EXPLOITATION AND SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Project title:	**Apprenticeship Inter-Network: Bringing together VET institutions and enterprises through a network of Career Hubs**
Project acronym:	**AppInterN**
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1. SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT

In an increasingly interconnected and rapidly evolving world, bridging the gap between education and employment is critical to the economic growth and social development of communities. The AppInterN project emerges as an innovative initiative aimed at facilitating the transition of Vocational Education and Training (VET) students and graduates into the workforce. By creating an up-to-date online portal, AppInterN seeks to foster meaningful connections between young aspiring professionals and the complex tapestry of the labour market. This initiative recognizes that in cultivating these connections it is pivotal not just to encompass the national perspective but also to transcend borders, reflecting the globalized nature of contemporary industries.

A focal point of the AppInterN project is the engagement and empowerment of VET students and graduates through Career Hubs. These hubs are not mere repositories of information, but dynamic platforms enabling direct communication between students, employers, and labour market stakeholders. The integration of Business Ambassadors, who are seasoned professionals and employers, is also particularly noteworthy. Through their voluntary involvement, they bring a wealth of practical knowledge, mentorship, and corporate social responsibility to the table. This harmonious blend of elements ensures that users are equipped with the skills, insights, and opportunities necessary to thrive in their chosen fields.

Moreover, the AppInterN project stands as a beacon of inclusivity and accessibility. In a world where opportunities are often limited by geographical and physical constraints, the AppInterN online portal ensures that even the most disadvantaged – such as those with disabilities or those residing in remote areas – have unbridled access to a plethora of opportunities and information. Additionally, through its transnational approach, AppInterN is not only facilitating the sharing of best practices across borders but is also creating an invaluable network that encourages diversity of thought and international collaboration. This aligns with the broader goal of fostering a highly-skilled and adaptable workforce that can meet the demands of the 21st-century labour market.

2. INTRODUCTION

This report aims at defining the sustainability and exploitation strategies of the AppInterN project. As the development of activities progresses even after the end of the AppInteN project's lifecycle, this report may be updated, and additional information may be included.

Both sustainability and exploitation strategies are profoundly influenced by the quality and extent of the partners' involvement in the project outcomes, as well as the dedication of employers, VET institutions, and other labour market stakeholders in implementing the solutions offered to them. The concepts of Sustainability and Exploitation are here defined as:

Sustainability: A project can be considered sustainable if its outcomes persist beyond the termination of EU funding, meaning that the results of the project continue to be used and exploited after the funding concludes. Therefore, sustainability is the ability of the project to maintain its existence and functionality beyond its completion. The project results are utilized and exploited continuously and in the long term. The AppInterN project will be considered sustainable if its project results, which focus on establishing a network that enhances the employability and career opportunities of VET students and graduates, continue to have an impact after the EU funding period.

Exploitation: This refers to the utilization of the project's results at various levels, during and after the implementation of the project. We acknowledge that exploitation is intimately linked to dissemination activities within the project, which generate 'visibility' for the project to inform the target groups, end-users, and stakeholders in the project and involve them in it.

It is understood that exploitation is closely connected to the sustainability of the project after its completion, since exploitation activities must ensure that the results of the project are utilized by its target groups and possibly transferred to other contexts (e.g. other countries; other educational areas, other sectors).

In the case of AppInterN, exploitation is largely related to the idea of developing an online portal for bringing VET students and graduates closer to labour market stakeholders and employers. The goal is for the online portal and the innovative concept of "Business Ambassadors" to be beneficial not only within the initial three countries (Greece, Spain, Italy), but adaptable and useful for various types of organizations and contexts in other EU countries.

3. EXPLOITATION PLAN

The principal strategy employed for the exploitation of the AppInterN project results is through creating a robust network and platform to connect VET students and graduates with employers and labour market stakeholders. This entails the creation of an online portal titled "Apprenticeship Inter-Network" (AppInterN) and the establishment of national Career Hubs in the participating countries.

Mainstreaming is essential, as it contributes to promoting and raising awareness about the contents, developments, and results of the AppInterN project, which is essential for generating interest and participation among the target audience. The partnership will employ the following mainstreaming channels:

- The AppInterN Online Portal, which will facilitate the shaping of an e-community for Apprenticeship. Through this portal, relevant parties including VET students and graduates, employers, and other labour market stakeholders will be able to directly contact each other, publish and receive occupational and other labour market information, and search for apprenticeships and job vacancies.

- The Career Hubs, which will be established within the AppInterN online platform, will facilitate networking, apprenticeships, and job placements. They will contain a VET Student and Graduate Database, and a Business Ambassador and Employer Database. The Business Ambassadors will play a crucial role in advising and informing students and graduates on current labour market needs and trends.

- Furthermore, in keeping with the transnational nature of the AppInterN project, particular emphasis will be placed on sharing experiences and best practices across borders. This will facilitate the international exchange of knowledge, expertise, and information regarding national labour markets and VET systems, thereby enriching the project outcomes and ensuring their adaptability and relevance in different contexts.

4. EXPLOITABLE PROJECT PRODUCTS

There are two different types of results we consider exploitable within the AppInterN project. The first type is 'tangible results', such as the online portal, the Career Hubs, the VET Student and Graduate Database, and the Business Ambassador and Employer Database. These tangible assets can continue to be utilized by the partners, disseminated to new stakeholders, and potentially promoted to a wider audience including VET students, graduates, and employers across different sectors.

The second type encompasses 'intangible results', which include knowledge, networks, expertise in apprenticeship matching, and experiences developed or shared throughout the project. These intangible assets are invaluable in understanding and catering to the varying needs and aspirations of VET students and graduates, as well as the requirements and expectations of employers.

We plan to exploit these by integrating them into the services offered by the partners and by sharing what we consider to be best practices with others, including educational institutions, employment agencies, and organizations involved in Vocational Education and Training. Through the AppInterN platform, this wealth of intangible assets

can be leveraged to foster meaningful connections and promote a thriving ecosystem for apprenticeships and employment.

4.1 TANGIBLE RESULTS

1. **AppIntern Online Portal:** this portal aims to establish an effective network between VET students, graduates, and employers.

2. **(e-)Community for Apprenticeship:** Within the online portal, this e-community allows for direct contact between all the relevant parties, fostering interaction and information exchange.

3. **Career Hubs:** These Career Hubs facilitate the search for apprenticeships, internships or jobs through databases, enhance competences and skills through career guidance and learning/information events, and support contact and collaboration with employers.

4. **VET Student and Graduate Data Base and a Business Ambassador and Employer Data Base:** Part of the Career Hubs, these databases facilitate networking, apprenticeship, and job placements.

4.2 INTANGIBLE RESULTS

1. **Knowledge and Information Exchange**: The portal and e-community foster the exchange of knowledge, expertise, and information across EU countries and between various stakeholders.

2. **Networking and Collaboration:** The project enhances networking between VET students, graduates, employers, and other stakeholders. It also promotes collaboration between Apprenticeship/VET schools and institutions, enterprises, social partner institutes, and municipalities.

3. **Promotion of Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning:** Through the AppInterN portal and its Career Hubs, the project promotes Apprenticeship and Work-based Learning as methods of enhancing young people's employability.

4. **Business Ambassadors' role:** The establishment of an intermediary role of "Business Ambassadors", who will inform/advise students and graduates on current labour market needs and trends.

5. **International insights:** Through the international dimension of the project, participants gain a broader perspective and significant insights that would not be available through a single country's initiatives/perspective.

5. SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

The main strategy used for ensuring sustainability of the results is through transferability and continuity, which entails the deliberate process of persuading individual end-users, including VET students, graduates, and employers, to embrace and/or apply the project results during and beyond the project's duration.

Additionally, these mechanisms will vary among partners, as they will hinge on factors such as market conditions, specific industry segments and target groups, local demand, competitive environment, availability of local project funding, and the institutional capacity and expertise of each partner. Generally, we believe that the sustainability of the AppInterN Project's results within (and beyond) the Vocational Education and Training sector is highly likely – this is primarily facilitated by the open sharing of the results and the increasing importance given to building career pathways and creating meaningful connections between students and employers.

However, since the sustainability of some project outcomes can be uncertain and multifaceted, this strategy specifically emphasizes the sustainability of the Project Results – how the products developed (such as the online portal, the Career Hubs, and the Databases) can be maintained, utilized, and further developed after the cessation of funding; and the Partnership itself – demonstrating how the AppInterN Project can strive to ensure stakeholders' commitment to apprenticeship matching and building career pathways. At the very least, the following results will be sustained:

- **The Career Hubs** were developed to address the specific needs and attributes of VET students and graduates. These hubs encompass descriptions of career paths, skills, experiences, and development needs of each user, and provide a practical approach for their development in various sectors.

- **The VET Student and Graduate Database and Business Ambassador and Employer Database** were focused on facilitating connections and fostering collaboration between VET students and employers. These databases include key information, contact details, skill sets, and requirements.

- **The AppInterN online portal** serves as a repository and conduit for continued career development and networking among VET students, graduates, and employers. The technical studies and work devoted to the creation of the Career Hubs were focused on transferring the career and apprenticeship content to an online environment. This online portal serves as a repository and conduit for continued career development and networking. It comprises career paths/occupational specialties and related qualification and skill sets, as well as apprenticeship/internship/job opportunities. The portal is highly interactive and accessible to all, making it an effective tool for career development and networking.

- **The networks and partnerships** formed during the project by the AppInterN encourage continued collaboration, sharing of best practices, and advocacy for policies and practices that support vocational education and training. This can be achieved through various channels, including project websites, social media, participation in conferences, and involvement of professional organizations. These networks and partnerships are essential for the continuity and transferability of the project's results.

In the next section, each Project Result will be briefly explained under the lenses of the sustainability and exploitation objectives, to provide more details regarding what was already listed above.

6. THE APPINTERN PROJECT RESULTS: EXPLOITATION AND SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

The focus on continuity and transferability is present throughout all activities described in the AppInterN project. Thus, the sustainability and exploitation strategies are intrinsic parts of the project's objectives. Each project result aims at establishing procedures that can be later reproduced by any organization that wishes to streamline the internship and apprenticeship process, and providing the necessary tools to exploit the models created and adapt them to specific needs. Below we will describe the initiatives that guarantee sustainability and ensure the exploitability of the project, divided into the Project Results.

The sustainability of the AppInterN project's results will be carried out through the utilization of partners' own resources, taking into consideration that the results of the project are anticipated to be fully incorporated into the everyday work of educational institutions, corporate partners, and job-seeking individuals. Additionally, the administration and maintenance costs for the online resources (website, internship/apprenticeship matching platform) will remain available for an indeterminate period of time.

6.1 PARTNER CONTRIBUTION TO EXPLOITATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

6.1.1 DYPA
Use of Project Results

As Lead Partner of the Project, the Hellenic Public Employment Service (DYPA) focuses on all aspects and tangible results of the project. Primarily, AppInterN will act as a pillar for:

- The promotion of networking, cooperation and best practice exchange
- The highlighting of the significance of VET through the facilitation of job placements and the important role of Business Ambassadors
- The acquisition and improvement of skills

DYPA will try to gain the greatest possible advantages from the project. Entering the period of full implementation after the project's pilot phase, VET students and graduates (with their profiles and skills), employers (with apprenticeship, internship and job offers), as well as DYPA VET Schools will be registered on the AppInterN portal. The registration and active participation of the users is expected to strengthen the perception of how valuable and significant Work-based Learning is for improving youth employability and tackling serious issues of mismatch among actual needs and existing skills in the labour market. The role of Business Ambassadors will definitely contribute to the prominence of VET. On a parallel basis, national and international networking and cooperation, as well as the exchange of information between the three national Career Hubs, will offer a broader view that will add value and lead to the adoption of new measures and policies.

Resources Dedicated to the Project

DYPA will use any possible source of funding on a national and European basis in order to promote the sustainability of the project and the multiplication of the advantages expected to be derived from it. Besides, the sustainability will primarily be achieved through the human resources, namely the registration of all participants involved and the uploading of all apprenticeship/internship offers and job vacancies for graduates. The implementation of the project in total will encourage the commitment of all stakeholders involved.

Target Groups/Organisations for Further Exploitation

According to DYPA, the following target groups would be potentially interested in using the AppInterN products:

a. **Individuals:** VET Students and Graduates, Disadvantaged Youth, Young Professionals, Jobseekers, Trainers and Teachers.
b. **Organizations:** VET Schools and Institutions, Employers and Business Owners, Labour Market Stakeholders, Social Partner Institutes, National and International VET Institutions & Municipalities.

c. **Specific organizations that DYPA intends to involve during the project:** DYPA is trying to establish a steady and long-term cooperation with employer associations, commercial, trade and industrial chambers, municipalities and all possible stakeholders both at a national and a European/international level. To this end, DYPA has proceeded to concluding bilateral/multilateral agreements, as is the case with the Hellenic-German Chamber of Commerce for the Experimental Apprenticeship Vocational Schools in the sector of hospitality and tourism, as well as memoranda of understanding with large enterprises, such as ONEX, the Hellenic Aerospace Industry and, most recently, the Theocharakis – NISSAN automotive industry.

6.1.2 EVTA

Use of Project Results

EVTA will keep publicising the AppInterN portal and the e-community for apprenticeships among its network members, and whenever there is such an opportunity. EVTA will keep profiting from the network created in this project, including the knowledge and information exchange. Also, it will continuously promote apprenticeships, especially under the framework of the European Alliance for Apprenticeships, where EVTA has the opportunity to constantly discuss Work-based Learning.

Resources Dedicated to the Project

N/A

Target Groups/Organisations for Further Exploitation

a. **Organizations:** VET Schools and Institutions, Social Partner Institutes, National and International VET Institutions & Public Employment Services.

b. **Specific organizations EVTA intends to involve during the project:** EVTA is a Europe-wide network, so it is able to involve EU institutions and its numerous members across Europe. EVTA has the opportunity to participate in several

events, so it is possible for it to advertise the project every time it takes part in one related to the topic of the project.

6.1.3 IME GSEVEE

Use of Project Results

From the tangible and intangible results described above, IME GSEVEE has detailed how the organisation will use each project result:

The AppinterN Online Portal will be promoted, used and exploited by all Federations – Members of the Hellenic Confederation of Professionals Craftsmen & Merchants (GSEVEE), under the supervision of IME GSEVEE. Networking and collaboration will be promoted via the e-community for apprenticeship. The Career Hubs will facilitate apprenticeship and work-based learning. Moreover, the role of the Business Ambassadors will be promoted to all interested parties so that they can register on the portal. Finally, thanks to the transnational character of the AppInterN portal, valuable insights into international experiences will be gained by all participants.

Resources Dedicated to the Project

To ensure the sustainability of the project, IME GSEVEE will use the following resources:

- Financial sources from the European Social Fund, via:
  - The Hellenic Operational Programme: "Human Resources and Social Cohesion 2021-27".
  - The Hellenic NRRP (under the Recovery and Resilience Facility) 2020-2026.
  - Erasmus+ programme 2021-27.
- Financial sources from the National Fund for VET.

Target Groups/Organisations for Further Exploitation

According to IME GSEVEE, the following target groups would be potentially interested in using the AppInterN products:

a. **Individuals:** VET Students and Graduates

b. **Organizations:** VET Schools and Institutions, Employers and Business Owners, Labour Market Stakeholders, Social Partner Institutes, National and International VET Institutions, Public Employment Services.

c. **Specific organizations that IME GSEVEE intends to involve during the project:** 57 local and 30 sectoral 2nd-level Federations – Members of the Hellenic Confederation of Professionals Craftsmen & Merchants (GSEVEE), which are representing 1,100 1st-level Associations with 140,000 registered micro companies and self-employed people from a wide range of secondary and tertiary sectors of the economy, such as professions in construction, food, vehicle repair, service provision etc.

6.1.4 MUNICIPALITY OF AMAROUSSION

Use of Project Results

The Municipality of Amaroussion will disseminate information about the AppInterN Online Portal and the Greek Career Hub through its communications with the local/regional business community (e.g. press releases, website announcements, links to the project website, reference to the AppInterN project results in presentations and public speeches, etc.). It will encourage use of the project results and invite feedback from enterprises regarding their use of the AppInterN site.

The Municipality of Amaroussion is always looking for ways to promote the exchange of know-how and experiences between different regions of the EU. It encourages local businesses to be outward-looking and their citizens to participate in the Europe-wide community to which they belong. The AppInterN project strongly fosters networking and collaboration at local level within the Municipality (between enterprises and apprentices). It also promotes the exchange of information and best practices across borders, in a sector where mobility, innovation and the exchange of ideas are critical.

Resources Dedicated to the Project

The Municipality of Amaroussion will use its effective channels of communication with the large business community established in its area, to disseminate the results of the AppInterN project. It would certainly carefully consider the option of supporting the

further operation of the pilot Career Hubs in the future if additional funding were available and, possibly, the number of participating countries increased.

Target Groups/Organisations for Further Exploitation

a. **Individuals:** VET Students and Graduates, Disadvantaged Youth, Young Professionals, Jobseekers.
b. **Organizations:** VET Schools and Institutions, Employers and Business Owners, Labour Market Stakeholders, Social Partner Institutes, Municipalities, National and International VET Institutions & Public Employment Services.

6.1.5 PIMEC

Use of Project Results

PIMEC will focus on the maintenance of the Spanish Career Hub, and therefore the AppInterN portal, through the promotion of the project and contacts with more stakeholders (schools, municipalities, enterprises...). Also, the monitoring and preservation of the portal will be carried out with the support of the Municipality of l'Hospitalet de Llobregat, which will become the administrator of the Spanish Career Hub once the project ends and will ensure the Hub's continuity and sustainability. The main idea is that once the database of the platform has extended to all the country, and more stakeholders have joined the Career Hub, the platform will have reached its maximum effectiveness.

Resources Dedicated to the Project

The long-term sustainability of the project relies heavily on the human resources and expertise of PIMEC's collaborators. Their participation will be instrumental in ensuring its success. Moreover, PIMEC believes it would be beneficial to explore the possibility of a second phase, to maintain, enhance, and optimize the platform. This could either be an integral part of the project itself, focused on continuous improvement, or a parallel endeavor that complements and contributes to the platform's growth. By considering these options, PIMEC aims to foster an environment of ongoing innovation and refinement, thereby maximizing the platform's potential and long-term impact.

Target Groups/Organisations for Further Exploitation

a. **Individuals:** VET Students and Graduates, Disadvantaged Youth, Young Professionals, Jobseekers, Trainers and Teachers.

b. **Organizations:** VET Schools and Institutions, Employers and Business Owners, Labour Market Stakeholders, Social Partner Institutes, Municipalities, National and International VET Institutions & Public Employment Services.

c. **Specific organizations PIMEC intends to involve during the project:** The Municipality of L'Hospitalet de Llobregat (AppInterN associated partner) plays a crucial role in ensuring the sustainability of the project. Their genuine interest in the platform and its purpose drove their voluntary participation from the very beginning. Furthermore, their commitment to maintaining and utilizing the platform even after the project's completion ensures the continued enhancement of VET. By attracting more users and stakeholders, they contribute to the platform's growth and ensure its long-term viability. In addition, the valuable contributions from the City Council of Girona and other members and associates are bound to ensure the project's sustainability. Leveraging their extensive knowledge and experience in the field of VET, they will actively participate in sharing their expertise. Together, they will establish a strong foundation for sustainable growth, fostering innovation, and driving positive outcomes in VET within the region.

6.1.6 ROMA CAPITALE

Use of Project Results

ROMA CAPITALE can incorporate the Italian Career Hub into the tools that are currently used for guaranteeing a good match between its municipal service provision and the citizens' needs and requests. The database can also be matched with the one that is currently activated by the Job Orientation Services of the Municipality of Rome, with the objective of guaranteeing proper service delivery and full valorization of the project materials and results.

Roma Capitale believes that the AppInterN project was very valuable and effective in fostering a full exchange of expertise and information between all the countries involved. The network that was developed as part of the project will be further valorized by Roma Capitale in new projects and actions. Thanks to the job that has been done in the project, Roma Capitale can definitely guarantee a solid promotion of the importance of Work Based Learning for increasing employment opportunities for young people who are looking for new occupational competences/skills and new job opportunities .

Resources Dedicated to the Project

The project results, in particular the Career Hub, will be presented by the Municipality and by the connected vocational orientation services as a tool to guarantee a positive dialogue and match between enterprises and jobseekers. In this way, Roma Capitale will be able to further valorize the project results and guarantee the maximum sustainability of AppInterN, thanks in particular to the wide audience of Roma Capitale.

Target Groups/Organisations for Further Exploitation

According to Roma Capitale, the following target groups would be potentially interested in using the AppInterN products:

a. **Individuals:** VET Students and Graduates, Jobseekers, Trainers and Teachers
b. **Organisations:** VET Schools and Institutions, Labor Market Stakeholders, Municipalities, Public Employment Services

6.1.7 STEGI SA

Use of Project Results

STEGI has illustrated how each public relations strategy will be employed by the organization. As a national social partner, the Hellenic Federation of Enterprises (STEGI SA) intends to play an active role within the e-community for apprenticeship, encouraging member businesses to offer quality apprenticeships, internships and jobs to DYPA VET school students and graduates.

The Hellenic Federation of Enterprises will register as a Business Ambassador, thus contributing to the community by communicating useful labour market insights, information about forthcoming events, business trends etc. The Federation systematically supports apprenticeship and internship, as well as any other form of Work-based Learning. The portal will help it communicate its positions and relevant initiatives to a targeted audience. As an AppInterN project partner, it is already actively promoting the role of Business Ambassador within the Greek business community and will continue to do so via the AppInterN portal. The international aspect of the project enables STEGIB to connect to a broader VET community and share experience and information with other stakeholders.

Resources Dedicated to the Project

N/A

Target Groups/Organisations for Further Exploitation

a. **Individuals:** VET Students and Graduates, Young Professionals, Jobseekers, Trainers and Teachers.

b. **Organizations:** VET Schools and Institutions, Employers and Business Owners, Social Partner Institutes, National and International VET Institutions, Public Employment Services.

6.1.8 UNITELMA SAPIENZA

Use of Project Results

Considering the outlined tangible and intangible results and outcomes, UNITELMA SAPIENZA has articulated how IT plans to utilize every public relations approach.

UNITELMA SAPIENZA is interested in using the AppInterN portal to support students in finding new job opportunities, after the end of their learning/educational pathway. The portal could also represent a good opportunity to help students in making their *stage* experiences while doing their Bachelor or Master's Degree pathway. UNITELMA pledges to invite students to register in the portal, in order to create a network of practice at national and international level

The portal will represent a fundamental way to keep contacts between organizations and stakeholders at national and international level. UNITELMA has already developed a wide set of international contacts during the project's lifecycle. The AppInterN portal will help them maintain a line of dialogue at national and international level and widen the set of relations with more stakeholders.

Resources Dedicated to the Project

The main project product, the Career Hub and the AppInterN online Portal, will be kept in use by being incorporated into UNITELMA practices, with the objective of supporting the implementation of apprenticeships and creating contacts between the university and the world of enterprise, providing wider benefit for the students. UNTIELMA expressed their availability to take part in new project actions (also other than Erasmus+) to identify new funding opportunities for keeping up the project work.

Target Groups/Organisations for Further Exploitation

a. **Individuals:** VET Students and Graduates, Jobseekers, Trainers and Teachers.

b. **Organizations:** VET Schools and Institutions, Employers and Business Owners, National and International VET Institutions, Public Employment Services.