

JOB TRIBU - New Technologies for Career Guidance



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Organisation: Province of Siena

Country: Italy

Level of government: Local government

Sector: General public services, Social protection

Type: Digital, Public Service

Launched in: 2011

Overall development time: 2 years

Link to the innovation's website

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Description

As part of the EU JOBTRIBU project, a new system for webinars within the Public Employment Centres network of the Province of Siena has been tested and developed. It aims at providing young people (aged 16-30) with short seminars on active job searching techniques structured in four modules: curriculum vitae, job interview, job search online and job offers. A webinar is a seminar on the web, held using a distance conference tool allowing the trainer/speaker/lecturer to be located in a different venue from the participants 'attending' the session (namely another room, building, city or country).

Integrating ICT into activities traditionally based on the relationship with the counsellor/consultant needs a methodological redefinition of the service itself, examining the various processes on which the service is based. This is in order to evaluate which tools might be utilised to render the processes more efficaciously and efficiently in terms of the service's general and specific aims.

The innovation led to the identification of new areas for development of services which can reach a broader target of users and create points of contact between informational and guidance resources and emerging needs. Advantages: Reducing the cost per user for each activity/seminar, availability online at any time.

Why the innovation was developed

The great challenge of employment services lies in offering career guidance to the younger generations. Young people - although on average the most highly-educated sector of the population and also the readiest to deal with the new digital knowledge society - are also those who are suffering the most from the current economic and employment crisis. In this scenario, a process of intensive renewal of employment services began with the means and tools that can effectively benefit and aid young people on the path to professional growth and their active job search. The idea was to open a new dimension of active participation of young people in the dynamic process of labour mobility to create virtual communities to share and develop ideas, information, proposals and opportunities, together with practitioners and other young people.

Objectives

Improve access, Improve effectiveness, Improve service quality, Improve social equity, Improve user satisfaction

- To develop and test a training model and pedagogical tools to improve the ICT skills of the guidance practitioners.
 - To develop, test and disseminate innovative ICT tools in the field of information, communication and guidance.
 - To improve the networking abilities and the mobility chances for young people, through the help of PES in different countries.
 - To promote networking and community building activities among the practitioners of local PES in different countries, also with the use of ICT tools.
 - To promote analysis and benchmarking of methodologies among stakeholders and decision makers involved in European, national, regional and local labour mobility programmes and activities.
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Main beneficiaries

Government bodies, Government staff, Young people

- Young people.
 - Public employment service (PES) practitioners.
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Existing similar practices

Virtual Guidance

In the private sector, civil society or elsewhere

KAR-DER (Turkey)

KAR-DER is a Career Counselling and Human Resources Development Association. Their Virtual Guidance Project aims to increase the counsellors' use of ICT in guidance services and to equip them with the competencies and skills they need to deliver such services.

Results

Service quality

Accessibility:

- Reduced the cost per user for each activity/seminar.
- A wider public reached, overcoming some of the geographical problems that prevent clients from the rural areas to attend a face-to-face activity.
- Further assessment for the opportunity of expanding ICT in the services (e.g. managing a Facebook page, offering counselling sessions via Skype etc.).

Responsiveness:

- Enhancement of ordinary in-service training activities through the contents/materials for all the partners' staff and counsellors and some external organisations.
- Promotion of the online tools with additional guidance practitioners to reach more young people and job seekers.

Other:

- Use of the new and upgraded training materials on job searching techniques for final users within all the regular face-to-face seminars and workshops.

Evaluation

An overall monitoring of the partnership and activity was carried out as transversal action during all the project life span, in collaboration with the other partners. Furthermore, an external expert has been appointed for an external evaluation. An evaluation plan and four tools/activities have been designed and used to monitor and evaluate the project.

The Evaluation was conducted with a qualitative and descriptive approach, on the basis of the following macro indicators:

- Efficacy and efficiency of the action.
- Evaluation of results – Participants.
- Evaluation of results – Impact and sustainability.
- Evaluation of results - Products, tools and methodologies.
- Evaluation of results – Overall evaluation.

Development

Design

The main idea moved from the precise aim of exploring and sharing new opportunities offered by new technologies - in particular by Web 2.0 tools - to bring traditional job informational, guidance and assistance services into closer contact with younger users. This is both to facilitate the transition from school to work, and to open up and create new opportunities for knowledge-building, networking and international mobility.

The Province of Siena and Centro Studi Pluriversum, the main technical partners specialised in guidance services, have been collaborating for ten years. The whole partnership also took into account the results of two previous projects (ICTSkills and ICTSkills2) in planning the tools and methodology related to the innovation.

Testing

- Participatory process to identify priorities and resources, involving information managers and guidance practitioners from the public employment service (PES) system.
 - Creation of a moodle platform based on the social-constructivism model and the cooperative learning approach.
 - Development of a set of ICT tools - for practitioners and for the young users – so as to test the new model of guidance intervention.
 - Testing of the guidance model and the ICT tools in five countries (Italy, Austria, Romania, Spain, United Kingdom) within the PES systems.
 - Realisation of the pilot actions lead by the previous trained guidance practitioners and with the active participation of young users of the PES.
 - Structure of the pilot actions: Preparation and planning, training of practitioners, selection of the young users within the local PES, testing, monitoring and evaluation of the experience.
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Implementation

Tools used:

- Development of the webinars service in a very controlled and guided setting with the support of a tutor or practitioner.
- Creation of an open source platform MOODLE and based on the social-constructivism model and the cooperative learning approach.
- A platform was created through the open source use of the open-source software OpenMeeting, installed on a server and integrated with SSO process (Single Sign-on) into a Moodle platform.
- New and upgraded training materials on job searching techniques for final users.

Resources used:

- Public Employment Service (PES) Practitioners.
 - European PROGRESS Programme financing (European Union's Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity, 2007 - 2013).
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Partnerships

Centro Studi Pluriversum (Italia)

Private sector

Centro Studi Pluriversum, the main technical partner, is specialised in guidance services and has been collaborating with the Province of Siena for ten years.

Cascaid Ltd - University of Loughborough (United Kingdom)

Academics and Research Bodies

Cascaid Ltd produces high level ICT tools for guidance and information used by public institutions and schools all over the EU and North America.

Institute of Educational Sciences (ISE), Bucharest (Romania)

Academics and Research Bodies

ISE is the national reference point of the Euroguidance network in Romania.

DEP Institut, Barcelona (Spain)

Private sector

DEP is specialised in social research, marketing and strategy consulting, runs counselling programmes and manages EDUCAWEB (www.educaweb.com), the most important Spanish website devoted to job guidance and information.

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

- While the community of practitioners has been quick to embrace the new environment, clients are slower in accessing web based counselling.
 - Importance of clear identification of practitioners target groups and selection processes to participate in the testing actions, based on motivation and level of involvement, to address the potential issue of a discontinuous participation in the actions.
 - Overall lack of good materials in different languages beyond English and need for further gradual translation of a wider set of supporting resources on ICT tools usage in this field and in general.
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Conditions for success

- Identification of final users target groups.
 - Right communication and involvement tools and methodologies for young people, to effectively interest and motivate them and to face their potential difficulties and resistance, at social and personal level, to access career guidance and employment services.
 - Opening of the practitioners to implement ICT in their daily work.
 - Need to improve significantly the skills of all practitioners involved (at any level) but especially regarding ICT skills and methodological skills connected with the use of ICT tools at professional level and in a public service context.
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