NETWORK RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A NEW PROFESSIONALISM OF IN-COMPANY VET PERSONNEL

LEVEL up!

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Foreword

A new professionalism for in-company VET personnel. "Giving people a profession who train others in their profession"

Why do we need a new professionalism for in-company VET personnel and what do we need in order to achieve it? We have spent a long time discussing these questions in various settings and with various experts from different backgrounds and countries in the course of the Level-up project.

Questions that concerned us in this debate included:

- What role do in-company trainers play in the modern world of working and learning?
- What constitutes the modern world of working and learning? What has changed? How does that impact on a changing culture of in-company learning?
- Accordingly, how do the responsibilities of trainers change? How does that impact on what competencies are required?
- Consequently and ultimately, how can we achieve a new professionalization of this target group that corresponds to the vast changes of working realities and competence requirements in this field? What shape should qualifications for our target group actually take in order to satisfy the changes listed above? Do we need (new) qualification offers for our target group? How can better transparency and comparability contribute to this?

The debate on the new professionalism for in-company VET personnel spanned the stakeholder consultation that was implemented throughout the course of the Level-up! project in the framework of the so-called EWT Network debate. This constituted the establishment of a discussion platform for all stakeholders involved in the professionalization of our target group. We have discussed questions surrounding the professionalization of in-company VET personnel in different settings (conferences / workshops on different aspects of professionalization, and roundtable discussions, bringing together actors of VET from different backgrounds and countries, focus group discussions and individual consultations) and with a variety of stakeholders (such as in-company trainers themselves, HR managers, VET teachers, training providers and professional associations, social partners, education politicians and other experts).

We have found that, across Europe and across the everyday realities and backgrounds of our Network members, requirements and expectations of in-company trainers have increased over the past decade or so. Increasingly, in-company trainers are required to be moderators of learning processes in the company, coordinators of processes of change, counsellors on training and qualification processes in the company, experts of personnel development and coaches for their colleagues. In addition, trainers' responsibilities increasingly involve planning and managerial processes. However, until today, the majority of countries in Europe do not have standardised and / or compulsory qualification offers for in-company VET personnel. Trainers are typically those who are good at their job and are assumed to have a way with people, particularly the youth.

We feel that a greater level of professionalization (which entails both the better quality of qualification and a greater degree of professional and societal recognition) for the group of in-company VET personnel is long overdue! It will contribute to

- A greater level of horizontal and vertical mobility on the labour market
- A greater extent of equivalence between the trainer and teacher profession
- Increased competitiveness between vocational and academic education
- An image improvement of work-based learning, the dual system and vocational education in general
- A general improvement of vocational training and work-based learning, hence better training and skills in our economy
- Better implementation of increased requirements to a modern learning management inside and outside of organisations

We are convinced: the tasks and responsibilities in vocational training and education are extremely demanding and require an extensive level and width of competencies. This fact is still not mirrored in the qualification landscape for this target group. The professional and societal recognition of VET personnel, specifically in-company VET personnel, is long overdue!

1. Apprentice, Journeyman, Master – Is there an analogy to teacher, trainer, mentor?

In this article we are going to bring up an idea about an analogy between the traditional vocational training and education model, namely apprenticeship training: apprentice – journeyman – master, and the changing role of teacher and VET personnel from teacher to trainer to mentor.

Jobs and occupations are changing so much that we are not always aware of what the future holds. The development of technology is fast and VET cannot always keep up. VET organisations in general can be heavy and clumsy in being adaptable and therefore it can take years to change the curriculum to meet today's needs. There seems to be a need for more flexibility within the education system in general and less hierarchy in formal training. In order to succeed in the future, also VET organisations need to change and be more adaptable in line with many modern companies.

Prerequisite of current working life is that learners need to have a wide combination of competencies, and not just one set of skills. Due to technological development, jobs are in constant evolution or change, and this also means that an increasing number of jobs and occupations disappear. A lifetime position in a company is no longer a valid option; instead, we all have to have skills, such as soft skills and key competences, which enable us to maintain employability. Are we preparing people for a future career path or a specific job?

VET personnel need a variety of skills to be able to address the needs of working life and individual learners. Vocational teachers' competences are developing towards a new competence identity, says an article written by vocational teacher training lecturers, Anu Raudasoja and Soili Rinne, from HAMK, Häme University of Applied Sciences. In the article, they present an idea of vocational teachers' identity positions. Vocational teachers work on three different levels: individual, communal and societal. They can be seen as experts within their field and didactics, as well as developers of their organization and of working life. They are also experts on everyday life: supporting students, constructors of the working community and educators on the societal level, says the article.

It seems that a teacher is no longer only a teacher, and the roles of in-company trainers and workplace tutors emerge. The competences they need are much the same. They can all be seen as having identity positions on individual, communal and societal level, as outlined in the previously mentioned article.

An answer to the need of a more flexible VET system could be part-time work that combines teaching with in-company training: a person who is a part-time teacher and a part-time company worker. Such a person would have current knowledge of working life processes and methods and of what training is needed in a VET organisation accordingly. In the future, are VET personnel 50 % teachers and 50 % company workers? One can easily think of the benefits that such an arrangement could have: if the teacher is present at a company, the company does not have to use a production worker for tutoring. The companies could get better workers when the teacher/in-company trainer can really give state-of-the art or up-to-date vocational education to students as well as workplace specific tutoring.

One solution to a more flexible VET system would be to increase internal and external networking

activities and teamwork. Teachers, trainers and mentors have to be in close cooperation with companies, public organisations, trainers in other companies and other VET providers forming an interlaced network like a spider's web. They cannot stay in their own cocoon, but need to have contacts and have to understand the societal level, have an overall view. Professional networks and learning communities are easier to create and maintain in the modern digital environment. Without networks it is stressful to survive, one needs a support group.

When thinking historically, the basic idea of training or transferring ideas to others has not changed. In the past, the logical progression was from apprentice to journeyman to master. The master had responsibility to train the next generation and pass down knowledge. In modern society we see a return to this idea. Mentors in companies fulfill the role of the master in the past. They have knowledge, they have skills and they have a responsibility to transfer this knowledge and train the next generation (the next apprentice). The apprentice starts by copying a set layout of basic skills. When you begin as a tutor, you also have the role of an apprentice as well. In this role, you can teach basic routine tasks, which have clear formulas or methodology. After a while, as the tutor's skill and knowledge grow, the way of training changes focus. Rather than concentrating on standard skills, you have the ability to teach processes and concepts and have a better understanding of how these connect together.

The final level of ability to train is mentor (master). In this level problem solving, interaction of different tasks is understood and can be trained to others. As a mentor, you have the awareness to apply the knowledge, which you have learned in different situations and processes, even those that you have not faced before. You also understand the whole process, the bigger picture, and have a deep knowledge of the field in which you work. At mentor level you have the ability and experience to transfer knowledge in the way that actually touches someone´s heart and be a companion in their learning journey.

In conclusion, the cycle is complete. The process of learning has not changed dramatically. A noticeable change has been in the viewpoint: the modern approach is learner-centered whereas earlier we looked at learning from the teaching point of view. During this project we have seen the need to focus on learning guidance in work-based training, management involvement in this process and the necessity of building and maintaining networks between all actors. This requires commitment and involvement from all stakeholders in this process to ensure high-quality work-based learning in the future.

An apprentice = a traditional teacher: learning and teaching by repetition (behaviorism)

A journeyman = a tutor: more independent ability to apply knowledge, aiming to find new ideas and to search for new skills in other areas of life (constructivism)

A master = a mentor knows the field of work really well, whether it is the teaching profession or industrial manufacturing. A mentor has excellent collaborative and networking skills, both inside and outside of their own organization. The mentor looks beyond their responsibilities, and keeps an eye on things that would need to be developed. Environmental and cultural sensitivity and awareness helps to transfer ideas. (collaborative and active learning)

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2. Minimum Qualifications for Workplace Tutors

Introduction

The project "Level Up! Workplace Tutor Goes Europe" had two main aims. Firstly, to develop a high level pan-European training course for in-company trainers and secondly, to raise the awareness of all VET stakeholders on the importance of work-based learning and learning guidance and engage them in a debate for the professionalisation of VET actors.

In our project, the target group was VET personnel in its widest meaning. We define VET personnel as teachers, trainers, tutors, mentors at VET institutions and companies with special emphasis on those who actually work closely with different types of learners at the workplaces not forgetting those who are mainly involved in administration and human resources activities.

Increased work-based learning calls for better tutoring and learning guidance. The workplaces must invest resources in training their personnel to engage in skills development and learning processes of **the staff**, but also of
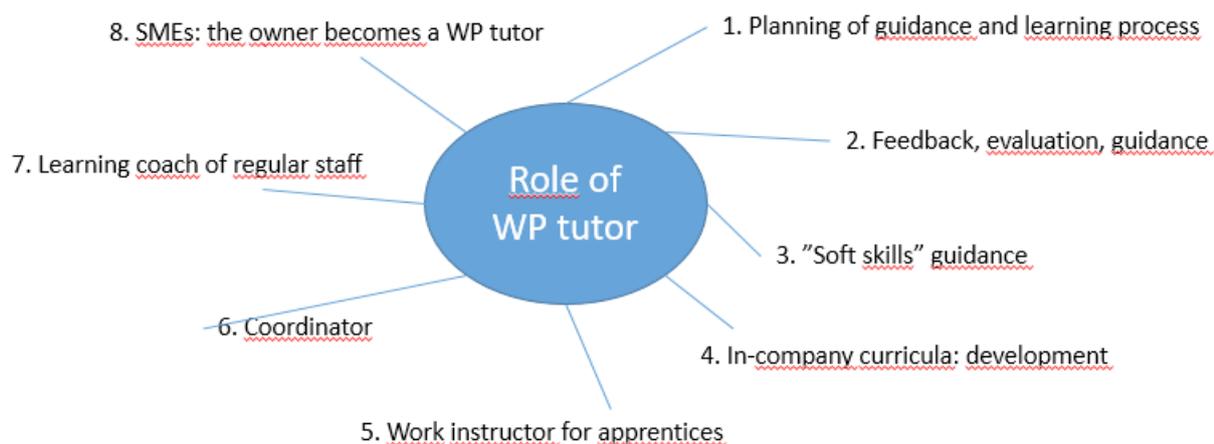
- **pupils in primary and secondary education** undertaking work-oriented projects;
- **vocational students** undertaking a period of work-practice as a part of their training course;
- **apprentices** applying job-related theory to the day-to-day requirements of their job;
- **higher education students** complementing learning theory with an understanding of labor market expectations;
- **adult learners / employees** within (or looking to enter) the labor market, taking part in continuous learning and skills development activities with a view to improving their employment or career progression prospects;
- **young people and adults gaining** occupational and soft skills through undertaking (formal or informal) voluntary work or voluntary activity in a workplace or work environment.

Working life faces changes that take place so rapidly we have difficulties in keeping up with them. Work environments in the near future are expected to feature more autonomy, less routine, more use of ICT, reduced physical effort and increased social and intellectual tasks. Labour market skill needs will be shifting, and workers will have to supply new skills to match changing needs. An aging workforce, overqualification and job polarisation at the top and bottom of the skills scale will be some of the key challenges of the next decade, calling for action now. There will be an increase in demand for ICT skills as the pace of innovation in the application of information and communication technologies – productivity-enhancing technological change – is expected to accelerate further in the coming decades. (Cedefop Briefing Note, 2018b)

Rethinking of VET personnel roles at the workplaces

This challenge of keeping up with the change requires rethinking of VET roles at the workplaces. At the Level Up! project multiplier event held in Lahti (FI) in June 2017, the question of the roles of the workplace tutors in their organisations was brought up. In this discussion we realized that the term

'workplace tutor' refers to drastically different roles in the partner countries. During the learning café activity the following tasks or roles were identified:

8. SMEs: the owner becomes a WP tutor
7. Learning coach of regular staff
6. Coordinator
5. Work instructor for apprentices

Role of WP tutor

1. Planning of guidance and learning process
2. Feedback, evaluation, guidance
3. "Soft skills" guidance
4. In-company curricula: development

The discussion reflected the findings of our previous project EWT – European Workplace Tutor. In the project we distinguished between **two different roles** or positions at the workplaces: that of a **Workplace Tutor** and that of a **Learning Process Guide**.

According to the definition made in the previous EWT project, **the Workplace Tutor** is a role held by a person in a company who has the responsibility **to guide and coordinate in-company training processes**, and independently plan, implement and evaluate in-company education processes as well as advise individuals regarding training and guidance. In other words, the Workplace Tutor has a specialized biography and a qualification in his area and is very often in a managerial position.

The Learning Process Guide is a role with a very hands-on approach to practical learning guidance at the workplace. The Learning Process Guide accompanies learning processes of staff or learners (VET students) in the company. The learning process guide acts as a specialist for learning processes with the aim of enabling learners to independently create and reflect learning processes. These are not necessarily full-time roles/positions but can be held by staff members appointed to these roles alongside their normal tasks.

Two approaches to better-qualified VET personnel in relation to EQF

As you can see, the field of VET personnel's roles in Europe is like a patchwork quilt: there are many pieces but none of them are the same nor even similar to one another. When considering the required qualifications for VET personnel, we can approach from at least two different angles: one that has a set of ready-made certified qualifications to choose from or, secondly, one which considers the competences needed and builds training programmes tailored to the needs of in-company training personnel.

The existing qualification offers are based on the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the programmes to be designed should follow the learning outcomes based level structure of EQF. During the past decade, national qualifications frameworks (NQFs) have been developed and implemented across Europe. Triggered by the adoption of the European Qualifications Qramework (EQF) in 2008! these frameworks draw attention to the outcomes of education and training, focusing on what learners are expected to know, understand and able to do. Learning outcomes-based level descriptors are essential to these frameworks. While technical in their character, these descriptors not only help to define and map the (vertical) level of complexity of a particular qualification, they also help to clarify its (horizontal) orientation, be this on theoretical knowledge, practical skills and/or transversal competences. (Cedefop 2018a)

Previous research (Cedefop, 2009; 2016) shows that most European countries see the orientation on learning outcomes as critical for modernising their education and training systems. Shifting the focus towards learning outcomes is also a prerequisite for dialogue between education and the labour market, and forms part of an effort to strengthen the relevance of education and training to the labour market.

Occupational standards

Occupational profiles or standards are normally set outside the education and training system by labour market stakeholders but can have significant impact on the way learning outcomes statements are defined and written. Occupational profiles or standards specify the main jobs that people do, describing the professional tasks and activities as well as the competences typical of an occupation. Occupational standards signal what students must be able to do in employment and can ideally serve as a link between education and training and the needs of the labour market. While a qualification standard needs to look beyond the specific functions of a single job or occupation, occupational, as with qualifications standards, the term occupational standard is not used everywhere but refers to a function which can be identified in most countries. In some countries, for example Germany, the functions of qualifications and occupational standards are closely interwoven: in German VET, candidates will be awarded a qualification containing Berufsbild (occupational title), signalling a close relationship between occupation and qualification.

Qualification profiles and standards

Qualification standards define the expected outcomes of the learning process, leading to the award of a full or partial qualification. In vocational education and training (VET), profiles or standards normally answer questions such as 'what does the student need to learn to be effective in employment and what does the learner need to learn to become an active citizen, supporting basic human and democratic values?' A qualification standard is not exclusively about promoting skills relevant to the labour market, but must address a broader set of competences relevant to life and society in general. It must also consider the changing nature of the labour market and society and clarify the role of transversal skills and competences, such as communication, social skill and problem solving.

The European Qualifications Framework (EQF), implemented in 2008, is a common European reference system, which links different countries' national qualifications systems and frameworks (NQF) together. In practice, it works as a translation mechanism, making qualifications more readable. As

statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do, the learning outcomes descriptors for all levels of qualification are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competences, relevant to qualifications at that level in any system of qualifications and understood as shown in the following table:

Table 1. **EQF Level descriptors: main elements**

Level descriptor elements		
Knowledge	**Skills**	**Responsibility and autonomy**
In the context of EQF, knowledge is described as: ▪ **theoretical** and/or ▪ **factual**	In the context of EQF, skills are described as: ▪ **cognitive** (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) ▪ **practical** (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).	In context of the EOF, **responsibility** and **autonomy** is described as the ability of the learner to apply knowledge and skills autonomously and with responsibility.

Based on the competences profile and learning outcomes associated to this qualification, the complexity, range and the level of learning expected from learners, the **Learning Process Guide** competence profile targeted the European Qualification Framework (EQF) Level 5[1], allowing though, depending on each country needs, a further development into a higher qualification level:

	Knowledge	**Skills**	**Responsibility and autonomy**
Level 5[(1)] The learning outcomes relevant to level 5 are:	comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge	a comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems	▪ exercise management and supervision of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change ▪ review and develop performance of self and others

The settlement of the EQF level 5 for the **Learning Process Guide** Competence Profile allows partners to establish the correspondence between the European Qualification levels and their National Qualification Frameworks (NQF):

EQF Levels	DE NQF	PT NQF	ES NQF	FI NQF	HU NQF	IE NQF
5	5	5	5	5	5	6

By making the correspondence between the partner countries' NQFs and the EQF, the achieved outcomes become more readable across Europe, allowing learners' mobility inside or between countries and facilitating their lifelong learning processes, and contributing for a better recognition of training outcomes.

Apart from the above specified, <u>extra entry requirements</u> can be required, according to each coun-

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1 Developing descriptors for level 5 can be challenging in many countries as it is considered to bridge VET and HE.

try's specifications:

	DE	PT	ES	FI	HU	IE
European Workplace Tutor Entry requirements	For fully qualified trainers: Qualified professional and trainers aptitude test	Having 3 years of work experience in training provision, or related functions	--	--	--	--

Two models: the Irish Certificate and the European Workplace Tutor training programme

As stated above, there are two approaches to consider in these recommendations. We have existing certified training programmes available, such as the one in Ireland. In order to be considered a qualified trainer in Ireland you need to possess a certificate to state that you have successfully completed the Special Purpose Specification NFQ Level 6 (EQF Level 5) Training and Development AWARD number 6S3372. This consists of two modules or separate courses. The first course 6N3326 deals with "Training Delivery and Evaluation" while the second course 6N3325 deals with "Training Needs Identification and Design". Both are accredited by QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland) and all providers of this course must be registered with QQI as a centre for delivery and hold an approval to deliver the course. To achieve this the centre needs to make a detailed application.

The other approach is the one we used in building the Level Up! Workplace Tutor Goes Europe programme. We identified the core competences, skills and knowledge (at EQF Level 5) needed to act as a workplace tutor or learning process guide and the designed profiles then formed the basis for the structuring of the programme. The benefit of this approach is that it allows prior learning to be taken into account and the modularised content can also allow for different modules to be completed individually to the needs of the trainee or learner in the order that fits the learning needs.

The ultimate goal is to complete all five modules of *the Learning Process Guide*:

UNIT 1: Analysing the learning needs of the learner(s)
UNIT 2: Planning and preparing training measures: plan training and learning measures (ongoing or specific training measures) for his area economically and according to needs / framework conditions of the company and the learner
UNIT 3: Guiding learning processes: Guide and accompany learning processes
UNIT 4: Assessment and documentation of learning processes of individuals
UNIT 5: Quality assurance and improvement – Evaluation of training measures (interim and final)

or the six modules of *the European Workplace Tutor profile*:

UNIT 1: Analysing the learning needs of the learner(s)
UNIT 2: Analysing organizational needs and creating training opportunities
UNIT 3: Planning and preparing training measures: plan training and learning measures (ongoing or specific training measures) economically according to needs / framework conditions of the company and the learner

UNIT 4: Implementing training measures and guiding learning processes

UNIT 5: Assessment and documentation of learning processes of individuals

UNIT 6: Quality assurance and improvement – Evaluation of training measures (interim and final)

In general, the training programme of the Level Up! project forms a basis from which European VET providers can form their own programmes and schemes suitable for different learning cultures and education systems. Each country or VET provider can emphasize topics according to cultural and organizational diversity.

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QQI Training Award http://qsearch.qqi.ie/WebPart/AwardDetails?awardCode=6S3372

3. The Learning outcome – a short view from two Level Up training participants

Participating at Level Up! was a really good experience, not least because of the European scope, not only for meeting people who are working on the topic of qualifications and for travelling to European countries; we also learned a lot about the education systems in other nations and how they handle qualifications and learner support differently.

Our journey took us through Ireland, Finland, Spain and Germany. We were talking in English all the time and furthermore we had to write a final assignment in English as well. Therefore, we could practice our language skills and improve our vocabulary.

In Ireland we got a very good impression of learning situations and how to create good environments for the learners. Everybody was very friendly and they gave us a perfect overview about learning examples.

In Finland we had nice experiences in the practice of learning situations. The project room was very exciting with all the comfort of modern furniture and materials like beanbag chairs. We were able to gain our own experiences in different learning environments and could also feel what it means to each learner and the varied preferences of the group members. In the evening we visited different companies, one of them a social enterprise selling used articles.

In Valencia we learned a lot about how to support learners inclusive in difficult discussions. We did some group work to practice communicative situations with learners. We also visited different companies and institutions. Here we remember in particular the visit of a company that works with people with disabilities.

In Germany we focused on the quality of learning situations. There we visited a specialised VET institution that also acts as a recruitment company. They gave us a very good overview about their work departments and how they educate in further and vocational training.

In Level Up! we have had a very good mix between theoretical and practical topics. We enjoyed the different styles of food and it was good we also had some time getting to know the city and environment we were staying at. All participants were having fun and contributed to an active exchange of the work habits in their countries.

In summary, we identify that in terms of work in learning situations and with learners there are a lot of things that all four countries and our own countries have in common. Besides, there are some things that are very individual in habits of the companies and in the culture of each country. That´s why not everything can be compared.

Finally, we want to answer the question "Why is learning guidance so important?" For us it is so important because there are special needs for the learners in which they need to be guided and there is a need of support. That's why companies should have experts in qualification topics since then they will have a good quality of employees and good processes with good qualities. That means much more success for the company with satisfied employees and very good operations.

Thank you so much for the possibility to take part in this exciting learning programme.

4. Permeability between educational sub-systems and the new role and responsibilities of VET personnel in the modern world of work

Permeability is the property of material to allow fluids (such as water, water vapour or oil) to diffuse through it to another medium without being affected physically or chemically.2

The term permeability is also applied to educational sub-systems. It is the possibility of learners to easily move between different types of education (e.g. academic and professional) and between different levels (secondary education, apprenticeships or higher education), depending on their decisions.

The statement of Bruges and the Europe 2020 Strategy emphasize the importance of permeability as a prerequisite for the existence of European modern education and training systems that encourage learning throughout life (acquired learning not only in schools but also in the workplace and leisure). However, in Europe, most of the education and training systems are permeable only to certain a point. This has to be changed.

Traditionally, education and training systems are separate and distinct subsystems (of general, vocational and higher education), related to each other in a strict hierarchy decomposed into primary, secondary and higher education. This hierarchy works well when learners follow a predefined direction in the area and the subsystem of their choice. However, splitting education and training creates institutional barriers that can restrict the options and choices of learners to progress to higher levels of learning or by moving horizontally to an area of different studies on the same level of education. Often, learners have to specialize when they are still very young, making it difficult, for example, to transition from vocational education and training (VET) to higher education, or combine both systems, in a later stage.

(…) it is important to promote the permeability between vocational education and training and other educational and career paths. For example, the permeability can be enhanced by providing proper access to VET graduates to higher education, creating transition programs and / or integration of transversal skills at all levels of VET. (EC: 2016, p.10).

The increased permeability in education and training is, in many countries, related to the possibility of a larger number of VET graduates pursuing higher studies. Member States of the European Union (EU) have different policies on access to higher education. However, the number of students enrolled in secondary education, including students from VET with direct access to higher education, have been increasing, in the EU zone, in the last years. Despite this, there is a long way to run. True permeability should enable learners to transfer and make use of all types of prior learning – formal, non-formal or informal – regardless of the context in which this learning occurred. For learners, this broader view of what is considered relevant makes all the difference, in that it assigns a value to learning outcomes achieved over time and in different contexts.

2 https://www.corrosionpedia.com

The importance of empowering people

The Bruges Communiqué on enhanced European Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training also puts in evidence the need to empower people, so they can adapt to new developments and manage change. The modern world of work changes rapidly:

This means enabling people to acquire knowledge, skills and competences that are not purely occupational. These broader competences – key competences – are important to succeed in life, and it should be possible to acquire them as well in VET as in any other form of education (...) Work-based learning is a way for people to develop their potential. The work-based component substantially contributes to developing a professional identity and can boost the self-esteem of those who might otherwise see themselves as failures. Learning on the job enables those in employment to develop their potential while maintaining their earnings. (European is Ministers VET: 2010, p. 3)

That's why more than 400 experts from 28 Member States of the EU, candidate countries and European Economic Area countries and the European social partners and associations at European level representing interest groups worked for two years and have developed a set of principles for the future of education and training in Europe[3]. One of them emphasizes the "support to enterprises, especially SMEs, that provide work-based learning." A clear and coherent legal framework is an important prerequisite, but this may not be sufficient to encourage companies to receive apprentices. Therefore, it can take be important to predict supportive measures to make WBL more attractive and accessible to SMEs, in order to motivate companies to receive apprentices.

In order to ensure the employability of young people, the content and delivery of learning stages should be constantly updated according to labour market needs, while respecting the training skills needs of each company. This requires finding the right balance between the specific training skills needs of companies and the employability of learners. Moreover, it can be important to support and motivate companies to designate qualified trainers and tutors for their apprentices. This requires finding the right balance between the specific skills needs of training companies and the employability of learners. Moreover, it can be useful to support and motivate companies to designate qualified trainers and tutors for their apprentices.

It is vital in this context that vocational education and training is not considered a dead end, making the mobility to other educational or professional backgrounds difficult. Therefore, is important to promote the permeability between vocational education and training and other educational and career paths. The permeability can be enhanced by providing VET graduates access to higher education, by creating transition programs and / or integrating soft skills at all levels of VET.

On the other hand, the improvement of the image of VET and WBL is also an important factor. The vocational education and training with WBL included do not have the same status as general education or academic training. The relation that young people have with their teachers and VET trainers also contributes to considering learning more attractive and, consequently, finish one's education.

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3 European Commission , Educação e Formação 2020 – Destaques dos Grupos de Trabalho 2014-2015, February 2016

In order to increase the attractiveness of apprenticeships by increasing the quality of VET teachers, it could also be important to continuously update their professional and pedagogical skills. In addition, cooperation between schools and businesses is important to ensure good learning stages and increase the knowledge of teachers and trainers on current work practices – modern world of work – and in pedagogy and didactics.

Lessons to be learned

Implementing permeability in education and training systems requires the construction of links between sub-systems and the reduction of barriers between levels and learning institutions and qualifications. However, the permeability is not only related to institutional and bureaucratic barriers. Currently, the family background of youngsters is one of the main factors of influence on the choices related to education and training and careers. Strategies are needed to strengthen the links and encourage synergy between European and national initiatives. Set qualification levels based on learning outcomes are a real opportunity to make education and training systems more permeable and interactive.

We need a focus on the overall transparency of education and training systems, in order to demonstrate that learning can be achieved in close relation with job opportunities and careers. The role of VET personnel is critical to this change of mentalities, helping to spread the word about vertical and horizontal learning pathways and options that learners have at their disposal. Work on the development and implementation of the NQF seems to confirm that countries are giving priority to flexibility and enhanced permeability of systems. It's important that this trend does not slow down, otherwise the permeability may be at risk if learners continue to face obstacles in learning pathways. This requires a more systematic exchange of information on the recognition of the qualifications of VET systems across Europe, which is extended to companies, trainees, parents and education and training institutions.

In the end, the permeability between educational sub-systems allows diffusing through it to another, without being physically affected. Each system and sub-system remains the same, while students are free to choose, to change, and to grow in competences adapted to the modern world of work.

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5. Recognition of Non-Formal and Informal Learning – Austrian best practice for adult educators

Following up on what has been said before on issues of permeability and the ideas of progression from teacher to mentor, we would also like to introduce the idea of recognition of competences for VET personnel, trainers and adult educators in general by presenting the Austrian case of the wba, an institution for the recognition and accreditation of adult educators. The recognition of non-formal and informal learning for workplace tutors and learning guides is an issue of high relevance and should be further explored in the future. The wba-process could act as a good practice example in this respect.

In 2007, the Austrian Academy of Continuing Education (Weiterbildungsakademie Österreich, wba) launched a new approach to validate and recognize adult educators' competences. In this system, the wba not only acknowledges prior learning results (from formal, non-formal and informal learning), but also offers guidance as far as the acquisition of identified missing skills/competences is concerned. There are two different types of degrees that can be acquired: (1) the wba-certificate for certified adult educators, and a further (2) wba-diploma for graduated adult educators.

In this context, the term "adult educator" is understood more broadly than "workplace tutor" or "learning guide". The group of adult educators encompasses rather general working profiles such as teachers/trainers, guidance counsellors, educational managers, and librarians, too. The only pre-requisite to enter the validation process is hands-on experience in the area of adult education and a completed vocational education (e.g. apprenticeship) or a school qualification above compulsory secondary school level. Just like the European Workplace Tutor training, the whole programme is based on competence profiles. But what is of interest here is that recognising work experience and learning outcomes gained on the job was one of the main goals of the wba from the very outset.

There are three stages in the recognition process:

1. A status quo evaluation in which candidates submit relevant proof to their online portfolio. These proofs are first checked by a wba advisor and compared to the standards of the qualification profiles. Later on, the accreditation board provides a more detailed evaluation of the already acquired and still lacking competences. After this evaluation, the candidate can opt for the wba certificate or end the recognition processs.

2. In a next step, an education plan is established and candidates can supply missing qualifications. Competences covered in the learning-outcomes based qualification profile include counselling skills, didactic skills, management skills, social and personal skills, andragogics and pedagogics. Once all required competences and 500 hours of practical experience have been proven, candidates attend a three-day certification workshop in which the adult educational competences are assessed through various tasks (e.g. role play, discussions) and tests. After passing the certification workshop, a wba-certificate is awarded ("Certified Adult Educator").

3. Candidates can opt to continue their journey and go for the wba-diploma "Graduate Adult Educator" that requires further competences in a chosen focus area (teaching/group super-

vision/training, counselling, educational management, or librarianship/information management), a written thesis (based on either practical experience or a project) and passing a final oral exam. With a wba-degree, adult educators can also continue higher education. Currently there is a dedicated study programme "Educational Management" available at the Danube University Krems that is taking wba qualifications into account.

In 2011-2013, all qualification profiles for the certificate and the four diplomas were modified and re-written with an emphasis on learning outcomes. Triggered by debates on European and national qualifications frameworks, all wba curricula are now learning-outcome-oriented. The learning-outcome based curricula for the certificate and the diplomas are regularly revamped and updated. One of the more recent changes in the qualification profile for the wba-certificate was the strengthening of media competences as a cross-cutting issue, taking into account that most adult educators are older than 30 years and no "digital natives".

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6. The Union Way – Why we think a strong say of unions is the key to a good in-company training

Let's start with several assumptions:

1. That workers are members of trade unions.
2. That all unions are recognised by employers as having the right to be consulted and have negotiating rights on behalf of their members.

Of course, while this would be the ideal situation and one that we feel should exist the reality is that it does not. Article 23.4 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights states "Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.".

This is incorporated into the constitution of many countries by way of a statement to the effect that people have the right to join a trade union but, as far as we can see, there is no corresponding section of the various constitutions that guarantees the right of the trade union to be recognised for the purposes of consultation and negotiation on matters that affect their members.

Individual countries may by way of legislation introduce specific rights for trade unions, but it is beyond the scope of this project to deal with these. The project partners therefore rely on Article 23.4 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights as stated above and define the words "protection of their interests" as unions having the right to be consulted and to make representation on matters relating to their members interests including matters such as education, training and development.

The European Union Directive 2009/38/EC was transposed into the domestic legislation of member states to give effect to the right to establish works councils. In many cases the threshold for the number of employees was too high especially for small economies. Also, without an organisation such as a trade union to push the agenda its success has been limited. However, the mechanism still exists and could be valuable in the future.

While it would be easy to leave the subject at that we want to identify best practice and put it forward, not as an alternative to "Article 23.4 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights" but as a practical approach in the interim. We will achieve this by:

1. Looking at the concept of education and training
2. The German approach to collective bargaining
3. The Irish experience of social partnership

1 Training

Training is a response to a requirement or a need or a problem. In the context of this statement we can define training in the workplace as the result of (1) statutory requirements, (2) industry standards, or (3) employment needs:

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Statutory requirements are the result of acts of parliament, e.g. health & safety legislation and maternity/paternity leave. These acts of parliament may have originated in the European Union and are published as directives or recommendations.

While all these requirements set out the organisation responsible for enforcement it is often the case that sufficient resources are not available for adequate enforcement. It is here that local representation can assist with training identification etc.

INDUSTRY STANDARDS

Industry standards include employments who have achieved an award from a particular "standards setting" organisation such as the International Standards Organisation who establish standards such as ISO20000. It can also include the standards specified by the European or United States Food and Drug Organisations that control quality standards.

In these cases, organisations are required to have a set of written procedures for every activity. Inspections can identify deviations from the procedure and the loss of the accreditation can be devastating for the company. Trainings in procedures are therefore standard practice but these do little for individual staff development.

EMPLOYMENT NEEDS

Finally, each employment will have specific needs that require training of groups and individuals.

Identification of these is usually the job of the Human Resource Management department, local managers and team leaders. While there may be some interactive debate as to the training needs of the local team or production group, the needs are often decided by the HR department based on the strategic objectives of the organisation.

Performance Appraisal does play a role in identifying individual training needs and this is to be encouraged when we are dealing with training in an individual setting and not as a group.

2 German Approach

The German approach to training and other matters related to industrial relations is based on the plan developed by government, employers' representatives and trade unions. It is not intended to go into detail regarding the agreement that emerged other than to say that it is underpinned by the "Works Council Constitution Act" which governs the relationship between the employer and its employees and provides a mechanism for consultation in the workplace. This includes general working issues such as working hours, rules of operation and questions of occupational safety, but also

training and development. A works council can be elected in Germany in private-sector companies that employ at least five employees over the age of 18. The size of the works council depends on the number of people employed by the company.[4]

The existence of the German Model led to the European Directive 2009/38/EC mentioned earlier.

3 Irish Experience

The Irish experience is referred to as "Social Partnership". It existed in Ireland from 1987. In the previous decade national employer-union deals and 'National Understandings' were the norm. In these, the three parties worked out an agreement mainly on pay. The three parties were the trade unions at national level, employers at national level and the government as an employer. This had the advantage of setting pay increases for a period of time but with this information the government (as government) could plan taxation measures knowing that employees had increases in pay. There was no dialogue regarding broader matters such as training and development.

But in 1987 the system was changed. Now there were five parties at the negotiating table. These were the employers, trade unions, the government as an employer, the voluntary/social sector and the government as a government. Now the agenda was broadened to include social issues which could include training and development.

As a consequence of the economic crisis in 2009, the employers' organisations withdrew from the process resulting in its collapse. Since then there have been attempts to resurrect it without success.

From an education and training perspective, the system could be of great advantage. It could bring together those responsible for supporting local enterprise, those responsible for encouraging foreign inward investment and education and training providers including universities and by targeting specific industries such as electronics towards a specific geographic area would provide jobs and avoid the loss of skills through emigration and prevent what is known as "Structural Unemployment".

Conclusion

In conclusion, the German system of industrial democracy combined with the Irish system of social partnership at national level together with an updated EWC Directive could achieve a new professionalism in not only education and training but society in general BUT it can only work if employees have not only the right to join a trade union but have that union recognised by employers with the right to negotiate on behalf of its member.

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4 For more facts regarding German works council see https://www.bmas.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/EN/PDF-Publikationen/a741e-co-determination.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=2

7. Unión General de Trabajadores on Dual Professional Training in Spain – A proposal of bases

In order to sum up the Spanish reflections on a new professionalism of in-company VET personnel, we will use the latest document prepared by one of the Spanish trade unions, Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT) organization, "UGT on VET in Spain. A proposal of bases".

From the proposal of bases, we extract the following most relevant sections, related to the issues that are presented to us:

THE MODEL OF TRAINING IN DUAL TRAINING

VET must have a consideration beyond the realization of a set of practices in companies. It is about learning in the workplace, not about working to learn; therefore, there must be a clear implication and co-responsibility of the companies, which necessarily implies their "capacity to train" and the assumption of "responsibility" that they must have on the student worker. This responsibility must be part of the formative business culture that must necessarily imply the supply, by the companies, of sufficient resources and the necessary means as well as of the existence of tutors in their staff with the necessary pedagogical competences, committed to the project and with enough time to devote to working students – this must be an essential requirement when establishing agreements that are reached with the selected companies. In this sense, it is necessary to facilitate the work carried out by the workplace tutors and of the training centres. This way, enough time to carry out their tasks with full capacity and competence must be provided.

The training activity, as well as the activities and professional achievements that take place in the workplace must be agreed with the educational centre. This type of training cannot and should not be adjusted exclusively to the needs of companies; therefore, it is necessary to foster the relationship between the training centre and the company in order to improve the coordination, tutoring, monitoring and assessment of the students who participate in VET. Therefore, sufficient coordination mechanisms are needed to ensure good practice of the VET.

On the other hand, the educational centres – after the information and approval of the projects by the relevant bodies (Senate, Social Council, Board of Directors or School Council) – must have the resources and enough means: teachers with the availability of time to be able to supervise the exercise of the formative activity that is done at the workplace and to arrange the training with the workplace tutors with whom they will share the teaching of the different professional modules.

The workplace tutors must receive training and prior advice for the proper performance of their responsibilities and tasks. In addition, they must have the necessary pedagogical skills that allow them to plan the teaching-learning process in the workplace; select and prepare learning contents; use the relevant teaching methods and techniques; didactic interaction and participation in the learning assessment process. Finally, the alternation process must necessarily involve periods of "back and forth" of working students between the training centre and the workplace, avoiding long stays, as a full academic year, indistinctly in each of the centres, giving priority to the schedules established by the educational centre.

Therefore, a double profile is required of the tutors in the workplace: a technical profile related to the professional family of reference of the training cycle studied by the students, and, very important also, a teaching profile.

FINANCING

The VET model must be based on a double financing: on the part of the Public Administrations, which should provide sufficient resources that allow an improvement and update of their teachers and the companies themselves, in charge of the remuneration of the working students, their tutors and, the resources and materials necessary for proper learning in the workplace.

INFORMATION, GUIDANCE AND ADVICE

The information, guidance and advice must be the compulsory mechanisms of accompaniment to the VET process; all the working students – including the tutors who participate in the tutoring, accompaniment and supervision – who are going to start this training modality, should have at their disposal elements for orientation, both educational and at work. This is a key factor: the guidance system must respond to an integrating vision. It is necessary to establish an integrated system of information, guidance and accompaniment as structural support, and with the active participation of social agents, to ensure education, training, insertion in the labour market and personal and social development of people and deal with the training and work transitions throughout life, taking into account that currently with initial training there are no guarantees of a job for all working life and the acquisition of new professional skills is necessary. This accompaniment in the VET would give continuity to the orientation processes initiated in the compulsory educational stage and would contribute to the reduction of the rates of early school dropouts.

THE LEGAL REPRESENTATION OF WORKERS (LRW)

In close relation with the model of legal regulation and remuneration established with working students, the LRW must be an intervening agent in the training process, with advisory, supervision and control functions, in such a way that it can represent the student worker interests, being able to verify how VET is being developed, so that it truly fulfils its function and that substitutions, reductions or amortizations of jobs do not occur. In this sense, it is necessary that the LRW have access to the information of the students who do the practical training in the workplace in the framework of VET: contract, training schedules, plan of activities to be followed by the company, training itinerary that will be followed by the different sections of the workplace, who will be the tutor in the workplace and if they have the required training in occupational risk prevention. Likewise, the LRW must be able to monitor and accompany the students in the workplace. The LRW must have adequate training to respond to the needs that may arise and may also develop a role in terms of guidance, information and advice to the recipients of VET. In SMEs and microenterprises, in the absence of LRW, the existence of an apprentice representative might be interesting. It is considered essential to incorporate in the collective negotiation and through specific agreements on training, the implementation of the VET in the workplace. The LRW should have a guaranteed participation in the whole process, from the design, organization, execution and management, to the evaluation.

ANNEX:

THE MODEL OF INSTRUCTORS IN PAIS VALENCIANO

To facilitate the selection of tutors in the workplace, which are called company instructors in País Valenciano, the regulations are made flexible to the maximum, establishing that "the instructors will be part of the company's staff, and in no case may be outsourced from entities outside the company and, at least must meet one of the following requirements, in terms of training and experience: a) Three years of non-teaching professional experience in positions directly related to the contents of the training cycle. or b) Possess a qualification equal to or higher than the training cycle that is being studied by the vocational training student. And, as the case may be, additional conditions that workplace tutors in relation to the didactic training and the official accreditation of the competition linked to the educational cycle must comply with may be established", committing the educational administration to promote the procedures that facilitate these conditions.

In addition, the functions that are required are obvious and generic, totally subordinated to the guidelines of the educational centre and VET project:

1. 1. Training the students during the period in which they carry out the training activities in the workplace in accordance with the approved VET project.

2. 2. Coordinating with the dual vocational tutor of the group of the training cycle in the following aspects:

   a) Inform the dual vocational tutor of the group of the training cycle of the development of the training activities carried out by the students.

   b) Informing the tutor of dual vocational training of the group of the training cycle in those cases in which the student engages in inappropriate behaviours, lack of attendance and/or unjustified delays or unjustified performance, so that it adopts the appropriate measures.

3. Issuing an individualized final report for each student who they have instructed.

For a better performance of these functions, company instructors need to receive a didactic and pedagogical training that provides them with the necessary knowledge for their training task. The model of this training designed in País Valenciano is very simple, practically on-line, being totally subsidized by the ESF and in charge of the educational administration:

MODEL OF COURSES THAT ARE TAUGHT IN PAIS VALENCIANO

Duration: 20 hours

Modality: blended (4 onsite hours and 16 hours of e-training)

Venue: one site per province.

Recipients: trainers-instructors of companies that collaborate, or are interested in collaborating, with educational centers in the development of DPG projects.

Objetives:

- Knowing the vocational training system, its modalities, especially dual VET, the agents that participate in the process and the tasks they perform.

- Understanding the importance of the role of the instructor-trainer and their involvement in the learning process.

- Introducing elements related to the pedagogy applied to the training of professionals in the workplace.

- Proposing the teaching-learning strategies appropriate to the profile and age of the students.

- Strengthening the knowledge about business culture, psychosocial aspects, organizational climate, teamwork, prevention and conflict resolution.

Contents:

- The Vocational Training system. Normative. Dual Vocational Training in the education system. Agents involved. The dual VET project.

- Pedagogy applied to the training of professionals of the company. Theoretical foundations of learning. Teaching-learning strategies in the workplace. Training plan. Evaluation.

- Fundamentals of work psychology. Welcome and integration plan in the company. Climate and business culture. Values and social-emotional competencies at work. The role of the instructor as a coach and as a mentor. Communication, negotiation and conflict resolution.

Workplan:

The four face-to-face hours are two training sessions at the beginning and the end of the course. The online part is distributed in eight working days, approximately, where the student must connect to the virtual classroom to visualize the contents, do the exercises and actively participate with the different communication tools that are used throughout of the course.

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8. Excursion: Improving the Quality of Apprenticeships and Work-Based-Learning

by Mario Patuzzi, DGB Executive Board, Head of Unit VET Policy

Already half of the workers in the European Union have experienced changes in work practices, working methods and technologies in the workplace in recent years (CEDEFOP, 2018). But many workers fear that their qualifications and work experience will soon be worthless and, in addition, that they have a high risk of becoming unemployed or having to take on less desirable jobs.

About the challenges

When we look at developments and trends across countries, we can see that the world of work is constantly changing – by demographic change, increasing market volatility, accelerating technology and globalization, in addition policy-driven deregulation and company-driven flexibilisation. These are just a few key words decisively responsible for the transformation processes in the world of work. Among other things, these developments lead to a change in the occupational and employment biographies as well as increased learning needs for every worker as well as to growing learning and qualification requirements in companies that want to ensure a sufficient potential of skilled workers. Many employers often complain that they do not have or get the appropriate professionals. The unions, on the other hand, repeatedly find that there is unused potential for training within the workforce, and that there are still significant selection processes for approaches to continuing vocational training. The same is increasingly true for beginners in initial vocational training.

Political decision-makers have to react. How politics react at the European level, what role agencies such as CEDEFOP (European Center for the Development of Vocational Training) can play and what unions are doing and moving for improving quality of apprenticeships and work-based learning, will be shown along three examples.

1st example: European Alliance for Apprenticeships

Already in 2013, the EU Commission launched the European Alliance for Apprenticeships. It aims to reduce youth unemployment by improving the quality of VET and the availability of training places across the EU, and by changing attitudes towards VET. In particular, the most successful training systems should be implemented for everyone. Given the different systems of vocational education and training, labor markets and political systems, it is not easy to define common European criteria or standards in this field. The CEDEFOP speaks of a variety of work-based learning and basically identified three different forms of workplace learning: work-based learning itself, work-placed learning and apprenticeships. The latter can be divided into three different groups (Ranieri, 2018). The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) can always rely on this research very well and has done so in the past. For example, with regard to the European Alliance for Apprenticeships, which has remained rather non-binding and abstract, in particular, the difference between apprenticeship and other forms of work-based learning or the involvement of social partners was unclear. The ETUC has therefore developed "A Europe-

an Quality Framework of Apprenticeships" (ETUC / unionlearn, 2016) to provide the Alliance with more substance and formulate the unions' demands for good initial vocational training across Europe. On this basis, the ETUC managed to reach a Council Recommendation on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships this year. With this recommendation, after a lengthy discussion process with the Commission, the employers and the governments, it was possible to adopt minimum standards. These include a written contract, company-based learning, and cooperation on learning places, pedagogical support within the company or also the training allowance and quality assurance. With this Council recommendation, we again have good arguments for making our national VET systems and training programs better.

2nd example: New Skills Agenda for Europe

Another example is the EU's New Skills Agenda. The main priorities of this initiative are higher and more relevant qualifications for all, promoting better visibility and use of available skills and to achieve a better understanding of skill needs and trends in the labor market. However, for the unions this prioritization also reflects one problem: the skills shortages and mismatches are suspected among the workers alone. But CEDEFOP notes something different in a recent study (CEDEFOP, 2018):

- A considerable share of the working population already possesses the skills needed for their jobs, even if these are not evident from their formal qualifications.

- Many employees find themselves in jobs that do not fully utilize their potential. In addition, there is great persistence in skill underutilization.

- Part of the reason that overeducated workers endure a wage penalty relative to their former classmates is because of lower levels of work experience and non-formal/informal skills. However, little evidence is found to suggest that this wage gap reduces as the skills of overeducated workers are gradually aligned to their job-skill requirements.

So surprisingly, the results of the CEDEFOP study are not new for us. Nevertheless, they reaffirm that, especially for the field of work-based learning, responsibility lies not with workers alone, but with employers and the labor market conditions, too. Therefore, ETUC demands a sound environment for skills development. This requires high-quality jobs and apprenticeships, based on initiatives for more investment in employment and economic development. However, we also need more attention to good education at all levels, and especially to qualifications, not just to individual competences.

Moreover, we need a Professional Skills Guarantee to ensure effective access to training for low-skilled workers and unemployed people, in order to ensure their employability and their capacity to adapt to the labor market. Further, we need a Paid Educational Leave to allow workers to upgrade their skills according to the new needs in their sector, and ensure them access to training not related to job-specific needs as an opportunity to launch a new phase in their career. In addition, to encourage workers to use their training rights is to provide them access to career guidance and professional development.

3rd example: SACADOS project and the key role of trade unions as social partners

The role of **social** partners and social dialogue at all levels of decision making on qualifications and training schemes should be recognized and fostered by the EU institutions. Now, the ETUC supports and contributes to the interesting SACADOS (Supporting Anticipation of Change and Development of Skills) project. It is a European funded project involving German, Italian, Bulgarian, Latvian and Romanian trade unions, which aims to contribute to a European trade union strategy to support trade union representatives to make better use of information, consultation and participation procedures in the workplace and to anticipate change and develop skills. Based on the experience gained during the lifetime of this project, SACADOS is proposing a number of recommendations for future trade union work at the European and national levels to improve the involvement of trade union representatives in information, consultation and participation procedures in the area of workplace learning. That concerns above all to strengthen minimum standards for the creation and functioning of information, consultation and participation procedures so as to include decisions on the development of skills in the workplace as well as to ensure a European right to the development of skills in the workplace for all workers. A result could also be a Council Recommendation that would establish certain minimum rights for trade union support for the development of skills in the workplace.

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9. Network recommendations

We are convinced: the tasks and responsibilities in vocational training and education are extremely demanding and require an extensive level and width of competencies. This fact is still not mirrored in the qualification landscape for this target group. A new professionalism of in-company VET personnel will not only greatly benefit the trainer profession but improve the quality of VET overall. The professional and societal recognition of VET personnel, specifically in-company VET personnel, is long overdue!

As a result of the European debate on a new professionalism for in-company VET personnel, we have derived the following recommendations, at political level – in terms of education policy and framework conditions, at European level – in terms of better cooperation, comparability and mutual understanding, at practical level – in terms of qualification content and methodologies...

Network recommendations for a new professionalism of in-company VET personnel

1. **High-quality training offers for VET personnel following the quality criteria and methods of the EWT Network.**

   We recommend training providers across Europe to increasingly offer high quality training offers for our target groups. The training course developed in the framework of the Level up! project (see "Training Course Handbook"), as well as the competence profiles for the "European Workplace Tutor" and the "Learning Process Guide" that were developed in the EWT project (2011-2013) and also formed the basis of the Level-up! training course constitute good guidance material that can be used for this purpose by any experienced training provider. The EWT Network also recommends the application of the quality standards and the framework of methods for high-quality training programmes for in-company VET personnel. The Course Handbook developed as a result of the Level up! training course is targeted at training providers and gives practical and detailed instructions about how to implement high-quality training courses for our target group, including input on all aspects of the quality standards and framework of methods.

   Quality standards:

   - Defined training contents in form of the EWT competence profiles as well as a method framework
   - Examination and assessment should be conducted by use of a project-oriented approach
   - The programme must be equipped with a diversity of methods (see framework of methods)
   - Project-oriented work forms the core of the training course
   - There should be one main tutor who accompanies the programme throughout the individual modules

- Training providers should work with participant feedback systems (see chapter "Evaluation" in Course Handbook)
- Training participants are informed about the quality standards and possibilities to give feedback to the network
- User-oriented terms and conditions must apply

Framework of methods:
- Project-orientation
- Exchange of expert experience and opinions
- Active learning
- Knowledge should not be academic but practically applicable
- External learning (face-to-face sessions according to the needs of participants)
- Learning at the workplace
- Individual learning
- Learning guidance and distance learning (e.g. e-learning)

Aside from the framework conditions and training methods applied, it is also vital that trainer qualifications really orientate towards the highly demanding challenges that trainers face in their jobs today. Qualification contents should necessary reflect the trends of the working world and include aspects such as:

- High level of didactical and methodological competence (e.g. learning guidance, moderation, problem-solving, application of diverse training methods, ICT, etc.)
- Coordination and management of learning and training processes
- Project management
- Learning needs analysis
- Guidance and counselling
- Special needs, social and intercultural aspects of learning
- …

2. **Training contents should reflect the professional reality of trainers, such as the greater need for autonomous working, the greater need for working in holistic processes, increasingly heterogeneous learning groups, increasing responsibilities in the area of personnel development.**

Standardisation, recognition, validation and recognition of prior learning

There is a lack of standardized and recognized qualification programmes across the vast majority of countries we looked at. This contributes to the de-professionalisation of in-company trainers who often have a great degree of expertise and experience, and also of training which, however, in most cases is non-formal in nature, not recognized and standardized. The fragmented qualification offer in this field means that the market is incompatible, intransparent and qualifications often do not mean anything even to experts, let alone potential employers or trainers interested in the qualification. It is absolutely necessary, that stakeholders of the qualification market for in-company trainers create a greater degree of comparability and transparency, at national as well as at European level. Beyond this, the need and acceptance of widely known and recognized standardized qualification offers should be explored by regulatory partners at national as well as European level.

At the same time, it is crucial to explore and develop pathways of recognition of prior learning towards such widely recognized standardized qualifications in order to enable trainers to validate the comprehensive amount of experience and training which they typically hold already.

3. **Reform of university curricula and academic further training along the lines of extended modern vocationalism**

This step is also connected with the improved qualification situation mentioned above. Trainer qualifications exist in both educational sub-systems, higher education as well as vocational education. Until today, the equivalence of qualifications from the different sub-sectors is a problematic issue. The contents of high quality train-the-trainers qualifications highlight that training is most successful when it combines both academic further training and activity-oriented learning methods. Reforming trainer qualifications towards a good balance thereof will also greatly improve the quality and image of vocational education and training. A more permeable approach to further training pathways in these sectors would also require the consideration of higher education guidance in initial training and vice-versa. At the same time, the continued development of dual and part-time university degrees will further promote the permeability between vocational and academic training and access to higher education for professionals. However, promoting access to higher education should not and need not be at the expense of continued development of vocational further training as an equivalent alternative to higher education. However, such reforms necessitate a reciprocal recognition and accreditation of competences acquired in vocational and academic education

4. Development of a professional identity of trainers

Supporting and strengthening the development of a professional identity of trainers is the precondition for better recognition, remuneration and acceptance of the crucial role that trainers play in today's working world. Raising the quality of training for this target group, but also more general efforts towards an improved image of VET will contribute to this goal. Creating and supporting professional organisations and networks can also facilitate professional identity. Recognising the vital role and challenging responsibilities that in-company trainers hold in today's working world is a prerequisite for this development. Trainers today are more than just instructors, they are moderators, facilitators, coaches, mentors, process managers and much more...
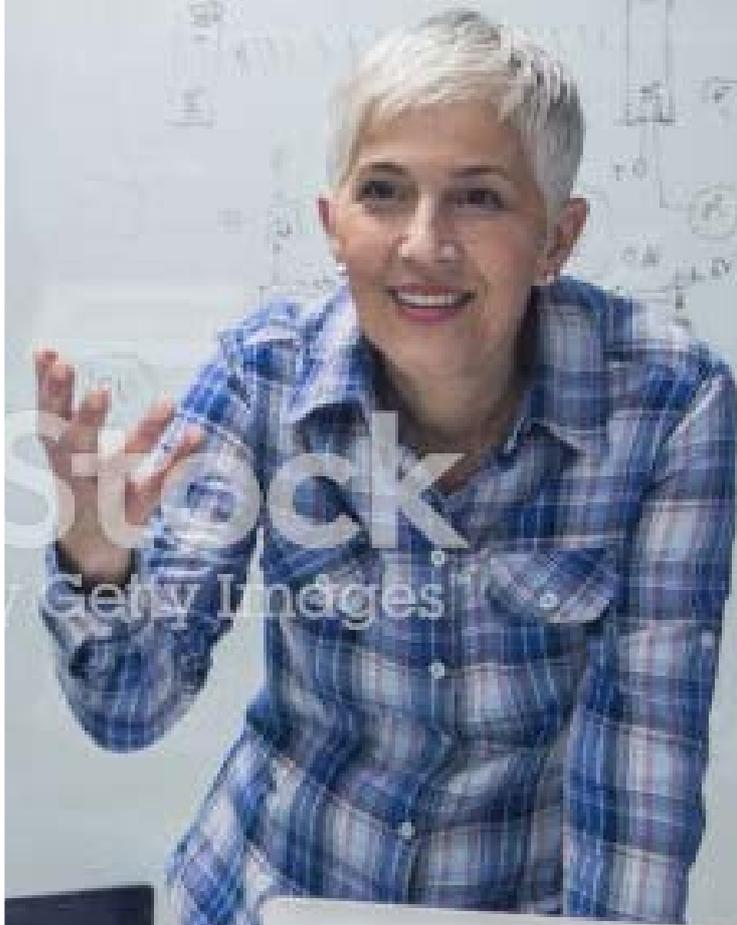
5. Creating career opportunities for trainers

The creation of better career and professional progression opportunities for trainers is an element that would help improve the professional identity of trainers, attract more individuals in the training profession and, last but not least, contribute to a better quality of VET in companies. For this purpose, career paths should not only be made available in companies, but a progressive qualification should also be mirrored in the qualification landscape. Developing qualification offers that enable a piecemeal progression of trainers' qualification is also highly commendable. The two competence profiles of "Learning Process Guide" and "European Workplace Tutor" represent an example of what shape such a progressive qualification pathway could look like. The German three-tiered model of trainers' qualifications could also represent an example for such models.

Accompanying policies to enable and support the above should include:

- Concepts for more transparency, coordination and planning of resources in vocational and higher education in order to avoid growing competition between the two educational sub-sectors;

- Development of holistic legal regulation for further training including the financing thereof. The aim should be comprehensive support for adult learners;

- Development of legal regulation for better coordination of vocational and higher education. Extension of co-determination rights of employees in education and training matters in order to improve the quality of in-company learning processes.

- Formulation of cornerstones for the creation of a European education and labour market. This should be based on the concepts of extended modern vocationalism;