

## Ensuring Quality in VET Networks

2009-1-PL1-LEO05-05050

<http://www.adam-europe.eu/adam/project/view.htm?prj=5653>

## Project Information

Title: Ensuring Quality in VET Networks  
 Project Number: 2009-1-PL1-LEO05-05050  
 Year: 2009  
 Project Type: Transfer of Innovation  
 Status: granted  
 Country: PL-Poland  
 Marketing Text: AN INNOVATIVE TOOL FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING, EVALUATION AND KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM (SPEAK) ENHANCING QUALITY ASSURANCE IN VET NETWORKS  
 Summary: Following new LLP through the past years there's a rapid growing of VET networks throughout Europe, with a strong tendency to interlocking educational activities across organisations and sectors. Apparently this shift towards multilateral and transversal cooperation in VET calls for new and innovative approaches to joint decision making, shared planning, coordinated implementation and quality control of educational provision.

However the vast majority of instruments and methods of quality assurance available for educational planning, monitoring and evaluation on provider level do not meet the new requirements. They are designed for managing the quality of either individual organisations or discrete training processes and structures, and this way are systematically counting out collaborative quality processes within newly emerging learning networks.

Through recent Leonardo da Vinci programme periods the European CERN partnership, with the help of evaluation, planning and management experts has developed a set of quality instruments in order to bridge this gap. Besides research papers, evaluation handbooks and training programmes the EVAL II project with SPEAK produced an strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation tool for VET networks, which in the course of the Leonardo da Vinci pilot project EVAL IV has been tested and validated in collaboration with VET institutes and stakeholders.

The VETWORKS project transferred the SPEAK instrument within a multi-stakeholder approach to national VET networks, and advanced their effectiveness and efficiency by using the European common quality assurance framework (CQAF), as well as the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQARF), as a reference framework for implementation. In accordance with the Helsinki goals, the project was aimed to improve educational planning and training delivery within local, regional and sectoral VET networks in order to become a world quality reference and develop a common culture of quality improvement.

The VETWORK is promoted by the University of Economics, Cracow, whose transfer partner in Poland is the Regional Office for Social Policy. The partnership falls into 7 highly professional partners from 7 countries (PL,DE,HU,EL,ES,AT,IE), of which 6 actively transferred the quality approach to regional / national VET networks (the Irish partner - developer of SPEAK, was responsible for technically adapting the SPEAK tool, supporting implementation units and delivering multiplicator training.

Description: SPEAK is a participatory evaluation and management support methodology. It offers organisations and projects a set of tools to build a deeper understanding of the relationship between efforts and results and to enhance planning for the future, and in the process pro-actively engages the ongoing participation of stakeholders.

A key part of SPEAK is a software package, tailored to each user. Implementing the SPEAK system by VETWORK partners involved a set workshops, within which members or the chosen network were supported by designing their own version. This was followed by participatory training sessions: delivered by VETWORKS partners and supported by Nexus.

WHAT DOES SPEAK DO?

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SPEAK is designed to work at two levels, project and programme.

The project version would be developed and deployed in situations where there is just one network. In these cases, the SPEAK version will be used by staff, volunteers and local stakeholders. But project level data can also be collated into a programme version, where there are several projects undertaking similar programmes of work with similar objectives. In these cases, SPEAK will facilitate comprehensive and consistent aggregation and comparison of projects, ultimately generating significant benefits for both programme managers and projects for both ongoing development and networking.

To each project, the SPEAK system offers:

1. A planning tool to facilitate clarification and definition of mission and goals, key partners and available resources, in a participatory process open to all main stakeholders;
2. A means to monitor the utilisation of staff resources against each goal, based on target and resource use data provided by the staff and volunteers themselves;
3. A participative and transparent means to monitor and evaluate progress in relation to achieving agreed goals and objectives, covering both outputs and outcomes and tracked year by year;
4. A means to readily document and report on all major activities, processing and synthesising them into regular reports of various kinds, both quantitative and qualitative;
5. Combining the above, SPEAK facilitates periodic planning and review processes, in which all stakeholders participate equipped with the knowledge and orientations needed.

At the multi-project or programme level, programme managers is able to:

1. Aggregate outputs and impacts of projects in usable forms, including both quantitative and qualitative features;
2. Identify and compare issues for projects working in similar areas, suggesting areas in which cooperation can be encouraged or support may be needed;
3. Extract and analyse data and insights on development themes, challenges and results across all projects, thus increasing programme capacity for both forward planning and policy influence.

Projects, at a collective level, should be able to:

1. Share experiences and learning points;
2. Through using a common evaluation language and understanding, build common agendas and shared actions on thematic, geographical or other bases.

Above all, the aim of implementing SPEAK was to create an empowering process for both projects and programme management: enhancing individual engagement and group participation; yielding strategically useful and robust information; and revealing many new possibilities and opportunities.

### THE UNDERLYING METHODOLOGY AND SPEAK CYCLE

The underlying methodology of SPEAK is relatively straightforward and not unlike other participatory approaches to evaluation and support. Its sustained software-supported mode of implementation, however, is unique. The system is conceptually organised around a four part framework.

The one side of the project comprises mainly an 'audit' of each project and the environment in which it operates. The second side comprises review and evaluation: measuring firstly what the project has achieved in relation to its stated objectives and target groups, and, secondly, what impact this work has had on the groups

## Project Information

concerned. On the other hand, the cycle describes the environment in which the initiative operates and hopes to change; as well as the the initiative itself, what it is and what it delivers.

From area and project audits, SPEAK moves on to indicators relating to the project and area.

First is the output indicators component. Drawing together information available within the project but also through collective deliberation, the direct outputs of the project are identified by staff and volunteers. These can be quantitative or qualitative, referring for instance to training days delivered, clients seen, infrastructure built, and so forth. Outputs are related to specific target groups and goals.

Next, staff, management committee members, volunteers and key stakeholders interactively work through a set of impact indicators to develop a consensus on what the initiative has achieved through these outputs, in terms of making a difference to target groups. These can refer back to the ultimate mission, goals and milestones, and may consist of, for instance, verifiable behaviour change of target groups, specific evidence of empowerment, or changes in objective well-being indicators.

Finally, the process moves into a second cycle with a re-examination of the operational environment, but this time with a detailed and robust knowledge of the role of the initiative in changes identified. At this point, goals, target groups and working methods are revisited, future plans revised, and the cycle is underway again.

In practice, the process of working through each moment in the cycle is as important as the knowledge generated, combining individual reflection on the use of resources and time with collective deliberation on the environment, working methods, outputs and impacts. All involved in the initiative gain a deeper, shared, understanding of the environment in which they work, what they are trying to achieve, and the way they are going about it. The real value lies at least as much in the process as in the formal outputs.

Most important, the framework is cyclical: it begins by looking at the external environment it seeks to influence and, moving around a full circle, finishes up by asking questions about how this environment has changed.

To assess the achievements of a project or initiative, some account must be taken of the nature of the development challenges faced and existing responses to them. The top left of the diagram, the conceptual starting point, thus begins by defining the operational environment including for instance baseline figures and features, or a description of VET-related needs, as well as an account of the current responses to these, independent of the project itself. The collective process by which this is completed is vital as it ensures that those involved, including management committee and staff, develop a common view of the issues facing young people, and of current responses to them.

The second conceptual component is a detailed analysis of the project environment. Here, based on the initiative's mission, goals, resources and expected outcomes, the groups targeted by the project, the working methods adopted, and the working partners are teased out and set down by staff and other stakeholders. A further key element of the project environment, estimated retrospectively each period, is the resource audit showing how much staff and volunteer time is used in relation to each of these.

- Themes:
- \* Labor market
  - \* Quality
  - \* Lifelong learning
  - \* Vocational guidance
  - \* Continuous training

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## Project Information

Sectors:

Product Types: evaluation methods  
procedure for the analysis and prognosis of the vocational training requirement  
website

Product information: First national versions of SPEAK will be released at the end of the project, in October 2011.

Moreover, since June 2010 on the project's homepage there is a draft paper on CQAF model of excellence in VET at the institutional level (in English as well as in Polish version). The English version of this document was also uploaded on the ADAM portal as a temporary product of the VETWORKS project(tab "files")

In September 2010 on the VETWORKS homepage were published other language versions.

At the ADAM database you can also find executive summary of national reports, describing the VET sector in participating countries, as well as transfer of innovation strategies (SPEAK) and other products delivered by the project partners.

Projecthomepage: <http://www.vetworks.info/>

## Project Contractor

Name: Cracow University of Economics  
City: Krakow  
Country/Region: Malopolskie  
Country: PL-Poland  
Organization Type: university/Fachhochschule/academy  
Homepage: <http://www.uek.krakow.pl>

## Contact Person

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Homepage:

## Coordinator

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Country/Region: Malopolskie  
Country: PL-Poland  
Organization Type: university/Fachhochschule/academy  
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Homepage:

## Partner

### Partner 1

Name: p&w praxis und wissenschaft projekt gmbh  
City:  
Country/Region:  
Country:  
Organization Type: others  
Homepage: <http://www.pw-projekt.de>

### Partner 2

Name: University of Pecs  
City:  
Country/Region:  
Country:  
Organization Type: others  
Homepage: <http://www.pte.hu>

### Partner 3

Name: NEXUS Europe (IE) Inc.  
City:  
Country/Region:  
Country:  
Organization Type: others  
Homepage: <http://www.nexus.ie>

### Partner 4

Name: Gesellschaft fuer Arbeit und Bildung der Chance B GmbH  
City:  
Country/Region:  
Country:  
Organization Type: others  
Homepage: <http://www.chanceb.at>

## Partner

### Partner 5

Name: XXI INVESLAN, S.L.

City:

Country/Region:

Country:

Organization Type: others

Homepage: <http://>

### Partner 6

Name: IDEC SA

City:

Country/Region:

Country:

Organization Type: others

Homepage: <http://www.idec.gr>

## Project Files

CQAF model of excellence - Draft Version.doc

<http://www.adam-europe.eu/prj/5653/prj/CQAF%20model%20of%20excellence%20-%20Draft%20Version.doc>

Speak-Presentation.ppt

<http://www.adam-europe.eu/prj/5653/prj/Speak-Presentation.ppt>

## Products

- 1 National reports - executive summary
- 2 Portal for QA in VET Networks
- 3 Quality Assurance in VETWORKS SPEAK
- 4 VET Networks Best Practice Guide
- 5 VETWORKS Scorecard
- 6 VETWORKS video

## Product 'National reports - executive summary'

Title: National reports - executive summary

Product Type: procedure for the analysis and prognosis of the vocational training requirement

Marketing Text: Executive summary of national reports on Vocational Education and Training (VET) Networks

Description: A brief document that presents the most important information about VET networks in six different European countries (Austria, Greece, Germany, Hungary, Poland and Spain). It is divided into six chapters, devoted to such topics as:

- 1) general information on VET
- 2) management of VET Network
- 3) quality in VET Networks
- 4) Role of EU Policies
- 5) SPEAK and Quality Assurance
- 6) Transfer strategy

The conclusions are very important for all institutions that potentially will implement SPEAK tool in their VET Networks

Target group: Project partners, potential partners (VET institutions interested in implementing SPEAK tool and the process of quality assurance in VET)

Result: PDF File

Area of application: Establishment of transfer strategy for SPEAK system (strategic planning, self-evaluation and knowledge management in VET institutions).

Homepage: [www.vetnetworks.info](http://www.vetnetworks.info)

Product Languages: English

### product files

National Reports - executive summary.pdf

<http://www.adam-europe.eu/prj/5653/prd/1/1/National%20Reports%20-%20executive%20summary.pdf>

## Product 'Portal for QA in VET Networks'

Title: Portal for QA in VET Networks

Product Type: website

Marketing Text: Internet portal for people interested in ensuring quality in VET sector

Description: Portal and forum for people interested in VET activities and the problem of ensuring quality in VET Networks

Target group: All stakeholders involved in VET sector

Result: Website

Area of application:

Homepage: [www.vetworks.info](http://www.vetworks.info)

Product Languages: English  
Polish

## Product 'Quality Assurance in VETWORKS SPEAK'

Title: Quality Assurance in VETWORKS SPEAK

Product Type:

Marketing Text:

Description:

Target group:

Result:

Area of application:

Homepage:

Product Languages: English

## Product 'VET Networks Best Practice Guide'

Title: VET Networks Best Practice Guide

Product Type: website

Marketing Text: VET Networks Best Practice Guide is a multilingual source of information and inspiration for everyone who is interested in VET Networking.

Description: Best Practice Guide delivers a lot of information about the process of quality assurance in VET Networks, with reference to the current European debate on this issue. It provides a set of experiences/best practices, that might be important for all VET institutions interested in networking.

Target group: VET institutions, especially VET Networks

Result:

Area of application: VET Networks

Homepage: [www.vetnetworks.info](http://www.vetnetworks.info)

Product Languages: German  
English  
Hungarian  
Greek  
Spanish  
Polish

## Product 'VETWORKS Scorecard'

Title: VETWORKS Scorecard

Product Type: evaluation methods

Marketing Text: VETWORKS Scorecard provides a methodology for quality assurance in VET Networks.

Description: The scorecard is the direct result of the 2-year activity of the VETWORKS project. It represents one of the major module of the SPEAK programme, that was implemented by project partners in different national, sectoral and cultural context. The scorecard is a final result of partners' experiences.

Target group: VET sector

Result:

Area of application:

Homepage: [www.vetworks.info](http://www.vetworks.info)

Product Languages: English  
Polish

## Product 'VETWORKS video'

Title: VETWORKS video

Product Type: Film

Marketing Text: Web-video presenting the most important elements of the SPEAK evaluation methodology within VET Networks.

Description: Promotional video aimed to disseminate the information about the SPEAK evaluation method, as well as about the advantages related to the usage of this new approach within VET Networks.

Target group: VET Sector

Result:

Area of application:

Homepage: [www.vetworks.info](http://www.vetworks.info)

Product Languages: Spanish  
English  
Polish  
Hungarian  
Greek  
German

## Events

### VETWORKS fourth meeting

Date 06.10.2011

Description Fourth transnational meeting

Target audience Partners, experts

Public Closed event

Contact Information Marcin Kedzierski  
kedziern@uek.krakow.pl

Time and place Cracow University of Economics (room K5)  
Rakowicka 27  
31-510 Krakow  
Poland

### National Seminar on Quality Assurance in VET

Date 12.09.2011

Description A seminar on QA in VET sector, organized jointly by the Institute for Educational Research from Warsaw and the Cracow University of Economics, VETWORKS coordinator. The main aim of the seminar was to discuss the similarities and differences between CQAF/EQARF and traditional tools for quality management, such as TQM, and international standards (ISO), especially in terms of training services.

Target audience Professionals from VET sector, partners of the Institute for Educational Research

Public Event is open to the public

Contact Information kedziern@uek.krakow.pl

Time and place 12.09.2011  
10:00  
Institute of Educational Research  
ul. Gorczewska 8  
Warsaw

## Events

### **VETWORKS third meeting**

Date 14.04.2011

Description Third transnational meeting

Target audience Partners, 3s (evaluation company, responsible for internal evaluation)

Public Closed event

Contact Information George Velegrakis

Time and place Piraeus, Greece

### **SPEAK Design workshop - Greece**

Date 27.10.2010

Description

Target audience Representatives of IDEC

Public Closed event

Contact Information geov@idec.gr

Time and place 27.10.2010, IDEC

### **SPEAK Training Session - Austria**

Date 21.10.2010

Description Introduction into SPEAK system as a tool for self-evaluation

Target audience Representatives of Chance-B

Public Closed event

Contact Information birgit.haas@chanceb.at

Time and place 21.10.2010, Chance B

## Events

### **SPEAK Training Session - Hungary**

Date 13.10.2010

Description Introduction into SPEAK as a tool fo self-evaluation

Target audience Representatives from Pecs University, Faculty of Adult Education and Human Resources Development

Public Closed event

Contact Information nemethb@feek.pte.hu

Time and place 13.10.2010, Pecs University

### **SPEAK Training Session - Poland**

Date 07.10.2010

Description Introduction into SPEAK as a tool fo self-evaluation

Target audience Representatives from Regional Centre for Social Policy

Public Closed event

Contact Information marcin.kedzierski@gmail.com

Time and place 07.10.2010, Cracow University of Economics

### **SPEAK Design workshop - Spain**

Date 22.07.2010

Description

Target audience

Public Closed event

Contact Information Lina Klemkaite, proyectos@inveslan.com

Time and place 22.07.2010, 10:00  
Inveslan, Bilbao

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## Events

### **SPEAK Design workshop - Hungary**

Date 29.06.2010

Description

Target audience

Public Closed event

Contact Information Dr. Balazs Nemeth, nemethb@feek.pte.hu

Time and place 29.06.2010, 10:00  
Pecs University

### **SPEAK Design workshop - Austria**

Date 09.06.2010

Description

Target audience

Public Closed event

Contact Information Birgit Haas, birgit.haas@chanceb.at

Time and place 09.06.2010, 07:30  
Chance B, Gleisdorf

### **SPEAK Design workshop - Poland**

Date 29.04.2010

Description

Target audience Regional Office for Social Policy in Cracow

Public Closed event

Contact Information Marcin Kedzierski, marcin.kedzierski@gmail.com

Time and place 29.04.2010, 9:00  
Cracow University of Economics  
ul. Rakowicka 27  
30-510 Kraków

## Events

### VETWORKS second meeting

Date 11.03.2010

Description The SPEAK Design Workshop is a critical first milestone, explaining the principles and operation of SPEAK and generating the data and concepts required to adapt the SPEAK system to the specific characteristics and needs of projects. The Workshop will be used to clarify key categories, definitions and parameters to be integrated within the SPEAK software, such as baseline data and key parameters, target groups, working methods and modalities, working partners, and milestones. The Workshop will bring together both project and programme level staff, to ensure that the final structure satisfies all needs.

Target audience representatives of the Network in Bavaria

Public Closed event

Contact Information Randolph Preisinger-Kleine [rp@pw-projekt.de]  
Marcin Kedzierski [marcin.kedzierski@gmail.com]

Time and place 11-12 March 2010, Munich