



Business Intermediary Organisations e-learning Network (BIOeNET)

Progress Report

Public Part

Project information

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Executive Summary

The project is aimed at two target groups, short term and long term target group. During the life of the project the short term target group will consist of Business Intermediary organisations (or 'BIOs', any not for profit organisations that provides business support and/or training to businesses), European Umbrella organisations (Organisations that act on behalf of European BIOs at European level – there are three – Eurochambres, BusinessEurope and UEAPME) and selected Training providers. The long term target group are the Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs). After the end of the project the short term target group mentioned above will also become a long term target group.

The BIOeNET project has three key objectives:

- To develop a technical e-learning platform where the European Business Intermediary Organisations can host and share online training materials – it is envisaged that BIOs will use this platform to share and access training materials for the ultimate benefit of their member SMEs.
- To establish a membership network of Business Intermediary Organisations interested in sharing online training resources. This network will again be used by BIOs who will have to sign up to be a member of the network to access the platform.
- To encourage BIOs and other training providers to use the e-learning platform, as a central “repository” of training materials, for hosting and promoting a wide range of SMEs focussed training materials develop for or by BIOs. If BIOs continue to use the platform for their SMEs, this will ensure sustainability of the project.

The partnership is formed by seven Business Intermediary Organisations, representing the variety of these organisations, e.g. Chambers of Commerce (UK, Slovenia, Romania), Industry Associations (Bulgaria), SMEs Federations (Sweden), SMEs Technology and Innovation Centres (Italy) and Development Agencies (Lithuania); one international business college (Spain) and one e-learning technology specialist (Bulgaria). Due to the main target group of the project being BIOs it is also intentional that majority of the partner organisations are BIOs, whilst the University will assist with the VET work package.

The BIOeNET project concerns new technological approaches, as well as a large scale involvement across Europe by Chambers of Commerce, Industry Associations, organisations who are influential and work with SMEs.

Main achievement to date of the project is the development of the e-learning platform with first course being currently uploaded. Other positive developments are Network charter, high level of dissemination and strategic meeting with BusinessEurope planned for early next year.

The project will continue focusing on further development and improvement of the e-learning platform, building networking environment and through dissemination encourage BIOs to become members of the network. It will also be crucial to continue targeting the European Umbrella organisations in order to raise their interest which could potentially result in these organisations endorsing the e-learning platform and thus ensuring long term sustainability of the project.

The website is available via the following link: www.bioenet.net

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1. Project Objectives

BIOeNET project main goal is to increase the range and quality of European SMEs' online training provision in response to the Communication from the EU Commission "New skills for new jobs" (Dec 08).

The project is developed by Business Intermediary Organisations, such as Chambers of Commerce, Industry Associations, Business Federations, etc; who collectively provide a large proportion of training and learning resources across Europe, for example, the network of European Chambers alone trains around 2.7 million people per year.

The main goal of the project will be achieved by developing an e-learning platform on which training resources can be stored, further developed/translated and made available to a wider audience.

The project encourages the re-use and improvement of existing e-learning materials developed by Business Intermediary Organisations as part of online training initiatives or funded projects which have applicability outside their immediate membership but have not been made more widely available due to cost, resources or competitive constraint.

The BIOeNET project has three key objectives:

- To develop a technical e-learning platform where the European Business Intermediary Organisations can host and share online training materials.
- To establish a membership network of Business Intermediary Organisations interested in sharing online training resources.
- To encourage BIOs and other training providers to use the e-learning platform, as a central "repository" of training materials, for hosting and promoting a wide range of SMEs focussed training materials develop for or by BIOs.

The project benefits European BIOs, as the key short term target group (any not-for-profit organisation that provides business support and/or training to businesses e.g. local/national Chambers of Commerce, Industry Associations/Federations, etc) who:

- are currently participating or have participated in the past in EU funded projects
- are providing training to SMEs
- have e-learning materials and wish to share them

During the consultation carried out in the User Needs Analysis, the partnership has already engaged with this short term target group, exploring more specifically the training needs of their members and inviting them to join the network and share their materials in the platform.

The improvement of the BIOs training provision will ultimately benefit their members, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), the long term key target group of the project. SMEs will have access to the right training, benefit from a wider range of quality materials and subsequently improve their competitiveness.

It is expected that the project will achieve the following benefits:

- Provide growth opportunities for SMEs
- Improve training provision made available by Business Intermediary Organisations
- Enhanced reputation and exposure of partners
- Development experience as a member of a well-organised consortium
- Gaining experience in valorisation activities
- A learning experience for partners staff
- Additional service and training offerings by partners
- Encourage European & regional government backing for the development of online learning materials by business intermediary organisations for the ultimate benefit of SMEs
- Encourage central government backing for new online learning technologies.
- Improving contacts/collaboration opportunities with already established wide network of regional and European partners (e.g. Chambers, employer associations, development agencies, training organisations)

2. Project Approach

The BIOeNET project partnership will develop a technical platform where e-learning materials will be stored and shared. The project encourages the re-use of existing e-learning materials developed by Business Intermediary Organisations.

The basis for a system of e-learning resource sharing, which is relatively simple and workable, has been already developed by the team. This approach will be used as a spring board to create a more state-of-the-art platform for the sharing of training products and future joint capacity development activities by BIOs across Europe.

The BIOeNET project concerns new technological approaches, as well as a large scale involvement across Europe by Chambers of Commerce, Industry Associations, organisations who are influential and work with SMEs.

Although online learning platforms particularly in the academic and large business already exist, there is no learning platform which facilitates collaboration and resources sharing between Business Intermediary Organisations (BIOs). Some of those BIOs (the short term target group of the project) have invested in their own learning systems to improve their training provision, others have training materials developed in previous projects, as it the case with the project partnership.

The BIO partners have already worked together in previous Leonardo projects, INTELS, YENTELS and ENERGY-WISE, and they have realised the benefits of the collaboration. Making the online learning products from these three projects more widely available is one of their main aims, as well as use e-learning products created by other BIOs which access is restricted.

In parallel to the technical platform development, the project will develop a membership network of BIOs that wish to join the platform and share their materials.

In order to explain how to the project will achieve its main goal, the main activities carried out by the partnership will be detailed below.

The BIOeNET project consortium carried out a User Needs Research, as one of the main activities in Year 1, in order to have a picture of the training needs of Business Intermediary Organisations (BIOs), Umbrella Organisations and training providers. This has helped to define the most important characteristics of the different partner countries on an individual basis and from a global point of view.

Three different questionnaires were designed, based on a series of qualitative and quantitative questions to determine the best way to implement training measures. The aims of the consultation were the following ones:

- To determine the interest generated by these entities in relation to training.
- To define the main obstacles European SMEs encounter in gaining access to training.
- To determine the current status of BIOs and detect training deficiencies.
- To identify the perceived benefits of good training in SMEs.

The results of the consultations were obtained from the surveys of these three targeted groups in each of the countries of the consortium. Most of the surveys were to be carried out by face-to-face interviews in order to help obtain better results from the sample group, when this was not possible, some of them were done via telephone or email.

The results showed the priority areas of training considered by the BIOs to be included in the BIOeNET platform. Once these results are available, the research & content provision activity will start considering the specific criteria and needs. The main aim of this part is to develop assessment criteria to decide which type of e-learning should be included in the platform and which should be piloted during the second year.

At the same time Virtech, the technical partner; has been checking the technological basis of the research carried out by the partners in order to ensure that it is possible to include the sourced e-learning materials on the platform from a technical perspective.

The development of the platform utilising an open source learning software, such as DRUPAL & MOODLE, starts once the best technical option is agreed and progresses during the lifetime of the project, in parallel to the rest of activities. Once the platform is created and integrated in the project website, the inclusion of the existing materials (INTELS, YENTELS & possibly ENERGY-WISE) starts.

The membership network of BIOs that will be developed together with the e-learning platform will be based on the "Network Charter", the operating model of the Project Networking Environment. This will describe and set out the different types of membership and outline what are the responsibilities of the members. It will include guidelines about copyright and IPR, and set out the process for resolving disputes of this nature.

An important part related to Testing & Validation of the technical platform as well as the network will take place during the lifetime of the project in order to validate the project products. The partnership will engage with other BIOs and a group of SMEs to carry out this task.

In terms of the added value of the approach used, it would need to be addressed from three different points of view.

From a pedagogical point of view, the BIOeNET project is using a well-accepted open source e-learning to develop the platform. DRUPAL & MOODLE are the systems selected for this and they will allow the partners to manage the content in a simple way.

From an organisational point of view, the inclusion of a wide range of different types of BIOs (Chambers of Commerce, Industry Associations, SME Federations, Development Agencies and Centres of Innovation) enables the project partnership to reflect the interests and concerns of the potential target audience for the platform.

From a political point of view, the involvement of organisations within the partnership that are members of the three key Pan-European BIO Umbrella Organisations (UEAPME, Eurochambres and Business Europe) helps ensure that the project direction is in line with wider European business needs and allows the project access to these influential bodies.

In terms of the evaluation of the project, after carrying out a tender process, a consultancy company was appointed to carry out the external evaluation of the BIOeNET project.

The key results of the evaluation are two formal reports:

- An Interim evaluation report (end-of-year 1)
- A final evaluation report (end-of-project)

The interim evaluation addresses whether the project has achieved its objectives by the dates set out in the work plan and whether it is still on track to achieve its objectives by the end of the project.

The purpose of final evaluation is to draw conclusions on the design, implementation and degree of success of the project in the light of its objectives and indicators. The evaluation will also provide a series of six-monthly informal feed-back reports to assist the project assurance efforts of the project team.

Regarding the dissemination strategy, the main aims during the first year of the BIOeNET project are to create awareness and understanding of the project and its capacity, as well as to engage with the target group in order to carry out the user needs analysis.

The project has developed a number of strategies in order to achieve this:

- Creation of marketing materials
- Production of newsletters
- Attendance to events and conferences
- Usage of technology tools, such as the project website, social media tools
- Use of networking at three different levels: local, national and European.

The exploitation and sustainability strategy of the BIOeNET project is divided by the different target groups.

The first main group is SMEs or end users of the e-learning platform – The project will engage with them through their membership within Business Intermediary Organisations. Some SMEs will be recruited by BIOs to test the product during the lifetime of the project and a wider group towards the end.

The second main group is formed by Local/ Regional/National Business Intermediary Organisations (BIOs), EU umbrella organisations for BIOs and selected Training Providers. This group will ensure sustainability of the platform and that training materials and resources will be added to the platform.

It is envisaged that the main responsibility in disseminating the project and attracting attention to it after the end of the project will rest with European Umbrella Organisations as having a huge influence across European states, these will be expected to encourage their member BIOs to become members of the network and use the e-learning platform for benefit of their member SMEs.

Certain Dissemination activities are expected to last beyond the lifetime of the project e.g. such as linking to different websites and use of social media. In regards to the latter, past experience indicates that once a social media following (on e.g. Facebook, Twitter) has grown sufficiently in size, this will serve to promote the project continuously even without intensive input.

3. Project Outcomes & Results

Throughout the first year the project has seen some positive developments which brought the project closer to achieving its main objectives. These accomplishments will be outlined below.

It can be said that the most notable achievement to date is the development of one of the main objectives of the project, the e-learning platform and its associated website which will serve as entry point to the platform. A first prototype of this platform and the website has been developed throughout this year and can be found via the following links:

<http://www.bioenet.net> Website

<http://training.bioenet.net> E-learning platform

The website of the project which has been set up at a very early stage in the project has recently been given a new and attractive design and is currently being improved even further. The platform itself has only been developed in September in accordance with the project plan and already work has been done towards populating this platform since last month with one of the previous projects being partially uploaded.

In terms of the platform development, the partnership has also agreed on a more suitable name for the project, one that conveys the message of training more clearly than "BIOeNET". With majority of votes from partners, the new name of the platform will be "LearnSMARTEurope".

The second main aim of the project is establishing a membership network and the project partnership is pleased to report that a good progress has been made towards this objective, too. This has been achieved through completion of a second draft version of a 'Network Charter' document, which is a deliverable that addresses the membership network and serves as its operational model. Indeed, not fully completed as yet, this document provides a sound foundation on which further developments in this work package can be built.

The third main objective is to encourage Business Intermediary organisations (or BIOs - Any non for profit organisation that provides business support and/ or training to SMEs) and other training providers to use the e-learning platform, as a central "repository" of training materials, for hosting and promoting a wide range of SMEs focussed training materials developed for or by BIOs. A great progress has been made towards achievement of this objective as two of the project partners with direct links to one of the main target groups, European Umbrella organisations for Business Intermediary organisations have managed to promote the project to UEAPME and BusinessEurope and strategic meetings with these two organisations have been pencilled in for January and February 2012.

If these two organisations do endorse the project, this could mean that a vast numbers of BIOs who are members of the two organisations (BusinessEurope represents 40 trade federations in 34 European countries with the total number of members being around 20 million companies, whilst UEAPME represents 85 national organizations in 34 countries, and subsequently with 12 million member organisations in total) will be targeted and encouraged to participate in the network and contribute to the platform. This could further mean extremely positive news in terms of sustainability of the project as the endorsement of the two organisations will ensure that companies will use the platform beyond the life of the project.

The partnership can also be particularly satisfied with the level of dissemination that has been completed within the first year of the project. It has been noted that following design of the project logo and producing a provisional brochure, 2,587 of these leaflets have been distributed across nine partners. All partners have further included the project in a number of publications which reached total of 5,416 people.

Other means of dissemination included events, seminars, conferences etc. and total number of 17,482 people were engaged through these activities. Partnership has also used technology in its dissemination activities and through these a total number of 18,641 people were reached. Dissemination work package leaders have also embarked on development of social media strategy which can mean even more people will be targeted through as a result.

Unfortunately, it has to be said that along with the positive developments, there were also two issues encountered by the partnership within the first year of the project which subsequently caused several months delay in delivery of some of the work packages. These will be outlined below.

In the early stages of the project, the partnership encountered difficulties in understanding the main rationale behind the project and what the main target groups of the project were. This was mainly due to complex nature of the project as the concept is rather innovative and has not been done before.

The second problem encountered was related directly to one of the objectives of the work package 3 which involved gathering responses to a survey. The survey as focused around the training needs of the three main target groups, Business Intermediary organisations, European 'umbrella' organisations for Business Intermediary organisations and Training providers.

This proved to be a rather difficult task due to lack of response which was encountered by all partners. The lack of response could have been caused by several reasons, with some related to the selected research methodology for the research. The methodology of choice was 'survey' and it is generally known that when using survey as a main research methodology, lack of response is considered one of the main issues. Researchers estimate that the return rate can be as low as 2%.

Further reason for this lack of response could also be the fact that due to recession organisations have somewhat negative attitude towards training and this is not currently viewed as a priority.

Both issues were however resolved by person in charge of the work package by applying several simple measures such as additional explanations to remedy the lack of understanding and increased persistence in following up the respondents of the survey and allowing more time for the task in the case of the second problem.

Partnership noted both issues as lessons learnt and despite the delay is confident that the project will catch up with the objectives without major difficulties.

4. Partnerships

The BIOeNET project aims to increase the level of training support provided to Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) by European Business Intermediary Organisations.

The project partnership hopes to develop a platform which encourages the re-use of existing e-learning resources whilst facilitating the development on new online resources based on existing training materials. The team has previously developed the basis for such a system of e-learning resource sharing during an earlier Leonardo funded project.

In order to achieve this, the project has selected a complete, varied, experience and well-connected partnership that is bringing the best from each country and contributing to develop a successful project.

The partnership is formed by seven Business Intermediary Organisations, representing the variety of these organisations, e.g. Chambers of Commerce (UK, Slovenia, Romania), Industry Associations (Bulgaria), SMEs Federations (Sweden), SMEs Technology and Innovation Centres (Italy) and Development Agencies (Lithuania); one international business college (Spain) and one e-learning technology specialist (Bulgaria).

The following nine organisations form the partnership of the BIOeNET project:

1. Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce (co-ordinating partner) from the UK
2. Foretagarna the Swedish Federation of Private Enterprises
3. Democenter-SIPE, a SME technology and innovation centre from Italy
4. Virtech, a software company from Bulgaria
5. BIA, Bulgarian Industry Association
6. CPU, Slovenian Chamber of Commerce
7. EL, Enterprise Lithuania
8. CCIPH, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Prahova, Romania
9. Aliter – Escuela Internacional de Negocios – an International Business School based in Madrid

The quality of the partnership is not only assuring an engagement with a number of European BIOs, but also a representative sample of European countries and a varied interaction at different levels (local, national and European).

One of the strengths of the BIOeNET partnership is the existing links at local, national and European level. The local level is covered by each of the partners in their respective area where they are able to engage with the relevant BIOs, part of the short term target group of the project. In regards to the national level, the links are established by being members of national umbrella organisations, such as British Chambers of Commerce in the UK.

The European level is covered by CWCC, BIA and Foretagarna that belong to three main Pan-European organisations acting of behalf of European BIOs (Eurochambres, Business Europe and UEAPME) and have very good contacts there.

As described in the exploitation & sustainability of the project, one of the challenging objectives is to engage with these Umbrella organisations and facilitate wider inclusion of the BIOeNET platform within training provision of their members (BIOs) through this group.

In terms of the working relationships, some of the partners have already taken part in previous Leonardo funded projects together, which has built an excellent working relationship among them, facilitating the integration of the new partners and giving support when needed.

Working in a transnational partnership is proven to be a very enriched and interesting experience. The mixture of countries and different backgrounds from the partners make the project an ongoing learning experience where everybody shares their knowledge in order to achieve the best results possible.

The partnership is working well together in a harmonious and supportive manner. The partner meetings have been conducted in an efficient and constructive way and the partners socialise well together during and after the meetings.

5. Plans for the Future

Although, as mentioned in one of the previous sections, the project has seen some positive developments, there are still a lot of things to be achieved in the following year across all of the 10 work packages in order to bring the project to a successful end and these will be outlined below.

Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce (CWCC), the project leader of the **work package 1**, will continue to provide a strategic direction to the project and continuously monitor the progress to ensure that work packages and the project in general are progressing according to the plan and that the outcomes/ results and products are of the highest standards possible. CWCC will further continue to provide organisational and administrative management to the project e.g. organising the partners meetings as these are proving to be a very successful tool in motivating the partnership to carry out the work required.

The work package 2, aimed at quality and evaluation and led by Democenter, an innovation centre from Italy, will continually carry out quality checks on the deliverables of the project, thus making sure that these are of highest quality.

Having completed the main the deliverable of the work package, the leader of the **work package 3**, Aliter, will ensure that partnership will treat the user needs analysis as an ongoing process throughout the life of the project and thus continuously monitor the target group and ensure that the areas covered by project are still relevant to the target group. Further activity undertaken by this work package will also be monitoring the online users of the platform which will further ensure that the project is successful in targeting the correct audience.

Work package 4, Dissemination, will play a very important role as the project progresses and deliverables are being completed. The dissemination leaders, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Prahova, will continue raising awareness of the project and ensure that the project is promoted to the target groups through various means such as leaflets, downloadable presentation placed on the website, pop-up stands, events and conferences. The dissemination leader will also take responsibility for implementation of the social media strategy which seems to be an increasingly popular dissemination tool with a very wide reach. The more dissemination is carried throughout the life of the project, the higher chance of the project being established enough to continue to be used after the end of the project which is the ultimate aim.

Through its activities, the leader of the **work package 5**, Swedish Federation of Private Enterprise, Foretagarna, will continuously seek opportunities that would ensure sustainability of the project after its end and ensure that the results of the project will be exploited to their full potential. It is hoped that leader of this work package will succeed in convincing the European Umbrella organisations to endorse the project which would mean that large number of organisations will be encouraged to use the platform thus achieving the objective of the project and at the same time fulfilling higher purpose of the project which was to increase skills amongst European SMEs.

The work package 6, led by Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce will become increasingly important as the platform develops in the course of the project as it is this work package that will ensure that the partnership has materials that are relevant to SMEs and of high standards to be included on the platform. The Chamber and the partnership will conduct research on e-learning materials and BIOs using Leonardo's EU projects database, ADAM and using assessment criteria identify potentially suitable materials for inclusion the platform. Further to this, owners of the materials, relevant BIOs, will be

approached and invited to participate in the network and contribute their materials and in return access materials of the other contributing organisations.

The main objective around which the whole project revolves, the e-learning platform, which is encompassed in the **work package 7** and led by Virtech, Bulgaria will continue to be one of the most important objectives of the project and technical partner along with the rest of the partnership will work intensively towards improving this deliverable. This will include improvements in functionality, e.g. ability to sign in, search for courses and access these, improvements in attractiveness e.g. improving the layouts, and creating matching designs of the platform and the website, use of images to attract users etc. Improvements will be also made in terms of content; more courses will be uploaded onto the platform once identified by WP6.

Further to making a great progress on the Network Charter to date, **work package 8** leader, development agency Enterprise Lithuania, will continue to improve this operating model for the project network as this will this document will be a key to the ongoing success of the network as it may help allay fears members may have about contributing materials where they have significant investment. The leader of this work package will also embark on the second deliverable of the project which is a report on effectiveness of the project network environment which will hopefully aid improvements in the process of recruiting BIOs to participate in the network and platform.

Connected to the platform is also the **work package 9** which will carry out all the testing required to ensure that both, the website and platform are usable and functional. This work package leader, Democenter, will carry out three levels of testing and on three occasions in the following year using their previous experience in this field, each time noting defects if there are any and report these to Virtech for improvements.

The last **work package - 10**, aimed at Integration of the platform materials into Vocational Education and Training system and led by the educational expert, Spanish University Aliter, will provide guidance to partners on integrate the courses on the platform in their respective countries and guide them in these efforts. Following this, Aliter will document these efforts in a Best practice guide on VET incorporation particularly focusing on lessons learnt during this process so it can be utilised by BIOs attempting to do the same with their courses.

6. Contribution to EU policies

By developing the first prototype version of a technical platform for sharing e-learning resources and in attempting to define a commercial framework in which Business Intermediary Organisations (BIOs) and training providers from across Europe can share SME learning resources, the project is seeking to meet the requirements of the **December 2008 EC Communication on “New Skills for New Jobs**. (The work of the project in this regard is particularly relevant to the parts of this Communication in which the E.C. undertook to “Promote dialogue between business and education and training providers, for the establishment of partnerships to meet medium-term skills needs” and to “Support platforms of companies, training providers to jointly design targeted training courses”.

The creation of the platform of online e-learning materials specifically written to meet the needs of SMEs will allow SME staff to link into 'a framework of learning' at whatever stage of learning they are, thus meeting the **Lisbon European Council’s strategy of “adaptation of education and training systems to lifelong learning and contributing to the Lisbon Treaty aims regarding the development of partnerships for growth and jobs**.

The project’s work on identifying relevant good practice examples in VET and developing a best practice guide the project will also be seeking to **promote the implementation of the European Qualifications Framework**. This will be achieved through defining how the establishment of national qualification frameworks has occurred and explaining how the competences required to engage in further learning and the labour market are acquired and recognised throughout general, vocational, higher and adult education (including the non formal and informal learning offered by the e-learning platform).

The project is also in line the **Europe 2020 Flagship Initiative “An agenda for new skills and jobs”**. This is because the project seeks to contribute to the creation of conditions for modernising labour markets through facilitating the acquisition of new skills which will enable our current and future workforce to adapt to new conditions and potential career shifts, reduce unemployment and raise labour productivity. In particular, the project will give a strong impetus to cooperation in education and training involving all stakeholders (including a very wide range of BIOs and training providers) and by reinforcing the attractiveness of vocational education and training.

The project also aims to increase the range & quality of online training provision available to SMEs across Europe through the development of an online learning repository (available to BIOs and the SMEs that they work with) and in doing so will help address the **Life-Long Learning Priority 3 (Developing Vocational Skills considering the labour market need – New Skills for New Jobs)**. To achieve this the project will work closely with a range of BIOs (e.g. Chambers of Commerce) to define what online learning resources are most needed by their members to promote creativity, competitiveness, employability and the growth of an entrepreneurial spirit, to improve their competitiveness, encourage innovation and foster life-long-learning amongst SME staff.

The creation of the technical e-learning platform and the associated membership network of training materials users/providers from a wide range of BIO organisational types and across a number of European countries will also see the project contribute to a number of Life Long Learning Objectives as well as some Leonardo specific & operational objectives i.e.

- Life Long Learning Objective c: To help improve the quality, attractiveness and accessibility of the opportunities for lifelong learning
- Life Long Learning Objective k: To encourage the best use of results, innovative products and practices and to exchange good practice:
- Leonardo Programme Specific Objective a: To Support participants in training and further training in the acquisition and the use of knowledge, skills and qualifications to facilitate personal development, employability and participation in the European labour market
- Leonardo Programme Specific Objective b: To support improvements in quality and innovation in vocational education and training systems institutions and practices
- Leonardo Programme Operational Objective 2: To improve the quality and to increase the volume of co-operation between institutions or organisations providing learning opportunities, enterprises, social partners and other relevant bodies throughout Europe
- Leonardo Programme Operational Objective 3: To facilitate the development of innovative practices in the field of innovation and training: other than at tertiary level, and their transfer, including from one participating country to others;

[If we need specific details about this they can be taken from the proposal – see below – however there may not be enough room in the Progress Report for this

LLP-obj-c – To help improve the quality, attractiveness and accessibility of the opportunities for lifelong learning

By encouraging BIOs to contribute SME focused e-learning materials to the platform the project is making “best use of innovative products.” The creation of the commercial framework & networking environment so that diverse organisations can collaborate to develop their outputs will “lead to the exchange of good practice.” Promotion of standards & encouragement of the integration of the platform e-learning resources into European VET provision will “improve the quality of education & training.”

LLP-Obj-k – to encourage the best use of results, innovative products and practices and to exchange good practice:

By encouraging BIOs to contribute SME focused e-learning materials to the platform the project is making “best use of innovative products.” The creation of the commercial framework & networking environment so that diverse organisations can collaborate to develop their outputs will “lead to the exchange of good practice.” Promotion of standards & encouragement of the integration of the platform e-learning resources into European VET provision will “improve the quality of education & training.”

LEO-obj-a – To Support participants in training and further training in the acquisition and the

Setting up the platform will enable SMEs across the eight partner countries to access e-learning materials that meet their needs. The network will encourage European BIOs to work together to offer training & capacity development to their members that would be impossible in isolation. At the outset the partners will contribute learning materials to help young people become entrepreneurs & materials to help SMEs trade internationally, thereby improving employability & labour market participation.

LEO-obj-b – To support improvements in quality and innovation in vocational education and training systems

The creation of a technical platform which can translate & enable local contextualisation of e-learning materials plus the set up of a commercial framework to allow European BIOs to share SME learning resources is an innovative improvement to European training systems. The expertise of BIO members in defining what online learning resources

promote competitiveness & employability plus the inclusion of assessment criteria will ensure high quality platform materials which meet the needs of SMEs.

LEO-obj-2 – To improve the quality and to increase the volume of co-operation between institutions

The creation of a commercial framework and networking environment between European BIOs where they can interchange resources and ideas, collaborate on training initiatives and exchange best practice will “improve the quality & volume” between organisations who offer training and capacity development to SMEs. The aim of recruiting new BIOs to the network during the lifetime of the project will also improve the volume and quality of co-operation.

LEO-obj-3 – To facilitate the development of innovative practices in the field of innovation and training:

The involvement of Training Provider platform members in the network will lead to new approaches on materials development. This will be complemented by the exchange of best practice between the members. The inclusion of partners from eight European countries in the project, plus the creation of a technical platform which can translate & enable local contextualisation of e-learning materials will be instrumental in transferring innovative training practices across Europe]

