



fOCUS europe

February, 2017

Spotlighting European developments and projects

SPECIAL EDITION

Mobility in Vocational Education and Training

REMO - Regional networks for quality in vocational mobility

Mobility in education and training - outlook

VET systems in Eastern Europe under reform

Intercomprehension and cross-cultural training for mobility operators

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Focus Europe

A spotlight for ideas and innovation



Dear readers!

Studying and learning abroad are key activities in education and 'must-haves' for the labour market of today. With mobility in education most of us immediately associate ERASMUS. This year we celebrate 30 years of ERASMUS(+) and looking back... it all started in 1987 when 3,244 students went abroad. Nowadays more than 4,000 universities and approximately three million students participate in the programme. In the field of Higher Education you seldom find a person who was not spent some time abroad for study or research.

But what about all the students involved in Vocational Education? Do they not go abroad during their education? Yes, they do and in 2015 130,070 people took advantage of VET mobility opportunities. Even if transnational mobility is gaining in importance and becoming better known within Vocational Education and Training, compared to HE, there is still a long way to go before it becomes a firmly embedded component of the VET system. By 2020 10% of all learners in vocational education and training should have participated in a transnational learning mobility. In order to reach this benchmark set by the European Union different tools and instruments are being introduced to support people in organising and implementing mobility as well as to improve the recognition of knowledge, skills and competencies acquired abroad. Of course the differences between national vocational education systems do not make this an easy task.

Over the next pages you will find a small selection of transnational cooperation projects and articles that deal with these challenges and suggest different approaches, tools and activities in order to foster mobility in Vocational Education and Training in Europe. All projects follow the same criteria: they are co-funded by the ERASMUS+ programme and focus on the topic of transnational mobility in VET (or other forms of education), they either present a practical approach by implementing/organising mobility or follow a more theoretical one such as developing tools and instruments in order to foster quality and transparency of mobility and related processes; and they can either be completed or still running. This FOCUS EUROPE special edition was published in cooperation with the non-profit association Auxilium, which supports the implementation of learning mobility in VET in many ways. Amongst others, Auxilium is the coordinator of the ERASMUS+ project REMO that developed an online platform and network for learners and organisations to more efficiently plan, organise and implement VET mobility (read more on page 6).

Mobility abroad can help (young) people in Vocational Education and Training to gain the professional and personal skills needed for today's competitive employment market. But not only that: let's take another look at the story of 30 years of ERASMUS(+)... The European Commission estimates that roughly one million babies have been born to Erasmus couples since 1987. Furthermore, 27% of the Erasmus population have met their life partner during an exchange.

With this additional perspective or even motivational factor I hope you are ready to enjoy the latest Focus Europe publication and I wish you an interesting reading experience with this special edition.

Petra Kampf

E.N.T.E.R. network coordinator

Further information:

<https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/sites/erasmusplus/files/erasmus-plus-annual-report-2015.pdf>

https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/anniversary?pk_campaign=erasmus_30&pk_kwd=notification_box

<https://esn.org/blog/thirty-candles-thirty-years-erasmus-generations>

MOBILITY IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING – FORECASTS AND OUTLOOKS

Georg Müllner, Auxilium (Austria)

Learning mobility is the term that covers all the aspects related to spending parts of the education and training process in another place abroad to profit from different perspectives, contents, scientific excellence, cultures and ways of life. Without a doubt mobility in education and training is one of the huge benefits of the European Community and besides the impact on individual skills and competence development processes it is also an important motor for integration, mutual understanding and common efforts in European countries.

Learning mobility has quite a long tradition within the European Union, mainly stemming from higher education levels, with students and especially post graduate students spending study time abroad to improve their competences, research profiles and academic excellence. Also over the last decades learning mobility has entered into the vocational education and training sector enabling young learners in initial vocational education and training to gain added value from other countries' cultures, training approaches, training contents and ways of solving problems. However, compared to the higher education sector, where transnational learning mobility is without a doubt an integral part of programmes and structures, the vocational education and training sector has still some way to go.

The European Union set the benchmark for the year 2020 that 10% of all learners in vocational education and training will participate in transnational learning mobility and this still seems to be quite a challenge to reach. For further support the European Union has introduced a number of tools and instruments that should ease participation, exchange and transparency.



For example, the Mobility Scoreboard can be seen as an instrument to support policy making and exchange about learning mobility in the different European countries

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/projects/mobility-scoreboard>

and also the recommendation to introduce a European Credit Transfer System in Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) has been a crucial and important approach to improve learning mobility and transparency throughout Europe.

Nevertheless, there is still some way to go in order to reach the set targets and benchmarks, at least in some of the European countries, and especially in countries with dual initial VET systems (apprenticeship type initial VET) it seems particularly difficult to increase the participation rates of young learners in transnational mobility. The particular backgrounds of dual apprenticeship systems in initial VET (besides its huge value for a high quality vocational education and training and its high proximity to real work and business life) create some challenges for learning mobility.

It is therefore crucially important that all the key players in vocational education and training, especially in dual apprenticeship systems, social partners, companies, VET schools, trainees, parents and the whole political and policy making level support and foster the concept of transnational learning mobility in Europe. Only with their broad support and engagement will it be possible in future to achieve and reach these benchmark levels, which are in fact not only statistical figures but are an expression of the desire for young Europeans to be ready to build and maintain the future of European society. Every single project and every single initiative presented in this magazine and all other relevant actions support these processes and will herewith be showcased. All of them are important contributions to a common, integrated and prosperous Europe of tomorrow.

The Erasmus+ Programme, which financially supports transnational learning mobility plays an important and crucial role in this process. Political decisions around the programme priorities show that learning mobility is in fact one of the central goals and priority points and this is certainly a well thought through and future proof decision.



VET SYSTEMS IN EASTERN EUROPE UNDER REFORM

Grit Ackermann,
Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Slovenia)

VET reform high on the political agenda in Eastern Europe

Vocational and Educational Training (VET) systems in almost all Eastern European (EE) countries are adapting their legislation and existing practices in order to move from the current school-based to a more work-based learning system. Pressure from the business world for the higher employability of young people but also the understanding of governments, that dual VET systems, especially apprenticeship, increase the attractiveness and quality of VET and helps decrease and prevent youth unemployment, has led to this reform process.

The project NewWBL answers the challenges resulting from the reform process, supporting the new political course in three EE countries: Bulgaria, Latvia and Slovenia. While new legislative framework will be or has been very recently established, these countries face the challenge of creating the structures and partnerships needed to foster the implementation of apprenticeships and other forms of work-based learning in practice.

Within the school-based systems, companies and their representative organisations have often been insufficiently and also only formally involved with the provision of VET. Their roles and responsibilities need to be newly defined. This is not an easy process, as it requires VET actors in the EE countries to find their models to ensure the successful implementation of dual learning systems as well as to develop a vision for the future.

What were the main concerns of the business world in Eastern European countries?

Years of experience has shown that the existing legislative framework in Eastern Europe did not encourage the participation of employers and their representative organisations in the process of providing work-based learning. VET schools faced difficulties in keeping up with modern equipment, machinery, raw materials and supplies, which companies use for their work, so VET graduates often lacked important skills when entering the labour market. However, VET graduates lacked not only professional skills, but also important soft skills that can only be acquired within real working environments.

Companies saw the necessity for VET student to spend more time in real working environments and on that basis the dialogue between VET schools and employers and their representative organisations has become more intensive and meaningful within the last years in EE. However, dissatisfaction with the old VET system does not mean that business is fully in favour of work-based learning and apprenticeship. So far, no obligations nor direct funds for VET have been forthcoming. With the introduction of work-based learning, they see many new costs and obligations for them: provision of workplace and HR resources to select and work properly with the apprentice, additional legal obligations and administrative work, remuneration of the apprentice etc. It is also unclear what the legal status of the apprentice will be and what the actor's concrete role is in defining the framework of working conditions and remuneration.

The change is not easy for VET schools either

VET centres used to have an exclusive role in the provision of vocational training. It is never easy to share responsibilities with new partners. Moreover, this step is even more difficult, if tasks are shared and transferred from the public to the private sector. The turbo capitalism in some EE countries has created some distrust within the private sector. The main concern of VET schools is whether companies can assure the required quality in training content and its appropriate provision.

Financing of VET centres and schools has depended mostly on numbers of students and training duration. What will happen to the schools' finances when a considerable part of the training is not provided by the school anymore, but by a company?

Employers' representative organisations need to discover and negotiate their role in the VET system

New established networks at the national, regional and local levels need to be created; just bilateral cooperation between schools and companies is not enough to make apprenticeships a success. The countries with strong apprenticeship systems, like Germany, Austria and Switzerland, have chambers with obligatory membership who are a main pillar of the VET system. In Eastern Europe chambers are voluntarily organised and it is an open issue, which responsibilities are entrusted to them by the governments. As fast as possible, they need to build up capacities to support not only their member companies, but all businesses in the provision of apprenticeships and other forms of work-based learning.

VET students have the choice between the old and the new VET system

Along with the new legislative frameworks, pilot projects have begun in the areas of apprenticeships and work-based learning in Eastern Europe. It is too early to analyse and to assess the results of these pilots. It is clear that the effective introduction of apprenticeship depends upon how the EE countries succeed in including the private sector in the VET partnership. School-based VET education should not compete with apprenticeship, but flexible solutions, taking into account the needs of regions, business sectors and the individual are needed.

The project NewWBL will answer these challenges through the development of new models of work-based learning. More information:

<http://newwbl.eu/>



Chambers need to build up capacities to support companies in the provision of VET

REMO

Regional Networks for Quality in Vocational Mobility

Carina Maas, Auxilium (Austria)

The REMO project meets urgent European challenges, such as improving mobility in lifelong learning – especially in VET – through a smart and innovative new approach. Whilst raising the quality and efficiency in VET with appropriate, “down to earth” tools, REMO aims to foster co-operation between VET institutions and the world of work, particularly at a regional and cross regional level. Simultaneously the improvement of the transparency of learning outcomes using European transparency instruments at a broad level was pursued in this project. Seven partners from Austria, Croatia, Italy, Hungary, Romania and Slovenia joined together to develop a regional network and platform for VET mobility.

As a first step the requirements and needs of the three main target groups (VET learners, sending and hosting organisations) and wider stakeholders related to initial VET mobility were analysed by a comprehensive research study, building on quantitative and qualitative data. This three-month investigation took place in every partner country and over 450 participants offered their expertise to improve the understanding of constraints and influencing factors for initial VET learner mobility in Europe.

As a second step, REMO developed 12 descriptions in every partner language of the core processes of planning and organisation as well as implementation of VET mobility programmes plus 2 additional support processes. Those descriptions are based on the 10 guiding principles stipulated by the European Quality Charta for Mobility. The process descriptions are also coherent with the requirements and indicators of the ISO 9001 quality management system. This means, for the first time it will be possible to inform, motivate and convince sending organisations, hosting organisations as well as learners to participate in mobility programmes based on standardised processes which follow this worldwide known and well tested quality standard. Furthermore, it is well known that the success of mobility programmes is dependent upon the possibility of recognising the learning outcomes achieved during the mobility stay, which will be ensured by the use of ECVET as the main transparency instrument for VET. The REMO process descriptions will allow mobility processes organised in the future to benefit from ECVET and to make better use of their learning outcomes for their individual initial VET learning path.

The third step and heart of the REMO project was to develop an electronic mobility platform available in all partner languages. On this platform, VET learners, hosting and sending organisations can register and search/find placements or interested learners in their neighbouring countries. The platform conveniently provides the process descriptions which were developed in step 2 and also all supporting documents for learners and

AT A GLANCE

Programme:	ERASMUS+, KA2
Duration:	2 years, 01.09.2014 - 31.08.2016
Main outcome:	Developing partnerships between education and employment
Website:	www.remoproject.eu www.remonetwork.eu/en



sending/hosting organisations. It also offers access to support structures in the partner countries where participants can receive support with applying for mobility grants or mobility project implementation. Have a look for yourself and visit www.remonetwork.eu for more information!

The fourth and final step was the implementation of a legal network structure for a cross-regional mobility network, which was established as non-profit association in Austria and guarantees the sustainable use of all outcomes. Feel free to contact the REMO partners for more information about participation and contribution to the REMO association which is legally registered in Austria.



TUCEP FOR JOB PLACEMENT 3

Transnational mobility as accelerator into working life

Chiara Marchetta, TUCEP (Italy)

The experience of work based learning in transnational mobility is recognised as an accelerator for integration into working life.

TUCEP has been promoting and coordinating student and academic staff mobility involving 11 member universities for more than 25 years. In 2017 the project TUCEP FOR JOB PLACEMENT 3, under the Erasmus + Mobility for Learning-KA1, provides several mobility opportunities for students and university staff.

Students have access to placements in enterprises, training centres and research organisations in one of the 28 EU member states and in EU partner countries, having at their disposal a contribution towards travel and living expenses for stays from 2 to 12 months.

AT A GLANCE

Programme: Erasmus+ - Learning Mobility of Individuals
Duration: 01.06.2016 - 31.05.2018
Main outcome: Embedding scientific training with a fruitful work experience
Website: www.tucep.org

The project aims to facilitate the access of young people into the labour market, embedding scientific training with fruitful work experience. This creates the necessary link between higher education and business: the practical experience within a corporate environment is instrumental in strengthening personal and professional skills through new approaches and strategies based on active learning methods.



ECVET GOES BUSINESS

From Push to Pull: Modern Human Resource Management with European transparency instruments

Carina Maas, Auxilium (Austria)

The ultimate success of European transparency instruments and, in the first place, ECVET is dependent upon the acceptance and broad use of the model, the instruments and tools by the world of business and this process is struggling, because it remains a theoretical concept at the level of education and VET systems. The overall picture at the moment is that HR and companies are hardly concerned with and aware of these instruments and tools, even though they are fully developed and ready to be implemented. Right now the success of ECVET depends on a necessary paradigm shift in the implementation process, which needs to shift from a push approach to a pull process where companies understand the benefits of these transparency instruments and are asking for ECVET based certification and recognition. This is why ECVET needs to go business. By changing the focus the added value of ECVET and transparency instruments is made visible for companies and the responsible staff working therein.

This projects aims to develop an approach to make ECVET and European transparency instruments relevant to the typical HR process of companies, providing materials and information in a format and language the target group of human resource managers, job/shop stewards, business owners and workers can use and understand. To make this possible, eight partner organisations joined together and started their first working phase by implementing introductory research in all seven partner countries. This comprehensive qualitative research was addressed to representatives of all crucial parts of companies in order to identify the key processes of HR management and to find the process elements where ECVET and other transparency instruments can be embedded and provide support. In spring 2016 all partners met for the presentation of the results of the research study in Slovenia and started transferring the results towards the development of the second core element of the project: a comprehensive reference handbook for HR management including the most modern and

AT A GLANCE

Programme: Erasmus+, Key Action II: Strategic Partnerships
Duration: 2 years, 01.10.2015 – 30.09.2017
Main outcome: Implementation and dissemination of EU VET tools
Website: www.ecvetgoesbusiness.eu

latest HR management theories together with the potential and support of ECVET and transparency instruments. This handbook will be published in all partner languages and serves as a base for the third core output of this project: a 2-day (16 learning units) training programme for the target groups including curriculum description, trainer guidelines and training materials. In this course the basic principles of the handbook will be presented together with practical approaches, case studies and hands on material to use. To ensure the wider impact and dissemination potential the training programme will be translated in all partner languages as well. Additionally, the ECVET goes business project increases the mainstreaming and exploitation potential of its outputs by embedding the benefits of ECVET and transparency instruments into the standard processes of companies independent from the sector.

The final conference and result presentation will be held in autumn 2017 in Austria where the target group of this project will be invited to comment on the concept of the handbook and the training course and give valuable feedback. Interested? Visit www.ecvetgoesbusiness.eu for more information!



VET@WORK

Recognize and validate skills and qualifications gained by alternating school and work experience

Patrizia Giorio, FormAzione Co&So Network (Italy)

The VET@WORK project looked at one of the main challenges of the Europe 2020 Strategy: to reduce Early School Leaving (ESL) to less than 10% and to contribute to increasing attainment in tertiary education to at least 40% by 2020.

Completing upper secondary education is recommended as the minimum entrance qualification when making the crucial transition from education to the labour market. Schools and especially VET Institutions play an important role in addressing ESL but they cannot and should not work in isolation. Comprehensive approaches that focus on the root causes of ESL are required to reduce ESL. The VET@WORK project enlightens the need of developing a new approach aimed at:

- tailoring educational interventions to the characteristics of the learners;
- adopting innovative teaching methods based on working experiences at the national and EU levels;

AT A GLANCE

Programme: Erasmus+, KA2
Duration: September 2014 – November 2016
Main outcome: Work Based Learning and its recognition in terms of competences acquired
Website: www.vetatwork.eu

- designing flexible Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) by improving the skills of VET and Enterprise staff.



YOUTHMETRE - #YENGAGE WITH US?

An exciting project gives voices to youth all over Europe

Julie Mahlerova, European Youth Press (Germany)

Speak up and engage, because YouthMetre is here to foster dialogue between youth and policy makers. YouthMetre (<http://www.youthmetre.eu>) is a unique Forward Looking Erasmus+ project that develops an e-tool to empower youth to join in and shape EU youth strategy and its implementation at local, regional and transnational levels. It specifically responds to challenges posed by the European Commission's Structured Dialogue initiative (http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/implementation/dialogue_en).

YouthMetre supports the communication between youngsters and policy makers. It provides information, inspirational practices and opportunities to discuss ideas for community development, using a bottom up approach. YouthMetre is developed in response to recent surveys and statistics that show young Europeans often feel "marginalised" or "excluded" from economic and social life.

YouthMetre trains youth workers to equip youngsters with information, advocacy skills and knowledge necessary to establish dialogue with policy makers and help them create relevant policies and practices for youth. Mobility is enabled by YouthMetre Study Groups across Europe (<http://youthmetre.eu/study-groups/>). Young people meet to discuss, express and prioritise their needs. Some of them will then participate in the YouthMetre launch event and training in Brussels in February 2017. Further mobility opportunities are planned.

AT A GLANCE

Programme: Erasmus+
Duration: 2 years
Main outcome: To empower young people to influence youth-related decisions to hold local authorities accountable, the YouthMetre shall provide young people innovative and engaging channels of information and participation.
Website: www.youthmetre.eu



© Julie Mahlerova

YouthMetre is an innovative approach to give youngsters more confidence to engage in European socio-political activities. It is an example of good practice in youth work, which encourages the development of new, personalised approaches to youth education, via the principles of voluntary participation, youth-centeredness and mutual respect. YouthMetre helps youth to answer the question 'Yengage' and make a difference.



© ARS for Progress of People

TCC-SCV

Skippers Working Without Borders

Silja Teege, Sea Teach S.L. (Spain)

The estimations for the charter industry make it an essential part of Blue Tourism, with about 50,000-75,000 professional skippers working permanently or occasionally across Europe, and small commercial vessel charter activity is estimated to generate a turnover of 6 billion Euros annually.

Yet, there are no common rules across Europe for the training and certification of professional skippers of small commercial vessels. On the contrary, the regulatory landscape is very fragmented as rules are only set at the national level. One of the consequences is that professional qualifications from one member state are not recognised by another, causing problems with recruitment, work mobility and a lack of standards for the skipper profession.

The TCC-SCV project is a follow-up project to the TRECNET project, which received the "Success Story" award by the European Commission. This time, 10 partners from 9 EU countries joined forces to use a newly developed methodology, that breaks curricula into its smallest parts, for the analysis of national curricula from seven countries: UK, Germany, Spain, France, Czech Republic, Croatia and Slovenia.

The extracted data was then used to compare these qualifications in an objective and transparent way and to demonstrate their commonalities and differences. The results were displayed in the 2 main outcomes of the TCC-SCV project: the Online Comparison Tool and the Common Core Curriculum. **The Online Comparison Tool** showed that today 80-90% of the 7 analysed qualifications are identical. It means that differences are far less than commonalities and that generally speaking the various qualifications are already fairly similar. This tool brings much needed transparency and details about the content of each qualification, making it easy to understand what additional training or competences would be required when working for another member state's flag.

The **Common Core Curriculum** was designed based on the current commonalities of the seven analysed qualifications. The differences from each of those qualifications are identified and proposed as modules. This allows professional skippers to have the common core of their existing qualification recognised and only need to re-qualify in the additional modules requested by other member states.

And this is what professional skippers need: the problem to be recognised, the proposed solution recognised and actions to be taken at the national and EU levels. The TCC-SCV Project Team invites all interested parties to send their remarks, inform companies and administrations about the tools available, and to make them known in order to raise awareness about existing solutions.

AT A GLANCE

Programme: Erasmus+, KA2 Strategic Partnership, Vocational Education and Training
Duration: 2 years, 01/09/2014 – 31/08/2016
Main outcome: Recognition of qualifications and professional mobility for professional skippers of small commercial vessels

Website: www.tcc-scv.eu



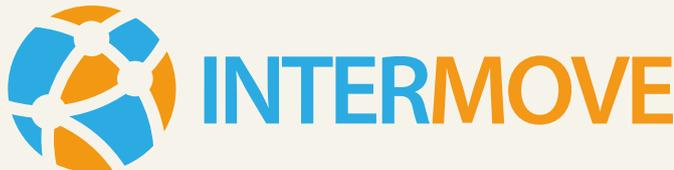
INTERMOVE

Intercomprehension and cross-cultural training for mobility operators

Juan Guerrero, INCOMA (Spain)

AT A GLANCE

Programme: Erasmus+
Duration: 28 months (01.09.2015 – 31.12.2017)
Main outcome: Training for mobility operators
Website: www.inter-move.eu



European mobility in the field of education and training has been one of the most everlasting and successful initiatives implemented by the European Commission, with millions of young Europeans benefiting from mobility schemes funded by EU programmes.

Thanks to these funding programmes, European youngsters have the chance to move abroad for short or more extensive study periods and to undertake an internship in a foreign institution. The impact of these mobility schemes is so relevant that one can even speak of an "Erasmus Generation", representing the first and true generation of Europeans who have lived, studied or worked abroad.

Despite the undeniable benefits associated with partaking in such initiatives, which are highlighted by the European Commission itself, some barriers to mobility still persist and must be addressed in order to increase the number of mobile youngsters, as stressed in the strategic framework Education & Training 2020 (ET2020).

Indeed, two of the most important obstacles to mobility refer to the knowledge of foreign languages and to what might be summed up as the difficulty of interacting with the culture of the host country (that is, cross-cultural issues or difficulties). On the other hand, these are simultaneously two of the most relevant benefits that participants gain: learning a new language and understanding a new culture.

INTERMOVE seeks to contribute by providing an answer to the need for preparing mobility participants better, by developing a training pathway that tackles these main barriers to mobility. Its action will focus on designing, developing and delivering a training solution for mobility beneficiaries that enables them to acquire intercultural competences, as well as competences related to their knowledge of foreign languages.

This will be achieved by combining intercultural preparation aimed at making mobility participants more aware of cross-cultural issues, with the

intercomprehension of French, English, Portuguese, Italian and Spanish. Intercomprehension is a form of communication in which a person uses his/her preferred language and understands the language used by the other person(s). It is linked to the concept of interaction between one or more cultures by promoting diversity, empathy, oral and non-oral communication skills: understanding a language, understanding a culture.

The core actions of INTERMOVE target mobility operators (mentors from VET providers, Universities, Chamber of Commerce, NGOs or Youth Associations, amongst others) responsible for managing the pre-departure and upon-arrival preparation of trainees and students, by providing them with resources for blended learning, e-learning and face-to-face training sessions with mobility beneficiaries.

The main INTERMOVE activities include: the development of the INTERMOVE training pathway, online learning platform and repository of open resources targeting mobility operators involved in the preparation of mobility participants; the transfer of knowledge among the consortium and to third parties through capacity building and training actions for trainers; and validation of the INTERMOVE model through a pilot run with trainees.

The INTERMOVE Consortium is composed of five European institutions with a great experience in the development of international cooperation projects and expertise in the technical topics addressed by the project.



EURO-EDUCATES

Teaching agroecology in the transitory period that is the question!

Marie-Laure Weber, La Bergerie Nationale (France)

The project supports the Europe 2020 strategies, initiated in 2010, aiming at promoting sustainable growth and therefore at protecting the environment and natural resources such as soil, water and biodiversity.

An agroecological transition will rest on the ability of the European educational systems to adjust to the innovations arising from research and development as well as from farmer practices.

The project aims to improve existing agricultural training systems and the quality of the training itself, and to increase and make possible the implementation of innovative practices.

This project enables the project partners to develop common and innovative educational tools in an European cooperative environment. The mobility element offers partners the opportunity to meet in different places, throughout the project in order to take the project forward. The partners improve their work practices by broadening their outlook beyond their countries. Teachers and trainers from all partner countries discuss together the educational tools created. These materials are disseminated to help teachers and trainers throughout Europe to transmit essential knowledge and skills for agroecological transition.

Further information about the Euro-Educates project can be found on the website www.euroeducates.eu/

AT A GLANCE

Programme: Erasmus+ Strategic partnerships for vocational education and training
Duration: September 2015 – August 2018
Main outcome: To professionalize and assist teachers and trainers working in agricultural schools in order to implement the environmental objectives initiated by the European Union.

Website: www.euroeducates.eu



Euro-EducATES

SKILLS#EU

Learning Mobility-Opening European Minds

Feargal Doherty, Foyle International (Northern Ireland)

Erasmus+ provides the opportunity for young people to travel to different European countries to help them gain essential skills for their personal and professional development. We are European organisations from Germany, Austria, France, Malta and the UK that are currently involved in a European project called Skills#EU. The organisations' expertise include Youth Work; Vocational Training; Language Learning and Intercultural Awareness. The aim of the project is to utilise the existing enthusiasm of the trainees whilst abroad and to equip them with the necessary skills to promote their European citizenship. This will fulfil their Educational Potential in the field of Social and Civic Competences, Cultural Awareness and Expression. Our overall goal with skills#EU is to develop and pilot a blended learning training programme for young interns as well as trainers to develop respective methodologies to be implemented by all European partners and training organisations participating in European mobility schemes.

This programme provides trainees with additional professional, personal and cultural information about their stay abroad and creates and develops a social environment and a network of European awareness. It equips trainees with the means to develop key competences, to reach their educational potential. Ultimately, this helps trainees develop a European perspective

AT A GLANCE

Programme: Erasmus+, KA2 YOUTH
Duration: 2 years, 01.01.2016 - 31.12.2017
Main outcome: Promoting empowerment, participation and the active citizenship of young people

Website: www.yourskills.eu

both in their personal and professional life thus preparing them for the challenges of the European labour market.



UPGRATES

Validating and Upgrading VET Trainers' and Teachers' Digital Skills (UPGRATeS)

Meike Jens, Leibniz University Hanover (Germany)

Teachers themselves comment upon the great need for professional development activities with regard to their ICT skills. This is one finding of the Teaching and Learning International Survey of the OECD (TALIS 2013).

To find out more about the exact needs of VET teachers, the UPGRATeS project partners (ICT training organizations, union, NGO and Leibniz University/Germany as coordinator) distributed questionnaires in Cyprus, Greece, Romania, Spain and Germany.

A peculiar interest of teachers is the area of internet security (data protection and safeguarding the e-reputation of their students). Other topics include learning platforms (e.g. moodle), interactive whiteboards, media editing (sound and animation) and communication means (instant messengers, Skype). At present an IT tool is being designed with which teachers can test their skills in a 2-step process. It will be ready in March 2017. With a concrete idea on what aspects need improvement, teachers may attend UPGRATeS online courses.

Colleagues of the UPGRATeS partners who were not actively involved in the development of the IT-tool etc., may take part in short term mobility training. At the end of the training, they will be issued with the EUROPASS Mobility certificate and would be able to work as multipliers.

Further info can be found here: <http://www.vupgrates.eu/>

AT A GLANCE

Programme: Erasmus+, KA2, VET
Duration: 01.10.2015 – 31.03.2018
Main outcome: To improve VET teachers ICT skills
Website: www.vupgrates.eu



TEACHING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

USE IT 2

Ayşe Bilgiç, ABİDİN PAK PAKMAYA ANADOLU LİSESİ Edremit (Turkey)

A vision of 21st Century education is learning anywhere, anytime. Today's learners expect more personalisation, collaboration and better links between formal and informal learning, with much of it being possible through digital-supported learning. Together with 6 European Education institutions (CZ, IT, EE, ES, NO, TR) we aim to increase the quality of VET education by motivating teachers to use modern methods of teaching, strongly supported by digital media, in order to comply with the needs of societies and industries. Within the project we have carried out three surveys that define the level and the needs for various educational methods, digital media and technologies used in partner schools. We have organised 5 transnational teacher training workshops including a week-long job shadowing at a hosting partner school.

We have provided 75 teachers with 125 hours of transnational training opportunity in their continuing professional development and individual learning by introducing new pedagogical methods (i.e. cooperative learning, flipped classrooms) essential for teaching in the digital age. As a result our teachers have produced their own digital teaching materials such as podcasts in VET and science subjects. All projects activities and outcomes can be followed via the project website.

AT A GLANCE

Programme: Erasmus+, Key Action II Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices
Duration: 3 years, (1.09.2015 - 01.09.2018)
Main outcome: To improve VET teachers ICT skills
Website: www.useit2blog.wordpress.com



Transnational Teacher Training and Job Shadowing in Trento, IT (February, 2016)



SKILLCO

An innovative project for facing skills gaps in the construction industry

Grit Ackermann, Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Slovenia)

Despite the high levels of unemployment observed in the EU, in several member states construction companies are confronted with difficulties in finding the right workers with the right skills.

In 2015 the construction sector in the EU represented 8.5% of the total GDP, more than 14 million workers and 3.2 million companies, the vast majority of them with less than 20 workers. It is also a sector with specific features such as, for example: high mobility of its workforce, changing working conditions (for example in order to take into account weather conditions), difficulty in attracting and retaining young people. Finally, it is a sector which plays a crucial role in "green" policies both at the EU and at the national levels, as the built environment is responsible for 40% of all the energy consumption in the EU.

Within this framework the anticipation of skills needs and the adaptation of training schemes are key elements in confronting the observed skills gaps.

The SKILLCO project, coordinated by the Chamber of Construction and Building Materials Industry of Slovenia (CCIS CCBMIS), has gathered social partners, organisations and training providers from Germany, Hungary and Slovenia, as well as FIEC (European Construction Industry Federation), the EU umbrella organisation for employers' in the construction industry.

The main goals of the project are to define and identify existing and anticipated skills needs, to elaborate and define learning units, with the use of ECVET principles, that could be integrated into formal VET programmes or used as training courses. The intention is, on the one hand, to integrate the learning unit outcomes that will be elaborated upon within the framework of the project into existing sectoral curricula, corresponding to the 4th EQF level, and, on the other hand, to include them (where possible,

AT A GLANCE

Programme:	ERASMUS+, Sector Skills Alliance
Duration:	11/2016 – 10/2019
Main outcome:	Curricula development responding to skill gaps in construction
Website:	www.skillco.eu

due to the differences in the various education systems and where required with specific adaptations) in national occupation standards and regular VET programmes. These goals, therefore, constitute the initial attempts to elaborate and implement comparable curricula in different countries, with the aim of fostering trainee and worker mobility.



Construction workers move with their work place. Construction is characterised by a high mobility of workforce among EU countries due to differences in salaries and working conditions across EU as well as project based employment.



SKILLCO

4X4 RELOADED

4 sectors, 4 countries – the VET mobility project takes off on a second round!

Carina Maas, Auxilium (Austria)

Due to the great success of the first run, 30 Austrian VET students from four main economic sectors – manufacturing technology, trade, public administration and tourism – get another chance to visit companies either in Germany, Great Britain, Spain or Italy. The individual internships usually last 2-6 weeks and are suitable for VET students in the second year of their apprenticeship training.

This mobility project aims to enhance the specialised skills of VET students as well as to elaborate upon core competences that are highly significant for living in a European community. These include improving foreign language skills and the cultivation of social and intercultural competences, e.g. the importance of teamwork, flexibility and business communication. Of course students and their supervisors count on the transfer and translation of those individual learning experiences into their home workplace environment.

AT A GLANCE

Programme:	Erasmus+ Key Action I: Learning Mobility of Individuals
Duration:	2 years, 01.06.2016 – 31.05.2018
Main outcome:	Entrepreneurial learning - entrepreneurship education
Website:	www.auxilium.co.at/mobilitaet

Besides the use of Europass and ECVET, this process is ensured by the definition of units of learning outcomes as well as the design of a learning agreement that are both characterised by students and supervisors in both countries before the internship starts. Furthermore, the participants attend a workshop before their stay abroad, designed to prepare them for the organisational and intercultural challenges they will encounter. In conclusion, the 4x4 mobility project brings European companies and their employees closer together and ensures not only the quality management and dissemination of results, but also the chance to experience the European dimension at first hand – and those experiences are treasured a lifetime.

BEST BOSS

Business successors in touristic SMEs – acquisition is possible Europe-wide!

Pia Winkler, Fachhochschule des Mittelstands (Germany)

In Europe as well as in other continents tourism is one of the largest industries and an important part of the main economy. Supporting this idea, the tourism sector is capable of creating some 100,000 new jobs per year. Against this background, tourism is often seen as one of the only economic options for less developed regions. Although (especially in the tourism industry!) mobility and internationalisation are the key success factors for people employed in this sector, it is not seen as a leading economy.

The Best Boss project seeks to overcome this situation by linking both stakeholders - universities and SMEs - to increase mobility throughout Europe and to solve the problem of insufficient staff within this industry. The main output of the project is the so called "Best Boss Inventory (BBI)", which is an assessment procedure of successor personality traits. This approach makes the task of finding a suitable business successor for a company easier and more effective – at an international level.

Especially for companies within the tourism sector the results of this project are of great interest. Most of them belong to the SMEs category, due to their limited workforce, turnover and concentration of capital. Although the project is mainly aimed at the tourism and hospitality industries, the results are also useful for SMEs in general. More information can be found via the project's website.



The Partnership of Best Boss consists of 7 partner countries (DE, BG, BE, UK, AT, SI, RO).

AT A GLANCE

Programme: Erasmus+, Strategic Partnerships (Key Action 2)
Duration: 2 years, 01.09.2014 – 31.08.2016
Main outcome: Finding business successors from all over Europe to compete against lack of specialists in tourism

Website: www.bestboss-project.eu



The Policy paper of Best Boss contains all experience, results and research approaches of the project. It is one of the main outputs of the project.

EURDIQ

International master study course to improve education quality in Russia and Kyrgyzstan

Pia Winkler, Fachhochschule des Mittelstands (Germany)

The existing programmes in Russian and Kyrgyz universities are hardly comparable with programmes within the EU, neither do they meet international standards in terms of content, delivery methods, or learning outcomes. These factors hinder students' and teachers' mobility as well as academic recognition of qualifications and degrees. For this reason, a Master's curriculum is to be developed according to international Qualification standards (European Qualification Framework).

Thus, a consortium in partnership with EU Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) was formed, consisting of 16 partners (LV, RU, KG, UK, CY, DE). All partners will help to improve the quality in tourism education by modernising the educational systems in Russia and Kyrgyzstan to strengthen their intellectual, cultural, social, scientific and technological potential.

The main focus is on reforming the education in tourism since nowadays tourism businesses have become global and international due to the intensive development of network business structures. The development strategies are aimed at overcoming the existing shortcomings and improving the quality of Higher Education through improving qualification frameworks in the tourist sector, introducing qualifications recognition procedures and establishing links with businesses and society at large to enhance the

AT A GLANCE

Programme:	Erasmus+, Strategic Partnerships (Key Action 2)
Duration:	3 years, 15.10.2015 – 14.10.2018
Main outcome:	Improvement of education quality in Russia and Kyrgyzstan in the tourism sector
Website:	www.cq30567.tmweb.ru

employability of graduates. During the three years of the project, a research phase will show similarities as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the European educational system in comparison with the Russian and Kyrgyz systems. Following this, an international master course will be established. This will be the basis for the international exchange of staff and students within the partner HEIs and beyond.



ECVET-ENTERPRISE

Training Programme and OER for VET and Enterprise Tutors

Jekaterina Minkova,
Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Latvia)

The improvement of cooperation between enterprises and VET schools is one of the most highly discussed topics at the EU level – both EU and national level studies and policy papers indicate the importance of addressing practitioners and actual users about the importance of working together and harmonising approaches for starting to cooperate on a mass scale. However, it is no less important to develop transnational cooperation where new international partnerships between VET schools in one country and enterprises in another will be established. Within this goal seven partners from 4 countries (LV, EE, FI, DE) have started to implement this new project, which offers a methodology and a EU level practical training programme for tutors supervising work-based learning in which tutors from VET are involved together with their counterparts from enterprises.

The strategy of the project is based on two priorities:

- 1) promoting work-based learning in all its forms, with special attention to apprenticeship-type training and
- 2) transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications to facilitate learning, employability and labour mobility.

AT A GLANCE

Programme:	Erasmus+
Duration:	2 years, 01.10.2016 – 30.09.2018
Main outcome:	Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices
Website:	www.chamber.lv

It is strategically important for countries to learn from each other with regards to using of the learning outcomes approach and ECVET in practice as well to work in conjunction for achieving uniform approaches, procedures and documents. The implementation of the project will provide both tangible and intangible results. The main topics of the project are recognition, transparency and certification.



ECVET-Enterprise

DIGITAL WORKPLACE

Skills for a changing work environment

Annamaria Cacchione, ARES (Italy)

The project promotes an innovative working model, to meet the needs of a world that is more than ever globalised, digitally embedded and ever changing.

As physical boundaries tend to dissolve, the traditional workplace transform itself in wherever and whenever the worker can be: at office, at home, at the airport, at someone else' office or in a co-working space.

This approach can impact positively on the lives of both workers and companies, by boosting productivity, improving quality of life and promoting a better balance between family, leisure and work time. Innovation and creativity can also be stimulated by a more flexible and worker-friendly environment and organisation.

But all this transformation requires people and companies to be properly skilled, otherwise they will not remain competitive and will not benefit from those changes.

The project addresses these needs by defining a methodology for providing key staff and companies with a set of critical skills. This skill-set is mostly digital but also encompasses communication, organisation and stress management.

The project therefore aims to:

- define the profile of the ideal digital worker and employer, so to consequently define their skill-set and competence-based training and certification
- design and test the training to acquire the skills in question. The training will be mainly digital based, delivered as a MOOC and composed of Learning Objects, Open Educational Resources and Learning Outcomes. It will be structured at EQF level 4-7 – thus essentially for HE and VET
- design and test the certification scheme for workers and employers, with clear evaluation rubrics, audit and awarding mechanism and based on innovative approaches and tools (e.g. Open Badges)
- promote the adoption of the model, acting holistically to let the various components of the labour market overcome the obstacles and enhance productivity, personal and community well being.



AT A GLANCE

Programme:	Erasmus+, VET
Duration:	2 years, 01.12.2015 – 30.11.2017
Main outcome:	promoting a new organizational approach for working, based on ITC tools and self-management skills
Website:	www.digitalworkplace.education



400 persons are expected to be directly involved in the project:

- 108 as informants
- 24 as trainees
- 80 employers/HR managers and workers as testers
- 170 participants in the multiplier events.

Trained trainers will in turn train 10 other professionals per country – about 60 other VET and HE staff will be involved.

A dissemination campaign will be developed during the whole project lifetime, so to reach the widest audience possible and raise awareness about key points. Multiplier events will take place in 4 EU countries to meet local entrepreneurs, HR managers, current digital workers as well as future ones. The dissemination plan includes press releases and targeted social media pages. A rich website is being finalised to give all hosts a taste of the digital workplace and the best learning experience.



SMEART

Knowledge Alliance between Higher Education providers and SMEs in Smart Engineering

Michael Schwaiger, E.N.T.E.R. (Austria)

AT A GLANCE

Programme:	Erasmus+, KA2, KA
Duration:	3 years, 01/2017-12/2019
Main outcome:	Development of stress-test tool for SMEs and university business cooperation model including transnational learning mobility actions
Website:	www.smeart.eu

One of the greatest challenges for Europe's engineering economies is the so called smart industry, which is understood as the intelligent IT-based components and systems within all key areas of supply, production and distribution chains. This irreversible leap forward in industrial development is comparable with the introduction of steam power, electricity or basic IT at previous stages and is therefore known as the fourth industrial revolution.

Engineering enterprises – most of all SMEs - must act quickly because they need to:

- build-up IT-controlled communication and interaction processes between various actors during the entire production and value chain
- develop and implement Cyber-Physical Systems
- redefine management and staff skills
- restructure work organisation and communication flow

The whole project idea and work is based on a university business cooperation model, whose main purpose is to prepare and up-skill SMEs

to meet the challenges of smart engineering. One of the model's crucial elements is transnational learning and know-how exchange mobility actions. In small groups of five to ten persons, representatives of SMEs and universities will together visit best practice examples all over Europe. In total 75 participants will spend more than 400 days abroad. To ensure effective know-how transfer and learning outcomes, a detailed learning agreement will be signed with all mobility participants; in this agreement, a clear set of learning outcomes is defined, which will be validated by using Europass.

We learned from previous projects that such kinds of transnational visits are very much asked for by companies, however, especially SMEs are often not provided with appropriate time, resources, contacts and methodological skills necessary for planning and implementing thematic visits abroad. By jointly organising such stays in university business mobility groups we are confident of attracting many more SMEs to participate in informal learning and know-how exchange mobility visits outside their countries. Our mobility actions will be implemented in 2018 and their preparation, implementation and outcomes will be published on the project website www.smeart.eu. In case you are interested in joining one of the mobility groups or if you are generally interested in our project please do not hesitate to contact: michael.schwaiger@enter-network.eu.



REACH OUT

Petra Rabl-Peinsipp, Jugend am Werk Steiermark (Austria)

Jugend am Werk Steiermark is actively participating in European cooperation projects with the aim of developing new methods and instruments related to the main target group. In relation to this, Jugend am Werk is involved in a broad process of exchanging experiences and using best practice transfer. This is also visible in the Erasmus+ project REACH OUT: Empowering Workers to Reach Out Young Migrants and Refugees:

The ever-growing migration potential in Europe requires active strategies of economic, social, cultural and political integration. This is necessary especially for people with long-term permission to stay in the host country. Although the vast majority of these people are actively willing to integrate, learn the language etc. social exclusion is very often the reality. This is, unfortunately, an increasing problem.

Youth and social workers play an important role in the support of young refugees in the process of overcoming barriers to successful integration. The growing demands for skills and competences by this target group require a permanent learning process and the development of knowledge, skills and

AT A GLANCE

Programme:	Erasmus+, Youth
Duration:	30.09.2016 – 29. 09.2018
Main outcome:	Training curriculum for youth workers to support them in reaching out to young migrants and refugees
Website:	www.jaw.or.at

competences to be able to properly support young refugees. The main aim of the project is to develop and test an innovative training curriculum for youth and social workers to be able to better support and mentor the target group of young refugees.



DREAM

Dynamic Reinforcement for European Adaptation of Migrants

Wolfgang Schabereiter, brainplus (Austria)

The project "DREAM: Dynamic Reinforcement for European Adaptation of Migrants" aims to reinforce migrant integration provision through the exchange of experience in areas of integration and spread the results of successful initiatives through a EU-wide network of stakeholders.

The project will develop and disseminate a comprehensive database of good practices at the EU level focused on migrant integration enhancement through education. The database will provide valuable experience from 9 European countries and beyond on effective methodologies for integration and work with migrants addressing needs related to better social, cultural and economic integration.



AT A GLANCE

Programme:	Erasmus+, strategic partnership
Duration:	01.09.2016 – 31.08.2018
Main outcome:	European-wide network of practitioners developing national and European initiatives focused on key aspects of migrant integration
Website:	www.project-dream.eu

AIMS:

- To develop and disseminate a comprehensive database of successful and effective practices and initiatives at the EU level
- To build a European-wide network of practitioners developing national and European initiatives focused on key aspects of migrant integration
- To improve the readiness of key actors and facilitators of migrant integration in the host communities
- To contribute to the improvement of the capacity and expertise of the authorities responsible for integration in countries playing the role of "transit" channels to other EU countries
- To support migrants in their preparedness to adapt to the host society
- To foster the exchange of experience at the EU level

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