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PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES: TOWARDS A QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

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Full Papers

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Presentation

Business Marathon “Ascension Towards European Excellence”: Experience, Results and Prospect
Public and Private Employment Services Towards a Quality Assurance System
The illusion of quality management in social services.

1. Core question is:

Which quality assurance scheme and which specific methodologies can be adopted to manage evaluation processes of potential providers in a “quasi-market” approach (qualitative and quantitative indicators)?

As consumer, we use services every day. But also as citizens, even as simple human beings. For example, all the relations based on the exchange of tangible or mostly intangible transactions, are a form of service.

Service comes from an Indo-European linguistic root: *swer*, that means “to hold the eyes on something”, to take care of someone, without any diversion, to focus on people who are the scope of my attention. The attention of this linguistic root is so high that a prevention of the needs or expectations of the targeted people is required. From this root comes also the Sanskrit word “*varutà*” (protection), the greek “*horàn*” (to see, to look at) and “*aretè*” (excellence), the latin “*servus*”, “*servitium*”, and also *servare* and *observare*. Even the words *veritas* and *verecundus* (respectful).

A Manual of Guidelines for Quality Assurance of that delicate type of service will be presented. It aims to provide all the employees and officers of the Public and Private Employment Services a methodology paving the way to a continuous improvement of the matching between job seekers and market needs and demand, to ensure a real and effective customer satisfaction, to be open to a benchmarking programmes with the best in the class in Europe and in the World. The originality of these Guidelines consists in the use not only of quality indicators concerning employment services’ mission and processes, but also indicators of ethic quality of the service (for unemployed people!) and in networking quality of the link between Public and Private Services, between competencies requirements and needs and competencies offer, between all the possible partners for a successful achievement of the expected results.

2. De la servitude au service: from slavery to delivery

Therefore we have enough inspiration to state that services don’t have anything to do with the usual meaning we consider: “servile” works, birth, feelings etc.

The most important change in the history of the civilization has been the transition from the society founded on the “servile consciousness” (as Hegel said) to the society founded on the “service responsibility”: with democracy and the rights of the man and citizen, according to the great revolutions in the United States of America and in France at the end of the XVIII century, finally begins the era of the services and the economy of the competitiveness, against the era of the slavery and the economy of the privilege and situation rent.

This is the essence of all the principles, concepts, vision and methodologies of the services’ quality.

3. The experience of the services and the social capital

The first consideration that I would like to stress in this seminar, is that services quality has a close connection with the quality of the social capital. The “servile consciousness” quoted above is the fruit of the “unhappy consciousness”: the complete lack of self-esteem as human being and the perception of the lack of meaning in our existence. On the contrary, the molecular experience of the “services”, from the State as organisation that

ensures the rights of the citizens as equal in front of the constitution and legislation, to the local institutions, the firms, the schools, the banks, the assurances, the enterprises, the shops, the hotels etc.: all these form the immense “pedagogical province” which generates the social capital of a community, a region, a state, even a union of states like the European Union or the Council of Europe or the World Bank, the United Nations etc. If the quality of the services is low or does not exist, the quality of the social capital should be also low or not existing at all.

4. Quality of services and quality of social capital

The actions concerning the quality of the services are urgent nowadays, because the social capital is vanishing day by day.

According to the World Bank definition social capital is "the institutions, relationships, and norms that shape the quality and quantity of a society's social interactions (World Bank, 2000)", especially through the “trust” indicators. Social capital is explicitly relational. It cannot be produced by individuals acting in isolation from one another. In sum, social capital reflects the value of cooperative social activity.

Families, communities and nations differ in their endowments of social capital. In some, the social networks that give rise to social capital are dense and efficiently organized. In others, levels of quality are low and the stock of social capital is meagre. Recent theory suggests that communities possessing relatively high levels of social capital will experience higher levels of economic performance and social welfare (other things being equal). The report on the different models of industrial relations and social dialogue in the European Union confirms the evidence of this statement.

This is the reason why we will introduce also the ethic and social accountability systems (e.g. CSR - Corporate Social Responsibility) in our evaluation tool.

Rational and juridical approach to the social relations are insufficient to ensure the accountability of the interactions, if the “moral feelings” (just to use the expression of the fathers of modern democracy and capitalism, Adam Smith, Stuart Mill and others) do not enable the commitment and responsibility to be steady and internalized.

Even economics is interested to introduce, after the ROI index (Return On Investment), also the SROI index (Social Return On Investment)..

Social capital is composed by the competencies of the people and the quality of their relations and interactions (especially through the “trust” indicators): these elements are more intangible than tangible: **the social capital and its quality**, intensity and dynamics, is the premise of every effective outcome in all the strategies for improving the society as a whole.

5. Social capital is fragile

The social capital is fragile: we need much time to create it, but only a few years, a decade or so, are enough to destroy it almost definitively.

The machine that generates the most part of the social capital is the “quality of the services”: from the services provided by the families, based on gratuity, to the educational services, from the post offices to the bank and assurances, from transportation, communications and utilities to retail trade, from the government bureaucracy to the hospitals, from the hotels to the restaurants, museums, events , concerts etc. More than 50% of the GDP all over the world is made up by services.

The “access era” (Rifkin) and the “economy of the experiences” (Pine & Gilmore), the network society (Castells) and globalization (Giddens), the happiness economy beyond the money (Kahnemann & Diener) and the sustainability programs (UNEP) are the objective evidence that we are building a society where man doesn't produce objects anymore, but rather “relations”, no longer items, but rather himself, no longer GDP, but rather HDP.

6. Approach to the quality

Taking into consideration the central role of the quality of the services to generate the open society and its social capital, source of the all other forms of development, growth, wealth and well-being, the correct approach to the quality of the services should ensure that a service or a services set:

- Be embodied into the social capital of the society and its value table: without a moral premise, which establishes that the quality is meeting, then exceeding citizens' needs, requirements and expectations, stated and implied, at the lower possible cost and a continual (not only a continuous) improvement of the performances, we could have a good stage where all the details and decorations are perfect, but the effectiveness is absent,
- Be honest,
- Be realistic.
- Have citizens and communities involved,
- Be communicated and known by the people,
- Be specific,
- Be cost effective,
- Be improving quality of life.
- Be monitored in their effects through customer/citizens satisfaction analysis and other performance measurement tools.

7. The benchmarking as strategy for continual improvement

The most important tool to implement a strategy for improvement is the benchmarking. However, we have some considerations to do on this subject and draw the attention of the experts to the limitations of the benchmarking programs.

We could summarize these limitations to the following aspects :

- Relativity
- Transferability
- Reversibility

Usually we define the services for their features of intangibility, heterogeneity (or variability), perishability of the output, simultaneity of production and consumption, but not enough the features of relativity and reversibility.

The relativity is implied in the concept of benchmarking: however we must consider a supplementary aspect of the relativity, that is the differences of the services performances in the perception of the beneficiaries, not only in their delivery processes and in the benchmark or standard therein.

For example, the delivery of cars number-plates in Germany needs 2 hours, in Italy 60 days. Moreover, getting a tax refund needs a couple of days in Germany, a couple of years in Italy. So it is not correct to do a benchmarking on the simple performances, because the quality of the services processes are not comparable and the use of the “best in the class” performance as benchmark is not honest. From the citizens’ point of view, i.e. from the customer satisfaction measurement, to reduce the time from 60 days to 30 could be perceived much more exciting for an Italian citizen, while to get the number-plates in 4 hours instead of the usual 2, could cause heavy dissatisfaction in the German citizens.

The same consideration should be made for the “**transferability**”: it is easier to transfer processes concerning the production of the industry than the processes of the services, because of the elements of creativity or other skills which cannot be reproduced out of their milieu or social capital. It is impossible to transfer the fine arts attitudes of the craftsmen, or the special competencies in the negotiation of the Neapolitan people.

Moreover, the “**relativity**” is also diachronic: some benchmarks of services quality were much better in the past than in the present, like the postal service efficiency of the ancient Romans, which was the best practice until the XX century. The layers of the houses and the thermal services are other examples of the Roman Empire benchmarks not yet overcome, so far.

As far as the “**reversibility**” is concerned, the examples just quoted are eloquent: we can have a society, an organization, an institution, a state, a corporation etc, that are excellent providers of the services now but not after a certain period. Reversibility and instability are embedded. We are forcing now the comparison of the services quality providers in Europe: but the methodological approach cannot ignore how many differences there are and how much we must adopt the so called “diversity management”.

8. Providing Parity Power: to be honest

To be more careful in the measurement of the economy and wealth of the different countries in the world, the experts introduced the **Purchasing Parity Power**: e.g. the usual measurement of the GDP, United States are the first, but according to this new approach, China overcomes the United States and Brazil overcomes Italy.

I believe that such an approach could be adopted also in the benchmarking of the services providers, because the adoption of a unique standard or benchmark could create distortion in the quality measurement, disappointment of the people, inferiority complex in the nations, and other effects that could undermine the cohesion and the social capital of a community of the states, regions or other actors.

9. Paradoxes

We are experiencing in these days many dangers for the dependability of the quality services programmes and policies. The paradoxes on this field are increasing day by day: it seems that the correlation between the number of banks, assurances, corporations etc. certified in accordance with the quality systems, the Corporate Social Responsibility codes, the Ethic charters, the Social Accountability 8000 and so on, and the real, actual quality delivery of the services are opposite of what should be expected.

The Potemkin effect could be a strong temptation: to avoid it, we have to set up very independent authorities, with effective interventions both in the States and in the European Union.

10. Paradigms

A correct approach implies also the attitude to the falsification of the paradigms adopted. I teach psychology and I was surprised, two years ago, for an interesting case of falsification, just in the quality services measurement.

The treatment of the dementia or Alzheimer disease in the aged people was normally based on the paradigm of the so called ROT, that's Re-Orienting Therapy: all efforts are made to sustain the capacity of the aged people, from the beginning of the dementia, to maintain or keep the orientation to the reality, reinforcing their sense of the time, of the facts, of the events and so on. In spite of the fact that this therapy did not succeed so much, all the professionals adopted it and established the quality of the services provided to the aged people according to the processes of this paradigm: they can be saved from their collapsing personality through the continuous exercise of the objective perception of themselves and of the reality around them. Some years ago, a new paradigm was introduced: the aged people look for a not existing reality, because the objective reality is so poor and miserable, the self-perception is so bad, that their survival tendency favours the creation of a not existing world. But, when we listen to a child, who is talking with a not existing person, we are delighted for his genial performance and consider that fact as sign of creativity. Why not the same for an aged people? The Validation Therapy has been introduced by Naomi Feil¹ and is considered much better than the former paradigm: we have to respect the aged people as they are, not as we would like they to be.

All the efforts must be made to change the criteria of the service quality and the processes therein.

11. Networking and the quality of the value chain: the fractals of Mandelbrot

We usually consider the networking of public and private services as one of the most strategic challenge for the new forms of governance: this is correct, but the methodology of the approach to do this and to choose the appropriate form of measurement of the services quality provided by a value chain of providers connected with each other, is the **paradigm of the fractals**, elaborated by Mandelbrot² to try to make all forms of chaos understandable.

Services Quality is very difficult to design, to plan, to apply, to check and to improve in all single units of supply chain: we can hardly imagine how complicate is to ensure the equivalent quality of the services in a network of suppliers. The success can be achieved only through a continual, steady and very creative work in progress, towards the approximation, in accordance exactly with the Mandelbrot formula and the empirical pragmatism of the problem solver. The best practice in this field is only the "*excellence of the imperfection*". As a writer said: it is not difficult to understand the curve of Gauss. The real difficulty is to understand Gauss' wife".

¹ Feil developed Validation Therapy as a response to her dissatisfaction with traditional methods of working with the severely disoriented old-old people who were her clients. Feil N. (1993).: Validation. A new way to understand old humans

² Noted for developing a "theory of roughness" in nature and the field of geometric fractals, he said that things typically considered to be "rough", a "mess" or "chaotic", like clouds or shorelines, actually had a "degree of order". He collaborated also with Nassim Taleb, famous for his approach to the risk management methods used by the finance industry and warned about financial crises.

Zygmunt Bauman³, the old wise sociologist, states (quoting Kafka), that our way out is to consider Europe as a lab where we all have to run through the corridors, to open all the doors, to climb the ladders changing the floors to infinity.

12. Kaizen or Kairyo?

The guidelines for the services quality are basically in these two Japanese words, used by Masaaki Imai⁴, one of the fathers of the quality systems.

The Kaizen approach and the Kairyo approach are compared according to their differences in the components of the activity concerned: the application to the services is evident, and we can choose the fitting approach in accordance with citizens', clients', customers' expectations.

If a service is provided in certain sectors, the expected quality is focused on safety more than on other features or outcomes, e.g. a flight of the airplane. Normally we state that the participation of the customers or the consumers to the quality of the performance should be always guaranteed. Nevertheless, services quality and customer satisfaction are often more likely ensured by a directive action by service providers, without any participation or involvement of the clients. It is evident that an unemployed young or worker is less interested to the smiles, the warm reception, the clean offices and the gentle behaviours of the officers, than to the opportunity to get a job. He/she prefers an actual job, even if offered with scarce empathy, than a great empathy without any job. To provide the services implies to satisfy the most important expectations, before than the supplementary elements of the relationship.

Moreover, the mode of the co-makership as compulsory for the quality of the services is false. This is true in most cases and activities, but not as a dogma of the faith.

Tab. N. 1 – Compared analysis of the two methodologies

ACTIVITY	KAIZEN (improvement)	KAIRYO (reengineering)
<i>Level of the change</i>	<i>Gradual & continual</i>	<i>Radical, sudden and not steady</i>
<i>Starting point</i>	<i>Existing processes</i>	<i>Zero point</i>
<i>Frequency of the change</i>	<i>Continuous</i>	<i>Once</i>
<i>Speed</i>	<i>By little degrees</i>	<i>By great strides</i>
<i>Timing</i>	<i>Continuous and in progress</i>	<i>Intermittent</i>
<i>Involvement</i>	<i>All</i>	<i>Few and selected</i>
<i>Participation</i>	<i>Bottom up</i>	<i>Top down</i>
<i>Approach</i>	<i>Collective, team working</i>	<i>Individuals efforts</i>
<i>Style</i>	<i>Consent</i>	<i>Directive</i>
<i>Risk</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>High</i>
<i>Rules</i>	<i>Adaptation and evolution</i>	<i>Conflicts and discussions</i>
<i>Forms of action</i>	<i>Maintaining and improvement</i>	<i>Dismantling and building</i>
<i>Evaluation criteria</i>	<i>Process and striving for the best practices</i>	<i>Results and profits</i>

³ Polish sociologist, he published a number of books that dealt with the relationship between modernity, bureaucracy, rationality and social exclusion: an excellent inspirator for our guidelines for the Quality assurance of Employment Services.

⁴ Father of continuous improvement, Masaaki Imai has been a pioneer and leader in spreading the Kaizen philosophy all over the world. Masaaki I. (1997), *Gemba Kaizen: A Commonsense, Low-cost Approach to Management*.

13. Considerations about the cost/benefit analysis

I draw your attention to the forms of action: Masaaki Imai says that in most cases the quality improvement can be reached through the Kaizen methodology, but sometimes it is necessary and compulsory to adopt the Kairyo methodology. The experience is that usually people do **exactly the opposite choice**: dismantling what is good, maintaining what is bad.

The Private and Public Employment Services in my country (Italy) is one of the numberless cases of the truth of this statement: the public debt of Italy (129% of the GDP) is there to show how much the heavy lack of effectiveness and value creation counts in a country, where too many people receive amounts of money completely not commensurate to their actual contribution to the national wealth, first politicians and their crowd of courtiers and fawners. Italy is an example, according to the American poet Thomas Stearn Eliot, of “waste land”⁵.

In the public services, the employees are paid according to their costs, not according to their value. Some researches we set up at the University of Verona on the gap between the costs and the value creation in the public services show that a percentage of circa 60% of the costs for the personnel are simply without any value creation. In other words, we have a steady gap, for dozens of years, between the costs of the Public Administration and its effectiveness in services’ delivery: we pay 100, what is worth 40.

Waste is very high: quality system implies as intrinsic requirement to reduce the waste to nil value. Sadly, the most part of services delivery, and not only in the public institutions, is submitted to the bubbles and black holes of waste, e.g. in the financial sector with the so called derivatives. Why all the experts of Quality Systems and Certification of the Balances did not lift a finger to point out these huge frauds against the “customers”? Is it perhaps possible for our profession to be guardian angels for all the enterprises, companies, organizations, public institutions etc. with the exception of Banks, Assurances, Hedge Funds and subprime mortgage crisis? Who of us had the courage to do the quality evaluation and customer satisfaction analysis of the Goldman Sachs, drawing the attention of its Ceo, Mr. Lloyd C. Blankfein, to the first requirement of the ISO 9001: Responsibility of the Management? There are (among the enormous number of Quality Experts and Evaluators, Economists and Politicians) at least a few honest professionals with the courage to rebuke that man, who called himself “owner of the universe”, pointing out the priority of the attention to the clients, as the word “service” means?

Additionally, the bad organizations have normally a longer life than the good ones. Moreover, all the presents here can swear that every time one tries to improve or renew an organisation or a process, his life becomes immediately worse.

Reengineering normally refers to a drastic, dramatic processes’ improvement in certain areas of management utilizing computer technologies. However, reengineering addresses only a limited area of problems in the company and brings about limited improvement, no matter how dramatic. Reengineering probably will always have its place as an organizational change process. But it is relevant in limited circumstances because, ultimately, it produces short-term and static results. Reengineering is like innovation: we expect innovation to occur all the time, yet we know it doesn't happen.

⁵ We shall not cease from exploration, And the end of all our exploring Will be to arrive where we started And know the place for the first time (Four Quartets): T.S.Eliot was a publisher, playwright, literary and **social critic**.

It's unrealistic to expect reengineering to be applicable all the time. That would cause chaos. *Kaizen* is a more lasting improvement process.

Nevertheless, my suggestion about the Employment Services is to apply kairyo methodologies the first, to ensure the radical change: immediately after, to introduce very carefully the kaizen methodologies and Mandelbrot's paradigm.

14. To satisfy the needs is much more than to be friendly and smiling

Kaizen has a great impact on the costs of the services. To ensure the quality is not so **automatically friendly** with the customers, clients, citizens, beneficiaries etc. without a commitment for the lower possible costs.

The Baumol law is clear: the services (especially those which provide "intangible" contents) are not so easily flexible for the downsizing of prices. On the contrary, the services are the economic area where the bubbles are well covered and the cheating strategies are spread. From this point of view, the introduction of the quality in the services domain needs as first action to clean and delete all these bubbles: the effect would be positive for customers, clients, citizens, because they get more services at the same prices, more quality in the same service, less prices or less time or less painful troubles in the services experienced.

The low cost flights are an example: why do low cost companies achieve higher profits lowering the prices, while the high cost companies have great losses raising the prices? The mystery is the use of the kaizen methodology.

Most companies still subscribe to the old paradigm which says that better quality costs more money. The real challenge to management is to improve quality while reducing cost because that is what today's customers want.

Improving quality while reducing cost is the only option for survival. Often, managers take cost reduction to be synonymous with cost cutting. Cost reduction should come as a result of better cost management. The key point is how to build a management system that can reduce cost while achieving good quality.

Management has been too focused on results and not on the process of what achieves or delivers those results. They have avoided looking at the core process of the business, the one that delivers added value. Instead, they have focused on peripheral elements such as financial management, marketing, R&D and engineering which, while they are important to any business, are not the *gemba*, the value-added portion of the business.

Finally, it is a question of greater balance between process and result. According to Masaaki Imai, the stock market places great emphasis on short-term results, which drives executive management behavior to demand results in the short term, hence the focus on finance. We can say that 99.9 percent of all the companies in the world today are obsessed with a growth mentality. These are the companies that can make profits only when the market is growing. In real life, market demand always fluctuates. The only companies that will survive into the next millennium will be the ones that have the flexibility to produce according to fluctuating demand.

15. The weaknesses of the services quality in the experiences on the field

According to the empirical applications of many programs for services' quality improvement, my researches confirm that there are 3 elements of the quality requirements that are usually weak: the **responsibility of the managers** (the wishful

thinking or the painful thinking: weak strategic thinking), the **poor empowerment of human resources**, the **poor attention to the voice of clients**.

This result is often repeated in many experiences: about the lack of managers' responsibility and strategic thinking, it is not necessary to quote the laws of Murphy, but rather the statements of Edwards Deming, the greatest father of quality systems: "More than 90% of all the errors, nonconformities and bad performances in the organization are generated by the management".

Also Maasaki Imai has the same opinion, when he explains the concept of *Gemba*. *Gemba* means the place where real actions take place. It usually refers to the place where manufacturing activities are conducted in a factory as well as the place where employees have direct contact with customers in the service sectors. *Gemba* can be a hotel dining room, a car dealer's service department, a doctor's examination room. One place that is not *gemba* is a manager's desk. Managers often avoid going to *gemba* because they don't want to be embarrassed by their ignorance. They are afraid that in *gemba*, they will expose the fact that they don't know what is going on there, and often don't even know the right questions to ask. Add to that the traditional view which says that being assigned to *gemba* is a dead-end for career development. Perceptions about status and class, fear of Unions, the glamour of the front office and the excitement of R&D and marketing are also probable reasons.

16. Conclusion

The services area is a very fragile domain: a real *Glasperlenspiel*⁶, just to quote Hermann Hesse. But they are also the "pedagogical province" where we (the *knechten*) build all the processes (molecular, day by day) of the social capital, of people's self-esteem, who perceive through the services quality their dignity as citizens, clients, customers.

I would like to conclude by quoting the theory by Pine and Gilmore: "the citizen, the customer, the client has become "guest" nowadays, into the continuum Hostility-Hospitality"⁷. We are guests and the services world is the host organization where we feel this important benefit to be someone, to be target of cure and care, even if I have to present as endorsement my pure human being, even without other assets. This is the utopia that Bauman considers the challenge of the European model of society, so fragile to be kept, so essential to be saved. At all costs.

17. The guidelines for Quality Assurance in Public and Private Employment Services

If our commitment for Quality in all the economic, social and organizational contexts should be very crucial for a better well-being of the customers, it should be even more crucial in the Quality Assurance in Public and Private Employment Services.

In this case, we have to do with one of the most delicate and ethically substantial services concerning to the job supply through a careful matching between demand and offer in the labour market.

⁶ *Glasperlenspiel* (The Glass Bead Game) is the last full-length novel of the German author Hermann Hesse, for which Hesse won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1946: the setting is a **fictional province** (pedagogical) of central Europe called Castalia, reserved by political decision for the life of the mind. The protagonist is Joseph Knecht, whose surname translates as "**servant**".

⁷ Pine, J. and Gilmore, J. (1999) *The Experience Economy*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston.

European Union, with its documents and rules, emphasizes this matter: it devotes financial resources, facilities, programmes and projects.

Nevertheless, the present situation of the employment, especially for the young people, is catastrophic.

In Italy we spend more than 1 billion Euro for the Public Employment Services, but their results is that just barely 3% of all the jobs are put into effect.

This the reason why European Commission, 6 years ago, asked to the Ministry of Labour and Welfare of Italy to produce the GUIDELINES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES. I had the honour (and the duty) to be in charge of this Manual.

I would like to draw the attention of all my colleagues who are working in Quality Assurance to the “architecture” of that Manual, because its tripartite structure implies that this type of service requires much more than a simple application of the Norms ISO 9001, to be “conform” with the social features of the unemployment and its “vulnerable” clients: one of the most helpless and weakest social classes or target groups.

18. The original architecture of the Manual for the Quality Assurance of Employment Services

18.1. Principles and Concepts for a Manual

The Project “**PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SERVICES: TOWARDS A QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM- TRANSNATIONAL RESEARCH**”, was promoted by the European Commission in 2006-2007 and managed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security - Directorate General of Labour Market (Italy), in co-operation with Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Slovak Republic, Italia Lavoro (technical Agency of the Italian Ministry of Labour), and with the Italian Regions Emilia-Romagna and Lombardy.

The project envisages explicitly as final result the definition of “guidelines for the employment services’ quality”, in order to develop a coherent series of indicators and methods to which the participants in the project can adapt their actions and choices in contexts where public and private employment services coexist and operate in the same market.

Actually, EU had not yet established definite directives or rules on this matter: as usually, EU prefers the “bottom up” approach, encouraging local (national or regional) experimentations and tests, benchmarking between member states and their relevant institutions and organizations, the “discovery methodology” which rises from the social and institutional creativity and/or innovation of players. In fact, the “change” required in the employment services design, organization, management and delivery is impressive.

Since the Commission's “White Paper on Growth, Competitiveness, and Employment: The Challenges and Ways Forward into the 21st Century”⁸, the perception of the deep breakthrough with respect to the past employment strategies and the traditional forms of job creation and employment services organization, was clear and unequivocal. Moreover, the scenario was shaped day by day, in very rapid processes, by the new forms of economy, value creation (and job thereby), social and civil organization,

⁸ COM (93), 5 December 1993.

enterprises and institutions re-engineering: net economy, knowledge economy, well-being and happiness economy, economy of the experiences, access era, information and network society, global-local paradoxes, sustainable development model, bottom up and decentralization strategies, the increasing role of the third sector, the e-government programs, the new governance styles, the demand of more ethic guarantee both in the production and consumption behaviours and business transactions or interactions.

These concepts are only some of the features which are forging the present millennium.

18.2. A glance to the “scenario”

The “scenario” (European and International), related to the new vision and new mission of the Educational Systems in the present crisis and globalized labour market deserves some basic considerations:

- **The first consideration** was on the basic concept of “merit” and “competence”: it is a “pillar” and foundation of the modern capitalism and the connected birth of democracy. The transition from a society founded on the “privileges”, where a very little number of people owned the major part of the wealth of the Nations, not on the basis of the merits and competencies, but only for “divine right”, gave the birth to the modern society, founded on the wealth through competencies, merits and job, with a new vision of the value and wealth generation, through the work and human capital, with all the human resources, skills and competencies therein.
- **The second consideration** is referred to the increasing need of the modern society, to come back to a more effective evaluation of the “production” of value through the “work”, more than through the “finance”: the global economic crisis of the present, with its heavy impacts to the wealth of the nations and to their debts, employments and enterprises (especially SMEs), is specifically due to the financial “preference” for wealth achievement, without a real basis on the value creation. Instead of the value, these trends and behaviours (particularly diffused among the bankers and speculating sharks) create “bubbles”, completely empty of content, but dangerous and full of poisons. An English saying is “Don’t count the chickens before they hatch”. Well. With the “derivatives” the financial world has sold already twenty times many chickens, much before they hatch. The criticisms against these trends come from a number of national and international experts, like the Nobel Prizes Joseph Stiglitz, Amartya Sen, Paul Krugman and others, like Richard Sennett, counselor of President Obama: he wrote in 2008 a book very meaningful for our topic and vision: “The Craftsman”⁹, just to draw our attention to the mind setting of all the civilizations’ progress, that implied always, in its successful steps and turnabouts, the integration of the “hands” with the “mind”, of the “practical experimentations and applications” with the theoretical thinking, as it happened in all the most important discoveries in the history, from creative works of the Renaissance (e.g. Leonardo da Vinci, formed in the workshop-school of Verrocchio, not in Harvard University), to the Pedagogic Manifesto of Bauhaus. Moreover, to be “entrepreneur” doesn’t mean necessarily to “invent” new things, said Schumpeter, but also “inventing” new combinations of the old things. We have people who create

⁹ Richard Sennett is professor of sociology at New York University and at The London School of Economics. According Richard Sennett, Craftsmanship means the basic human impulse to do a job well for its own sake, and good craftsmanship involves developing skills and focusing on the work, Sennett explores the work of craftsmen past and present, identifies deep connections between material consciousness and ethical values: a very good antidote to the “poisons” of the hegemony of the “false financial value creation”.

huge values, devoting their activities in the wine production: a very old technology, but evergreen and with a great future.

- **The third consideration** concerns the Increasing gap between political class and real economic world: many of our politicians don't have any idea about the real world they pretend to rule. We need a continual circulation of the élite, to ensure that the politicians don't become OGM (Organisms Genetically Modified), completely devoted to their own privileges and bound up to their chairs without merits and even without competencies. All people must, during their education, prove the effective contact with the practical problem solving and applications. They will be more effective and conform to the needs of the community.

As far as the Employment Services are concerned, the main elements to shape the present condition of many countries are:

1. That many employers can't find people with the right entry-level skills to fill their jobs,
2. That it is urgent to close the gap, pioneering new approaches to successfully transition as greater numbers as possible of students from education into employment and designing a system that works in favour of the transition,
3. That Employers, education providers, and youth live in parallel universes,
4. That the education-to-employment transition is full of obstacles,
5. That the education-to-employment system fails for most employers and young people,
6. That Innovative and effective educational programs around the world have important elements in common,
7. That creating a successful education-to-employment system requires new incentives, new legislations and new Structures,
8. That Education-to-employment solutions need to scale up.

To ensure quality in the services' sector means almost automatically to improve the society, the economy and the well-being in general as a whole.

Services are an increasingly important part of economies. According to the OECD (2005) 'market services' accounted for 50% of total OECD value added in 2000, with public services accounting for an additional 20%. As innovation is considered one of the key drivers of economic growth, there has been increasing interest in studying and measuring innovation in the services sector. Quality is one of the most important factors of innovation: we have just in this new paradigm the possibility to integrate the high tech competitive advantages together with the "high touch" (or contact) competitive advantages.

18.3. Examples of social experiments on the employment services for job creation

The Nobel Prize of Economy Robert Solow, studied the relation between "marginalization" and jobless condition, and proved, in his researches on self-sufficiency policies, experimented in two Canadian Provinces, that the beneficiaries of its social experiment, in the interviews and questionnaires applied "after" the implementation of the pilot-project, were unanimously convinced that their self-esteem increased thanks to the "transition" (activated by the "social experiment"), from a policy of "subsidies" to a policy of job opportunities, even if partly integrated by a "public" support in several forms (e.g. fiscal deductions).

Solow introduced a new approach to the marginalized people, through the change of policy adopted:

- from the welfare to the fair workfare,
- from a complete and individual dependence to a reciprocal inter-dependence, involving the commitment of the crucial stakeholders in this field: enterprises, local authorities, civil society with its associations and coalitions.

Our Pilot-Project for a new approach to the Public and Private Employment Services aimed just to implement a similar “workfare” action for the unemployed people or job seekers (marginalized from the “affluent” society), with the assumption that a “good management” of the Employment Services produces a more evident and effective availability to the “social inclusion” of the disadvantaged people through the employment and the consequent valorization of their capabilities and competencies, which are usually ignored and not taken in due consideration because of the “scarcity” and lack of quality requirements and standards in the related services’ delivery, especially about the first and basic principle of the “attention to the customer needs and expectations. Moreover, Employment services usually don’t have the specific tools for potential competencies’ investigation and enterprises’ effective networking processes.

At contrary, a good management of the Employment Services, a good relationship both with customers and enterprises or organizations, offer a better responsiveness towards the unemployed people (in particular young people): it appears clear that it is worth to improve the productive capacity and competencies of the Employment services, for a more active setting of the employability policies and services.

Moreover, for the other marginalized people (workers in obsolescence of skills, disables, single mothers, drug addicted etc.), is less expensive and heavy, for the economic sector in general (and their fiscal weight) to involve them in the “workfare” than to let them in charge of the “welfare”, which must be considered as *second best*.

The transformation of the Welfare into a system based on the job, is slow and not easy, but the “social experiments” of the Nobel Prize of Economy Robert Solow¹⁰ show that “a substitution well set up of the welfare with workfare, implemented with a careful attention to the disabled and marginalized people, can be a progress towards a more positive direction and strategy, also for those are beneficiaries of this innovation, because they admit that a humble job is surely better than the humiliation of no job”.

The irreducible condition for the success of such an approach, is the competencies’ development of the workers, and the model of quality we propose is founded on the hypothesis that a good performance of the Employment Services generates a much more attention to the capabilities of no matter workers and the capacity to explore more carefully the potentials of everyone, involving all the enterprises in this process.

Solow has a statement full of irony, in the conclusion of his experimental research, where he says that “job, when applicable, is anyway preferable to the assistance of the welfare, because the assisted people feel better with themselves when they work and this preference must be respected. They live in a society where the self-esteem and the respect for ourselves (and for the others), are normally embedded to job. So that even rich people simulate to have a job”.

In other words, we are faced with the immense responsibility, while remaining faithful to the ideals which have come to characterize and represent Europe, of eroding a new synthesis of the aims pursued by society (work as a factor of social integration, equality

¹⁰ American Economist, he was one of the supporters of the original proposal of **Guaranteed minimum income (GMI)** also called Citizen's Income. Moreover, the application of this proposal to the marginalized and unemployed people creates a form of “workfare” system, just to facilitate the policies oriented to get an income sufficient to live on, provided they meet certain conditions. Eligibility is typically determined not only by the mere citizenship, but also by availability for the labour market or a willingness to perform community services. Similar model is the so called “flexsecurity”, successfully applied in some EU countries (e.g. Denmark).

of opportunity) and the requirements of the economy (competitiveness and job creation). However, the social welfare system is now being re-examined to reduce costs through a new model with less passive and more active solidarity. Solidarity, first of all, between those who have jobs and those who do not.

19. The Quality Manual and guidelines towards the Employment Services quality: tools to be used.

19.1. Introduction

The tool proposed is the architecture of a Quality Manual, with all the basic components and conceptual frameworks to be implemented in a quality system focused on the “specific” mission of the institutions and organizations concerned (public and private).

Therefore, the Manual proposed has the following characteristics:

It encompasses all the three perspectives that the Chapter 2 has taken into account for an effective and tailored creation of a quality achievement in the private and public employment services delivery:

- **The Quality management** of each “internal” organization involved in this field, considering the “excellence” as the final benchmark to be achieved, with the specific differences and requirements of the private and public organizations (from this point of view the differences are very few: quality systems can be applied to all types of organization, regardless their mission, because both have the same product, i.e. “services”, and a mission quite similar, i.e. “public“ *lato sensu*).The guidelines are applied for the development of quality management within one’s own responsibility areas;
- **The Ethic Quality**, as core and central profile of this type of “services delivery”, taking into account the target groups and beneficiaries of the service offered: they deal with one of the basic human rights and needs and they act as interface between intangible values of the well-being and the tangible values of the labour market, a very critical zone where the failure of a delivery is coinciding with the failure of “existences” in itself, not only the failure of a consumption or a travel or a meal ;
- **The Co-operation and Networking quality**, as strategy of a real, effective partnership between all the organizations involved in the employment services : the end of the public monopole in this field is due to the too rapid changes and innovation of the society and the insufficiencies and delays of the usual institutions devoted to this service must be only fulfilled by the creation of efficient and effective partnerships between all the actors and players, in order to ensure a large “web” of supporting structures, personnel, competencies, along the new requirements of the globalization and the new expectations of the job seekers.

It includes a series of “indicators” to be used by employment services organizations, involving everyone in the process and applying the basic architecture of the manual proposed to the different situations in the countries: the “harmonization” between European countries involved in the Quality Application to the Employment Services should be more focused on the methodologies than on other aspects of the services delivery.

Questions like: more public or more private? More competition or co-operation between public and private employment services? And other similar “technicalities” are completely misleading our philosophy.

19.2. Quality statements, indicators and the evaluation methodology

A Manual serves to document all the activities and processes adopted to implement the quality management of the organization in all its parts:

- Quality policy statement: the first documentation to be exposed and explicitly confirmed, communicated and shared by all the people concerned, is the statement of the Management for unconditioned commitment for quality. The Manual opens with such a statement.
- Indicators: they are useful to offer a professional answer to the question on how do customers measure services and how do organizations measure customer satisfaction
- The evaluation: both the supplier and the client meet their common evaluation benchmark in the indicators.

Normally they are composed in clusters (groups of indicators concerning the same area of behaviors) and each cluster can be considered a “key factor “of quality.

Then, all the clusters should be detailed with specific “indicators” (traits of the behaviors): they form integrated groups of the most meaningful elements or components of the factors or clusters, which show their multiform features to permit a careful analysis of the quality processes and the way they are perceived by the auditing activities and finally by the customers.

They permit the evaluation, mostly of qualitative type, with reference to the quality of objective evidence, consistency, effectiveness, usefulness etc. that an indicator implies, to be considered operational. The result coming from service delivery’s indicators, offers an analytical methodology to establish a comparative relationship between customers’ expectations and the actual performance, selecting the right quality measures and indicators, using the right assessment instrument, involving the right stakeholders. Moreover it is very useful to do a benchmarking evaluation between different actors or players in the same system. Quality measures have to be made operational with quality indicators.

Once the indicators are selected and applied, the measurement in quality systems is normally made with a Likert scale like this:

- 0 *(no evidence at all of the indicator)*
- 1 *(some traces of objective evidence of the indicator, but largely insufficient)*
- 2 *(modest objective evidence, without sufficient precision and accuracy)*
- 3 *(good objective evidence of the indicator, with small gaps)*
- 4 *(excellent objective evidence of the indicator and available to be considered as best practice)*

The definition of a set of quality measures is only a first step in the process of quality measurement.

Typically, quality indicators are categorised as quantitative versus qualitative and subjective versus objective.

Subjective quality indicators can always be quantified. They are usually based on some type of survey which measures the reactions or expectations of a group of

respondents. Objective quality indicators, however, cannot always be convincingly quantified. For example, it may be hard to construct an objective quantitative indicator measuring the comfort of waiting rooms in public agencies. Even though quantitative indicators such as the room temperature, the number of seats and the size of the waiting area may give some hints about the basic conditions of the waiting room, more qualitative information on its cleanliness, level of noise, availability of more private areas, decorative state, and 'atmosphere' would be much more useful in allowing service providers to decide whether it embodied the appropriate quality level. Ideally, a sound set of quality indicators should include both quantitative and qualitative indicators.

19.3. The core dimensions of quality

There are five dimensions:

- ⇒ *Tangibles: structures, equipment, personnel and communication tools, safety ;*
- ⇒ *Reliability: competence, dependability, accountability, loyalty, honesty, protection of data ;*
- ⇒ *Empathy: courtesy, high touch atmosphere, capacity to listen and understand the job seeker and his/her needs and expectations*
- ⇒ *Communication: interpersonal communication (either verbal or not verbal), assertive relationship,*
- ⇒ *Responsiveness: effectiveness, on time offers and proposals, accessibility.*

Since the search for such ideal dimensions is rather time-consuming and also requires experience and knowledge regarding which indicators support the purpose of an organisation, ready "off the peg" performance measurement systems have become quite popular in the private as well as in the public sector (with some time lag).

Many of these systems include a set of quality indicators which may be used to measure different dimensions of quality. Nevertheless, the arguments above suggest the need for caution in this area. Many aspects of quality can and should be measured, both by objective and subjective measures and by quantitative and qualitative data. However, we should not get trapped by the illusion that any of such sets of measures captures the essence of quality – they only provide a partial picture.

The basic objectives and structure of several of these quality assessment systems have been described briefly - the ISO 9000 series, citizen's charters and quality excellence models. All of these instruments have become widespread and often used for the wrong purpose.

A critical assessment of their limitations must be considered as well.

19.4. The Manual architecture:

All the considerations above exposed, meet their goal to become operational and effective within the logical framework of the Manual. A Manual is not the definite solution for quality assurance: it is paving the way towards quality.

QUALITY MANUAL

CONTENTS:

SECTION A:
QUALITY ASSURANCE WITHIN THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE
ORGANIZATION

SECTION B:
THE ETHIC QUALITY

SECTION C:
THE CO-OPERATION AND NETWORKING QUALITY BETWEEN PES
AND PRES

19.5. Section A: Quality assurance within the Employment Services' Organization and Management:

19.5.1. Management responsibility:

19.5.1.1. Quality Policy

Statement: Management of the employment services organization shall provide evidence of its commitment to the development and implementation of the quality system and continually improving its effectiveness.

Indicators:

- ⇒ to have a good preliminary knowledge of the quality system
- ⇒ to know the policies concerning the quality management and the pertinence of the decisions to be undertaken therein
- ⇒ to establish a policy statement, according to the mission strategy of the organizations: corporate goals are clearly defined and communicated to all staff
- ⇒ to motivate all the members of the organization about the importance of meeting customer as well as statutory and regulatory requirements
- ⇒ to conduct management review
- ⇒ to ensure the availability of resources

Questions for self-auditing:

For each indicator try, please, to answer the question: "In which degree do I believe that this indicator has objective evidence?"

	0	1	2	3	4
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References and proofs on the best practices: Have you some references and sources to be documented on the best practices about this cluster of quality indicators?

Example of objective evidence of the indicator: “to establish a policy statement, according to the mission strategy of the organization”:

CORPORATE MISSION STATEMENT

As specialists in the employment services delivery, our mission is to be recognised as an organization which operates according to quality requirements, wherever it is located, and which is providing all the services it is able to supply. We will strive to satisfy the needs and aspirations of our customers to find solutions according to our customers’ needs and expectations. We will provide a consistent quality and a uniquely customized, personalised style of service, thereby achieving customer loyalty.

(For Private Employment Services: we aim to achieve a fair and reasonable profit to ensure growth and prosperity for the organization and for the benefits of its people)... We recognise the importance of a safe, healthy work environment, and promote strongly, personal development and training, thereby offering opportunities in career advancement. We promote participation by everyone in what we do, and support and recognise each individual’s contribution.

Whilst striving at all times for the highest standards of efficiency, we will also promote and nurture good relationships with all co-workers. The rewards reaped, through personal and job satisfaction, and a sense of achievement by all, will engender a loyalty to and identity with the organization.

We aim to communicate effectively and motivate all team members so that they will portray our unique professional style to our customers.

To achieve this we require total involvement in, commitment to, and understanding of quality excellence by everyone in the organization

Standards and systems adopted reflect our commitment to quality. Our quality policy is based on a number of fundamental principles:

- ⇒ the continuous development of people.
- ⇒ the continuous measurement of Quality achievement
- ⇒ the continuous review and improvement of system.

Date _____

Signed by the Board of Directors (or CEO)

19.5.1.2. Responsibility, authority and communication:

Statement: Management of the employment services organization shall ensure that responsibilities, authorities and duties are defined and communicated within the organization.

Indicators:

- ⇒ General and specific responsibilities are defined for all personnel whose functions are bearing on service/product quality and the quality system.

- ⇒ A Group Quality Co-ordinator is responsible for the co-ordination of the Quality System across the organization
- ⇒ Appropriate communication processes are established within the organization
- ⇒ Communication takes place regarding the effectiveness of the quality system and its application in the daily activities and operations
- ⇒ An organisational chart showing structure, job description, responsibilities, duties and reporting relationships is visible, accessible to everyone (especially to the stakeholders) and widely circulated throughout the organisation
- ⇒ There is a direct relationship between responsibility and accountability throughout the organisation
- ⇒ Individual responsibilities for quality activities are documented for each of the services provided by the organization
- ⇒ The internal value chain of the services delivery is well focused and object of systematic review and monitoring to ensure an integrated quality offer of all passages from one point to another
- ⇒ A flow diagram is established and continually updated for the internal chain of services delivery
- ⇒ An inter-functional matrix is used to define a project management methodology

Questions for self-auditing:

For each indicator try, please, to answer the question: “In which degree do I believe that this indicator has objective evidence?”

	0	1	2	3	4
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References and proofs on best practices: Have you some references and sources to be documented on best practices about this cluster of quality indicators?

19.5.1.3. Management review:

Statement: Management of the employment services organization shall review the organization quality system, at planned intervals, to ensure it is continuously suitable, adequate and effective.

Indicators:

- ⇒ To assess opportunities for improvement and the need for changes to the quality management system, including the quality policy and quality objectives
- ⇒ To evaluate the information on results of auditing actions (internal/external) and the nonconformities of services and/or of processes
- ⇒ To consider carefully customers’ feedback and improvements of the services provided related to customer’s requirements
- ⇒ To introduce preventive or corrective actions
- ⇒ To communicate recommendations to the staff through personal and inter-personal briefings and written reports

Questions for self-auditing:

For each indicator try, please, to answer the question: “In which degree do I believe that this indicator has objective evidence?”

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References and proofs on the best practices: Have you some references and sources to be documented on best practices about this cluster of quality indicators?

19.5.1.4. Quality of strategy and strategic behaviours

Statement : Management of the employment services organization has a clear, up to date and competent strategy of the organization (public or private) , according to a deep knowledge of the normative, economic, social and cultural scenario, especially related to the labour market

Indicators:

- ⇒ compliance of the management and employment services delivery with the legislation and normative framework concerning the mission of the organization (International charters and European Union directives included)
- ⇒ pro-active ability to do proposals and improve the legislation framework and norms concerning the employment services, especially on the PES/PRES co-operation through a defined specificity
- ⇒ competent use of data on the labour market trends, changes and needs as “system client”, both at local and national/international level for their pertinence of the decisions to be undertaken in effective employment services delivery
- ⇒ Availability, traceability and degree of the up-to-date statistics on the labour market and the features of the target groups of the services (age, origin, competencies, location, impact of the employment crisis, career obsolescence....)
- ⇒ Relations with all the social, economic, cultural, educational and institutional actor , especially those who play the role of stakeholders of the organization, are systematic
- ⇒ There is a unit for the “marketing “ strategy and/or the external relations development
- ⇒ A steady networking with the stakeholders, other organizations (public and private) with similar mission

Questions for self-auditing:

For each indicator try, please, to answer the question: “In which degree do I believe that this indicator has objective evidence?”

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References and proofs on the best practices: Have you some references and sources to be documented on the best practices about this quality cluster of indicators?

19.5.2. Resource Management

19.5.2.1.. Provision of resources:

Statement: Management of the employment services organization shall determine and provide the resources needed for the appropriate and competitive offer. Organization must ensure that are provided adequate resources to enhance customer satisfaction and to implement the required processes and to improve them.

Indicators:

- ⇒ To assess opportunities for improvement and the need for changes to the quality management system, including the quality policy and quality objectives
- ⇒ To evaluate the information on results of auditing actions (internal/external) and the nonconformities of the services and/or the processes
- ⇒ To consider carefully the customers' feedback and improvements of the services provided related to the customer requirements
- ⇒ To introduce preventive or corrective actions
- ⇒ To communicate recommendations to the staff through personal and inter-personal briefings and written reports

Questions for self-auditing:

For each indicator try, please, to put the question: "In which degree I believe that this indicator has objective evidence?"

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References and proofs on the best practices: Have you some references and sources to be documented on the best practices about this quality cluster of indicators?

19.5.2.2. Human Resources:

Statement: Personnel performing work affecting services quality shall be competent on the basis of appropriate education, training, skills and experiences.

Indicators:

- ⇒ To plan and determine the necessary competencies for personnel performing work affecting services' quality
- ⇒ To provide training or undertake other actions to satisfy the competencies needed and expected
- ⇒ To evaluate the effectiveness of the actions undertaken
- ⇒ To ensure that the personnel of the employment services is aware of the relevance and importance of their activities for the fundamental rights of the job seekers
- ⇒ To create and document the personal port-folio of empowerment of the personnel
- ⇒ To manage the human resources with motivating leadership and high contact
- ⇒ To involve everyone in the quality management and in the processes

- ⇒ Employees are appraised on quality
- ⇒ Recruitment takes place on the basis of appropriate education, training, skills and competencies : all the recruitment systems on the basis of references more than competencies are avoided
- ⇒ There are evidences of improved productivity
- ⇒ There are evidences of reduced turn over,
- ⇒ There are evidences of reduced absenteeism,
- ⇒ There are evidences of improved management/staff relations
- ⇒ There are evidences of more effective teamwork
- ⇒ There are evidences of less direct supervision
- ⇒ There are evidences of Increased job satisfaction (employee as “internal client)
- ⇒ Personnel plays a role in the decision making process
- ⇒ To ensure that the organizational atmosphere is positive and facilitates the job run
- ⇒ Regular meeting are held between management and staff
- ⇒ The leadership style can be described as participative/consultative
- ⇒ The quality groups have been formed and trained in problem solving techniques and meeting procedures
- ⇒ Quality groups meet regularly in accordance with the agreed schedule

Questions for self-auditing:

For each indicator try, please, to put the question: “In which degree I believe that this indicator has objective evidence?”

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References and proofs on the best practices: Have you some references and sources to be documented on the best practices about this quality cluster of indicators?

19.5.2.3. Infrastructure and technical/technological resources & facilities:

Statement: Management of the employment services organization shall determine, provide and maintain the infrastructure, technical/technological resources and facilities needed to achieve conformity to services requirements.

Indicators:

- ⇒ To ensure a location and a state of the building that meets the accessibility needs of both the employees and customers
- ⇒ To ensure that the state of the building meets the safety and accessibility needs, especially for the disabled people or other weak target groups of customers
- ⇒ To plan the workplaces and workstations with the associated utilities
- ⇒ To plan the workplaces and workstation with the appropriate conditions (space, light, heating, connections...)
- ⇒ All the applicable technologies are adopted to help staff performances
- ⇒ The work environment is positive and conform with the eco-audit guidelines
- ⇒ To ensure that all the Hygiene Regulations are respected

Questions for self-auditing:

For each indicator try, please, to put the question: “In which degree I believe that this indicator has objective evidence?”

	0	1	2	3	4
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References and proofs on the best practices: Have you some references and sources to be documented on the best practices about this quality cluster of indicators?

19.5.3. Employment services design and delivery

19.5.3.1. Planning and designing of employment services:

Statement: Management shall plan, design and develop the processes needed for the employment services realization and offer. Planning and designing shall be consistent with the requirements of the other processes of the quality management system and, if the case, when submitted to the survey of the public authorities, for the specificity of this services, shall be conform and consistent with the normative frame and rules (European, national and local) of this type of services.

Indicators:

- ⇒ To ensure the “capacity” of the organization to design and develop the employment services offer according to the customers and the stakeholders concerned requirements (researches on the field)
- ⇒ To set up and carry out the processes, competencies, resources (both human and technical) needed for a quality services delivery
- ⇒ To determine the necessary survey and pilot testing on the services planned and designed before their delivery, to prevent errors and review the designing processes
- ⇒ To modify and innovate the offer according to the changes of the labour market or the economic, social and cultural context in general and according to the priorities established by the European or national and regional bodies
- ⇒ To ensure the predictability of the professional profiles required by the labour market and do provisional programmes
- ⇒ To be pro-active and to use creativity for the emerging needs of the customers or the “client system”
- ⇒ To be available to introduce tailored and flexible combinations of the offer, taking into account the immigration flows, the multicultural context, the diversity management, the strong mobility, the tele-work, etc
- ⇒ There is congruity between labour market needs analysis and the offers purposed
- ⇒ The relationship between the responsible of the designing and the staff responsible of the services delivery is positive and permanent
- ⇒ The organization is able to do services design and proposals on demand
- ⇒ To document and record what the customer wants as component of the co-makership processes of the services
- ⇒ The offer is differentiate according to the different types of clients/customer
- ⇒ Employees know perfectly and on time all the characteristic and differentiation of the offer

- ⇒ Operational problems have been identified and classified and specific problems have been prioritised and targeted for elimination

Questions for self-auditing:

For each indicator try, please, to put the question: “In which degree I believe that this indicator has objective evidence?”

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References and proofs on the best practices: Have you some references and sources to be documented on the best practices about this quality cluster of indicators?

19.5.3.2. Employment services delivery and customer related processes

Statement: Management of the employment services organization shall determine, provide and carry out the employment services delivery, according to the quality requirements in the processes and interactions with customers.

Indicators:

- ⇒ To determine and implement effective strategies and operations for communicating with customers in relation to the services
- ⇒ To manage every customer feedback ,including customer complaints
- ⇒ To do careful analysis of the requirements specified by the customers, also for post-delivery and follow up activities
- ⇒ To ensure that the relations of the employees with the customers have a good degree of empathy
- ⇒ To ensure that the communication and transactions styles of the employees with the customers are assertive
- ⇒ The information contents and the promises are honest, veracious and realistic in all the promotion and advertising materials
- ⇒ The use of the mass media, the participation to the fairs, conventions, congresses etc is consistent with the mission strategies, also for the “institutional marketing and communication” (for the public employment services)
- ⇒ The information on the employment services is complete
- ⇒ The communication and information on web is user friendly, clear and customer tailored
- ⇒ A creation of a networks on line, telematics forums, many to many communication systems etc. are fit for the mission strategy of the employment services
- ⇒ The information concerning the location of the organization (how to join it), transport, parking etc. Are provided
- ⇒ The architectural barriers of the building are removed
- ⇒ The internal disposition of the officers and workstations are clear and easy to identify
- ⇒ The front desk is particularly and carefully disposed with employees who have the skills and abilities needed for a welcoming processes
- ⇒ The communication styles of the organization contributes to the Self-esteem of the customer
- ⇒ The communication tools in general contributes to a better corporate image

Questions for self-auditing:

For each indicator try, please, to put the question: “In which degree I believe that this indicator has objective evidence?”

	0	1	2	3	4
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References and proofs on the best practices: Have you some references and sources to be documented on the best practices about this quality cluster of indicators?

19.5.4. Verification, validation, documentation and monitoring of the Employment Services:

19.5.4.1. Verification, validation and documentation of the services delivery

Statement: Management of the employment services organization shall establish and implement the inspection or other auditing activities necessary for ensuring that services delivery and offer meets specific customer needs and expectations.

Indicators:

- ⇒ There are specific and tested (validated) forms for monitoring and measuring the quality of the delivery processes of the services
- ⇒ To establish forms of internal auditing at planned intervals to determine whether the quality management system conforms to the planned objectives and benchmarks or standards
- ⇒ There are specific and tested (validated) forms of monitoring and measuring the effects or results of the services in the customers
- ⇒ There is a good management of the lines and flows, to avoid time waste of the customers
- ⇒ The organization makes known and publishes data, information, periodical reports about the services delivered, the quantity and quality of the results achieved, the impact or effects of the activities on the social context and labour market
- ⇒ The monitoring and evaluation/verification activities are documented, kept and traceable
- ⇒ Preventive and corrective actions are made to eliminate the nonconformities and to ensure the continuous improvement, according to the Total Quality Management principles
- ⇒ It is defined the criteria, scope, frequency of the audit and audit methods
- ⇒ Auditors should have needed competence to perform audits
- ⇒ Those responsible for managing the non-conformances found decide for the need of actions and implement in a diligent manner those ones

Questions for self-auditing:

For each indicator try, please, to put the question: “In which degree I believe that this indicator has objective evidence?”

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References and proofs on the best practices: Have you some references and sources to be documented on the best practices about this quality cluster of indicators?

19.5.4.2. Customer satisfaction

Statement: The organization shall monitor information relating to customer perception as to whether the organization has met customer requirements and expectations

Indicators:

- ⇒ To determine the methods for obtaining and using the customer satisfaction and customer perception of the employment services supplied
- ⇒ Systematic forms of customer satisfaction analysis are performed and their results are carefully examined and communicated to the staff
- ⇒ This feedback is an input for management review meetings with staff and focus groups with customers
- ⇒ A continual improvement is adopted according to the data and outputs of the customer satisfaction analysis
- ⇒ Nonconformities are under steady review

Questions for self-auditing:

For each indicator try, please, to put the question: “In which degree I believe that this indicator has objective evidence?”

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References and proofs on the best practices: Have you some references and sources to be documented on the best practices about this quality cluster of indicators?

19.6. Section B : the Ethic Quality

19.6.1. Corporate Social Responsibility¹¹ :

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis. It is about enterprises deciding to go beyond minimum legal requirements and obligations stemming from collective agreements in order to address societal needs. Through CSR, enterprises of all sizes, in cooperation

¹¹ Commission of the European Communities: Implementing the partnership for growth and jobs :making Europe a pole of excellence on Corporate Social Responsibility Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee, Brussels, 22.3.2006, COM(2006)136 final

with their stakeholders, can help to reconcile economic, social and environmental ambitions. As such, CSR has become an increasingly important concept both globally and within the EU, and is part of the debate about globalization, competitiveness and sustainability. In Europe, the promotion of CSR reflects the need to defend common values and increase the sense of solidarity and cohesion

19.6.1.1. Policy quality of employment services according to Corporate Social Responsibility: the vision and strategy

Statement: The revised Lisbon strategy promotes growth and jobs in a manner that is fully consistent with sustainable development, which remains an overarching long term goal for the European Union. Enterprises, as the motor for economic growth, job creation, and innovation, are key actors in delivering the Lisbon and sustainable development objectives. Europe needs business to do what it does best: to provide products and services that add value for society and to deploy entrepreneurial spirit and creativity towards value and employment creation. However Europe does not need just business but socially responsible business that takes its share of responsibility for the state of European affairs. In its contribution to the March 2005 Spring Council, the Commission recognized that CSR “can play a key role in contributing to sustainable development while enhancing Europe’s innovative potential and competitiveness”. In the Social Agenda, the Commission announced that it would, in co-operation with Member States and stakeholders, present initiatives to further enhance the development and transparency of CSR. In the revised Sustainable Development Strategy, the Commission called “on the business leaders and other key stakeholders of Europe to engage in urgent reflection with political leaders on the medium- and long-term policies needed for sustainability and propose ambitious business responses which go beyond existing minimum legal requirements”. Therefore, corporate social responsibility means to behaviour in ethic and honest way, beyond the simple respect of the laws.

Indicators:

CSR practices are not a panacea and cannot on their own be expected to deliver these outcomes. They are not a substitute for public policy, but they can contribute to a number of public policy objectives, such as:

- ⇨ more integrated labour markets and higher levels of social inclusion, as enterprises actively seek to recruit more people from disadvantaged groups;
- ⇨ investment in skills development, life-long learning and employability, which are needed to remain competitive in the global knowledge economy and to cope with the ageing of the working population in Europe;
- ⇨ improvements in public health, as a result of voluntary initiatives by enterprises in areas such as the marketing and labeling of food and non-toxic chemicals;
- ⇨ better innovation performance, especially with regard to innovations that address societal problems, as a result of more intensive interaction with external stakeholders and the creation of working environments more conducive to innovation;
- ⇨ a more rational use of natural resources and reduced levels of pollution, notably thanks to investments in eco-innovation and to the voluntary adoption of environmental management systems and labeling;

- ⇨ a more positive image of business and entrepreneurs in society, potentially helping to cultivate more favourable attitudes towards entrepreneurship;
- ⇨ greater respect for human rights, environmental protection and core labour standards, especially in developing countries;
- ⇨ poverty reduction and progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.

Questions for self-auditing:

For each indicator try, please, to put the question: “In which degree I believe that this indicator has objective evidence in the vision and strategy (table of values) of my organization?”

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References and proofs on the best practices: Have you some references and sources to be documented on the best practices about this quality cluster of indicators?

19.6.1.2. Employment services planning and designing according to the Corporate Social Responsibility: the activities and priorities

Statement: Management of the employment services organization shall determine, provide and carry out the employment services delivery, according to the CSR requirements in the processes and interactions with customers, society and environment

Indicators:

- ⇨ To build our customers’ trust through sincerity, enthusiasm, and creativity in all our corporate (or institutional, for public employment services) endeavours
- ⇨ To strive for total innovation from a global perspective by conducting our mission rich in originality.
- ⇨ To conduct fair and open business operations while acknowledging our social responsibilities and aspiring for harmony with our global environment.
- ⇨ To create a positive working environment by maximizing our individual talents and strengths as a team
- ⇨ To enhance our corporate standing and promote the continual development of the organization through the exploration of new possibilities
- ⇨ Fostering innovation and entrepreneurship in sustainable technologies, products and services which address societal needs
- ⇨ Helping SMEs to flourish and grow
- ⇨ Assisting enterprises to integrate social and environmental considerations in their business operations, especially those in the supply chain with our organization or in network or in partnership with our organization
- ⇨ Improving and developing skills for employability, especially for the disadvantaged people
- ⇨ To contribute to the local development programmes as active stakeholders of the territorial pacts, integrated territorial projects, industrial clusters and districts, agenda 21, and other local co-operation forms for development

- ⇒ Better responding to diversity and the challenge of equal opportunities taking into account the demographic changes alongside the rapid aging of the European population
- ⇒ Improving working conditions, also in cooperation with the stakeholders or the enterprises in partnership
- ⇒ Enhancing pro-active dialogue and engagement with all relevant stakeholders
- ⇒ Operating outside the borders of the European Union in a socially responsible way as companies do inside the European Union

Questions for self-auditing:

For each indicator try, please, to put the question: In which degree I believe that this indicator has objective evidence in the planning and designing of employment services?

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References and proofs on the best practices: Have you some references and sources to be documented on the best practices about these social responsibility indicators?

19.6.1.3. Employment services tools according to the Corporate Social Responsibility:

Statement: Management of the employment services organization shall adopt the appropriate tools, in order to implement the organizational processes according to the CSR guidelines.

Indicators:

- ⇒ To create a positive work environment with adoption of the Social Accountability 8000
- ⇒ To do every years the “Social Balance” through the Social AccountAbility 1000 guidelines
- ⇒ To use for the customer guarantee and rights the “Services’ Charter”
- ⇒ To determine an internal code of behaviours with the customer, the stakeholders and the referents of the networking and partnerships actions and programmes
- ⇒ To elaborate a “values compass or table” as benchmark for the “ethic” vision of the organization in the society

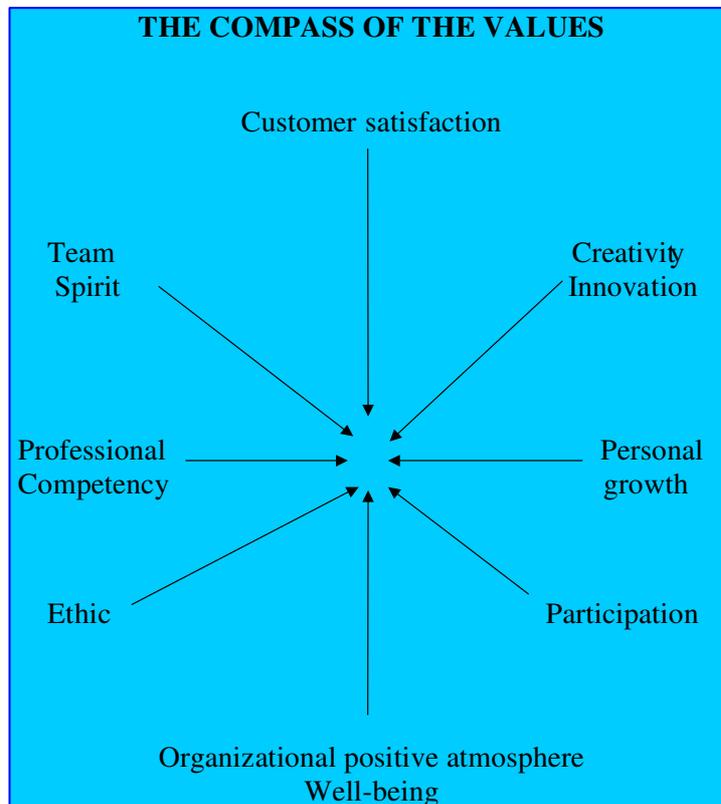
Questions for self-auditing:

For each indicator try, please, to put the question: In which degree I believe that this tools of ethic priorities have objective evidence in the organisation of the employment services?

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References and proofs on the best practices: Have you some references and sources to be documented on the best practices about these social responsibility indicators?

19.6.1.4. Example of visual presentation of the “values compass or table” of the organization:



19.7. Section C: the co-operation and networking quality of the Employment Services

A free comment on the John Naisbitt considerations in its work “The global paradox”¹² says:

“Competition and co-operation became the ying and the yang of the global market. The idea that a central government – a huge mainframe – is the most important component of the policies system, is obsolete. The networking between cultural, social and professional organizations is becoming more and more important...What is happening

¹² One of the most “visionary” and predictive writers on the international scenarios. He wrote *Global Paradox*. The Bigger the World Economy, the More Powerful Its Smallest Players. William Morrow & Company, Inc., in 1994. Moreover: *Megatrends*. Ten New Directions Transforming Our Lives. Warner Books, 1982, *Reinventing the Corporation*. Transforming Your Job and Your Company for the New Information Society. Warner Books, 1985, *Megatrends 2000*. Ten New Directions for the 1990s. William & Morrow Company, Inc., 1990, *Megatrends Asia*. Eight Asian Megatrends That Are Reshaping Our World. Simon & Schuster, 1996, *High Tech/High Touch*. Technology and our Accelerated Search for Meaning. Nicholas Braely Publishing, 2001, *Mind Set!* Reset Your Thinking and See the Future. Collins, 2006, *China's Megatrends: The 8 Pillars Of A New Society*. HarperCollins, 2010. Reading these works should be compulsory for all who are working in the Employment Services.

is, basically, a change of the power models: from the state to the subjects, from the vertical to the horizontal, from the hierarchies to the networks”, from the pyramids to the lenses”. Moreover, the Psychologist Kurt Lewin stated that “*the striving commitment of two or more subjects who work together for a common goal is more than the addition of their single efforts*”.

19.7.1. Agreement on the values, mission, strategy and roles

19.7.1.1. Agreement on the values to be respected and adopted in the private and public employment services policies:

Statement: Co-operation and networking should be deeply founded and rooted on the same ground values about the democracy, citizen’s rights’ fulfillment, solidarity and other values connected with the job and employment policies.

Indicators:

- ⇒ To introduce in the mission strategies and organizational policies statements the same values, in order to build a solid basis for the co-operation between private and public employment services
- ⇒ To share the “ vision” related to the job as one of the basic premises for the full citizenship and social, economic and professional inclusion of people
- ⇒ To adopt the quality assurance systems and ethic quality guidelines to make comparable and consistent the dialog between all the partners of the co-operative issue and networking
- ⇒ To do a large use of benchmarking programmes and actions to test the common vision of values and the common indicators of efficiency in the processes and the common indicators of effectiveness in the outcomes and expected results
- ⇒ To experiment frequently the project management forms and pilot projects to prove and re-prove the co-operation feasibility in short, medium and long term
- ⇒ To develop forms of exchanges not only of the best practices but also of the personnel for temporary internships to optimise the collaborative actions
- ⇒ To participate together to all the local development programmes and job creation projects, set up and carried out by the territorial networks like territorial pacts, integrated territorial projects, European structural funds applications , especially European Social Fund, employers and trade unions co-operation programmes in the vocational training and career guidance

Questions for self-auditing:

For each indicator try, please, to put the question: In which degree I believe that this tools of ethic priorities have objective evidence in the organisation of the employment services?

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References and proofs on the best practices: Have you some references and sources to be documented on the best practices about these social responsibility indicators?

19.7.1.2. Agreement on the distinction of the functions and roles, of the reciprocal roles expectations:

Statement: A co-operation will be so effective and durable as the roles and the reciprocal roles expectations will be clear, submitted to periodical review according to the changes of the labour market requirements and the evolution of the normative frame of reference.

Indicators:

- ⇒ To introduce the same distinction adopted by the Quality System between the Organizations which release the “accreditation” or “certification” and Organizations which are accredited and certified : between the organizations which release the licensing and those which receive a formal licensing to provide employment services in the labour market, there must be no “confusion” or “fusion” or “intersection” or “interest conflict”
- ⇒ To reckon the role of the “public employment services” accreditation of the private actors and auditing and inspection for the conformities to the norms and legislation
- ⇒ Every interest conflict between accreditation bodies and executive bodies should be carefully avoided
- ⇒ To establish clearly and in progress the reciprocal role expectations and distinguish them in compulsory, preferential and optional without commixture
- ⇒ To focus all the efforts on the contents and objectives of the relation and co-operation and not on the status and social desirability, visibility and reputation
- ⇒ To recognize explicitly (e.g. in the reports or other objective evidence) the contribution of the partners in the action purposed, in the results achieved, in the success obtained
- ⇒ To reckon the project leadership of the “public employment services” in the employment policies priorities
- ⇒ To reckon an appropriate rotation of the project leadership in all the programmes and actions concerning all the services provided, excepted the specific roles of the public services and authorities above mentioned

Questions for self-auditing:

For each indicator try, please, to put the question: In which degree I believe that this tools of ethic priorities have objective evidence in the organisation of the employment services?

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References and proofs on the best practices: Have you some references and sources to be documented on the best practices about these social responsibility indicators?

19.7.1.3. Agreement on the reciprocal supply chain services delivery and the appraisal of the value chain performed:

Statement: To agree with the relevant roles is a premise for an agreement about quality services delivery and performances, so well that customer comes to perceive a providing parity power ¹³

¹³ The “providing parity power” could be a very similar benchmark to the “purchasing parity power” (PPP), that’s used in all the economic performances’ comparisons at international level.

Indicators:

- ⇒ To establish agreements for a mutual auditing action of second part when applicable for the qualitative measurement and evaluation of the effective value produced for each other to implement and/or improve the employment services delivery to the customer
- ⇒ To be able to enlarge in all flexible possible forms the networks and partnerships, involving all the stakeholders, to join better or more rapidly (on time) the customer (job seekers) needs and expectations
- ⇒ A long-term relationship between the partners and the knots of the network is characterized by teamwork, mutual confidence, and common goals regarding customer satisfaction.
- ⇒ The supplier implements quality assurance processes and auditing of first part (internal) to limit or eliminate incoming inspection by the second part¹⁴
- ⇒ They create common telematics platforms and database and favour all the opportunities offered by the information and net technologies to ensure a permanent on line inter-connection, availability and access
- ⇒ They devote every effort to create an inter-operability of the systems to set up an integrated management of the matching demand and offer of employment
- ⇒ Each partner becomes suppliers of the others and dispose the interactions processes so that costs are lowered and offers are improve
- ⇒ The recruitment and selection of the members of the network are made according to the consistency and congruity of the quality of the services provided and the efficiency, responsiveness and competence of the performances
- ⇒ Quality of the communication strategies of the network as a whole and the channels or tools used for information to the customer (e.g. advertising campaigns, fairs, meetings...)
- ⇒ Advertising and diffusion of the information in appropriate places (e.g. info-points, portals on the web etc.)
- ⇒ The existence of One-stop-shops for services to the special targets groups (e.g. immigrants, disable people etc.)

Questions for self-auditing:

For each indicator try, please, to put the question: In which degree I believe that this tools of ethic priorities have objective evidence in the organisation of the employment services?

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References and proofs on the best practices: Have you some references and sources to be documented on the best practices about these social responsibility indicators?

¹⁴ The auditing action in the quality systems (e.g. ISO 9000 series) is: first part, if the auditing is internal, that's carried out by an internal inspector about the quality conformities; second part, if the auditing is made by the client about the quality conformities of his supplier; third part, if the auditing is made by an independent organization, whose inspection is carried out by certified auditors. More the internal auditing (first part) is accurate, more the second part and third part auditing will be positive.

19.7.1.4. Evaluation of the quality traits of the interactions “rituals” and patterns in the social dialogue and networking activities :

	0	1	2	3	4
Reciprocity of the representative members of each partner : evidence of the reciprocal acknowledgement and esteem of relevance					
Cohesion of the network : the partners are present, active and there are no divisions or misunderstandings					
Consistency or coherence of the partnership : all the partners feel that the network provides more advantages for their respective strategies					
Complementary support between the participants : evidence or the complementary role and benefits in action					
Integration/System paradigm of the group functioning : the partnership is aligning the objectives and mission of the members as a whole					
Durability of the partnership : in which evidence can we consider the partnership duration as a proof of its solidity, especially in the critical events ?					
Loyalty/trust between the different social players : degree of trust and loyalty of the partners and absence of exclusion and/or seclusion					
Value sharing/vision between partners : the strategies of the single partners are not in collision with the strategy of the partnership and cooperation activities					
Dependability/confidence of each other : evidence of the reciprocal confidence and equity in the relationships					
Diversity management/complexity management of the “leaders” , coordinators and facilitators : leaders are competent and openminded					
Customer oriented management of the activities : actions are focused on the customer satisfaction					
* other traits					

** To be completed by each organization according to the agreements of the networks*

19.7.1.5. How to gear monitoring in the networking projects

In the networking projects we generally find lots of different subjects (individuals or organizations) working in complex arrangements. These subjects are asked to decide together on the objectives and the procedures to be adopted, implement actions according to plan, react to the unforeseen, cultivate contacts with both/network their own target groups and partner organisations, and regulate organisational issues. All these actions demand constant negotiations and agreements, often within an intricate network of interests with at least latent conflicts, different “visions” and strategies, paradoxical pressures of their respective client systems and so on. Every individual or group involved sees things their own way. The numerous patterns of thinking and behaviour, their own experiences, interests and views shape the reality of a project at least as much as any jointly agreed-upon objective. If we follow this through, it is easy to see that a project cannot be steered like a piece of machinery where we only need to pull a few levers or turn a wheel or two.

Monitoring in this sense becomes an organised process of communication which should direct all actors towards a common understanding of project implementation and impacts. They compare their views on the past course of the project, on its current status, and agree on how to proceed. This is the direction in which the common understanding of monitoring in development cooperation has been moving over the last few years. The

realisation has been gaining ground that in a world which is constantly changing in a more or less unpredictable way, such changes cannot be mastered using instruments assuming a stable and controllable reality.

The focus of monitoring is thus increasingly geared to communication and consensus building, to repeatedly negotiating views and assessments.

Target group organisations and partners should adopt periodical meetings and sessions in one or another of the methodologies connected with the “logical framework” principles (e.g. GOPP, EASW, OST etc.), within which members find it easier to express their opinions. Thus the project can get quality feedback with little additional effort.

In the design of cooperation with partners, monitoring can help :

- to extend the type and scope of contacts and bring the two sides closer together
- to initiate processes of discussion and to establish a joint understanding about the goals and the way to reach these
- to develop suitable forms of participation, and initiate target-group-specific monitoring processes.

For successful project implementation it is vital to identify which factors in the project environment can positively or negatively influence the project, and to what extent.

Such outside factors include :

- political directives in the partner country
- legal, economic and socio-cultural framework conditions and changes
- interventions of other donors and implementing organisations
- infrastructural and technological developments
- ecological factors and events.

To allow us to react in good time to changes in the project environment, it is important to agree on those factors, and how they should be observed as part of the project’s monitoring.

Generally, important factors that represent a latent risk for the project are identified at the planning stage under “*risks and assumptions*”.

The relationship between the terms inputs, outputs, outcomes and impact can be represented like this:



The inputs to our project enable to deliver outputs. These bring about outcomes, which may eventually lead to an impact.

The elements we propose to focus in monitoring the progress of the Project impact and in the further realizations after the end of the Project, are:

Participation

- The number of business participants and business sectors represented
- The number of Associations and NGOs
- The number of Local Authorities involved

Activities

- Learning activities undertaken by the network

- Partnership activities facilitated or initiated by the network
- The number of Communications on Progress produced by networks' members
- Activities carried out in support of the production of Communications on Progress
- Activities planned for the next years
- Reporting Local Network Activities
- Extension of the Areas of Partnership Projects

20. Conclusions:

I would like to conclude by quoting the theory by Pine and Gilmore: "the citizen, the customer, the client has become "guest" nowadays, into the continuum Hostility-Hospitality". We are guests and the services world is the host organization where we feel this important benefit to be someone, to be target of cure and care, even if I have to present as endorsement my pure human being, even without other assets. This is the utopia that Bauman considers the challenge of the European model of society, so fragile to be kept, so essential to be saved. At all costs.