

## Meeting with the EU Commission

Five years of work with the Leonardo da Vinci pilot project EUExcert was presented to representatives from DG Enterprises, DG Education and FEEM, European Association for Explosives Manufacturers.

The Review was arranged in Sweden House, Rue du Luxembourg 3, Bruxelles in June 13.

Partners from Sweden, United Kingdom, Norway, Finland, Italy, France, Czech Republic, Germany, Estonia, Lithuania and Portugal who also represents two European organisations The European Federation for Explosives Engineers (EFEE) and the European Chemical Trade Union (EMECF) were invited.

The work is too important to end when the project time finishes. The future collaboration is planned in EU-Exc@rt-F.

The project group will now be transformed into a sustainable cluster centre where information on training and education, career progression can be accessed. It will:

- ☞ Promote and manage exchange programmes
- ☞ Promote transnational education and training
- ☞ Manage and update the glossary on terminology
- ☞ Manage a database on experts
- ☞ Support the European Commission with independent advice



From the European Commission Jan Varchola - Directorate General for Education and Culture and Maik Schmahl, the Enterprise and Industry Directorate, were positive about the work in the EUExcert project. The President of EFEE, José Góis from Portugal were pleased to discuss common matters.

- ☞ Award the EUExcert certificate and be responsible for the nations awarding bodies
- ☞ Promote and license the trademark
- ☞ Search for international cooperation

Maik Schmahl had some ideas for future work and was very eager to meet the group again.

All presentations can be found at EU-Exc@rt website [www.euexcert.org](http://www.euexcert.org)

Jan Varchola suggested the partners to apply for funding through the system for life-long learning. He said that he was pleased to be informed about the project and that he was looking forward to the final report.

- I am interested of how the Leonardo da Vinci projects impact the future, Jan Varchola said.



Hans H. Meyer, Secretary General, FEEM discussed common matters with Jörg Rennert, EUExcert.

# Background for the EUExcert pilot project

The manufacture and use of explosives, propellants and pyrotechnics underpins a significant part of EU economic and industrial activity. An understanding of explosives science and technology, and the competence to harness it is central to maintaining European Explosives capability, national security, and in sustaining a competitive European industry. A consequence of eroding this competence is the increased likelihood of explosives accidents. These are often catastrophic as demonstrated by accidents for example Toulouse in France, Enschede in Nederland's, Kolding in Denmark, Novaky in Slovakia and Groebming in Austria where many people has died since the start of the millennium. The latest accident happened some weeks ago in Albania.

In addition to the serious loss of life there was the very significant damage to homes, domestic and industrial infrastructure and to the environment at a cost of many millions of euros.

There is a perception and some evidence that in Europe competence in this key technological area is being eroded. In several member nations a high proportion of the most experienced and knowledgeable personnel are retiring or nearing retirement. Urgent efforts are therefore underway in some partner nations to replenish this expertise.

The aim of this European Union Leonardo da Vinci pilot project is to establish a training and education programme aimed at restoring and maintaining the competence of workers engaged in European explosive business.

The programme places increased emphasis on improving the quality of the educational material and in improving



access to training through the use of workplace and e-learning techniques. Improvement in competence and skills will enhance the status of explosives workers, improve worker and public safety and improve European industrial competitiveness through greater worker mobility and the ability to react rapidly to a fast changing economic and industrial environment.

To achieve this aim the partners in the programme has during the latest five years conducted a comprehensive analysis of explosive business conducted throughout the EU. For each member state we have identified the size and scope of the explosives worker community, from top management level, to technician and process worker level. We have identified the competencies and skills required by these workers. This has been accomplished through close consultations with stakeholder organisations in each of the participating member nations. An inclusive framework illustrating all of the required competencies has been established and is available through internet

Examples of the training and educational needs of the community of explosive workers has been determined in relation to the required competencies. Pilot training and education programmes has been developed and tested in several member nations with successful results. A comprehensive programme of education and training still has to be developed utilising the widest range of training and educational methods, ranging from traditional classroom-based teaching, workplace learning and by using distance learning techniques. These will be developed and delivered by a range of

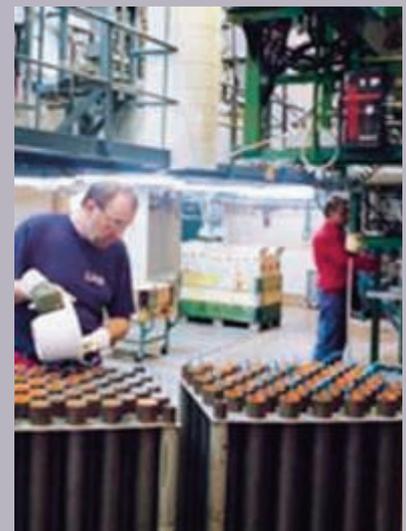
educational establishments, including universities and higher education institutions, professional bodies, trade union organisations and specialist further educational authorities.

The results of the EUExcert work have been widely disseminated through the project website, newsletters, reports, presentations and demonstrated to stakeholder groups in the member nations and at international conferences all over the world.

A network of interested individuals and organisations will be encouraged to promote the concept of a world class European explosives community. The next phase will now be to establish a European Explosives Education Cluster and network.

Outcomes from the EUExcert project has shown that there is a genuine need in the explosives sector at European

Level to find ways to deal with the problems related to eroding competencies and skills which is causing an increase of the likelihood of severe accidents to happen.



*For more information, please visit our website: [www.euexcert.org](http://www.euexcert.org) or contact one of the partners involved.*

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