

## **Report of the First Regional HELP Meeting**

**18-21 June 2009 - Tessedik Samuel University Centre, Szarvas, Hungary**

This was the first meeting of all the HELP partners. Its purpose was to clarify the objectives, methodology and planned outcomes of the project and to coordinate and agree the way forward. On this basis, most of the sessions of the workshop were structured to provide information on the various activities of the project. All partners made presentations on their work to date and, despite the delays in starting the project the extent of the progress made was encouraging. All partnerships have established a HELP office and have held at least one local HELP meeting. During the workshop a significant proportion of the time was given to UK HELP which made presentations relating to their extensive experience in delivering demand-driven training to industry. The Serbian HELP introduced some of the common project work which they have begun (TNA and website) for the comments and suggestions of the group. All partners had begun to look ahead and plan for the stakeholder meetings scheduled to be held consecutively in the first week of September.

### **HELP Project Organisation and Common Activities**

At the workshop an overview of the whole project was provided to highlight the main activities. It was emphasised that although this is a common project the individual members of the regional HELP are free to prioritise and organise their activities according to the needs and interests in their local area. More importantly, in order to encourage diversity and creativity in approach local HELPs were free to determine which training would be developed and how this would be delivered. The common elements of the project that all regional HELPs will undertake are:

#### **1. Establishing the Local HELP Office and HELP Partnership**

All the members of the regional HELP had connected with their official Tempus partners to establish the core local HELP. The purpose of this partnership is to facilitate the planning of local HELP activities and to disseminate information.

##### **Tasks**

- ✓ grow the partnership and encourage broad representation for dialogue on the local skills agenda
- ✓ use meetings to inform the planning of local HELP activities and disseminate information
- ✓ record attendance, the agenda and the minutes from these meetings
- ✓ monitor meetings with satisfaction surveys
- ✓ contact the National Tempus Office to raise awareness and for support

#### **2. Connecting with Stakeholders**

The first stakeholder meetings have been agreed for September. These are to be held on consecutive days to permit UK HELP to attend all meetings and contribute to structuring the dialogue. The purpose of this dialogue is to enable the local HELP partnership to:

- attract wider interest and participation in the HELP project
- disseminate the results from the Training Needs Analysis
- initiate dialogue on the local skills agenda and the potential role of HEIs
- identify partners to participate in the preparation and delivery of the HELP training

The Training Needs Analysis is currently being revised by the Serbian HELP in the light of comments received from the workshop. This will be forwarded to the regional HELPs as soon as it is completed with full information on its implementation. It is hoped that that this exercise will be completed and the results analysed in time for presentation at the stakeholder meetings. The dates agreed for the stakeholder meetings are:

Thursday 3 September	Timisoara - UPT
Friday 4 September	Novi Sad - UNS
Monday 7 September	Osijek - JJSUO
Tuesday 8 September	Szarvas – SZIE

There is no obligation for partners to attend the stakeholder meetings organised by other HELPs. The specific arrangements for the meetings and accommodation will be agreed with each regional HELP in due course.

### Tasks

- ✓ consider the stakeholders you wish to invite and create a database of contact information
- ✓ build relationships with stakeholders based on common interest and trust
- ✓ think about the ways you intend to engage the stakeholders at the meeting
- ✓ think about the type of input you wish from UK HELP
- ✓ be clear about your expectations of the meeting and what outcomes you wish to achieve
- ✓ plan carefully all aspects of the meeting
- ✓ record attendance, the agenda and the minutes from these meetings
- ✓ monitor meetings with satisfaction surveys

### 3. Linking with the Regional HELP Network

The Szarvas workshop realised the important objective of formally establishing the regional HELP network and connecting the different members. The purpose of the network is to coordinate the activities of the HELP network, share information from the local level to develop an understanding of the regional skills agenda and to provide mutual support and advice.

The next regional HELP meeting will be held during the Training Good Practice Workshop to be held by UK HELP during the week 21-28 February 2010. It is hoped to confirm the arrangements for travel and accommodation in the near future. Ideally, it would be useful if we could all travel from Budapest which has good connections to Birmingham. The visit is aimed at academics and stakeholders from your local HELP. The emphasis should be on including those people who can multiply the outcomes of the visit upon their return. Each HELP has sufficient budget to bring at least 8 participants.

In addition to the regional HELP meetings, the HELP website will be an important tool for internal communication and external dissemination. The website is currently being developed by Serbian HELP and will be a dynamic website. Each HELP will have their own access rights and be able to upload and manage their contribution to the website. Further information will follow in due course.

### Tasks

- ✓ think about your expectations and how the HELP network can support your HELP activities
- ✓ consider the type of programme and activities you would like at the next meeting
- ✓ think about who you will bring to UK to maximise the impact in your local HELP activities

#### 4. Prepare and Deliver Demand-driven Training

During the second year of the project a main activity will be to develop the training to be delivered in the final year. This process will be informed and supported by:

- the results from the Training Needs Analysis
- information derived from local HELP and stakeholder meetings
- the learning from the Good Practice Workshop
- a range of support provided by UK HELP

### Tasks

- ✓ begin to consider the ways the training will link your institution to the local enterprise sector
- ✓ how the training can help your institution become more responsive to local development needs
- ✓ think how the training will be accredited – credits, quality control and certification

#### 5. Monitoring and Evaluation of HELP Activities

An important task in any project is to undertake monitoring to evaluate progress and adjust activities as necessary to achieve the planned objectives. The Hungarian HELP will coordinate the M&E and will send out templates for use at your local and stakeholder meetings. This is to enable the project to be informed of the situation at the local level within the HELP network and to develop an understanding of the nature of the demand for skills training at the regional level.

The project has obligations to disseminate information about its activities and main findings. A publication is to be prepared towards the end of the second year. At this stage it would be helpful to begin to think about the type of dissemination output and the possible theme and content.

The results of the monitoring from the HELP workshop are presented below. They are generally positive and provide some useful information for the preparation of the next regional meeting. This should be more interactive, with more sharing of experience and expectations and with greater involvement of business and employers.

## Results of the monitoring of the HELP Workshop

### Composition of participants

Education	27
Business	6
Government	5
Other	1

Was the meeting useful in helping you to understand the objectives of the HELP Project?

**Y - 100%**

Do you have any suggestions on how to improve the HELP project and the planned activities?

**Y - 25% greater representation by business and employers**

Do you have any suggestions for the **organisation** of the next Regional HELP Meeting?

**Y- 20% more discussion and presentations of partner expectations**

Do you have any suggestions for the **content** of the next Regional HELP Meeting?

**Y – 25% collectively prepare programme, more interactive, case studies, review partner progress**

Do you think the HELP project will be useful in helping to prepare training that better meets the needs of business?

**Y – 95%**

Suggestions

***Circulate e-mail addresses of all partners***