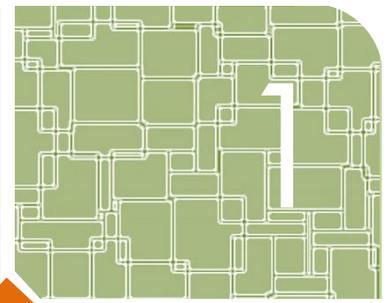




# STEP4All Newsletter



Edition 2

Overview on the project progress

March 20

## Step4All: a tale of 9 EU fellows in Bulgaria

A new year of 2013 for Step4All consortium started with the kick off meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> of February in Sofia, Bulgaria. The goal of the meeting was to gather together all the representatives from the partner organizations to present their activities, projects and direct experience in delivering trainings on design and management of EU projects. Partners shared their best practices giving ideas on how to shape and improve trainings in the field throughout Europe. The meeting was hosted by Bulgarian Construction Chamber (Bulgaria). The organization is working successfully for 20 years now, focusing on energy efficiency in buildings. Nina Georgieva, the Head of Projects Management Department, welcomed project partners from 9 EU countries.

On behalf of project coordinator Eurocrea Merchant (Italy), Gianluca Coppola presented the issues that Italy is facing in accessing EU funds. Italy is the 2<sup>nd</sup> country by the number of applications for EU funding, however its success rate is lower than average in Europe. Silvia Farina, project manager from Eurocrea Merchant presented the Step4All project, its goal and main tasks, introducing the work plan and the next workshop which will be held in Athens, July of 2013.

In order to increase the number of accepted applications Eurocrea Merchant offers a training course on EU project design and management. The target audience is mainly graduates and public bodies who are working or willing to work with EU projects. 5 modules course covers all the main topics in writing the project according to the EU standards. The trainings are combined with a visit to Brussels, where participants experience the EU institutions and working environment. The experience of the Eurocrea Merchant will be the basics for development of Step4All unified training programme.

All the project partners took part in the meeting presenting their experience and good practices in EU project development and management. Darina Pavelekova presented the SPIS Regional Development Agency (Slovakia), which focuses on training and supporting people in new businesses and dealing with women and men equal labour market issues. Enver Düz, representing Governorship of Kocaeli (Turkey), shared their steps taken in organizing training on project cycle management. The organization is mostly working with health and education projects.

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The STEP4All project is a Multilateral Partnership  
co-funded by the European Commission within the Leonardo da Vinci.



Lifelong  
Learning  
Programme

The Leonardo da Vinci sector programme links policy to practice in the field of vocational education and training. One of its main aim is to facilitate the development of innovative practices in the field of vocational education and training other than at tertiary level, and their transfer, including from one participating country to others.

[www.step4all.eu](http://www.step4all.eu)



Representatives of  
Eurocrea Merchant (Italy),  
Step4all coordinator



Step4all consortium  
meeting in Bulgarian  
Construction Chambers,  
February 2013

Another partner organization interested in health and social tourism is DHI Consulting Ltd (Hungary). Pal Boza presented their trainings on project development organized in collaboration with France. BDF, a project partner from the Netherlands Friesland Region, is working with knowledge institutes to support and train start-ups and young entrepreneurs in acquiring funding, sharing knowledge and technologies. Lennard Drogendijk and Erna van der Werff presented mentoring programmes for students to prevent their dropping out of school by grouping them up with inspiring teachers. Jorge and Sandra Veloso from Tematica Positiva (Portugal) shared their personal experience gained while working with EU projects and presented key methodological elements necessary to give attention in trainings on development of EU projects. They hold a postgraduate course on this topic.

Bulgaria representatives and hosts of the workshop from Bulgarian Construction Chamber shared their positive experience in participating in the trainings on EU project writing. Maria Zheleva had the opportunity to take part in the training programme conducted by the American University in Bulgaria since 2008. The programme lasts for 190 days and covers all the main topics in EU project design and management. The difference from the Italian model is the emphasis on reviews and usage of online materials, which makes the training environmentally friendly. The training also thrives on interactive learning and teambuilding methods as well as constant course content improvement based on students' feedback. This good experience was worth sharing.

Evelina Kutkaitytė from European Leadership Institute (ELIN) in Lithuania presented good practices on methodology of delivering trainings through methods of active learning and emotions. ELIN offers to consider the human resources and team management issues in the context of EU project writing as the balance in a team is as much important as proficiency and experience of each member.

The variety of partners' experiences in design and management of EU projects triggered an idea to run a survey and learn more about challenges that EU project managers meet every day. If you have direct experience in designing or managing EU projects, we kindly invite you to take part in the survey by following this link: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/STE4ALL>. Please share your experience with us and ask your colleague to do the same! Answers are

## Tips for successful team management

The process of project design and management is the art which requires inspiration and effort. One is not a soldier in the battlefield when it comes to writing a project to access European funds. One may be the most talented project manager but the scope of tasks which are necessary to complete is a bit too big to be handled by one head. It takes a team to succeed in this process.

The benefits that come with the team are multiple viewpoints on the subject, pooled professional fields, talents, experiences and shared resources. Also more minds and hands in the process give more dynamic and effective work flow. However there are always two sides of the coin. In every team there are inner processes going on, motivation and communication issues arise and may interrupt with the task completion. Good team management is essential for successful cooperation, even though most of the teams fail because of lack of leadership strategy.

In order to successfully submit the project and get the funding the team should consider some tips on how to organize team work.

## Building team

- **Form diverse team**  
The great team consists of members from different fields and with diverse preferences. Key positions in the team could involve professional with training in the project's focus, researcher, accountant and liaison etc. Also personal preferences makes a difference. If group consists only of ideas people there could not be any talk about meeting deadlines.
- **Choose a team leader**  
Decide who will be responsible for good work flow: tasks and time management, communication within the group and with partners. Successful team has to be led by the one who puts all the work together.
- **Agree on your purpose**  
Make sure everyone has the same purpose in mind. It has to be done in the beginning that every member would know what the goal is and why.

## Team work planning

- **Assign tasks and duties**  
Share responsibilities for different activities. Decide who will work on the problem formulation, who will talk with the target group, who will manage the budget and so on. Also it is good to share the writing parts between group members just to divide the amount of work equally.
- **Choose a single person for final editing**  
People write in different styles, even though the team has writing guidelines and the official form is quite strict. There must be one person who will put all parts of the text together and make them look coherent.
- **Set deadlines**  
Clear deadlines for every task, drafts and final project help to manage time and stay efficient. In addition it gives structure to the whole process of project development and makes it easier to handle.
- **Set recurrent meetings**  
Meetings arranged daily, weekly or every second week gives opportunity to update the team on the progress made, reassign tasks and solve problems. Some informal meetings with the team in a bar or Friday meal together may boost the motivation and refill group energy.

## Work

- **Start early**  
This rule helps to handle unexpected issues and still meet the deadlines. It prevents a team from the last minute rush and preserves the quality in work. Also it is good to start while everyone is excited and motivated to do their best.
- **Work individually**  
Most of the work could be done individually. Group work should be left for the meetings. Of course communication is essential, but most of the time real work doesn't happen in the circle. It's recommended to keep meetings efficient by bringing up the questions and updates rather than trying to do the assignments.
- **Peer-review the final draft**  
The more eyes read the text the more mistakes, content mismatches and other inconsistencies could be solved. Diverse viewpoints of a team members help to see the whole product from different angles.



# STEP4All Newsletter

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## STEP4All Consortium



Besides offering management consulting and advising, Eurocrea Merchant is also involved in providing training courses and in EU-Project management. Part of the team is constantly involved in searching the best funding opportunities offered by the EU Commission, and in designing and managing projects for themselves or for Italian SMEs.



**AVACA TECHNOLOGIES**  
**GREECE**

Avaca Technologies S.A. is an independent software development house and IT integrator that provides consulting, informatics and engineering services. AT is a fast growing company which currently employees 17 persons and has developed a significant list of clients across many industries and market sectors.



HDI Consulting is a consulting company, which gained expertise in the project development in the framework of EU funded development programmes, preparation of projects and tenders for submissions, professional help during the project implementation, preparation of call for tenders for development agencies, strategic planning, evaluation, monitoring.



**SPIS Regional Development Agency**  
**SLOVAKIA**

Spiš Regional Development Agency, is a non-profit organisation supported by Ministry of Construction and Regional Development of the Slovak Republic that acts in the concept of integrated network of RDAs, and is focused on boosting economic development in the region via institutional cooperation and support to investments.



**Associação Temática Positiva**  
**PORTUGAL**

Temática Positiva promotes social cohesion and competitiveness in socio-economic sectors with the aim to link the needs of the population to the economy. Since the territories in question have favorable characteristics in different areas the training of local human capital becomes of key importance.



**Stichting Business Development Friesland**  
**THE NETHERLANDS**

Business Development Friesland is a not-for-profit foundation positioned within the triangle of SMEs, knowledge institutes (VETs and Univ. of Applied Science) and governmental bodies, which initiates and participates in projects aimed at knowledge transfer and development. BDF provides training and support to start-up companies, SMEs and other organisations.



**European Leadership Institute, Ltd**  
**LITHUANIA**

European Leadership Institute is an international training company that develops programmes, organises and delivers seminars and courses, internal trainings, and conducts research seeking to become a corporate partner that meets today's challenges of labour market and personal effectiveness.



**Kocaeli EU Project Coordination Center**  
**TURKEY**

Kocaeli EU Project Coordination Center was founded under responsibility of Governorship of Kocaeli and provides consultancy services and information in order to accelerate Turkey's accession and enable Kocaeli fully to get benefit from EU education programs, within the frame of LLP, FP7, central finance & contracts unit.



**Bulgarian Construction Chamber (BCC)**  
**BULGARIA**

BCC is the Bulgarian representative federation of Construction industry, representing 2285 SMEs company-members, and 7 associated specialised member-federations. It is involved in Social dialogue, collective agreement, supporting to the VET system development, national legal framework, EQF, lists of Construction professions, partners network of sectorial training institutions.



**Lifelong Learning Programme**

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