



Erasmus+

**Experiences from**  
***HOW TO WIN THE CHALLENGE: INTERNATIONALIZING***  
***EQF LEVEL 5***  
***HINGE***

Project Number: ***2015-1-IT02-KA203-015210***

**Anna Tozzi**  
**Vice Rector for International Relations**  
**UNIVERSITY OF L'AQUILA**

***How to Measure and Strategically Ensure  
Sustainability and Impact***

# EUROPEAN SCENARIO

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- The Europe 2020 Strategy puts a strong focus on knowledge and innovation, sustainability, employment and social inclusion and calls for increasing the share of 30 – 34 years old having completed tertiary education (40% by 2020).
- The economical crisis calls for more well-educated graduates with the right types of knowledge, skills and experience, including transversal skills and Universities must help students prepare for life and work.
- Europe is facing talent shortages (talent crisis) in a wide range of occupations, because educational standards are not always sufficiently high and the demographic decline is producing a dramatic fall in the number of traditional students.

## EUROPEAN SCENARIO

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- The "talent crisis" requires a quick and strong response and again Universities have to play a key role to increase Europe's attractiveness.
- In a globalised higher education world, universities must have an international strategy .
- Universities are called to achieve the 5 priorities highlighted by the Agenda for Modernising HE by, among other,
  - ✓ developing clear progression routes from vocational and other education types into higher education,
  - ✓ to encourage institutions to build learning mobility more systematically into curricula,
  - ✓ to support public policies which encourage partnership between professional institutions, research universities, business and high-tech centres in the knowledge triangle.

## LOCAL (coordinator) SCENARIO

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- L'Aquila medieval City with the largest historical center, with medium/large university (mostly technology focused), well known Conservatory and Fine Arts Academy, big cultural tradition (music, theatre, events)
- 06.04.2009: earthquake destroying the “social structure”
- University becomes a key actor for the reconstruction and resilience playing the role of “Civic University”
- Research for innovative technologies and materials for the reconstruction of historical buildings
- The need (and opportunity) to join and integrate modern and advanced services within an ancient City stimulate several projects

# LOCAL (coordinator) SCENARIO

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Several projects are started:

- **“Metropolitan optic network for the PA and experimental optic network for the city of L'Aquila”**
- **“Smart Tunnel”**, a 20 km underground tunnel
- **“L'Aquila Smart City”**: Grid automation, Smart info, Smart urban service
- **Piazza 100 - Smart Community**: living lab with direct participation of citizens
- **5G technology**: L'Aquila one of the 5 selected cities
- **ZTE and FCA** establishment of research units with direct involvement of the University
- .....
- L'Aquila is selected in the programme “Digital Cities”, 15 in total in two calls

**The internationalisation policy/strategy became a powerful tool**

# JOB MARKET SCENARIO

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Locally: the reconstruction phase highlighted the need of competences and skills on the ICT sector at any level, from vocational to research, and new skills and competences.

Globally: Innovation 2.0 and Industry 4.0 are preparing the forth industrial revolution.

The uptake of industrial internet of things in manufacturing, and of the internet of things (IoT) in the citizens' life will create new value chains for the traditional industries on one side and new products requirement by individuals on the other side.

Educational systems must be ready

# HINGE PROJECT SCENARIO

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The project intends to contribute to the achievement of the above mentioned key issues by designing and organising a pilot international Level 5 degree.

## WHY the Level 5?

University of L'Aquila

- has international Bachelor, Master and PhD in ICT,
- Implemented several TEMPUS/Capacity Building projects focused on curricula development/updating of that level
- wants to enhance integration with VET

# HINGE PROJECT SCENARIO

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## Partners:

- Università degli Studi dell'Aquila (IT)
- Regione Abruzzo (IT)
- University of Western Macedonia (GR)
- DIDE KILKIS (GR)
- EPIMORFOTIKI KILKIS Single Member llc (GR)
- University Stefan Cel Mare Suceava (RO)
- Inspectoratul Scolar Al Judetului Suceava (RO)
- Artesis Plantijn Hogeschool Antwerpen (BE)
- World University Service of the Mediterranean (ES)
- Universitat de Girona (ES)
- ITS-Energia (IT)
- Reiss Romoli (IT)
- Instituto Montilivi (ES)



# HINGE PROJECT SCENARIO

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## **Outputs/Outcomes:**

- O1: International EQF Level 5 definition
- O2: Guidelines for designing an international EQF Level 5 curriculum,
- O3: Pilot international curriculum in ICT
- O4: Pilot courses delivering
- O5: Arrangements for international recognition established

## **Expected Results:**

- to remove the obstacles in connecting the three worlds: universities, VET and labor market, often related to the lack of a common language (on knowledge, skills and competences)
- To increase the attainment at tertiary level
- To increase the employability of young people

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# HINGE PROJECT SCENARIO

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- The partnership is composed by universities and decision-making authorities. The universities are very active in the internationalization of curricula and play a key role in the development policies and education reform of their regions/countries but are facing problems due to huge variety of educational offers at VET level that are not clearly inserted in the EQF/NQF and need a proper evaluation.
- Partners belong to countries severely affected by economical crisis and unemployment of young people

# HINGE PROJECT SCENARIO

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- In the 5 countries the Level 5 has different characteristics: In Italy, Spain and Greece it has been identified only recently and is delivered by a consortium made of University, VET institution and businesses, in Romania and Belgium is delivered by the universities, but the connection with the Level 6 is not clear, sometimes impossible.
- Also the funding authorities are different (regional or national)

# HINGE PROJECT SCENARIO

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- The project has been very challenging for several reasons:
- In Greece the Body in charge of the V level was not established yet, when the project started,
- In Belgium the course was going to be reintroduced in the university
- In Italy no new ITS were allowed
- the direct involvement of the relevant authorities was fundamental for the accreditation

The course is accredited in all the countries and the pilot group of students is at the end of the first year

# HINGE PROJECT IMPACT

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## IMPACT ON CONSORTIUM MEMBERS:

- Acquired capacities to design more attractive education and training programmes, in line with individuals' needs and expectations and enhance the level of internationalization of the institutions; (*number of students enrolled and the number of people contacting the offices for information*).
- better understanding of skills and qualifications in Europe and beyond and ability to develop and apply new strategies and rules for recognition and validation of competences; (*degree of involvement in the preparation of the Guidelines, links with Smart Specialisation Strategy* )

# HINGE PROJECT IMPACT

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## IMPACT ON PARTICIPANTS AND RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS:

- skills and competences developed in an international environment, enhancing employability; (*Improved language skills of students will be measured through specific exams.* )
- the school students and families will understand the importance of strengthening links between education/training, mobility and the labor market; (*increased enrollment of students at higher levels*)
- the labor market members will acquire a common language (on knowledge, skills and competences) with education providers and will be acquainted with the main tools provided by EU as meeting point for exchange of information (EQF, ESCO, European Skills Panorama).

# HINGE PROJECT IMPACT

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## IMPACT ON OTHER DECISION MAKING AUTHORITIES AND LABOR MARKET:

- the bodies in charge of accreditation of education providers and training courses, adopt the methodology used for the design of the pilot SCHE, as a key reference instrument; (*exclusive use of Learning Outcomes as agreed at transnational*)
- the accreditation authorities and labor market will also make clarity on the varied and confusing quantity of educational offers and certifications provided by VET institutions for which there is no clear and commonly accepted procedures for quality assessment as well as learning outcomes description. (*Clear entrance requirements*)



# HINGE PROJECT IMPACT

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## IMPACT AT REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL

- awareness that qualifications are useful only when can be recognized around the world. (*Improved and transparent recognition tools*)
- Represented countries did not make a clear policy for the enhancement of vocational and professional training and the links with HE. (*Adoption of improved procedures developed and learnt during the project implementation for comparability with the advanced countries*).

# HINGE PROJECT IMPACT

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## IMPACT AT EU AND TRANSNATIONAL LEVEL

The project contribute to the achievement of

- the objectives of “Agenda for the modernisation of Europe's higher education systems” and “Europe 2020”:

- 1) Increasing attainment levels to provide the graduates and researchers Europe need

- 2) Improving the quality and relevance of higher education.

- the objectives of “ET 2020”:

- 1) Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality.

- 2) Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training.

- the objectives of “Open up culture”:

- 1) Learning institutions, teachers and learners should acquire digital skills and learning methods.

# HINGE PROJECT ACHIEVED IMPACT

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1. The international curriculum developed
2. Mobility started with recognition of credits
3. Bilateral Agreements for financing mobility for the next cohorts of students signed
4. Recognition methodology agreed
5. Final exam organisation for the double degree, established
6. Region Abruzzo, funding authority for the ITS, asked for help and support in preparing a call within the ESF PO finalised to finance the ITS in the region

All the above guarantees the sustainability of the main project results.



***Thank you!***