

LLP - Transversal programme – Key Activity 1 “Studies and Comparative Research”

**C4C – European Research on Competences for Competitiveness
AGR. No. 2008-3598/001-001 (LLP KA1 STUCOM)**

Minutes of the 2nd transnational meeting held in Ripoll 14 – 15 May 2009

Participants list

Thursday, May 14th and Friday May 15th 2009

Name of the participant	Organisation/partner	Town and country
CASTAGNA Romeo	P1 - Fondazione Aldini Valeriani	Italy
CAVINA Laura	P1 - Fondazione Aldini Valeriani	Italy
DAHLHIELM Stefan	P6 - AB CENTEK	Sweden
FIORI Annalisa	P1 - Fondazione Aldini Valeriani	Italy
GOMEZ Mates Anna	P8 - Escola del Treball del Ripollès	Spain
HEPBURN Donald	P9 - Glasgow Caledonian University	United Kingdom
ISAKSSON Kenneth	P6 - AB CENTEK	Sweden
KATANA Natalia	P2 - Alintec	Italy
KOZAN Natalia	P3 - Wroclaw Centre for Technology Transfer	Poland
KULMER Cornelia	P4 - Auxilium	Austria
MAILLE Françoise	P5 - Université Paris 13	France
OSIADACZ Jaroslaw	P3 - Wroclaw Centre for Technology Transfer	Poland
PACCOUD Béatrice	P5 - Université Paris 13	France
SASSI Cinzia	P1 - Fondazione Aldini Valeriani	Italy
SOTERIOU Xenia	P7 - NSF CYBERALL ACCESS	Cyprus
TEMPLE Bryan	P9 - Glasgow Caledonian University	United Kingdom
UREÑA Doris	P8 - Escola del Treball del Ripollès	Spain
ZIGLIANI Chiara	P2 - Alintec	Italy



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Thursday, 14 May

Morning working session

The meeting started at 9:30 with a welcome greeting by Anna Mates Gomez, Director of Escola del Treball del Ripollès, while waiting for the Swedish partners to join the group.

Françoise Maille and Beatrice Paccoud introduced themselves as they were not able to attend the first kick-off meeting in Bologna in which Université Paris 13 was represented by Philippe Olivier. Then they started talking about possibilities about how to arrange the last meeting in Paris in 2010: hotel location and transports.

Romeo Castagna started presenting the slide "Synthesis (the shared version)" at page n. 12 of the document "Output of the groups 27_01_09" of the kick-off meeting. Then he summarized the Delphi survey, data processing and results: definitions were shared through a two steps methodology and each partner expressed very different opinions about each definition.

- 1) competitiveness
- 2) innovation: product, process, organisations
- 3) positive correlation between VET systems and competences

Each partner commented and added some remarks: Bryan said that in his opinion innovation is independent of knowledge and Béatrice asked whether the definitions we are using correspond to OECD ones.

Partners asked to print the final results of Romeo convergence test; in the meantime Doris was printing the page for the partners, Bryan asked to present and speak about his opinion/contribution on the convergence of definitions. His point of view was: "*Everybody has knowledge, an implicit/tacit one and an explicit one and companies have to exploit them. Innovation is the ability to link the achievements*" (referring to the ladders of achievement).

Jaroslaw intervened to find a balance between the two points of view to achieve some results. Romeo Castagna went back to his presentation for the Draft Methodological Research Plan: the first block of words referred to competitiveness and how to measure it and he explained how the various definitions have been positioned after the Delphi survey.

Bryan Temple said that a company can be competitive and innovative even without having a high level of technology: an example was given for the toys market in which a company such as Mattel, having a low technology level is still a market leader. According to Bryan, competitiveness is also the ability to sell more products than the others.



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So partners convened to the idea of comparing OECD criteria with the ones found on the Delphi survey.

Françoise showed the EU web site on Competitiveness:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/enterprise_policy/competitiveness/1_eucompetrep/eu_compet_reports.htm

in which some useful report can be downloaded and used as bibliography for the WP4 "Desk research" as the Communication from the European Commission on the European Competitiveness report 2008 - Com (2008) 774 final 28.11.2008.

Concerning French public diplomas, Françoise said that in France they are created together with companies and revised every three years. Cornelia Kulmer said that in Austria they are very theoretical.

VET systems are very different from country to country: Romeo Castagna suggested that each partner writes a short presentation of his country educational system, that could be considered as the "context" or the starting point of the desk research as stated on page 42 of the project (first box).

The final version of the Methodological research plan has to take into consideration transversal competences and personal development.

Every country has his definition for each thing: it is very crucial to start from there.

Françoise Maille asked whether it is possible to have a VET system description for each country involved in the research. Another issue was about which age groups to consider as for Italy, Spain and Poland VET systems comprise also secondary school students, but for other countries it is for students over 18.

Laura Cavina recalled partner's attention on the desk research objectives on page 42 of the project referring to school and university as both involved.

The discussion went further in trying to identify whether to have the research at national or local level. Some partners such as Scotland and Catalonia would prefer to have it done at regional level, while for other partners it would be easier to access national databases.

Slide n. 12 of MRP: Bryan Temple said that it will be very difficult to find information at regional level.

Stefan Dahlhielm suggested to choose the most competitive sector for each region according to common criteria (for example for Sweden the health sector) in order to compare the different human resources training levels. Another example of interesting innovative sector to possibly investigate in Sweden could be the "*Student consulting*".



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At about 13.00 partners had lunch at Hosteleria.

Afternoon working session

After lunch partners had a tour of the Escola del Treball del Ripollès visiting some laboratories for mechatronics, electrotecnics, etc.

At about 15.00 the afternoon session started continuing with Romeo Castagna's presentation on WP5 of the draft Methodological Research Plan.

Françoise Maille mentioned "Eden annual conference" speech by Claudio Dondi from Scierter with the title: "Innovation in learning or learning for innovation". Laura Cavina promised to find some information about last year conclusions and this year programme and speech after the conference (June 2009).

As far as questionnaires and interviews is concerned, partners suggested to have a preliminary survey with companies, possibly on the phone in order to arrange a deep interview at a later stage.

A question arose about the possibility of sending questionnaires to various companies or even on the phone as in Italy, for example, employers are not very keen on answering on the phone because of too many market research and surveys calls. Béatrice Paccoud asked how would be possible to motivate companies managers (HRM, CEO, etc.) to answer to our questions: interviews with a set of experts will support researchers to better identify the right competitive companies to be interviewed.

Concerning this topic, Cinzia made an example intending to interview Romano Prodi as expert economist well knowing companies situation and convinced of the key role of education and training in supporting economic growth.

Françoise Maille asked for some explanations on the matrix on page 28 of the MRP presentation.

The research team

Laura Cavina reminded all partners to communicate the name of the researchers for each country involved in the WP4 and WP5 works; Françoise Maille said that it is not possible to simply give the name of the researcher without defining a precise field of research. First it is important to define the professional competences and background (education in economics, psycho-sociology, socio-economic, etc.) the researcher should have in order to find the most appropriate resources.



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Laura asked partners to send the research team composition by next weeks.

The meeting finished at 5 p.m. then partners went to visit the Ripoll Monastery with a guided tour and the Farga Catalana.

Then they went for dinner at about 20.00 at Crocus Restaurant.

Friday, 15 May

Morning working session

The working session started at 9:30 with a proposal by Françoise Maille concerning the adoption of a common project glossary as terminology is influenced by national culture and/or influenced by "company" culture (example of "Valeurtech" EU project).

In particular, the most important words/terms on which the attention has been focused on to put some "boundaries" for the research have been: "vocational education/training", the "difference between technical and technological education" and the UE definition about SMEs.

- Vocational education: a type of education which leads to a professional profile

- "*Technical education*" gives an idea on processes, "Technological education" is the practical side of a subject opposed to the theoretical side of a subject .

- Accepted EU definition for SME companies:

Micro: 0-9

Small: 10-49

Medium: 50-249

In order to define a research area, the research level (country or region?), the typology of interviews and questionnaires size and kind of companies to be chosen both in the WP4 desk research and WP5 Field research, partners met and discussed in *small groups working sessions*.

The small group working session for the WP4 continued for one hour then partners met again in a plenary session before lunch to summarize and put together the results.

WP4 smalls groups working sessions

Reporting of first group (moved in the other room)

"In order to come to an agreement Françoise Maille proposed to consider common definitions considering both national definitions and European definitions.



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Jaroslawn Osiadacz proposed to collect all the definitions concerning innovation and VET systems and focused partners' attention on the way of collecting data across all countries: he proposed to built and send to all the partners an inventory (excel file) concerning:

- data accessibility in different national, regional and local databases
- how innovation index is counted
- what type of data are available: sector, company, data collected for income, profit or both, etc."

Reporting of second group (stayed in the meeting room)

"The project aim is how to give a good contribution/advice to companies to boost their competitiveness and to VET systems to match competences needs expressed by companies.

Looking at the boundaries, the most important question is "which would be the correct boundary for our research?".

Looking at geographical boundaries, our research should be focused on regional or national level, depending on the characteristics of the Country, in order to have a consistent number of examples of companies that are competitive.

Romeo said that, thanks to the fact the partners' countries are so different, the choice to focus the research on a region or country level, as the choice to address the research to medium, small or big size companies, isn't so relevant. The result of the research will be the more interesting and useful the more articulated the composition of the organization and VET System sample will be.

The sample of the organizations and the institutions will result as the composition of entities that are peculiar (for dimensions, industry and VET System) of the country they belong to, and this will grant to the results of the research the value of a conceptual model. In other words, an effective cooperation between companies (demand side) and VET System (supply side) will appear the more evident the more this cooperation will characterize both small companies (operating in local areas) and medium-large international companies.

Concerning the sectors we are going to investigate both manufacturing and services are to be considered.

Concerning the size of companies: medium size companies or possibly also a business unit within a large organisation are to be considered.

Conclusions for WP4

Final decisions on WP4 desk research starting point:

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- all partners will send the formal definition (at national level) which will be collected to agree on a common "project definitions"
- excel inventory sheet circulated by Jaroslaw Osiadacz to be filled in by all partners (2 weeks time to agree on what to put on the database and 2 weeks to compile data)

WP4 (France) will provide the European/international references.

All other partners will provide national and regional level.

Concerning possible databases partners need to access for data searching Laura Cavina promised to contact EACEA C4C project manager to check how partners should proceed in case some databases are not free of charge (the question has already been submitted and waiting for an answer).

WP4 deadlines

By mid September all partners will send their country report draft to Françoise, so that we can have an idea before the meeting in September.

WP4 final report will be ready by November, so that we are able to draft the Interim Report by December 2009.

WP5 smalls groups working sessions

Conclusions for WP5

Concerning the WP5 sample, this will be composed on the basis of WP4 conclusions.

On the field analysis demand side, sectors to be deeply investigated will result as the most competitive ones from the WP4 desk research. Interviews with a set of experts will support researchers to better identify the right competitive companies to be interviewed.

From the companies questionnaires results researchers will deduce which VET systems are appropriate to be interviewed subsequently, on the field analysis supply side.

Partners convened on the importance to interest companies to agree to fill in questionnaires and interviews.

WP5 deadlines

Jaroslaw Osiadacz reminded all partners that Wroclaw meeting is planned for January 2010 and that it would be good to discuss proposals for deliverables n. 14, 15 and 16 (questionnaire's draft for demand and supply side and interviews' structures) before the meeting and make questionnaires during the spring of 2010.



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The deliverable n. 18 (Project report/research publication) and deliverable 19 (Recommendations for Policy Makers) may be done before holidays next year.

At about 13.00 partners had lunch at Hosteleria.

Afternoon working session

At about 15:00 the working session started.

C4C Logos

Laura Cavina and Xenia Soteriou presented the logos proposals from FAV and NSF Cyberall Access; partners expressed their opinion about and suggested some modifications which will be done in order to forward a new proposal to all partners for final voting.

C4C web site

Xenia Soteriou presented her idea about the C4C website and said that she would have sent the "client survey" to FAV as soon as she came back to her office.

C4C next transnational meeting date

Before the end of the meeting partners agree on changing of the location for the next meeting from Lulea, Sweden to Limassol, Cyprus as it seemed more appropriate in terms of climatic conditions in the two countries.

Concerning the date, **next meeting will be held in Limassol (Cyprus) at NSF Cyberall Access on 28-29 September 2009.**



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To Do List by next project meeting in Limassol (CY) held on Sept. 28-29 2009

What	Who	To whom	When
VET systems to be sent by all partners to Laura and Françoise	All partners	Laura and Françoise	22/05/2009
WP4 – WP5 schedule of activities (project charters)	Romeo Castagna	All partners	22/05/2009
C4C modified logos	FAV + Xenia	All partners	22/05/2009
International/EU answers to the definitions of "competence", "competitiveness", "innovation".	Françoise	All partners	25/05/2009
Website client survey and graphical proposals	Xenia	FAV	25/05/2009
Inventory excel tool draft version	Jaroslav	All partners	29/05/2009
WP4 - WP5 schedule of activities feedback	All partners	Romeo Castagna	29/05/2009
2 nd Evaluation report questionnaires	Auxilium - Cornelia Kulmer	All partners	29/05/2009
Logos voting	All partners	All partners	29/05/2009
Partners research team	All partners involved in the research	Laura Cavina	05/06/2009
Country report structure WP4 deliverable 11	Françoise	All partners	12/06/2009
Draft Country report	All partners involved in the research	All partners	Mid September
Methodological Research Plan in word version	Romeo Castagna	All partners	12/06/2009

27/05/2009 – Draft version

Drafters of the minutes:

Laura Cavina and Annalisa Fiori – Fondazione Aldini Valeriani

Revised by Romeo Castagna