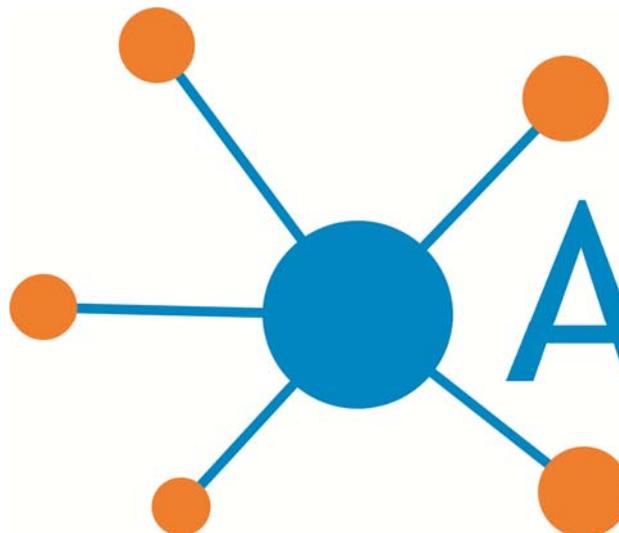




Executive Agency, Education, Audiovisual and Culture



AMaP

Age Management in Practice

**Age Management in Practice: Improving Access to
VET/CVET for Older Workers Across Europe - AMaP**

Final Report

Public Part

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Executive Summary

Over the last 10 years, there has been a general increase in the employment rates of older adults across Europe. Almost all countries have experienced an increase in the employment rate of workers aged 55-59 and 60-64¹. This is projected to continue in the future, presenting significant challenges for older workers remaining in the workplace. Moreover, the ageing workforce is a development that also has implications for employers and their approaches to human resource management. It is important for employers to have a strategy in place for managing the ageing workforce in order to remain competitive².

The Age Management in Practice (AMaP) project aimed to engage with **older workers** and **employers** as well as **key stakeholders** such as Chambers of Commerce, National Qualifications Authorities and Cedefop, to: improve access to CVET for older workers by identifying challenges and supporting participation in lifelong learning; investigate and positively influence the attitudes of employers towards older workers; and work with Cedefop, Chambers of Commerce and National Qualifications Agencies (NQA's) to effectively disseminate project results

To achieve these objectives, the **project partnership**, consisting of 6 organisations from across Europe, pulled together their collective experience of working in the fields of adult learning, research and policy influencing to execute the **project strategy** which placed older workers firmly at the heart of the project. The **methodology** used combined traditional research methods for capturing data from employers while engagement with individuals and key stakeholders was more targeted.

A number of products have been developed, including a comprehensive **Learning Model** for older learners as well as an innovative **EQF Mapping System** designed to assist older workers benchmark their skills and experience against nationally recognised frameworks, to help understand the validity and currency of their skills in today's labour market. Moreover, a questionnaire **survey of employer's attitudes** towards older workers was distributed and analysed before **Age Management seminars** took place in selected countries to encourage employers to adopt more age diverse policies and practices. Finally a range of dissemination activities took place, in particular the production of a '**Talking Heads**' DVD which has been used and will continue to be used in highlighting the challenges and opportunities of workforce ageing for individuals, employers and policy makers.

¹ Eurofound (2012) *Employment trends and policies for older workers in the recession*, Luxembourg: Publications Office.

² CIPD – Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2012) *Managing a Healthy Ageing Workforce*, Accessed 4 November 2012: <http://www.cipd.co.uk/binaries/5754ManagingageingworkforceWEB.pdf>

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1. Project Objectives

Background

Demographic change in Europe over the last thirty years has seen Europe's population age significantly. The widely acknowledged drivers of increasing life expectancy and lower rates of mortality mean individuals in Europe are living longer than ever before. This combined with fertility rates that are lower than those required for countries to naturally re-populate means there is a decline in the number of younger people and increasing numbers of older people.

These factors have led to a steady rise in the number of adults aged 50 and over in employment or seeking employment across Europe. Over the last 10 years, there has been a general increase in the employment rates of older adults across Europe. The increases vary significantly indicating a great deal of diversity across Member States. Only 13% of 60-64 year olds in Hungary were employed in 2010 compared with 60% in Sweden. All countries with the exception of Romania and Portugal saw an increase in the employment rate of workers aged 55-59, while Greece, Poland, Portugal and Romania all experienced a decline in employment rates for 60-64 year olds³.

The Age Management in Practice (AMaP) project was framed around this challenge of increasing employability among older workers. While recognising that there are a number of issues and factors that will impact on an individual's capacity to work in later life, one of the key barriers is access to learning development opportunities. While Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Continuing Vocational Education and Training (CVET) are now familiar terms for many individuals, they are less likely to be recognised by older adults. In addition, older adults who have become disengaged from learning are even less likely to engage in VET/CVET activity, with participation rates considerably lower than their younger counterparts⁴. Thus, it makes the process of engaging older adults in VET extremely difficult, resulting in a need to educate older adults on a) what VET/CVET is and b) the benefit and value it can bring. In order to achieve this, foundations must be built to increase confidence and motivation and help older adults re-engage in learning. Core to this is effective guidance, advice and support.

AMaP Project Aims and Objectives

Over the project life-span, the key aims were to:

- Improve access to CVET for older workers by identifying challenges and supporting participation in lifelong learning
- Investigate and positively influence attitudes of employers towards older workers
- Work with key stakeholders, such as Cedefop, Chambers of Commerce and National Qualifications Authorities to ensure effective dissemination of results.

³ Eurofound (2012) *Employment trends and policies for older workers in the recession*, Luxembourg: Publications Office.

⁴ Cedefop (2010) *Older Worker's Training: Low, but why?*, Accessed 30 Nov 2012:
<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/articles/16495.aspx>

In order to achieve the aims of the project, the partnership aimed to:

1. Develop a learner engagement model for older workers aged 50+

The creation of an 18-hour learning programme to encourage older workers to engage in learning that will improve their employability in later life. This will be a flexible model that can be delivered over a series of sessions, for example a 6 week period, 3 hours per week, or more intensively over a 3 day period.

2. Improve knowledge and awareness among older workers of the European Qualification Framework (EQF)

Working with National Qualifications Authorities (NQA's), develop a Mapping System that will allow older workers to benchmark their skills and qualification against the EQF. This will be delivered as a separate session distinct from the Learning Programme.

3. Conduct an employer's survey to measure awareness of the ageing workforce and attitudes towards older workers

A quantitative, cross sectional study of employers using an e-questionnaire will be carried out to examine attitudes towards older workers and ascertain awareness of key age management principles. An evaluation of the results will be done and findings presented in an evaluation report.

4. Organise seminars for employers on age management and create a DVD of employer views

Seminars will be hosted in three of the partner countries to disseminate the findings of the employer's questionnaire and to raise awareness of the benefits age management policies and practices can bring. In addition, a 'Talking Heads' DVD will be created to present the views of employers on the issue of an ageing workforce and the challenges presented. It will also include the views from the perspective of key stakeholders across the 6 partner countries and will be launched at the final conference.

5. Disseminate project findings through a final conference in Uppsala, October 2013

The climax of the project will be to present all the tools, products and findings of the project at an event in Uppsala, to take place in October 2013. This will present an opportunity to influence key policy makers from partner countries on the potential of the tools created, improving the chances of sustaining the project activity beyond the project life-time.

To meet these objectives, a project work plan was created and split into a number of work packages, specifically:

- Work Package 1 Project Management
- Work Package 2 Learning Model for Older Workers
- Work Package 3 EQF for Older Workers
- Work Package 4 Employer Attitudes to Older Workers
- Work Package 5 Age Management Seminar for Employers
- Work Package 6 Dissemination and Valorisation

2. Project Approach

Early on in the project, the partnership devised a strategy that placed improving access to, and participation, in CVET for older workers as the main focus of the project. From this central theme, five key components emerged as shown in Figure 1, each with their own methodology.

Figure 1: AMaP Project Approach



Source: Own

1. Learning Model

Using the skills and experience of the project partners⁵, particularly those with an expertise in training and development of older adults (P1 and P5), a Learning Model has been designed using a combination of peer supported learning activities, where older learners draw strength and confidence from learning from each other with an element of facilitated learning to encourage greater participation and provide direction.

2. EQF Mapping

For this element of the project, engagement with the NQA's was deemed as crucial, as any benchmarking of skills and qualifications must first be done at a national level before being able to 'map' across to the EQF. To achieve this, guidance was taken from the

⁵ For full details of the project partnership please see Section 4, p17

National Qualifications Authority in Scotland, considered as one of the world leaders in qualification framework development. The Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework worked strategically with the lead partner to provide guidance on the development of a coherent and comprehensive mapping framework that allows older workers to benchmark their skills, experience and qualifications against the EQF.

3. Employer Attitudes

The methodology chosen to carry out this element of the project was a cross-sectional, quantitative questionnaire⁶ distributed electronically by all partners to employers in each of their respective countries. The questionnaire was designed jointly by P1, P3 and P6, with P6 hosting the online software⁷ and carrying out analyses. They were also responsible for the collation of results with each partner translating the results into English for evaluation purposes.

4. Research

Led by P1, the partnership prepared an academic abstract and presentation which was submitted to, and accepted by, the Journal for Vocational Education and Training (JVET) conference, a peer-reviewed international conference attracting a global audience of academics and practitioners in the field of VET.

5. Stakeholder Engagement

It became clear through discussion among partners that the main way to disseminate the project and ensure the sustainability of the products created, was to involve a number of strategic partners. This was achieved by inviting representatives of the Chambers of Commerce in each of the partner countries to partner meetings to ensure buy-in of the project ideas and concepts by a key group which can influence employers at a local level. In addition, NQA's were also invited along to partner meetings, again to share their views on older adults, as well as ensuring the mapping of older workers skills and qualifications is taken into consideration when formulating national policy, which in turn affects the future viability of the EQF.

The strategy adopted for dissemination and exploitation of the project embraced a five-tiered approach:

Tier 1 – Individual Level

Through the work carried out in work package 2, the Learning Model engaged directly with older workers to help improve confidence and motivation for learning in later life. This ensured the products developed were utilised by the key target group identified in this project. Moreover, the EQF Mapping tool was also tested with individuals in the pilot countries ensuring greater awareness of the EQF and NQF's was achieved.

Tier 2 – Organisational Level

Through the Age Management seminars as part of work package 5, the project directly engaged with employers to disseminate the findings of the employer's questionnaire (work

⁶ Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2007) Research Methods for Business Students, 4th Edition, Essex, Pearson Education Ltd.

⁷ Software used is Netigate: <http://www.netigate.co.uk/>

package 4) and raise awareness of the concept of age management and its potential value at an organisational level. The project flyer and newsletters⁸ were also used as awareness raising tools to increase the visibility of the project

Tier 3 – Local Level

At a regional level, partners engaged with Chambers of Commerce and other employer representative groups such as trade unions and regional development organisations to ensure effective dissemination of project results and findings. Representatives were also invited along to partnership meetings to strengthen the links between the project and these key influencers.

Tier 4 – National Level

The National Qualifications Authorities directly influenced the work carried out in relation to the EQF mapping. It was agreed by the partnership that the specialist knowledge and expertise of the NQA's in relation to the national frameworks would be vital to the successful achievement of work package 3. In addition, this is crucial for the future sustainability of this part of the project as NQA's are key actors in ensuring new and innovative tools are developed and taken forward beyond the life-span of the project.

Tier 5 – International Level

At a European level, dissemination and exploitation activity concentrated around key agencies such as Cedefop, ensuring the project was presented at relevant conferences and seminars. This offered an added dimension of multiplication whereby the project and its products/results were presented to a number of agencies and organisations with an interest in this field.



⁸ Available on the project website: <http://www.a-map.eu/index.php/documents>

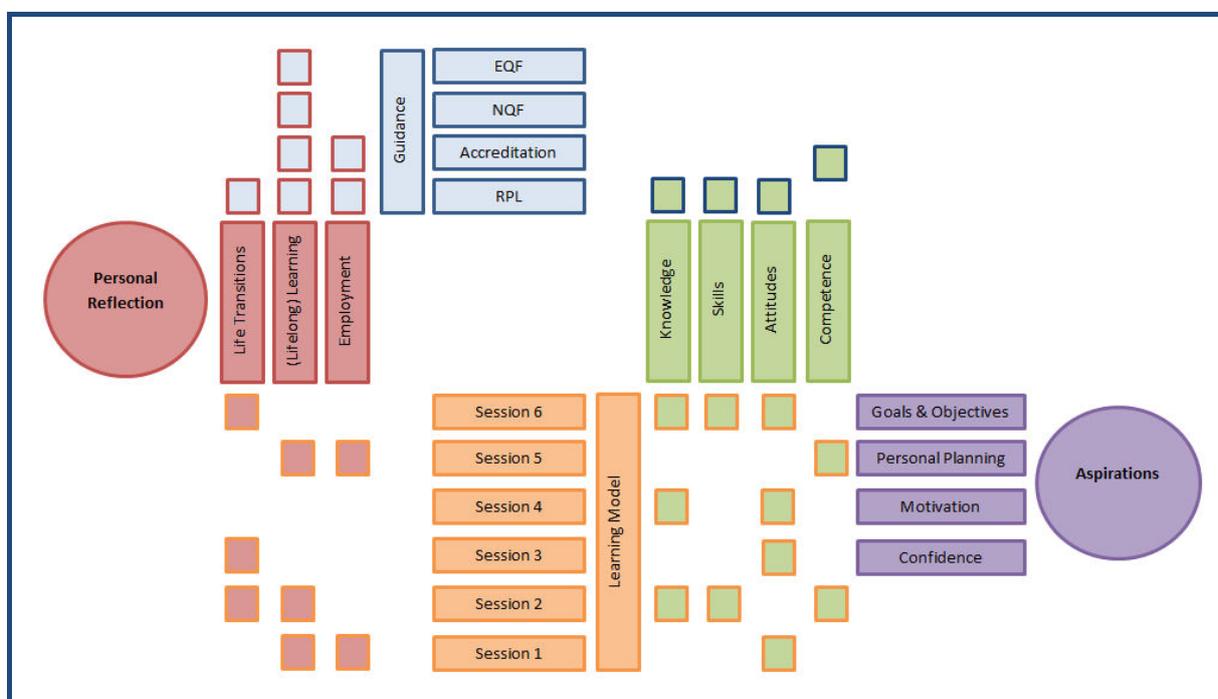
3. Project Outcomes & Results⁹

After 27 months of project activity, the partnership has achieved the following outcomes and results:

Work Package 2 – Learning Model for Older Workers

A Learning Model has been created and translated into the testing partner languages. Figure 2 shows the model used, and details the reflective and aspirational elements built into the programme. It was based on two models shared by P1 and P5, the *Realising Your Potential* model the *Recognition and Validation of Competences*.

Figure 2: Learning Model and EQF Mapping Overview



Source: Own

Designed as an 18-hour programme, it can be delivered in a flexible way, either over an intensive period or over the course of a few weeks. There are six sessions in total:

- Session 1: Confidence for Learning*
- Session 2: Defining Learning*
- Session 3: Lifelong Learning*
- Session 4: Motivation for Learning*

⁹ All project results and deliverables are available for download on the project website: <http://www.amap.eu/index.php/deliverables>

Session 5: Learning Development

Session 6: The Learning Journey

Evaluation: Sharing Learning

The Learning Model was tested in Germany, Poland, and Portugal with a total of 67 older learners participating and was very well received by all participants. It aimed to engage and inspire older workers to re-engage in learning and development and to help them find out more about the value of VET/CVET and lifelong learning. *“The benefits that are coming from the participation in this type of training is the ability to self-discovery of new competence, reflect on his own person, own life and approach to the reality”*. A comprehensive evaluation report of the pilot activity, capturing the views and experiences of learners, was also produced.

Work Package 3 – EQF for Older Workers

The EQF Mapping System was designed and created for two reasons. Firstly, it is to benchmark participants to a notional EQF Level. This improves confidence as it proves equivalency of learning and skill from life and work experience to a more academic setting. Secondly, it was designed to improve knowledge, confidence and understanding of a participant’s individual skills and knowledge gained from life and work experience. By taking part in the EQF Mapping System, an individual will have a clearer picture of what they have to offer when pursuing Continuing Vocational Education and Training (CVET) or employment.

There are seven parts to the EQF Mapping System:

- Step 1: *‘My Experience’* Activity – Identifying skills gained throughout working life and hobbies and interests
- Step 2: *‘Review’* – Discuss with your Adviser what you have discovered about yourself
- Step 3: *‘Who Do You Think You Are?’* – This part tells you what kind of person you are using the four EQF Areas – Knowledge, Practical Skill, Thinking Skill and Competence – and how your skills fit into the workplace
- Step 4: *‘My Examples’* – Reflective exercise to more fully understand your own skills in more depth
- Step 5: *‘Benchmarking’* – Mapping your skills to the EQF Area identified in Step 3
- Step 6: *‘My Skills’* – An opportunity to identify language suitable for future applications
- Step 7: *‘My Future’* Profile – Compile everything you have learned together in one place

These steps are supported by an Adviser’s Guide for the facilitator and a User’s Guide for the participant. An *Introduction to EQF Mapping System* document was also developed as part of the resources.

All partners successfully engaged with their National Qualifications Authority and disseminated the project to them, and P1 has created a strategic link whereby support is

being provided in developing the Mapping System at a national level beyond the life-span of the project.

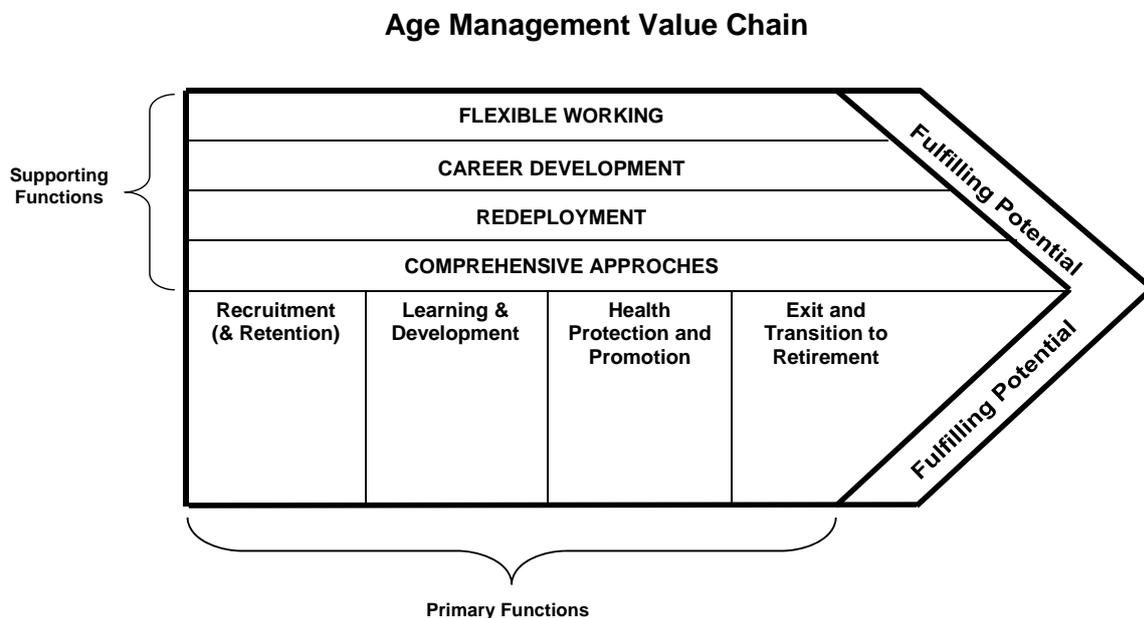
The Mapping System was successfully piloted with 53 older learners across the partner countries, with an evaluation report of the pilot, capturing the views and experiences of learners, produced.

Work Package 4 – Employer Attitudes to Older Workers

The objective of the research was to measure attitudes of employers toward older workers in areas such as productivity, capacity for learning and return on investment of training and development.

The method used to collect data was an e-questionnaire, which was developed using Netigate¹⁰. The questionnaire aimed to carry out a cross-sectional study of employers in each of the partner countries to establish the levels of awareness among employers of the ageing workforce in Europe. The survey consisted of approximately 50 questions which were divided into the following sections: information about the company; HR Department within the company; and Age Management and attitudes towards older workers within the company. Desk research led to the identification of key core concepts of Age Management, which can be presented as a 'Value Chain' (Figure 3) which if implemented can increase productivity and fulfil the potential of older workers.

Figure 3: Age Management Value Chain



Source: Own

¹⁰ A draft of the questionnaire which was sent can be accessed here: <http://www.netigatetest.net/test.asp?s=94556X5374>

The survey consisted of multiple choice questions together with open questions. The questionnaire was distributed to 100 employers in each partner country through the web based survey system Netigate. A total of 341 companies responded to the survey, with the results written as an analysis report and used as part of the dissemination activity as part of work package 5.

Work Package 5 – Age Management Seminars for Employers

The seminars for employers were aimed at providing an overview of the concepts of age management, providing more specific information on the benefits of having an age diverse workforce. P3 developed the content of the seminars, based on desk research and the wider expertise on age and employability brought in particular by P1.

The seminars took place in three of the partner countries: the UK, Sweden and Greece, with 44 employers attending



Targeted at HR Managers, Managing Directors and company owners, their aim was to provide information on the value of age management practices and policies, in particular, the strategic challenges of an ageing workforce, recruitment and retention strategies, age auditing as well as the value of introducing lifelong guidance practices.

For all seminars, content material was developed to be used by partners, coupled with marketing material for the recruitment of participants and overall dissemination of the event. All seminars were half day events and a feedback questionnaire's was given to the participants.

A comprehensive evaluation report of the seminars, capturing the views and attitudes of employers who participated, was also produced.

Work Package 6 – Dissemination and Valorisation

There have been a significant dissemination activity and commitment to sustainability and valorisation throughout the project period. In particular:

- The project website was developed and updated throughout the project, attracting over 26,000 visits from almost 16,000 individual users. It remains fully operational and can be accessed at <http://www.a-map.eu>

- Four bi-annual newsletters¹¹ created and circulated to networks in each of the partner countries.
- Project logo designed and included on all project materials to ensure a unique and visual representation of the project.
- European dissemination has taken place at 6 key events:
 - o The LINQ European Conference on 23 October 2012, where the project was presented by P5 in a workshop to key stakeholders from across Europe, all of whom are actively involved in the (C)VET field. LINQ 2012 was the leading European conference on Learning Innovations and Quality.
 - o The lead partner was invited by the European Commission to present the AMaP project at one of the key events of the year in Brussels on 19-21 November 2012. The *'One Step Up in Later Life'* conference was attended by some of the key policy makers in Europe, including Mr Antonio Silva Mendes, Director of the Lifelong Learning policies and programme and Ms Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner for the Education, Culture Multilingualism and Youth. The event was organised by Cedefop and provided a platform for the project to be showcased to some of the key stakeholders the project is influencing, including Mr Christian Lettmayr, Acting Director of Cedefop.
 - o The lead partner was also invited by the European Commission to provide expert knowledge at the *'Adult Learning: Spotlight on Investment'* conference on 12-13 December 2012.
 - o The lead partner presented the project in the European Parliament on 24 April 2013 as part of a Parliamentary Hearing on the theme of *Ageing and Intergenerational Fairness*, organised by WhatIf International and presided over by Commissioner Laszlo Andor.
 - o In October 2013, P3 presented the project in Beijing at the *'International Conference on Learning Cities'* organised by the Ministry of Education of China, UNESCO and the Government of Beijing Municipal city, with 560 delegates from 102 countries, including several Ministers and Decision makers from all over the world. AMaP was been presented as a model of Best Practice from the EU, in particular, regarding the transfer of know-how and the European Qualifications Framework. It was also highlight that the project's key learning models are closely linked with National Strategies and the importance of such frameworks on building and transforming cities into Learning Cities.
 - o The lead partner presented the project at the EAPRIL conference in Biel/Bienne, 27-29 November 2013 an event attended by over 300 teachers, educationalists, researchers and practitioners from across Europe.
- A 'Talking Heads' DVD was commissioned and produced, and includes views and opinions of employers, experts and policy makers on the topic of an ageing workforce and the challenges presented. It is split into 6 chapters running in total just over 40 minutes:
 - o The Challenge

¹¹ All newsletters available for download: <http://www.a-map.eu/index.php/documents>

- The Learning Model
- EQF Mapping System
- Employer Attitudes
- Influencing Policy
- AMaP What Next?

As the project progressed, it became clear that there were multiple stakeholders that the DVD could target, but not all would be interested in all the themes. By splitting it into chapters and having it available additionally online in English, it was felt that this would allow a greater opportunity for targeting employers, policy makers and older workers. As well having DVD's produced in each of the partner languages, the English version is available online at the project website¹².

- Around 60 delegates attended the project Final Conference in Uppsala, Sweden where the entire project deliverables were presented to targeted groups of employers, policy makers and educationalists as well as providing a platform for the launch of the 'Talking Heads' DVD.
- One of the largest national disseminations took place at the Journal for Vocational Education and Training conference at Oxford University on 5-7 July 2013. P1 wrote and submitted an abstract, which was accepted, and presented the project and results to date to an audience of around 50 academics, practitioners and policy makers, and distributed newsletters to a combined audience in excess of 300 delegates.
- A paper on the project has been published by KEN – The Knowledge Economy Network, which supports ambitious European regions and local communities in upgrading their knowledge-based competitiveness. Their objectives include increasing awareness of the critical importance of developing a knowledge society and improving knowledge-based competitiveness. These are all key themes of the AMaP project which was published in the KEN November 2012 publication¹³ and distributed to key stakeholders across Europe.
- The project has also been promoted¹⁴ through the European Map of Intergenerational Learning (EMIL) network, a collaborative network of members working together to support intergenerational learning taking place across Europe.
- In Greece, a press article was published in Isotimia issued on the 14-15 January 2012 entitled "*Burden or added value; the value of third age for enterprises?*" with 7,000 copies distributed. In addition, P3 appeared on a TV show, and provided views on age management as part of the topic *Ageing Workforce and Entrepreneurship*.
- In order to capture the dissemination activity carried out by the partnership, a shared Google Docs file has been created¹⁵. This was a centralised system agreed by the partnership to allow the lead partner to monitor activity and present it in clear and concise way.

¹² <http://www.a-map.eu/index.php/deliverables>

¹³ Page 12: http://amap.euroinnov.eu/files/KEN_Bulletin_Issue_11.pdf

¹⁴ <http://www.emil-network.eu/news-and-events>

¹⁵ Exported documents of the Google Docs file are provided in the folder Supporting Documents, No's 38 to 40

- The Launch Flyer and all newsletters have been circulated via The European Network for Transfer and Exploitation of EU Project Results (E.N.T.E.R.), which has a membership base of over 750 organisations.

Work Package 7 – Quality Assurance

As well as developing a Quality Agreement within the partnership and conducting an Internal Evaluation at the half-way stage of the project, an External Evaluation was commissioned and carried out by one of the leading age-related organisations in Europe.

TAEN – The Age and Employment Network carried out an extensive evaluation examining a number of key themes, including:

- *Innovation* – the innovative nature of the project theme and products.
- *Transnationality* – the impact of the project on a transnational basis, including dissemination of results and products.
- *Partnership* – the strength of the partnership including the interaction and communication of partners throughout the project period.
- *Validity* – how valid and relevant are the project outcomes to the overall problem the project aims to address.
- *Dissemination* – the effectiveness of the dissemination strategy to inform key stakeholders on the quality, relevance and effectiveness of results.
- *Exploitation* – how effective will the project be going forward and how will it influence regional/national/European decision makers to adopt, adapt or apply the project outcomes.

The report was hugely encouraging and pointed to the innovative nature of the project, with outcomes that particularly addressed the policy issue of workforce ageing, although it was inconclusive on how precisely effective the project will be going forward. It also commented favourably on the awarding of further funding to P1 for further elaboration of the Mapping System and continued exploitation.

4. Partnerships

P1 – University of Strathclyde

The project has been the vehicle for a number of key stakeholder partnerships that will have positive impacts beyond the life of the project. In particular, at a government level, the Scottish Parliament have been a strong supporter of the work carried out and keen to link the products and findings to wider national strategies relating to the lifelong learning agenda.



Glasgow City Council and Glasgow Chamber of Commerce have also been positively influenced by the project and provided key support in engaging local employers. The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework are also keen to explore further elaboration of the EQF Mapping Tool. At a European level, the Eurochambre is keen to explore how the products can fit in with their skills agenda and be of use to their members, ensuring a truly pan-European reach.

P2 – GEB Berlin

During the Project a number of partnerships were established at a local level. We spoke with many institutions that are running projects with, and for, older workers and unemployed adults. But the biggest and most promising partnership is the one with the German Demographic Network (DDN), a network consisting of 350 large German companies with a combined number of employees reaching around 2 million. The results of the AMaP project have been distributed in local network meetings of the DDN and will also be shown during an international conference in Berlin on 20th/21st February 2014.

P3 – Life Long Learning Research Institute (EL)

Based in Athens, the Greek partner develops and promotes ideas, programs, projects and activities related to the Information and Knowledge Society, academic and vocational training as well as education in all areas of technology, science, the economy and society. A number of partnerships have been formed locally, in particular with the Athens Chamber of Commerce and the National Qualifications Agency, both of whom are keen to further explore the outcomes and products of the AMaP project.

P4 – Semper Avanti (PT)

Based in Wroclaw, the Polish partner works in the field of active citizenship, ensuring people of all ages have the opportunity to learn and develop their skills and experience. Close links have been built with the Marshal's Office in Lower Silesia as well as the Chamber of Commerce and National Qualifications Authority based in Warsaw.

P5 – Kerigma (PT)

Kerigma has established partnerships at different levels to face the challenges of the project. With Associação Empresarial de Paredes (AEParedes), they have cooperated in order to

engage employers in northern Portugal with the challenges of an ageing workforce. Board members have been invited to participate in partner's meetings, which allowed the consortium to get to know the Portuguese situation and the challenges faced in developing age management practices and non formal strategies. As a second step, they have helped Kerigma in implementing and testing the learning model for older workers and the EQF mapping system, and have hosted a study visit for partners.

Finally, the President of the Board of AEParedes has participated in the final conference in Uppsala, Sweden and disseminated the project results and outcomes. A workshop for employers has been prepared to present the report of the questionnaire for employers and its evaluation.

The National Agency for Qualification (ANQEP), responsible for the Portuguese NQF and the National Qualifications Catalogue, has also been crucial for the project development and dissemination. They have been engaged and involved in the learning model evaluation and improvements and the project materials are now available on their website. The new Portuguese guide for Lifelong Learning Guidance is also interested in the project achievements and Kerigma is working with ANQEP on its implementation at a national level, as an exploitation strategy. ANQEP has also participated in the final conference of the project.

P6 – Folkuniversitetet (SE)

The Swedish partner has built strong links with the Chamber of commerce of Stockholm as a direct result of the project and used it as a conduit for dissemination of the project products and results, with specific support in providing access to employers and assisting in distributing the questionnaire for employers through their membership base. In addition, the Association of Municipalities in Middle Sweden have become an important partner going beyond the project in relation to information and access to municipalities and public authorities. Finally, the County Administrative Board of Stockholm has also been supportive in providing information to municipalities and public authorities

Overall, working together as part of a European consortium has offered greater opportunity to experience different cultural attitudes and approaches in relation to workforce ageing and age management. On reflection, the stark differences in attitude between, for example, Poland and Sweden show that there is still a significant amount of work to do in achieving common practices across Europe, and highlights the diverse range of cultures Europe is dealing with. While at times it has been a challenging process trying to understand different worlds from which each of us lives, the process has been hugely rewarding and been a learning process for all partners involved.

5. Plans for the Future

Greece

Age Management in Greece is a new concept. The project has succeeded in presenting key aspects of age management to Greek stakeholder organizations. Prominent among them, was the Ministry of Education & Religious Affairs (General Secretariat for Lifelong Learning), the State Scholarships Foundation (National Agency for the Erasmus+), and the National Centre for Social Research (EKKE). Delegates of the above organizations participated in the AMaP Final Conference which they found a very fruitful experience. The Ministry of Education expressed interest in deploying some of the project techniques in their own initiatives and programs. Active ageing has a lot of potential in the planning of activities of the State Scholarships Foundation, especially in view of Erasmus+. The National Centre for Social Research will use some of the project findings to enhance its own research agenda on the issue. Finally through the development of the Talking Heads DVD, EOPPEP which is the National Coordination Point for EQF in Greece was interviewed and was informed on the age management topic, expressing an interest on the project's results.

Portugal

Kerigma is committed with the importance of AMaP. We have been in conversations with EAEA – European Association for the Education of Adults (www.eaea.org) for the enlargement of the countries involved in AMaP. EAEA has members in more than 40 countries and its mission is to raise awareness of the importance of adult education and its benefits for the societies. Together with EAEA and some project partners, consideration is being given to submitting a project proposal in the future to reach around 115 umbrella organisations operating in the adult education sector and continuous VET.

Sweden

Folkuniversitetet together with Association of Municipalities in Middle Sweden intend to apply for an ESF-project for implementation of concept of age management and training material elaborated during the project cycle in three counties: Uppsala; Stockholm; and Västerås. In order to attract employers, the Chambers of Commerce in all three counties will be involved in the project.

UK

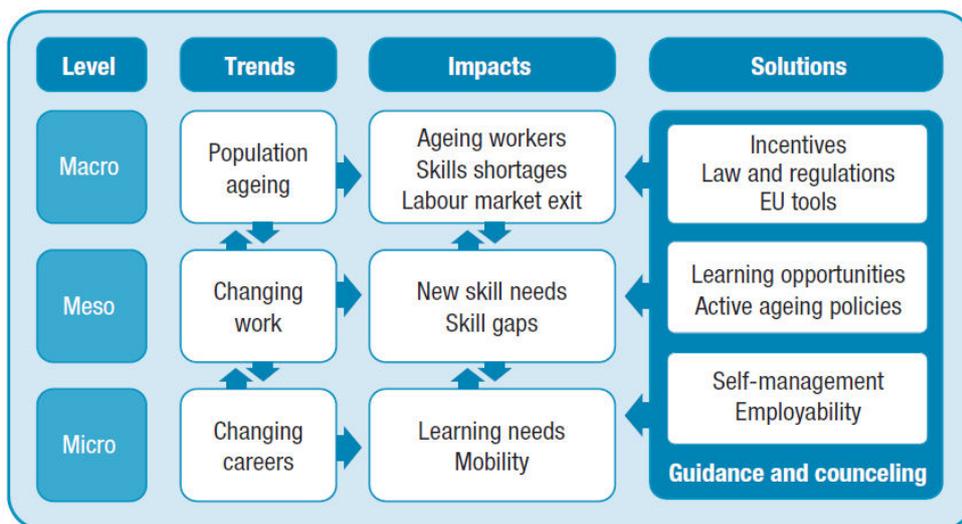
Perhaps the most successful outcome of the project in relation to sustainability has been the further awarding of project funding by the EACEA to further build on the work around the EQF Mapping System. The CaMEO (Career Mobility of Europe's Older Workforce, project no. 539099-LLP-1-2013-1-UK-LNW) project will offer the opportunity to build on the results of this project and look at ways of taking the EQF Mapping System to the next level. In particular, an e-Academy will be developed that will allow employers greater access to the mapping system, allowing them to recognise the skills and experiences of older workers against national recognised qualifications frameworks.

6. Contribution to EU policies

“The European Commission sees lifelong learning as a key tool to help older people stay at work longer, participate in society and lead healthy lives. Yet, only 3.6% of older people (55-64) participate in learning.”¹⁶

There are a number of societal and economic challenges presented by demographic change, which have to be considered in a wider context. The emerging trends as a result of workforce ageing can be viewed at three levels as shown in Figure 4 below:

Figure 4 Main trends shaping work, labour markets and societies¹⁷



Source: van Loo, J, Lettmayer, C. and Launikari, M. (2011)

With changing trends comes the need for changes in policy, attitudes and solutions to formulate new strategies that ensure the workforce remains competitive. It is crucial to address the impacts these changing trends will have by addressing the skills shortages through innovative solutions to population ageing. Ensuring older workers receive the guidance, counselling and opportunity to develop their mobility and learning needs will ensure future skill gaps are met and labour shortages are filled.

This project worked across the macro, meso and micro levels by considering three challenges in relation to: individuals (older worker); employers; and policy measures to encourage participation VET. By developing a Learning Model that encourages older workers to re-engage in learning, as well as developing a Mapping System to help individuals understand the validity and currency of their skills and experience in today's labour market is a major progression in beginning to address the challenges faced by individuals. It is also central to the Europe 2020 strategy, with *“the quality of human capital crucial for Europe's*

¹⁶ One Step Up in Later Life conference, 19-21 November 2012: http://ec.europa.eu/education/adult/conf12_en.htm

¹⁷ van Loo, J, Lettmayer, C. and Launikari, M. (2011) Setting the scene: promoting an inclusive labour market for ageing workers IN Working and Ageing, Cedefop, Publications Office, Luxembourg: http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/3053_en.pdf

success¹⁸ and has the potential to help shape future policy in the field of VET in later life and the way in which skills and experiences are benchmarked by National Qualifications Authorities. Secondly, the challenge faced by older workers in managing their career trajectory and accessing appropriate learning, development, guidance and skills validation to fulfil their needs and aspirations and fully contribute to a competitive Europe has been addressed by this project.

As the Bruges Communiqué (2010) points out, *“The future European labour market will be simultaneously confronted with an ageing population and shrinking cohorts of young people. As a result, adults - and in particular, older workers - will increasingly be called upon to update and broaden their skills and competences through continuing VET”*.¹⁹ This is an area where work is still required in informing employers of the consequences and the questionnaire highlights this. The production of the DVD as well as the EQF Mapping, are both tools that can be used going forward to continue highlighting the challenge of workforce ageing as well as solutions for employers to evaluate the skills and experience of their older workers, something which will be taken forward by the CaMEO project (as mentioned in section Section 5), led by P1, over the next two years.

Moreover, there were two key conferences organised by the Commission and Cedefop in November and December 2012, where both the lead partner, P3 and P5 were invited to participate and contribute to future policy in the areas of lifelong learning and VET. The first *“One Step Up in later life: learning for active ageing and intergenerational solidarity”*²⁰ highlighted the importance of creating innovative strategies that will ensure greater involvement of older workers in the future. The Conference Memorandum highlights the need for better use of older workers in a shrinking labour market as this will lead to increased competitiveness as well as the need for better advice, guidance and counselling, with greater involvement of employers in this process. The second, *“Adult Learning – Spotlight on investment”*²¹ also concluded that the role of the older workforce will be a key contributor to the future success of Europe. There is no question that this project has held these themes central to the vision, aims and objectives, with new and innovative products and tools that can be utilised in the future to continue addressing this challenge.

Finally, following on from 2012 as the European Year of Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity, this project addressed a key area through empowering and encouraging older workers to *“realise their potential wellbeing throughout their lives and to participate in society according to their needs, desires and capabilities”*.²²

¹⁸ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: A new impetus for European Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training to support the Europe 2020 strategy: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0296:FIN:EN:PDF>

¹⁹ The Bruges Communiqué on enhanced European Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training (2010): http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/vocational/bruges_en.pdf

²⁰ See: http://ec.europa.eu/education/adult/conf12_en.htm

²¹ Adult Learning – Spotlight on Investment Conference, 12-13 December 2012: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/events/20767.aspx>

²² European Commission (2010) Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council – European Year for Active Ageing (2012) [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/com/com_com\(2010\)0462_/com_com\(2010\)0462_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/com/com_com(2010)0462_/com_com(2010)0462_en.pdf)

