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# NEEDS ANALYSIS REPORT



Erasmus+

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# 1 Methodology

The aim of the EDIPUS project is to develop the Digital Portfolio Portal (DPP), an outstanding, state-of-the-art tool to promote employability of higher education students in the current competitive labour market and to guide their professional career from Education to Labour.

Digital portfolio has become a viable institutional tool to facilitate student learning and its assessment. DPP can be “web-sensible” a thoughtfully arranged collection of multimedia-rich, interlinked, hyper textual documents that students compose, own, maintain and archive on the internet or in other formats. It communicates various kinds of information for the purposes of assessment. Can be:

- Identify connections among academic and extra-curricular learning for admission to higher education and vocational opportunities;
- Demonstrate applications of knowledge and critical literacy for course or programmatic assessment;
- Provide evidence of meeting standards for professional certification;
- Display qualifications for employment;
- Showcase job-related accomplishments beyond schooling, for evaluation or promotion;
- Represent lifelong learning for participation in public service.

A portfolio is the sum of the best work of someone; it forms his/her identity representation. Therefore, benchmarking best practices facilitating this process are of high importance.

The members of the EDIPUS partnership performed a needs-analysis study aiming to gather a comprehensive view of the users’ needs related to digital portfolios for higher education students. This study has two main foundations: a survey that was directed to the key players and a systematic analysis describing the current standing in each country of the partnership. As a result of this last task, seven national reports were drafted (Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain). This report is a consolidated version of the former, describing the main findings of this needs analysis study. Further details related to each individual country may be found at each of the national reports.

The global analysis of the online survey is available at the survey report, *Needs Analysis Report for the Digital Portfolio*.

At the remaining of this report we discuss best practices and analyze online tools in use to support students promoting themselves through portfolios and similar

instruments, at Section 2. Section 3 describes how higher education institutions (HEI) are supporting their students in the non-curricular task of promoting their employability and facilitating their entrance into the labour market. Section 4 presents the conclusions and recommendations for innovation.

## 2 Benchmarking

A critical concern of the EDIPUS project is to assure that the DPP to develop will be of significant added value to stakeholders and a significant advance in the field. The first step towards this concern is getting a clear view of the current state of the art regarding the options that are available for students to create, maintain and disseminate their portfolios online aiming to promote the management of their career management and their employability. This preliminary study addresses two main aspects: best practices and extra-curricular activities promoted by HEI.

To realize what is currently being done to make students take advantage of their experiences to the benefit of their careers, the partners have interviewed several students, career officers, private and public institutions related to education and employment and employers. These interviews were made by phone, email, informal talks in events related to education and employability and face-to-face meetings with key players.

### 2.1 Best practices

The effort to identify best practices in the partner countries provided a clear view of the current standing point and of the positioning of DPP.

#### 2.1.1 Austria

Besides some online platforms, the main players are the university career services. Both are described in the proper sections.

## 2.1.2 Belgium

Here follows a short introduction on the general situation in Belgium. As can be seen in the text below, there are many things that separate Belgium from the rest of Europe and which makes it something of a “special case”.

First of all, it should be noted that Belgium has a very high rate of international students; 17 % of the new entrances to the Belgian higher education system are from other countries than Belgium. The overall attainment in higher education in Belgium is slightly above the OECD average (37 % vs. 34 %).

The unemployment rate for Belgians with higher education is currently 4.2 % (figures from 2014), slightly under the OECD average at 5.1 %.

Furthermore, the higher education students in Belgium are very young by international standards. 96 % of the new entrances to Bachelor programmes are under 25 and 95 % of those starting a Master programme are under 30. The figures are the youngest and the second-youngest in the OECD, respectively.

Belgium’s labour market is very different in different groups by international standards. According the 2016 Country-Specific Recommendations, “The employment rates of prime age middle and highly qualified workers are generally above average, while low skilled workers, older workers, second generation migrants and young people clearly underperform in this respect” (p. 41). At the same time, the *skills mismatch* is very prevalent in Belgium and there are many job openings which are not filled. Indeed, employers in Belgium “are among those who most frequently reporting skills shortages as the greatest challenge in filling vacancies” (ibid, p. 42).

Finally, Belgium is not a heterogeneous country but rather consisting of three entities with rather different characteristics. In general, Flanders has a better job market than Wallonia and Brussels.

In sum: there are clearly many challenges for young people in Belgium; the Belgian student entering the labour market are young and less likely to find a job than older people in the country. On the other hand, looking at the unemployment rate for those with a higher education degree, they are in a relatively good position compared with their peers from many other countries.

What is currently being done to make students take advantage of their experiences to the benefit of their careers?

Interviews with Belgian students showed the following.

**LinkedIn** is very popular to students, especially during the last year of study, when the real preparations for the future job markets start.

Many students use the **government job service** when looking for jobs. Many - although not all - of the job openings are posted there and the site is thus very popular. A notable exception is the *international* jobs. Many jobs in Belgium, notably those in the Brussels area, are jobs for international employers (companies, organisations etc.) and these are not listed in the government job service site.

Many big **companies** also announce their job openings internally through their own **communication channels**. These are not listed anywhere else.

Many students also feel that one of the best places for finding jobs is the **university job fairs**. Many universities organize these fairs regularly and prospective employers and employees have a chance to meet up, discuss the jobs and eventually organize a job interview. Many of the students feel that this is a good way to get a job.

Regarding the “general student situation”, Belgium is in a reasonably good state of affairs compared to some other countries. Still, there is a widespread feeling among students that the job market awaiting them in the end of their studies is going to be difficult. Finally, it is largely acknowledged that students in some sectors are much better off than in others. Students of law, to take an obvious example, have a more straight-forward career path than their peers in social science.

## Vacancy databases

Several universities have their own vacancy databases, specifically for its students. According to University of Antwerp’s website (<https://www.uantwerpen.be/en/alumni/services/career-services/for-companies/>): “Companies and organisations can post vacancies, internships and scholarships that are suitable for alumni and students in the online vacancy database” and students can see the offers online. Vacancies can be posted in English or Dutch and only jobs at Master or PhD level requirements are accepted.

University of Ghent also has a database, but “only” for student jobs:

<http://www.ugent.be/student/nl/meer-dan-studeren/jobdienst> and only in Dutch. KU Leuven has a student database also in English, but, similarly to

University of Ghent, only for student jobs:

<https://cwisdb.kuleuven.be/pls/sjobs/sjstarte>.

While the limited student job databases might be less relevant for this project, the university-specific vacancy databases which include jobs for graduated students are an interesting way of matching job-seekers and employers.



### 2.1.3 Cyprus

In Cyprus three best practices have been identified. In general, universities in the country provide students with comprehensive career advice through various services such as a job searches, CV and cover letter writing and psychometrics tests. Generally, the career offices help students to prepare their CV or upgrade an existing one with already outdated techniques. In addition the services inform students about career opportunities or options after completing their studies or during their studies.

#### **One-Stop-Service-Shop - European Association of Career Guidance - EACG<sup>1</sup>**

The University of Cyprus, along with five other Institutions based in Greece, Portugal, Italy, Norway and France, founded in 2010 the European Association of Career Guidance - EACG, in Cyprus, aiming to promote the creation of the One-Stop-Service-Shop for career guidance counsellors. This One-Stop-Service-Shop provides a common framework of best practices concerning vocational guidance, methods and practices that apply to public and private organizations and local authorities in the EU, but also, presents to career guidance counsellors specialised training programmes.

This One-Stop-Service-Shop is a Portal which includes information related to career counselling from various countries and cities. Among others the information concern Career Guidance and Counselling Training-Courses, Links to EU job sites and Job-finding openings, Labour market trends-FAQ, a Toolkit for Career Guidance, Training Programmes and Education Programmes for Clients, Entrepreneur Training Programmes, Mobility Programmes and Placements, Senior Citizens Career Guidance information, Special Needs Citizens Career Guidance information, Integration and Inclusion Programmes as well as Funding programmes for Career Guidance in general.

The fact being that there was a European survey on best practices and presentation of the results in an electronic guide which is a huge source of information, the organisation of training courses for career guidance counsellors on various issues, the organization of Annual European Conferences on Vocational Guidance (2011-2014), the creation of a European Network / Career Guidance Counsellors Association and the development of a “one stop Career-EUshop”, contribute to the provision of high quality lifelong guidance services across Europe and convey a more inclusive approach to improving the conditions and available tools for career/ employment counsellors across Europe.

The continuation of the education seminars ensures the provision of information to those engaged in vocational guidance as regards to indicating

<sup>1</sup> Career-EUshop Membership details: <http://www.eacg.eu/index.php?id=3>

to them a successful model and how to design a “One-Stop-Service-Stop” in their country, as well as providing them with good practices and useful tools to be used on behalf of the career guidance counsellors and the relevant career service offices. For the sustainability of this platform a membership fee for Institutions and individuals has been set for being able to access more specialised information, which in the long term will on the one hand sustain the operation of the portal, however on the other hand the membership fee may be proven high for counsellors and career advisors who work independently.

This good-practice can be easily transferred to other countries, as it has been proven already, without the need of much investment. It would just be required that an Institution from this country, which already provides counselling and guidance services, subscribes as a member to the portal so as to receive all the relevant information on trainings and educational seminars.

### **Liaison Offices with the Business World in universities<sup>2</sup>**

The University of Cyprus coordinates the project “Development and Operation of Liaison Offices with the Business World in universities” that operate in the Republic (Cyprus University of Technology, Open University of Cyprus, European University of Cyprus, University of Nicosia, Frederick University), approved and funded by the European Social Fund (ESF).

Specifically, the project is about the creation and operation of Liaison Offices with the business world in each of the six universities that operate in the Republic and aims to better and more intensive communication and collaboration between universities and business on issues such as the transfer know-how, the development of applied research in response to specific problems of the industry, cooperation in research projects, student placements in enterprises and generally promoting innovation in business and academic environment of our country.

The main strategic objectives are the creation of a network interface standard offices of the academic and business world, the use and exploitation of research results of universities by Cypriot companies and finally improving the employability of students and graduates through their increased contact with businesses during their studies.

The career centres/ liaison offices assist students and alumni in writing their CV and guides them for job interviews. Students and alumni can benefit from a series of workshops, presentations and seminars organised every semester on topics such as “Note Taking”, “Time Management”, “Professional Appearance”, “CV writing and interview Techniques”. All

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.liaisonoffices.ac.cy/>

workshops, seminars and presentations are offered free of charge and are open to all students and alumni. Speakers in such seminars are outstanding professionals, career experts and in-house professors.

Furthermore, the offices have created careers leaflets which come out once every month, with useful tips for building a successful CV, having a successful interview, tips for self-confidence etc.

### **Computerised Placement System (CPS) <sup>3</sup>**

The Computerised Placement System (CPS) provides a detailed report of unemployed persons and vacancies, the allocation of unemployed with suitable skills for a specific vacancy, the procedures for fulfilling vacancies and the preparation of statistical reports. Since January 2005, with the upgrade of the system to a web system, it also provides services to individuals (Cypriots or European citizens) seeking job vacancies. Persons registered at the local District Labour Offices can access their job application, renew their application, search for available vacancies in their desired occupation and submit their C.V.s so that employers can look through them. Employers can register job vacancies and search through the C.V. library to find people that they might be able to use as personnel.

The CPS was launched in 2008, aiming to achieve more effective placement and improving the collection of information from labour market. It serves as a management tool to support the work of employment counsellors. Job seekers are required to update their registration status every 6 weeks. An analysis from the PES register shows that compared to the pre crisis period the number of unemployed that resort to the labour offices in Cyprus Quadrupled. This has resulted in the assignment of all employment service staff, including those trained to provide in-depth counselling to front-office-services. This is why there is limited provision of individualised counselling and guidance services in Cyprus.

The CPS is linked to the EURES network which currently serves 31 European countries. This provides the users with the opportunity to access a larger database of job listings all at once and to save time when it comes to applying for various positions. In addition, the CV Bank provides the employers with the opportunity to draw a particular profile for future job opportunities or even for positions that have not been declared yet.

The success factor is that it is a clearly defined structured system (Job search, Job seekers services, employer services, CV Bank) to which anyone can get access and search individually based on its personal needs and current status. It is user friendly and the information acquired through the

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Labour- Department of Information and Technology:  
<http://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/DITS/dits.nsf/All/5F71D39EE1D325A4C22578180025F1FD?OpenDocument>

on-line system can be further discussed in the meetings that the individuals have with their advisors/officers.

Although the CPS intended to increase time for counsellors for the provision of in-depth counselling services to job seekers at risk of exclusion from the labour market, there has not been any obvious impact on their workload or time, due to the fact that the registrations of unemployed people started to increase dramatically. Another issue is that the staff handling the system compared to the registered unemployed people cannot meet the basic requirements (2013 ratio- 1:139)<sup>4</sup>, while due to the crisis the job posting have decreased providing little incentives for registration.

This good-practice could be easily transferred to other countries, as it would just be required that the relevant services of the country providing the services for counselling and guidance acquire and adjust the programme/platform/database to their own existing society and labour market needs.

#### **2.1.4 Greece**

In Greece the best practices identified are two. The first one is about the career advice provided to the students through the Career Offices. Generally, the career offices help students to prepare their CV or upgrade an existing one with already outdated techniques. In addition the services inform students about career opportunities or options after completing their studies or during their studies. Moreover the University of Piraeus has initiated the “Inter-Institutional Agreements between the University of Piraeus and SMEs”, aiming at offering students, wishing to undertake an Erasmus+ Mobility for Placement, quality internships and better job matching opportunities.

#### **Inter-Institutional Agreements between the University of Piraeus and SMEs**

The International Relations Office of the University of Piraeus has implemented for the first time in Greece, Inter- Institutional Agreements with SMEs and organization across Europe in order to facilitate the procedure students have to follow in order to take part in an Erasmus+ Mobility for Placement.

This initiative has been recognized by the National Agency in Greece, the State Scholarships Foundation, as an official good-practice.

<sup>4</sup> Corbanese V., Rosas G. (2014) Jobs and skills for youth: Review of policies for youth employment of Cyprus. International Labour Office - Geneva, (Table 3.4- p.68).

During its implementation of this initiative there has been a remarkable rise to the total amount of mobilities for placement under the Erasmus+ program, proving its success.

These agreements simplify the official procedures and ensure improved job-matching and quality for the offered internships for our students.

This good practice can be easily expanded to internships and short-term job offers for young people that are not funded under the Erasmus+ program, with the consultation and expertise of the International Relations Office of the University of Piraeus.

### **Career Offices' Services**

The University of Piraeus as every University in Greece offers career advice, mentoring and preparation for the transition from the academic to the business world.

The career office of the University of Piraeus has established cooperation not only with enterprises but also with upper secondary education institutions, offering career guidance to pupils.

Moreover it actively organizes Career Days, where students have the chance to discuss with business representatives, have mock interviews and learn about the possibilities after graduation.

Lastly, with the cooperation of Orientum, students of the University of Piraeus have a chance to take the tests “Profiler” and “Jackson Vocational Interest Survey- Greek Version” in order to assist the students explore the academic and labour choices they have.

This good-practice can be easily transferred to other countries, as it has been proven already, without the need of much investment. It would just be required that an Institution from this country, which already provides counselling and guidance services, subscribes as a member to the portal so as to receive all the relevant information on trainings and educational seminars.

### **2.1.5 Italy**

In Italy, the challenge is to make the digital portfolio as a competitive tool for students, which can help them having an immediate impact towards potential employers. Indeed, with youth unemployment rates among the highest in Europe, the gap between job offer and demand is too high to be easily faced with traditional recruitment methods.

Employers, often overwhelmed from requests from job-seekers, are not able to respond appropriately to their own needs, due to the lack of unique channels, time to dedicate and trust. By relying exclusively on a word of mouth process, matching between vacancies and human resources risks not to be carried out at its best, with consequent mismatching between candidates - vacancies and lack of meritocracy.

In general, universities in the country provide students with information, services, quantitative and qualitative analysis, generally related to the job market, in order to increase the students' employability options and to find a suitable job, while promoting their professional qualifications. This is usually done through the career services of the Higher Education Institutions.

The career officers of the Universities organize several activities and events, such as seminars, workshops, training activities, simulation of job interviews, recruiting days and career days in order to support students (both enrolled and graduated) and job seekers in being linked with enterprises and recruiters.

## **How the transition school to work is in Italy and Best Practice 1: “lo scelgo-io studio” portal**

In Italy, the public career guidance service aimed at young people of school-going age is provided outside the school sphere by services set up by the Regions, since they are responsible for career guidance. They organise the offer of guidance services independently, mainly delegating them to the Provinces. Generally speaking, the main public figures in career guidance are:

- placement services, which sometimes have a dedicated “counter” for young people. Even lacking that, their services, in addition to bringing demand and supply together, include reception, information, guidance, and assistance with drawing up a vocational and/or training project. In some cases they make use of outside resources for these types of service.
- information and career guidance centres (which have different names such as, e.g.: Informagiovani (youth information); Centri di Iniziativa Locale per l'Occupazione (local employment initiative centres) - CILO; Centri di orientamento al lavoro (employment guidance centres) - COL, etc.), operating at the municipal or provincial level, sometimes organized into national networks or groups, which offer young people information not only about possible training or vocational courses but also other kinds of information (for instance about spare time, voluntary work etc.).

In addition to the public services, the offer of guidance for young people can also be supplemented by various private bodies, including, for example, chambers of commerce, training authorities, employment agencies, trade unions, trade associations, schools and universities, employment consultants, based on the liberalisation of the market for employment services. With regard to the latter, attention is drawn to the annual organisation by the employers' federation, Confindustria, of the “Giornata Nazionale Orientagiovani” (national youth guidance



day) aimed at bringing businesses and young people together: in all the provinces, the industrial associations, in cooperation with schools and universities, give students and teachers the opportunity to get close to the business sector and to obtain useful information for subsequent placement in the labour market.

There are also guidance services available on the web, which offer information related to professions and to training or vocational courses; they include: the Ministry of Labour's portal "Cliclavoro", the new portal of the MUIR; the "Orientaonline" service of Isfol (vocational training institute); Jobtel.

With regard to specific programmes for facilitating school-to-work transition, the main national experience is the "Formazione ed Innovazione per l'Occupazione - Scuola e Università" (training and innovation for employment - school and university) programme - FlxO S&U, belonging to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies and carried out by Italia Lavoro. This is a national, experimental programme for technical assistance to schools and universities. With regard to actions intended for secondary schools, FlxO, in cooperation with the Regions, with which a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed, is aimed at intervening in the sphere of the transition from the education and training system to the labour market. The service model prepared by the Programme foresees:

- organisation of a placement service inside schools, for assisting the educational establishments in organising and providing services of guidance, intermediation and placement, and in the use of active labour policy arrangements and measures in line with the new role of practitioners on the labour market assigned to them by the "Biagi" law and in liaison with the network of local stakeholders (placement services, enterprises, universities, etc.). Technical assistance includes the qualification and inclusion of the operators of the school system;
- implementation of a customised guidance/placement system for the students, offering a series of services adaptable to suit the needs of the person holding or studying for a diploma;
- assistance with the establishment/strengthening of the territorial network of stakeholders, aimed at strengthening the Employment Services sector and the role of schools as a link between students and production resources in the area, in order to finalise the course of guidance in placement, facilitating the employability and employment of young people.

Thus far, in the schools, services dedicated to school-to-work transition have mainly been put into effect within the framework of projects with specific financing, or left to individual schools or teachers.

One worth mentioning experience at national level is the Italian "lo scelgo- lo studio" portal promoted by MIUR (ministry of education), to support the transition between different school levels. This National initiative was created to develop a new model of educational guidance that can guarantee support for all the moments

of transition and choice of the person, throughout the course of life. It is mainly devoted to the choice of educational path, but it is also connected with career perspectives and it is a good tool to support students in orientation. It even provides contact with a person (sort of 'ask the expert') at the Ministry level that answers questions from students in order to help them in the labyrinth of choices when they move to higher education.

## **Career Service of the University of Padova**

The most relevant feature of the activity of the personnel responsible for Job and Internship Offers Management is the so-called intermediation aspect, or rather the intersection between the requests for personnel from companies and the requests by students and graduates to take part in internships and work experiences.

By initiating more than 15,000 internships a year and handling the management of a significant number of job offers, the Career Services of the University of Padua has adopted an agile and efficient system to automate and accelerate the procedure as much as possible.

Companies, institutions and organizations (both Italian as well as foreign) that want to propose internships and job offers are provided with a reserved area in the web portal which allows them to manage those offers and the applications of students and graduates. In order to access this reserved area, the company, institution or organization must register their company data, including information such as company name, registered address, number of employees, business sector and the data of the referent for the selection.

At the conclusion of data registration by the company, the Career Services office receives an email notification, verifies that the activity of the company/organization is not in conflict with the policies of the University (for example, in the case of temporary work agencies or businesses which operate in the field of personnel selection for third parties for payment) and then approves the company data and subsequently sends the access codes for the reserved area via email to the referent indicated by the company/organization.

The referent is the only person who can access the reserved area. He/she has access to the following operations:

- Propose/modify internships and job offers,
- View the CVs of the candidates proposed by Career Services,
- Communicate possible hiring.

The insertion of internships or job offers on the part of the company is an extremely simple and guided process. A brief description of the desired profile is required (This description should be as clear as possible, as it will be published directly in the display visible to candidates) which is then followed by a more detailed description of specific skills and knowledge desired.



The insertion of the offer in the display screen is not an automatic process, but rather passes through examination by the Career Services office: the successful insertion of the offer by the company within its reserved area is communicated to the office which then evaluates the pending offers and can decide to modify them or change their status from “pending” to “available”. At this point the offer becomes public and students and graduates have the possibility to apply for it.

Besides the area reserved for the companies the portal also provides a reserved area for candidates. Students and graduates from the University of Padua receive usernames and passwords upon matriculation which allow them to make use of the services that the University puts at their disposal, among which are services related to internships and job placement. By identifying themselves with the credentials provided to them by the university secretariat, candidates can access their reserved area where it is possible to apply for internships or job offers available in the system after they have uploaded their CV. Their applications are not automatically visible to the companies, but become visible only after positive evaluation of the staff of the Career Services office.

The third reserved area belongs to the office and the following operations can be carried out:

- Approval of company data with consequent sending of access credentials to the referent for selection,
- Modification of the internships and job offers and their publication and removal from display,
- Visualization of applications for each offer with the possibility of calling the candidates for an interview, accepting the candidates and proposing them to a company, or the rejection of an application (for each of these operations a notification is sent to the respective candidate, who is given constant feedback with regard to the state of their application).
- Carrying out matching between requests and offers, using the criteria requested by the internship or job offer and connecting them with the data in the CVs in order to individuate profiles from the database which are most in line with the needs of the company.

The matching operation is the most delicate and interesting. One can simply click a button which pulls up the CVs which most correspond to the requests of the company, but the selection assistant from Career Services intervenes in the moment in which the requests are interpreted, adding details (and therefore narrowing the results of the search) or eliminating less significant research criteria (thus enlarging the number of possible results).

The criteria involved in matching are highly diverse and involve areas such as residence, academic background, IT skills (subdivided into operating systems, applied software and programming languages) and linguistic and relational/organizational skills. Once matching is complete, Career Services has a

list of candidates at its disposal. These candidates are informed of the possibility that their CV may be sent to interested companies/organizations with respect to the offer for which the matching was made and in line with the profile requested. Only when the candidate has officially given his/her approval, the Career Services does send the CV to the company. In this manner the privacy of the students and graduates is respected at each step of the selection process.

All of the operations carried out by Career Services staff within the portal are recorded in order to trace all operations and data back to the specific operator involved. Each operator is provided with a username and password and for each completed operation the date and name of the operator is recorded in order to maintain tracking of workflow.

Since 2009 in the section related to work abroad candidates have the possibility to record a 2-minute self-presentation video which can be linked to their electronic CV. The video can be recorded in multiple languages by the same candidate (English, French, German, Spanish), using only an Internet connection, a webcam and microphone. Technical instructions as well as suggestions on what and how to best present oneself are found on the page of the video recording. In the case where candidates do not possess the appropriate instruments they can reserve a room which is appropriately equipped by Career Services via a link on the video recording page.

Before the video is made visible, it is evaluated by Career Services for quality, both in terms of content as well as technical aspects (for example low audio/video quality) and the candidates may be contacted in order to make a new recording if necessary. The video is closely linked to the electronic CV, and thus it becomes visible to the companies only when Career Services has obtained specific authorization on the part of the candidates to make it visible in connection with a specific internship or job offer. In this phase as well Career Services guarantees the truthfulness and privacy of the information inserted within the portal. The video presentation gives significant dynamism to the CV, allowing selection assistants the possibility to see the candidates directly and appreciate their linguistic abilities. In a similar way, the staff finds the video to be extremely effective in evaluating foreign language abilities, and it is used broadly and with much satisfaction in selections relative to competitions such as Leonardo and Erasmus Student Placement.

Within the section dedicated to work abroad companies have another valuable opportunity; thanks to remote interviewing, they have the possibility to hold an online interview with candidates who have made the best impression. Once these candidates have been identified, companies simply indicate (through a link within the reserved area of the portal) a maximum of three available dates/times to propose an online interview to send to the pre-selected, individual candidates. Candidates are notified of the companies' interest via email and can confirm one of the proposals. Once done, the recording room where the online interview will

take place is reserved. At the end of the interview a member of the staff of Career Services speaks with the company referent for evaluation and feedback of the interview.

## **Dote Formazione and Dote Lavoro**

One best practice regarding the VET sector is the one put into practice from Lombardy Region, with the system “DOTE”, funded through the ESF.

Schooling rates in Lombardy are higher than the national average: according to ISTAT (Italian Institute of Statistics) 17.4% of the population has only an elementary school certificate (national average 20.1%), 42.6% possesses a lower secondary school or vocational qualification (national average 40.9%), and 28.6% has a high school leaving certificate (national average 28.7%) while 11.4% are graduates (national average 10.3%). Vocational courses are offered by about a hundred accredited operators (public and private) all belonging to a Regional Register, and receiving funding of 120 M €/year. The offer is based, however, on only a few traditional qualifications (hairdressing, beauty care, catering, mechanics, electricians, electronics) which count for more than 70% of the courses on offer in the various Lombard provinces.

The system of tokens directed to VET centres (so called “DOTE”) does not intend to simply deliver training services to final beneficiaries but to follow up the individual beneficiary all along his life and it is related to his pathway, in terms of education, training and work: what is interesting now for us are “Dote Lavoro” devoted to job placement, and “Dote Formazione”, devoted to education and training.

“Dote Formazione”, devoted to education and training, consists of resources allocated to potential beneficiaries, in order to guarantee their employability, by reinforcing competences and know-how. It is delivered to individuals requesting it, in order to access Vocational and Educational Training Systems, and stay competitive into the job market by increasing their own competences and abilities. It is declinated in specialization courses or ongoing education, already offered by regional VET centres, which can be integrated with tutoring and traineeships services. The beneficiaries of “Dote formazione” are citizens from Lombardy Region, under 64 y.o. being:

- unemployed, holding bachelor or master degree;
- entrepreneurs of small companies;
- self-employed who exit the job market.

Through the centralized Regional System, “DOTE formazione” is allocated to the most deserving candidates willing to retrain for fostering their employability chances.

“Dote Lavoro” devoted to job placement, is delivered to the worker, in order to get services devoted to the acquisition of competences and job placement. Every worker requiring it is assigned a score corresponding to his difficulty on entering the job market: the most he is facing difficulties, the higher he is financed.

Worker defines, together with specific bodies accredited by Lombardy Region, his personalized intervention path (Piano di Intervento Personalizzato - PIP), which describes in detail all steps he needs to undertake in order to meet agreed objectives, including foreseen services and resources. Worker is supported by a specific tutor and all phases of his path are recorder into the Regional System.

Services foreseen with the personalised intervention path are delivered by:

- Regional operators accredited for the delivery of job services;
- Universities of the Regional University System, legally authorized for delivering educational services within University Masters of I° or II° level;
- Regional operators accredited for the delivery of training services.

Regional operators get funded only once the personalised intervention path has been fully delivered and agreed objectives have been met, guaranteeing the efficiency and effectiveness of the whole path.

## Centro Orientamento LUISS

LUISS - “Libera Università Internazionale degli Studi Sociali Guido Carli” - is an independent university based in Rome, which offers an innovative educational approach, based on instilling flexibility in young people, at its four Departments: Economics and Finance, Business and Management, Law, and Political Science.

The counseling service of LUISS University includes “Career services” and “LUISS @ Companies”.

The “Career Services” is the service which provides to students and graduates valuable support in building their career path and is committed on giving them the right support during their transition from university until they enter the world of work. Such a path is carried out with regular meetings with the staff in charge of career guidance, followed by a careful analysis of both strengths and weaknesses of any student, raising while they approach the world of work.

The “Career Services” Office also aims to promote the employability of students and graduates LUISS, through the collaboration of companies and partner institutions, as well as to promote the active participation of employers on training, retraining and recruitment activities at the universities.

Among the guidance activities of the “Career Services”, the following:

- Promotion of the tools to be used for active job search, identification and enhancement of personal and professional resources, according to market and employment needs,
- Development of self-employment with the construction of a network of personal contacts and through the use of social networks,

- Analysis and improvement of acquired skills (skills assessment) by evaluating the professional profiles related to the attended undergraduate program,
- Implementation of an educational and professional personal development project, through the use of self-marketing tools (Personal Branding)
- Support on the comprehension of corporate recruitment methodologies.

The Career Services organizes advising and counseling meetings, where students and recent graduates can acquire useful tools for appropriately approach the labor market. Such meetings can be:

- Counseling and one-to-one meeting;
- Seminars;
- Personal branding;
- Consultancies on personal biography;
- Meetings with the world of work;
- Promotion of curricular and extra-curricular training activities

As for the “LUISS @ Companies”, it is a free service available for students, to be informed about internships and job offers from Italian and foreign companies and organizations. This service is shaped for graduated students (having both Bachelor and Master Degree) and PhDs. They can access and directly apply through the portal, to job offers and internships daily published.

### 2.1.6 Portugal

In Portugal, besides HEI, we found good practices to promote students employability from private companies and from the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector.

#### Private companies

We found the two initiatives below, promoted by private companies, particularly interesting for their innovative character and for their high potential to produce effective results.

#### *PitchBootcamp - Job accelerator*

Pitch Bootcamp<sup>5</sup> is a two-day program that brings together 120 newly graduated and university students, and 100 companies - Pitch Bootcamp can be organized in different sizes: 30 bootcampers with 15 companies; 100 bootcampers with 50 companies, and so on.

During two days, participants dive into post-its, work and develop of a business model for their career. They improve their skills, get to know their future

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.sparkagency.pt/pitch.php>

employers, learn how to communicate with impact and present to companies in a vivid, furious and empathic atmosphere.

Pitch Bootcamp is a concept by Sparkagency<sup>6</sup> addressed to students looking to anticipate the job market and recently graduates looking for job opportunities. With an average age of 24 years old, students come from Economics, Management, Marketing, Engineering, Health, Programming, Law, Architecture, among other areas. The participating companies are looking to recruit people and being closer to the new generations of talent. Companies recognize the added value of this program and put their best efforts to make it successful. Pitch Bootcamp grant students an intensive contact with CEOs, Human Resource Directors, Marketing Directors, Production Directors and other business professionals from the banking, services, technology, retail, commerce and manufacturing sectors.

This type of event raises students' awareness to understand that their own skills determine the value of their work in a company; allow them to identify their own transferable skills and connect them up to specific experiences and teach them how to present their experiences and skills with measurable results.

It also allows them to understand the differences between companies; the methods used by companies to find talent and how the recruitment works and to understand their value proposition and how they can help the employer.

During the programme students develop efficient communication tools including an improved résumé, crafting their business card, setting up their e-mail signature, developing their presentation and follow-up e-mails, exploring their ambassadors' network and reviewing their online presence through LinkedIn and Facebook.

Pitch Bootcamp is a fully hands-on experience running for two days. The first day is dedicated to training and the second day is reserved for the pitch and presentation to companies.

#### DAY 1: Training

On Day 1 morning the bootcampers:

- Identify life experiences: training, professional experience and other activities that can be used to show talent and value
- Describe each experience using numbers and presenting results
- Identify the strongest employability skills
- Connect skills with life experiences
- Prepare and train a 2 min pitch
- Identify different customer segments and specific customers in each segment

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.sparkagency.pt/index.php>

- Design a value proposition for each segment or specific company

On the end of Day 1, bootcampers welcome 3 invitees from companies, successful professionals and entrepreneurs, to share their career experience and advice. During two hours, in an informal Q&A format, bootcampers discuss:

- Career options and different paths
- What is their job like, in a day-by-day basis
- Which skills are more important for their career progression
- Which skills are more valued by their companies/market
- Other doubts and questions about the world of work

DAY 2: Pitch and presentation to companies

#### COMMUNICATION

The bootcampers develop communication tools:

- Curriculum Vitae
- E-mail signature
- Business card
- Follow-up e-mail
- Presentation e-mail
- LinkedIn profile

#### COMPANIES

The bootcampers have 3 different interactions with the companies:

- Icebreaker
- Pitch
- Open Networking

#### ***CB Talents Academy - Career booster***

CB Talents Academy<sup>7</sup> is an initiative by Cross Border Talents, CBT Global Recruitment Portugal Lda<sup>8</sup>. They provide recent graduates with no IT background a chance to acquire ICT competences that grant them a chance for getting a job in the ICT sector. This same opportunity is available for anyone looking for job opportunities in the ICT sector and is seen as a perfect launching ramp to boost the career of anyone wishing to enter this professional field. CB Talents Academy aims

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.cbtalentsacademy.com/>

<sup>8</sup> [www.cbtalents.com](http://www.cbtalents.com)



to narrow down the skills gap in ICT that is expected in the European labour market during the next few years.

CB Talents Academy provide trainings on how to operate in a wide number of programs and/or IT sectors, from Java, SAP to Microsoft .NET. CB Talents Academy enables everyone to access the vast ICT job opportunities.

In order to do so CB Talents has partnered with some of the best tech companies in the world who are willing to share their expertise and therefore making trainees more appealing to every IT company in the world.

All of this makes CB Talents Academy a pioneer in solving a global skills shortage, helping professionals to quickly understand and adapt to the latest ICT trends, improving their career prospects.

The training programs are handled in part-time and full time schedules. The duration ranges from 180 to 360 hours and ends with a test performed by an external entity. The courses' certificates are aligned with EQF policy and enable a job interview with client from Cross Border Talents. More than 80% of their courses' attendants start a job immediately after successfully concluding our training.

## Vocational Education and Training

In general, Vocational Education and Training (VET) schools are closely linked to local industrial partners. This symbiosis generates clear advantages to all those involved including the pupils, the school and the company.

VET, as practitioner education, takes advantage of several teaching paradigms to promote employability and create links between pupils and employers. These include:

- Job shadowing
- Pupils working during a few hours/day a week while studying; similar to the dual-system used in Germany and being adopted by other EU countries
- Industry labs like Microsoft, Cisco Academy (these are common in HEI) and others more specific where a company installs the equipment they use at a lab in the school

Higher education might benefit from a closer look at the teaching activities of VET aiming to adopt and adapt some of them to the Higher Education sector with benefits for all.



## 2.1.7 Spain

### Employment Agencies

Employment Agencies are non-profit or profit public and private organizations of laboral mediation. Their objective is to find adequate jobs to job seekers, according to their profile and to facilitate to employers the right professional for their requirements and needs. They are coordinated by the Public Employment Services.

To be operative they do not need to be authorized by the Public Services. They are just required to present a responsible declaration to the Public Service of their area. They may offer their services in one region or all the country, they have offices but also on line platforms.

What are the Collaborative Employment Agencies?

In order to collaborate with the Employment Public Services, the Employment Agencies must sign an agreement in which there are established the operational. These agencies are financed by the Employment Services according the agreement signed and they cannot get paid for the services they offer to the users.

## 2.2 Online tools

For a better understanding of the positioning of EDIPUS-DPP and the current standing of the digital portfolio's offers for higher education students we have analyzed which online platforms are available and how are they being used.

### 2.2.1 Austria

#### Woome

In Austria we couldn't really find a similar project which is focusing on academics. But almost the same time the EDIPUS project started; This site came up, it's called *Woome* it aims on pupils, students and young professionals. And it wants, similar to EDIPUS, connect Employers with their future employees.

As for as you can see at the website <http://woome.net/><sup>9</sup>, which is so far only available in German, the project is still not very progressed. So far they are just aiming the Austrian job market and companies. There is also a mentoring programme offered, but it seems to be with costs. Behind the

<sup>9</sup> As you can see on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/woome.net/> they got a little be more active since the last weeks of April. But the outreach is still very small.

Woome - *The Talent Network* stands a company called *Symbiosis Strategy & Branding*<sup>10</sup>.

The impression is this project is, although there are parallels existing, are not aiming the same target group (they are focusing on pupils, students and young professionals, as well as there aren't the same possibilities for creativity as in die DPP as well as there seems to be no international . As well as a lot of the above mentioned points which are a benefit of DPP are as well not included or offered by WooMe.

## Xing

31% of the students in Austria, who answered the survey, mentioned that they already have some kind of an online portfolio. This unexpected high number is probably an outcome of the common use of XING in German speaking countries, which is for sure more frequent than the bigger and international “brother” LinkedIn.

## 2.2.2 Belgium

### LinkedIn

LinkedIn is very popular in Belgium, with approximately two million users. This makes it one of the top-10 most popular LinkedIn country in the world (<http://www.xpats.com/linkedin-counts-2-million-members-belgium>). It also makes LinkedIn the second-most popular social media in the country, beaten only by Facebook but being ahead of Twitter.

According to LinkedIn Talent Solutions Benelux, “Nearly 45% of the Belgian population of business professionals has a profile on LinkedIn.” The most popular sectors are finance and ICT. The most popular employers for LinkedIn are the European Commission, followed by BNP Paribas Fortis and KBC Group. The European Commission is of course not really “Belgian” but rather “European”, a reflection of the above-stated fact that many jobs in the Brussels area are international in character. BNP Paribas Fortis and KBC Group are both banks. (The numbers are from 2014 and the source is the same as the link mentioned in the previous paragraph.)

As described above, LinkedIn is widely perceived as an interesting opportunity especially for students during their last year of study.

During the research for this report, we have not come across any other online digital portfolio.

<sup>10</sup> <http://symbiosis.co.at/> The Company is located in Munich, Salzburg and Vienna

### 2.2.3 Cyprus

National portals in order to support university students to be more employable, while promoting their professional qualifications do not exist in Cyprus as such.

Each University in Cyprus possess their own internal student portals where they upload all necessary information for furthering their students' employability skills, mainly via online seminars, face-to-face workshops, one to one support, e-learning etc. Through their portals they also provide links to job vacancies portals for Cyprus (i.e Ergodotisi<sup>11</sup>, Cyprus jobs<sup>12</sup>), material for CV writing, paper portfolio guidelines and interview representation tips and techniques. However, there is nothing similar to a national Portal or online tools as the proposed Digital Portfolio Portal. There have been some efforts in the field however the system is very "traditional".

As foresaid, one of these efforts, is the **Employability Database**<sup>13</sup> that has been created by the European University of Cyprus, which is a career tool developed to assist young people in their on-going process for education and personal development, identifying programs of study and career choices that leverage individual interests and skills.

In addition, **StudyCyprus.eu**<sup>14</sup> exists, which is a portal that provides information about universities in Cyprus and aboard. It is regularly updated with news from the academic and labour sectors. The portal team also publishes articles about various topics that concern students, i.e on how to write a CV and a cover letter; how to find out what interests them the most; how to use social media as LinkedIn to get access to more employment opportunities etc. In addition, it has a section where students can add classifieds about services they can offer, stuff they are willing to sell and ask for help for their studies.

Overall, in Cyprus the existence of portals directly linked with supporting students to become more employable, enhancing their skills and helping them in the process of creating their own portfolios is limited and poor in content and new ideas. A more traditional approach is currently being followed, which in the digital era will need to change so as to facilitate the aforementioned process.

### 2.2.4 Greece

National portals to support higher education students' employability and promoting their professional qualifications do not exist in Greece as such. Each University possess their own internal student portals where they

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.ergodotisi.com/>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.cyprusjobs.com/jobs/>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.euc.ac.cy/en/career-center/employability-database>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.studycyprus.eu/>

upload all necessary information for furthering their students' employability skills, mainly via online seminars, face-to-face workshops, one to one support, e-learning etc. Through their portals they also provide links to job vacancies portals for Greece (i.e Xrisi Efkeria<sup>15</sup>), material for CV writing, paper portfolio guidelines and interview representation tips and techniques. However, there is nothing similar to a national Portal or online tools as the proposed Digital Portfolio Portal.

On the private sector there are a lot of efforts to cover that gap. The most successful is **100mentors.com**<sup>16</sup>, a company that matches mentors, successful in their field to students who need career or studies advice. The mentors represent a wide range of Universities and top industry organizations and companies.

It is also important to notice the high popularity of social networks that can be used as portfolios, such as **Facebook** and **LinkedIn**.

Overall, in Greece the existence of free portals directly linked with supporting students to become more employable, enhancing their skills and helping them in the process of creating their own portfolios is limited and poor in content and new ideas. A more traditional approach is currently being followed, which in the digital era will need to change so as to facilitate the aforementioned process.

## 2.2.5 Italy

Online portals supporting students' employability are organized in National and International platforms.

### National portals

Those started and operated by national groups to support university students to be more employable, while promoting their professional qualifications:

- a) **Almalaurea** <http://www.almalaurea.it/> is an interuniversity consortium, composed of 72 Italian universities. Since 1994, it has two main purposes:
  - To collect information and evaluations from graduate students in order to improve them employability and to give them more information about the job market.
  - To make available on-line the students' curricula, in order to assist students in finding job offers according their backgrounds.

This is a free tool addressed only to students enrolled or graduated in the Almalaurea network universities.

<sup>15</sup> [www.xe.gr](http://www.xe.gr)

<sup>16</sup> [www.100mentors.com](http://www.100mentors.com)

- b) **InfoPoint** is an information free service provided by universities and addressed to future students, students, graduates, professors, companies, associations, and so on. Tutors are at disposal of students in order to give them both information about universities and support in vocational guidance.
- c) **Jobsoul.it** <https://www.jobsoul.it/> is a free platform that collects job and internship offers and students curricula. The enrolled companies publish job offers. The students enrolled in Universities that have joined the platform (Sapienza University of Rome; Tor Vergata University; Roma Tre University, the Accademia di belle Arti of Rome, Foro Italico University; Libera Università degli Studi Maria Assunta of Rome; University of Tuscia, University of Cassino) make available on-line their CVs. Jobsoul gives four main services both to companies and students:
- To consult a database with of CVs of all the students enrolled;
  - To publish job offers and internships;
  - To support internships administration during the bachelor or the master degree;
  - To organize events where students meet companies.
- d) **Porta Futuro** <https://www.portafuturo.it/> financed by the Province of Rome since 2011, is an innovative and free center that support job seekers, and that both improve vocational and educational guidance. The Porta Futuro staff supports job seekers in writing an effective CV, training for a job interview, consulting job offers and finding a job according to their skills and inclinations. Porta Futuro helps also companies in recruiting potential staff. To sum up, Porta Futuro aim is to match supply and demand in the employment market, not only in Italy but also abroad.
- e) **Unimonitor.com** <http://www.unimonitor.it/tag/unimonitor/> is an Observatory focused in quantitative and qualitative analysis related to development and situation of internships launched in Communication and Social Research Department of Sapienza University of Rome. Unimonitor produces also reports related to the needs of companies and to ideal profiles of job seekers. On its webpage there are many bibliographical references related to universities and placement, which is a useful tool of consultation for students. The service provided is free and entirely on-line.
- f) **ClicLavoro** <http://www.cliclavoro.gov.it/> is a free Portal managed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security where are published and collected students' and job seekers' CVs, job offers, public competitions, projects realized by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security in the field.
- g) **Lavorare.net** <http://www.lavorare.net/> is a free website that addresses both graduated students and generally job seekers. On its website are collected some job opportunities in Italy.
- h) **Primolavoro** <http://www.primolavoro.it/> is a free website where are collected job offers but only for graduated students that are looking for the first job experience.

### Other/International portals:

- 1) EURES - <https://ec.europa.eu/eures/public/en/homepage> The European Job Mobility Portal- is a cooperation network designed to facilitate the free movement of workers within the European Economic Area. It publishes Job vacancies in 31 European countries.
- 2) EURAXES - <http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/Euraxcess> is a European initiative providing access to a complete range of information and support services to researchers wishing to pursue their research careers in Europe. On the portal are published not only all the job offers in Europe, but also services, assistance and advice when people are relocated from a Country to another.

### 2.2.6 Portugal

Through the survey promoted by the EDIPUS project we got answers from 1010 students. From these, 176 are Portuguese.

43 out of 176 (24%) Portuguese students claim to use portfolios (three of them have indicated more than one tool). LinkedIn is by far the most popular platform; 72% of the students claiming to use digital portfolios mentioned LinkedIn. Figure 1 and Figure 2 show the most popular platforms used by Portuguese students to have their digital portfolio online. It is interesting to notice that there are students investing in the development of their online portfolio from scratch, using html their own webpages.



Figure 1 - popular portfolio platforms (Portuguese students)



Figure 2 - popular portfolio platforms other than LinkedIn (Portuguese students)

This distribution is also represented at Table 1 below.

Although our sample is reduced, mainly for certain study areas, it is also of relevance to analyze the popularity and the recognition of digital portfolios by students from distinct study areas. According to the data in Table 2, digital portfolios are more popular in Arts & Humanities and Social Sciences.

Table 1 - online portfolio platforms used by Portuguese students

Tool	N
linkedin	31
behance	4
carbonmade	2
about	1
dropbox	1
facebook	1
html	1
net_empregos	1
seek	1
showcase	1
wix.com	1
youtube	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>

Table 2 - distribution of students per Study Area (N is the total number of students; n is the number of students using digital portfolios)

Study area	N	n	%
Arts & Humanities	7	5	71%
Social Sciences	8	3	38%
Business & Administration	3	1	33%
ICT	3	1	33%
Engineering	143	31	22%
Health	9	2	22%
Education	1		0%
Natural Science	2		0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>24%</b>

Despite the low rate of Portuguese students that keep use digital portfolios (24%) there is a general understanding of their added value.

- 170 (97%) believe a portfolio can help them finding a job.
- 164 (93%) believe a portfolio helps them highlight/showcase their skills.
- 144 (82%) believe a portfolio helps them improve their competences.

These figures are an extra motivation for our work under EDIPUS.

There are several online platforms available for the creation and maintenance of online digital portfolios. Some are directed or adopted by users of specific areas, mainly addressing designers and creative areas, like:

- PortfolioBox <https://www.portfoliobox.net/pt>
- Behance <https://www.behance.net/>
- Dribbble <https://dribbble.com/>

Others are more general website creation platform with portfolio templates, like:

- WordPress <https://wordpress.com/create/>
- Weebly <https://www.weebly.com>
- Wix <http://www.wix.com>

Social networks are also popular and being used for editing portfolios:

- Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/>
- Wikispaces <http://www.wikispaces.com/>
- Visualize.me <http://vizualize.me/>
- LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/>

Others are specific to portfolio edition:

- Carbonmade <https://carbonmade.com/>
- Sumry <https://sumry.me/>

## 2.2.7 Spain

### **E-CURRICULUM.** <http://www.sefcarm.es>

The Regional Government of the Region of Murcia has developed E-curriculum, an online application that allows the matching between the employers and people looking for a job.

The Regional Employment and Training Service-SEF (Servicio Regional de Empleo y Formación) is the responsible of employment policies and public initiatives in the Region of Murcia and agrees with companies the dissemination of their job offers. SEF has built up a tool, a virtual or on line space called “I am looking for a Job” where the job seekers can see the offers and apply for them.

This is an application that allows candidates for a job to introduce, change and update their CV and also their video CV.

For the use of this application the companies have two options. They can access to the candidate’s CV and select directly the most appropriate



candidates for them, or they can delegate SEF Professionals to carry out the selection process.

### **EMPLÉATE.** <https://www.empleate.gob.es/empleo/#/>

The Spanish Employment Ministry offers an employment meeting point where is possible the interaction between job seekers and companies.

*Empléate* is a portal in which participate both, companies and people. There is one part of the portal where any person can register his/her CV and there is also a part which shows all the job offers from companies that have been also registered.

In this portal, the process for the matching is easy but not innovative. The job seekers access to the information showed in the portal and with no any intermediary agent they can connect with the companies and send them their CV. That is all. From the side of the companies, they have also access to the CV and information of all the job seekers registered in the portal, and they have to filter the profile they are looking for in order to simplify the searching of candidates.

*Empleate* offers users the following services:

- To look for a job and show their interest for any offer.
- To create their CV.
- To be registered as a job seeker in order to be introduced the companies.
- To activate alarm that informs them by email or SMS about new offers.

The main feature of this portal is the connection and collaboration with other Spanish and from abroad portals. That allows job seekers and companies to access to the information of a large range of employment online portals just being registered in *Empléate*. In this sense there are agreement with all the Spanish Regional Employment Services but also with some interesting services like TRABAJANDO.COM, HACESFALTA.ORG, JOBANDTALENT, MONSTER, X.TALENTO, TICJOB.ES and UNIVERSIA.

### **STUDENTJOB.** <https://www.studentjob.es/>

StudentJob is a job portal specifically dedicated to the employment needs of students and graduates.

This is a platform with a dynamic and fresh language, and also with a direct message addressed to jobseekers: “StudentJob brings you into direct contact with interesting companies that are looking for temporary, part-time or full-time employees”. Whether you are looking for an internship to

complement your education or a graduate placement to start your career, we have a wide range of opportunities. StudentJob offers a simple way to get into touch with local and international companies, whether to earn money besides your studies or to gain valuable work experience.

StudentJob provides student jobs, summer jobs, internships and starter functions. You can quickly and easily search for the type of job you are looking for. Then you apply in a few clicks and we will send your application directly to the company concerned. You will be easily found by interesting companies. Simple, fast and effective!

A date to take into account is that there are about 600.000 students looking for a job in this platform.

Regarding the employers, this platform offers them the access to young, graduated talent. The company can place and edit its vacancy at any time that will be shown directly in the search results on Google. Guaranteed applications within 24 hours.

### **UNIVERSIA. [www.empleauniversia.es](http://www.empleauniversia.es)**

Universia is the most important Iberoamerican University Network aimed to enhance the social and economic development through the talent, knowledge, applied research and business-university collaboration.

In the frame of that network, Fundación Universia operates as an Employment Agency with the authorization of the Spanish Employment Ministry, what allows this Foundation to be an intermediary agent between the employers and disabled job seekers, to attract disabled people's talent and to advise other institutions.

In that field, Fundación Universia carries out several actions addressed to the companies:

- Collaboration in the analysis and description of jobs according to the capacities and competences needed.
- Employment Offer Management.
- Face to face and online interviews.
- Evaluation reports of candidates.
- Job adaptations and identification of specific needs of user support services.
- Consultancy and information about disabled people hiring.
- Training and Awareness Programme on Social Responsibility and Diversity Management.

**TRABAJANDO.COM** <http://empresas.trabajando.es/empresas/>  
*Trabajando* is a large Iberoamerican network of employment portals present in 11 countries, with more than 1500 partners (companies, universities, professional institutes, chambers of commerce, business associations, local councils, media, etc.) and 115 thousands of job opportunities per month.

Universia joined Trabajando.com and that allowed this company to incorporate the main universities in order to facilitate the employment of university students.

Trabajando.com has also alliances with Chambers of Commerce and Business Associations. This Company says to have a high technology platform that allows these organizations to recruit the most suitable professionals for each job offer.

Moreover, thanks to the corporative platforms, some interesting companies can select the best talents and more different profiles. At the same time, the users can access to a large number of job offers.

So, Trabajando.com is an employment platform but also a platform with several services and software in order to optimize the recruitment and selection process.

These services are the following ones:

a) GPS 3.0 Software of Selection Process

This is a Tailored Employment Portal with the layout of the Company and administration tools.

The User Company publishes any kind of information in that portal, like training programmes, job and internship offers, etc. That information is disseminated in the whole network of employment portals associated to the Spanish Laboral Community Leader.

There is a direct access from the web domain of the user Company in order to use and visualize the platform. That is a domain like: <http://www.employment.company.es>.

It is also offered survey publications, news and interesting articles what provokes a higher interaction between the Company and the candidates.

Regarding the software tools:

- It allows the whole recruitment and selection process administration from the candidate registration to the hiring.
- It has an organized and updated data base with all the candidates. It is possible to save old registers in order to use them in further selection process.
- Administration process by phases and uploading of interviews and psychological test results.
- Coordinated Working Group. Each user has a personal account. All the users accounts are managed by a general administrator.
- 100% tailored according to the Company structure.
- Advance searching tools, filters and e-mail.
- Management reports and process information storage in order to be used in the future.
- Tailored video-interview for the candidates.
- Possibility to do international publications and access to data bases of countries where Trabajando.com has employment portal.

#### b) Corporative Portal

This is an online portal for the reception of talents and CV through the corporative website of the Company, where there is a site called: “Work with Us”. It is a portal with own identity and domain like works.company.es

This Portal has the following tools:

- Unlimited users allocation
- Unlimited job offer publications
- Unlimited candidates acquisition in the data bases of the Laboral Community Trabajando.com and the own data base.
- Questions in the offer publication.
- Questions to the candidates in the registration moment.
- CV reception box.
- CV filter.
- Electronic Agenda.
- Classification and observations to each CV.
- E-mail delivery to register users.
- Portal Statistics

# 3 In-house support to students

At the institutional level, in higher education institutions, the support to students when entering the labour market comes mainly from Career Offices.

## 3.1 Career Office

### 3.1.1 Austria

The career service of the University of Vienna - **UniPort**, offers trainings for students and graduates. They also help with the career planning of young scholars. Like similar institutions the UniPort is staffed with counsellors providing specialized guidance and information to young graduates for their transition from the University to the job market. So they offer trainings for job interviews, submitting applications, writing CVs and motivation statements and help to create personal career plan.

As well as there are offering Recruiting for both job seekers and companies. Companies can send their job profile and UniPort is kind of “Headhunting” for them. So although they are having a job database, there is no possibilities for the Employer/company to look directly for potential candidates.

All in all their offer could be called quite traditional and they are supportive but not using an online tool or database which could be compare with EDIPUS DPP.

### University Career Service - Example: Center for Doctoral Studies University of Vienna

As written in the National report of Cyprus Universities career services are considered as the bond between higher education and the future employment of their university graduates. But still Career counsellors underestimate their role of supporting students to make their career choices, to find appropriate education for furthering their studies according to their interests and to fill out their applications either for traineeship, jobs or grants.

We as the centre for Doctoral Studies offer also workshops (like organization writing techniques, communication skills, presentation techniques etc.<sup>17</sup>) information events as well as consultations for graduates, prae Doc as well as postdocs to help them to plan their further career in or outside academia.

Career officers and counsellors mentioned following challenges in the daily routine:

- Heavy Workload and not enough time
- No proper tools and/or old and outdated technology;
- Limited or no access at all to social media tools and platforms;
- Limited knowledge and understanding of counselling by the managers of the career centres;

### 3.1.2 Belgium

Universities in Belgium have various degrees of support services to their students. This varies very much from university to university; there is no common framework or national-level guidelines on what to do with career support. This can be contrasted with for example accommodation, where there are rules in place.

Career services are therefore done on an ad hoc basis, from universities that realize the importance of finding jobs for recent graduates. Sometimes, for example in VUB (Brussels), the “Vacancy databases” described above are integrated in this service.

For the purpose of this report, an interview was made with the career officer working at Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) in Brussels. The office has been running for approximately five years and during these years gotten more ambitious and better. The feedback it has received from students has been overly positive. It was pointed out during the interview that it is easier to operate in a generally well-functioning job market, such as the one in Flanders/Belgium. The job would most likely be much more difficult to carry out in a country with much higher unemployment for graduates. Still, the career officer found that when it comes to optimizing the entry of newly graduated students in the labor market, it has a very important role to fill.

Although - as pointed out above - the roles of career offices can vary highly from place to place in Belgium, what VUB does is to look at the big picture of a student and his/her career prospects. What is his/her interests? What are his/her strengths in the CV? How can these be highlighted? These questions are looked at and then translated into a good CV and motivation letter. This basic service is the most

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<sup>17</sup> Here you can find the workshop programme in transferable skills offered by the Centre for Doctoral Studies: <https://doktorat.univie.ac.at/en/workshops-and-training/transferable-skills/workshops/>

common one, but there are also workshops, individual coachings, learning how to network etc. which are also looked upon.

Career services are promoted from the first day of the first year and students are welcome to use the services during all this time. However, quite naturally there is a higher interest for the services during the last *year of studies* and also *shortly after graduation*.

### 3.1.3 Cyprus

The role of the Career Advisor/ Counsellor in Cyprus is not clearly defined and qualifications and requirements to enter the profession differ from one occasion to the other. The title “Career Advisor/ Counsellor” in Cyprus is being used for professionals, both in the public and private sectors, who are active within the educational system or dealing with guidance for entering/ re-entering into labour market.

Universities career services are considered as the bond between higher education and the future employment of their university graduates. Career counsellors undertake the role of supporting students to make their career choices, to find appropriate colleges / universities for furthering their studies according to their interests and to fill out their applications either for traineeship or job opportunities linking in this way graduates and potential employers.<sup>18</sup> These offices are staffed with Counsellors providing specialized guidance and information to young graduates for their transition from the University to the job market, on topics such as attending job interviews and submitting applications, drafting their CV and motivation statements and formulating a personal career plan. In addition, they undertake the organization of seminars for writing techniques, communication skills etc., career fairs and company presentations. Career counselling can be offered in various settings, including in groups and individually, in person or by means of digital communication.

Through their expertise in career development and the labour market, they gather a person's qualifications and experiences and identify strengths and weakness in a wider perspective while also considering their desired salary, personal hobbies and interests, location, job market and educational options. They can additionally support graduates in gaining a better understanding of what really matters for them personally, how they can plan their careers autonomously, or help them in making tough decisions and getting through times of crisis, while effectively combating social exclusion and increasing their employability.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Zembyla - Kalli, A. (2007). The National Report for Cyprus. FEDORA Guidance and Counselling in Higher Education in European Union Member States, (p.60-75).

<sup>19</sup> Council of the European Union (October 31, 2008). "Council Resolution on Better Integrating Lifelong Guidance into Lifelong Learning Strategies." (Resolution No. 14398/08 EDUC 241 SOC 607)



Career centres are changing, trying to integrate digital systems so as to provide their students with the skills that will serve them throughout their professional lives - not just in finding their first job upon graduation. The career centres are rolling out a variety of new programs designed to respond to a changing job market and students are in the process of uploading selected information on a database that employers can have access to and search for graduates who match their needs.

University career advisors use various tools for their everyday practices; however these tools are rather outdated. Mainly they use Printed informative material, Presentations, CV preparation guides, Psychometric Tools, Self-awareness and goal-setting tools and tests, Forms for interest, Assessment techniques, Information Material, Professional orientation and social integration assessment tests etc.

The majority of the career advisors identify many obstacles, while performing their everyday tasks, some of which are the following:

- Heavy Workload;
- Lack of time;
- Limited access to proper tools;
- Outdated technology;
- Limited knowledge and understanding of counselling by the managers of the career centers;
- Lack of information on trainings and seminars for advisors;
- Limited access to social media tools and platforms;
- No special tools available for vulnerable groups or students with special needs;
- Heavy bureaucratic process as regards to people with very specific educational backgrounds;

Career centres operate and offer students their services all year round. They do not discriminate among students: even if the students are in their first year of studies they are allowed and urged to visit the services and get counselling for their future career plans; however students in their 3<sup>rd</sup> or final year visit the advisors much more frequently. Usually, the career advisors reach and inform the students either through the internal student portals or by announcements and posters placed throughout the campus for upcoming events, workshops, seminars etc. During these events, experts are being invited to speak to students for matters related either to their field of studies and their opportunities for future employability or by taking a more practical approach to provide them with useful tips and techniques for making their CVs more competitive and how to perform in an interview.



### 3.1.4 Greece

The main connection between students and the labour market in Greece are the Career Offices Universities operate. In addition to that Alumni Associations and Student Unions offer some services of career orientation and assistance.

### 3.1.5 Italy

In order to map the “in-house support to students” offered by Italian Universities to their students and fresh graduates, UNIMED, in collaboration with Fondazione EMBLEMA<sup>20</sup> launched an additional survey to the career officers of Italian Universities. This second survey can be found in annex 1.

From the survey it was determined that career officers are equally focused on placement and vocational guidance, that seminars, workshops, analysis and competencies’ evaluations are frequently organized, as much as to say training activities and simulation of job interviews.

Nevertheless, the career officers reported also that these initiatives have sometimes a limited impact because of bureaucracy and difficulties in communicating with the universities’ departments involved.

Recruiting days, career days, companies meetings and days focused on emerging professions and new competencies are some of the event frequently organised by Italian Universities in order to link potential job seekers with enterprises and recruiters.

Among the services deployed by Universities to find a placement (both internship and jobs) for their students, Career services departments of Italian Universities offer students and alumni database, job posting, services for the arrangement of internships during and after graduation, information and vocational guidance services, services for job mediation, help-desk for self-employment and entrepreneurs, databases where the agreements with companies and institutions are listed.

Generally, career officers publish all the job offers they receive on their available communication channels, mainly their website and social media.

Half of interviewed universities have answered that their placement rate (both internships and jobs) one year after graduation is around 60%.

Students’ most common questions to career officers are related to suggestions to prepare their CV, to obtain a list of companies potentially interested to their profiles, or/and the agreement documents’ list with companies and institutions in order to carry out an internship (especially abroad).

Career officers frequently suggest students to use and create their digital portfolios, as a perfect tool to increase their professional awareness and their competencies in professional guidance.

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<sup>20</sup> <http://www.fondazioneemblema.it/>

### 3.1.6 Portugal

In general, European HEI have Career Offices to provide guidance and support to their students in the transition from education to labour. In Portugal, the first Career Office appeared in 1983 at the Instituto Superior Técnico from the Technical University of Lisbon. The Career Office of ISEP, called ISEP GO, was created in 2001.

As is common at the Career Offices in Portuguese HEI, ISEP GO offers students several activities in three main dimensions:

- Psychological consultation (assistance to students)
- Soft skills (training)
- Career (assistance to students and training)

Consulting psychology is available on request. It is common that undergraduate students experience anxiety and several other challenges related to inter-personal development, integration in the academic life, living alone and away from their families and friends. These are natural effects arising due to the sudden changes that are happening in the students' life while they are still entering their adulthood. Having access to psychologic assistance might be very helpful at this stage. However, students are not very keen to ask for help on these matters.

Soft skills are mainly promoted through training courses and, most recently, seminars directed for students and alumni. ISEP GO promotes several courses, such as:

- Personal marketing
- Emotional intelligence
- Assertiveness
- Personal and time organization
- Communication in public
- Job interview simulation

Career guidance is mainly provided through:

- Vocational orientation
- Psychometric testing
- Revision of CV
- Providing guidelines for career development
- Searching job opportunities online

The ISEP GO Office has two permanent staff members. Around 25% of the students (ISEP has a little below 7000 students) request the support of ISEP GO. ISEP GO staff complaint of the lack of resources.

### 3.1.7 Spain

All the Spanish Universities have a Centre of Employment Information and Guidance which give students career guidance through individual or group interviews.

In the individual ones, the interview is oriented and adapted to the specific needs of each student. The group interview approach is a dynamic discussion that provides answers to the students concern for employment and training.

The objective of these Centres in the universities is to advise university students and degrees in some professional issues like:

- Professional Career choice and planning.
- Professional Opportunities.
- Strategies for searching a job.
- Training Offer.
- Public Employment Offer.
- Business Creation.

In the training field these services offer some workshops with contents and training about Skills or competences that are not taught students:

- Social skills in the professional environment.
- How facilitate the team building and working in group.
- Emotional Intelligence and its application to the labour market.
- Efficient communication and speaking
- Time management.
- Your Professional Success Plan.
- Negotiations skills in the work place.
- Creativity in your job
- Innovation in your daily work
- Your CV: From 1.0 to 2.0
- E-Tools for Personal Productivity
- On line networking
- How to build your personal brand

## 3.2 Other initiatives

### 3.2.1 Belgium

VUB strongly recommends their students to use LinkedIn. They also recommend to have a link to their LinkedIn profile on their “normal” CV. It works well, employers

are interested in it and in the words of the VUB career office staff, “Almost all students use it”.

The biggest obstacle to this seems to be the lack of stable long-term financing. Since there is no government funding it is difficult to find the resources necessary for staff, offices, coaches, workshops, website etc.; this costs plenty of money and was perceived as the biggest difficulty by the VUB career office staff.

### 3.2.2 Cyprus

In general, in house support for students must be designed to provide them with more practical skills which will render them more employable in their search for work. Specific digital tools should be created so as to facilitate both the work of the counsellors as well as to enhance the students' capabilities. Students should be able to keep track of the progress for their career management plans and the future steps for enhancing their professional competences in a more digitalised setting provided by the Institutions of their choice of study.

### 3.2.3 Greece

**Student Unions** often organize seminars and discussions on career orientation in the premises of the Universities in which they operate.

The **Alumni Associations** also provide counselling through events and meetings.

In the University of Piraeus :The International Relations Office is responsible for the management of the relations between the University of Piraeus and its alumni. The Office is responsible for:

- The communication with the alumni and the updating of relevant printed and electronic data
- The creation of information material for the alumni
- The implementation of ceremonies, conferences and lectures of the University in order to develop the alumni relationships with the University.

### 3.2.4 Portugal

Students get also support from **Alumni** and **Students Unions**. The Students Union organizes several events, some of them connected to the labour market like an annual job fair.

At ISEP other initiatives came mainly from teachers that are interested in developing new curricula and/or developing services and tools to promote students employability.

At ISEP each academic semester has 16 teaching weeks. At the Informatics Department, these are divided in two periods. The first period, running during the first 12 weeks, is dedicated to the traditional classes, using traditional teaching/learning paradigms. The last four weeks are reserved for a lab course where students work in teams to develop a solution for a certain problem. This problem is designed in a way to have students applying what they have learned in the previous 12 weeks. This Problem Based Learning or Project Base Learning approach is in accordance with **CDIO** principles to promote students value to labour market. ISEP is a member of CDIO<sup>21</sup>.

Student may also do their capstone project course in an international team by joining the **MUTW** Course. In MUTW students become members of an international team with students from several universities in Europe. These teams have students from different countries and from different study areas to promote intercultural and interdisciplinary experiences. Students meet together on a kick-off meeting and get to know each other and the problem they have to solve. The problem is a real world problem by a company who takes part in the project. Then, students go to their own institutions and work on their tasks during the semester ad cooperating with all the team member using online collaborative platforms. By the end of the semester, students get all together for the second time to prepare a final presentation and to present to the company and to their supervisors the solution that the team has developed. This course is running for seven years now and has had nearly 150 students until now. This paradigm is being streamlined through the Blended AIM<sup>22</sup> project being supported by the EU under the Erasmus+ programme.

Another Europe wide initiative promoted by teachers from ISEP to open the doors of the European labour market to students is **Praxis**<sup>23</sup>. Praxis is a virtual market for project/internships. An online portal where companies and research labs announce their project/internship offers and students search for project/internship opportunities matching their specific needs.

### 3.2.5 Spain

#### Employment Public Services

Professional Guidance offered by Public Employment Services.

The Professional Guidance could be considered as an individual and continuous helping process aimed to facilitate the acquisition of personal, labor and social competences that help people to get or maintain a job enhancing their autonomy and self-knowledges.

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.cdio.org/>

<sup>22</sup> [www.blendedmobility.com](http://www.blendedmobility.com)

<sup>23</sup> [www.praxisnetwork.eu](http://www.praxisnetwork.eu)

Each Spanish Region has its own Employment and Training Public Service which spread their services through several offices located in different municipalities.

There are also some private and public organizations that collaborate with these services as subcontracted institutions.

Anyone who is registered in the Employment Office can be a beneficiary of these kinds of services that support users to elaborate their CV, to develop a job search strategy, to follow a training programme, etc.  
[www.murciaorienta.es](http://www.murciaorienta.es)

Apart from the individual services there also working groups with activities focused to job search, skills and capacities building.

These sessions in groups are designed in order to work on job search issues through the development and acquisition of skills, personal competences and information. It is proved that these sessions are more rich and effective when they are organized in groups.

The users learn how to elaborate their CV, how to define a specific professional project, how to proceed in a job interview, how to manage internet tools. The approach of the working groups is participative with a dynamic that assures that the goals are reached.

In the Region of Murcia it exists “ Portal MURCIA ORIENTA” an initiative that belongs to the VET Plan of the Region of Murcia (years 2004-2009) and also to the 2nd Agreement for the Stable Job.

The initiative consists of an e-platform that integrates the information that all the Employment Public Services manage in order to help users to take right and successful decisions about their professional careers.

This e-platform is also a collaborative space in which are included and participate the career advisers. They offer advice, provide information and documentation and share their experiences and best practices.

In the field of training services, the Employment Public Services offer several workshops like:

- 1.- Job Search in Internet.
- 2.- Resources for the Job Search.
- 3.- Job Interview Dynamic.
- 4.- Guidance for people with special needs.
- 5.- EURES Network.

# 4 Conclusions

In general, few students use online portfolios. Nation-wide platforms, supported by some public or private organization are rare. Nevertheless, there are a few regional tools, mainly in Spain and Italy. The most used platforms Europe-wide are commercial social networks like LinkedIn.

Using portfolios is not a common practice for higher education students despite the fact that they are aware that a portfolio might improve their visibility to the labor market and help them systematizing and showing their professional achievements. In fact, several students mentioned that a portfolio is much more than a tool to find a job that improves ones' professional career.

National online portals, which support university students to be more employable, while promoting their professional qualifications do not really exist so far in Europe.

Most universities have their own internal student portals where they upload all necessary information for furthering their students' employability skills, mainly via online seminars, face-to-face workshops, one to one support, e-learning, etc. Through their portals they also provide links to job vacancies portals for their own country, material for CV writing, guidelines for portfolios and interview and presentation techniques. All in all these websites, doesn't matter from which university or if they are private institutions, are frequently old-fashioned and they are not really at the state of art in case of using social media as supporting tool as it will be offered by DPP.

The situation of the profession of career advisor and counsellor (in Cyprus) and their roles within the Universities and in parallel the existence and development of portals and tools for supporting university students and graduates in becoming more employable is still in an embryonic stage and activities are characterised as very "traditional" and outdated in this digital era, although, there is some investment for upgrading the services, through the introduction of psychological and aptitude testing and the implementation of computerised guidance and counselling systems.

Lifelong learning and guidance policies are yet largely unshaped and the potential contribution of guidance and counselling services in promoting a knowledge-based economy is not sufficiently understood. There are no explicit mechanisms in place to ensure quality standards and practically no nationwide research has been carried out to indicate the needs and students' expectations in the area of career guidance and information within the Universities.



The use of new technologies is not widespread in this field, which constitutes a major obstacle in today's society and labour market, especially with the uptake of social media. Updating the current counselling techniques and material, and introducing new more technologically advanced ICT tools, is a high priority for counsellors due to the fact that this will render their work more efficient and will provide them with the opportunity to reach more students in need of information. There is also the need for the formulation of new tools that correlate to the needs of students who fall within the vulnerable groups.

As far as portals are concerned, the general impression is that there are several options available but also that they should be improved.

One main challenge is a cultural mind-shift, which the EDIPUS Digital Portfolio can promote in order to overtake the existing "fear" of new methods, new practices and new contacts with regards to the recruitment process, towards more flexible, more meritocratic and more cost-effective recruitment patterns.

## 4.1 Opportunities

EDIPUS primary aim is not employment but the self-development of students through portfolio use. None of the platforms that we are aware of addresses the EDIPUS purpose. Our focus is the students, their portfolio development and making portfolios available in a database that employers can then explore to search for candidates for a position.

At the current standing there is a window of opportunity for EDIPUS:

- Students and employers are wishing to have an online portfolio platform/service
- Students are aware of the added value such a platform might have to develop their professional career
- Employers want access to an effective tool for searching candidates
- To the best of our knowledge there is no such platform available online

EDIPUS DPP might be seen as a special gimmick much more interesting and valuable than as only a tool to find a job.

It is difficult to estimate the EDIPUS opportunities in general. On the one hand, the success of LinkedIn suggests that students are interested in online portfolios and its opportunities to match prospective employers and employees. The fact that many students and many employees are international, together with the fact that the students are very young, suggests that students could be open to international initiatives. On the other hand, with LinkedIn firmly established, perhaps it could be difficult to establish EDIPUS. A possible way of doing this could be to firmly stress



the differences and the additional benefits that EDIPUS could bring when the project will be launched.

Private universities are a relevant niche since they are very active looking for and exploring ways to improve the services they offer to their perspective and current students.

The DPP might ease the life of SMEs businessmen by helping them on spending less time on the recruitment phase and by offering them a synthetic and at the same time broaden enough overview of the candidate profile. This way, SMEs businessmen can feel safe on taking the risk of choosing by themselves new candidates, rather than relying on network's connections and filtering.

From the point of view of the employers wishing to disseminate their job offers, in many cases, there is not an added value for the use of one specific platform. Although there are some exceptions, such as "Trabajando.com", where the companies can find additional services like the corporative portal that enhance the brand and image of the company and also its presence in the labour market, this is still a relevant factor to promote the interest of employers in the tool.

No specifications about finding the right job seeker for the company's needs have been found, so it is also an additional value and service that EDIPUS could implement.

For the students and university graduates there are not experiences about the implementation of innovative CV supported by a digital portfolio. EDIPUS project could be the opportunity to make the job seeker's CV more flexible and adaptable to the profile of the students. It is important that the students and university graduates know what the companies want or are looking for in order to design their CV according to these requirements of the companies.

Finally, a more innovative platform could help also to the organizations that offer employment services and career guidance to students and university graduates. They will improve their activities and outcomes when they have access to a more flexible employment digital portal. So it is important to know their opinion and experience with the use of the current tools and the design of a new one more innovative.

## 4.2 Recommendations

In general, there is a long way to go so as to improve the counselling and guidance services provided within the Universities. At a high level, several measures might improve the impact of higher education students' guidance services:

- Medium to long-term measures are needed to address the current heavy workload of the professionals, in combination with the provision of specialised trainings
- The development of ICT tools and courses based on new, innovative and easy to use technologies would assist the professionals in the field when performing their everyday tasks
- In addition, the formulation of a more defined legal framework and the systematic provision of educational opportunities linked to counselling techniques are needed for the amelioration of the overall career counselling and guidance systems.

Several activities are required to put EDIPUS DPP to the service of HEI:

- have a beta version of the Digital Portfolio Portal platform available online in a short time period
- have a controlled users group testing it during some time and taking notes on the require corrections/improvements
- in the meanwhile, create a bootstrap group of students (let's say 20 per partner) that will load their portfolios to the final version before going alive
- deploy the definite version and load it with the portfolios from the bootstrap group and launch it online
- promote through partners networks of contacts and EU channels
- firmly stress the differences and the additional benefits that EDIPUS could bring

A broad user base (both students and employers) is a critical success factor, thus dissemination (at local level and through online channels, like Facebook and others) becomes a core activity.

A main recommendation is to benchmark and start from already existing good practices and online tools making them systematized and scalable. This way, by sharing positive examples, mutual contamination arises to the benefit of both employers and job seekers.