



**EU.EM.NET: European systematic approach for employers' engagement to
anticipate skills requirements**

and support quality assurance (QA) in VET

Project No. 527838-LLP-1-2012-1-SK-LEONARDO-LNW

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EU.EM.NET Employers Forum Report

WP7

Country: United Kingdom

Partner: Rinova Limited

Date: October 2015

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Overview of sections

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Section 1: Organisation

1.1 Selection of the invited

For this workshop a small group of London-based employers attended (from small independent SME's, large chains and across all aspects of the hospitality sector). The selection of employers invited included those from hotels, bars and pubs, restaurants and specialist venues. We also invited VET providers, employment agencies for the sector and policy makers.

Some of the employer representatives who attended this event, had also attended our first testing session of the Core Methodology – so although at the beginning may have been a slight repetitive for them, it gave them a quick overview. It was good to have a mix of the views of those returning attendees, as a follow up from the last session, along with those of the new attendees who had not known of the EU.EM.NET project before this workshop.

1.2 Type of event, venue, logistics, duration

Type of event: Workshop

Venue: St Luke's Community Centre, 90 Central Street, London, EC1V 8AJ, UK

Date: Wednesday 9th September 2015

Duration: 10:00 – 13:00 (3 hours)

Description: The aim of the workshop was to disseminate the products of the EU.EM.NET project to a wide range of employers, in order to create awareness, in the hopes to sustain this going forward.

We chose to run this event as a workshop, as it would be an effective way in order to both promote the products and project, as well as gaining perspectives and opinions from carefully selected employers across London. We thought that the informal workshop approach would prove most beneficial due to the fact that employers would feel more comfortable to express their views in a workshop based environment.

Section 2: Content

2.1. Course of action

During this event, the main focus was to promote the EU.EM.NET project and the products we have created within the partnership, in multiple break-out/brainstorming sessions in order to gain insight to the employers views/opinions.

We begun by outlining the EU.EM.NET project, in which we presented both the „Core Methodology“ and the „Country Road Map“ products, and explained the main project aims.

We discussed the 1st testing workshop that was held and presented the feedback from this workshop, in which the academy model was presented. We raised three discussion questions, and then broke out into a group discussion;

- 1) TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE/DISAGREE WITH THE FINDINGS OF THE LAST GROUP?*
- 2) WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO ADD?*
- 3) HAS ANYTHING CHANGED IN THE LAST 8 MONTHS?*

Tim Andrews (LTR) then went on to a powerpoint presentation to discuss the academy model further, which led us into a productive workshop and brainstorming session over developing and funding the model. We focussed on the following discussion questions which resulted in many helpful comments/feedback;

- 1) HOW DOES THE ROTATION OF EMPLOYEES WORK? HOW LONG CAN THEY BE GONE FROM THEIR ORIGINAL EMPLOYER?*
- 2) PAYMENT OF WAGES, HOW DOES THIS WORK?*
- 3) WHAT FRAMEWORKS WOULD BE OFFERED*
- ?4) EXISTING OR NEW EMPLOYEES?*
- 5) DEVELOPING A TAILORED TRAINING PLAN FOR EACH EMPLOYEE – DO EMPLOYERS GET TO CHOOSE WHERE THEIR EMPLOYEE GOES DURING THEIR ‘SKILLS ROTATION’? HOW MANY EMPLOYERS AND HOW LONG FOR?*

2.2 EU.EM.NET products/deliverables presented

In this meeting we referred extensively to the Core Methodology document and also to the outline of the Country Research Document. We also referred to the plans for the Country Road Map.

We did not use the pre workshop questionnaire during this session. We did however complete our own evaluation of the session.

2.3 Feedback of the participants

At the beginning of the workshop, some of the participants (in particular those from the VET and key stakeholder organisations) felt that there were products or programmes in place already, sounding very similar to the model we were presenting. Their view for instance was that through the involvement of Sector Skills Council People 1st, employers did have direct input into the design of sector based qualifications. However, as the session progressed it became clear that employers did

not necessarily agree with this. Representatives from the industry were quick to point out that there are some skills gaps that are not yet being met within the current educational system. Another overriding theme was the poor promotion of the sector as a viable, exciting and challenging career option to young people and the problem with creates for employers who simply do not get the calibre of people they need when recruiting. We ran through with the employers the idea of the Employer Led academy which had come about as a result of the ‚fantasy and reality‘ phases of the last workshop and participating employers were definitely interested in seeing this model develop.

At the end of the workshop, all participants were asked to complete a short questionnaire to provide us with feedback of how they thought the workshop went. The findings from these results were very much positive, with 100% of attendees saying they wish to be informed of the development of the EUEMNET project and the proposed Academy Model and would be interested in discussing this further with us. The majority agreed that the workshop discussions helped them to think about ways in which the interface between employers and training providers could be improved, thereby improving skills levels and better meeting employer’s needs.

„Great to discuss potential barriers to employee retention post training“

„Now have more info and suggestions on what already happening“

„Good discussions on the Academy and support that could be given“

2.4 Partner’s (organiser’s) experience

With this final event we focused on bringing together a small but influential group of employers, all of which operate within Zone 1 of the city of London . Representatives came from small but specialist independent SME’s, large chains and across all aspects of the hospitality sector, including hotels, bars and pubs, restaurants and specialist venues. We also invited VET providers, employment agencies for the sector and policy makers. We know from experience that it notoriously difficult for people from the sector to plan ahead to attend these kind of workshops and for that reason we started early in the morning with the intention of them being away before lunch. This was effective although we still did have a number of apologies on the day. Whilst the turn out for the session wasn’t as high as we hoped, we were able to bring together enough people to make the session worthwhile and we also carried out a number of one to one and small group sessions with other representatives that were unable to attend but were interested in being involved.

At this event there were a number of employer representatives who had attended our first testing session of the Core Methodology. This was both an advantage and a disadvantage. It was not our intention to undertake a full testing workshop in this session, instead we presented information on the previous workshops but also then went onto describe, not only the continuing work of EUEMNET but also the practical results of the initial workshop and what had come out of this ‘fantasy – reality’ stage of the meeting. This was a blue print for an employer led academy to address the anticipated skill shortages within the sector.

For the employers who had been at the original workshop, there was an unavoidable element of duplication. Although as some time had lapsed since the first meeting, they felt that overview was

quite refreshing. For those who were attending for the first time, while it was interesting to hear about the Core Methodology and the other deliverables from the project, some of the participants said they would like to take part in a full testing workshop. This was encouraging and we intend to find ways of incorporating this into the development of the next stage of the academy model.

At this workshop we were able to engage other VET providers and also policy makers in the form of the British Hospitality Association (who strongly influence People First the UK Sector Skills Council for the H&T industry in the UK) and a number of VET organisations including Springboard, who also work closely with the sector skills council on some funded initiatives. Initially we found that they were quite resistant to the idea that there was any gap or mismatch between what the employers require and what VET and HE is offering in the way of skills anticipation and delivery. Their view at the beginning was very much ' if it isn't broken, don't fix it – and we don't believe there is anything to fix' – however during the course of the session, it became clear that employers do have skills gaps that aren't being met within the current educational system and even where there are options which could better meet employers staff training and recruitment needs, the employers themselves are often not aware of these . Also where there are initiatives or programmes that do tackle this issue they are too small and niche and do not impact on SME's in particular. By the end of the session we had the full buy in of the VET organisations and the policy makers that were present.

2.5 Any other information

Section 3: Summary (for dissemination)

Subject: Updated Invitation: LTR/Rinova: Euemnet Talks: 10am @ Wed 9 Sep 2015 10:00 - 13:00 (tim@ltrecruit.co.uk)

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| This event has been changed. more details » LTR/Rinova: Euemnet Talks: 10am | |
| Changed: The time has been rescheduled to 10am. Finish time is still 1pm. Problems & Suggesting solutions in Hospitality industry | |
| When | Wed 9 Sep 2015 10:00 – 13:00 London |
| Where | St Luke's Community Centre, 90 Central Street, London EC1V 8AJ, United Kingdom (map) |
| Calendar | tim@ltrecruit.co.uk |
| Who | (Guest list has been hidden at organiser's request) |
| Going? Yes - Maybe - No more options » | |
| Invitation from Google Calendar | |
| You are receiving this courtesy email at the account a.francis@rinova.co.uk because you are an attendee of this event. | |
| To stop receiving future updates for this event, decline this event. Alternatively, you can sign up for a Google account at https://www.google.com/calendar/ and control your notification settings for your entire calendar. | |
| Forwarding this invitation could allow any recipient to modify your RSVP response. Learn More . | |

[Screenshot of invite that was sent out before the event]

EU.EM.NET Employers forum in the UK

Date : Wednesday 9th September 2015

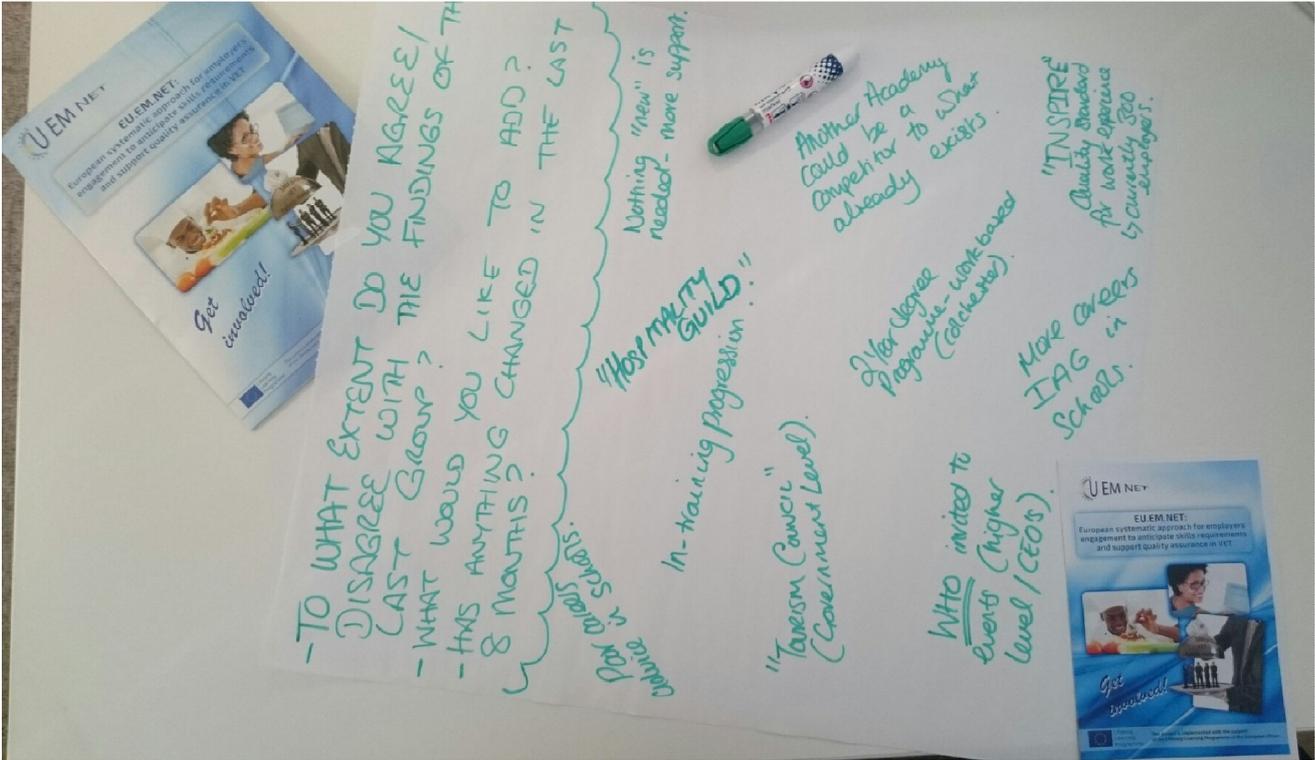
Location : St Luke's Community Centre, 90 Central Street, London, EC1V 8AJ, UK

With this final event we focused on bringing together a small but influential group of employers, all of whom operate within Zone 1 of the city of London. Representatives came from prestigious, specialist independent SME's, large chains and across all aspects of the hospitality sector, including hotels, bars and pubs, restaurants and specialist venues. We also invited VET providers, employment agencies for the sector and policy makers. It is notoriously difficult for people from the Hospitality sector to be able to plan ahead and attend sessions of this kind but we were fortunate to end up with a group of very enthusiastic, participative and engaged individuals at both our testing events and our final Employers Forum.

The Core Methodology testing workshops, undertaken earlier in the project, had already resulted in the idea of an Employer Led Academy. Having been through the 'fantasy phase' of the testing, this was the result of the 'reality' phase and has since been worked on in some detail by several of the participating employers along with Rinova - resulting in one very high scoring funding application and now a blueprint for a new and innovative Apprenticeship model. During the Employers Forum, this was discussed in more detail, including the identification of various funding opportunities which would make this possible, along with the continuing work of the EUEMNET partners.

This meeting was also attended by VET providers and Policy Makers, along with employers who were new to the EUEMNET project and the notion of the futures skills forecasting methodology and the result of the previous workshops was discussed in some detail. By the conclusion of the event there was a common consensus that those present wished to see this model developed further and that the Core Methodology would also be used in the design of the curriculum which, would be

developed by the group of employers engaged in the pilot. Not only can we see that the idea for the Employer Led Academy is a direct result of the project but the ongoing work on the development of this Academy, will ensure that the materials and tools designed by the EUEMNET partners, continue to be used in a productive and effective way, as the idea the project has fostered, becomes a reality.



[Photo of brainstorming activity from the Workshop]



[EU.EM.NET partnership logos]

Section 4: Annexes (included as separate documents)

List of participants

Invitation

Presentation(s)

Photographs