



Thematic Network Project

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2nd. Round Table Meetings

Internet-related Jobs

**“Bridging the Gap between Market Needs and Training Outcomes:
Seizing the Opportunity of e-Jobs”**

Consolidated Report

Country: UK, Hungary, Germany, Poland, Spain, Greece and France

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Table of Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Description/General Information	4
3.	Venue and dates	5
4.	Main Topics	5
5.	Main outcomes of the PIN roundtable meetings	6
5.1	e-Jobs Observatory Platform (http://e-jobs-observatory.eu/)	6
5.2	e-Jobs Profiles and Training Guidelines.....	7
5.3	e-Jobs Label of Excellence	8
5.4	e-Jobs Seal of Market Compliance.....	8
6.	Other specific comments	10
7.	Conclusions	11
8.	Pictures.....	12
9.	Annexes.....	14
Annex 1.	D4.4 Conceptual Planning for 2nd Roundtable Meetings	14
Annex 2.	Roundtable Quality Assurance Guideline	14
Annex 3.	Ppt. Labelisation, Certification and Normalisation & e-Jobs- Observatory. 14	
Annex 4.	2 nd . Roundtable Results per Country	14

1. Introduction

The second series of roundtable meetings, "*Bridging the gap between market needs and training outcomes – seizing the opportunity of e-Jobs*" as part of the tasks of WP4 of the PIN project took place in the participating countries during the first semester of 2012. They counted with the participation of training institutions, representatives of the ICT industry, and government authorities.

The meetings addressed the results that have been produced by the project team during the last year, mainly, the e-Jobs Observatory platform (www.e-jobs-observatory.eu), the final versions of the model e-Jobs profiles, the training guidelines for e-Jobs, the e-Jobs Label of Excellence (labellisation process) and the Seal of Market Compliance (certification process), as it was agreed by the Consortium in order to obtain feedback from the participants.

The present document compiles the results, main conclusions and recommendations gathered in the countries that carried out the PIN meetings, with the objective to validate the different results of the project or take the necessary corrective measures to fulfil the expectation of the key stakeholders.

2. Description/General Information

The first activity for the second round of meetings was the drafting of a methodology by the WP leader GAIA, to provide guidelines to the partners on how to organize the roundtable in their countries and obtain the expected results. This methodology included the description of the topics to be addressed, instruments to use, target group, structure, dates and venues, expected output, promotion methods. The guideline was accompanied by a general presentation with the main topics for its respective translation to the native languages.

Because of the topics of the meetings, the main target group was constituted by VET institutions, ICT industry, policy makers and professionals.

The meetings were promoted at EU level through the e-Jobs Observatory and the ADAM portal. For the promotion at national level, the partners used different communication channels, such as: direct mailing, newsletters, press releases, and social networks.

With the aim to ensure the quality of the roundtables, MATISZ, the WP leader of PIN project Quality Management drafted the “Roundtable Quality Assurance Guideline” which was provided to all the partners. This guideline can be found in the annex accompanying this report.

Due to the fact that Labelisation and Certification processes were some of the topics to address, and DEKRA has been leading their definition, some of the meetings counted with the participation of Ed Mahood to explain such processes.

3. Venue and dates

The PIN meetings took place in the following places and dates:

No	Partner	Country	Date	City	Venue
1	EMF	UK	17.04.2012	London	eSkills UK
2	MATISZ	Hungary	27.04.2012	Budapest	Cisco Office
3	FOM	Germany	16.05.2012	Munich	FOM Study Center
4	HOU	Greece	28.05.2012	Athens	OTE Academy
	HOU	Greece	16.11.2012	Patras	Technical Chamber of Greece
5	WUE	Poland	04.06.2012	Wroclaw	Wroclaw University
6	GAIA	Spain	11.06.2012	Bilbao	Technology Park, Bilbao
7	MPS	France	25.06.2012	Bordeaux	MPS (24 Avenue de Virecourt 33370 Artigues près Bordeaux)

The list of participants in each country is available in the detailed report that the organizing partners drafted with the results of their countries and attached to this report.

4. Main Topics

As agreed by the consortium, the roundtables included the following topics:

- Facts & figures on the ICT labour market and skills shortages encountered by employers
- The future of the ICT industry and the job market
- The ProInterNet project and the e-Jobs Observatory
- Model e-Jobs professional profiles
- Mapping of these profiles to EQF and eCF
- Needs of various types of SMEs (start-up, micro, established)
- Skills mix across training areas (technical skills vs. behavioural and soft skills)
- Benefits of the e-Jobs Label of Excellence and e-Jobs Seal of Market Compliance proposed by PIN
- Feedback, conclusions, and recommendations from the participants.

5. Main outcomes of the PIN roundtable meetings

5.1 e-Jobs Observatory Platform (<http://e-jobs-observatory.eu/>)

It can be said that the participants of the meetings in the different countries supported the e-Jobs observatory, they liked the idea of a European platform specialized in the field of e-Jobs, the feedback was positive and participants showed special interest in the e-Jobs profiles. In the particular case of the UK, several participants registered at or after the meetings and become new members of the platform. The German participants especially liked the stepwise approach of joining the Observatory in a first step, then receiving the label of excellence and the certificate of market compliance in a possible third step. According to them, this approach does not create an entry barrier which may prevent the visitor from joining the network.

The Hungarian participants suggested that the PIN approach and the e-Jobs Observatory could serve as basis for defining the structure and regulation of Vocational Education in Hungary, which is now being under reconstruction.

The feedback gathered in the Greek roundtable concerning the e-Jobs Observatory was positive as it was characterized as a useful, informative tool presented in an appealing way and a focal point that can be used not only by the professionals of the Internet but also by individuals and organizations that are interested in the professional profiles and certification procedures in constantly growing sectors such as Green ICT, Ambient Assisted Living etc

The French participants made emphasis on the positive side of the transversal approach instead of focusing on technical issues. For them, Internet jobs are more and more communication jobs using technical tools and not informatics and technical jobs.

In general, the participants didn't find new features that should be added to the platform, and some of them were concerned about the sustainability of the platform after the end of the PIN Project.

5.2 e-Jobs Profiles and Training Guidelines

It was agreed that the quick growth of the ICT industry and the rapid development of the technology result in a gap between expectations of employers and qualifications of the candidates. To this respect, the participants considered that there is a need to work on satisfying the requirements of the labour market, and for them, the e-Jobs profiles seem to meet such requirements. They were also of the opinion that the development of training programmes should be based on common frameworks, such as the e-Competence Framework, (e-CF), and acknowledged that the latter represents an approach both supported by the ICT industry and endorsed by the European Union. The Spanish participants commented that they are familiar with the European qualification frameworks, (EQF and e-CF), and that they would be will to implement the e-Jobs Profiles in their organizations. An issue that was recognized and appreciated by the UK participants is that the proposed e-Jobs training modules are developed on the basis of the market driven demands.

In Greece, it was suggested that the Job profiles should be based on standards in order to receive any kind of certification. A general comment was that the need to develop a new job profile is directly linked to the number of employees in a specific sector. Job profiles are being developed in Greece since 2006; there are 202 job profiles for the moment but most of them do not meet the basic requirements and have been arbitrarily created without taking into account the needs of the labour market. Due to the appreciation of the good results provided by the e-Jobs Observatory, the participants suggested that HOU should collaborate with the National Organisation for Accreditation of Qualifications & Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP) and stakeholders in order to standardize the profiles developed in the project.

Concerning the e-Jobs Training Guidelines, the participants considered that its content is useful to develop or update their training modules. The Hungarian audience suggested making it livelier for an easier usability. Meanwhile, the Polish participants wondered about how to combine the learning outcomes proposed by the PIN project and the ones already established by the Polish Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, they were unsure how to apply the e-Jobs proposal in a compatibility form with the Polish system.

The Greek participants agreed that the training guidelines constitute a necessary step for obtaining the certification offered by the network and suggested that they could form the basis of a standardized procedure across Europe.

5.3 e-Jobs Label of Excellence

For the majority of the participants, the idea of a label of excellence in the field of e-Jobs was very welcomed, and they agreed with the principles established by the PIN consortium. For them, the label is an important tool to promote standardized ICT trainings at EU level, which will provide the opportunity to find jobs within the EU territory in an easier way. For two Spanish attendees, the e-Jobs Label of Excellence has been the first step to start promoting training education valid in the European Union, reason why they had applied for it.

However, some of the UK participants questioned whether small companies are interested in labels (“trust is not established through labels, rather through recommendations and references”). Overall, it was however generally recognized that the label could provide an orientation point for people that are not as informed as they could or should be.

A very positive reaction was shown in Greece towards the Labelisation and Certification Process proposed by the e-Jobs Observatory. The panellists remarked that both labels will be useful for Greek training organizations now that they have to enter free market competition. Up to now they preferred to offer courses that were approved by the Ministry of Education regarding their content and structure but the situation is changing rapidly, due to the crisis. Those training organizations that will manage to obtain both the Label and the Seal will gain a competitive advantage in this market under reform.

In France, a general comment was that autonomy for universities and training organisations decreases the confidence in diplomas, as the level acquired in a place can be totally different from another university or training organisation. This reinforces the necessity of European labialisation based on quality and accordance with market needs.

5.4 e-Jobs Seal of Market Compliance

It could be observed that participants of the different countries found interesting the idea of the certification process and the Seal of Market Compliance. For the UK participants, the

certificate is a better option than the self-assessed label, as it should result in generating more trust. Private training providers in particular liked the certification idea: a European label may appeal to clients. However, as it is new and has no historical background, it may take time to establish itself. If it were already well known, no doubt it would be useful. But there needs to be a beginning to everything.

The Hungarians suggested that it should become a basic system in the near future, and for that, dissemination activities are crucial to make it well known.

The Spanish manifested their intention to go through the process once it has the official approval of the Education Ministry.

The Polish and Hungarian participants were of the opinion that it is important to make a big promotion of the brand of e-Jobs Observatory Seal and Label.

Even that most of the representatives of the training institutions agreed of the big potential of the e-Jobs Seal, it is here where more concern and doubts arose, mainly regarding to the compatibility with the Education National system and the future sustainability of the e-Jobs Observatory.

In the UK, the public training providers were skeptical and stated that the certificate would only become attractive (or a requirement) for them, if it was endorsed by the public authorities. However, all agreed that market needs should govern the training curricula, particularly for jobs in the ICT sector.

In Spain, the comments were that training institutions cannot deliberately change their curricula or go through a different certification process without the approval of the State authorities. To this regard, they proposed to present the PIN initiative to “Lanbide”, the employability promoting entity of the Basque Government, (<http://www.lanbide.net>) that is in charge of this kind of initiatives, as a starting step to get an approval from the Education authorities.

In Poland, questions were related to the facts such as the no face-to-face meetings during the certification process, how the trainees are going to be evaluated, and the future sustainability

of the e-Jobs Observatory after the end of the PIN Project. They also wondered on how to train and combine technical, behavioural and business competences.

In Germany, the participants pointed that for making the initiative successful it is needed sufficient pilot partners, and it requires an important investment of money and time.

In Greece, The panellists proposed a possible adaptation of the procedures that lead to obtaining the Seal of Market Compliance, after a broad consultation with stakeholders, which will take into account the particularities of the Greek market.

6. Other specific comments

In the UK, the participants commented the considerable skills shortage of the ICT labour market and the efforts done to address it. It was also commented that they have the same problems as other countries when it comes to creating cross-curricula skills: usually, a technician will not learn management skills as this is part of management studies; a manager will not learn language skills as this is either part of school education or specialised language curricula; finally, soft skills are usually not trained at all.

The trust element between an enterprise and its clients is crucial: to be trusted, the company needs staff members who address clients in the correct way. Cultural differences in cross-border activities may play a role in this respect, which may be underestimated by training courses. The emphasis on soft skills, such as social and cultural competences, should be reinforced in many ICT-focused training courses. While trust is not easy to obtain, labellisation and certification are tools that may help as orientation tools (label) and, in an ideal world, as objective indicators (certificate).

In the context of cross-border trade, language skills appear as crucial. It is not sufficient to have a multilingual website. This appears to be an issue of particular importance for the UK, as language skills are taught less now than they used to be a few years ago.

In the case of Spain, GAIA started conversations with the representatives of the Basque Government in order to obtain the approval for the implementation of the e-Jobs Profiles and the Certification process by the Spanish training organizations that want to do so. In this

respect, the Spanish partner was suggested to submit the e-Jobs profiles for registration to Basque Government Education system during the next call of October or November of this year.

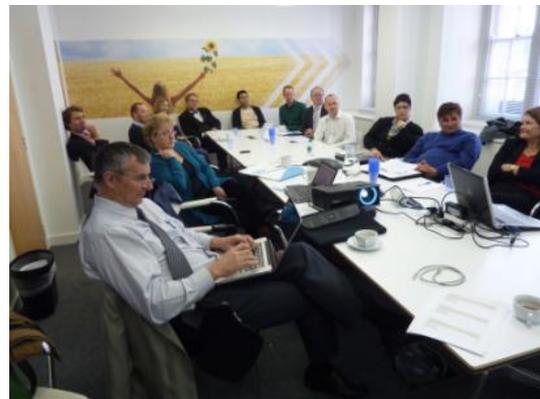
7. Conclusions

After the analysis of the results of the PIN meetings, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- Participants welcomed the PIN initiative of the e-Jobs Observatory as a specialized platform for e-Jobs in Europe. They also emphasized the importance that the platform be constantly updated with information relevant of the field.
- They agreed that training curricula must be defined according market labour needs, therefore, the e-Jobs Profiles and Training guidelines are appreciated.
- e-Jobs Label of Excellence and Seal of Market Compliance are considered important tools to harmonize skills, competences and knowledge in the field of ICT within EU and promote employability and mobility.
- The main and common concern manifested by the participants in all the countries is the compatibility of the e-Jobs Observatory proposed certification with the National Education Systems. It was perceived that many of the participants would be willing to apply for the Seal of Market Compliance if it would be endorsed by State authorities. However, in Greece, it was made big emphasis to the importance of entering into a free market competition to face the crisis, and providing courses according to the market needs will make training institutions more competitive.
- There was a common agreement regarding the English version of the documents produced by the PIN consortium, that they should be translated to the national language in order to facilitate the use of them in each country.
- The training guidelines proposed by the Consortium could form the basis of a standardized procedure across Europe.

- Another issued that was commonly arisen was the one concerning to the sustainability of the e-Jobs Observatory after the end of the project.
- Participants commented the importance of more dissemination activities around the EU in order to make the e-Jobs Observatory, the e-Jobs Profiles, the e-Jobs Label and Seal well known.
- Concerning the roundtable meetings as such, it could be said that they fulfilled their objectives because it could be obtained valuable feedback of the PIN results from the attendees, and provide the consortium important elements for finding solutions specially for the future sustainability of the platform and its compatibility with national education systems.

8. Pictures The UK



Germany



Poland



Spain



Greece



9. Annexes

- Annex 1. D4.4 Conceptual Planning for 2nd Roundtable Meetings**
- Annex 2. Roundtable Quality Assurance Guideline**
- Annex 3. Ppt. Labelisation, Certification and Normalisation & e-Jobs-Observatory**
- Annex 4. 2nd. Roundtable Results per Country**