

EVALUATION OF THE TRANS-NATIONAL
COOPERATION PARTNERSHIP



INTERIM REPORT
STUDY VISIT - PORTUGAL

DR. ROBERT VASSALLO,
B.A. (LEGAL & HUMANISTIC), DIP. NOT. PUB., LL.D., LL.M. (IMLI)
NOTARY PUBLIC, MALTA; COMMISSIONER FOR OATHS

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INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

1.1 PURPOSE OF EVALUATION

Together with the Trans-National Meetings and the Deliverables, Study visits are a key component of the PASSI partnership results. Study visits aim at providing the partnership with a further understanding of all involved organisations and will act as a showcase for best practices and transfer of knowledge between the different countries. The following themes were chosen for the study visits:

1. Training courses for AS: logistics and methodology;
2. Innovative ways to put AS into the labour market;
3. The availability of social partners to integrate the AS; and
4. Conditions for reception and temporary accommodation.

This study visit, hosted in Lisbon, Portugal on the 14th March, 2007 focused on the first theme, *Training Courses for AS: Logistics and Methodology*, which makes reference to the vocational education and training available for AS. Together with this main focus, the study visit had several other objectives:

1. *Exchange information about training methodologies, best practices in providing vocational training courses and the recognition, validation and certification of competences;;*
2. *Visit the vocational training centres and a centre for the recognition, validation and certification of competences;*
3. *Debating some of the problems of AS in what concerns vocational training and validation of competences; and*

4. *Presenting the Project VIAAS Activities.*

A delegation of eighteen people attended the visit, including those of the host country: Germany, Greece, Italy and Malta with three representatives each; and six from Portugal. This report is representative of 67% of the participants since six participants did not submit an evaluation sheet. Furthermore, two participants and another three filled one evaluation sheet between themselves.

Regarding the questions answered, there were a total of thirty questions left unanswered. Regarding the *Hosting Organisation Evaluation Sheet*, Questions 1, 7, 11 and 14 by two participants each; Question 3 by three participants; Questions 4 and 10 by four participants each; Questions 8 and 12 by one participant each; and Question 9 by five participants. With respect to the *Sending Organisation Evaluation Sheet*, Questions 4 and 6 by one participant each; and Question 12 by two participants were left out.

It should be pointed out, regarding the questions answered and unanswered, that some of the respondents, both visiting and hosting, claimed not to have understood some of the questions or statements. Some have left the answers blank, some have stated their lack of understanding while others have answered in the wrong way. This situation limits the validity of this evaluation exercise.

The purpose of this evaluation tool is to assess the outcomes of this particular study visit vis-à-vis the aims and objectives set out and according to the evaluation framework identified in the inception report.

1.2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PASSI

PASSI is formed by five partners which are Germany,¹ Greece,² Italy,³ Malta⁴ and Portugal.⁵ These countries constantly face identical problems and difficulties when dealing with AS:

- i. lower school education and little or no vocational qualifications;
- ii. the labour market seems reluctant to employ members from such groups, mainly due to racism and discrimination;
- iii. society in general often adopts an uninterested, and sometimes a rejecting, attitude;
- iv. the living conditions of the temporary reception centres and rented apartments;
- v. the language barrier; and
- vi. agencies and individuals working with and helping these migrants, many of them lack adequate training

As a consequence, most of the migrants often occupy the worse jobs and unemployment often results in being above the average. Moreover, although in employment, AS are in the constant fear of being fired. Finally, few asylum applications are accepted and this leads to illegal migration and illegal activities.

¹ Project *Employment and Education International (Arbeit und Bildung International)*, handled by the agency *DGB-Bildungswerk Thüringen e.V.*

² Project *Aktinergia (Ακτινεργία)*, coordinated by the *Hellenic Red Cross*.

³ Project *Orizzonti*, coordinated by *Ecipar Ferrara Scarl.*

⁴ Project *Integration of Asylum Seekers in the Maltese Society*, coordinated by the *Foundation for Social Welfare Services*.

⁵ Project *Vias de Interculturalidade na Área do Asilo (Portugal) (VIAAS)* is coordinated by *Conselho Português para os Refugiados*.

All of the five partners share common aims and objectives in order to fight the above-listed problems and help the AS and the society for integration. Through meetings, study visits, deliverables and reports, the goals can be summarised as:

- i. To promote the integration of the AS into the labour market;
- ii. To fight discrimination and racism;
- iii. To identify good practices on multicultural/intercultural work;
- iv. To increase and improve the competences of organisations and workers participating in the TCA;
- v. To open the participation in the TCA activities to a large number of workers of the DP's, namely those working directly with AS;
- vi. To exchange information, ideas, methods and technical know-how about the reception and the integration conditions for AS;
- vii. To compare instruments availed by the various partners to evaluate and validate skills and competences of the AS;
- viii. To formulate an evaluation and validation competence/skills audit model (EVC);
- ix. To enable trainers and tutors to compare the *modus operandi* to deliver training to AS; and
- x. To find new ways how to approach social partners in order to show them the skills and competences of the AS in order to facilitate employment.

Chapter 2

WORK COMPLETED AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 EVALUATION FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

The general evaluation criteria, as set out in the Inception Report, are given below.

CRITERIA	DEFINITIONS
<i>Impact</i>	The expected and unexpected impacts on direct and indirect beneficiaries as perceived by the partnership at the time of evaluation.
<i>Relevance</i>	The extent to which the outcomes achieved are consistent with the objectives set.
<i>Effectiveness</i>	The extent to which the objectives set have been achieved. The expected effects resulting from used interventions and instruments. The extent to which different instruments could have produced different results.
<i>Efficiency</i>	A measure of how economically inputs are converted into results. The extent to which the effects obtained commensurate to the inputs.
<i>Sustainability</i>	The expected duration of results and impacts over time. The extent to which impacts will sustain without public funding.

2.2 FIELD DATA COLLECTION

The process of this study visit has been evaluated through a field instrument, a *pro forma* questionnaire, distributed to the participants. All the participants were requested to fill in the sheet during the study visit and forward it to the evaluator. The data was collected between April and March 2007. All the sheets were then verified and stamped by the evaluator.

The questionnaire has a selection of qualitative open-ended questions and a small number of statements to be rated on a Likert-scale. This tool has been modified slightly to fit the needs of the hosting participant and the visiting participants. Both versions are attached.⁶

⁶ Annex 2.

RESULTS

3.1 IMPACT

This criterion looks at the impact that the activity has on the needs of the target population. The expected and the unexpected impacts are both looked into. The questions/statements relative to the impact criterion are the following:

H/V - 3 What sections/departments of the HO/SO were involved directly or indirectly?

H/V - 4 How were the sections affected?

H/V - 7 Were there any unexpected outcomes/impacts?

H/V - 11 What impact did this study visit have on the local project?

The participants represent various organisations and this facilitates the overall impact, transfer of knowledge and multiplier effect. On the other hand, the respondents do not identify clearly how the sections were affected, although some referred to the transfer of knowledge.

Only one of the visiting delegations registers unexpected outcomes. This is in relation to the visit carried out at the Reception Centre in Bobadela and it refers to how this open centre operates within, and with, the local community. It is also interesting to note that this open centre is a result of EQUAL funding.

The hosting partners do not identify many impacts on their local project. This can be the result of the fact that this study visit was more focused on the

presentation of the DP's work in the field of AS rather than the exchange of knowledge and good practice between the different countries.

On the other hand, the visiting partners are very positive about the impact that this study visit will have on their local project. One delegation correctly points out that *we have to look at how we can assimilate [individual work]*. The transfer of knowledge and working methods across countries is often harder than imagined due to cultural, situational and attitudinal limitations.

3.2 RELEVANCE

The second criterion listed is the Relevance criterion. This explores the appropriateness of the objectives set out for an intervention in relation to the socio-economic problem they are meant to address. The questions and statements relative to this criterion are:

H/V - 2.3 The activities organised reached the expectations.

H/V - 2.4 The outcomes/results can be transferred to other persons/organisations.

H/V - 8 What experiences/skills can be transferred to the colleagues or other DP's?

2 To what extent do you agree with these statements?	5	4	3	2	1
<i>Rate from 5 to 1. 5=Excellent, 1=Very Poor</i>					
2.3 The activities organised reached the expectations.	4	5	0	0	0
2.4 The outcomes/results can be transferred to other persons/organisations.	1	5	2	1	0

The relevance of this trans-national partnership has been consistently proven to be very high, due to the contemporary nature of its theme. The study visits, and in turn, the activities organised during the study visits, have continuously been of interest to the participants.

Relevance for other institutions, apart from those of the actual participants, is questioned through Statement 2.4 and Question 8. Visiting partners are very thorough in which lessons learnt will be transferred and these include the whole concept and organisation of asylum procedure and integration, the country management mechanisms and resource allocation in reception of AS, new vocational training methodologies and also the validation and certification process of vocational skills.

3.3 EFFECTIVENESS

This criterion looks into the achievement of expected results. The statements and questions relative to this criterion are:

H/V - 2.1 The aims set out for this study visit were reached.

H/V - 5 What were the strong points of this study visit?

H/V - 6 What were the weak points of this study visit?

2 To what extent do you agree with these statements?	5	4	3	2	1
<i>Rate from 5 to 1. 5=Excellent, 1=Very Poor</i>					
2.1 The aims set out for this study visit were reached.	3	4	2	0	0

The quantitative answer given above indicates that the aims of this study visit were reached. In the open-ended questions, the respondents, both visiting and hosting, are confident of the achievement of the aims set out. Strong points include the visit to the Reception Centre and the Vocational Training Centre; the two opportunities for discussions with AS; and the mix of theoretical and practical presentations by the different Portuguese DP's.

On the other hand, respondents indicate that they would have preferred to have longer discussion times after each DP's presentation; that the presentations of visiting DP's were more focused on best practice methodologies rather than on activities and results; and, inevitably, the hosting partners would have preferred to have more preparation time.

Overall, the effectiveness of this study visit can be assessed as satisfactory.

3.4 EFFICIENCY

The efficiency criterion looks at whether the outcomes achieved justify the costs incurred for the whole activity. The Statements relating to this criterion are:

H/V - 2.2 The study visit was very well organised.

H/V - 2.5 The costs incurred for this study visit justify the results reached.

H/V - 2.6 The SO/HO contributed financially to the success of this study visit.

<i>2 To what extent do you agree with these statements?</i>	5	4	3	2	1
<i>Rate from 5 to 1. 5=Excellent, 1=Very Poor</i>					
2.2 The study was very well organised.	3	5	1	0	0
2.5 The costs incurred for this study visit justify the results reached.	2	4	1	0	0
2.6 The HO/SO contributed financially for the success of this study visit.	4	2	1	0	0

The value for money of this particular study visit is good. However, Statement 2.6 indicates that the SO had to contribute financially for this study visit to be made possible. The hosting organisations have also financed two meals and provided internal transportation.

3.5 SUSTAINABILITY

The sustainability criterion attempts to decipher the long lasting effects of the project. The questions relating to this criterion are the following:

H/V - 9 What internal dissemination is planned to create a multiplier effect?

H/V - 10 What external dissemination is planned to create a multiplier effect among other organisations?

Sustainability of study visits are dependent on the transfer of knowledge and the actual implementation of any innovation working methods encountered, lessons learnt and other transferable practices. The hosting delegation fares very poorly on this criterion. There is only one reply regarding external dissemination and

this refers to the compiling of best practices document to share with other institutions. The hosts have amply involved the DP's and other institutions in this study visit and thus, this could be considered as a dissemination exercise in itself.

On the other hand, the visiting partners have several ideas on how to disseminate the results and knowledge achieved through this study visit both internally and externally.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

It can be concluded that the Portuguese study visit reached the aims and objectives set. It provided the visiting partners with an opportunity to delve into the Portuguese working methods in dealing with AS, in particular in the work carried out by the DP's. This study visit was also an opportunity for trans-national partners to exchange information about national projects in the field of AS.

The working programme was packed with activities, visits and discussions. This was conducive to the achieving of the aims and objectives set and the overall success of the study visit. Logistics have been applauded by the visiting delegations.

Considering that this is the last study visit for the PASSI partnership, instead of recommendations, this report will focus on conclusions arrived at through this interim evaluation exercise:

1. Trans-national gatherings should always make ample allowances for both formal and informal discussion times. This allows the delegations to mentally assess and assimilate the working methods and best practices observed. This is also important following a visit to an institution.
2. Fluency in the chosen working language is crucial for a positive outcome of a trans-national meeting. Precious time and knowledge is easily lost

because of language barriers. This also hampers the drawing up of documentation, both at reporting stage and during evaluation.

3. Study visits have a rather intangible outcome. Unlike more tangible results, a good dissemination plan can drastically improve the impact and sustainability assessment of study visits which are highly dependent on the sharing and transferring of knowledge, best practices and lessons learnt.
4. While the involvement of several local partners in the hosting of a study visit or trans-national meeting is to be commended, timely and detailed coordination is necessary. This is not only for the benefit of the visiting partners but also for the hosts themselves who are then able to involve themselves more with the thematic content during the actual meeting/study visit.

This concludes the study visits planned for the PASSI partnership. Overall conclusions about study visits in general can be found in the Final Report of the partnership.

Annex 1

ABBREVIATIONS USED

AS	Asylum Seekers
DP	Development Partner
EVC	Model to evaluate and validate the competences of Asylum Seekers
PASSI	Prepare Asylum Seekers and Society for Integration
TCA	Trans-National Cooperation Agreement
TNM	Trans-National Meeting

A n n e x 2

SAMPLE OF THE PORTUGUESE STUDY VISIT EVALUATION SHEETS



TRANS-NATIONAL COOPERATION PARTNERSHIP EVALUATION SHEET

STUDY VISITS

HOSTING ORGANISATION - PORTUGAL (14-03-2007)

NAME/S: _____ ORGANISATION/S: _____

1. Give a brief description and comment on the objectives, programme, activities, host organisation/s, networking, participating partners, and logistical arrangements.

2. To what extent do you agree with these statements? <i>Rate from 5 to 1. 5=Excellent, 1=Very Poor</i>	5	4	3	2	1	Other Comments/ Explain Why
2.1 The aims set out for this study visit were reached.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.2 The study was very well organised.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.3 The activities organised reached the expectations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.4 The outcomes/results can be transferred to other persons/organisations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.5 The costs incurred for this study visit justify the results reached.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.6 The Hosting Organisation (HO) contributed financially for the success of this study visit.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	



TRANS-NATIONAL COOPERATION PARTNERSHIP EVALUATION SHEET

3. Which sections/ departments of the HO were involved directly or indirectly?

4. How were the sections/ departments affected?

5. What were the strong points of this study visit?

6. What were the weak points of this study visit?

7. Were there any unexpected outcomes/ impacts?

8. Which experiences/ skills can be transferred to colleagues or other DP's?

9. What internal dissemination is planned to create a multiplier effect?



TRANS-NATIONAL COOPERATION PARTNERSHIP EVALUATION SHEET

10. What external dissemination is planned to create a multiplier effect among other organisations?

11. What impact did this study visit have on the local project?

12. As an organiser of the study visit, how was you organisation affected?

13. Were there any problems regarding the organisation of this study visit?

14. What could be improved in future study visits?

DATE: _____

SIGNATURE & STAMP OF EVALUATOR: _____



TRANS-NATIONAL COOPERATION PARTNERSHIP EVALUATION SHEET

STUDY VISITS

SENDING ORGANISATION - PORTUGAL (14-03-2007)

NAME/S: _____ ORGANISATION/S: _____

1. Give a brief description and comment on the objectives, programme, activities, host organisation/s, networking, participating partners, and logistical arrangements.

2. To what extent do you agree with these statements? <i>Rate from 5 to 1. 5=Excellent, 1=Very Poor</i>	5	4	3	2	1	Other Comments/ Explain Why
2.1 The aims set out for this study visit were reached.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.2 The study was very well organised.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.3 The activities organised reached the expectations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.4 The outcomes/results can be transferred to other persons/organisations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.5 The costs incurred for this study visit justify the results reached.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.6 The Sending Organisation (SO) contributed financially for the success of this study visit.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	



TRANS-NATIONAL COOPERATION PARTNERSHIP EVALUATION SHEET

3. Which sections/ departments of the SO were involved directly or indirectly?

4. How were the sections/ departments affected?

5. What were the strong points of this study visit?

6. What were the weak points of this study visit?

7. Were there any unexpected outcomes/ impacts?

8. Which experiences/ skills can be transferred to colleagues or other DP's?

9. What internal dissemination is planned to create a multiplier effect?



TRANS-NATIONAL COOPERATION PARTNERSHIP EVALUATION SHEET

10. What external dissemination is planned to create a multiplier effect among other organisations?

11. What impact did this study visit have on the local project?

12. What could be improved in future study visits?

DATE: _____

SIGNATURE & STAMP OF EVALUATOR: _____