



## SME COUNSELLING

### DEVELOPMENT OF A "FRONT-LINE" ADVICE - GUIDANCE - COUNSELLING SCHEME FOR SMEs' EMPLOYEES

#### SME Counselling

#### NEWSLETTER No. 4

#### **Highlights:**

1. TRAINING FOR TRAINERS OF INTERNAL "FRONT-LINE" COUNSELLORS
2. NATIONAL TRAINING ACTIONS
3. BEST PRACTICE IN DEVELOPMENT OF A "FRONT-LINE" ADVICE - GUIDANCE - COUNSELLING SCHEME FOR SME's EMPLOYEES
4. INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS
5. CONTACT INFORMATION

#### **1. Training for Trainers of Internal "Front – Line" Counsellors**

After agreeing upon the "front-line" counselling scheme, a series of training tools were developed, in view of planning a train for trainers action, aiming at testing the learning methods and refining the pedagogical approaches. In this respect, specific training tools were developed and a coherent and unitary group of trainers were selected from all the participating countries, in order to transfer the acquired know-how and to disseminate the identified national best practices in TQM approach for SME's.

The training support documents were developed under the guidance of P5, P6 and P8. At the training action were participated two trainees which were selected from every partner. The training action was take place in Fagaras and it was organised by APIMM Fagaras. The period of the training action was 3 days, March 20, March 21 and March 22.

During the train for trainers action the group of partner's trainees detected the objectives of training action, the social skills needed by managers, how to improve their management style and competence. There were also discussions about motivation and about social skills improvement by counselling, mentoring, coaching, instructions. It was presented the concept of emotional intelligence.

Other topics discussed:

- Area of problem for individual and team: influence - organizational effectiveness and leadership; group effectiveness - interpersonal skills, negotiation, and teamwork; personal management - self-esteem, goal setting/motivation, and personal and career development; adaptability - creative thinking and problem solving; communication - listening and oral communication; reading, writing and computation; learning to learn.
- Broad topic of training needs: business ethics, values and behavior/ social psychology/ courtesy, self management, self discipline and self confidence, organizational culture, communication skills, customer care, codes of conduct, good practices.

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At the end of the training period the trainees assumed the conclusions on the remaining work to be done for improvement the project outcomes.

## 2. National Training Actions

The method approached by the SME Counselling project is to provide specific training tools for enabling managers to improve people results within their organisations.

This activity represents the core of the project products testing phase. The training tools customized by each partner were tested in real conditions. So, every partner, Api Varese and Provincia di Varese from Italy, AHE from Poland, Byweb from Portugal, CNIPMMR from Romanian selected the pilot group of managers, consultants, entrepreneurs, specialized personnel, employees, etc. from the targeted SME's in each participating country.

According to the identified Romanian local needs, CNIPMMR, design own national training action under the name "Social competences of the managers". The duration of the training action it was 3 days and it was take place at the Council location from Bucharest. In accordance with the National Report from the training action organised by CNIPMMR, there were joined 14 organizations with different profiles such us production companies, logistics companies, consulting companies, educational organisations, etc. and 17 participants with different positions in their companies such as one human resources senior consulting, one production manager, one chief account, one jurist, one school teacher, administrators, executive managers, engineers.

Modules for training used:

- Improvement of the managers social skills – Success manager
- The concept of competence
- Communication
- Empathy and assertivity
- Feedback and motivation
- Competences in different situations and terms
- Problem solving, change management
- Coaching, mentoring, counselling
- Management systems (TQM) and EFQM quality models

Conclusions according with the questionnaires which were filled in at the end of the training action by the trainees and by the trainer:

- The filed is vast with many interpretations and various approaches, therefore is hard to realize a perfect training support. It is important to reach the objectives connected to awareness of the importance of social competences for managers.
- The participants were satisfied because the course offers some instruments and managerial techniques with practical utility.
- All the persons had similar level of knowledge with the exception of one person who required attention and a particular approach.
- Learning objectives allow fulfillment of participants needs with the exception of the ones who already have knowledge above the average of the group.

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- The group had an optimum number of participants, enough materials and exercises, participation and involvement, evaluation and positive feedback from participants (most of them). There is always possible for improvement but we consider that the performance was good at the level of an experimental course.
- The group conclude that the course was efficient and positive.

### **3. Best Practice in Development of a "Front-Line" Advice – Guidance – Counselling Scheme for SME's Employees**

Here are some examples of best practices from the different SME's from the different countries.

Examples of best practices from Romanian's SME's:

<b>Title of practice:</b>	Team Development		
<b>Organisation Name:</b>	Technoelectric		
<b>Contact Information:</b>	Country: Romania		
<i>e-mail:</i>	laurentiu.carp@technoelectric.ro	<i>web site:</i>	www.technoelectric.ro

**Key word/Category: Team Work**

<b>Details on Category of Practice:</b>	Development of work teams
<b>Brief description of the Organisation</b>	Productive company, approx. 100 employees, based near Bucharest
<b>Objectives:</b>	Better accountability of jobs done by team members
<b>Practice Description:</b>	Developing organisational procedures at the level of an individual, a group, and an organisation. All personnel has to participate. The personnel will be rewarded for active involvement, respect for others members of the group, support for the own team, etc.
<b>Target Group:</b>	All employees, regardless their function or qualification
<b>Number of People Involved:</b>	100
<b>Main Actors and Their Roles:</b>	Top managers, line managers and operators
<b>Competencies Addressed through this Practice:</b>	Team spirit and accountability for own tasks as a team member
<b>Results of this Practice:</b>	Increased team spirit, awareness of others qualities, motivation and pride of employees
<b>Time Needed:</b>	One day every two weekends
<b>Special Remarks:</b>	Simple, cost effective method for team development
<b>Related Categories:</b>	Management style or Mentoring

#### **Relevant Links**

[www.smeskills.org](http://www.smeskills.org)  
[www.smeprojects.ro](http://www.smeprojects.ro)  
[www.cnipmmr.ro](http://www.cnipmmr.ro)

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www.technoelectric.ro

\* **"Best practice"** for the purpose of this survey may be defined as any existing practice one may find effective in leading or supporting people within organizations by managers.

<b>Title of practice:</b>	Collectively Team		
<b>Organisation Name:</b>	TOPEX PUBLIC SWITCHING		
<b>Contact Information:</b>	Country: Romania		
<i>e-mail:</i>	calin.popescu@topex.ro	<i>web site:</i>	www.topex.ro

**Key word/Category:** Team Work

<b>Details on Category of Practice:</b>	Teambuilding training.
<b>Brief description of the Organisation</b>	Productive company, approx. 100 employees, based near Bucharest
<b>Objectives:</b>	Better accountability of jobs done by team members.
<b>Practice Description:</b>	Developing organisational procedures at the organisational level. All personnel has to be active members of formal work teams, quality teams and problem solving teams. The personnel will be rewarded for active involvement, respect for others members of the group, support for the own team, etc.
<b>Target Group:</b>	All employees, regardless their function or qualification.
<b>Number of People Involved:</b>	100
<b>Main Actors and Their Roles:</b>	Top managers, line managers and operators.
<b>Competencies Addressed through this Practice:</b>	Team spirit and accountability for own tasks as a team member.
<b>Results of this Practice:</b>	Increased team spirit, awareness of others qualities, motivation and pride of employees.
<b>Time Needed:</b>	One day every weekend.
<b>Special Remarks:</b>	Simple, cost effective method for teambuilding training.
<b>Related Categories:</b>	Management style, Coaching, Mentoring, Communication.

#### Relevant Links

[www.smeskills.org](http://www.smeskills.org)  
[www.smeprojects.ro](http://www.smeprojects.ro)  
[www.cnipmmr.ro](http://www.cnipmmr.ro)  
[www.topex.ro](http://www.topex.ro)

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Examples of best practices from Nederland's SME's:

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<b>Title of practice:</b>	Mind Map Workshop		
<b>Organisation Name:</b>	Dutch Association for Research Quality Assurance (DARQA)		
<b>Contact Information:</b>	Network of QA managers, The Netherlands		
<b>e-mail:</b>	qaexpert@euronet.nl	<b>web site:</b>	www.darqa.nl

**Key word/Category:** Counselling, Problem solving

<b>Details on Category of Practice:</b>	Creative problem solving by application of mind maps
<b>Brief description of the Organisation</b>	Network of QA managers in The Netherlands for sharing experiences, information transfer and training activities with regard to quality management systems application, auditing and counselling
<b>Objectives:</b>	Learning how to apply mind maps as a creative tool for problem solving
<b>Practice Description:</b>	Application of the tool Mind Map for counselling activities of QA managers with regard to solve quality problems in their respective companies in a creative way
<b>Target Group:</b>	QA managers and afterwards staff of departments as their customers for counselling in QMS maintenance
<b>Number of People Involved:</b>	50
<b>Main Actors and Their Roles:</b>	QA managers as counsellors
<b>Competencies Addressed through this Practice:</b>	Sharing experience, application of creative tools, problem solving, communication, counselling
<b>Results of this Practice:</b>	Learned how to apply mind maps, increased experience in problem solving, increased experience in creative tool for counselling
<b>Time Needed:</b>	One day workshop
<b>Special Remarks:</b>	To build up experience in mind mapping together with QA manager colleagues how to use mind maps for problem solving before counselling activities to employees in the company
<b>Related Categories:</b>	Internal auditing, process improvement

#### Relevant Links

[www.smeskills.com](http://www.smeskills.com)  
[www.smeprojects.ro](http://www.smeprojects.ro)  
[www.cnipmmr.ro](http://www.cnipmmr.ro)  
[www.mindjet.com](http://www.mindjet.com)  
[www.mindtools.com](http://www.mindtools.com)  
[www.inspiration.com](http://www.inspiration.com)

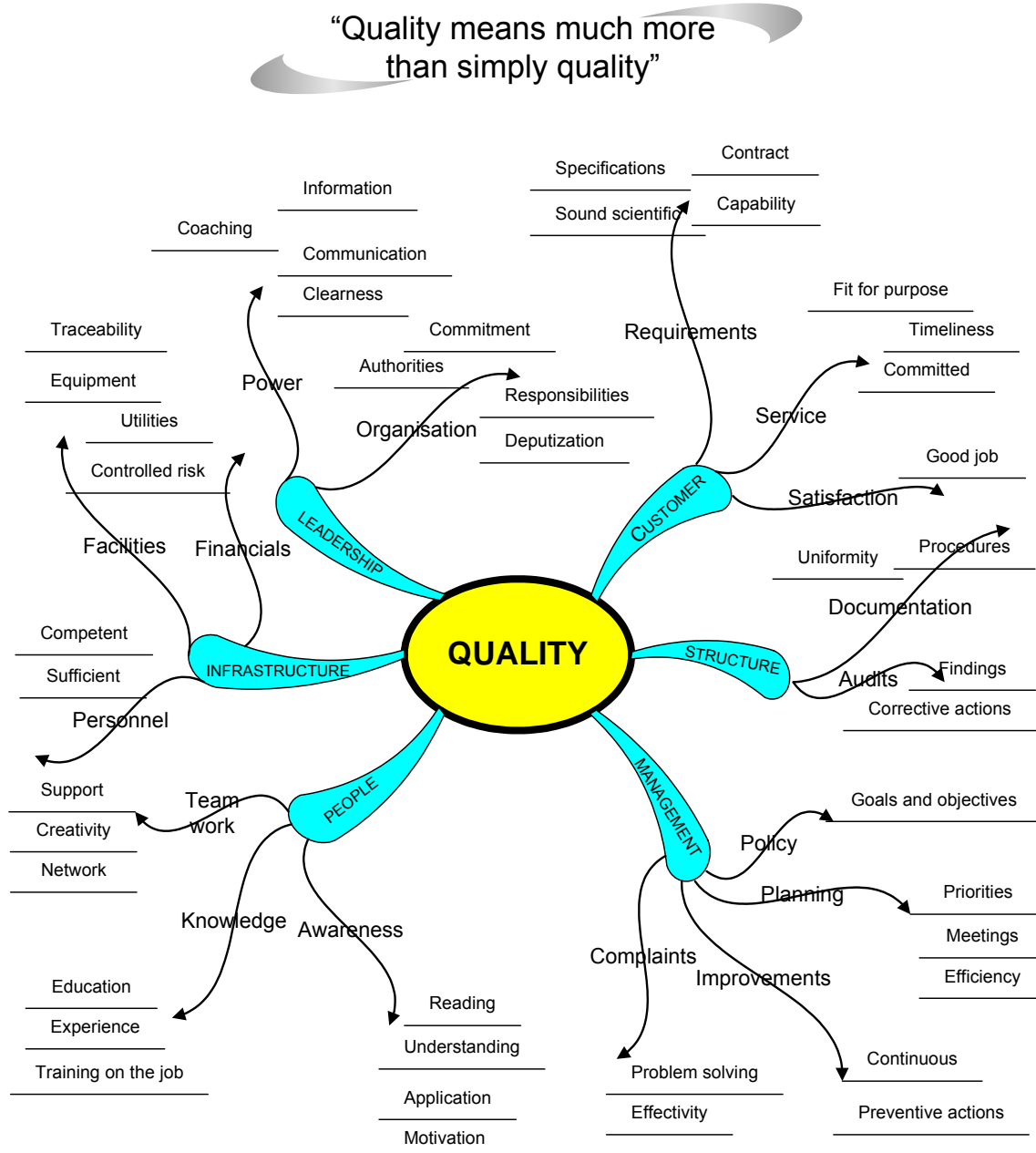
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### EXAMPLE OF MIND MAP FOR QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



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### DEVELOPMENT OF A "FRONT-LINE" ADVICE - GUIDANCE - COUNSELLING SCHEME FOR SMEs' EMPLOYEES

<b>Title of practice:</b>	Risk Management Workshop		
<b>Organisation Name:</b>	Biotech Company		
<b>Contact Information:</b>	Pharmaceutical enterprise, The Netherlands		
<i>e-mail:</i>	qaexpert@euronet.nl	<i>web site:</i>	confidential

**Key word/Category:** Learning organisation, Risk management

<b>Details on Category of Practice:</b>	Application of risk management as proactive method to prevent risks and identify potential adverse effects
<b>Brief description of the Organisation</b>	Biotechnological company developing and manufacturing innovative pharmaceutical products, namely vaccines in USA and The Netherlands.
<b>Objectives:</b>	Comprehensive guidance in the principles of risk management for employees how risks and changes in manufacturing of vaccines for human use can be managed according to the new international guidelines.
<b>Practice Description:</b>	The risk management workshop will be of considerable benefit for. QA officers will play an advisory role in the performance of risk assessments.
<b>Target Group:</b>	Top management, Department management, Project leaders, Project teams, Laboratory and QA/QC personnel
<b>Number of People Involved:</b>	120
<b>Main Actors and Their Roles:</b>	QA officers as counsellors, multidisciplinary teams (mix of management, project representatives and employees)
<b>Competencies Addressed through this Practice:</b>	Sharing experience in risk management, performance of risk assessments, structured method of risk evaluation and prevention of risks and adverse effects, internal communication, counselling
<b>Results of this Practice:</b>	Learned how to apply risk management and perform risk assessments, increased experience in proactive method to prevent risks, increased experience in analysing risks, working in multidisciplinary teams
<b>Time Needed:</b>	One day workshop
<b>Special Remarks:</b>	To build up experience in risk management together with how to use a risk assessment tool for analysing risks before QA officers taking the role as counsellor to assist the teams in performing risk assessments on the basis of actual cases from daily practice
<b>Related Categories:</b>	Counselling, Change management

#### Relevant Links

[www.smeskills.com](http://www.smeskills.com)  
[www.riskman.unsw.edu.au](http://www.riskman.unsw.edu.au)  
[www.infoscouts.com](http://www.infoscouts.com)

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[www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)  
[www.hsedirect.com](http://www.hsedirect.com)  
[www.workplacehealthconnect.co.uk](http://www.workplacehealthconnect.co.uk)  
[www.sparc.airtime.co.uk](http://www.sparc.airtime.co.uk)  
[www.tbs-sct.gc.ca](http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca)

#### EXAMPLE OF RISK ASSESSMENT CASE

##### CRITICAL SITUATION FOR INPUT OF PERSONNEL IN PROJECTS

The business of Biotech Company is increasing rapidly in time from year to year on the basis of new acquisitions for vaccine development.

At the same time the activities of Biotech's employees are changing in line with the development process of a new pharmaceutical drug product according to the scheme below.

DISCOVERY → DEVELOPMENT → PRODUCTION

Technology transfer				
Involvement / Phases	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Manufacturing
Discovery	X	X		
Development		X	X	Trouble shooting
Production			X	X

Coming from Discovery / Phase I transfer of technology know-how (small scale production) has to take place from R&D to engineering and technical personnel (pilot → full production scale). In this process from Phase I activities up to Phase I and III problems are encountered during the expansion of the Biotech organization regarding competences (or restrictions) of personnel and top management is not sufficiently aware of these problems:

1. Changing from scientific into multidisciplinary and complex technical matrix organization (functional / hierarchic / phases / projects)
2. Planning of activities becomes more difficult (many activities are evenly important)
3. Less flexibility to exchange personnel between departments in case of a high work load (different qualifications)
4. Personnel is not sufficiently capable or trained on-the-job for functioning in a changing environment
5. Quality management system is still research oriented while more strict rules are needed according to Good Practices
6. Communication between people having different backgrounds is becoming more difficult (speaking each others language)

Proposed corrective actions:

Adjust the criteria for selection and qualifications of personnel in line with the future developments and future job needs for the company. Technical personnel should be hired for Development and Production departments that is qualified and trained to perform well in a

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matrix organization. Basic GMP approach has to be converted into an integrated quality system containing different elements.

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Examples of best practices from Denmark and Sweden SME's:

<b>Title of practice:</b>	Study tour to Denmark and Sweden		
<b>Organisation Name:</b>	Stedebouwkundig Adviesbureau (SAB)		
<b>Contact Information:</b>	Arnhem, The Netherlands		
<b>e-mail:</b>	Arnhem@sab.nl	<b>web site:</b>	www.sab.nl

**Key word/Category:** Competence Development, Organisational Development

<b>Details on Category of Practice:</b>	Development of competences and Team work
<b>Brief description of the Organisation</b>	Consultancy agency for city development, planology and architecture, approx. 60 employees, based in Arnhem
<b>Objectives:</b>	Learning from foreign cities in Europe in city development, planology and architecture
<b>Practice Description:</b>	Yearly study tour with all employees of the company including top management to a place where city building is developing in special, modern way and architecture friendly to the people who live and/or work in the city. By visiting together architectural objects in different cities creativity, competences and team work are enhanced.
<b>Target Group:</b>	All employees including top management and supporting staff of at all levels of the organisation, regardless their function
<b>Number of People Involved:</b>	60
<b>Main Actors and Their Roles:</b>	Top management, project managers, technical and supporting staff
<b>Competencies Addressed through this Practice:</b>	Broadening scope of expertise, sharing experiences, communication, team work, creativity, social skills
<b>Results of this Practice:</b>	Increased experience in city development, planology and architecture, increased team spirit, getting to know each other, enhancement of job motivation
<b>Time Needed:</b>	Four days study tour, including weekend
<b>Special Remarks:</b>	Most cost have been paid by the company, commitment of top management with work force, motivating for employees
<b>Related Categories:</b>	Company culture, process improvement

#### Relevant Links

[www.smeskills.com](http://www.smeskills.com)  
[www.sab.nl](http://www.sab.nl)

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#### 4. International Meetings

The 4<sup>th</sup> international meeting of the SME Counselling project partner organisations was organised by the Polish partners - Academy of Economics and Humanities, in Łódź, on 18 – 19 May 2006.



Topics discussed during the 4<sup>th</sup> partners' meeting:

- 1) Presentation of the guidelines concerning the final technical and financial report, made by the 2 representatives of the National Agency LDV – Ro
- 2) Presentation of the forms for project final report to be sent for review to ECOMET (financial and technical parts)
- 3) Overview of the current stage of the SME Counselling project – 2006: presentation of slides with the current stage of the project, by workpackages and deliverables according to the following pattern: name of WP, project tasks (done, due / to be done)
- 4) Proposed roadmap for the remaining activities, deadlines for the remaining activities
- 5) Review of promotion materials, dissemination, up-dated web site
- 6) Review of project intangible results
- 7) Evaluation issues - discussions on the two draft questionnaires presented by Cristina Zambon (evaluation example for trainers and evaluation example for trainees)
- 8) Conclusionns of the "train for trainers" action from Fagaras, made by ECOMET
- 9) Availability of open courses in polish language (on line training courses) for all the interested persons, not just students in Academy of Economics and Humanities.

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- 10) Discussions about the inventory list with training tools.
- 11) Conclusions about guidelines for use, content of training manual, guide of best practices, organization the national training courses
- 12) Final conclusions

**The 5th international meeting** of the SME Counselling project partner organisations was organised again by the Italian partners – Provincia di Varese and Api Varese, in Varese, on 21 - 23 September 2006.



Topics discussed during the 4<sup>th</sup> partners' meeting:

- 1) Review of promotion materials, dissemination, up-dated web site.
- 2) Discussions about how to enlarge the smecouns group.
- 3) Presentation of the guidelines concerning the final financial reports, material printed by ECOMET team at the indications of the National Agency LDV – Ro
- 4) Presentation of the forms for project final report to be sent for review to ECOMET (financial and technical parts)
- 5) Overview of the current stage of the SME Counselling project – 2006: presentation of slides with the current stage of the project, by workpackages and deliverables according to the following pattern: name of WP, project tasks (done, due / to be done)
- 6) Proposed roadmap for the remaining activities, deadlines for the remaining activities
- 7) Review of project intangible results
- 8) Evaluation issues - discussions on the evaluation model for the national training actions. Ioana will make the out line for the evaluation report. The evaluation report will be filled in by the partners involved in the national training courses
- 9) Discussions and conclusions about how to modify the list with training tools function of the partner's needs
- 10) Discussions about the content of Guide of best practices on TQM
- 11) Discussions about the dead line for all the partners involved in making the training manuals in the national languages
- 12) Discussions referring to the Karin proposal for the possibility to organise in Nederland another type of national training course, a type of interactive national course on he CD.
- 13) Discussions about the content of CD for the Best Practices Guide.

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14) Final conclusions

5. Contact Information



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<http://www.smeprojects.ro>



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**P6 – The Academy Of Humanities And Economics**

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**P7 - Byweb Formacao e Informatica, unipessoal, lda.**

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Phone: +351 227 410 133 Fax: +351 227 410 134  
E-mail: [tpinto@byweb.pt](mailto:tpinto@byweb.pt) Web site: [www.byweb.pt](http://www.byweb.pt)



**P8 - TEHNE**

Address: 37 Timisoara Bd., T10-AP78, sector 6, Bucharest 061311, Romania  
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E-mail: [office@tehne.ro](mailto:office@tehne.ro) Web site: [www.tehne.ro](http://www.tehne.ro)



**P9 - APIMM Fagaras**

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**P10 - ROMPLUS COMPUTER CENTER SRL**

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For further information, please visit the project official web-site: <http://www.smeskills.com>.

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