



Newsletter

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Latest News

Successful mid-term trans-national workshop held in Athens in September, attended by project partners, social partners and Greek delegates – about 40 organisations represented. Lively and useful debate ensued.

Project going to plan, even allowing for changes of personnel amongst the partners.

Country reports for Work Package 2 completed (Review of Policies and Practices of ICT-supported Lifelong Learning), together with a synthesis report from German partner – available on the project website.



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.

Further project findings will be presented at another trans-national conferences - Brussels in September 2007.

The project is funded by the Leonardo Da Vinci Programme.





Progress

The project team met in March this year and then again in September (Athens).

Work has completed on the various country reports relating to the current state of ICT-supported Continuing Education and Training, policies and practices. It is apparent that the partner countries are all at various stages of development.

Training providers have been approached to participate in the project, completing questionnaires pertaining to their delivery of ICT-supported learning and whether or not SMEs and other businesses (urban and rural) are using the technology to enable lifelong learning. It has proved difficult to persuade providers to complete the questionnaires in some countries; if anyone reading this newsletter would like to participate, the online survey is available on the project website.

There was also a one-day workshop, attended by Advisory Panel Members (APMs) from various organisations and many Greek institutions.

Workshop Report

The Euracademy Observatory project has social partners in the participating countries (SME associations, chambers of commerce and other advisories). These partners were invited to the workshop.



Other attendees included the Secretary General of Adult Education and other officials from Greek ministries, chambers of commerce, industry and agriculture.

A workshop was organised so that panels and open discussions could be held, which was deemed to be a great opportunity for all participants to explore ways of further cooperation, bearing in mind the recognition that ICT supported lifelong learning is well established, although the partner countries are at various stages of development in this very important field.

Three panels were organised to present to findings to date of the project and obtain valuable feedback from the social partners, creating a favourable environment for constructive discussion between all participants.

The main conclusions were that ICT-supported learning is still in early stages of development, that communication infrastructure for delivery must be present (particularly in rural areas), basic ICT skills must be present amongst SMEs and that any training must be rele



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



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vant to SMEs for the benefits to be realised.

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Two Greek training providers asked to speak and made many comments about whether or not e-learning was the way forward. This re-iterated the need for the Observatory; the vast differences in different countries and perhaps a clear way forward, promoting new strategies, designing new approaches and analysing the current outcomes.

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The lifelong learning needs of SMEs in rural areas was discussed; their needs, effects of subsidies in the market structure and constraints and incentives for participating in e-learning, recognising the most important constraint to SMEs is time, or rather lack of time, together with fear of technology.



The workshop offered all participants the chance to air their views and give valuable feedback to the project.

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

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