ER8 - Report from each participating country regarding the pilot testing of the web-based Information System

WP7: Pilot

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1. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

The SCORE project aims to set up a quick and efficient process of Recognition and Validation of professional competencies for the Children's Products Retail personnel and entrepreneurs throughout Europe, which will be adopted by the labour market of the sector and will lead to the further certification of these competencies by the competent National Authorities in each country.

The objective of WP7 is to evaluate the efficacy of the recognition and validation system within the target group, and assess its functionality. In this WP all participating associations managed the pilot tests in their countries:

- CFE in Spain
- EMTEX in the UK
- HCIA in Greece
- TRN in Belgium

The process followed included the following steps:

- Selection of participants in the pilot testing, with a minimum of 5 participants
- Meeting with the participants in order to give them guidelines about the whole procedure
- Self assessment of the participants. Recognition and validation of their competencies through the system
- Communication of the results.

Hellenic Clothing Industry Association (HCIA) coordinated the testing process on a European basis. Each partner selected a group of professionals in the children's products retail stores who are actively interested in obtaining additional qualifications, especially

those who do not have an extensive educational background, but nonetheless, have acquired considerable technical - commercial skills through their professional experience. The selected candidates (at least 5 per participating country) followed the assessment process, and at the end, they received their personalized development plan. The main purpose for the whole process was to evaluate the tool developed within WP6 in order to make any necessary changes in WP8 "Finalization of the Quick Recognition and Validation system (QRV) and its translation in respective languages of the partners".

2. RESULTS

2.1. *Overview*

The QRV system was tested in June 2014 in 4 countries. The following table presents the overall evaluation results, based on the questionnaire, which is included in the appendix.

Greece	6
Spain	6
UK	5
Belgium	4
Total	**21**

Number of responses per country

Furthermore, each respondent was asked to place some marks in a number of indicators, in order for the project partners to be able to assess the system that has been developed and to make all necessary adjustments.

The table below present the responses in a number of aspects.

	Yes	**No**	**Not sure**
Did you find it easy to navigate?	18	0	3
Was the layout visually appealing?	17	1	3
Was the content relevant to your needs?	16	2	3
Did you find the information you needed?	14	0	7
Overall, did you find the web interface useful?	16	1	4
Would you recommend the web interface and learning package to other learners?	16	2	3

How would rank your experience of using the web interface and learning package? (1: Good, 2: OK, 3: Poor) – the overall mean score was 1,67 which is clearly between Good and OK.

The following table presents the mean scores evaluating a number of aspects of the developed system. The various issues examined are presenting in descending order in order to clearly identify the strong vs the weak points of the system. The indication of the scoring system is the following: 1: Not at all, 2: Somewhat, 3: Just right, 4: Better than expected, 5: Great.

About the Learning Package	Score
Was it easy to work your way through the instructions of the learning package?	3,95
Did you understand and follow the instructions of the learning package?	3,85
Was it easy to navigate your way through the learning package?	3,85
Was the experience better than a traditionally taught course?	3,75
Did the presentation of the course materials follow a logical route?	3,60
Was the material presented in "bite sized chunks" that allowed you to learn at your own pace?	3,55
Did you find that learning by using a web interface suited you?	3,40
Were the learning aims and objectives of the learning package clearly stated?	3,35
Was there a step-by-step progression of the course materials that build upon your previous learning?	3,35
Do you feel that the learning package delivered its learning aims and objectives?	3,30
Was the content relevant to your needs?	3,25
Would any additional support improve the use of and learning from the learning package and the web interface?	2,72
When you got things wrong, did the learning package support you in finding the right answers?	2,70
Was there other support available to you to help you learn [eg internet/phone connection to a tutor, introductory session etc]	2,67
Was there enough material to practice and consolidate your learning, or check and test your learning?	2,45
Was there enough variation in the learning materials [text, video, tests etc] to keep your attention and interest?	1,84

About the results of using the learning package	Yes	No
Did you feel that you have learned from the learning package?	17	3
Do you feel that you have met the learning aims and objectives of the learning package?	19	1
Do you feel confident that your learning could be transferred to a work place?	19	1
Do you feel confident enough to sit a recognized qualification covered by this area of study?	17	3
Have you recommended the learning package to any of your friends or peers?	4	15

Moreover, the respondents gave a number of fruitful comments / suggestions, which are presented below in the 'Recommendations' section of this report.

2.2. *Per country*

2.2.1. Greece

In Greece, the pilot was organized by HCIA in the premises of HMA, where a room with all the facilities was provided for this purpose on 13 June 2014. HCIA invited a number of individuals to attend the validation session, which was finally tested by 6 individuals. One main aspect that appeared was that the content was only in English, and the Greek version was necessary for further in-depth evaluation of the content. The Greek version was available but the system failed the day of the workshop. The participants were asked to re-visit the system as soon as the Greek version would be available again.

The main results / recommendations for system modifications are the following:

- Tokens should be used only once, i.e. they should be directly associated with a specific user (unique name and / or e-mail) and using the same token, the user should be able to attend his/her survey and take it again. That means that the token system should ask for the user's name and e-mail in the beginning of the session and that even when the session is over, the user to be able to re-visit his/her answers in the future.
- As far as the content is concerned, almost all participants requested for more interactivity, i.e. under the last question for each skill tested, there could be some links to e.g. reports regarding the aspect under evaluation, or videos or any other interesting links for the interviewee to refer
- Also, in the first page there should be a paragraph explaining the whole process i.e. the selection of skills to be validated and the questions that will follow, etc.

- In addition, when a person chooses some skills and moves on to the questions, then if he/she goes back to choose another skill, the new skill is not included in the examination
- Content: some questions should also be checked on whether the person taking the test actually implements them, i.e. it is easy to say that a person knows very well how to maintain clean the store, but does he/she actually follow implement the necessary steps.
- Reporting: poor presentation, and it is not clear what is the role of the text boxes
- Content: personal relationship with customer – especially for small business owners – is missing.
- Some changed to the look of the questions / answers was also suggested, i.e. to have the responses closer to the questions
- Finally, the role of the Score is also questioned! For example a score of 95 what does it mean? Also, since each person chooses different skills for validation, how can the scores be comparable.

2.2.2. Spain

The PILOT experience developed by CFE took place during June and July 2014. CFE tried to obtain feedback in all the user experience possible (auto-evaluation, manager and interviewer), and also tried to combine different types of contact to include different reactions.

Some pilots were organised in the shops, others in our offices, some in SCORE events in Fashion Fairs, and other by distance. In general, the experiences were positive, and with some improvements mentioned, it was quite well accepted.

1. User 1

Owner of Children's Fashion shop in Valencia, Spain. Visited CFE facilities to complete the pilot experience. She used the platform as AUTOEVALUATION and as MANAGER.

2. User 2

Manager of Children's Fashion shop in Barcelone. We did the pilot experience guiding her by phone. She used the tool as an INTERVIEWER

3. User 3

Owner of Children's Fashion shop in Barcelone. The experience was guided by telephone, and used the tool as MANAGER.

4. User 4

Manager of mono brand shop in Valencia. We attended her shop to develop the pilot experience. She fulfilled the pilot using the AUTOEVALUATION method.

5. User 5

Commercialization expert. We contacted him during FIMI, Children Fashion Fair celebrated in Madrid. Developed the pilot in CFE's stand with our supervision and help. Developed the INTREVIEW experience.

6. User 6

Brand owner. Completed the pilot during FIMI fashion fair, using the platform as MANAGER.

2.2.3. Belgium

In Belgium, the pilot was organized by TeleRegions Net (TRN) in two different scenarios: (1) PMO, an independent non-profit organization specialized in education and vocational training for the commerce sector, partners of UNIZO the most important trade & industry association in the Flanders Region, with the cooperation of Mr. Bart Persoons, Manager of PMO; (2) IKEA Belgium, with the participation of the people working in the children's section.

The most important conclusions are:

- SCORE is an interesting tool for all the participants in the pilot.
- SCORE solution it's interesting and useful: as more information have the retail personnel it will be better.
- SCORE gives a correct overview of the needs within the retail sector.
- SCORE is in line with retail co-workers skills needs and, more especially, for retail children Business.
- SCORE provides SMEs with an useful tool to find the right co-workers in selection process.
- SCORE provides SMEs with an instrument to evaluate the skills and attitude of the employees.
- SCORE requires a solid training package to enable the requested skills.

UK

Overall, the concept was well received, but not totally useful or relevant for very small companies/shops.

When the pilot was completed it needed further stages /work to help point the way forward sign post or to give bespoke advice.

The score generated was meaningless unless it was evaluated and given direction. A manager would or could do this but not a single shop keeper with say part time staff.

We did face a few issues when completing the pilot, only two could be completed online as two stores did not have pc's and a at a third we could not access the evaluation, so the others had to be done paper based.

In one store when we clicked onto the reference documents they opened at the front page of the reference document every time rather than the relevant page.

General thoughts were it is a good tool when interviewing or evaluating a new employee.

We have been speaking with a 6th company (Designer Kidz) that are actually larger, with 9 stores but are more relevant for the project as they are already looking at developing a training package for their retail staff.

We have having difficulty at this stage though in getting through to the correct member of staff to look at the pilot as they are based in the head office rather than our local

store. We will continue to try and make this contact and get some feedback on the package and forward that at a later date.

English grammar and choice of words

Some of the English in the headers etc, is poor and needs correcting.
The instructions are misleading such as checking one of the boxes is not an answer, the user needs to answer first, have the response checked and then judge whether competent etc.

Similarly the statement about referring to the guideline document isn't right it needs to read something like "Please refer to module 3 page 11 for guidance".

Content

The self-development plan doesn't make sense. It isn't a self-development plan. That needs to be a list of topics for study and linked back to WP4.

Technical

We had missed checking one of the boxes and when we went back to correct this, it cleared all of my other responses.
Several other issues related to technical problems were reported, some were easily resolved others such as emailing the results were still present and are being dealt with.

COMPANY VISITS

We decided to revisit some of the companies we had contacted 12 months previously,and introduce others this was all done via site visits to explain the detail and help complete the pilot here are the 5 results.

evemtext1 Price and Buckland Schoolwear Outlet

An independent schoolwear store, the company Price and Buckland manufactures schoolwear overseas, sells, and distributes nationwide through a factory/warehouse in Nottinghamshire as well as the direct retail shop.

This pilot was conducted online with no problems.

evemtext2 Silver Sense, an online retailer of specialist childrens vests and nightwear with silver properties for medical purposes. Mainly online retail, manufactured, managed and distributed from a factory based in Nottinghamshire.

This survey was conducted online with no problems.

evemtext3 Isobel and Henry, Melton Road, West Bridgford 01159 455119

lynsey@isobelandhenry.co.uk

Independent shop stocking ranges from 0 – 15 years. Mid range/everyday with some partywear

Have three staff including owner but only one in store at any time. Has been running for 2 ½ years. Owner is an accountant and has only been running for 6 months so most staff are more familiar with store and ranges etc than her so all take part in buying stock etc,,

buy from manufacturers and wholesalers. Have trading website

This store participated in the initial questionnaire.

This survey was conducted paper based and then later transferred online as the store had no pc.

evemtex4 Jellykins, Ripley

An independent childrenswear store specialising in preloved designerwear. Run and managed by owner.

This survey was conducted paper based and then later transferred online as the store had no pc.

evemtext5 The Schoolwear Centre, Workshop

A small group of schoolwear stores, each has own management. One manager, assistant manager and several part time staff, especially over the school holidays.

We couldn't access the pilot online, we got to the login page, entered username and password but then the target page wouldn't come up. So then we had to review paperbased and enter online later.

None of the companies piloted were interested enough in the package to continue to use and review it.

other Designer Kidz – Childrenswear retailer at East Midlands Designer Outlet Mansfield. Not independent. The name/brand Designer Kidz is part of the Flyers Group. There are 9 stores nationwide, mostly in Discount Designer Retail Parks. Each store deals with their own recruitment apart from manager positions which are advertised and filled through head office. This store has 3 – 4 staff on duty at any time. Mansfield@flyersgroup.com This store participated in the initial questionnaire. This head office of this store are in the process of developing a training package for staff so I am going to contact the man dealing with this for him to review the site too for feedback.

3. Recommendations and next steps

Overall, the responses clearly demonstrated that the project has developed a very useful tool. Some fine tuning is still necessary, and all results should be taken under consideration in WP8.

In particular, the following aspects were identified and presented by the respondents during the pilot phase:

1. Main types of usage:

- Use by individual companies for their retail stores in order to assess the skills and competencies of each store and to develop horizontal training courses for the retail store personnel
- Use for interviewing purposes
- Usage by companies that have their own shops in order to identify minimum common needs for training, as well as for benchmarking purposes.
- Perhaps not very useful for very small businesses.

2. Main recommendations for changes in the system:

- More videos, interactive and audiovisual equipment could improve content and make it more attractive
- System should be more interactive for better learning ability and testing and should also include links to interesting / related topics
- Navigation stages should be available at every page.
- The material could be improved with practical examples.

- Front page should have more details regarding the objective of the whole process. There needs to be a distinction whether the answers refer to knowledge and not to implementation on the job
- Final report should include more explanations and the overall scoring system should be more harmonized, e.g. all sessions could have a maximum score of 100 and each question have variable weights.

All the above statements together with the overall assessment of the system will be taken into consideration in WP8, where the system will be finalized.

4. Appendix – Evaluation Questionnaire

SCORE – User reactions [Product validity]

Introduction

The SCORE web interface and training package is being funded by the Leonardo da Vinci Programme. Part of the funding requirement is that it is evaluated by users. Completing the following will help the project to secure its funds and enhance the portal content ease of use for future users. Thank you very much for your interest, and in anticipation of your help with the evaluation.

Please click on the grey boxes; they will expand to fit your comments

1. About you.

Name

Organisation

Occupation

Country

Date of Review

2. How did you find out about this web interface and learning programme

Please click appropriate boxes

We are a partner with the SCORE Project	☐

Through an SCORE event	☐
Through direct mailing by an SCORE partner	☐
Peer recommendation	☐
Web search	☐

Other sources

3. The web interface

Please click appropriate boxes

	Yes	No	Not sure
Did you find it easy to navigate?	☐	☐	☐

If not, why not?

	Yes	No	Not sure
Was the layout visually appealing?	☐	☐	☐

If not, why not?

	Yes	No	Not sure
Was the content relevant to your needs?	☐	☐	☐

If not, why not?

If yes, how?

	Yes	No	Not sure
Did you find the information you needed?	☐	☐	☐

If not, why not?

If yes, how?

	Yes	No	Not sure
Overall, did you find the web interface useful	☐	☐	☐

If not, why not?

If yes, how?

	Yes	No	Not sure
Would you recommend the web interface and learning package to other learners?	☐	☐	☐

If not, why not?

If yes, how?

	Good	OK	Poor
How would rank your experience of using the web interface and learning package?	☐	☐	☐

Do you have any suggestions for further improvement of the web portal?

4. About the Learning Package

Please click appropriate boxes

	Not at all	**Some-what**	**Just right**	**Better than expected**	**Great**
Did you find that learning by using a web interface suited you?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Was the content relevant to your needs?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Were the learning aims and objectives of the learning package clearly stated?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Do you feel that the learning package delivered its learning aims and objectives?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Was the experience better than a traditionally taught course?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Was it easy to work your way through the instructions of the learning package?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Did you understand and follow the instructions of the learning package?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Was it easy to navigate your way through the learning package?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Did the presentation of the course materials follow a logical route?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Was the material presented in "bite sized chunks" that allowed you to learn at your own pace?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Was there a step-by-step progression of the course materials that build upon your previous learning?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Was there enough variation in the learning materials [text, video, tests etc] to keep your attention and interest?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When you got things wrong, did the learning package support you in finding the right answers?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Was there enough material to practice and consolidate your learning, or check and test your learning?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Was there other support available to you to help you learn [eg internet/phone connection to a tutor, introductory session etc]	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Would any additional support improve the use of and learning from the learning package and the web interface?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

How could the learning package be improved [especially if you answered no to any of the above]?

5. About the results of using the learning package

Please click appropriate boxes

	yes	no
Did you feel that you have learned from the learning package?	☐	☐
Do you feel that you have met the learning aims and objectives of the learning package?	☐	☐
Do you feel confident that your learning could be transferred to a work place?	☐	☐
Do you feel confident enough to sit a recognised qualification covered by this area of study?	☐	☐
Have you recommended the learning package to any of your friends or peers?	☐	☐

6. Are there any other improvement you would suggest around;

The contents of the learning package?

The ease of use of the web interface and learning package?

The context in which it is used?

The applicability to your workplace?

Any linkage to a national qualification?