



VAE, from prior experience to professional qualification

MINUTES OF MEETING CORDOBA 12 & 13TH MAY 2011

Present:

Elisabeth Eschenlohr, Cécile Ximénès, Didier Lefèbvre, Driss Korchane - GIP-FCIP, France
Fritz-Gerhard Kuhn, Maren Cichon - CJD, Germany
Mieszko Wdowiak, Ewelina Debczynska (day one only) - BZDZ, Poland
Inmaculada Diaz Minuoz, Inmaculada Serrano Lopez - CPDE, Spain
Marylise Dufaux - SOL, Switzerland

Apologies: Marcus Flachmeyer, Andreas Schulte-Hemming - Heuraknet, Germany

Please note: NA = National Agency

1. NATIONAL AGENCY (NA) FEEDBACK ON INTERIM REPORT

Interim report sent to National agency at the end of December; feedback received mid-April.

Overall, the evaluators are satisfied with the contributions of all partners.

There are several weakness that need to be addressed.

At the time of the interim report the NA did not have sufficiently detailed information about implementation of the APEL process.

i) REPORTING OF INFORMATION

Implementation of APEL

Action: Each partner to provide detailed information on the status of the implementation of the APEL process and the problems and issues encountered to Driss Korchane (GIP-FCIP)

Deadline: End of June

Financial Reporting

The NA has made several remarks about financial reporting.

Action: Each partner to check carefully the remarks made by the NA and ensure that they follow the reporting rules, using the LLP Guide 2009.

GIP-FCIP also to ensure reporting is correct.

Final Report

In the final report, the project co-ordinator will ensure a coherent narrative. All partners to send detailed information needed for the final report, so that the Co-ordinator can provide a coherent and harmonious narrative.

Action: ½ day of the final conference will be dedicated to an internal partnership meeting to the prepare the final report, and to ensure a complete and thorough report to the NA. All the partners will be actively involved in final report preparation. The objective is to agree a homogeneous approach to the reporting of information.

Each partner needs to prepare their contribution to the final report; **every concrete action undertaken needs to be reported.**

P0 (GIP-FCIP) needs the time to plan the work, receive the information from partners and reorganise it all, and the time to ask any questions or request further information from partners, to ensure that all relevant information is available.

ii) GERMAN PARTNERS

The NA regrets that the legal and institutional and political barriers to APEL were not identified prior to the project application.

Action: Make the case for the participation of CJD despite these barriers. Response to NA via final report form and also a more detailed document making the argument to be uploaded on the Wiki. **Deadline: 31/5/2011 Fritz Gerhard and Mme Eschenlor**

iii) COLLABORATIVE & INTERACTIVE WORKING

The NA remarked on insufficient exchange and sharing of experience between partners and the need to demonstrate interactive work between partners in the final report. The NA remarked that there is little demonstration of sharing and exchange of experience. This is normal at this stage of the partnership (last autumn) as the focus was on the transfer of the methodology and partners were yet to acquire the experience required for meaningful exchange of experience and good practice.

The NA also advised to translate key project documents to facilitate the sharing process

One possibility is to have a group Skype meeting to discuss and share experience of implementation, in the context of the analysis of the APEL implementation process : obstacles, issues, levers, supporting factors, discoveries.

Action : Swiss partner (SOL) to organise a Skype conference (technical factors permitting). **Deadline: 23/06/2011**

Sharing and exchange of experience on the methodology of APEL during this meeting. **Action:** workshop to share experience on **13/05/2011**

All partners to provide a summary of other documents (legal, framework, context, which are not project results) in English. The summary needs to include:

- 1) Who produced the document
- 2) the original audience for the document
- 3) Status of the document (e.g.. legal document)
- 4) how it is used in the project
- 5) Brief summary of content

This will enable partner P1 (Heurakanet) to fulfil its responsibilities in relation to the management of information on the Wiki platform for the sharing of resources and results

Action: translation of documents which constitute project deliverables and summaries in English of all other documents (as per instructions above) **Deadline: 31/05/2011**

REMINDER: as per the e-mail sent to partners on April 13th, we are changing the collaborative work space in order to have greater storage space. The clear Wiki will be closed on 1st June, so ALL documents must be uploaded onto the new platform <http://www.transvae.fr> by **31st May**.

Three months before the end of the project we need to increase the visibility of our work.

iv) PROJECT MANAGEMENT

v)

The NA requests a global progress chart for the project.

Action: P0 (GIP-Cécile Ximénès) to provide a Gantt Chart for the project, integrating the information provided in the complete/not complete list. **Deadline: May 31st**

v) EQF

The NA remarks that Spanish and Polish partners have not related their VAE process to EQF. This was an action in the project proposal (c.3.2, page 22 & 23 of application form). **Partners need to reference the diploma aimed at in terms of the EQF levels.**

The NA remarked that the Spanish and Polish partners have uploaded legal and contextual documents on the Wiki platform, but these are not project deliverables.

Action: Spanish and Polish Partners to upload on the Wiki all the documents they have produced themselves for the project, with Trans-VAE and EU logos. **DEADLINE:31/05/2011**

vi) QUANTITATIVE TARGETS (WP7)

The NA remarks on the need to take care that quantitative targets need to be met. (80 candidates for 100 people informed of APEL for each partner).

Germany (CJD) and Poland (BZDZ) report that the quantitative targets cannot be met. The priority focus in Germany has been on the quality of the APEL process

implementation. In Poland, a number of issues are leading to a smaller number of candidates. In Spain, there is a large number of applicants, but this is creating issues in terms of quality .

Action: Each partner to provide an explanation and argument for not meeting the targets **Deadline: 13/06/11**

REMINDER for WP8 leaders - there needs to be a demonstration of sharing of experience and good practice of APEL implementation between partners for the construction of project good practice.

vii) QUALITY PROJECT MANAGEMENT & IMPLEMENTATION

a) **Action:** According to NA remarks, P0 (GIP-FCIP) will ensure that partners are able to fill in the quality questionnaire. **DEADLINE : 30/06/2011**

b) A Questionnaire will be sent to partners to enable the external evaluator to assess the compliance of partners' APEL process with the specifications.

viii) INFORMATION ON WIKI

All partners to ensure all resources are available on the Wiki.

Action : all partners to make sure all resources produced for the project are on the Wiki. **Deadline: 31/05/2011**

The NA remark in relation to the information activities of CJD being restricted to internal channels is incorrect. **Action:** CJD to upload relevant documents on the Wiki.

ix) DISSEMINATION

GIP has uploaded an excel sheet to record all dissemination activities undertaken by the project. The excel sheet name is «target audience»

Action: All partners to fill in the excel sheet with all the meetings, events and information distribution undertaken to date. **Deadline: 31/05/2011**

Partners can find advice on dissemination in a document from the English National Agency (Ecotec) on the Wiki.

Action: All partners are requested to take the time to read this document.

The Polish partner is responsible for the co-ordination of dissemination and for formalising the dissemination plan.

Photos

Action: all partners please upload photos on the Wiki (left hand side menu). **Deadline: 31/05/2011**

CJD to upload the its film of the participants to APEL if possible

x) FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT

The NA noted a number of errors in the entry of data and highlighted the need to check that are costs are eligible, particularly the ceiling for eligible daily staff costs and the status of partners (e.g. for CDEP Spain, local partners attended European Project meeting.)

Action: GIP will check re the eligibility of travel expenses for local partners

Action: each partner to read the NA feedback carefully and take note of the comments which concern them. All partners need to **ensure that they follow reporting rules, using the LLP Guide 2009 for the final report.** For travel expenses, any expenses over the limit must be explained and justified.

xi) TRANSLATION COSTS

The 4,000€ budget for translation costs is NOT for the translation of project results; it can only be used for costs related to the administration and management of the project, not for project results.

There is NO BUDGET for translating project results. All the translation needs to be done internally using staff costs.

xii) STAFF COSTS - Supporting documents

Action: All partners please make sure time sheets are filled in and signed, and that pay slips are available for each member of staff involved in the project.

It is very important for all partners to follow the indications, advice from the NA and to follow the rules very precisely. This will avoid the waiting time created when the NA has to ask for clarification, for documents. In such cases waiting time for approval of the final report can be up to 2 years. Therefore it is very important to follow advice and rules.

The national agency (NA) commented on the incorrect numbering of partners in the interim report.

Action: GIP to check the correct numbering of partners and let everyone know.

2. PRESENTATION OF THE APEL PROCESS IMPLEMENTATION IN EACH PARTNER COUNTRY

i) BZDZ, Poland

Mieszko Wdowiak presented a powerpoint slide showing a model APEL process for Poland, currently under discussion.

Action: Mieszko Wdowiak will provide the Polish and a translated version of this slide on the Wiki. **Deadline: 31/05/2011**

Mieszko Wdowiak reported that he sits on the official committee considering APEL and reporting to the Ministry of Education, and that his presentation of TRAN-VAE to this committee was well received, with the French methodology being taken into consideration in the discussions.

Mieszko Wdowiak reported that he is working particularly on the political aspects of APEL in Poland, with his participation in the national discussion on APEL.

Mieszko Wdowiak explained that there are a number of obstacles to APEL, not least the fact that the personal care sector is totally unregulated and dominated by private companies; that a majority of personal care staff are older workers who do not see the relevance of gaining a qualification.

Nevertheless, Mieszko Wdowiak reported that he had between 8 and 10 candidates willing to go ahead with APEL, recruited through local partners (private agencies in personal care). They have filled in the first questionnaire. Others contacted have dropped out of the process, being unwilling to commit themselves to the requirements of APEL, others did not have the necessary experience.

Mieszko Wdowiak also reported that the partnership agreement with the Warsaw Institute (advisors to the Ministry of Education) will be signed soon.

Action : BZDZ, Poland

- 1) to upload onto the wiki platform documents relating to the meetings with partners to promote APEL, e.g.. attendance lists from meetings **DEADLINE: 13/6/2011**
- 2) to upload onto the wiki platform documents in relation to the information provided to the target audience about APEL (with an English translation) **DEADLINE: 31/5/2011**
- 3) to upload onto the wiki platform documents in relation to the APEL candidates: filled in candidate questionnaires, with names blanked out, attendance lists. **DEADLINE: 31/5/2011**

ii) CJD, Germany

CJD presented the work on the implementation of the APEL process:

Worked in partnership with HEPs - staff working in cleaning, serving meals and preparing snacks: these tasks are part of the German Hauswirtschaft profession (domestic economy). It is a broad profession with an EQF level of 4, and consists of 3 years' training in the dual apprenticeship system. The interviewees for the APEL process were working at level 2 or 3 and in some aspects of domestic economy, not the whole content of the profession. For the candidates their workplace structure does not give them the opportunity to work at level 4.

One learning point is the importance of taking into account the specific workplace context and the constraints that can exist.

The interviews with APEL candidates took 1 - 2 hours, with two interviewers, one person asking questions, the other taking notes. (see the bilingual minutes describing this on the Wiki)

Quarterly meetings are held with regional partners

Each candidate was given a certificate of competence (based on the Europass format)

Certificates will be awarded at a formal ceremony planned for 31st May 2011 (with several key institutional stakeholders).

Candidates who went through the process gained tremendously from it, for example: an increase in confidence, and understanding of their role in their workplace and its importance, a pride in their work.

The experience to date has shown the value of undertaking this process, even if the APEL process lacks institutional and legal support in Germany at the moment. It is important to act in national discussions on APEL even if the results are unclear. The personal care sector is a good choice as there is a lack of qualified staff in the is sector and employers area more likely to be favourable to APEL in this situation, this is combined with the high level of mobility characteristic of this sector.

CJD showed a short video film of one of the participants in the APEL process.

iii) CPDE Spain

The Spanish partner is working in partnership with a large organisation which has several institutions, including homes for elderly people and a home care service.

CEPD are working with the directors of these institutions. The staff have been informed of the project and the opportunity for them to go through an APEL system.

A grid system is currently being used, which details the competencies required for the professions concerned. This is used as the basis for interviews which may be carried out by the directors.

The large number of candidates is proving detrimental to the establishment of a high quality APEL process in this developmental stage of APEL in the region.

There are also issue with the setting-up of a jury, and the issue has moved up to the political level in order to get things moving. The experience of the implementation of the APEL process will be discussed in more detail in a workshop.

13.05.2011 - DAY 2

1. Workshops: Sharing and exchange of experience and good practice

- 1) Political / Institutional aspects
- 2) dissemination
- 3) methodology

Workshop 1: Political and Institutional Aspects (Participants: Germany, France, Switzerland).

The discussion focused on the German situation, in view of the comments made by the NA

There are several key issues in Germany in relation to APEL.

Firstly and most importantly, it is critical to situate the participation of CJD in Trans-VAE in its context of the long term on-going work that CJD has undertaken on different aspects of the recognition of competencies and qualifications in the regions, with a view to pushing for the official, recognised implementation of APEL in the future and on the solid working relationship between GIP and CJD, (over 10 years).

CJD first became involved with APEL in a 1993 European project. Each project, each partnership undertaken have represented a series of steps towards the goal of legitimising APEL, which must also be viewed in the context of the regions concerned in France and Germany which are border regions with some 60,000 workers crossing the border from France to work in Germany (and Switzerland) every day. It is a situation where a French worker can work in Germany, and have the experience and competences gained recognised through APEL in France, while a German worker cannot even do this in their own country.

There are several developments favourable to legitimising APEL: the German government is currently working on providing a legal framework for the recognition of foreign diplomas; a convention enabling apprentices to work in companies in France or Germany; the «Pass reconnaissance» for cross border recognition of professional diplomas, a precursor to APEL. The Trans-VAE project is the logical next step.

The economic context is favourable to APEL in that employers are facing a shortage of skilled workers and the APEL process offers a way to identify those skills in the workforce. However, one of the main obstacles to APEL are the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, who «own» the professional qualification system and who have a strong vested interest in blocking the implementation of APEL, due to the very high levels of income obtained from professional exam fees. At the same time, employers are facing situations to which APEL can provide, or be part of, the solution.

Certain companies in the cross border region are favourable to APEL, for example, one large company recognises competencies of the German diploma level of «meister» for French staff, giving them the associated pay levels, responsibility and status.

CJD is a large national network with 9000 employees and 150 training centres. CJD is a partner in regional state institutions responsible for the personal care sector (Home economist) and a key player in VET in the region. Indeed, CJD is invited to participate in policy discussions.

With its vast experience and role on the ground, combined with European experience and participation in key European VET networks, CJD is an ideal organisation to participate in TRANS-VAE to push for APEL in Germany.

Participants shared their experience of the political aspects of APEL in their respective countries, particularly France, where APEL legislation came into place in

1992 and Switzerland, also with dual apprenticeship system and key employer role and responsibilities in the VET system

Workshop 2: Dissemination

(Participants: France, Poland)

The participants discussed the dissemination plan and activities, as well as the use of the Adam website. As co-ordinator of WP9, BZDZ will gather information and ideas from partners for the dissemination of results.

Following the workshop feedback, a whole group discussion on dissemination, came to the following decisions:

Adam Website

Action: All partners to fill in the relevant partner section. There are guidelines for using ADAM on the Wiki. **Deadline: 31/05/2011**

Project Leaflet

Cécile Ximénès (GIP-FCIP) to check the content of the French project description on the Adam Website for use in a promotion leaflet, and then send the French and English version to Marylise to check the English translation

Deadline: **18/05/2011** for the FR/EN version to Marylise

20/05/2011 for Marylise to check EN version and return to GIP

Printing of leaflet:

The printing of the project leaflet will not be done in Poland as previously planned. Instead, it is decided to produce an electronic leaflet (2 sides, one side in English the other side in the national language) which each partner will translate and print according to their needs.

Action: BZDZ prepares a virtual leaflet design which partners can then download from the wiki.

Deadlines: **01/06/2011** - texts are translated into the national language, with national websites inserted. (ALL partners)

07/06/2011 - draft version is ready and sent to all partners for written

17/06/2011 Finished leaflet is available on the Wiki (BZDZ)

appro

CJD already produced a local leaflet and poster which were used to promote APEL in the region .

Information about TRANS-VAE on partner websites

Action: BZDZ to check that all partners have been able to put information about Trans-VAE on their organisation's website. **Deadline: 14/06/2011**

Action: All partners to send website link to the Trans-VAE information on their own website to Mieszko Wdowiak (BZDZ) **Deadline: 31/05/2011**

Dissemination Plan

1) Mieszko Wdowiak (BZDZ) to send templates for partners to fill in by **18/05/2011**

2) All partners to fill in the Excel table «target audience» on Wiki by **31/05/2011**

3) All partners fill in and return templates to Mieszko Wdowiak by **01/06/2011**

4) Draft dissemination plan produced by BZDZ and sent to all partners by **17/06/2011**

5) Final version of the dissemination plan ready by **22/7/2011**

Workshop 3 - implementation of APEL methodology

(Participants: Germany, France, Spain)

The participants shared experiences and good practices in the implementation of the APEL process and discussed the questionnaires and methods used.

Germany undertook participant interviews based on the French questionnaires, using two interviewers, who were not specialists in the profession concerned. The applicants' answers and explanations were all recorded. After the interviews, the interviewers weighted the level of the competencies demonstrated.

Spain: used as list of competencies and activities as the basis for interview, led by the director of the workplace. Candidates answered questions around the competences, the answers being noted down by the director.

There is an issue with the high number of applicants (well over 50) which is proving detrimental to the quality of the process.

This will be discussed further this afternoon between P0 and P2, to ascertain a strategy to make the process more appropriate in relation to the applicants. At the moment, the employer is advisor, jury and judge.

2. Swiss contribution to the project

SOL is to undertake a small research project to identify the difficulties, obstacles, issues, Supporting factors and discoveries experienced by partners in the implementation of the APEL process.

Action: A grid to identify initial issues to be sent to all partners **Deadline: 25/05/2011**, followed by more in depth discussions with partners by Skype or telephone.

3. Final conference preparation

The final conference will take place on 8 & 9 September 2011 in Strasbourg (with possibility of one cross border day in Germany)

Action: Each partner to send the name and position of an official representative (senior management level) of their organisation attending (and speaking at) the final conference. to GIP by **15/07/2011**

Travel Budget

Partners who have not used all the budget allocated for the partner meetings so far, can use this money for final meeting travel and accommodation.

Draft Agenda for final Conference

Thursday 08/09/2011

a.m. Internal partner meeting (activities will be organised for guests
14:00 - 18:00 Conference Presentations (Partner representatives and experts)
Friday 09/09/2011
a.m. - 14:00 Show results of project (including film)
Methodology and next steps

14:00 - 16:00 Buffet, networking, «verre de l'amitié»

4. Final Report

Driss Korchane (GIP) will start working on the final report from July 15th.

Action: all partners to send responses to the points raised by NA in the interim report feedback. **Deadline: 15/07/2011**

Evaluation form for Bydgozcz training session

Action: all partners ensure that each participant fill in and return this form to Driss Korchane (GIP), electronic version is OK.

Deadline: 31/05/2011

Internal Project evaluation

Action: Driss Korchane to restart the internal project evaluation. **Deadline: 31/07/2011**

HeurekaNet

The absence of EurekaNet is noted.

Action: GIP to organise meetings with HeurekaNet: a telephone conference in the first instance, followed by a face to face meeting.

REMINDER:

All documents and material on the old Wiki **MUST** be transferred and uploaded onto the new Wiki by **31/05/2011**. The old wiki will be closed on June 1st.

Each partner has access to upload, read, modify on the new platform. Any problems please contact Driss Korchane

The full partnership meeting closed at 15:00.

Sub-meetings:

CPDE (Spain) and GIP (France) held a meeting to give further support and advice to the Spanish partners in the implementation and methodology of the APEL process.

GIP and CH worked on the minutes of the meeting.

The sub-meeting closed at 19:30

ANNEX 1 - TABLE OF ACTIONS

Who	What	Deadline
ALL	all partners to send responses to the points raised by NA in the interim report feedback to GIP - DK	15/07/2011
GIP	½ day of final conference for internal meeting to prepare final report	
CJD/GIP	Make the case for the participation of CJD in Trans-VAE: upload document on wiki	?
ALL	Translate project documents (deliverables) into English	31/05/2011
ALL	provide English summary of «context» documents	31/05/2011
GIP - CX	Provide a project Gantt chart	31/05/2011
CPDE, BZDZ	upload documents produced for the project on the Wiki, with Trans-VAE and EU logos	31/05/2011
CPDE, BZDZ, CJD	Provide explanation and argument for not reaching the target number of APEL applicants	13/06/2011
GIP - DK	ensure partners complete the quality questionnaire	30/06/2011
ALL	Fill in the Excel Sheet «Target Audience» on the Wiki	31/05/2011
ALL	Read the Ecotec Dissemination document available on the Wiki	on-going
ALL	Upload photos of meetings on the Wiki	31/05/2011
CJD	Upload film of APEL participants on Wiki if technically possible.	
GIP - DK	Check the eligibility of European travel expenses for local partners	
ALL	Check carefully the comments made by the NA in the Financial Assessment and make a note of those that concern them for the final report	
ALL	Ensure time sheets are filled in and signed and payslips available for all staff involved in the project	final report
GIP - DK	Check partner numbering with NA and inform partners	
BZDZ	Provide the Polish and a translated version of the APEL powerpoint shown at the meeting	31/05/2011
BZDZ	upload onto the wiki platform documents relating to the meetings with partners to promote APEL, e.g. attendance lists from meetings	13/6/2011
BZDZ	upload onto the wiki platform documents in relation to the information provided to the target audience about APEL (with an English translation)	31/5/2011
BZDZ	upload onto the wiki platform documents in relation to the APEL candidates: filled in candidate questionnaires, with names blanked out, attendance lists.	31/5/2011

Who	What	Deadline
ALL	Fill in relevant partner section on Adam website. Guidelines for using Adam are available on the Wiki	31/05/2011
GIP - CX	Check French project description on Adam website to use for leaflet and send to SOL (MD) along with English version (on Adam)	18/05/2011
SOL	Check English translation and return to GIP	20/05/2011
ALL	Translate leaflet text into national language. Include own website address	01/06/2011
BZDZ	Draft design of leaflet sent to partners for written approval	07/06/2011
BZDZ	final leaflet is available on Wiki	17/06/2011
BZDZ	Check that all partners have Trans-VAE information on their website and confirm to GIP	14/06/2011
ALL	Send link to the Trans-VAE information on own websites to BZDZ	31/05/2011
BZDZ	Dissemination Plan: Send templates to all partners	18/05/2011
ALL	Fill in the Excel Sheet «Target Audience» on the Wiki	31/05/2011
ALL	Fill in and return the templates to BZDZ	01/06/2011
BZDZ	Draft dissemination plan produced by BZDZ and sent to all partners	17/06/2011
BZDZ	Final version of dissemination plan	22/07/2011
SOL	Produce grid to analyse the experience of the implementation of APEL and send to partners to complete	25/05/2011
ALL	Each partner to send name and position of official representative of their organisation attending/speaking at the final conference to GIP - DK	15/07/2011
ALL	Ensure all participants fill in evaluation form for the training session in Bydgozcz and return to GIP - DK	31/05/2011
GIP - DK	Follow-up internal project evaluation	31/07/2011
GIP	Organise telephone conference with HeurekaNet, followed by face to face meeting	

ANNEX 2 - DRAFT OVERALL ARGUMENT FOR NOT REACHING TARGET NUMBERS ACHIEVING APEL

The partnership is committed to ensuring the high quality of the main stages of the APEL implementation process, rather than the achievement of numbers at the cost of quality. According to the legal VET framework in each partner country, achieving certification can take more time than initially foreseen. Indeed, the year 2011 is supposed to be the one of the EU APEL decision, which would of course help. We have not ignored the wager of pushing ahead towards APEL simultaneously with the EU Commission discussion, it was foreseen as contribution to national decisions. Let's remember that in France, GIP has been a key player in this experimentation in Alsace for the national board of education, which was carried out while the authorities were preparing official statements. Concomitance between political discussion and implementing grass roots experimentation cannot be considered a risky undertaking, but better as rational proof of the validity of the APEL protocol.

The decision to pursue APEL is an individual decision by potential candidates, as is the speed at which they follow the process; it is clear that no-one can be forced to enter the process nor pushed to work at a speed which is not appropriate for them. In addition, as there are no success stories to encourage applicants, convincing people of the value of APEL can be difficult. The key aim of the project is the transfer of the *methodology and the conditions required to implement APEL processes (information, training of experts, work on local networks, ownership of the methodology)*. Better to transfer the methodology in good conditions for with lower numbers of final beneficiaries and to create a solid basis for APEL.