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CERT-TTT-M

“CERTIFIED TRANS-NATIONAL TT MANAGER” – Building up a framework to qualify  
TT- Managers on a trans-national level and with mutual recognition

Integrating and strengthening the European Research Area

Coordination Action

## **Publishable Final Activity Report**

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It is an increasing certainty that the long-term objective of creating one coherent European Research Area is lacking efficiency without building-up concurrently a coherent market for exploiting research results, an European Technology Transfer (TT) Area. Recent findings identified several obstacles towards such a TT-Area. In particular, the IPR expert group giving advice to the European Commission by means of the Open Method of Co-ordination (OMC) brought-up crucial weak points even in the baseline of TT system, the education and profession level:

- Lack of TT skilled people
- No registered TT profession
- No TT education / training programme recognised all over Europe

Facing these obstacles, a consortium of 11 partners from 7 Member States started the project Certified Trans-national Technology Transfer Manager (CERT-TTT-M). CERT-TTT-M aims at building up a framework to qualify TT- Managers on a trans-national level and with mutual recognition in Europe. As a bottom-up initiative consortium consists of innovation policy –makers and public research organisation thus intending to ensure sustainable implementation. In the respect of sustainability it was also a decisive decision of the consortium to include the expertise and experience of organisations representing major market-players in the field of technology transfer education & training. In fact, it was the measurable objective of the project to have 5 organisations committing themselves to offer a Certification for TT professionals that will be mutually recognized in at least 5 Member States.

The activities of the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the project have been focusing on collection and analysis market-data thus creating a valid fundament for such a Certification Framework.

First of all, it was to raise specific data about the demand-side respectively dealing with questions like in which skills TT- managers should be trained, which training modules are interested to attend, what should be the maximum costs of training and how should a training be structured in terms of duration and frequency and of course the decisive question how big is the market size for a prospective Certification. These and more questions were included in questionnaires used for interviews and online-survey. Indeed, the consortium partners collected about 3000 contacts of technology transfer managers all over Europe and translated the questionnaire in seven languages. Thus, 561 responses were received which is an proportion of more than 19% of the sample. All the results of this valid and representative survey have been elaborated by Business School of Rotterdam and published on the project's website [www.ttt-manager.eu](http://www.ttt-manager.eu) as report: "*Key elements of education programme for Certified Trans-national TT Managers*". This report includes also a specific view of the Member states and referring to the question araised above the key findings are:

- 7 skills were identified and ranked whereby “communication” was ranked first by the respondents
- Between 37% and 52% of the respondents expressed positive opinion about participating in a future European-wide education programme
- 83% of all respondents indicated that professionals from their organization would be interested to receive training on at least one skill
- 18,880 technology transfer professionals would be interested in 65,500 training modules
- **73% of the respondents indicated that it is important for them to receive a European-wide recognized certification.**

Second of all, it was to raise specific data about the supply-side of the technology transfer market. Again, the consortium partner collected dozens of training courses resulting in a sample of 161 courses in nineteen EU countries. Management Center Innsbruck (MCI) undertook to categorize the course and identified 51 Master Programmes, 31 Part of Masters, 11 Diploma Courses, 59 Courses and 9 Workshops/Summer Schools. For ten countries MCI went into deep analysis based on the 7 skills ranked on the demand-side. In this way the gap between the market-demand (requirements) and the market-offer (existing-programmes) became evident:

- Those courses that would fulfil partly or entirely demand-criteria in terms of skills trained, structure, duration, fees do not offer recognized certification.
- Those courses offering some kind of certification, in particular consecutive & executive master programmes do not provide optimal structure, duration and fee.

With regards to the existing programmes the desktop research was enriched by analysis of good-practise courses. Seven organisations were invited to present as benchmark their proved approaches and all the partners discussed and elaborated the consequences for a future Certification Programme. Consequently, MCI merged all the prior findings into the “*Main Report: Study on European TT education programmes & Benchmarking*”.

All the reports and findings have always been accompanied by frequent crosschecks provided by TT experts and practitioners. On recommendation of the consortium partners the Co-ordinator prepared a contractual frame and finally awarded those subcontracts to TT-organisations of repute. The so-called advisory panel, consisting of 7 experts dispatched, took up it’s work in July. Since then the work, findings and results were exposed to critical views of the “real world”. The advisors are closely linked to peer-groups and associations relevant to TT-education and trainings:

- Noel Campling & Giovanna Oddo → European Patent Academy
- Frederic Caillaud → L’Óreal link to LES France

- Eileen Cluclas & (later) Gillian McFeadzan → Universities of Essex & Hayett-Watt University link to ProTon Europe
- Ivan Dvorak → Societas Rudolphina
- Christi Mitchell → LESI
- Douglas Robertson → Newcastle University link to the Institute of Knowledge Transfer
- Jeff Skinner → University College London link to ASTP & PRAXIS

In total the advisors were providing 918 hours of consulting to the project (see Annex III). It is to point out that they were not only contributing expertise to the work-groups but they were also much engaged in disseminating and discussing the results of CERT-TTT-M among their respective networks.

The intense involvement of the advisory panel came also along with the basic decision of the consortium partners to follow a broad bottom-up approach for the main work of 2<sup>nd</sup> period which was to build up the framework of training and recognition, also called the CERT-TTT-M framework.

Yet before the partners started to work on the framework some advisors was asking to figure out for the reasons why the existing TT courses, 161 we had identified, were not sufficiently used. Therefore Co-ordinator together with RSM performed a “follow-up survey” among the 516 respondents of the first online-questionnaire asking them what are seen as the main barriers preventing them from participating in existing training courses. Besides the usual reason of “having not enough time” the respondents ranked the reasons that existing training courses “lack of relevance” and “have the wrong level of difficulty” highest.

Consequently, during the next 8 months, seven so-called joint-workshops took place involving almost always all partners and advisors in order to set-up CERT-TTT-M framework. In a first step, within a model curriculum, 7 skill-sets for TT management were defined: (1) Managing Communication, Information & Networking, (2) Understanding IPR & Licensing, (3) Commercial Activities and Markets, (4) New Business Development, (5) Negotiating, (6) Project Management, (7) Information retrieval and analyses (this skill-set was strongly recommended by European Patent Office). In a second step all participants agreed on to foresee 3 skill-levels and described it suitable for illustrating a TT career path:

Experience	Title	Skill-Level	Activities / Roles
Basic 0-3 years experience	Technology Transfer Professional	Has general knowledge of all six skills.	Assistant TT manager, Project Assistant
Advanced 3-8 years experience	Senior Technology Transfer Professional	Has deep knowledge of all seven skills and has knowledge and experience in all methods of technology transfer and conditions of application and several years of personal experience from participation in (projects in) technology transfer.	Project Manager, managing technology transfer or innovation projects along at least one of recognized lines of technology transfer.
Expert > 8 years experience	Executive Technology Transfer Professional	Has profound knowledge and experience in/of all seven skills and has knowledge and experience in all methods of technology transfer and conditions of application and an extensive and systematic personal experience from management of projects in some field or fields of TT. An executive TTP is able to manage and exploit large Technology Transfer processes and is able to manage a TT professional team.	TTO manager, TT manager, supervising technology transfer, and managing very complex structured projects along at least one of recognized lines of technology transfer.

Having 7 skills sets and 3 skill levels, for **each!** combination the project-team defined: learning outcomes, training modules, methodologies, facilities, teaching staff, assessment and minimum duration.

In parallel to that, there was continuous flow-in of aspects of current methods of profession recognitions in Europe, elaborated by Italian partners. All findings were consolidated in one report which was published under [http://www.ttt-manager.eu/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=105&Itemid=113](http://www.ttt-manager.eu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=105&Itemid=113) as THE CERT-TTT-M FRAMEWORK: curriculum, career & recognition path.

This report was the basis for all subsequent activities, in particular distributing the results among the three target-groups defined – the training-providers, the policy-makers and TT-stakeholders. For each target-group an information package was prepared suitable to address the specific needs thus supporting dissemination activities of both the partners and the advisors. Facing the long list of dissemination activities hereinafter, it is not overstated to have reached more than 10.000 people of the TT community with aspects of CERT-TTT-M framework.

What of course is more decisive, also with regards to sustainability, is that besides more general reception by policy-maker at least 8 training providers in 7 different countries have been basically committing to adopt the CERT-TTT-M training framework and would mutually recognize certifications awarded by those training providers as follows:

- Alma Graduate School, Bologna – Italy
- European Patent Academy, Munich – Germany
- IEEPI Institute Européen Entreprise et Propriété Intellectuel, Strasbourg – France

- Management Center Innsbruck, Austria
- Agenzia per la Diffusione delle Tecnologie per l'Innovazione, Italy
- ProTon Europe AISBL, Brussels, Belgium
- Rotterdam School of Management, Netherlands
- Inovocni podnikani na Univerzite Karlove, Prague – Czech Republic

Finally, it can be considered to be a promising spin-out of the project that almost all partners and advisors organisations have been combining efforts in order to head for a FP7 project dealing with the institutional integration of the Framework which could be the starting point of an “European Knowledge Transfer Society”. This would be also a good opportunity to continue streamlining-process started within CERT-TTT-M with similar approaches in and beyond Europe such as the US based Certified Licensing Professional (CLP) initiative of LESI.

In this respect CERT-TTT-M can be considered a major step towards an established Technology Transfer Management profession in Europe. Or to say it with the words of advisors: “...*The deliverables are very useful, groundbreaking and are already having considerable impact...*” and “...*The CERT-TTT-M project was initiated at a key moment in time. It is essential that the European Commission continue to maintain their interest in the development of the European KT community...*”.