

Workshops on VET Teachers and Trainers: Key Actors to Make Lifelong Learning a Reality in Europe

Regional-specific background paper country cluster 4:

The Situation of VET Teachers and Trainers in Belgium, France, Italy, Portugal and Spain

Overview of the VET systems

The countries that are represented in the French workshop are examples of the school-based model of VET although Portugal, Italy and Spain are moving towards a stronger emphasis on company-based training and decentralisation. In some of the countries, namely Belgium, Italy and Spain, there is a considerable autonomy of the regions. There are also linguistic and cultural links between the countries in this group with a considerable amount of cooperation in the area of VET teachers and trainers, for example between France and Portugal as well as between Portugal and Spain.

Italy more strongly represents a mixed system in terms of vocational education and training with distinct regional variations and a trend towards regional decentralisation of the system. Dominant topics in France, Italy and Portugal are the establishment of a system for continuing vocational training and the accreditation of prior learning. In Portugal stronger emphasis is put on work-oriented learning through vocational schools and skills-based training leading to employability. Both France and Portugal aim to put policies in place to reform, modernise and promote apprenticeship training.

Belgium has a school-based training system which is administered by the six political bodies within the federal system, namely, the linguistic communities (Flemish, French and German-speaking Community) and the regions (Flanders, Wallonia, Brussels). Vocational certificates are available through full-time school-based training, block release training in sandwich courses or apprenticeship. IVET is provided in various types of schools and training centres. Most of these schools and training centres belong to the educational provisions for children and young people in the age from 12 till 18 years. Only the "block release training for self-employed operators and small and medium-sized enterprises" and the "industrial apprenticeship" do not resort under the "regular" educational system.

In France initial VET at the upper secondary level is offered at general and technological high schools (*lycée d'enseignement général et technologique*, LEGT) and vocational high schools (*lycée professionnel*, LP). The LEGT leads to the national university entry qualification, the *baccalauréat*, which may be taken in general or technological subjects at the end of a three-year study programme. The LP leads several types of vocational qualifications, namely the two-year CAP (*certificat d'aptitude professionnelle*) or BEP (*brevet d'études professionnelles*). Subsequent to the CAP or BEP, students have the opportunity to obtain the *baccalauréat professionnel* after additional two years of study. The "bac pro" is available in 48 specialisations. Apprenticeship training is offered by specialised training centres.

In Italy the VET system underwent a major reform in 2003. According to the new system vocational education and training is provided under the supervision of the regional authorities and takes place in vocational schools, vocational centres or in the newly established apprenticeship scheme. Vocational schools offer four-year programmes that lead to a diploma of vocational qualification, which qualifies for the labour market or entry into higher vocational education. Vocational centres provide three-year programmes leading

to a vocational qualification certificate, which qualifies for the labour market. Students may also continue their studies and enter the fourth year of a vocational school programme. These school-based programmes may also be pursued via a pathway of school/work alternance, which has to be agreed upon between the VET institutions, the enterprises and the chambers of commerce.

The apprenticeship system, which is still in the process of being implemented, offers three types of training. There is apprenticeship for young people aged 15 to 18 years as an alternative pathway to complete compulsory education. This type of apprenticeship leads to a vocational qualification certificate as in the school-based system. For those aged 18 to 29 years there is a more occupation-based apprenticeship scheme. Both types of apprenticeship include a minimum of formal training of 120 hours per year. Finally there is a type of apprenticeship that allows for the acquisition of a secondary or higher education diploma, which is based on a cooperation between schools, training centres or universities and the social partners.

Portugal's vocational training system is characterised by having dual ministerial oversight and dual institutional support for the 2 training subsystems: training delivered within the education system is overseen by the *Ministério da Educação* - ME (Ministry of Education), while training provided on the labour market is overseen by the *Ministério do Trabalho e da Solidariedade Social* - MTSS (Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity). Articulation between the 2 systems includes integration of the different types of provision in a single system of education and training under joint tutelage.

The secondary education level is characterized by having 2 types of courses, one of general feature, the *Cursos Científico-humanísticos* (Science-humanities Courses) and all the others that give double certification allowing the progress to subsequent education levels or the entry into working life. The *Cursos Científico-humanísticos* are designed to prepare students for progression to further studies, and confer a secondary education diploma; young people who successfully complete one of these courses, can choose vocational occupational specific training rather than higher education, they may attend a *Curso Pós-secundário de Especialização Tecnológica* (Post-secondary Technological Specialisation Course).

In the Spanish education system initial vocational education and training is integrated into the secondary school system. The vocational pathway in upper secondary education is called Specific Vocational Schooling and is structured into two levels, the medium-level and the upper-level training cycle, both of which offer vocational qualifications. The medium level can be accessed after completion of compulsory secondary education (i. e. after the acquisition of a school certificate of the lower secondary level), whereas the entry requirement for upper level vocational schooling is an upper secondary general school qualification (*Bachillerato*). The upper secondary general education programmes that lead to the *Bachillerato* also include some basic vocational training. Middle-level specific vocational schooling lasts between one and two years and includes up to 2,000 hours depending on the training programme. Of these, 300 to 700 hours are reserved for in-company training. In upper-level specific vocational schooling the figures are similar with a slightly higher amount of time devoted to in-company training.

Specific issues related to VET teachers and trainers

Given the strong dominance of school-based vocational education and training the focus regarding the professional profiles of VET practitioners in all of the countries is clearly on teachers. In Belgium there are several types of teachers in the regular VET system, namely general subject teachers, technical subject teachers and practical teachers. In the non-

regular system, i. e. in apprenticeship and block release training for entrepreneurship, a distinction is drawn between teachers and “entrepreneur-trainers”.

The French VET system distinguishes between teachers, tutors or trainers and apprentice masters. Teachers are working in the formal education system whereas the apprentice master is responsible for training apprentices in a company. Most teachers in schools are trained in the University Teacher Training Institutes (IUFM), as well as by distance learning (CNED) or in one of the four ‘*écoles normales supérieures*’ (ENS) or in certain universities or private institutions. Teachers in apprenticeship training centres are often ex-tradesmen and women and experts in the occupation they teach. Unlike schoolteachers, who have civil servant status, they are employed on the basis of a contract with the training centre or self-employed. The functions of tutor and apprentice master are not regulated by law. They are taken over by experienced employees who are selected for this role by their employers.

In Italy IVET Teachers work in State Vocational Schools and are mainly employed by the Ministry of Education, University and Research. They are normally involved in the classroom teaching of scientific, technical and general subjects. Teachers can be supported by technical and practical lab assistants. They need a university degree in their subject area and must undergo a pre-service training of two years. In-service training is not compulsory.

IVET Trainers work generally in Vocational Training Centres (managed by regional/provincial/municipal authorities) and private vocational training centres accredited by regions. There are approximately 18,000 trainers who perform various roles: classroom teaching, design, tutoring, guidance, needs analysis, monitoring and evaluation, etc. The functions are defined in detail by the National Collective Agreement for the sector. The educational requirements are similar to those for teachers: trainers must have a degree or an upper secondary level qualification as well as relevant work experience. A new profile has recently been introduced for the training of young apprentices: the company tutor. The company tutors for apprenticeship are regulated by laws or contracts.

In the Portuguese VET system there are general and technical teachers as well as trainers. While teachers work in public and private schools including vocational schools, the term trainer refers to educators working in enterprises, vocational training centres and other accredited institutions. There is also a distinction between general and technical trainers, the latter being also referred to as “tutors”. VET teachers, like other teachers in secondary education, need a university degree in the subject they teach and have to undergo in-service training organised by institutions of higher education. Trainers must have a vocational qualification equal to or higher than the level they are about to train, and a Certificate of Pedagogical Aptitude (CPA). However, many trainers have a university degree in their profession instead, which is recognised as a substitute for the CPA. Trainers must have a minimum of work experience that varies between 1 and 3 years depending on the occupation.

The Spanish system of initial vocational training distinguishes between teachers of secondary education, technical teachers of vocational training, and qualified professionals. The first group of teachers is responsible for the delivery of VET contents that are more theoretical in character. They must be in possession of a degree in a subject of specialised vocational training. The technical teachers are responsible for the more practical training modules, which are normally carried out in workshops or laboratories. They also have a degree in specialised vocational training. Finally, qualified professionals are specialists contracted from the working sector. In agreement with the necessities derived from current studies plans, vocational training can be carried out by qualified professionals when there is no suitable teaching staff from the centres with corresponding profiles for training associated with the vocational qualifications.