



Executive Agency, Education, Audio-visual and Culture



**H-CARE: “Launching of Sector Skills Alliance
for Training & Apprenticeship of Health Care and Food Supplements
Salespersons”
540170-LLP-1-2013-1-TR-LEONARDO-LMP**

Final Report

Public Part

540170-LLP-1-2013-1-TR-LEONARDO-LMP

Project Title: H-CARE: “Launching of Sector Skills Alliance for Training & Apprenticeship of Health Care and Food Supplements Salespersons”

Project information

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Executive Summary

H-CARE was a 30 months EU funded project which addressed specific target audience as **Unemployed graduate adults (18+)** who have obtained up to date and innovative knowledge, skills and competencies for the innovative job core profile; **Current employees** in Health Care & Sales establishments who have enhanced their career development; **VET training centres** who have enriched their training offer with the accredited new VET training programme for assistive technologies and food supplements salespersons and **trade companies (SMEs)** in the field of Sales of Health Care and Food Supplements who have the ability to re-train their personnel upon contemporary H-CARE training course.

The project deliverables have been developed based on conducted survey and user requirements gathering in Austria, Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey (see comparative analysis report of the national findings related to training needs and gaps). The active involvement from our end user groups in identifying the barriers they experience, their needs and key issues in trying to enter the health sector labour market and to gain a greater understanding of the current national situation and issues on educational context required in workplaces in each partner country have been taken into account during all stages of development, testing, piloting, evaluation and refinement of the project deliverables (469 participants have been interviewed in the involved countries during research phase, 104 experts involved as members of National Advisory boards in partners countries, 687 unemployed and current employees involved in the piloting of the results and more than 20000 involved in dissemination and exploitation activities).

The key project tangible results which have been included in all processes stated above are the unique H-CARE curriculum connected to the national qualification descriptions and state educational requirements (following the listed ECVET learning outcomes). Those learning outcomes have been produced following the guidelines of the “Integrated Competencies Framework for Public Health Workforce Development” and with the EQF (level 4), so that the existing qualifications in this field are transparent and comparable. They have been validated by local authorities and National ECVET coordination bodies such as NAVET partner.

At present the H-CARE blended VET training programme consists of 9 training modules which are piloted and refined based on received pilots’ and trainers’ feedback as following:

- M1. Health Care Introduction & Health prevention recommendations;
- M2. EU and National legislative framework
- M3. Trading with medical devices and Assistive technologies
- M4. Trading with food supplements
- M5. Communication & Work with disabled customers
- M6. Sales management skills
- M7. Entrepreneurship skills
- M8. E-commerce
- M9. Internship

The H-CARE VET course is available and deployed in the partner’s countries (TR, BG, RO, AT). The course is following the approved new occupational core profile for: “Medical devices for home use, assistive technologies and food The H-CARE project has the following didactical training approaches (blended learning): e-learning, group work and apprenticeship (into real workplace lasting minimum 120 hours). The acquisition of knowledge, skills and competencies has been validated by dedicated control tools based on the EQAVET indicators. The results from the piloting phase are structured and presented in details in consolidated piloting report where the feedback is thoroughly analysed and taken into account for the final refinement of the project results.

All results are published on www.healthcaresales.eu and www.healthcaresales.eu/elearning

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1. Project Objectives

The H-CARE project was dedicated to the development of innovative and practically oriented training curriculum, modules and control tools for Health care sales sector stakeholders, who offer products and services of assistive technologies, medical devices for home use and food supplements. The partnership has reached their core objective to introduce VET training on Medical devices for home use, assistive technologies and food supplements salespersons, through VET blended learning curriculum which embraces the use of a wide range of training approaches, such as e-learning, group work and apprenticeship – following that matrix ensures the application of acquired skills and knowledge into the real practice. By this novel way of cross-sector collaboration the partnership has ensured that the learner (trainee) gained competences and skills in a way that will be beneficial for both: the learner and the clients with disabilities, who in a short term period take advantage of high quality offered services. The learners have direct access to training materials even when being on the job by the dedicated e-learning platform which is freely accessible from PC, tablet and smartphone. At the same time by using the newly developed curriculum of this project, the employers in health care sales and food supplement sector are able to train their existing and newly recruited staff which is saving time and financial resources because all project results are provided for free of charge for non-commercial use.

By its end the H-CARE project has reached the following concrete objectives:

- By **implementation of need analysis research survey** with 469 stakeholders and beneficiaries led to the production of **quantitative and qualitative analysis of the national findings (EN and executive summary in TR, BG, DE and RO) of the training needs and gaps** related to the knowledge and competencies of the current and potential HC salespersons. Partners reached the objective to define steps for assessment of learners' competencies, their individual training needs, and relevant approach in terms of VET creation of specific learning course to fulfil those gaps.
- By development of a specific **H-CARE VET curriculum, training modules (based on ECVET principles) and control tools based on EQAVET (in EN, TR, BG, RO, DE)** taking into account individual needs of employers and salespersons in the Health care sector and especially the clients with disabilities and their families the partners achieved the objective to produce innovative and thematically related modules as following:
 - M1. Health Care Introduction & Health prevention recommendations;
 - M2. EU and National legislative framework
 - M3. Trading with medical devices for home use and assistive technologies
 - M4. Trading with food supplements
 - M5. Communication & Work with customers with disabilities
 - M6. Sales management skills
 - M7. Entrepreneurship skills
 - M8. E-commerce
 - M9. Internship (apprenticeship).
- By development of a new non-existing in Europe occupational profile (job core profile) of **“Medical devices for home use, assistive technologies and food supplements salesperson” (in EN, TR, BG, RO, DE)** the partnership reached their objective to support new skills for new jobs Agenda as promised in the application form.
- By establishment of a structured internship scheme in **Health sector**, based on common procedures and quality assurance standards, applied in each participated country (TR, BG, AT, BE, RO) the partnership reached the objective to ensure

application of the acquired knowledge, skills and competencies into real working world which will ensure the effectiveness of the H-CARE VET course.

- By implementation of **piloting sessions with 687 pilots** from Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania and Austria the partnership reached the initial objective to train and certify 120 unemployed and current employed salespersons which actually is 4 times bigger than initially planned in the application form.
- By **evaluation of piloting results and gathering learners and trainers’ feedback** the partnership achieved the objective to monitor and assess the impact and effectiveness of the H-CARE VET course and produced comparative piloting report which presents the achieved results.
- By development, implementation, piloting and evaluation of the project results the partners reached the objective for **envisaged impact which is immediate for the salespersons and reflect not only on enhancement of their knowledge and skills but also influence the level of services at the companies where they are employed.**
- The partners achieved the objective to create dedicated curriculum and training modules referring to **EQF level 4 and based on the ECVET framework with dedicated learning outcomes** which is enabling immediate use by VET training centres and other educational institutions which benefit by using free of charge training resources in the field of Health Care and Food Supplements sales.
- In addition, the assessment control tool reached the objective to **support the indicators of the EQAVET framework** and to ensure the improvement of the quality assurance in National VET systems.
- **All results have been validated also by national advisory boards** which consists of various stakeholders such as VET trainers, medical staff, health care gatekeepers and they were involved in all phases of the project.
- By **seeking for accreditation procedures** the partners reached their preliminary objective and applied documentation for national approval – this was fully reached in Bulgaria, Austria and Romania and waiting for governmental decision in Turkey which is influenced from the latest political emergencies in the country.
- By **strict internal quality control** the partners reached the objective to provide all results without major deviations in accordance with the project work plan and GANTT chart.
- By series of continuous contacts with project stakeholders the partnership has achieved the objective to **ensure negotiations for further exploitation and mainstreaming** of project tangible public results.

2. Project Approach

The H-CARE project has implemented the following approaches:

- **User requirement gathering through survey conducting and analysis of the needs** - At the beginning of the project the H-CARE consortium started with the design and elaboration of a research survey on need analysis. This **survey** covers the engagement and active involvement from our end user groups (469) in identifying the barriers they experience, their needs and key issues in trying to access the health care sales sector and to gain a greater understanding of the current national situation and issues on educational context required in workplaces in each partner country. The selected survey questionnaires have been developed separately for job seekers and for current employees as well as focus group meetings with VET trainers and policy makers in the above mentioned sector. The survey has been conducted via face to face meetings – either individual or as a focus group as well as through Skype and by email correspondence. Under the first group the survey includes the following types of occupations - Healthcare assistants; Staff with Health care or nursing diploma, Medical studies, Care studies, Social studies and Rehabilitation. The used approach in their development has been designed in order to ensure that the forthcoming production of an H-CARE curriculum meets the user needs and requirements of health care and food supplement sales sector. The survey defines a set of learning activities appropriate to and usable across, the range of user needs. The comparative part of the research includes obtainment of a good perception of the need for adjustments in training practices to enable the beneficiaries to achieve short term success. The reader of the survey will be able to gain familiarity with the nature and potential value of adjustments in training methods and in their learning strategies to meet beneficiary’s needs as well as to understand the similarities and differences between national contexts in the partner countries.
- **Development and accreditation of a new job core profile** – by following contemporary trends and legislative framework on national and EU level the profile is accredited.
- **Development of VET curriculum and training modules** - by full implementation of the principles of the **ECVET system** which has been ensured by the National Accredited ECVET body – NAVET National ECVET reference point.
- **Development of self-assessment control tools to ensure the learning acquisition** – by full implementation of the indicators 1, 6, 7 and 10 of the EQAVET framework
- Implementation of the **blended learning approach** - totally in line with the Lisbon Convention objectives that clearly state education systems must be modernised to make Europe a world leader in the quality of its education & training systems. The H-CARE project provides a totally new approach on how to provide training support, by not only making use of them, but also training of people, seeking professional career in Health care sales sector to acquire a completely new qualification “Health care and food supplement salesperson”.

Above mentioned are in line with the Europe 2020 strategy that calls for economic growth based on a smart, sustainable and inclusive model. By its nature the H-CARE already developed curriculum offers exactly new skills for new jobs, providing opportunities for the inclusion of unemployed or low paid people in the EU job market.

The **evaluation approach of the H-CARE project** is conducted on three levels:

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- Products level - Evaluating the outcomes of the project requires, first, the identification of which are the final products to be realised and, second, the individuation of the performance indicator of each product.
- Dissemination impact level - The dissemination and exploitation of the project outputs is one of the most important aspects of the H-CARE project. The main aspects of successful dissemination are a high quality outputs , a clear definition of advantages for users and the development of a phase-oriented dissemination and exploitation plan
- Process level - Evaluating the project process.

The internal and external evaluation is structured based on dedicated **quality approach (strategy)** which has its qualitative and quantitative indicators. The project management has been considered around three main indicators: the quality of management, the project administration and the partners' involvement. The project management is the most delicate process in a project, insofar as it deals with objectives, hurdles and limits, which are material and immaterial resources as well as contingencies that could not be foreseen, thus making the project deviate from the initial work plan.

The **internal evaluation** was ensured by measures such as: conducting of monthly based Skype meetings, every 3 months' regular updates of the action plan; production of 6 months' internal quality assurance reports; evaluation of the partners' performance; post partners' meeting evaluation and liaison with the external evaluator.

External evaluation was playing a central role in the project, providing continuously advices and feedback on project activities and outputs throughout the project duration. The external evaluation has a major 'formative' function (helping the project to achieve maximum effectiveness), as well as providing summative assessments during kick-off and the third partners meeting, as well as for progress report.

The **external evaluation approach** was dedicated: to ensure the project is producing quality products and materials which are targeted to the end users; to evaluate the on-going impact and end impact of the project; to feedback into project development formative evaluation findings; to monitor project activities, outcomes, processes and partnership relationships; to analyse the impact of project outcomes through external evaluation component; to monitor impact of the project's dissemination and valorisation strategy; to become aware of strengths and weaknesses as well as obstacles to progress; to promote discussion on the project performance. The formative evaluation (provided as a dedicated report on Progress and Final report stage) enables possible changes and adjustments which improved the project design and development. Formative evaluation concerned with examining ways of improving and enhancing implementation and management and delivery of the project with a focus upon reviewing project progress and achievements. It resulted in a number of key recommendations, supporting improvements in H-CARE implementation. The summative evaluation was provided for the final report concerned with determining the essential effectiveness of programmes.

The **dissemination approach** was based on the needs of the target final users and sectors. Therefore, all partners actively contributed to the dissemination activities at different levels, addressing the specific needs of the target groups in their region/country (by reaching more than 20 000 stakeholders). The dissemination approach was following important principles which the dissemination activities followed: *Be visible: Stay proactive. Promote your objectives through media and community involvement. Build positive relationships with third parties. Be informed: Keep abreast of community issues, read papers, watch news. Attend the national and community policy making on the topic that you are concerned. Research the issue on the Internet. Be consistent: Stay on message. Right plan in right place. Media can*

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sometimes relish inconsistencies. Be constructive: Be part of the solution. Build personal relationships.

The H-CARE dissemination was continuous integral part of the project activities as it enables the consortium to reach the target groups, get them actively involved, interested and motivated in order to get better and more precise results (direct beneficiaries and final users); get them interested to foster the project results (trainers, health care professionals and associations, trade sales companies, policy makers and other stakeholders); get the message out there (trainers, training institutions, media, public bodies, health care professionals and associations, policy makers, etc.)

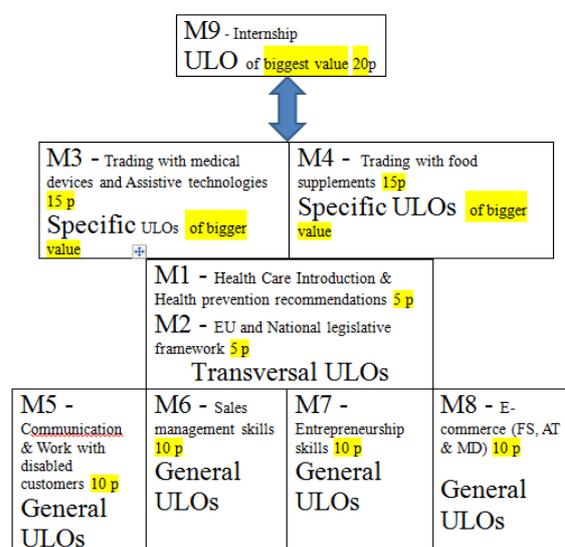
The **approach for detailed stakeholder mapping** of specific opportunities and tasks has been made in order to support the dissemination activities that will be performed during the H-CARE project.

As **major dissemination products** have been used: the project website www.healthcaresales.eu which is available in EN, BG, FR, DE, RO; Dedicated project Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/hcareproject> , initial and final project leaflets and roll up banners (available in EN, BG, FR, DE, RO), promotional materials such as – recycled notepads and pens, USB sticks, bags, lockers, rulers etc.

3. Project Outcomes & Results

At Final report stage the H-CARE partnership reached the following major achievements and results:

- **Deliverable number 1.1 Communication strategy (EN)** - H-CARE project communication strategy is designed to support partners to communicate between each other in a transparent, clear way. The general purpose of the strategy is to provide recommendable channels for communication between partners as well as to ensure open opinion sharing among partnership. The implementation of the strategy coincides with the project lifetime.
- **Deliverable number 1.2 IPR agreement (EN)** – the document is presenting the partnership agreement in terms of copyright and exploitation issues.
- **Deliverable number 1.3 Project steering group minutes (EN)** - the minutes consist of scanned list of participants, all topics covered by the agenda, all discussions and decision agreed by the partnership as well as the action plan with tasks, roles and responsibilities which each partner should perform until the next partners’ meeting.
- **Deliverable number 2.1 Survey questionnaire (EN, TR, RO, DE, BG)** – there are 3 questionnaires developed – for current employees, for job seekers and for VET centres/ employers/NGOs/ SMEs/policy makers.
- **Deliverable number 2.2 Consolidated survey findings.** The report is presenting all findings from the research face and is available in English, while an executive summary is available in English, Bulgarian, Turkish, Romanian and German.
- **Deliverable number 3.1 Development of the H-CARE curriculum (EN, TR, RO, DE, BG)** - The H-CARE curriculum defines the learning outcomes and pedagogical methodology as well as the structure on which basis the training modules will be prepared in WP4. The curriculum is based on the ECVET principles for definition, recognition and assessment of learning outcomes.



- **Deliverable number 3.2 Set up of the Open distance learning platform (EN, TR, RO, DE, BG)** – A fully accessible multilingual e-platform has been developed as technical solution at the end of the 4th month. It is available via project website: <http://healthcaresales.eu/elearning>. The platform will be available in all partner languages and will be populated with content by M17.

- **Deliverable number 4.1 H-CARE VET training modules (EN, TR, RO, DE, BG)** - dedicated 9 modules related to the job core profile and its ECVET learning outcomes.

- **Deliverable number 4.2 H-CARE EQAVET tool (EN, TR, RO, DE, BG)**– dedicated control tools developed for module 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 – those tools are case based and are using for self-assessment of the acquired knowledge by the learners.
- **Deliverable number 5.1 Occupational core profile of “Health Care and Food Supplement Salesperson” (EN, TR, RO, DE, BG)** – this profile is presenting the major characteristics, requirements and job duties of the salesperson.
- **Deliverable number 6.1 Consolidated piloting report (EN)** – it contains analysis of the results from the piloting phases in Turkey, Bulgaria, Austria and Romania as well as data and conclusions on reached impact.
- **Deliverable number 6.2 Observational Checklists, User Questionnaire / Interviews (EN, TR, RO, DE, BG)** – consists of evaluation and feedback questionnaires as well as interviews with stakeholders realised as a paper based or video case studies.
- **Deliverable number 7.1 Quality strategy (EN)** – it defines the quality management procedures and the quality assessment procedures that will be applied by the project to evaluate outputs and activities within the project
- **Deliverable number 7.2 External evaluation reports (EN)** (Progress and Final report) – these reports are evaluating the project management of the coordinator and the participation of all partners, their performance in terms of project work plan, the quality of the project results as well as the involved stakeholders so far and the impact that the project so far reached.
- **Deliverable number 7.3 Financial Auditors’ Report (EN)** – it consists of review and observations in terms of financial documentation provided by all partners to be used by EACEA during assessment of the project and initiation of the balance payment.
- **Deliverable number 8.1 Dissemination strategy (EN)** – it elaborates the approaches, methods, channels and materials deployed by the partnership.
- **Deliverable number 8.2 Project website (EN, TR, RO, DE, BG)** – the project website is available via www.healthcaresales.eu and facilitates all project results. The news section is regularly updated as well as all public project results are available there for free download. The website is hosting also the e-learning platform and the **internal communication platform ATutor**.
- **Deliverable number 8.3 Production and distribution of dissemination materials** – project leaflets (initial and final) and roll-up banners in English, Bulgarian, German, Turkish and Romanian has been developed as well as promotional materials – bags, notepads, pens, lockers, rullers, USB sticks.
- **Deliverable number 8.4 Final EU Conference in Brussels (EN)** – this was the final event attended by 108 EU experts in the field of VET, healthcare, sales, food supplements, policy makers, trainers, practitioners. This was an EU event where all project outcomes and their impact has been presented together with external experts who presented their opinion about the H-CARE results and their importance.
- **Deliverable number 9.1 Exploitation strategy (EN)** – the exploitation strategy is presenting the methods, audiences, plans and achievements towards during and beyond the project lifetime exploitation. It was deployed by all partners with dedicated plans and reached targets.

4. Partnerships

This project has been realised by:

- **Istanbul Regional Educational Directorate, Turkey – Project Coordinator**
- **European Medical Association, Belgium**
- **Technical University “Gheorghe Asachi”, Romania**
- **BFI National Institute for Vocational Training, Austria**
- **National Agency for Vocational Education and Training, Bulgaria**
- **Consultancy company “ZGURA-M”, Bulgaria**

By its nature the H-CARE project is a sector skills alliance where each partners comes on project board with a specific expertise, capacity and resources and so far everyone is entitled to share and exploit them through the alliance. The alliance comprises of six organizations, each of them has proved itself as a successful player in the area. The participating organizations has a unique paradigm of combination between key players and expertise in the field of VET namely: representatives from the Health care sector, Health care sales sector, University, Educational Authority, VET providers, Public Administration Authority and Guidance and Counselling bodies. They are all committed to create an innovative H-CARE VET programme and the new job core profile, aiming at fulfilment of the identified gaps and needs for such occupational profile area. All partners were committed to do their best including the support from external experts as members of the National Advisory boards in each country to ensure that the designed training materials are necessarily innovative. This consortium confirms also the geographical coverage of spreading project outcomes to as much as possible end users in Europe and worldwide (by using EMA international network). Following the evidence by the partners’ realised dissemination activities it is evident that the consortium reached more than 20 000 key stakeholders and gatekeepers not only in their countries but also on European level. This was also possible by EMA’s 17 EU offices in 17 Member states. The geographical coverage and added value to the project dissemination activities and mainstreaming is also supported by the network of the already contacted 20 associate partners interested in project results and each partner has already an extensive network of contacts and cooperation in the field of Health Care, VET and Adults education, school education and VET providers depending on their experience and expertise and will involve them in need analysis, development phase and testing and piloting phase as well as exploitation and mainstreaming actions. Finally, the collaboration among all partners has been running effective and efficient.

5. Plans for the Future

All project results will be exploited, mainstreamed and multiplied during periodical several actions including trainings and seminars organised by the participating H-CARE organisations (for further details check Del. 9.1 Exploitation strategy)

- **Turkey:**
 - Upon approval of the accreditation process by the Adults Training Department of Ministry of Education the Istanbul Educational Directorate will continue to spread the results among all educational centres which are under their supervision
 - The directorate will mainstream the final results to all educational directorates around Turkey by the support of the Ministry.
- **Austria:**
 - In the forthcoming years BFI will ensure continuous use of the VET training course as approved by the regional authority part of the Apprenticeship 3-years course which is involving around 2400 people per annum.
 - BFI will spread the H-CARE to all members of BBRZ Groupe and EVBB partners to ensure its mainstreaming and multiplication in Austria and also in Germany.
- **Bulgaria:**
 - NAVET together with ZGURA-M are proceeding with the development of the state educational standard for the H-CARE job core profile. Upon approval NAVET will disseminate through all 869 VET centres which are under their supervision.
 - ZGURA-M will continue maintenance of the project website and e-learning platform for at least 5 years beyond the project lifetime. The team will continue to offer trainings by using own resources and will try to seek for embedding on Higher education level by connection of the ECVET learning outcomes with those under ECTS system.
- **Romania:**
 - TULasi already embedded the H-CARE training course in their post graduate courses and will continue maintaining them in the forthcoming years.
 - TULasi will continue to spread the project results among other Romanian universities who are providing courses in the health care area.
- **EU level (by EMA):**
 - EMA team will continue EU dissemination and mainstreaming actions during their European annual events and through their offices and representatives in 17 EU countries.
 - The EMA team will spread the EN version of the H-CARE results also in other countries which are already informed about the course such as China, Japan and USA.

6. Contribution to EU policies

By the end of the project we may confirm that the H-CARE also contributes to the Europe 2020 growth strategy in particular to the EU’s employment rate target of 75% by 2020, by helping people learn new skills and adapt to changes in the labour market.

By development of a new occupational job profile in Health Care Sales the project will encourage the employment in this sector.

The H-CARE innovation can make the Health Care Sales sector more sustainable and find new cures for health conditions since the HC sector has an important role to play in improving skills and creating jobs as it employs 1 in 10 of the most qualified workers in the EU.

It should be emphasized that the project is totally in line with the Lisbon Convention objectives that clearly state education systems must be modernised to make Europe a world leader in the quality of its education & training systems. The H-CARE project provides a totally new approach on how to provide training support, by not only making use of them, but also training of people, seeking professional career in Health care sales sector to become experts and to acquire a completely new qualification “Health care and food supplement salesperson”.

H-CARE project through the production of its curriculum and 9 training modules confirms that it’s fully supported the LLP objective for “Support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning”. Those products will be available at dedicated e-learning platform which will supports the VET training of current employees or unemployed people in the field of Health Care and Food supplements sales. Through fully innovative VET training of current and potential employees at the Health Care sector the H-CARE project will support the competitiveness of those targets on the Health Care sales labour market. This confirms the connection with another LLP horizontal objective for “Promotion of the creativity, competitiveness, employability and the growth of an entrepreneurial spirit”.

The H-CARE project offers exactly new skills for new jobs (with reference to New skills for new jobs EU agenda), providing opportunities for the inclusion of unemployed or low paid people in the EU job market. The H-CARE innovation justifies that can help make the Health Care sector more sustainable and find new cures for health conditions. The current situation of the European labour market requires qualified work force, which is able to respond to the needs of new professions and job profiles, which will create an added value in provisions of services in health sector. The project offers exactly new skills for new jobs Agenda, providing opportunities for the inclusion of unemployed or low paid people in the EU job market.

During all stages of development and implementation the H-CARE project follows the principle of equality between men and women during all project activities and in particular during piloting phase with adults (18+). The Health Care sales sector which is the core of the H-CARE project by its nature does not allow discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation which is also a well-known LLP horizontal policy.

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