

Report on 2nd Consultation Workshop
Kaunas 30-31 October 2008
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1. Programme



VYTAUTAS MAGNUS
UNIVERSITY
 MCMXXII

CONSULTATION WORKSHOP
VYTAUTAS MAGNUS UNIVERSITY, CENTRE
FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND
RESEARCH

2008 10 30-31
KAUNAS, LITHUANIA

Project “VET Teachers and Trainers: Key actors to make lifelong learning a reality in Europe” (Contract No.: 2007-4094/001-001)

October 30th: Position audit – updating the picture		
9:00 - 9:15	COFFEE / TEA and REGISTRATION	
9:15 - 10:00	Welcome and introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome speech of Dean of the Faculty for Social Sciences at Vytautas Magnus University. TTNNet Lithuania Coordinator <i>Prof. Kęstutis Pukelis</i> • Introduction of the Project. Goals and outcomes of the Workshop <i>Simone Kirpal. Project Coordinator</i> • Introduction of the participants and national Teacher education systems (5-7 min. per presentation).
10:00 - 10:30	Session 1: Arrival activity	Task 1: Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement by placing stickers along the line in the appropriate place.
10:30 - 11:00	COFFEE / TEA	
11:00 - 11:15	Session 1: Arrival activity (continues)	Task 2: Find someone who has placed an arrow at the opposite end to yours on one of the statements and discuss for ten minutes why that is so.
11:15 - 12:15	Session 3: Feedback on key Issues	<p>There are 5 topics – titles will be published on posters. You are invited to sign up according to interest. Maximum allowed 8 people.</p> <p>Each group has 60 minutes together to examine one or more of the key issues both in general terms and related to their own country.</p>

		The group is asked to record comments straight onto a word document. These will be printed out as hard copies before next session.
12:15 - 13:00	Session 4: Rainbow groups	Divide in to rainbow groups.
		Each person will have paper record of their group discussions.
		Feedback to each other.
		Paper output on additional points raised.
13:00 - 14:00	LUNCH	
14:00 - 15:00	Session 5: Identifying additional issues and examples of practices	Country groups Each group has two tasks:
		1. Are there additional (related to 5 topics discussed in Session 3) issues related to their own country?
		2. Have they any particular examples of good practice in training of VET teachers or trainers?
15:00 - 16:00	Session 6: Expert witness session on the projects	Presentations of the projects (10 min. each):
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TT+ <i>Jenny Huges (England)</i> • PROPETO, TIMA-Balt and TNet <i>Defining VET Professions</i> <i>Aušra Fokienė (Lithuania)</i> • ... <i>Darina Vybohova (Slovakia)</i> <p>Questions and discussions</p>
16:00 - 16:30	COFFEE / TEA	
16:30 - 17:00	Session 7: Building of the project	In buzz groups – one or more concrete points/ideas coming out of the research projects that could be build on and / or one suggestion they would give to the project team.
17:00 - 18:00	Session 8: Influences, barriers, opportunities	Task 1. Sentences in preprinted color coded cards with “barriers”, “influences”, “opportunities” are to be completed.
		Each person takes as many cards as they want to each color and fills them in.
		Task 2. Groups of 2-3 people take several completed cards and brainstorm responses. So, for “barriers” try to suggest ways how to overcome them, for “opportunities” it may be ways of exploiting them etc.
		Cards are “posted” back on the table when they have been dealt with so that other groups can address the same issue.
19:00	Dinner at the restaurant “Žalias ratas”	

2008 October 31st: Agenda for the future		
9:00 - 9:30	COFFEE / TEA	
9:30 – 10:30	Session 1: Establishing priorities	Groups take “solution” cards and carrying out activity to prioritize.
		Either mapping onto important / urgent grid or card sort under “next steps”, “middle distance” and “back burner”.
10:30 - 11:30	Session 2: Stakeholder action	Trainers, Researchers and Policy makers (institutional representatives, universities)
		3 board activity.
		3 groups representing different stakeholders.
		Task 1: Taking priority lists, each group to address 3 key questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can they do to respond / move the agenda forward • What do they need other stakeholder groups to do.
		20 minutes at each board. Groups rotate to next board. Facilitator stays with same board. When next group arrives, facilitator summarizes the points on flipchart.
		Next group record: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What they want from previous group • How they can respond to what first group wanted.
Third group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As for second group. 		
11:30 - 12:00	Session 3: Summing up and evaluation	
LUNCH / DEPARTURES		

2. General information

The Lithuanian workshop was held in Kaunas on 30-31 October 2008 targeted at participants from Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Slovakia, Poland and Finland. The three Baltic countries Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia form a fairly homogeneous group in terms of historical background, the economic and educational system, but also as concerns trends and developments in the area of VET teachers and trainers. All six countries of this cluster are striving to reform their vocational education and training systems, pursuing to establish some sort of framework of reference under conditions of a fairly unregulated system, particularly as concerns VET trainers. While Finland with its different historical tradition was contributing to this workshop as a contrasting model, it shows some communalities in terms of seeking to reform its current system of vocational education and training.

Excepting Finland all participating countries in this cluster have experienced a transition to a market economy and have experienced fundamental changes in their education and training cultures. Finland has continued the Scandinavian reforms but with its own direction (for example, the developments in the training of trainers is mainly provided by vocational teacher education colleges who are mainly dealing with vocational school teachers.) To include Finland into the Baltic group accounted for Finland's model function in the area of VET for the Baltic countries.

The workshop sessions took place in a conference room at Hotel 'Daniela' in Kaunas where all delegates stayed. Meals were organised at the restaurant of the hotel except for the dinner on the 30th which was arranged in a nearby restaurant. Considering the participants' national background it was decided between the workshop organiser and ITB that interpretation would be provided into the national languages or eventually to use Russian, English or German as the working language with providing interpretation into some of the national languages represented. In the end, the workshop language was English with one Lithuanian interpreter who provided consecutive interpretation. Overall, the interpretation services provided were not sufficient to fully engage the Polish, Slovakian and Latvian participants. This was partly compensated by the arrangement that most of the small working group sessions were organised in country groups. However, this limited participants in moving around frequently between different groups. Four Estonian delegates cancelled their participation at the last minutes so that experts from Estonia were not represented. The workshop was organised, arranged and run by the Center for Vocational Education and Research of Vytautas Magnus University.

3. Summary of session outcomes

The workshop in Lithuania basically kept the scheduling of workshop sessions that was piloted in Newport with only some slight changes. The sessions were organised in small, interactive group work except for one session during which different European projects were presented. The presentation of results is based on the four core workshop activities: i) discussion groups on key topics; ii) witness sessions; iii) identifying additional issues and prioritising areas that require action; and iv) the role of different stakeholders.

3.1 Discussion groups on key topics

Topic 1: Co-operation between VET teachers and trainers

Is there a marked distinction between VET teachers in colleges and universities and trainers working outside the education system? All participants in this group pointed out that there is a marked distinction and that the recognition of teachers in general education and VET teachers through the Bologna process has widened the discrepancy, particularly in terms of status and setting professional standards. Cooperation between teachers and trainers is fostered, but varies strongly between national contexts. This issue was further discussed against a national perspective. Finland and Slovakia were represented in this group.

In Finland, the distinction is fairly marked. For the training of trainers the recommendation is only 2 credit week training, which is not mandatory for the trainers in companies. However, there are also some similarities and cooperation is fostered. In order for the training to be carried out by teachers in industry, they also have to do the 2 credit weeks. Many regional projects exist for VET colleges so that VET teachers can have a paid period in industry workplaces to up to 6 months, in some cases also internationally. A key challenge is how to evaluate vocational skills demonstrations when students are internationally mobile through EU projects. Trainers in the host countries need to be trained on how to provide guidance to international students. In Finland it is necessary to work a minimum of three years in the field. A project offers the teacher the possibility to be in some factory for one month or a half year to improve one's practical skills. Currently, 20 credit weeks need to be spent in industries, but this is going to be increased to 24.

Also in Slovakia the distinction is very marked. However, the system at present is also very varied. The schools develop their own programmes and sometimes there is lack of connection with the actual needs of the local industry. Firms and factories are developing their own education programmes. One reason why these two groups differ is because the training needs for teachers at schools are based on refreshing courses and the up-dating of practical skills. While trends are divergent programmes are needed to bring them together. For example, a basic accreditation framework could be established with specific requirements for each group.

Slovakia is currently undergoing a time of reform. The interest in VET schools is low, because the economy is changing and pupils do not know where to learn. Many VET teachers left the schools to work in industry and general teachers are not dealing with VET. Trainers are mostly learning on the job and need a Bachelor's degree in order to be able to work in a school.

Topic 2: New technologies – what impact does / should it have on the practice and training of VET teachers and trainers?

Guiding questions: How will new technologies impact on the work of VET teachers and trainers? How do we define ICT / new technologies? What do VET teachers and trainers need to know about new technologies? How do they acquire this knowledge? Latvia, Lithuania and Finland were represented in this working group.

Several issues emerged on these topics, referring to the personal use of ICT and knowledge about new technologies. It can be expected that most young people already have these skills, so how can trainers and teachers be supported to use new technologies for e-learning and in the classroom at the level of the student's IT knowledge which many trainers and teachers do not have? However, new technologies in this country group were also regarded as concerns new technologies and technical equipment and machines used in industry. This opens up a completely new topic.

While teachers increasingly need skills in ICT, the extent of the competences they need in practice varies according to their situation and their subject. Occupational standards should specify the ICT-specific skills needed for work and VET teachers should take account of those needs in their curriculum. However, they need to be supported by ICT specialists and trained ICT teachers. Overall, trainers and teachers need to be far more

aware of the virtual world in which young people live – they need to consider the impact of ‘digital natives’, who are used to using ICT for every day communication and learning. This makes the use of social software in teaching and learning necessary. Resources and funding is a problem in some countries – countries are moving at different speeds.

VET teachers and trainers need to be supported by industry and the social partners, which points to the importance of *partnership*. Both VET teachers and trainers need regular industry-based work experience. In addition, continuing professional development should provide formal training in ICT. Increased international mobility between countries could be a way to foster the e-literacy of VET professionals. The use of ICT will facilitate professional development and will change teaching and learning practices. There is increasing use of blended learning.

Topic 3 & 4: Initiatives and emerging approaches towards the recognition of VET trainers and teachers in terms of their professional status and expertise

Guiding questions: How is the situation in each country or different sectors? Should a qualification framework be based on competences or qualifications or something else? On which elements should accreditation be based (observation of practice, portfolio building, peer assessment)? Should there be sectoral or national or a European wide accreditation system? Lithuania, Finland and Slovakia were represented in this working group.

In Finland, vocational teacher education organised at the non-university sector of Higher education (Applied Sciences Universities) with problematic relation to the Bologna process. The up-grading of staff of vocational adult education centres is based on interest based/choice of up-grading schemes. Overall is the training of trainers fairly marginalized. It is carried out by local initiatives and VET teachers.

The situation in Lithuania is similar. A draft for professional standards of VET teachers has been developed along the categories of junior/senior/ expert VET teacher, VET teacher for methodologies but nothing is available for trainers. They have no formal qualification but their training follows the same guidelines like for teachers and this not beneficial for them. VET trainers should have their own standards which is more practice oriented and adapted to work processes.

The participants agreed that a qualification framework should be based on formal qualifications, competences (mainly generated through informal processes) and personality traits related to commitment and reputation, for example. It should also be based on portfolio, not just on formal accreditations. A *portfolio approach* developed in Lithuania comprises three main areas: personal development/reputation; didactical aptitude (curriculum planning and improvement); and subject areas (which varies). Recognising personality development and values thereby has its own steps and categories; the third level related to personal maturity that would be required for example for a teacher mentor is closely linked to a cultural value system. It is a phased model that recognises practice observation as well.

The training for trainers should have a combination of IVET and CVET programme elements. Basic training programmes (IVET) may become important where there are severe shortages of VET trainers. However, the training of trainers should mainly be based on CVET and continuing professional development, which should be more highly

recognised. Differentiating further it is necessary to consider whether the basic training should be in the subject area or on the didactics. When trainers assume the role of a learning facilitator they may not need so much subject-matter knowledge, but can use the subject-related knowledge that comes from the skilled people who are engaging in training activities. For skilled workers who assume training function, for example, didactic aspects are important, but are often not included in their basic training.

In terms of level of regulation, Lithuania and Finland follow sectoral (14 sectors in Lithuania) and regional (Finland) modes of regulation. At the European level it was recommended to operate with an open method of coordination rather than a closed accreditation framework with inputs from diploma level formal accreditation. Certain levels of commitment towards common goals and acknowledgement of professional development should be established.

In Slovakia, accreditation for the continuing professional training of VET teachers and trainers does not exist. Even despite the accreditation system of universities which follow minimum standards for VET teachers this in practice is not always guaranteed. The establishment of an accreditation system does not per se raise quality and standards. While the continuing professional development of VET teachers and trainers should be supported an accreditation system will not deliver this on its own. Steps towards enhancing the continuing professional development of VET teachers and trainers could include allocating designated funding to schools which cannot be used otherwise. Quality monitoring systems should be introduced in schools and companies. Any accreditation system for continuing learning should focus on the quality (i.e. the effective application of new competencies) and not on the numbers of hours of training. In Slovakia, any form of accreditation has to be monitored by the accreditation council of the Ministry of Education, which decides upon formal requirements of the education programmes. However, the quality of the programmes will be decided by the clients – schools will not send teachers or trainers to attend programmes which are of poor quality. Any institutions or companies can request accreditation of education or training programmes. The schools and the social partners should be involved. Also universities can play a key role if they are able to offer good quality and acceptable education and continuing training programmes for teachers and trainers. Regional government, big employers in the region and work offices should provide information about future skill needs – this is the basis for branch education of the teachers and trainers.

Topic 5: How can quality be assured and what role do VET teachers and trainers play in this process? Will increased professionalisation improve standards?

This topic was of particular interest to the Polish participants who discussed this topic in a country group. Professionalisation was understood as a specialisation in the field of training as well as in the occupational domain. Participants agreed that increased professionalism will improve the standards of teaching as concerns the subject areas, but also as concerns performance. However, professionalisation can also lead to higher job entry requirements and can lower potential and effective job mobility among professionals in a certain field.

While formal training leads to a certificate and the right to perform in a particular occupational domain, informal training is important to enhance skills and competences, but

even if certified it may not give the right to perform in a specific job. VET schools should introduce standards by evaluating VET teachers' performance. One indicator for good performance could be the successful labour market inclusion and subsequent career pathways of graduates from VET schools.

Quality standards help to improve both, the teaching methods and the performance levels. All kinds of standards should be created in cooperation with all stakeholders involved in VET training, including the trainers and teachers themselves. Keeping to those standards should be evaluated. Standards themselves should be flexible so they can be subject to change if adjustments need to be made.

Accreditation should confirm quality. It should be awarded by an institution that is well known for their high applying high standards. The situation of trainers in companies, however, is different due to their different role. Their trainer position results from needs and positions deriving from the structure of the company. Companies should create the position of 'internal trainer' who is responsible for introducing newcomers to the workplace. A framework of competences for internal trainers could be created on the basis of the learning needs of young people and some learning techniques specific of adult education.

3.2 Witness session

In the workshop methodology the witness session has the objective to induce plenary and small group discussions on results of so far conducted studies and/or other projects and topics. It can be organised like a panel discussion or with a set of input speakers that then engage in a discussion with the participants. The inputs should be very short and focused given that they partly repeat what is presented in the background papers.

In the Lithuanian workshop the focus was placed on presenting new projects so that there was more of a series of presentations than discussions. The different projects inspired some ideas about future cooperation and possible projects. The following projects were presented on the basis of power point presentations:

- a) Pekka Kämäräinen from Finland/ITB Bremen gave a brief report on the Leonardo da Vinci project TTplus – A framework for the continuing professional development of trainers.
 - the task to develop a common framework for trainers' professional development;
 - the acceptance of different concepts of 'trainers' due to different training cultures;
 - the variance of training arrangements in different organisational contexts;
 - the different role of mandatory certificates and training curricula;
 - the common approach to 'commitments' and 'matching commitments' as a starting point for clarifying trainers' and stakeholders' interests;
 - the mapping of national and European policy environments and unsettled issues with European qualification frameworks.

- b) Ausra Fokiene from TNet Lithuania presented the Propeto and Tima-Balt projects as examples of European projects with a focus on pedagogic tutoring or recognition of prior learning in vocational teacher education.

- c) Darina Vybohova from the Methodological Institute in Slovakia presented the work of the Eutrex project as an effort to develop tools that promote the mobility of trainees and support the pedagogic and organisational involvement of teachers and trainers. In particular the development of an existing German tool ('Praktikumsbörse') and its upgrading into a European tool ('Mobilitätsbörse') was brought into broader discussion.
- d) Jaana Räisänen from Finland complemented these presentations with insights into the Finnish portals that support the workplace learning in Finnish VET schools and partner enterprises (TOnet-portal, TAT portal and school-specific portals).

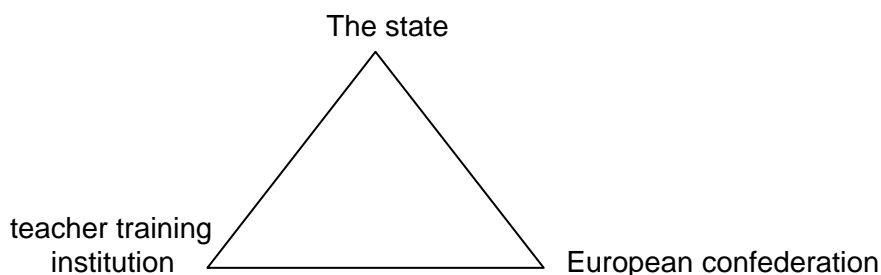
The presentations gave rise for proposals to gather such examples and present them as a group picture of mutually supporting initiatives with

- common goals;
- mutually complementing tools and frameworks;
- possibilities to enrich the approaches;
- possibilities to identify a baseline for future projects;
- possibilities to gather the unsettled issues as common concerns.

It was further suggested to present the group picture on the web-site of the workshop project or on another related web-site and to invite commentaries and further examples. This would not only document the learning gains of the workshop but also stimulate further knowledge development in the phase of preparing successor projects. In small groups some further ideas were developed:

- Workshop participants acknowledged that there are main differences between the countries in terms of VET teachers training. It was suggested that *action research* on best practices would be an interesting approach for an international comparative perspective.
- An on-line *glossary* on VET teacher training and education could help to develop a common understanding and perceive differences better.

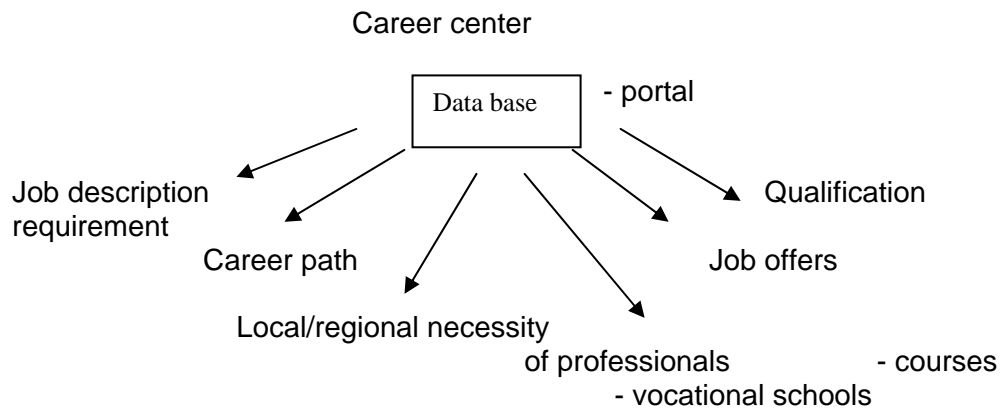
In accordance with the Lubvicens education system and economic situation a triangle cooperation among the state, teacher training institution and the European confederation was suggested.



Mutual enrichment from project clusters

- Learning from each other;
- Baseline studies for new projects;
- Commentary;
- Unsettled/ critical issues;

- Mutual strengths/ combined effects
- Follow-up ideas → implementation parallel examples.



3.3 Identifying other issues and prioritise areas that require action

For mapping critical issues participants were invited to formulate brief statements that indicated

- barriers for or obstacles to innovations and development in the area of VET teachers and trainers;
- opportunities for new measures and innovation; and
- intervening factors that need to be taken into account.

In group work, this is a card exercise where participants complete sentences and statements written by other participants. If the initial statements had been rather general, the comments are to give concrete examples or outline ways forward. Then the statements and some comments are transferred to new cards that exemplify possible measures related to research, policies, ICT, pedagogy etc. After redistribution of cards among the groups, participants are invited to prepare a cognitive map with reference to the importance and urgency of the proposed measures.

The commenting of the statements and subsequent mapping stimulated a lively discussion on the initial statements and then led to rich feedback. Setting priorities and commenting on the urgency started as a rather atomistic card-by-card ranking, but resulted in a shaping of priority clusters or problem clusters later on. The participants identified the following areas to be important and requiring urgent intervention:

Card question	Sentence completion
One of the influences on the training of VET teachers and trainers we should take into account is....	...the risk of losing the national identity of VET teacher education as the EU develops.
	...the lack of one integrated system of career path for VET teachers.
	...the possibility to use e-portfolios and related web applications (blogs, podcasts) to make problems and innovation in workplace learning and in the work of trainers transparent.
	...the internationalisation of the workforce (migrant workers, immigrants, international trainee).
	...labour market needs and demands, which need to be taken into consideration when developing training programmes: new technologies, ICT, demographic shifts, sectoral

	<p>features, new pedagogical ideas and methodologies which need to be adapted for VET.</p> <p>...professional experience and background before becoming a teacher or trainer. Reflection on our school and training experience.</p> <p>...national policy.</p> <p>...international projects (e.g. Europass from project to ESPO basic CV from)</p> <p>...new investors in Slovakia</p> <p>...the lack of cooperation between regional government, local companies and industries and schools.</p> <p>...the low prestige of the VET teacher and trainer position in comparison to general education teacher and trainers.</p> <p>...the salary of VET teachers and trainers is connection with their career development opportunities.</p>
One of the barriers on the training of VET teachers and trainers is...	<p>...that there is no clear distinction between the professional requirements for teachers and for trainers.</p> <p>...the lack of resources and awareness.</p> <p>...not enough professionals to train the trainers.</p> <p>...small number of school workshops.</p> <p>...lack of standards.</p> <p>...that schools do not operate with a clearly-defined profile of competences for school-leavers so it is difficult to define the skills and competences of the teachers.</p> <p>... lack of funding in schools for sending teachers on training.</p> <p>...that there are so many different skills and competences VET teachers and trainers need to acquire at a time.</p> <p>...the lack of a trainer profile in comparison to the clear structures of teachers' career pathways.</p> <p>...lack of legislation.</p> <p>...that trainers are not motivated to raise their qualification. Lack of incentives.</p> <p>...particularly SMEs lack resources to release trainers to attend training courses.</p> <p>...that enterprises are not interested in promoting new technologies for VET teachers.</p> <p>...lack of information: Where? Who? How?</p> <p>...the underdeveloped awareness of self training needs among VET teachers and trainers.</p>
One of the opportunities we have for the training of VET teachers and trainers is....	<p>...the national traditions and specific needs (defined after having analysed the context)</p> <p>...the emergence of new training models that</p> <p>a) combine trainers' experience in workplace training as subject matter for seminars and workshops;</p> <p>b) provide conceptual interpretation models for trainers' work process knowledge in training</p> <p>...to use internship periods of teacher trainees at schools and enterprises for focused knowledge development (mini-studies on pedagogic problems or on the impact of teaching / training activities).</p> <p>... the development of a new integrated competence model that can guide the training of VET teachers and trainers (integration of social, pedagogic, personal competences as well as reflection of values and personality portfolio and communication skills).</p> <p>...vocational schools.</p> <p>...seminars in the regions.</p> <p>...cooperation with specialist instructors in preparation of education programmes for VET teachers and trainers.</p> <p>...international cooperation and mobility programmes.</p> <p>...increasing demand for highly educated craftsman (in traditional sectors such as building industry, services, new sectors and ICT).</p> <p>...availability of EU funding: ESF, LDV</p> <p>Briefing of learning and teaching "communities between T+T"</p> <p>...e-learning</p> <p>...the cooperation between actors at different levels: governmental, social partners, industry, VET schools</p> <p>...ICT and new technologies which offer the chance to build communities and share expert discussion in VET training</p> <p>...the sharing of best practice between institutions and schools within the country</p> <p>...work placements of teachers in companies (paid) as a basis of enrichment of teachers work, curriculum development and the training of trainers at the workplace.</p>

When prioritising the suggestions to overcome 'barriers' and exploit 'opportunities' the measures and actions rated **important and urgent** included:

In the area of **research**:

- To meet changing labour market demands continuous research and assessment is necessary. This also involves the generation of new materials and databases. Research should focus on labour market development and demands but also on the competences and skilling needs of VET teachers and trainers. The results should be put into practice. Outcomes from international projects should be better disseminated and validated.
- More support should be given to research and studies in the area of VET teachers and trainers. Also pilot studies can give guidance and new insight.

In the area of **collaboration** and **dialogue**:

- The dialogue and collaboration between different stakeholders must be intensified. Closer dialog is needed between education researchers, education actors and policy makers. Closer cooperation is needed between employers, schools and local authorities and regional government. Involving the VET practitioners and professionals in the 'VET dialog' is important here.
- Networks for stakeholders should be strengthened and supported.
- International cooperation in the area of VET teachers and trainers should be fostered and intensified.

In the area of **status** and **recognition**:

- A properly designed motivational and incentive system for VET teachers and trainers should be established. This also involves the development of clear promotion pathways for both groups.
- The prestige and recognition of the VET teacher and trainer position is low in comparison to general education teacher and trainers. This weakens the role of VET teachers and trainers.

In the area of **training** and **continuing professional development**:

- The training of VET teachers and trainers should be based on an integrated competence model (integration of social, pedagogic, personal competences) and should equally reflect values, personality portfolio and communication skills.
- The training and continuing training of VET teachers and trainers should involve components of self-evaluation and self-assessment.
- Develop interest-based training schemes for teacher education/ continuing professional development with incentives for institutions. For example, attract enterprises so that they can be certified as 'investors in people'. Overall, new training models should reflect trainers' experiences in workplace training.
- Combinations of initial (pre-service) education and continuing (in-service) training as presented in the Lithuanian model is a way towards innovations in VET.

In the area of **ICT** for training, knowledge sharing and networking:

- ICT was regarded as an important tool for knowledge sharing, access to information and learning. ICT should be used to share of good practice between institutions and schools and to make information, materials and databases available.
- Portals for VET teachers and trainers should give guidance on arrangements and implementation of workplace learning (including content and evaluation) with project ideas, tools and advice on international exchanges. The possibilities to use e-portfolios and related web applications ('blogs', 'podcasts') can be used to share problems and innovation in workplace learning and in the work of trainers.
- E-learning should be further developed and supported. This also requires the development of new e-learning materials for VET teachers and trainers.
- The e-portfolio and ICT competences of VET teachers and trainers should be more strongly developed.

In the area of **resources** and **funding**:

- SMEs need resources, support and incentives to release their trainers to go on training courses. The same applies to VET schools to send their teachers on training.
- Resources and funding are needed to support work placements of teachers in companies in order to enrich their work and curriculum development but also to strengthen cooperation between trainers and VET teachers.

Areas designates as **LESS important and urgent** included:

In the area of **collaboration** and **dialogue**:

- Network for stakeholders.

In the area of **status** and **recognition**:

- Awareness raising campaigns at the national level on the key role of VET teachers and trainers should be promoted in collaboration with the social partners' and key labour market institutions.

In the area of **training** and **continuing professional development**:

- The validation (identification / assessment and recognition) of prior professional experience and experience-based learning needs should be strengthened in the education and training of VET teachers and trainers.
- Vocational education and training programmes for VET teachers need to become more flexible (through modularisation?) with the active involvement of teachers to designing them. Narrow specialisations may imply less flexibility in responding to market needs.
- The critical reflection on one's own personal learning history can be used as a source for a new learning approach (along particular role models).
- The training of VET teachers should be structured along the BA/MA model.
- VET teachers and trainers should be better prepared to work in multicultural environments. Their English language capabilities should be enhanced.

- Support teacher and trainer mobility

In the area of **ICT** for training, knowledge sharing and networking:

- Improve the credibility of on-line sources;
- Develop on-line learning tools;
- Inform VET teachers and trainers about new online materials;
- More knowledge how to use technologies in classroom

3.4 The role of different stakeholders

Another exercise was geared towards clarifying the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders in the process of realising improvements and innovations in the area of VET teachers and trainers. Those stakeholders were specified to be i) the research community; ii) policy makers; and iii) training practitioners.

The **research community** should more strongly engage in assessment studies to identify the key stakeholders of VET teacher and trainer education, the learning needs of both groups and trends and demands of the labour market. Research can also facilitate the revision of the professional frameworks of VET personnel and the formulation of policy recommendations for the improvement of the VET teachers and trainers education system. Researchers should collaborate with trainers in terms of training feed-back and assessment and in formulating key areas that need further support. Action research could be a good method to assess training practice and the situation of VET teachers and trainers. This approach would also facilitate a mutual learning process. As concerns the collaboration with policy makers, the latter should better support the research community and consider research results in the formulation of policies.

In undertaking research practitioners participation in the research design should be ensured as well as the feed-back that comes from enterprises. Companies as well as practitioners are not just interested in being actively involved in the research process but also in getting feed-back from the research outcomes. Thus, dissemination and exploitation of results and evaluation should be fostered and more strongly supported. The role of ICT in the changing practice and competences of VET teachers and trainers is an area that deserves more research attention. ICT should thereby be linked to occupational standards, curriculum development, training methods and teaching practice. Also the continuing professional development should consider training and competence development in ICT.

The strength of **VET professionals and practitioners** lies in their practical experience and expertise of their respective occupational domain specific to a branch or sector. They have pedagogical skills in the area of adult education and know how to apply education programmes. They are also sensitive to educational needs of clients and stakeholders. VET practitioners play a key role for networking and to support projects and new initiatives. VET practitioners would appreciate if the research community could produce more practice-relevant outcomes and provide guidance on how to implement results. Researchers could play a key coaching and guiding function for VET practitioners under the condition that they promote respect for each others' skills and knowledge. From policy

makers practitioners expect more support for access to resources and more direct interaction and listening to practitioners. They should engage more with the current developments in the field. On the other hand, VET practitioners should more strongly support the practical implementation of regulations and legislation of VET training and policy and should cooperate more intensively with industry and local authorities in the implementation of VET teaching and training schemes. They should lobby for the career and professional development of VET teachers and trainers.

Policy makers should create higher levels of transparency and more strongly share information of funding possibilities and new programmes and priority areas in the field of VET teachers and trainers. They should ensure stability and continuity in policies and aim for a long-term planning perspective. Better coordination between the different policy levels, iterative development cycles (policy assessment/ reviewing) and mutual learning between different VET cultures should be supported.

From practitioners and researchers policy makers expect that needs and demands are clearly formulated and that both stakeholder groups engage in the creation of a flexible training scheme for VET teachers and trainers. Policy makers for their part should clearly formulate expectations, feed-back and further development plans.

3.5 First evaluation and assessment by workshop participants

At the end of the workshop all participants engaged in an evaluation exercise by providing comments on the workshop organisation, methods and outcomes. Participants in particular valued the interactive methods and activities based on team working and sharing ideas and information. They appreciated the support for wider communication throughout the whole group and the facilitation of meaningful dialogue and discussion. Also the group mixing (i.e. discussion in mixed groups and country groups) received very good feedback.

Participants particularly benefited from the mutual learning culture, which was facilitated through the methodology, and the richness of the information, background materials and session inputs provided. The idea of a consultation process was very positively rated as was the overall organisation of the workshop and the preparatory information and materials, which clearly outlined the expectations and objectives of the workshop.

While participants considered the workshop to be 'hard work' they found it inspiring an activity that also supports them in their current work. The short duration of the individual sessions were criticised: people would have wished to have more time for the individual sessions and tasks, the summarising process and the synthesis of the different activities. It was suggested that information on national VET features should be visualised (on charts) during the workshop.

4. Summary of workshop results against the project objectives

Objective 1 & 2: To explore the national strategies and national contexts relevant for VET teachers and trainers and the training of trainers and determine the impact that these strategies have on the training and practice of VET teachers and trainers

The workshop examined the national strategies and contexts relevant for VET teachers and trainers and the training of trainers and the impact of those strategies of training and practice through a series of thematic working groups focusing on 4 different topics:

- Co-operation between VET teachers and trainers
- New technologies – what impact does / should it have on the practice and training of VET teachers and trainers?
- Emerging approaches and existing initiatives towards the recognition of trainers and VET teachers in terms of their professional status and expertise
- How can quality be assured and what role do VET teachers and trainers play?

A series of key issues emerged. The distinction between VET teachers and trainers working outside the education system is fairly marked throughout all countries that participated in this workshop. The Bologna process has widened the discrepancy, particularly in terms of status and setting professional standards through the process of higher recognition of teachers in general education and VET. While the cooperation between teachers and trainers is aimed to be fostered, actual cooperation varies strongly between national contexts. Finland tries to bring both groups closer together by the requirement that VET teachers have to do some practical training in industry. Regional projects exist for VET colleges so that VET teachers can have a paid period in industry workplaces to up to 6 months, in some cases also internationally although here the problem of evaluation arises. Currently 20 credit weeks need to be spent in industries, but this is going to be increased to 24 in order to enhance teachers' practical skills. In Slovakia, schools develop their own programmes which tend to disregard the actual needs of the local industry. On the other hand, firms and factories also develop their own education programmes. However, a reform process has been initiated to foster closer cooperation between both sides but the interest seems to be stronger from the side of the industry than from the side of the VET schools.

It was also discussed that ICT will have great impact on the training and work practice of VET teachers and trainers. The use of ICT will facilitate professional development and will change teaching and learning practices. There is increasing use of blended learning. It can be expected that most young people already have these skills, so the question is how can trainers and teachers be supported to use new technologies for e-learning and in the classroom at the level of student's ICT knowledge many trainers and teachers do not have. Notably, for the participating countries the impact of new technologies was not only discussed in terms of computer literacy but also with regards to innovations in technical equipment and machines used in industry.

While teachers increasingly need ICT-related skills, the extent of the competences they need in practice varies according to their situation and subject. Occupational standards should specify the ICT-specific skills needed for work and those should be incorporated into the respective curricula. Overall, trainers and teachers need to become more aware of the virtual world and the impact of 'digital natives', who are using ICT for every day communication and learning. This makes the use of social software in teaching and learning necessary. Resources and funding for enhancing VET teachers' and trainers' ICT knowledge was a problem in some of the participating countries. In addition, both groups

need to be supported by industry and the social partners, which points to the importance of *partnership*.

As regards approaches towards the recognition of VET trainers and teachers in terms of their professional status and expertise it was stated that the training of trainers in the countries is fairly marginalized and more emphasis is given to developing professional standards and recognition for VET teachers. Trainers, by contrast, either have no formal qualification or follow the guidelines that apply to teachers. Neither of this option is beneficial for trainers. VET trainers should have their own standards which is more practice oriented and adapted to work processes. The participants agreed that a qualification framework should be based on formal qualifications, competences (mainly generated through informal processes) and personality traits related to commitment and reputation, for example. It should also be based on portfolio, not just on formal accreditations.

Further should the training for trainers have a combination of IVET and CVET programme elements. Basic training programmes (IVET) may become important where there are severe shortages of VET trainers. However, the training of trainers should mainly be based on CVET and continuing professional development, which should be more highly recognised. Differentiating further it is necessary to consider whether the basic training is in the subject area or on didactics. When trainers assume the role of a learning facilitator they may not need so much subject-matter knowledge, but can use the subject-related knowledge that comes from the skilled people who are engaging in training activities. For skilled workers who assume training function, for example, didactic aspects are important, but are often not included in their basic training.

While some of the participating countries follow sectoral (Lithuania) and regional (Finland) modes of regulation it was recommended that at the European level an open method of coordination should be followed rather than pursuing a closed accreditation framework with inputs from diploma level formal accreditation. Certain levels of commitment towards common goals and acknowledgement of professional development should be established. Notably, the establishment of an accreditation system does not per se raise quality and standards. While the continuing professional development of VET teachers and trainers should be supported an accreditation system will not deliver this on its own. Further steps are needed such as quality monitoring systems in schools and companies. Any accreditation system for continuing learning should focus on the quality (i.e. the effective application of new competencies) and not on formal criteria such as the numbers of hours of training.

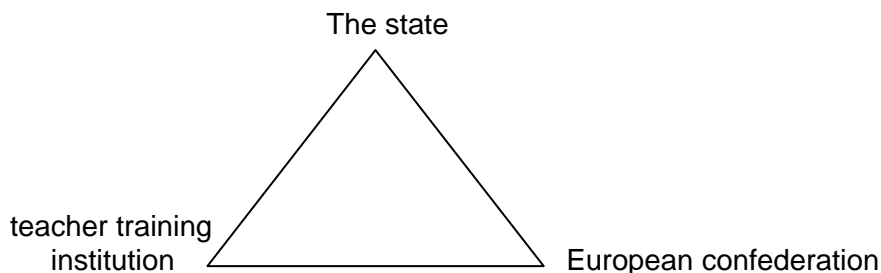
While formal training may lead to a certificate and the 'right' to perform, informal training is equally important to enhance skills and competences. Participants agreed that increased professionalism will improve the standards of teaching as concerns the subject areas, but also as concerns performance. However, professionalisation can also lead to higher job entry requirements and can lower potential and effective job mobility among professionals in a certain field. Quality standards help to improve both, the teaching methods and the performance levels. All kinds of standards should be created in cooperation with all stakeholders involved in VET training, including the trainers and teachers themselves. Keeping to those standards should be evaluated. Standards themselves should be flexible so they can be subject to change if adjustments need to be made.

Objective 4: To discuss key findings, conclusions and recommendations of reports initiated/supported by the European Commission and CEDEFOP and related European and national projects

In addition to findings from European projects participants of the Lithuanian workshop also presented new projects. This inspired some ideas about future cooperation and possible projects. The following projects were presented on the basis of power point presentations:

- a) Pekka Kämäräinen from Finland/ITB Bremen gave a brief report on the *Leonardo da Vinci* project TTplus – A framework for the continuing professional development of trainers.
 - the task to develop a common framework for trainers' professional development;
 - the acceptance of different concepts of 'trainers' due to different training cultures;
 - the variance of training arrangements in different organisational contexts;
 - the different role of mandatory certificates and training curricula;
 - the common approach to 'commitments' and 'matching commitments' as a starting point for clarifying trainers' and stakeholders' interests;
 - the mapping of national and European policy environments and unsettled issues with European qualification frameworks.
- b) Ausra Fokiene from TNet Lithuania presented the Propeto and Tima-Balt projects as examples of European projects with a focus on pedagogic tutoring or recognition of prior learning in vocational teacher education.
- c) Darina Vybohova from the Methodological Institute in Slovakia presented the work of the Eutrex project as an effort to develop tools that promote the mobility of trainees and support the pedagogic and organisational involvement of teachers and trainers. In particular the development of an existing German tool ('Praktikumsbörse') and its upgrading into a European tool ('Mobilitätsbörse') was brought into broader discussion.
- d) Jaana Räisänen from Finland presented Finnish portals that support the workplace learning in Finnish VET schools and partner enterprises (TOnet-portal. TAT portal and school-specific portals).

The presentations gave rise for ideas for further cooperation initiatives. In small groups some further ideas were developed. In accordance with the Lubvicens education system and economic situation a triangle cooperation among the state, teacher training institution and the European confederation was suggested.



Objective 3 & 5: To identify other factors, which influence the work and training of VET teachers and trainers and to identify any additional issues or challenges not covered by these reports

In order to map factors that influence the work and training of VET teachers and trainers and to identify additional issues or challenges not covered by the reports presented in the witness sessions, participants looked at:

- barriers or obstacles to innovations and development in the area of VET teachers and trainers;
- opportunities for new measures and innovation;
- intervening factors that need to be taken into account.

Further work involved exemplifying possible measures related to research, policies, ICT, pedagogy etc. and to prepare a cognitive map with reference to the importance and urgency of the proposed measures. The participants identified a considerable number of recommendations.

*In the area of **research**:*

- To meet changing labour market demands continuous research and assessment is necessary. This also involves the generation of new materials and databases. Research should focus on labour market development and demands but also on the competences and skilling needs of VET teachers and trainers. The results should be put into practice. Outcomes from international projects should be better disseminated and validated.
- More support should be given to research and studies in the area of VET teachers and trainers. Also pilot studies can give guidance and new insight.

*In the area of **collaboration** and **dialogue**:*

- The dialogue and collaboration between different stakeholders must be intensified. Closer dialog is needed between education researchers, education actors and policy makers. Closer cooperation is needed between employers, schools and local authorities and regional government. Involving the VET practitioners and professionals in the 'VET dialog' is important here.
- Networks for stakeholders should be strengthened and supported.
- International cooperation in the area of VET teachers and trainers should be fostered and intensified.

*In the area of **status** and **recognition**:*

- A properly designed motivational and incentive system for VET teachers and trainers should be established. This also involves the development of clear promotion pathways for both groups.
- The prestige and recognition of the VET teacher and trainer position is low in comparison to general education teacher and trainers. This weakens the role of VET teachers and trainers.

*In the area of **training** and **continuing professional development**:*

- The training of VET teachers and trainers should be based on an integrated competence model (integration of social, pedagogic, personal competences) and should equally reflect values, personality portfolio and communication skills.
- The training and continuing training of VET teachers and trainers should involve components of self-evaluation and self-assessment.
- Develop interest-based training schemes for teacher education/ continuing professional development with incentives for institutions. For example, attract enterprises so that they can be certified as 'investors in people'. Overall, new training models should reflect trainers' experiences in workplace training.
- Combinations of initial (pre-service) education and continuing (in-service) training as presented in the Lithuanian model is a way towards innovations in VET.

*In the area of **ICT** for training, knowledge sharing and networking:*

- ICT was regarded as an important tool for knowledge sharing, access to information and learning. ICT should be used to share of good practice between institutions and schools and to make information, materials and databases available.
- Portals for VET teachers and trainers should give guidance on arrangements and implementation of workplace learning (including content and evaluation) with project ideas, tools and advice on international exchanges. The possibilities to use e-portfolios and related web applications ('blogs', 'podcasts') can be used to share problems and innovation in workplace learning and in the work of trainers.
- E-learning should be further developed and supported. This also requires the development of new e-learning materials for VET teachers and trainers.
- The e-portfolio and ICT competences of VET teachers and trainers should be more strongly developed.

*In the area of **resources** and **funding**:*

- SMEs need resources, support and incentives to release their trainers to go on training courses. The same applies to VET schools to send their teachers on training.
- Resources and funding are needed to support work placements of teachers in companies in order to enrich their work and curriculum development but also to strengthen cooperation between trainers and VET teachers.

Objective 6: To consider what directions and strategies might be appropriate in the area of VET teachers and trainers in the future, both at a national and European level

See Chapter 3.4