

WP5/D5.10
WP5/D5.11



docent
doctors in enterprise

**Evaluation report on implementation
(Deliverable 10)
and final evaluation report
(Deliverable 11)**

Edited by Fundeun

DOCENT PROJECT EVALUATION – WP5

Evaluation report on implementation

(Deliverable 10)

and final evaluation report

(Deliverable 11)

The evaluation in DOCENT Project is actively integrated in all phases of the Project, so the evaluation activities start from the beginning of the project (WP1). This report explains the methodology used in the Evaluation of Docent Project (WP5) and shows the data related to the project development according to criteria such as the progress, improvement or partners satisfaction for the results achieved and working methods used. Besides it collects a summary of all interim results and adds the partnership evaluation about the effectiveness and efficiency of the results.

METHODOLOGY:

- INTERNAL EVALUATION

For the internal evaluation we foresee 4 steps that correspond to the four deliverables of the project (deliverables n. 8, 9, 10, 11).

With the words “internal evaluation” we mean an evaluation that is based on **processes**, and for this reason, is continuous during the (whole project) cycle, including all the phases of work. It is fundamentally formative in that it aims to fine tune and adapt the working context. It is aimed to facilitate the integration of suggestions put forward to improve the project.

The method of internal evaluation incorporated within the project is the following:

- data collected through methods and techniques designed specifically for each step of evaluation plan
- analysis of the data collected
- a report drawn up for the evaluation of each phase (deliverables n. 8, 9, 10, 11)
- sharing and discussing the report among the DOCENT partners.

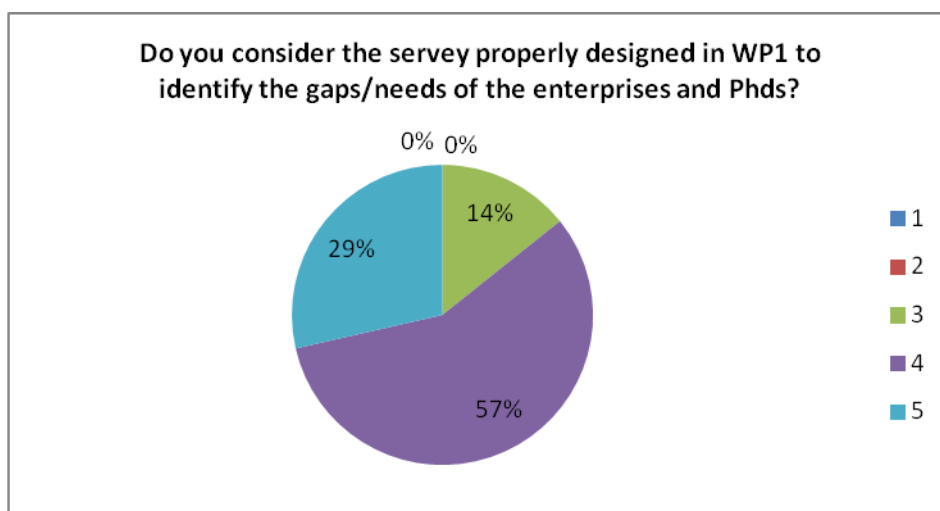


TOOLS:

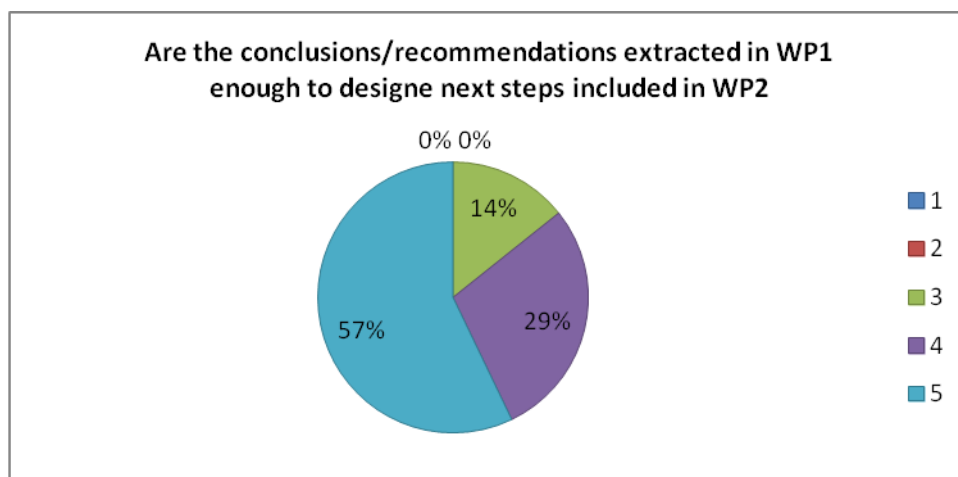
FUNDEUN, as responsible of WP5, designed a form directed to Aster, Fundeun, University of Modena, University of Malta, CRAC, COEPA and Cofindustria Emilia-Romagna in order to extract conclusions about the processes related to WP1, WP2 and WP3 in order to assess the results achieved. The form, that is part of the present report in annex 1, included close-questions and open-questions.

These were the answers to this form:

1.



2.



3. **What things would you change in WP1?**

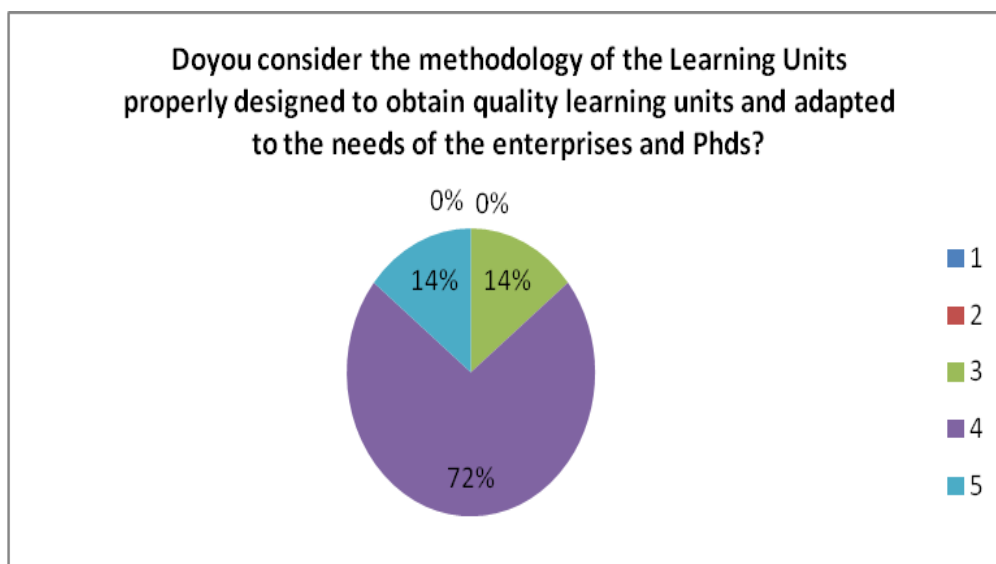
- ✓ Nothing relevant. We think that the activity develop in WP1 has been consistent with the foreseen outcomes.
- ✓ There were some initial challenges in working together which were identified and improved on after the first WP5 discussion. Having 4 partners contributing directly

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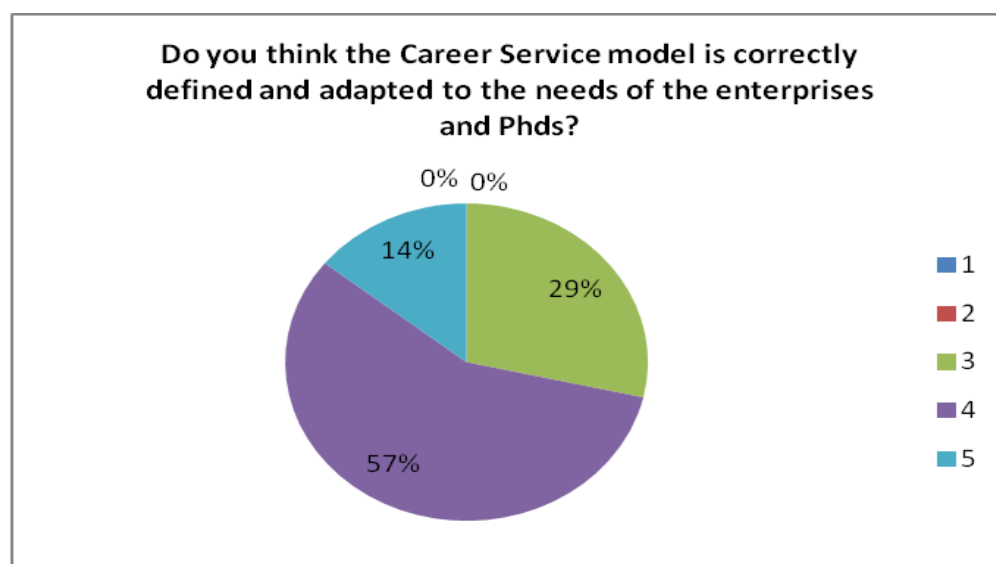


to the background report was challenging in terms of the time needed to unify style, level of content, language etc. but it was probably a better report for having input from more than one perspective.

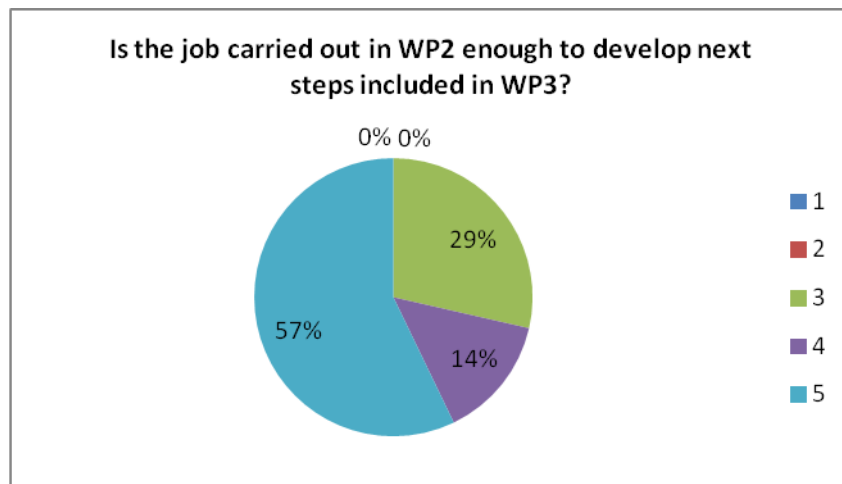
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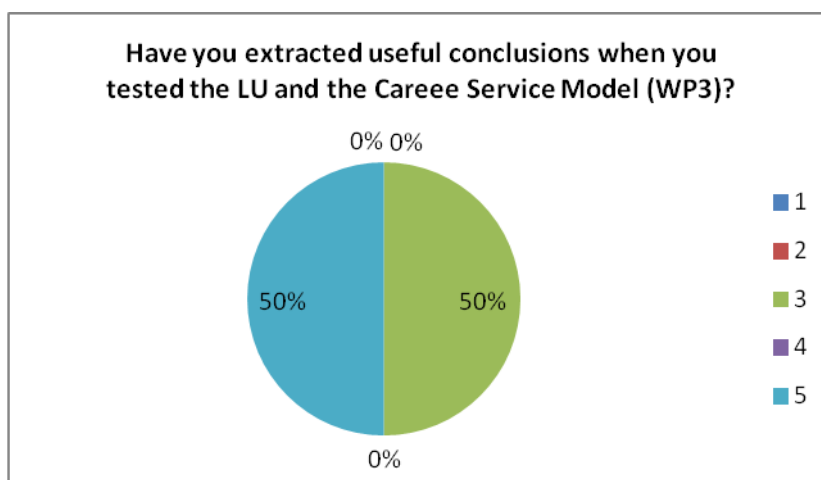


7. What things would you change in WP2?

- Nothing relevant. The effort was really stronger than foreseen in the project design. The partners have worked hard in this phase but this effort has been rewarded thanks the good results achieved.
- I don't feel that we spent sufficient time initially agreeing the focus of the learning units or the purpose of the careers service model. It was all done hastily and then we had to consider those questions later – especially for the careers services model.
- A business plan for the take up of the career service is of paramount importance overall to give input to transferability of the service. Furthermore business model likely to be offered from a university office or to a Regional office providing the service for all the PhD candidates at regional level. Either this office could be hosted in enterprise associations, so a chapter about business model could be a tangible and practical adds-on. Regarding the LU the lack of discussion on the IPR framework for using, disseminating the LU can hinder the transfer of results and their use and re-use. IPR issues need to be addressed ranging from copyrights up to creative commons licences.
- Proof of reading of LUs should be performed accurately. Mistakes are still present.
- No analysis on correlations can be done neither data harmonized eg because the very different PhD school naming so comparative approach cannot be taken. However based on experience we acknowledge that still fellows are recalcitrant in following transversal skill course entirely delivered in English.
- The choice of the right, communicative and smart tutor is essential to open up and interpret the added value of the LUs.
- Courses should be longer.



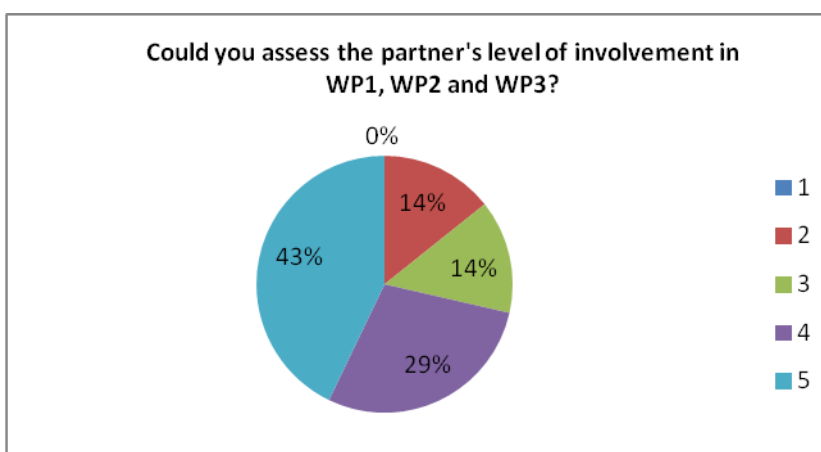
8.



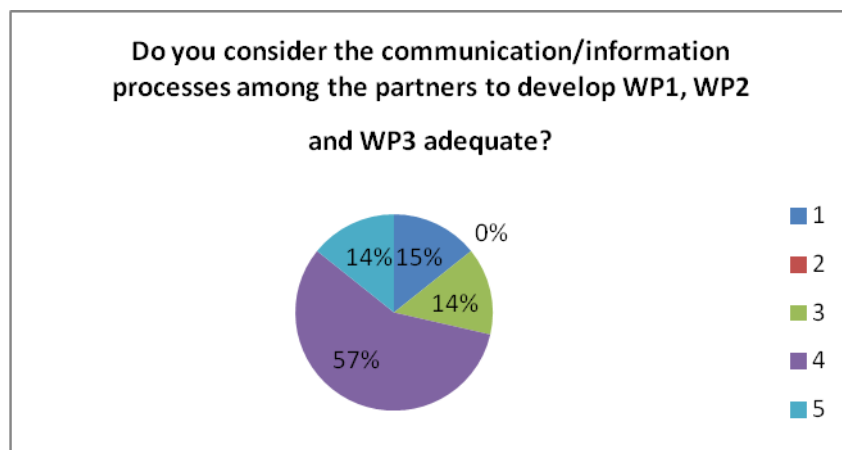
9. What things would you change, if any, in WP3?

- Nothing because the methodology of work allowed the partners involved in this activity to test in an appropriate way the deliverables of WP2 and to provide enough information about the impact of testing. In general, a positive feedback was received on each workshop both from participants and from tutors.
- Besides, focus group had a broad range of participants (stakeholders).
- CRAC not involved directly in work on WP3 but a very practical approach was taken to organising the work

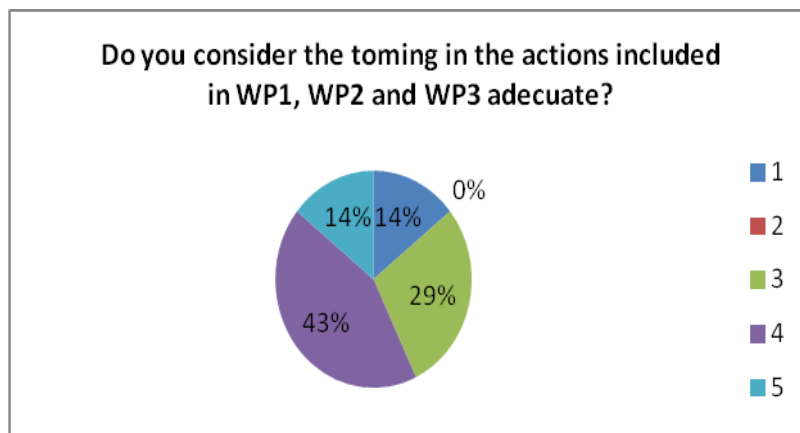
10.



11.



12.



EVALUATION ON CONTEST AND NEEDS

We include some comments of partners about the BEST and the WORSE (things) they have highlighted from those taking place in Docent Project:

WORSE THINGS

- Timing very “pressing”

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- The difficulty of those involved in guidance and innovation transfer to recognise the need to cater for PhDs since they are such a small group and that their employment is not the greatest of problems.
- Initial challenges with communication (although they could have been worse and much improved over course of project).
- The later start meant less time for WP1.
- Insufficient whole team involvement in outlining our aims for WP2 at the outset (although we were all happy eventually).
- It is no worse, but it would be interesting to take in account more the opinion of the companies related to this project and initiative in order to adapt the units to their real situation.

BEST THINGS

- The high quality of the products/results
- The strong involvement of all partners in all project activities
- The creation of a new “European network” build by the partners on the specific issues of transferable skills of doctoral candidates and their employment outside Academia. The evidence of this network has been the collaboration for submitting a new project proposal in the call “Knowledge partnership”
- The students’ interest in the learning units.
- Tight organisation from lead partner.
- Enthusiasm for aims of the project amongst partners.
- Coordination of the different WP; Useful units for Doctors related to company needs; interviews with other organizations and entities.

EVALUATION ON WORK PROCESS

FUNDEUN includes some RECOMMENDATIONS with all collected information in DOCENT PROJECT evaluation:



- DEADLINES: Difficulties to meet the deadline, so this shows that we as a group were too optimistic about the time to dedicate to the project. We should have designed a timetable more real.
- LUs could have been longer.
- Training materials could be produced thinking in blended-learning.
- LU: Limiting the size of groups with similar needs.
- IPR framework for using LU in the future by the partners.
- In WP3 there should be more focus on discussion about what and why we are collected LU testing data in order to be compared. University of Modena proposes, here, two alternatives (classifications):

MPN (Mathematics/Physics/NANO and Materials)

GEO and environment sciences (including earth, geodesy, satellite positioning systems and geographical science)

Socio-economic sciences and humanities

Health (including medical science, pharmaceuticals , biotech, biology and chemistry)

Food (food and agricultural studies)

Engineering / ICT

We could use, alternatively, the ERC panel classification (limiting ourselves to the 3 macro domains):

Physical Sciences and Engineering

Life Sciences

Social Sciences and Humanities

- EXTERNAL EVALUATION

With the words external evaluation we mean an evaluation on the **deliverables** of the project.

The method we foreseen is that of *Peer Review* which consist in a form of external evaluation which is aimed to support the development of quality in a project. The “Peer” (or the “Critical friend”), is an evaluator in the same level of the persons whose performance is in charge to evaluate. He works in the same sector and he is skilled in the area of activities he has to evaluate. We enclose a brief C.V. of the external evaluator:



Dr Charles Jackson, BSc, MSc, FRSA is a Senior Fellow of the National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling (NICEC) and a Visiting Professor at Kingston Business School. He led the team that conducted the recent European Review of Career Guidance to Support Workforce Development for CEDEFOP. Other recent work includes research for the UK GRAD programme on the recruitment of people with PhDs and acting as the internal evaluator of Researchers in Residence, a programme funded by Research Councils UK and the Wellcome Trust.

We enclose the external evaluation:

***Review by Charles Jackson, Senior and Fellow,
National Institute for Career Education and Counselling;
Visiting Professor, Kingston Business School***

1. Introduction and background to the DOCENT project

DOCENT (Doctors in Enterprise) is a two year programme of work funded by the European Commission. It has been carried out by partner organisations from Italy, Malta, Spain and the UK.

‘The project aims to contribute to enhancing the employability of technical and scientific doctoral candidates through the development and testing of:

- a model for the provision of careers services specific to doctoral candidates and graduates capable of innovation and effective knowledge transfer, whether as an employee or as an entrepreneur. It will include guidelines for integration/coordination between University functions
- training modules to be offered within this careers services framework to support the professional development of doctoral candidates and graduates, in particular opening up opportunities beyond academia, and underpinning the development of transferable skills’

This is the final report reviewing the work of the DOCENT project. It reviews the evaluation of the learning units and the careers service model. In particular, it will discuss the appropriateness of the approach taken to the evaluation and the results of the trials. It will also review the overall conclusions from the evaluation.



2. Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation had two main components:

- a) the testing of individual learning units with doctoral students
- b) the review of the careers service model via focus groups with relevant experts

The learning units were tested by three of the partner organisations with doctoral students. This meant that the units have been tested in three different countries. Not all the units were tested but, in total, 11 of the 18 units were tested with all but two of these units being tested in two locations. While the initial intention was for each partner to test six of the learning units, in Italy the University of Modena e Reggio Emilia tested 8 of the learning units and also ran a separate combined workshop on budgeting and project management in English for foreign students.

Each of the partner organisations involved in the evaluation, the University of Malta (Malta), FUNDEUN (Spain) and the University of Modena e Reggio Emilia (Italy), also ran a focus group with a cross-section of participants from academia, industry and career services, as well as knowledge transfer professionals and PhD students (potential users of the service).

2.1 The testing of individual learning units with doctoral students

The testing of the learning units required:

- the identification of trainers to deliver individual learning units
- the recruitment of PhD students to participate in the workshops
- organisation and administration of the programme of learning units at each location

Feedback questionnaires were also developed to be completed both by the participants in each workshop and also by the tutors.

Full details of the implementation of the Learning Units in each country are given in the report (see Tables 3, 4 and 5). These record the tutors involved, the date the workshop was held as well as the number of participants. Although the number of PhD students participating in individual workshops varied, in general fewer students participated in Malta and more in Italy. The focus was on PhD students doing research in STEM subjects and special effort was made to recruit female candidates with preference also being given to PhD students who were more advanced in their studies.



Often several of the workshops were held on the same day, with four workshops being held in Italy and Spain on a single day. It is not clear how many of the PhD students participating attended several of the workshops but, at FUNDEUN, students attending five out of the six sessions (which were all held over two consecutive days) were awarded a special Diploma.

The broad approach adopted for this trial of the workshops seems eminently appropriate given resource and time constraints. The majority of the learning units have been tested with most (9 out of 11) units tested in two different countries. PhD students from a range of subject areas participated in the workshops and the same workshops have been run by different tutors. In total, there were 5 tutors in Malta, 6 in Spain and 5 in Italy. It is clear from their biographies that all the tutors had relevant expertise and experience related to the workshop with which they were involved.

In general, positive feedback was received on each workshop both from participants and from tutors. Feedback covered several areas:

- Rating of aspects of the learning unit (content covered, notes provided, tutor's presentation, relevance of content, method of delivery, usefulness for job hunting and usefulness to career)
- How necessary the learning unit was in preparation for work
- The length of the leaning unit
- An overall rating of the session
- How well the learning unit met expectations
- The degree to which participants would recommend the learning unit to others

2.2 Focus groups to review the careers service model

The focus groups were designed to review with expert informants:

- the relevance of the career service model for doctoral candidates
- whether the key players identified are comprehensive
- The comprehensiveness of the competences of the personnel involved in the provision of careers services
- The applicability of the objective, activities and resources identified for the implementation of the model



Each partner organisation organised one focus group. The focus groups in Spain and Italy took place in May, 2011 and the one in Malta in July, 2011. There were 10 participants in Italy and Spain and 5 in Malta. Participants were sent copies of relevant background papers ahead of the session so that they were well briefed ahead of the actual focus group about the purpose of the session.

A full list of participants is provided in the WP3 Evaluation Report and it appears that each focus group had a broad range of participants representing the key stakeholder groups.

Each focus group appears to have well conducted with note takers in addition to the lead facilitator. The design and organisation of all three focus groups, therefore, appears to be perfectly appropriate for the task in hand.

3. Key findings

The report provides detailed feedback on each workshop and the focus groups. For convenience of presentation, different versions of the same workshop group were reviewed together in order to present a balanced and more accessible review of each learning unit.

3.1 Learning Units

The main finding is that participants in all three countries were generally very positive about the workshops they attended, although some learning units (LUs), particularly those that were more closely related to the world of work, were better received than others.

Other general conclusions reached from the evaluation were that:

- in many cases LUs could have been longer
- some LUs could have been better tailored to the group needs
- group size influences the effectiveness of the LU

Some of these points may overlap. For example, larger groups may require more time to discuss issues and so require more time overall. It was also likely that certain content was of greater interest to some students than others and that this would be particularly the case with some of the more specialised topics.

The key overall finding from the experience of running these workshops is to suggest that they are meeting a real need and that, in broad terms, the content of the sessions was seen as relevant by participants in addressing these needs. This is an important vindication of the work of the DOCENT project team as it validates both the overall



mapping of the workshop content across the five modules and the individual content of particular learning units.

There can be more debate about the content of individual workshops and it is not really within the scope of this review of the initial evaluation of the testing of the materials to comment further on the style and content of individual learning units. Some comments and suggestions on both these issues were included in the first evaluation report.

3.2 Careers Service model

The focus groups were also in agreement both about the need for such a model and the development of the services to support it. The one exception was in Malta where the relatively small PhD labour market meant that most PhDs still find work in academia. It is worth pointing out that in small countries, such as Malta, labour markets operate in some distinctive ways (see Sultana, R. Challenges for Career Guidance in Small States. EMEA: University of Malta, 2006 for a detailed review). However, it is likely that, even in these countries, some PhD students will opt to pursue their careers on an international basis and seek employment outside academia and that this trend is likely to increase over time.

The focus groups also made a number of constructive suggestions about how the model could be developed. These included the advantage of including descriptions of some practical examples of existing models of career service provision and of involving more countries as well as greater consideration of the financial aspects of the model.

4. Conclusions

This report describing the work of Work Package 3 provides a most competent overview of the evaluation work carried out by the DOCENT project team. Developing a training programme and a model for the provision of career services specific to PhD students and graduates in a European context was an ambitious project goal. The DOCENT project team have developed and tested a model and a set of training modules, and are now in a strong position to move forward to the final stage of dissemination of the work. It will also be important to look at ways for the project materials to be supported and made available once the project is completed and the initial EU project funding has been exhausted.

A key part of this evaluation was to see how PhD students and graduates would react to the training materials when they were piloted and tested. The positive reaction of the primary stakeholders – PhD students and graduates – to the materials demonstrates their relevance and suitability – they are ‘fit for purpose’.



The evaluation report does, however, include a number of practical suggestions about how the learning units could be improved. In particular, it is suggested that more time (up to 3 hours) be allocated for sessions in order to allow more time for discussion. One advantage of this would be to allow greater opportunity for participants to share their own experiences.

Limiting the size of groups and bringing together students with similar needs are two other practical suggestions that are likely to enhance the quality of discussion within a session. It is also clearly sensible to recognise that some units could be extended and additional learning units could be developed within the existing modular framework.

Finally, the suggestion that notes and other training materials produced as part of the project could be made available online is one significant way of both disseminating the project material and also of making sure that they are available in a sustainable way after the formal project has been completed.

The evaluation report concludes with a number of practical suggestions from the focus groups about how the paper describing the careers service model could be improved. Key suggestions are:

1. To consider how the model can be adapted to build on existing service provision within Universities and not just as the setting up of a new/additional service.
2. To provide some case studies that describe the setting up of initiatives that use the careers service model.
3. To put even greater emphasis on the need for universities to build better links with industry.
4. To simplify the document so that it is easier to follow or, alternatively, develop a practical guidebook with step by step instructions for implementing the model.
5. To insert a section that outlines some of the financial issues that need to be considered when implementing the model.

These are valuable suggestions and should provide some useful feedback to the project team when they revise and finalise the document describing the careers service model.



ANNEX 1

EVALUATION WP5

FORM DIRECTED TO ASTER, CRAC, FUNDEUN, UNIVERSITY OF MODENA, UNIVERSITY OF MALTA, COEPA AND COFINDUSTRIA EMILIA-ROMAGNA

INTRODUCTION: FUNDEUN must evaluate the processes related to WP1, WP2 and WP3 in order to assess the results achieved.

We enclose a FORM that should be answered sincerely and sent to us completed before **22 July 2011**.

The form includes close-questions and open-questions. Please, mark the answer you think more adequate.

QUESTIONNAIRE:

CLOSE-QUESTIONS: mark the answer among 1-5 according to your opinion

1. Do you consider the survey properly designed in WP1 to identify the gaps/needs of the enterprises and Phds?

NO	1	2	3	4	5	YES
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2. Are the conclusions/recommendations extracted in WP1 enough to design next steps included in WP2?

NO	1	2	3	4	5	YES
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3. What things would you change in WP1?

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4. Do you consider the methodology of the Learning units properly designed to obtain quality learning units and adapted to the needs of the enterprises and Phds?

NO	1	2	3	4	5	YES
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5. Do you think the Career Service model is correctly defined and adapted to the needs of the enterprises and Phds?

NO	1	2	3	4	5	YES
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6. Is the job carried out in WP2 enough to develop next steps included in WP3?

NO	1	2	3	4	5	YES
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7. What things would you change in WP2?

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8. Have you extracted useful conclusions when you tested the LU and the Career Service Model (WP3)?

NO	1	2	3	4	5	YES
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9. What things would you change, if any, in WP3?

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10. Could you assess the partner's level of involvement in WP1, WP2 and WP3?



NO	1	2	3	4	5	YES
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11. Do you consider the communication/information processes among the partners to develop WP1, WP2 and WP3 adequate?

NO	1	2	3	4	5	YES
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12. Do you consider the timing in the actions included in WP1, WP2 and WP3 adequate?

NO	1	2	3	4	5	YES
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13. What are the BEST and the WORSE (things) you can highlight from those taking place in WP1, WP2 and WP3?.....
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Thank you very much.