spotting difficulties and problems concerning framing establishment of accreditation due to lack of an integrated national system of accreditation, the role of accreditation bodies and employees' familiarization in SMEs and self-employed with new technologies. The pilot application of distant accreditation system, and exceptionally for skills and competence, provided that at the time its expansion in vocational skills is not feasible due to reactions related to the impact on the character of profession and relevant profession rights (GR 200859 – “Network of Life-long Learning Promotion and Distant Skills Accreditation in SMEs – “TECHNOMATHEIA” D.P”)
- ✓ *Analysis of particular parameters and required arrangements to apply a skills accreditation system, according to the following practices:*
 - Effective and combined realization of all the basic parameters of an integrated System of Human Resources Development (SAAP) for the shipbuilding industry, that is analysis of job profiles, training tools application and human resources evaluation tools and vocational skills accreditation aiming at an integrated confrontation of target-group needs as well as needs of productive structure of sectoral companies (GR 71160 – “NEORION II D.P. – Promotion of competitiveness and Securing Employment in the Shipbuilding Industry”).
 - Vocational skills accreditation is to complete job analysis procedures, training and skills evaluation, aiming at the “official” ascertainment of acquired skills, either through training or through work experience, anticipating the operation of a an accreditation committee and provision of certificates as well as combined utilization of technical criteria of efficiency. Contribution of transnationality by developing a common methodology for employees' skills and competence accreditation and producing a “skills passport” (GR 71160 – “NEORION II D.P. – Promotion of competitiveness and Securing Employment in the Shipbuilding Industry”).
 - The partnership of companies, universities, training bodies, social partners and trade unions is critical. Participation of employees representatives (trade unions), employers (managers) and training bodies in the process of accreditation is necessary, as well as seeking the required consent of social partners, trade unions and company management, particularly, in the field of labour-intense industry under crisis, and for reasons primarily concerning occupation viability and social recognition of employees (GR 71160 – “NEORION II D.P. – Promotion of competitiveness and Securing Employment in the Shipbuilding Industry”).
 - Integrated approach to form a reference framework and necessary adjustments of prior and continuing vocational training system, as an integral part of an Integrated System of unemployed people's support through Accreditation of their Vocational Skills (ESPEP), whose application is achieved by developing a job profile according to labour market needs, developing respective program of modular vocational training, individualized counseling

and skills review by using the training card tool, and vocational skills accreditation acquired via work experience or have been upgraded based on some title with occupational activity practice (GR 70069 – “SPARTAKOS” D.P.)

- ✓ *Development of vocational skills accreditation system with the use of new technologies and distance software applications, such as:*
 - Model of distant accreditation of skills for technical professions in SMEs with functional structure, open and flexible system without any assumptions and independent of training route, supported on the model of vocational standards, developed with low cost but effective technological applications (development of LMS platform) and enriched with spotting problems or possible adjustments, which are likely to be required during application of accreditation model in technical professions (GR 200859 – “Network of Life-long Learning Promotion and Distant Accreditation of Skills in SMEs – “TECHNOMATHEIA” D.P.).
 - Effectiveness of accreditation procedure through clear limitation of three-level accreditation according to examined data, way of examination and grading factors. Technique to verify clearly distant acquired knowledge and possible combination with other techniques of practice exam, lab and interview, particularly, concerning technical professions. Result validation as far as a proposed level of work performance by representatives’ bodies of skills and at the same time significant participation of trainers and professionals in the examination Committee of distance training (GR 200859 – “Network of Life-long Learning Promotion and Distant Accreditation of Skills in SMEs – “TECHNOMATHEIA” D.P.).
 - Participation of social partners in the framing procedure of vocational standards as an essential parameter for the function of the distant skills accreditation, enhancing human potential training and securing reliability of the proposed model. Active participation in all development stages of vocational skills accreditation, approval and adoption of methods and results (specific profiles) by professional bodies and social partners as a necessary assumption for the practice and effective application (GR 200859 – “Network of Life-long Learning Promotion and Distant Accreditation of Skills in SMEs – “TECHNOMATHEIA” D.P.)

7. OUR PROPOSAL FOR AN INTEGRATED ACCREDITATION SYSTEM OF VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS

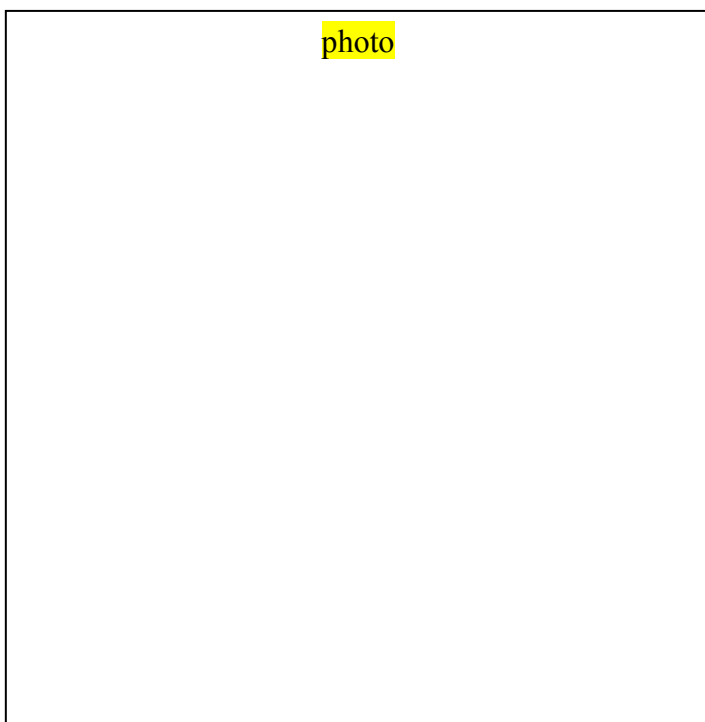
The basic conclusion of The National Thematic Group is that the establishment of an **Integrated Accreditation System of Vocational Qualifications and Skills (O.S.P.E.P.)** is needed. The proposed Integrated System is, in fact, the outcome of 9 Development Partnerships which participated in the specific Thematic Group and a brief expression of the three Synthesis Reports preceding, and in this sense it can trigger a systematic dialogue for a National Public Policy for vocational skills accreditation, based on the existing legal framework (Act 3191/2003), as well as a source of activation, contemplating and attitude expression by social partners (mainly on a national level). This system neither touches on nor substitutes qualifications of formal educational system.

7.1. STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE INTEGRATED SYSTEM OF VOCATIONAL SKILLS ACCREDITATION (O.S.P.E.P.)

O.S.P.E.P. consists of the following Systemic Modules (S.M.):

(A) S.M. of Professions Codification and Description

The basic principles, rules and procedures of the Systemic Module and the included functions, are the following:



A.1. Principles, rules and procedures of professions codification and description

A.1.1. Professions and Vocational skills codification, initially via the methodology of professions statistic classification (per STEP-'92), which can be specialized and expanded, taking into account their hierarchy in levels according to the E.U. guidelines.

A.1.2. Recording of each profession and vocational skill of the current situation in a sectoral / entrepreneurial field and developments in it, aiming at spotting the special needs of the chosen profession (including needs estimation of employees

and enterprises), taking into account technological innovations and prospects of inclusion of unemployed workforce.

This methodology is based on the cooperation of experts, trade bodies representatives of employees and employers, as well as staff and employees of individual representative companies.

Indicatively, the following procedures can be used:

- Production of a strategic development plan of a sector and internal needs survey to define weak points and express proposals of production, human resources and organization optimisation. Use of different representative cases existing in a sector, as well as a number of self-employed, to produce case studies aiming at developing an integrated system of human resources development for the sector.
- Recording a sector's potential, the demand in workforce, the needs in occupations and vocational skills.
- Bibliographic research, study of the valid institutional framework and data verification with trade bodies of employers and employees of the sector.
- Utilization of respective data of internationally established organizations (preferably European), and adapting them in the Greek conditions cooperating with representative companies of the sector and representatives of trade bodies of employers and employees.

Based on the above-mentioned procedures, the basic occupational and vocational skills requirements of each sector are defined.

A.1.3. Analysis of job profiles and respective work posts and definition of respective job tasks for each occupation of each sector.

This methodology is based on the cooperation between experts, managers and employees of enterprises in a sector, as well as the trade bodies that represent them.

Indicatively, the following procedures can be applied:

- Based on a questionnaire to the companies of the sector and employees in the professions under investigation, job description and respective work functions are defined, utilizing also the data provided by systems of job standardization.
- Based on a requirements survey of work posts or required vocational skills of the chosen occupations, as well as on-the-job observation of works executed, the respective work functions are defined.
- Multiple questionnaires application and structured interviews with employees of representative companies of the sector and experience utilization by respective work posts in other European countries, the work functions are defined.
- According to the basic requirements of occupations and vocational skills produced not only from needs surveys of labour market, but also from the strategic development plan of the respective sector, meetings between professionals and training experts are organized and the relative work functions are defined.

According to the occupation or skill needs, work functions can be categorized in specialization levels, corresponding to different content and responsibility levels of the respective work posts.

A.1.4. Definition of vocational standards of the professions and the required qualifications rating based on the content and level of work functions.

This methodology is based on the cooperation of experts, sectoral trade bodies' representatives of employees and employers, as well as professionals of the sector and it requires knowledge of job analysis techniques.

Indicatively, the following procedures can be applied:

- With the help of a survey and plan of changes in the production process, analysis of work functions in sub-categories and matching skills in them and with the help of systematic observation of work functions execution, definition of respective criteria of work performance (method of "functional analysis"). Particularly for new professions, utilization of experience from other countries and systematic procedures of expert's consultation with sectoral trade bodies and company professionals.
- Specialization of work functions (produced from surveying representative companies) by experts, either based on specific work targets or specific performance level, or the idea of independent initiative – responsibility taking, or the idea of a relation - cooperation framework, or the idea of the resources in use. Matching of skills with functions. Skills analysis in knowledge, competence and abilities.
- Data collection and elaboration to analyse work functions through questionnaires, check by experts via interviews with staff and company employees, definition of respective required skills and validation by appropriate trade bodies representing employers and employees.
- With the help of a survey and utilization of a job standardization system, definition of required skills, which are balanced on the basis of categories of "data management, team management and tools operation".

The defined skills can be divided into formal and essential ones for each occupation and also can be matched with specialization levels where work functions have been classified (low – medium – high specialization).

A.2. Functional analysis of job profiles

Composing, generalizing and summarizing the above, we conclude the following:

Production of a job profile of a sector includes the following functions/actions:

- Codification of occupations and vocational skills of a sector by a recognized methodology.
- Production of a sectoral survey based on scientifically accepted methodologies and study of the institutional framework. Definition of chosen profession requirements. In case of a new profession or skill, survey completion with bibliographic research and utilization of other countries or European organizations experience.
- Checking of the above-mentioned requirements of a job profile by experts cooperating with managers and employees of representative companies of the sector.

- Analysis of job profiles of relative work posts and defining work functions of the occupation. Work functions can be classified in levels of specialization, corresponding to different content and responsibility level of respective work posts.
- Definition of required skills based on the content of work tasks, rating based on specialization level of these tasks and analysis of skills in knowledge, competence and abilities. The defined skills can be divided into formal and essential skills.

The above-mentioned actions can come into existence by using the system of job standardization and/or questionnaires and interviews with employees of representative companies and/or on-the-job observation of performed work and/or utilization experience of other European countries respective work posts.

A.3 Remaining rules

During production and validation of a job profile or profession the following rules should be applied:

- A.3.1. A model methodology is followed (preferably acceptable on a European level), which documents the needs of professions and skills, as well as work posts produced in companies. It has to **secure social partners' agreement, particularly of competent trade bodies of employers and employees**. This can be achieved in the framework of social dialogue and collective negotiations of employers and employees associations. The methodology reliability is reinforced by company participation, particularly if it concerns professions existing in companies playing a leading role in the sector.
- A.3.2. Job profiles and vocational skills **are adapted**, where it is feasible, **in the needs of people with disabilities** (separately for each category of people with disabilities) and requirements of respective work posts. This can be achieved by rating specialization levels (see last part of paragraph A.1.4.), so that skills accreditation potential can be provided to low-skilled people also.
- A.3.3. The description of each occupation or vocational skill is accompanied by **the prerequisite training level and/or prerequisite basic qualifications and skills**.
- A.3.4. **The updating** of job profiles or vocational skills takes place **with repetition of initial procedures, in regular time periods**, according to the estimated speed of changes appearance in the sector.

(B) S.M. of Vocational Training

The basic principle and function of this Systemic Unit is the development, for every occupation, of a vocational training curriculum (prior and continuing), which will provide the required vocational qualification skills and also the accreditation of this curriculum.

Indicatively, the rules applied and the respective procedures are the following:

- Adoption of an internationally acceptable system of producing and accrediting training curricula.
- Production and accreditation of training curricula of different levels, to acquire knowledge, skills and competence required by different occupations, for which there will be recognition potential by official bodies (e.g. with a certificate and/or European diploma). Therefore, designing training curricula should be based on job profile analysis.
- Production and customized training accreditation corresponding to more special training and remaining needs (e.g. people with disabilities) in the framework of generally accepted profiles and standards.
- Production and accreditation of modularised and concise training, emphasizing key skills and contextual learning, resulting in context based applications.

The training curricula can be structured in thematic modules serving specific training targets corresponding to vocational targets (required skills). The curricula include, as a rule, theoretical training and practice.

All training curricula should provide the potential of completing skills acquired through vocational training and/or, generally, to facilitate life-long learning.

(C) S.M. of Vocational Counselling

The role of vocational counselling is complementary to the other systems of O.S.P.E.P. The basic goal of vocational orientation and counselling is to reinforce, encourage and empower individuals by specialized staff.

The basic principle and function of the Systemic Module is the following:

Vocational Counselling – aiming at confronting gap skills – uses reliable tools, means and procedures of needs diagnosis and guidance of employees and the unemployed in forming their individual action plan and their inclusion or evolution in the modern labour market.

Indicatively, the following tools can be used, which should be applied in a different way according to each beneficiary case and needs.

- **Integrated system of vocational counselling**
 - I. Reception of supported person: Interview guide
 - II. Vocational Orientation: Language skill test, numerical skill test, abstractive and critical thinking test, searching and selecting training services guide.
 - III. Vocational Counselling: Occupational profile test, occupational value test, decision-making test, self-esteem and self-efficacy test, emotional intelligence test.
 - IV. Vocational Information and Employment Counselling: selecting job advertisements guide, responding to job advertisements guide, guide on

collecting information on the professions sought by enterprises, managing communication with companies-employers guide, spontaneous job application guide.

- **Skills review and training card system**

- I. Documenting formal qualifications (education, training, and work experience), skills, competence and experience of the supported individual, with the help of a vocational counsellor.
- II. Producing a training card including level of knowledge – skills in connection to knowledge – skills of the job profile he/she is interested in, as well as the necessary training modules (thematic fields, schedule, training provider).

- **Supporting special groups (migrants, refugees) system**

- I. Reception: Specialized social background – Social capital estimation
- II. Vocational orientation, occupational interests questionnaire, professional profile questionnaire, self-esteem questionnaire.

- **Human resources management and development support system in enterprises**

- Training manual for human resources management staff and managers
- Training manual for staff – people in charge of work teams.

In the above manuals other tools can be added, for instance the “Guide for employees skills evaluation procedure”.

Composing, generalizing and summarizing the above-mentioned, we conclude that the Systemic Module of Vocational Counselling includes the following functions:

- Objective recording and individual characteristics analysis of formal and informal skills, work experience and possible special potentials or problems of supported people.
- Objective diagnosis of occupational interests, tendencies, competence and abilities.
- Evaluation of the above, related to the job or skill requirements, towards which the person is oriented, and the suggested training and/or experience he/she needs.
- Counselling support for his/her inclusion or development in the labour market.

These functions should be linked, as far as it is feasible, to the appropriate state services and to trade bodies structures to secure the best possible communication with the labour market.

(D) S.M. Vocational Skills Accreditation

The basic principles, rules and procedures of this Systemic Module and the functions it includes, are the following:

D.1 Principles, rules (standards and specifications), methodologies and procedures of vocational skills accreditation

D.1.1. Vocational skills accreditation of every occupation in a sector, independent of the way they were acquired, as defined in the job profile that documents the real needs of jobs developed in companies (workers and employers' needs) and secures appropriate sectoral trade bodies' of employers and employees' agreement (social partners agreement). (This accreditation should not doubt the already recognized skills and the established occupational rights.)

These vocational skills may have been acquired through various paths: education and/or training and/or experience and/or informal learning.

Accreditation should be competence-based in tune with a content-based profession.

Indicatively, the following procedures can be used:

- Adoption of European requirements of skills accreditation, particularly if there is the possibility of recognition.
- Production and accrediting skills accreditation system securing the abovementioned principles and rules (labour market needs and social partners' agreement), particularly if this accrediting is recognized by the State.

The accreditation methodology can be shaped according to occupation characteristics or specialization, as well as to the content of knowledge to be certified.

- Evaluation of theoretical knowledge (through a web platform), of basic practical skills (through Internet and laboratories), formal qualifications (via portfolio), general vocational skills (via project work) and individual characteristics/competence (via personal interview).
- Written knowledge exams (theory), practice exams of skills in laboratories (practice), competence evaluation with personal interview and supplement of deficiencies with apprenticeship. Practice exams can also include techniques of assessing performance.

D.1.2. There is likely to be more than one skill accreditation level in the same occupation, matching different content and responsibility level of the respective jobs.

D.2. Functional analysis of vocational skills accreditation

Composing, generalizing and summarizing the above, we conclude the following:

Skills accreditation of an occupation in a sector includes the following functions/actions:

- The individual portfolio to be accredited is examined, including documents of formal and essential skills (checking documents completion) and then, is evaluated by examining the new knowledge to be accredited (e.g. written or distance exams) and practice skills exams (e.g. through laboratories or Internet). The technique of interviews can be used to evaluate personal characteristics and abilities and it is advisable for counselling and supporting reasons. The evaluated data can be graded, where the most basic can have a minimum required threshold. Finally, all the data is given proper grading.
- The Accreditation Committee is, as a rule, trilateral with the participation of experts appointed by employers and employees or their trade bodies and a respective training body and/or appropriate state organization.
- When the accreditation procedure does not conclude a positive decision, some substitution measures, for the elements he/she lacks, are suggested, either by training or work experience. In such a case training is optional and is facilitated if the accredited training curricula are modularised and context based.
- Accreditation recognizes, integrally and concisely, vocational sufficiency for one or more occupational activities, with the prospect of particular accreditations to act additionally in recognizing sufficiency in an entire occupation.
- When accreditation leads to established occupational rights, the accredited individuals enter special registries.

D.3. Remaining rules

During vocational skills accreditation, the following rules should be applied:

- D.3.1. A necessary assumption for vocational skills accreditation is a minimum level of training, previous participation in relative vocational training (general, special or complementary) and acquisition of relative professional experience (even a short one).
- D.3.2. In forming or choosing standards, models and accreditation methodology, in any case, representatives of employees and employers take part together with experts of training bodies and state organizations.
- D.3.3. Support to companies is provided in order to integrate accreditation systems results in their human resources development systems.
- D.3.4. Vocational skills accreditation should not doubt the already recognized vocational skills and established occupational rights.

D.4. Validation – Reliability – Recognition of vocational skills accreditation

- D.4.1. The validation and reliability of applied standards, models and methodologies are secured provided that:

- They are applied on a European level
- They are accepted by social partners (employers and employees)
- They are applied by established accreditation bodies.

D.4.2. Recognition of vocational skills accreditation is based on being approved by:

- Appropriate European and national bodies
- Labour market and particularly organizations of the respective sector (chambers, associations etc)

D.4.3. O.S.P.E.P. can secure a fast and effective implementation, connected with the National System of Connecting Vocational Training with Employment – E.S.S.E.E.K.A. – (Act 3191/2003), by supplementing and clarifying it.

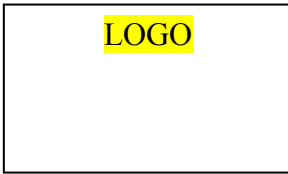
7.2. O.S.P.E.P. BODIES AND THEIR ACCREDITATION

For O.S.P.E.P. to achieve an integrated character, it is necessary to:

- Appoint organizations to undertake vocational skills accreditation and define presuppositions and terms to be completed for their accrediting (via the foreseen procedure of article 9, Act 3191/2003)
- Appoint the State Institution which will evaluate the accreditation organizations and recommend the issuing of the regulatory acts of accrediting
- Define and frame special rules and bodies, and certify vocational skills per group of related occupations or skills.

APPENDIX

BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS



NETWORK FOR VOCATIONAL COUNSELING AND PROMOTION TO EMPLOYMENT (D.E.S.P.A.)

Project Title: Pathways to Employment and Career

Project Objective: Facilitating access and re-integration of disadvantaged groups in the labour market, through upgrading and modernizing support structures and systems.

Project aims: The main aim of the project was the development and implementation of a new, innovative and effective system for Vocational Counseling and Promotion to Employment, by leveraging existing capabilities and resources and by connecting effectively vocational training services with job promotion, in order to achieve Employment of the unemployed, of the disadvantaged and socially discriminated groups in quality jobs.

D.P. Structure: The D.P. partners were: Union of Hellenic Chambers of Commerce (K.E.E.E.) – D.P. Managing Organization, Athens Chamber Of Commerce and Industry (E.V.E.A.), Tecmor S.A., “A” Network, Labrakis Research Foundation, V-Project Research Consulting S.A., UNIVERSITY of Piraeus – Research Center – Career & Liaison Office, Ergon Vocational Training Center, Integration Vocational Training Center S.A., Opinion Vocational Training Center, 01 Pliroforiki Ekpedeftiki S.A., DELTA Vocational Training Center, Institute Of Business Studies & Training S.A., M.I.T. Vocational Training Center, Techniki Ekpedeftiki Vocational Training Center Ltd, Acmon Vocational Training Center, Mentor Training S.A., DIMITRA Institute of Training and Development - Center for vocational training, Technopolis Training S.A., Center For Gender Equality Research – KETHI, Delta Singular Training S.A., Olympic Training and Development, Effective Management International Center of Vocational Training S.A.

The Development Partnership was formed by a network of public and private organizations that provided specialization, know-how, experience, infrastructure availability, full coverage of the actors involved, and nationwide range, thus assuring project effectiveness, transferability, and wider dissemination of its results. This structure secured close co-operation of two well-established, nationwide professional organizations - Athens Chamber of Commerce and Industry (EVEA) and Union of Hellenic Chambers of Commerce (KEEE) – thus directly providing participation of employer organizations in this proposed system for Vocational Counseling and Promotion to Employment. Also, the participation of the major Vocational Training Centers of the country provided a vast experience in vocational training and Counseling services for the unemployed and socially excluded groups, and a sound infrastructure at a wide geographical range, covering 75 points in all 13 Regions of Greece. This secured accessibility of thousands of unemployed to the proposed system. The “A” network provided networking potential and coordination of the Vocational Counseling and Promotion to Employment Centers (KESPA), and also further expertise and improvements in the proposed system. VPRC, being a major and highly credible market research organization, ensured reliability of results of research and mapping actions of the unemployed in the 13 Greek Regions. Labrakis Research Foundation contributed in developing a web-based, relational database that integrated information on job supply and demand. Furthermore, the Foundation’s background research experience on the integration of new technologies in knowledge and information management, assured the quality of the results. Finally, the

input of the University of Piraeus concerned the elaboration of the European aspect in job curricula at high demand, which up leveled the final output of these innovative project products. These are considered as critical tools for the application of the integrated system for vocational support of disadvantaged groups and placement in the labour market.

Short project overview: The “Pathways to Employment and Career” project aimed at developing a new, innovative system of vocational Counseling and promotion of the young unemployed, women, the long-term unemployed and other disadvantaged social groups to the labour market, by effective linking training services to promotion services, in a way that ensures employment of target groups at quality jobs.

The ***list of the outcome – products*** of the project include:

- Development and operation of a web-based service to record and search jobs offered and demanded in 36 prefectures of Greece; above 80% of the country’s population lives in this geographic coverage.
- Mapping survey to determine socio-economic, educational and other characteristics, (e.g. sex, age, professional background, e.t.c.) of the unemployed. This served to develop and provide “packages” of specialized Counseling and support services aiming at placing them into employment, with the aid of the new Counseling and support structures to be developed within the project.
- Mapping survey of the job posts offered by the enterprises, resulting on the one hand in a procedure that assesses the employability potential of the unemployed registered in the database and, on the other hand, in the reinforcement of the effectiveness of training services, by restructuring training curricula.
- An innovative curricula (job profiles) system of professions at high demand, including the recommendation of alternative pathways, which lead the beneficiary target groups to the skills and competencies required. Furthermore, these curricula also enhance the effectiveness and improve the structure of both training courses and vocational Counseling and promotion to employment services.
- Innovative tools for the evaluation of skills, to determine vocational aptitude for job positions of interest. These tools facilitate planning and decision-making related to the improvement of work conditions and potential of the target groups in the labour market.
- Development and application of an integrated system of individualized vocational Counseling and promotion of the unemployed to employment, by using: a) modern tools to diagnose occupational profile of the beneficiaries, on a personal basis, b) techniques for establishing and applying a personal career plan, and c) a guide of recommended pathways to achieve one’s occupational objectives.
- Development of a network for providing and managing occupational experience services, by placing the unemployed in enterprises linked to the project and the DP partners. These enterprises take advantage of the project outcome and, at the same time, develop mechanisms to host and support apprenticeship.

The system’s development was based on permanent structures and functions by the so-called “Vocational Counseling and Promotion to Employment Centers” (KESPA) that have been supported by the services of Promotion to Employment hosted within Vocational Training Centers and work-related organizations participating in the project.

Project tasks focused on personal vocational Counseling, which built an integrated framework for evaluating skills and competencies. Within this framework, vocational guidance, Counseling, and information services are provided, aiming at the accession of the beneficiaries in job positions matching their qualifications. The whole project and its

results are new practices in the field of vocational Counseling, on a national level. This means that the project's added value for the national systems to improve employability is quite significant.

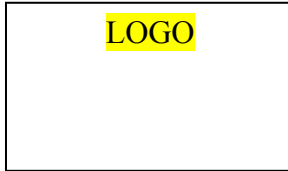
The **innovative products** of the project are related to personal Counseling services, mainly concerning vocational information (job curricula at high demand), guidance (language skill test, numerical skill test, abstractive and critical thinking test, searching and selecting training services guide), employment counseling (occupational profile test, occupational value test, decision making test, self-esteem and self-efficacy test, emotional intelligence test), and support (selecting job advertisements guide, responding to job advertisements guide, guide on collecting information on the professions sought by enterprises, managing communication with company-employer guide, spontaneous job application guide).

The mapping survey to determine the job posts offered by enterprises, as well as the registration of the skills and competencies required per job post (a survey implemented for the first time at this level of analysis), are also included in the innovative project products.

The **transnational cooperation** typology developed throughout the project focused on joint development for organizing, producing, promoting, and disseminating project products, and included inter-transfer of know-how and good practice, mainly during the product development stage. This framework was considered necessary in order to assure the European dimension of the project outcome, and also the exploitation of results and experience acquired by past similar actions and initiatives at an EU level.

As to the content of the various actions and outputs, robust transnational synergies were deployed in the development of job curricula and Vocational Counseling Guides. Cooperating with the French Employment Authority (ANPE), which has been issuing the French job profile guide for a number of years, was particularly significant as it permitted the incorporation of the European experience in the development of job curricula and the production of the guides concerning employment Counseling services.

Results – Conclusions: A basic project product is the integrated system of individualized vocational Counseling and promotion to employment, which has been developed in a way to allow for the identification and support of the personalized needs of the target groups. It is a product of wider application scope that can be exploited by any organization providing vocational stimulation, guidance and promotion services. The Vocational Counseling Guides for jobs at high demand, together with the skill and competence assessment tools reach the standards for being an integrated and validated system for providing Counseling services to all the unemployed and the disadvantaged population groups.



“DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP FOR EQUALITY AND SOCIAL COHESION”

Project Title: Forum for Social Cohesion

Project Objective: The main project objective is the integrated, multi-level intervention for tackling racism and xenophobia phenomena and creating the proper conditions for the development of a multi-cultural society. The project engages upon fighting racism at school, at work, in Mass Media, and in the Greek society in general, as well as promoting good attitude.

The support of migrants and refugees in their attempt to be integrated into the Greek society is also a major project aim.

The project interventions were planned under the following pillars:

- Developing and operating of hosting and support structures for migrants and refugees.
- Developing and applying “social capital” assessment tools and intervention models for migrants and refugees to provide them support, occupational accession and evolution in the labour market.
- Interfering at the labour market, via trade unions and employer awareness activities, for the achievement of a normal incorporation of migrants and refugees.
- Sensitising actions for general public and specific social groups (such as students, teachers, journalists, Mass Media, etc).

Project aims: The main project aim was the support of economic migrants and refugees, and the upgrading of their skills and competencies in order to facilitate their occupational and social integration.

Furthermore, the Development Partnership aimed at developing appropriate anti-racism material (i.e. anti-racism information packages, observatory, tools, guides, etc) so as to raise awareness, act in precaution and reject the establishment of racist stereotypes at the public opinion makers, the educational community, the public organizations and the general public.

Conclusively, another aim of the Development Partnership was the implementation of events for information of both the direct beneficiaries, and the general population, and also for the development of the conditions necessary to establish a multi-cultural society. Acting on a cultural and social level, these events stood as an opportunity for active participation and voluntary action.

D.P. Structure: A network of public, private and social organizations, NGOs, trade unions and local administration authorities formed the Development Partnership. This partnership not only provided know-how, expertise and experience, but also assured the dissemination and mainstreaming potential of the project results. In addition, the structure of the Development Partnership assures active participation and target groups' empowerment principles, as a number of migrants' organizations are partners of the D.P. More specifically, the partners of the D.P. for Equality and Social Cohesion are as follows:

- Athens News Agency
- University of Athens - Faculty of Communication and Media Studies

- National Youth Foundation
- UNICEF
- SOS Villages
- Mediciens Sans Frontieres-Greece
- Social Work Foundation
- Acmon Vocational Training Center
- Ergon Vocational Training Center
- Elyros S.A.
- Tecmor S.A.
- Labrakis Research Foundation
- Hellenic Network for Corporate Social Responsibility
- Fighting and Cultural Solidarity Centre
- Albanian Emigrant Association
- Albanian Community of Athens
- Ethiopian Community of Greece
- Greek Textile - Clothing - Leather Workers' Federation
- Centre of Employment and Entrepreneurship
- Union of Migrant Workers of Bangladesh in Greece
- Development Agency of the Municipality of Athens S.A.
- Municipality of Acharnes
- Center for Research and Documentation of OLME

Short project overview: Under the “Forum for Social Cohesion: project, a number of actions concerning the integrated intervention for gradual social and economic streamlining of immigrants and refugees into the labour market, were implemented. More specifically, **structures** providing information and support services to the target groups were developed, in order to tackle the needs of the migrants and the refugees. These services were organized with a view to tackling the deficiencies appearing in the field of information and support of migrants and refugees, which, up to now, have been inadequate both from the content, as well as from the methodological approach viewpoint. These special offices played the role of hosting centres for the beneficiaries, and worked on their needs assessment, specifically focusing on the evaluation of the social capital of the migrants and refugees. The aim was their inclusion at the labour market, at jobs matching their qualifications and professional experience. More specifically speaking, the services provided by the offices included reliable information of the target group members at sites that they have a massive presence, recording, classification and evaluation of the problems of the target group, and also guidance and orientation by organizations with expertise in support and empowerment. The migrants’ and refugees’ support structures have developed and applied a holistic intervention action plan, via which they can host the migrant – refugee and deal with the total of his/her needs.

More specifically, the services provided are as follows:

- Information on:
 1. Legalization and permanence
 2. Insurance and labour rights
- Legal assistance
- Work placement
- Psychological and Social Support, both at personal and a group level.

The operation of the support structures is linked to the operation of an electronic observatory for migrants and refugees. This e-observatory collected, evaluated and coded all the information available on national and European level, with a view to

achieving higher sensitisation on racism and xenophobia issues. By regularly updating its content and by its linking to the Development Partnership members, the Observatory provides vital information on issues relating to the problems of the migrants and refugees, as well as to issues concerning planning and implementation of policies and actions from state or other authorities and social organizations. Apart from sensitising the general public on racism and xenophobia issues, the “Forum on Social Cohesion” project also implemented a number of specific sensitisation actions. In detail, the D.P. developed training material for teachers and students for all educational levels, in order to sensitise student and teacher groups with a view to tackling racism and xenophobia phenomena and build on social cohesion.

To this end, the main activities included the establishment of a network of primary and secondary schools, within which actions against racism and xenophobia were planned and implemented, appropriate info material for schools was developed and workshops for teachers were organized.

Also, a number of events addressed to the journalists took place, and there was an organized flow of information on migrant and refugee issues towards printed and electronic press so that unbiased presentation of their issues could be established.

In addition, a multi-language magazine, entitled “METOIKOS” was published. This played the role of a workshop from which other printed materials for migrants were issued.

Furthermore, background actions for the development of actions supporting migrants and refugees were carried out. These actions focused on voluntary participation of “mentors” who could provide “linguistic training” and support for even professional integration services, aiming at developing social cohesion.

Results – Conclusions

The need for close collaboration of all the parties involved, aiming at specifying policies, measures and actions concerning migrants at all sectors of social and economic life has arisen. More specifically, as far as skill accreditation and accreditation issues are concerned, a well-organized, transparent and concise process for validating and certifying previously acquired skills, competencies and qualifications of the migrants and refugees, should be provided. This process should be accompanied by an allowance for attaining knowledge and accreditation on the Greek language, as a means for even integration and evolution in the labour market.



Development Partnership for the Establishment of Job Rotation

Project Title: Innovative Techniques of Life Long Learning – The Job Rotation Model

Project Objective: The project implements a series of actions in order to promote life long learning and labour inclusion practices. These actions address on the one hand employees and enterprises encouraging similar practices, and, on the other hand, unemployed and social partners that benefit from enterprise development and wider dissemination of life long learning policies.

Project aims:

- a) Development of active plans for promotion of employment for employees and unemployed affected or threatened by exclusion, due to insufficient access to the labour market.
- b) Implementation of the job rotation system in private enterprises of two financial sectors (food processing and tourism) as a process model for constant upgrading of the employees' skills and for providing opportunities to the unemployed via linking to vocational training mechanisms.
- c) Adoption of work set-up processes which contribute both to enterprise effectiveness and constant improvement of knowledge, skills and competencies of the employees.
- d) Promotion of model mechanisms to identify trends in labour market and vocational training, as well as recording of policies and practices of life long learning in Greece.

Within this framework the priority of the Development Partnership is to tackle inequalities and discriminations in the labour market with regard to the shortcoming of medium and low skilled employees to adapt to the rapidly changing production requirements and eventually obtain or even maintain quality and permanent jobs. The lack of training culture within the enterprises themselves and the fact that they are reluctant to invest in continuing training of their personnel, sharpen these inequalities. This is so either because the enterprises cannot realize the direct relation of life-long learning to their competitiveness, or because they are short in know-how in the field in question. These being the facts, the project focused on encouraging the enterprises to introduce life-long learning mechanisms and exploit new technologies, as well as on implementing a complex of measures for upgrading the skills of employees and the unemployed.

As to the application fields, the project was directed to two sectors of specific significance to the Greek economy and labour market: tourism – and hotels in particular, and food processing. Both of these sectors have a major contribution to the GNI and the development of the country's economy. From the geographical viewpoint, the project actions were implemented in three regions in which the enterprises participating in the project are located: Athens, Thessalonica and Crete. All these areas are notable in terms of labour market and production volumes.

Transnationality: In regard to transnational cooperation the project dedicated a significant part of its activities to tackle the issues arising from the transformation of the working environment into a place where, apart from the main production activities, processes contributing to the constant upgrading of the skills of the workforce and to combating of exclusion are present. This was done in a joint effort with DPs of other member states. To this end, actions of know-how and experience exchange, and

common development of tools and methodologies were implemented in cooperation with the Danish, British and Portuguese DPs.

More specifically, the transnational cooperation, entitled “The Inclusive Workshop”, was structured in three work groups, which were engaged in three discrete issues. In these groups the beneficiaries / ones directly involved of the relevant national actions participated. Namely, the transnational work groups were as follows: a) The role of training experts in promoting equality in the workplace, b) Identification and promotion of the pros resulting from the application of inclusion practices, via training actions in the workplace, and c) Audit and accreditation of workplaces as inclusion elements. The Greek DP was in charge of the second work group. The main transnational products include comparative studies, common development of vocational profiles and training curricula, exchanges of staff and trainers, common surveys, production of awareness material, development of evaluation guides and manuals and good practice awards.

DP Structure: The Development Partnership for the Establishment of Job Rotation is composed of 13 organizations working in the labour market sector. The concept of its composition is based on the effort to network on the one hand organizations with experience and expertise on training, support and promotion to employment of disadvantaged groups (i.e. training providers, voluntary organizations, development companies, etc), and on the other hand organizations of the market, either participating in production processes or directly related to production (i.e. enterprises and chambers of commerce), whose role is to take workforce and adapt to the new, flexible economy. In detail, the DP partners are:

1. DELTA Development and Training Ltd (Managing Organization)

Delta Vocational Training Centre is a firm of the Delta Educational business group. It has been a legal entity (Ltd) since 1985. It implements Continuing Vocational Training Courses addressing the unemployed, employees, or people of socially disadvantaged groups, as well as various related actions. It is a certified vocational training centre (KEK) of nationwide range.

2. DELTA ICE CREAM INDUSTRY S.A.

DELTA ICE CREAM INDUSTRY S.A. and DELTA MODEL MILK INDUSTRY S.A. are 100% subsidiaries of DELTA HOLDING S.A. DELTA ICE CREAM INDUSTRY S.A. is nowadays one of the largest industries of production and delivery of ice cream in Greece. It also acts abroad, as it exports its products to the whole Southeast Europe.

3. FOOD GENERAL S.A.

FOOD GENERAL S.A. came up in 1994 after a merger of FROZA and BARBA STATHIS firms. It is also a firm of DELTA HOLDING S.A., functioning in the production and delivery of frozen foods.

4. GRECOTEL S.A.

Grecotel is the largest hotel chain in Greece, and was founded in 1981. It is a joint venture of Daskalantonakis family and TUI multinational. Grecotel cooperates with more than 60 European tourist organizations.

5. SPACE HELLAS S.A.

Space Hellas was founded in 1985, aiming at providing telecommunication products and applications to the Greek enterprises. It operates within the broader field of telecommunication and networks, offering integrated solutions to all kinds of voice, data and image communication, as well as technical services of installation and support.

6. Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Athens

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Athens (EVEA) has been operating since 1919. It has a versatile volume of work and actions on issues related to economic development and also social evolution in the country.

7. Center of Employment and Entrepreneurship of the Municipality of Athens

The Employment and Entrepreneurship Centre operates as an organization of supporting the unemployed and promoting them to the labour market, either as salaried work or self-employment. It is a structure established under previous Community Initiatives and stands as a robust source supporting social and professional inclusion and re-inclusion of persons threatened by exclusion (i.e. the long-term unemployed, homeless people, youth lacking vocational skills, persons with disabilities, etc).

8. Development Company of the Municipality of Athens

The Development Company of the Municipality of Athens S.A. was founded in September 1996 and operates as a limited company. It is focused on developing actions and initiatives and providing services aiming at upgrading life quality in urban areas. This means social and environmental upgrading and promotion of economic, scientific and cultural development.

9. National Centre of Social Research

The National Centre of Social Research (EKKE) is the successor of the Centre for Social Research (founded in 1959). EKKE is a Public Organization, located in Athens and supervised by the Ministry of Development (General Secretariat of Research and Technology) and stands as the major public organization in the field of social research.

10. Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Chania

The mission of the Chamber of Chania is to protect and promote commerce, industry, SMEs and other crafts in the Chania region and in Crete in general, under the framework of promoting the interests of the national economy.

11. Chamber of Finance of Thessalonica – 3rd Regional Branch of Central Macedonia

The Chamber of Finance is an established financial advisor of the State. Its aims include: research and analysis of financial issues to generally promote financial values in Greece, consultancy in general financial issues, circulation of financial, commercial, auditing and accounting principles and constant effort for establishment of the most feasible of them and, in general, contribution to promoting public interest.

12. NOSTOS – Association of Social and Cultural Support of Repatriated Greeks

The NOSTOS is a non-profit organization established in 1995 by the Federation of Pontian societies of South Greece, in cooperation with the Pontos societies of Aspropyrgos, Kallithea (namely “Argo” and “Argonaftes Komninoi”), Menidi and Kos island. NOSTOS has been accredited as a Support Service Centre by the National Accreditation Centre of Continuing Vocational Training (EKEPIS) for the target group of repatriates – migrants – refugees.

13. Institute of Social Innovation

The Institute of Social Innovation (IKK) is a consultancy firm established in 2000 as a joint venture of well-known scientists, holding a solid know-how and experience background in consulting services and research support of public, private and voluntary organizations and enterprises in Greece and abroad.

Innovation: The project’s innovative features can be seen both in terms of objectives, and in terms of methodology and products. With regard to objectives, innovation can be identified in the quest of active promotion to employment for employees and the unemployed, via the establishment of the job rotation system in private enterprises. Also, innovation is achieved by familiarizing enterprises with models of work organization that endorse life-long learning and, therefore, strengthen their adaptability and competitiveness, their awareness of labour market exclusion issues and restructuring their training processes so that new technologies – particularly e-learning – are utilized. Lastly, another innovative element of the project is the development of the first observatory on life-long learning in Greece, with a view to advancing organized research and provision of integrated services of information and support in enterprises.

As for innovation in methodology, this is evident in: a) networking private enterprises and chambers to voluntary organizations, employment centres of local administration and training providers, b) training of human resources executives on issues of labour market exclusion, life-long learning and work organization under the framework of “learning organization”, and c) planning and implementation of a special mechanism for employer awareness of the discrimination that the target groups have to challenge.

Furthermore, there is considerable innovation for the results viewpoint, in terms of products and good practice. One can underline the life-long learning mechanisms in enterprises, focused on job rotation, as well as the learning organization model. Both these approaches find limited or even no application in Greek enterprises. Products of added value also include the training package for human resources executives, in-enterprise training curricula and surveys on job rotation and sectoral needs on specialization and skill upgrading.

LOGO

NEORION II DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

Project Title: Promoting Competitiveness and Securing Employment in the Shipbuilding Industry (www.neorio2.gr)

DP Structure:

The D.P. structure aimed at satisfying two main criteria: on the one hand, participation of the maximum possible trade bodies directly or indirectly associated to the shipbuilding industry, and, on the other hand, suitability and reliability of these partners with regard to implementing specific tasks. Based on these, the D.P. partners included:

1. NEORION NEW S.A. OF SYROS SHIPYARDS (*DP Managing Organization*)
2. ELEFSIS SHIPBUILDING AND INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISES S.A.
3. NEORION VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTER LTD
4. UNIVERSITY OF THE AEGEAN – SCHOOL OF SYSTEM AND PRODUCT DESIGN ENGINEERING
5. UNIVERSITY OF PATRAS - LABORATORY FOR MANUFACTURING SYSTEMS
6. NATIONAL TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS - SCHOOL OF NAVAL ARCHITECTURE AND MARINE ENGINEERING- MARITIME TRANSPORT AREA
7. INSTITUTE OF LABOUR OF THE GREEK GENERAL CONFEDERATION OF WORKERS
8. REGION OF SOUTH AEGEAN
9. REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF CYCLADES S.A.
10. WORKERS' - EMPLOYEES' CENTER OF THE CYCLADES PREFECTURE
11. TRADE UNION OF NEORION SHIPYARDS WORKERS
12. TRADE UNION OF ELEFSIS SHIPYARD WORKERS
13. ASSOCIATION OF GREEK SHIPBUILDING – SHIP REPAIRING INDUSTRIES
14. e-HELLAS – ORGANIZATION FOR INFORMATION SOCIETY

Transnational Cooperation:

The Transnational partnership of the project, entitled “EUNETYARD - European Network for supporting employment and adaptability in the shipbuilding sector» (www.eunetyard.net) was also a sector based partnership and, apart from Neorion II DP, included two other transnational partners:

- SUP.PORT DP- SKILLS UPGRADE IN THE PORTS DP, Italy
- Ammattilaisen Väylä DP, Finland

Target groups of the Project:

Project beneficiaries primarily included employees (full or short-term ones) and the unemployed of the shipbuilding industry, estimated at approximately 3,000 persons. Specific emphasis is given on the following sub-groups:

- Front-line skilled workers at high age, low skilled workers or workers tackling difficulties in adapting to new requirements, and short-term employees.
- Middle and upper rank employees (i.e. supervisors, managers, etc) and even top management executives of the shipyards.
- Trade unionists in shipbuilding.

Furthermore, the project focused on the “outer environment” of the shipyards too, including subcontracting and supplying firms, study studios, and decision makers (public and local administration bodies).

Project Objective and Main Aims:

The project objective was to support shipbuilding enterprises in acting competitively in the international market, via the integration of new work organization forms and flexible production systems by using new technologies. These systems are meant to support both shipyards and their employees in adapting to market requirements and evolutions of the industry.

After reviewing the features of Greek shipyards, especially the problem of adaptation, the project focused mainly on removing qualitative and quantitative obstacles for adaptation and flexibility of the enterprises. More specifically, the project had the following main aims:

- ✓ Securing and promoting employment in shipbuilding and ship repair industry on a national scale.
- ✓ Developing an action plan and respective processes for organizational adaptation of the shipbuilding and ship repair industry.
- ✓ Introducing modern human resources development systems in the shipbuilding industry and upgrading vocational skills of the workforce, according to new industrial requirements.
- ✓ Developing sectoral dialogue processes between the social partners involved on employment issues.
- ✓ Assuring social consent to overcome old-fashioned work organization forms.
- ✓ Improving efficiency in the carrying out of certain tasks in the shipyards.
- ✓ Developing state-of-the-art tools for training, life-long learning and teleworking.

Short Project Overview:

Project interventions and actions covered a wide range of fields in the shipbuilding sector. The most essential ones are as follows:

- ✓ Integrated mapping and evaluation of the current situation in the industry, in terms of production organization and management, and features of the human resources.
- ✓ Operation of a physical and a virtual forum of dialogue on shipbuilding industry issues, focusing on employment issues.
- ✓ Development and piloting in the two shipyards (Neorion and Elefsis shipyards) of an integrated information system for production management.
- ✓ Market and needs surveys and an information system of networking shipyards with their suppliers and subcontractors.
- ✓ Software application for teleworking.
- ✓ Investigation and exchange of good practice on production processes and outsourcing management (transnational task).
- ✓ Inventory of critical production processes and training on best practices.
- ✓ Subcontracting management model and subcontractors’ assessment system.
- ✓ Exchange of information and know-how on professional health and safety issues and production of a health and safety manual (transnational task).
- ✓ Virtual forum for industrial relation issues (transnational task).

Specifically in relation to the fields of training and human resources development, the following actions were implemented:

- ✓ Integrated human resources development system for the sector

- ✓ Job profile and work post specification analyses and piloting on five shipbuilding professions (Platers, Welders, Pipe Fitters, Machinists and Fitters).
- ✓ Training packages for five professions (Platers, Welders, Pipe Fitters, Machinists and CNC tool machine Operators).
- ✓ Asynchronous web based e-learning system and innovative training applications of Virtual Reality.
- ✓ Qualification and skill assessment tools of the workforce (i.e. assessment guides, assessment specifications and criteria, assessor interview guidelines, etc) for the professions of Plater and welder and piloting of them in Neorion shipyards.
- ✓ Joint skill accreditation methodology (transnational task) and piloting them on a transnational scale.
- ✓ Import and piloting of a model methodology of recording and transferring tacit knowledge of front-line workers (transnational task).
- ✓ E-Observatory that assesses training needs in the shipyards (transnational task).

Transnational cooperation: Crisis in the shipbuilding industry runs throughout all EU countries. Transnational cooperation with two other DPs from Finland and Italy respectively, also of interest to shipbuilding industry issues, allowed for the exchange of questioning, experience and good practices. Under this cooperation a series of actions of both complementary and parallel character as to the national projects were implemented, as already mentioned.

One can locate special added value in the import of the experience of Italian partners from the purchase and change of activities of a major shipbuilding unit (Livorno shipyards) into a center for providing integrated services to yachting (building, repair, maintenance, mooring, wintering, etc). Management of this large-scale change took place at the same time as project implementation and contributed considerably to the know-how of the two other transnational partners by providing a viable model of focused development for European shipyards.

Innovation: The main innovative concept of the project lies in the fact that organizational change / restructure is used as a means for upgrading human resources, not just on the scale of a single industrial unit, but on the scale of the entire industry (cross-cut approach). More specifically, under this concept, actions such as the inventory and assessment of production potential to achieve a rational allocation of human resources, the introduction of a system of technical standards to rationalize skill specifications, the induction of a standardized system for human resources upgrading and evaluation, are considered to be highly innovative, as they approach human resources issues as parts of an integrated question to meet the needs of an entire market.

The Development of the Employment Forum is also approached under the same attitude, that is as a tool of dialogue between the interested parties (i.e., employers, employees, and the State) to cope with major employment problems in the sector.

Furthermore, development and use of state-of-the-art technological systems and tools (i.e. Human Resources Development System, Technical Specification Management System, information systems of networking with suppliers and subcontractors, e-learning platform, virtual reality applications, teleworking application, etc) enhance also the innovative aspects of the project. The same also applies to the effort for developing a common production management system between the two shipyards participating in the project, as well as introducing an innovative system for e-cooperation and e-empowerment of the DP partners. This is also the case for the Web-based Thematic Portal, a collective product and service of the project, that integrated the various IT systems, applications, or e-services developed.

As for business management, solutions are provided for several critical problems, concerning employment and human resources development (i.e. inability for total production planning, dead-times occurrence, shortages in sound processes for human resources and production procedures assessment), resulting in shortfalls in things like training needs assessment, or the taking-up of corrective actions).

With regard to the DP structure and the range and profile of its partners, the involvement of the major representative organizations of the sector (i.e., enterprises, employers, employees, and social partners), in a way that their active participation in all project stages is pursued and accomplished, resulted in an integrated, multi-angled approach. The internal structure of each activity or task included: tracking down the problem - solution seeking, planning and development - pilot application - evaluation.

Active Participation of Target Groups: This was a critical prerequisite and was pursued via:

- ✓ Operation of a sectoral physical and virtual forum on Employment, which provides a space for open social dialogue between employers, employees and other actors involved in issues related to employment, industrial relations and human resources management.
- ✓ Active participation of the trade bodies of the major target group (employees in the sector) in the DP structure.
- ✓ Participation of the trade bodies representing target groups in project evaluation and redesigning activities, as well as in training and in raising awareness actions.

Mainstreaming of Results: This is a major priority of the DP, aiming on the one hand at integrating good practice in the shipbuilding enterprises (horizontal mainstreaming), and, on the other hand, at promoting them to policy planning centers on national and EU scales (vertical mainstreaming). These aims are supported by:

- ✓ The sectoral approach of the issues instead of a single-point one. The two most dynamic and well organized industries in the sector (i.e Neorion and Elefsis Shipyards) are used as case studies, and product design is such to allow for good practice produced to be easily transferable to other enterprises in the sector.
- ✓ D.P. structure that ensures networking, transferability and mainstreaming of the results.
- ✓ The D.P.'s participation in the **National Thematic Group (NTG) on Accreditation of Vocational Qualifications and Skills**, as well as the **European Thematic Group (ETG) on Age Management**.
- ✓ The drawing of an integrated action plan to support and clearly specify goals and actions of thematic networking, dissemination and mainstreaming of results on national and EU scales.

Main Results and Conclusions:

From a quantitative point of view, the following milestones are worth mentioning: 24 sub-projects, including 70 specific tasks were implemented (*taking into account Actions I & II*). These called for 1,452 man-month labour coming from the DP partners' personnel as well as from free-lance associates. The main products under national and transnational project are estimated at 71, including: 36 surveys and studies, 6 physical and virtual human resources support structures, 5 major IT systems, 27 training / awareness courses (5,860 training man-hours and 481 trainees), 6 open type events, 4 dissemination products, and a great number of meetings of the DP's Administrative Board and Scientific Committee, not mentioning the specific work group meetings.

Aside the tangible numbers of results and products, specific value is given to the interventions and questioning introduced by the project in relation to behavioural and

culture changing aspects of all parties involved (*intangible outcomes*). To this end, the project impacts so far are considered to be particularly efficient and include:

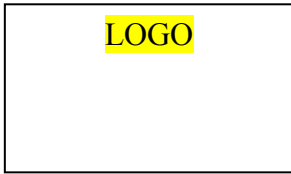
- ✓ Networking and cooperating of a range of organizations of various profiles and different concepts, under a joint framework and action plan with a view to commonly agreed goals. This can stand for a partnership model for other sectors of the economy or for other issues prompting synergies between diverse organizations.
- ✓ Reducing reluctance phenomena, especially as far as social partners (i.e. trade unions) and enterprise management were concerned, with regard to the necessity for dialogue, forming concrete suggestions and undertaking effective, integrated interventions for issues related to employment, competitiveness and adaptation of the sector and of its human potential.
- ✓ Downgrading the viewpoint difference concerning the approach of certain project tasks between academic partners (i.e. Universities) and production oriented ones (i.e. enterprises, trade unions).
- ✓ Making public and promoting the critical sectoral problems to decision makers on local, national and EU scale.

Difficulties or inefficiencies that were traced, can be identified as follows:

- ✓ Difficulties in achieving direct links with the main target group that is front-line shipyard workers, due to shortage in confidence regarding motivation, goals and practical impacts of such Community initiatives or programs.
- ✓ All the parties involved were able to identify the problems and agree on the solutions provided. However, the real effectiveness of these solutions can become truly tangible only after their integration in full operational conditions.
- ✓ Inefficiencies in transferring and disseminating the information and knowledge produced within the project.
- ✓ Requirements for imminent impacts and outcomes by many employees, a fact that did not facilitate the implementation environment of some of the project interventions.
- ✓ Shortage of several high-ranked shipyard employees (“leaders) in self-activating and undertaking of initiatives.
- ✓ Emerging of a considerable “bottom-up” potential, mainly coming from the experienced front-line, high-skilled workers that should be further exploited.

The main conclusions deriving from project implementation can be summarized as follows:

- ✓ Necessity for communication strengthening if any adaptation effort is to be effectively implemented.
- ✓ Need for improving management of production processes, especially concerning new production activities such as new buildings, in order to achieve reductions in production cost.
- ✓ Requirement for upgrading human resources management, focusing on valid assessment of skills, optimum utilization of human resources, improvements in terms of confidence and drop of internal inequalities and discrimination.
- ✓ Need for workers to upgrade their skills and competence, with a view to facilitating their adaptation to new job requirements.
- ✓ Need for reinforcing active participation of employees in decision-making and work conditions forming processes, under the quality jobs approach, and, at the same time, upgrading their responsibility as to the outcomes of their work and as to the overall development of the enterprise.
- ✓ Necessity for further establishment of new ICT technologies in the sector.
- ✓ Requirement for maintaining and taking advantage of the tacit knowledge of ageing or aged workers.



DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP “FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN OPEN SYSTEM FOR ACQUISITION AND ACCREDITATION OF QUALIFICATIONS & SKILLS IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION SECTOR”

DP Partners:

The Development Partnership consists of the following partners:

- Greek Biotope-Wetland Centre (EKBY), DP Managing Organisation
- National Accreditation Centre of Continuing Vocational Training, Supervised by the Ministry of Employment and Social Protection
- National Centre for Environmental and Sustainable Development (EKPAA), Supervised by the Ministry of Environment and Public Works
- Development Company of the Municipality of Lavrion (DEAL), Local Administration Organization
- Energy-Environmental-Local Development (EPTA LTD)
- Hellenic Union of Municipal Enterprises for Water Supply and Sewerage (EDEYA)
- Greek Society of Solid Waste Management (EEDSA)
- Environmental Planning Engineering and Management (EPEM SA)
- OIKOS Natural Environment Management (OIKOS LTD)
- Hellenic Federation of Employees of Municipal Enterprises for Water Supply and Sewerage (POE-DEYA)
- Planet S.A., Consulting Services Firm
- Technical Training Ltd, Vocational Training Centre

Transnational Cooperation Partnerships

The transnational partners of the Development Partnership are as follows:

<p>logo</p> <p>RIPRESA – Italy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CIRPS: Inter-University Centre for Sustainable Development - ASIA ONPLUS: Support Organization for socially disadvantaged groups - ENEL PRODUZIONE S.P.A.: Power supply company / Personnel Training Department - S.S.P.A.L.: Supreme School for Public Administration - HOCHFEILER S.R.L.: Multimedia system design firm
<p>logo</p> <p>RESTECO – Belgium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CCNWF: Federation of employers in the construction sector of Northwest Flanders - FVB: Training federation of employees in the construction sector - EUCORA: Training centre for socially disadvantaged groups - VCB: Technological Centre for constructions - VDAB: Flemish service providing employment and training

Target groups of the project:

The project focused on the needs of:

- Employees in the environmental protection sector
- Newcomers in the labour market of environmental protection who are either low-qualified, either high-qualified but low experienced and who could

Project objective:

The project “Development of an Open System for Acquisition and Accreditation of Qualifications & Skills in the Environmental Protection Sector” aimed at linking the needs of the environmental protection sector in specialized workforce with those of the groups suffering from inequality in terms of access and remaining in this particular labour market.

Short project overview:

The project of the Development Partnership for “Development of an Open System for Acquisition and Accreditation of Qualifications & Skills in the Environmental Protection Sector” is described by the following interconnected sets of actions

1st set of actions: Accreditation system of vocational skills and competence – Accreditation system of training curricula in the environmental protection sector

At first, **the condition of the environmental protection sector was surveyed and the operational areas and professions were recorded**, including both the present ones, as well as those expected to arise according to the needs and evolutions in the sector. Within this survey, **an analytical description of the job posts and the professional tasks (job profiles), and also the identification of the required knowledge and skills**, was implemented for selected professions of the three main areas of the sector: solid waste management, waste water management, and natural environment protection.

On the basis of this survey an **open system for acquiring and certifying skills and competence in the environmental protection sector** was developed, mainly by the National Accreditation Center of Continuing Vocational Training (EKEPIS).

The system was documented in a study describing the specific methodology for identifying the criteria and the standards required for an employee to reach, and also an integrated framework for certifying either formal or non-formal skills and competence held by the employees. More specifically, three professions were chosen and for these the method for documenting and evaluating vocational experience, skills and specific characteristics of the employees, as well as the method for identifying training needs for obtaining new knowledge and skills, were studied. The professions chosen included:

- Machinery Operator in Solid Waste Disposal Facilities
- Maintenance Technician for Water Waste Treatment Facilities and Networks
- Planning and project manager for eco-tourist programs and environmental rendering systems.

Accreditation actions were concluded after **a study implemented by EKEPIS and Technical Training – Vocational Training Centre on the accreditation of vocational training curricula in the environmental protection sector**. This study documents Greek and European state-of-the-art and sets the parameters and standards that a vocational training course in the field of environmental protection should meet. Also, it sets the processes to be followed for the accreditation of the training curriculum. It answers the questions regarding the roles in the process and, after three case studies corresponding to the vocational content of three selected professions of the environmental protection sector, ends up indicating an integrated training curricula accreditation model.

2nd set of actions: Developing training material and a distance learning system and implementing training activities

The outcomes of the 1st set of actions concerning vocational profiles and new knowledge and skills required for the three main environmental areas, gave input to the development of six training packages, as follows:

- Three conventional, printed training packages, entitled “Protected areas management”, developed by EKBY, “Management of solid waste recycling programs by separation at source”, developed by EEDSA, and “Planning and implementing environmental management systems”, by EPTA, respectively.
- One training package under the title “Management of municipal waste water”, developed by EDEYA, both in print and customized for asynchronous e-learning.
- Two training packages: “Planning and management of eco-tourist programs and environmental rendering systems”, developed by OIKOS Ltd and “Basic principles for solid waste disposal facility operation”, developed by EPEM SA. These packages were customized for asynchronous e-learning.

Technical Training – vocational training centre implemented three pilot vocational training courses, one per environmental area, at a conventional form, using these training packages. A number of 38 persons in total attended these courses and their practice on-the-job was carried out in enterprises and organizations of the sector. Following the training courses, a number of trainees were placed in two partner organizations of the Development Partnership (EKBY and OIKOS Ltd) in order to **obtain job experience**.

An **open distance learning system** (asynchronous e-learning) was designed and developed in order to fulfil the training needs of people working in small and spatially dispersed businesses and enterprises in the sector. To this end, a system specification study and a comparative state-of-the-art survey were carried out for the optimum solution to be found. The platform that was developed is based on the integration of reusable modules of open source software, capable of supporting simultaneous use for 100+ users. After that, the user manual, the trainer-counsellor manual and the trainee manual, as well as the entire code of application of the system were issued.

This system was used by Technical Training vocational training centre for distance training of 129 employees coming from 61 chosen enterprises and organizations nationwide. This pilot distance-learning course took place for three trainee groups, using the training packages customized for e-learning that were mentioned above. For the first group training concerned planning and management of eco-tourist programs and environmental rendering systems, the second one concerned management of municipal waste water, and the third one concerned the main principles for the operation of solid waste disposal facilities. During the courses all the tools of the asynchronous e-learning system were used (i.e. agenda, description and curriculum of the course, links, subsidiary files, trainee projects, announcements, area for asynchronous – Forum – and for on-line communication – chat -, self-assessment and final assessment tests, frequently asked questions and answers – FAQ -, course statistics, user groups and user registration. Trainees were allocated in user groups that trainers / counsellors supervised, supported by an administration team which provided technical or any other support required. The employees in the sector welcomed this innovative course positively.

3rd set of actions: Developing life-long learning processes in enterprises of the environmental protection sector

The project partners DEAL, POE-DEYA, EPTA and EEDSA contributed in the design of the main principles and guidelines for the development of Human Resources Management System and life-long learning / training processes for enterprises and organizations in the environmental protection sector. A pilot application of this system was carried out in six enterprises in the sector, after the development of a manual for each enterprise and the necessary training of two persons in charge for each one of them. The enterprises in question were as follows: EPEM SA, MESOGIOS Technical SA, ELXIS SA, OIKOS Ltd, ENV. PLAN. Ltd and EXERGIA SA.

4th set of actions: Information and dissemination activities

A series of dissemination activities were implemented, aiming at: raising awareness of the enterprises operating in the environmental protection sector as to the potential for significant improvement of the vocational skills and competence of their employees, informing the employees caring to improve their position in the labour market, as well as the unemployed interested in working in the sector in question. Dissemination was focused on the residence and work locations of the target groups.

Furthermore, project information and dissemination activities allowed for feedback and upgrading of the project results.

These activities, organized by EKPAA, included:

- Building of corporate profile, logo issuing, issuing of four promotion leaflets, one poster, two stickers, one folder, two CD and DVD cases, and four newsletters for distribution to the beneficiaries.
- Development and support of a web site (www.envi-e.gr) containing information on the progress and the actions of the project.
- Organization of a conference (Athens) and seven other events (Thessalonica, Athens, Crete, Veroia).
- Development of an action grid for promotion through mass media: operation of a press office, issue of four press releases, production of four press packs and two press conferences, advertisements in four press media (KATHIMERINI, AVGI, DROMOLOGIA and ANAKYKLOSI) and promotion of radio campaign at two radio stations (Spot Rethymno and Echorama).

(For more information: www.envi-e.gr web site).

5th set of actions: Transnationality activities

The effort of the Development Partnership to optimise its results was enriched by common actions with RESTECO DP, Belgium and RIPRESA DP, Italy. The transnational cooperation was structured on meetings, dissemination activities (e.g. a Conference) and exchange of information, know-how and experience and resulted in the production of 4 joint deliverables, as follows:

- Development of distance learning systems
- Methodology and tools for evaluating the effectiveness of training courses
- Development of approaches for establishing of accreditation systems
- Development of three training packages on safety and health issues in the workplace.

Internal and external evaluation actions

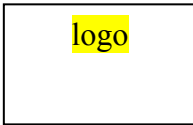
For the whole project PLANET SA provided an integrated management and coordination system, as well as a monitoring and internal evaluation system. Internal evaluation of the project included:

- Building of a database for evaluating sub-projects and tasks and development of an information system (IT) to support the monitoring and evaluation sub-project.

- Appraisal of project design in relation to the current situation and EQUAL priorities.
- Evaluation of effectiveness, performance and impacts of the sub-projects, the actions and the project as a total, in relation to the set objectives, providing documented data.
- Setting of realistic and feasible suggestions to review and improve project planning and project outcomes.

The tools and processes of the monitoring and internal evaluation system gave feedback throughout the development phase of the project and contributed to the optimum functioning of the Development Partnership and the effectiveness of its activities.

External evaluation was assigned to Astiki Diaxeirisi SA, an external organization as to Development Partnership and was carried out according to the guidelines of the Managing Authority of C.I. EQUAL. It included evaluation of planning and evaluation of the results and impacts on sub-project and project level. Within this framework, one brief evaluation report, using a structured questionnaire, two intermediate reports and a final report were carried out. The final report included two case studies in which the sub-project outcomes, as well as the side effects created by the respective actions were evaluated.



DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP “PROTEAS”

D.P. Structure:

A motivated cooperation between 16 organizations that effectively operate in a range of activities, such as Rehabilitation, Training, Health, Business, Mass Media and Local Administration, commenced about three years ago under the motto: “Adapt Technology, not the Individual”. More specifically, the participating partners were as follows:

- Social Work Foundation (IKE)
- Spastic Protection Society (EPS)
- Hellenic Society for Protection and Rehabilitation of Handicapped Children (ELEPAP)
- Hellenic Association of Paraplegic and Physical Disabled (PASYPKA)
- “DISABILITY NOW” – Non-profit supportive organization
- National & Kapodistrian University of Athens –Faculty of Informatics and Telecommunications
- Hellenic Network for Corporate Social Responsibility
- Hellenic Society for Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
- Development Company of the Municipality of Egaleo (DEADA)
- LABRAKIS Research Foundation (IML)
- Hellenic Broadcasting Corporation (ERT) SA
- INTERAMERICAN Insurance Company SA
- GRIGORIS Snack Food SA
- V-PRC, PROJECT RESEARCH CONSULTING S.A.
- TECMOR SA – Techno economical Consultants for Management and Development
- IDEASIS Ltd – High Tech Systems and Services for Robotics and Informatics.

The specific actions that took place included:

- Integrated skill assessment of physical
- Integrated evaluation of employers’ needs
- Training on fields corresponding to professions of the free labour market, that is:
 - Informatics
 - Sport journalism
 - Insurance services
 - Catering services
- Support and re-accession of persons with physical disabilities via counselling services and application of the appropriate legal framework, as well as via promotion to employment services. Emphasis was given to alternative forms of employment, such as teleworking in the insurance sector.
- Workshops for Health professionals on Job Coaching issues. A number of these professionals worked afterwards to promote people with disabilities to employment and support their On-the-Job-Training.

Cooperation of all these organisations took place within the framework of the EQUAL Community Initiative, co-funded by the European Social Fund and the Greek Ministry of Employment and the Social Protection. The partners:

- Developed two tools (questionnaires) that can produce a clear picture of the needs of the beneficiaries (i.e. people with disabilities – employers).

- Communicated the project to a large part of the population.
- Raised the awareness of employers
- Mobilised a part of the population of people with disabilities for training and promotion to the labour market, thus assuring their right to dignified living.

Surveys:

VPRC implemented three major surveys within the “PROTEAS” DP. The results of these surveys document the demographic, ideological and social characteristics of the Greek society as to the relation of disability with employment. These surveys had a considerable contribution to the disability field, as well as to the business world, offering also a ground for further academic research. Their scopes were as follows:

- “Physical Disability in Greece”, Parts A and B
- “Survey on the Special Population of Physical Disabled”
- “Businesses and Employment of Physical Disabled in Greece”

Assessment Tools:

The assessment tools aimed at a dual objective, as follows:

- Documenting the skills / competence and the needs of persons tackling physical difficulties
- Documenting the tasks that a candidate should carry out and the skills and competence that one should have in order to be able to work in targeted work posts.

The tools are available in a digital, easy to use form, allowing separate candidate assessment entries (Candidate Assessment Tool) and work post assessment entries (Work Post Assessment Tool).

The modules included in each assessment tool are as follows:

- ❖ Candidate Assessment Tool
 - Special assessment of kinetic skills (generic info, moving – accessibility, smooth and rough mobility).
 - Holistic skill assessment (cognitive and psycho-social skills, work aptitude skills).

The tool includes also the Work Aptitude Card that comes as an automatic digital output and describes the professional profile of the individual in a 5-page format.

- ❖ Work Post Assessment Tool
 - Special assessment of kinetic skills (generic info, moving – accessibility, smooth and rough mobility).

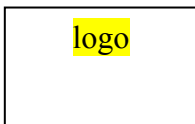
Training:

42 individuals with physical disabilities were trained on 4 certified training courses of 200 hours per course. The methodology followed in these certified training courses included both classroom sessions and practice sessions in virtual work environments. Four special

training manuals were produced as an outcome of the focused training courses in the fields mentioned above.

Counselling Support.

To assist Counselling Support the “Distance Vocational Self- recognition and Orientation Environment” was also used. This is a web portal hosting information on labour market issues mainly for persons with disabilities and employers interested in employing such persons, not excluding them.



INITIATIVE FOR THE QUALITY OF WORKING LIFE

Project Title:

NEW EMPLOYMENT PERSPECTIVES WITH HIGHER QUALITY OF WORKING LIFE

DP Managing organisation:

DELTA SINGULAR EDUCATIONAL SERVICES S.A., CENTER FOR VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND RESEARCH

General:

The Development Partnership «Initiative for the quality of working life» under the coordination of Delta Singular Educational Services SA – Vocational Training Center, implements the «New Employment Perspectives With Higher Quality of Working Life» project within the framework of the EQUAL Community Initiative. This project attempts, for the first time in Greece, to introduce teleworking in a number of departments of a company that provide call center services. More specifically, the project actions under implementation involve planning and piloting teleworking in the call center of Delta Singular S.A. (now First Data Hellas), by taking advantage of the potential offered by new information and communication technologies.

The **main problem** addressed is the **impacts of transferring work from the traditional office location to the teleworker's home**. This is approached by focusing on the pros as to quality of working life and to providing the possibility of employment to individuals who find it hard or even impossible to reconcile professional duties with social and family life.

Target groups:

More specifically, the project directly addresses:

- **Employees in general**, mainly women, who cannot be at home for long periods, because of various problems or duties.
- **Employees at call centres**, who encounter problems mostly due to the routine and repetitive nature of their work.
- **Individuals with disabilities**. More specifically, within the project pilot application phase individuals suffering from visual impairment and thalassemia were selected to participate.

The project also indirectly addresses:

- **Businessmen** interested in applying teleworking who are in search of similar work practices.
- **Actors of the labor market** working with new forms of work organization or searching for applications of teleworking.

Project Objective and Specific Aims:

The main project objective is the investigation of the ways to **retain teleworking attractive** as a form of work organization for the enterprises on the one hand, and promote it as a reliable alternative for employees who could make use of it at a certain

stage of life, in order to tackle mobility difficulties, due to structural changes or personal choices, on the other hand.

The project goals also include:

- Creating new employment opportunities for disadvantaged groups (e.g. people with disabilities, women, refugees, etc).
- Developing good practice on reconciling professional with personal life.
- Applying methodological tools for:
 - a) Analyzing the vocational characteristics of call center employees
 - b) Designing professional profiles for call center employees
 - c) Supporting the evolution of their career
- Strengthening social dialogue between the interested parties and social partners as to issues related to work organization forms.
- Propagating teleworking as a new work model.
- Raising awareness of the impacts of teleworking.

D.P. Structure:

More specifically, the participating partners of the Development Partnership are as follows:

- Delta Singular Educational Services S.A., center for vocational training and research – DP Managing Organization
- Delta Singular SA (now First Data Hellas)
- PLANET S.A.
- Federation of Private Sector Employees of Greece (OIYE)
- Athens Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Hellenic Society of Retina Diseases (PEA)
- Hellenic Association of Thalassaemia Sufferers (PASPAMA)
- Union of Qualified Greek Women Engineers (EDEM)
- Vocational Orientation and Educational Consultants (SEP&E)
- Software Engineering Laboratory (EPISEY) of the National Technical University of Athens (NTUA)
- Southeastern Europe Telecommunications and Informatics Research Institute (INA)
- Ophthalmology Center of Athens (OKA)

Actions:

Social partners and other organizations co-operate in testing and documenting managerial and organizational practices of teleworking in call centers, with a view to empower employment and fight segregations. These practices are disseminated so that a faster response and preparation for the upcoming labor market developments are achieved.

More specifically, the interventions of the project can be classified according to the following typologies of the EQUAL Operational Program:

- ❖ Strengthening implementation of new organization forms and flexible work schemes.
- ❖ Supporting businesses in promoting synergies and adapting flexible production systems.

Innovation:

Innovative aspects of the projects can be found from the action content viewpoint (i.e. promoting institutional, social and operational features of teleworking as a

practice that can reinforce businesses' and employees' adaptability and act as a mechanism for social and professional inclusion of highly disadvantaged social groups). Furthermore, innovation is apparent from the implementation methodology point of view, as well as from the one relating to the delivered products.

The main **innovative aspects** of the project are the establishment of teleworking in Greek enterprises and the investigation of its pros not only regarding call center employees, but also individuals of disadvantaged groups that can enter employment in this field.

From the methodology and product viewpoint, innovative actions are identified as follows:

- Elaborating analyses of vocational profile and skills for teleworkers.
- Special foundation work for people with disabilities and supporting them for placement in teleworking positions.
- Focused training (conventional and distance learning techniques applied) on the specific requirements of the project.
- Designing a system for accreditation of vocational qualifications and skills for the profession of call center agent.
- Adjusting a data transfer and security system for call center teleworking environments.
- Developing and operating a coordinating instrument for the consultation of social partners on new work organization forms.
- Developing and managing a life-long learning observatory.
- Building a cooperation network between call center service providers and teleworking application providers.

Transnationality:

Exchange of experience and good practice via transnational cooperation has contributed significantly to the project implementation.

Transnational Partners

The project's transnational partners are as follows:

Belgian D.P.:

2002 Befr- 44- Acces aux metier de l' informatique (Access to the information Technologies profession)

Dutch D.P.:

2001/EQF/0008- Afstandleren in de call center sector (Distance learning in the call center sector)

Transnationality contributed to the following main project goals:

- Exchange of information on issues related to developing and managing new technologies and their impact on restructuring of the work forms.
- Exploitation of good practice and know-how on the teleworking field by the transnational partners.
- Joint development of professional profiles, training curricula for call center agents (for both conventional and distance learning) and accreditation processes on national and European scales.

Benefits from Transnationality

Benefits derived from transnationality can be distinguished in two categories: benefits concerning project development and functioning and benefits concerning the organizations participating in the D.P.

a) The first type is related to broad benefits and subsequent pros of the D.P. by utilizing transnational cooperation, including:

- Creation of joint products that could not be accomplished if it wasn't for the intervention of the transnational partners (i.e. methodologies for analysis of professional profiles, for training and accreditation curricula, for supporting teleworkers, for documenting the teleworking model and networking social partners with new technology enterprises).
- Adopting new ideas and concepts as to restructuring of work organization forms and adaptability of employees to market changes.
- Promoting supportive means in order for the teleworking model to be utilized by disadvantaged social groups (i.e. people with disabilities, the young unemployed).
- Building and maintaining extended transnational networks on the field of teleworking.

b) The latter type is related to the benefits gained by the D.P. partners. Such benefits can be located especially for the staff of the partners participating in project implementation and include:

- Coming to know new methodologies and work organization techniques.
- Acquiring new qualifications in the field of training and integrating target group members.
- Upgrading vocational skills of target group members in the teleworking method.

Apart from the above-mentioned, the "Initiative for the Quality of Working Life" D.P. also participates and manages two National Thematic Networks, namely:

- **"Reconciling family and professional life"**
- **"Accreditation of vocational qualifications and skills"**

At the same time the D.P. participates also in the European Thematic Group on "**Life-Long Learning**", which aims at creating the proper conditions to provide employees with the possibility for constant and continuing development of their skills via Life-Long Learning.

Results – Conclusions

General observations

Adopting teleworking and adapting it to the needs of Greek enterprises can assure solution to a number of macro as well as micro type problems that have appeared during the last years and are associated to competitiveness strengthening processes and to productivity of the informatics market. The positive impacts by implementing a teleworking development plan can be summarized as follows:

- ❖ **Improvement of work environment conditions.** Teleworking reduces transport to and from traditional work locations, thus resulting in reduced pollutant emission, fuel economy, less need for constructing new roads or for maintenance of the existing ones.
- ❖ **Smoothing of inter-regional inequalities.** By teleworking enterprises located away from the metropolitan centers can solve their problem of recruiting high-skilled staff, whereas at the same time scientists are given a motive to work at their place of origin without being obliged to move to urban centers.
- ❖ **Increase of Effective Working time.** As a rule, teleworkers take advantage of considerable time, which would otherwise be spent on commuting. In addition, a number of surveys have indicated that one needs also an amount of time after arriving at work before one comes into full productivity status.

Apart from these, the main project directions and the D.P. structure insure the potential for wider application of its results. In fact, promotion of a human –oriented teleworking model and validation through its pilot application, provide a solid background both for

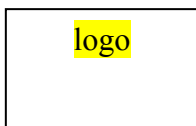
employment and industrial relations policy planners on a national scale, and to social partners in the country.

Project deployment by social partners

Implementation of an integrated teleworking model and development of consultation processes between social partners on new work organization forms gave the representative of employers and employees the opportunity to understand and inform their members on the incorporation of flexible employment forms, teleworking in particular. This option is of particular interest to trade unions that usually approach teleworking in an ambiguous manner, a fact that reflects both the new chances and the risk existing in this employment form.

Specific project results

- Flexible work organization forms and teleworking in particular, are directly associated to ICT development in terms of the general work environment quality, working time arrangements and also the way to approach work organization in enterprises on the whole.
- Teleworking can stand as a vigorous, robust vehicle for promotion to employment, specifically as far as disadvantaged social groups are concerned.
- Application of teleworking as well as other flexible work forms on a broader scale depends on the fulfillment of several prerequisites (i.e. legal and institutional framework, infrastructure, etc).
- Mixed teleworking model overcomes the other ones.
- A successful teleworking application can be found at the field of call centers, provided infrastructure costs and safety and health standards for teleworkers are covered.
- A significant element for a successful application is proper training of human resources and constant updating of their knowledge and skills.



DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP “SPARTAKOS” NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

Project Title:

Unified Support System for the Unemployed via Accreditation of Vocational Qualifications (E.S.P.E.P.)

Project Objective:

The project objective is to pilot EQUAL aims on a group of individuals tackling discrimination and inequality in the labour market. This pilot is applied to two highly active market sectors (i.e. tourism and new economy), with a view to a unified support system for the unemployed, via Accreditation of their Vocational Qualifications.

Project Goals:

- ❖ Developing the appropriate institutional, organizational and administrative framework for accrediting, upgrading and validating vocational qualifications and skills of individuals in a disadvantaged position in labour market.
- ❖ Cooperation between national systems for prior and continuing vocational training and promotion of a unified accreditation system for vocational qualifications.
- ❖ Linking training and employment on the basis of active participation of institutional organization of employers and employees, unifying different approaches found in the main public training and employment support organizations, and practical acceptance of a common reference model.
- ❖ Implementation of the above mentioned without creating any new structures, but instead by using the existing ones to take advantage of the experience available, after the necessary adjustments and improvements.
- ❖ Promotion of gender equality as a horizontal type intervention at all stages of the unified system proposed.
- ❖ Generalizing and standardizing results of pilot applications on representative professions and groups.

D.P. Structure:

The Development Partnership was structured as a non-profit organization under the title: “SPARTAKOS: INTEGRATED SUPPORT OF INDIVIDUALS TACKLING DISCRIMINATION”. The following 11 partners participate in the D.P.:

D.P. Managing Organization:

1. Hellenic Management Association (E.E.D.E.)

Public organizations for vocational training and promotion to employment:

2. Organisation for Vocational Education and Training (O.E.E.K.)
3. National Accreditation Centre of Continuing Vocational Training (E.KE.PIS.)
4. Greek Manpower Employment Organization (OAED / KPA / KETEK)
5. Schools of Tourism Education (OTEK)

Public Authority for Horizontal Implementation of Gender Equality:

6. General Secretariat for Equality (G.G.I.)

Trade bodies of employers and employees:

7. Hellenic Confederation of Professionals Craftsmen and Merchants (G.S.E.V.E.E.)
8. Hellenic Federation of Hoteliers (P.O.X)
9. Greek Computer Society
10. General Confederation of Greek Workers - Institute of Labour (G.S.E.E. – I.N.E.)
11. Federation of Industrial Worker's Unions (O.B.E.S.)

Short Project Overview:

Target group - Professions - Specifications:

The project targeted at 50 unemployed (long-term unemployed, young unemployed, short-term employees) that were selected from OAED registries. After appropriate training 20 job counsellors of 4 OAED Employment Promotion Centers supported the recording of vocational qualifications, skills and competence and traced training needs of each candidate trainee, using the qualifications review method.

The professions chosen were as follows:

- ❖ IT-based accountant services
- ❖ Developer of Internet and Multimedia Applications
- ❖ Tourist info Manager

Pre-specified qualification level for the target group to enter the three professions was set at post-secondary education. This was due to the fact that the ESPEP project point by default at unemployed of low and middle educational qualifications level (I, II, III+). In fact, disadvantaged position of these groups in the labour market is due to lack of vocational training and professional experience in the specific profession that they wish to practice.

Job Profiles:

The job profile analysis approach that was selected consists the basis and the reference framework for the support system (i.e. selection of unemployed, determination of their skills and deficiencies, promotion to employment by using the training card or promotion to placement programs, etc), and also the accreditation system (i.e. assessment and accreditation of qualifications and skills of the unemployed for each profession).

The three occupations were indicated by the relevant employers' organizations - D.P. partners: GSEVEE, EPY, POX, as the ones meeting the criteria mentioned above.

Experts of the two sectors and the three occupations in question carried out the job profile analyses. In turn these analyses were reviewed via a survey on a particular sample of enterprises in order to determine the exact job positions that the occupations refer to, validate job demand and check the correlation rate to the selection criteria. Apart from an initial evaluation of the relevant job demand, this investigation also aimed at properly adapting the occupations to the labour market requirements. Survey results showed the need for further elaboration of job profiles, but not a need for redesigning them.

Vocational Counselling:

A special survey was implemented, proposing an integrated unemployed support system, targeting their professional (re-) inclusion at job positions corresponding to their vocational qualifications accredited.

In more detail, the survey indicated the methodology and the tools for the "qualifications review" process that is the backbone of the development and implementation of the "training card".

This process provides both the unemployed and the employees having a professional focus, the possibility to assess and accredit their knowledge – basic and specialized -, vocational skills and competence, needs, desires, professional interests and activities, and also to determine their inefficiencies so as to re-adapt their skills, competence and knowledge according to their professional pursuits.

This process evolves by using certain “tools” and results in a synthesis of all the elements mentioned above.

The results of the “qualifications review” process are integrated via the training card which is a synthesis tool focused on knowledge, vocational skills and competence. This card is meant to systemize knowledge, skills and competence required for one to achieve a professional pursue.

Training Curricula and Courses:

The brief job analysis used in the job demand survey, was further elaborated in order to extract learning goals of training curricula.

The method used for developing training curricula and instructive techniques resulted as a blend of two methodologies: the “sustainable professionalization” method, a methodology in the development of which O.E.E.K. participated, and the training curricula accreditation methodology promoted by E.KE.PIS. This blended approach is based on the development of training curricula satisfying certain standards set for each occupation. These standards come as a result of the relevant job profile analysis.

The training curricula developed are modularised and comprehensive, basically aiming at creating employability to the trainees. At the same time, the developed instructional method was founded on cognitive psychology, giving emphasis on the development of key skills by a contextual learning approach.

The training courses implemented on the basis of a context-based framework, not a rigid, content-based one and were structured in modules per professional activity, not per training session.

- ❖ For the occupation of IT-based accountant services the training course was of 442 hours total duration, attended by 19 trainees.
- ❖ For the occupation of Developer of Internet and Multimedia Applications, the training course was of 437 hours total duration, attended by 18 trainees.
- ❖ For the occupation of Tourist info Manager the training course was of 340 hours total duration, attended by 13 trainees.

Accreditation of Vocational Qualifications:

The system developed allows formal accreditation of the knowledge and skills acquired after successfully attending the training courses already mentioned, and also the qualifications reached by practicing a professional activity.

A special train-the-trainer course based on the project innovative features was set-up for the trainers that afterwards participated in the training courses in question.

A trilateral Accreditation Committee (i.e. employers, employees and the State) carries out accreditation, administratively and scientifically supported by O.E.E.K. and E.KE.PIS.

Accreditation concerns in particular qualifications of 50 unemployed, after various paths (i.e. formal basic education, prior or continuing training, professional experience via apprenticeship placement or full employment, thus extending by far traditional educational / training concepts. It should be noted, though, that all 50 unemployed have undergone the training courses above-mentioned, depending on their learning needs.

Each unemployed individual attended those training modules – and the respective training hours – in which a training need was identified, as indicated in his/her training card.

The accreditation process is as follows:

1. Submission of an application at the Trilateral Accreditation Committee (A.C.)
2. Portfolio Building: Aided by his/her former and/or present employers, the candidate determines the qualifications and skills for which he/she documents professional adequacy and, then, applies for partial or full accreditation at a specified level.
3. Briefing of A.C. and the candidate in which the portfolio content is finalized by review of the documentation submitted and provision of any clarifications required is given.
4. A.C. matches the required qualifications, skills and competence for the specified profession and vocational training level to job profile standards.
5. Based on the formal reference (job profile standard) A.C. evaluates the application and suggests either rejection or approval or even approval after complementary actions.

Accreditation process includes written exams to investigate the theoretical background required for the profession and oral exams to assess the respective practical skills and competence. The process relies on the experience of the two public organizations – D.P. partners (O.E.E.K. and E.KE.PIS.) who are the formal state bodies charged with accrediting prior and continuing training, respectively, in Greece.

Supplementary Actions:

The 50 unemployed entered an O.A.E.D. placement program (STAGE) in order to obtain professional experience.

The employer organizations, being D.P. partners, developed liaison services, which, in conjunction to the well-organized information and dissemination plan of E.S.P.E.P., facilitate the anticipation of the unemployed for employment.

The relevant European experience was surveyed via two transnational projects: PECE and EQUALIFICATION.

Conclusions:

Innovation – Establishment of Accreditation – Standardization:

Innovative features and **good practice** of E.S.P.E.P. are as follows:

a) Participation and, therefore, adoption of the project by the state bodies (O.E.E.K., E.KE.PIS, O.A.E.D.), as well as the social partners / organizations (G.S.E.V.E.E., P.O.X., E.P.Y., G.S.E.E., O.B.E.S.) formally charged with the issues in question.

b) Job profile analysis methodology that results in specific standards used for designing training curricula. This is a pilot action for harmonizing vocational training and accreditation of qualifications systems.

c) Implementation of context-based, modular training courses that facilitates utilization of the “training card”. More generally speaking, this approach secures flexibility for adapting to the needs of the unemployed, to those of the labour market, as well as to the constantly changing market and society conditions, prompting an unhindered progress of individuals under the life-long learning concept.

d) Accreditation system of vocational qualifications that broadens the current systems of prior (Institutes of Vocational Training) and continuing vocational training (Vocational Training Centers).

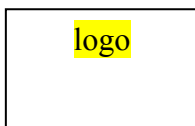
With regard to **establishment of accreditation** issue, it is considered to be feasible, since:

- a) It meets European and Greek standards (those used by O.E.E.K. and E.KE.PIS.).
- b) The state bodies charged with accrediting prior and continuing vocational training participate in the accreditation process, together with trade bodies of employers and employees.

One of the main project objectives is to render the system a **national public policy on accreditation**. This objective is supported by the fact that O.E.E.K. and E.KE.PIS. are the relevant state bodies of Education and Employment Ministries, respectively. A crucial boost in this effort would be the activation of the National System of Linking Vocational Education and Training to Employment (Act 3191/2003 – E.S.S.E.E.K.A.).

The overall outcomes of the E.S.P.E.P. project could integrate into national policies, resulting in:

- a) Improving job profile analyses accepted by the labour market.
- b) Upgrading prior and continuing vocational training systems and their inter-management, especially as far as the training curricula content is concerned, with reference to the new job profiles.
- c) Introducing vocational counseling, qualification review and the new tool of the training card in individualized support services offered by public or private counseling providers.
- d) Developing the conditions for a vocational qualification accreditation system, regardless of the path these qualifications are obtained. Up to date, such a system is not available.



Development Partnership “TECHNOMATHEIA”

“Development of a Model System for Life-long Training & Distance Accreditation of Skills in Small and Medium Enterprises”

The project is placed within the framework of Measure 1: “Promoting life-long learning and inclusive work practices”, Sub-Program 3: “Adaptability” of the EQUAL Community Initiative.

The project aims at the dissemination and adoption of life-long learning and training culture in small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), as well as the innovative utilization of new technologies, particularly those associated with informatics and internet, on distance learning and accreditation of vocational qualifications.

Geographical range of the project includes the regions of Attica, Central Macedonia, Western Greece and Crete and concerns small and medium sized enterprises relating to Handicraft and Services.

The main project objective is to develop and implement a life-long learning system, distance learning and accreditation of skills in small and medium sized enterprises.

Twelve organizations form the Development Partnership (D.P.) entitled “**TECHNOMATHEIA – Promotion Network for life-long training & distance accreditation skills in small and medium enterprises**”, as follows:

- 1) Vocational Training Center of the Hellenic Confederation of Professionals, Craftsmen and Merchants (**KEK GSEVEE**) (**DP Managing Organization**)
- 2) Hellenic Open University (**EAP**)
- 3) Hellenic Institute for Occupational Health and Safety (**ELINYAE**)
- 4) Hellenic Confederation of Professionals, Craftsmen and Merchants (**GSEVEE**)
- 5) Greek Manpower Employment Organization (**OAED**)
- 6) Foundation for Research and Technology - Hellas (**ITE**)
- 7) Athens’ Chamber of Small and Medium Sized Industries (**BEA**)
- 8) Vocational Training Center of the Institute of Labour – General Confederation of Greek Workers (**KEK INE- GSEE**)
- 9) National Accreditation Centre of Continuing Vocational Training (**E.KE.PIS**)
- 10) Development Agency of the Chamber of Commerce of Central Macedonia (**EKEM**)
- 11) Aristotle University of Thessaloniki – Research Committee (**APTH**)
- 12) Development Agency of Halkidiki (**ANETHA**)

The **main project goals** focus on:

1. Awareness of employers and employees in SMEs on life-long learning issues.
2. Design and implementation of model agreements between SME clusters coming from the same sector or geographic area and training and education organizations on applying job / training rotation schemes.
3. Support of SMEs coming from the same sector or geographic area to adopt tailor-made training processes according to their needs and to implement e-learning programs, with special emphasis on subjects of New Economy, Information Society and Occupational Health and Safety issues.

4. Development of a model distance learning and skill accreditation system for selected clusters of SMEs, accompanied by design and pilot application of the necessary accompanying tools.
5. Implementation of mainstreaming and promotion of gender equality on a policy level in order to ensure streamlining of the project products in the best possible way and outline terms and conditions for the basic project principles and products to be adopted by employment policies, integrating quality specifications as to equality of opportunities and mitigation of discrimination.

The project's **target groups** include:

- Employees and self-employed in SMEs
- Unemployed tackling discrimination in the labour market.
- Employers and owners of SMEs.

Innovative features of the project can be traced in the following areas:

- D.P. structure stands as an innovative feature on its own, given the fact that a considerable number of organizations charged with life-long training, employment labour market policies and vocational training participate in the D.P.
- Content of surveying and evaluating with regard to the rate of establishment life-long learning practices in SMEs.
- Design and implementation of model agreements between a selected sample cluster of SMEs on applying job rotation schemes.
- Pilot application of e-learning tools, developed under specific sub-projects, aiming at familiarizing employees and the unemployed with state-of-the-art distance learning methods.
- Design and development of appropriate counselling tools for the adoption of training processes tailor-made to the needs of SMEs.
- Development and standardization of a model system of distance skill accreditation on selected clusters of SMEs.
- Design and development of suitable distance learning tools.
- Implementation of e-learning courses focusing on issues raised after a training needs analysis of SME employers and employees.
- Incorporation and utilization of new technologies in the project, aiming at life-long learning, promotion of employment, development of processes for accreditation of vocational qualifications, establishment of dissemination and information courses of action for the results and outcomes of the project.

Four DPs from Ireland, Germany, Italy and Greece participate in the **transnational cooperation** of the project, under the title **equaleurope.com**.

The actions developed within this transnational project are as follows:

- Development and support of a web site and distance learning tools.
- Investigation and development of joint systems for human resources management in SMEs.
- Exchange of experience and development of a job rotation model.
- Exchange of experts of the transnational partners

The **main thematic areas** covered in the project are:

- Methodology of job profile analysis for technical professions
- Application and results of job rotation in SMEs
- Counselling tools for training in SMEs
- Framework and applications of distance learning and accreditation.

A. Methodology of job profile analysis for technical professions

In this thematic area institutional, financial and social conditions of Car Mechanics and Photography sectors were investigated. More specifically, the professions investigated were: “Car air condition mechanic” and “Photo captures and printing by digital media”, aiming at recording job profiles of the professions in question.

Job profile analysis was carried out via workshops in which employees and trade union delegates from Car Mechanics and Photography sectors participated. Professional electricians, mechanics and photographers validated analysis results by filling up a questionnaire.

Job profile analysis results in designing three levels of training courses: the first one addresses newcomers in the profession, the second one addresses individuals already working in the field and the last one addresses self-employed and enterprise employers.

B. Applications and results of job rotation in SMEs

This thematic area targeted at designing a Model Job Rotation System for Greek small enterprises (1-50 employees). This model system was piloted within the project.

The concept of the Job Rotation model is the following: When an employee has to attend a further training session / course, an already trained unemployed person covers his/her place at work

This job rotation model is tailor-made to the needs of Greek small enterprises and significant benefits are expected to be produced, such as:

- The unemployed participating in this will upgrade their professional background via training and job placement.
- The enterprises participating will reinforce their competitiveness through further training of their employees and upgrading of their skills.
- Participating employees are provided with the opportunity for continuing training with a view to improving their employability.
- Trade bodies of employers and employees will raise their awareness of issues relating to life-long learning promotion for enterprises and employees.
- Providers of vocational training, counselling and employment support services will be equipped with considerable experience and know-how on job rotation practices.

C. Counselling tools for training in SMEs

An integrated training counselling system was designed to support the efforts of trade bodies to respond to the needs of their members – enterprises for focused / oriented training of their employees. Individuals (partners of trade bodies or partners of enterprises) are expected to support the operation of this system. These individuals will play the role of agents, acting as training counsellors.

The trade body uses the services of a dedicated training provider (e.g. Vocational Training Center) and proceeds to designing and implementing the targeted training courses required, as derived from the action results of training counsellors. In total, a number of 60 plans for upgrading human resources in the Car Mechanic and Photography sectors were implemented.

D. Framework and applications of distance learning and accreditation

Principles of a Distance Accreditation System tailor-made to the specific needs of SMEs were developed. These main principles are as follows:

- Accreditation system will include three distinct but interconnected levels.
- Mandatory, accreditation system will refer to a specific training content (curriculum), pre-specified by the interested parties.
- Accreditation system will refer to a specified training process and each individual interested in getting accreditation will be able to enter this process or skip it if he/she feels she holds the necessary skills through his/her professional experience.

Training material to be provided through the system is based on the fundamental training that are values used to support all the traditional accreditation systems. In addition, system design followed all the basic principles of software technology.

The potential offered by Internet and multimedia was exploited to develop the e-learning system. A special software platform was used to transfer traditional training material for the two professions into e-learning training material. Up-to-date, 7 e-learning structures in Athens and 5 ones in Northern Greece have been operating, whereas the sum of e-trainees is more than 140 users.

Given that the system users are employees with technical skills with little experience in PCs, the system was designed in a way to be:

- Simple to use
- Easy to learn
- Not confusing
- Tolerant to user errors.

Structure of the accreditation system is a blend of tradition and technology, using:

- Traditional procedures as a base for distance accreditation on the one hand, and
- Software for web based training that was developed within the project on the other.

Accreditation process includes the following successive steps:

1. Submission of an application by the employee or the interested self-employed.
2. Gathering of all the necessary documents to build the candidate's portfolio.
3. Participation of the candidate in the accreditation process via the use of the web based platform.
4. Carrying out testing and approval or rejection of the accreditation competency.

After piloting on the selected professional sectors and the necessary adjustments, the project of the "Technomatheia" D.P. will be able to apply to more sectors of SMEs. In this way SME employees and the self-employed will be able to strengthen their position in the market, whereas the SMEs will be able to specialize their workforce using New Technologies and, thus, become more effective and competitive.

A highly innovative feature of the project, rendering it a project of major significance at national and EU levels, is especially the fact that it is the first time such a project promotes distance learning and accreditation of technical professions for SMEs.

Under the EQUAL concept, one of the objectives of the "Technomatheia" D.P. is to restrain discrimination in the labour market and promote equal opportunities in

employment. Provision of training and skill accreditation opportunities and development of systems and models of training counselling both within and outside SMEs will facilitate professional inclusion of individuals threatened with exclusion from the labour market.