



Executive Agency, Education, Audiovisual and Culture



Retail sector Skills Alliance. Future Retail Managers for efficient and flexicure SMEs

Final Public Part

Project information

Project acronym: RETAIL

Project title: Retail sector Skills Alliance. Future Retail Managers for efficient and flexicure SMEs

Project number: 538640-LLP-1-2013-1-ES-LEONARDO-LMP

Sub-programme or KA: Leonardo Da Vinci Multilateral Projects- Development of Innovation

Project website: www.retail-alliance.eu

Reporting period: From 01/01/2014
To 31/12/2015

Report version: 1

Date of preparation: 26 February 2016

Beneficiary organisation: European Business and Innovation Centre of Albacete

Project coordinator: Mr. Angel Prieto Sotos

Project coordinator organisation: European Business and Innovation Centre of Albacete

Project coordinator telephone number: +34 967 616000

Project coordinator email address: aprieto@ceeialbacete.com

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.

This publication [communication] reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

© 2008 Copyright Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency.
The document may be freely copied and distributed provided that no modifications are made, that the source is acknowledged and that this copyright notice is included.

Executive Summary

Commerce, one of the largest sectors of activity in Europe with more than 33 million persons employed, has been severely affected by crisis and restructuring processes. **Globalisation and internationalisation**, mass customisation, lifestyle changes, and labour market flexibility in that respect pose huge challenges, especially to **retail trade sector** (New Skills and New Jobs; Comprehensive Sectoral Analysis of Emerging Competences and Economic Activities in the European Union – 2009).

If looking at the ongoing changes can be seen that the **qualification requirements** are changing throughout the sector, while the VET and continuous learning provision is no more able to offer suitable solutions. Thus, active labour market measures must be implemented across the EU in order to provide the sector with tools for a better **anticipation and positive management** of change, better adapting to the sector's future skills need (Lisbon Strategy).

According to the information above, this project focuses on the three main problems affecting the retail trade sector:

(1) The retail sector is already a much **internationalised sector and globalisation** and internationalisation will heavily affect the sector in the future. Competition is increasingly taking place at the global level, where more markets will open up for international players. Hence, retailers are competing internationally and source their goods globally. Further internationalisation and globalisation will require different skills from employees, as they will need to have a more international attitude, i.e. be able to communicate internationally, understand cultural differences etc.

(2) Main drivers for the retail sector are mass **customisation and lifestyle changes**. It is expected that mass customisation will be fully adopted in the future. Supported by the application of ICT tools, retailers will know more about their customers and will build up close relations with them. Based on this information and the close relations, retailers will make offerings tailored to the individual needs of the customer. Successful implementation of the strategy of mass customisation will result in growth and more jobs. In addition, it will also affect employment composition and the type of skills, as it will require, for example, availability of services and a flexible workforce, a more service-oriented attitude, and more ICT and marketing knowledge and expertise. Lifestyle changes are certainly impacting the market, as consumers need new products addressing, e.g. healthier living and crisis consequences. In addition, consumers will pay more attention to health-related characteristics of existing products, as well as ethical issues, quality, and safety. Successfully addressing the lifestyle changes with new products and services will result in growth and additional employment. It will also affect employment skills as the focus on lifestyle products and services will require educated employees with better knowledge of health, product characteristics, and production processes and better developed competences in advising and informing customers. In addition to the increased attention for healthy living, there will also be an increasing demand for environmentally friendly /organic products. In some

countries, for example Germany, this is already a very important market, but it will increasingly become important in other countries as well. Successfully addressing this market will result in growth and therefore more jobs. It will also influence the skills of the employees, as it will require better knowledge of sustainability issues and the sustainable characteristics of the products and production processes.

(3) An important weakness deals with the extreme **labour flexibility**. The commerce sector is very labour-intensive, especially in retail, and strives for more flexibility to be able to address the needs for labour in a 24/7 economy. Retailers strive continuously for more labour flexibility to increase competitiveness and labour productivity, but the downside is that this could lead to less motivated workers because of less attractive working conditions and as a result poor service quality, unsatisfied customers, decreased sales and profits, which start the process of cutting personnel costs again (also known as the cycle of failure in services) (Lehndorff, 1999). Opposite to this passive, numerical labour flexibility is the active, functional labour flexibility. This is the concept of flexicurity (EuroCommerce, Annual report 2007/Action plan 2008), pushed by the European Commission, and requiring specific competences by the managers in the retail sector.

These characteristics, associated with high one-sided focus on cost reductions, are making the sector less attractive and less safe. Moreover, they make very difficult for the sector to implement a lifelong learning developmental strategy, with negative consequences for people working in the field and for the whole development depending on the sector.

This project will improve the competitiveness of the European system through an acquired capability to encouraging SMEs in promote learning in the workplace environment, through the creation of attractive models of learning provision about the most needed skills for the future, enabling learning everywhere and at any time, and creating the new figure of “Future Retail Manager” (FURM), able to bring innovation within SMEs facing the main trends affecting the sector (Globalisation, Mass customisation and Lifestyle changes, and Labour flexibility).

The FURM will be able to create learning conducive environments at the workplace, properly coordinating employees in a Flexicure way, balancing ‘lean’ thinking with a developmental approach to HR management and improving the image of the sector.

Thus resulting in improved working conditions, including health and safety, in the retail sector, and in the creation of preconditions to attracting and retaining a future workforce.

Table of Contents

- 1. PROJECT OBJECTIVES..... 7
- 2. PROJECT APPROACH..... 8
- 3. PROJECT OUTCOMES & RESULTS..... 11
- 4. PARTNERSHIPS 15
- 5. PLANS FOR THE FUTURE 19
- 6. CONTRIBUTION TO EU POLICIES 20

1. Project Objectives

RETAIL objectives are a better **anticipation of skill needs** together with the **reduction of labour markets** crisis consequences in the EU retail trade sector, which are highly needed.

The proposed strategy aims at **minimising social costs and facilitating adaptation during crisis processes** through a better anticipation and positive management of change, via the promotion of a strategic management of human resources and fostering stronger synergies between innovation, skills and jobs, taking into account the global context and encouraging adaptations to national and regional level in a **flexicurity** oriented way.

RETAIL Project is following a strategy focused on overall key objectives of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in the European Union retail trade sector, namely:

1. Enhance the development of **human capital** in the EU retail sector
2. Improve the **image of the sector**, as well as its flexicurity conditions
3. Improve customer **relation management and efficient strategies** to face crisis.

Retail trade is hugely dominated by SMEs. Due to these specific circumstances, **strategic and visionary skills** as well as **initiative-taking** are even more important for retail managers of SMEs and micro enterprises, i.e. top management and company owners/ entrepreneurs, but also including different specialist managers, such as HRM, finance, sales, and R&D management.

This proposal aims at creating a new professional figure for the retail sector: **the Future Retail Manager for flexicure and efficient SMEs (FURM)**, endowed with innovative management skills, tools and intervention methods needed in order to face the main trends affecting the sector (Globalisation, Mass customisation and Lifestyle changes, and Labour flexibility).

The steps:

- Development of sectoral methods for anticipation of skills needs;
- Implementation of specific initiatives that stimulate sector SMEs to invest in training and flexicurity;
- Development of a new model of training provision 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 FURM, endowed with more advanced entrepreneurial and management skills;
- Developing flexible devices for validation, transfer and recognition of learning outcomes, using ECVET principles;
- Development of the Info-Formative Toolkit for the new FURM – with a strong use of simulation and blended learning modalities;
- Piloting the training on at least 120 FURM
- Set up of a European Peer-Development Network for FURM.

2. Project Approach

The commerce 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.

Current VET provision differs at EU level. For instance, in Spain retail VET is mainly managed at informal level; in Germany there is an enterprise-based training system (the 'Dual System') implemented by the social partners and the state; in France, a school-based training system is established and implemented by the state; in Bulgaria, VET moves from a state centred model to a stronger corporatist model. But, most importantly, sectoral VET doesn't cover the priorities outlined above, mainly focusing on health and safety, national rules and administrative issues.

A new European innovative approach is highly needed for retail managers, making them able to constantly acquire up-to-date key skills need to (1) quickly pick up new trends, explore new markets and channels, invest in customer relations, (2) provide attractive working conditions as well as learning conducive environments; (3) understand customers' needs and build strong relations with them.

RETAIL partnership was created in order to improve sectoral **identification and anticipation** of skill needs and their integration in VET provision; to develop the needed vocational skills considering the European labour market changes; to promote integration of learning with working and flexicurity in retail trade.

This project will achieve this by developing brand new solutions not yet available in any of the countries participating in the Lifelong Learning Programme.

The innovative aspect of RETAIL project stands in its capability to face the difficulties of SMEs in the retail trade sector in improving working conditions, including **personnel development and flexicurity**, so as to create preconditions to attracting and retaining a future workforce, and on the other hand to face properly the current crisis.

The following explains what is/will be our approach, methodology and dissemination and exploitation activities:

WP1

The coordinator of this phase is the Project coordinator. Each partner will be involved in this phase, supporting the activities implemented by the coordinator and managing each one's specific activities from financial, administrative, and quality pursuing views.

The transnational meetings will represent the main decision moments. They will be coordinated by the Project coordinator and each partner will contribute for what

concerns their roles and expertise. Key decisions taken will be summarised into the Meeting minutes: realised by the hosting partner and circulated among the other partners within one week after meeting conclusion.

Virtual meetings will represent also crucial updating moments. The coordinator, one week after each virtual meeting, will circulate the minutes.

Continuous contacts via email and telephone will be guaranteed, in order to solve possible problems arising in time.

For what concerns financial management, each partner will be responsible for its own organisation, with a transnational coordination made by the Project coordinator. Each six months' timesheets will be sent to the Project coordinator (according to a form that the latter will circulate), so as to better monitor ongoing activities and to ease the progress and final reports drafting.

WP2

The coordinator of the phase will draft specific guidelines for a proper management of the phase, as well as tools to be used.

All the partners involved will implement the specific tasks at the different national levels, reporting results in English language.

The leader (P2) will draft a synthetic report in English, which all the partners will translate in their own languages.

The supporters will contribute in drafting the desk research report, especially concerning new skills needed in the sector.

WP3

The WP leader, together with the P2 (co-leader), will create the EQF on the bases of the previous research results.

Such testing version will be then validated by a sample of expert organisations (WP6), in order to reach a common European tool that will be translated by the partners in all the languages of the consortium.

WP4

The WP leader will define the criteria for selecting international organisations working in the field of recognition of prior learning outcomes.

All the partners will identify a minimum of 6 organisations on the bases of the criteria stated. An international virtual workshop will be realised in order to define the standards of the validation devices, basing upon the EQF defined and upon the ECVET principles.

The P5, with contribution from P3 (supporter), will then lead the creation of the ICT device, that will be then translated in all the languages of the consortium.

WP5

The leading partner will define the Storyboard as well as the approach to be used in order to produce effective learning materials. Then, together with the supporting partners, will elaborate training contents (draft version) to be tested within a sample of retail SMEs (WP6).

The partners in charge will calibrate the product according to the testing results, producing the definitive European Info-training kit for future Retail Managers of efficient and flexicure SMEs.

The tool, translated in all the languages of the consortium, will be then ready for being uploaded onto the web.

WP6

The leading partner will state methodology and tools for internal evaluation and external testing/validation.

The partners in charge will implement the testing and or validation events according to defined guidelines, and will make a report of the results in English.

The partners will actively participate in all the testing sessions, bringing the point of view of a SME in the retail sector.

WP7

The leading partner will create the project logo and define/upload the dedicated project website (transversally to the entire project length).

All the partners will share a mailing list of relevant contacts at the different national levels.

The P4 will also define the contents of the newsletters that will be then translated by the partners in all the different languages of the consortium.

The partners will define the Decalogue and the Guidelines; as well as a new model of training provision for the retail in English, then calibrated in all the national versions.

WP8

The leading partner sets the bases/ indications for promoting the approach among companies (Label agreement) and for implementing the specialisation seminars. All the partners implement the referring tasks accordingly.

P1 defines the guidelines for populating and using the Peer developmental network, in order to help the other partners to do that.

3. Project Outcomes & Results

The following grid summarises all the main objectives of the product, explaining the deriving results, the target addressed as well as the specific actions that will be implemented in order to reach the final aims.

Objectives	Product	Target	Actions
Development of sectoral methods for anticipation of skills needs;	Section of the website containing: A synthetic report in all the languages: New skills for future Retail Managers; References to main sectoral observatories/ associations at different national levels and at European level and a list of contact person per country	VET organisations	Definition of Guidelines for research
			Desk Research of main sectoral observatories/associations at different national levels and at European level + contact person
			Definition of a research form for each finding
			Desk research of main European sectoral reports of the new skills for the future
			Definition of a synthetic report in English: New skills for future Retail Managers
			Translations
			Divulgence of the results among an international sample of Sectoral associations and VET organisations
Designing and implementation of specific initiatives that stimulate sector SMEs' incentives to invest in training and flexicurity;	A Decalogue for future retail trade SMEs + motivational guidelines for companies in all the project languages A Label for companies accepting the agreement	SMEs	Desk Research of main evidence based advantages of managing SMEs in a knowledge intensive and flexicure way (10 advantages)
			Field Research of main evidence based advantages of managing SMEs in a knowledge intensive and flexicure way
			Definition of the contents of the Decalogue for flexicure and efficient retail SMEs + Guidelines for companies for accepting and implementing the Decalogue (motivational tool) in English
			Translations
			Definition of the Label layout and contents

			Dissemination of the model among companies sending the proposal and making them sign it
Development of a new model of training provision, taking into account barriers existing among SMEs and micro enterprises;	A new model of training provision within an overall lifelong learning strategy for the retail sector (all the languages)	VET	Desk research of different learning media, learning methods and forms supporting decentralised, self-directed and efficient learning more independently in time and space
			Reporting the most innovative decentralised, self-directed and efficient learning methods
			Field research of the main barriers/incentives met by companies in introducing the 4 new learning ways within the retail sector
			Definition of the characteristics of the new model of training provision for the retail in English
			Translations
Set up of the EU curricula of the new professional figure of the FURM, endowed with more advanced entrepreneurial and management skills;	The new European Qualification Framework of the FURM, in terms of knowledge, skills and competencies needed in order to be able to (1) quickly pick up new trends, explore new markets and channels, invest in customer relations, (2) providing attractive working conditions as well as flexicure environments; (3) understand customers' needs and build strong relations	VET and SMEs	Definition of the main competences, skills and attitudes needed by FURM on the bases of the main EU sectoral reports of the new skills for the future
			Field research about main problems/ support needed by SMEs (points 1, 2, 3)
			Definition of the new EQF of the FURM (draft)
			Testing of the new EQF of the FURM on a sample of international stakeholders
			Reporting of the testing results
			Calibration of the new EQF of the FURM
			Translations
Divulcation among training and VET associations and higher education institution of the sector			

	with them		
Developing flexible devices for validation, transfer and recognition of learning outcomes, using ECVET principles;	Device for validation, transfer and recognition of learning outcomes	VET, counselling organisations	Identification of the associations for validation of learning outcomes
			Virtual team work: Circulation of the EQF with the aim of defining a methodology for validation, transfer and recognition of learning outcomes
			Reporting of results
			Definition of an ICT device for validation, transfer and recognition of learning outcomes
			Translations
			Circulation of the results among relevant stakeholders
Development of the Info Formative Toolkit for the new FURM – with a strong use of simulation and blended learning modalities;	Info Formative Toolkit for the new FURM in all the languages	VET, SMEs, Managers	Development of training contents according to the new modalities/inputs (1) quickly pick up new trends, explore new markets and channels, invest in customer relations, (2) providing attractive working conditions as well as learnconductive and flexicure environments; (3) organise the retail process to better manage mass customisation and lifestyle changes.
			Testing the contents
			Development of the Info Formative Toolkit for the new FURM (EN version)
			Translations
Training 57 direct FURM (400 indirect FURM)	4 Training sessions for the new FURM	Managers	Organisation and Development of the training sessions
Set up of an European Peer Development Network for FURM.	European Peer Development Network for FURM	Managers and stakeholders	Definition of the contents in the portal
			Set up of the network

For more information and to discover our products, please, visit our website www.retail-alliance.eu

4. Partnerships

An EU based approach is needed, focusing at exploiting new innovative skills in an easy and friendly way. This issue cannot be faced univocally, but needs to be jointly defined by different actors, calibrating opportunities that derive from a collaboration of organizations across national borders.

Thanks to a 2-years constant share among the partners involved, the partnership will produce tools with a real EU added value, exploitable in several countries. In order to assure an effective generalization/customization of the results, RETAIL foresees a direct involvement of all the targets: hundreds of subjects among EU VET institutions, workers and SME managers will be involved through interviews, specific training and workshops, dissemination and exploitation sessions.

There are visible benefits accruing from the collaboration of partners across national borders, including concrete opportunities for transfer of knowledge and experience (EQF and collaborative network). The new tools produced within the RETAIL project will complement the existing ones at EU level, being further used by VET institutions and entrepreneurs' association as powerful tools to help the retail sector survive to the crisis.

The project includes activities that could result in the conditions being met for the effective generalisation of its results (dissemination WP, exploitation and mainstreaming WP).

There are different types of institutions participating in the project and there is a clear illustration that the benefits accruing from their collaboration will be not only transnational but also trans-institutional.

Translating the project's outputs into all the languages of the partnership will enhance the prospects of them being further exploited and generalised.

The consortium, which comprises affordable institutions from 6 countries representing different parts of Europe (Spain, Germany, Italy, France, Bulgaria, Norway), presents a balanced geographic coverage.

There is a mixture of institutions with different profiles, capacities and complementary competences that are appropriate for the development of the work programme (private and public organisations, companies and non profit bodies, research and training centres and sectoral social parts).

The project provides for a stable Partnership. Actually, while some partners share previous cooperation, for new partners involved the project foresees specific actions to develop and reinforce cooperative working (rules established during the first Meeting - agreement).

The Partnership provides for links (directly or via reliable relays and networks) with the most representative decision-makers/stakeholders and professionals in the fields targeted by the project, and includes organisations expected to incorporate the project outcomes in vocational, culture or practices at national, regional and sectoral levels.

European Business and Innovation Centre of Albacete

The European Business and Innovation Centre (CEEI) of Albacete is a provincial organization with European projection. Established 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. In 1984 CEEIs started to be created throughout Europe as an instrument of industrial and business development under the initiative of the Director General of Regional Politics (DGXVI) of the European Union Commission.

The CEEI Foundation of Albacete is part of the European Network EBN (European Business and Innovation Centres -BIC- Network) that gathers 170 CEEI/BIC throughout Europe and which has distinct characteristics which credit its work. Belonging to EBN allows a bigger diffusion of new technologies and a bigger internationalization of businesses and projects. It is also part of the National Association of Spanish CEEI (ANCES) which unites 23 CEEI/BIC in the whole of Spain.

www.ceeialbacete.com

WISAMAR, Germany

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. In the AZAV accreditation process the quality management system is audited on an annual basis.

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.

www.wisamar.de

Maison de la Promotion Sociale, France

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.
- 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.

For 10 years, MPS is involved in European projects, thanks to a dynamic and competent European Pole. One of the main tasks is the coordination of European projects, as EQUAL, LLP Grundtvig, Leonardo, ICT, Networks, and mobility projects. MPS is a training organisation for IT certified by French “Office Professionnel de Qualification des Organismes de Formation” since 2000 renewed in 2010 valid till 2014.

MPS employ around 250 employees (mainly teachers) and teach around 6 000 trainees a year for long training periods. For short term trainings number of trainees attending courses is around 60 000

www.mps-aquitaine.org

Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Dobrich, Bulgaria

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 Europe Enterprise Network.

CCI has extensive experience in Lifelong learning, cooperation and innovation projects and expertise in promoting linguistic diversity and intercultural exchange.

CCI has practical experiences on issues like solution approaches, methodology considerations, national implementation, as well as dissemination and valorisation of project results. As part of the network of the European Chambers of Commerce and the Enterprise Europe network, it has strong potential to reach a wide industrial and entrepreneurial target group all over Europe.

www.cci.dobrich.net

CIAPE - Centro Italiano per l'Apprendimento Permanente

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.

CIAPE is the transnational coordinator of the “Quality Apprenticeships European Network”, a network involving businesses and VET organisations from 20 different countries in a European Network for the certification of learning outcomes deriving from the apprenticeship experiences.

CIAPE is a member of the CEDEFOP “European Qualifications Framework – Credit Transfer In VET” and of the “Quality Assurance in VET” communities. CIAPE implements research and training activities aimed at the development and validation of transversal skills as well as of the new skills required by the labour market.

www.ciape.it

European Masters of Skilled Crafts, Norway

EUROMASC is a consultancy with experience and competences from a long time cooperation with international organisations within the VET area in managing and monitoring projects.

The main areas are:

- EU projects under the umbrella of Leonardo da Vinci and LLP, primarily at the post-secondary/tertiary level – exemplified as Mester/Meister/Master of Skilled Craft;
- Mobility measures relating to VET and corresponding sectors;
- Europass and transparency questions;
- ECVET and EQF initiatives across Europe;
- EU/ECVET and Leonardo Thematic Monitoring Groups on Transparency, ECVET and validation and accreditation of skills and competences, and on Skills in companies;
- The EU Commission's ECVET-Team for the implementation of ECVET in Europe;
- Quality in mobility actions / Best practices;
- EEA Financial Mechanisms ("Norwegian structural funds" for new EU member states)
- VET and development of human resources
- UNESCO/UNEVOC actions, networks and initiatives;
- Multilateral monitoring and management of projects.

5. Plans for the Future

Partners have identified key organizations and networks at European level through which project results can be transferred to numerous potential end-users. Thanks to the identification of key stakeholders partners will be able to transfer project results more easily and will be able also to carry out more focused exploitation activities.

RETAIL Partnership has produced produce tools with a real EU added value, exploitable in several countries.

In order to assure an effective generalization/customization of the results, RETAIL foresees a direct involvement of all the targets. There are visible benefits coming from the collaboration of partners across national borders, including concrete opportunities for transfer of knowledge and experience (EQF and collaborative network).

The new tools produced within the RETAIL project will complement the existing ones at EU level, being further used by VET institutions and entrepreneurs' association as powerful tools to help the retail sector survive to the crisis. All the partners foresee the integration of the RETAIL approach in the framework of training and counselling activities implemented locally, and in further transnational activities in a geographical mobility and mainstreaming view.

The Partners are engaged in involving other institutions/organizations interested to contribute to the valorisation of the project products and results (specific letters of intent from ad hoc organizations have been collected during the project lifespan).

The Partners foresee a continuous publication and diffusion Retail project ongoing activities after the project end;

All the collaboration tools dedicated not only to the team of trainers and consultants involved in the project developmental phase, but also to other employees and stakeholders in the field, will be maintained also after project conclusion.

All the partners will propose the adoption of the tools to the members of their own networks.

The web site will be available on Internet also after project conclusion, linking together all the interested actors. Moreover, the web sites of all the partner organizations, will contain a link to the RETAIL and to all the available information also after the project conclusion.

During the last meeting was also proposed and agreed by all partners to include the following suggestions to the sustainability plan: To provide short training lessons, Toolkit linked to the ICT device, Phone app for testing Device ICT

The long term impact stands in the possibility, for the training and guidance consultants, and for the HR managers to use/adapt the tools to their working realities. Finally, the tools will represent a good practice to which draw inspiration in order to implement integrated company strategies finalized to the lifelong learning of workers.

6. Contribution to EU policies

The renewed **Lisbon strategy** and European Employment strategy stress the need for Europe to place more emphasis on a better anticipation of skill needs together with the need to reduce labour markets mismatches. These policies should aim also at minimising social costs and facilitating adaptation during restructuring processes through a better anticipation and positive management of change.

In that context, the Commission has introduced recently the **New Skills for New Jobs initiative**, with the aim to serve as a guide in launching further EU and other actions to promote the strategic management of human resources and to foster stronger synergies between innovation, skills and jobs, taking into account the global context and encouraging adaptations to national and regional level.

The qualification requirements are changing throughout the sector, while the VET and continuous learning provision is no more able to offer suitable solutions. Thus, active labour market measures must be implemented across the EU in order to provide the sector with tools for a better anticipation and positive management of change, better adapting to the sector's future skills need (Lisbon Strategy).

This project focuses on the **three main problems** affecting the retail trade sector: **globalisation and internationalisation, mass customisation and lifestyle changes**, and **labour market flexibility** in that respect pose huge challenges, especially to retail trade sector (New Skills and New Jobs; Comprehensive Sectoral Analysis of Emerging Competences and Economic Activities in the European Union – 2009).

