

**THE TRANSNATIONAL CO-OPERATION
AND THE JOINT ACTIVITIES
WITH THE SWEDISH PARTNER**

Final publication in the frame of the *Equal* projects

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and
Kista Open Academy SE-11

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P R E F A C E

This work originates to spread the experiences lived, as well as to disseminate the results emerged from the research into the discriminations suffered from the workers/employees within the working environment.

The transnational co-operation has been realised between the Italian Development Partnership (from now on DP) signed in Catania, Sicily, and carrying out the *Fenice* project, and the Swedish DP signed in Stockholm, and carrying out the *Kista Open Academy* project. The two projects belonged to the thematic field 3, Adaptability, theme E –life long learning, in the frame of the EQUAL Community Initiative and aimed at promoting the life long learning and the practices of integration. They also are intended to encourage the maintenance of the job of people suffering from discriminations and the inequalities within the labour market, through the experimentation of tailored-made working paths in favour of the workers/employees.

The experimentations foreseen by the EQUAL Community Initiative, thematic field 3, Adaptability, theme E –life long learning, are concerned with the following issues:

- to adjust the competencies of the workers/employees;
- to prevent the workers/employees from the risk of their vocational obsolescence;
- to support, in an experimental way, the procedures of the audit of the competences and the their “essential certification”, in order to make the enterprises recognise the competences acquired by the workers/employees;
- to support, in an experimental way, integrated training interventions and information actions addressed to the workers/employees, in order to respond to the exigencies of the enterprises as well as the workers/employees;
- to promote interventions supporting the leading sectors on a local level, in order to create new vocational competences able to control the changes and avoiding the marginalization of workers/employees endowed with competences that are not in line with such development.

Besides, such initiative focuses on a main activity performed by each DP at local level: the creation of ties with at least a DP from another State, so that a comparison between different contexts can influence the planning of future policy and practices.

The Transnational Co-operation as well as the collaboration with another country, allows the National Partnership to take advantages from different working methods, it also encourages new experimentations. It is not an option, it is compulsory: each DP should have at least a partner from another Member State of the Ue.

The knowledge of new systems and the synergic realisation of good practices in terms of life long learning/training and management of Human Resources, has given an input to each Transnational partner that could lead, in the near future, the institutions to adopt them on a local as well as on a national level. What justifies the importance of this publication, through a dissemination of the activities developed and connected with a joint action: the research work on the discriminations suffered from the workers/employees within the working environment.

To disseminate the results of this research work and to stress the differences and the points of contact between the two territories are our main tasks.

SECTION 1

Chapter 1

The subjects carrying out the experimentation

a) The two contexts.

The projects of the two involved DPs were aimed at the promotion of the life long learning in order to avoid the phenomena of obsolescence in the labour market and to favour the maintenance of the job of those people suffering from many discriminations: on this purpose the project aimed at carrying out actions which can influence the systems of life long learning of the territories. This agreement was mainly interested in exchanging experiences and experimenting jointly the actions in the contexts that share common aspects and precise peculiarities. Such common interests were also evident in the structure of the DPs: these were composed of societies skilled in the vocational training, organizations of employers, trade unions and public bodies. The similar objectives of the projects, the structure of the DPs the possibility of operating in social contexts that have the same characteristics, were peculiar elements of the co-operation that the agreement wanted to develop.

The problems shared by the two DPs were the following:

1. short importance given to the promotion of the Human Resources and to the life long learning as a tool to favour the people who suffer from discriminations in the labour market;
2. improvement of the quality standards of the training offer;
3. lack of an adequate system of certification of the competences;
4. lack of the training programmes based on the clients' needs.

The development of such actions would assure the possibility of exchanging experiences and updating the knowledge or favour the life long retraining of the people who live in the areas involved in these actions, in order to avoid or limit their spillage from the labour market.

The methodology that will characterise the transnational project will be based on exchange of experiences and a joint development of actions which want to achieve the objectives previously described.

a.1) Kista – Stockholm, Sweden.

Kista Borough, Sollentuna and Järfälla municipalities are the big partners in the DP and together they have about 150,000 inhabitants. The economy of the area is based on some leading sectors, such as IT-industry, commerce and other branches - e.g. the learning and the service sector. With reference to the labour market, many are also employed in the Public Administration. The unemployment rate differs a lot from an area to another one because of a segregated housing. Another reason is the high amount of people with different ethnical background, groups who very often suffer from discrimination and isolation. In some areas more than 60% are unemployed and in other it can be less than 4%. Many people also have low paid jobs and jobs not in line with their education. The unemployment in average in Sweden and in the Stockholm area is about 5.5% at the moment. Many people have lost their jobs during the last ten years for different reasons: wide cultural exchanges, structural changes on the labour market, the IT-cries, the lack of adequate competences or training actions, missing/inadequate refreshing courses aimed at discovering the new exigencies of the enterprises and having another ethnical background, so that people are very often discriminated in working life. Remarkable is the fact that e.g. in Kista only 5% of the labour working in the area live there. The rest come from other areas in Stockholm and the labour from Kista has to find jobs all over the big city, mainly in the service sector. The IT-University (a collaborative organisation from The Royal Institute of Technology and The University of Stockholm) in Kista is one of the most prestigious universities in Sweden. It graduates and trains a great number of young people in the IT-sector, ready to be inserted to the labour market and able to replace the employees/workers that are not adequately prepared. But this will not be of great importance for unemployed adults in this area as long as the university only serves young people coming mainly directly from the upper secondary school. The courses are not open and adapted to higher and further education for adults. There are a

lot of barriers for adults' higher education and this is one of the main tasks for the *Kista Open Academy* to identify them and to raise the level of awareness among the politicians and decision makers to get them reduced.

The target groups in the Swedish project are adults, mainly unemployed people and people in low paid jobs even if they have an academic background. These groups often suffer from discrimination and isolation. Many immigrants are unemployed and many have started own companies in the area of restaurant (pizzerias) or transport (taxi). Because these groups are mainly people with different ethnical background it is very important to work close to these target groups. Their associations are therefore partners in the project. We have to find out how we can hook these people into learning and how to change the system to be able to offer them suitable complementary education and training. They need individual study plans, as the employed in SMEs. In adult education we are used to that but we have to influence the systems of life long learning and to find ways to motivate these people. We also need to involve the labour market authorities because they are part of the system. We have to work on different levels, structural and individual ones. Sweden needs to open up the systems, because we do have a structural discrimination, not meant to be but in reality. The system for adults' learning is very diverted with water proof limits between the different areas. Especially the higher education is very closed and traditionally academic and it is difficulties to get validation of experiences previously acquired.

In the project *Kista Open Academy* there was no money for piloting new methods or attempts only for working with structural development except of the last six month when we got money for piloting *Learning Ambassadors*¹, an adopted method for hooking people into learning. The method could be useful in hooking staff in SMEs for learning as well.

Kista Open Academy is also working with development of pedagogical methods and to supporting people to start up companies by giving advice via one of our partners, "Kista NyföretagarCentrum", and to support systems for flexible learning for staff in SMEs, mainly via Nova Distance AB and by Kista Borough and Sollentuna municipality.

a.2) The province of Catania - Sicily, Italy.

With over 1,100,000 inhabitants, Catania is one of the Italian provinces having a high rate of demography and a high population density.

The economy of the province is based on some leading sectors, such as agriculture, commerce, industry and other branches of the tertiary.

Agriculture – above all citrus fruit cultivation, viticulture and horticulture, plays an important role, though less important than in the past.

As to commerce and trade, citrus fruit and the products of other Sicilian provinces - destined to home and foreign markets - are really important in the field of export. Not only does the port of Catania favour export, but also imports from Germany, France, UK and the Usa.

Tourism and Fontanarossa International Airport in Catania, the main air station in Sicily, are really influent. Tourism and hotel accommodation, that have been improved for some years, are nowadays considered an incommensurable resource, as they are connected with a territory whose environmental and cultural resources – monuments, archaeological areas and museums have encouraged cultural tourism that have been placed alongside the bathing tourism favoured by the splendour of the ionic coast - could be a call-back for visitors.

In the field of industry the province of Catania is the second one, preceded by the province of Palermo, all over Sicily. The decrease in production relating to sulphur industry and leather has been replaced by the development of food and chemical and pharmaceutical industries, the most active sectors in the province of Catania. Apart from other significant enterprises in

¹ See Section 2, Chapter 2 – The experimentation, paragraph c.1.2 – The attempt with *Learning Ambassadors*, in Sweden.

the bio- medical-pharmaceutical field (Novartis and Sifi), in the High-Tech and telecommunication (such as ST Microelectronics or Nokia), there are SMEs that try to survive to thousands of difficulties.

With reference to the labour market, 40% employees work in the Public Administration, while the unemployment rate is equal to 35%: moreover many people run the risk of losing their jobs, because of poor training actions and missing/inadequate refreshing courses aimed at discovering the new exigencies of the enterprises. In addition, Catania University, one of the most prestigious universities in Italy, graduates and trains a great number of young people, ready to be inserted to the labour market and able to replace the workers/employees that are not adequately prepared.

The concealed labour – a half of people in search of a job is represented by young people -, a high rate of drop out and irregular training paths are other characteristic irregularities. These latter, together with a poor efficacy of the training actions based on superficial methodologies of identification of the training offer, have repercussions on the acquisition of the know-how suitable to the insertion to work and on the adequacy of the competences necessary to the maintenance of the job, even though one has a low level of education and training. Inefficiency of training actions is due to badly chosen methodologies of identification of the training offer.

The position held by women is more difficult as they often re-enter the labour market after being absent because of long maternity leaves and are, thus, provided with obsolete competences. This is due to the lack of re-training courses for workers/employees. Some people having mental or physical handicaps, find it difficult to be inserted to the work context, even if a recent Law (*Law n. 68/99*) dealing with the insertion of disabled people should protect them.

What emerges from this picture is that the changes in the economic field this last decade have determined the consolidation of the barriers and the discriminations, not only making it difficult to enter the work context, but also making the unqualified workers/employees run the risk of being precarious for a long time or being expelled from the labour market.

The problems inspiring this project can thus be summed up as follows: the unsuccessful realisation, in Sicily, of a reformed labour market facing and solving the problems connected with the work context and the lack of a life long learning/training planned on a provincial level, taking into account the real needs of enterprises and workers/employees.

b) The two Development Partnerships (DPs).

Immigrants as well as staff in SMEs and in low paid jobs suffer serious problems of unemployment, underemployment and discrimination in both countries. These latter shared common underlying problems relating to the basic antipathy to these target groups within the broad public perception; these are rarely seen as part of a possible solution more often as a problem. There is a need to share experience about the methodologies of approach to e.g. ICT and training of staff in SMEs and low paid workers/employees, how to support people to study before they become unemployed with reference to their preparation for a new labour market and to their own personal competencies (basic skills, language acquisition, training, recognition of previous experiences and qualifications etc.), and how to match e.g. immigrants and unemployed to the demand of the labour market.

b.1) The Swedish DP.

Kista Open Academy (KOA) represents a broad partnership which is created to show a bit of a national perspective because the issues that would be faced are based on a national demand.

The results from the DP would be disseminated into authorities and decision makers on local regional and national levels.

KOA is made up of three municipalities from the urban Stockholm area, one from rural area in the north of Sweden, four national immigrant associations, two universities and four SMEs, one popular adult organisation and one partner that could be called both “public and private”. It is a service association (it serves starting up of new SMEs privately but with public money). It is a regional body but the strength will come from the public partners. These latter are quite self-governed in Sweden (decentralized responsibility) and deal with the economic and social development of the community. They represent the socio-political requests by people and they have to encourage the participation of the inhabitants in the democratic, economic and social development. The questions of democracy and learning are important for the municipalities in Stockholm as well as in other bigger cities in Sweden and also in the municipalities in rural areas. This is because the unemployment is high in the suburbs of Stockholm, people feel isolated and the amount of social fees is high in these areas. There are big similarities between urban and rural areas participating in this DP.

These municipalities also have to promote peace and human rights through cultural initiatives, research and information and give stimuli to education, social awareness and all forms of development, improving life quality. Learning in a wider perspective is seen a base for this.

The municipalities are responsible for adult education and training up to upper secondary school level. All post upper secondary school education and training are governed and managed by national authorities and just a few private organisations (e.g. a university). Education and training for unemployed people are also a national responsibility decentralized to regional level. The higher education and training on university level is normally closed for unemployed people. If they want to study on a university they are not allowed to get the same benefits as other unemployed people. They have to take study loans and compete about entrance on the same conditions as young students.

In Finland, as a comparison, the universities give special open courses (no formal demands for entrance) on demand of the regions and these can be followed by unemployed as well as e.g. people employed in public services and staff in SMEs. It is at the moment about 10% of the production of all adult education and training. The state pays for these courses as they pay for normal university studies.

In Sweden we have a lot of actors and no collaboration. To analyse the demands of the target groups and to recognize and accept competences especially not earned from a formal school system is a challenge which has to be faced. In Sweden we have the last years been more aware of these issues but it was still in a beginning when we started EQUAL. Between the Swedish actors waterproof limits which caught big barriers for the target groups have grown up. No collaboration is usual, especially not in the Stockholm area. To get a change is necessary and has been one of the main task for *KOA*.

Structural changes as well as pedagogical and methodological issues are interesting to discuss in a new cultural environment. It is easy to be blind to defects in one's work. We have had a long and very good collaboration in Nordic countries for building a more flexible on demand education and training but we have been missing the European dimension. Structural building is based on traditions and small steps further and we have probably built in even our attitudes without being aware of it. Sometimes it is attitudes and manners that cause discriminations and exclusion. When they are structural based it is very often difficult to observe them. We needed to mirror this in a new cultural perspective. The cultural differences between Italy and Sweden were therefore especially interesting for the Swedish DP. We were very interested to exchange experiences about questions of e.g. isolation and discrimination because we know these issues are very often based on attitudes and they often are very hidden in our country. Also questions to support education and training of staff in SMEs and equality in a broad perspective, men and women on the labour market and the working environment were

interesting issues.

b.2) The Italian DP.

In accordance with the EQUAL Community Initiative, the *Fenice* project has been promoted by a geographical DP whose members have previously agreed the strategies to follow and the means to adopt in order to give a response adequate to the exigencies of the territory.

The **Provincial Administration in Catania**: made up of 58 municipalities, it is a territorial public body, dealing with the economic and social development of the community. It represents the socio-political demands by people, encourages the participation of the municipalities in the democratic, economic and social development. It contributes to the town planning scheme on regional level and co-ordinates the proposals by the municipalities and the social organisations.

It also promotes peace and human rights through cultural initiatives, research, and information and gives stimuli to education, social awareness and all forms of development, improving life quality.

The Provincial Administration in Catania carries out charitable structures and services of extra - municipal interest; deals with distribution, building, maintenance, furnishing, tools, equipment, organization and provision of the staff for secondary school; and promotes and realises initiatives and activities linked to the training courses all over the province.

As a local organisation, it is aware of the needs expressed by the territory: so in the frame of the *Fenice* project, it has “spread the culture of life long learning/training” and has co-ordinated, managed and ensured the creation of a permanent system of planning annual training plans on a provincial level, in the view of the competences it will have, in the near future, in terms of labour active policy and vocational training.

The **Confcommercio** (*Confederazione Generale Italiana del Commercio e del Turismo*, General Federation of Italian Merchants and Shopkeepers) **in Catania**: it is a federation including small, medium and big entrepreneurs operating in the field of trade, tourism, services and transports, it was born to represent and protect the economic and moral interests of its members. With 16,000 members, it has 26 seats within the province and is connected, on vertical level, with trade associations (goldsmiths, opticians, booksellers, mercantile and business agents, hoteliers).

It promotes and realises initiatives aimed at the assistance of the technological evolution and the vocational training of the members and workers/employees.

Training is the focal point of the policy supported by Confcommercio: it is developed directly, as well as in accordance with the ISFOTER, the Institute promoting culture and vocational training of the tertiary and created by the same organisation.

In the years it has been succeeding in starting up several initiatives and training actions, such as the promotion and realisation of workshops, consultancy offered to the members for the legal, fiscal, financial and accounting assistance. It is also a reconciliation organisation.

Confcommercio has started and managed directly a series of services and has formed societies and organisations in charged of activities in favour of its members.

As a trade association, in the frame of the *Fenice* project it has ensured the involvement of the enterprises within the system.

The **Promozione & Sviluppo m.c.m. S.r.l. (Pro.Svi.** for short) has been formed in 1991, in order to provide the SMEs with a wide range of services referring to the organisation and training of Human Resources and to the management advice for business activities management. It has been recognised by a Ministerial Decree passed in 1998, as an Agency promoting Job, Business and Enterprise.

The society offers the enterprises advice concerning the organisational structure, the analysis of the management and business procedures, the planning of the financial needs of enterprises, the management control, the drawing up of marketing plans.

In the field of legal services, it provides the enterprises with advice and assistance concerning the drawing up of contracts, the company law and the administrative law.

The Promozione & Sviluppo society offers advice concerning the feasibility of a project or an entrepreneurial initiative and the accompanying of the future entrepreneur in the start up phase, in order to reduce the risks of starting up a new activity.

Laws concerned with contributions without security, easy grants, tax credits and other opportunities offered in the framework of an economic planning at community, national and regional level, together with the tools of negotiated planning, are peculiar in the advice provided by this society, in the viewpoint of the orientation towards the easy terms concerning the forming, the development and the consolidation of entrepreneurial activities.

The experience acquired from the planning and management of a number of initiatives in the field of Operating Programmes at regional level and Community Initiatives Programmes gives the Promozione & Sviluppo society the opportunity to propose a wide range of training actions respecting the exigencies of the territory and the dynamics of the labour market. The society plans and realises training actions addressed to unemployed people and orientated towards the insertion to the working environment, as well as life long learning interventions in favour of vocational refreshing and re-training of workers/employees working for public and private bodies.

Moreover the Pro.Svi. society organises post-university masters, specialising courses and vocational refreshing seminars addressed to entrepreneurs, professionals and managers, it gives advice to public and private bodies concerning the Human Resources organisation and management. It also provides services of research and personnel selection by adopting different methodologies and according to the clients' specific exigencies.

The **Cormorano Felix soc. coop. a r.l.**: formed in 1987, it has a registered office and a work place in Catania. It is a company dealing with vocational training and guidance, Internet services and multimedia production, telecom and software production, advertisement and communication, technical consultancy and assistance, marketing assistance and internationalisation of congressional services. It has been accredited by the Regional Administration, in order to realise life long training, higher education and compulsory training, thanks to the support of advanced technologies, such as distance learning.

The Cormorano Felix is also a successful company in planning, in the development and direction of web sites and portals, using the most modern and innovative languages in order to guarantee complete and updated services.

It provides the enterprises, the public bodies and whoever wants to start up an enterprise, with economic and technical consultancy, through the elaboration of projects and business plans both for the preliminary economic/financial proceedings and for the development of the administrative procedures. The organisation offers fiscal and contributory assistance, research and market analyses, statistical surveys, opinion polls, technical projects and advice on "safety".

Since the early Nineties, it has been specialising in accompanying enterprises in the field of marketing and internationalisation, developing a net of relationships with institutions, associations and national and foreign enterprises.

In the frame of the *Fenice* project, the Cormorano Felix has thus ensured the adoption of innovating systems and the experimentation of new methodologies.

In order to realise the intervention planned, the organisational procedures adopted by the DP promoting this project, have been based on the continuous involvement of the partners and on the real and active participation.

The Steering Committee, the Evaluation Committee, the reference subject and the general coordination of the project have contributed to work out the initiative.

c) A short description of the national projects.

c.1) The project by the Swedish DP – *K.O.A., Kista Open Academy: objectives and operating phases.*

In accordance with the EQUAL Community Initiative, the *Kista Open Academy (KOA)* project has been promoted by a very wide DP with inclusion of Nordic partners from Finland and Norway. The partnership has been very big with involvement of municipalities, universities, NGOs and private companies. The common interest in the partnership has been development of adults' learning to support life long learning, development and growth in the society without any exclusion, discrimination and barriers.

An open learning for all, not only for the privileges based on demands and respecting individual needs as well as the needs of labour in the society. The NGOs are immigrant associations representing their members who are important target groups for EQUAL. To work for open and flexible systems and adequate training without barriers, also on higher levels, is the focal point of the project. Groups who suffer from structural discrimination and many barriers are unemployed people and very often people in low paid jobs as well as staff in SMEs.

KOA has promoted the main aim, which has been to identify obstacles for adults' learning and build a strong network for getting an open university in Sweden. But *KOA* has also supported necessary development of prerequisites for our target groups as motivation and engagement, active search and guidance, pedagogical and methodological issues, use of ICT and modern support tools for teachers. *KOA* has also promoted creating of Learning Centres where people can go and get information and guidance, meet other people and get help with technical equipment. A Learning Centre will have three main functions, 3M - "Meeting, Motor and Mentor".

KOA has not had any money for piloting, just for working with structural, pedagogical and methodological changes.

The aims of *Kista Open Academy* were:

1. to build a strong network to realise an open university in Sweden;
2. to create enthusiasm for education and training among new groups in the local society;
3. to create a system of education applicable in both rich and poorly populated areas;
4. to combine different levels of education, i.e. education for adults parallel with university studies;
5. to study in several different languages at the same time, without any structural barriers;
6. to develop individual study plans, containing courses from different providers;
7. to develop flexible, pedagogical and methodological methods e.g. the form and substance of popular education by adding a university dimension to it;
8. to create virtual support structures, ICT, in order to facilitate the process of starting-on-your-own for adults;
9. to raise the interest for higher education among children and adolescents from families where such education does not exist.

c.2) The project by the Italian DP – *Fenice: objectives and operating phases.*

The main goal of the *Fenice* project is to experiment, in the province of Catania, a permanent system of identification of the training needs of the workers/employees of private enterprises, in order to realise an annual planning, on a provincial level, of the life long learning/training interventions, required by the territory.

Such experimental system has foreseen the creation of the *Fenice* Centre within the Provincial Administration in Catania, which has also favoured a wide collaboration between training

organisations and enterprises.

In order to achieve the objectives foreseen, the Italian DP has adopted a strategy focused on the dissemination of information concerning the initiative, with reference to the problems identified and the consequent involvement and the active participation of all the subjects directly interested in the problem, in order to adopt joint actions directed to the improvement of the context.

The project paths were composed of four operating main steps strictly connected with the territory.

The first main step, named *Awareness and knowledge of the context*, included two activities:

- the awakening of the context through a massive advertisement of the *Fenice* project and of its contents;
- the analysis of the existing training system through a study on the training organisations of the territory, the training courses organised, the professional profiles created and the results obtained.

The second main step, or *System processing*, included two activities as well:

- the identification and experimentation of an organised system for a lasting identification of the training needs of the enterprises in the province of Catania. In order to realise such a system both the entrepreneurs and the entrepreneurs' representatives, as well as the unions, have been involved;
- a research work focused on the analysis of the labour market and the existing discriminations preventing the workers/employees to keep their jobs.

This step was aimed at giving a complete picture of the socio-economic context, of the labour market in Catania and its tendencies through a detailed research activity.

The third main step, *Experimentation of new models and implementation of the Fenice Centre*, made the results of the advertisement and of the research carried out in the previous steps concrete, and included the following activities:

- starting up the *Fenice* Centre, that allowed to modify the life long learning/training system in order to make it play an active role within the labour active policy. Thanks to the results of the analyses worked out all over the province, this Centre has tested the efficacy of the tool used to certify the competences and experimented during the development of the second main step;
- consultancy to enterprises concerning the Human Resources management, the identification of the training needs and the planning of business and/or individual training interventions;
- consultancy to training organisations, in order to improve the refreshing and retraining interventions and to adopt procedures having high quality standards.

The fourth main step, *Transnational Co-operation and Mainstreaming*, has been realised in a transversal way during the development of the project initiative and has been realised through the following activities:

- transnational activities foreseen by the TCAs signed with the transnational DPs. The transnational co-operation has been based on the exchange of know-how and the realisation of joint actions with the foreign partners. In particular the Swedish DP *Kista Open Academy* and the French DP *Salariés seniors – Agir aujourd'hui pour l'emploi de demain*, belonging to the same thematic field 3, Adaptability, theme E – life long learning, in the frame of the EQUAL Community Initiative, and developing the national projects mentioned above, have been involved;
- the involvement of the institutions and social actors, in order to favour horizontal and vertical mainstreaming, in other words to disseminate the experimentations realised and to make the local policy adopt the good practices identified.

Chapter 2

The activities

a) The choice of the transnational partner and the co-operation.

a.1) The Swedish choice of the Italian transnational partner and the co-operation.

Sweden was contacted by the Italian *Fenice* project. We had earlier been interested in finding a partner in South of Europe and we welcomed the initiative to be able to operate in two contexts with the similar issues. We realised immediately that a joint action of research on the discriminations suffered from the workers/employees within the labour markets was involved into the two contexts - which was interesting.

The Italian DP had very much of the same structure and many interesting objectives focusing on the exchange of procedures and tools to identify the training needs of the enterprises. To be able to compare the discrimination of our common target groups with a group in a totally different cultural environment with a very different system for adult education and training and for reception of immigrants, was interesting in a perspective of integration and of the target groups possibilities on the labour market. It was different and similar at the same time.

The overall interesting issue was the possibility to exchange experience with a DP that came from a very different cultural environment and had a lot of common aims and interests. It was a possibility to get added value and to improve our European dimension.

a.2) The Italian choice of the Swedish transnational partner and the co-operation.

The choice of a transnational partner from Sweden was done through a careful analysis and evaluation of the projects admitted to Action 2 and collected by the ECDB.

The analysis was concerned with the projects belonging to the thematic field 3, Adaptability, theme E –life long learning, since a fruitful co-operation between the two DPs was based on the same main goal: to realise a joint action of research on the discriminations suffered from the workers/employees within the labour markets of the two contexts.

The other objectives shared by the two transnational DPs were the following:

- to awaken all the enterprises operating in the two contexts, the workers/employees, as well as the unions and the other local actors, to the importance of the training interventions, as valid tools to overcome the existing gaps;
- the reciprocal participation in information seminars on the significant events experimented in the two countries;
- the realisation of visits addressed to the actors of the respective territories involved in the problems linked to life long learning/training and to the labour market;
- the exchange of procedures and tools to identify the training needs of the enterprises and the workers/employees inserted;
- the exchange of procedures and tools identifying the minimum requirements each worker/employee should have not to be expelled from the labour market;
- the transfer of the procedures and methods to audit and certify the workers'/employees' competences;
- the publication of a final common report on the discriminations.

To sum up, the coincidence of the objectives of the projects, the same structure of the DPs, the possibility of operating in two contexts that are different and similar at the same time, have characterised such co-operation.

The methodology that both partners wanted to adopt was the development of a joint action aiming at the achievement of the objectives foreseen and at the realisation of a joint research on the discriminations suffered from the workers/employees within the labour market.

The overall transnational strategy was thus based on the sharing of a common problem connected with the discriminations mentioned above, the realisation of a tool (a questionnaire) to identify such discriminations, the evaluation of the results achieved within the visits to

exchange the experiences emerged from the respective research works, as well as on the dissemination of the results obtained.

b) A comparison between the two experiences: trips, cultural and human exchanges.

The transnational activities foreseen by the respective national projects, in the frame of the EQUAL Community Initiative, have permitted to make a comparison between the Mediterranean and Scandinavian contexts.

b.1) The Swedish experience in Italy and in Martinique.

Soon after the preliminary contacts by e-mail and by telephone a first *face to face* meeting was necessary, in order to fix some points about the future collaboration.

The trip. An Equal project, three transnational exchanges during the realisation of the project (April 2002, October 2003 and October 2004) and a final transnational exchange (December 2004, in Martinique).

The arrival. The welcome on the part of the Italian responsible of the Pro.Svi. society was warm: a successful co-operation was foreseen, from the professional as well as from the human viewpoint.

The stay. Each mission took the Swedish delegation few days.

The work experience.

The first mission in Italy (from 4th to 5th April 2002).

Main goal. This preliminary meeting aimed at getting together directly. There was a very warm welcoming and the response from all in Ragusa was very appreciated by the Swedish partners.

Specific goal. This atmosphere has favoured the creation of a positive and serene microclimate, in order to analyse the possibilities of planning, creation and realisation of a TCA.

Activities.

1st working day. The first working day took place in Ragusa. After the welcoming of the members of the Italian DP and the introduction of the members representing the organisations participating in the meeting, the national projects have been explained. During the second part of the day, the TCA has been planned as well as a framework for the collaboration.

2nd working day. The second working day took place in Catania, under the support of a tourist guide. That moment was particularly important, as the visions of Catania for building up an IT industry and the impact of the experiences deriving from the IT-crash in Kista, where thousands of people became unemployed and a lot of industries broke down in Stockholm, caused a lot of interesting exchange of ideas. To be able to realise the different systems for Sicily and Sweden for benefits and prerequisites for unemployed people was the next big exchange of experiences in our systems. To realise the traffic of the prerequisites for the trade in Catania was an interesting experience.

The second mission in Italy (from 24th to 27th September 2003).

Main goal. The general objective of this visit was to analyse the state of art of the respective projects, as well as to deepen the reciprocal knowledge.

Specific goal. To explain the function of the system of the educational and vocational training system in Italy and in Sweden, with particular reference to life long training.

Activities.

1st working day. The seminar was held in Catania. Five different organisations from Sweden were present. After the welcoming, the two delegations introduced the participants, the organisations to which they belong, and their functions within them. They described the territories and contexts, in order to exchange information and discover the common elements

for a fruitful co-operation. Then the participants concentrated on the detailed description of the educational and training system in Italy.

2nd working day. It focused on the training of the staff and of unemployed people. The introduction made by the responsible of the Italian delegation was rich in information and the interest by the Swedish partner was relevant. The analysis of the SMEs, the explanation of the strategies and the experimentation were also interesting. The exchange of experiences was good too.

In the afternoon two visits of two training body were arranged, at ECAP and CEFOP. The Swedish delegation had also the possibility of meeting the beneficiaries of the training actions and discussing with them. It also had the possibility to meet beneficiaries and discuss with them. It was an informative session for the Swedish partners and there was a good exchange of experiences between the partners. The information about the region and the exchange of experience about differences in the education and training systems became a good platform for further discussions.

The third mission in Italy (from 4th to 6th November 2004).

Main goal. The general objective of this visit was to analyse the state of art of the respective projects, as well as to deepen the reciprocal knowledge concerning the experimentation started, autonomously, in each country.

Specific goal. To start a comparison between the experimentations of Italy and Sweden, and to analyse the results.

Activities.

1st working day. A special visit was held in Ragusa. One person, a specialist from Nova Distance, visited the Italian partner. The aim of the visit was to finish the work with the analysis of the results of the questionnaire and to work with a description of systems identifying the training needs in enterprises and to discuss the analyses of the joint action on discriminations. Different solutions were discussed and new tools were shown, in order to create possibilities for identifying competences and for developing the possibilities for new and flexible solutions to meet the demands of the target group. The visit was successful and ensured the exchange of experiences would continue. Both partners were interested in finding solutions for a further collaboration.

The fourth mission for the final seminar, in Martinique (from 10th to 17th December, 2004).

This seminar did not take place in Italy, but in Martinique. The French partner from Martinique, transnational partner co-operating with Italy for another TCA of the *Fenice* project, had invited the Swedish partner in order to participate in the final seminar in Martinique. The Martinique experience was one of the biggest surprises because it was unexpected from the beginning. The programme was very ambitious with seminars, study visits and cultural events.

Main goal. The general objective of this visit was to sum up the results of the co-operation foreseen by the two TCAs.

Specific goal. To make a comparison between the experiences of Italy, Martinique and Sweden, and to analyse the results.

Activities.

1st working day. All DPs reported from the experiences of each transnational event and it was an interesting exchange. The Italian and the Swedish delegations presented the results of the respective national projects.

2nd working day. After a meeting, there were two study visits on the second day,. The first visit took place in a company producing ice-creams, which deepened the topic concerning training adopted by the enterprises. The second visit took place in the harbour, which was very big and new (supported by EU-foundlings). The harbour will probably be of great value for the trade in the whole Caribbean area, as it was one of the most modern harbours in the

world with an excellent equipment and a trained staff.

3rd working day. A 25-year celebration of the organisation supporting the SMEs and an exhibition of SMEs involved the Italian and the Swedish delegations in Martinique. During the exhibition it was possible to talk to entrepreneurs and to appreciate their products. It was a great opportunity to exchange experiences, enriched by the interest of the local entrepreneurs in the delegation of the Italian DP and the Swedish one.

Later the same day the final seminar took place with all authorities in the field present. There was a presentation from the Martinique DP with a lot of interesting new facts about labour, useful for the development and growth of the Martinique market. It was the first time they had made such a research and it got a big attention.

The experience from their visit in Sweden looking at companies' working environment and the prerequisites for keeping elder labour working (they retire at about 55 years) was also interesting element and on the more informal part of the meeting many politicians and officers asked questions. A short presentation from Italy, the *Fenice* DP, and from Sweden, the *KOA* DP, was done.

The exchange of experience brought in a very special European dimension to the partnership.

The human and cultural aspect. The welcoming of the Italians with marvellous people, excellent Mediterranean food and an interesting cultural adventure made this co-operation a rich experience. The Swedish experience deriving from these meetings has marked the rest of the collaboration. The linguistic barrier characterising each of the experiences was solved thanks to the interpretation/translations as well as to the attempt of communicating in English, the working language chosen for the transnational co-operation.

b.2) The Italian experience in Sweden.

The transnational activities foreseen in the Italian project have given the possibility of operating a comparison between the Mediterranean context and the Scandinavian one.

A peninsula with green and thick vegetation, Sweden is a bridge between Northern and Southern Europe, where cultures and traditions deeply different, are blended together.

The trip. An EQUAL project, two transnational visits (April 2003 and June 2004) and a final one (December 2004, Martinique), a three-hour trip for each seminar organised.

The arrival. The responsible of Kista Borough gave the Italian delegation a warm welcome: the proverbial hospitality of the Italians, replaced by the Swedish one, made us guess a fruitful co-operation, from a human as well as a professional viewpoint.

The stay. Each visit took the Italian delegation few days.

The work experience.

The first mission to Sweden (from 7th to 8th April 2003).

Main goal. The project realised by the Sicilian partner focused on the creation of a system of life long learning in favour of the enterprises' workers/employees, in order to satisfy the following remarks:

- the lack of a structured vocational training device for the workers/employees;
 - the decentralization of the vocational training initiatives to the regions and the provinces.
- Such premises led the Sicilian delegation to find out the life long vocational training system, with particular reference to the innovative mechanisms, such as distance learning.

Specific goal. This DP was founded on the realisation of a specific experimentation on the enterprises of each of the two contexts, regarding a common phenomenon: the discriminations suffered from the workers/employees within the working environment.

Activities.

1st working day. The Swedish and the Italian delegations met in the conference room of the Hotel situated in Kista. It is a modern area situated between the centre of Stockholm and Arlanda airport.

The representatives of Kista Borough and the *KOA* project manager welcomed the Italian delegation. After explaining the programme of the two working days, the introduction of the two delegations followed.

The two delegations described the respective territories and contexts, in order to exchange information and find out the common elements for a co-operation.

The second part of the morning was focused on the description of the TCA, in order to plan the activities concerning the co-operation foreseen, to organise the timetable and the budget.

In the afternoon, the national projects were explained. The meeting with the Swedish national partners and the description of the Italian membership offered the possibility of contextualising the two projects, *KOA* and *Fenice*. It also favoured the exchange of information as well as the research and the analysis of the Swedish context. The active participation of the participants and the organisation of the meeting confirmed the professionalism of the Swedish delegation and the care for the activities planned.

2nd working day. The exchange between the two delegations allowed the Italian partner to deepen the knowledge of the Swedish context. It is a wide territory, with a low population density: in order to overcome the difficulties linked to the distances, they realise a vocational training adopting innovative strategies, methodologies and tools. On this purpose the visits of a Learning Centres in Sollentuna and Intervverbum were organised.

The second mission to Sweden (from 17th to 19th June 2004). Once more an occasion to experiment the Swedish partner's competences and interest in the project activities. And this time the Italian delegation took part in the mission in Sweden together with the French delegation from Martinique (a transnational partner co-operating with Italy for another TCA of the *Fenice* project), can experiment again the warm welcome, the care as well as the competence of the Swedish staff.

Main goal. The Italian delegation has discovered one of the farthest areas from Italy: Sorsele. Situated in the northern part of Sweden, in the southern Lapland - 940 Km² far from Stockholm, Sorsele belongs to Västerbotten. It is quite large, yet it counts a few inhabitants, - about 1300 - and has, therefore, a very low density of population.

Specific goal. To deepen the knowledge about how to exploit the territory.

Activities.

1st working day. After welcoming the participants, the Head of the Local Government in Sorsele proposed the programme foreseen for those days. Then a description of the area followed. The interventions aimed at showing the way to overcome the isolation of the areas that are hardly reachable. Many initiatives and projects were illustrated in order to show how the resources are exploited, the strategies adopted to achieve the development and growth of this area and its SMEs.

Late in the morning the representatives of the three delegations explained their national projects and the progress of the project activities.

Early in the afternoon the participants focused on the description of the infrastructures favouring the learning process and the development of the competences in Sorsele, with particular reference to the SMEs. Then the delegations visited a Learning Centre, a key point for the learning process, thanks to the distance learning technique, realised with the help of the Internet. Then the different participants concentrated on the techniques of local development of Sorsele, realised thanks to some initiatives: *North Academy* in Sorsele, *Growth through co-operation*, *SIKU* and *PRIO 1*, are some of the examples of the initiatives that have started to combat the problem of distance and isolation, offer equal opportunities to live and work successfully in one's own municipality, develop and empower the activities of the territory, give prominence to the entrepreneurial spirit of young people living in Västerbotten, involving a number of young as well as enterprises.

2nd working day. The Italian and French delegations went and visit Gargnäs, a municipality in Västerbotten, in order to visit an enterprise producing microchips and other computer

devices. Such visit offered the two delegations the occasion of deepening the theme of learning and the management of senior workers/employees, it also concentrated on the adoption of Information Technology, an important means to destroy the boundaries and combat the isolation of inaccessible territories - like Sorsele.

The first part of the afternoon opened with the description of the infrastructures favouring the development of the Swedish Lapland, with particular reference to the initiatives promoting the resources available from an environmental, economic and social viewpoint. On this purpose, two initiatives were described. The *Snow Magic* initiative - promoting attractive products, services and events in northern Europe based on the sustainable use of snow and ice combined with local resources, tales, legends and new technologies – and the initiative addressed to *exalt the natural reserve of the Vindel mountain* – which confirmed the interest in promoting the area. It is one of the widest reserves of Europe aimed at saving the Sami culture and protecting its fauna and flora.

The second part of the afternoon was centred on the themes previously developed and on the exchange of information concerning the development of tourism, thanks to initiatives, projects and strategies to achieve precise objectives.

3rd working day. The representatives of the delegations mentioned above met to make the point of the transnational meeting. In particular the previous meetings were built around the dynamic development on local level, which took into great consideration the *peripheral* condition of Sorsele and its strong decentralisation (with reference to Sweden and Europe), the development of Information Technology (and its adoption in the distance learning) and the high tech enterprises.

The attention was then addressed to planning the activities concluding the transnational experience in Italy and Sweden, especially to the joint analysis of the discrimination within the labour market and to the final publication connected to this research analysis.

On this purpose the procedure adopted in Sicily to discover the discrimination within the labour market was analysed and the tool used by the Sicilian consultants (a questionnaire on discriminations) was explained. On this occasion a meeting would be organised in Sicily, probably in October or in November, in order to compare the results of the joint action on discriminations.

Finally, as the French delegation from Martinique had invited a Swedish delegation to take part in the final seminar that will take place in Martinique on the first half of December 2004, an appointment was fixed.

The third mission for the final seminar, in Martinique (from 10th to 17th December, 2004).

This seminar did not take place in Sweden, but in Martinique. The French partner from Martinique, transnational partner co-operating with Italy for another TCA of the *Fenice* project, had invited the Swedish partner in order to participate in the final seminar in Martinique and sum up the results of the co-operation foreseen by the TCAs. (See Section 1, Chapter 2 – The activities –, paragraph b.1 – The Swedish experience in Italy and in Martinique –).

The cultural and human aspect. The Italian delegation has been attracted by the particular territory and by the people living there: the *Fenice* project has given the possibility of appreciating the transnational partner from both a professional and a human point of view, combining the competence, accuracy and devotion to work, with the pleasure of the visit. On this purpose through these transnational exchanges the Italian delegation has appreciated, directly, a new context, very different from the Mediterranean environment because of the climate, the flora, the fauna, habits and traditions. Through the exploration of the context, the Italian delegation has discovered a double reality: on the one hand Stockholm, the Scandinavian Venice, a north European metropolis, visited during the first mission. On the other hand the Swedish Lapland, the town of Sorsele, in the region of Västerbotten, subject of the second mission of the Italian delegation in Sweden.

Moreover the Italian delegation has been really surprised and happy because of the warm welcome received by the representatives of Sorsele and also because it had the possibility to get in contact with a context quite similar to the Sicilian one in terms of *isolation* and *difficulties of communication*, yet quite different from it in terms of *spirit of enterprise*, of *organisation* and of *adoption of advanced technologies*.

Sicily can take possession of such elements, in order to face some problems contributing to increase the phenomenon of *marginalisation*, not only from a geographical viewpoint, but also –and above all – from an economic viewpoint.

Yet a new aspect emerges: taking care of the relationships was also intended to discover other components characterising the Swedish context. Kind and warm like the Italian partner from Sicily, the Swedish one has stood out for the spirit of initiative, for the responsibility and the ambitious aspiration to professionalism.

SECTION 2

Chapter 1

The transnational activities

a) The Transnational Co-operation Agreement.

The DPs that have signed the Transnational Co-operation Agreement, shared a main goal to carry out joint actions aimed at:

1. experimenting good practises which can face the problems linked to the clients who suffer from discriminations in the labour market because of a vocational training which is not suitable to the requirements of the labour market;
2. awakening all the enterprises of the referring territory, the workers/employees, the unions and all the local actors to the importance of the training courses as valid tools to overcome the existing gaps;
3. favouring contacts and co-operation among the DPs by arranging exchanges among the representatives of the local partners;
4. taking part in seminars which give information on the relevant experiences tried out in the two countries;
5. editing a report concerning the actions;
6. favouring the sustainability of the actions experimented by developing new projects about subjects of common interest.

Description of the activities/tasks.

1. Systems to identify the training plans (joint development);
2. joint development of training plans to update and retrain the target groups;
3. exchange or adoption of new approaches favouring the involvement of the target group;
4. parallel development of innovative approaches favouring life long learning within the organisations;
5. benchmarking (exchange of information and experiences);
6. development of common tools to evaluate and certify the competences;
7. conferences to exchange information;
8. visits to exchange experiences;
9. dissemination.

On the basis of the motivations mentioned in the previous paragraphs, that led the Italian and Swedish partners to choose each other, a TCA has been signed, with a preliminary planning of the working programme as follows:

1. to realise a joint action of research on the discriminations suffered from the workers/employees of the labour markets of the two contexts;
2. to exchange information on the system of identification of the training needs and the editing of training plans for the enterprises;
3. to exchange information on the training plans addressed to refresh and to the re-qualification of the workers/employees;
4. to transfer, reciprocally, innovative approaches favouring the learning process within the organisations;
5. to transfer, reciprocally, tools identifying the minimum requirements each worker/employee should have not to be excluded from the labour market, evaluating and certifying the competences;
6. to exchange information and experiences in order to make the two partners identify the best and most effective management techniques;
7. to solve the problems met during the realisation of the joint activity connected with the research on discriminations.

Moreover, the conferences of exchange would allow to transfer information and experiences between the DPs involved, as well as within the territories interested; the visits of exchange would be addressed to the territories involved in the problems linked to the workers'/employees' life long learning/training and to the labour market; the realisation of a web site would spread the actions and the activities foreseen in the projects on a national

level, as well as in the frame of the transnational co-operation; a final event would aim at disseminating the results obtained.

The methodology of communication the transnational partnership would adopt would be based on e-communication, through e-mails and the web sites created on a national level: in particular a section concerning the transnational activities would be created in each national web site, having a similar structure, whose documents would be available in each national language, as well as in English.

Besides this ordinary system of communication, periodical meetings and seminars would be organised.

b) The choice of the objectives.

As it has been previously said, the global transnational strategy was based on the following actions:

- sharing the problems which are common to the national projects;
- using common tools and planning common action;
- development of the previous points;
- evaluation of the results of the meetings aimed at exchanging experiences;
- changes/modifications originating from the comparison of the results;
- dissemination of the results.

The DPs involved the TCA had, thus, a main goal: to exchange information and to realise a joint action aiming at the experimentation of good practices and directed to face the discriminations suffered from the workers/employees within the two contexts, also because of a poor vocational training related to the exigencies of the labour market and from the comparison of the two research works this document originated.

Such objectives have been achieved, in progress, by the two DPs, since these latter have agreed a process of horizontal mainstreaming while the realisation of the co-operation was in progress, through exchange conferences organised on national levels in order to deepen the knowledge of the contexts and to awaken the territories to the problems existing and to propose solutions to the problems identified.

Thanks to an active benchmarking, effective strategies and methodologies already experimented, on national level, by the national projects or during previous experiences developed by each of the DP.

The value added of the strategy the DPs have agreed and put into practice through the co-operation, was given by the possibility of developing a joint action of research on the discriminations suffered from the workers/employees of the two contexts.

The intervention has been realised in two territories sharing common and different characteristics, yet sharing the same need concerning the adoption of life long learning as a tool weakening the risk of exclusion from the labour market.

c) The points of contact and the differences.

c.1) The points of contact and the differences, according to the Swedish partner.

The points of contact. The target groups in Sweden, unemployed people and low paid workers/employees and staff in SMEs, meet with a lot of barriers in their possibilities for life long learning. To encourage these groups for learning and meeting their demands will insist on new and flexible systems, new pedagogical and methodological ways for education and training, e.g. use of ICT, and methods and acceptance or validation of informal and non formal knowledge. There are already many activities concerned with the education and training of the target groups but there are also many barriers, especially in the field of higher

education, and many people need higher education to be able to increase their competences and get a new job. In Swedish SMEs the people are not very often aware of the necessity of further studies and they are sometimes hard to motivate. It is also part of a culture not to study if one belongs to these groups and so a cultural change is needed. Many workers/employees, especially those who are underpaid, will run the risk of losing their jobs and to get difficulties to get a new one. The companies will lose in competition on the market and their possibilities for growing and expanding will be limited.

These years the technological innovations, the expansion of the service industry production, the fast evolution of the research, require new organisational models based on the widening of the workers'/employees' skills, that is why training interventions are necessary for the enterprises, as a tool to adapt the competences to the changes of the production, organisation and management. This is exactly the same situation as it is in the Catania region.

The differences. Sweden has a broader spectra of target groups, a more "formal" task to identify obstacles, to build networks for strong partnership to make possible to get a structural change of the Swedish system for life long learning for all.

c.2) The points of contact and the differences, according to the Italian partner.

The economic context in Catania is characterised by SMEs having no structured system of life long learning, yet these years an attempt to build a system of life long learning satisfying the exigencies of this socio-economic context has been made.

The institutions have started initiatives encouraging the access to training of the workers/employees, in favour of the improvement of the professional competences and the competitiveness of the enterprises: although the evolution of the regulations, most enterprises think that having no recourse to training is due to the fact that the enterprises have already the competences requested. This makes one think there is a cultural delay, some prejudices towards life long learning and training, in a period when there are deep changes, re-organisational procedures and mobility.

In this view the enterprises are not conscious of the importance of re-qualification and/or updating the workers/employees, organising tailor-made training courses for them.

This means that many workers/employees run the risk of expulsion from the working environment. From the "sensitiveness" of the context to life long learning/training in the territory of Catania, two elements emerged:

- the entrepreneur thinks that training is a cost for his/her own enterprise;
- the lack of information about bids and public funding for the staff's refreshing and re-qualification.

These years the technological innovations, the expansion of the service industry production, the fast evolution of the research, require new organisational models based on the widening of the workers'/employees' skills, that is why training interventions are necessary for the enterprises, as a tool to adapt the competences to the changes of the production, organisation and management.

A wide *dissemination of the culture of life long learning/training* is thus necessary, using all means but above all *an agreement involving public bodies on local level, the social parts and societies of the sector*, in order to make our enterprises compete with the enterprises of other countries.

Chapter 2

The experimentation

a) Objectives and contents of the experimentation.

a.1) Objectives and contents of the experimentation realised by the Swedish DP.

The main interest for the Swedish DP was the possibility of exchanging experiences where the cultural aspect could help the DP in development of a new structure for adults learning with less discrimination and isolation of Swedish target groups in a perspective of life long learning for all.

A joint action would make the picture more clear and increase the European dimension in our result. The objective was to identify and visualize the amount of discrimination these people felt in comparison to the Italian entrepreneurs. The criterion was a small company with up to 10 employees and having an immigrant as an owner or as a managing director. We tried to get an equal number of men and women to interview but it was not possible because it was difficult to find women companies.

The steps in the joint action were a bit simpler than the Italian version. We didn't have any contact with the unions of the territory. Yet they would be important organisations for dissemination. We contacted the town of Stockholm, Järfälla and Sollentuna municipalities and got lists with companies registered on immigrants or where they knew there was a managing director with an immigrant background. It has then been a direct contact with at random chosen companies with this immigrant background.

a.2) Objectives and contents of the experimentation realised by the Italian DP.

As it has been explained in the chapter concerning the "Transnational Co-operation", the *Fenice* project, in the frame of the EQUAL Community Initiative, has foreseen an activity of exchange of information and good practices and a joint action with the Swedish partner, directed towards a research on the discriminations suffered from the workers/employees of the two territories.

The experimentation has been divided into three steps:

Step one. At first the unions of the territories have been contacted: they have been informed on the objectives of the Italian project, the transnational project and on the necessity of realising a research on the discriminations suffered from the workers/employees within the working environment.

Step two. Then the unions have promoted and advertised the project through their offices all over the territory, and have made their members fill in a questionnaire on the discriminations. The questionnaires have been collected and given to the coordinator who analysed the data emerged.

Step three. On the basis of the data collection a report has been written down.

b) Analysis and structure of the tools used by the two DPs.

The research on the discriminations has been developed using a traditional tool: a questionnaire with semi-open questions.

b.1) Analysis and structure of the tools used by the Swedish DP.

The questionnaire used and directed to workers/employees, had the following structure:

- (personal) data
- education
- sector/activity
- relationships
- level of satisfaction concerning one's own job
- possibility to have recourse to learning/training actions

- discriminations suffered
- mobbing

b.2) Analysis and structure of the tools used by the Italian DP.

See the previous paragraph b.1 - Analysis and structure of the tools used by the Swedish DP.

c) Description of the results obtained by the two experimentations.

c.1) Description of the results obtained by the Swedish DP.

c.1.1) The joint experimentation on discriminations.

In Sweden the research was made by phone (telephone interviews) and that is why it had 100% of answers. The amount of companies that was interviewed was only 25. All companies were small, with 3-10 employees.

The sample was formed of non European (60%) males (75%), being between 33 and 45 (45%) and having an upper secondary leaving certification (32%). Most of them worked in the management (76%) and 12% had permanent or temporary full-time employment contracts.

The result of the research was not surprising for the Swedish DP. It is well known that discrimination exists and this has been seen in many earlier publications referred in daily news and in discussions about unemployment and working environment in conferences and seminars. One thing was difficult to handle in the interviews: mobbing and discrimination are not easy to separate for the entrepreneurs.

A big amount of the group (15 out of 25) had started their companies because they had felt isolated and not accepted in the working life. They had not got a job in response with their competence. They felt discriminated. Language and their names are big obstacles in getting a job for a person with immigrant background. Many young people changed their names or added a Swedish name to their other names. Language and nationality also rose obstacles in getting better wages or the right level of wage as well as it was a barrier in participation in life long learning activities: 4 of the 9 women also feel that sex and age are barriers for preventing learning activities.

The reaction caused on the mobbing is depressing. More than half of the group (18) has been discriminatively treated. Some have been badly paid, others have been given less important tasks than the ones they had before, and some others have been moved from the office, have been sick and have finished the job on their own.

The result of the Swedish research has an impact on the content in adult education and training not only for the target groups but also for the territorial unions and the management of training.

c.1.2) The attempt with *Learning Ambassadors*, in Sweden.

Aims and objectives. The main goal was to try to adopt “*Learning Ambassadors*”, a method used in our partnerships in UK and Portugal. The project has obtained an extension to increase the dissemination and to realise a pilot project within the Swedish immigrant associations with *Learning Ambassadors*.

The **members of the partnership** are: the Iranian Association - Stockholm County; the Co-operation Group for Iranian Associations in Sweden (IFR); the Eritrean Association - Kista/Husby and the Kurdish National Association.

Target groups and objectives. The main target group for the *Learning Ambassadors* is the members in the associations and the task is to find out if it is possible to develop a Swedish

method for *Learning Ambassadors* adapted to these target groups.

Prerequisites. All groups got about 6500 EUR each to cover their costs and to be able to pay a small fee to the person they choose to do the job. The ambassadors have got one day of education and training with a guidance councillor.

Results. The first experience we got was that the demands and prerequisites in the target groups were very different. Because of that all associations were free to create an own model.

The **Iranian Association - Stockholm County**, was a very divided organisation. Their members were not so highly educated and many of them were unemployed. Many were also young people, the second generation in Sweden. Many of these had dropped out of school and had a difficult situation.

This organisation will not be able to fulfil the task and they just the first step, to inform and build up a network between all the partners in their organisation. We will not get any more experiences from this attempt.

The **Co-operation Group for Iranian Associations in Sweden (IFR)** started up very quickly. Such associations contacted the labour market office for unemployed people and got support and will now add their money to money from the office. They have one person employed full time. The members are highly educated and their difficulties are around the level of services. Many of their highly educated members are driving taxi or running pizzerias. They have worked to match people into the right work and to find possibilities for complementary education and training with good results, as well as to find possibilities for practice.

They have translated information, arranged open radio broadcasting where members can call them and get answers and they have arranged meetings in their office where they have courses and activities.

An interesting final report will give many ideas about how to work into these kinds of groups.

The **Eritrean Association - Kista/Husby**, has been very ambitious. Its members have translated a lot of material and they have arranged a lot of meetings in their office where they also arrange other activities.

The demands of the group have been really different from the others. A very high rate is unemployed and they are very isolated from the society. To be able to take the step into a world of education and training their members need a lot of daily life information. These demands have been met from the *Learning Ambassadors* by inviting authorities (e.g. the local social department), and tax experts to explain the most necessary knowledge in these areas etc. They have also invited representatives for basic skills training and guidance councillors. They have very practically supported families with difficult social problems as drug problems with their youngsters and they have had a great success in their job. They have also had open radio broadcasting.

A very interesting report is expected from them.

The **Kurdish National Association** has also a divided structure and this will make it more difficult to structure the work and to find conditions to agree about. It has been up and down and we still do not know the results. A report is expected.

Summary. This is the situation in the end of the pilot project. The Swedish DP has at least two really interesting results: many people have been involved, been hooked into learning and training and got support and more knowledge for the future. There are ideas that can be developed further and maybe we can find an adopted and a divided version for the Swedish *Learning Ambassadors*. The reports have not still been analysed, but the Swedish DP will have them very soon. Then the results will be analysed and evaluated and later the final results will be able to be disseminated into the municipalities.

This method could be transferred and used in different target groups, e.g. staff in SMEs to hook them into learning.

c.2) Description of the results obtained by the Italian DP.

This work, born in order to face problems of discriminations suffered from the workers/employees in the province of Catania, has voiced those people experimenting and bearing, day after day, the problems and difficulties, as well as the satisfaction linked to each specific function.

Beside the statistical data to examine, this activity was intended to observe and stress a reality often hidden and deceitful, causing frustrations perceived and lived also unconsciously.

A sample of 152 workers/employees, being between 18 and 45 and living within the province of Catania was given a questionnaire aiming at identifying the presence, the incidence and the consequences of mobbing.

The sample interviewed had the following characteristics: 55% of the people interviewed were males; 45% was between 33 and 45; 99% was Italian; 97% did not belong to protected categories, 50% had a upper secondary leaving examination; 35% worked in the third sector; 38% had a permanent full-time employment contract.

Only 32% of the people interviewed were satisfied of their jobs; 48% thought they had enough possibilities to approach training in order to improve their conditions at work.

Once they had been asked whether they had already suffered from discriminations preventing their participation in life long learning/training initiatives, 57% of the people interviewed did not answer and 14% revealed to suffer from discriminations, due to the lack of a title.

As to discriminations concerned with the remuneration, 19% of people answering the question said they have been discriminated because of the type of contract signed.

MOBBING

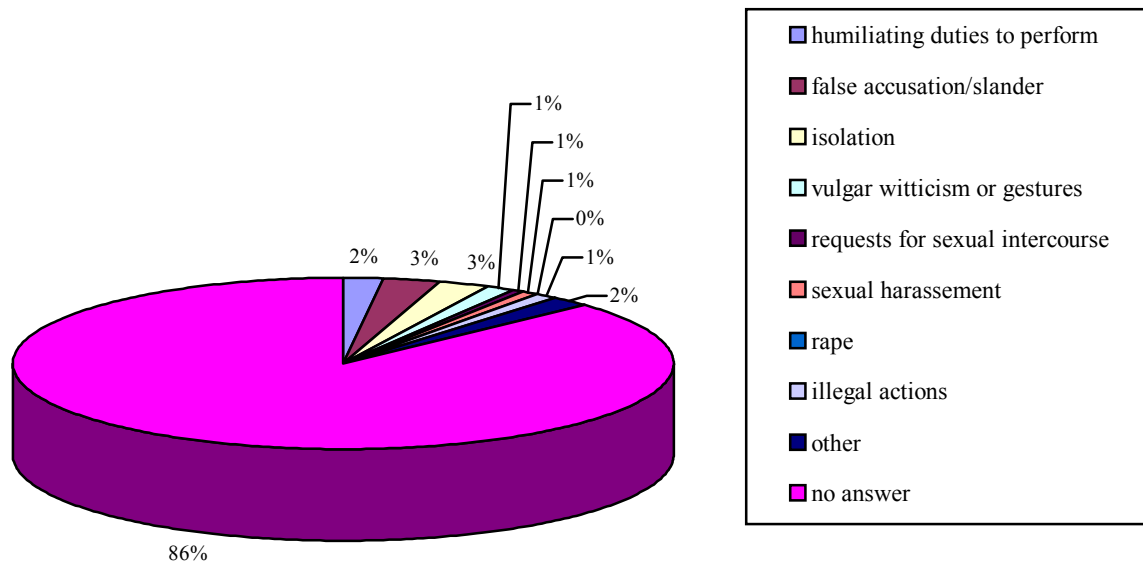
This section of the research work was of a certain importance for the *Fenice* project, not only to reveal episodes connected with mobbing in the province of Catania, but also to discover how conscious the people are.

On this purpose the workers/employees had been asked whether they have been molested within the working environment; it had also been clarified that “being molested” meant to *suffer from any hostile physical or verbal behaviour, within the working environment, referring to sex or not, and perceivable as an injury to one’s own dignity and personal liberty (vulgar witticism or gestures, injuries, undesired care, sexual harassment)*.

Moreover, because of the specific question, the people interviewed were given the possibility to answer the questions proposed, by ticking more than an answer.

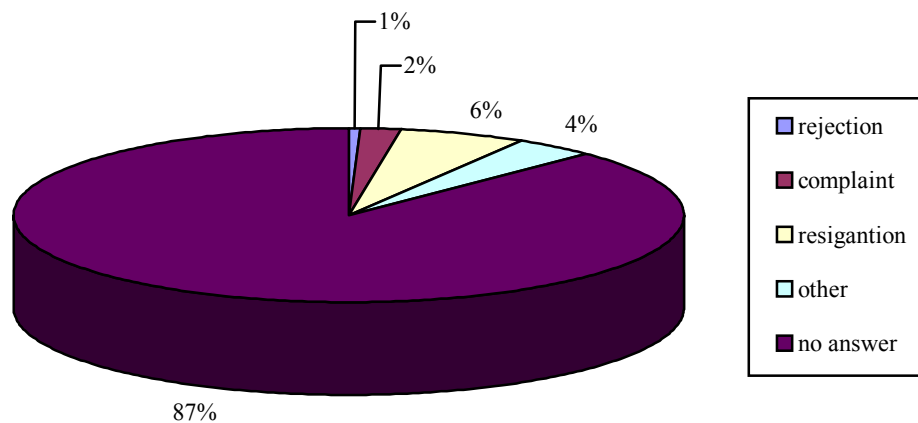
15% of the people interviewed preferred not to answer this question, whereas 12% said to have suffered from mobbing within the working environment.

With reference to the typology of molestation, the following data have been collected and processed:



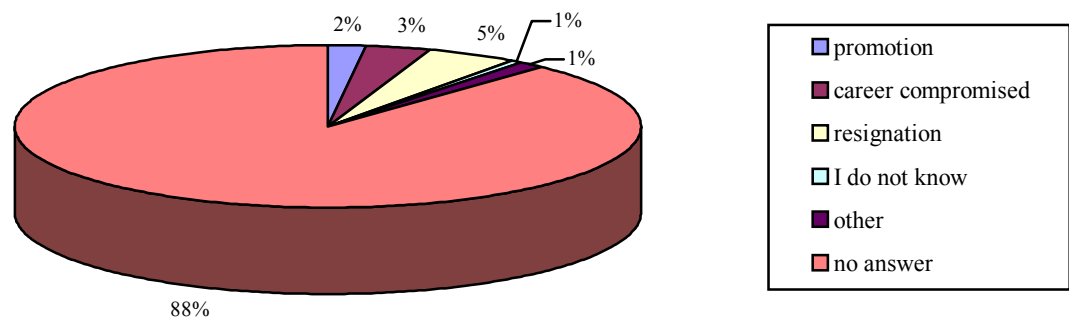
86% of the people interviewed do not refer what kind of molests had suffered or deny to have suffered from molests within the working environment, whereas 14% is included within the wide range of answers offered and had the possibility of giving more than one answer. In this case the data emerged are the following: false accusation and slander (3%), isolation within the working environment (3%), humiliating duties to perform (2%), vulgar witticism or gestures (1%), requests for sexual intercourse (1%), sexual harassment (1%), illegal actions (1%), other (2%).

With reference to the way they react and behave



only 13% of the people interviewed answered and, among them, 6% resigns.

The consequences of mobbing experimented on a professional level are the following:



So, considering the consequences provoked by mobbing, on a professional level, the most common typology is resignation (5%).

Chapter 3

Analysis of the results obtained.

a) Common aspects/elements shared by the two experimentations.

The experimentation realised in Italy and at the same time in Sweden, gave the possibility of identifying some similarities and differences connected with the discriminations suffered from the workers/employees within the two contexts.

Unlike the Italian sample, 60% of Swedish people answering the questionnaire is satisfied of their own jobs and 72% think they have not adequate possibilities to have recourse to training and improve their working conditions.

As to the question concerning discriminations preventing the access to training actions, 48% answered to have been discriminated because they were non European citizens.

And furthermore, many workers/employees also answered to have been subject to discriminations suffered in the field of remuneration, yet for reasons that were not specified in this questionnaire.

Mobbing was a wider, or simply, more denounced phenomenon in Sweden than in Italy. In fact 44% of the people interviewed confessed to be subject to mobbing within the working context.

Even though the most common typology of discrimination is different from the Italian one (30% of the Swedish sample is subject to illegal actions), the phenomenon evolves in the same way, in both countries.

Once people are subject to mobbing, the most common reaction is resignation (29% of the sample); as a consequence the most common typologies refer to the attempt to compromise the career (21%).

b) A “comparative” table.

Attention. A great number of people (88%) did not answer the questions concerning the phenomenon of mobbing in Italy. This is connected with the fact that the Swedish research is small, which gives the joint action a lower value.

It is not possible to make a comparison in all parts but it still gives a national platform and a background for interesting exchange of experiences for the DPs, in order to make the point of the situation.

Age	Sweden	Italy
18-32	8%	41%
33-45	44%	45%
>45	48%	14%
Sex	Sweden	Italy
Male	76%	55%
Female	24%	45%
Nationality		
Domestic	32% (all with immigrant background)	99%
European	8%	No answer
Non European	60%	No answer
Belonging to a protected category		
YES	68%	3%
NO	32%	97%
Education	Sweden	Italy
Primary school	8%	11%

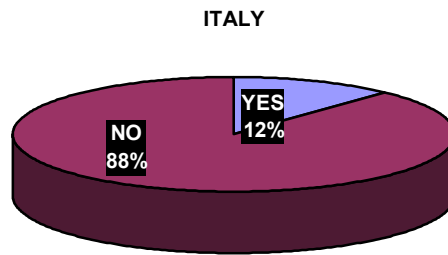
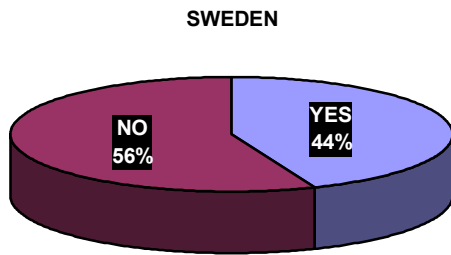
Lower Secondary school	24%	26%
Upper secondary school	32%	50%
University	16%	10%
Research doctorate/specialisation	20%	1%
Altro		2%
Job	Sweden	Italy
Skilled worker	16%	16%
Unskilled worker	8%	14%
Employee	0%	35%
Manager	76%	7%
Other		27%
No answer		1%
Employment contracts	Sweden	Italy
Permanent full-time contracts	12%	38%
Temporary full-time contracts	12%	14%
Other (in Sweden all of which were company owners)	76%	48%
Satisfaction degree (regarding their jobs)	Sweden	Italy
Not at all	4%	15%
A little bit	0%	20%
Satisfied	60%	32%
Quite satisfied	28%	26%
Very satisfied	8%	7%
Possibilities to have recourse to Life long Learning in order to improve working conditions	Sweden	Italy
YES	12%	48%
NO	72%	34%
Not aware of such possibilities	4%	13%
Through employers care	12%	2%
Other		3%
Reason for being discriminated against (more than one answer may be entered => number of answers are displayed)	Sweden	Italy
Woman	4	13
Age (>45)	3	7
Lack of qualification	1	22
Non European citizen	0	0
Flexible contract	12	11
Homosexuality	0	2
Other		10
African	2	
Asian	1	
Black	2	
Language	6	
No answer		87
Lower wage due to discrimination because of...	Sweden	Italy
Sex	4	17
Age	2	11
Nationality	6	1
Disability		0
Contract		29
Other		6
Language	10	
No answer		88

Mobbing

Have you been subject to mobbing?

YES
NO

	Sweden	Italy
YES	44%	12%
NO	56%	88%

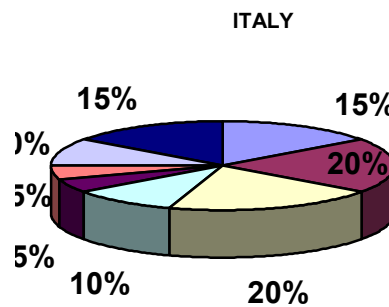
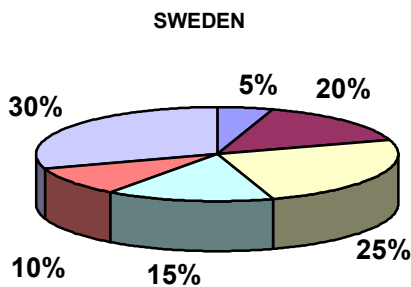


Those who have said YES to the question above, have given the following answers:

Kinds of actions suffered from (more than one answer may be entered => number of answers are displayed)

Humiliating duties to perform
False accusation/slander
Isolation
Vulgar witticism or gestures
Request for sexual intercourse
Sexual harassment
Rape
Illegal actions
Other
No answer

	Sweden	Italy
Humiliating duties to perform	1	3
False accusation/slander	3	4
Isolation	5	4
Vulgar witticism or gestures	3	2
Request for sexual intercourse	0	1
Sexual harassment	2	1
Rape	0	0
Illegal actions	6	2
Other	0	3
No answer	0	132

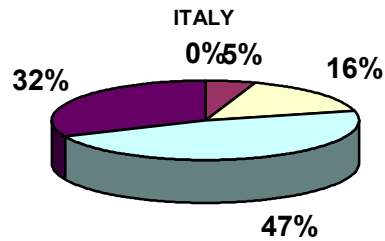
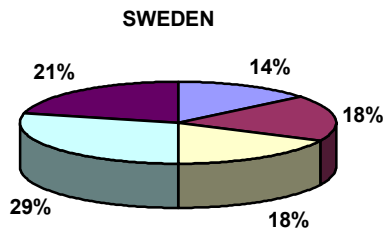


The option "No answer" is not presented in the diagrams above.

Reactions to mobbing

Acceptance
Rejection
Complaint
Resignation
Other
 try to ignore
 "give back"
No answer

	Sweden	Italy
Acceptance	4	0
Rejection	5	1
Complaint	5	3
Resignation	8	9
Other		6
try to ignore	3	
"give back"	3	
No answer	0	133

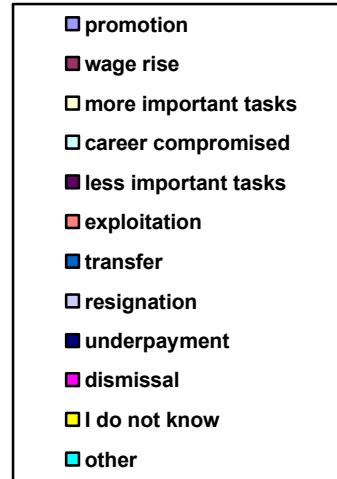
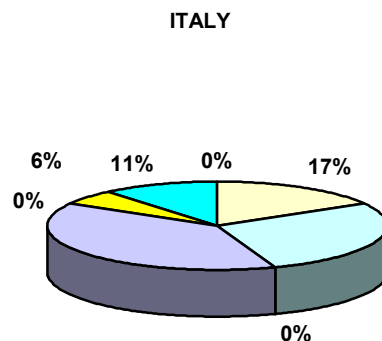
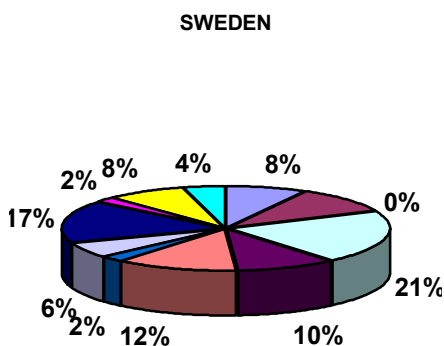


The option "no answers" is not presented in the diagrams above.

Consequences of mobbing

- Promotion
- Wage rise
- More important tasks
- Career compromised
- Less important tasks
- Exploitation
- Transfer
- Resignation
- Underpayment
- Dismissal
- I do not know
- Other
- Sick
- No answer

	Sweden	Italy
Promotion	4	0
Wage rise	5	0
More important tasks	0	3
Career compromised	10	5
Less important tasks	5	0
Exploitation	6	0
Transfer	1	0
Resignation	3	7
Underpayment	8	0
Dismissal	1	0
I do not know	4	1
Other	2	2
Sick	2	
No answer	0	134



The option "No answer" is not presented in the diagrams above.

c) Conclusions.

In both countries mobbing and discrimination exists. The Swedish interviewed answer "no" on the mobbing question (11 people) but they agree having been suffering from different actions in the next question (18 people).

The number of people who say they suffer from discrimination and mobbing is anyway very

high in Sweden if we compare with Italy. The question is very actual in Sweden when we talk about the high amount of people who are sick and absent from their jobs. This might have been influencing the answers but we do not know. People are very aware of these issues.

The amount of people resigning and “accepting” the situation, in some way, in this group is frightening. A big group would do this in both Italy and Sweden. It is what is in the answers but it has also been seen that people have taken their own initiatives and started own companies in Sweden.

Unfortunately we can't see if it is the same people that said that they had accepted and resigned.

ANNEXES

a) The tools used to realise the experimentation within the enterprises.

a.1) The tools of the Swedish DP.

The Swedish DP has used the same tool used by the Italian DP (a questionnaire) translated into Swedish.

a.2) The tools of the Italian DP.

Questionnaire on discriminations

Activity: study of the tendency of the labour market with reference to the discriminations suffered by workers/employees.

Thank you for reading carefully and filling up the following questionnaire.

1. Age

- 18 – 32
- 33 – 45
- over-45

2. Sex

- Female
- Male

3. Nationality

- Italian
- European
- Non European

4. Do you belong to a protected category?

- Yes
- No

5. Education

- Primary school
- Lower Secondary school
- Upper Secondary school
- University
- Research doctorate programme/specialisation school
- Other (specify)

6. Job

- Skilled worker (specify the sector)
- Unskilled worker (specify the sector)
- Employee (specify the function)
- Manager
- Other (specify)

7. Kind of employment contract

- Permanent full-time employment contract
- Temporary full-time employment contract
- Permanent part-time employment contract
- Temporary part-time employment contract
- Other contracts concerning flexible employment (specify)

8. Are you satisfied of your job?

- Not at all satisfied
- A little bit satisfied
- Satisfied
- Quite satisfied
- Very satisfied

9. Do you think you have enough possibilities to be inserted in life long learning/training activities aimed at improving your working conditions?

- Yes
- No
- I am not aware of such opportunities
- My employer prefers to set up life long learning/training initiatives addressed to employees

10. Do you think you have already suffered from discriminations preventing your participation in life long learning/training initiatives because...

- You are a woman
- You are over-45
- You have no qualification
- You are handicapped
- You are a non European citizen
- You have a flexible contract
- You are homosexual
- Other (specify)

11. Do you think you suffer from discriminations at wage level because of your...

- Sex
- Age
- Nationality
- Disability
- Contract
- Other (specify)

Mobbing and job

12. *Mobbing* is a kind of attitude, or psychological terror, which is carried out on the workplace by means of regular attacks by colleagues or employers, in order to get rid of a person who is, or has become, somehow "inconvenient". Do you think you have been subject to *mobbing*?

- Yes
- No

If your answer is Yes, please specify

12.1. Consider the strategies the mobber has performed. What kind of actions have you suffered from?

- I have been given humiliating duties to perform, damaging my social image in front of customers or superiors
- I have been criticised regularly and persecuted systematically (I have suffered from false accusations and slander, rumours about me have been spread...)
- I have been isolated
- I have suffered from vulgar witticism or gestures, offensive appreciations

- I have been menaced, I have been asked to have sexual intercourse
- I have suffered from degrading and humiliating sexual harassment – on a physical and verbal level
- I have been raped
- I have suffered from sabotage and/or illegal actions
- Other (specify)

12.2. What reaction/behaviour have you had?

- I have accepted such abuses
- I have refused any proposal without denouncing the responsible
- I have denounced the event
- I have resigned
- Other (specify)

12.3. What consequences has your reaction/behaviour caused?

- I have obtained a promotion
- I have obtained a wage rise
- I have been given more important tasks than the ones I had before
- My career has been compromised
- I have been given less important tasks than the ones I had before
- My professional services have been exploited, I have been asked overtime work that was badly paid and not adequate to my competences
- I have been moved from my office or seat
- My professional services have been badly paid
- I have been dismissed, I have lost my job
- I do not know
- Other (specify)

The personal data processing is allowed, according to the law 196/ 03 and to the aims foreseen by the phase of research and analysis.

Date, _____

The interviewer _____

The interviewer: _____

Comments by the interviewer

Date _____

The interviewee _____