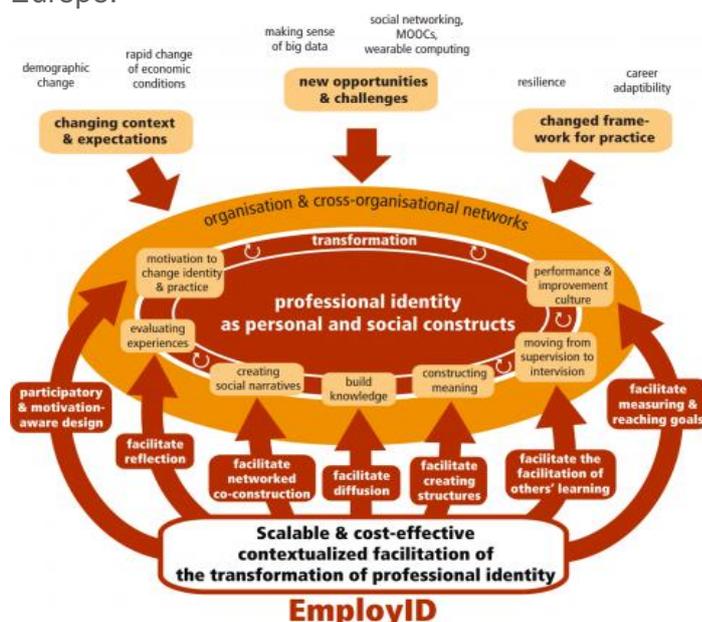


## EmployID - Scalable & cost-effective facilitation of professional identity transformation of Public Employment Services and their employees – the Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS)

By Urša Dolinar – Employment Service of Slovenia

Across Europe, Public Employment Services (PES) and their employees are facing fundamental challenges to the design and delivery of efficient and effective services. Many are in the process of developing new approaches towards combatting rising unemployment, migration and demographic change. PES have been actively broadening the scope and depth of services offered face-to-face and/or online. In this context, new solutions are required to feed into the transformation of PES and to inform and support both managers and practitioners. The [EmployID project](#) partners are together supporting PES staff in engaging with professional identity transformation processes by facilitating the following activities:

- Networking and engaging with others in the co-construction of new PES professional identities;
- Diffusing lessons learned, especially through new approaches such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and Communities of Practice (COP);
- Adopting new skills sets, with a focus on facilitating the learning of others in a move from traditional supervision-based models to peer-models of intervision (i.e. strengthening the role of peers through peer coaching); and
- Measuring, collecting, analysing and reporting data about practitioners and their diverse contexts in order to optimise learning about the processes of identity transformation across Europe.



In late 2013, the ESS was formally invited to participate as a Lead Application Partner in EmployID - a European Union Seventh Framework funded programme for research, technological development and demonstration, because of its preparedness for proactively finding constructive approaches to improving services. This came about in a period of high unemployment, new incentivised co-operation between the ESS and employers and significant legislative changes influencing the ESS service delivery. The ESS formally joined EmployID as a Lead Partner at the beginning of 2014. Working alongside the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP UK), the Croatian Employment Service (CES), and other university and technology specialists, research was undertaken to identify specific challenges for PES, when responding to the fast changing needs and demands of the labour market.

EmployID follows an agile design and development approach that involves researchers/designers, learning and coaching experts, as well as PES representatives in all phases of co-operation. This allows project partners to comprehend and identify the possibilities of joint co-operation and innovative technological developments. For example, the agile design process has enabled the ESS to focus on enhanced vertical and horizontal communication by addressing following goals:

- Enhance peer to peer exchange of knowledge, best practices, experiences, formal and informal learning;
- Encourage mutual assistance in acquiring competences, learn new behaviours and approaches when transferring knowledge into practice;
- Reflect on best practices and enhance transfer of good and/or interesting practices between offices.

Additional to the ESS specified goals, it was also important to address the goals of the Public Employment Services' Contribution to EU 2020 - PES 2020 Strategy Output Paper. Visit: <http://csdle.lex.unict.it/docs/labourweb/Public-Employment-Services-Contribution-to-EU2020-/3861.aspx>

Drawing on the findings from an analysis of practitioners' development needs, it was agreed to facilitate the development of a **community of practice (CoP)** or so called **Social Learning Platform**. This Platform will be adjusted to PES needs by enabling networking, problem solving, requests for information, shared peer to peer support, discussing "hot" topics and developments, organising visits etc. The Platform will be available in Slovenian language. Consequently, following aspects were considered when developing the CoP: intensive case-load of the ESS practitioners, the ESS data and privacy protection regulations including handling sensitive content, ICT deployment possibilities, and the available ICT equipment for use by the ESS practitioners.

Over the next two years, within the EmployID we will aim to incorporate the possibility for structured on line peer-coaching and greater usage of a Labour Market Information tool on the Social Learning Platform.

## ZRSZ Social Learning Platform

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### Welcome to the ZRSZ community



Alice A

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The EmployID agile approach turned out to once again be the right way forward as we were able to, from the very beginning, include PES practitioners in the design and content development and thus received their concrete needs, demands and concerns, which permitted for a simultaneous change planning. In the design and content development we took on board expressed concern about integration of the tool in a daily work – not “just another tool”; demand for enhanced result oriented cooperation on the platform with visible and recognized contributions. But mostly, it was recognized that the introduction of a new social learning culture and co-construction of new professional identities in a case-overloaded environment should be light, on voluntary basis, and moderated.

As the ESS practitioners already established trusted networks and communication channels among their close colleagues, we thus decided to primary build content around enlarging networks and knowledge exchange among colleagues sharing passion and working at different locations. In this context, at the ESS we worked on establishing facilitating roles and activities that will support and engage cooperation within the Social Learning Platform.

The EmployID project is currently preparing the first pilot “roll-out” of the new Social Learning Platform, which will incorporate monitoring and evaluation of the Platform usage as well as its influence on the identity transformation of PES practitioners participating in the pilot.

Various dissemination events are being organised to ensure that key stakeholders are fully informed of the project progress. For example, on the 16th October 2015, a special invitational EU Symposium was held in London, organised by EmployID, focusing on ‘Public Employment Services Under Pressure: Professional Identity Transformation In European PES’. Margareta Olsson Dahlgren, WAPES Consultant, Europe delivered a keynote presentation to 63 PES and allied organisations from across Europe.

If you would be interested in the information on the EmployID project, how to [participate](#) or [benefit](#) from the project results, or in the presented concept, please visit [the EmployID web-page](#) or email: Dr Deirdre Hughes at [deirdre.hughes3@btinternet.com](mailto:deirdre.hughes3@btinternet.com). The results of the pilot trail of the Learning Platform at the Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS) will be published in due course. For further information on the ESS development activities, please visit [the EmployID web-page](#) or email: [ursa.dolinar@ess.gov.si](mailto:ursa.dolinar@ess.gov.si).