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ABOUT THE PROJECT

The RETAIL sector is one of the most important sectors for the European economy. Its importance stems not only from its size (which is estimated to be € 1.352,00 billion or 11,8% of European GDP), but also from the fact that it will experience a job growth in the next future (Cedefop, Future skills supply and demand in Europe, 2012).

Crisis, globalisation, internationalisation, strong competition and mass customisation in that respect pose huge challenges, comprising both risks and opportunities.

RETAIL Sector Skills alliance will provide new solutions in terms of:

- Development of sectoral methods for anticipation of skills needs (New skills for Future Retail Managers (FURM));
- Design and implementation of specific initiatives that stimulate sector SMEs' incentives to invest in training (Decalogue for future retail trade SMEs, motivational guidelines for companies in all the project languages and a Label for companies accepting the agreement);
- Development of a new model of training provision within an overall lifelong learning strategy for the retail sector, taking into account barriers existing among SMEs and micro enterprises;
- Set up of the EU curricula of the new professional figure of the Future Retail Manager (FURM), endowed with more advanced social, entrepreneurial and management skills;
- Development of flexible devices for validation, transfer and recognition of learning outcomes, using ECVET principles;
- Providing the sector with the Info Formative Toolkit for the new FURM – with a strong use of simulation and blended learning modalities;
- European Peer Development Network for FURM.

More information: www.retail-alliance.eu ➤

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NEW SKILLS FOR FUTURE RETAIL MANAGERS

Retail in Europe is characterized by continuous change over the past 70 years. This change can be summarized in three major phases¹:

- The first phase occurring during the years after World War II was marked by the construction of the organisational and physical structure of retailing. City and town centres all over Europe were reconstructed. In Western Europe American ideas influenced managerial developments (e.g. the introduction of self service markets)²;
- The second phase is represented by the development of a common market and subsequently into a more and more integrated EU. Furthermore a growing acceptance towards marketing took place. The first hyper markets and superstores were developed in this phase;
- The still ongoing third phase is a phase characterized by re-structuring of retailing with new roles and function in the sector emerging. Information and communication technologies are rapidly developing, while the convergence of these technologies becomes more and more important for retailing. Furthermore the sector is influenced by other applications of technology, new materials and an ever growing internationalization.

¹Dawson, John, *The evolution and future structure of retailing in Europe*, 1999

²*Retailing in the 21st century, Current and future trends*, 2nd edition, 2010, p. 64

Main Problems and challenges

The main problems and challenges affecting the retail sector in Europe can be identified

- A growing influence of globalisation and internationalisation, which is leading to more competition on a global level. Retailers are competing on more markets and against more concurrence. To keep up with globalization and internationalisation it requires a better knowledge regarding languages, legal frames and international private and procedural law e.g. CISG, Brussels I Regulation, Rom I Regulation, as well as a better understanding of cultural differences and differences on trading practices;
- Developments in the retail trade sector are aiming towards more mass customisation and a better adaptation of lifestyle changes of the customers. The massive use of information and communication technologies for both, customers and companies, shows the need for more ICT and marketing knowledge for retailers. Furthermore a rising importance can be seen in lifestyle changes. Customers pay a growing attention towards ethical issues, quality, safety, environmental and health – related characteristics while purchasing goods. These upcoming developments also need a better knowledge on the part of retailers;

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- The current development in the retail trade sector in Europe aims for a high labour flexibility while it is characterised as a low-pay sector. This leads to less attractive work conditions and in consequence to less motivated workers, less quality, unsatisfied customers and decreasing sales and profits. This passive, numerical labour flexibility can be challenged by the concept of flexicurity as an active, functional labour flexibility.

You will find more information in the 1st part of
New Skills for Future RETAIL Managers Analyses

RETAIL Sector Skills Alliance comprises affordable institutions from 6 countries from different parts of Europe, presents a balanced geographic coverage. It is a mixture of institutions with different profiles, capacities and complementary competences:



European Business and Innovation Centre (CEEI)

of Albacete, Spain is a provincial organization with European projection. Established in 1984 as a Non-profit making Foundation, it was created thanks to cooperation between the public and private sectors, with a wide consensus among the regional and local development bodies. The objectives of the Foundation CEEI Albacete are to boost the creation of new businesses, especially those which are innovative or diverse, fostering new lines of activity in already-existent businesses and helping entrepreneurs in the process of starting their projects.



Wisamar

is a non-profit educational institute in Leipzig, Germany, acting in vocational, cultural and adult education. Wisamar is accredited by TÜV as education provider according to AZAV principles (employment activities for the Federal Employment Office) and also by the German Institute for Adult Education as competence center. Main activity areas are: Competence and dialogue Center, Project Office, Intercultural learning & EU Mobility. The aim of the organization is the promotion of education, tolerance and international attitude in all spheres of understanding between different peoples, cultures and education.

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MPS

Created in 1967, the MPS is a non profit organisation situated (about 10 minutes of Bordeaux) in France, at Artigues-Près-Bordeaux, employing 250 persons and realizing activities around two poles: a reception centre for events, seminars, colloquiums, meetings, etc. and a training organization for adult training offering qualification' trainings in adult education: Environment, Animation/ Sports, ICT (Certified training organisation by OPQF), Development of rural areas, Support creation of enterprises, Languages, E-learning, Gerontology, Up skilling, Secretary, Professional orientation.



Chamber of Commerce and Industry

of Dobrich, Bulgaria, is the biggest business support organization in the region of Dobrich, part of the network of Bulgarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry and contact point of Enterprise Europe Network. It is a non-governmental organisation established on the principles of voluntary membership and financial self-support. Mission: to increase regional economic growth and prosperity, to stimulate international trade and investment, to encourage international exchange and cooperation, to ensure the connection between education and business.



CIAPE

CIAPE is the Italian Centre for Permanent Learning, an adult learning provider offering quality and comprehensive training systems which are accessible to and inclusive of all. Main activity areas are: train the trainer; adult training; skills mismatch; e-learning & m-learning; mobility; job profiles and European projects. CIAPE is the transnational coordinator of the "Quality Apprenticeships European Network", a network involving businesses and VET organisations from 20 different countries. It is a member of the CEDEFOP "European Qualifications Framework - Credit Transfer in VET" and of the "Quality Assurance in VET" communities.

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European Masters of Skilled Crafts

(EUROMASC) is a Norwegian consultancy with experience and competences from a longtime cooperation with international organisations within the VET area in managing and monitoring projects. Main activity areas are: EU projects under the umbrella of Leonardo da Vinci and LLP; mobility measures relating to VET and corresponding sectors; Europass and transparency questions; ECVET and EQF; European Commission's ECVET-Team for the implementation of ECVET in Europe; EEA Financial Mechanisms, UNESCO/UNEVOC actions, networks and initiatives.

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