



E-CHANCE 2.0 for women entrepreneurship

NEWSLETTER of the project E-Chance 2.0 for Women Entrepreneurship • June 2010 • Number 1

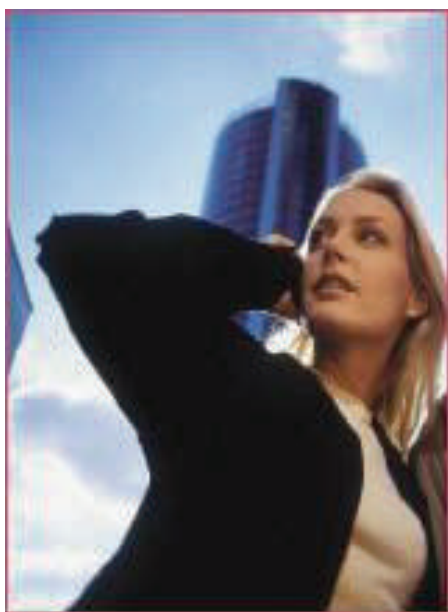


Introduction to the project E-Chance 2.0 for Women Entrepreneurship

The pool of female entrepreneurial talent is still underexploited in the EU: Women participation in self-employment has modestly increased since 1995 and amounted to 28 % in the EU-25 in 2003 (Benchmarking enterprise policy, 2004). As female labour market participation in general has made good progress, approaching the 60 % target, self-employment has continued to be an option for comparatively few women. Within this context, the project **E-Chance 2.0 for Women Entrepreneurship** aims at the inclusion of women into knowledge society: attending new ICT developments and practices and current entrepreneur needs.

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The **E-Chance 2.0** is aimed to train on technologies based on web 2.0 for using in entrepreneurship processes. The training activities are addressed to develop skills and capacities in order to improve the inclusion in the knowledge society. In addition, the acquisition of the skills and competences will facilitate personal development and competences for life (as creativity and innovation).

Different institutions from different areas of expertise forms the project partnership that will improve the quality and increase the cooperation between different actors involved in learning and training.

E-chance 2.0 for Women Entrepreneurship project will transfer the main idea of E-chance project aimed at training women on ITCs for improving their employability. As a final outcome of the project, a training platform based on web 2.0, combining elements of formal and informal training and creating blended e-learning environments, will be developed providing women entrepreneurs with a set of basic skills and capacities regarding the web 2.0.



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Objectives in brief

The project **E-Chance 2.0 for Women Entrepreneurship** aims at promoting the entrepreneurship between women using the technologies based on web 2.0. Women entrepreneurship is associated with some gaps as a lack of information, contacts and access to networking as well as weak and inflexible childcare facilities and difficulties in reconciling business and family obligations. The flexibility of the use of web 2.0 can facilitate narrowing these gaps and improving the entrepreneurial environment for women. Thus, the project **E-Chance 2.0 for Women Entrepreneurship** aims to:

- Foster entrepreneurial mindset on women,
- Provide with the access to training and to improve women skills and qualifications regarding the use of technologies based on web 2.0,
- Promote innovation and creativity among women collective,
- Improve the self-employability of women.



Project partners

The project partnership falls into 7 highly professional partners from 5 different countries: AMESAL (Spain), ASIMAG (Spain), Agencia para empleo adrid (Spain), Athena (Czech republic), INCSMPS (Romania), Equilibrio (Italy), Insitut pro zeny (Czech republic) and ISMA (Latvia).

ATHENA
ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN

IPZ
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Analysis of the previous E-Chance project

Message prepared by Equilibrio (IT)

Equilibrio (IT) as assigned co-leader of the work package 2 (henceforth, WP2) “**Analysis of good practices in training on web 2.0**”, has been leading the analysis for transferability of the previous E-chance project. For more information and details, the previous project (E-CHANCE FOR WOMEN - ECW) can be accessed at the following links: <http://e-chance-m.euweb.cz/> and <http://www1.osu.cz/leonardo/main.htm>.

5 questionnaires were developed by Equilibrio (IT) to analyze the different aspects of the previous project (generic aspects, gender differences, web 2.0, previous project’s participants’ experience, handbook’s analysis). The questionnaires’ creation led to a 360° analysis of the previous E-Chance project. 5 different forms were needed, due to the different nature of the target group (the previous E-chance project was dedicated to women, especially middle-aged women and young mothers returning to the labour market with scarce ITC skills), the used methodologies and to the developed products (an interactive platform based on web 2.0 technologies instead of CD –Rom based training). After a careful analysis of the questionnaires, specific elements that can be transferred to the E-chance 2.0 project were identified:

- A specific methodology, in the light of gender context. Women have learning specificities caused by different factors as: a different reference culture, a different scholastic background, less time availability, the need to use tools in a pragmatic way to gain results to improve quality of life at home and at work.
- The collection of best practices. It helps in the motivational aspect and in providing effective examples to be immediately implemented in the entrepreneurial context.
- The correct introduction to new technologies. An adequate translation and introduction could be an important issue to explain (also with pre-training) what web 2.0 is and how could it be applied and used.
- The attention to the language. To avoid fall backs on partners, a different language planning is needed, to satisfy both the cultural contexts’ needs where the English term is used and contexts where the terms are usually translated in the national language.
- Attention to the different software. A problem of the precedent project was the non-homogeneous platforms. This element must be extended to consider as strategic some elements related to the web 2.0 platforms’ use in different regional contexts. It has to be considered that not every partner’s Country uses the same platforms.

Those elements would permit to use the skills developed by the previous project, giving continuity with E-Chance 2.0 and paying attention to critic elements to be highlighted, as the best practices. A complete report “Guidelines for transferability of E-chance project” will be accessible on our website.

E-Chance project in brief

E-Chance project was based on the necessity of the employability improvement and enhancement of the professional assertion of the women in the labor market, due the enhancement of their PC competencies. The project fell on the idea that it was necessary to create a concept of a proper dialogue with women, a concept of education and learning for women, to provide them with appropriate training, including the convenient teaching methods. For this purpose, the partnership elaborated the following tools:



- Methodology of training and counseling women to favor them in learning ICT using results from a survey and women’s life experience.
 - Training for counselors and trainers with 6 modules, as well as training programme for women (as pre-training).
 - Handbook for women with examples how to start step-by-step their learning of ICT.
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Analysis of women training needs on the use of web 2.0 technologies regarding to the improvement of entrepreneurship

Asimag (ES) as co-leader of WP2 (Analysis of good practices in training on web 2.0) coordinated a research on women entrepreneurs needs about Web 2.0 technologies that has been carried out in the partners countries during the months of January – April (2010). The analysis of the women training needs and good practices in training on web 2.0 technologies was based on the mixed methodology: qualitative methodology (expert interviews and focus groups with women entrepreneurs) and desk- research. A final report of the national cases studies will be taken as a reference for the forthcoming WP3 "Elaboration of training contents".

Summarizing national reports and aiming to extract the most relevant points to be considered for transference, noteworthy the following highlights:

- Women entrepreneurs as a target group — is very diverse and heterogeneous one in terms of education, age, undertaken business sector, previous experience etc (leaving apart cultural differences). Despite the highlighted diverse profile of women entrepreneurs, it could be observed an improving situation for entrepreneurship, however halted by economic crisis.
- Concerning the knowledge about web 2.0, in all the national reports it was pointed at the gender digital gap. Women tend to be less familiar with ITCs and spend less time connected in Internet. Access to strategic information and huge information flows that are hard to control is one of the main associated fears concerning Web 2.0.
- When it comes to the usage of particular applications and technologies, as expressed by women entrepreneurs in focus groups, as well as observed by interviewed experts, women rather opt rather for more functional and practical usage and application of technologies.
- Among the identified specific needs of women entrepreneurs, a lack of networking and contacts, time management, a lack of confidence and self – esteem were emphasized among Spanish, Italian, Latvian, Rumanian and Czech entrepreneurs.
- While technologies are changing too fast, it was particularly suggested by various experts to focus on training in values and general application and philosophy of the technologies.
- Gender perspective on technologies, practical examples and success stories, "learning by doing", direct involvement of women entrepreneurs are examples of recommendations reflected in national reports for the inclusion into the training programme.

A complete report presenting national case studies will be accessible through the project website. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all women entrepreneurs and our experts for kind collaboration and contributions to our research.

For more information about the project E-Chance 2.0, visit our website: www.echance2.eu or write us an email: echance2@echance2.eu

From July on, follow us in Facebook!



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