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**ANNEX 6. ITALIAN NATIONAL REPORT ON
COMPETENCES ON INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS
MANAGEMENT**

Country: ITALY

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1. Major findings of the interviews

Preface

We made 4 interviews via Skype/phone to Italian people with a wide experience on international projects management.

Note: the interview outline contains 11 main questions; for practical reasons, in that report we merged some of them, in homogeneous groups, while in a separate file we collected links, bibliography, list of courses and good practices.

Main findings from the interviews

Professional experience and field of expertise

The four people present different experiences and curricula; they are also different in term of age, training and typology of trans-national projects that they made in the last years.

We could summarize the professional experiences as follows:

- Their ages are between 38 and 54 years; so basically they got at least 12/13 years of professional experience;
- All of them made a sort of master or long course on project management and/or trans-national projects (basically focused on European initiatives);
- Language skills are very high: at least 3 foreign languages (plus Italian as mother tongue) are very well known and daily used; these skills show in practice that English is nowadays not enough;
- Also ICT know-how is above the average; in fact for the interviewed ICT is a basic knowledge, very useful for the daily job (not only Internet, but also e-learning or advanced application in some professional issues);
- All of them travel a lot (of course, due to the trans-national project) but they also moved and lived (sometimes for several years) abroad (EU or extra EU), for study reasons (University, Erasmus, PhD, etc.) and for professional matters (a start up, project management, a pilot action, etc.);
- Last but not least: from a geographical point of view, their experiences come not only within Europe, but also outside (i.e. Far East, Russia, Africa, USA).

Three main skills that should have a good international manager

We can summarize the topic as follows:

- Flexibility and adaptability (projects have different objectives, partners, countries, contents, etc.);

- Very deep knowledge about the country where the international manager works (not only from economic point of view, but also in term of society, way of life, business practices, cultural approach);
- Very wide network (each project needs different kind of partners, e.g. private or public, profit or no profit, technical or not, etc.);
- Ability to listen (e.g. questioning the own beliefs);
- Interpretation of the socio-cultural context;
- Team building and group motivation abilities;
- And, of course, high knowledge of foreign languages (but this is a sort of pre-requisite).

What are the problems and the challenges, which will happen more often to deal with the management of international projects

We can summarize the topic as follows:

- Basically all the interviewed stressed “cultural gaps”, not only between European countries and non European partners, but also within Europe;
- Another topic concerns management issues, above all for the lead partner;
- Sometimes misunderstanding, new challenges and communication tasks are also key aspects;
- A challenge could be also the adaptation of a good “flexibility attitude”; in other words is really important to “put yourself in the shoes of the other”;
- Another task should be “to constantly question your point of view”;
- Misunderstanding comes also from the way of communication: e.g. a successful international project needs also “face to face” meetings (and not only e-mails or Skype calls...);
- Finally, sometimes problems come from: an unclear assignment of roles; a wrong motivation of the involved partners (above all at the beginning) or a no clear budget and tasks distribution.

Cases/examples in which the interviewed did not solve a situation in the right way, and what is the “lesson learned”

All the interviewed gave us a concrete example of “failure”; they described it and, above all, they explained why something did not work and, eventually, which kind of corrective actions they made or tried to make.

We can summarize the four cases, and some comments, as follows:

- It was a technical problem concerning a restoration of a big and expansive building: the supplier did not estimate some issues in term of technology and materials that did not fit the needs. The consortium was composed by several companies (small and middle size) coming from different countries. The reasons of the mistake came from a wrong scheduling phase; they needed also a “simulation” before starting, useful for a deeper analysis. Finally, they solved the problem, adapting the technology (but wasting time and money...);

- The problem was created by an “information gap”: the supplier was planning some computer classrooms, in a different country. But the estimation of the number of computers was wrong (or, better, there was a big difference, in terms of students, between different schools). So, it was not only a technical or logistic problem, but above all a “cultural issue” too (at the beginning the project managers compared different countries in the same way...). At the end, they adapted the model, and they found a solution, quite flexible (and it worked...);
- The problem was very specific but, in the same time, very significant: during a European project the lead partner planned (following what was written in the application) a trans-national steering committee. But they built up it sharing the membership for countries and for partners. In other words, apparently they simplified the model (one member for one country) but they did not consider also the single needs from each partner. The committee did not work well; so finally they considered a more “democratic” approach, and they represented all the partners. In this case, the lead partner understood how much crucial are the single expectations, above all at the beginning of a two or three years project;
- The problem was a wrong timetable planning: during a three-years trans-national project (between some European partners and a target country in the Far East) there was a mistake in the approved application. In fact, some activities needed more time to be done, also for some cultural gaps, in term of planning and execution. The lead partner understood it quite soon, and re-planned some phases (according to advices that came from the European Commission). The problem was also done in the information tasks: lead partner did not share, since the beginning, the challenges that each partner should face.

Participation in an initiative of non-formal and informal (e.g. social games)

All the interviewed agreed: they are able to test a social game focused on trans-national project management. In fact, at the moment, in their opinion in the market there are several courses in that topic, but there is not a specific business game/application.

2. Desk research

2.1 Bibliography

N.	Author, source (link, or title of the publication)	Year of publication	Subjects approached, target	Short description of the source and of the competences in international project management indicated	Comments or Remarks
1	Schunk J., <i>Il ciclo del progetto</i>	2011	Theoretical and technical methodologies for following the whole cycle of project management	Intercultural awareness, technical competences, operational competences, focus on the main aim and on the single objects of the different phases of the project cycle at the same time.	
2	Sirolli E., <i>Ripples from the Zambezi: Passion, Entrepreneurship and the Rebirth of Local Economies</i> . New Society Publishers.	1999	Case history of a successful experience of "enterprise facilitation".	Being able to listen to your target's needs. Then motivate people to reach their objectives. [A interesting video can be seen on TED http://www.ted.com/talks/ernesto_sirolli_want_to_help_someone_shut_up_and_listen.html]	
3	Brivio P., Quarta M. (a cura di), <i>Da manager a</i>	2009	New needs and roles in the enterprises:	Executive competence, (quick) decision making, strategic vision,	

	<i>professionista. Nuovi ruoli per l'impresa di domani.</i> Franco Angeli		how the manager role is changing and how to satisfy the new requirements for being a good manager.	unconventional thinking, flexibility, negotiation skills (different from the "old" political mediation)	
4	Schunk J., <i>Il progetto prima del progetto. Tattiche e strategie applicate all'aiuto allo sviluppo.</i> L'Harmattan Italia.	2001	How to develop a good cooperation project.	N/A	

2.2 Collection of good practices

Title of the good practice or of the course (both formal or informal initiative) 1	ISPI School (Istituto per gli Studi di Politica Internazionale)
Country	ITALY
Brief description. Why is it worthwhile to be considered a good practice or a good course? Highlight the strong points	The ISPI School makes it possible to approach the world of international relations and understand the way it works. The School offers a rich variety of courses aimed at a wide and varied public interested in exploring specific thematic areas. The ISPI School works on training since 1950, so it has a valuable experience and a big capacity to satisfy the contemporary training needs.
Promoter of the initiative (person or institution that developed it)	ISPI School
Target group	- University students;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Graduates; - Professionals and other operators working in the field of international cooperation.
<p>Competences improved in the good practice or in the course</p>	<p>Theme areas and respective main objects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development (What is international cooperation? How do you manage a development project? How can you update the knowledge you have already acquired, by working on cooperation field projects?); - Diplomacy (What is a diplomatic career? What are the subjects of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs entrance examination? What is the examination syllabus? How can you study for all of this?); - European Affairs (How do the European authorities work? What are European policies and what are their domestic implications?); - Emergencies (What are humanitarian emergencies? What are the standards recognised internationally through the Sphere programme? How do you manage an emergency intervention?); - International current affairs and Geopolitical Atlas (What are the causes and results of an international crisis or a world political dispute? What are the worldwide and regional effects of the policies of an emerging international player or of a power in given area?); - Language courses
<p>Educational and pedagogical approach</p>	<p>The ISPI School proposes a wide range of course typologies.</p> <p>Masters: full-time programmes intended for young people wishing to enter the diplomatic career, to become EU official or work with international, governmental or non-governmental organizations in sectors</p>

	<p>concerning cooperation for development and the management of emergencies.</p> <p>Winter and Summer Schools: short, intensive courses (15 hours) provided on Fridays and Saturdays (Winter School, from November to April) and Mondays to Fridays (Summer School, in July and September), in order to gain an introduction into major international themes</p> <p>Diplomas: in-depth courses (75 hours) on European Affairs, International Development and Cooperation, and Humanitarian emergencies, consisting of 5 short courses following fixed study plans</p> <p>Advanced Diplomas: part-time programmes in English intended for people operating in emergencies, development projects, management of children projects, and the fields of electoral assistance and post-conflict reconstruction.</p>
Further information/ Additional Comments	http://www.ispionline.it/

Title of the good practice or of the course (both formal or informal initiative) 2	Net-Map
Country	The author is German, her experience is word-wide (Africa in particular) and her actual location is Washington DC.
Brief description. Why is it worthwhile to be considered a good practice or a good course? Highlight the strong points	Net-Map is an interview-based mapping tool that helps people understand, visualize, discuss, and improve situations in which many different actors influence outcomes. By creating Influence Network Maps, individuals and groups can clarify their own view of a situation, foster discussion, and develop a strategic approach to their networking activities.
Promoter of the initiative (person or institution that developed it)	Ms Eva Schiffer eva-schiffer@web.de

Target group	No specific requirement needed. It can be addressed to every group wishing to better understand a complex situation.
Competences improved in the good practice or in the course	<p>Net-Map helps players to determine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - what actors are involved in a given network, - how they are linked, - how influential they are, and - what their goals are. <p>Determining linkages, levels of influence, and goals allows users to be more strategic about how they act in these complex situations. It helps users to answer questions such as: Do you need to strengthen the links to an influential potential supporter (high influence, same goals)? Do you have to be aware of an influential actor who doesn't share your goals? Can increased networking help empower your dis-empowered beneficiaries?</p>
Educational and pedagogical approach	<p>The tool is low-tech and low-cost and can be used when working with rural community members with low formal education as well as with policy makers or international development actors.</p> <p>The detailed Handbook is here available.</p> <p>The methodology leads to a deep understanding of situations thanks to the added value given by working in group, debating and comparing different views on the same issue.</p>
Further information/ Additional Comments	http://netmap.wordpress.com
Title of the good practice or of the course (both formal or informal initiative) 3	Master in Europrogettazione
Country	ITALY

<p>Brief description. Why is it worthwhile to be considered a good practice or a good course? Highlight the strong points</p>	<p>The prestigious MASTER in Europlanning was born in 1999 to improve the design and access to European funds capability by the enterprise system and the Italian public administrations and represents the most authoritative training proposal in Italy in the field. In addition to having trained thousands of professionals over the years, this Master is elected every year by all major institutions and companies in the country for their own training needs relating to the European projects design.</p>
<p>Promoter of the initiative (person or institution that developed it)</p>	<p>CENTRO DI FORMAZIONE IN EUROPROGETTAZIONE – Venice International University</p>
<p>Target group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Companies, public bodies, local and regional authorities, trade associations, trade unions and the third sector associations and voluntary groups, international organizations, research institutes and universities, consultants and freelance professionals; - Youth and graduates (who can have access to scholarships).
<p>Competences improved in the good practice or in the course</p>	<p>Technical knowledge to prepare, design, write down and apply for a European funded project, in order to make it competitive on the base of the EC evaluation criteria.</p>
<p>Educational and pedagogical approach</p>	<p>The course foresees a training programme composed by one week of face-to-face lessons and a semester of individualized project work, supported by Venice International University, via help desk or with the possibility to have access to the Centre (for assessments, in-depth analysis, direct involvement in project planning teams). During the semester students develop their own actual European project</p>



	(which is considered such as a thesis) that will be evaluated by a Committee of teachers and evaluators.
Further information/ Additional Comments	http://www.europelago.it