

**Promoting Accessible Social Dialogue and Innovative  
Training Practices:  
Towards an Information Society for All**

**SDV-NETJOB  
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**PROJECT FINAL REPORT**

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**WP4  
ANNEX 4**

**Evaluation of the  
NetJob Transfer**

This report is also available online at  
[http://www.socialdialogue.net/en/en\\_results.htm](http://www.socialdialogue.net/en/en_results.htm)

**Abstract:**

This report gives an evaluation of the SDV NetJob Vocational Training Scheme transfer (from Denmark to Greece) from two different angles. First it examines the transfer from a macro perspective, discussing the actions, causes and effects from the viewpoint of the overall project management. Secondly, it reviews the transfer process from the perspective of WP4 - the hands-on level of the project - reflecting the actual transfer and the implementation of the NetJob concept in Greece. In conclusion, recommendations are given for possible future transfer of similar training programmes.

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## ***1. Executive Summary***

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This report gives an evaluation of the SDV NetJob transfer from two different angles – from a macro perspective, discussing the actions, causes and effects from the angle of the overall project management. Furthermore, we will be viewing the process from the perspective of WP4 – the hands-on level of the project reflecting the actual transfer and the implementation of the NetJob concept in Greece.

The report contains an introduction giving an overall discussion of target achievement. Next, the report goes into details with three parts of the WP4 project: Organisation, Resources and Methods. Finally, we want to pass on our experiences from the WP4 project to future projects of this kind and point out some recommendations.

In this context, we would like to stress that this evaluation report only includes the project process as it has been evaluated by the Danish Centre (DC)-NetJob participants, with additional input from the Greek project team. The more detailed *A.4.1 NetJob Hellas Main Report* gives a comprehensive description of the design and implementation of the NetJob Hellas programme.

In Greece, the project implementation has been evaluated by the NetJob Hellas trainees themselves and by their traineeship companies in Athens, using translated versions of the questionnaires which are normally used in Denmark after a NetJob training course has been completed. These results are contained in Report A.4.1.

## 2. Introduction

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The writers of this evaluation report are placed at the senior consultant level at NetJob in Denmark. We have been active participants in the project process and implantation of the NetJob model in Greece, both having the role of WP4 project manager at different times during the project period. It is important to bear this in mind when reading the report as it will be reflecting the view and expectations of the Danish side of the SDV-NetJob transfer. Thus, the conclusions in this report are subjective, but – hopefully – thoroughly accounted for and explained. They should be seen in connection with a similar report from the SDV-NetJob project organisation in order to give the reader a full picture of the transfer process.

In the following chapters we will be discussing the SDV NetJob transfer from two different angles – from a macro perspective, discussing the actions, causes and effects from the angle of the overall project management, or in other words, at Steering Committee level. Furthermore, we will be viewing the process from the perspective of WP4 – the hands-on level of the project reflecting the actual transfer and the implementation of the NetJob concept in Greece. It is important to keep this distinction clear when evaluating and concluding on the transfer process as the various project levels have been clearly separated during the project period, but have also had an undeniable impact on each other. When making recommendations for other similar projects it is important to bear distinction of the two levels in mind, but also to bear in mind the important interdependence of the two levels.

### 2.1 Target And Target Achievement - Did The Netjob Model And Philosophy Survive The Transfer?

The project description and layout was of course defined at the macro level, including the description of WP4 – the actual NetJob transfer process. It is our impression that the description was written by highly skilled people with profound project experience. However, it is also our impression that the in-depth knowledge of the NetJob concept was lacking at this stage of the project. The consequence being that a shared understanding of the concept on an overall level was never really achieved by the project partners involved in Greece. It has, no doubt, had consequences on the implementing level (WP4) of the project and it has also had an impact on the core concept. The way we see it there is a big difference between *adapting a concept to another cultural setting* and *exporting an overall idea of a education programme* to another country and then waiting to see what comes out of it in the end.

To illustrate the above issue, we refer to the Greek Implementation report<sup>1</sup> where it is stated that the “..target of the NetJob Hellas Project was to transfer some principles of the educational system for people with disabilities promoted by the Danish NetJob and which was success...”. According to the Greek participants the aim of the project process was to “transfer some principles” – not to transfer the entire concept, or model.

The degree of general acceptance of a core concept from the project partners has been very determining for the possibilities at the implementing level of the project as well as for the co-operation at the micro level. We question whether enough energy and resources were put in to creating a common understanding of the core NetJob concept and of a shared goal for the transfer process and the expectations and responsibilities of the project partners from Denmark and from Greece.

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<sup>1</sup> See: A.4.1 NetJob Hellas Main Report, Part I – Background for the Project , NetJob Hellas’ Project History [www.socialdialogue.net](http://www.socialdialogue.net)

## **3. Organisation**

### **3.1 Ownership**

A Greek sense of ownership of the model was at the core of the criteria for success for the whole project and for a successful transfer of the model from Denmark to Greece. The fact that the Greek partners achieved a basic understanding of the model, were able to see the possibilities in relation to a transfer and were motivated to use the tools presented in the model were prerequisites for at transfer of the model as a whole.

That is why it was important from the very beginning to focus on creating this Greek sense of ownership of NetJob Hellas. We tried actively to support this process through a number of actions: A project kick-off, involvement of the end users of the model and workshops.

In the following sections the various aspects will be described and evaluated in relation to the way in which they affected the concept of ownership throughout the project period and what other consequences have occurred.

### **3.2 Project Establishing/Formation**

#### **3.2.1 Project Formulation**

In an ideal world all future project partners would work together to develop and describe the project. Doing it this way the main project idea would be "sold" to all the partners from the very beginning and the partners would all have a stake in the project process and results. In other words, ownership would be secured.

Unfortunately, that was not the case for WP4. The initial project owners, who wrote the grant application, were very competent project and process resources, but were not part of the everyday lives of the participating organisations, who would later implement the project. They initially contacted various organisations during the process of formulating the project and presented their ideas to the possible participants. However, the organisations did not themselves contribute input and ideas of their own. In our opinion this method influenced the future project process in the way that the project partners did not establish the proper sense of ownership of the project ideas and methods from the beginning.

In our opinion this fact – that the initial project owners, writing the project description, were not part of the project partner organisations – has been an impediment for the project as a whole and for the various WPs in particular. In relation to WP4 it has meant that management from the project partner organisations were lacking in knowledge about the main project ideas and in acceptance of the goal for the transfer process and the development of a NetJob Hellas. The management of the three Greek project partner organisations participating in WP4 have had difficulties understanding the requirements and the demands which should have been explicitly described in a project description. Unfortunately, these requirements and demands were not presented until after the project had formally begun.

As an example, the Greek project participants did not have the back-up of their organisations to travel to Denmark as part of the transfer process. Furthermore, it was not possible to form a single, common NetJob Hellas organisation in Greece, where both trainees, project management and project workers shared common facilities, thus ensuring a daily exchange of knowledge and ideas.

In our opinion it would have been ideal if the organisations had been invited to participate more actively in formulating the project – even in the form of delegation of the description of various parts of the project process.

### **3.2.2 Kick-Off**

The DC initially tried to create the best possible starting point for developing a sense of ownership of the NetJob transfer by arranging a project kick-off. The goal of this kick-off was to gather both the people who had originally developed the NetJob model and the people who would be using the NetJob model in order to create a common understanding of the project idea and of the transfer process.

Consequently, a common kick-off was arranged only one week into the formal project period. The event took place in a positive atmosphere and the various project participants were introduced to one another and introduced their competences in relation to the project. Everyone expressed both enthusiasm and a sense of ownership in relation to the future cooperation.

One point of concern in relation to the kick-off was, however, that it was not prioritised to go into an in-depth discussion about the WP-level issues. In other words, to discuss in detail the basis of the project and to establish a common understanding of the overall goal of the project and of the goals within the specific WP. The theme of the meeting was of a much more general nature and therefore we think the event had only a limited outcome for the participants.

Specifically, this beginning meant that we did not discover until much later that there were in fact two different understandings of the goal of the project – a Greek version and a Danish version (see also above section 3. Target and target achievement). The Greek participants had the expectation that they were to implement a “Greek handicap training programme inspired by a Danish model” while the Danish participants had the expectation of a more stringent “Model transfer”. Only later did we attempt to correct this discrepancy, e.g. by arranging a “start-up workshop”, which for various reasons was not possible to carry out.

In conclusion we think that the kick-off worked very well as a method for developing ownership, but that unfortunately the ownerships the Danish and the Greek participants did develop were not concurrent with each other.

### **3.2.3 Involvement of the Greek Partners**

It was the DC’s intention and strategy to involve the Greek project participants from the beginning of the project – starting with the kick-off. Furthermore, Train-the-trainer courses were arranged and held as workshops in order to support the exchange of knowledge between the DC and the Greek partners. The aim was to involve all existing experiences and knowledge in the field to be able to adapt the NetJob model to a Greek context.

It was successful in the way that the Greek participants would correct the NetJob model during the workshops in the areas where the model deviated too much from the Greek common practice. E.g. the number of traineeship periods was reduced from three to two to make the concept more attractive to Greek companies. It was also possible for the Greek participants to introduce new competences which were not standard to the NetJob programmes in Denmark. E.g. the Greek participants have applied a much more psychological approach to their work developing the trainees’ personal and social skills.

It is our opinion that the strong effort to involve the Greek participants has been a successful strategy. It has created a Greek sense of ownership of NetJob Hellas, which has very much become a Greek product. The Greek participants have been very independent in the sense that they have organised and managed NetJob Hellas more or less without help or guidance from the Danish project participants.

The only reservation we may have in relation to establishing ownership is that it took a considerable period of time to actually involve the Greek participants. This is primarily due to the fact that Greek staff were replaced during the first six months of the project period making it time consuming to establish the Greek WP4 project organisation.

### 3.3 Project Organisation

The NetJob Hellas organisation was constituted by employees from the three different partner organisations: MZO, IKE and Interface. They had to work out amongst themselves how to distribute the responsibility and the tasks of the project and to secure proper project management of NetJob Hellas.

When establishing the NetJob Hellas project organisation the first task was to negotiate the different roles and responsibilities. The Greek partners had to spend time exploring the competencies available within their organisations and as a result they found out that they needed certain competences, which is why new people were employed for the NetJob Hellas organisation.

The end result – the NetJob Hellas organisation – was an organisation divided into three. The division is most noticeable when it comes to the office and class room facilities. NetJob Hellas has not been resident at one single location during the entire project period, but has rather been moving from one location to another during the period of recruiting and training the trainees, residing at two different places (and a third location, when Interface moved its entire operation into new work premises) . Local coordinators have been assigned to the project at each different organisation.

Apart from this logistical issue the NetJob Hellas organisation has been fairly similar to the original NetJob organisation in Denmark. It consisted of a project manager, trainers, job consultants, and educational co-ordinators. It is our impression that the project manager and the project participants have had the competences necessary to perform their tasks very successfully.

However, the report about the Greek implementation process supports our impression that the basic common understanding of project management is lacking. DC obviously did not succeed in conveying the Danish idea of an organisational structure to the Greek partners. The idea that an organisation is an entity sharing daily routines, rooms and other facilities. By this we mean that it would have been ideal to have one continuous project organisation, sharing offices and everyday working life to enable the project manager to act proactively when dealing with the various aspects of the implementation process.

### 3.4 Project Management

The project management of WP4 was placed with the DC, as the “owner” of the original NetJob model. The intention clearly was for the DC to manage the transfer process and to be involved on a continuing basis throughout the project, in the role of consultant. In reality this did not happen.

As the financial basis for an outplacement to Greece was not present the WP4 project manager was based in Denmark. This of course meant, that the project manager was only

involved in the overall planning of NetJob Hellas, but not in the more practical aspects of the implementation and the ongoing development of the NetJob method. The consequence is that even if the Greek project partners have followed the overall phases of the original NetJob model it is now clear that they have primarily applied their existing experiences from the world of social workers, occupational therapists and psychologists, whereas the NetJob model is based on a very strong link to the methodology and terminology of private companies. Therefore the DC has not been influencing the methodological development of NetJob Hellas, as originally intended by the WP4 management.

Our conclusion is that long distance project management has had a negative effect on the exchange of knowledge and experiences between Denmark and Greece. The exchange has been far less effective than expected. To compensate for this long distance project management the DC offered consultancy in relation to the methodological decisions and choices which the Greek participants were facing. However we do not think NetJob Hellas has fully taken advantage of this possibility, and we conclude that the Greek managers have not experienced a need to consult the original NetJob method during the implementation process.

We believe the same lack of exchange of knowledge has been an issue in relation to the internal project management of NetJob Hellas. We say this without any documented evidence that the Greek partners have experienced this as a problem. However, we believe that choosing an organisational design where the organisation is in effect divided into three parallel organisations, not all being at the same location as the other project participants and the trainees, sharing of knowledge is not encouraged.

The low degree of management, or rather the distance to project management, has resulted in a relatively low degree of exchange of ideas, methods and knowledge between the DC and the Greek partners, but also between the Greek partners forming the NetJob Hellas project organisation. Every person has had his or her own area of responsibility and it has been very difficult to achieve any effect of synergy, that might otherwise have been one of the benefits if each project partner had been more actively involved in the day-to-day decision process.

Overall we think that long distance project management reduces the area of project management to a risky and unreliable task. When the project participants are highly competent and self motivating everything is running seemingly smooth – as has been the case in this project where the project task at hand has been carried out successfully. However, we would not recommend this structure for future transfers of the NetJob model.

### **3.5 Participating Companies**

The knowledge we have about the Greek companies comes mainly from the evaluation based on the evaluation questionnaires filled out after the end of the training programme. The company responses in these questionnaires indicate that the reasons for Greek companies to participate in a programme like NetJob Hellas are very similar to the reasons for Danish company involvement.

On a more practical level it was attempted to involve Danish companies with subsidiaries in Greece to try to find traineeship companies this way. The DC wrote an initial letter inviting the companies to an information meeting in the Danish Institute in Athens, but only one company responded. Subsequently, phone calls were made to all the companies, but with the same result; no Danish companies or their subsidiaries in Greece would commit to the project.

WP4: NetJob Training Transfer Scheme

ANNEX 4: Evaluation of the NetJob Vocational Training Scheme Transfer

In the end, the most effective way to find the necessary companies for the traineeships was through the Greek participants' existing networks. They were, in fact, very successful in arranging the traineeships very quickly compared with the Danish experiences in the area of establishing company contact and involvement.

## 4. Resources

### 4.1 Time

A well known, basic condition for long term projects is the fact that the project organisation will change over time. People will leave the project and be replaced by others. This poses a threat to the continuity of the project and makes it very important for project management to keep the overall goal of the project in mind throughout the project period. Furthermore, it becomes challenging to keep knowledge and new learning within the project organisation – it tends to leave the project along with the project participants unless a very structured documentation is done on an ongoing basis.

Specifically we find that too many different employees have been working on the project implementation. The consequence has been that knowledge is lost over time because events are not sufficiently documented in writing. Every time a person leaves the project knowledge is lost. It is a very real problem when evaluating the project implementation and the project process. The project implementation has been evaluated by trainees and by traineeship companies in the evaluation questionnaires. The project process has been evaluated by the DC participants but not by the NetJob Hellas participants because several of the project participants have left the project before evaluating it.

### 4.2 Money

When planning/budgeting the project finances it was a condition that the project partners would receive the financial contribution for the *partner organisation*. The *working project organisation NetJob Hellas* – consisting of employees from three different organisations – would not receive the contributions 'en bloc' for the work carried out. We think that this setup often resulted in the fact that the various Greek employees working with the implementation of NetJob Hellas did not always have the necessary backing from their parent organisation to travel or use the sufficient time on the project.

If the project organisation had its own funding, independent of the partner organisations, we believe that the employees actually working on the project would have had much better working conditions in terms of putting the work necessary into the project at the appropriate time. This would be worth considering for future projects of a similar nature. Another financial issue, which has been mentioned earlier is the lack of trainee "salary" in the project budget. At one point during the project period it was a point of great concern for the Greek project participants. Luckily, it was possible to move funding from one account in the budget to another, thus freeing money to pay the trainees.

### 4.3 Knowledge

#### 4.3.1 Individual Knowledge

We have experienced that much of the knowledge used and generated in the NetJob Transfer process has been held by individuals. Therefore the project has been vulnerable each time personnel has left the project and been replaced by new employees. Through the last six months of the project many of the key project participants - among others the Greek project manager – have left the project. Much of their knowledge has not been documented or passed on to new participants. In reality their knowledge is lost and has had to be reconstructed through interviews etc.

Throughout the project period the Greek organisation has been run very professionally by very self-motivated employees. Because of this there has been a positive development of responsibility towards the tasks carried out. However, this independence has had

disadvantages, too. E.g. there have been no explicit, common routines worked out among the three Greek partner organisations. This means that the level of documentation has not been sufficient for us to be able to fully assess which possible new routines NetJob Hellas has developed in the fields of co-operation, decision making and distribution of information between the three organisations.

On a more overall level of the project we believe that it would have been an advantage for WP4 to have a stronger representation of business and industry in the project management. For WP4 in particular, this would have given easier access to knowledge about the Greek IT business and maybe even commitment from companies beforehand to recruit some of the trainees from the project. The companies could also have taken part in the recruitment process, making sure that the match between the trainee and the company was based on mutual involvement rather than simply the possible wishes of the trainees and the network of the Greek project participants.

#### **4.4 Logistics**

A major challenge in the project has been the international aspect. It is very difficult to communicate effectively with a long distance between the communicating parties. We have had to rely heavily on email and telephone communication and it is our experience that it is far from sufficient. The communication in particular and the target achievement of the project in general would have benefited from a larger number of travels between Greece and Denmark.

Each time the project participants did meet time was spent on getting re-acquainted and establishing what the status of the implementation was, rather than being able to deal with the more methodological issues of the project and exchange of ideas and experience.

Furthermore, communication conducted mainly via email and telephone is very sensitive to the language abilities of all the participants. Communication is very often disturbed by inaccurate language which misses the nuances the participants would normally use and by sheer misunderstanding. The level of documentation in a project where documentation must be in a third language will always be a time consuming task with low priority.

Finally, it is our impression that the Greek project participants were facing serious logistical challenges in relation to accessibility, in particular when trying to find traineeship companies for the trainees. Seeing that it is not possible in Greece to have public funding for adaptations of the workplace we suggest that the accessibility issue is taken into consideration when planning the budget for future projects.

## 5. Method

### 5.1 More Specialised Knowledge

Something new to the NetJob method was the NetJob Hellas use of psychologists to perform tests for recruitment and coaching of the trainees (formally the job consultant function). The trainees received "trainee support" in the form of group sessions and individual session with the psychologists.

This indicates a difference in the general approach between the Greek and the Danish way of organising the project organisation. In Denmark, for instance, project managers, trainers and coordinators have all been involved in teaching and coaching activities, the division of labour has been much more stringent in Greece. There they have chosen a model which is based more on specialisation.

The high degree of specialisation which has been characteristic for the Greek organisation is an important deviation from the original NetJob model. It is difficult for us to determine whether this has had a positive or a negative effect on the trainees or the trainee companies. However, we could argue that the use of psychologists to the extent that we have seen it in NetJob Hellas will enhance the focus on "treatment" and "therapy", which is not true to the original NetJob concept. An example of this mechanism is the recruitment process. With NetJob Hellas the process did not consist of a written application and a following "job" interview as the procedure goes in any ordinary company recruitment process. In Greece the application was an in-depth application form which the applicants filled out just prior to a long interview conducted primarily by "therapists", assessing psychological qualities more than evaluating the potential and skills for working in the IT business. This has been commented on by some of the trainees in the Greek evaluation questionnaires.

This leads to a general discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of specialisation vs. integrated organisation – a discussion which is not relevant in this context. All we want to point out is that the Greek method of implementation in this area is the result of the competences and profiles available in Greece at the time and not a consequence of the NetJob model as such.

### 5.2 Less Focus on IT Business

NetJob Hellas mainly recruited their project participants from the group of their existing employees. Almost every participant had a background as a therapist within different fields of experience. This meant that they had a very good background to be able to assess which structural and cultural ground rules the project had to fit into in terms of the Greek rehabilitation system.

This knowledge has been a particular advantage for the trainees. E.g. the Greek project participants took the initiative to find a solution to the problem that the project had not initially provided for a subsistence allowance for the trainees as part of the project budget. It was obvious that the fact that the trainees would receive money from the project as a reward for their work in the traineeship companies was an important incentive and motivational factor for them to finish the NetJob Hellas course as opposed to look for other training courses.

But despite the advantages for the trainees we also believe that something important has been omitted in the recruitment process. In Denmark the NetJob organisation itself has very good experience recruiting employees to its staff from the IT business: both IT project managers and IT developers.

WP4: NetJob Training Transfer Scheme

ANNEX 4: Evaluation of the NetJob Vocational Training Scheme Transfer

The employees from the IT business have an in depth knowledge of the working culture that the trainees will be facing during their traineeships. First, the employee are able to prepare the trainees specifically for the IT jobs they are training for. Secondly, it is far easier for employees with experience from the IT business to communicate with the IT companies about the trainees and also to see the possibilities for the trainees in the companies.

## **6. Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **6.1 Target Achievement**

The result of the project was evaluated positively by the trainees and by the traineeship companies, and we really think that NetJob Hellas is a project worth repeating. Five trainees have ordinary jobs after the training programme – which no one believed was possible, before the project began. Furthermore, two additional trainees were offered employment on ordinary terms, but refused the offer. It would be very interesting to look more into the reasons for these refusals, but unfortunately, we have to rely on the answers from the questionnaires which offer very little explanation of the reasons for the trainees' choices.

One student explains that he or she felt the offer was only an act of pity, seeing that he or she knew the employer personally. Therefore it was undignified to take the position. It is interesting that the issue of pride is so important a factor to the trainee that it prevents him or her from taking a job that might be the stepping stone to something else (less undignified?). It is especially interesting as it is an issue that thousands of us are facing every day – physical disability or no physical disability – that we use our network and personal contacts to advance in the world. *"It may not be my first choice when it comes to ways of getting a job, but it will create the chance that I need to be able to get the job that I really want. So I'll accept it as a step on the way."*

At NetJob in Denmark we stress the importance of networking to our trainees, since recruiting from a network rather than advertising is becoming increasingly common in Denmark. At a first glance, it surprises us that a trainee would feel they can afford to decline a job offer on the basis of pride, ethics or convenience like that.

### **6.2 Transfer of Knowledge**

We also think that the WP4, along with the other WPs of the SDV-project, have been a unique chance to exchange and spread knowledge about the existing political possibilities in the field of integrating physically disabled people into the work force. It is a forum which only existed during the project period for the exchange of knowledge about culture, social and political aspects, which potentially spread to a much wider circle of people and organisations – e.g. through the creation of [www.socialdialogue.net](http://www.socialdialogue.net).

It is a unique opportunity to learn and develop both existing and new methods. The Danish WP4 participants have been very excited to see the many new ways in which the training programme was implemented in Greece and what the result would be. For instance we have often discussed the pros and cons of employing a psychologist to participate in the coaching of our trainees. One of the really difficult tasks for NetJob in Denmark.

### **6.3 Recommendations for Future Projects**

For future projects we have learned a lot from the SDV project.

We would recommend that for future projects professionals from the IT business should be involved in the project planning process at a very early stage. We believe that it would have been possible to achieve the involvement of Danish companies in Greece in the project if the contact had been made at an earlier stage of the project. It would also have been an advantage if the resources had been allocated to have Danish project participants sent to Athens to meet with the individual companies and "sell" the NetJob model face to face. As a bonus the presence of professionals from IT companies would have ensured that the focus would be more on integration into the work force rather than training physically disabled people. This would have been more true to the original NetJob model.