**TEXAPP 3rd NEWSLETTER – JULY 2018**

In this newsletter, it is highlighted the importance of the acquisition of skills in the textile and clothing sector, and the activities of dissemination and implementation of the TEXAPP project, a strategic initiative to strengthen the supply of apprenticeships in the European textile sector**,** are presented

**Progress of TEXAPP so far**

The project started in October 2016 and, after the mapping the apprenticeship situation in Europe in the Textile and Clothing (T&C) sector, it was developed a common standard for a procedure of training courses. Currently, the project partners are implementing the courses for the adoption of the standard.

**Project Partners**

The project consortium includes eight partners from Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Portugal and the UK. The coordinator of this project is EURATEX, the European Apparel and Textile Confederation (Belgium)**.**

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**The importance of competence acquisition in the textile sector**

With the impulse which the textile sector has experienced in the last few years due to the drive of technological evolution, the topic of skill of employees in the textile sector is taking on a very important role. In this scenery, however, in the textile sector exist two significant aspects which will issue important challenges in the next years. The first topic, also in regions where textile industry is present with strong clusters, is the risk to lose great part of this traditional know-how, due to lacking the introduction of new and young employees in the sector. The second topic is linked to the need to acquire new knowledge, which require specialized competences. The textile sector must be able to be more attractive for potential employees, above all for young people but the sector image is often perceived as an old one. It’s necessary to introduce this sector more effectively as a modern, lively and high-tech sector, offering a wide range of application fields.

**Transferring know-how to the new generations**

Keeping the know-how in a sector in which the older workers are retiring is a problem. It happens very often that part of the know-how acquired by the company gets lost with the employees which leave the company due to seniority. It would be necessary to create retirement plans suitable to ensure to the younger workers the possibility to learn from their wide experience.

**Textile and Clothing sector**

With 1,7 million employees, representing 5% of total manufacturing employment, 177000 companies and a turnover of around EUR 181 billion, the European Textiles and Clothing (T&C) Industry is a key manufacturing Industry in the European Union. Over many years the sector can only result from more technological innovation and better skills of a qualified labour force, but to address this challenge, SMEs need to prepare young people for entry to the labour market and to secure their future skills base. Working with young people towards successful completion of an apprenticeship program requires time and mentoring skills in the employing company that, most likely will need to be developed and supported. Therefore, targeted cooperation among T&C Sector’s key stakeholders for the identification of solutions and preparing of action plan to improve the supply and quality of apprenticeship and motivation schemes for SME’s to take active part is needed

**The TEXAPP Project**

TEXAPP is an European project coordinated by Euratex, as the European level organisation of the T&C national associations, in order to develop, through the close cooperation with the partners an integrated approach for fostering and strengthening the supply of apprenticeships in sector’s SME’s and micro enterprises. TEXAPP project will create and provide a structure and tools oriented towards the T&C sector considering the SME’s needs and obstacles they face in this regard. The sectoral tool package to be developed aims at assisting SME’s in setting up, planning, delivering and ensuring the quality of their apprenticeships, including apprentice assessment.

The following objectives are pursued:

* Development of a “Standard” that describes the capacities and competences required for an SME to manage and deliver an apprenticeship programme successfully.
* Design of a competence centre for apprentice as pilot for engaging SME’s and micro companies in implementing apprenticeship schemes in line with the corresponding national VET systems.
* Mobilize SMEs and micro companies and motivate them to get involved in apprenticeships
* Setting-up a community of practice (CoP) to support the exchange of information and experience amongst sectorial stakeholders from different EU countries.

**TEXAPP training courses and national conferences**

Several initiatives have been launched, recently, to disseminate the results of the project.

**Portugal**

CITEVE organized, on May 28th, the conference "Competências para a ITV no horizonte 2030", which aimed to streamline the TEXAPP project. With more than 80 participants, the conference had two discuss panels. The first highlighted the enhancement of human capital, and the second focused on the challenges in human resource management. During the afternoon, the seminar used the “focus group” methodology to analyse two themes that complement each other:

"Strategies in multigenerational work environments. Career Decisions, Skills Development and Reform Processes", and "How to plan, implement and ensure the quality of the integration of new employees through learning processes and apprenticeship."

CITEVE is also on track in the pilot phase of implementing important tools and resources, developed in the TEXAPP project. During June and July, it was implemented, with 10 SME’s, the Training Programme with the goal of developing the capacity and practice of company staff, their skills, abilities, behaviours and competencies to ensure effective collaborative working and successful apprenticeship training.

**Italy**

TexClubTec, in cooperation with SMI, the national federation of Textile and Clothing,organized, on June 8th , in Milan, the conference "L’Apprendistato nel settore Tessile Abbigliamento, la situazione in Italia alla luce delle esperienze europee", which aimed to present the TEXAPP project. It was a one-day event with the participation of representatives  of national and regional industrial textile and clothing associations in charge for apprenticeship, company managers and VET providers. In the conference program there were three sessions: in the first, the results of the apprenticeship survey in Italy were presented, in the second, the regulatory context in which it is used, and in the third, it was presented the Texapp standard, as tool to make apprenticeship more efficient. At the conclusion an interesting debate took place among the experts with the presentation of various experiences

**Bulgaria**

The TEXAPP training seminar in Bulgaria was held on April 27th at PIRIN-TEX's premises in Gotse Delchev with the participation of representatives  (company managers, HR managers, future mentors) of 11 companies. There were also representatives of a professional high school and a trade union. It was a one-day event aimed to present the TEXAPP project with focus on the implementation of dual vocational training which is currently the core of VET in Bulgaria

**Greece**

The training of the Greek companies was organized in two stages, one in Thessaloniki, on the 23rd May 2018, where the EPAS for fashion is based, and one in Athens, on the 13th June 2018, at the central offices of HCIA.

In Thessaloniki, HCIA’s representatives had the opportunity

to present and disseminate TEXAPP project during a special event organised by OAED’s fashion school, where also an exhibition booth was used for the wider promotion of the project. Following the event, HCIA organized the specialized pilot activity for the pilot of the Company Training Course withthe participation 6 attendees – representatives of clothing companies. Furthermore, HCIA organized a specific event with 4companies’representatives in Athens

**Hungary**

On the 17th May, TMTE held a national conference for its members and experts from the T&C industry. The conference was dedicated to "Trainings and Apprenticeship - where to and how?". TMTE presented the TEXAPP Project - its main goals, achievements and challanges. Also the Standards and upcoming training events were published and discussed. To highlight different aspects of training needs and opportunities, also other well known experts from the industry and even regulatory bodies were invited.

A famous psychological researcher gave insight to the generation issues, how the new generations behave in the workplace, how they can be understood and integrated. A representing the Chamber of Commerce, detailed the difficulties and opportunities in apprenticeships and trainings, and the support the regulatory bodies can give and a well known expert in recruiting, gave practical tips on how to successfully address and attract the new generation workforce on the job market.

 **UK**

The UK partner, the Textile Centre of Excellence has developed an Approved Employer Apprenticeship Standard alongside an Assessment Tool to identify initial company capacities and competence against the criteria of the Standard. Additionally, the Centre has created a Training Course for company supervisors and mentors involved with the delivery of Apprenticeship training to develop their capacity to meet the

requirements of Approved Employer Standard. During 2017, 20 companies were involved in piloting the company training course, and their feedback resulted in a number of modifications to the structure and content of the programme. Following the revisions, additional training courses continued throughout 2017 and 2018 and the series of courses will continue until all of the Centre’s member companies are registered as meeting the Standard and all the appropriate staff are trained. By January 2018 the TCoE had worked with approximately 35 different companies training around 70 of their staff. A National conference is planned on13th September at **the** TCoE’s Training Centre in Huddersfield to introduce, disseminate and showcase the Texapp project.

**What’s next?**

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