

THESEIS Project Training on Health and Safety for workers in the Environment Industrial Sector

The THESEIS project has been funded in the framework of Lifelong Learning Programme under the action of LEONARDO DA VINCI Multilateral Projects for Development of innovation.

(Grant Agreement reference no 2011-3988/001-001 signed on 11/11/2011).

THESEIS partners

-  [SIGMA Consultants Ltd](#)
-  [Federation of Industries of Northern Greece](#)
-  [Hellenic Institute for Occupational Health and Safety](#)
-  [PREVENT](#)
-  [Forschungsinstitut Betriebliche Bildung](#)
-  [Occupational Safety Research Institute](#)
-  [Finnish Institute of Occupational Health](#)
-  [Swedish TelePedagogic Knowledge Centre](#)
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Training on Health and Safety for workers in the environment Industrial Sector

1. The THESEIS Project

THESEIS project aims at developing, testing, validating and disseminating an **innovative training model** in the field of **Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)** for the **workers occupied in the pollution management sector of eco-industry**.

THESEIS instructional strategy is anticipated to create a learning culture on OHS aspects according to learner needs where collaborative learning with multiple perspectives and self-management will be promoted.

The training model will be developed and implemented using a phased, extensively interactive collaborative approach incorporating early stakeholder involvement in the design of the learning outcomes and services, as well as utilizing graphic-oriented tools for the analysis and design stages for the production of vocational training material. The training model will use a web-based Virtual Community Platform (VCP) which will provide powerful and rich-on line information, multilingual interaction and networking and collaborative information publishing services

between users.

According recent studies, the training needs for acquisition of skills, competences in OHS issues, in European eco-industries, have received the first or second highest ranking amongst all other training needs. Therefore, the learning outcomes will be designated according the specific training needs of workers that will be identified via a research survey along with the investigation of the existing National Qualifications Frameworks for the workers occupied in eco-industry sector, in all eight European, participating in the project, countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Greece, Poland, Sweden).

It is anticipated that the adaptation of the new innovative training model will generate several direct benefits (improve labour conditions, decrease risks and possibility of accidents) both for companies and workers operating in the eco-industry sector addressed. In addition it will empower companies and individuals to engage in true lifelong learning, career planning and evolution and encourage new entrants into the sector, ensuring healthier and safer working conditions as well as improved

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competencies and skills, thus facilitating the mobility of the eco-industry workforce.

THESEIS project proposal was submitted in Leonardo da Vinci (LdV) European Vocational Training programme, the proposal was approved in July 2011 and its realization started the 1st of November 2011. It has a 2 years' duration and an overall budget of 533,264.00 Euro. The project is funded by 75% within the framework of the LdV programme.

2. The European Eco-Industry Sector and the necessity of THESEIS project

Facts and Figures of the European Eco-Industry Sector ^[1]

According to the definition of Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Economic Development (OECD) and the Eurostat, eco-industries are "those [identifiable] sectors within which the main – or a substantial part of – activities are undertaken with the primary purpose of the production of goods and services to measure, prevent, limit, minimize or correct environmental damage to water, air and soil, as well as problems related to waste, noise and eco-systems."

In comparison to other industries, the major characteristic of the European eco-industry is undoubtedly its diversity. The type of activities range from high-tech and complex services in e.g. renewable energy and air pollution control to mature and well established applications in recycling and waste treatment. This also implies that the sub-sectors have different innovation and technological potential, and therefore vary in finding and validating new opportunities for creating value added. SMEs are especially present in the so-called 'regulation driven' markets, such as air pollution control and eco-construction. Yet in the older sub-sectors such as waste treatment and collection large and multinational companies are the major actors. Recycling is a case in particular with large companies at the top of the collection and

processing chain and a base of SMEs that collect, sort and process at smaller scale and feed their output into the production of the larger ones.

The size of the EU eco-industry has been estimated using methods which rely strongly on environmental protection expenditure data and which are consistent with the ones of previous studies. In 2008, the employment reached approximately 3.4 million. Total turnover was estimated to be more than 300 billion €. While the average growth in nominal terms was about 2% p.a. in previous reports, the current study arrives at a rate of 7% to 8% p.a.

The four largest sub-sectors ^[1] take up to roughly three quarters of the total eco-industry with waste management (30%) as the largest one followed by water supply (21%), wastewater management (13%), and recycled materials (13%).

The Necessity of THESEIS project

It is sufficiently documented that workers occupied in pollution management activities were offered so far training programs which were targeting to the improvement of their qualifications, mainly, at technical aspects. The training need for acquisition of skills, competences in Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) issues received the first or second highest ranking amongst all other training needs. As it is revealed by an extensive survey conducted in the project participating countries as well as in the publications of the respective EU organizations, there is no training material specifically oriented to be used by the eco-industry sector for the in job training and/or lifelong learning of its workforce on OHS issues. There are a very few initiatives with similar references but even those cover a very limited range of activities. Moreover they are based on conventional training delivery tools and are not designed to provide any mechanism to assess the learner's development toward achieving the intended competencies.

It is foreseen that the high demand of

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professionals in the fields of OHS and the pollution management sector of the eco-industry, the priorities of the E.U. policies towards sustainable development and green economy combined to the collaborative and networking character of THESEIS project, to lead to at a high level the demand for the THESEIS project results and outcomes in a medium and long term perspective.

Finally, as green and sustainable practices become more common in Europe and also in other parts of the world, there is an opportunity to promote worker safety and health as a fundamental dimension of true sustainability. A sustainable product, process or technology should not only protect the environment and the consumer but also the worker. Green jobs must be safe jobs and eco-industry can show the way to that.

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^[1] Study on the Competitiveness of the EU eco-industry- Final Report – Part 1- ECORYS SCS Group, Brussels, 09 October 2009.

3. The VCP Training Platform

The VET Demonstration training model will be based on the collaborative instructional strategy and will use all the necessary learning services made available from the THESEIS Virtual Community Platform (VCP) for the preparation of the training courses.

THESEIS VCP is an online tool that allows all THESEIS members to have access to all their specific contents, groups, and services from anywhere in the world with a web browser. Each service plays a vital role in delivering the value of online communities as well as communicating, sharing, and publishing many different types of information.

The demonstration module will be restricted to the project consortium until the consensus and approval on the design and functionality have been reached.

The final version of THESEIS-VET model will contain all the training modules complete with content (30st of April 2013).

4. Launch of THESEIS Website

THESEIS project website is officially launched. A full description of the project and the consortium partners can be accessed via the website. Additionally a direct link to the Virtual Community Platform (VCP), the Training Platform where the OHS training material will be developed and delivered to the trainees has been added. At the moment, interested users can be informed about the training platform operation.

THESEIS website will be regularly updated on project progress, results and deliverables. It will also be translated in all participating countries languages.

Website visitors can be informed on other, related to THESEIS projects and have a direct access to them, on the dates of vocational, educational training events, such as seminars, conferences.

5. THESEIS Kick-off Meeting

The kick-off meeting of THESEIS project was realized in Brussels on 17 & 18 January of 2012, just before the EACEA meeting for the new Leonardo da Vinci projects. The meeting was hosted by partner PREVENT.

During the meeting analytical descriptions of the project workpackages and the operation of the Virtual Community Platform were presented. ELINYAE also presented different types (videos, lectures, presentations) training material that can be used for web-based courses.

6. Next Planned Action – Events

Next planned meeting of the THESEIS partners is the 2nd coordination meeting that will be held in Prague, on the 7th and 8th of June 2012. It will be hosted by the Czech Occupational Safety Research Institute (VUBP).