

Article 1

Let's Celebrate the Leonardo da Vinci Programme

A transnational project, partially funded by the Leonardo da Vinci programme of the European Union, is now under way. Led by The Chartered Institute of Loss Adjusters (CILA), it aims to introduce a transnational dimension into Loss Adjusting.

The present difficulties over the Lisbon Treaty seem to compound well publicised problems in Brussels. The debate on the CAP and the failure to make progress on a range of issues from trade resulting from self interest and the European Constitution and the Lisbon Treaty leaves citizens within the Eurozone, particularly those in the private sector at the sharp end of a sluggish and in some cases deflationary economy following the credit crunch, are expressing doubts about whether they have derived any benefit from the EU. When one reads about deals between large member states behind closed doors in an attempt to block reform, one can understand the cynicism and wonders whether gross self interest will ever permit more genuine cross border activity.

In terms of EU activity, however, the Leonardo programme is by contrast a breath of fresh air. It is not just officials who want it. Most people involved in training and staff development want it. Breaking down barriers between Member States, not erecting them and using them to promote national interests, is the way forward for the EU. Breaking down barriers is the foundation on which Leonardo is based. No one can use Leonardo as a negotiating tool. It is simply a programme to encourage vocational training at a European level, building on and supporting national strategies. No wonder the Commission views it as a flagship programme and is placing an ever increasing emphasis within the programme on valorisation, the process whereby projects can add value to existing knowledge and practice, and dissemination, the process by which relevant professionals and the public at large can learn about cross border developments and, crucially, participate in them.

Loss Adjusting is a well established activity which has developed alongside the growing sophistication of the insurance industry. Insurance claims have been pouring in since the advent of the insurance industry. However, a sophisticated relationship between clients and insurers is relatively new, and increasing legislation and cross border activity over the years has made the subject more complex, with each country developing its own regulations. The increasing internationalisation of the insurance market however has placed new demands on all those in the sector who now require additional sets of skills, in order to meet the demands of an international market. The Leonardo project, run and managed by the CILA in conjunction with seven international partners, is designed to address these matters and meet the needs of the international market of the 21st Century. By making it possible for professionals in the future to practice in other member states, the project will make a huge contribution to the internationalisation of the Loss Adjusting profession.

Future articles will address specific issues relating to the Leonardo programme, but suffice it to say at present that, thanks to Leonardo and the CILA contract, there will be for the first time a transnational training programme for those working in Loss Adjusting, with the possibility of a European qualification to make it easier for qualifications to be internationally recognised. British loss adjusters working in Austria and skilled Polish staff working in London now seems more than a distinct possibility. Let's celebrate real cooperation in Europe and look forward to better opportunities for people working in Europe.



Leonardo da Vinci-Meeting in Brüssel



Leonardo da Vinci-Meeting in Porto