

Newsletter

Number 1 February 2006

This is the first of 5 newsletters, which will be published throughout the Euracademy Observatory project.

The project team held their first meeting in early December 2005, at the Ruralia Institute, University of Helsinki, in Seinajoki, Finland. All partners were able to attend - even though the snow caused some journey problems. These were from IMEDES (Spain), PRISMA (Greece), University of Rostock (Germany), Centre for Regional Studies HAS (Hungary), Norton Radstock College (UK) and Nicolaus Copernicus University (Poland). Also EfVET (Belgium) had a vicarious representative present.

The entire project was discussed at length, with individuals raising questions and gaining knowledge about particular aspects of each of the work packages.

The Observatory project is divided into 7 work packages, each with a Lead Partner who is responsible for that particular work package. Work Package 1 (WP1) - Project Management and Co-ordination - is lead by the University of Helsinki assisted by the coordinator of the project PRISMA, and will be ongoing throughout the project.

The first work package which will involve all partners is WP2 - Review of Policies and Practices of ICT-supported Lifelong Learning.

The Euracademy Observatory project started in 2005 and will run until the end of September 2007.

The aim of the project is to examine the policy and practice for ICT-supported continuing educational and training (CET) in the context of lifelong learning (which includes learning at work, skills acquisition, personal development) across the participating countries and in the European Union more generally.

An inventory of opportunities for unemployed or employed people will be created, with an emphasis on employees of SMEs and micro-enterprises, and the self-employed. Such documentation will be collected through surveys, to include governmental organisations, policy makers, training providers and trainees, to provide a comprehensive picture of the supply and demand for ICT-supported CET in rural Europe.

The intention is to establish the Observatory on the Internet with the remit to continue its operations beyond the life of the project.

Partner countries involved are Belgium, Germany, Greece, Poland, Hungary, UK, Finland and Spain. The project findings will be presented at two trans-national conferences: in Athens in September 2006 and in Brussels in September 2007.

The project is funded by the Leonardo Da Vinci Programme.

A European Observatory of the use of ICT-supported Lifelong Learning by SMEs, Micro-Enterprises and the Self-employed in Rural Areas



The aim of this part of the project is “to give systematic documentation of policy and practices for ICT-supported continuing education and training in the context of life-long learning. This documentation will provide an inventory of opportunities for ICT-supported learning available to employed or unemployed people, with emphasis on employees of rural SMEs and micro-enterprises”.

For this review each partner will produce a national report which will cover information available concerning the demand and supply for ICT-supported learning, assessing access to learning resources and relevance of the learner’s needs, together with ‘good-practice’ examples. EfVET, as a European membership organisation, will call upon its membership to collect ‘good policy’ practice from 5-10 other countries.

The draft reports will be available 15 March, for discussion and agreement at the next partner’s meeting in Valencia at the end of March.

As internal communication has a crucial part in making a project a success, some discussions at the meeting centred around the use of new technologies which would assist the communication of the project team members. A product for video-conferencing (Marratech) was presented as well as an e-learning platform for distance learning, which provides notice board and discussion group facilities (Moodle). It was decided that both

of these would be used, as all recognised the usefulness.

Initial discussions took also place regarding the other work packages, some of which have already started. The set-up of the Observatory website has been subcontracted to an ICT specialist company and is currently ‘Under Construction’. It will be available at www.euracademy.org/observatory

Dates were set for the mid-term trans-national conference in Athens (September 2006) and the final conference in Brussels (September 2007).

As Euracademy Observatory project has also social partners in the participating countries (SME associations, chambers of commerce and other advisories), especially those will be invited to participate to the mid-term conference.

The partnership welcomes all who are interested in sharing knowledge and experience in the field of the Euracademy Observatory –project to contact us for further cooperation.

For more information about the project and its activities, please contact:

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