



Lifelong Learning Plan 2007 - 2013  
**Leonardo da Vinci Project**

**OCT**  
**Open Coordination**  
**for vocational training**



**Partnership:**

- **Provincia di Latina** - Settore Politiche per il Lavoro e Formazione Professionale - Italy
- **SAIP sas** - Servizi di Aggiornamento e In-Formazione Professionale - Italy
- **Confindustria Latina** - Italy
- **UST CISL di Latina** - Italy
- **Abaton srl** - Italy
- **HMA** - Hellenic Management Association - Greece
- **S. C. FORMENERG S.A.** - Romania
- **Junta de Extremadura** - Dirección General de Formación para el Empleo, de la Consejería de Igualdad y Empleo - Spain
- **Ayuntamiento de Coria** - Patronato de Formación y Empleo - Spain



**Programme** LEONARDO DA VINCI

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## Lifelong Learning Plan 2007-2013 Leonardo da Vinci Project

### OCT - Open Coordination for vocational Training Manual Index

#### Sommario

Sommario .....	3
Introduction .....	7
OCT Project, partner, objectives and expectations .....	7
The starting point .....	8
Mapping activity .....	8
Stakeholders and Other Operators in the territories.....	9
Province of Latina .....	9
Hellenic Management Association - Athens.....	10
Region of Extremadura and Municipality of Coria.....	10
Formenerg S.A. - Bucharest.....	11
The Stakeholder's role and Activities.....	13
Province of Latina .....	13
Hellenic Management Association - Athens.....	14
Region of Extremadura and Municipality of Coria.....	15
Formenerg S.A. - Bucharest.....	16
Local context analysis .....	16
The Italian local context .....	16
The Greek local context .....	17
Romanian local context.....	17
The context in Extremadura .....	18
First Part - The participate planning and methods of participation .....	19
What is the OMC? .....	19
The OMC: a new flexible governance tool relying on soft law .....	20
The OMC: a reflexive governance tool.....	21
Objectives, Indicators and Benchmarks.....	21
Why has the OMC been introduced in EU Education Policies?.....	22
From local government to local governance: participatory planning methods and practices in OCT partner countries.....	25
National policy context on improving quality of VET - Greece .....	25

Improving quality in VET provision .....	25
Policy progress since 2002 .....	25
Two Examples of policy measures .....	26
Involving of local stakeholders and citizens in decision-making processes and participatory planning:	
Italian practises .....	27
Local Areas planning .....	27
Other participatory planning initiatives.....	27
Listening Pesaro .....	27
Ivrea: Lapis project.....	28
Salerno: ex-post assessment of the therapy for reduce pain and of palliative therapies .....	28
Florence 2010: strategic plan for the Florence metropolitan area.....	28
Agency for the development of Vallo di Diano.....	28
PRODEAS (Digital Province and Social Access) .....	28
Third Veneto .....	29
Participate planning for vocational training in Romania .....	31
European funds in Romania .....	31
Institutions responsible with the implementation of ESF in Romania.....	31
Parties responsible for Continue Vocational Training (CVT). Participate planning.....	32
Social partnership in CVT .....	33
Regional and local level institutions for social partnership.....	33
Participatory planning .....	33
Example of implemented project and best practices.....	34
Project: “Community-Based Organizations - centres for community mobilization” .....	34
Participate planning in Extremadura .....	36
Overview of different approaches to participatory planning adopted or tested in the partner countries.....	37
Participatory planning in the province of Latina and Extremadura: a comparative analysis.....	39
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS .....	40
The project in Extremadura.....	43
The OCT method - Peer Review from evaluation process to learning experience.....	45
Coordination and organisation of Peer Review in OCT.....	45
Peer Review methodology .....	45
Peer Review procedure.....	46
Preparatory phase .....	46
How reviewed institutions benefit form the results of Peer Reviews .....	47
Second Part - OCT Activities.....	49
Foreward .....	49
A functional interaction among territorial actors .....	49
Some planning experiences and participate administration .....	49

The Strategic Provincial Plan to contrast the loss of labour force.....	49
The Executive Triennial Plan and Target Plans.....	49
Instruments of Innovative Governance.....	50
OCT Project in Latina .....	50
Activation of the participatory process during the seminar days.....	51
Updating of the context analysis.....	52
Founding sources .....	52
Outlining the sample .....	52
Creation of questionnaire .....	52
Sample and questionnaire approval .....	53
Delivery of the questionnaire.....	53
Data analysis .....	53
Sharing of results .....	53
Focus Groups planning .....	53
Analysis of Focus Groups results.....	53
Sharing of total results of the research and working out of recommendation .....	54
Spread and dissemination .....	54
Third part - Conclusion .....	55

**Notes**



## Introduction

### OCT Project, partner, objectives and expectations

The project OCT – Open Coordination for vocational Training, funded by the European Leonardo Da Vinci Plan to a transnational partnership constituted by Province of Latina as leader of the project, Confindustria Latina, CISL Latina, SAIP sas, a training organization in Anzio, Abaton srl in Rome, Junta de Extremadura and Coria municipality in Spain, Hellenic Management Association in Athens and Formenerg S.A. in Bucharest.

The educational and training system frame, in which operates the OCT project, has been underlined by the analysis conducted by the Province of Latina in his PET FSE 2008-2010 an inadequacy and ineffectiveness of public funds employed for training of new recruited people, for adjustment and retraining of the competences of employed people.

Local stakeholders underline the persistence of a gap between the professional demands of the labor market and the wealth of expertise provided by the system of vocational training.

Also the provincial training centers accredited for permanent training show a gap in relation to the employment structure, as quantified by ISTAT: 40% of the workforce is employed in industry and agriculture, but only 10.86 % of the training courses have been activated for these areas.

The final beneficiaries have not a widespread access to information on local training offer, and often those most in need of support activities cannot be achieved by guidance services which are available only at the actuators of the measures.

Surveys conducted by Observatories for the work and similar bodies confirm for the Extremadura region and the area of Athens, a situation in many ways comparable to that observed in the province of Latina.

For Greece, especially, ESF resources management has not yet reached a satisfactory level of effectiveness. In the measures to be implemented within the ESF 2007 2013 was expected to increase the resources devoted to improving governance in the modern public administration and also

were defined as priority interventions for inclusion of working in the education system. Vocational education in Greece has a significant attraction, despite the marketability of the securities it issues, the ongoing reform in the last 10 years has improved the quality of organizations and has created a national accreditation system, but locally very remains to be done.

The region of Extremadura is undergoing a rotation policy that makes it necessary to restructure some territorial networks and create new ones. Administrators consider this situation a very favorable condition for introducing new models of governance as they believe necessary to propose innovative solutions to the territory starting from strictly local needs. The region needs to improve the matching between the needs of employment and training services in the area, activities that do not currently have a good relationship is not possible to define the efficiency of Vocational Training.

Romania is facing many problems related to effectiveness and attractiveness of the vocational training system, a series of structural changes in the economy has generated strong emigration of skilled workers to EU countries in which professionalism has increased economic returns, while vocational training is offered to those who do not fill the gap with the profiles required by the domestic labor market. In 2008 they started with delay, the ESF Operational Plans, including the Field Operational Plan Human Resource Development (SOP\_HRDO) if within overall it has increased competitiveness through better links between education and the labor market appears desirable to provide tools for use by the devolved administrations to make these goals achievable by measures more responsive to local needs.

In all four countries, companies, especially smaller ones of Greece and Italy, in light of not being able to find on the market the skills they need, while often willing to contribute their own resources in training.

OCT has two parallel goals: if (Spain and Italy, in different degrees) there is a political-administrative and favorable maturity land OCT explores a participatory planning process

that brings the number of parties to take responsibility for co- ESF local resource management; where (Greece and Romania) have not yet OCT these conditions will spread significant elements of the approach so that in future this type of process becomes realistically implementable.

OCT acknowledges and moves from the centrality of the role of public authorities as a catalyst for decentralized participatory planning processes, but acknowledges the parallel critique of all other stakeholders as actors included in the processes of local governance.

OCT will take action to address the needs / evidence uncovered by an approach that is modeled on specific needs identified.

The Province of Latina will be using the OCT approach in the programming period the ESF 2008 2013 to experience the actions, tools, approaches to further enhance the attractiveness of local systems of vocational training. Specifically it will use the path of participatory planning to check the progress of the last call and intervene on the ESF 2008 2010 2011 2013 next call as time verification system developed scheme.

OCT will take action to address the evidence uncovered by an approach that is modeled on specific needs identified.

The region of Extremadura has the opportunity to develop a more limited pilot OCT their path (even given the particular political situation) can test the new links and whether created in the territory during the rotation policy in place.

OCT will provide the area of skills likely to make the system approach to participatory planning, with particular attention to the role of government.

OCT Athens area offers the possibility of creating a local network to divert, the activities of the project - first of all Peer Review - the experience of creating added value for the system of vocational training, qualification of human resources and techniques dedicated to matching supply and demand of labor supply and training.

OCT experiences in Romania, an approach aimed at creating greater awareness of the importance of consultation as a real solution and not on the problems of the vocational training system. TMB also want to transfer, particularly through mutual learning activities, reading skills more effectively the needs of enterprises and qualified to enable flexible responses to the profound restructuring of the Romanian market.

OCT will also achieve that the following objectives are common to all local:

- capitalization and dissemination of the methodology at the OCT system entities work training;
- increased capacity of stakeholders to participate in participatory planning processes;
- greater adherence of the planned measures locally to real employment and training needs;
- increase the share capital of the territory with the creation of new relationships or improve existing ones;
- empowerment of those involved even after the conclusion of the process due to increased capacity comparison, greater autonomy and ability to take decisions.

OCT will ensure that participants attended to the process a positive and quick return of their involvement, the guarantee to make a real contribution to a problem that has a specific interest and the possibility of a consistent and transparent feedback on the process that results. OCT reflects the national priorities identified in the section as a process of support to local governance in order to increase the attractiveness of the vocational training system, including the largest possible number of key local actors.

### The starting point

OCT has the overall objective to increase the attractiveness of local systems of Vocational Training acting inside the local reality in which they operate and then create the conditions for a participatory planning process that includes *stakeholders* of Vocational Training system.

Then, it has been necessary, by each national partner involved in the project, to set up a mapping activity to select, in its own context and according to the objectives to be pursued, the organisms that could play a relevant role of stakeholders in the participatory planning process that will be achieved in each local context, taking also into account the experience gained in the OCT project.

In addition to the stakeholders, it was considered appropriate to involve other operators, playing a significant role in the local context of Vocational Training.

This mapping activity has been conducted as preliminary step of the local context analysis to evaluate the effectiveness of the activities FSE funded in the field of Vocational training.

#### Mapping activity

It was agreed, in this respect, to share the definition of these two categories of organisms, identifying as:

- *stakeholder* a public body or a private organization that has a specific personal interest to the objectives of a program or a project, but at the same time and in specific context of their project partners in each OCT, this organism has the representation of a collective interest and an effective ability to participate in the programming of the entity that manages the ESF.

Then with the mapping of stakeholders, OCT is trying to identify the interests and relationships of all stakeholders in a project as a necessary precondition for the participatory planning.

- *Other Operator* a public or private organism that may have a subjective interest about the objectives of a project, because his role as indirect beneficiary of ESF Vocational Training funds or other active employment policies, social policies, etc.

Were therefore developed surveying grids to select organizations to be included in separate maps of "Stakeholders" and "Other Operators", and each partner has realised a proper mapping by collecting information from any available sources, starting from each partner's own social capital and including, through networking activities, the social capital of members of further networks.

Each mapping has represented the organisations operating in the public employment policies and local development area, also listed in eventual ESF public registers of local operators.

The mapping grids has been exhaustively filled out, either as number of operators entered and number of related and relevant characteristics.

### **Stakeholders and Other Operators in the territories - Province of Latina**

The Province of Latina intends to use tools and methodologies of the OCT project in ESF planning period 2008-2013 to test the actions, tools, approaches, to further enhance the attractiveness of the local Vocational Training system.

Specifically, the Province of Latina means to use the path of participatory planning to establish, with the last call ESF 2008-2010, a sort of test-bed for creating later, with the first call 2011-2013 an occasion to check the system running.

Consequently, together with Confindustria, Cisl and SAIP, has analyzed the possible impacts of the participatory process within the Vocational Training funded by the ESF and has defined its own list of the two types of local actors

from which to draw for the mapping provided by the project, where was included 13 organizations as relevant "Stakeholders" and 9 organizations identified as "Other Operators" having a key role in the local system of Vocational Training and employment policies.

The choice of the organizations was made by incorporating in the mapping all the organizations that returned, properly completed, the grid of observation made their reach.

Among the stakeholders have been included:

- 3 school institutions having an experience in the field of continuing education co-funded by ESF;
- 2 consortium companies having a service function to the production system of the Province, the system of Education, the university system and the private social in the Province of Latina area and a function of research, pre-competitive development and diffusion of innovation for enterprises;
- 3 trade unions local representatives, the most important at a national level;
- 3 employers representative at local and national levels of the interests of enterprises in Vocational Training of employees;
- 1 social cooperative active in the field of training given to members, the managers and employees of companies of the third sector;
- 1 Association, active in organizing training courses and guidance for unemployed and employed people of the industrial sector.

These are organizations with strong roots in the area equally distributed among employers organisations, trade unions and training institutions, with a slight prevalence of the latter.

The action field of stakeholders is primarily provincial, but is not marginal the group of organisations with a regional action.

All in all, finally, there is a substantial balance between those who provide Vocational Training and those that of this formation are indirect beneficiaries.

Among the Other operators have been included:

- 4 education institutions and three other institutes of higher education with experience in the field of continuing education co-funded by ESF ;
- 2 for profit companies;
- 1 cooperative active in the field of continuing education

and training given to enterprises for the qualification and retraining of staff;

- 1 employers organisation representing the interests of enterprises in the distribution sector;
- 1 association active in the field of protection of migrants' rights.

Most of these organizations are located in the province of Latina from less than 25 years but almost many of them are present from more than 10 years. The quite prevalent field of activity is training in a predominantly regional and provincial area.

### Hellenic Management Association - Athens

Hellenic Management Association, a leading training Organisation in Greece and partner of the Leonardo da Vinci OCT project, tried to develop a local network able to acknowledge the added value for VET system of OCT approach, mainly by the Peer Review experiences, increasing the qualification of technical and human resources devoted to labour market needs and VET offering matching.

The selected stakeholders are:

- the *National Accreditation Centre for Continuing Vocational Training* (EKEPIS), a statutory body with administrative and financial autonomy;
- the *Economic and Social Council of Greece* (OKE) active in the promotion of the social dialogue through the formation of common positions on issues concerning society;
- the *Labour Institute of INE GSEE* an organisation of the Greek trade union;
- the *Hellenic Clothing Industry Association* (HCIA) representing Greek companies of the clothing industry sector;
- the *Hellenic Fashion Industry Association* (SEPEE) representative of the Greek textile industry;
- the *Hellenic Network for Corporate Social Responsibility* (HNSCR), a non-profit Organisation that aims at promoting the meaning of Corporate Social Responsibility.
- the *University of Patras*, is one of the biggest Universities in Greece.
- the *Hellenic Hotel Federation* (HHF), whose purposes are the study, protection, demand and promotion of the financial, social and professional interests of its members.

- the *Athens University of Economics and Business* (AUEB).
- the *National Technical University of Athens* (NTUA), one of the oldest Universities in Greece;
- the *General Secretariat for Youth* that plans and carries out social policy actions through informal learning initiatives;
- the *Hellenic Confederation of Professionals Craftsmen and Merchants* (KEK GSVEE) that aims at meeting the needs for up-to-date vocational training, qualification and professional expertise of SME's as well as artisans and merchants.
- the *National Confederation of Hellenic Commerce* (NCHC) plays an institutional role in the Greek economy and society ;
- the *Organization for Vocational Education and Training* (OEEK) active in the Initial Vocational Training in Greece.

Also the Other Operators, are organisations with a wide field of interest, being they universities or public or private national agencies actives in the employment policies in accordance with the objectives of the HMA participation in OCT project.

### Region of Extremadura and Municipality of Coria

The Open coordination for vocational training in Coria is approached from the Employment Plan and business Development created to address the needs and gaps identified at local, regional and territorial level, from a broad strategic perspective, which includes cooperation with all institutions involved and all the territories with which we share goals and potential for common development.

This same perspective is applied to the different aspects involved in generating the conditions for job creation and development. So it is the process leading to full employment generation from the guidance, through training, and continues with the insertion phase, but does not end here watching every step interconnected, so that training is also to people employed and unemployed.

Actions aimed at improving its corporate governance and the search for better results, which has a direct impact on employment and the development.

The main objective is to reach higher levels of development of economic, employment , quality and social welfare, cohesion and environmental sustainability, and this is to ensure technical work continuous and ongoing process to

ensure employment (insertion orientation and training), incorporating the support and reinforcement of the tissue business, both in terms of the companies and their managers, the entrepreneurship, as in regard to the entrepreneurial culture.

The selected stakeholders are:

- *Junta de Extremadura, Dirección General de formación para el empleo*, responsible for the design, implementation and financing of Vocational Training management in the region;

*Town Council of Coria* ;

- *Unión General de Trabajadores UGT*, one of the most important Trade Union, having the objective of improving life conditions of workers;
- *Comisiones Obreras CCOO*, the historical organisation of Spanish workers, represents and defends the interests of working population, and carries out training activities for them;
- *Central Sindical Independiente y de Funcionarios CSI-CSIF* an organisation of a category of employees;
- *Asociación de Empresarios de Coria y Comarca ASECOG*, one of the most important employers organisation active in the Coria municipality and neighbourhood;
- *CREEX* , an employers' confederation, represents the interests and the needs of training of employers;
- *FEMPEX* , composed by the local entities of the region, in order to defend their degree of local autonomy.

Among the Other operators have been included:

- *Liga Española de la Educación y la cultura popular Casa Verde* having a large social work and a program of development of the house of children and of actions of professional education ;
- *Academia Antón* , supplies education and professional training and higher education ;
- *Academia Maldonado* , prepares all types of examinations directed to teachers, technicians in early childhood education, nursing assistant, administrative assistant, local government, police, Fire-fighters, cooks, watchmen;
- *Asociación para el desarrollo del Valle del Alagón, ADESVAL* , which objective is to promote all initiatives at the development of the Valle del Alagón and of the Comarca;
- *Carpintex S.L.*, located in Coria, an industry of wooden

and aluminium construction products;

- *Más Allá Textil, Sociedad Cooperativa*, a small industry of manufacture of garments and clothing accessories ;
- *Obrador Artesano La Casa C.B.* located in Coria, produces Pastry and confectionery ;
- *Centro de Estética Salon de Belleza Madelaine* , located in Coria.

### **Formenerg S.A. - Bucharest**

Formenerg's goal, in OCT activities is to create a relevant data base of the most important stakeholders and key operators in ESF field, assuring the conditions for collaboration in the Romanian VET system, leading to a strong network of institutions.

Objectives are to identify the stakeholders and key actors in the European funded projects, meant to raise the human resources development; to process a detailed analysis regarding the implementation and managing of the ESF in Romania; to sustain the involvement of potential Peers in Peer review actions; to promote the ESF importance and benefits for Romanian economy.

The project creates the opportunity for establishing important connections and relationships between relevant institutions in the VET field, through ESF. Those relationships may end with new projects ideas, training plans, partnerships, good practices exchange.

Furthermore, the local context is very deep analyzed in order to find out relevant information, which leads to the next stage of collaboration, with a positive impact over the national economy.

As a partner of OCT project, Formenerg has to conduct an activity of mapping of local relevant stakeholders and key actors in public funded VET in Romania.

Through this activity, were selected 7 stakeholders, most of them Public Institutions, part of the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation, four of them established before 2000, the rest created after the Romania's accession in European Union and the entrance of European Funds in this territory, with a prevalent dimension in the range between 41-80 employees, generally institutions that are relatively young in the Romanian context).

The selected *stakeholders* are:

- Authorities and public institutions involved in managing and implementing the European funds in Romania, at national and regional level:

- Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation ;
- Managing Authority for Field Operational Plan for Human Resources Development (MASOPHRD);
- Intermediate Body for Field Operational Plan for Human Resources Development SOP\_HRD;
- Organizations promoting the vocational training, applying the strategies in VET domain, according assistance in implementing European funded projects
  - National Agency for Employment ;
  - Romanian Fund for Social Development ;
  - Civil Society Development Foundation (CSDF) ;
  - National Centre for Development of Vocational Education and training ;

The Other 25 organizations selected are public institutions, stock companies and state own companies. This organizations are quite check and balance among institutions from Bucharest and other parts of Romania. Regarding the institution's field of activity, they are public administration, professional association, training providers, social partners and many other organizations which operate in other sectors.

The majority of the institutions are set after 2000, due to the previous Romanian economic transition stage, the recent EU's accession and economic development. These institutions' establishment was influenced by Romanian economic growth and new requirements of the market, in the same time with the European standards, rules and directions.

In the Regional Intermediate Bodies for SOP\_HRD, the number of employed people decreased to more than 40. The number of employed people is around 40 in many of the VET institutions, mainly because the Romanian VET providers are acting in highly competitive market and it is hard for them to maintain and manage the costs, so they use the strategy of low costs, in the financial crisis situation, where the companies reduced the budgets for Vocational Training. Some of the companies mentioned, have about 1-2000 employees, the rest of them have more than 2000 employees, the major sector is represented by companies with 4000-6000 employees. Those companies are the biggest and powerfully ones in Romania, they having an important role in the economic scenario.

The selected Other Operators are :

- Regional Intermediate Bodies for SOP\_HRD, which promoted the local and regional partnerships:

- Regional intermediate Body for SOP\_HRD Bucharest Ilfov Region ;
- Regional intermediate Body for SOP\_HRD Center Region ;
- Regional intermediate Body for SOP\_HRD North East Region ;
- Regional intermediate Body for SOP\_HRD North West Region ;
- Regional intermediate Body for SOP\_HRD Muntenia South Region ;
- Regional intermediate Body for SOP\_HRD South West Oltenia Region ;
- Regional intermediate Body for SOP\_HRD South East Region ;
- Regional intermediate Body for SOP\_HRD West Region;
- Vocational Training providers, promoter and partners in European funded projects, concerned on human resources development :
  - S.C. Ascendis Consulting, is the biggest consulting firm in the organizational development field ;
  - ECDL Romania, is the national Operator of the license ECDL in Romania, having more than 400 authorized centers all over Romania for training and ECDL certification. ;
  - C.F.P. Perfect Service S.A., offers more than 300 training plans in different fields of activities, for both public and private sector ;
- Consultants in accessing non-refundable funds and implementing approved projects that have made studies on vocational and professional needs of Romanian economic context and promotion of vocational training:
  - Interactive Ro Consult, offers Vocational Training plans and consulting services;
  - OK Service Corporation SRL, is the Romanian leader of training through short courses market;
  - Institute for Economic and Social Training, is a training provider and consultant for European funded access and implementation ;
  - Romanian Institute for Training, promotes the vocational training for adults based on experimental methods ;

- Companies, players in the energetic system, potential beneficiaries of ESF :
  - *CN TRANSELECTRICA S.A.*, which plays a key role in the Romanian electricity market.
  - *CE Rovinari S.A.*, operates in the field of coal based Electric and Thermal Energy production;
  - *SNGN Romgaz S.A.*, the National Gas Company, a specialized in the production, delivery, marketing and underground storing of natural gas ;
  - *TRANSGAZ S.A.*, aims at the achievement of the national strategy on transmission, international transit, natural gas dispatching ;
  - *Enel* , is the most important private investor of the Romanian electric energy sector ;
  - *SC ELECTRICA S.A.*, that conducts researches and analysis regarding the Romanian energy market and the vocational professional training needs of this field's employees ;
  - *E.ON Gaz Romania*, specialized in natural gas supply services;
  - *SC APA NOVA SA*, the water public services concessionaire of Bucharest ;
  - *Hidroelectrica*, one of the Romanian Transmission and System Operators (TSO) which plays a key role in the Romanian electricity market ;
  - *National research and development Institute for Chemistry and Petrochemistry*, a public institution which conducts scientific researches and technological development for the Chemistry and petrochemical industry .
- the Nautical Institute "Giovanni Caboto" in Gaeta, specialized for the sea relating professions;
- the junior high school "Alessandro Volta", accredited for continuing education, higher education and orientation, engaged in the provision of courses for employed and unemployed Italian and foreign people, to increase language skills including Italian as a second language, computer making them aware of the importance to adopt appropriate behaviors on quality and safety;
- on a regional basis:
  - the Professional Institute for Agriculture and Environment "San Benedetto" supplying Higher Technical Education and Training courses, and carrying out vocational training for employees of industrial companies involved in measures of corporate industrial restructuring;
  - the Latina Formazione consortium whose role is to act in the field of active labor market policies, fulfilling a service function to the Education, Academic and private social systems of the Province;
  - the European Centre of Managerial Studies that organize training and guidance for unemployed and employed people in companies of the local industrial sector and for the activation of apprenticeships;
  - the Astrolabio Social Cooperative, that organize training courses in cooperation, Project Design and Project Management directed to employees of other cooperatives or associations;
- on a national basis:
  - the Pa.L.Mer. consortium whose role in vocational training, is to regulate, coordinate and develop activities aimed at the promotion, implementation and management of research, experimentation and dissemination of scientific, technological and organizational.

## The Stakeholder's role and Activities

### Province of Latina

The role of stakeholders within the context of the local Vocational Training differs among those who deliver training interventions assisted by ESF resources and those who are interested in those interventions to meet the learning needs of our members.

Seven stakeholder organizations provide training courses and six organizations have an indirect benefit from training activities.

The first group includes all educational institutions, engaged in different training activities:

- on a provincial basis:

The second group, identified as indirect beneficiaries of training activities includes employers' organizations (Confcommercio, Confartigianato and Confcooperative) and trade unions (CGIL, CISL, UIL and UGL), all with their provincial representatives, located in the city of Latina.

The role of employers' organizations is, mainly to provide associated companies, services, fiscal, legal, insurance, access to credit, labor, vocational training and more.

In vocational training the role of these organizations is to provide members with a wide range of opportunities offered

by different channels of public finance, with or without the ESF, using, in some cases, companies that assist the individual enterprises in the application of funds, design of training and subsequent supply of courses and reporting of costs. They provide assistance to member companies to activate specific training interventions including those relating to job security, Security in data processing, food hygiene, preparation for certification of quality, privately managed and burdens of 'business.

The service offered by Confartigianato in training involves the activation, through companies that are able to provide training for private and financed, including free training courses for groups of persons or companies.

The role of local workers is to protect its members either in the employment context or in civil action supporting organizational structures of class' representation in favor of employees, retired people and, recently, the immigrants and workers employed on atypical contracts. In terms of territorial structures they are concentrated as tax assistance services through the CAF care insurance, through employers, and legal assistance in cases of individual and collective disputes through law firms trust.

Trade unions participate in the provincial committee of labor market policies, in the Observatory of the co-operation, in the Board of crisis, in the Board "equal opportunities" and all the committees where are discussed the area plans and the training problems of the municipalities of the Province and where are taken decisions on those subjects.

### **Hellenic Management Association - Athens**

The stakeholders selected and their respective role in the employment – vocational training system are the following:

- The National Accreditation Centre for Continuing Vocational Training (EKEPIS) aims at ensuring quality assurance in vocational training, improving effectiveness of training services, reinforcing reliability in vocational training, linking vocational training with employment and the demands of the labour market, interlinking the systems of VET (linking initial with continuing vocational training systems), promoting lifelong learning. It also deals with the Accreditation of Vocational Training Centres and Special Centres for the Social and Vocational Integration of people with disabilities and ex-drug users, monitoring and Evaluation of Accredited Vocational Training Centres and Special Centres, accreditation of Trainers of Continuing Vocational Training, accreditation of Support Services Providers, accreditation of Job Profiles,

accreditation of Continuing Vocational Training Plans, accreditation of knowledge, skills and competencies.

- The Economic and Social Council of Greece (OKE) which aims at the promotion of the social dialogue through the formation (if possible) of common positions on issues concerning society as a whole or particular groups. OKE deals with the promotion of a common line through the discussion of various arguments and proposals on issues of common interest of the social partners involved.
- The Labour Institute of INE GSEE that aims at reinforcing the contribution of the Greek trade union movement to studies and researches concerning the unemployment, the trade unions and other relevant issues of interest and at reassuring the development and implementation of vocational training programs. The Labor institute is in permanent cooperation with the Greek General Confederation of work and The Hellenic Ministry of Employment.
- The Hellenic Clothing Industry Association (HCIA) provides a wide range of services to its members using its own network of contacts for information gathering.
- The Hellenic Fashion Industry Association (SEPEE) which main role is to promote its members interests in national & international organizations and governing bodies.
- The Hellenic Network for Corporate Social Responsibility (HNSCR) that aims at promoting the meaning of Corporate Social Responsibility to both the business community and the social environment, with the overall objective being a balance between profitability and sustainable development.
- The University of Patras that collaborates permanently with HMA, EKEPIS, OEEK, the General Secretariat for Youth, Athens University of Economics and Business and The National Technical University (NTUA) which are selected as stakeholders in this Leonardo project in various projects.
- The Hellenic Hotel Federation (HHF) whose purposes are the study, protection, demand and promotion of the financial, social and professional interests of its members and the service of their guests and public.
- The Athens University of Economics and Business (AUEB) conducting rigorous theoretical and applied research that has influenced the development of knowledge in the fields of economics, management, business administration, accounting and finance, marketing and communication, informatics, statistics,

international and European studies. By developing effective academic programs they shape generations of managers and leaders in the country, as well as internationally.

- The National Technical University of Athens (NTUA) that offers technical and academic training, in the areas of civil engineering, mechanical engineering, electrical and computer engineering, architecture, chemical engineering, rural and surveying engineering, mining engineering and metallurgy, naval architecture and marine engineering, applied mathematical and physical science.
- The General Secretariat for Youth plans and carries out social policy actions through informal learning initiatives (sensitise, up-date, inform), emphasising on young people with fewer opportunities.
- The Hellenic Confederation of Professionals Craftsmen and Merchants (KEK GSVEE) aims at meeting the needs for up-to-date vocational training, qualification and professional expertise of owners, directors and employees of SME's as well as artisans and merchants. It has a Vocational Centre that provides a complete package of educational information and services. It organizes and carries out integrated projects for continuing vocational training of self-employed businessmen, employees and unemployed people, co funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) or to other national funds.
- The National Confederation of Hellenic Commerce (NCHC) plays an institutional role in the Greek economy and society by participating in the signing of the National General Collective Agreement, as an equal social partner, and of other separate professional branch agreements. It also sits in numerous national and international committees and agencies, participating that way in the formation of the social, economic and business environment.
- The Organization for Vocational Education and Training (OEEK) designs directs and supports Initial Vocational Training in Greece. It is administratively and financially independent and it operates under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs. It supervises 144 Public Institutes for Vocational Training (IEKs) that operate in the country and 52 private ones. It undertakes various actions aiming at the exploitation of choices concerning the productive net, the development of equal opportunities, the exploitation of entrepreneurship and the supply of specialized staff in various economic sectors. OEEK

offers basically to secondary education graduates-contemporary scientific, technical, vocational and practical knowledge and skills. OEEK is the only national body that certifies initial vocational training (IVET) provided by the Institutes for Vocational Training. The Certificate of Vocational Training is accredited by the state and the European Union and is a key factor in the labour market.

### Region of Extremadura and Municipality of Coria

Stakeholders whose main tasks are to promote and organize the participate process to identify the territory's needs on vocational training and implement the training activities are:

- The Coria Town Council with the coordination the others stakeholders in a local committee whose functions are:
  - to propose measures and actions
  - be consulted in advance about the proposals and conditions of vocational training measures;
  - To know and analyze the evolution and development of different professional training activities that develop:
  - establish ways for collaboration with other institutions that develop vocational training activities in order to conclude the proceedings and avoid dispersion in the operation and goals to achieve;
  - knowing the annual report of findings and actions taken;
  - to spread.

But, the roles of the stakeholders and others Operators is conduct by vocational training activities too

- The Patronato de Formación y Empleo that conduct all the activities of the Town Council about the vocational training. PFE, as autonomous body, whose its main objective is the promotion of vocational guidance, training for unemployed and workers, and social and economic development in the Municipality and Mancomunidad of Coria from a global perspective and, using this innovative programs themselves or financed by other institutions.

Training and development are promoted in different fields of economic activity, among which are the activities and jobs related to:

- the environment and agriculture.

- the promotion of industry, handicrafts, construction and conservation;
- tourism services and business services.
- The Trustees must manage complementary programs in education and access to culture.
- The Board also has the purpose of research methodology and technology in the areas listed above to improve the expectations of its objectives.
- As regards the main Trade Unions they contribute to the preparation and training of workers, and for the Employers Association whose functions is the institutional participation in public administrations working to defend the general interests of employers.

### Formenerg S.A. - Bucharest

Regarding the convergences between the stakeholders, concerning the main research, planning, implementation, monitor activities realized, there are two groups of institutions.

The first group includes Authorities and public institutions that have the common role in managing and implementing the European funds in Romania, at national and regional level:

- Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation;
- Managing Authority for Field Operational Plan for Human Resources Development (MASOPHRD);
- Intermediate Body for Field Operational Plan for Human Resources Development;
- National Agency for Employment.

Their common activities are to assure the allocation of ESF for vocational training, to launch calls for proposals, to evaluate the beneficiaries' application forms, to assist in projects' implementation.

The second group getting the common role in promoting the vocational training, applying the strategies in VET domain, according assistance in implementing European funded projects:

- Civil Society Development Foundation (CSDF);
- Romanian Fund for Social Development;
- National Centre for Development of Vocational Education and training.

Their common main activities are researches concern the public sector and implementation of projects for civil society and social development.

### Local context analysis The Italian local context

The survey was entrusted to the Province of Latina, society SAIP and the local representatives of Confindustria and CISL.

The questionnaire developed by Italian partners for the analysis of context used in the Province of Latina is composed by 14 items, predominantly closed, divided into three parts, each relating to a specific field of research.

The survey was conducted on a sample of organizations active in the field of vocational training among those identified were mapped during the survey provided by WP1 Project OCT.

Although it is not a rational sample, its composition is very similar to that of all institutions accredited by the Lazio Region and is, therefore, represents the supply of vocational training funded by ESF in the province of Latina. There are 5 accredited bodies over 12 in the sample but also 5 to 14 accredited institutions in the province of Latina.

Are present in the sample, all constituent elements of the vocational training system which looks at the PET of the Province of Latina: There are institutions that are working on guidance for continuing education for adult education, training higher education and to skills training for a variety of topics consistent with the ones who are turning accredited institutions in the province.

The survey shows that:

- the level of involvement of institutions sampled in the planning of operations of professional training is high, is mostly done through contracts episodic structured and unstructured in the presence of planning interventions judged to be of high quality;
- the effectiveness perceived by providers of educational interventions is considered high: the impact of relevant operations financed on local needs, despite the existence of a situation that requires, however, further adjustments also on the side of resource planning of ESF. Particularly significant impact reported particularly high in relation to any work training, but also the modest impact on learning;
- the conduction of studies and analysis of training needs is felt by most local authorities in view of the fact that they have also become involved in a more or less structured and often right from the planning stage. Shows a substantial agreement that these studies were conducted with the ESF and they are not restricted to

any display of data exist but have constituted an anticipation of territorial needs, keeping in mind in the later stages of planning to use the same resources ESF;

- letters of actions made with the notice requirements of the local context in which institutions operate is deemed to medium-high.

Overall the survey confirmed the vitality out of the local environment on the offer from a plurality of entities able to use the opportunities made available to the Managing Authority of Community funds and also by virtue of a national position on the machine to which looks at the process of planning and management of public resources available for training throughout their lives.

### The Greek local context

The aim of the Leonardo Da Vinci project “Open Coordination for vocational Training” – OCT, was to tackle the insufficient and reduced attractiveness of local Vocational Educational Training – VET systems and the related insufficient cohesion among relevant stakeholders.

Under this project, in the framework of the WP4, we undertook the task to realize an in-depth research focused on Vocational Training activities during the last three years in Greece. More specifically, we measured the experience acquired by VET providers in dealing with the European Social Fund (ESF) managing authorities and the real existence of a prior analysis of local needs.

Concern the methodology for this research, questionnaires were used as the analysis tool. The data collection was made using the traditional postal mail, e-mail and direct interviews. In total, 67 questionnaires were sent to major stakeholders, of which 30 replied to the call.

It was possible to conclude from the answers but also from the discussion carried out through the interviews that:

Greater political efforts have been made in recent years in the Attica region but also in Greece to improve quality in vocational training: these have been reflected by structural reforms, legislative measures introducing rules of dualism and transparency into vocational training, and multiple initiatives in the field of innovation, evaluation and monitoring. Nevertheless, stakeholders have retained the conceptions and judgments of vocational training that have been shaped by their social, political and cultural backgrounds.

There are, however, many concerns about the improvement of the following procedures:

- Participation of the stakeholders – social partners and others – in all the stages of planning, decision making, implementation and evaluation of ESF activities
- Joint responsibility among partners of ESF activities
- Application of common rules for monitoring, implementation by vocational training institutions, centres and programs
- Vocational qualifications and certification meeting the needs of the employment market
- Formulation of methods and mechanism to evaluate effectiveness and efficiency in terms of the matching between the demand from employers for vocational qualifications and the vocational training system
- Adoption of new models of training organisation based on decentralised decision making and on upgrading of local projects
- Dynamic information and guidance systems
- Introduction of goals of diversity, flexibility and equivalence

New concepts and dimensions of quality need to be developed, such as quality evaluation based on the trainee, self-evaluation by institutions etc. These new concepts and strategies also require a change in the culture of management and administration and the creation of new and workable evaluation models.

The rules and international standards most often used in the administration and management of vocational training could be used as auxiliary instruments by those in charge of initiatives relating to quality in vocational training. This process makes it necessary to examine whether proposed objectives have been achieved from the point of view of the aspirations and needs of trainees and whether there is a match between qualifications and the vocational skills needed in employment.

By way of a final conclusion, the participants in this research stressed the importance of quality in all the phases – from planning to implementation – of the ESF funded activities.

### Romanian local context

- The implementation of ESF in Romania is at the beginning and the results will be seen after year 2013 when this funding line will stop;
- More and more companies are surveyed by the authorities responsible with ESF management, in order to find out the professional needs;

- The impact of the projects funded by ESF is seen in a certain degree, depending on the project domain and activities. The overall impact will be more visible after the 5 years of using those funds;
- The Romanian companies agreed on the importance of life long learning, sustaining their employees access to training plans;
- The ESF actions in Romania are promoted at national level, the companies and other interest parts being aware of the possibility to access those funds, the objectives, the rules, the necessary steps to obtain the financing. Also they had heard of various studies and researches regarding the professional and vocational needs;
- Viewing that the ESF action in Romania started in 2007, since 2008 a lot of project were accessed and now the first results are seen (seminars, conferences, consulting, dissemination action, training plans etc.);
- The Managing Authority for SOP HRD is fully aware of the significant challenge lying ahead and has learnt the right lessons from the planning of the plans. It will ensure that all institutions know their role, duties and related responsibilities. Staff recruitment, training, setting up of clear procedures, etc. were recognized as crucial prerequisites for an efficient and correct management of the funds;
- The Field Operational Plan for Human Resources Development 2007-2013 has been elaborated in a large partnership process. These consultations have pursued the following aspects:
  - Obtaining the partners agreement for establishing the priority objectives for development;
  - Ensuring transparency in the elaboration process;
  - Increasing the level of commitment and involvement of partners.
- The relevance of the partnership principle in implementing SOP HRD consists especially in the multitude of existing challenges, but also, in the opportunities regarding the modernization of educational and training systems, lifelong learning, promoting active measures for employment and social inclusion. The complexity and interdependence of these aspects, besides the fast rhythm of changes, inclusively of national, regional and local reorganization, needs a multi – disciplinary and integrated approach, based on the contribution of all stakeholders. From this point of view, various problems derived from the necessity of harmonization of the educational supply with the

demands of the labour market, promoting adaptability and flexibility of the workers and enterprises, modern organization of the labour, sustainable participation of the vulnerable group on the labour market, need solutions that can be achieved only through partnership.

### The context in Extremadura

The survey has been applied by our staff, through e-mail communication and taking into consideration the comments and other information they gave us during this process. It is possible to say that this process has been improved because we have taken into account all the qualitative perceptions people give us about the subject. Private and public entities have been asked.

One of the information we have to report at this respect, is that some entities declared at first time their ignorance about ESF issues and the process of planning and processes. It is an indicator on how they do not feel included in any process related with the planning and managing, and how necessary could be to take them into consideration in the current and next processes.

In accordance with the general themes defined by the objectives of this survey, following results have been obtained.

Most of entities asked consider that have had a *LOW* level of participation in ESF decision making and planning activities and consider that, it occurs as well as in other VET operators. Just 25% of them consider have a medium level of participation.

Apart from that, most consider that sometimes have been asked to participate or just give their opinion about ESF managing, but in different levels: most of those who say that were asked declare that it occurred only sometimes and just for giving data for monitoring, and not in an organized way. One of four declare that never have been asked by ESF Managing Authorities.

Regarding their opinion of quality level of National and Local ESF planning and projects implemented in their local contexts, most asked consider they have a *MEDIUM* level of quality. This answers can be related with the two previous ones, because as we were said, this level could be higher for instance by asking them their opinion.

Impact of ESF Projects: this is a good valued point of projects, because all participants think that ESF projects have had a *HIGH* or *MEDIUM* impact in their local contexts. So, apart from the planning and managing process which is not absolutely well consider because the few participation of

these entities, the general impact of these actions is high.

According to the way of improving the effectiveness of ESF Projects, there are two majority opinions: half of those asked think the best way is Planning by Administration and Local Authorities, and half consider it better to have Planning and design of proposal by implementing bodies. There is a division of opinions.

The previous actions with the most significant results in their local contexts have been included in the integrated projects with training for unemployed and employed people. There is a clear vision of good results as training for unemployed people as permanent learning.

Just any of those asked have identified Best practices. They have selected projects which combine training with employment and labor insertion activities:

- Training and professional insertion plan of SEXPE. Selected because of their implication of all stakeholders as Administration, private training centres, etc. in the training activities
- Companies of Experience, another SEXPE program which combines training and internships in companies, and has a very high level of success: the people who mention this program say that it has had a very high percentage of labor insertion.
- The Proder projects, because of their basis on local development.

Different points of the survey have been selected as the most interesting, as the priorities, the call for proposal or the project. The results are selected in equal percentages of participants.

Regarding training needs analysis carried out during five previous years, there is a lack of knowledge about it: even those who say that some analysis have been carried out, also say that they do not know their results. Approximately half of those asked think that there have been analysis and half consider that there was not. Even this disparity shows how bad these issues are known among people asked.

The majority of those asked consider that they have had no participation in any analysis.

At the same time, most of them do not have any proof of any survey on local development or training needs by ESF.

The interviewees think that the correspondence level of Call for proposals in the previous three years with the needs is MEDIUM. Just a minimum percentage thinks they have a high level of correspondence.

## First Part - The participate planning and methods of participation

There is lively debate about new forms of governance in the European Union (EU) and how they apply to various areas of economic and social life. Relatively little, however, has been written about new forms of EU governance for education policy (see Novoa & Lawn, 2002; Dale, 2003). In this document we discuss important developments in EU education policy in order to develop a better understanding of the nature of these new forms of governance and their implications for education. We are particularly interested in the open method of coordination (OMC) as a new tool of EU education policy making especially after having developed our project on an open coordination for vocational training under Leonardo program 2007-2013. In the first part of the document we outline three key characteristics of the OMC. Thus parallelism with what we have done within the peer reviews will inevitably come up. In the second and main part of the article we critically examine key aspects of the OMC with a particular focus on the potential politicization of mutual policy learning in the context of OMC education measures. To begin with, however, we need to address the question of what the OMC actually is.

### What is the OMC?

There is no formal legal definition of the open method of coordination (OMC) in the European Community or EU Treaty. [1] There were calls by various EU institutional actors, such as the Committee of the Regions and the Economic and Social Committee, for a definition of the OMC in the draft EU constitution (Committee of the Regions, 2002, p. 4). This, however, never happened, perhaps in order to preserve the OMC's flexibility, one of its key characteristics. The closest we get to an official definition of the OMC are the statements in the conclusions to the Lisbon European Council, a meeting of the heads of EU member state governments:

- The OMC is a means of spreading best practice and achieving greater convergence towards the main EU goals. This method, which is designed to help MS [member states] progressively develop *their own* policies, involves:
  - fixing guidelines for the Union combined with specific timetables for achieving the goals which they set in the short, medium and long terms;
  - establishing, where appropriate, quantitative and qualitative indicators and benchmarks against the best in the world and tailored to the needs of different MS and sectors as a means of comparing good practice;

- translating these European guidelines into national and regional policies by setting specific targets and adopting measures, taking into account national and regional differences;
- periodic monitoring, evaluation and peer review organised as mutual learning processes.

(European Council, 2000, par. 37)

The Lisbon European Council meeting talked in general terms about the OMC and, for the first time, explicitly referred to EU education policies as a key area in which the OMC should be applied. The OMC is a *governance* tool – and hence not merely an expression of supranational EU *government* – because it involves both public and private actors. It involves traditional public governmental actors, such as member states in the Council of the European Union, and supranational EU public institutions, such as the European Commission, the European Parliament (EP), the Committee of the Regions, and the Economic and Social Committee. However, it also involves private stakeholders in policy making. For instance, OMC policy making in the field of education involves national evaluation agencies, teachers, academics, civil servants working in the field of education, trades union representatives and private education businesses. The term ‘OMC’ is usually employed to refer to EU policy-making processes. Sometimes it is also used to describe substantive outcomes of these policy-making processes.

It is clear that there is not one single OMC, but a number of OMCs. The OMC varies according to the specific policy field and time in which it is employed (Armstrong & Kilpatrick, 2006, p. 11). Different types of OMCs are now employed in a wide range of EU policies, such as the European Employment Strategy, fiscal policies in connection with the Growth and Stability Pact, pensions, health care, social inclusion, youth policies, immigration and asylum, and, of course, education policy. OMCs can also vary over time. In some policy areas, such as social inclusion, there have been ambitions to move away from ‘soft’ and ‘light-touch’ regulation OMC towards ‘harder’ forms of regulation, though these ambitions have not necessarily been realized in practice. Revisions of EU social inclusion policies included clearer targets and more focused indicators. Coordination was directed at a clear goal of convergence, rather than leaving it open to member states which aspects of the policy they wanted to engage with (Armstrong & Kilpatrick, 2006, p.13). In other policy fields, however, such as economic policy coordination under the Growth and Stability Pact, there has also been a ‘softening’ of OMC measures.

Even though there is variation in the OMC, it is nevertheless

possible to identify some key aspects of this governance tool. As one can see from the Lisbon European Council conclusions referred to above, **flexibility** is the first key characteristic of the OMC. The OMC is flexible because it relies on soft law. The OMC is different from traditional EU policy making, which – as its final outcome – usually involves the creation of formal, legally binding legislation through the ‘classic Community method’. The latter involves the main EU institutional actors, such as the European Commission, the Council of Ministers and the EP, mostly in a co-decision process. While the European Commission initiates the legislative proposal, the Council and EP co-decide, with the EP having a power of veto since both the Council’s and EP’s assent to the legislative measure is necessary. In contrast to this ‘classic Community method’ of translating policy initiatives into law, the OMC does not involve the creation of formally binding secondary EU legislation, such as EU directives and regulations (European Commission, 2001a, pp. 21-22). Instead, it relies significantly on soft law.

### **The OMC: a new flexible governance tool relying on soft law**

Soft law can be distinguished from hard law, the latter being the traditional form for exercising governmental powers. While hard law, such as EC and EU Treaty articles, directives and regulations, creates legally binding obligations for member states and individuals, EU soft law, such as recommendations, opinions, reports, joint communications of the Commission and the Education Council, and action plans, is only persuasive. It does not create enforceable legal rights and obligations for EU institutions or citizens. An example of EU soft law in the field of education policies is the European Commission reports, which set out benchmarks and indicators for measuring the quality of secondary school provisions throughout the EU. These benchmarks and indicators do not create legally enforceable entitlements to a particular standard of service for pupils or parents, nor are they a legally binding standard that schools in the EU member states have to comply with.

Traditionally, soft law has been employed in EU policy making just as a preliminary measure, before hard law measures are adopted. For instance, the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights can be considered as a precursor to traditional ‘hard’ law civil rights in a formally ratified EU constitution. Soft law is also frequently used simply for interpreting existing hard law measures. The Commission issues ‘soft’ law, such as administrative circulars and Commission communications, in a number of policy fields

in order to facilitate the interpretation of 'hard' law measures (Armstrong & Kilpatrick, 2006, p. 3). In contrast to this, the OMC commits itself to soft law as a key governance tool, not just as a preliminary option or an aide for the interpretation of hard law. This matters because significant reliance on soft law has consequences for the distribution of power in the EU. Where the European Commission particularly relies on traditional 'soft' law measures, for instance, for expressing its view on the interpretation of EU hard law, the role of the Commission and thus nationalism in the EU are reinforced. In contrast to this, the OMC strikes a new note. Here, soft law measures – in place of hard law – are often derived from initiatives of the European Council and the Council of Ministers. This increases the role of member states in the EU policy-making process and hence strengthens inter governmental in the EU (Armstrong & Kilpatrick, 2006, p. 3). The OMC's significant reliance on soft law also points to another key characteristic – its reflexivity.

### The OMC: a reflexive governance tool

**Reflexivity** is a second key characteristic of the OMC (Armstrong & Kilpatrick, 2006, p. 11). By definition, soft law can be more easily revised than hard law in the light of new knowledge about a policy issue. As is clear from the Lisbon conclusions, '**peer review**' [2] and policy learning are central elements of the OMC. Hence, as a reflexive governance tool, the OMC involves iterative policy-making processes that are fed by the ongoing reflection and revision of ideas. As new knowledge about policy issues develops, governance responses can be modified. For instance, the application of the OMC to EU education policies has generated new EU policy networks that exchange information about best practices in education. This exchange of information and perspectives between different member states also seeks to encourage each member state to reflect on its own education practices, to stimulate policy learning and to increase standards to the level of those member states which are considered to deliver 'best practices'. Also, in order to implement the Education and Training 2010 Work Plan, in 2006 the Commission set up 'clusters', which engage – amongst other activities – in 'peer learning activities' (PLAs). **Clusters** consist of groups of interested countries that discuss specific themes in education about which they have expressed a desire to learn from other interested countries. In our case, we have set up a significant cluster of institutions from four countries. This can also involve sharing their successful or unsuccessful experiences with other countries (European Commission, 2006a, p. 1). Clusters and the PLA activities within them are seen as the most bottom-up activities within the

education OMC. They are also voluntary. Member states can participate in any cluster they wish, and to the extent that they wish. There is no formal monitoring of the performance or participation of member states in clusters and PLAs.

But 'softness' and reflexivity must not be overemphasized as the key characteristics of the OMC. Exchanges of information and points of view in policy networks also provide the basis for the imposition of more specific forms of EU OMC governance, which have the potential to steer and shape education policies in the member states. In particular, exchanges of information can provide the basis for the development of objectives, benchmarks and indicators that are central to the OMC, also in EU education policies. Reliance on these new public management (NPM) tools forms the third key characteristic of the OMC.

### Objectives, Indicators and Benchmarks

In March 2001, the European Council adopted three strategic goals for education and training (ET) in the EU. These focus, firstly, on increasing the quality and effectiveness of ET systems in the EU. Secondly, they seek to facilitate the access of all to ET systems and, thirdly, they aspire to opening up ET systems to the world. In the same year, the European Commission (2001b) published a report on *The Concrete Future Objectives of Education Systems*, which specified 5 main [3] and 13 subsidiary objectives. A detailed work plan followed in order to plan for the changes needed to achieve these objectives. The progress of the member states in relation to each of these objectives is monitored through the creation of benchmarks. Benchmarks are not concrete targets for individual countries to meet – they are simply references for 'average' performance. Austria and the Netherlands, however, included these benchmarks as targets for their domestic education policy (Gornitzka, 2005). The Commission also published the *European Report on the Quality of School Education: sixteen quality indicators* (European Commission Directorate-General for Education and Culture, 2000). This report further entrenched the use of indicators and benchmarks for the evaluation and improvement of the quality of schooling. In May 2003, the Commission proposed, and the Council adopted, five European benchmarks for education. For example, by 2010 the Council wants to achieve, across the EU, an average rate of early school leavers of no more than 10% of all (secondary) school pupils.[4] Hence, benchmarks are an important element of the OMC in education. They are meant to be used in order to 'identify best practices', which should help to achieve agreed objectives.[5] Their use is justified also with reference to various governance values. They should promote transparency by making progress towards

the objectives visible. They should also advance pragmatic aspects of 'good governance' by 'breaking down the overall (Lisbon) ambition into achievable goals' (European Commission, 2004, p. 10).

Finally, 'indicators' [6] are used to assess either quantitatively or qualitatively progress towards the benchmarks and the common objectives. Indicators should also help to stimulate exchange and discussion among member states about reasons for differences in performance. Hence, they are meant to facilitate policy learning (European Commission, 2004, p. 11).

They have been endorsed by Commission working groups [7] and should also be endorsed by the Council. As part of the OMC on EU education policies, the European Commission has set up a Standing Group on Indicators and Benchmarks [8], which has developed 29 indicators in order to measure whether, and at what rate, the EU is progressing towards its common objectives and benchmarks in the field of ET.[9] In relation to a number of education activities, the EU is also seeking to develop further and refine its indicators. This seems necessary also because indicators are sometimes only tenuously linked with the benchmarks and objectives whose progress they are meant to measure. For instance, the indicators 'ratio of pupils to teaching staff' and 'age of teacher' are used for measuring improvements in the quality of teaching. But often there is no detailed social science evidence provided in support of the asserted links between indicators and benchmarks in the EU policy reports. Are the age of teachers and the number of teachers in relation to pupils really key factors which influence the quality of teaching? Moreover, some indicators do not seem to measure what the benchmark seeks to capture. For instance, the number of pupils registered in foreign languages is used as an indicator of improvements in foreign language learning. While this indicator measures the number of pupils formally involved in language instruction, it does not measure whether, and to what degree, competency in foreign languages is actually acquired. After having outlined three key characteristics of the OMC, it is now necessary to address the question of why the OMC is also applied in the field of EU education policies.

### **Why has the OMC been introduced in EU Education Policies?**

The OMC is usually employed where the formal EU institutions have limited power to develop policies under the EC and EU Treaties, or, where there is significant political resistance by member states to an expansion of EU activities. This clearly applies to the case of EU education policies. Hence, the OMC can be perceived as a potentially

new answer to the old problems of limited competencies and legitimacy for EU actors in policy making (Zeitlin & Pochet, 2005). According to Article 149 (1) of the EC Treaty, the European Community has only very limited powers for developing EU education policies:

The Community shall contribute to the development of quality education, particularly by encouraging cooperation between MS and, if necessary, by supporting and supplementing their action, while fully respecting the responsibility of the Member State for the content of teaching and the organisation of education systems and their cultural and linguistic diversity.

This article was only added to the EC Treaty in 1992 through the Maastricht Treaty. Hence, the EU acquired only relatively late in its development express powers under the EC Treaty for developing an EU dimension to the education policies of member states.[10] But, while there is now the specific Article 149 of the EC Treaty giving powers to the EU institutions in the field of EU education policy making, it is also clear that these powers are very limited. The EU institutions can only encourage cooperation between member states and, if necessary, support and supplement member state actions. Any activities beyond the encouragement of cooperation between member states can only be secondary to activities initiated by member states themselves. It is also clear that the EU institutions do not have any formal law-making powers in relation to education under Article 149 of the EC Treaty. Moreover, the article ends with a requirement for the EU institutions not to interfere with the principle that the main responsibility for the content of teaching and the organization of education systems lies with member states. The idea of a unified EU education policy is further limited in the article through an express reference to the cultural and linguistic diversity of education systems in the EU.

In addition, EU policy-making powers in the field of education are also limited because they are subject to the general EC law principles of support and proportionality. Article 5 of the EC Treaty refers to support. It requires that, in areas which do not fall within the exclusive competence of the EC – which clearly applies to education policies – the European Community should only take action if the proposed objectives cannot be sufficiently achieved by member states themselves. Finally, EU action in the field of education is also limited by a potential legitimacy deficit. There is a strong link between education policies and the construction of national identities and sovereignties. Hence, member states question whether an EU dimension to education policies is really legitimate (Alexiadou, 2005a). National, regional and local actors, who hold significant

powers in relation to education governance in various member states [11], can be expected to be critical and watchful of a potential erosion of their influence through an EU dimension to their education policies.

To conclude, the OMC as a 'light touch' governance tool is the type of regulatory tool which is particularly appropriate

for regulation in areas where the EU has only very limited competencies. Having outlined three key characteristics and a reason for its introduction in the field of EU education policies, we will now critically assess some key aspects of the OMC.



## From local government to local governance: participate planning methods and practices in OCT partner countries

### National policy context on improving quality of VET - Greece

With the institutionalisation of the National System of Linking Vocational Education and Training with Employment (ESSEKA) in 2003, it is the first time that the three systems of Technical and Vocational Education, Initial Vocational Education and Continuing Vocational Education, after their rapid development in the last decade, have coordinated and complemented each other so that the one does not substitute the other as far as their role and mission are concerned. The coordination and complementariness of the systems provide education and training opportunities to every person according to his/ her special characteristics as well as the special characteristics of the local labour market, so that every effort has a specific result on employment. Thus, the flow of manpower from one system is an inflow for the other, so that every person is given the opportunity to improve or differentiate his/her professional qualifications, competences and skills by adapting them to the local needs of the labour market each time, without wasting time and resources, aiming at the employment, the quality and the safety of his/her work. Moreover, the systems, in order to achieve coordination and complementariness develop appropriate internal capacities, educate their personnel and specialise it in the administration and management of education and training.

Moreover, the law 'Systematisation of Lifelong Learning and other provisions' 3369/2005 includes provisions for the bodies that provide lifelong education and training as well as the development and accreditation of occupational profiles that can constitute the basis for the design and accreditation of lifelong learning plans. In addition, it defines the characteristics of lifelong learning plans, such as their duration and the certificates they issue. Using the national and international experience in lifelong learning, the new law promotes educational activities directed towards employment, fights social exclusion and generally sets capital investment and vocational education and training investment at the same level. It also defines the procedures for the evaluation of Vocational Education and Training.

### Improving quality in VET provision

#### *Policy progress since 2002*

Quality assurance in the provision of Vocational Education and Training has been defined as the main priority of the Government, which is reflected in a series of constant institutional and legal regulations.

Law 2986/2002 'Organisation of the Regional services of Primary and Secondary Education, evaluation of the educational work and teachers, teacher training and other provisions'. This legal framework creates the prerequisites to reinforce the improvement of our educational system and increase the opportunities that the students have in order to use their potential to a full extent and create the conditions so that Greek society is able to respond to the challenges and demands of an international environment.

Law 3475/2006 'Organisation and operation of secondary vocational education and other provisions'. This law aims at upgrading the secondary Technical-Vocational Education through the operation of Vocational Lyceums (EPAL) and Vocational Schools (EPAS). In this reform, the Vocational Lyceums (EPAL) provides substantial general education, broad vocational education and basic vocational skills in a broader framework of financial activity, professional competence at a specific profession and not specialisation, so that its graduates have the ability to observe the technological evolutions and adapt to the new conditions of the labour market, thus avoiding unemployment and social exclusion.

The Vocational Schools (EPAS) give the opportunity to those interested to follow, within the educational system and in the framework of twelve-year compulsory education, specialisations that correspond to those offered by the Vocational Lyceums (EPAL) as well as specialisations that do not require theoretical background but focus on practical training, so that the graduates can immediately integrate into the labour market as skilled craftsmen.

The Organisation for Vocational Education and Training (OEEK), following the decisions of its Administrative Board,

expands the plans of practical training of the trainees, which contribute to the improvement and implementation of their training, reforms the curricula and creates new specialisations, so that Vocational Training Institutes (IEK) graduates can acquire the basic skills and competences required by the labour market.

The National Accreditation Centre for Continuing Vocational Training (EKEPIS) has proceeded to the design and implementation of accreditation procedures for its bodies and structures that implement plans of continuing vocational training for the general population as well as people with special needs and those threatened with social exclusion. It has applied quantitative and qualitative criteria for the evaluation of training provided by the Vocational Training Centres (KEK) and the promotion procedures of trainees to employment as well as the implementation of uniform methods and criteria in order to measure progress and efficiency that have been set by the Decisions of the Ministers of Economy and Finance and Employment and Social Protection, 110327/2005 'System for the Accreditation of Vocational Training Centres (KEK)', 113709/2005 'Accreditation System of Accompanying Services (SYY) Executives'.

Moreover, the law 'Systematisation of Lifelong Education and other provisions' (3369/2005) includes provisions in order to approve the content, the quality and the evaluation procedures of plans so that their constant improvement is possible. The evaluation is divided into external and internal one. The law sets specific criteria that evaluate the services offered in the field of lifelong education as well as their efficiency. The plans can continue only if these criteria are met.

## Two Examples of policy measures

### 1. Growth and promotion of active policies for fighting and prevention of the unemployed, for the evasion of long-lasting unemployment and the facilitation of rehabilitation of the long-lasting unemployed through VET

#### Operation of the already existing Centers for the promotion of employment and aid of new infrastructures

The establishment of eleven (11) new Centers added to the already operating 49 ones, financed from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Community Support Frame, was undertaken. These Centers play a basic role in the materialization of the operational program and in the employment policy in Greece, in general. The Centers provide individualized services for the unemployed, helping them to form a personal action plan, which will give them guidelines **in order to participate in a training program and**

**even better to find a working position.**

For the operation of the Centers, **193 labor advisers** have been engaged and a methodology of application of individualized approach for the unemployed was developed, in a pilot phase firstly. This methodology was created with common tools such as printed questionnaires, individualized action plans, publication of guidelines and publication of directives adapted in the priorities of the national employment policy.

### 2. Innovative projects for the support of the employment of women through VET

IMPLEMENT project : IMPLEMENT project was financed and materialized in Attica in the framework of the European Community Fund, Article 6 "Innovative approaches for handling changes, during October 2004 until October 2006".

The objective of the project was to confront the impact of reformation in the target group by adapting the specialties and the content of working positions in the sectors of Information Technology and Communication, and Tourism, specifically. These two sectors had positive reaction in the reformation and satisfactory rhythm of growth and employment.

Project's main idea was to create a system that would facilitate the transition of a specific target group -from a position worsened by the structural change - to a position in favored of the change via adequate training and transfer of knowledge.

The target group was employed women in unskilled or low specialization working positions, in both sectors mentioned above.

Systems, methods and **mentoring** techniques played an important role in this project, because by using them, new chances for growth were given to employed women in enterprises in the sectors of Information Technology and Communication and Tourism. Social partners, educational organizations, Institutions which represent the target group, enterprises as well as educational institutions of abroad with relevant experience and know-how, had an active part in the configuration and application of mentoring systems.

With the completion of the project, the enterprises participated, "transformed" in "organizations" which helped their personnel -especially women- to learn more, to strengthen and growth their abilities.

In general, the project achieved the objective of the creating and application of a complete methodology of

guided learning, which is called “mentoring” to a specific target group, in this case employed women in unskilled or low specialization working positions, in the sectors of Information Technology and Communication and Tourism.

The Mentoring system applied within the frame of the IMPLEMENT project, can constitute an alternative form of management and support of manpower and can have positive impact on both employees and enterprises, if applied systematically.

Mentoring concerns the career management and the personal growth of individuals abilities and it's in the new frame in which employees themselves must be able to manage their career and make decisions regarding their personal development, education and how they will remain active in the labor market.

In conclusion, we have to mention that unemployed as well as employed women participating in a program's mentoring action strengthen and fulfilled their atomic goals (225 women of a total of 300 ). Last but not least, it is important to mention, that not only women but mentors participating in this project were profited as well.

### **Involving of local stakeholders and citizens in decision-making processes and participate planning: Italian practises.**

In Italy the methods for involving local stakeholders and citizens in decision-making processes aim at achieving common and shared goals referred to many different sectors.

Local Public Authorities (Regions, Provinces, Townships) have more and more often adopted inclusive processes in solving many-sided problems; they define the list of involved stakeholders including also local associations of citizens or citizens as individuals.

Public Authorities are no more the only stakeholders of community welfare and local environment management; their responsibilities now include the support to citizens direct involvement, the management of partnerships and networks including the higher number of local stakeholders.

#### **Local Areas planning<sup>1</sup>.**

This method of participatory planning is more often referred to social issues; social politics include many different services and activities (financial supports, day cares, health care, counselling..) to be provided by different institutions and local organisations (Public Authorities, Public Health

local centres, third sector associations...) to a wide range of beneficiaries (elder people, child and young targets, social or economic marginalised groups, physically or mentally disabled groups...).

It is very difficult to find out the real needs of these categories only by technical surveys, so Italian Public Authorities (especially Provinces and Townships) involve all stakeholders, third sectors organisations, beneficiaries and citizens in defining and implementing Local Areas Plan for social politics.

Among the others, the Local Areas Plans of the following territories have been implemented with relevant achieved results:

- Province of Rovigo: since 1997 Politic Representatives, Public Health managers, trade unions, and third sector associations have developed a common Plan for social issues;
- Township of Andria: since 1999 third sectors organisations, the Township and the Local Education Authority promoted a local Plan for child and teenagers;
- Province of Trento: in 2001 40 different groups of local citizens supported the Local Area Plan development and implementation;
- Township of Bologna: in 2001 the Township involved in Local Area Planning for teenagers a wide number of stakeholders as Public Health Centres, the Bologna Province, the Local Education Authority and the Juvenile Court.

### **Other participatory planning initiatives. Ascoltare Pesaro (listening Pesaro)**

In 1996 the Township of Pesaro decided to ask its citizens to contribute to the new Urban Planning Regulation involving them in “Ascoltare Pesaro” (listening to Pesaro); the participatory planning closed in 1999, in 2001 the achieved results (guidelines for urban planning politics, a final report on citizens contribution utilized as introduction to final Urban Planning Regulation) were implemented to edit a strategic plan for Pesaro 2015.

Citizens gave their contributions (mainly by focus group) to the Township Plan Offices and eventually provided them very accurate information before the Offices started their technical procedures; so, the different options set by the Offices were based on the suggestions and opinions of citizens.

<sup>1</sup> Public Administration, enterprises, associations and citizens into inclusive decisional processes, Luigi Bobbio Department for the Innovation of Public Authorities 2006

### **Ivrea: Lapis Project.**

In 2002 the Township of Ivrea activated a participatory planning to create an Agency for the Local Social Inclusion; the activity was funded by the Region of Piemonte.

The process included the main stakeholders as: the Province of Torino (in charge for Employment Services), the Public Health Centres, the Department for Mental Health and Drug Addiction, the Social Sciences Department of University of Torino, a Public Consortium for Training, a Private Foundation for social inclusion, a trade union, a entrepreneurial association, a Co-operatives Consortium.

The Agency is a kind of network among different organisations that could more easily co-operate and communicate to solve local area problems of many different targets; it is structured in 3 sectors in which different stakeholders cooperate.

The Agency tested its potentialities on a first 80 people target including mental and physical disabled people, marginalised groups, drug addicted and immigrants.

The Agency departments meet several times per month and have defined shared guidelines for social inclusion practices.

### **Salerno: ex-post assessment of the therapy for reduce pain and of palliative therapies.**

Besides implementing a customer care services, the Public Health Department "E" of Salerno Township realised an innovative audit service for patients in treatment and their families. (Customer requirement audit).

The involved patients are treated home and are often in terminal stage of their respective illness so the services are personally tailored and delivered.

The Department made its patients and their families to participate to the defining of Therapies characteristics, analysing their expectations and emerging needs; from 2006 until 2008 specifically trained operators of Department met the patients and their families to fill out a questionnaire and used the results to increase the coherence of therapies to patients real needs.

### **Firenze 2010: strategic plan for the Firenze metropolitan area**

The participatory planning included about 260 people representing 170 associations, committed to join focus groups and negotiating tables.

The involved stakeholders included: the Province of Firenze,

the Region of Toscana, Firenze Township and all townships of Firenze Metropolitan Area, the Firenze Chamber of Commerce, the local entrepreneurial associations, trade unions, Firenze University, some bank institutions.

The involved targets were very supportive and contribute with several proposals and integrations until a Draft Plan was realized and analysed by a smaller Scientific Committee.

The main achieved results can be reassumed as:

- The creation of District (quarter) workshops to implement participatory management of several squares in Firenze;
- The creation of a web site [www.firenzerestauro.it](http://www.firenzerestauro.it)
- The feasibility study for the creation of a network of metropolitan Parks
- The networking of the townships of the Firenze metropolitan area and the definition of a local governance method on a participatory basis;
- The creation of several Conferences of local Mayors of Firenze metropolitan area
- The creation of several and stable tables of negotiation on a defined set of issues (as environmental planning).

### **Agency for the development of Vallo di Diano**

The participatory planning started in 2001 with a negotiating table involving 5 Townships, a mountain region administration, the Province of Salerno, the Region of Campania and a Regional Board for environment and arts.

In 2006 the table was transformed in a permanent Conference for Planning and in 2007 was transformed in a permanent Conference for Sustainable Development, including all local entrepreneurial associations and trade unions. The Conference meets once a month, all related reports are accessible by citizens.

The main achieved results can be summarised as: training activities to update the competencies of personnel of local institutions and organization involved in strategic planning, the realisation of supporting services for participatory planning (information, counselling, monitoring and assessment).

Also, it is planned to realise an information network that will register all cultural and touristic activities to give them the highest visibility.

### **PRODEAS (Digital PROvince and Social Access)**

This project - actually enacted - aims at creating communities of stakeholders interested in sharing a Plan for Digital

Innovation and increasing the governance of innovation in their territory; so far it has been tested in three Townships and will be adopted in all Province of Roma.

Citizens and local associations could check any phase of politic decision-making process, dialogue with Public Departments using Internet tools.

The first sector to be tested will be the politics of Innovation using the web site [www.provinciadigitale.it](http://www.provinciadigitale.it) (a total open source Portal) and the investment plan for public utilities, through the network of Townships web sites.

Province of Roma with the Provincial Education Department has already created a direct link with local students using SMS service to collect communications about malfunctions or suggestions about educational institutions (in 2009 600 SMS were sent to Province of Roma by students).

### **Third Veneto.**

In the recent years the Regional Council of Region of Veneto is increasing the participatory planning in its territory; it has utilised the e-democracy initiative "TERZO VENETO"

(Third Veneto) to develop local communities and networking its citizens to better manage social and economic politics.

Region of Veneto has involved many stakeholders as: Provinces, Townships, Mountain Public Communities, third sector associations, Universities, Parks Management institutions, entrepreneurial associations, trade unions.

Many different projects have been developed in order to increase the openness of Public Department processes to citizens and to analyse the quality of regional education system and its interactions with the provincial education system.

Region of Veneto is supporting the realisation of a Regional Plan of Development and of a Regional Local Plan for Coordination, both with a participate planning and the involvement of most of the interested stakeholders.



## Participate planning for vocational training in Romania

### European funds in Romania

Despite of the fact that Romania was one of the first Member States to have their operational plans approved by the European Commission, the actual implementation of European funds and the operational plans saw a difficult start. Romania is in the first period of using structural instruments, which implies a somewhat slower evolution in the first years (given the difficulties of a new and complex financing system, at beneficiary level as well as at the level of organizations managing the operational plans), to be followed by a rapid growth of absorption levels while advancing on the implementation cycle.

This assumption has been largely confirmed by the recent developments in the implementation of operational plans. Hence, the year 2007 was the year of negotiations with the European Commission for the approval operational plans, but it was as well the year when the first calls for projects were launched. In 2008 the launched calls for projects were numerous, and by the end of the year potential beneficiaries managed to open most of the operations envisaged in the plans (around 90%). 2009 may be seen as the “contracting year”, given the rapid increase in the number of contracts/financing decisions concluded with the beneficiaries, with an obvious progress in the second half of the year in terms of actual project implementation and payments.

Both Managing Authorities and the beneficiaries faced a lot of complex problems in starting the process of operational plans’ implementation, and afterwards in the actual project implementation, and addressing these problems took a lot of time and efforts. The main difficulties were related to the preparation of the project portfolio and the launching of calls for projects; delays in the project evaluation and selection; starting the project implementation at the beneficiary level; various legal barriers; as well as institutional issues.

### Institutions responsible with the implementation of ESF in Romania

Institutions responsible with the implementation of ESF in Romania are:

- The Ministry of Labour, Family and Equal Opportunities, through the Managing Authority for the Field Operational Program Human Resources Development (MASOPHRD).
- The Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reform, through the Managing Authority for the Operational Plan Administrative Capacity Development.
- The Ministry of Labour, Family and Equal Opportunities, through the Management Authority for the Field Operational Plan Human Resources Development (MASOPHRD) is responsible for the elaboration and the management for SOP HRD.

### What is SOP HRD?

The Member States and European Union regions have access to the European Social Fund within a seven year programming period. In order to benefit from ESF assistance, the Member States elaborate operational plans which are implemented by socio-economic actors, such as education institutions, training providers, SMEs, chambers of commerce and industry, social partners, NGOs, public institutions, local authorities s.o. The Field Operational Plan for Human Resources Development 2007-2013 has been elaborated in a large partnership process.

These consultations have pursued the following aspects:

- Obtaining the partners agreement for establishing the priority objectives for development;
- Ensuring transparency in the elaboration process;
- Increasing the level of commitment and involvement of partners.

**The general objective of SOP HRD** is the development of human capital and increased competitiveness, by linking education and lifelong learning with the labour market and ensuring increased opportunities for future participation

on a modern, flexible and inclusive labour market for 1,650,000 people. The Intermediate Bodies designated by the Managing Authority are: 8 Regional IBs under the MoLFEO subordination, the National Agency for Employment, the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth, the National Centre for Technical and Vocational Education Development, 2 Intermediate Bodies to be designated following a public procurement process based on the EU regulations and national legislation. The Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reform, through the Managing Authority for the Operational Plan Administrative Capacity Development (OP ACD) is responsible for the elaboration and the management for OP ACD.

**The specific objectives of SOP HRD** are the following:

- Promoting good quality initial and continuous education and training, including higher education and research;
- Promoting entrepreneurial culture and improving quality and productivity at work;
- Facilitating the young people and long term unemployed insertion on the labour market;
- Promoting (re)insertion on the labour market of inactive people, including in rural areas;
- Improving public employment services;
- Facilitating access to education and to the labour market for the vulnerable groups.

The Field Operational Plan Human Resources Development comprises the following sections:

- The analysis of the current situation in the field of education, employment, social inclusion and health.
- The strategy, which highlights the priority axes and the key areas of intervention supported by European Social Fund. At the same time, the strategy envisages the means through which other Operational Plans will support human resources development, in a complementary manner, avoiding the eventual overlaps;
- The implementation mechanism;
- The financial plan, which establishes the financial allocations for each priority axis and key area of intervention, during the entire programming period 2007-2013, as well as on each year.

**The general objective of the OP ACD** is to contribute to the creation of a more efficient and effective public administration for the socio-economic benefit of the Romanian society. In this context, OP ACD aims at the decentralization and the modernization of public

administration at central and local level, in order to increase the administrative effectiveness, improvement of the policy and legislative processes.

The specific objectives of OP ACD are to achieve structural improvements of the public sector and to improve the quality and efficiency of the delivery of public services on a decentralized basis.

### **Parties responsible for Continue Vocational Training (CVT). Participate planning**

As in other countries, the **responsibility for CVT** in Romania is shared by **enterprises, individuals, providers** and the **government**. The financing and organisation of CVT is mainly a responsibility of enterprises and individuals. The government is responsible for providing a policy framework to stimulate participation and quality in CVT provision, while ensuring that CVT is accessible and that the outcomes of CVT are recognized. Given this shared responsibility, the involvement of social partners is essential in the development of CVT initiatives and policies. Most individual employers and employees are unable to address their CVT needs efficiently on their own.

The existence of **active stakeholders** that can represent collective labour market interests is crucial for balancing public interests. Private companies, training providers and NGOs are important stakeholders, but in terms of promoting development and cohesion, social partners are in a unique position.

Surprisingly, the main consumers of CVT in Romania seem to be individuals rather than companies. The role of the government focuses mainly on CVT policies, quality assurance of CVT provision and the organisation and financing of CVT for disadvantaged adults. Government investment in CVT for disadvantaged groups is limited. CVT is recognized as a potential tool for career and personal development that can contribute to the competitiveness of the workforce and their integration into the labour market by raising the employability of adults.

Although participation is low, there is a strong interest in developing CVT policies in Romania. During the past six years many instruments have been developed for understanding, stimulating and regulating CVT, including measures to improve the provision of CVT. The government has been the main initiator of these developments, involving representatives of social partners for consultation.

Despite heavy technical assistance delivered in the past decade, local governments still lack capacity in strategic participatory planning at the local and county/ regional

level. Since presenting well- defined projects that respond to the needs of the communities is a fundamental criteria for success, this situation directly affects the ability to access structural funds. A second important problem is an insufficient implementation capacity of local governments. Cases when EU funds were returned, because of local governments' lack of capacity to finalize projects are not rare. The two possible causes for this situation are:

- Insufficient and untargeted training that would support personnel in accessing and absorbing structural funds
- An organizational culture that is unsupportive to various post-accession challenges at local and regional government level.

### **Social partnership in CVT**

#### **The role of the NATB (advisory body for adult learning policies)**

The NATB was established in 1999 as a tripartite advisory body for adult learning policies. The tripartite structure of the NATB ensures that social partners have a voice in the development of adult learning policies. However, the NATB is not always consulted at an early stage of the development of new policies, thus making a true tripartite dialogue difficult. Apart from the NATB, the NAE and the Social and Economic Council (SEC) are the most important tripartite bodies. In addition, there is a National Committee for Employment Promotion (NCEP), and both the Ministries of Education and Labour have tripartite advisory boards.

A first stage in the development of a new system of occupational standards in Romania was the establishment in 1994 of the COSA as a tripartite body responsible for the implementation of the system of evaluation and certification of professional abilities based on occupational standards. As a result of COSA activities a data bank containing 300 occupational standards and information on evaluation processes was created. Through Law No 235/2003 COSA was included in the NATB and thus, the tasks of standards development and the evaluation procedures have been merged within one and the same structure.

A decision to extend the responsibilities of the NATB and turn it into a National Authority for Qualifications was adopted. The new institution is instrumental in the development of the qualifications system, including the maintenance of a national register of qualifications. In this regard Romania is to develop a National Qualifications Framework that should make reference to both IVET and CVET.

The concept of a framework of vocational qualifications

has been devised by the Phare TVET RO 0108-01 Plan. The new system of qualifications is expected to lead to in-depth changes at the level of quality assurance and evaluation processes.

Another important role that the social partners have in the authorisation process, aside from participating in decisions on whether or not training providers are authorised, is to propose specialists to evaluate CVT plans or to be part of examination commissions, constituted for the graduation exams that take place at the end of the training plans. The County Committees for Authorisation (CCAs) of the adult training providers in the counties and in Bucharest are established by an NATB decision. The authorisation commissions are made up of the director of the County General Directorate for Dialogue, Family and Social Solidarity (who is the chair of the commission), an expert/specialist from the county school inspectorate, an expert/specialist from the County Agency for Employment, an expert/specialist who is proposed by consensus to represent the employers' organisations at national level,, and an expert/specialist who is proposed by consensus to represent the trade unions at national level. The authorisation commissions can only work in the presence of the representatives of the trade unions and employers' organisations.

### **Regional and local level institutions for social partnership**

At the regional level regional consortia have been established, with representatives from county school inspectorates, county employment agencies, regional development agencies and social partners. Regional consortia and local development committees actively participate in the planning of TVET, but the role of social partners in these bodies should be further enhanced.

### **Participatory planning**

Despite heavy technical assistance delivered in the past decade, local governments still lack capacity in strategic participatory planning at the local and county government level. Since presenting well- defined projects that respond to the needs of the communities is a fundamental criteria for success, this situation directly affects the ability of LGs to access structural funds. A second important problem is an insufficient implementation capacity of local governments. Cases when EU funds were returned, because of local governments' lack of capacity to finalize projects are not rare. Two possible causes for this situation are:

- Insufficient and untargeted training that would support

personnel in accessing and absorbing structural funds

- An organizational culture that is unsupportive to various post-accession challenges at local and regional government level.

#### *Example of implemented project and best practices*

#### **Project: “Community-Based Organizations - centres for community mobilization”**

Through this project it's aimed at increasing the sustainability of 12 community-based organizations (CBOs), by building their capacity to work in a participatory manner with members of their community and to mobilize them in participating in various activities to the benefit of their community. Representatives of each organization participated in two training modules. Supported by PACT, the CBOs then applied the knowledge and abilities gained through training within their own communities, so as to mobilize citizens towards drawing viable action plans and implementing new community projects. The final event in the project brought together the community-based organizations PACT Foundation collaborated with in this project, as well as beneficiaries of these organizations, actual/potential collaborators/partners (local public authorities and institutions) and potential financiers (representatives of public institutions that manage structural funds). The objectives of the event were to disseminate the project results, to share experiences, as well as local development opportunities that can be addressed by accessing European funds.

By participating in this project, CBOs strengthened their organizational development capacity, learning, on one hand, to involve community members in their organization's projects through innovative participatory workshops, and on the other hand to operate planning and management tools in order to consolidate the inner structure of their organization. In the final event, representatives of CBOs and representatives of local communities had the opportunity to work together with resource persons from central, regional, county and local level, so as to draw action plans that would lead to facilitating the access of

local communities to development funds.

12 communities-based organizations in the Southern part of Romania<sup>2</sup> were involved during the period December 24th, 2008 – October 23rd, 2009: the project aimed at developing their capacity to work in a participatory manner with community members, in order for them to become strong, visible actors in their community, to be sustainable and efficient in their work and to play a significant role in the development of their communities, as real dialogue partners for local and regional actors.

Direct beneficiaries were:

- over 60 representatives of the 12 CBOs involved in the project. The number of CBO representatives that took part in the project varied across project activities (24 representatives took part in the first training module, 36 in the second one, over 35 members participated in the experience exchange visits and over 60 representatives contributed to both organizing participatory events in their community and applying management instruments in their organization).
- specifically for the final event - the Future Search Conference, the direct beneficiaries were 70 representatives of CBOs and local communities involved in the project, together with other stakeholders involved in planning, managing and implementing development funds addressed to local communities.
- PACT Foundation, which strengthened its organizational capacity by increasing the number of its team members and by building on its experience in developing and assisting CBOs. The community members that participated in the project activities developed by the local CBOs, the community groups targeted through these activities, as well as the 12 communities where the project was implemented.

Indirect beneficiaries were the community members that participated in the project activities developed by the local CBOs, the community groups targeted through these activities, as well as the 12 communities where the project was implemented.

<sup>2</sup> Located in South Muntenia and South-West Oltenia regions, the communities were:

- Turnu Magurele city, Teleorman county (CIVITAS Association)
- Pitesti city, Arges county (ProElevi Pitesti Association)
- Malu Mare commune, Dolj county (ProEuroYoung Malu Mare Association)
- Tismana city, Gorj county (Tismana Foundation)
- Valea Mare Podgoria locality, Stefanesti city, Arges county (Education and Culture for People Association AECO)
- Vranesti village, Calinesti commune, Arges county ('Sons of Vranesti Village' Association)
- Afumati commune, Dolj county (ABC Afumati Association)
- Iancu Jianu commune, Olt county (Humanity Rom Association)
- Dorobantu commune, Calarasi county (Rom-Roman Association)
- Arcani commune, Gorj county (Association for Development Initiatives of Communities in North Oltenia – IDCON Association)
- Carna commune, Dolj county (NASTA Association)

The activities in the project were:

- project promotion among the CBOs that PACT Foundation works with:
  - Selection of 12 participants CBOs
  - Selection and contracting of 3 community facilitators to become members of PACT team
  - 2 training modules for CBO representatives:
- Innovative participatory methods of work with community members and efficient communication tools (2 representatives of each CBO took part in this module)
- Resource and activity management (3 representatives of each CBO took part in this module)
- 2 on-site consultancy/facilitation sessions delivered by PACT (one following each training module) in order to support local CBOs in implementing the knowledge and techniques gained through training:
- each CBO sustained a participatory workshop within the community in view of planning community actions
- the CBOs applied planning and management tools in order to build their organizational capacity
- experience exchange visits between participant CBOs
- final event organized as a Future Search Conference, on "The access of local communities to development funds. How to better respond to citizens' real needs?"; this event brought together various stakeholders involved in planning, managing and implementing development funds: management authorities for European structural funds' financed programs, regional implementing bodies of these European programs, regional and county level offices and directions, county councils, local public authorities and institutions, community based organizations and local communities' representatives – beneficiaries of local level projects and services.

The results of the project were:

- 3 new community facilitators joined PACT Foundation's field team; through their involvement in the project, the facilitators gained knowledge and built their abilities of work with community-based organizations and local community members, through applying innovative participatory methods in local communities, as well as by supporting these organizations to draft their own strategic plans
- 24 representatives of the 12 local CBOs participating in the project (2 representatives of each organization),

participated in the first training module on Innovative participatory methods of work with the community. During the training, CBO members gained knowledge and exercised practical abilities for the organization and implementation of 2 participatory methods: the World Café and the Future Search Conference

- Each CBO (assisted by members of PACT team) applied a participatory work method within its own local community. Based on the results of these participatory workshops, each CBO drafted a concrete action plan regarding the problem addressed together with the community members
- Around 320 citizens of the 12 communities took part in the workshops organized by their local CBO. Community members participating in these events had a positive feedback on the CBOs' initiative to organize such meetings and showed their willingness to participate in similar events or other community actions proposed by their local CBO in the future
- 36 representatives of the 12 CBOs involved in the project (3 representatives of each organization) participated in the second training module, on Resource and activities management, developing knowledge and abilities to help them build organizational capacity related to planning and managing the activities of their organization
- 6 CBOs worked on the strategic planning for their organization, 3 other CBOs developed plans for attracting material and financial resources, 2 CBOs drafted their financial planning, 1 CBO worked on a volunteer management plan and another one developed its members' time management skills
- around 60 members of the 12 CBOs involved in the project took part in these planning and activity management sessions
- in the final event of the project, the 70 participants discovered a common vision on the future of local communities' access to development funds and drafted 6 action plans to facilitate local communities' access to development funds
- editing an Informative Bulletin (350 copies) to disseminate project results, to promote good practices and to illustrate concrete experiences of the 12 participant CBOs;
- making 11 presentation videos, illustrating the 2 participatory working methods applied in the project and the benefits of applying such methods in local

communities (1 presentation video for the World Café and 10 short videos showing the different steps of the Future Search Conference method);

- editing the report of the final event (200 copies) and disseminating it to institutions and organizations represented in the conference, and to other 51 local organizations PACT Foundation has been working with in local development projects
- editing a brochure (70 color copies) comprising information on financing sources available for local communities and disseminating it to over 60 CBOs that PACT Foundations has been working with, either in this project or in other local development projects
- organizing the final event of the project as a Future Search Conference was a challenge in itself for the project implementation team, this specific method being used for the first time in Romania. PACT Foundation shall seek to build on the experience gained, by organizing similar participatory events in the future.
- The project was founded by the European Union, through PHARE Program 2006/018-147.01.02 – Increasing the role of civil society in Romania's integration process, Component 3 – Developing the NGO sector and civic education.

### Participate planning in Extremadura

Participatory process corresponds to a more and more promoted mainstream in the European institutions and entities which is decentralization of Member States and subsidiarity principle. The aim of this principle is to achieve that decisions are taken by the closest way to citizenship. One of the most concrete applications of that principle is the creation of local proposals, what means, the core of the participatory process in which we are interested.

The Pact for employment is a agreement frame signed by public administration, trade unions, business and social organizations, and are the basic framework that describes lines of action as regards employment, training for employment, entrepreneurship and consolidation of businesses, innovation, etc, with the objective of fostering the improvement of the development in the territories that it is applied. Once the guidelines are agreed, the pact implements specific activities that imply local actions and commitments, everything to foster more and better jobs, with the participation of the territories.

So, Local pacts for the employment complement the local actions and other policies from different bodies and entities, in a coordinate way and without doing the same work or

losing resources.

In addition to the local pacts and plans for the employment, promoted by the regional government in the last years, we also have the process of participatory planning of training needs that have been carried out for knowing about the real needs in every territory, municipality, city and group of municipalities. With this process we have analysed the needs of training for employment, and this has allowed us defining a training offer that completely corresponds with the needs and so, with the maximum usefulness for that territory.

This last process of analysis and decision in the training for employment at local level has been carried out by the regional government in the last year. It is a methodology developed by the Observatory of Employment of Extremadura, in collaboration with the Provincial Councils of Cáceres and Badajoz.

In view of the increasing demand of training in the municipalities and cities from unemployed people as well as employed people, the need of setting up a coordinated plan was considered. It was needed a new order and planning in the training offer, according with the needs of companies and employees, and which take into consideration the emerging sectors in every territory, a plan which respects their singularities and in perfect coordination with other kind of professional training and educative systems, in order to not duplicate efforts and optimize resources.

In the frame of this process, a first analysis of all the communities of municipalities in Extremadura has been developed. This analysis gathers information about the number of employees and unemployed people in each economic sector, municipality, kind of occupation, age and sex, and also the number of companies in all the sectors, and the possible new companies. The previous training program in every municipality and the existing resources of training are also analyzed.

After this first documentary diagnosis, a second phase of contrast of the information gathered begins. This phase is carried out with people from the own territory, with works or performs a relevant role in the municipality. This phase will be explained in other section. Once this process has finished, the result is the distribution of training specialties in the territory.

The distribution of training offer arisen from this process has been revealing because it has clarified the lines we have to work for in order to promote a custom –made development of every territory. But it has also highlighted that in many cases, the lack of concordance between the

previous training programs and the needs of the labor market in the territory.

Representatives of all the municipalities have taken part in this process thanks to its qualitative methodology: a focus group has been carried out in every community of municipalities. This group has discussed all the items proposed by a coordinator from the regional government or the two province councils. These items were:

- revision of the socio-economic characteristics of the municipalities: all the members of the group have read the first documentary diagnosis, sent by e-mail by the coordinator one week before the meeting. The aim was to create a discussion from objective data, and determine the real needs of the labor market. This group of stakeholders can also contribute to this analysis with the knowledge of special circumstances of all the municipalities, or the possible new changes not revealed by the socioeconomic data: new companies emerging or near to close, investments, emerging sectors or activities, etc, that could determine the needs of training in the population of the territory.
- revision of data regarding training: previous training plans in the territory, existing courses imparted by any entity, all the kind of training activities that have been developed in all the municipalities. As regards the training carried out from the regional government, data of the results are also included in the analysis, so the group can value the usefulness of every kind of training activities. These data of results include number of participants in every course, age, gender etc, and in many cases the rate of getting a job after passing the course.
- discussion of the training for employment that must be imparted in the next plan: this must be an offer which respects all the labor market needs in this territory, and not doubling the training that is being done now there.

So this process contrasts the data with the vision of the people in the municipality. At the end, the community participates in the decision of what training activities have to be carried out in their territory.

The people who participate in these groups come from one of the municipalities. They all work in the spheres of employment, training for employment, employment and local development agents, technicians from local authorities, from employment offices, representatives of the companies in the community or representatives of business organizations in the municipalities, and local representatives of trade unions.

Meetings were planned with a clear aim: it was not a debate without a specific result, but also a working group with a very concrete mission and a result to give.

The background of this work is based on objective data, and not on vague ideas, and after that it has been discussed by all the members of the territory who can give their knowledge and experience. The fact of having the participation of people from the own territory, from all the municipalities, has reinforced the conclusions of the global work carried out.

With this work, the offer of training for employment which was applied in all the communities of municipalities in the region was adapted to the characteristics and needs of every territory. This was the first training plan from the regional government which in a direct way takes into account the peculiarities of all the territories. It has been a milestone in the new system of training for employment in the region, more adapted to all and more effective and related with labor market.

It is foreseen to carry out periodically this process for all the annual training plans, with a constant plan of revision and improvement in the methodology.

### **Overview of different approaches to participatory planning adopted or tested in the partner countries.**

In Extremadura there are different previous examples that have implemented local plans and agreements with participatory processes, all of them aimed to draw, from the closest to the citizenship point of view, all the conclusions necessary to design policies.

- **PIRÁMIDE: Sustainable Development Plan for a territory center.** Don Benito (Badajoz). PIRÁMIDE (acronym of All-embracing Plan of Environmental and Local Resources for Innovation and Strategic Development) is a plan created with three principles: Territorial sustainability; social sustainability; economic sustainability; and environmental sustainability.
- **Statement of Interest for the creation of the Local Pact for the Employment of Cáceres.** This document means the previous phase of the Local Pact of Employment in Cáceres. The Statement is signed by the Autonomous and National Administration, Trade unions, Employers organizations, and means the commitment for designing an Strategic Plan for the Employment in the framework of a local pact of employment. The statement was signed in 2008.
- **AGROCIUDADES: Local Strategies for Employment.** This project has been experienced in five cities of

Extremadura: Coria Llerena, Montijo, Valencia de Alcántara and Villafranca de los Barros, with the aim of create specific local employment plans for these municipalities. This has been a project carried out from 2002, and established a first proposal of methodology for the current period of participatory process in Extremadura.

There are also previous experiences in Spain related with local plans and agreements based on participatory processes. As other examples nationwide, we can point out some of them:

- **CORPLEM: Basic Strategic Formulation.** This project was carried out by Diputación de Córdoba (Córdoba Council), with the aim of designing, planning and applying a scheme of local employment strategy in six municipalities of Córdoba (Cabra, La Carlota, Doña Mencía, Nueva Carteya, Priego de Córdoba y Pozoblanco). The experience started with a diagnosis of each municipality in terms of socio economic conditions as well as active policies of employment. Some common lines were established for this analysis: Capacity of labor inclusion, Entrepreneurial spirit, Capacity of adaptation, Equal opportunities. CORPLEM used the dialogue and agreement among social agents as a tool for fostering effective policies of employment. According that, different actors from province of Córdoba has been involved in the process by Work groups for defining the Basic Strategic Approach. With the guidelines created by these Work groups in the province, some workshops will be held in each municipality for setting Local Strategies of Employment. This project was carried out during 2005.
- **Local Pact for Employment and Promotion of businesses in Córdoba.** The promoters of the first Local Pact in Córdoba define it as “an important milestone as for the cooperation and participation of institutional, economic and social agents who are working for developing employment and economic activity in the city”. The new pact has the aim of creation of steady and high quality jobs and the promotion of entrepreneurship in the city of Córdoba. Three Action Areas were defined: Entrepreneurship encouragement and city promotion; employment and labor inclusion, and economic, technological and social development. The Pact has been created by reaching and agreement among Economic and social agents (employers association and trade unions from Andalucía Region. Training is one of the main focus of debate in the Pact. The creation of specific measures was made by the work of a Technical commission of the Pact, which gathered all the proposals received in the city.

This process was carried out from 2004 to 2007.

- **Strategic Plan for the innovation and the employment of Campillos (Málaga).** This is a participate process with eleven strategic lines that include employment and business development.
- **Local Action Plan for the sustainable employment of Medina del Campo (Valladolid).** This Plan is included in the process of “strategic thought” of Agenda 21 Local project, with the aim of find the key elements for the designing of Medina del Campo as a sustainable city. The Plan includes an essential dimension: social participation for an interactive process with social agreement. With this process, employment indicators will be developed. The methodology proposed by ICLEI (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, an international association for local governments and regional local government organizations with a commitment of sustainability), and the General Directorate of Employment and Social issues in EU, means a balance between environmental aspects and those socio – environmental and economic ones. The phases of the strategic planning are: preparing the strategy; development of local approaches of employment through citizens participation; identifying new opportunities for sustainable local employment; agreeing actions for employment; implementation, monitoring and assessment. The Plan was carried out during 2007.
- **ELECAN: Local Employment Strategy for Cantabria.** ELECAN has been financed under the Article 6 of ESF and promoted by the Regional Ministry of Industry, Labor and Technological Development and means the creation of a network of local collaboration. The stages of the Plan have been: territorial Knowledge; and the creation of networks and local partnerships with the aim of strengthen the social capital to impulse the development of networks and territorial partnerships linked to local development. This Plan has been active from 2002 to 2004.
- **RED PLENA Project: Net of local Employment plans of Navarra.** The Department of Industry and Technology, Commerce and labor of Regional Government of Navarra promoted this Project. The aim of REDPLENA is the experimentation of a methodology for creating local strategies of employment and local development in coherence with Regional Strategy. The project was based in the participation of a wide and representative group of socio – economic agents, public entities and private ones, with contacts between local and regional spheres. The project finished in 2005.

## Participatory planning in the province of Latina and Extremadura: a comparative analysis

We can give an account of previous experiences of participatory process nationwide with National Action Plans for Employment, as well as Regional Plans for Employment that has developed this principle of support in some way.

These plans highlight the support to the decentralization, and the establishment of partnerships at different levels.

The most recent case in Extremadura is the existing Plan for the Promotion and Quality of the Employment 2008 – 2011. It is the regional strategy for more and better jobs in the region, which contains all the measures related with employment, promotion of quality in employment, training for employment, etc.

This plan is based on the knowledge of the region as a territory composed by its own particularities, and so this has been included in its approach and in its subsequent implementation of all its measures and policies. This territorial approach pledge its commitment for the development from the bottom to the top, and the Local Plans for Employment arisen from that approach. The “bottom up” approach for defining policies, from the local spheres to the regional ones, has been promoted in the region by all the development associations, entities and agents that have managed projects from European initiatives as Equal.

Local Plan for Employment is the framework agreed by different stakeholders in local levels, for the development of that specific territory or municipality. This must be adapted in a real way to the needs and have to analyze the starting point in the municipality, existing policies, specific particularities, and all the aspects related with employment and live conditions, housing, health, education and training, business support, resources, etc, that can help to define the lines to implement the Plan.

In Extremadura as in other Spanish regions, we have different previous examples that have implemented local plans and agreements with participatory processes, all of them aimed to draw, from the closest to the citizenship point of view, all the conclusions necessary to design policies.

Local Plan for Employment is the framework agreed by different stakeholders in local levels, for the development of that specific territory or municipality. This must be adapted in a real way to the needs and have to analyze the starting point in the municipality, existing policies, specific particularities, and all the aspects related with employment and live conditions, housing, health, education and training, business support, resources, etc, that can help to define the lines to implement the Plan.

**COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

Participatory Planning Process: Comparative Analysis						
Topics	Contexts	Activities	Resources needed	Involved Actors	Times of implementation	Output
Identification of needs (scope origins)	Extremadura	The Processes arises from the Plan for the Fostering and Quality of Employment for Extremadura: it establishes the need of adaptation of measures (training measures) to characteristics of territory, and the need of take into account the people in the territory: participation and territoriality	Internal staff (politicians and managers) from subjects which are members of the Social Dialogue process	Policy makers, managers of entities members of Social Dialogue process	2008 - 2011 Plan for the Fostering and Quality of Employment for Extremadura PERIODICITY OF PLAN: 4 years	Plan for the fostering and quality of employment for Extremadura
	Latina	Needs were identified by Province of Latina with on desk preliminary studies conducted planning the PET 2008-2010	Consultants from the Province of Latina in charge to the planning of the PET 2008-2010	Province of Latina,	3 weeks approx.	PET 2008- 2010
Planning of the process	Extremadura	Establishment of Process scheme, methodology and calendar, according the aims and time available. Delivery of duties.	Technical staff of Public Service of Employment of Extremadura: Observatory of Employment, in collaboration with Diputaciones Provinciales (Cáceres and Badajoz) with competences on qualitative and quantitative research, planning of participatory process, etc.	Staff from Regional Government and Diputaciones	1 week approx.	Internal report on methodology and calendar
	Latina	The Executive Territorial Plan was drawn up to use the ESF resources for the period 2008-2013. The Plan was articulated in Objective Projects related to a limited number of economic and social sectors considered relevant for the development prospects of the Province to which direct the investments for training actions and labor policies	Consultants from the Province of Latina in charge to the planning of the PET 2008-2010	Province of Latina,	3 months approx	PET 2008- 2010

Internal stakeholder list	1 week approx.	Technical staff and managers from Observatory of Employment (Regional Government) and technical staff from Diputación Cáceres and Diputación Badajoz. They	Technical staff and managers from Observatory of Employment (Regional Government) and technical staff from Diputación Cáceres and Diputación Badajoz, all of them with high knowledge of institutional structure in the region.	i.g. Criteria adopted for the selection Identification of a "First list of stakeholders" Revision of the list and selection according their representativeness in municipalities and territories, the organizations they belong, and profile of job (technicians, policy makers etc.)	Extremadura	Identification of relevant stakeholders
Report on WP1 activity. Report on WP4 local context analysis	4 months approx.	Relevant stakeholders (9) and other operators (12) active in the field of vocational training and employment policies.	Consultants from SAIP, Confindustria Latina and CISL Latina in charge of the mapping activity WP1 and the context analysis WP4 in the territory of the province of Latina	Relevant stakeholders were identified with the mapping and research activities performed by WP1 and WP4. Preliminary indications were given by the Province of Latina, based on previous local activities carried out in the ESF period 2000-2006.	Latina	
An official letter for informing about the process and/or asking participation	2 weeks approx.	Staff from Regional Government	Administrative staff from Regional Government	Mailing to all entities interested, stakeholders and other bodies in the region.	Extremadura	
An official invitation letter containing information about OCT project and the role of stakeholders; a summary of the project and the mapping activity.	3 weeks approx.	Managers of high schools, Permanent Territorial Centers, social parts, social and economical research centers, training institutions, social cooperatives, third sector's organizations.	Consultants from SAIP, Confindustria Latina and CISL Latina in charge of the information activity in the territory of the province of Latina	An information activity was taken by a meeting that was attended by all the relevant stakeholders identified through the previous mapping activity. All the stakeholders that attended the meeting were made aware of the general aims of the participate process and the role that they should play in it.	Latina	Information, awareness raising Activities

Training actions	Extremadura	Training for people who is going to carry out the working groups	Specialized Staff from Diputaciones with high knowledge on qualitative methodologies of research, participatory processes and training.	Diputaciones staff who will carry out the practice work and lead the working groups receives training actions.	2 months approx.	Training plan for technicians of Diputaciones
	Latina	A cycle of seminars was planned with the intent on of sharing meaning, methods, process and tools to perform a "Good Governance" action by a group of relevant stakeholders representative of the whole territorial training and employment needs of the province of Latina.	Consultants from SAIP, Confindustria Latina and CISL Latina in charge of the seminar activity directed to relevant stakeholders foreseen by WP3 of the OCT project	Relevant stakeholders belonging to high schools, Permanent Territorial Centers, social partners, social cooperatives, third sector's organizations.	2 months approx.	Final report of the seminars,
Setting up of the working group and Start up of the process	Extremadura	1. A documentary report on the characteristics of labor market, carried out by Observatory of Employment (Regional Gov.) and Diputación Cáceres and Diputación Badajoz) 2. Working groups with stakeholders 3. Interviews with stake holders	Multidisciplinary staff from Observatory of Employment (Regional Government) and staff from Diputación Cáceres and Diputación Badajoz	Staff from Observatory of Employment (Regional Government) and staff from Diputación Cáceres and Diputación Badajoz	2 month aprox. PERIODICITY OF PARTICIPATORY PROCESS: intended to be every year.	Internal reports on the different phases and: 1 documentary revision for using during working groups; 2 Report on results; 3 Proposals of Training actions originated by the participatory process

	Latina	The training activity was completed with the setting up of the Territorial Staff that is in charge to plan the process of participatory planning foreseen by WP 10, WP11 and WP12. This process will start with an on field survey to identify the positive and negative aspects and the problematic areas of the tenders and the projects related to the ESF period 2008-2010 in the province of Latina, followed by focus groups addressed to a large number of stakeholders and operators active in the training and employment local context to deep the context analysis. The survey has been taken with the intent to gather information useful to elaborate a document of Recommendations for the next PET 2011-2013, directed to the Province of Latina as ESF Management Authority.	Consultants from SAIP, Confindustria Latina and CISL Latina in charge of the WP9 activity – Territorial staff in charge of the participate planning and all the WP9, WP10 and WP11 activities of the OCT project	Territorial staff; operators that managed or participated to Objective Projects funded by the PET 2008-2010; other operators that managed or participated to other projects ESF funded in the last three years; other stakeholders and subjects that operate in the vocational training and labor field.	5 months approx.	Participate process Plan, tools for the research activity, grid and guideline for the focus groups, report on the research activity and on the focus group, recommendations for the next PET 2011-2013
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## The project in Extremadura

Extremadura has taken part in the OCT Project through two partners:

- Patronato de Formación y Empleo de Coria, body responsible of activities of employment and training for employment in the municipality of Coria, with a wide experience in the management of training for employment.
- Dirección General de Formación para el Empleo, from the Regional Government of Extremadura, the regional administration with competences in the whole region of Extremadura in the training for employment.

This Project has been a tool for both partners from Extremadura, for a better knowledge about Peer Review methodology. It has been implemented in the Coria training project (Escuela Taller), and attending to other peer visits in projects of the OCT partners, as well as to reinforce and complement in a very positive way the participatory process in the planning of employment and training for employment measures in a local target.

Participatory process was planned as an action to develop as a part of the Project by the partners by the first phase of the process, and the partners from Extremadura should have developed it from the beginning. Nevertheless this action has been re designed for us and modified by the special coincidence with a similar process carried out by Regional Government at the same time of the beginning of the project. As the Local Plans for Employment had been started, it was considered that was more appropriate not to do the same process. So we have tried to put into value this process that had already been carried out, to have a real example of the participatory process that could be a first experience to report to other partners.

Local Plans for Employment show the agreement of the key

stakeholders in the territory, community of municipality or cities, in order to define the actions related with employment and training for employment to carry out there. Local Plan for Employment arises from the Local Pacts between the city council or group of municipalities that implement it, and social agents in that local level. The document that results is reached jointly by them, with a consensus in definition of the strategy, and this is a commitment in the implementation with the specific measures that results of that process.

So it is not a simple declaration of intentions, but also a practice and decided planning to carry out, and this is why it has higher warranties of efficiency and success, and of evaluation.

This process is included in a whole approach that affects the entire system of Vocational training, whose peculiar aim is to get more and better jobs.

The moment of participation in OCT Project has been very appropriate, not only for the coincidence with the own participatory process that has started with the Local Plans for Employment, but also for the new approach of the system of Vocational training which Regional Government is leading by now, and that is being included in different strategies in regional Government. The aim is to reach a training system completely in agreement with the needs of the labor market in the territories, according with the population needs, with the consensus of the key actors, and useful for unemployed people in order to get better jobs and maintain them.

It is an approach reinforced also by the recent creation of the Institute of Qualifications and Accreditations of Extremadura, an entity included in the General Directorate of Training for Employment. The new body will coordinate the actions of accreditation of qualifications.



## The OCT method - Peer Review from evaluation process to learning experience

Institutions providing vocational education and training are more and more interested in evaluating the quality of their organisation and of the services they provide.

Many different procedures and instruments of quality assurance can be adopted at this level and, among them, the Peer Review approach has becoming very relevant and widely adopted.

OCT, a Leonardo TOI projects, aimed at transferring the European standard procedure for Peer Review (developed in the course of the Leonardo da Vinci Project "Peer Review in initial VET"), adapting its main characteristics to the OCT operative contexts.

OCT aimed at increasing the formative approach of Peer Review procedure, improving the attitude of involved institutions and personnel toward mutual learning.

OCT realised a cycle of 3 interrelated Transnational Peer Reviews, where the mutual learning of a group of permanent Peers was a relevant goal, along with the mutual learning of the reviewed institutions.

All reviewed institutions were OCT partners; they all gathered a reliable, external and cost-effective evaluation and benefit develop a mutual learning in a cooperative network.

### **Coordination and organisation of Peer Review in OCT**

Peer Reviews can be organised as single events or more related Reviews can be planned, with the purpose of carrying out a mutual cooperation.

OCT planned a cycle of 3 related Peer Reviews between 3 VET providers, all partners of OCT project.

The European standard process of Peer Review was adapted to OCT characteristics during the first Peer Review and then a "tailor made" approach was adopted, after defining common guidelines, activities, indicators, reporting and monitoring forms.

The coordination of the whole Peer Reviews cycle was

implemented by SAIP with the relevant contribution, for each Peer Review, of the personnel of the reviewed institutions; more, an external expert supervised all the Reviews in order to ensure the quality in the implemented process.

SAIP managed the network of VET providers, coordinated and monitored the adoption of common guidelines, procedures, format and indicators, provided individual support to all involved actors of each Peer Review (including Peers, Facilitators and personnel of reviewed institution), supported the identification of Peers, planned and realised the Peers Training - together with the external supervisor - and monitored the Reviews.

In OCT the Peer Review methodology has proved to be cost-effective, supported the networking between the involved institutions and the exchange of good practices.

The OCT Peer Review procedure is based on the standard phases of the European Peer Review process:

- Preparatory phase: in OCT it included, mainly, the editing of a Self-Report by the reviewed institutions, the identification and training of Peers, the organisation of the Peer Visit;
- Peer Visit: in OCT it included mainly a tour of the premises, interviews with different groups of stakeholders, an oral feedback at the end of each Peer Visit;
- Editing of a draft report: in OCT Peers sent a draft report to the reviewed institution then a commented copy was sent back to Peers to have them issue a final Peer Review;

### **Peer Review methodology.**

Peer Review is an external evaluation focused on an institution or a part of this institution, aiming at increasing the level of quality in the services provided or in the organisation itself.

Peer Review is implemented by Peers, a small group of

external experts who have developed relevant expertises and work experiences in environments similar to the one reviewed; Peers have a professional background consistent with the nature of subjects to assess.

The reviewed organisation have several benefits from undergoing a Peer Review.

The evaluation provided by Peers is critical but mild and makes the involved personnel to consider their activity from an external point of view, through an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of their practice.

The reviewed organisation increases the accountability of the analysed areas/services and is led to define an improvement plan to increase the effectiveness and quality of provided services.

### **Peer Review procedure.**

Peer Review process is focused on the ability of Peers to be impartial, critical but supportive and on the ability of reviewed institutions to clearly set the objective of the review, providing Peers with relevant and useful information.

The Peer Reviews realised in OCT were based on openness and “friendly critical attitude” and, being on a transnational setting, took into account the contextual influences.

### **Preparatory phase**

In OCT, each reviewed organisation decided to undertake a Peer Review during the design and submission of the OCT project itself; OCT is, actually, a TOI project in which the Peer Review is one of two approaches transferred, together with the approach to local governance in VET.

Each organisation committed its respective management and personnel and the most relevant stakeholders, identified departments of each institution to be reviewed, stated the purposes of the process and the quality and quantity of resources to involve.

One of the main criticalities was the definition, for each Peer Review, of the Quality Areas; in each Peer Review the management of each institution chosen two Quality Areas, consistent with the review focus, interesting for local stakeholders and relevant for an external evaluation.

As for the initial documentation each reviewed institutions edited a Self-Report, resuming all the first-level information useful to Peers in order to understand the aims of the Peer Review and have a initial panorama of the main activities and characteristics of reviewed institutions.

All Self Reports were edited using common format and guidelines.

The Self Reports were sent to Peer Review Coordinator by the Facilitators who forward it to all Peers; the Peer Review Coordinator, the Supervisor and the Peers considered about the Report contents and eventually asked for explanations and integrations.

The identification of Peers profile is usually performed by the reviewed institutions; in OCT, due to the planned cycle of Peer Review, the composition of Peers Team was jointly and partly pre-defined, giving priority to a set of Peers – strictly linked to OCT partnership - who joined two or all Reviews.

This characteristic of OCT Peer Review was very useful in terms of mutual learning for Peers and for the reviewed institutions; e.g. two of transnational Peers played the role of “critical friends” in two Reviews and were further involved – respectively - as Facilitator and supporting role in the Peer Review focused in their respective organisation.

All involved Peers – who filled out a specific Application Form - were informed by SAIP coordinator about the Peer Review procedure and the tasks to be performed.

The Peers analysed the Self-Reports, asked for any additional information and attended a one-day Peer Training meeting with the Facilitators of each reviewed institutions; during the meetings the Teams members got to know each other, exchanged opinions on the contents of the Self-Reports, detailed the final versions of Peer Visit Agendas, defined each interviews grids and defined criteria for eventual observation activities.

The organisation of the Peer Visit started up defining a detailed Agenda; the Facilitators, with the support of Peer Review Coordinator and of Supervisor planned the schedules for each agreed activities to be performed by Peers.

The Peers Teams and the Facilitators jointly defined the category of interviewees.

The Facilitators selected and invited the specific interviewees, provided the required facilities and equipment, organised a tour of premises of reviewed institutions.

In each OCT Peer Review various relevant stakeholder groups have been involved (local employers and their associations, trade unions, final beneficiaries of activities) as interviewees.

The Peer Visits included mainly a tour of the premises (classrooms, laboratories, workshops), interviews with different groups of stakeholders, observation (of classroom or workshops activities) and a final oral feedback.

The Peers focused their evaluation on the Quality Areas chosen by the reviewed institutions, checking the

information provided in the Self Reports and collecting additional data.

The Peers made a friendly but professional judgement of the Quality Areas they reviewed; Peers exchanged different opinions and finally agreed on consensual feedback contents to be delivered to the reviewed institutions.

After the first feed back session with the reviewed institutions, the Peers take into account the eventual comments and opinions and include them in the final Peer Review Report.

OCT adopted a common format and guidelines for the Peer Review Report, that was similar in structure to the initial Self Report.

The contents of the Peer Review Reports' final conclusions,

the joint recommendations were basically created during the final phases of the Peer Visits, in order to ensure the highest contribution from each involved Peer and optimise the direct communication among the Teams members.

### **How reviewed institutions benefit give the results of Peer Reviews.**

At the end of each Peer Visit, during the first level feedback, the reviewed institutions were led to identify some areas for improvement; in average, they agreed with the Peers recommendations and state for the planning of improvement plans.

Actually, formal planning were not provided but the reviewed institutions report of several actions realised after the Peer Review implementation.



## Second Part - OCT Activities

### Foreword.

From several years the main aim of Province of Latina is to realize a participated planning, through direct involvement of all main territories trying to create with them a range of interventions sponsored by FSE – a partnership which aims to innovate and improve the strategies of formative plans.

This kind of strategy is the key into the planning of POR-FSE of the Lazio Region from 2007 to 2013. In particular because uses the community advices about the adoption of governance innovative models - other than use a consultative aspect, introduce different way of comparison and participation.

Province of Latina is working to handle and manage issues linked to a concrete realization to the concept of governance tweaking its role in the new organization of the institutional framework, in particular as regard to the duties of Intermediate Organization for the realization of the planning of the FSE and for the cohesion and innovation goals who them would achieve.

Nowadays the Province in Italy cover a complex role which goes over the simple management and face of own duty, the goal the Province would to reach is to anticipate what will be the need and the request of own territory, so to create courses and planning every times more efficacy.

### A functional interaction among territorial actors.

The main instrument to hit this target is the creation of network among the involved territories and people.

This instrument works perfectly if doesn't remains only a formal theory and became functional and concrete. This is the main reason because these networks need to be constantly checked to verify its efficacy and pertinence. The most common mistake is to estimate a governance, a good governance experience, just for numbers of meetings and agreements dealing and not for the real and concrete impact on the interest territory.

### Some planning experiences and participate administration.

#### The Strategic Provincial Plan to contrast the loss of labour force.

Province of Latina has been launched the project named "Strategic Provincial Plan to contrast the loss of labour force" from 2008 using resources assigned to the Economical Triennial Plan 2008-2010.

#### The Executive Triennial Plan and Target Plan.

Province of Latina concurs in fully to this process, through the working-out of own PET concerning period which goes from 2008 to 2010, document of planning and strategies have been approved by Lazio Region.

Province of Latina wants underline the way in which PET resources have been organized, can impact territorial competitiveness, through the improvement of human resources skills – and can be pivot instrument for plan of development in specific economic field.

The Executive Triennial Plan is composed in "Target Plan" – each one calculates a complementary number of actions and resources. The global view of these actions and these resources gives to the project the possibility to develop the employment effectiveness and the functionality of the results. The actions, in the way in which have been planned, consented to operate on the whole weaving-factory. The main steps are the promotions of actions among territory, reception to users, individuation of characteristics of productive and economic fields, trainings, accompaniment into the work.

Doesn't leave out the opportunity to support develop processes of new company.

The individuation of the field which became targets of "Target Plan" is happened studying economical reality of the interest territories – both as regard field and productive weaving-factory which are living critical situation and need to specific supports for own re-launching – and as regard

sectors available to innovate the local production, improving quality and standard or supporting new economic sectors available to affect in a good way the local development policy.

From the study of the provincial productive context, linked to the guide-lines planned by the Province the "Target Plans" that the Province would achieve are:

1. Target Plan: "Culture of welcome, Catering, Tourist promotion."
2. Target Plan: "Cultivation, change and improvement of produce."
3. Target Plan: "Chemical-Pharmaceutics."
4. Target Plan: "Environment, energy conservation, alternative energy."
5. Target Plan: "Sailing, crafts of the sea".
6. Target Plan: "Technological Innovation and Transfer of apply research."
7. Target Plan: "Social Immigrants Inclusion."
8. Target Plan: "Social Different able and weakest part Inclusion."

### Instruments of Innovative Governance.

The participate planning approach has been widely tested in the last two years (2008 e 2009) through specific plans: GO.IN "Testing of Governance Policy to innovate formative system" and "Testing of local device of formative training". This approach has been confirmed and intensified to promote and start with two new projects in the works actually (2010): "Strategic Provincial Plan to curb the loss of labour market" and "Testing of governance policy for the innovation of formative system in the critical Industrial and occupational situation." The last project named "Interventions aimed to contrast phenomenon of social and economic diseases come from situations of failed working reintegration".

Each experience has permitted to plan and implement training experience into company, planned projects, implemented and realized with the real involvement of all interest territorial actors (stakeholders) and not only through sharing of planning ideas.

Such methodology has been applied to various typology of users: unoccupied young people and women, adults (over 45), occupied subjects, CIG workers (both ordinary and extraordinary), people in job mobility, and at last young people and adults which lose work because of the occupational crisis.

Through active involvement of social parts, of University Institutes, of formative schools of local body, Province of Latina launched a complex orientation course to implement company training courses: àcompetence mapping àaim training à matching (matching between job demand and job offer)

Such methodology it has been applied to different kind of users: unemployed young people, women and adults. With the direct involvement of the organization which offers training work started a complex training course à analysis of competences à training à professional integration.

This course has give relevant results both from the occupational point of view (about 35% of participants obtain the work at the end of training course) and for creation of new skills.

Such methodology shows the starting of new seasons of cooperation available to innovate the formative planning with positive effects which concern skills of the Province (as Intermediate Organism of Lazio Region into the planning and implementation of FSE) and the available of the entrepreneurial and trade-union organizations to go over own specific duties and take care about the planning of communities resources and their consequent employment.

It's important underline the experience of governance conducted in a way in which the local actors are been direct involved globally into the planning and implementation.

If this kind of approach has a real value for development and innovative policy, it has had the same value to contrast critical situation, such that lived from own country from more than 2 years.

The pivot of issues is how it's necessary to manage critical situation. It's important to merge perfectly the interest subjects, their skills and social capital to have the real right solution.

### OCT Project in Latina

OCT project is closely linked to the programmatic development of the Province of Latina, which represented, to a large extent, the elaboration and implementation of the Executive Triennial Plan in two editions, the 2008-2010, now concluded and the 2011-2013 that it isn't yet in its startup.

The aim of the project is to test a model of participatory planning that, however, is not born from a vacuum of instruments in participating in the processes of setting up and implementation of employment policies to EU funding: OCT provides a methodological contribution and gives suitable tools for investigation and management of the processes.

To this purpose, context researches were carried out, spread throughout various geographical areas of the project's partnership.

The researches, in the Province of Latina, allowed to achieve a mapping of bodies that, in various ways - such as stakeholders or other actors - and different measures, have been involved in the planning of initiatives financed by EU funds.

Besides the researches aim to acquire information about the body's degree of involvement in the initiatives planned and called for tender by the ESF Managing Authority, operating in the Province of Latina.

The mapping and the researches led to identify a group of subjects who, in recent years have supported the Province of Latina in the planning actions of the most important initiatives, often having both negotiation content and implementation.

In the final phase of experiences conducted in the years 2008-2010 of decentralized management of the POR Lazio, the Province of Latina, through the OCT project, intended to formalize the relationship with those who have contributed to the implementation of one or more parties of the Process management of ESF resources.

The Province of Latina have decided to promote the participation of those who have carried out functions of representing the final beneficiaries of the resources committed.

### **Activation of the participatory process during the seminar days**

Has been initiated a process of setting up and consolidation of a Territorial Staff, composed of different subjects, holder of different interests, some of them almost involved in previous activities of negotiation with the Provincial Administration, others involved in different phases of EU fund management for training and labour, others again ever directly involved in this fashion.

OCT project reserves to the Staff "participatory planning" tasks of interventions in vocational training and employment policies, this term referred to an activity that does not tend to perform functions in charge of the ESF Management Authority, but rather to make available relevant information useful for a planning capable of taking into account the real local training and employment needs.

To acquire the findings and to analyze and transform them to tools for the definition of future use of ESF resources, OCT project has provided a plan of seminars directed to the Territorial Staff, through which proceed with the formation of the Staff, to the sharing of the objectives for which it has been created, to the detecting of operative ways and of a plan for participatory planning through which perform

the tasks outlined above.

The seminars- which have a training nature-, designed for key actors involved in training and employment policies of the Province of Latina, were held on 26, 27 and 29 April 2010 and had the theme "*The participatory planning as the main instrument of Good Governance*".

During the first day, information about the role of the seminars into the OCT project were supplied to the participants, making clear the objectives, methods and working programs. The concept of *local governance* according the point of view of the Institutions was shared (with particular reference to the EU) and was inserted into the local context. Indications on deepening of available sources about the evaluation of "*good governance*" and related operative aspects and implications were supplied.

The concept of participatory planning as main instrument of "good governance" was then introduced.

During the second day the process of participatory planning has been considered, and was singled out the main elements of its structuring and functioning. To support the discussion this process has been put into practice on the Province of Latina PET.

To this end has been developed a local critical analysis aiming to find the needs into Lazio Region POR and particularly to the Province of Latina PET.

In the third day, more properly operative, have been developed feedback reflections about the working group activity carried out in the previous day. An analysis of the elements and key points that must characterize the guidelines for the start up of the participate planning through a "Territorial Staff" of the Province of Latina, has been conducted. During this phase self diagnosis tools of the governance system quality that will be activated have been found out and shared.

The conclusions of the day and of the whole cycle of seminars have represented a moment of collective reading of the experience conducted and in the sometime, have allowed to formalize the constitution of the Territorial Staff and of the working group that will be in charge to realize the decisions taken by the Staff.

A plan with all the data chosen for the meetings that the Territorial Staff will attend to discuss and validate the activities conducted by the working group has been also carried out.

The seminars, on the whole, have allowed to the Territorial Staff not only to constitute itself as a working group but also to create inside the group a membership to the

participate planning project that originated the Staff and provide itself of shared functioning rules,

and to create a feeling of belonging to the project which conducted them to the table, to obtain shared rules of functionality, to adopt a right management of an action to Participate Planning and to gain a right methodology to the planning and the implementation of the Participate Planning Project.

During this stage, Staff sharing a governance protocol comes to the definition of contests put into the different parts of process, to establish maximum amount of time for the realization of each stage, to identify the used methodologies for the conduction of the table, through management of the issues, during the explanation of the faced problems concern to good experience of “good governance”, and to outline assumption system for take decisions and at last the identification of communications rules from e for work group together with the introduction of implementation procedures of the process of Participate Planning.

### **Updating of the context analysis.**

The first step of working plan take by Territorial Staff has been the inquiry on the reality as the pivot of the Participate Planning.

In particular, concern with OCT project developed in the Province of Latina, such reality has been circumscribed only to advanced Target Plan published during PET 2008/2010. This reality with others has been subject of inquiry during the research of context realized for MP4.

The implementation of Participate Planning process permitted an updating of that analysis of context concern some stakeholders and changes from last 2 years, because of the experimental activity of planning launched by Province of Latina, combined with previously described Innovative Governance projects. Territorial Staff for the operational realization of the context analysis and the subsequent steps of the Participate Planning process made use of a domestic work group of skilled people, provided by partners of the OCT project, which have the responsibility to conduct this analysis.

The updating of the context analysis has been conducted through the actions described below.

### **Founding sources**

Territorial team, stimulated through the net, give necessary information for completion of the context analysis to the work group through:

- The sharing of studies, researches, data about initiatives of training courses and work policies sponsored by FSE in Province of Latina, underlining formative and occupational needs, mode of implementation of the actions, achieved goals and occupational results.
- Information about organization involved in the project as planning partners, as silent partners and in any way into implementation to different Target Plans from starting point of PET 2008/2010.

The result of this stage has been used to write the updating report of the mapping made for WP1 of project OCT and for the analysis of congruence of the initiatives registered with the PET goals.

### **Outlining the sample**

The work group saw to selection of field experts, training courses, education and work policy to enter into the sample.

Standard adopted by Territorial Team to define the sample:

- Institutes of teaching and training nautical field;
- Enterprises, associations, consortiums of nautical field;
- Experts of CCIAA of Province of Latina;
- Teaching and training Institutions which work into the field of social inclusions;
- Independent associations and different organizations which work into the field of social inclusion;
- Institutes of teaching and training of agriculture field;
- Factory farm;
- Body of professional training spread across the Province;
- Field of study which are relevant for the Province;
- Body of planning and management for Europe projects.

### **Creation of questionnaire**

Work group saw to creation of a draft of questionnaire that the operators entered into the sample have had to fill.

It has been realized a questionnaire framed with the following elements:

- General information about the role of the organization into Target Plan;
- Sharing level of announcement structuring concern to the Target Plans into different aspects, such as interaction among partners, analysis of needs, level of innovation, the role of each part into planning, enthusiasm of participants;
- Sharing level of management method indicated by announcement, showing strong and weakness parts too;
- Information concern management modality of Target Plan, level of satisfaction and dissatisfaction about project workflow, level of innovation, repeatability and its sustainable;
- Information about effectiveness of Target Plan – available to intercept various needs of territory in which the projects working and information about the targets FSE didn't examine;
- Collection of suggestions for a different planning of FSE resources.

#### **Sample and Questionnaire approval.**

On 27 May 2010 took place the meeting of the Territorial Staff to approve this hypothetical sample and the draft of questionnaire.

The two proposals have been examined, revised and completed and at last the work group drew up the final versions of them.

#### **Delivery of the questionnaire.**

Work group deliver the questionnaire to the operators they have been entered into the sample.

Delivery took place with and by the interviewer who pays particular attention to information collected through open questions.

Each filled questionnaire has been categorized, codified and it has been moved into data base expressly created for the following analysis.

#### **Data analysis.**

Analysis of data of this research has been conducted using database format in which were been entered data of done interviews.

Study of results has been done through individuation of appropriate statistical indicators and the individuation of effectiveness of the answers from open questions items.

Analysis of data has been entered into report of field research which has been shown the output of the updating for the context analysis during WP4 of the project OCT.

#### **Sharing of results.**

On 1 July 2010 took place the meeting of the Territorial Staff scheduled by working plan for the sharing of research data and to delineate standards to use during next planning stage of Focus Group.

Territorial Staff, thanks to final report of the research, gained the knowledges on the results of activities conducted into the area of Target plans and into any selected reality at the moment of Working Plan approval. Further, Territorial Staff identified standards which work group have had to follow to implement several focus groups, with the aim to recruit more stakeholders and operators designed to identify strong and weakness points of the started and conducted planning at the moments of the survey.

#### **Focus Groups Planning.**

Work Group – after have had specific instructions – proceeded with creation of conduction net of Focus Groups and standards to elaborate a list of subjects to enter in each Focus Group using instructions provided by Territorial Staff. These Focus Groups had the aim to go into more depth and to interpret data research and gained information to complete the Participate Planning.

Conduction net of the Focus Groups constituted the output of this planning stage.

Through direction of conduction nets has been carried out close examination Focus Groups of collected data with the field research, following instructions from Territorial Staff concern localization of development areas, composition of groups: coherent to aim of Participate Planning Project and to contents which have had the target of issue.

Then workgroup provided the writing report for each Focus Group.

#### **Analysis of Focus Groups results.**

Focus Group results have been examined and entered in a unique final report in which there were every data: general and specific data, concern various aspects of the conduction plan and of the net of stimulating questions.

A draft of entire report of results take from Focus Groups and a draft of entire final research was been the output of this stage.

### **Sharing of total results of the research and working out of recommendations.**

On 23 September 2010 took place the meeting of Territorial Staff aimed to share Focus Groups results and the entire research, to approve and gain further necessary information to go into more depth of the planning activities announced with the resources of FSE through PET 2008/2010 of Province of Latina.

The experiences of the Updating analysis of the Participate Planning and context have been entered in a final document in which there are all recommendations of Territorial Staff. Province of Latina could got some idea from this document for next PET (Executive Triennial Plan) FSE 2011/2013.

Work group, represented by Territorial Staff for final approval, have drawn up draft of this document. The recommendation for announcement of PET 2011/2013, its final writing, sharing on the net among Territorial Staff members is the output of this stage.

### **Spread and Dissemination.**

After constitution and formalization of work group (Territorial Staff) Confindustria Latina provided to collect and spread documents which work group drew up both for partners and into the inner staff of work.

Meeting for close examination and thematic comparison have been organized with the key actors of training/working body (in particular the heads of Target Plans) to identify needs and opportunities of each organisms, concern improvement of attractive of training field and governance quality.

The results of Participate Planning have been improved and shared through a communication plan which has seen the involvement of differentiate media and finally viewing of external slides of the project OCT.

All Territorial Staffs and in particular Confindustria Latina has been involved on this stage to collect and spread produced documentation.

A collection of produced and spread documentation (produced by Confindustria Latina) and plan of spread and dissemination of the results of Participate Planning are the output of this stage.

## Third part - Conclusion

### Lessons learned and suggestions for new experiences in participatory planning

#### *Results of the monitoring and evaluation of project results of the study and research (4-6, Italy) - Elena Grilli*

#### Notes

- [1] In the EC Treaty, there is only reference to the OMC in the context of economic policy coordination through the broad economic policy guidelines introduced by the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 in preparation for economic and monetary union. Moreover, since the Amsterdam Treaty in 1997, the EC Treaty refers to the OMC in the context of its provisions for the European Employment Strategy. For all other policy areas in which the OMC is employed, such as pensions, health care, social inclusion and education, the Lisbon conclusions are the only basis on which the application of the OMC to the particular policy rests.
- [2] Peer review, however, has not been practised yet in education.
- [3] These are (1) raising the standard of learning in Europe, (2) making access to learning easier and more widespread at all times of life, (3) updating the definition of basic skills for the knowledge society, (4) opening education and training to the local environment, to Europe and the world, (5) making the best use of resources.
- [4] The four other benchmarks are: (1) 'The total number of graduates in mathematics, science and technology in the EU should increase by at least 15% by 2010 while at the same time the level of gender imbalance should decrease'; (2) 'By 2010, at least 85% of 22-year-olds in the EU should have completed upper secondary education'; (3) 'By 2010, the percentage of low-achieving 15-year-olds in reading literacy in the EU should have decreased by at least 20% compared to the year 2000'; and (4) 'By 2010, the EU average level of participation in Lifelong Learning should be at least 12.5% of the adult working age population (25-64 age group)' (European Council, 2003).
- [5] The key documents here are *European Benchmarks in Education and Training: follow-up to the Lisbon European Council* (European Commission, 2002) and the 'Council Conclusions of 5 May 2003 on Reference Levels of European Average Performance in Education and Training (Benchmarks)' (European Council, 2003). See also Scheerens & Hendriks (2002).
- [6] The EU is also employing 'composite indicators', which 'attempt to capture the complex, multidimensional nature of the knowledge-based economy by aggregating a number of key variables, and expressing the result in the form of an overall index' (European Commission, 2004, p. 6). They are used, for instance, to measure whether there has been an increase in 'investment in the knowledge-based economy' (ibid).
- [7] Working groups, however, have now been replaced by the clusters described above.
- [8] This is 'an expert group which includes members from all participating countries giving advice to the Commission on the use of indicators as tools for measuring progress towards common objectives and benchmarks' (European Commission, 2004, p. 12).
- [9] 'An indicative list' of 33 indicators and indicator areas was identified in the 'Detailed Work Plan on the Implementation of European Common Objectives in the Field of Education and Training' (European Council, 2002).
- [10] The Europeanization of member state educational policies has also been promoted through the case law of the European Court of Justice – also well before 1992. The European Court of Justice interprets EU legislation on the rights of access of workers' dependants to education and the crossborder supply of education services in the EU under Article 49 of the EC Treaty.
- [11] In Germany, for instance, the Bundesländer have responsibility and powers for the development and implementation of education policies for the primary, secondary and tertiary sector. In the United Kingdom, primary and secondary school education governance in particular has been devolved to England, Scotland and Wales.
- [12] The European Expert Network on Economics of Education 'aims to contribute to the improvement of decision-making and policy development in education and training in Europe by advising and supporting the European Commission in the analysis of economic aspects of educational policies and reforms.' See <http://www.eenee.org>

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