

ENHANCING COMPETENCES

DYNAMIC ALIGNMENT BETWEEN JOB AND EDUCATION.

CHALLENGES AND EVIDENCES FROM THE SMART PROJECT.

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Abstract

A modern, inclusive, flexible and competitive labour market embraces a broad spectrum of activities. Stimulating open, accessible and flexible learning (both focusing transversal and vertical skills) and promoting partnerships between public and private institutions (to ensure appropriate curricula and skills provision) represent the pillars of the "Rethinking Education 2030 EU strategy and frame, as also recalled in the recent EU programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI).

The need of dynamically matching educational system offer and job market demand represents a relevant challenge to promote and sustain an inclusive and competitive society in Europe. The EU strategy EUROPE 2020 strongly recommend, specially within the Agenda New skills for New jobs, the approaches bridging educational/training systems and labour market. Furthermore, the system ECVET also boosts the transparency and recognition of the learning outcomes to facilitate its understanding in a European labour market that needs innovative and dynamic tools to reach the goals in terms of employment and educational excellence.

SMART (Skill MAtching for Regional development) is a LLLP-Leonardo da Vinci TOI project aimed at support the dynamic matching of competences and jobs demand by addressing two main dimensions: the skill matching models and the anticipation of professional scenarios. SMART model and system are based on the need of getting a systematic fit among learning outcomes and job requirements by dynamically identifying competences, knowledge and skills required and adapting the learning outcomes in the Educational regional system. In fact, the identification of new employment possibilities will also allow to react in the preparation of new educational pathways, mainly in the Higher Education context and Formal Vocational training. Moreover, the technology enhanced SMART system (and tools) deal with and the approach that will be made based in knowledge, skills and capacities as learning outcomes, will allow us to enhance transparency, recognition of non-formal competences in regional context and the extent to an European scope.

The project focuses on education and job balance in Andalusia region featured by high rates of unemployment as well as both over and under qualification, with special refer to the Tourism Industry (Hospitality, Catering and Travels). The main project expected outcomes are represented by: the improvement of the cooperation among stakeholders (from VET, institutional and business sectors) by the definition of common models, procedures and tools for the competences' matching process; the design and realization of an ontology-based adaptive tool that map and validate companies' and education competences. An additional result is the identification and anticipation of new emerging jobs and competences needs in the Andalusian labour market. E-learning outcomes will be also developed to cover the mismatching found out during the Pilot testing.

Keywords: Innovation, evaluation and assessment, ePortfolio, technology enhanced learning, VET competences, job market, international research projects, Skill matching