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WP5

REPORT

Content Advisory Board CONTRIBUTIONS

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BACKGROUND

Within the framework of the Project *FRO curriculum - Curriculum for Training Management Systems for Family Responsible Organisations* a Content Advisory Board has been established under the coordination of Unioncamere del Veneto-Eurosportello.

The Content Advisory Board (CAB) has been set up with the aim of providing a consultancy support to the project by involving 6 representatives of different entities/organisations located in the concerned project areas (Portugal, Italy, Sweden, Poland and Belgium).

The involved Advisory Board members main tasks is the evaluation of the main project outputs and documents completed within the period October 2007-September 2009 by providing their feedback and expertise concerning the real needs and conditions of specific mentioned sectors.

The role of the CAB is even strategic: it actually ensures the participation of social sector representatives in the project implementation by improving the potential impacts and the quality of project's results. By securing the involvement of social partners in the targeted sectors and their participation in the ongoing evaluation, the project will strengthen the potential for impact and mainstreaming.

The CAB has been created with the purpose of continuously provide expertise and evaluate the ongoing work. The Board provides feedback on needs and conditions in different sectors as a basis for adaptation of products to be developed within the project framework.

THE CAB PARTICIPANTS

The Content Advisory Board has been established in the initial phase of the project.

Three Italian Advisory Board members have been initially involved:

- Antonio Girardi, Director of "Fondazione Giacomo Rumor - Centro Produttività Veneto"
- Santo Romano, Head of Regional Unit "Direzione Formazione" of Veneto Region
- Luciano Galliani, Academic dean Faculty of Sciences of Education, University of Padua

During the meeting held in Warsaw on 24-26 September 2008 the following additional members have been identifies:

- Anders W Johansson "Professor of entrepreneurship" Växjö University, Sweden

- Maria do Rosário Fidalgo, gender adviser of Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG)
- Ellie Varchalama "Member of the Hellenic League for the Women's rights and legal counsellor of the Greek Workers General Confederation (GSEE)"

Prof. Luciano Galliani was not able to provide any contributions due to incurred commitments and lack of time at disposal. Therefore 5 feedbacks out of 6 persons involved have been collected.

FEEDBACK COLLECTED FROM THE CAB MEMBERS

Mr. Antonio Girardi

Mr. Girardi is the Director of the Veneto Productivity Centre (Fondazione Giacomo Rumor-Centro Produttività Veneto, hereinafter CPV) an independent foundation associated with the Chamber of Industry and Commerce of Vicenza.

CPV's main activities are training, including programmes financed by the European Commission (such as ecological auditing, open and distance learning and female entrepreneurship), inter-firm exchanges of best practices (Study Groups) and information services (Technological Information Counter and New Enterprise Information Desk). The areas covered by both activities are general management, technology, marketing, cost-accounting, human resources, entrepreneurship and public administration.

Mr. Girardi analysed all documents related to the FRO Curriculum Project submitted by Unioncamere del Veneto-Eurosportello. He focused his attention mainly on two aspects of the project activities, also considering his experience as Director of Veneto Productivity Centre:

- Ø The content
- Ø The method proposed

About **the content**, Mr. Girardi stressed the importance of keeping on working and further developing the results achieved through the Equal Programme and through activities related to CSR, especially by involving the new generations in the awareness process.

Spreading the culture of Family Responsible Organisations is actually still a challenge for new generations. They actually have to become more aware of the central role of human resources' different genders (male and female), the job value and the importance of relationships in work environments (enterprises and other organisations).

The FRO curriculum Project, by focusing on these main themes, is coherent with the approach proposed. It enhances both genders' role, in order to promote equal "responsibility" without ignoring differences.

About the **method proposed**, it's appreciable the effort to propose the certification processes as a tool to introduce these topics into the European organisations and enterprises. Certification is actually a tool already known by the existing organisations. Moreover, at Regional level, the Veneto Region already support the Ethic-Social Certification Sa8000 and coordinates the multi-stakeholders round-tables related to CSR. This can be considered as a positive sign in view of a wider recognition of the human resources crucial role for the economic field.

Conclusion: Mr. Girardi suggestions concerning the project are connected to two main aspects. Project FRO, through its training activities, should underline the importance to improve the culture of business management and innovation capacity.

Project FRO should therefore propose specific tools able to help SMEs and organisations to rise up the quality of management and their capacity to innovate.

Mrs. Ellie Varchalama

Mrs. Varchalama is a lawyer, member of the Hellenic League for the Women's rights and legal counsellor of the Greek Workers General Confederation (GSEE).

She attended the transnational FRO CV project training event held in Warsaw, Poland, on September the 24/26 2008.

Mrs. Varchalama supported the idea of having a FRO certification and specific procedures through which an enterprise or organization could obtain it. Through the proposed approach actually an organisation/an enterprise could obtain particular benefits and advantages. The AFEM participation has been useful and important and it has contributed to change the experiences in conciliation project application.

Mrs. Varchalama provided also to disseminate the information related to the Project within a wide network of social stakeholders linked to GSEE at European level. In particular EUROCADRES Executive Committee and ETUC's Women's Committee.

Finally Mrs. Varchalama proposed to promote the Project content and FRO CV within the next ILO's International Labour Conference that will take place in Geneva (3-19 June 2009). In the Conference agenda there are actually two issues of great interest and relevance for the FRO idea: the "employment and social protection in the new demographic context" and the "gender

equality at the heart of decent work". Mrs. Varchalama, as representative of GSEE, will attend the conference and suggested to Anjaf, FRO CV Project lead partner, to join the event.

Mr. Santo Romano

Mr. Santo Romano is Head of Regional Unit "Vocational Training" of Veneto Region.

The Veneto Region Vocational Training Office has the following functions and competences: start-up and management of European programmes in the educational and training fields; training curriculum development and integrated VET programmes management; auditing, administrative control and training organisation certification procedures.

Mr. Romano analysed the documents related to the FRO project on the basis of his experience in CSR and the activities carried out in co-operation with Unioncamere Veneto.

Starting from the assumption that the development of employment policies, with particular attention to the reforms of the labour market, represents a key challenge for all European countries as mentioned in the Lisbon Strategy, Mr. Romano emphasized how the increase of employment among women and the promotion of reconciliation policies are fundamental to get closer to full employment and achieve better working conditions.

According to what Mr. Romano stated in its report, the labour market is composed of a multiplicity of actors that are, in turn, carriers of different and multiple instances in terms of conciliation life work, training needs, responsibility of family care. More organisational flexibility and greater attention to issues of equal opportunities should not be read as a mere claim of gender, but as a right of civilization to all, that could help women and men to get back their time helping to better manage loads of work and family care responsibilities and that could help companies in developing the skills of everyone, ensuring equal treatment.

The inclusion in work organisation of the principle of equal opportunities and of forms of flexibility means also a socially responsible take-over by the enterprises on gender issues and on relationship between work and employees private life.

The activities implemented so far have revealed the importance of developing initiatives and vocation training paths, in the promotion of equal opportunities.

From more parties and with increasing insistence it is envisaged that the problems of conciliation does not concern only women but also men and the whole social and economic system in its entirety.

The role that Veneto Region has taken and that it intends to continue to promote in the course of 2009 is precisely to contribute to the dissemination of the principles of social responsibility enterprise, supporting companies in real adoption of social responsibility as strategic instrument which increase competitiveness, and not only as mere instrument of image for its own customers and employees.

Conclusion: **FRO Curriculum** Project has very well highlighted how an organisation that pays attention to life-work conciliation themes can achieve specific benefits both concerning a better business climate and greater productivity. It also contributes to introduce a more sensible approach to the needs that human resources may have with a consequent overall positive impact in terms of internal human resources management strategy.

The **FRO Curriculum Project** represents therefore a step to the achievement of the mentioned objectives and a supportive instrument for the acquisition of specific certification tools for those enterprises/organisations which introduce gender equality and reconciliation policies.

Mr. Anders W. Johansson

Mr. Johansson is Professor of entrepreneurship at Växjö University, Sweden.

He was invited to read and reflect upon the project content such as European reports, training curriculum, training manual. He analysed in particular two main documents:

1. Desk Analysis
2. Analysing professional profile and training needs

Of the remaining 14 documents 12 are related to the two above as either consisting of parts of the two main documents or specifications of them.

Mr. Johansson's comments, in relation to these documents, are described in the following part:

Desk analysis – The aim of this report is “to point out the state of the art of professional profiles and training needs among teachers and trainers in the field of FRO”. According to Mr. Johansson, it is the first step toward the definition of a comprehensive professional profile and the designing of a new training program for those teachers and trainers. In addition, special attention seems to be paid to the conditions within SMEs, but this aim is not so clear in the report.

Given this aim, Mr. Johansson has stated the desk analysis to be made up of a 58 pages description from the four countries and a one page general conclusion. The main content in the descriptions from the four countries is divided into two parts. One part covers an overview

of the supply of training courses **that could be relevant to FRO**. The second one is mainly an overview of official standards in use in the four countries for certification agencies.

In general Mr. Johansson stated that the report gives an overview with an exemplification of the supply of courses as well as suppliers which gives a kind of overall view of the supply of gender courses.

The most important thing is that there are not enough contents in the courses focusing on work life issues of relevance to FRO. Therefore the report is mainly focused on descriptions not so relevant for the overall aim. It is the same for the section about official standards and certification. About the overview, for example, it is concluded that SA 8000 Standard relates to FRO issues only partly; therefore most of the content in this desk analysis seems redundant referring to the overall aim of the project.

While the descriptions by the four countries are rich in details, the conclusions are mainly weak. Some important conclusions are drawn (covered by Mr Johansson's comments) but not much has been done in order to relate these findings to the overall aim of the project.

Analysing professional profile and training needs: the aim of this report is "to carry out in depth studies of training needs amongst the target group and analyse the professional profile for FRO trainers".

According to Mr. Johansson it is stated that the professional profile and training needs amongst VET teachers and trainers were analyzed through surveys, interviews and focus groups. Most of the report contains the result of surveys undertaken in the different countries. The interview method has been used only by one country. About the use of focus group, nothing is reported. The surveys use standardized questions as well as open questions, so that the results are reported in a very descriptive way. It was not possible for Mr. Johansson to see that surveys and interviews really corresponds to studies of training needs. The only exception is the interview method used by one country.

He has not found any synthesising discussion which can be called "professional profile for FRO trainers". The report contains a three pages conclusion section that Mr. Johansson considered to be only a kind of summary of the results from the survey and interviews.

Mr. Johansson's concluding remarks: the aim is very important and some of the observations recorded are also very useful as they underline the necessity of the issue. There should have been a learning process in the project.

Mrs. Rosário Fidalgo

Maria do Rosário Fidalgo is gender advisor of Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG). CIG is an official department under the Prime Ministry's Office and it is the Government office for equal rights and opportunities. She was invited to read and reflect upon the project contents such as training curriculum and training manual. She analysed in particular that **FRO Curriculum Project** represents therefore an important step to the achievement of the

mentioned objectives and a supportive instrument for the acquisition of specific certification tools for those enterprises/organisations that introduce gender equality and reconciliation policies. **FRO Curriculum** matches the need for increased professional qualifications amongst teachers and trainers in VET in the field of gender equality and reconciliation policies in Portugal and other EU member states. Increased qualifications will make teachers and trainers able to offer suitable training to enterprises focusing on management systems for gender equality and Family Responsible Organizations (FRO). The **Didactical methodology** is made of: learning by doing, learning by dialogue and methodologies for transferring tacit knowledge, acquired through non-formal learning processes, into explicit knowledge. By non-formal learning process we mean a parallel path to main education and training systems which doesn't always lead to formal certificates. Work place, organizations of civil society, group activities, organizations and systems set up to complete formal system. This methodology needs different dynamic introductions e.g. case studies, brainstorming or role-play. It is necessary to change the modules' duration and the spreading of good practices is important for the project product implementation. Portugal aims to disseminate the FRO among enterprises, schools and NGOs. It is important that a document, certified in Portugal, can be recognized by international organizations, including ILO, European Union and Council of Europe. This certificate will offer greater credibility for the organizations using it. The implementation of an organizational culture in an innovative way aims at gender equality and opportunities and greater social responsibility of organizations.

CONCLUSIONS

Most of CAB members have stressed the importance of developing initiatives and vocational training courses promoting equal opportunities. For companies and SMEs it is crucial to understand that equal opportunities and conciliation policies represent an instrument which can really increase competitiveness and attract motivated human resources. Nevertheless, in order to turn companies and SMEs into Socially Responsible Organizations and Family Friendly Organizations, regional authorities and governments should both introduce certification systems and offer a wider range of information and training opportunities. FRO Curriculum significantly contributes to go towards this direction.