

Job Rotation e-service enhancing life long learning for the Agriculture Sector”



JOB – ROTATION APPLICATION HANBOOK



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

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**Title: "Job Rotation e-service enhancing life
long learning for the Agriculture Sector"**

"AGROTATE"

**DELIVERABLE 2. JOB – ROTATION
APPLICATION HANDBOOK**

Concept

Benefits

Models

Design & Implementation

Steps & Recommendations

Best Practices

E-Service

Training needs identification

The handbook was developed in the frame of the 'AGROTATE' project.

The handbook aims to familiarize farmers, companies and all interested parties in agriculture and employment with the concept and benefits of Job Rotation. Furthermore, the handbook will support and guide all interested users to develop and implement a customized to their needs Job Rotation scheme through the application of certain steps and methodology.

Life long learning and unemployment know no frontiers. Farmers, no matter which country they belong to, they have similar needs for upgrading their skills and limited free time to follow traditional training courses. On the other hand job seekers across Europe ask for training relevant to the market needs and a sustainable job position in order to overcome the uncertainty of the current economical crisis period.

Unemployment is a major concern in several European Union Member States at the moment. Governments need to help the unemployed find jobs by engaging employers more actively in this process.

Job rotation is a training model in which the unemployed are educated and trained continuously in order to replace employees in companies, during the time that they leave their jobs for more education and training.

The Agrotate system, integrating in a web application the job rotation model, aims at linking training and employment needs to each other. It

is an online matching tool that connects unemployed qualifications with farm's needs, and an e-learning platform that offers through distance learning the aforementioned courses.

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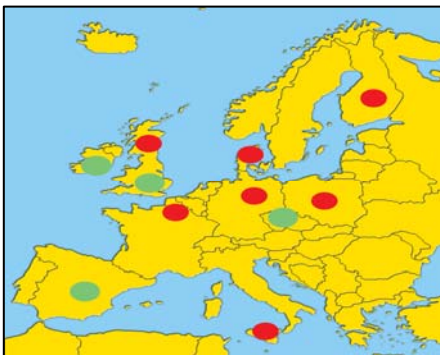
CHAPTER 1. JOBROTATION SCHEMES: CONCEPT AND APPLICATIONS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Growth and employability are some of the key challenges facing Europe in the 21st century. At the heart of these challenges lies the development of human resources. The huge changes arising from global competition and technological development have set the companies on a path where they continuously must meet the demands of enhanced competence, greater productivity and higher performance.

At the same time fighting unemployment remains one of the greatest social challenges in the new millennium.

Job rotation is an efficient and modern labor market policy instrument



in achieving the objectives and satisfying the demands arising from the challenges facing businesses. Since the nineties job rotation has proved to be one of the best means of increasing employment and at the same time upgrading the

professional skills of permanent employees. The job rotation concept was deemed one of ten “Best Practice Models” by the European Commission at the Employment Summit in Luxembourg in November

1997. Job rotation forms a part of labor market policies in several EU countries being integrated into labor market legislation and national or regional guidelines for employment policies.

Red Spots:

Where JobRotation has already been heavily piloted, promoted and to a certain degree mainstreamed.

Green Spots:

State, or within that regions or local communities, where JobRotation has potential to be piloted, promoted and mainstreamed.

Job rotation was first introduced in the 80's in Denmark and was then over the following years further developed and implemented on a nation-wide scale.¹ At the end of 1995 the transnational partnership "Job rotation – A new method in Europe" was established with the aim of testing this system in all Member States of the EU.

The partnership initially comprised of 30 partner organizations in 14 countries.

1.2 WHAT IS JOB ROTATION

Job rotation is a special form of combining further training for company employees and unemployed persons whereby the vacated workplaces are filled by unemployed substitutes during the further training period.

Job rotation can be seen as an innovative combination of structural and employment policies corresponding to the strategy of the transitional labor markets. As a structural policy measure on the one hand, the qualification deficits of a company's staff are improved, while on the other hand, thanks to training and temporary jobs for the unemployed, qualifications and placement chances are increased. These two aspects are reflected in the financial and institutional framework conditions for job rotation.

The starting point for job rotation lies within businesses and their training needs resulting from the introduction of new technology, organizational changes or internationalization processes. Job rotation projects are intended to facilitate providing individual employees, groups of employees, a department of company or branch of industry with new skills and qualifications.

The **principle of a job rotation scheme** is simple: The employed participate in supplementary training, while an unemployed person trained for the temporary job takes over the vacant jobs becoming a substitute.

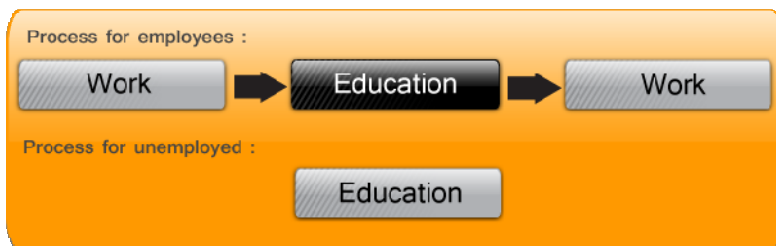
Since the beginning of the 1990s the job rotation model has been exploited mainly in the Scandinavian countries with Denmark as a pioneer with well over 36,000 participants of job rotation projects in 1996, which is equivalent to 1.5 per cent of the total labor force of the country. Private as well as public enterprises participate in job rotation schemes within a variety of sectors. A survey in 2001 showed that the

most dominating categories are primarily production companies and secondly, the health and social care sector and thirdly the tourism/hospitality sector. (note).

1.2.1 Results and different models of Job rotation:

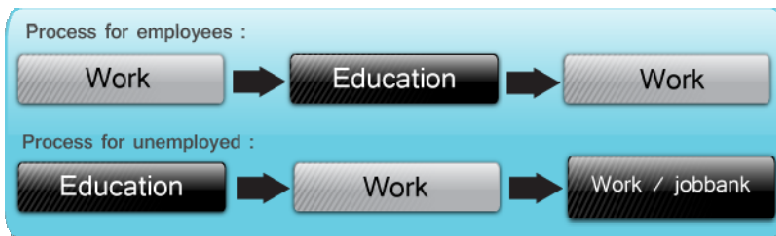
When the employment effect for substitutes is considered, the results from all European regions indicate that approximately 75 percent of substitutes obtain employment after completing the period of replacement, either in the job rotation enterprise or in another company.

The first job rotation model in its classical form looked like this:



Employees going into further education and training, while been substituted by an unemployed person. The further education and training in many cases is carefully selected according to the strategy for competence development in the company (in best case well described in a training plan). The jobrotation concept was then developed into a number of individual projects varying in scope and form. One of the

general modifications is to pre-train the substitutes and/or secure a follow up process for the substitutes, who may not immediately get a job after finishing the Jobrotation scheme.

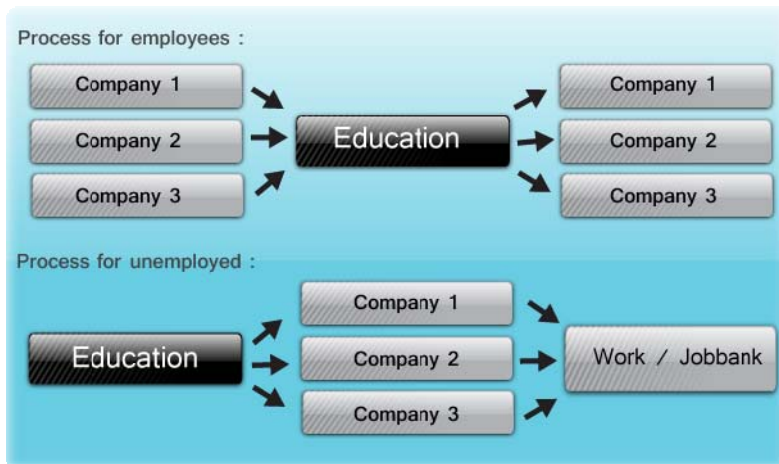


The pre-training could be short (a few weeks) or much longer, depending on the requirement of skills. Very often pre-training is a combination of courses, job internship and/or having a mentor for introduction. Also the efficiency of job rotation has been developed by being combined with:

- internal job switching, so that work organization has been adjusted to optimize production, while job rotation is taking place
- transnational rotation, for example employees from hotel in Sicily being trained in Great Britain, while being substituted by local unemployed

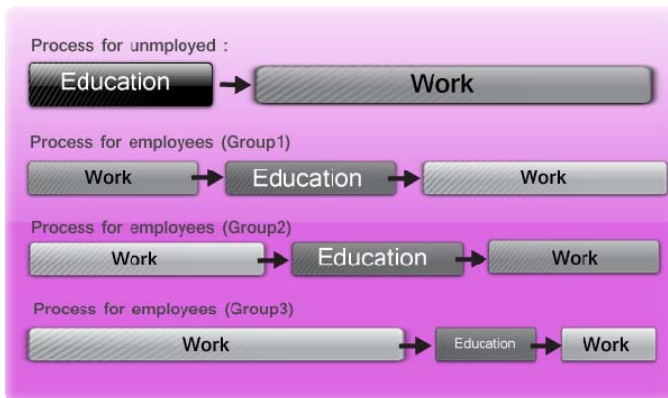
For larger companies, many employees can participate in job rotation at the same time, for example following tailor made courses, while being substituted by a number of unemployed. For smaller companies, it is more likely that a single or a few employee will follow further education

or training while being substituted by well prepared unemployed. Also a number of smaller companies can be connected to secure a certain volume in the jobrotation activity, for example allowing the development of tailor made courses for the employees from the different companies.



Substitutes make it possible for a several employees to follow further education and training for shorter periods. In the following scheme, the substitutes are engaged for a year, allowing different employees to leave the work place for training. Especially for larger companies and company networks this gives the opportunity that all employees can

follow the same type of courses (for example obligatory security courses) without interruption of production.



1.2.2 Benefits for all participants (win-win):

Job rotation schemes to a rare extent combine the interests of many actors of the labor market. Employees improve their qualifications through supplementary training and general education increasing their job security. The unemployed improve their qualifications and have the possibility of obtaining ordinary employment as a result of the job rotation schemes, becoming known in the enterprise and having a better chance of being employed the next time the enterprise will need to hire new employees. Companies solve their needs for providing the employees with supplementary training while the replacement labor ensures that the production continues, a better trained labor force will

increase productivity, flexibility and quality which will increase the competitiveness of the enterprise. Furthermore the companies are ensured a broader recruitment base

The advantages for the community and labor market in general are obviously connected to reducing unemployment. Moreover the labor force becomes better trained/more skilled, the flexibility on the labor market is increased.

Finally, job rotation can also be used to promote the adaptability of firms and employees in the period of globalization, the increasing use of new technology and the increasing demands of professional and general qualifications of the labor force with particular attention devoted to the special situation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SME).

1.3 EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICE

In the last 10 years a large number of regions and economic sectors have seen a variety of job rotation initiatives and projects. Some of these have been in response to the needs of a specific economic sector to meet changing and continually rising technical and quality standards or to the challenges facing small and medium-sized companies. In other cases they have been means of implementing a new company strategy or local development plan. Others have focused on special target groups or types of action, or have been the result of new market opportunities increasing demands of competences and skills.

It is important to study the variation in jobrotation schemes in different areas of Europe and in different economical sectors to understand, how adaptable jobrotation is a tool to facilitate competence development in companies. In the following we take a round tour to the landscape of jobrotation specific examples divided some main categories.

1.3.1. Job Rotation in Small, Medium and Micro Companies

DENMARK – Agricultural sector

A pilot project in Southern Jutland of Denmark was taking place from February 2003 until October 2004. Twelve small pig breeding companies participated. The project was very innovative, being the first (and still only) project in this sector, trying to deal with need of new competences and lack of skilled labor force at the same time.

Six overall goals of the project were developed and described:

1. To increase motivation amongst unemployed and school leavers to work in the agricultural sector.
2. To develop new tools to support the job introduction and learning at job.
3. To develop and offer management tools, to support the process of maintaining the employees.
4. To develop and offer vocational training (elements) for the employees to secure both formal and informal competences.

5. To implement use of ICT in daily work procedures, e.g. by combining text and visualization in developing of the 15 most important procedures in the pig sheds.
6. To establish and maintain a local cross sector cooperation, organized around a steering committee including the most relevant partners to identify barriers, share experiences and support implementation of results.



GERMANY – handicraft business

In Berlin, more than 100 SMEs have taken advantage of job rotation schemes resulting of co-operation between SPI ServiceGesellschaft, further training institutions like the Chamber of Crafts and the labor offices. The Berlin based job rotation project was originally designed as one-to-one model and worked - among others - in the following fields:

- Training key personnel in travel agencies, as small travel agencies are under pressure to find niches in a market that is experiencing concentration due to take-over by major travel businesses
- Training modules in the hotel industry, in the reception area which is subject to higher standards in communication, new booking technology and organizational issues;
- Training of journeyman to become master craftsmen in the commercial side of the business. In Berlin demand in this area is particularly important as 43% of owners of over 5,000 craft businesses are older than 50 and do not have a person with the right qualifications to take over. The project gave longstanding employees the opportunity to become potential new owners by getting the knowledge and certificates necessary for a take-over (generation shift problem).

All in all Jobrotation in Berlin further training for 120 workers by running ten group and three individual courses. 103 firms released 137

staff members from their regular duties to participate in training. 103 unemployed persons were placed in these companies as substitutes.

SCOTLAND – very small handicraft and retail companies

The Scottish project was based in Glasgow, co-funded by the Glasgow Development Agency and run by the Workers' Educational Association (Scotland). The main distinctive feature of the Scottish project was the participation of small firms employing less than 50 workers.

The basic structure of the project was that group of 12 unemployed received education and training for six months in a series of core and vocational skills with the aim of temporarily replacing 40 permanent employees from small Glasgow enterprises released for training. The substitutes were placed within a firm for six months where they received full wages for the job. During their temporary employment they were supported by mentors. The type of businesses and job placements were relatively wide: cleaning company (job placement administrator and general operative), theatre (job placement: administrator), voluntary organization (trainer and marketing/monitoring adviser), paint manufacturer (telesales), climbing centre (receptionist), catering equipment supplier (administrator, customer services worker and warehouse worker), security installation firm (office worker and installation engineer).

Jobrotation WEA-Scotland		
Employed		
STATUS Companies, 9 SME	EDUCATIONAL PERIOD Employee training (1:14) Personal Development General Skills Job Specific Skills	RESULTS SME's Improved training plans Some applying for training quality Certificate "Investors in People"
Unemployed		
PRE-TRAINING 6 months training (1:4) Personal Development General Skills Job Specific Skills	SUBSTITUTION PERIOD 6 months works experience in one company	RESULTS All who have completed are still in work
Comments: Each substitute releases many employees for training from 1:4 up to 1:14 Companies involved in recruitment of unemployed trainees who will substitute		

The Glasgow project in very small companies has also combined job rotation with internal job switching. In a small Glasgow enterprise (less than 5 employees) the owner was doing all the managing and administrative work herself even though her business skills were not fully up-to date. To substitute her while she was away for further training required that 3 of her most experienced employees shared her work, while a substitute then took over some of the manual work they were usually doing.

GREECE – small textile companies

In Thessaloniki 10 of the SMEs in the textile industry have offered the employed designers to be trained in new technologies, while trained substitutes took over. The substitutes had been given a combination of technical and core skills. A steering committee has been responsible for

the overall co-ordination between the participants, as well as planning of strategy regarding information to the parties involved and to the public.

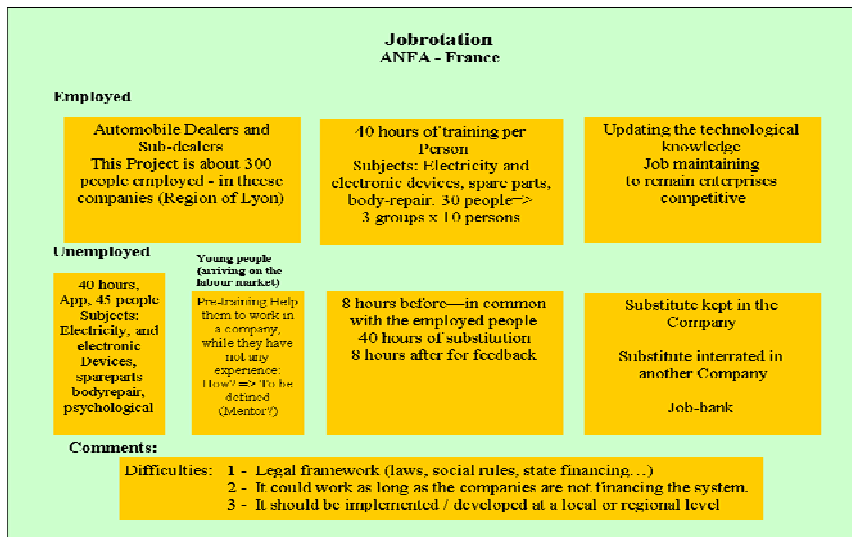
Jobrotation Chamber of SME's Thessaloniki		
Employed	EDUCATIONAL PERIOD	RESULTS
STATUS 10 employees from 10 enterprises of textile sector with up to 50 employees each	100 hours in design and new technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of new Technology - Updating of the companies - Development and enlargement of the companies
Unemployed	SUBSTITUTION PERIOD	RESULTS
PRE-TRAINING 200 hours 30 unemployed with a basic knowledge in design, Designing and communication skills. 1 weeks practice in the companies	13 working days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5 in permanent jobs - Refreshment of knowledge
Comments: In the framework of ADAPT project the Chamber of SME's in Thessaloniki has established a centre and network to relate training with employment and to support and inform the companies that want to get involved with Jobrotation.		

The training of the unemployed that were employed as substitutes took place on two specially designed training courses at the paper making school. All in all 217 employees improved their qualifications on the training courses with 26 substitutes employed temporarily on their place. The substitutes have participated in the training of the length 3 1/2 months (1st round) and 10 weeks (2nd round). Their employment period lasted 6-12 months. The first part of the project has finished in December 1998 and 81% of the substitutes obtained a permanent job within the same company. For the project co-operated the Chamber of

SMEs in Thessaloniki, Technopolis vocational training centre, Municipalities of Ampelokipi and Eleftherio Korthelio and the unions of both employees and employers.

FRANCE – automobile sales and repair companies.

The network partner ANFA, National Training Organization for Motor Trade and Repair, took the initiative for job a rotation project in the French car repair industry. The purpose of the training program was to meet the needs of the workers from car dealers and sub-dealers from the region of Lyon for updating their technological knowledge. All in all 30 employees participated in the further training.



The preparatory course for the unemployed (approximately 45 unemployed, mostly young people entering the labor market) with

vocational subjects and psychological pre-training lasted 40 hours. The substitutes have been supported by the employees who served as mentors in 8 hours before and 8 hours after the substitution period.

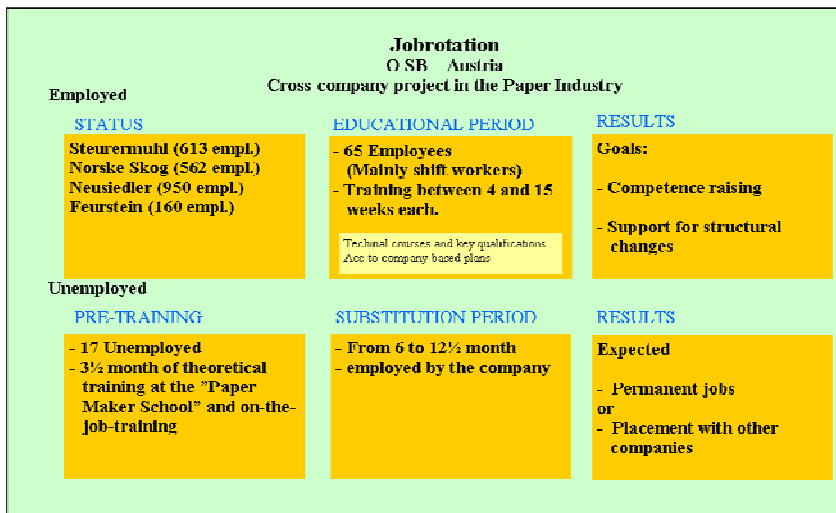
NETHERLANDS – metal-electro companies.

The regional foundation of metal- electro companies (SSM) in the south of the Netherlands (region Southeast Brabant) was established to combat the problem of personnel education, training and communication on behalf of companies in the sector metal works and electro technology. In order to meet the needs of the sector to retraining of employees and adapting to technological development and to improve theoretical lessons and work practice (working together with the employees to be substituted) before substituting. The project was financed by Adapt initiative and it will conclude with a study on the necessary changes of the labor market legislation. The pilot projects were car export possibilities and competitiveness of the branch SSM launched the project REGIOMET (Regional Innovative Training Approach Metalelectro) based on the job rotation concept. The project was coordinated by the network partner CINop have run from March 1996 to March 1998 with training of 300 unemployed and upgrading of 600 employees. The unemployed have been trained in basic technical and social skills within pre-training period of 4 months.

1.3.2. Sectoral Job Rotation Schemes.

AUSTRIA – Paper industry

Job rotation offered the paper industry facing the challenge of the dynamic international competition and development of new technologies a viable solution for involving shift workers in training more easily and without loss of production. Job rotation was offered by the network partner ÖSB to all members of the Professional Association of the Paper Industry all over the country. It was carried out in two phases with participation of 4 companies and 3 companies respectively from September 1997 to December 1998 (1st round) and from September 1998 to September 1999 (2nd round). The job rotation project was developed as a network project in cooperation between many actors of the labor market:



The Professional Association of the Paper Industry, the trade unions, company representatives, the training centre for the paper industry in Steyrmühl & Public Employment Service of Austria, Upper & Lower Austria and Styria as financiers were involved in the development of the framework concept. ÖSB has been responsible for the overall coordination between the participants, as well as planning of the strategy regarding information to the parties involved and to the public.

ITALY, SICILY – Tourist Industry

The idea of job rotation proved to be very efficient tool to solve the rising need for further training and development in tourist industry on Sicily. The target groups of Sicilian approach have been:

- Employees in hotels, travel agencies and in the Tourist Board
- Substitutes who used to be seasonal workers in the hotels, unemployed at the moment, and unemployed people who had worked in tourism (travel agencies, museums, fairs, leisure centers, etc.) living in the rural area of the Alto Belice. In total 80 unemployed have been trained replacing in 4 weeks almost 58 employees being on the further training courses.

Jobrotation Arcidonna - Italy		
Employed		
STATUS	EDUCATIONAL PERIOD	RESULTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 10 Hotels - 10 30 employed - 4 travel agencies - 3-15 employed - Touristboard - 110 employed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 weeks - 60 hours in class - 60 hours practical training in Europe - Subjects: Language skills + Infotec 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New technology implemented - Improvements of careers in hotels - Possibilities for changes in organisation
Unemployed		
PRE-TRAINING	SUBSTITUTION PERIOD	RESULTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 40 months (+ 30 hours mentoring) - 80 people - Subjects: Languages (En, D, Fr) Infotec, customer care, "Welcome Europe" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 full weeks - Special: The previous mentoring effected by the same workers who will be substituted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 65% in permanent jobs in hotellerie - 35 % in permanent jobs in info-tourism - Creation of joblist for hotels & travel agencies - Stimulation of creation of infortour jobs

The 4 pilot projects have been carried out in the period from December 1996 to June 1998. The employees attended the training course comprising of 2 weeks of language improvement and other relevant subjects, and 2 weeks of practical training in partner organizations in England and Germany. One of the most important experiences from the project is that the employees who have been replaced have been acting as the mentors for the substitutes.

1.3.3. Job Rotation with Focus on Special Target Groups

PORTUGAL

In Portugal the job rotation schemes implemented by DGACCP - the department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and SOPROFOR as general contractor are targeted for the Portuguese emigrants, who recently returned to their native country with the objective of integrating into the labor market. The contents of the training course for employees was based on competence analysis in the companies for matching training with the companies management objectives, and consisted of upgrading of technical skills (new technologies and innovation) and middle management skills (social skills). The project was carried out from December 1996 to June 1997 in the shipbuilding and the hotel/catering sectors. The scheme in both sectors involved approximately 10 employees and 13 unemployed workers with a total of 600 hours of training. The shipbuilding project involved 8 employees and 10 unemployed with a total of 600 hours of training. The assessment made at the end of the projects was extremely positive - all the substitutes (23 unemployed) were successfully integrated them into several companies - with the employment rate of 100%.

FINLAND

The need for new technology and internationalization in the tourism industry were the background of the Finnish job rotation project. 18 unemployed after a 26 week course were taken on as substitutes while

250 employees received further training in organizing and running conferences. 16 substitutes obtained a permanent job after the substitution period.

Jobrotation Lahi - Finland		
Employed		
STATUS	EDUCATIONAL PERIOD	RESULTS
250 people from: Fellmanni-Institute 8 hotels, 2 restaurants and 2 turist & travel offices	App. 50 participants Individual programs 1-10 weeks courses	- Improved costumer Service, language and Cultural skills - Improved professional self-confidence
Unemployed		
PRE-TRAINING	SUBSTITUTION PERIOD	RESULTS
19 unemployed attend a 26 week course	18 weeks	- 50% in temp.work - 20% in part time work - 30% in jobbank

UK, ENGLAND – The tourist sector

In England job rotation has been a success in the tourism and hospitality sector. This sector has, despite of the highest rate of economical growth in the UK, suffered from a bad image by many perceived as requiring no skills. Some sectors of the tourist industry have 94% of their staff untrained. Job rotation has helped to solve this problem. Milton Keynes College initiated a National partnership with the English Tourism Council, Southern and Western Country Tourist Board and the employment office developing Jobrotation projects in Milton

Keynes, Southampton, Portsmouth, Torquay, Weymouth, Oxford, Bristol and on the Isle of Wight.

The project was working in conjunction with the government “Welfare to Welfare” New Deal program. Milton Keynes College together with the Finnish partner (University of Helsinki, Lahti Institute for Training and Research) and the Italian partner on Sicily (Arcidonna) invented a double loop model, where Sicilian hotel and restaurant employees as a part of their further training scheme in Job rotation have been substituting English colleagues, while they went on a study trip to the Finnish hotel and hospitality sector (transnational jobrotation).

IRELAND – Women returners to labor market

The EU Jobrotation partner - the Northside Partnership has just completed the development of the first ever Irish Jobrotation pilot targeting women returners who for a variety of reasons left the workforce some time ago and now wish to return, but find that they need to re-train to prepare themselves for re-entry to the labor market.

The project was developed in the company which provides services in Irish airports - Aer Rianta. There was a Jobrotation team working on this project and it comprised staff from the Northside Partnership; from Aer Rianta Personnel, Training, Commercial and Workers’ Participation section and shop stewards from a trades union.

Recognizing the changes in Duty and VAT Free selling environment and the need for employees to explore and learn new selling skills,

Jobrotation was seen by the company as a useful tool to provide training for staff without disrupting service provision. Also there is a labor shortage in Ireland at present and Aer Rianta has also been hit by this shortage. Jobrotation was seen as a possible mechanism by which a Job bank might be created for the company.

Over 40 Aer Rianta employees received training during the rotation and 12 women had work placement experience and top quality training. 50% of these women are currently employed by the company and 25% are awaiting their children to return to school so they can take up part-time positions in the company. Some are employed in other firms and one or two are still undecided about their career paths. The unemployed have participated in a 13-week training receiving accredited training in retail sales and cash handling, also training in personal development and motivation techniques for returning to work.

AUSTRIA – Higher qualification of women

At the beginning of 1999 a new target group oriented program for the higher qualification of women through job rotation projects could be developed as the result of the co-operation between network partner ÖSB and Public Employment Service of Lower Austria. All in all training of 258 employees replaced temporarily by 27 unemployed as substitutes is planned in textile industry (15 employees on further training, 1 substitute), in joinery (13 employees, 2 substitutes), manufacturing of lamps (100 employees, 4 substitutes), personnel leasing (50 employees, 13-20 substitutes), service industry/spa (70

employees, 2-3 substitutes, metal industry 10 employees, 1 substitute). The job rotation scheme in the sector of home-care service with women as target group was launched in September 1998 as a network project between labor market service, the public administration of Vienna and many non-profit organizations with ÖSB as coordinating partner. This project is a cross-company approach involving 10 organizations with approximately 285 employees to be trained and 86 substitutes.

1.4. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR JOBTROTATION BASED UPON EUROPEAN EXPERIENCES AND POLICIES

1. Secure the budget.

- Jobrotation has mainly been financed by a mix of national or regional funding, EU funding and company own funding.
- The overall aim has been to influence national legislation and regional funding to secure a financial frame work for jobrotation, but this is has only succeeded in a few places. (F.ex. Denmark and Germany (in a certain period)).
- For this reason a lot of effort has to put into making a patch-work financing to make it possible to pilot jobrotation.
- In a jobrotation budget always five categories of costs have to be considered to run a project. The way to finance these costs is, as seen above, very different from state to state, region to region and even project to project.

	Employee	Unemployed
Salaries		
Training		
	Project Management ----- Mainstreaming	

2. Consider how to overcome the Barriers.

Jobrotation is very much depending on a cross-sectoral cooperation, so that structural (business-) policies work together with labor market and strategies for life long learning. This is why jobrotation is so innovative, but it also causes many problems and barriers. Regarded as some of the main barriers are:

- Companies and social partners do not understand the concept of Jobrotation
- Training is regarded as a cost for companies, not as an investment
- Training in regular working hours not usual for many companies
- In some regions it may be difficult to find qualified substitutes and /or find the sources to prepare and train unemployed
- Long-term unemployed need a longer period of pre-training and introduction to the companies before substituting
- Some companies do not want long term unemployed
- Part of the labor market authorities and administration finds jobrotation complicated and/or are not used to deal directly with companies
- The local employment services are not convinced of advantages of the scheme
- The employers unwilling to pay the wages to employees during training period

- The employees are afraid to enter into these schemes. They fear they will lose their job, if the substitute is better
- The training and/or educational institutions are not used to tailor made their training courses to company needs
- Trade unions may be sceptical, if no job is guaranteed for the substitute and/or if there is no written guarantee, that the employee can return to the same job
- Difficult to find the funding, and some fund, e.g. EU programmes, may narrow the flexibility of the program

3. Promote the legal framework for Jobrotation.

Far-reaching legal or collectively agreed regulations regarding further training for the employed and practice-oriented training for unemployed and for sections of the non-working population are a necessary precondition for a wider spread of job rotation.

4. Incentives for the substitutes.

Incentives for the substitution persons should be clearly positive and through an adequate reimbursement for substitution work, a sufficient increase in comparison to unemployment benefits needs to be assured.

5. Fairly distribution of Jobrotation costs.

Costs incurred through job rotation projects should be 'fairly' distributed through a suitable co-funding structure in order to keep the so-called 'deadweight' effects as low as possible.

6. Incentives for employees

Incentives for employees to undergo further training must be guaranteed through the existence of appropriate regulations and leave of absence for the purpose of improving one's skills must be flanked by secure dismissal protection legislation.

7. Corresponding regional policies.

Functional regional policy networks are necessary in order to implement the projects on the interface between labor market policy and structural policy.

8. The strength of further training funds based on collective agreements.

Job rotation could gain a new impetus through the wider spread of further training funds based on collective agreements including elements of job rotation and complemented through additional funding by labor market policy or tax reductions to participating firms. Under such a framework job rotation could make a stronger contribution to the reduction of unemployment by at the same time reaching higher productivity.

1.5. RECOMMENDATIONS: HOW TO ORGANIZE AND IMPLEMENT JOBROTATION.

On a practical level EU-Jobrotation, international association, described after 7 years intensive piloting of Jobrotation the following 9 steps (“9 recommendations of Jobrotation”, all quotes below taken from there):

The importance of clear objectives.

When a company decides to initiate a jobrotation scheme, it should have clear objectives concerning what kind of development to be improved in the company. Jobrotation is not an objective in itself, but rather a mean to business and competence development.

“The clear overall objectives of the company may relate to changes in, for instance, organizing the work, or with the introduction of new technology both of which will change the profile of the workforce. In order to meet such changes, jobrotation can be used as a tool or an instrument. The clear overall objectives are stressed here, because jobrotation often affects the company as well as its partners. Jobrotation – in particular the training and education of the workers leads to changes – for instance relating to work-functions of the workers and the functions of the foremen and middle-management of the company. These changes should be made explicit to the company”.

A jobrotation project may be initiated in order to motivate the workforce for further training and education. This would typically take the form of smaller programs. Then it is important to follow up on such

programs, to inform about the development and to motivate the workers further. Programs or courses that are not integrated with the overall objectives should not stand alone. This could create frustration and make workers reluctant to further jobrotation schemes. The level of information within the company in general and during a jobrotation scheme in particular should also be taken into consideration as well as the social responsibility of the company in relation to unemployment should be considered.

“The jobrotation scheme in itself does not create jobs for the unemployed substitutes, and the unemployment might just as well be seen as an advantage as it might be seen as a problem. Whatever the values are, they should be made explicit to all involved partners.

The person formulating the objectives should be familiar with team building and vision-making. Formulating the objectives could for instance take place in a join seminar between management and shop-stewards. Experience shows that you will reach better and more clear results, if you spend time on teambuilding within the group of decision makers.”

In general jobrotation schemes should be initiated, when the company knows what it wants and why it wants it. In best case, the objectives of the project are based not only on actual demands, but also on future demands, competences, and profiles of the workforce.

1. Training and education objectives

The analysis and description of training and competence objectives of the company should be the starting point. To secure implementation, it is in most cases a good idea, if the company makes a budget and identify the methods to be used. For the sustainability of the project, it is important to involve workers and workers representatives actively in the process and/or include or establish a training committee in the company – depending upon the size of the company.

The formulation of training and education objectives must clarify:

- The budget – i.e. how much can be expected from public funding, social agreements etc., and the contribution from the company itself. It must also be clarified who is responsible for working out the detailed budget proposal – for instance a program manager from a local training organization.
- What kind of methods to use in analyzing training need and objectives within the company. In many countries a range of analytical tools already exist of these purposes.
- The required level of technical, general, and personal competences of workforce. Many companies highlight competences such as flexibility, efficiency and quality.

Once again, it is important that development of the training and education objectives involves agreement between workers representatives (shop stewards) and management.

2. Motivation of the workforce before establishing the jobrotation

“Not all companies and not all workers are familiar with further education and training, and it is not uncommon to find at least part of the workforce somewhat reluctant towards jobrotation schemes. A success full strategy on jobrotation must include answers to questions, such as: “I do not need any training” and “I do already my work very well”, as well as dealing with the barriers coming from lack of information on what is actually going to happen in the jobrotation scheme”.

A high level of information is extremely important to initiate a successful jobrotation scheme in the company. All the key players have to be well informed about decisions taken in the project. Information can be written, and should also include minutes from the relevant meetings. A running dialogue and discussion is also necessary to secure the workers influence and motivation concerning the form and the content of the training, the new role of the substitutes, the wage-conditions, and the job-security of the workers. “It is very important to be aware of reluctant attitudes towards jobrotation schemes. One of the ways to overcome this and at the same time to motivate workers is to secure a high level of information and dialogue. Make clear to the involved workers that they can rely on that first of all they get their job back and secondly that the substitutes will have the same working and wage conditions as they do”. All together it is a very good investment

to discuss and decide upon a information strategy from the beginning of the project. This could include all kind of activities, including newsletters, hot line, staff & status meetings, case writing (look below in chapter 2 about JobrotationEService) and other means adapted to the local situation.

3. Methods for analyzing overall company training-needs

In order to plan a more specific a jobrotation project, the training needs of the company have to be analyzed. The questions are simple:

1. What is the actual profile of the workforce?
2. What is the desired profiled if the workforce?
3. What are the training needs of the workforce?"

The answers may be more complicated to answer. Experiences of companies, especially SMEs exhausted by heavy analyzes, lead to the following recommendation: “..the analysis should not overshadow the activities. It is important for companies trying jobrotation schemes for the first time to make a pilot project from which the company can learn and gain experience”

Another point is a recommendation to use existing tools for analyzing the needs, if these have already been out success full in the company or at local or regional level. A typical example, how it works could be:

“The **actual profile** can be subdivided into

Functions: Ex: electrician

Task: Ex: repair electrical contacts

Associated skills: Ex: In depth understanding of the functions, skills to explain it

Collection of data can take place through interviews (development-discussions, workers-discussion) and questionnaires, and systematic registration of background: School, courses, etc. “

When it comes to the **future competence profiles** of the company, it deals with the necessary competences of the workforce in a short, a medium, and a long term.

“Collection of data can take place through questionnaires and interviews. Sometimes the individual worker will shed important light on his/her future profile and thereby foresee needs not highlighted by analysis from outsiders.

The training need of the workforce may be reached in different ways. Learning is not necessarily the same as training and education in traditional class rooms. The analysis carried out in the company may also reflect specific needs of (for instance) workers with reading/spelling problems.” To secure motivation and relevance, planning the specific courses for the employee(s) should be in a dialogue with the participant him or herself. The company may in many

cases be open for a combination of vocational, company specific and core skills. Also the final training program could integrate elements of learning-on-the-job followed by a mentor.

5. Establishing the local network

To carry out a jobrotation scheme implies cooperation between a number of organizations and institutions – company (management and workers representative), the trade union, business support organizations, labor market authorities and training and educational institutions. “In most places the network already exists. However, it is most important for a success full jobrotation scheme that all these organizations define their work in relation to this specific project – and not only from the more general point of view of their own organization – in other words that they cooperate within the framework of this specific project. Experience shows that successfull jobrotation schemes put high demands on the cooperation between the different partners – company (management and shop stewards), the trade union, labor market authorities and trading and education institutions.”

This cooperation can be established in a reference group, a steering committee or even a consortium, if the jobrotation project is huge or a part of a large number of projects. As mentioned earlier (examples from practice), jobrotation in a specific economical sector (sectoral jobrotation) with participation of a large number of companies, calls for a more strong coordinating body.

6. Recruitment of substitutes

One of the core activities in Jobrotation, is the recruitment of substitutes. Unemployed are invited, selected and systematically prepared to substitute for employed workers while these follow further education and training.

“... the function of the unemployed substitutes is crucial in the jobrotation schemes and thereby the recruitment of substitutes is important to the success of the jobrotation schemes.....

No matter where the recruitment takes place, for instance through the local or regional job center, it is essential that the recruitment is carried out in cooperation with the management of the company and the training institution. It is important to be very explicit and clear about what is expected from unemployed substitutes and what the objectives of the jobrotation scheme in the company are. If the company cannot guarantee the substitutes a job after the jobrotation scheme is over, this must be made clear.”

Time planning has to be very careful. The period of substitution has to match the training of the workers. Experience shows that – for different reasons – some substitutes drop out. More persons that actually needed should therefore be recruited. If 8 unemployed are needed, at least 10 unemployed should be recruited.

The necessary preparation of the substitutes includes training, jobpractice and mentoring, if needed. The specific preparation program

depends on the company's job-profile, the qualification of the unemployed and the support offered, for example mentor schemes.

“Labor market authorities may be concerned that the training and education is too narrowly related to only one kind of job and maybe only within just one company. To broaden the training and education so that it also relates to other jobs and other companies as well may therefore be necessary. “ So there is a balance. If the company does not guarantee a job after substituting, it should secure, that the unemployed has better chances to get another job. “Experiences show that training and education for the unemployed should relate to personal and general as well as technical competences. Being unemployed often implies loss of self confidence – this must be build up before actually substituting in the company.

A combination of education and training that relate to these different competences should therefore be adopted. This may involve external training institutions, but also mentors should be active in the training and education of the substitutes. An interchange between classroom based and workplace based learning has shown good results. It is important that the length of the training and education enables the unemployed to become familiar with the technical as well as “cultural” aspects of working in the company.”

7. Overall plan of action – and dates

“The overall plan of action sets out the dates and sequence of the many elements in the jobrotation scheme. It is of major importance that the action plan gives room for minor changes: If the recruitment of the unemployed is delayed, this must not destroy the activities that follow. The decision on the overall plan of action must respect the planning-horizon of the company, which can be different from the ones of the training-institutions. The involved institutions must be flexible in relation to the company. It is the responsibility of the programme manager to fit the different planning-horizons of the involved partners”.

The plan of action should on one hand be broadly decided accepted: By the training committee or another joint body in the company – and by external cooperation partners (steering committee of local network including all relevant partners). On the other hand it should be flexible enough to survive upcoming problems. Of course it is even better, if problems can be foreseen and taken care of in time. “It is important that all agreements reached are actually written down and potential disagreements and misunderstandings are solved in the process of planning – so that they do not turn up when the scheme is actually running.”

The overall plan of action should, according to the recommendations, also deal with the following actions:

- “Training of trainers”. It is important that the involved trainers and teachers are familiar with the company and workplace in question.
- Function of the mentors. The mentors integrate workers as well as the unemployed into job functions and company culture.

“Mentors should have relevant job related experience and skills, well developed interpersonal skills, an ability to relate well with learners (empathy), an open mind, a flexible attitude, and recognition of their own need for support and finally time and willingness to develop working relationships with learners”. To support mentors scheme, it is important to offer mentor training courses in or outside the company. The course should increase technical as well as pedagogical and personal competences of the mentors.

8. The training and education

The core elements of jobrotation are the upskilling and competence development of the employees, but also training of the substitutes and the mentors should be considered important. Training and education in the jobrotation scheme should be carefully planned in the project calendar:

- Unemployed people
- Workers
- Mentors

To secure quality of the training offered, it is highly recommend to have a close cooperation with different providers of training and education.

“On the level of the day-to-day training and education, the different parts of the training and education should relate to the experience of the workplace. Examples and studies in the training may be taken from the workplace rather than being abstract. This requires very close cooperation between the involved teachers, tutors, mentors etc. and the functions and role of the program manager in relation to the planning of this is crucial.” The training and education of employees, substitutes and mentors should include an ongoing evaluation, which may lead to adjustment in the program. This can be regarded as a burden in terms of time and resources, but may end up a really good investment regarding satisfied employees and relevant training and further education.

9. Implementation of jobrotation results.

After the jobrotation scheme has finished, reports and evaluations must be worked out for public authorities (depending on the funding). But in question here is also the implementation of the education and training.

“.....implementation in this context refers to the transfer of knowledge from the training and education to the working life of the company. In other words: What takes place after the jobrotation scheme”

The training and further education has ended, and it is important to implement the results. How are the new competences of the workers brought into the daily work of the company and how is the training and education implemented? For this reason, the overall objectives of the

company, highlighted in the first commendation of this paper, is so important. "Continuing the process can take place in a number of different ways, all of which are important. By putting the training and education of the agenda of the company, you automatically raise the question of implementation of the training results. By using new measures (new training etc.), you also contribute to the implementation of the training results"

Some of the processes mentioned to increase benefits of the training are:

- a. Awareness activities in the company. Give room, space and tools to use the new knowledge in the company.
- b. The good circle of constant learning and implementing. The training plan has hopefully already dealt with the relation between learning and how to use it at work place level. As this is reflected into the training sessions, and the process of implementation of new knowledge on work place level is repeated, the good circle is established and the company gradually gets the potential of turning into a learning organization where continuing education and training is the normal situation.
- c. The role of middle management and foremen: "The implementation of the training and education of the workers depends also on the middle management and the foreman in the company. Middle management and foremen should also develop their management functions and set-up strategies for using the new competences of the

workers. Special training programs for middle management and foremen might be an integrated strategy for implementation of the result of the jobrotation scheme”.

d. The unemployed substitutes: In most jobrotation schemes there is no job-guarantee for the unemployed. A general figure, however, is that between 60 and 85 % of the unemployed substitutes get a job within one month after ending of the jobrotation scheme. Many substitutes stays in the company, where they will be regarded very valuable already trained and experienced, as well as a part of the internal network and culture of the company. In this sense, the company implement new work force with out further costs for training and integrating.

e. However the situation of the remaining 15 to 40 % of the unemployed should also be considered as a common responsibility for the company and the steering committee of the local jobrotation network. What could be done is to cooperate with agencies for temporary workers, who could be interested to hire experienced substitutes. In a larger scale a sectoral or local labor pools could be established, inviting other companies to identify their current staff need.

CHAPTER 2. JOBROTATION-E-SERVICE AS A TOOL TO IMPROVE DEVELOPMENT, PILOTING AND PROMOTION OF JOBROTATION SCHEMES.

2.1. JOBROTATION E SERVICE

JobrotationEService is a quite unique tool, developed to integrate the many different processes of Jobrotation, e.g. companies and employees looking for adequate CVT (continuing vocational training) offers and unemployed looking for job opportunities.

JobrotationEService is very well described elsewhere ([link](#)). What is important here is how this service potentially contributes to traditional Jobrotation schemes. To go into this analyze, we need a certain systematic procedure. We choose to follow a step-by-step guide, called "the 10 phases of Jobrotation", developed by EU-jobrotation International Association (I.A.) and published in 2001. For every phase we consider, how JobrotationEService could work together with the intention of develop, promote and ensure the quality of local or sectoral Jobrotation schemes. Finally we try to conclude and give some recommendations for the future work.

1. Company and partner contact.

In the core of any Jobrotation project is to identify and invite companies, who have a need to up skill their staff, and who understands and are motivated to use the Jobrotation concept. It is fair to say, that most companies, especially SME´s, don´t give priority to go

into very complicated schemes which is not directly linked to business and market development. Jobrotation, building upon the idea to facilitate competence development, may for many SME look as a quite sophisticated concept.

JobrotationEService may support Jobrotation development in more than one sense:

- companies, who uses the JobrotationEService platform, may be convinced by the overview and simplicity of the website, which offers both different further training possibilities and unemployed as substitutes.
- for most companies, a local contact person or organization will then be needed to make clear, how jobrotation could be organized. This is the first step to be part of a local Jobrotation network.
- To release the potential in this process, a good cooperation with and between local and regional business service organizations is essential. Companies have many offers, so bringing jobrotation and Eservice on the Agenda needs support from partners who understand and are close to local companies. These partners would be authorized and promote JobrotationEService via their own service and would secure an attractive linked up marketplace on their own websites. For a more general impact, JobrotationEService would be

embedded into social websites as facebook, twitter, linked-in a.s.o. This would also contribute to an interactive story of a modern and dynamic tool (Jobrotation) for competence development, and to make more transparent the win-win-win thinking of this tool.

2. Local network and clear objectives.

The process of identifying a number of motivated local partners (companies, social partners, business service, educations institutions and local authorities) will finally lead into the elaboration of a local network and the decision to set up a Jobrotation project. The first step would be a selection of a project manager to lead the following process. Experiences show, that the work of defining, financing, time manage and execute the process of a jobrotation scheme is quite vulnerable, and has to be taken care of quite carefully. On of the reason for this is the double process of securing the internal quality versus open up the project to alternatives and supplementary participants. On the one hand, it is important to secure the quality of the project in term of elaboration of clear objectives, involvement of company management and shop stewards, formal agreements between project partners and the transformation of the work group into a steering committee of the project. On the other hand, the situation of the involved companies and the market is very dynamic and shifting. Thus the motivation of the companies may be short termed, and the project dangered, if companies end up to leave the project.

For this reason a continuously promotion and flow of motivated companies interested in jobrotation would be a safe guard for going on. This indicates that JobrotationEService could play a role of an ongoing promotion of existing activities and network. To full fill this role, there has to be an agreement and cooperation between local jobrotation networks and JobrotationEService about an open-door policy, so that activities going on, will be highlighted and used to invite more companies (and other cooperation partners) into cooperation.

3. Financial model, budget and applications.

The same double process will could lead to similar considerations, when it comes to setting up the financial scheme of one or more Jobrotation projects. Since sources of finance to projects like this are very different in different European States and regions it is not possible to be too specific on this point.

On the one hand, generally spoken, there is a need to be very clear with participating partners, when it comes to the financial flow in the jobrotation projects. Further to this the fund and sponsoring administration very often require a very strict project time- and activity plan. On the other hand, as already demonstrated before, there is a need to secure a an open and dynamic agenda, e.g. allowing new companies and partners to join the jobrotation activities. This would put a pressure, both on the flexibility of the project administration and on the ability to welcome and integrate new partners in the project.

Nevertheless an open agenda, would in perspective lead to a more attractive environment for companies, especially if it means that projects have a high degree of flexibility, reflecting the conditions of most companies with shifting market positions. In this sense, it may even be easier to agree upon a certain level of own (company) financing of the schemes, thus bettering the budget and project applications.

4. Information and motivation.

One of the core lessons of Jobrotation, is that a very high level of information is needed, when the project is running. One of the reasons for this is the high number of partners involved and also the high risk at stake: The employee leaving company for vocational training worries about what happens meanwhile at the company, the trade union wants to secure salaries and work conditions of both employees and substitutes, the company nervous about the timing and daily work organization a.s.o. This is a golden opportunity for JobrotationEService to make transparent the process and results of running projects. This will increase motivation not only of existing, but also of future partners joining jobrotation activities. Of course it will not cover the need for specific and detailed information within the individual project, but it will certainly make contribute to the understanding of what is going on in jobrotation projects. When it comes to companies in the agricultural sector, the information strategies may be even more important, since

agricultural companies according to EU findings are less connected to mainstream business service structures than other economical sectors.

5. Analysis and identification of training needs.

JobrotationEService invites companies to identify and register their need in terms of Professional Competence Development (PCD) and Continuing Vocation Training (CVT). The idea is to match existing offers in this field by national or local training institutions. Instead of leading to registration of employees for certain courses, this may in be cases lead to a dialogue between the companies and the local Jobrotation network. The reason for this is, that in many cases it is not possible for employees to take part in already existing courses. There is a mismatch of timing, of content, of price or of geographical accessibility.

The local networking, including training institutions, would support the flexibilisation of the training offered, so that it is tailor made to the needs of the local companies. This is particular important, when substitutes are will go into the companies for a period. This underlines the importance of a close cooperation between the local jobrotation network and the JobrotationEService. The local network may also initiate a more specific analyze of the future needs of qualifications and competences, thus changing the focus of needed job profiles from today till tomorrow. This may, once again, also attract companies, which consider to go into new market areas. When they understand, that they not only will have the opportunity to up skill the existing labor force, but also train and integrate future employees, namely the

substitutes, they may see good business opportunities in the whole scheme.

6. Recruitment of substitutes.

JobrotationEService has a great potential to support recruitment of motivated substitutes, if the platform at the same time get recognized as an efficient way to achieve labor market access as unemployed. The service has to be well known and easy to use. It is special consideration, if and how JobrotationEService can be connected to already existing labor market databases offered by the local labor market authorizations and/or the social partners.

Seen from the side of the unemployed, such database, where ever accessible, would need to be supported by quick and professional feedback. This includes information about, which jobrotation schemes is running or planning, but it also means solid information about under which conditions the unemployed will be allowed (or qualified) to participate. Or next best, where such information is available.

If this conditions are present, the JobrotationEService offers or support a strong opportunity for access or returning to labor market. Once again it demonstrates the potential of JobrotationEService being in close cooperation with local jobrotation network, including all relevant partners.

7. Running the Scheme & trouble shooting.

For the same reasons as earlier mentioned, there is a high and on going need for trouble shooting in Jobrotation. If a substitute drop out of work or if an employee drop out of education, it causes immediately a crisis in the project. It is fair to say, that the unique concept of the jobrotation, which integrates both employees and substitutes in a mutual depending a time narrow process also lead to a certain vulnerability of the scheme.

JobrotationEService does not facilitate any process of trouble shooting for the individual projects. It will content a FAQ function, and it may be considered to develop a local hotline in cooperation with local jobrotation network. Also it will be considered to offer "Jobrotation Project Manager Courses" via JobrotationEservice. Courses will give key persons in the local and regional network an opportunity the methodology and know how of European jobrotation. The best way to solve problems is to foresee and prepare for them, as mentioned several times.

8 – 10. Implementation of results - Evaluation and Mainstreaming.

JobrotationEService offer a special opportunity in terms of continuing the process, since companies, employees and unemployed, who already used the service, and/or have been through a jobrotation scheme, have the experience to be more goal-directed in a second use of the platform. This means for example, that the screening of possibilities

(e.g. selection of training providers) will be based upon former experience and more qualified. This kind of individual implementation is valuable, but what when it comes to common organized implementation and dissemination activities?

The strategy of elaboration of a strong cooperation between JobrotationEService and local jobrotation networks will finally increase the introduction of a new mindset, when it comes to implement and disseminate results of Jobrotation. The traditional way to evaluate Jobrotation is to make an evaluation report, based on quantitative and qualitative findings of the experienced schemes. The findings of this report will be presented at a seminar or a conference, and its best case a popular and easy reading edition will be elaborated to secure a wider dissemination.

Never the less it is often seen, that (massive) reports will not be read by cooperation partners, especially from companies and social partners. JobrotationEService may be the platform to lead an on-going and interactive evaluation process of the project results. This can be organized in many ways, most important is that the companies and social partners also in the process of contribution and reporting their assessment and experiences of the project.

This leads to the recommendation, that evaluation and dissemination, as organized in cooperation between local jobrotation network and JobrotationEService should be an on-going and interactive process instead of or supplementary to the production of a large evaluation report.

2.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The benefits of Jobrotation EService are, as argued in this chapter, strong and logical in deep cooperation with one or more local or regional jobrotation networks. This is also to say, that the benefits of a JobrotationEService as a web stand-alone tool, is much more difficult to value, if not backed up and used and promoted by relevant jobrotation partners. For this reason the following recommendations are based upon the existence of a strategy (and an alliance) winding JobrotationEService and local and regional Jobrotation Network(s) together.

a. JobrotationEService uses the cooperation with labor market authorities and social partners to secure, that the web platform has widespread and easy access from partners. This is also important, when it comes to recruitment of substitutes. Also elaboration of groups and adverts in the social medias will increase the dynamic and understanding of the web based service.

b. JobrotationEService would support the promotion of Jobrotation by a continuing updating of local and regional jobrotation projects. This transparency would increase motivation for new companies and more social partners to take part in jobrotation.

c. JobrotationEService would support the strategy that Jobrotation is very beneficial for companies, and certain own financing from the

companies is necessary. This improves the budget of jobrotation, but it also increases opportunities for public funding (based on co-financing).

d. For companies in the Agricultural Sector, a segmented information strategy is needed. This will be different from region to region, but a field strategy (finding companies by visiting them) should be combined with elaboration of web-cases on the platform of Jobrotation EServices.

e. JobrotationEService is already able to match company needs in term of continuing vocational training (cvt) with specific courses offered by training and educational institutions. This could be increased, so that companies are invited to describe more general their needs of (tailor made) competence development.

f. Substitutes and companies reflecting upon the service of JobrotationEService should have a professional and quick feed-back.

g. JobrotationEService could choose to organize Jobrotation Project Managing courses, as a combination of face-to-face and web based lessons.

h. Supplementary to traditional evaluation reports, JobrotationEService, together with local partners, could initiate an on-going evaluation process with the purpose of rapid and efficient implementation of results and new methods.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY OF TRAINING NEEDS IDENTIFICATION & JOB ROTATION SCHEMES DEVELOPMENT

An important element regarding the implementation of the job rotation schemes is that the training that employees & unemployed will attend should be based on the specific needs and particularities of the companies participating. More specifically, the training process and content should be closely related with the organisational model, strategy, goals and special characteristics and needs of the companies. The training should support and contribute in the implementation of the strategy and the objectives of the company, through the provision of the appropriate knowledge and skills to the workforce. A methodology was developed in the framework of the **Agrotate Project** that can be applied for both companies and unemployed participating in job rotation that includes the following main axes:

3.1. TRAINING NEEDS IDENTIFICATION

One important element is the identification of the training goals which will correspond to the needs of enterprises. This identification is based on a needs identification model aiming to trace the needs and goals of the company and develop tailored training courses for employees / unemployed to address these needs. The identification model includes the following core stages:

I. Analysis of the strategic direction and objectives of the company

Within this frame the goals of the company are examined, based on which the training needs of the unemployed and employees are set. The strategy and the objectives of the company should be taken into account in order to ensure that the training of the company's employees is linked with the overall strategic direction of the company. The company objectives are associated with the training needs of the employees of the company who will participate in the job rotation training process, attending a training which provides the required for the company objectives knowledge and skills (eg the employees of a company aiming to expand in new markets should be trained in marketing and international trade techniques). Furthermore, the goals of the company indicate the potential training curriculum that an unemployed should attend in order to both replace the employee and attain knowledge which will correspond to the company objectives (eg an unemployed replacing an employee in the accounting department of a company which aims to expand in new markets should be trained in accounting principles and international accounting standards, accounting procedures for international trade etc).

Example of application in an agricultural company

We will use as an example an agricultural company which cultivates process and trades grapes. The application of this analysis stage will record and describe the basic strategic objectives which the company aims to achieve in the future, along with the effects that these objectives are anticipated to have on the company's human resources. In the specific agricultural company of the example, the strategic objectives and specific targets of the company are presented at Table 1. Furthermore, the effects of each objective on the overall company operation and specific departments are analyzed in terms of human resources and presented at Table 2.

Table 1. Strategic objectives of the company

Objective	Specific Targets
Increase of sales of products (eg grapes)	<p>Within the next 2 years the company aims to achieve an increase of its sales, consisting in :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase 10% in total sales of grapes Increase 15% in sales of grapes at region X Increase 5% in total sales of grapes of a specific
Enhancement of products' quality	<p>Within the next 2 years the company aims to advance the quality of its products, consisting in :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of a quality assurance system and department within the company Implementation of HACCP in the packaging and storage of grapes Grading of grapes as EXTRA quality
Organic cultivation of a new product	<p>Within the next 2 years the company aims to initiate the organic cultivation of cherries, which includes :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soil preparation techniques – implementation of crop rotations Acquisition of appropriate tools and raw materials Development of a cultivation plan Development of links with distribution and marketing channels
Export of products to another country	<p>Within the next 2 years the company aims to start exporting its products in another country, which includes :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of new market and consumers' profile Development of distribution channels and marketing channels / techniques

Table 2. Objectives and effects on company's operation

	Increase of sales of products	Enhancement of products' quality	Organic cultivation of a new product	Export of products to another country
Overall company operation	The objective of sales increase means that the company will have to enhance its focus on effective marketing and sales techniques, the effectiveness of distribution mechanisms, and the human resources associated with sales operations.	For the enhancement of product's quality the company should develop a concrete long term strategy and quality plan, be aware of the developments, regulations and trends in fruits and agricultural products quality standards.	The cultivation of a new crop affects the overall company's operation as the new product should be integrated in all departments' operation and the human resources be familiar with the techniques, requirements and particularities of the overall production	The objective of exporting a product creates new requirements from the human resources. Thus the company should focus on operation, distribution, marketing of the product in the new market.

<p>Company operations/ departments</p>	<p>The sales / marketing department is the department mainly affected from the specific objective. The company should focus on the training of the employees of the sales department.</p>	<p>The marketing department can support the objective, by promoting the quality of products as a competitive advantage. The employees in the sales department should be familiar with the quality components and characteristics of products and be able to support sales promotion</p>	<p>The sales department will be affected as the introduction of a new product will result to increase in sales operation, new sales & distribution channels, increase in customers. The employees in the sales department should be trained in the sales and distribution of the new product.</p>	<p>The sales department should be trained in the exporting regulations, legal framework and particularities of trade in the specific country.</p>
<p>Production</p>	<p>The increase in sales means that an increase in production should also be achieved. The production department should enhance productivity</p>	<p>The production process should be adapted in the quality requirements and systems that the company aims to develop.</p>	<p>The new product will require new machinery, new production techniques and procedures.</p>	<p>The export of the product will require adaptation of the production process to the requirements of the new market.</p>

II. Environmental Scan

Environmental information is often closely linked to the strategic direction and goals of a company. A range of external issues (social, technological, economic) can have a significant impact on a company's existing or/and future operation. The purpose of environment analysis is to identify all information, trends, assumptions and conditions that affect the organisation's operation and activities. Within this frame the sector of the company, main characteristics, prospects and current developments as well as competition are examined. These facts are also connected with the training needs as they reveal the weaknesses, strengths and needs of the companies and the consequent knowledge and skills requirements for the viability and development of the company.

Example of application in an agricultural company

The environmental scan will identify the main factors affecting human resources and give the opportunity to the company to respond and address the changes and trends foreseen. In the specific agricultural company of the example, the trends and environmental factors affecting the company are presented at Table 3. Furthermore, the effects of each factor on the overall company operation and specific departments are analyzed in terms of human resources and presented at Table 4.

Table 3. Environmental factors

Factor	Description
Economic	The product's demand levels are expected to decrease due to the economic crisis
Legislation	<p>The New CAP regulations affect the company's operation and the funding support of the products will be eliminated</p> <p>New regulations are coming into effect by the government</p>

Table 4. Environmental factors and effects on company's operation

Factor	Economic	Legislation
Overall company operation	<p>The economic factors and especially the decrease of demand and general economic crisis will affect the company's operation, as the sales will not be favoured and the products of the company along with the costs of production should be reoriented in order for the company to avoid big losses.</p>	<p>The company should adapt its operation overall operation to the new regulations which affect all production processes.</p>

Company operations/departments	<p>As the demand and consumption of the products is expected to decrease, the marketing operations should enhance the promotion of the products through alternative techniques, approach other potential consumers' groups, adopt new approaches.</p>	<p>The marketing department should focus on the promotion of products and increase of sales in order for the company to compensate for the losses from the decrease in state funding.</p>
Sales / Marketing	<p>As the costs of the production are high, and the sales/revenues are expected to decrease the company should focus on more effective production process, decrease of production costs, better logistic systems and productivity.</p>	<p>The production process should be overall reviewed and adapted to new legislations.</p>
Production		

III. Identification of the needed competencies at organizational level.

This factor is also associated with the training needs of the employees of the company in order to be able to correspond to the company operations and objectives and also with the training needs of unemployed to be placed in a specific organisational department. Within this frame, the company develops a profile of the skills and competencies that the human resources should possess in order to respond to the environmental trends and support the company to implement its strategy and objectives.

Example of application in an agricultural company

In the specific agricultural company of the example, skills and competencies required at organizational and departmental level are presented at Table 5.

Table 5. Required competencies at organizational level

Environmental factor	Economic	Legislation
Objective	Skills and competencies required from human resources	
<u>General skills</u>	To overall respond to the challenges and trends the human resources of the company should possess general knowledge on the agriculture sector, the European regulations affecting its products and the general market, the new production and processing techniques of grapes, the trends in standardization and quality of fruits and agricultural products.	
<u>Skills for the achievement of objectives</u> ▪ Sales increase	The human resources should attain specialized knowledge and skills in sales and marketing operations, focusing on marketing regarding the specific product (grapes), targeting of specialized consumer groups, exploitation of IT technologies an de-commerce, etc. Also, knowledge should be attained in cost reduction and production efficiency techniques.	
▪ Enhancement of quality	The human resources should specialize and be able to design and implement a quality management system within the company, perform products quality controls, follow a product standardization procedure etc. Furthermore, specialized knowledge should be acquired on the Eu and national regulations regarding products (fruits) quality requirements.	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cultivation of new product 	<p>The human resources should specialize in the overall production of the new product, attain specialized knowledge and skills on organic farming.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Etc 	<p>.....</p>

IV. Determination of needed skills for the workforce

Within this frame, the specialized skills required from human resources are determined in job position level, in order for the company to achieve its goals and respond to environmental challenges and opportunities. Thus, the company develops a profile of the desired workforce and its competencies, which will further determine the content of the training that employees should attend.

Example of application in an agricultural company

In the specific agricultural company of the example, skills and competencies required at indicative job positions are presented at Table 6.

Table 6. Skills required (level 1: low-5: high)

Job position	Production skills				Marketing skills			Quality			Packaging			General skills & knowledge			
	Cultivation techniques	Certification of organic	Organic farming of	Use of pesticides and fertilizers	Sales and exports	Marketing techniques – ep commerce	Distribution channels	HACCP system	Total quality management	Quality controls	Packaging materials	Packaging and standardization of grapes – cherries	Packaging and labeling	EU regulations on grapes	National support and funding on fruits production	Integrated management of agricultural production	Production cost – economics of production
Field worker	5	3	5	5	-	-	1	3	2	3	2	1	1	1	1	2	-
Packaging – storage worker	2	5	3	3	-	-	2	2	1	2	5	5	5	2	2	2	-
Production manager	5	5	5	5	3	3	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Marketing manager	2	5	2	-	5	5	5	3	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	3	3

V. Determination of existing skills that the workforce possess

Within this frame, the existing skills of the company's employees are recorded and evaluated in order for the company to trace the weaknesses and needs of the workforce and determine the needed skills and knowledge. The identified existing skills are compared with the needed skills identified during previous stage in order to trace gaps and actual skills needs.

Example of application in an agricultural company

In the specific agricultural company of the example, existing skills and competencies at indicative job positions are presented at Table 7.

Table 7. Existing skills (level 1: low-5: high)

Job position	Production skills				Marketing skills			Quality		Packaging			General knowledge & skills				
	Cultivation techniques	Certification of organic cherries	Organic farming of cherries	Use of pesticides and fertilizers	Sales and exports	Marketing techniques – ep commerce	Distribution channels	HACCP system	Total quality management	Quality controls	Packaging materials	Packaging and standardization of grapes – cherries	Packaging and labeling	EU regulations on grapes	National support and funding on fruits production	Integrated management of agricultural production	Production cost – economics of production
Field worker	4	0	0	4	-	-	1	0	0	2	1	1	1	0	0	1	-
Packaging – storage worker	1	0	0	1	-	-	1	0	1	1	4	3	3	0	1	1	-
Production manager	5	3	2	4	2	2	4	3	2	4	5	4	4	3	4	2	3
Marketing manager	2	4	0	-	4	4	3	2	3	2	2	3	2	4	4	3	3

VI. Gap analysis

In the next stage the existing skills of the workforce are compared with the needed skills identified and the gap and actual skills needs are traced, which will determine the training that the employees of the company should attend within the job rotation process and also core knowledge that the unemployed should attain within the same process.

Example of application in an agricultural company

In the specific agricultural company of the example, the skills and competencies in which a gap exists and in which employees should be trained are presented at Table 8. A further analysis can be made regarding the levels of skills that employees should possess through comparing the level of existing skill and the level of required skill, prioritizing this way the skills and consequent training needs (*eg for a field worker skill in organic farming are required at level 5 and the existing skills of the worker in the specific topic are at level 1. This means that the gap is 4 levels and that specialized and intensive training is required. For the same worker the skills required in pesticides use are at level 5 and the existing skills are at level 4. This means that the gap is 1 level and that a short training is required for the enhancement of worker's knowledge in specific topics. It is obvious that training in organic farming is more important for the implementation of company's objectives and the worker than training in use of pesticides.*)

Table 8. Gap analysis - skills required (level 1: low-5: high)

Job position	Production skills				Marketing skills			Quality			Packaging			General skills & knowledge			
	Cultivation techniques	Certification of organic cherries	Organic farming of cherries	Use of pesticides and fertilizers	Sales and exports	Marketing techniques – e-commerce	Distribution channels	HACCP system	Total quality management	Quality controls	Packaging materials	Packaging and standardization of grapes – cherries	Packaging and labeling	EU regulations on grapes	National support and funding on fruits production	Integrated management of agricultural production	Production cost – economics of production
Field worker	1	3	5	1	-	-	0	3	2	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	-
Packaging storage worker	1	5	3	2	-	-	1	2	0	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	-
Production manager	0	2	3	1	1	1	0	2	3	1	0	1	1	2	1	3	2
Marketing manager	0	1	2	-	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	0	0

VII. Development of the appropriate training for the employees

Based on the gap analysis and the needs identified for the implementation of the company objectives, the training that the employees will attend is determined. Within this frame, the training required for the unemployed is also identified, which will provide to the unemployed the knowledge and skills to both substitute the employees trained and correspond to the needs and goals of the company regarding the specific position they are placed.

Example of application in an agricultural company

In the specific agricultural company of the example, occurs that each job position has certain skills needs in different levels. The training proposed for the job position of the field worker based on the analysis is presented below:

Job Rotation Handbook

	Cultivation techniques	Certification of organic cherries	Organic farming of cherries	Use of pesticides	HACCP	TQM	Quality control	Packaging materials	EU regulations	Integrated management
Gap	1	3	5	1	3	2	1	1	1	1

The gap analysis results depict that the field worker should be trained in the following topics (in prioritized order)

- 1. Organic farming of cherries**
- 2. Certification process of organic cherries**
3. HACCP system
4. Quality management topics
5. Cultivation techniques, use of pesticides, packaging materials etc.

VIII. Determination of the appropriate training for substitutes (unemployed)

Following the identification of the training topics that an employee should attend, the training required for the unemployed is also identified, which will provide to the unemployed the knowledge and skills to both substitute the employee trained and correspond to the needs and goals of the company regarding the specific position he will be placed. In the example of the agricultural company, the unemployed that will substitute the employee within the job rotation frame should be trained in the specific activities that the employee undertook until that time (cultivation of grapes, harvesting etc) and also in additional topics that can assist the overall company operation (eg basic principles of organic farming, specialized topics on grapes and cherries cultivation etc).

3.2. MATCHING OF COMPANIES AND UNEMPLOYED TRAINING NEEDS AND DEVELOPMENT OF JOB ROTATION SCHEMES

After companies have identified the required knowledge and skills that their employees should possess in order to support the overall company goals and objectives, the job rotation system can provide to the company:

- appropriate training possibilities that can support employees in the attainment of the required knowledge and skills in order to correspond to their job position, develop their career path and

support the overall company objectives (eg an employee in the marketing department of a commercial company which has as main objective to create and exploit the e-commerce possibilities in order to respond to competition and increase its sales, through job rotation system will attend specialized e-commerce training).

- The selection of an appropriate unemployed who will substitute the employee of the company. The unemployed will be selected based on his profile, employment preferences and stated training needs, and through the job rotation will be trained in specialized marketing topics associated with the job position that he will undertake.

Regarding the specific project, the implementation of the job rotation scheme was also partly based in the methodology mentioned above. Although in the specific project the core training material has been already developed during a previous project, specific elements were examined in order to achieve an efficient identification of the training needs of agricultural companies and unemployed (and a consequent adaptation /selection of the training material) and an effective matching between them.

3.3. APPLICATION OF THE METHODOLOGY WITHIN THE JOB ROTATION E-PLATFORM

The above methodology applied, is being adapted in the electronic Job Rotation platform of the **Agrotate** and is used as a supporting tool. Although a detailed descriptive analysis as presented above cannot be implemented through the e-system as effectively as a company itself can implement it through the handbook guidelines, certain elements of the methodology can be parameterized within the e-system and support an automatic customization of the training process and selection of training topics for each company subscribing.

Thus, when a company subscribes to the system, identifies (states to the system) certain characteristics that affect and determine the training required for the specific company. More specifically:

- The company states the sector in which is active and the position that the employee to be trained holds
- the company states/selects its objectives, from a range of options which will be enriched throughout the system's application (eg increase of sales, cultivation of new product, expansion in new market etc)
- the company states/selects environmental factors that already affect or expects to affect its operation, from a range of options which will be enriched throughout system's application (eg

economic crisis, new legislation for agricultural products, EU regulation)

- the system identifies a range of required competencies that the company should possess for the achievement of objectives and adaptation to the environmental challenges, based on the information provided by the company. Furthermore, the system may determine the level/weight of importance for each competency.
- the company verifies the competencies and required levels and through a gap analysis (comparing the competence and weight suggested by the system and the existing ones in the company) confirms / adapts the competencies.
- the system links the final competencies identified with the required training topics / material that specific employees should attend to attain the required competencies
- the system links the competencies with the required training course / material that unemployed should attend to attain the required competencies related to both the job activities of the employee substituted and the activities and further objectives of the company.

The unemployed or employee when will be selected for job rotation from a company will be automatically subscribed to attend the related training course in the e-learning platform. The e-learning platform will

have knowledge of the company that the unemployed is trained for, and through the identified skills in need from this company, will be customized to serve more these goals during the training process. This is achieved from the platform through connection of system's tests with training goals. Each exercise of the platform is connected with a specific training goal, and when the user runs self tests in order to proceed to following chapters the systems builds these test focusing on the needed competences. This way, the system ensures that the trainees have acquired the required from the companies' skills. The connection of the training goals with the system's tests is undertaken by content authors and the trainees cannot understand the strategy behind the platform.

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