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Web Advanced Export Manager – EM2.0

Progress Report

Public Part

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Executive Summary

Web Advanced Export Manager – EM2.0 is the European funded project aiming at the development and testing of an innovative training course for Export Managers (i.e. the **EM2.0** Training Course). The **general objective** of the project is boost the export capacity of European SMEs by upgrading the current capacity and readiness of EU export managers to use web tools, web-related ICT and new networks as tools for exports and internationalisation, both during the definition of company's export strategy and in daily work.

The project addresses different target audience (beneficiaries), with different objectives: i) **SMEs**, by providing a new opportunity to train internal staff with additional skills; ii) **VET institutions**, to enlarge their training offer with innovative training courses; iii) **professionals**, especially young ones, by providing them with further opportunity to create their own job by delivering specialised internationalisation services to SMEs.

The **project team** is composed of staff from different type of organisations, such as Regional Agencies for Internationalisation, Chambers of Commerce and VET organisations, complementary covering the wide range of expertise required for the implementation of action, from SMEs support services to delivery of training in export management and web related tools.

The **approach adopted** for the development of this new training course was in the sense to avoid replication of existing training offer already present on the market (training for export managers and training for web-marketing operators). It rather aims at defining a training course specifically addressing only the theme of “export and internationalisation through web and ICT tools”, in order to be both i) suitable to be delivered as a stand-alone course, and ii) suitable to be embedded, integrally or in single modules, into existing training offer of EV VET system (modularity). Such approach unleashes its full potential in terms of **valorisation** of project's results, after the end of the EU funding, having the potential to dramatically enlarge the audience of organisations interested to take over, entirely or in part, the training course.

At the very beginning of the project, a **study on existing training offer** for export managers in Italy, Spain, UK, Bulgaria, Slovenia has been conducted. At the same time, a research addressing “**Resources 2.0**” (web related resources and ICT solutions for export management and internationalization) was performed.

Research results were matched with traditional training offer outcomes. The output was a grid matching current training offer (state of art of training for EM) with most advanced web and ICT resources suitable for export management purposes and internationalisation. The grid enabled to the consortium to start the design of the EM2.0 Training Course, ongoing at the time of the drawing of the present report.

During the first year the **communication and dissemination** campaign was launched, based on the C&D Strategy drawn during the first months, at EU level and National/Regional level, which included the launch of the project website (www.exportmanager20.eu), the issues of the first newsletter the launch of the EM2.0 Twitter page and the implementation of dissemination among the national and regional communities of stakeholders. Open approach was adopted regarding the **participation of third parties**. Relations with some relevant stakeholders were established during the first year and “Collaboration Agreements” became the main tools to formalise such collaboration.

Table of Contents

- 1. PROJECT OBJECTIVES..... 5
- 2. PROJECT APPROACH 7
- 3. PROJECT OUTCOMES & RESULTS..... 15
- 4. PARTNERSHIPS 20
- 5. PLANS FOR THE FUTURE 22
- 6. CONTRIBUTION TO EU POLICIES 24

1. Project Objectives

The project challenge is to provide European actors of *Export* (SMEs and their export managers, but not only) with a new training offer able to upgrade the existing competences in *export management* with skills related to the use of web related and ICT resources currently available on the market.

The **final objective is to boost the export capacity of EU SMEs** thanks to the intensive, aware, strategic use of the wide range of tools available today in internet and thanks to ICT. The EM2.0 training course will contribute to embed web related tools into ordinary export management activity of EU SMEs, increasing their opportunities to be more competitive in the globalised market, not only in export activities within the EU internal market but – expectably – against extra EU competitors, thus helping to fill the gap between EU businesses and extra EU competitors.

In this perspective, the objective of “Web Advanced Export Manager – EM2.0” is:

- i) **to develop an innovative training course on Export Manager by upgrading traditional EM competences into a new profile** able to leverage on most advanced ICT solutions and web marketing approaches.
- ii) to promote the **take over and delivery of the new EM2.0 training course by VET Institution**, both with a previous experience in EM training or not.

The project’s outcomes are expected to produce benefits for several communities of users/final beneficiaries, according to their different nature.

- The first (and natural) community is represented by **EU businesses and their export managers**, mainly SMEs or crafts.

Nowadays companies need highly competent and specialized human resources able to design growth strategies and effective marketing policies, entering new markets and adapting to fast changes to compete globally. However, to face the elevate level of competitiveness, export strategies must be integrated by innovative and creative marketing approaches suitable to intercept and anticipate market trends, and communicate with effective promotional campaigns. The increasing use of ICT and web marketing can provide a stronger support to the acquisition of innovative marketing approaches in the enhancement of export strategies.

In this perspective, the purpose of the EM2.0 training course is to upgrade traditional EM competences into a new profile able to leverage on most advanced ICT solutions and web marketing approaches, in order to make companies more competitive and successful in international trade.

Businesses and their EM will be involved in the project mostly during the testing phase and the implementation of the valorisation strategy. In fact, a prototype of EM2.0 course will be pilot-tested on a test bed of EMs (limited number of modules, likely the inception modules – giving the overview and the strategic impact of the training course - and one or two modules addressing vertical contents).

It is expected a mid term impact (2-5 years) on this target group, consisting in the improvement of SMEs export and presence abroad of EU businesses. In fact it is first required VET institutions (or other Institutions) to take over and deliver the course before knowledge to reach SMEs, EM to use the acquired knowledge for strategic planning and operational application and first results to reach businesses.

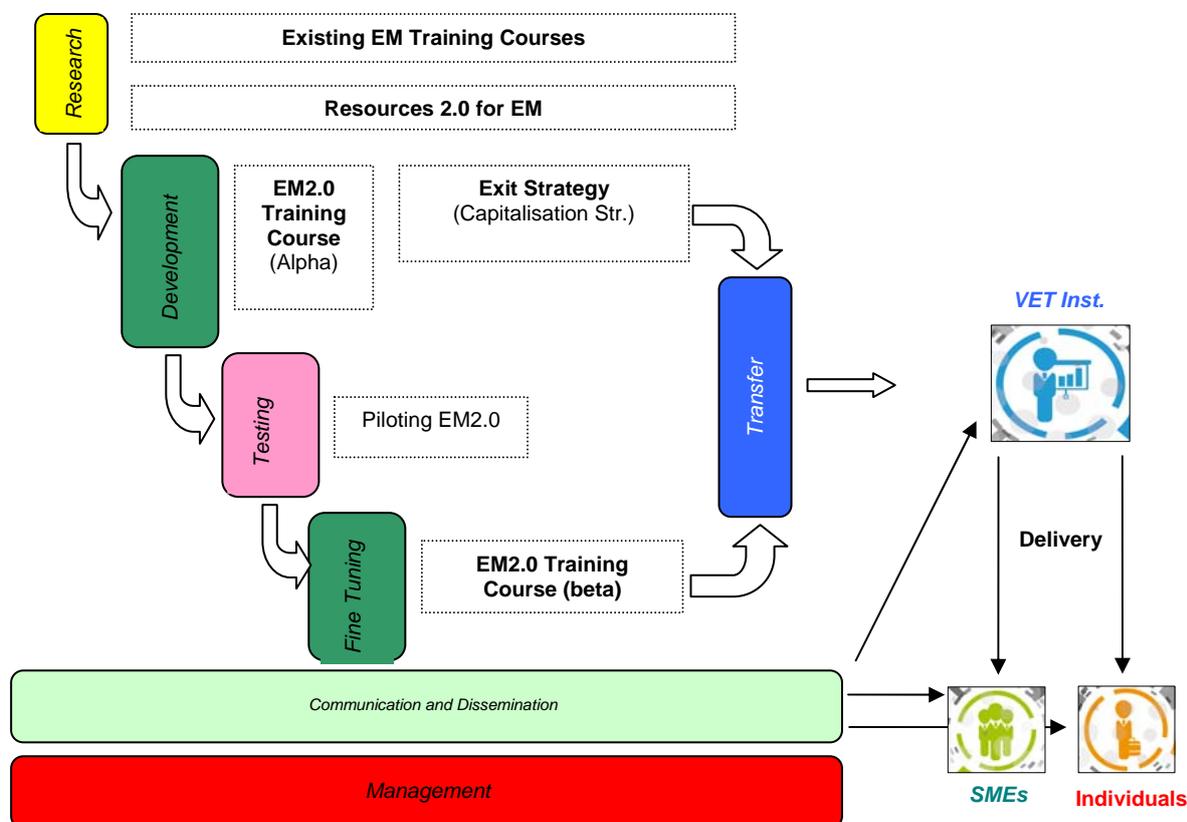
The second group is represented by **VET Institutions**. In the context of this project, these are a very large group composed of Business Schools, Universities, Vocational Training

Centres, Chambers of Commerce, Trade Unions, Associations of Entrepreneurs. Currently training offer in export management, business internationalization, international marketing is missing modules dedicated to innovative ICT and advanced web-based tools for export. They are expected to have a key role especially during the 2nd year, when they will be invited to express their interest to take over the new training course to improve their training offer. However, VET institutions have also been addressed at the very beginning of the project when the research about current state of art of EM training was performed. During the first year, the involvement of VET institutions in the project has been formalised through *Cooperation Agreement* signed between the coordinator and the third party. Such agreements have a double purpose: on the one hand to get access to confidential information about current training courses, on the other hand to “crystallize” the interest to take over the EM2.0 course. This group will benefit from EM2.0 as it might represent a resource both as i) a brand new course to be activated within their training offer and as ii) pre-packed training modules to be embedded into the existing offer, to improve its impact on the trainees audience.

The third target group is represented by future potential **professional of export management 2.0**, consultants providing their professional services to SMEs (externalisation of EM functions). This group is composed of individuals in training period or already active in the market, looking for an upgrade of their competences and business model. It is expected that the market of such target group is rapidly growing (companies looking for EM2.0 expertise but not able to internalize this function due to lack of financial resources). The forms of involvement of this group during the project is the same expected for SMEs and their EMs, i.e. during the pilot testing phase, and at the end of the project, as trainees of training courses took over by VET Institutions. The expected impact for this target group is an enlargement of the number of EM service providers, specialised in web tools and ICT for export, differentiated from “web marketing agencies” thanks to their specialisation on Export processes.

2. Project Approach

The logical process governing the project workflow is described in the following table.



Besides of Management and Quality Assessment, during the first year of project, the consortium performed the expected activities, consisting in **research**, **development** and **C&D**.

Research activity, basically addressed two fields of investigation:

- i) State of art of Export Management training courses in the areas covered by the project;
- ii) Web-related, ICT, and other innovative resources for export management.

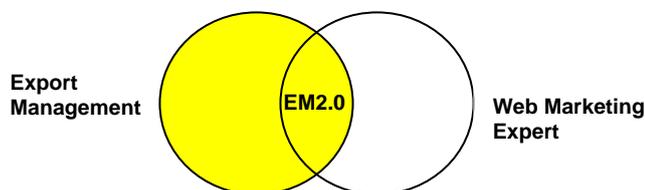
The researches were implemented taking into account the expected professional profile of the Export Manager 2.0 and the characteristics of the expected course itself. In fact, the professional profile that EM2.0 course intends to train is an *Export Manager expert, with a sound training in the traditional issues of the export management and business internationalization, enriched with a lively knowledge of the potentialities provided by the most innovative and advanced web-based tools* (web marketing and search engine optimization, social network, e-commerce, etc.).

Such integration represents the added value of the project, as the application of innovative and strategic approaches from web tools and ICT will provide an original approach to the traditional activities of the export manager, reinforcing its competences and competitiveness.

Initial discussion among partners about the **core features** of the final product (EM2.0 training course) allowed to define the overall research & development context of the project.

Accordingly, the EM2.0 course must:

- be **focused**: in order to avoid the risk of duplication and overlapping with existing “Export Manager” and “Web Marketing” training courses, the EM2.0 needs to stick to that area where the two disciplines overlaps, exploring which Resources 2.0 can “serve” the Export Manager mission.



- have **boundaries**: in order to be both “effective” and “reasonably accessible” by different kind of final beneficiaries, the course has to find reasonable boundaries for its contents. The trainee of EM2.0 is not expected to become a “superman” of Export Management (highly skilled in the use of web tools or most advanced technologies). The final professional profile is still an Export Manager. Therefore, its core mission sticks to a strategic level (export strategy and operational planning) and never goes into the daily work on web and ICT tools (or partially does).

- be characterised by a significant level of **modularity**. In order to enable the highest number of potential VET institution to benefit from the course, it is necessary to make the contents easily accessible to VETs. The goal is to structure the EM2.0 course in a way that also single parts of it can be merged, mixed and embedded into VETs existing courses (upgrade of traditional EM courses);

- always be **updated**: In the field of web resources and ICT, the cycle of obsolescence of approaches and tools is very short. To avoid it, the knowledge transferred with training modules is expected to be sufficiently accurate to describe “how to” benefit from Resources 2.0 for export (innovativeness in EM approaches thanks to the web environment, potential of EM2.0 in terms of strategies and the tools available, adoption of a wider approach to export management). Training modules are not expected to go too deep in the description very technical aspects (where the obsolescence is too fast). The deep insight into technical aspects of Resources 2.0 is postponed to a second time, right before the delivery of the EM2.0 training course (performed by those VET institutions delivering the course at local level). This “update”, which will consider the “state of knowledge” at the time of delivery in the relevant matter, will be performed with the support of VET Institutions’ experts and trainers.

- be **appealing**: this features refers in particular to the way the training course is communicated among stakeholders and perceived by companies. In terms of EM2.0 project, it refers to the communication “message/s” chosen in the C&D plan.



General Visual Identity: Starting from a coordinated visual identity, specifically designed by an internationally awarded Studio of Design taking into account the desired message and impact on target groups, different messages have been accompanied by different images.

EM 2.0: The European project for a new generation of Export manager.

Empower your knowledge and use web-based advanced solution for boosting SMEs global competitiveness

Three sub-messages addressing the three groups of final beneficiaries were adopted, each one targeting the very core their interest:



Icon for Businesses - Message: "Boost your international sell, by upgrading your export manager's skills!";



Icon for VET Institutions - Message: "enlarge your VET offer, get access to new market demand and be the first to deliver the EM2.0 training course;



Icon for individuals/professionals - Message: "Improve your skills and get the chance to create your own opportunity of work/business."

Being the EM2.0 training course dedicated to people wishing to benefit from an advanced knowledge of Export Management knowledge and techniques, communication and dissemination activities were conceived to reach and have impact as much as possible on the following three type of subjects:

1. groups of people already **trained in Export management**;
2. groups of people already **trained in web marketing and innovative ICT tools**;
3. groups **without training**.

The approach to research

The research addressing the **state of art of EM training** was expected to provide a picture of the complex and differentiated world of the EM training provided by different kind of institutions, in the five project countries: Italy, United Kingdom, Spain, Bulgaria and Slovenia. The goal was to get a frame of what is considered EM training in the different EU countries' experience, distilling a comprehensive (and sufficiently exhaustive) EM training course structure out of it. To make it possible, all partners provided examples of most relevant, complete and upgraded EM training courses in their countries. Research tool and brief were prepared to this extent. The question leading the research was: "*what kind of training, contents and modules are currently offered as training courses for Export Managers by VET institutions in the countries represented in the project?*"

Main object of the research were *Contents of the training* (modules) and *learning outcomes*. They were registered against the following categorisation:

Contents of the training

- International contexts
- Economic geography focus
- International marketing
- International contracts
- International finance
- Customs techniques
- Trade techniques
- International Taxation
- Legal and commercial English (or other foreign language)
- Basic web marketing (SEM)

- Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)
- Building an online presence and Brand
- Leadership and Management

Learning outcomes (Ability to...)

- Employ analysis techniques of the international social-economic, political, legal, cultural, trade and export situation;
- Analyse and operate in different geographic contexts;

- Run analysis and research of the international market
- Organize a promotional campaign on foreign markets
- Elaborate strategic plans
- Identify the most appropriate ways to enter a new foreign market
- Search for business partners
- Organize and manage business networks abroad
- Draw the major commercial contracts
- Fulfil the requirements according to the registration of International trademarks and patents
- Capacity for critical analysis of structures proposed to contractual counterparties
- Identify the best forms of hedging commercial risk and country risk
- Analyze and research financial tools to support the processes of internationalization
- Carry out the customs formalities required for the movement of goods in international markets
- Manage a negotiation
- Persuade the client
- Analyze the psychological profiles of the customer
- Perform administrative duties under the tax laws relating to international trade Business and legal English (or other foreign language)
- Create and execute online marketing strategies
- Manage human resources,
- Work in team and leading groups

Training modules were processed by putting information into a comparative grid in order to identify similarities and common elements and to highlight the most innovative elements. Modules and contents descriptions were carefully analyzed with the aim to identify the “classes” and groups of modules with similar contents. Then, modules belonging to the same or to similar classes of contents were merged and a single title, choosing among the most significant or renaming the modules. The comparison helped to mash up the most significant modules and to integrate basic knowledge of business management, international trade, business internationalization, marketing with more specific modules, taken from Executive courses and highly specialized courses (mostly directed to professionals and managers), such as customs techniques, taxation and tariffs policies, international web marketing, negotiation and sales techniques. The synthesis was a complex framework including all the basic and specific modules thus creating a long and complete curriculum, whose contents are to be considered as the milestone for the training of the professional profile of the export manager, currently existing in the project partners’ countries. In order to ensure the access to sensible information, the project recurred to **Cooperation Agreement (CA)** with third parties¹. A model of CA was set up accordingly.

The research addressing Resources 2.0 (interesting for Export and Export Management purposes) adopted a similar methodology, looking for the answer to: *which are the 2.0 resources potentially useful to be employed in the Export Management activity?*

In order to make the research more effective and “export-driven”, a comprehensive list of the most significant “export management activities” was defined, basing on partners experiences and from the outcomes of the previous first research (EM training courses). Characterising element registered for each Resource 2.0 have been the description of the resource, its relevance with Export Management and with Export Manager activities and its relation with the traditional EM Training Module(s).

In order to gather an organic collection of information, ensuring a first classification of the information on the existing Resources, the latter have been sorted by:

A) **NATURE** of the Resource, and split in:

- **WEB tools** (web based software, applications and tools);

¹ Besides of the purpose of cooperation for technical aspects, Cooperation Agreement are also intended for dissemination purposes among key stakeholders, aiming at raise interest for the EM2.0 project, paving the way for the future exploitation and capitalization strategy (take over of the EM20 training course by third parties).

- o **Technologies** (available technologies and hardware with the potential to innovate, facilitate, enrich, boost the Export Management)
- o **Web-based networks** (networks of companies and service providers/Organisations supporting Export management, mainly working through the internet).
- o **Other resources** potentially interesting for the purpose of the research.

B) Level of INTERVENTION ON EXPORT MANAGEMENT:

- o **Strategic** Level
- o **Operational** Level

The results of the research were further processed in order to create a match between Resources 2.0 and i) Export Management typical activities, ii) learning objectives of EM traditional training course.

Example of matching grid for the 2.0 Resource “Google Analytics”

	RESOURCE 2.0 and its relevance with the export management. (A)	EXPORT MANAGER ACTIVITIES (B)	The resource is related to the following TRADITIONAL EM TRAINING COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES (C)
#	<p>Google Analytics</p> <p>Rather than gaining knowledge of the market this is important for monitoring traffic to a given website and ensuring the user can convert as many visitors to the website into customers purchasing products. Also monitors how people arrived at a site So the user can maximise the source of visitors and utilise better.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research on the distribution system (information about the distribution structure, the importers and the dealers in each target market). ▪ Monitoring the promotional campaign on the web (tools for monitoring the effectiveness of the promotional campaign). ▪ Planning of future activities in term of results, human resources organisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To get the knowledge of newer forms of international commerce, internet sales ▪ To be able to conduct international marketing researches according to quantitative methods and to develop the ability to assume strategic decisions ▪ To be able to employ techniques for customer satisfaction in the international environment

- (A) Description of all the 34 Web-based and ICT resources taken into consideration by the partnership and which have been considered the most valuable and suitable compared with the project needs.
- (B) Relevance of each resource compared with the topic of Export Management. After explaining it through a short text, each resource has been connected with the activities of a traditional Export Manager and with the learning outcomes of EM training framework which have been analysed in the D 2.2.
- (C) Demonstration any initial potential connection between each activity of a traditional EM with the resources examined. This grid is really important as it outlines the basis for defining the training modules to be developed in the WP4, given that the focus of the future development of EM2.0 course will constantly be the “*export*” and “*export management*” context: **“the EM2.0 training aims at enabling the Export Manager to fully exploit the potential of 2.0 tools for export management purposes. The resulting training path will enable Export managers to plan effectively the export strategy and to be confident with web based, ICT based and technological tools available”.**

This research has been conducted in order to identify **most popular free tools "on the shelf"**. The ratio behind this choice is that Export Managers 2.0 will be enabled to work since the very beginning of their new 2.0 approach without incurring in strong limitations due to significant additional costs for the company. According to the project approach, only

limited examples of national web based and ICT resources for international trade have been presented (i.e. ExportWindow).²

Concerning the approach adopted for the **overall architecture of the EM2.0 training course**, this matter has been discussed among partners since the end of the research. Two options were put on the ground. The discussion found a final decision during the III^o Consortium Meeting (6-7 November 2013, Barcelona). As a matter of fact, despite they were symmetrical, the two initial approaches appeared to be both interesting and effective. The first one focussing on “Resources 2.0”. In this case each training module creates the relation between the Resource 2.0 with the relevant “export management activity” or “learning outcome”. The second approach, focussing on “export management activities” sees modules describing how each “Resource 2.0” can be effectively exploited in terms of export management activities.

In order to come to a decision, the final structure of the course took into account the following aspects:

- Facility of take over (by VET institutions) for inclusion in existing training offers (including embedment into existing EM training courses);
- Perceived level of attractiveness of the course, compared with traditional ones;
- Capacity to be stand-alone, and suitable for VET Inst. without a previous experience in EM training.

The final decision on the approach to EM2.0 architecture was to take the best out of the two approaches:

- Course structure: modules mirroring traditional EM courses (Learning Outcomes and Export Management Activities);
- Contents based on the question: *How the Resources 2.0 can improve and have impact on EM strategic and operational activities? How it works? When should it be used?*
- Future “Teachers” are selected both among advanced professional operators of Export management and expert in Resources 2.0 (according to the final decision of the delivering VET).

Concerning the approach to **Communication and Dissemination activities**, they were designed in the relevant general **C&D Plan**, addressing both the EU level and the National/Regional level. The C&D plan approach took into account 4 types of target groups, according to the following concentric approach.



Target group 1: Partner Organisations of EM2.0 project (internal dissemination): often Projects are implemented by single departments within large organizations and not rarely there is a lack of information even within the partners organisational structure. Accordingly ,

² Nonetheless, as they are crucial for the definition of a comprehensive training for EM 2.0, they will be further and specifically included in the EM2.0 training course by each training organisation (VET institution taking over the EM2.0 training course) during the customisation of the course, before its actual delivery.

the first target group is represented by members of the partner organisation not directly involved in the action. A wide internal dissemination among partners of the project can bring additional interest of the Organisation to the project's output and increase the opportunity for linking the project to other internal initiatives and further possibilities of exploitation.

Target group 2: Core target Group outside the consortium, primarily SMEs, Associations of Entrepreneurs and VET institutions: this target group is represented by all those organisations dealing with export management, both as internal activity (SMEs) and as support to SMEs (Associations of Entrepreneurs, VET institutions). They are expected to be the first beneficiaries of the project outputs, by promoting training of internal export managers or by delivering the training course to trainees.

Target group 3: Stakeholders and decision makers, including other intermediary organizations operating with SMEs and public bodies at all levels (local, regional and national). This level of target includes other organisations interested to the topic of Export Management training but not directly involved/interested on its delivery. They can be local/national policy makers, VET stakeholders, think tanks, NGOs etc.

Target group 4: the general audience: this is the largest target group, not directly linked to Export Management or VET, but still interested to activities financed under EU programmes, to link their activities to the EM2.0 project.

The C&D work has been designed to be implemented in two phases, split by the pilot testing milestone:

PHASE 1: PRE-PILOT PHASE

The pilot test will expectably take place May 2014. The organisation, the implementation and the delivery of the Pilot Testing action entailed a communication which is orientated to the **information and awareness raising about the project** and it will be carried out starting from February 2013. During this phase the project is already running, but it has not produced any concrete output for the interest of the public. So the main goal is to **create expectations and to inform about the developments of the project**. Both phases should be addressed to the widest audience even if the communication and the scope of the spreading is different.

PHASE 2: POST-PILOT PHASE

This communication phase will accompany the fine-tuning of the EM2.0 training course, and the preparation of the transfer package. It will be aimed at reaching the highest number of:

- VET Institutions interested to take over the EM2.0 course and include it into their VET offer (*transferee*);
- SMEs and Associations of entrepreneurs, to boost the demand of training on the market;
- Other organisations (policy makers, in particular), to raise political consensus and create a favourable environment for the further dissemination of the course among VET institutions, and to facilitate the access of trainees to such training offer (inclusion on the EM2.0 course into the VET offer supported by public funds, e.g. regional funds for education, ESF, national funds).

Concerning the **approach to Quality Assurance**, activities has been fulfilled in accordance with the "European Reference Framework for quality assurance in vocational education and training" (EQAVET) and the methodology of the "Quality Cycle" has been applied. The

monitoring and quality control has been done at 4 steps: At the “Entrance” – to specify the quality criteria for each WP; “Monitoring of implementation” of quality indicators; “Monitoring emerging risks”; “Control of Outputs”- to assess the qualitative and quantitative results to achieve the project objectives.

Specific templates have been made in order to help all partners in submitting information and following up the quality applied criteria in the monitoring of QA at “the Entrance” and in “Monitoring of the implementation”. Information about the planned activities and the eventual changes is being followed up thanks to other templates, as well as the necessity for quick reaction is covered by “WP7_T7.3_RiskTrackingLog_P5” Template . The fourth step is done with the Template “Scope Change Log”, which helps the effective management of EM2.0 and the review of the intermediate and the final results.

The project **management** has been conceived to be as light as possible in terms of structures and governing bodies, in order to devote more efforts to an accurate and proper monitoring technical and financial management.

Accordingly the management structure of the project is composed by:

- 1 Project Coordinator;
- 1 Project Secretary;
- 5 Members of the Steering Committee (one per partner, excepted the coordinator, represented by the Project Coordinator);

The committee was convened twice during the first year, at M1 and M7, respectively in Brussels (BE) and Perugia (IT), both addressing management a technical issues.

The project governance and the relation among partners were set thought the signature of a **Consortium Agreement (CA)**. The agreement integrates the rules set in the Grant Agreement signed between the Coordinator and the Agency.

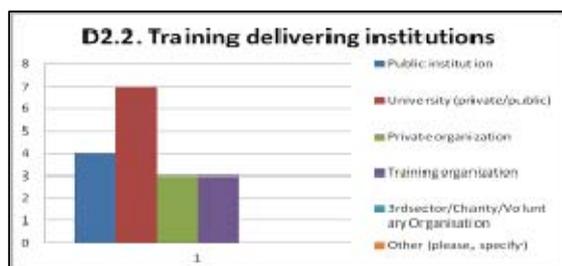
The approach adopted to the overall management of the project (internal and external communications, leading of WPs, reporting, distribution of pre-financing among partners) was characterised by the widest mutual trust among project partners. For what concerns the internal communication, the consortium has largely used e-mails, call conference, video conference and, only for the official documents (e.g. the Consortium Agreement), the express courier. The coordinator foresees to continue to use the same methodology because, so far, it has well performed and it has been cost-effective. All partners were involved in the project since from the very beginning and – accordingly – they were enable to benefit from EU pre-financing since the first instalment. This “open” approach stimulated the general partnership pro-activity and contributed to create the favourable conditions for fruitfully working in team. However, this approach has been compensated by a tighter control over partner expenditure, by mean of quarterly interim financial reports due by partners to the coordinator. The partners were required to keep a record of any expenditure incurred under the Project and all evidence (supporting documents) for five years after the end of the reporting period. All invoices were requested to be dated and certified as true and exact by the Financial Officer of the Partner. The Partners were also required to present interim technical reports of activities undertaken. Accordingly two internal report (additional to those foreseen for Progress and Final report) were foreseen:

- ◆ 15/05/2013 (1st internal report)
- ◆ 15/11/2013 (Progress Report)
- ◆ 15/05/2014 (2nd internal report)
- ◆ 20/11/2014 (Final Report)

3. Project Outcomes & Results

3.1 Research Activity

3.1.1 Research addressing existing EM Training courses: The research brought to the identification of 17 EM training courses in the 5 partner countries examined (IT 4, ES 4, UK 3, SI 3, BG 3). The results of this research are described in the document “EM Training Course Framework”.



Concerning the **type of VET institutions** delivering EM training courses, the analysis of results highlighted similar context in different countries characterized by a dominant position in the Higher Education institutes (Universities). Even post graduates courses and Masters are offered by universities, followed by Chamber of Commerce, Associations for External Trade etc. Other significant groups are equally represented

by Private organizations (Business schools, Institutes for International Business, International Trade Institute etc.) and Training organization (VET organizations, adult education training centres, etc.).

The research pointed out the existence of different training solutions characterized by differentiated duration and intensity of the training activities, according to the target groups who the trainings are addressed to.

We can thus distinguish among three main categories of courses, based on their duration:

- **Long-term training courses (1-2 year courses)** are mostly offered by Universities or public-private training institutions;
- **Short-term training courses (average of 6 months)** are mainly offered by private training institutions (Business Schools, Chamber of commerce, International Trade associations) where the courses are often organized during weekends;
- **Executive courses (weekend formula, 1-3 months)** are highly specific trainings on peculiar issues provided mainly by Business Schools, International Trade Agencies, etc.

Furthermore, the researches pointed out that another discriminating criteria is the correlation between the **type of training institution** and the different **target groups** addressed. They can be sorted in:

- **Universities and Masters, private training institutions** mostly addressing non graduated/graduates, anyway people needing a comprehensive training at high educational level;
- **Public sector institutions, private organizations** (Chambers of Commerce, Business Schools, International Trade associations) mostly addressing graduates, professionals, people already working in the business or trade sector, needing of a further professionalization in the field of Export.

As far as the **branch of knowledge** are concerned, at academic level, the courses analysed are delivered by the faculties of:

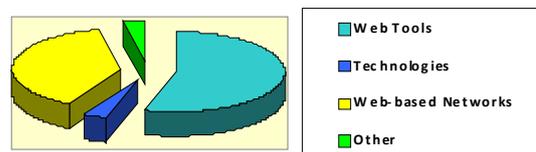
- International Business
- International Management
- International Trade
- Export manager

Other relevant courses taken into account by the partners were Masters, high education training courses or business schools' courses on the specific subjects of:

- International Commerce Management
- Business internationalization/international Business management
- International trade
- International Marketing

One of the main findings of the research is that currently trainings related to export (export management, business internationalization, international marketing) present a consistent **lack of training dedicated to innovative ICT and advanced web-based tools for export**. In majority of cases, curricula analysed only included the most “traditional” modules on ICT basic knowledge; only in few cases modules on basic web marketing and on line brand promotion or basic elements of search engine optimization are included. In this context, the use of ICT tools is often meant as a pedagogical tool in support of the training delivery. Thus, the research results show that most part of the courses employ “ICT based didactic tools or methodologies” and among them, the most common elements are “Learning platform” or “Distance learning / online learning” and only few courses deliver training about “Web-based tools for Export Manager”. To such extent the research confirms the original assumption of the EM2.0 project: there is a significant need to innovate current export manager training courses by opening the knowledge to a wide range of tools and technologies for export based on the new millennium driver: i.e. Internet and ICT.

3.1.2 The results of the research about Resources 2.0. They are described in the document “Scheme of embedment of web-based elements into the EM Training Course”. The document presents the results of the analysis of EM training course framework and identification of potential integration of web related tools and approaches into this. It includes the future EM2.0 training course indicative contents, describing and commenting on the matching between export manager traditional training and ICT and web based elements, also providing an outlook over the complete training profile of EM2.0.



According to the research findings, the majority of 2.0 resources identified (i.e. influencing Export management) have been “Web tools”. The research has spontaneously not focused the technological aspects, addressing more the “software” component of resources 2.0 rather than the “hardware” one. This fact stresses how all partners have been oriented to the current technological systems without figuring out future technological assets or instruments (Laptops – smartphones – Tablets) which could actively affect the role of the Export Manager.

The second group of resources identified belongs represented by *Web-based Network*. Each resource has followed the theoretical setting already outlined in the D2.2. Therefore, the strategic and the operational aspects of the export management activities appear to confirm being the most remarkable categories in order to define the future EM 2.0 training course.

The **Resources 2.0** identified for their processing in the EM2.0 training course development are:

Web Tools		WEB Based Networks	Technologies
Strategic Level	Operational Level		
Consumer Barometer	eBay	E-Market services	Pay Pal
Consumer Survey	European IPR help Desk	Facebook	
Eurostat	Export Window	FITA Global Trade Portal	Others
Global Market Finder	Global Trade - www.globaltrade.net	Flickr	ITC International Trade Centre
Google Analytics	Google Adwords	Google+	
Google trends	ImportGenius	KOMPASS	
Market Access Database	Juris International	LinkedIn	
Youtube trends	Kelkoo	Panjiva	
	Pay per Click	Pinterest	
	Trade Export Helpdesk	Powerful Online Company Database	
	Youtube	Twitter	
		Viadeo	
		Xing	

Following the project workshop aimed at defining the titles and contents of the training modules, the first composition of the EM2.0 training course is:

Module	Resource 2.0	
1. Introduction to EM2.0 training course	To be defined	
2. The 4 EM2.0 Groups of Resources	The 4 Groups of Resources in general. Introduction to the tools for Web Marketing. Introduction to the available Technologies.	Introduction to Web based Networks. Introduction to other web based sources of information.
3. International contexts	Market Access Database Export Window	FITA Global Trade Portal Powerful Online Company Database
4. International Market Analysis	Consumer Barometer Statscounter Google trends Global Market Finder Panjiva Youtube trends Consumer Survey E-market services Google Analytics	Kompass E-Market services Open Site Explorer Most Similar Web Sites Smetrica Follower Wonk Klout PageRank Source code: indexed websites and SEO indicators
5. International contracts and business law	Market Access Database European IPR help Desk	Juris International ITC International Trade Centre
6. Customs <i>"How to exploit and use 2.0 resources for facilitating this tasks"</i>	Committee on trade of the United Nation (GENEVE) Market Access Database European IPR help Desk	ImportGenius Trade Export Helpdesk ITC International Trade Centre Global Trade
7. Logistic and transport Payment instruments, insurance and finance of payments in international business	Trade Export Helpdesk Pay Pal	ITC International BITCoin
8. Calculations of import/export activities	Market Access Database ImportGenius Trade Export Helpdesk	Global Trade ITC International Trade Centre
9. The international digital marketing plan (i)	Google Analytics Woorank	Google Page Speed checker Adobe Browser Lab

Attracting potential clients to our Website Converting visitors into customers	Google Adwords External tool Ranks.nl SEO Moz Mail Chimp	Loads.in W3C Broken Link Checker Howtogomo
10. The international digital marketing plan (ii) Social Media and their use Business Development	Facebook Twitter Linkedin Pinterest Instagram	Youtube Flickr Vine Blogs Hootsuite
11. Internet and the international human resources management How to use Resources 2.0 to provide your export department / HR department with the right staff? How to get collaborators and business partners through social media?Linkedin	Viadeo About.me	Flavors.me Bayt Rozee

Outcome and results of **Quality Assessment** activities have been:

- ◆ The “Quality Assurance Plan”, helping partners to implement quality criteria and self-evaluation technique;
- ◆ A common approach for securing QA which can be applied in every country , where EM2.0 training course could be implemented;
- ◆ Quality requirements process – helping in adapting and developing additional tools for QA in the participants´countries and helps to meet the expectations of the target groups;
- ◆ Quality control and risk management activities – encouraging joint efforts of the participants in EM2.0 for implementing the EU successful practices in securing good quality in the professional education and training for EM;
- ◆ Activities for finalizing the EM2.0 project tools;
- ◆ Activities for defining the quality standards for all participants in EM2.0 for monitoring and control of the training process.

The Quality Management Plan describes how to ensure that the future training target group’s quality requirements are achieved. It is the place to describe the processes and activities that will be put into place to ensure that quality deliverables are produced. The Quality Management Plan also helps to understand when deliverables are complete as well as correct.

The information in the Quality Management Plan includes:

- ◆ Roles and responsibilities in EM2.0.- These could include quality auditors, third-party testing specialists, inspectors, etc.
- ◆ Completeness and correctness criteria of EM2.0.- The purpose of the completeness and correctness criteria is to work with the target groups and eventual customers up front to define what it means for a deliverable to be considered complete and correct.
* Quality requirements process in EM2.0.- Describes the process to uncover and validate the customer’s expectations for quality. This is generally going to be a part of the requirements gathering process.
- ◆ Quality assurance activities of EM2.0. -Quality assurance activities focus on the processes being used to build the solution, and can be validated by a functional manager, business sponsor, or a third-party reviewer in EM2.0.
- ◆ Quality control activities in EM2.0. -Quality control activities are performed continually throughout the project to verify that project deliverables are of high quality.

- ◆ Quality standards of EM2.0. -the quality standards that the team has previously defined that this project will follow.
- ◆ Quality tools of EM2.0.-the quality-related tools that will be utilized.

The Quality Management Plan is where EM2.0 team could ahead of time understand the customers expectation for quality, and how it will deliver to that expectation.

EM2.0 Project must meet the needs and expectations of the target groups to be successful.

These eventual target groups and eventual partners' needs and expectations are set through the gathering and agreement on the business and training requirements. In case of any degree of complexity within EM2.0, there will be a necessity of a formal process to ensure that all of the requirements are accurately gathered, reviewed, documented and approved.

Among the methods for Risk prevention and Quality assurance are also:

* Elicitation - ask questions / * Validation – rationalize / * Specification – by document / * Verification – by approval /

Concerning **C&D** the set of communication tools adopted for the project includes the typical set of instruments, i.e:

- Project website (www.exportmanager20.eu);
- Leaflet;
- Newsletters;
- Local events;

The leaflets and the newsletter are available for download at the following [link](#).

4. Partnerships

The multi-country partnership's composition (Italy, UK, Spain, Bulgaria and Slovenia) ensured the access to EU added value in terms of access to variety of different cultural and methodological approaches, different ways of approaching training for export management and internationalisation, different expectations of project impact at regional/national level and, finally, five different level of maturity of training for Export Management.

Geographically, the project presents a good coverage, bringing into the project experience 5 EU countries with 5 different cultural background. The partnership presents also a significant variety of experiences in terms of technical skills represented, as described in the table below:

<i>Expertise/skill/experience</i>	IT	IT	UK	ES	BG	SI
A. design of training course;		x	x	x	x	x
B. delivery of training course in Export Management;		x	x	x		x
C. knowledge of EM theory and practice;	x		x	x		
D. e-learning tools and methodologies;		x	x	x	x	x
E. Web marketing strategies and available tools;			x	x		
F. SEO – Search Engine Optimisation;			x	x		
G. SEM – Search Engine Marketing;			x	x		
H. Social Network Marketing;			x	x		
I. Other web.based tools for internationalisation & EM				x		
J. Experience in developing e-learning training courses and contents;		x		x	x	x
K. Ability/possibility to involve in a pilot test;	x		x	x	x	
L. Ability/possibility to involve trainees in a pilot test;	x		x	x	x	
M. Interest to directly make use of the project's results;	x			x		x
N. Interest to involve other actors in the exploitation of the project's results	x		x	x		x
O. Network of organisation to disseminate the project's results,	x		X	x	x	x
P. Own communication channels	x		X	x	x	x

As highlighted by the research performed during the project, there are different experiences of EM training already developed and performed in the different countries. In fact, activities implemented by the Export Manager in the different national contexts and cultural environments follow different approaches, and the comparison among EM trainings (implemented in WP2) represented a factor of cross-fertilisation resulting in a blended approach which constituted the base of knowledge on top of which the EM2.0 training course will be built.

The multi-cultural and multi-experience background revealed a true added value while considering that Export Manager (as a professional profile) is required to address different cultural and business environments. In that sense, the trans-national nature of the consortium revealed a pre-requisite to develop the training course.

The EU dimension of the project worked also as a evidence of reliability of the consortium and of its expected results, contributing to attract the interest of national-class training institutions, became third parties, contributors and supporters of the project.

It has been observed by some hasty observer that the expected output of the EM2.0 project (i.e. an innovative EM training course based on Resources 2.0) did not strictly require an international partnership for its development and implementation. This position must be firmly rejected, as it doesn't consider that the final product's ambition is to be suitable for transfer to VET institutions at EU level. Accordingly i) the base of knowledge about existing EM training courses, ii) the different cultural and methodological approaches to the EM, iii) the different sensibility to the identification of the Resources 2.0, cannot be ensured without a multi-national dimension. A training course elaborated under one point of view only would be

hardly “understandable” and “recognisable” as reliable, from the entire European community of VET institution and export managers operators.

It is expected that, during the development of the training modules (second year of project), a further ground for the demonstration of European added value will be the different impact that Resources 2.0 will have in different contexts. Having different point of views from different countries will enable to identify which technical tools and solutions will be more effective in a certain country, while being ineffective in others.

Besides of technical added value brought by the multi-country dimension of the project, working in multi-country team represented an added value in itself. All partners were already experienced in working in international projects, so there was not a significant added value in that sense. What appears interesting and worthy of mention is the “European dimension” of the project, intended as the perception of being working into a European context rather than simply international one. It refers to the consuetude to work and think in terms of European dimension, the awareness and familiarity with EU programmes working procedures (like a common, shared, and consolidated working methodology), the perception of a European final scope of the project.

The last mention to the partnership added value of the project, in the experience of Web Advanced Export Manager – EM2.0 refers to the partnerships external to the consortium, enabled by the project implementation.

These partnership can be sorted in formal and informal partnership.

Formal partnership has been created with third parties thanks to the instrument of the Cooperation Agreement. The first Cooperation Agreement was established between the coordinator and the Italian Governmental Trade Promotion Agency *ICE – Agenzia per la Promozione all’Estero e l’Internazionalizzazione delle imprese Italiane*, owner of one of the most significant EM training course delivered in Italy, providing a legal and operational framework for the access to training contents.

Two further CA, with the Faculty of Economics and PIN Consortium (University of Florence) are under negotiation at the time of the present report.

Informal partnerships have been initiated and/or consolidated at local level with communities of target audience (VETs and Associations of Entrepreneurs), especially in Italy, Slovenia and Spain, where the interest toward the project matured in a earlier stage. Such partnerships are mostly based on the mutual interest to cooperation, envisaging the possibility to deliver more than only one pilot testing experience.

5. Plans for the Future

An intense work is planned for the next 12 months (end October 2014). Activities are mostly dedicated to the development, testing and fine-tuning of the EM2.0 training course, study definition and implementation of the exit strategy, and strong communication and dissemination campaign to recruit VET institutions for EM2.0 take over.

	Nov13 M13	Dec13 M14	Jan14 M15	Feb14 M16	Mar14 M17	Apr14 M18	May14 M19	Jun14 M20	Jul14 M21	Aug14 M22	Sept14 M23	Oct14 M24
WP4												
4.1 - Design EM2.0												
4.2 - Development			D4.1		D4.1							
4.3 - Fine Tuning											D4.2	
WP5												
5.1 - Preparation												
5.2 - Implementation												
5.3 - Lesson Learnt								D5.1				
WP6												
6.1 - Market Analysis												
6.2 - Elaboration Exit										D6.1		
6.3 - Transfer Pack												D6.2
WP7												
7.2 - Quality Assurance						D7.4						
7.3 - Recovery Plan												
WP8												
8.3 - Implementation C&D												
Web site feeding												
Newsletter												
Local Events												
Press release												

Development of the EM2.0 modules: this activity is largely the most challenging and demanding. 11 training modules will be developed by all partners, according to the slip of responsibilities set out during the meeting of 7 November 2013 in Barcelona. The general structure of the typical module has already been defined. The first draft of each training module is expected for December 20th, 2013. in order to be reviewed by a second partner and improved by February 2013.

Assembling the training course and preparing the pilot testing: this activity will start in February '14 to end in June '14, when the "lesson learnt" and the "recommendation for improvement" will be produced. The pilot is expected to be performed in Slovenia, under the coordination of P6. A fine-tuning process will follow accordingly.

Valorisation of project results: since November '14 activities related to capitalisation and exploitation of project results will run under the coordination of P1. The work will start with a market analysis for the EM2.0 course, continuing with the elaboration of an exploitation strategy to submit the partners. Meanwhile, starting in July '14, the transfer package will be elaborated and assembled, with the aim to create an easy-to-manage procedure to transfer the EM2.0 training course (at the conditions set in the exit strategy) to third parties, thus starting the wide dissemination at EU level of the project's benefits for the wide communities of EU businesses and VET Institutions.

The second year of project will also see the major effort in terms of external communication. In fact the project will have produced concrete outputs to be communicated, raising the interest on the project. Timing is crucial for an effective communication having impact on beneficiaries. Starting a strong C&D campaign in a too early stage of development implies the concrete risk to generate high expectations of immediate involvement of third parties and impact on final beneficiaries, without being in condition to satisfy such expectation. The highest effort in communication will be faced from the preparation of the pilot to the final presentation of the project's results at the end of the project.

6. Contribution to EU policies

The EM2.0 project contributes to several EU policies, in different policy areas.

The first one is related to LLL specific objectives, the first to the benefit of trainees, the second to the benefit of VET system:

1. concerning trainees: *“To support participants in training and further training activities in the acquisition and the use of knowledge, skills and qualifications to facilitate personal development, employability and participation in the European labour market”* - In fact, the EM2.0 training course is meant to improve the quality and quantity of trainees' competences. Trainees will acquire competences belonging to 2 different knowledge domains, but having in common the potential to boost SMEs capability to be competitive on global markets. This mix of competences in a single professional profile increase dramatically the employment and self-employment opportunities of trainees, gaining competitive advantage in their position in the labour market.
2. Concerning VET system: *“To enhance the attractiveness of vocational education and training system”*. The project enhance the attractiveness of VET systems as the EM2.0 professional profile is currently subject to a strong boost of demand. European SMEs are (slowly but relentlessly!) discovering the huge and largely unexploited potential of the Resources 2.0 as marketing and selling tool and this course is expected to be very required by most innovative and open-minded companies.

In terms of operational Objectives of the Action EM2.0 contributes to:

3. improve the quality and to increase the volume of co-operation between institutions or organisations providing learning opportunities, enterprises, social partners and other relevant bodies throughout Europe. In fact, the project is implemented by organisation operating for the benefit of SMEs, being Chambers of Commerce, VET institutions, Regional Agencies. From different angle of action, they work to strengthen regional economies, labour markets and social conditions. The possibility to transfer the results of the project will attract the interest of all those type of actors, pushing to cooperation in view of bringing to the territory an innovative and useful training offer able to have concrete impact on regional economies.
4. Develop Vocational Skills considering the labour market needs (*New Skills for New Jobs*). The labour market needs was the primary driver of the original idea of the project. EM2.0 comes from the acknowledgment of companies' continuous demand of expertise to improve international trade and global competitiveness, when the economic and financial downturn force to constraints which impede hiring resource and significantly invest in internationalisation. Now companies need to reduce costs, increase business, and to go abroad. EM2.0 aims at providing a solution to those needs.



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