



European Cooperation in VET



LEONARDO DA VINCI IN FINLAND



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DEAR READER,

AT THE MOMENT vocational education and training in Europe clearly displays, to a growing degree, a demand for innovative materials and approaches, greater transparency of VET-systems, best practices and common structures and tools. The Leonardo da Vinci programme provides concrete responses to many of these mutual needs, including also answers to some of the challenges put to us by the Copenhagen process and the Maastricht Communiqué.

Capitalising on past experience and the good practices, which we commonly refer to as “valorisation”, is a key to ensure that products and experiences of present Leonardo da Vinci projects reach the future end-users.

Throughout the years and throughout Europe much work has been done on dissemination and valorisation of project results, including activities funded by the Commission in recent years. The present day understanding of what valorisation is combines in an interesting way the thinking from e.g. the Finnish dissemination guides and tools from the late 90’s, which focused on impact, integration and up-take of results, with the research-oriented approach of the first valorisation activities also from the late 90’s by the Commission, which were focused on analysing outcomes and effects from a meta-level. Furthermore, much progress has been done lately around the improvement of transparency of qualifications. Mobility is put high on the political agenda and quality aspects from past experiences are transferred and valorised competently also within this area.

This newsletter takes stock of the Leonardo da Vinci programme in Finland, at a point when the new Lifelong Learning Programme LLP is about to be launched in only a few months. The aim is not only to look back, but also to lay the ground for the future, by inspiring to build on existing achievements. The aim is valorise and capitalise!

Firstly, the newsletter will present some figures on the second phase of the programme. Secondly, the Finnish National Agency has funded national valorisation projects in order to increase the impact of the Leonardo da Vinci projects, and to that extent some case examples are presented in the areas of quality management, CLIL and forestry.

Thirdly, further training of VET teachers and trainers is one of the priority areas in the Maastricht communiqué and it will maintain its importance in the new LLP programme. The European valorisation project *The changing role of VET teachers and trainers* is presented as an example of effective model for increasing the impact of projects on EU level.

Finally, links between the Leonardo programme and EU policy processes are highlighted by pilot and mobility project examples on such topical themes as sectoral cooperation, non-formal learning abroad and competence development of teachers and trainers.

We wish you an interesting and inspiring reading experience!

Mika Saarinen and Nina Eskola
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The aim is not only to look back,
but also to lay the ground
for the future,
by inspiring to build on existing achievements

From Copenhagen to Helsinki

– CONTINUATION OF EUROPEAN COOPERATION

in VET



European cooperation in vocational education and training (VET) is one of the main themes of the Finnish EU Presidency in the area of educational policy. The second follow-up meeting of the Copenhagen process will be held in Helsinki in the beginning of December. In this meeting the ministers responsible for VET of 32 participating countries, European social partners and the European Commission will adopt a Helsinki Communiqué outlining the measures to be taken in the process during the following years. The previous follow-up meeting was held in Maastricht in 2004.

PREPARATIONS FOR the ministerial meeting and for the Helsinki Communiqué were started already in the beginning of the year when the Finnish Ministry of Education, while preparing for the upcoming EU Presidency, sent out a questionnaire to the directors general of vocational training and to European social partners in order to consult their views on the Copenhagen process and to seek guidance on how the European cooperation in vocational education and training should be continued.

Based on the answers received, the preparation of the Helsinki Communiqué has progressed in steps. The outcomes of the questionnaire were first presented to representatives of the participating countries and to European social partners during their regular meetings in Brussels. Based on the feedback, a background document was then prepared and presented to the Education Committee of the Council. Based on the feedback from the Committee, a proposal for Council Conclusions was drafted, including the future priority areas for the process. The Conclusions, adopted in November, will serve as basis for the Communiqué, which is targeted to a wider public. It is a long process, but this has ensured a full commitment of the all parties concerned. Feedback has been positive and the preparations have proceeded smoothly and in good spirit. ▶

The Copenhagen process

has helped to raise the profile of vocational education and training

THE FOUR DIMENSIONS OF THE COPENHAGEN PROCESS

What issues have emerged during the preparation process?

Responses of the directors general and the social partners to the questionnaire underlined their positive attitude to the process and its impact. The continuation of the process was regarded important. On the basis of the responses, we can identify four different dimensions in the process.

Firstly, the respondents emphasised the political dimension of the Copenhagen process. The process has helped to raise the profile of vocational education and training both nationally and at European level. The present priorities were regarded as relevant and in line with national goals. On the other hand, it was pointed out that at this stage it is still difficult to say which of the results arise from the process itself and which from national initiatives in the field.

A second key dimension of the process has been the development of common tools and frameworks aiming at promoting mobility and at facilitating transparency of qualifications. The best known of these is the development of the new, more extensive Europass. Other measures include guidelines for lifelong guidance and counselling, common principles for quality assurance, and for recognition of non-formal and informal learning. The aim is that participating countries will take these common frameworks and tools into account in their national development work. In Finland, for example, national recommendations for quality assurance in VET, currently under development, take into account the common

principles agreed in the context of the Copenhagen process.

At the European level, a European Credit Transfer System for VET (ECVET) and a European Qualifications Framework (EQF) to facilitate transparency of European vocational qualifications are currently under development.

Increased cooperation between European countries was regarded as the third dimension of the process. Respondents considered that the Copenhagen process had provided a forum for different countries to discuss their training policies, to compare national practices and experiences and in this way inspire finding new solutions. In this way, the process has promoted mutual learning.

As the fourth dimension, respondents highlighted the democratic aspect of the process. Different actors in the vocational education and training sector have been consulted and included in the preparatory work. For example, a Europe-wide hearing regarding the European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) was launched this autumn, for example.

Some difficulties were also raised. The big differences in the VET systems and practices was considered the biggest challenge to the European cooperation. It is difficult to find common practices and methods – starting from such basic issues as common definitions of concepts. As a whole, it was thought that the process is still at an early stage. Finalising and putting results into practice will be the main challenges in the future.

WHAT WILL THE HELSINKI COMMUNIQUÉ INCLUDE?

The Copenhagen Declaration put forward eight priorities for European cooperation. The Maastricht Communiqué had 13 priorities, five at European and 8 at national level. When the ministers meet in December in Helsinki, only four years will have passed since the Copenhagen meeting – and two since Maastricht. Is there anything new can we expect to present?

The main point that came across from the survey was the importance of continuity. We need to continue the work started and focus on the essential. There should be a restricted number of priority areas for the continuation of the work. It was also regarded important that work on vocational education and training is not done in isolation but in the framework of lifelong learning with close links to the Bologna process for higher education.

The Communiqué will be finalised in December, but based on the Council Conclusions one can already see some main directions.

At political level, it is likely that the Communiqué will encourage countries to pay more and more attention to attractiveness of vocational route. This includes, for instance, the use of skills competitions.

Another priority to be proposed in the Communiqué would be the further development, testing of European tools and their implementation at the national level. Development of EQF and ECVET should be continued. It will further be proposed that European cooperation in quality assurance as well as development of Europass will be continued.

A third priority could address the need for an increased and more systematic mutual learning between participating countries. In this respect, improved and comparable European statistics are necessary to support policy decisions. One key issue could be better information on funding of vocational education and training.

Furthermore, it is likely that the Communiqué will further emphasise the importance of engaging different stakeholders, social partners, and increasingly training providers, at different stages of the work, particularly in testing and implementation of tools developed. The significance of this is further emphasised as the process is gradually moving to an implementation phase. For this reason, we will also need improved information about the process.

A major challenge for the Communiqué is to present all the political messages in a clear and understandable format.

LIFE AFTER THE HELSINKI MEETING

Political processes take time, more so when taking place at a European level.

However, we can expect that in the next couple of years the Copenhagen process will gradually move towards an implementation phase and closer to practitioners, teachers, trainers and learners. Different tools and practices will be tested and developed further. Different pilot projects will be launched under the new Integrated Lifelong Learning Programme.

A decision on EQF will probably be reached in a year or two, and it would be established by 2010. EQF will facilitate comparison of qualifications completed in different countries, although it will, of course, take time to fine tune and finalise the system.

A proposal for the European Credit Transfer System ECVET will probably be put forward during 2007 and the decision will follow in due course. ECVET would provide common tools and methods for recognition of studies completed in other countries. The use of Europass will probably be extended. It is being planned that it will include references to the EQF.

We might not yet see many changes a year after the Helsinki meeting, but by the beginning of 2010s many issues will surely have taken shape and the use of common tools will have started to become established. We will be closer to reaching one of the long-term goals: a common European area of vocational education and training, where studies completed in one country can be recognised as part of a qualification in another.

The process will continue to raise the profile and attractiveness of vocational education and training, whereas the increased cooperation between different countries will introduce new ideas to national education policies.

The wheels will keep turning, after a short stop in Helsinki.

Mikko Nupponen
Counsellor of Education
Ministry of Education
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Finalising and putting results into practice will be the main challenges in the future

Leonardo in Figures ▶

LEONARDO MOBILITY PROJECTS IN FINLAND 2000–2006

International mobility increased and became established in vocational training in Finland during the second phase of the Leonardo programme. During this programme period, a total 532 mobility projects were funded, representing a total of 7,044 grants.

70% OF LEONARDO mobility applications came from vocational schools, who submitted applications for both student placements and trainer exchanges. All regions of Finland with the exception of Åland Islands have participated in the programme.

The most popular host countries were Germany and Britain, with the Netherlands and Spain growing in popularity. The new EU member states as well as Turkey, who joined the Leonardo programme in 2004, are becoming more and more attractive project partners, too.

Since 2001, Finland has set national priorities for applications. The priorities are always linked to topical education policy issues, such as the priorities of the Copenhagen process. The national priorities have had an impact, for example, on networking at national level, and thematic and other networks of training institutions that still exist, have been established. In line with the aims of the programme, the National Agency wanted to promote dissemination of results and

products through mobility projects. The national priority in 2004 and 2005 – valorisation of project results – contributed to use and further development of products and results of not only Leonardo projects but also projects funded from other sources in mobility projects.

INITIAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING WAS THE MAIN BENEFICIARY

Initial vocational training institutions were the biggest beneficiary group of Leonardo mobility projects. The second phase of the Leonardo programme saw international projects establishing themselves in vocational training institutions. Project management skills have improved, which manifests itself in better quality of applications and projects. Along with the increased quality, competition for grants has become tougher. In Finland, Leonardo grants account for about 20% of all funding for international mobility in initial vocational training sector.

The number of placement projects of higher education institutions has remained relatively low all through the programme period, polytechnics being the most active participants.

Despite its importance, the opportunity to support international placements of young workers and new graduates was

used rarely. These projects were run, for example, by employment offices and vocational schools.

The number of applications and projects under the trainer exchange strand of the programme has risen evenly. Trainer exchanges were used to prepare for and to monitor student placements, while the need to use them to address the continuing training needs of trainers increased. Professional development of vocational teachers has been an important theme in education policy in the past few years. Teachers' placements in business and industry were also realised within the Leonardo programme.

Exchanges aimed at development of language teaching and language teaching materials have not been popular. There have only been a few applications every year and only five projects were approved during the whole programme period. This phenomenon applies to other European countries as well. The lack of applications in this strand of the programme meant that more funds could be transferred to student placements within initial vocational training in Finland, where the demand was the greatest.

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Programme Coordinator
Leonardo da Vinci programme
Centre for International Mobility CIMO

Selected projects by target group 2000–2006

Target group	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total
Initial vocational training	35	36	38	43	36	51	44	283
Higher education students	13	12	13	5	10	7	8	68
Young Workers	8	4	3	2	4	2	2	25
Trainers	17	26	15	20	14	25	34	151
Language trainers	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	5
Total	75	79	70	70	65	85	88	532

Grants awarded by target group 2000–2006

Target group	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total
Initial vocational training	341	385	453	646	632	915	945	4317
Higher education students	179	184	176	137	174	135	178	1163
Young Workers	128	35	75	15	52	17	28	350
Trainers	97	159	68	139	111	249	362	1185
Language trainers	13	4	8	0	4	0	0	29
Total	758	767	780	937	973	1316	1513	7044

LEONARDO PILOT PROJECTS IN FINLAND

The Leonardo programme has established itself as a part of international development of vocational training in Finland. During the programme phase 2000-2006, a total of 64 Finnish-led projects were funded: 47 pilot projects, 10 language projects, 2 network projects and 5 reference material projects. In addition to these, Finnish organisations were actively involved in other projects as partners.

DURING THE PAST SEVEN YEARS, more than 629 million euros were awarded to Leonardo development projects across Europe, out of which 19.6 million euros went to Finnish-led projects. This means that Finland's share of the total Leonardo budget accounted for 3.14%.

When assessing the impact of the Leonardo programme nationally, partnerships play an important role. New forms of cooperation are created through them, new models and products are transferred - and they bring project money. In projects selected between 2000-2005, a total of 573 Finnish organisations were involved as partners in projects led by Finland or other countries. 326 of these were partners in projects coordinated from abroad and 247 participated in Finnish-led projects.

On average, Finnish-led projects had 4 to 5 Finnish organisations involved in addition to the foreign partners. It is also common that projects coordinated from abroad include more than one Finnish partner. We can argue that apart from increasing international cooperation, the Leonardo programme has also contributed to increased networking within Finland, both in a geographical and sectoral sense.

Germany is by far the most popular partner country in projects coordinated by Finnish organisations. The next most popular partner countries are the United Kingdom, Spain, the Netherlands and Italy. Hungary, Poland and Estonia were the most popular partners from the new member states.

It seems clear that Finns participate most commonly in projects led by the so-called big countries, who also tend to have the most projects anyway. Most Finnish partner organisations can be found in German-led Leonardo projects, followed by projects coordinated by Spain, the UK, Sweden, France and the Netherlands.

Information about projects that are not led by Finnish organisations is collected from the Finnish partners after each selection round. Apart from basic project data, information has been gathered about how the projects are going and the different roles of partners. Based on the responses, the average amount of support Finnish partners have received has risen somewhat from previous years. When the average grant received by Finnish project partners in projects selected in 2003 was € 26,500, in 2004 it was already about € 29,000. The size of the grant depends on the size of the project and the role of the partner in

it. The share of Finnish partners has varied between 4,000 and 85,000 euros.

VERSATILE PARTNERSHIPS

One of the goals of the Leonardo programme is to promote cooperation between training institutions and employers. It is typical of Leonardo projects that thanks to links that the participating training institutions have, they involve both private and public sector employers in their region and other relevant actors, such as sectoral associations. According to the statistics about 22% of Finnish partners in projects are enterprises and about 14% represent a variety of business and industry and professional associations. However, the coordinators of Finnish-led projects are almost always training institutions with the exception of a couple of chambers of commerce.

Different level training institutions participated in the programme to much the same extent. In Finland, universities accounted for 12% of participants, polytechnics for 16%, initial vocational training institutions for 15% and vocational adult education institutions for 9%. With regard to the number of training institutions, polytechnics are clearly the most active participants in the programme. In the next phase of the EU education and training programmes, the Leonardo programme will be more clearly about development of vocational training, whereas the Erasmus programme will cater for polytechnics, which will open more opportunities for initial vocational training institutions to develop their activities through the Leonardo programme.

Leonardo projects involve actors from across Finland. The most participants clearly come from the Uusimaa region where most of the training institutions and also national associations and public authorities in Finland are located. Other active regions include Pirkanmaa, Finland Proper and Northern Savonia. Kainuu, Central Ostrobothnia and Eastern Uusimaa have had the least organisations participate in Leonardo projects in Finland. We have noticed that it is to some extent the same training institutions that accumulate project experience, because after having had good experiences of cooperation, it is easier to get involved in new projects. The challenge of the next phase of the Leonardo programme is to encourage new training institutions and sectors to participate in the programme both as partners and project coordinators.

Information about projects selected in 2006 are not available yet.

2000-2006

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Further information about projects can be found at <http://www.leonardodavinci.fi/projektit.html> in English.

Finnish organisations participating in the Leonardo da Vinci pilot projects 2000-2005

Universities	71	12.4 %
Polytechnics	88	15.4 %
Initial vocational education	83	14.5 %
Adult education	51	8.9 %
Folk highschoools	5	0.9 %
Labour market organisations	33	5.8 %
Associations, foundations	39	6.8 %
Apprenticeship	2	0.3 %
Government	50	8.7 %
SME (<250)	105	18.3 %
Enterprises (>250)	20	3.5 %
Chamber of Commerce	8	1.4 %
Research organisations	11	1.9 %
Other	7	1.2 %
Total	573	100%

European partners in Finnish led Leonardo da Vinci projects 2000-2005

	European partners in Finnish led Leonardo da Vinci projects 2000-2005	Finnish partners in European Leonardo da Vinci projects 2000-2005
Austria	17	19
Belgium	10	8
Bulgaria	4	2
Cyprus	0	0
Czech Republic	8	3
Germany	55	52
Denmark	10	15
Estonia	15	5
Greese	18	10
Spain	28	24
France	19	23
Hungary	21	3
Ireland	15	10
Iceland	1	3
Italy	24	19
Liechtenstein	0	1
Lithuania	3	3
Luxembourg	1	1
Latvia	8	6
Malta	0	3
Netherlands	28	23
Norway	6	10
Poland	17	7
Portugal	10	12
Romenia	3	8
Sweden	20	24
Slovenia	3	1
Slovak Republic	9	7
Turkey	0	0
United Kingdom	40	24
Switzerland	1	0
	394	326

Increasing the Impact of Projects ▶

National valorisation projects

– FROM INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO NATIONAL IMPACT

IN THE SUMMER 2005 the Finnish National Agency for the Leonardo da Vinci programme launched a national valorisation call. Out of 14 applications 7 projects were funded for a one-year period. Priority was given to projects contributing to the objectives of the Copenhagen process. Altogether 24 Finnish organisations have participated in the projects.

The aim of the national valorisation projects was to identify, collect and analyse the results i.e. products, processes, models, and best practices of previously funded Leonardo da Vinci projects around the chosen theme. The projects identified 3–5 background projects dealing with the topic and analysed their results. The background projects represented both pilot and mobility projects, either with a Finnish coordinator or partners.

Another aim was to disseminate and transfer the results of previous projects to new target groups and potential users, sectors or regions. The projects also anticipated future needs of the sector or theme in question and come up with recommendations for future activities, sector specific competence requirements, new project ideas or development areas.

In addition to the sector or theme specific surveys, the activities of the projects have included e.g. publishing the results in reports, articles or on a website; organising national or international seminars for informing potential users and stakeholders about the results.

The valorisation activities have given possibilities for setting up national thematic networks with other organisations working with the same themes and challenges. Furthermore, sectoral cooperation and cooperation between IVET and higher education have been an important aspect of the projects. An analysis on the impact of projects and the whole model of funding this kind of activity will be implemented by the NA when the projects are finished.

In the following pages we have included three examples of projects funded under the national call.

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Priority was given to projects
contributing to the objectives
of the Copenhagen process

Learning quality

FROM OTHERS

Improving and assuring quality is one of the main goals of the Copenhagen process. The aim of a project led by the Finnish National Board of Education (Laatua toisilta oppimalla – learning quality from others) is to support training providers in quality management and its development at national level. The project made use of results and good practices of Leonardo projects coordinated by other countries.

THERE IS NO SINGLE definition for quality in vocational education and training. It is more useful to examine quality in different EU countries in relative terms and in context. In the end, quality in vocational education and training is always linked to the needs and expectations of customers.

FIVE PROJECTS IN FOCUS

In Leonardo projects, the word 'quality' was overwhelmingly used to describe an effort to meet the needs and expectations of target groups as well as possible. Actual methods of quality management and evaluation were addressed much less.

Projects focusing on quality management developed methods for accreditation of competences of staff, study programmes and organisations. Other projects dealing with quality can roughly be divided into those focusing on environmental quality systems and those aiming to create or maintain quality networks.

On the basis of an initial survey, products and results of five projects that did not have ready distribution channels within vocational education and training in Finland were selected for a more detailed analysis. To complement the analysis, three project coordinators or partners were interviewed.

CRITERIA FOR ANALYSIS

Criteria for the analysis were designed on the basis of aims of the national development plan for education and research (KESU), the wishes expressed by the training providers in the survey and the European Common Quality Assurance Framework (CQAF) model.

The aim of the CQAF model, developed in connection of the Copenhagen process, is to help develop, monitor, evaluate and improve quality systems and management procedures at different levels,

including concrete tools. The model includes sections for planning, implementation, evaluation and assessment and review (feedback and procedures for change) each of which have their own quality criteria. Self-assessment combined with external evaluation are the main methods used.

The criteria selected from the aims of KESU include meeting the needs of working life, quality assurance, promotion of entrepreneurship and raising the education level of adults. Training providers hoped for, among other things, tools for systematic feedback and change procedures, consolidation of different methods, and development and use of quality management systems.

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE IS VALORISATION OF RESULTS

Based on the survey, the biggest challenge is the valorisation of products and results after the end of projects. The results of the projects studied had not been used much after the projects had ended and they had not been actively disseminated outside the original target group.

It is essential for projects to be integrated in the operation of training organisations. In this way, we can make sure that results will continue to be used even when the staff change. For this reason, good practices should also be disseminated more within one's own organisation.

The target groups of projects were often small and medium-sized enterprises or adult education institutions. However, products and materials created were often so general that they could easily be adapted for quality management of VET



provider and individual units. This would require, however, that used examples, in particular, are adapted to suit the needs of training institutions. Material should also be available in Finnish.

TOOLS FOR CHANGE

Most of the projects studied mainly dealt with the planning stage of quality assurance, such as accreditation projects, or with the implementation stage. There were also a few projects that dealt with self-assessment and external evaluation.

There seems to be a clear need to develop methods and tools for making changes as part of on-going quality improvement. Many respondents also just wanted simple methods and tools for quality management. There was also a need to develop methods to address security and environmental issues and welfare at work.

Leena Koski
Counsellor of Education
Finnish National Board of Education

THE NEXT THREE PROJECTS ARE GOOD EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS FOCUSING ON QUALITY ISSUES:

Quality management Systems training for SMEs

- Coordinator: IDEC SA, Greece tools and materials for the use of a quality management system following the ISO
- 9001:2000 standard basic information about quality, features of the ISO 9001:2000 standard and other
- standards material and exercises for contact teaching and self-study.

IMPROHEALTH – Improvement of the Quality, Effectiveness and Efficiency of Healthcare Services through Vocational Education and Training

- Coordinator: Technical university of Kosice, Slovakia
- training on quality in a virtual quality centre
- tools for self-assessment of organisations (EFQM and Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award models), benchmarking and strategic leadership (ISO 19011:2003 standard, Balanced Scorecard)
- material and exercises for self-study.

CD-EQATE – Curriculum Development for External Quality Assessment Experts training

- Coordinator: Methodological Centre for Vocational Education and Training, Lithuania.
- materials, methods and guidelines for training of external evaluators
- a model for external evaluation of quality for vocational training institutions
- information about different methods of quality management and assessment (ISO, EFQM, TQM)
- material and exercises for contact teaching and self-study

Quality in vocational education and training is always linked to the needs and expectations of customers

JOINTS surveys projects

IN WOOD TECHNOLOGY

”In a good project in wood technology there is a real link between training and project work”. “Both teachers and project coordinators think that the most rewarding things are working together, new contacts, exchange of experience, new ideas and information”.

VIEWS ON WHAT MAKES a good project were surveyed in a Finnish project JOINTS that surveyed Leonardo pilot projects in wood technology and the results were presented in the final seminar of Far Forest and DEWEBAS projects – Wood Professionals of the Future – in Lahti, Finland, on 14 September 2006.

Piero Baroni, the Vice-President of the Wood and Forest Committee of European Federation of Building and Wood Workers (EFBWW) stressed the importance of networks:

“It is vital that solid networks are created across the leading countries within the timber and furniture industry which do not simply cover businesses that operate within the timber and furniture industry, but also other institutions on which this industry will be dependent both now and in the future. The interaction between the industry, training institutions and the European organisations within the industry now plays an important role.”

The main goals of the JOINTS project are to disseminate good practices and results and to find out the views of actors in the wood technology sector on what kind of projects will be needed in the future.

The views of a network that develops wood technology training in Southern Finland were surveyed during autumn of 2006. The network represents both initial vocational training institutions and higher education institutions.

The project also organised a workshop to teachers and project coordinators in the sector in Finland. The workshops offered participants an opportunity to disseminate good project results to others working in the same field and to discuss future needs and new project ideas.

Sannakaisa Raatikainen
Adviser
Salpaus Further Education

The project is coordinated by Salpaus Further Education from Päijänne-Tavastia region in Finland. Päijänne-Tavastia and Lahti regions are the biggest producers of wood products in Finland. Wood technology training in the region is also nationally significant. Salpaus Further Education has strong links with the industry and other Finnish training institutions and has participated in many international projects. The institution also prepares Finnish experts for national, European and international vocational skills competitions of young people, such as the WorldSkills and EuroSkills.



Learning under construction

– FUTURE PROSPECTS OF CONTENT AND LANGUAGE INTEGRATED LEARNING FOR MOBILITY AND COMPETENCE-BUILDING 2006–2012

CLIL is currently a prioritized educational approach which is now showing signs of entering VET and professional education across Europe. There is an acute need to improve quality of teaching through a foreign language at all levels, particularly in terms of learning outcomes and teacher competences.

THINK TANK
– BRINGING EXPERTISE TOGETHER

In 2006, the University of Jyväskylä, coordinated a national valorisation project funded by CIMO. This was to examine one aspect of educational change which developed in Finland, and across Europe, from 1994 onwards. The project Think Tank Processes and Event – Future Prospects of Content and Language Integrated Learning for Mobility and Competence-building examined teacher attitudes towards specific types of integrated methodologies used over the previous decade in language teaching. The aim was to examine if these alternative methodologies did improve the quality and effectiveness of education and training programmes.

The main activity of the valorisation project was to organise an international conference on the future prospects of CLIL which was organised in Helsinki in June 2006. It brought together European expertise and experience in using CLIL to promote competence-building for internationalisation, alongside input from international experts and Leonardo projects.

CLIL – FROM RHETORIC TO ACTION

In a globalized world we have to increasingly re-think ‘how we do what we do’ in order to not just cope with change, but also enjoy the opportunities it presents. We need to prepare young people for today and tomorrow, not yesterday, people

in education have had to re-think ‘how we teach what we teach’.

This has resulted in educational innovations which better prepare young people for their futures in the knowledge society. One major innovation, called Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), involves competence-building in languages and communication at the same time as developing vocational and professional knowledge and skills. It’s not language learning, and it’s not subject learning. It is a fusion of both.

CLIL means *using as you learn and learning as you use, not learning now for use later*. This directly complements learning styles preferred by the newly emerging internet generation now attending our schools and colleges. And it is leading to very promising results with students, teachers, colleges and the communities they serve.

The first ever European survey on CLIL in the primary and secondary sectors was published by the European Commission’s Eurydice in 2006. In the same year, a Finnish Think Tank examined the impact of this educational approach on vocational and professional education. An internet-based questionnaire was fielded amongst subject/skills and language teachers familiar with CLIL methodologies. The results were grouped according to the added value which this educational approach can realize for students, staff, institutions, and communities/regions.

The findings were reported in film form at CLIL 2006 conference which was the first major event on CLIL since the 2005 European Union Presidency conference in Luxembourg which led to the EU Council of Ministers’ Resolution: There is a need for greater public awareness of the benefits of the CLIL approach and the contribution it could make to enhance individual and societal prosperity and social cohesion. ▶

CLIL it is a fusion of
both language
and subject learning

THE ADDED VALUE OF CLIL – THINK TANK OUTCOMES

For the student, CLIL has been found to enable:

- Self-confidence in communication, intercultural awareness and skills,
- Working life knowledge and skills,
- Educational and working life mobility,
- Stimulating and innovative learning environments, and techniques,
- Recognition and validation of additional competencies,
- A positive foundation towards lifelong learning.

For the teacher, CLIL has been found to enable:

- Competence-building in innovative methods, materials, and e-learning,
- International individual and institutional networking, and professional mobility,
- Good practice through cooperation with teachers in other countries,
- Greater synergy with the expectations of employers in the Knowledge Society,
- Higher levels of professional satisfaction.

For the schools and colleges there are also tangible benefits:

- Stronger convergence with working life stakeholders, and enhanced profile for attracting students,
- Successful integration of staff and students from diverse backgrounds,
- Easier access to high-profile international partners for educational cooperation,
- Enhanced income generation opportunities.

Positive impact on communities and regions:

- Supported internationalization strategies,
- Greater attractiveness for international companies wishing to set up operations locally,
- Availability of multilingual locally-educated employees,
- Enhanced income generation possibilities,
- Enhanced position for attracting and retaining local residents.

Finland Think Tank Partnership

- University of Jyväskylä
- Helsinki Polytechnic
- Laurea Polytechnic
- North Karelia Polytechnic
- Savo Consortium for Education

One strong message relates to the methodologies and staff cooperation which can be found in CLIL. There is a frequent misunderstanding in thinking that CLIL simply means changing the language of instruction. This is not the case. CLIL is an educational approach which involves both change of language, but also very specific authentic, and inter-actonal, methodologies.

The experience of education and training in classrooms, colleges, factories, laboratories, or even aircraft hangars, mirrors the 'needs' of the wider environments and societies in which they are located. One reason why employers, politicians and others are interested in this approach relates to economic success.

Communicator self-confidence and the ability to use different languages can be important workforce factors in making a location attractive for international organisations, and strengthening income generation across the socio-economic spectrum.

As experience grows, insight develops. The increasing use of CLIL methodologies in vocational and professional education involves teaching staff undertaking new roles to provide education closely geared to the challenges and opportunities of working life in the Knowledge Society.



For further information see
<http://www.cilconsortium.jyu.fi>

For information on CLIL in Europe:

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) at School in Europe (2006), <http://www.eurydice.org>

People in education
have had to re-think
'how we teach
what we teach'

David Marsh
Coordinator of the valorisation project
UNICOM
Continuing Education Centre,
University of Jyväskylä, Finland

María Jesús Frigols
External Reflection Partner
CE Cheste, Conselleria de Cultura,
Educación y Deporte de la Generalitat
Valenciana, Spain

The Changing Role of VET Teachers and Trainers ▶

LEONARDO OFFERS OPPORTUNITIES

FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS

Internationalisation, new teaching technological solutions, new teaching methods and changes in working life create a need for lifelong learning for vocational teachers across Europe. Trainers are required to be able to adjust to constant changes and to update their professional competences along their work. The Centre for International Mobility CIMO wanted to find out what kind of teacher training projects were funded through the Leonardo programme during the 2000s, what kind of products and good practices were designed and how the projects had met teachers' training needs.

THESE QUESTIONS were tackled in the valorisation project **The changing role of VET teachers and trainers (TTVET)**. This article will present the project and results of an external evaluation of its impact.

A NETWORK OF EXPERTS HELPED IN PLANNING THE PROJECT

At the beginning of the TTVET project, the participating national agencies linked with national experts in the field – education authorities, teacher training providers, the national coordinators of the Training of Trainers Network (TTNet) of Cedefop and social partners. In cooperation with these experts, each country produced a description of training of vocational teachers, their continuing education and training needs and most important trends regarding changes in their work.

The descriptions provided a context for the Leonardo projects selected for analysis and enabled us to examine their results against national initiatives. The background and needs analysis also helped in preparation of a thematic seminar run as part of the TTVET project, because the national experts enabled us to select themes the actors in the field were genuinely interested in.

TEACHERS AND WORKPLACE INSTRUCTORS – THE FORGOTTEN TARGET GROUPS

At the first stage of the TTVET project, information was gathered on projects dealing with professional development of teachers from all the countries participating in the Leonardo programme. As a result, we received about 70 project descriptions from 20 countries. The projects were very varied with regard to their goals and activities. About a half of the projects were exchange projects and a half pilot projects. Continuing education and training of teachers was not always the main goal of projects, but a kind of by-product. In many projects, teachers were a rather vaguely defined target group.

The content analysis of the projects was done by a research group from the Research Centre for Vocational Education of the University of Tampere, consisting of docent **Seija Mahlamäki-Kultanen**, researcher **Marko Susimetsä** and professor **Paul Iisley**. The aim of the researchers was also to present recommendations for future to different target groups. The results of this study will be presented in more detail in the article of Seija Mahlamäki-Kultanen.

With the support of the Leonardo da Vinci programme it is possible to carry out exchanges and pilot projects the goal of which is to develop continuing education of teachers. Professional development of teachers has been a specific priority in application rounds 2005–2006.



IMPORTANCE OF TRAINING OF VOCATIONAL TEACHERS HAS INCREASED

The main seminar of the project – the changing role of VET teachers and trainers – took place on 3–4 April 2006 and there we heard presentations about the position of vocational teachers and workplace instructors in the EU. Speakers included **Peter Baur** from the European Commission; the leader of the TTnet network of the Cedefop, **Mara Brugia**; representatives of training institutions, **Torben Jensen** from Denmark and **Zuzana Svobodová** from the Czech Republic; and a business representative **Ingi Bogi Bogason** from Iceland. Furthermore, Seija Mahlamäki-Kultanen presented the results of the TTVET study and **Margaret Molloy** from the European Commission gave a key-note speech about the significance of valorisation of project results.

In his presentation, Peter Baur pointed out how training of vocational teachers has become an important political priority in the 2000s. Teachers play a key role in achieving the goals of the Lisbon process.

Mara Brugia presented results of a wide European study on training systems of vocational teachers. It is interesting how in some places professional development of teachers is seen as a tool of strategic personnel management whereas in other places funding for professional development is very difficult to find.

On the whole, there is very little training – basic or continuing – available to workplace instructors. At European level, the field of continuing training of vocational teachers is scattered, and there is no statistical data available on teachers' participation in continuing training.

THE ROLE OF A TEACHER HAS CHANGED

It is possible and necessary to develop teacher training at European level. The project exhibition of the seminar and working groups showcased products of almost 30 projects as examples of successful cooperation. Case studies were divided into the following themes: language competence of vocational teachers; multicultural skills; new and innovative teaching methods; training of workplace instructors; teachers' working life competences; and transparency of skills. The themes came out of the TTVET analysis. Detailed descriptions of products are available on the TTVET project website.

Speeches on motivating teachers, recognition of skills, cooperation with business and industry and continuing training models were given in the round table

groups. Although trends and challenges are similar in different countries, there are great differences in systems. In some places it is considered whether vocational teachers in certain fields should regularly take up work placements to update their skills, whereas in other places there are no obligations for teachers to take up further or continuing training and it is up to teachers themselves whether they participate in professional development or not.

The role of teachers has changed dramatically and besides teaching, they are expected to participate actively in developing training institutions. More attention should be paid to motivating teachers, for example, by increasing their links to business and industry. The seminar participants thought that more national resources should be allocated to professional development of teachers.

High and theoretical qualification requirements were regarded as a common challenge to vocational teacher training. Training times are long and for this reason it is difficult to attract professionals from industry to teaching. The average age of vocational teachers in Europe is high and newcomers are needed. The teaching profession should be made more attractive career option.

Based on the discussions in the seminar, for example, the following themes have had little consideration in the Leonardo programme: administrative competences of teachers (e.g. knowledge about quality assurance systems), guidance and counselling skills, working life competences, entrepreneurship and new teaching methods.

NATIONAL FOLLOW-UP SEMINARS HELPED PUT RESULTS INTO PRACTICE

After the main seminar, each partner country organised a national follow-up seminar to present results of the main seminar, but on some occasions special national themes were also raised. The theme of the follow-up seminar in Finland was training of workplace instructors and speakers included, for example,

employers who talked about cooperation between training providers and workplaces.

The national follow-up seminars enabled us to link the results from the main seminar to national development work and developers of teacher training received concrete ideas about how they could benefit from EU funding in the future. From the point of view of the national agency for the Leonardo programme, it was very valuable to forge closer links with different stakeholder groups and experts in the field and to encourage new people to get involved in development work. The Hungarian national follow-up seminar will be presented in the brochure as an example.

WHAT DID WE ACHIEVE?

The TTVET project helped us open debate about the importance of professional development of teachers and about possibilities of using the EU programmes to support continuing education. At best, we promoted the use of existing products and introduced new project ideas. In the future, applicants can develop existing products further, for example. Professional development of teachers and transfer of innovations will be a part of the Leonardo programme in the next application round.

The model we used in this valorisation project – an initial survey and a needs analysis, organisation of the main event, and national follow-up measures – was an efficient way of working. The three-stage model gave the year a good structure. Time allowing we could have gone even further with the analysis of good practices. A more detailed analysis of transferability will be needed in order to really be able to transfer results to new countries and new sectors.

Teachers will not be forgotten even though the TTVET is finished. In autumn 2006, Iceland will organise a contact seminar on continuing education of teachers and in spring 2007 there will be a seminar on TTVET in Istanbul. ▶

Further information

The changing role of VET teachers and trainers (TTVET) project:
<http://www.ttvnet.org>

European network of vocational teachers and trainers:
<http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/default.asp>

European policy documents on teacher training:
http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/testingconf_en.html

Support material on valorisation:
http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/leonardo/new/valorisation/index_en.html

SUPPORT FOR VALORISATION IN THE FUTURE

The main goal of the project was to disseminate results and good practices achieved in the Leonardo programme, but traditionally dissemination activities are only one part of a project's activities. We can ask whose responsibility in the end it is to integrate results of big pilot projects after they are finished and how we could support the projects in the future. There is no single answer. It is obvious that it is the responsibility of projects to disseminate their results and make plans for their use already during the project, but more wide thematic follow-up should be done at EU level with the support of the European Commission or the national agencies administering the programmes. An idea about European clusters that could support dissemination of results and provide information to new projects was raised during the main seminar.

Paula Rouhiainen
Senior Adviser
Leonardo da Vinci programme
Centre for International Mobility CIMO

WHAT IS TTVET?

TTVET is a valorisation project funded by the European Commission. It ran during 2005–2006 and ended in September 2006. TTVET analysed how the professional development needs of vocational teachers have been addressed in the Leonardo programme: what kind of continuing education products have been developed, how exchanges have been used for this purpose, what kind of good practices have been developed in training institutions, what kind of challenges to co-operation have been encountered and what kind of recommendations can be given. The project was coordinated by the Leonardo unit of the Centre for International Mobility CIMO.

Partners:

AUSTRIA:
Leonardo da Vinci National Agency in Austria
ESTONIA:
Foundation for Lifelong Learning Development Innove
ICELAND:
The Research Liaison Office of the University of Iceland (RLO)

SWEDEN:
The International Programme Office for Education and Training
IRELAND:
Léargas
THE CZECH REPUBLIC:
National Training Fund
HUNGARY:
Tempus Public Foundation (TPF)
DENMARK:
CIRIUS

RESULTS OF THE PROJECT:

Report:
Leonardo da Vinci project supporting the changing role of VET teachers and trainers
Seminar report and presentations
Project catalogue
Evaluation report
Examples of national follow-up seminars

All project results are available on the project website at <http://www.ttvvet.org>

DOES THE LEONARDO DA VINCI PROGRAMME ADDRESS THE CHANGING SKILLS NEEDS OF VOCATIONAL TRAINERS IN EUROPE?

The future skills needs of vocational trainers and workplace instructors are very similar all over the world. Teachers and workplace instructors should adopt new views on learning, teachers, and guidance and counselling. Students learn increasingly at work, on information networks and other new learning environments. Guidance and assessment of learning results will become more prominent parts of teachers' work.

IN A CONSTRUCTIVIST LEARNING theory students' background needs to be taken into account. As career paths are becoming discontinuous, periods of study and work will alternate in people's lives, and their ages, skills and competences, experiences and study skills will vary, too.

The common principles of skills requirements for teachers, designed by the European Council and the European Commission in 2004, stress the importance of lifelong learning, mobility of teachers, and networking. The Leonardo da Vinci programme is a key tool and resource for achieving these goals. How well do the different projects and exchanges of trainers funded through the programme support professional development of teachers at the moment?

THE TTVET PROJECT BROUGHT GOOD PILOT PROJECTS DEALING WITH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL TEACHERS AND WORK- PLACE INSTRUCTORS TO LIGHT

The aim of the **TTVET project – changing role of VET teachers and trainers in Europe** – was to increase the impact of successful Leonardo da Vinci projects on professional development of teachers.

The activities of the TTVET project included collection of information about skills needs of teachers in the partner countries and about good projects in this field from all European countries participating in the Leonardo programme, a joint European report on the results of the project, a European seminar and national follow-up seminars.

The first survey was carried out in August 2005 by sending all national agencies administering the Leonardo pro-

gramme a request to propose good pilot and trainer exchange projects on professional development of teachers for more detailed analysis. Proposals were received from 17 national agencies out of 32, including all the project partner countries and Poland, Norway, Lithuania, Britain, France, Turkey, Germany and Greece.

A total of 70 Leonardo pilot or exchange projects that developed competences of teachers in some way were proposed. All proposals were analysed and 18 were selected for a more detailed analysis and to be interviewed.

The goals and results of pilot and exchange projects were analysed by comparing them to the results of teachers' skills needs analysis made in each participating country. A previous skills needs analysis carried out by Corti and Volmari for the TTNET network was also used as a basis for the analysis. The results of the TTVET valorisation project are published (Mahlamäki-Kultananen, Susimetsä ▶



It is possible and necessary
to develop
teacher training
at European level

We will need new projects which will have the development of skills of teachers and workplace instructors as the main goal

& Ilsley 2006) and can be downloaded at <http://www.ttvvet.org>. In this article I will only present the key findings of the project.

PROJECTS ADDRESS THE RIGHT ISSUES, BUT MORE RESOURCES ARE NEEDED

Those participating in Leonardo projects seem to have been familiar with the increased skills requirements of teachers, because many pilot and exchange projects addressed exactly those skills needs that most experts in the field also regard as important, and they were engaged in valuable and relevant work. There are many needs, though, and only some of them have been sufficiently addressed and allocated resources. Those development needs that have been addressed by relatively many Leonardo projects are printed in bold in graph 1 – internationalisation, IT development, new and changing target groups and la-

bour market development; others – listed in the circles in graph 1 – have received little attention.

By their nature, international projects advance internationalisation, networking and the use of IT, but the sector would clearly benefit from more resources. Development of skills of workplace instructors is clearly addressed less than those of teachers. New, innovative models for professional development are needed to help accommodate learning and the hectic work of teachers and workplace instructors better. Few teachers and workplace instructors have the time to participate in traditional training courses and they don't see their relevance in their everyday work.

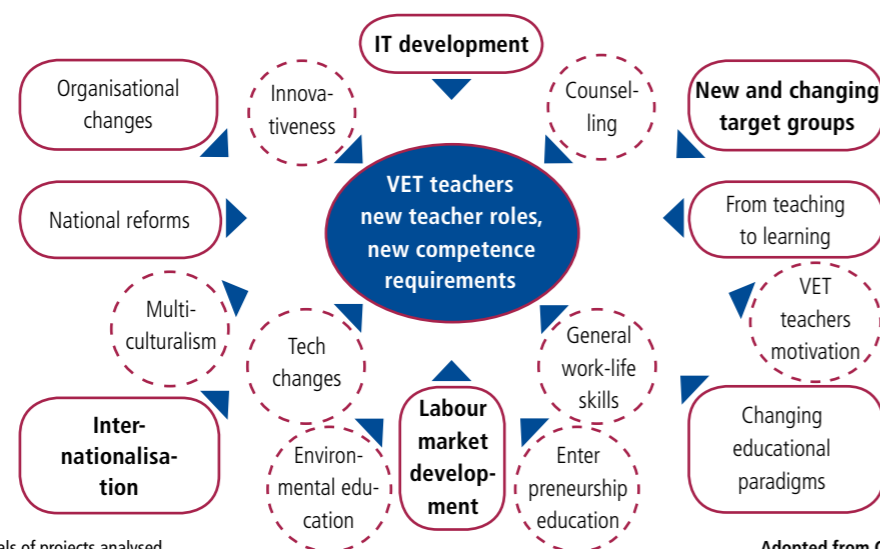
MUCH REMAINS TO BE DONE

In the future, we will need new projects which will have the development of skills of teachers and workplace instructors as the main goal and which will address the skills needs that have received little attention so far, such as lifelong learning abilities of teachers and questions of teacher motivation and well-being at work. Those working with Leonardo projects have their own development needs: they should realise the conflict between the everyday needs of vocational teachers regarding their work and ways of speaking and working in projects that easily remain at too abstract a level.

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Docent, Research Centre for Vocational Education, University of Tampere
Lecturer (part-time leave of absence),
Karkku College for Home Economics and Social Services

Mahlamäki-Kultanen, Seija, Susimetsä, Marko & Ilsley, Paul 2006: Leonardo da Vinci projects supporting the changing role of VET teachers and trainers. Centre for International Mobility CIMO. Edita, Helsinki. http://www.leonardodavinci.fi/publications/TTVET-selvitys_pdf-julkaisu.pdf

National needs analysis versus the targets of Leonardo da Vinci -projects under study



Graph 1. Skills needs and goals of projects analysed

Adopted from Cort, Härkönen & Volmari (2004)

DO TRAINERS IN FINLAND GET ENOUGH SUPPORT FOR THEIR GROWING ROLE IN

VET?

The latest VET reform in Finland has meant that more learning takes place in the workplace. Consequently, there is more responsibility and pressure on the workplace than ever before. The list of responsibilities of the trainer is overwhelming; in addition to teaching the student the job, the trainer is expected to guide and counsel as well as assesses the students' performance.

THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON IN THE WORKPLACE

For the students the trainer is the most important person in the workplace. His role is decisive in the success of on-the-job learning. The trainer has three roles. He functions as an instructor, demonstrating how the theoretical knowledge and authentic work processes integrate; as a mentor, conveying all the tacit knowledge present in the workplace; as a tutor motivating the young student to stay in the trade.

If the student is lucky, he finds himself in a big enterprise where the trainers can reserve specific time to supervising and guiding the students. In many cases however, the trainer lacks time for instructing and supervising the student.

TRAINING OF TRAINERS: WIDE GAP BETWEEN EXPECTATIONS AND OFFERED SUPPORT?

When we talk about trainers we list a lot of "shoulds". The trainer should be an expert in his own field and have a good command of the practices in the workplace. The trainer should be interested in and capable of supporting the students' professional growth. The trainer should have a sound knowledge of the education system and qualifications. He should also be able to create and maintain networks that benefit VET and be familiar with the factors behind the enterprise's productivity, efficiency and quality. Since the inclusion of skills demonstrations into all vocational upper secondary qualifications, the workplace and the trainers have a bigger responsibility in assessing the students' learning outcomes.

What support is there for trainers to fulfil all these "shoulds"? There are no formal qualification requirements for trainers. Basically the only formal training available today is the 2-credit course (ca 80 hours of work), which is based on a national core curricula. This training has been organised almost solely with ESF funding. A challenge for the future is how to make this training a permanent part of the system without reliance on external funding. A further challenge are the trainers in small enterprises who have difficulties in participating in training organised outside the workplace.

The trainers need more training in a job which is becoming increasingly complex. In addition to the "shoulds" listed above, developments such as the integration of students with special needs into mainstream education have meant that also the trainers should possess competences related to special needs education. Particularly so, as the tendency is to increase the amount of on-the-job learning with students with special educational needs.

FUTURE TRAINING NEEDS OF TRAINERS

Studies point to the fact that the majority of trainers feel that they need continuing training. They need skills e.g. for motivating unwilling students and better knowledge of the curricula of their field. The trainers have also voiced a need for training in assessment methodology and practices.

The students' skills demonstrations and on-the-job learning periods should be assessed in a valid, reliable, objective, transparent and fair way. The assessors' pro-

professionalism and training can be decisive regarding the students' further development and prospects in the labour market.

The understanding is widely that trainers need more support in their work which is becoming increasingly important and complex. There is a need for:

- closer cooperation between the teachers and enterprises where teachers could coach the trainers while supervising the students or during the teachers' own on-the-job period.
- more systematic approaches to addressing the training needs of trainers: e.g. so that student guidance and assessment are included already in upper secondary vocational qualifications and should be addressed through continuing training.
- future policies encouraging enterprises to take a greater role and responsibility in VET and encourage the management to ensure adequate resources for on-the-job learning

In addition to VET teachers, trainers are the keys to achieving the Lisbon goals on the quality, effectiveness and accessibility in education. A profession which used to be about simple and straightforward transfer of knowledge and skills to students has become much more complex. This complexity means that the professionalisation and support of trainers should be high on the political agenda.

Publication *VET Teachers and Trainers in Finland* available at <http://www.minedu.fi> > in English > Publications

Kristiina Volmari
Senior Adviser
Finnish National Board of Education

TTVET FOLLOW-UP SEMINAR IN HUNGARY

The Hungarian Leonardo National Agency (NA) organised the first conference related to the TTVET project in December 2005 with the title "The Leonardo programme as a tool for the in-service training of teachers and trainers".

The Hungarian Leonardo NA organised the one-day follow-up conference in Budapest. In Leonardo terms it could be called a dissemination conference, where pilot and mobility projects related to the themes of the TTVET project were presented.

The considerable interest in the conference was certainly also reinforced by the fact that the event was combined with the Hungarian Quality in Mobility 2005 award ceremony.

All stakeholders in the training of teachers and trainers were invited, although not evenly represented: there were many more VET school teachers and principals present than, for example, workplace instructors or teacher training providers.

Combined with short presentations about the TTVET project and the TTVET study participants were presented a list established on the Tempus Public Foundation website. The list is a collection of relevant institutions and their websites which may serve as a source of information when looking e.g. for best practices or existing projects in VET teacher training.

After that colleagues and experts who participated in the Helsinki conference workshops presented good projects and best practices presented there, e.g. the Finnish Talent project of the Federation of Education of Central Ostrobothnia, a case of on-the-job learning abroad for teachers. In order to show participants that it is possible to implement such project not just in Finland but also in Hungary, a Hungarian cook was invited to tell about his personal experiences of on-the-job learning abroad in the frame of a Leonardo project.

The event concluded with moderated discussions inspired by speeches heard at the Helsinki conference. After hearing about the widespread VET related activities of Škoda Auto in the Czech Republic, Hungarian examples of co-operation among training institutions and companies were presented to participants: the case of a secondary vocational school in Budapest with MALÉV Hungarian Airlines, and another case of a school for disabled students in a smaller town with local enterprises.

All this concluded in a lively discussion which highlights one of the challenges the Hungarian VET system has to face in the future: co-operation among different stakeholders.

Bianka Hajdu
Tempus Public Foundation, Hungary

WEBSITES

The seminar speeches and the descriptions of the 20 presented projects and the summary of the round table discussion were published in a bilingual (English-Hungarian) booklet which is available under the *Library* heading of the Tempus Public Foundation website: <http://english.tpf.hu/>
Hungarian National Education Observatory: <http://www.observatory.org.hu/>
Tempus link repository e.g. for best practices or existing projects in VET teacher training: http://www.tka.hu/pages/subpage/index.php?sourcepage_id=94&id=778&lang_type=hu
eTTCampus: <http://www.observatory.org.hu/index.php?id=91>

A PRACTICAL VIEW ON

workplace instruction

THE ENTERPRISE OF Jouko Nieminen, Master blacksmith, specialises in basic and artist blacksmithing and produces, for example, gates, banisters and furniture for buildings and interiors. The enterprise has hosted on-the-job learners regularly for 15 years now, one to three learners at a time. More would be willing to come. Learners must already be advanced in their skills and only a few hours per week are spent in actually giving instruction.

Assistant department nurse **Tuula Latosuo** works on the surgery ward of the operative unit of the hospital of Hyvinkää and is also responsible for instructing students in the unit. Only during the winter and spring of 2006 there were 26 students at different levels in the ward, ranging from those studying to become practical or registered nurses or public health nurses or midwives. Apart from an induction at the beginning of a training period, workplace instruction is given daily, and during Tuula's absence will be delegated to another nurse who has completed student instruction training.

Jouko Nieminen
Entrepreneur, managing director,
Tmi Seppämestari J.E. Nieminen

What is a good workplace instructor like?

"A good workplace instructor should have both time and interest – and also ability to recognise students' skills and what they still need to learn and to guide them to the right direction, in other words, to give them enough both responsibility and freedom."

Should workplace instructors be systematically trained?

"There is no harm in training, of course, but it's another thing how many will have the time to participate in it. The fact is that workplace instructors are not separately compensated for the training they give to students. In practice, instruction has to be given on the terms of the workplace, and the students are workers."

What special skills are required from workplace instructors of international students?

"Language skills, but also cultural understanding. The majority of my international students come from Western cultures, which makes things easier. One must, however, be flexible and understand that people are accustomed to different working methods in different countries. I have not had problems in this respect. On the contrary, I have also learned new things from my students."



Tuula Latosuo
Assistant department nurse,
Hospital of Hyvinkää, HUS

What is a good workplace instructor like?

"Motivation is the basic requirement, the instructor must be interested in both their field and the students. Having completed a qualification in one's field one time is not enough; skills and competences need to be up-to-date. Being open and social is naturally a benefit. I am already close to retirement age (laughs) and one must also understand the reality of young people now, to keep up with the times."

Should workplace instructors be systematically trained?

"Absolutely – and continuously. Workplace instruction changes like everything else in this society, so one-off training is not enough."

What special skills are required from workplace instructors of international students?

"Instructing international trainees is its own field completely. The number one requirement is naturally language skills, but motivation is equally important, too. Instruction requires more time. Being a workplace instructor of an international student demands more, and some extra incentives are needed. The need to command health care terminology in a foreign language, for example, is a big requirement. It would also be good to understand different cultures. Ideally, the instructor would have been working abroad his- or herself at one time."

Virve Zenkner
Publications Editor
Centre for International Mobility CIMO

COOPERATION BETWEEN EMPLOYERS AND TRAINING INSTITUTIONS: skills demonstrations abroad

Performing skills demonstrations abroad requires good cooperation between training institutions and employers. International skills demonstrations practices have been developed and tested in many projects. The SKILLDA projects supported by the European Commission's Leonardo da Vinci programme have tried to facilitate skills demonstrations abroad in a number of different ways.

THE SKILLDA PROJECT FAMILY coordinated by Savo Consortium for Vocational Training consists of three projects: the SKILLDA pilot project (Skills Demonstrations Abroad), a student placement project SKILLDA in Practice and the national SKILLDA Network project.

The aim of the SKILLDA pilot project was to develop common practices for skills demonstrations in cooperation with training institutions, employers and education authorities in Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands and Hungary. The purpose of the common practices is that students from these countries could perform skills demonstrations of equal standard as in their home countries during their placements abroad and at the same time meet the curriculum criteria of their home institutions.

Another goal has been to improve teachers' and workplace instructors' competences in planning, organisation and assessment of skills demonstrations and to ensure that resources invested in organisation of skills demonstrations by training institutions and workplaces are used sensibly. The project produced a skills demonstrations guide for students, teachers and workplace instructors and a self-study assessment module for teachers and workplace instructors. A Virtual Campus that is also available in Hungarian has been used to work on the material produced and for training of students, teachers and workplace instructors.

Quality and functionality of the model was tested with the help of a student placement project SKILLDA in Practice. 16 Finnish students received a grant to go on a work placement abroad and three Finnish teachers were awarded a grant to go and evaluate students' skills demonstrations abroad. Danish students also received Leonardo grants to go on work placements in Finland and Hungary where they performed skills demonstrations towards the end of their placements. Guidelines produced in the SKILLDA project have also been tested among other students.

The basic principle is that skills demonstrations are evaluated by the workplace instructor alone or possibly together with a teacher from the host training institution. In only one case, the own teacher of the student in question was present during the skills demonstration. His role was to train the workplace instructor in carrying out and evaluating a skills demonstration and to guide him in the use of the guide and evaluation module. ▶

Applying
European Priorities
into Practise ▶

Work placements and skills demonstrations have gone very well most of the time and students, teachers and workplace instructors have all been happy with the results. One workplace instructor described his experiences:

”In my opinion, the largest added value of an unambiguous system in the appraisal of a practical training period and vocational skills demonstrations is that through a shared system international differences can be bridged, and what is more important, one can prevent miscommunication...Naturally, at the international level it serves a much larger interest, i.e. reinforcement of the knowledge development, and it can have positive influences on the European job market in longer term, too. This should be the higher goal... The biggest result in this project for now is that we have succeeded in putting up an unambiguous system... but of course we still need to fine-tune it.”

A Finnish workplace instructor said that “... creation of common rules has been hard work, but the process has been challenging and has also offered an opportunity to consider skills requirements in other cultures.”

According to the teachers we interviewed, the best results of the SKILLDA project are the good guidebook, common evaluation practices, creation of a network, facilitation of student mobility and the fact that students can perform a skills demonstration for an entire study module at a workplace.

Problems were encountered, too, when testing skills demonstrations abroad. These were due, for example, to a change of the workplace instructor (sick leave) or last-minute changes of out-going students who did not have enough time to receive proper preparation. We try to learn from these failures and prevent them in the future by providing better training for all concerned.

When asked about problems and challenges in the project, one workplace instructor answered:

”One of the biggest problems is that we must really try to get everybody behind the same system and way of working. All heads must point to the same direction. That is difficult, because putting up one system means that one always must do concessions at some points. We must make sure that it does not conflict against the national rules... Testing if the system works at the micro level (between business, training institute and trainee) is the largest challenge in this project. We are very content with



being able to give input to a system that we and other colleague hotels can use later on.”

A Finnish workplace instructor thought the biggest challenges were “crossing the language barrier, commitment of employees to an international skills demonstration, following the common rules at all levels, relationship between local training institutions and workplaces and understanding of the common goal, clarification of the goals of international skills demonstrations and understanding of their benefits.”

Teachers thought that the biggest challenges lied in “coaching/training of workplace instructors in evaluating skills demonstra-

tions, evaluation of skills demonstration environments, instruction of students during their work placements and their preparation for the skills demonstrations as well as development of sector-specific language preparation.”

Despite the positive results, it is clear that practices need to be further developed even after the SKILLDA projects are finished. The experiences received indicate that special attention should be paid to training of teachers and workplace instructors in planning, organisation and evaluation of skills demonstrations abroad. Only sufficient advance information will guarantee a system that works well, transparency of evaluation and equal treatment of students.

Information about common practices should be disseminated so widely that each workplace would have more than one person able to instruct students and supervise skills demonstrations. More attention should also be paid to linguistic and cultural preparation of students to help them adapt to the new cultural environment more quickly.

In the SKILLDA Network project, a questionnaire was sent to ten Finnish-led Leonardo projects dealing with vocational skills demonstrations. The aim of the project was to find out their goals and results, problems they encountered and what future challenges they saw in development of international skills demonstrations, and also to make them more widely



known by, for example, publishing articles. The questionnaire was complemented by telephone interviews. The analysis is not completed yet, but it is already clear that more emphasis should be laid on training of teachers and workplace instructors in organisation and evaluation of skills demonstrations and on improvement of language skills of all concerned as mentioned before.

Successful skills demonstrations abroad require, among other things, a positive attitude, language skills, good links with business and industry, understanding of the skills demonstration system, clear curricula, thorough advance planning, mutual trust among parties, sufficient information, timely and sufficient preparation of students, good documentation and continuous monitoring of the process. It is possible to perform vocational skills demonstration of high standard in a foreign work environment, too, but practices still need fine-tuning and simplification. Practices created in one country cannot be transferred as such to a system in a different country, but they can be adapted and at least partly transferred. This requires an open mind and willingness to experiment.

Special attention should be paid to training of teachers and workplace instructors in planning, organisation and evaluation of skills demonstrations abroad.

SKILLDA partnership

TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

Savo Consortium for Vocational Training (coordinator), Finland
CPH WEST, Denmark
Bornholms Erhvervsskole, Denmark
Kossuth Lajos Ipari Szakközép, Szakiskola és Kollégium, Iskola, Hungary
Mondriaan College voor Horeca en Toerisme, The Netherlands
ROC van Amsterdam, afd. Mode, The Netherlands

EDUCATION AUTHORITIES

National Board of Education, Finland
Det faglige Udvalg for Beklaedning (The Vocational Committee for Clothing in Denmark), Denmark
National Institute of Vocational Education, Hungary
LIFT Group, The Netherlands

BUSINESS PARTNERS

Relief Haute Couture, Denmark
Pet Ravintolat Oy, Ravintola Kummisetä, Finland
MeVi Tailor, Finland
Kunnonpaikka, Finland
Petritex Oy, Finland
University hospital of Kuopio, Catering, Finland
LIVIA Szabóság (LIVIA Tailor's Workshop), Hungary
Lachmann FIAI KFT, Hungary
Carlton Beach Hotel, The Netherlands

OTHER PARTNERS

Service Union United PAM, Eastern Finland, Finland
The Regional Organisation of Enterprises in Savo, Finland
European Forum of Technical and Vocational Education and Training EFVET, Belgium



Anne Onikki
Project coordinator
Savo Consortium for Vocational Training

<http://www.skillda.fi>

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY AS THE MOTOR FOR A PILOT PROJECT ON SKILLS IN THEATRE TECHNOLOGY

Professionals, employers, training institutions and trade unions in Europe have charted competences and skills criteria of different vocations in theatre technology. The pilot project Theatre Technical Training in the EU (TTT in the EU) has continued this work.

NATIONAL TEAMS from seven countries participate in this Leonardo da Vinci project, in which different actors in the theatre cooperate for mutual benefit. The long-standing partnership has been paramount for the success of the project.

The Helsinki Polytechnic Stadia is the coordinator of the project. Stadia has previously participated in national pilot projects in this field and a European Social Fund funded project, the main partner of which was the Finnish National Opera.

Teaching of theatre technology is a part of continuing professional training programmes in Stadia. Theatre professionals work in a number of study programmes leading to different polytechnic degrees in the culture sector. Preparatory training leading to vocational qualifications in the theatre sector has been delivered in cooperation between these study programmes and the adult education and business relations services of Stadia. Skills demonstrations for further and specialist vocational qualifications have been organised at Stadia for almost ten years.

Stadia was invited to join the project when the sectoral dialogue committee for performing arts of the European Union presented the idea of charting competence requirements and training provision in the sector. The Theatre and Media Employees in Finland and the Association of Finnish Theatres have been active partners from the very beginning of the cooperation.

TTT in the EU project advances development of training in the sector by supporting lifelong learning and development of assessment methods for the skills demonstration system. The project pro-

motes mobility of professionals in the sector and comparability of vocational qualifications.

TRAINING IS NEEDED TO DEVELOP THE SECTOR

“We need training to develop the sector, and this project gives us information about competence levels, training, and skills criteria for different vocations in different countries”, says Mr **Raimo Söder**, the manager of the Theatre and Media Employees in Finland. “Many European countries don’t provide systematic training in the sector and the contents within existing training provision varies a lot.”

“Both employers and employees, theatres and training providers are involved in the project, because this is an important issue for all.”

Rapid technical development and mobility of productions from country to country require comparable information about competences and skills criteria of professionals in theatre technology. The TTT in the EU project supports the work started by the sectoral dialogue committee for performing arts of the European Union and is building a foundation for mobility of professionals in the field.

“Cooperation with European umbrella organisations, such as the employees’ organisation EURO-MEI and the employers’ organisation PEARLE, has been paramount for the success of the project. Dissemination of information and results of the project is a natural role for them.”

The database to be created in the project will be a tool for development of competences and comparison of skills levels and requirements in Europe. A glossary of terms will also be an important tool for comparison of concepts among countries.

The eight-step European Qualification Framework (EQF) will be used in the project. “The existence of the framework has been news to the employers”, Söder says.

Söder has been happy to tell about the project in different European meetings. “Actors in the sector have been very interested in the project all over Europe.” It is already clear that the project will give rise to ideas for further development, perhaps for future pilot projects. “Many partners have been surprised about the amount of work, but the usefulness of the tools being developed has been a great motivator.”

Satu Hallenberg
Project manager of the TTT in the EU project, Project coordinator
Education manager
Adult education and business relations services
Helsinki Polytechnic Stadia



THEATRE TECHNICAL TRAINING IN THE EU

Leonardo da Vinci pilot project

Duration

2005–2007

Coordinator

Helsinki Polytechnic Stadia

Partners

Representatives of European training institutions, employers and trade unions in theatre technology from seven countries

The partners can be divided into three groups:

- those responsible for contents production, including Sweden, the United Kingdom, Belgium and Finland. They are responsible for and coordinate contents production that is done in cooperation with national partners. Countries will produce national material and run pilot projects. European

umbrella organisations, the employees’ organisation EURO-MEI and the employers’ organisation PEARLE, will contribute to dissemination of results.

- France, Spain and Estonia contribute to dissemination of results and will provide national material about training in their countries for the use of the project.
- In addition, there are recipients of information in the project: results will be disseminated, for example, to sectoral associations in Germany and Austria.

Products and tools to be developed:

- A tool for analysing competences in theatre technology.
- A tool for assessing standard of work and competence levels, also suitable for self-assessment.
- A glossary of theatre technology terms.

FINLAND AND WALES IN COMPARISON

Training in the social and health care sector based on competence tests in Finland and Wales was compared in a trainer exchange project "Comparison of Competence Based Training in Wales and in Finland". The project partners were the Welsh Coleg Gwent from Ebbw Vale campus and the social and health care sector of the North Carelia College in Joensuu, Finland.

THE FINNISH VOCATIONAL qualification system has been created following the British model. The models, practices and guidelines seem familiar on the surface, which helped us get familiar with the sister model. A deeper analysis, however, showed that in the end there were few similarities – except for the magnificent students in both colleges.

TEACHING ARRANGEMENTS ACCORDING TO INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

In Finland, those performing competence tests normally participate in preparatory training. Ideally, the contents and duration of the training are designed individually based on previous training and work experience. The goal is also to adapt the teaching arrangements according to the needs of the students. It should be possible to perform a competence test and preparatory training while working.

The principle of individualised teaching arrangements and possibility to attend preparatory training while working was realised better in Wales. In Finland, the duration of preparatory training for the initial vocational qualification in social and health care, that is a practical nurse qualification, is defined as a minimum of 80 study credits if the participant has no

previous qualification in social and health care.

Vocational competence requirements were split into many more modules in Wales than in Finland. The study plan for preparatory training follows the qualification requirements well. Compared to Finns, the Welsh participants had a better understanding of basic skills requirements, which the training followed well.

COMPETENCE-BASED QUALIFICATION SYSTEM SHOULD SUPPORT LIFELONG LEARNING

The Finnish practical nurse qualification is more comprehensive than the British one. Although there is only one title – practical nurse – there are many specialisation options. Students normally select their area of specialisation, such as children and young people, the elderly, nursing, mental health and substance abuse, or rehabilitation, during their compulsory vocational studies, which are common to all. The specialisation studies only start during the last year of the course.

In the British vocational training system, students choose their specialisation to health care, caring or child care, already at the beginning of their studies, which means that studies differ more from the

very beginning. The system also includes more competence categories

The system of competence tests should support lifelong learning and at the same time offer an important tool for professional development of staff. From the point of view of lifelong learning, the Welsh were ahead of the Finns. As a tool for staff development, the system is still finding its way in both countries.

In Finland, one key principle in the competence-based qualification systems is cooperation among the three parties. Employers, employees and training institutions work in close cooperation in deciding on contents and structures of qualifications and in performing and evaluating competence tests. In Wales, the training institutions bear the main responsibility, the knowledge and skills: teachers plan, implement and evaluate.

Training is also arranged differently in Wales. Students normally learn practical procedures at work and teachers instructed and taught students at work. Students in Coleg Gwent do not really have a chance to learn practical skills in the training institution, as lessons concentrate on theory. In some areas practical skills may only be learned after being qualified. The school's own nursery attended by the students' children provides an exception to this. Students can complete parts of their qualification there.

IN FINLAND, COMPETENCE TESTS ARE PERFORMED AT WORK, IN WALES STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE THEIR COMPETENCE IN PORTFOLIOS

The key principle in the Finnish competence-based qualification system is

that where possible, tests are performed at work doing normal everyday tasks. In Wales, students build an extensive portfolio that their teacher will evaluate.

Students collect descriptions of how they have performed the activities being evaluated according to detailed, written guidelines in their portfolios. In this way, students show that they have achieved an acceptable level on all objectives being evaluated. When necessary, descriptions of activities and tasks are accompanied by written assessments by different evaluators.

In Finland, competence tests are independent of previous training and the way skills were acquired. They are supervised by qualification boards and the National Board of Education. The National Board of Education trusts the qualification boards who in turn trust training providers, who organise the tests as well as the evaluators. The qualification boards supervise organisers of competence tests in many ways, but the overall principle is cooperation. The Welsh model is more hierarchical and the importance of evaluation and supervision is more prominent.



In Finland,
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are independent
of previous training and
the way skills were acquired.

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