

2nd Transnational Partnership Meeting of the DAISS Project

Kolikovski Hotel – Sofia, Bulgaria

15TH – 17TH May 2012

Minutes of the Meeting

(Taken by Val Sanders)

Tuesday 15th May 2012

Present: – Hilary Hale, Val Sanders, Monica Balaj, Anna Vasileiadi, João Rodrigues, Assenka Hristova, George Stoer, Gheorghe Sandulescu, Mariana Bistran, Darius Lasinis, Ausra Bemkiene, Paula del Gludice

First Work Session

Review of Quarter 2 Activity – ATM

Project Management: The session began with an overview of project management and lessons learned. Everyone agreed to use dropbox for shared documents rather than email in order to avoid repetition or omissions that can occasionally arise. New monthly reporting procedures were explained and demonstrated to partners. It was also agreed to complete milestones and KPIs as part of this process.

Adaptation Plan – HRDC: Main area for concern was translation of diagnostic. It was emphasised that each partner will have to consider how to deal with language anomalies and difficulties as they arise. This will be discussed in greater detail in Translation workshop.

HRDC stated that more work needed to be completed on the Needs Analysis.

Development of the Diagnostic – ATM: ATM gave partners a brief update on development of the integrated platform for the diagnostic. The Specification has been completed and the build is in progress with a completion date of June 30th.

Employer Engagement – SPI: Following a short presentation by SPI, IWG suggested that a group engagement strategy where several employers were invited to a meeting to explain DAISS and sell benefits, might be more appropriate for the pilot. Partners see employer engagement as a challenge – not necessarily for the pilot but in terms of wider employer involvement.

IPA SA reported that they had received a very poor response to their email campaign (over 400 emails sent with minimal response). They felt that direct contact with employers – face to face - was more productive. There was some discussion on the Letter of Commitment for Employers. Partners agreed that the letter should be shorter, less formal with more emphasis on the benefits of participation.

- **Action Point: SPI to redraft letter to employers and the recruitment form for the purposes of engagement in the pilot along the lines agreed above.**

It was agreed that for mass marketing a different strategy would be required

2nd Work Session

Research and Needs Analysis Findings - HRDC & SPI

HRDC presented results of the questionnaires completed by VET Providers and end user beneficiaries. Comments on each partners' results were discussed and it was agreed that the general conclusions drawn from the exercise were positive for the project. Partners felt that more work was required on competitor analysis. ATM also reminded partners that they needed to conduct more secondary research on soft skill skills needs in their countries. This would be required both to inform Adaptation and Transfer and meet interim reporting requirements.

- **Action Point: ATM to prepare a template for Competitor Analysis to distribute to partners by end of May**
- **Action Point: Each partner to conduct further secondary research – a summary of no more than 2 sides (A4) to be sent to HRDC by mid-July.**

The results of the Employer Needs Analysis were presented by SPI and it was agreed again that the results were predominantly positive for the project.

IPA SA made the point that, in their experience, employers would only use the tool if it were free of charge. It was clarified that for the duration of the project use of the diagnostic and associated support services were to be delivered at **no cost** to end users.

3rd Work Session

Brief Review of Activities for next 3 quarters - ATM

The session began with a review of project activities going forward. The spreadsheet had been prepared by the project co-ordinators and circulated to all partners prior to the meeting. ATM sought confirmation that partners agreed with task allocations and completion dates. The plan was signed off.

Evaluation – SIC

SIC (Lithuania) presented an overview of the evaluation strategy and confirmed that the external evaluation of the project would be conducted by an independent external evaluator who had been appointed. It was also confirmed that the Evaluator would be attending the next transnational meeting. The presentation covered the purpose of the evaluation and the instruments to be used.

- **Action point: It was agreed that these documents would be placed in dropbox.**

4th Work Session

Translation Workshop – ATM; all partners

ATM introduced the translation workshop explaining its purpose and the decisions that needed to be taken. All partners had received copies of the diagnostic ‘footprint’ prior to the meeting and had been asked to translate a list of key words and phrases. The question of gender was discussed at some length and it was agreed that a ‘masculine’ or ‘neuter’ version (where possible) would be acceptable with feminine endings indicated by slashes or brackets. It was confirmed with the developers that this could be coded.

The second part of the workshop focused on the effectiveness of an automatic translator. Reports had been prepared in all languages (apart from Lithuanian) and distributed to partners for comments on language validity. It was generally agreed that the quality of the translations were unacceptable even as a starting point and that they would require professional expertise in order to achieve the quality and accuracy required.

- **Action Point: ATM to send partners exact specification for translation of reports (estimate for pilot purposes 25,000 words or 50 pages) For wider distribution 55,000 words - this includes back end administration.**
- **Action Point: ATM will investigate if and how translation can be simplified.**

Wednesday 16th May 2012

Present: – Hilary Hale, Val Sanders, Monica Balaj, Anna Vasileiadi, João Rodrigues, Assenka Hristova, George Stoer, Gheorghe Sandulescu, Mariana Bistran, Darius Lasinis, Ausra Bemkiene, Paula del Gludice

5th Work Session

ATM conducted a brief review of the previous day’s work sessions and summary of action points to date.

Pilot Planning Workshop – ASEV & all partners

The session began with a discussion on end user target groups. It was agreed that in general we were targeting Adults but that some segmentation amongst the partnership might prove beneficial in terms of project results. The following was agreed:

- ATM would focus on adults who were either recently redundant in the workplace or under threat of redundancy.
- IWG would focus on mature students applying for internships. These would be reached through university outlets.
- ASEV would focus on VET trainers and adult students on vocational programmes

- SIC will target NGOs in terms of employers and Adults who are disadvantaged in the labour market.
- FORSAS will target immigrants, unemployed adults and those who are already in employment
- HRDC will focus on women wishing to return to work
- **SPI will consult with colleagues and inform partners in the near future**
- IPA SA will focus on adult students, potential employees of SMEs and employees who are seeking redeployment through restructuring.

The discussion then focused on how to evaluate the pilot. FORSAS suggested questionnaires for SMEs and real time observation for students. To ensure objectivity HRDC suggested a template for directed observation and a checklist for observers.

On further discussion it was decided to use online questionnaires (either Survey Monkey or Pollmill.com). The latter was demonstrated by SIC. It was recommended as easy to use, available in all languages and free of charge. The consensus was that partners could use either tool but it was essential that we all used the same questions.

- **Action point: ASEV to produce a first draft of questions (evaluation of pilot) by 15th June. Responses and comments from partners to be completed and forwarded to ASEV by 29th June.**

6th Work Session

Exploitation – Presentations by IPA SA

The first presentation was based on the initial Exploitation Plan completed by IPA SA earlier in the year. It summarised the main points and drew attention to the importance of Mainstreaming and Multiplication.

The second presentation was based on the theoretical notion of ‘the Art of Persuasion’ and concluded that in terms of employer engagement ‘Public Relations’ were superior to ‘Advertising’.

The presentations were followed by some discussion on IPR. Terms and conditions for use of the diagnostic are currently on the Self Awareness website and will also appear on the new platform. However, IPA SA would like a printed document stating terms and conditions of use during the pilot with an accompanying disclaimer for use of the diagnostic by the partners.

- **Action point: ATM will send this document to IPA SA before the pilot is conducted**

7th Work Session

Dissemination Workshop – ATM

ATM distributed the dissemination strategy amongst partners for comment. This was followed by a discussion on the best way to record dissemination and to collect evidence.

- **Action Point: Partners to send evidence of dissemination activities (screen shots etc.) with progress reports. The latter have been modified to incorporate additional reporting. ATM will place a folder for dissemination in dropbox.**

HRDC showed partners copies of e newsletters and press releases that had been circulated across their network. They also demonstrated how they had used links on their website to publicise the project.

IWG gave a demonstration of a soft skills 'web teaser' designed by their Intern. This has already appeared on Facebook and has proved extremely successful. It will be used to promote interest and encourage participation in the project and will be linked to their micro-site.

ATM showed partners the beta version of the project website and invited comment. FORSAS was not keen on the background image as it was not deemed representative of the labour market. However, other partners felt that it was acceptable. Website to go live by 31st May.

- **Action Point: ATM to select more pictures for partner approval. It was agreed that a series of background images could be included and rotated to keep the website fresh and interesting**
- **Action Point: ATM to add more text to website**
- **Action point: Partners to put completed case studies and other content into drop box (or email to Claire) for uploading to project website**
- **SIC to send EPS logo to Nita (ATM) for inclusion on brochure**
- **All alterations and additions to website to be sent to Nita (ATM)**

Forthcoming dissemination events were discussed. ATM to present 2 papers at conferences in Bucharest. These will coincide with 3rd transnational meeting. Other arrangements concerning the meeting in Bucharest were discussed and it was agreed that ATM would prepare a draft agenda for circulation as soon as possible. The possibility of the 3rd meeting to include an extra day for training in diagnostic interpretation is under consideration.

- **Action point: ATM to prepare draft agenda for 3rd transnational meeting and distribute for comment by mid-June**
- **Action point: ATM to prepare a paper and presentation for conferences in Romania**

Thursday 17th May 2012

Present: – Hilary Hale, Val Sanders, Monica Balaj, Anna Vasileiadi, João Rodrigues, Assenka Hristova, George Stoer, Gheorghe Sandulescu, Mariana Bistran, Darius Lasinis, Ausra Bemkiene

8th Work Session

Quality Assurance and Risk Management – ATM

The session commenced with a brief review of the QA strategy – a reminder of the balanced scorecard process and the associated KPIs. Partners were asked to complete progress towards achievement of KPIs on monthly reports.

This was followed by a review and discussion of the Risk Management strategy and register. IPA SA commented that there was a presumption that the platform & system would be perfect (i.e. achieve

100% functionality) and commented that this is rarely the case with any software system. It was agreed that level of 'trust in the tool' needs to be included on risk register. This was added by ATM and it was agreed that the risk strategy would be reviewed at the next meeting.

Group Activity – Template for newsletter

IPSA, SIC and HRDC showed examples of newsletters promoting the project that had already been published. For the collective newsletter it was agreed that a good headline was needed and that the text needed to be short and punchy – 2 or 3 elements at most. The main points to consider are: interest of the reader, benefits to the reader, interests of the consortia.

- **Action Point: ATM to produce a draft newsletter by mid-June. This will be translated by partners for distribution.**

Meeting Wind Up – ATM & Partners

The date of the next meeting was agreed and confirmed by all partners

It was agreed that the next meeting should be extended by to accommodate the training required prior to piloting. (see below). Evaluation forms were completed by all partners.

- **Action Point: IPA SA to send itinerary for conferences to ATM.**

In addition to the main work sessions a series of project clinics were held with each partner and the project co-ordinator. These one to one sessions provided an opportunity for partners to discuss any specific issues with the co-ordinator. They also provided an opportunity to run through a task check list with project co-ordinators, ensuring that all documentation had been sent and received.

The next meeting will take place in Bucharest, Romania. There will be 1 day for training and 2 days for the project meeting. It is anticipated that partners will travel on Monday 24th September. The whole meeting will last for 3 days (25th, 26th and 27th concluding at 5 p.m. on Thursday 27th September). One of these days will be devoted to training in preparation for the pilot. Two days have been allocated to work through and complete other project business.

