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Handbook of good practice on Continuing Vocational Training in Europe



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Manual of good practices on Continuing Professional Training in Europe



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1. Manual of good practices - Summary

This manual was produced within the CALIFICAT project (POCU/726/6/12/135430), the material being used by the project experts for the design of measures to transfer good practices from Europe, which also include the organization of study visits.

The general objective of the Qualified project is: increasing the participation in continuous professional training programs of employees from less developed regions, with priority for 651 adults with a low level of qualification and people over 40 years old, from disadvantaged rural areas; this will be achieved by developing and implementing a complex set of integrated and personalized measures, aimed at improving the status on the labor market, by improving the skills and competences of the target group.

As specific objectives, the project proposes:

ObS1. Development of skills and self-confidence for 651 people (people with a low level of qualification, people from rural areas, people over 40 years old) by participating in personalized sessions of professional counseling and tutoring, individual, group, but also innovative methods using new technologies.

ObS2. Improving the skills and developing the skills of 651 people (people with a low level of qualification, people from rural areas, people over the age of 40) through their participation in professional training programs (initiation courses, specialization, level II qualification) adapted their needs and carried out in accordance with the identified needs, with a certification rate of over 80% (521 people).

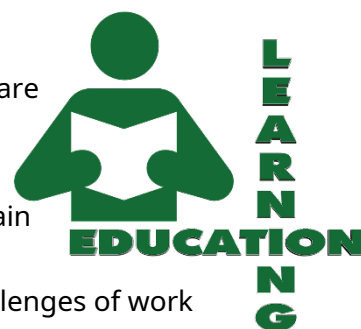
ObS3. Promotion with the aim of participating in VET programs for at least 651 people with a low level of qualification and people over 40 years of age from disadvantaged rural areas, including through the recognition and certification of learning outcomes acquired in non-formal and informal contexts, at least 375 improving their status on the labor market, and 66 following studies/training programs.

The handbook emphasizes the importance and necessity of continuing vocational training (CPV) as an effective way to facilitate and support lifelong learning. But what is CPD, where and how can it be used and what are the benefits for learners/employees, companies and stakeholders? To clarify these questions, the considerations and defined objectives of the EU on lifelong learning are explained at the beginning of this handbook.

The following presentation of the objectives and basic measures for ensuring lifelong learning in adult education in selected European countries - Austria, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Iceland and Bulgaria - provides an insight into concrete implementation possibilities. In order to enable a holistic approach, the education system with integrated possibilities for initial vocational education and training as well as possibilities for continuing education and training, quality assurance measures in (vocational) education and concrete measures to validate previous learning processes or (informal) are also presented training.

After this comprehensive insight into the (continuing) education and VET systems in these selected European countries, Continuing Vocational Training (CVT) is explained as a practical, sometimes implicit (vocational) training possibility, with the main advantages for companies as well as employees/students. A first perspective is provided on how VET programs can be developed and implemented - on the one hand, as a concrete measure of employee training in companies and, on the other hand, as a target-oriented measure of labor market policy objectives, for to be able to prepare job seekers in advance for the later demands of working life in the best possible way.

In the last part, examples of good practice from different European countries are presented, which serve to promote and deliver continuing vocational training (CVT) and comprehensively take into account the requirements of lifelong learning. The measures presented support people who want to continue to train and learn to bring the skills and know-how "up to date" so that the daily demands and challenges of work and everyday life can be solved independently and satisfactorily.



2. Lifelong learning (LLL) – EU policy

According to the definition of the European Council, the term "lifelong learning" describes:

"All lifelong learning that serves to improve knowledge, skills and skills and takes place in a personal, civic, social or related perspective Employment".

According to the European Commission, strong skills are an important basis for inclusion and social progress and therefore also serve the economy, which needs a skilled workforce for growth and innovation. Only with the "right" skills in the workforce can the digital and environmental transformation of the future succeed. The need for retraining and continuing education has increased due to the Covid 19 pandemic and the changing labor market.

The right to education, training and lifelong learning is enshrined in Principle 1 of the European Pillar of Social Rights. All people should have continuous access to quality education and training and should be able to choose skills development opportunities according to their needs. With the right skills, the continuous change in society and the labor market in terms of work requirements and needs should be met.



2.1 Lifelong learning - EU Commission proposals and targets until 2025

The European Commission wants adults of all ages to have better access to learning and training opportunities in the future. On 10 December 2021, the European Commission presented proposals for Council recommendations on individual learning accounts and evidence of learning outcomes - so-called "micro-credentials". They should make it even easier for Europeans to find learning opportunities and take advantage of employment opportunities. These measures are designed to help EU Member States reach the target agreed at the Porto Social Summit in May 2021 of providing at least 60% of EU adults with a training course each year by 2030.

Individual Learning Accounts: Virtual 'Wallets' for Educational Entitlements

Virtual "gateways" for learning rights should be available to all people of working age and ensure access to training opportunities across the EU, regardless of whether they are employed or not, according to a European Commission proposal.

In consultation with the social partners, Member States must:

- set up individual learning accounts and ensure continuing education rights for all working-age adults
- establish a list of labor market-relevant quality-assured training opportunities that are eligible for funding from individual learning accounts and make this list available in a digital directory that can be consulted, for example, via mobile devices
- Create orientation and validation opportunities for skills already acquired and introduce paid training leave.

Microcredentials - Evidence of learning outcomes achieved in courses or training

So-called "microcredentials" certify learning outcomes achieved in the context of a narrower learning experience (eg a short course/training). Through its proposal, the European Commission wants to ensure that microcredit works across institutions, companies, sectors and borders.

For this purpose, the European Commission considers that the member states agree on the following aspects:

- a common definition for microcredit
- standard elements for the description of microcredits
- key principles for the development and issuance of microcredit

This is to ensure that microloans are of high quality and issued in a transparent manner. It should also promote the acceptance of learning outcomes by learners, workers and job seekers who derive real benefits from microcredit. The proposal also includes recommendations on how to take microcredit into account in education, training and labor market strategies. This will enable citizens to acquire new or complementary skills in an inclusive, tailored way.

Microcredentials can be included in the catalog of learning opportunities that can be used with individual learning accounts. The European approach to microcredit will facilitate the recognition and validation of learning experiences. It will strengthen the role of higher education and vocational education and training institutions in making lifelong learning a reality in the EU and enable them to open up to a wider and more diverse range of learners.

The proposals for a Council Recommendation on Individual Learning Accounts and a Council Recommendation on microcredit for lifelong learning and employability are the latest of 12 flagship initiatives announced under the European Skills Agenda and the Pillar Action Plan European Union of Social Rights. The European concept for microcredit is also one of the central flagship initiatives for achieving a European Education Area by 2025.

3. Lifelong learning - Adult education and training systems in selected European countries

In this chapter, different aspects of lifelong learning (LLL) in selected European countries - Austria, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Iceland and Bulgaria - are presented. The basic strategies and implementation possibilities of LLL are explained, the basic structure of the comprehensive education and VET system, the measures to ensure the quality of education and vocational training offers, as well as the possibilities of validating previous learning, so that a comprehensive perspective and holistic on adult education and training systems are offered.

3.1. Austria

LLL - Adult education and training in Austria

Adult education and training (synonymous with continuing education and training, VET) includes

- all forms of formal, non-formal and informal learning goal-oriented by adults after completing an initial stage of education that varies in length and regardless of the level reached in this process.
- Adult education and training/VET involves all professional, general, political and cultural processes of teaching and learning for adults that are controlled in a public, private and economic context by others and/or by oneself (definition based on: Ö-Cert , General Basic Requirements).



Adult education mainly focuses on the acquisition of knowledge and skills that are generally important and are necessary and applicable in different contexts, including professional contexts. Adult training/CET mainly deals with the acquisition of subject-specific skills and qualifications for the labor market. The main objectives of adult education and training include improving access and providing opportunities for lifelong learning measures for all people, with special attention to disadvantaged groups, as well as increasing the permeability of the education system. Essential to achieving these goals are the implementation of programs appropriate for adults and the target group, as well as high-quality educational counseling and career guidance. Major prerequisites are improving the quality and professionalization of adult education and training, as well as protecting the basic structures of adult education and training. The Austrian adult education and training landscape is characterized by a high degree of institutional diversity and an associated wide range of programs available. In addition to the public sector (schools, universities and universities of applied sciences), there are many non-profit as well as commercial providers. The spectrum of education and training varies from universities and universities of applied sciences), there are many non-profit as well as commercial providers. The spectrum of education and training varies from universities and universities of applied sciences), there are many non-profit as well as commercial providers. The spectrum of education and training ranges from:

- basic skills education,

- acquiring qualifications in second chance education,
- various subject-specific courses and general education seminars, at
- master's programs at higher education institutions.

The Austrian education system

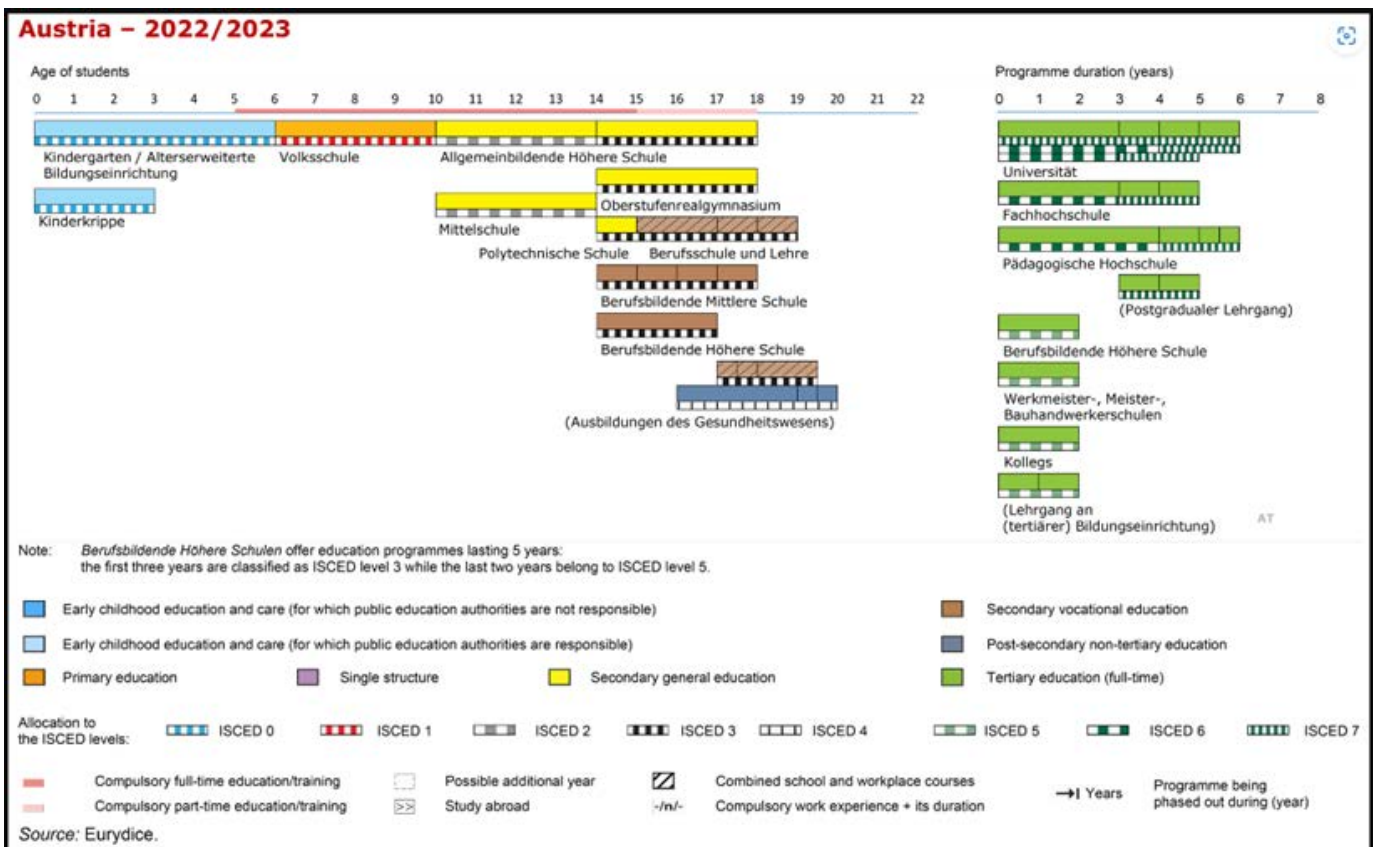
In Austria, school education is compulsory for nine years and starts at the age of six. Primary school is compulsory general school for students aged 6-10 (years 1-4). The lower secondary level (years 5-8) comprises compulsory secondary school (Mittelschule) and the lower level of academic secondary school (Allgemein bildende Höhere Schule). Upper secondary level (years 9-13) comprises a general education branch and a vocational branch. Higher education is provided by public universities (the largest sector), private institutions of higher education (IIS), universities of applied sciences (Fachhochschulen) and university teacher training colleges (Pädagogische Hochschulen).

In order to promote equal opportunities and employability, a training obligation until the age of 18 (Ausbildungspflicht bis 18) was introduced after completing compulsory schooling; this means that young people are required to participate in a training program or follow an educational measure until the age of 18.

The structure of the Austrian education system The

education and training system in Austria includes:

- Kindergarten or pre-school education (ISCED 0)
- Primary level (ISCED 1)
- Lower secondary level (ISCED 2)
- Upper secondary level (ISCED 3-4)
- Non-tertiary post-secondary level (ISCED 5)
- Tertiary level (ISCED 5-8).



Source: https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/inline-images/AT_0.jpg

Primary level(four years, students aged 6 to 10)

Before entering the four-year primary school, half-day kindergarten/kindergarten attendance is mandatory. For children with special educational needs (SEN), integrative classes are established in primary school or there are schools with specific special needs that are oriented towards the educational requirements of individual types of disabilities.

Lower secondary level(four years, students aged 10 to 14)

At this level of education, learners can choose to pursue general secondary education offered at the Academic High School (AHS) or the Secondary School (MS). In these types of schools, students with SEN can either attend mainstream classes or fifth through eighth grade in a special needs school. To move from primary school to MS or the lower cycle of AHS, learners need a positive final certificate of the fourth grade of primary school; for entry into the lower cycle of AHS, additional performance requirements (such as specific grades in core subjects) and possibly an entrance exam are provided.

Upper secondary level(one to five years, students aged 15 to 19)

The first school year of upper secondary education is, at the same time, the last year of compulsory education. Compulsory education ends after attending nine years of school; there is no separate compulsory school certificate. At upper secondary level, students can choose between general and (pre)vocational education programs. Many of these programs support direct entry into the labor market, provide access to post-secondary programs and/or lead to the tertiary sector either directly or through higher education entry qualifications.

Post-secondary and tertiary level(various durations; learners over 19 years old)

Higher VET programs (which aim to provide additional and higher qualifications, especially for holders of initial VET qualifications), many of which are organized in cooperation with work-based learning in companies, are offered in the context of formal education (schools and universities), but also the non-formal context (outside of schools in adult education institutions). Higher education programmes, which lead to Bologna qualifications and are primarily academically oriented and designed as pre-professional, are offered in universities, universities of applied sciences and university teacher training colleges.

Education outside the formal education system

Many adult education institutions offer continuing personal and professional education programs. There are also programs that make it possible for adults to gain qualifications in the formal education sector. For the unemployed and those threatened with unemployment, programs are offered as part of the active labor market policy.

VET in Austria: education and training system

In 2017, compulsory training until the age of 18 (Ausbildungspflicht bis 18) was introduced: all young people who are not in education and training or do not have a job, must participate in apprenticeship programs or other forms of training recognized. In Austria VET in school and apprenticeship (dual training) coexist. They cover almost all economic sectors and lead to different qualification levels (either EQF 4 or 5). There are also a variety of VET programs at tertiary level and for adults.

VET at secondary level

At secondary level, learners can choose from different pre-VET and VET options in different occupations/sectors:

- **Different types of pre-VET of one or two years**(Polytechnische Schule (PTS), ISCED 341; Berufsbildende mittlere Schule (BMS), ISCED 351): learners acquire general education, key competences and basic vocational skills, preparing them for further VET in school, apprenticeships and simple jobs on labor market;
- **VET in school for three to four years**(Berufsbildende mittlere Schule (BMS), ISCED 354, EQF 4): learners consolidate their general education and acquire the relevant occupational competences and qualifications to perform medium-level jobs. Those who complete an additional program or take the Berufsreifeprüfung (examination for people whose initial VET does not automatically qualify them for entry into higher education) also gain general access to higher education studies;
- **VET for five years in school**(Berufsbildende höhere Schule (BHS), ISCED 354-554, EQF 5): combining theory and practice, these programs provide high-quality occupation-related training while strengthening learners' general education. These lead to double qualifications for business management positions and general access to higher education at the same time (Reife- und Diplomprüfung);
- **disciples**(dual training) (ISCED 354, EQF 4) in about 200 occupations and trades for students aged 15 and over after compulsory education. These lead to intermediate level qualifications. Graduates can progress to a qualification, for example, as a master craftsman or, following further examinations, access tertiary level training in a related field. By completing the Berufsreifeprüfung or an additional programme, they can also gain general access to higher education;
- **Training for occupations in the health field:** access to training programs for care and nursing professions (ISCED 351 and 353) and other occupations in the health sector (ISCED 351) requires a compulsory completed education, minimum age and/or a specific qualification. Preparation to become a general care and specialist nurse (ISCED 454) is updated to the baccalaureate level. This process will be completed by 2023.

VET at post-secondary level

The introduction of ISCED-2011 resulted in a number of VET programs that had previously been classified as 'post-secondary, non-tertiary' being now considered 'tertiary'. Due to this change in classification, the number of post-secondary programs is now reduced, while the number of tertiary programs has increased. ISCED category 4 covers virtually only schools of nursing and nursing (ISCED 454). However, the program to become a specialist and general care nurse offered in this school is upgraded to a bachelor's program at universities of applied sciences. This process will be completed by 2023, so no VET programs at ISCED level 4 will be offered in the future.

VET at tertiary level

At tertiary level (ISCED 5-8) a wide range of VET programs is offered. These are provided at higher education institutions, especially universities of applied sciences and university teacher training colleges.

- **Bachelor's and Master's programs** offered at universities of applied sciences (FH, ISCED 665 / 767) are offered both full-time and part-time in the evening (with extended overall program duration). An internship is a mandatory part of the degree program. Programs are completed with an academic thesis followed by a final exam. Successful completion of an FH master's program entitles graduates to access discipline-related doctoral courses at the university.
- **Teacher training programs** offered by university colleges (PH, ISCED 665) aim to train teaching staff in compulsory schools for the type of education selected in a four-year bachelor's program. These PH programs focus on the transmission of knowledge and skills related to teaching and didactics, as well as their application in school life. There are practical teacher training stages within the undergraduate programme, as well as an induction period, a one-year phase where graduates teach in a school under the supervision of a mentor.

Tertiary VET is also offered in special schools or adult learning centres. This includes additional courses (Aufbaulehrgänge) and post-secondary VET programs (Kollegs), both of which lead to the same qualification as the five-year VET program at secondary level. There are also special schools that offer the industrial master program (Werkmeisterschule) and the construction craftsman program (Bauhandwerkerschule). Preparation for the master's exam

of jobs

(Meisterprüfung) is offered by master craftsman schools (Meisterschulen) within the formal education system or by adult learning centers that are not considered to be part of the formal system.

Learners can acquire qualifications in one of 200 legally recognized apprenticeship programs with different specializations in the field (construction, electrical, information technology, wholesale and retail) offered at ISCED 354 (EQF 4) level. Apprenticeship training takes place in two places of learning: in the training company and at the vocational school. A prerequisite for participating in an apprenticeship is the successful completion of nine years of compulsory education. Learners must find an apprenticeship with a company in order to access this programme. Once a training company is found, the weaker ones must sign an apprenticeship contract with the authorized apprenticeship trainer, which is registered by the apprenticeship offices (Lehrlingsstellen).

There is an Austrian-wide training regulation (Ausbildungsordnung) for each apprenticeship. It includes the job profile (Berufsbild), a type of curriculum for the company-based part of training, which sets out the minimum knowledge and skills to be taught to apprentices by companies. The competence profile (Berufsprofil), which is also part of the training regulations, formulates in a learning outcome-oriented manner the competences acquired by the apprentices at the end of their training in both places of learning. The social partners are essentially responsible for making decisions about the in-company curriculum and/or the competence profile on which an apprenticeship is based and exert a decisive impact on the structure and content of apprenticeship training through their work on advisory boards relevant.

At the end of the apprenticeship, each apprentice can take the apprenticeship graduation exam (Lehrabschlussprüfung, LAP), which includes practical and theoretical parts. The apprenticeship qualification can also be acquired through a so-called exceptional admission. For this purpose, relevant periods of professional practice and participation in relevant courses are credited as a substitute for formal apprenticeship training.

After successfully completing the LAP, graduates have various progression options, such as taking the Master Craftsman exam for a skilled trade. Access to HE programs can be gained by taking the Berufsreifeprüfung (BRP) exam during or after apprenticeship training. For many, apprenticeships also form the basis of an independent career. Almost 40% of business managers have completed an apprenticeship.

The growing tendency of young people to want to acquire a vocational qualification, preferably in apprenticeship training, combined with the fact that the willingness of companies to train apprentices has decreased, has led to the expansion of over-enterprise training (ÜBA, Überbetriebliche Berufsausbildung). Originally designed as a temporary education offer until entry into a regular apprenticeship within the company, ÜBA was incorporated as an equivalent part of dual VET in 2008. It is now possible for young people who cannot find an apprenticeship within the company or have not been accepted by a VET school to spend the entire training period in an ÜBA, which is publicly funded through the Public Employment Service Austria. The school part of the apprenticeship is provided at the regular vocational school.

The heterogeneity of people interested in dual VET also resulted in the establishment of inclusive VET in 2003. Inclusive VET is mainly aimed at young people who, at the end of school

compulsory, have special educational needs and have not completed lower secondary level. It can be implemented in two ways, either the training period can be extended by one or two years, or only selected skills of an apprenticeship (partial qualifications) are taught. Partial qualifications are supported by vocational training assistance (Berufsausbildungsassistenz). It advises and supports training companies and young people before and during training.

Also, a relevant apprenticeship training scheme has been established for particularly talented young people who are easy to learn: in 2008 the scheme of "apprenticeship with matriculation certificate" (Lehre und Matura) was introduced; this allows apprentices to obtain the Berufsreifeprüfung (BRP) parallel to their apprenticeship training and to attend preparatory courses and complete partial exams free of charge. Since 1997 they have also had the option to complete the entire BRP after obtaining their apprenticeship diploma.

Quality assurance in VET

Quality assurance in VET is a highly differentiated and ongoing process. Regular updating of curricula and training plans is a major part of quality assurance and many other measures are taken to keep VET attractive to learners and companies and to protect the recognition of qualifications.



The VET Quality Initiative (QIBB) for VET in Schools was introduced in 2004, setting the framework conditions in a way that successful teaching and learning is guaranteed. To this end, processes have been defined and tools have been introduced that enable systematic planning, observation, documentation, evaluation and reflection on the quality of procedures and results.

Another major element of quality assurance in five-year school-based VET programs is the partially standardized final exam, which was introduced in the 2015/16 school year. It consists of standardized exams in the language of instruction (most often German, but also Slovenian, Croatian and Hungarian), in applied mathematics and in a foreign language (English, French, Italian or Spanish). The tasks for these exams, as well as the duration and timing of their implementation, are set centrally for the whole of Austria. Uniformly defined exam topics and assessment criteria mainly aim to ensure objectivity and reliability of exam results and promote transparency and comparability of the final exam.

In dual VET, many quality assurance measures are carried out in addition to the regular adaptation of apprenticeships to economic and technological developments. These measures include the accreditation of training companies: every company that wants to train apprentices is required to go through an accreditation process. This consists of an examination by the apprenticeship office with the cooperation of the Chamber of Labor to verify that the company meets the legal and corporate prerequisites for apprenticeship training to teach the knowledge and skills set out in the competence profile.

In 2013, the Ministry of Economy established a clearing office for apprenticeship graduation exams at ibw Austria – Research and Development in VET. The main task a

this office is to ensure a uniform standard of quality by examining the apprenticeship exam tasks, assessment guides and proposed solutions for compliance with the respective exam regulations, discipline correctness, practical relevance and didactic quality. The apprenticeship-leaving exam is organized by the apprenticeship offices and is held in front of an examination committee. This ensures that training and validation are separate, which significantly contributes to objectivity and quality assurance.

Also in 2013, the quality management in apprenticeship training (QML) initiative was launched by the social partners with the objective of reducing the number of apprenticeship dropouts and increasing the success rate in the apprenticeship graduation exams. The QML is based on annually assessed indicators of apprenticeship dropout, the number of those who (fail) to attempt the apprenticeship leaving examination, as well as the apprenticeship leaving examinations (failed).

Quality assurance measures are also taken in the post-secondary and tertiary sectors, as in the definition and implementation of master craftsman and proof of competency examinations. The main basis for this is the European Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher VET, which were developed in analogy to the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), with substantial Austrian involvement.

Validation of prior learning

It is the validation of non-formal and informal learning (pre-training) that is gaining international importance. In Austria, major importance is traditionally given to formal education qualifications in the school, dual and higher education sectors. However, it is increasingly taking place outside of formal education in adult institutions, in the workplace and in voluntary activities.



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rapid changes in the labor market – thanks to technology and globalization – require a formal path to be followed by the need to learn, refine and deepen existing knowledge.

To promote the acquisition of skills outside the context of formal education and to encourage lifelong learning, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Science published a strategy for the validation of non-formal and informal learning in 2017. This strategy defines a framework for further development, coordination and networking of existing validation approaches. The aim is to promote quality and drive trust, as well as increase visibility and access to validation offers.

3.2. Germany

LLL – Adult education and training in Germany

Continuing education and further learning are becoming increasingly important with today's demographic development. In what



refers to lifelong learning, institutionalized continuing vocational training addresses the further development of individual qualifications as well as individual reorientation in relation to the qualification. Skills development, recognition and certification will become increasingly important in the future, as will new, non-formal learning. Continuing education equally encompasses the general, vocational and socio-political fields. Their interactions are increasing, especially with regard to the development and transfer of skills for further lifelong learning.

Continuing and adult education institutions offer a variety of programs, courses and fields covering general, vocational, political and continuing academic education. The aims, content and duration of the courses vary accordingly.

Continuing education is provided by municipal institutions, especially Volkshochschulen, as well as private institutions, church institutions, trade unions, various chambers of industry and commerce, political parties and associations, companies and public authorities, family education centers, academies, Fachschulen, higher education institutions and distance education institutions. Radio and television companies also offer continuing education programs. It is usually possible to obtain school-leaving qualifications later in life at evening courses (Abendhauptschulen, Abendrealschulen, Abendgymnasien) and Kollegs.

The education system in Germany

In Germany, compulsory education is for everyone between the ages of 6 and 18. Full-time compulsory education lasts 9 years (or 10 years, depending on the federal state). After 4 years of primary school for all, education tracks are divided into the subdivided school system, consisting of lower secondary programs (up to grade 9 or 10) and upper secondary programs (up to grade 12 or the 13th).

Apprenticeship or the dual VET system (EQF level 4) in Germany is also part of upper secondary education as much as full-time vocational education at school and is the main pillar of VET. VET programs in school at upper secondary level differ in terms of access, duration, types and the qualification levels they lead to (EQF levels 2 to 4). Progression from VET to upper secondary level is possible through various regulated VET programs offered at post-secondary level and increasingly at tertiary level.

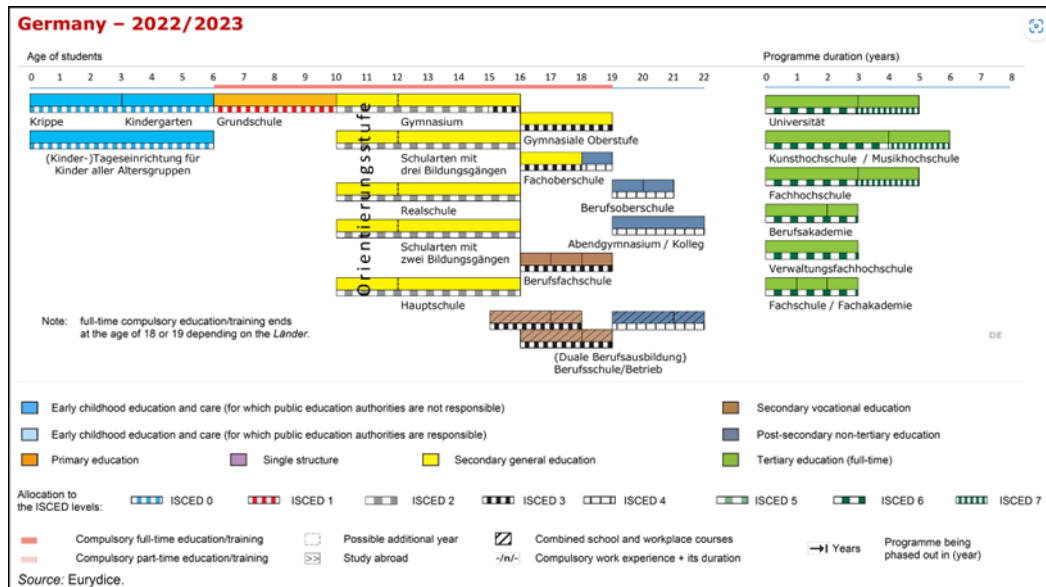
Those young people who do not attend a full-time general education school or a vocational school at upper secondary level after completing their period of compulsory general schooling must still attend school part-time (compulsory Berufsschule frequency – Berufsschulpflicht). This usually lasts for three years.

The structure of the education system in Germany

The German education and training system includes:

- Primary education (ISCED level 1, EQF level 1);
- Lower secondary education (ISCED level 2, EQF level 2 and 3);

- Upper secondary education (ISCED level 3), with the dual VET system, i.e. apprenticeship system (ISCED level 3 and 4; EQF level 3 and 4);
- Non-tertiary post-secondary education (ISCED level 4 and 5; EQF level 4-5);
- Higher VET and higher education (ISCED levels 6, 7 and 8, EQF levels 5-8).



Source: <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/inline-images/DE.jpg>

Early education is provided by catering institutions for children up to the age of six when they usually start school. School-age children who have not yet reached a sufficient level of development to attend school have another option in some federal states, namely Schulkindergärten and Vorklassen. These institutions are either allocated to the early childhood or the primary sector, depending on the respective Land.

Primary education

As a rule, in the year children turn six, they are required to attend primary school. All students in Germany enter the Grundschule, which in almost all federal states covers grades 1-4 (in Berlin and Brandenburg grades 1-6).

Secondary education

After the primary school stage, secondary education in the federal states is characterized by the division into different educational pathways with respective leaving certificates and qualifications for which different types of schools are responsible. Once students have completed compulsory schooling, they move on to upper secondary education. The range of courses offered includes general education and full-time vocational schools, as well as vocational training under the Dual System (dual system).

In the types of schools that offer a single course of education, all teaching is channeled towards a particular qualification. These were traditionally Hauptschule, Realschule and Gymnasium. Schularten mit mehreren Bildungsgängen (schools offering more than one type of course) bring two or three education courses under one umbrella. In most federal states, these have meanwhile led to the abolition of Hauptschule and Realschule.

For students with special educational needs, in addition, within the organizational framework of general and vocational education, various types of sonderpädagogische Bildungseinrichtungen (special schools) were established.

Once students have completed compulsory schooling – generally when they turn 15 – they move on to upper secondary education. The type of school enrolled depends on the qualifications and entitlements obtained at the end of lower secondary education. The range of courses offered includes general education and full-time vocational schools, as well as vocational education and training under the Dual System.

Tertiary education

sector tertiary INCLUDES institutions of education HIGH (universities, Fachhochschulen/Hochschulen für angewandte Wissenschaften, colleges of art and music) and other institutions that offer courses of study qualifying for entry into a profession to students who have completed upper secondary level and obtained a higher level. qualification for admission to studies. In addition, there are a number of special higher education institutions that admit only certain groups, for example the higher education institutions of the Federal Armed Forces and Verwaltungsfachhochschulen, and are not considered below.

Those with a higher education entry qualification may also choose to enter a Berufsakademie offered by some federal states as an alternative to higher education. At state or state-recognized Studienakademien (study institutions) and companies, students receive academic training but at the same time practice in their careers. Fachschulen and Fachakademien in Bayern are continuing vocational education institutions that usually require the completion of relevant vocational education and training in an anerkannter Ausbildungsberuf (recognized occupation requiring formal training) and a

relevant job. The qualification level achieved here is comparable to the first level of the tertiary sector according to the International Standard Classification of Education ISCED.

VET in Germany: education and training system

The German VET system also includes continuing education. Below is an overview of VET learning options, which include all WBLs:

At upper secondary level:

- general education programs with professional orientation
- VET programs in school
- apprenticeship program (ie dual VET including WBL of approximately 70%)

At post-secondary level (EQF levels 4 and 5), specialized programs based on secondary VET provide more in-depth occupational knowledge and lead to higher education entry qualifications.

At tertiary level:

- advanced professional qualifications and examinations at EQF level 5 (professional specialist), EQF level 6 (bachelor professional, e.g. master craftsman, specialist) and EQF level 7 (master professional, e.g. management expert);
- advanced professional programs (technician, specialist and similar programs)
- undergraduate programs
- master programs

Upper secondary VET

Apprenticeship programs (dual system) are the pillar of upper secondary VET. These are mostly offered at EQF level 4 and cover 325 occupations. Programs usually last 3 years and combine two learning sites, companies and vocational schools: the share of workplace learning is around 75%. Companies bear the costs of training within the company and pay the trainee's remuneration. Those who pass the final examination conducted by the chambers are qualified as qualified professionals. In parallel, upper secondary VET programs are offered in vocational schools at EQF levels 2 to 4. These include:

- **VET programs in school**, duration from 1 to 3 years, leading for example to a qualification in the health sector such as nursing;
- **general education programs** with professional orientation, duration 2 to 3 years, leading to the qualification for admission to general higher education.

Young people with learning difficulties, disabilities or insufficient knowledge of the German language have the opportunity to participate in various transition programs. At post-secondary level, specialist programs are offered at EQF levels 4 to 5, lasting 1 to 3 years and leading to university entrance qualifications.

Tertiary VET

At tertiary level, those with vocational qualifications and work experience can gain advanced vocational qualifications at EQF levels 5-7.

- **Advanced professional programs** are offered at EQF 6, lasting from 1.5 to 4 years. Entry requirements include specific professional qualification and work experience. These lead to an advanced qualification (such as technician, educator) and provide access to the relevant field of study. Advanced vocational programs are offered in trade and technical schools, which are regulated under state law. Entry requirements vary by field: normally an applicant needs a qualification in a recognized training occupation appropriate to the chosen field and relevant work experience of at least 1 year or a qualification from a vocational school with full time and a relevant work experience of at least 5 years.

Advanced professional programs can be followed as part-time or full-time programs (the latter lasting between 1 and 3 years) and lead to a state professional qualification (eg educator; technician). Students take on extended responsibility and management roles in the workplace. Some trade and technical schools also offer programs leading to a formal entrance qualification to universities of applied sciences. They exist for the following professional fields: agriculture, design, technology, business and social care. They conclude with a final state exam in accordance with state law.

- **Dual study programs** are offered at EQF levels 6 to 7 by various higher education institutions. They offer a combination of academic and vocational training, in which in-company training is an important element (weight of at least 40 to 50%). Businesses bear the costs of in-house training and pay a salary to the trainees. Dual study programs combine two places of learning (workplace and educational institution) similar to secondary level apprenticeships and are offered by universities of applied sciences (UAS, Fachhochschulen), dual universities (Duale Hochschulen), universities of cooperative education (Berufsakademien), as well as some universities. More than a quarter of all UAS programs are offered as dual degree programs.

Apprenticeship (dual VET system)

Dual VET, which is used as a synonym for apprenticeship, has a high status in Germany. Especially because of the way it links learning and work, as well as schools and companies, the system appears to be a successful model for structuring the transition from school to working life. It is characterized by two places of learning, company training which covers about 70% of the learning time and VET schools, which complement the training with theoretical and general learning content.

The main purpose of apprenticeships is to enable young people to acquire comprehensive professional skills. After completing the apprenticeship, they should be able to perform their duties as employees effectively, efficiently, innovatively, autonomously and cooperatively with others. The range of skills must be demonstrated in the examinations regulated by law (Law on vocational training, BBiG). The final exams are oriented towards professional practice, i.e. the requirements and work processes of the occupation. They are driven by cameras. For this task, the chambers are authorized by the state and officially act as a public institution. Upon passing the final exam, apprentices receive a chamber certificate documenting that the training has been successfully completed. This qualification certification is fully recognized and highly trusted by employers. Performance in VET school subjects is assessed through school reports.

An apprenticeship in the dual system normally lasts 3 years. Compulsory education must have been completed before starting an apprenticeship. There are no other official entry requirements, but companies select their apprentices and most hold either the middle school leaving certificate (mittlerer Schulabschluss) or the lower secondary school leaving certificate (Hauptschulabschluss). However, the share of apprentices with a higher education entry qualification has also increased: in 2018, almost one in three apprentices (29.3%) was a high school graduate. This group successively followed both educational paths at upper secondary level: first general, followed by professional qualification. Despite being classified as 'upper secondary'

Apprenticeships are offered both in companies and in public institutions. The companies conclude a contract with the apprentices, in which they bear the costs of the training within the company and pay the trainee's remuneration. Remuneration is regulated by collective agreement and increases with each year of training, averaging about one-third of the starting salary for a skilled worker.

The basis for the training part within the company is the training regulation. They define the professional skills that apprentices must acquire in their specific occupation. They are valid at national level, which guarantees a uniform national standard. The basis of learning in VET schools is the framework programs, which are aligned with the training regulations.

Quality assurance in VET

Three general principles are significant for understanding quality assurance in VET:



- the dual principle combines learning on the job with learning at a vocational school and, at the same time, facilitates the acquisition of professional experience;
- the principle of occupation is based on certification, which is mandatory and recognized throughout the country. It offers the opportunity to exercise a multitude of occupational activities;
- the principle of consensus guarantees the approach to the labor market, as well as the transparency and acceptance of training occupations by involving the social partners, the federal government and the federal states in the development of national training standards.

Important quality assurance tools in VET are:

- national standards based on the VET law,
- monitoring initial and continuing VET learning and
- referencing the German Qualifications Framework (DQR) to the EQF, allowing more transparency and comparability of qualifications within the EU.

The VET Act as a basis for quality assurance

The VET Act and the Trades and Crafts Code describe the standards required for training facilities and trainers, training regulations and examinations. Training regulations are revised every few years to keep pace with rapid technological and organizational change. As in-company VET is an essential part of the German dual system, employers' and employees' organizations are important stakeholders in quality assurance in initial VET.

The framework curriculum required for the dual education and training school section is regularly reviewed by the Permanent Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs. Compliance with quality assurance requirements by initial VET providers is monitored by local school authorities. Quality assurance approaches are based on quality frameworks, educational standards, centralized examinations, monitoring and benchmarking exercises and school inspection.

Monitoring and data for evidence-based VET policy

The Ministry of Education (BMBF) publishes an annual report on VET, providing a wealth of information and analysis on various aspects of its development. It is accompanied by the data report of the Federal Institute for VET, which brings together data from various sources (own data, data from the federal statistical office, state statistical offices, Federal Employment Agency, Employment Research Institute of Labor) regarding training participants and training results (such as share of employed trainees, occupation obtained after training). The report sets the basis for policy decisions on VET, including program funding.

Quality assurance in FPC

Quality assurance is mandatory for continuing VET providers receiving public funding: employment agencies only issue learning vouchers in certified programs offered by accredited providers. Accreditation of providers and continuous VET programs is done by private certification bodies according to the criteria established in the regulation regulation of accreditation and certification in continuous training. An advisory board of four (state and federal; employer and employee organizations) consults the certification bodies. The BMBF funds regular checks of CVET providers through an independent foundation and has prepared a quality checklist to help find a good quality CVET offer and provider. BIBB together with the German Institute for Adult Education, operates the online platform wbmonitor which is dedicated to supporting continuing VET in Germany. It conducts an annual survey of public and private VET providers and monitors labor market developments.

National qualification framework

The German Qualifications Framework (DQR) has eight levels. It is based on learning outcomes and focuses on the German concept of "vocational action competence": a holistic and integrated approach to the acquisition of competences during VET, rather than one based on the acquisition of isolated skills and competences. DQR is developed as a transparency tool without providing for legal obligations or rights, neither for individuals nor for education providers or businesses. The DQR was cross-referenced to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) in 2012.

Validation of prior learning

Validation of non-formal learning: external candidate final examinations

The most important tool for assessing the results of non-formal learning is the admission to the final vocational examinations in accordance with the Vocational Training Act (BBiG) and the Code of Trade and Crafts (HwO), known as the Externen-Prüfung (examination for external candidates, i.e. those not involved in a formal vocational training program). Under this provision, persons may be admitted to a final examination for a recognized occupation requiring formal training (training occupation) if they prove that they have been employed in the relevant occupation for a period equal to or greater than one and a half years. or initial training.

Credit can be obtained for a higher level of general education, such as the entry qualification for specialist upper secondary education, which shortens the period of employment for which evidence must be provided. A previous relevant initial VET program in another training occupation may also be credited towards the required periods of employment. In addition to the practical part of the exam, where relevant professional skills are tested, external candidates must prove their theoretical knowledge through a written test. Candidates can prepare either on their own or by attending the preparatory courses offered by the relevant chambers.

Implementation project of a validation system

The ValiKom project, agreed between the ministry of education and the national organizations of German chambers (DIHK and ZDH), has been operational since 2015. ValiKom is considered the reference project for the establishment of a validation system in Germany. It is aimed at adults who have acquired skills and competences through work but do not have a formal qualification, including those who wish to access further training. The approach relates to existing training regulations and occupational profiles and leads to certificates expressing the extent to which the skills demonstrated are equivalent to those normally acquired under the Vocational Training Act. Participating chambers of industry, commerce and trades began piloting in 2017.

The follow-up project ValiKom-Transfer aims to expand and widely transfer the standardized procedure of registration, review, assessment and certification of informally and non-formally acquired professional skills, developed and tested in ValiKom, in about 40 selected occupations for people without professional qualifications and for qualified career changers. By the end of 2020, the 30 rooms participating in ValiKom-Transfer have carried out more than 700 validation procedures.

Assessment and recognition of foreign professional qualifications

The Act on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications (BQFG), introduced in April 2012, gives individuals the right to match qualifications acquired abroad with a German qualification by a competent authority. The Act covers more than 600 regulated occupations, including dual training, master craftsman or other advanced vocational qualifications. It also covers occupations such as nurses, doctors and lawyers. Depending on the sector, the assessment and recognition of foreign professional qualifications is carried out by the IHK Fosa or the governing chambers (Leitkammern).

In March 2020, the Skilled Immigration Act came into force. This gives applicants from non-EU countries with a recognized VET qualification the opportunity to live and work in Germany. There is an exception: IT specialists with highly developed practical professional knowledge can come to Germany without recognition and practice their occupation. The new Central Service Agency for Professional Recognition (ZSBA) makes the entire recognition procedure more transparent and efficient for applicants through counseling. Another new feature is the possibility to enter Germany for up to 6 months to look for a training place.

3.3. Spain

LLL – Adult education and training in Spain

Adult education (EPA - Educación de personas adultas) ranges from traditional literacy processes and the achievement of basic education to training leading to



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types of benefits and programmer PROVIDED of education

and local authorities. Education authorities offer specific basic education programs for adults, basic VET (ISCED 353) and intermediate VET (ISCED 354) programs are also accessible to adults. All post-compulsory education programs are open to adults, including higher VET ISCED 554 programmes. These may or may not include flexible attendance arrangements to combine learning with personal and professional life. The purpose of adult education is to provide people over 18 with the opportunity to acquire, update, complete or expand their knowledge and skills for personal and professional development.

The programs are not free, but they are accessible to the majority of the population due to the low cost: student fees cover the cost of the tutors, the rest is covered by the Ministry of Education. For quality assurance purposes, students must complete all activities and pass exams. On successful completion, they obtain a certificate of achievement issued by the Ministry of Education, which has no academic value but can be evaluated in the labor market.

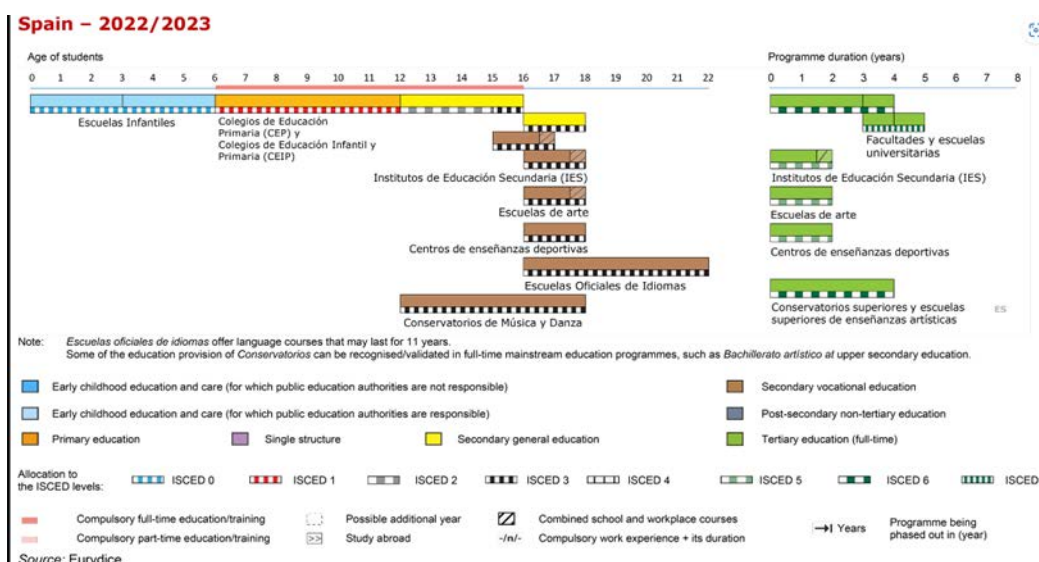
The education system in Spain

Compulsory education includes 6 years in primary school (6-12) and 4 years in secondary school (12-16 years). The age of 16 is the end of compulsory education, regardless of the level of education achieved, but lower secondary learners can stay until 18 in some cases, to obtain the end of lower secondary certificate (ESO diploma).

The structure of the education system in Spain

The Spanish education and training system includes:

- early childhood education (ISCED 0);
- primary education (ISCED 1), 6 years (6-12);
- compulsory lower secondary education (ISCED 2), 4 years (12-16);
- post-compulsory secondary programs (ISCED 3) (21);
- higher VET programs (ISCED 5);
- higher education academic programs (ISCED 6,7,8).



Source: <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/inline-images/ES.jpg>

Early education lasts until the age of 6. Although it is not a compulsory education stage, the second cycle is free in all institutions that receive public funding (public and private institutions with public funding). Public institutions that provide this education are called kindergartens, and those that also provide primary education are called primary and primary schools.

Basic education

Basic education is compulsory and provided free of charge in publicly funded institutions. It covers ten years of schooling and consists of the following:

- **Primary education**, provided in primary schools. It consists of six academic years, normally between the ages of 6 and 12.
- **Compulsory secondary education (ESO)**, which is offered in secondary schools for ages 12 to 16. At the end of this stage, students receive their first official qualification, the compulsory secondary education graduate diploma (Graduado en Educación Secundaria Obligatoria), which gives them access to gymnasium. education or the labor market.
- **Training cycles at basic level**, which are offered in secondary schools for ages 15 to 17. Students who complete these courses receive the Diploma of Graduate in Compulsory Secondary Education and the qualification of Basic Technician in the appropriate specialization.

Upper secondary education

Upper secondary education is mainly provided in secondary education lyceums as well. It has a duration of two academic years, attended generally between 16 and 18 years. It offers students two possibilities, Bachelor (General Option) and Intermediate Vocational Training (Vocational Option). The latter is also offered in integrated vocational training institutions and national reference centers.

Higher education

Higher education includes university studies and professional studies. University studies are taught in universities, and advanced vocational training is taught in the same institutions as intermediate vocational training.

Adult Education (EPA)

Adult education (EPA) encompasses different types of education provided by education, labor and local authorities in very different types of institutions. Face-to-face education leading to a formal qualification in the education system is offered in mainstream institutions or in specific adult education institutions. The EPA is aimed at people over 18 and, exceptionally, people over 16 who are working and unable to attend regular schools, or who are competitive athletes. In addition to these types of education, the Spanish education system offers specialized education:

- **Linguistic education**, which includes language teaching at levels A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). These programs are offered in official language schools.
- **Artistic education**, which includes elementary music and dance education, professional art education and higher art education. These studies are taught in different specific institutions according to each type and level of education.
- **Sports education**, organized on intermediate and higher training cycles and taught in the same institutions as vocational education.

VET in Spain: the education and training system

In Spain, vocational qualifications can be obtained by successfully completing IVET or CVET programs or by validating skills acquired through non-formal and informal learning or work experience. VET programs are modular, allowing for partial certification and re-employment from a lifelong learning perspective, and include compulsory on-the-job learning at the end of or during studies. Learners must pass all modules to obtain the relevant qualification. VET programs using online or virtual learning environments and platforms are increasing to facilitate access to VET. Initial VET provides upper secondary (basic and intermediate) and higher VET qualifications as part of the education system. The programs last 2 years (2 000 hours) and include on-the-job learning in a company and at a VET school:

- **basic programs**(ISCED 353) are available in the last year of compulsory education, for students aged 15 or 16. They allow students at risk of leaving education without qualifications to develop basic skills, prepare for an occupation (such as agro-horticulture) and gain a basic VET qualification. Pupils can move on to upper secondary VET and, in some cases, also obtain the compulsory secondary qualification opening the path to general education;
- **intermediate programs**it can start at the age of 16, after compulsory education. These lead to technician qualifications at ISCED 354 (such as cookery and gastronomy). Access to higher VET in the same field of study is possible, through an admission procedure;

- at tertiary level, higher programs (ISCED 554) lead to an advanced technician qualification (such as logistics coordinator). Graduates can transfer to degree programs through an admissions procedure.

Graduates of intermediate and higher VET programs can take specialization courses in the same field of study to expand occupation-specific skills and acquire digital skills in line with the emerging needs of the economy. Adults can enroll in the same VET programs as young people (basic, intermediate and advanced VET). The duration varies depending on the learning outcomes at each level (from 180 to 1110 hours), access to the next level is possible in the same professional field. All three levels include a mandatory on-the-job training module of variable duration.

The Spanish VET system is modular, allowing the recognition and transfer of competences (units) acquired in one VET program to another, shortening its duration. Competency units can also be acquired by validating prior learning. Training is provided by accredited public and private institutions. Non-formal VET includes a wide range of courses, designed for different needs and skill profiles, allowing for upskilling or retraining.

formal VET

Learners follow a 2-year program to acquire a basic vocational qualification (VET diploma) and have the option, under certain conditions, to obtain a high school leaving certificate (ESO diploma) which completes compulsory education. Direct access to intermediate VET is possible with or without the ESO diploma. Formal VET programs run at two other levels: Upper Secondary Intermediate VET (ISCED 354) and Upper Tertiary VET (ISCED 554). They provide full VET qualifications (VET diplomas) that have academic and professional validity.

Programs run in public and private VET institutions and integrated vocational training centers. IVET programs are modular and include compulsory on-the-job learning at the end of or during studies. The weight of WBL varies from 50% to 65% depending on the level. Practical training takes place in school workshops, laboratories, simulations; a mandatory practical placement in a company (Ø 400 hours, depending on level) is included in all VET programmes/levels. When the program is delivered dually, it can take the form of an apprenticeship contract (contrato para la formación y el aprendizaje) for learners aged 16 to 24 or a learning contract. The duration of the program can be extended from the initial 2 years to 3; practical training within the company covers 33% - 85% of the learning hours set in the qualification.

Learners must pass all modules to obtain the relevant qualification. However, modularization allows for partial certification (units of competence) and re-employment from a lifelong learning perspective. Graduates of intermediate and higher IFP programs can enroll in specialization courses (Cursos de Especialización) in the same field of study to acquire occupation-specific and digital skills in line with the emerging needs of the economy. Art, sports and foreign language education have their own organization and are considered "specialist education". Language education is organized according to the European Framework for Language Learning, Teaching and Assessment (CERF).

Formal CVET

Learners over the age of 16 can enroll in formal continuous VET programs to obtain state-recognised vocational certificates (CdPs) offered by public and private entities and integrated vocational training centres. In such cases, the distance learning part is predefined based on expert opinions. Learning that cannot occur through simulation (due to the use of specific equipment or machines) must be completed in traditional learning settings. All final assessments are face-to-face.

In vocational training programs, classroom learning in a training center (workshops, laboratories, simulations, etc.) is combined with a mandatory practical placement in a company, of varying duration depending on the content of the program. When the program is provided through a dual VET/ apprenticeship contract (contrato para la formación y el aprendizaje), classroom learning covers at least 25% of working hours in the first year and 15% in the second and third years.

Non-formal CVET

Vocational training in Spain also includes training schemes for workers to enter - or re-enter - the labor market and continuing training schemes for company employees. Employment authorities organize a wide range of training activities for the unemployed with the aim of improving their employability and facilitating their integration into the labor market. Other training activities are primarily aimed at employed workers, although unemployed workers can also participate (up to a limit).

Training provisions for both employed and unemployed workers are integrated into the continuing vocational training system for employment. They offer training courses included in the catalog of training specialties of the Public Employment Service (SEPE), financed from public funds through various schemes at state and regional level. There are other smaller training-employment schemes as well as training for civil servants, military personnel, seafarers and prison inmates. Other ad hoc training activities can be carried out by other public authorities in their field of activity.

Apprenticeship – dual VET

Dual VET is an alternative training scheme that combines work and learning. It takes the form:

- an apprenticeship contract (contrato para la formación y el aprendizaje) between the learner and the company, offered in both VET and VET programs;
- in VET, it can also be delivered without a contractual employment relationship through a learning contract.

Since 2016, apprenticeships must be linked to programs leading to state-recognised qualifications (VET diplomas or professional certificates, Certificados de Profesionalidad, CdPs). Training not leading to IFP or FPC qualifications has since been discontinued, unless complementary to the qualification program undertaken by the apprentice. VET programs in school and dual programs lead to the same qualifications (VET diplomas), and VET learners from both modalities could be mixed in the same class.

Dual VET offered in the form of a learning agreement between school, learner and company are called dual projects (proyectos de FP Dual). The main characteristics of learning agreements are as follows:

- the company will participate in a minimum of 33% of the training hours set out in the requirements for a particular qualification. The maximum share is 85%;
- the duration of the learning program (IVET) can be extended from the usual 2 years to 3;
- trainees can do the practical placement in the company only after completing the first part of the program in a training center. Each region has different regulations regarding when placement can begin;
- Student assessment is the responsibility of the teaching staff at the school or VET institution, taking into account the opinion of tutors and trainers within the company and work performance.

Quality assurance in VET

Education authorities establish, with the prior approval of the General for Education and Vocational Training, the basic quality indicators and requirements for education and training based on the National Catalog of Occupational Standards (CNCP). The education system subscribes to a quality assurance that covers all aspects of activities using two differentiated means:



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- inspection of the education system (including VET) organized between the state and the regional educational authorities
- evaluation of the education system, including evaluation of school performance and teaching staff performance.

Quality assurance in VET is threefold:

- state level
- regional level, by the Autonomous Communities
- at local level, by educational institutions

Since 2000, the Institute for Educational Evaluation (INEE), in collaboration with the regions, uses statistical indicators to carry out annual evaluations. The results obtained are used to make policy decisions. The process is in accordance with the European reference framework for quality assurance (EQAVET). At the end of each year, schools evaluate the results obtained to see if they are satisfactory and if the training provided is aligned with local socio-economic needs. An integrated IT system is in place in vocational training for employment. It collects complete and up-to-date information on training activities funded by public appeals throughout the state and is used to evaluate the effectiveness of vocational training for employment.

Training entities offering VET programs leading to a professional certificate (CdP) must comply with the requirements set out in the royal decree governing each CdP (training infrastructure, human resources) and establish a training project for program delivery, apply additional requirements for e-learning courses. Training providers are monitored by public employment services to check compliance with the requirements of VET programs leading to a professional certificate.

Validation of prior learning

The National Institute of Qualifications (INCUAL) ensures the maintenance and updating of the national catalog of occupational standards (CNCP), constituting the basis for establishing IVET and FPC qualifications. INCUAL uses a set of quality criteria to guarantee the reliability, objectivity and technical rigor of the validation process.



With the change published in 2021, individuals can now apply at any time to validate their skills. The regions are responsible for guidance services and quality assurance of the validation process, as well as for the registration of validated units of competence (CU). UCs are individually assessed and certified and can be accumulated towards a full IVET or CVET qualification. These procedures empower citizens to engage in further learning and gain comprehensive qualifications.

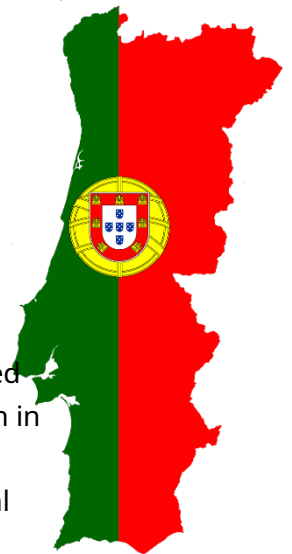
The process begins with an initial stage of counseling led by a counselor who prepares an orientation report on the applicant. The evaluation phase is carried out by analyzing the indicated report, the documentation provided by the candidate and the various methods of verifying the skills acquired at the workplace. Finally, the assessment results are transferred to a state register. To participate, applicants must have at least 3 years of experience in the validation competency, with a minimum of 2,000 hours of work in the 15 years prior to application.

VET education centres, integrated VET centers and national reference centers can carry out these activities. Other locations for this procedure may also be authorized by the relevant authorities. A national procedure for validating skills acquired in volunteering activities with young people was developed in collaboration with volunteering organizations, public authorities and companies. It is a free and telematic (online) service, through a web application, through which young people who volunteer regularly can apply for official certification of certain skills. Adults who wish to obtain ESO and Bachillerato or IVET qualifications (at all three levels) without having to complete the relevant studies can take the relevant exams.

3.4. Portugal

LLL – Adult education and training in Portugal

There are different ways of educating and training adults with specific objectives and target groups, including a system of recognition, validation and certification of skills acquired throughout life. Provision in this area is mainly included in the National Qualifications System/Catalogue and organized by a national network of "Califica" Centers covering the whole country, providing a guidance system for adults, while coordinating a vast network of qualification bodies. training. As such, they are focused on obtaining both academic and professional certification at the same time, although in some cases they may only award one of these. Recurring education is designed for adults who have not completed their basic or upper secondary education at the usual age.



The education system in Portugal

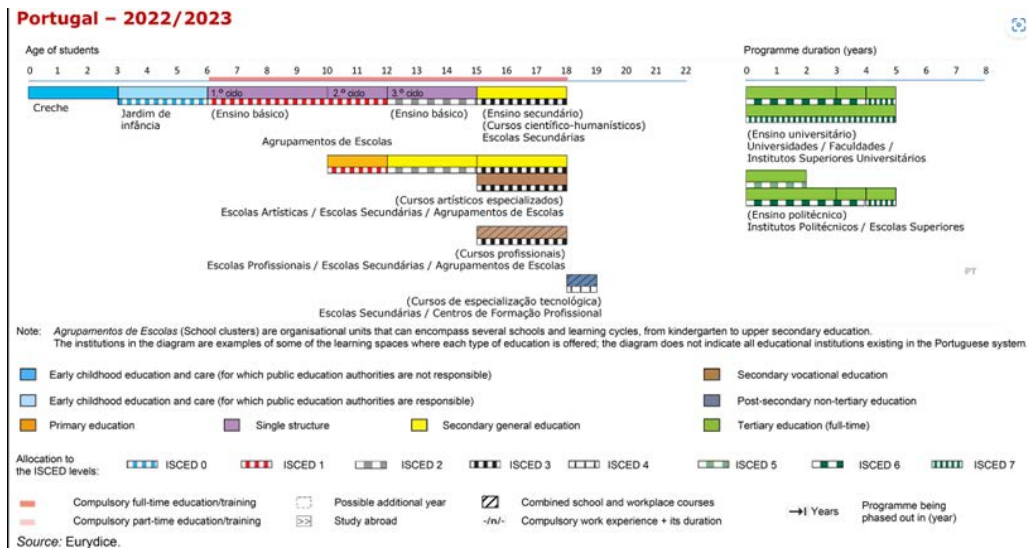
Early childhood education is optional and covers children from 3 to 6 years old. Compulsory education lasts 12 school years and starts at the age of 6. It includes basic education and upper secondary education. Basic education lasts 9 years until the age of 15 (including some VET programmes). It includes three cycles; cycle I of 4 years and cycle II of 2 years are considered primary education, while cycle III of 3 years corresponds to lower secondary education. Secondary (upper secondary) education comprises general and VET programs (years 10-12). Graduates of these 3-year programs can access tertiary and post-secondary non-tertiary education. Horizontal and vertical permeability is an important element of the education and training system, ensuring links not only between different VET programmes,

The structure of the education system in Portugal

The Portuguese education and training system includes:

- preschool education (ISCED level 0);

- basic education (9 years) organized in three cycles that integrate primary and secondary education (ISCED level 1 and 2);
- upper secondary education (ISCED level 3);
- non-tertiary post-secondary education (ISCED level 4);
- tertiary education (ISCED levels 5, 6, 7 and 8).



Source: <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/inline-images/PT.jpg>

The Portuguese education system is divided into pre-school education (from the age of three until the start of basic education), basic education (ages six to 15) and upper secondary education (ages 15 to 18).

Preschool education covers children from the age of three to compulsory school age (six years). Preschool attendance is optional, recognizing the primacy of the role of families in children's education, and is universal for children from the year they reach their third birthday.

Basic education (ISCED 1 and 2)

Basic education is universal, compulsory, free and lasts nine years. It is divided into three sequential cycles, each one should complement and build on the previous one from a global perspective:

- the first cycle (CITE 1) corresponds to the first four years of schooling (grades one to four).
- the second cycle (CITE 2) corresponds to the next two years (grades five and six).
- the third cycle (CITE 3) lasts three years and corresponds to lower secondary education (grades seven to nine).

The guiding principles of the organization and management of the curriculum aim to ensure a common general education for all citizens, through the acquisition of fundamental knowledge and skills that enable further studies.

Upper secondary education (ISCED 3)

Upper secondary education lasts three years and corresponds to the 10th, 11th and 12th grades of upper secondary education, organized into different types. Some are oriented towards further studies, others through dual certification (academic and professional), the latter combining general, technical and placement training. The permeability between the different paths is guaranteed, as well as access through all of them to higher education through national exams.

Non-tertiary post-secondary education (ISCED 4)

The provision of non-tertiary post-secondary education can lead to an NQF level 5 qualification and involves high-level technical training aimed at integration into the labor market as well as further higher education studies. It usually lasts one year and is intended for young people over 18 who have completed 12 years of compulsory schooling. This level can be obtained in the following ways:

- specialized technological courses (STC)
- apprenticeship + courses
- certified modular training
- recognition, validation and certification of competences.

Higher education (ISCED 5 – 8)

Portuguese higher education is a binary system that includes the university and polytechnic systems. Universities are geared towards providing sound scientific training, combining the efforts and skills of teaching and research units, while polytechnics focus on advanced vocational and technical training. Prerequisites for entering tertiary education include successful completion of an upper secondary program or similar qualification at the same level, entrance examinations and specific requirements for each field of study. Higher education institutions can also set a special quota for VET graduates.

Universities and polytechnics lead to a first-cycle degree (licenciatura) and a second-cycle degree (mestrado). It also offers master's programs, which integrate the first two cycles (mestrado) and doctoral degrees (doutoramento). Polytechnic institutions also offer short-cycle programs, called higher professional technical programs (cursos técnicos superiores profissionais, CTeSP). CTeSP graduates acquire a higher vocational technician diploma, but not a non-tertiary post-secondary certificate or a higher education diploma.

VET in Portugal: education and training system

In Portugal, all VET programs lead to double certification (education and professional certification):

- at the lower secondary level, education and training programs aimed at people aged over 15 who are at risk of early leaving; these programs are academic and include practical training
- at upper secondary level, there are four types of school-based VET programs that combine components of general or sociocultural training, scientific and technological training with work-based learning (WBL)
- at post-secondary non-tertiary level, technology specialization programs last from 1 to 1.5 years and incorporate WBL
- at tertiary level, 2-year higher vocational technical courses are offered by polytechnics (including internship).

There are the following programs for adult qualifications:

- adult education and training programs aimed at learners who wish to complete lower or upper secondary education and/or obtain a professional qualification
- certified modular training
- recognition of prior learning (recognition, validation and certification of competences, RVCC)

The two RVCC pathways (Education and Vocational) can lead to either a lower or upper secondary certificate or a vocational certificate.

Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship programs are aimed at young people up to 25 years old. Programs include 40% WBL. A training contract must be signed between the apprentice and the enterprise (WBL provider). The curricula are organized into training components: sociocultural, scientific, technological and practical training in the work environment (WBL). A dual certification that includes an educational and professional certification at EQF level 4 (ISCED 354) is awarded upon successful completion of the program.

Quality assurance in VET



Accreditation of VET providers (certificação de entitas formadoras) falls under the responsibility of DGERT. It aims to promote the quality and credibility of training providers operating within the SNQ but outside the education system, in particular private training companies. Accreditation aims to certify that a VET provider can develop and deliver all stages of the training cycle in the areas of education and training they focus on. The accreditation process is voluntary and includes the assessment of applicants against a quality standard and a technical assessment of their structure and organization.

VET providers should define the training or education program that will be assessed. They then self-assess their structure and practices against quality standards. Subsequently, providers submit an electronic application for accreditation to DGERT, which can then carry out an assessment (technical, documentary or audit-supported) to certify that providers can develop such a training program in a specific thematic area. In the final stage, DGERT accredits the successful candidates. If an already accredited VET provider wishes to extend the scope of accreditation to other areas of education and training, it can submit another application for accreditation. DGERT carries out regular audits using performance indicators and evaluating the results of the training activity of VET providers. Only successful VET providers maintain their accreditation.

Another national approach to improving quality assurance in VET, promoted by vocational schools and other VET providers, has been designed using the EQAVET framework. VET providers have aligned their quality assurance approaches to the EQAVET framework and the overall aim is that when the quality assurance approach is fully implemented, all VET providers can adopt it and be awarded a label of quality based on EQAVET quality criteria and indicative descriptors.

Validation of prior learning

The recognition of prior learning (the process of recognition, validation and certification of competences, RVCC) aims to identify the formal, non-formal and informal competences that individuals have developed. It comprises two pathways, education and vocational, each based on a different set of standards:

- key competence standards (for validation of education)
- professional competence standards (for professional validation).

The RVCC process also uses a set of specially designed assessment tools.

Individuals can initiate an RVCC process at a Qualifica center at any time of the year. The RVCC process is open to applicants who are at least 18 years old. Applicants under the age of 23 must submit a verification from a social security office showing that they have at least 3 years of work experience. To complete the RVCC process, learners should attend at least 50 hours of training to acquire the necessary skills. They can also attend 25-hour courses to



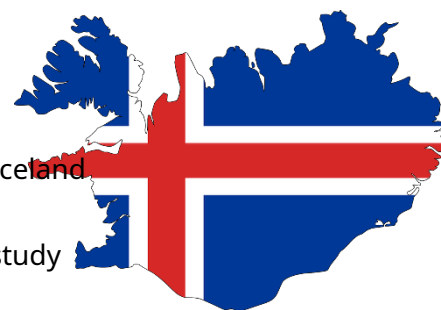
prepare for the final assessment. Both RVCC pathways primarily involve face-to-face procedures and training, although distance learning is also an option.

A main tool for evaluating the RVCC process is the reflective learning portfolio (portefólio reflexivo). It records candidates' competencies, displaying a critical assessment of their knowledge, skills and experience, including all relevant supporting documents. Candidates are evaluated by a jury, appointed by a Qualifica center, which certifies their skills. Assessment may be written, oral or practical, or may combine these methods to assess acquired key competences (education pathway) or professional competences (vocational pathway). Candidates can also obtain a partial certification that allows them to attend missing training components to achieve full certification. Certifications earned through the RVCC process are equal to any other, allowing learners to continue their education.

3.5. Iceland

LLL – Adult education and training in Iceland

Adult general education and adult vocational education and training in Iceland range from non-formal education to qualified general education and continuing vocational training. It covers both programs and courses of study



private, financed by the workplace or union, as well as financed by public funds. There is a long tradition of upskilling the workforce beyond the compulsory stages of education, and the Icelandic system is generally diverse, with many options, programs and modes of study serving the needs of many different groups. Some offer second chances so that young adults and lifelong learners can return to education and training later in life, with the curriculum and exams tailored to the experience, interest and prior formal and non-formal learning of the individual.

In many cases, the programs are structured in such a way that the skill level can be compared to the levels in the mainstream education system. VTC programs are available for adults and are usually offered by:

- institutions owned by the social partners. The courses offered are aimed at improving skills. These courses are usually of short duration. People in the labor market with VET qualifications can obtain financial support from social partners' training funds for these courses;
- other continuing vocational training centers which are much smaller than the social partners' institutions and offer more specialized training.

Employees are also given on-the-job training mainly on security, environmental protection, new work techniques, etc.

Iceland is above the EU benchmark for the proportion of adults (25-64) participating in education and training, according to the 2019 EU Labor Force Survey

(US LDS). Compared to the EU-27 average of 10.8% of adults participating in education and training in the four weeks preceding the 2019 survey, this rate was 22.2% for Iceland.

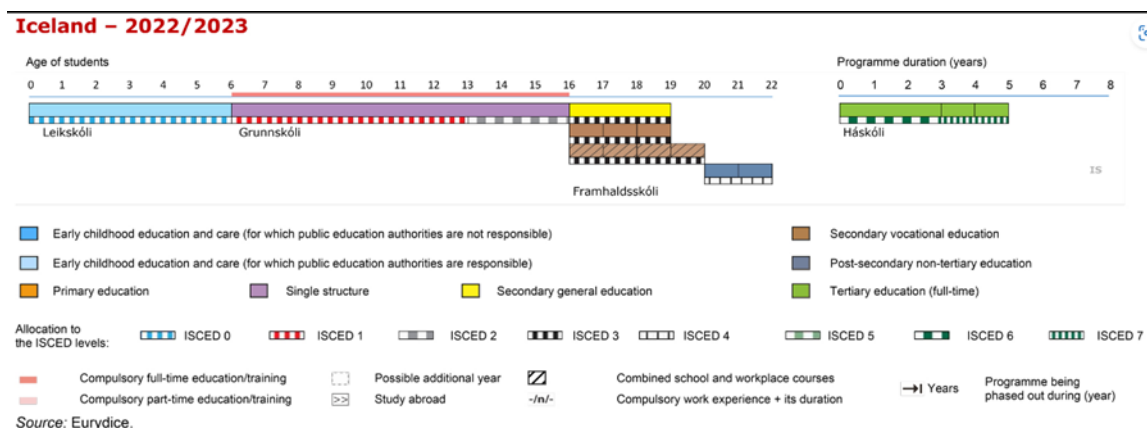
The education system in Iceland

Compulsory education begins at age 6 and includes 10 years of basic education (or by June of the year a student turns 16). Integrated primary and lower secondary education is the responsibility of municipalities. Upper secondary education (either general or vocational) is run by the state. Only a few of the 37 upper secondary schools do not offer VET programmes. Non-tertiary post-secondary education is offered for limited specialties (eg tour guides and tradesmen). Higher education is in accordance with the Bologna process, offering 3-year bachelor's, 2-year master's and 3-year doctoral programs. Iceland is one of the OECD countries that invests the most in its education system.

The structure of the education system in Iceland

The Icelandic education and training system includes:

- preschool education (ISCED level 0);
- integrated primary and lower secondary education (EQF levels 1-2, ISCED levels 244)
- upper secondary education (EQF 4, ISCED levels 344, 351, 353);
- non-tertiary post-secondary education (EQF 5, ISCED levels 453, 454);
- higher education (EQF levels 6, 7, 8, ISCED levels 554, 665, 766, 768, 864).



Source: <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/inline-images/IS.jpg>

The education system in Iceland is divided into four levels: pre-school, compulsory, upper secondary and higher education (universities). The system is mainly publicly funded, with very few private schools.

Early education and care(ECEC) in Iceland is based on an integrated approach to education and care. Until the age of 6, children can attend ECEC centers (leikskóli). Although not compulsory, ECEC is defined as the first level of education in Iceland. There is also a system of regulated and publicly subsidized home provision (dagforeldrar) targeting the youngest children (birth to age 2).

Primary and lower secondary education

Compulsory education(Grunnskóli) in Iceland is organized in a single structure system that extends to primary and lower secondary levels and includes children aged six to sixteen. A child's compulsory education normally begins at the beginning of the school year in the calendar year in which the child turns six.

Upper secondary education and training

Upper secondary education and training (Framhaldsskóli) in Iceland normally serves the 16-19 age group. General studies programs normally last three years and lead to a university entrance qualification. Vocational education and training normally lasts 3-4 years depending on the VET discipline and may be partly work-based (an apprenticeship).

Higher education

Higher education in Iceland follows a three-cycle structure. Education in the first and second cycle is referred to as university education, and the third cycle as higher education. Higher education institutions in Iceland offer various study programs. Recognized degrees include diplomas, bachelor's degrees, awarded on completion of basic studies, master's degrees, on completion of one or more years of postgraduate study, and doctoral degrees, on completion of extended research-related postgraduate studies.

VET in Iceland: education and training system

VET at upper secondary level

Almost all VET is provided at upper secondary level (ISQF 3/ EQF4), where school studies and workplace learning are an integral part. The duration of study programs varies from 1 school year to 4 years of combined school and work-based learning. Businesses responsible for training need formal certification and training agreements with both the learner and the school, stipulating the objectives, time period and assessment of the training. The most common are journeyman exams, but there are also exams for health professionals and ship and aircraft captains and engineers. In Iceland, vocational education and training normally includes apprenticeships, provided by both

public and private institutions. The National Curriculum Guide, as for all upper secondary education, also covers guidance for vocational study branches.

VET at non-tertiary post-secondary level

Several VET programs are available at post-secondary non-tertiary level (ISQF 4/EQF 5), including tour guides and captains at the highest level. Certificates are also awarded at this level for all master craftsmen. These programs last between 1 and 2 years and lead to qualifications that provide professional rights. Learners with severe learning difficulties are offered special programs in mainstream upper secondary schools. Several VET pathways leading to a degree offer these learners the potential to further their education.

The overall focus of the education system is to keep its structure simple and understandable so that learners can move relatively easily between programs of study. They can finish upper secondary school with a vocational diploma and a general diploma (matriculation exam), a prerequisite for higher education. VET learners who have not passed the matriculation exam can take additional general studies to qualify. Courses that award study points at high school must be approved by an official validation body, according to standards approved by the Ministry of Education.

Almost all initial VET in Iceland is in certified trades and built on an apprenticeship system, where most education takes place in school, but on-the-job training is also required. The length of time spent in school and time spent at work varies between programs and branches. In addition, there are a small number of VET programs where all education and training takes place in school and are not certified trades, such as computer technology and various arts. The most common duration of VET studies in certified trades is 4 years.

With a new regulation, the exact timeframe for on-the-job learning will not be determined from the outset. Instead, the length of on-the-job training will be determined by how quickly the learner masters a predetermined set of skills. Thus, the focus will be on the skills acquired at the workplace, not on the length of time spent there. Competency factors have been defined for each discipline, and the student must master the elements specified therein. On-the-job training will be much more skills-based than before. Learners will be able to graduate sooner rather than being held back waiting for the right apprenticeship to come along.

VET at post-secondary non-tertiary level is largely composed of Master of Trades programmes, where the journeyman certificate (in the relevant study programme, such as electrical, construction or mechanical studies) is a prerequisite for enrolment. Authorized tradesmen (with a journeyman exam) can also enter diploma studies (90 ECTS) in construction, mechanical or electrical engineering at tertiary level, acquiring the professional title of authorized technician.

According to the Upper Secondary Education Framework Legislation, a prerequisite for doing qualified workplace training is to have a contract with a company that is willing and able to provide training in a VET subject. Many prerequisites must be met for such a contract to be signed, including employment with a certified master in the trade in question. Two types of contracts are possible:

- a contract between the school and the company, where the content of the training must be carried out according to the regulation issued by the Minister of Education and which contains detailed provisions on workplace training contracts
- a traditional apprenticeship contract between the company and the learner, which stipulates the rights and obligations of the workplace and the learner respectively, as well as the objective of training, quality control and dispute resolution. The learner becomes employed and receives a marginal salary during the training, in accordance with the labor market agreements in which the number of working hours is also established.

The duration of on-the-job training varies from 3 to 126 weeks, depending on the VET study programme. The reasons for this difference are primarily: the total duration of the program, on the one hand, and the tradition of each sector, on the other.

Quality assurance in VET

The Ministry of Education validates the curricula for all upper secondary education and training, which enter the curricula for upper secondary schools when they are published in the legal journal of the legislator. VET study programs



for all trades are developed in cooperation with the members of the association of each occupation through twelve occupational councils. Job descriptions, knowledge, skills and competences are gradually reviewed by occupational boards.

All secondary schools are subject to a quality assessment by external parties every 5 years. The quality criteria are defined by the Ministry of Education. Training providers must be officially accredited by the Directorate of Education, on behalf of the ministry of education, to obtain a license to teach adult courses that award credits that can be used for further training in upper secondary schools. Accreditation does not imply commitment of public funding to the education provider concerned or responsibility for the obligations of the education and training provider. For several trades, the Ministry of Education has allocated the overall management of training contracts to a common education center portal hosted by the IDAN education center, which provides continuing education for several VET sectors,

Validation of prior learning

Validation of real skills/accreditation of prior learning is a system organized by the social partners and the Ministry of Education to validate non-formal and informal learning. People who have acquired certain skills at work, for example, can have them validated through a formal process, which can shorten their periods of study to, from



for example, a journeyman exam in a trade. They also receive valuable support (counseling and study help) if they have, for example, dyslexia or other learning difficulties. Real competence validations are available in several trades. The social partners and the Ministry of Education are working to expand the offers.

3.6. Bulgaria

LLL – Adult education and training in Bulgaria

The main/main aim of the national adult learning policy is to increase the participation of adults in lifelong learning through better interaction and mobilization of all stakeholders. National policy a



adults sets the strategic framework for government policy in education and training in that period, which aims to achieve the European objective of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Specific measures have been implemented at national level to build a change-adaptive system for adult education and training. It covers all grades of general, vocational, higher and adult education in all its aspects - formal, informal and formal learning. Adult education programs support the acquisition and continued development of nine major key competences for adult learning:

- Bulgarian language skills
- communication skills in foreign languages
- mathematical competence and basic competences in the field of natural sciences and technologies
- digital competence
- learning skills
- social and civil skills
- pro-activity and enterprise
- cultural awareness and creative expression skills
- skills in support of sustainable development and a healthy lifestyle

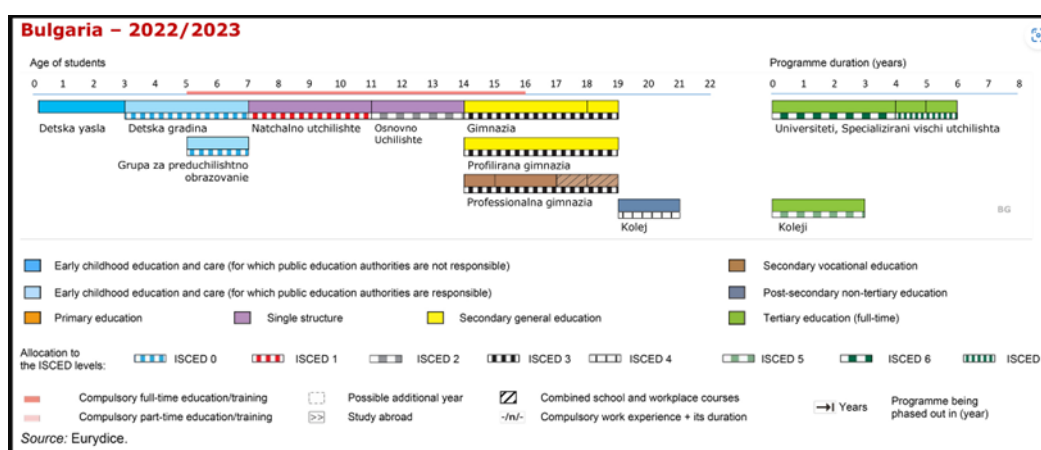
The education system in Bulgaria

Education in Bulgaria is secular and free in state and municipal schools. School education is compulsory from the age of seven or from the age of six, according to the parents' assessment, until the age of 16. It provides for the education and growth of students according to their individual needs and in accordance with the requirements and expectations for successful achievement in civic society.

The structure of the education system in Bulgaria:

The education and training system in Bulgaria includes:

- primary and lower secondary education (EQF 1 and 2);
- Secondary education comprises general (profiled) programs (ISCED 344 and 342) and VET programs (ISCED 352 and 354) in two subsequent stages: the first (3 years, grades 8-10) and the second (2 years, grades 11-11) . 12).
- Non-Tertiary Post-Secondary VET (ISCED 454);
- higher education (ISCED 645, 655,766,767,864);
- apprenticeships, traineeships and dual VET (range of VET qualifications ranging from ISCED 352 to 454).



Source: https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/inline-images/BG_BG.jpg

Kindergartens are institutions of the preschool and school education system for the upbringing, education and socialization of children from 3 years to 7 years (entering the 1st grade) in accordance with the preschool state standard. Children aged 2 can also enter kindergarten in accordance with the conditions and rules of the Preschool and School Education Law. School readiness is assessed at the end of the preschool education stage by comparing the learning outcomes achieved with the learning outcomes described in the standards. The certificate of school preparation is issued.

Primary and lower secondary education

Primary and lower secondary education (grades 1-7) is compulsory. Primary education starts at the age of seven and is provided by state, municipal and private schools. There are no VET programs at this level. Graduates can continue general or vocational secondary education.

Secondary education

Secondary education comprises general (profiled) programs (ISCED 344 and 342) and VET programs (ISCED 352 and 354) in two subsequent stages: the first (3 years, grades 8-10) and the second (2 years, grades 11-11) . 12). It is compulsory for students until they reach the age of 16. At the end of the second stage, learners who pass the state matriculation exams (matura) receive a secondary education diploma (EQF level 4) and a certificate for the VET qualification after passing the state qualification exam. Others receive a secondary school leaving certificate with access to adult vocational training but not higher education. VET programs provide graduates with a general education diploma in addition to a VET qualification certificate.

Higher education

Higher education includes the following programs:

- professional license (ISCED 655, EQF level 6; NQF level 6a)
- bachelor (ISCED 645, EQF level 6; NQF level 6b)
- master (ISCED 766, 767, EQF/NQF level 7)
- Doctorate (ISCED 864, EQF/NQF level 8)

VET in Bulgaria: the education and training system

In Bulgaria, VET is offered at secondary and post-secondary (non-tertiary) level.

VET at secondary level

VET in school it is only offered at the secondary level. Out-of-school adults (16+) can obtain the lowest VET qualification (VET qualification level 1, EQF level 2) before secondary education. Secondary VET aims at obtaining a vocational qualification, but also includes a general education part which is necessary for obtaining a secondary education diploma. Vocational education and training complies with the requirements of state education standards and consists of theory and practice (study and production).

Post-secondary, non-tertiary professional qualifications

Post-secondary, non-tertiary professional qualifications(ISCED 454, EQF level 5) can only be acquired by people with completed secondary education. The qualification acquired at this level ensures access to the labor market. Examples of such qualifications are company manager, hotel manager, restaurant manager, as well as sports and military/defence qualifications.

VET programs for school-aged students have a vocational and a general part; graduates gain qualifications for both. VET programs offered by adult training centers and colleges do not include a general education part and only lead to a VET qualification. VET qualifications can also be gained by validating previous learning by passing an exam, just like regular learners.

Work-Based Learning (WBL) represent a substantial part (50% to 70% or more) of all VET programmes. Most are offered by schools, with the share of WBL decreasing with program level. The current legal framework for dual VET is well defined and was updated in 2019. Practical training in a company alternates with theory periods in a school or other VET provider. School-age learners are trained by companies at least 2 to 3 days a week in the final grades (11 and 12). Both school-age learners and adults receive remuneration from the employer.

The main providers of VET are state, municipal or private schools, vocational secondary schools, art and sports schools, VET colleges and authorized vocational training centres. State education standards specify the content of VET qualifications.

Apprenticeships, traineeships and dual VET

There are several types of training in a real work environment. In 1992, so-called employee apprenticeships were introduced. In 2014, traineeships were introduced for young people (up to 29) who had already obtained a VET qualification (or higher education diploma) but had no work experience in the profession. The duration of internships is between 6 and 12 months.

Since 2014, dual VET has started to evolve. It enables learners to gain VET qualifications. Practical training in a company alternates with periods of theoretical training in a school or other VET provider. Company trainers (mentors) are responsible for practical training. For adult learners, the following options are available to gain a VET qualification:

- 300 hours for EQF level 2
- 660 hours for EQF level 3
- 960 hours for EQF level 4
- 1 260 hours for EQF level 5

The legal framework distinguishes six types of initial and continuing VET programs (FPPI and FPC), defines age and entry requirements and regulates content and duration.

Quality assurance in VET

The Preschool and School Education Law (2015, in force since August 2016) and the VET Law (2014)) set out the quality management process, including VET. Quality management is a continuous process of organizational development based on analysis, planning, implementation and its evaluation. Evaluation is done through self-assessment and inspection. This



aims to prepare the internal evaluation of the quality of education offered through operations, procedures and criteria established by schools. It is carried out in terms and conditions determined by the state education standard for quality management in institutions.

Inspection is a process of preparing an overall assessment by independent experts of the quality of education in schools at a given time and guidelines for improvement. Every school must be inspected at least once every 5 years.

All VET providers must introduce an internal quality assurance system to meet the requirements of the standards. The system includes:

- quality assurance policy and objectives;
- quality management responsibilities;
- system implementation rules;
- annual self-evaluation program;
- rules and procedures for measuring quality obtained through self-assessment.

A significant role is given to improving the working environment, learning outcomes, interaction with local community stakeholders, social partners, employers' organizations and universities and staff training. The Ministry of Education supports and monitors the implementation of quality assurance in VET schools and the National Agency for VET (NAVET) in vocational training centers.

Validation of prior learning

In 2014, the validation of informal and non-formal learning outcomes was introduced through amendments to the VET Law. VET providers organize the validation of professions and specialties that are included in the list of professions for VET (LPVET). The introduction of a new approach to the development of state education standards, based on units of learning outcomes in 2015, made the validation process more transparent.



Applicants present evidence of the learning outcomes they hold in order to acquire a full or partial qualification enabling them to access vocational training and/or the labor market. The methods for assessing learning outcomes are essentially identical to those for assessing knowledge, skills and competences applied in formal education and training.

After validation, two types of certificates can be issued:

- a certificate validating a full qualification. The exam certifies that all units of learning outcomes defined in the state education standard have been achieved;
- a certificate that validates part of the professional qualification (partial qualification). Certifies, through an exam, that one or more units of learning outcomes included in the state education standard have been achieved.

Holders of these certificates have the same rights as those who obtained the corresponding certificates through the formal education system.

4. Continuous vocational training (CVT)

4.1. The importance of continuing professional education (CPD)

Continuing Vocational Training (CVT), also known as lifelong learning, refers to the ongoing process of acquiring new knowledge, skills and competencies to improve job performance and career growth.

In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, companies in Europe face numerous challenges to remain competitive. To thrive in this dynamic environment, it is essential that organizations invest in the professional development of their employees. FPC has emerged as a vital strategy for European companies to improve the skills, knowledge and capabilities of their workforce.



Continuous professional training (CPV)

- enables companies to keep their workforce up-to-date with the latest technologies, ensuring their ability to adapt and innovate in the face of changing business landscapes.
- it can reduce the skills gap by developing the necessary skills within the existing workforce, reducing the need for outsourcing and increasing productivity.
- focuses on the current needs and interests of companies and employees
- it is a good way to react quickly and efficiently to current labor market trends and developments, as well as related changes and restructuring
- they should be individually adapted to the current needs of the company to ensure a goal-oriented expansion and to improve the necessary skills and abilities of employees
- enable learning settings that meet employee needs, prerequisites, and interests to achieve learning goals more effectively
- is able to quickly ensure learning success for employees, which increases motivation, joy in learning and active participation and engagement
- consider learning experiences and skills and development
- has a very high practical orientation
- *continuous checkson* employees' learning progress and flexibly adapt learning settings to their current needs to be able to ensure target-oriented achievement of all employees' learning objectives
- is able to initiate a positive attitude towards learning and further education in the ethos of the company

Providing FPC opportunities demonstrates a commitment to employee growth and development. Engaged employees are more likely to stay with an organization, reducing turnover rates and associated recruitment costs.

4.2. FPC benefits

Implementing FPC programs can bring a wide range of benefits to companies in Europe:

- **Improved performance** and productivity: training programs enable employees to acquire new skills and knowledge, leading to improved job performance and increased productivity. Well-trained employees can adapt to changing work environments and contribute more effectively to organizational goals.
- **Competitive advantage:** A well-trained workforce gives companies a competitive advantage. By equipping employees with cutting-edge knowledge and skills, organizations can differentiate themselves from competitors and drive innovation, positioning themselves as industry leaders.
- **Talent Development** and succession planning: continuing professional development nurtures internal talent, creating a pipeline of qualified individuals for future leadership positions. By investing in employee development, companies can reduce reliance on external recruitment and foster a culture of growth and advancement.

With the realization of FPC offers, a company can expect the following positive effects:

- Increase profit and productivity
- Faster and improved implementation of work processes
- *Minimizing/avoiding mistakes* in the execution of the works
- *Employee* they are more flexible in their work and are able to take on tasks and exercises, which they could not do before
- Employees don't have to ask colleagues for help as often as they used to
- Increasing group dynamics and collegiality
- Greater employee loyalty to the company
- Greater employee satisfaction
- Fewer sick leaves and absences, as well as lower turnover
- The transparent need for demand-oriented further learning that can be developed taking into account the interests of employees
- Employees show interest in further development and education, through which security and routine in the execution of work are increased

- *Proof of on-the-job training* it can be useful for employees to obtain the necessary certification or tenders for company orders
- Higher customer satisfaction as a result of more competent employees (eg, strong language skills and communication competence, fewer misunderstandings and mistakes, higher customer satisfaction, etc.)

4.3. Planning and implementation of FPC programs

Requirements for corporations

Corporations are primarily responsible for planning and implementing a continuing education program best suited to the training needs of the people they employ, which will improve their knowledge, skills and professionalism in the field. Apportionment of training costs will be a matter between corporations and individuals. Corporations should evaluate their training programs at least annually and make proportionate adjustments to meet the training needs of the people they employ.

In developing training programs, consideration should be given to the size of the corporation, organizational structure, risk management system and scope of business activities, as well as the prevailing regulatory framework and market development. Training programs can be provided in-house or corporations can use suitable external sources. In selecting training courses, corporations should be satisfied with the quality of the trainers and the standard of the training programs.

They should also ensure that the content of such courses is properly structured and beneficial to individuals in the performance of their functions. Subjects that are relevant to individuals' functions and can help improve the performance of their functions would fulfill the purpose of FPC.

Key considerations for implementing CPD

When implementing FPC programmes, European companies should consider the following key factors:

- **Assessment of training needs:** Conduct a comprehensive analysis of the organization's current and future training needs to identify skills gaps and prioritize training initiatives. This evaluation can be done through employee surveys, performance appraisals, and discussions with department heads.
- **Customization and flexibility:** Customize training programs to meet the unique needs of the organization and its employees. Consider including a combination of classroom training, online courses, workshops and mentoring programs to provide flexibility and accommodate different learning styles.
- **Measurement and Evaluation:** Establish metrics and evaluation mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of training programs. Regular feedback, post-training evaluations and performance reviews can help measure the impact of training initiatives and identify areas for improvement.

Assessment of FPC needs in the company

To ensure that the FPC can be adapted to current conditions and expected challenges, it is advisable to determine the training needs of the staff. The following questions may help to properly assess the needs:

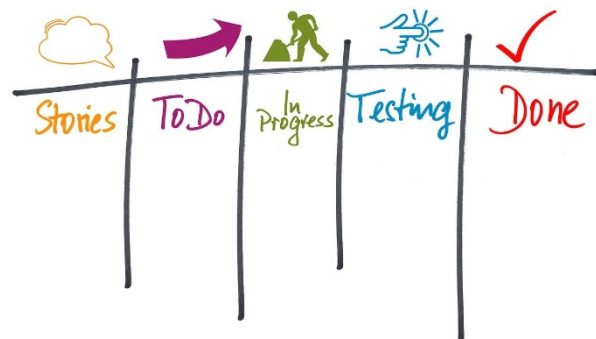
- What sites do employees work at and what exactly do they do there?
- What are the employees' tasks, which ones are working well, and which work processes are causing errors?
- What skills and competencies do employees need to perform their given tasks and exercises?
- Do all employees possess the necessary skills and competencies or are there deficits and shortcomings that need to be compensated for?
- Have there been major restructuring measures or major changes in the recent past that have had a direct impact on the day-to-day work of employees?
- What specific workflows are affected and what skills and competencies do employees need to perform the relevant work and tasks?
- What basic requirements have changed and are new for employees?
- What specific deficits and shortcomings can be compensated for during the FPC?
- What should employees be able to do better after completing FPC and what specific skills and competencies need to be further developed and improved?
- How could FPC be done in a way that motivates employees for active participation?
- What general conditions should be considered to enable easy employee participation?
- Should FPC take place inside or outside working hours and how could it be achieved over time?
- Where should VET take place and to what extent can the workplace act as a place of learning to ensure the most context-oriented and practice-oriented expansion of the necessary skills and competences?

Implementation of FPC

To ensure the successful implementation of CPD programs, European companies can follow these proven practices:

- **Driving support:** Gain buy-in and buy-in from senior management to create a culture of continuous learning and professional development. Leaders should actively participate in training initiatives, setting an example for others to follow.
- **Collaboration and knowledgeSharing:** Foster an environment that encourages collaboration and knowledge sharing among employees. Encourage cross-functional training, mentoring and communities of practice to facilitate the exchange of ideas and expertise.
- **Stay on top of industry trends:** regularly update training programs to reflect the latest industry trends, technological advances and regulatory changes. Engage with industry experts, attend conferences and leverage external resources to ensure training content remains relevant and up-to-date.

Continuous professional training has become a critical component of organizational success for companies in Europe. By investing in the development of their employees and providing opportunities for continuous learning, companies can cultivate a skilled workforce, can improve performance and gain a competitive edge in the marketplace. Through careful planning, customization and assessment, European companies can use to successfully navigate the ever-changing business landscape.



CVT

4.4. VET as a preparatory measure in training courses in the field of labor market policy

In the previous section FPC was presented as an effective measure in the company, where employees are trained according to current needs and future professional challenges – within the company itself or through external training. However, VET can also take place "upstream", as a preparatory measure of labor market policy formation measures, where jobseekers are prepared in the best possible way for further (re)integration into the labor market by need-oriented refresh and expansion of necessary requirements. (occupation-specific) competencies and skills and are supported on their way there.

Training projects in Austria funded by the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) offer a wide range of support measures to help jobseekers reintegrate into the labor market in the best possible way. At the beginning, in almost all training projects it is important to (re)become aware of the qualifications, skills, potentials and resources currently available that can be used for re-entering the labor market. This takes place in the form of competency reviews. In addition, participants' current career aspirations or options are identified. Once the occupational goals have been specified, a feasible plan is drawn up - usually with the support of a company contact person (BK) or a coach - to take up a job in the desired field. Missing skills and know-how are refreshed and expanded through specific (specialist) courses and workshops. Optionally, participants can also carry out internships to test, consolidate and expand the skills acquired in the targeted occupational field. At the same time, internships give them the opportunity to check their career decision, personal suitability for the profession, gain initial "on-the-job" experience and make useful contacts in industry and companies.

The focus of the training measure is on the acquisition of skills adapted to the respective career aspirations and current learning needs, as well as ongoing support in job searches and applications. This 'upstream' acquisition of skills is also a beneficial form of VET that fulfills the requirements of lifelong learning and enables people to bring 'up to date' the skills and competences required for working life, enabling sustainable participation in life professional.

From this point of view, the next chapter will present various VTC good practices that open up beneficial VTC opportunities for company workers as well as job seekers and promote lifelong learning in the long term.

5.FPC - Good practices in selected European countries

This chapter presents various good practices that have proven to be a useful FPC option, as well as various measures that promote and drive FPC measures. The presented best practices are, on the one hand, measures (support) for people who complete or want to complete an FPC measure in a company and, on the other hand, for job seekers (who are for example in a labor market policy training measure) and want to increase their chances of early integration into the labor market by upskilling in an "upstream VET".

5.1. Successful model "Betriebskontakter (BK)" in Austria

Placement offer and support by a company contact

In many labor market policy training measures (funded by the Public Employment Service Austria), the offer "Placement offer and support from a company contact person (Betriebskontakter BK)" can be found to support job seekers sustainably and specifically at the beginning of their (re)integration into the labor market.

Individual support

In concrete terms, this is achieved through individual support in the context of individual settings, this means:

- support for participants in searching for internships and jobs, acquiring and placing internships and job offers
- support for an "application desk" and a BEST job exchange
- support in the application process
- support for trainees and traineeship providers
- organization of company days, company presentations, company trips, etc.

Participants are supported in their search for internships and work. In the supervision of the participants, the multiculturalism and multilingualism of the deployed BKs are given in order to be able to support the participants - who themselves have a migration background - in the best possible way. BKs are responsible for cooperation with companies and internship providers. BK mainly focuses on fields and industries

future-oriented (eg technology, green jobs, teaching professions,...) and which offer participants good employment opportunities (eg tourism, gastronomy, care sector,...).



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The BKs working at BEST have built and maintained a wide network of contacts with the business community during their years of work in various labor market policy formation measures at BEST. To purchase suitable internships and job offers,

for organizing company presentations, expert lectures (e.g. WKO) at training locations, trips to various companies and institutions, BK not only uses its experience and contacts, but also continuously establishes new relationships. These contacts with potential employers support the participants to a decisive extent in their professional reintegration.

BK builds bridges between applicants and HR managers in companies, HR management and obtains information from HR managers about their requirements for potential applicants.

BK job profile

Participants benefit from BK's "know-how" dealing with the following agendas:

- Establishing company contacts, networking and partnering and sourcing job vacancies
- Telephone support and company staff, initial information about the training project
- Consulting and raising awareness of companies, e.g. to clarify staffing requirements, subsidies and thereby increase the chances of filling vacancies.
- Researching (potential) vacancies and their requirement profiles, if necessary in cooperation with regional offices of AMS Vienna
- Support in starting/securing a job
- Individualized, placement-oriented coaching tailored to individual needs
- Intensive support for participants: motivational work, encouragement, fear reduction, etc.)
- Targeted support in individual job research/job search and application process
- Accompanying during job interviews, if desired
- Internship internship, internship support, internship evaluation
- Personal feedback meetings with interns and company managers
- Current job announcements and company contacts as a newsletter service
- Organization and presentations of the company (with the possibility of subsequent job interviews for interested participants), expert lectures at the training locations, trips to various companies and institutions, etc.

Counseling and support offers

Participants are supported by BK through individual counseling and support in a one-to-one setting. Specifically, BK provides beneficial information and support around the topics of job search and application:

Labor market and professions

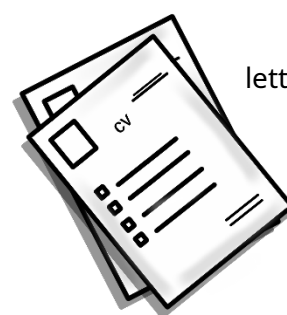
- European, national and regional labor market, employment figures, facts and figures, economic developments, labor market trends, growth sectors, eg Austria as a classic tourist country, with a focus on tourism, hospitality, gastronomy ... other important sectors are trade, export industry, energy industry (renewable energy, environment), software development, creative industries, etc.
- Branches, divisions, areas of activity, occupational areas, areas of activity, tasks, positions, areas of responsibility
- Training and apprenticeship routes (approx. 200 in Austria)
- Occupations (approx. 1800 in Austria), ancillary activities
- Occupational titles (approx. 20,000 in Austria) with which companies advertise their jobs

Internship and job search

- Job postings and job search opportunities: AMS, AMS job application, eAMS Jobroom, job ads in newspapers, trade magazines, online job search portals, home pages of the company, social media platforms, etc.
- Roads to the labor market: internships, professional training, work trials; first and second labor market, socio-economic employment projects and enterprises.
- Models and projects of (re)integration and professional rehabilitation
- Replacement and Replacement Foundations (eg AQUA)

Application for professional employment

- Application strategies, resume design, application letter, motivation, online application, video application,
- The job interview: dos and don'ts
- Coaching for candidates: professional self-presentation and job interviews
- Applying for jobs at employment companies, employment agencies, leasing companies, temporary employment agencies, labor leasing companies
- Recruitment strategies and personnel selection procedures in companies



TO

recruiters,

Information: Labor Law

- Work and employment-related topics: contract and labor law, compensation, collective labor agreements, etc.

Education and training opportunities

- Vocational education and training, e.g. basic education in German, English, mathematics, ICT, soft skills, etc.
- Apprenticeship training for young job seekers up to 25 years of age with max. compulsory school leaving certificate
- Opportunities to gain work experience and regain professional qualifications (e.g. foreign apprenticeship diploma)
- Funding opportunities as financial support for professional integration
- Education and training grants (eg waff, AK)

BK acts as an interface and mediator between participants (as potential applicants) and HR managers from various companies (as potential employers). BK holds discussions with companies about their short- and medium-term staffing needs, if necessary and in cooperation with the SfU (Service für Unternehmen) offices of AMS Vienna. If desired, BK conducts personnel preselection (assessment center) for companies with personnel needs, invites companies to company presentations, plans and organizes company trips, visits to (trade) career fairs and expert lectures (e.g. WKO).

The intensive development of broad company contacts, their acquisition as cooperation partners, the intensive cooperation with the companies offer the participants a decisive added value to be able to sustainably advance their (re)integration into the labor market.

5.2. On-the-job training - internships in Austria

In Austria there are various internship offers for jobseekers or people who are still in (school) training (e.g. studies) or in a labor market policy training measure.

Benefits for trainees

Internship offers of varying duration allow people to gain their first 'on-the-job' professional experience. On the one hand, they can check whether the career decision they have made corresponds to their personal ideas and whether they are really suitable for the job. On the other hand, they have the opportunity to apply various skills and qualifications already available and extend them with valuable job-specific skills, thereby gaining increased confidence and routine in the execution of different work steps and thus increasing self-confidence and self-confidence. insurance.

Through active and committed participation during the internship, they have the opportunity to convince the company of their skills and commitment, which serves to initiate/fix a concrete employment opportunity in the company. In addition, useful contacts in the industry can be made with interesting companies, allowing the development of a first professional network.



Before completing an internship, prospective interns should consider the following questions:

- What industry am I interested in?
- In which industry do I have a long-term perspective?
- Do I want to work in a small or large company?
- Are there any such companies in my region?

Once these questions have been answered, the following internship offers can be used:

Vocational training (Arbeitstraining)

Vocational training can be carried out in a company for up to 12 weeks, during which trainees can apply for a subsidy from the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS). The aim is to prepare for typical/occupation-specific tasks and work stages and to gain work experience to increase chances on the labor market. At best, the intern can get a permanent position in the company.

Work test (Arbeitserprobung)

A work trial can be arranged in a company daily with a maximum duration of up to 4 weeks. There is no right to remuneration from the company, but interns can claim an allowance from the Austrian Public Employment Service (AMS). Through the work trial, the company can check whether the intern is personally and professionally suitable for certain activities, and the intern can in turn check whether he is suitable for the work and whether he can imagine a future job in this field, in this company. This form of internship is particularly suitable for

- unemployed with certified qualifications and skills whose applicability is questionable (for example, if they have not been exercised for a long time)
- migrants who may not be able to prove the details of their qualifications and skills
- People with prolonged absence from the labor market who have difficulty finding or keeping a job due to personal circumstances
- People with special integration problems (disadvantaged people on the labor market)

Working trial is always related to the intentional termination of a concrete employment relationship. The activities to be tested are to be described in more detail by the company in a specified work trial contract between the company and the unemployed person.

Jobseekers must organize a job trial or vocational training through the Austrian Public Employment Service (AMS).

Volunteering

Volunteers are people who work in a company solely for the purpose of expanding knowledge and practical skills and without any work obligation and without any right to remuneration. Volunteers work in a company on their own interest only for a short period of time for training purposes, without this being prescribed by the school as an internship. Voluntary service is characterized by the purpose of training and the absence of any work obligation. There is also no right to remuneration. The sole purpose of learning, mutual independence and lack of remuneration are essential characteristics of voluntary service. The volunteer is free to organize his work schedule and can refuse any activity without giving reasons.

According to the Law on the Employment of Foreigners, migrants/foreigners who volunteer solely for the purpose of expanding and applying knowledge to acquire skills for practical activities may do so without any work obligation and without any right to remuneration. For this purpose, they do not need a work permit for up to three months (in a calendar year).

"Schnuppertage" and "Schnupperpraktika"

Labor market policy trainees often have the opportunity to spend individual days (so-called "Schnuppertage") or weeks ("Schnupperpraktikum") in one or more companies to gain initial work experience

During the internship, participants/trainees are usually supervised by the company contact person (BK) or a trainer/coach. The internship arrangements are defined in the "Internship Agreement", which is signed by the participant/intern, the internship company and the BC. At the end of the (one-week) internship, participants/trainees write an internship report and reflect on their internship experiences with the BC/trainer/coach or in a group setting with other course participants.

Excursions to companies

People who take part in training measures in the field of labor market policy can often take part in trips to different companies, enterprises and institutions. They usually last half a day to a full day and serve to get to know the company and various areas of activity and to get impressions and initial experience. Participants have the opportunity to ask questions about the company and the respective fields of activity.

5.3. Counseling and guidance projects - BBEs in Austria

The Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) supports jobseekers – in addition to various training projects – with various counseling and guidance projects (BBE projects) aimed at sustainable reintegration into the labor market. BEST implements



successfully several BBE projects for AMS Vienna, which are presented below.

BBE IT Screening

The support provided by BBE IT-Screening includes the assessment of the participants on their existing IT knowledge and a qualification requirement derived from it. The target group of the project are people with career aspirations in the IT sector, with or without prior technical knowledge, German level at least B1, who have been registered at AMS Vienna for more than 3 months.

The main purpose of the counseling and screening support is to determine the competence of the existing IT know-how and to determine the potential by means of a three-step screening procedure for the occupational purpose in the field of "IT" named by the participant. Based on the results of the screening and counseling interviews, a final individual report with concrete recommendations (eg qualification requirements, employment readiness, etc.) is presented to the counselors responsible for AMS.

IT screening stages

The first two screening stages include the participant's self-assessment and recording of existing IT skills according to the current Digital Competence Model for Austria (DigComp). The results are discussed in detail with the participant and the added value of participation in the final screening stage is explained.

In the third stage, concrete IT skills are examined (according to DigComp 2.2 AT). In the final meeting, the content of the final report is discussed based on the results and the qualification options are already discussed in very concrete terms (institutes, duration, costs, etc.).

The purpose of the individualized counseling sessions is to determine the respective participant's career goal, taking into account the screening results, and to be able to make concrete qualification recommendations based on the test results. In addition, during the one-month screening phase, company contacts (Betriebskontakter) are deployed to specifically communicate the requirements of the job profiles and possible fields of employment to the participants and, if necessary, to establish contacts with companies.

Advice and support

For people who are considered 'job ready', BBE provides additional support in their job search. The duration of support for this additional track is a maximum of 12 weeks.

Support during screening is mainly provided in a one-to-one setting. Additional counseling of job-ready participants is implemented in a mix of individual and group counseling sessions. The group setting makes it possible to offer targeted advice to people with similar career aspirations and initiate networking activities.

Company contact persons are used as an accompanying support tool already after the completion of stage 2 screening. Company Contacts make direct approaches to companies on a case-by-case basis and act as an interface with other BEST employees or relevant business units and external offices. Currently, there are already active contacts with companies in the IT sector, and BEST consultants have precise knowledge of specific job profiles. This expertise is particularly useful for selecting specific product testing tools, to be able to achieve a targeted match of IT know-how and companies' requirement profiles, as well as to make the participant's individual skill needs visible.

People who are accepted into the placement-focused support track especially benefit from company contacts. The "Job dating" sessions held on the BEST website offer participants the opportunity to connect directly with the company's recruiters.

BBE project: step2job

The main goal of advice and support in the step2job project is sustainable integration into the labor market, ensuring continuous and labor market-oriented support, removing placement obstacles, stabilizing the general situation and identifying the need for qualification, in each case along two paths individual support for different groups of people:

- People with minor problems and a quick chance of integration: through counseling services strongly focused on placement.
- Individuals with multiple problems: through case management and placement-oriented counseling services.

It is possible to switch between the two support processes.

Support processes

When the participant is admitted to the project, he/she enters the site assessment phase (SOB) and the more goal-oriented counseling path is decided together with the participant. While participants with fewer problems and a faster chance of integration enter the active placement support (AVU) process directly after assessment, participants with multiple or more severe problems first use comprehensive counseling in the case management process (CM).

Individual counseling is highly individualized and tailored to the needs of the participants. This individuality is reflected in the respective advisory and support services -

individual "steps" are defined together with participants according to their needs in order to achieve sustainable success in the labor market and are reviewed and adjusted as part of ongoing support. Against the background of the clearly defined goal of job placement, the emphasis in CM, compared to the UAV track, is much more on overcoming problems, stabilizing and expanding social networks and integration into the labor market.

On the other hand, within the AVU, the counseling is much more intensively oriented towards placement. Depending on the evolution of the individual case, there can and should be permeability between the two tracks. Experience has shown that this approach has proven to be successful and is readily accepted by participants.

Consulting services

The BBE concept is based on an intensive one-to-two hour twice-weekly individual counseling session. In addition, counselors are also available for telephone counseling sessions, email counseling sessions, additional one-on-one meetings as needed and, if desired, personal accompaniment to offices, job interviews or other important meetings. In addition to the counseling sessions held in our office, assisted persons are offered a "job application studio" with all the necessary equipment (telephone, fax, Internet, printer, etc.), which is accessible during the program of office work. These organizational measures ensure continuous and intensive advice, support and assistance.

In addition to individual placement-oriented counseling sessions, the counseling program also includes additional participation in need-oriented workshops to be attended for 2 hours per week, if possible. The program includes supervised app studios in individual and group settings, enabling app support, EDP, foreign languages as well as exercise, health, healthy eating, work-life balance to experiential learning about (new) media worlds. Especially for people of other origins, with different cultural backgrounds, with possible prevailing language barriers and/or also for those with an interest in openness to new things, intercultural learning is offered through special workshops in the fields of application, experiential learning and language. While workshops provide space for social interaction, the diversity of group participants creates space for new perspectives. This significantly contributes to a proactive attitude of the participants in the counseling process.

Stages of the consulting process - milestones

The consultation process defined phases as milestones:

- **Evaluation – entry into the CM process**

Intensive one-on-one interviews are the basis for assessing problems, determining needs and analyzing previously unrealized offers of help. Relevant sensitive data about education, resources, skills, problems and life situations are collected. This is done in a resource and network oriented manner and takes the empowerment approach into account. Workshops can already be selected here. In addition, an internal support agreement records highlighted problem areas.

- **Integration planning**

Based on the care agreement, goals are clearly formulated with the case manager (CM) and next steps, strategies, procedures and approaches are planned (Who? What? Until when?) Appropriate interventions to achieve a specific placement goal are discussed with the participant in an intelligible way and recorded in the database. The determination of counseling intervals is part of the agreement.

- **Intervention/coordination/monitoring**

Emphasis is on active placement and application, a structured approach to dealing with placement obstacles and processing individual resources, as well as increasing employability. Defined interfaces are required to be able to implement and control the targeted support services. To this end, a suitable internal/external network partner is brought "on board" at the decisive moment. The CM consultant provides information on support systems and undertakes the role of coordination and monitoring throughout the empowerment process on a case-by-case basis. In addition, monitoring ensures continuous review of case development.

- **Reports/Assessment/Reassessment**

Continuously and at 3-month intervals, the extent to which participants can enter the AVU route is reviewed. The review is done through a standardized control.

Placement-oriented vocational counseling in the individual framework is primarily devoted to the aligned matching method as a procurement method. Based on the personal and professional suitability profile, participants are introduced to a profile/field of activity in a needs-oriented manner, trained in job search and application design, as well as supported in preparing for the job interview and accompanied if it is desired. A company purchase is mainly tailored to the participant's needs. In addition, the empowerment of self-marketing participants is promoted by creating awareness of skills and activation in relevant networks. Specialized group workshops such as the 'job application workshop' and 'job search with EDP' complement the placement support.

5.4. Promotion of further vocational training measures in Austria

Educational support in Austria

In Austria, funding for your continuing education (CET) is provided by various bodies. The federal government and the Public Employment Service (AMS), for example, approve various subsidies for jobseekers and employees if the CET leads to a higher qualification or higher education diploma and if the income does not exceed certain limits. Grants are also often available for certain population groups, for example women returning to work after maternity leave or people with disabilities.

There are also occasional education grants for people who want to become self-employed.



Individual federal states also promote CET, including especially CET related to jobs or retraining that can improve the situation on the labor market. The Arbeiterkammer (workers' chambers) in the federal states also issue education vouchers that can be used for CET at the BFI or adult education centers. There are also some grants for very specific training or for training certain skills that are relevant to society. For example, there are grants for developing digital skills or for healthcare training. In addition, some unions also provide support for continuing education. In most cases, they subsidize course costs for occupation-specific training. Possible financial support can be found in the Database Kursförderungen in Österreich (database on course grants in Austria)

(<https://erwachsenenbildung.at/bildungsinfo/kursfoerderung>). A list of all education grants in Austria that are intended for individuals can be found here:<https://erwachsenenbildung.at/bildungsinfo/kursfoerderung/ueberblick.php>

In the following, some concrete funding for education in Austria is presented.

Arbeiterkammer- AK Educational Grants

Members of the Chamber of Labor (Arbeiterkammer AK) receive money to attend certain continuing education courses in many provinces. The unemployed, beneficiaries of unemployment assistance, apprentices, parents on maternity leave, marginally employed people and freelancers can also benefit from this support.

AK Vienna for example, facilitate access to further education with the AK Education Voucher, AK Digi-Bonus and AK Digi-Winner. Courses in the areas of digitalisation/IT, work techniques, continuing professional training modules, working environment, foreign languages and recovery of formal educational qualifications are supported, among others.

Subsidies for "waff" - Wiener Arbeitnehmer*innen Förderungsfonds

The waff - Wiener Arbeitnehmer*innen Förderungsfonds (Vienna Employee Support Fund) provides employees living in Vienna with information and advice as well as financial support for education and training. The Waff offers various grants for further studies, for example:

Klima winner:

It offers financing of up to 5,000 euros for employees who

- want to take further training in the field of climate protection and sustainability
- would like to do training in the field of climate protection.

More information about Klima-Winner can be found here:

<https://www.waff.at/foerderungen/klima-winner>

Digi-Winner:

It offers financing of up to 5,000 euros if employees want it

- to improve their chances in the digital world of work
- gain new skills
- secure their jobs better
- take advantage of the opportunities for continuing digital education in Vienna.

More information about Digi-Winner can be found here:

<https://www.waff.at/foerderungen/digi-winner>

Chance Check:

It offers financing of up to 5,000 euros if employees:

- want to catch up with an apprenticeship qualification
- want the qualifications acquired abroad to be recognized in Austria
- want to combine an apprenticeship qualification with a course.

More information about Chancen-Scheck can be found here:

<https://www.waff.at/foerderungen/chancen-scheck>

Training account:

It offers financing from 300 to a maximum of 3,000 euros if employees:

- would like to pursue initial and continuing education and training
- intend to take the Matura, Berufsreifeprüfung or another apprenticeship qualification
- You want to take a master's, master's or qualification exam in Vienna

More information about the education account can be found here:

<https://www.waff.at/foerderungen/bildungskonto>

Continuing education grants for one-person enterprises (EPU):

It provides funding of up to €2,000 when individual entrepreneurs undertake training and further studies.

- to improve commercial skills and business management skills or
- to acquire and improve digital skills or
- to improve language skills

More information on funding for UPE can be found here: <https://>

www.waff.at/foerderungen/epe

In addition, waff offers apprenticeship funding or apprenticeship funding to prepare for the apprenticeship leave exam, as well as a skilled worker grant and a healthcare grant.

AMS qualification grant for employees

With this subsidy, the Austrian Public Employment Service (AMS) supports the costs of qualification measures for employees. The aim is to ensure the employment of employees through qualification and to support them in their career advancement. In principle, course and staff costs for qualification measures (amounting to at least 16 hours per week) of the following groups of employees with full insurance or on leave (including freelancers) are eligible for grants if the training pursues one of the following objectives :

Employees with at most compulsory school leaving certificate

... if the course contributes to at least one of the following objective labor market policies:

- higher level job at the same job
- move on to a higher quality job
- improving basic skills (e.g. German language skills, computer skills)

- Completion of certified training
- specialization
- Job security for at least 6 months
- Undertaking age-appropriate activities at the same job (if over 45)

- Change to an age-appropriate/less stressful job (if you are over 45)

- Adaptation to the current state of technology/knowledge (if over 45)

Employees who have completed an apprenticeship or VET school(Berufsbildende Mittelse Schule)

... if the course contributes to at least one of the following objective labor market policies:

- higher salary (higher collective agreement employment group or increase of at least 10%).
- moving to a higher-level job
- facilitating re-entry after a career break for family reasons
- Improving basic skills (e.g. German, computer skills)
- Specialization (if over 45 years old)
- Carrying out age-appropriate activities in the same workplace (if over 45)

- Change to an age-appropriate/less stressful job (if you are over 45)

- Adaptation to the current state of technology/knowledge (if over 45)

Workers with higher education than the mandatory ones

... who have reached the age of 45, if the course contributes to at least one of the following labor market policy objectives:

- Taking over age-appropriate activities in the same workplace
- Transfer to an age appropriate/less stressful job
- adapting to the current state of technology/knowledge
- Specialization
- Improving basic skills (e.g. German language skills, computer skills)

5.5. AULA MENTOR - Spain

Online training courses in Spain

MENTOR ROOM is an open and flexible online training scheme, promoted by the Spanish Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, made up of over 200 courses in different fields, organized through collaboration agreements mainly with public institutions. There is an extensive network of halls

of mentors where people can take the courses that interest them the most if they are over 18. AULA MENTOR offers a mentoring process and the best experts available for professional advice.



Mentor Classrooms - Zones:

- Administration management
- Agrarian
- Graphic arts
- Trade and Marketing
- Electricity and electronics
- Hospitality and tourism
- Personal image
- Picture and sound
- Food Industries
- Computers and Communications
- Installation and maintenance
- Health
- Safety and environment
- Sociocultural and community services
- Textiles, clothing and leather
- Glass and ceramics
- Language skills – Foreign languages

AULA MENTOR's objectives are focused on offering an alternative in terms of training the adult population who do not have the opportunity to participate in the face-to-face offer and whose pace of learning and/or dedication requires a totally flexible system without subject, at schedules or deadlines of any kind. The training offer is embodied in a set of constantly updated courses, organized by training areas and which have been designed and/or adapted specifically for the characteristics of the potential recipients and the method of teaching.

A large group of Autonomous Communities, local territorial entities and public entities dependent on local territorial entities are actively participating in this initiative, through cooperation agreements. There are also agreements with NGOs with public interest recognition, the Cervantes Institute and Penitentiary Institutions. At the international level, AULA MENTOR is integrated into the operational plans of the OEI and the development cooperation programs with the AECID of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, so there are classrooms located in some Ibero-American countries targeting different population profiles with diverse needs. and characteristics.

5.6. ProfiTRAIN: European roadmap – Germany/Austria

Within the Erasmus+ ProfiTRAIN project - Professionalization of Trainers for Work-Based Basic Skills (<https://www.profi-train.de/en> - coordinated by bbb Büro für berufliche Bildungsplanung (Germany) in cooperation with operative partners from five European countries) the "European Roadmap - Guidelines for Stakeholders" was developed. The roadmap is aimed at broad stakeholders who can facilitate the sustainable implementation of workplace basic skills training and the professionalization of trainers - as the subject, the professionalization of workplace basic skills trainers, is quite an activity new and not yet well established. field. The guiding questions were: Why do we need basic skills in the workplace and why do we need professional trainers?

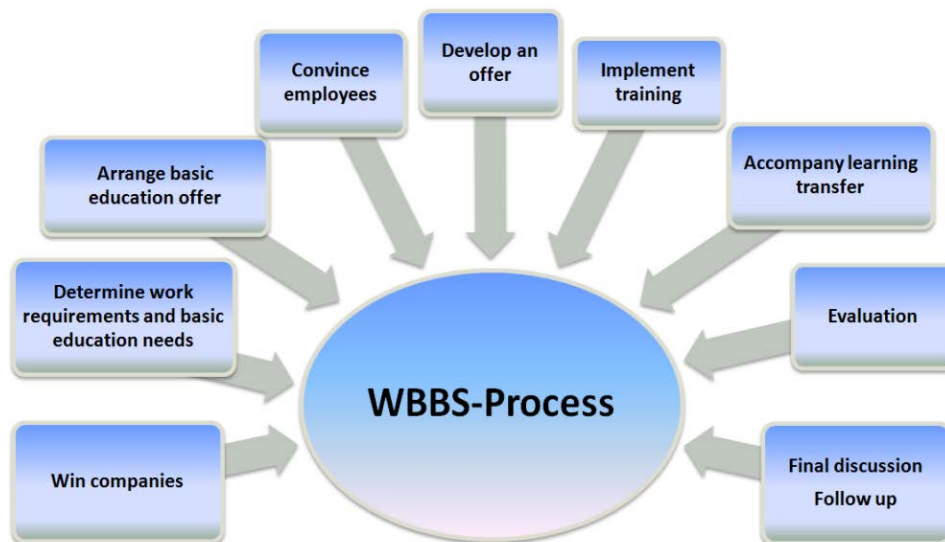
Professionalization of trainers for basic workplace skills

Providing effective conceptual solutions for basic workplace skills training offerings is crucial to meet these challenges, with the concrete professionalization of trainers being a major component of this. That professionalization involves the preparation and ability to make offers adapted to the real needs of learners at their workplace, respecting the perspectives of all parties involved, i.e. responding to concrete work situations and challenges and engaging the workplace as a general learning opportunity.

Professional action in this field it requires systemic knowledge and consulting/guidance skills in contact with company representatives and employees, it is characterized by high flexibility and must be measured by the development of competent work flows of the participants. From trainers, skills are needed that clearly go beyond the pedagogical, didactic-methodical skills of planning and designing conventional institutional courses.

ProfiTRAIN has developed a flexible and innovative training concept whose modular basis makes it suitable for adjustments for more and also less experienced teachers, trainers, coaches, advisors, project managers and teaching staff. The vocational training concept has been thoroughly tested in all six partner countries to lay the foundations for a sustainable European wide implementation. The ProfiTRAIN partnership presents concrete curriculum modules for planning and carrying out attendance seminars, closely related to the content of the Self-Study Manual (available at <https://www.profi-train.de/en>). The guide presents training models aimed at trainers of different levels of experience and competence and includes practical suggestions for seminar organizers, consisting of three-day programs each. For each module (going hand in hand with the six chapters of the Self-Study Manual), the following elements of the respective seminars are outlined: aims, objectives, target group and description of competences, teaching requirements, content structure, tips for facilitators, as well as concrete tools and methods.

In line with the process orientation of the Workplace Basic Competencies (WBBS) underlying the Self-Study Manual, the training guide – in its modular structure – practically exemplifies this very process in a very concrete way.



(Source: ProfiTRAIN. European Roadmap. Guidelines for Stakeholders, p. 14)

As a conclusion of all the activities and results of the ProfiTRAIN project, the ProfiTRAIN partnership would like to summarize that the professionalization of basic skills trainers in the workplace is successful and sustainable if/as soon as

- we can reach target groups among employees who are usually hard to reach and who have so far not actively participated in basic skills training projects at work
- Trainers know how to work with open, process-oriented and often even company-specific concepts
- trainers do not stick to fixed curricula, standard textbooks or existing conventional materials
- trainers know how to design teaching/learning situations that are concretely related to specific everyday work situations
- trainers have developed a strong sense of professional identity, as knowledge of their own professional dynamics sensitizes trainers to the problems employees encounter in their work environment
- in this context and as a consequence, employees experience learning as useful, something personally successful, and through this they can overcome the hitherto individually perceived barriers to participation in learning.
- companies perceive a measurable increase in competitiveness, which goes hand in hand with a measurable increase in the qualification and sustainable employability of their staff
- companies see basic workplace skills as an important strategic component of securing their business and keeping their workforce up to date
- training organizations can support and/or expand their offerings and programs

- training organizations can better reach companies by planning for increased quality and implementing respective services

Find more information on the results (in several languages) of the ProfiTRAIN project (Self-Study Manual; Guide for Training Trainers in Face-to-Face Seminars; European Roadmap – Guidelines for Stakeholders, Report of Pilot Seminars) at <https://www.profi-train.de/en/outputs> .

5.7. Enterprised: Methodological framework for effective teaching - Iceland

The project "Enterprised - Low Qualified Adults Ready for Work" combines the efforts of 4 partners, reflecting the current challenges and trends in the field of adult education in different regions of Europe - northern, central and southern. The project focuses on expanding and developing the skills of educators and other staff in effectively teaching low-skilled adults. By equipping adult trainers with the appropriate methodological framework and resources for effective teaching (ie literacy, numeracy, language skills, digital skills, entrepreneurship, etc.) in line with current workplace realities, Enterprised aims to increase the quality of training. provided and, respectively, the prospects for learners to be successfully employed in the long term – particularly in the tourism sector,

Successful methodological approaches in professional training

A multitude and variety of learning forms allows both teachers and learners to make learning processes more varied, more interesting, more effective and more sustainable. The use of diverse forms of learning clearly moves away from classical knowledge transfer towards competence-oriented learning. Here is a list of possible forms of learning:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| - Dialogic learning | - Learning through teaching |
| - Differentiated learning | - Oriented learning to objection |
| - Exploratory learning | - Process-oriented learning |
| - Multidimensional learning | - Solution oriented learning |
| - Holistic learning | - Self-directed learning |
| - Action-oriented learning | - Self-organized learning |
| - Inclusive learning | - Independent learning |
| - Cooperative learning | |

In the following three methodological approaches to ensure success in professional training will be presented for both teachers and learners.

Multidimensional learning

Multidimensional learning characterizes a method of adult education in which, on the one hand, several learning dimensions of learners are activated and, on the other hand, several learning paths are linked together in a goal-oriented manner. Thus, participants' cognitive, sensory, motor, manual and other talents are used side by side and with each other during the processing or development of teaching content and allow each participant to learn individually.

This way of teaching and learning is a further development of holistic learning, which uses the different potentials of learners in learning processes. This methodical approach is demanding, challenging and particularly suitable for complex learning objectives and can be used, for example, in project-based learning. But also for more simply structured learning objectives, multidimensional learning can generate better learning efficiency.

Another advantage of this method is that learners and teachers establish more intensive contact with each other, as the different learning requirements and learning methods of the participants are also taken into account.

Therefore, learning objectives can be achieved in many different ways. The learning process is varied and increases the sustainability of the learning content. However, this varied and multidimensional approach requires a wide repertoire of methods, as well as solid methodological and didactic knowledge on the part of teachers. It is therefore important and valuable to start with the training and continuing education of teachers/trainers so that they are optimally prepared for the multidimensional challenges.



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Programmed learning

Programmed learning means the learning method aimed at obtaining the learning material as independently as possible by the participants. To this end, tasks are provided to be completed in small steps and at an individual learning pace. After each learning step, checking the learning objectives or checking the learning progress gives learners feedback on their learning success so far and thus allows them to take the next learning step or, if necessary, adapt the learning process. Digital learning tools and e-learning programs, as they are increasingly used in adult education, also support this process.

Working on the project

Project work or project-based learning offers the opportunity to provide complex and methodologically demanding inter-thematic learning processes. A project is carried out over a period of time, where the start date and end date are fixed. The projects deal with topics or activities that impose high methodological and organizational requirements. In order to carry out a project, a structured organization is needed that is oriented towards achieving the project's goal. The project is carried out by a project group, where a project management is defined at the beginning of the project work, which guides the way to the sub-goals and division of tasks.

In addition to working on content, this methodical approach also allows for a parallel social and interactive learning process where participants learn, try and experience a lot about team building, teamwork, cooperation, organizing work processes, structured thinking and acting, optimal use of individual project team members' talents, strengths, skills, communication, conflict management, and more.

A competency-based, participant-centred approach focuses on learning outcomes, but also on practical relevance and relevance to learners. Competencies link knowledge and skills, enable problem solving, and include the willingness to use these skills independently.

Principles to meet learner requirements

To meet the demands of learners, we recommend the following five principles:

- Orientation to learning outcomes: Learners should have demonstrable competence to act. The outcome of the learning process is important. This means first of all successfully mastering professional challenges, moving away from the simple transfer of knowledge to the ability of learners to act, so that they are up to the professional competences required in the world of work.
- Action orientation ensures transfer into practice. Knowledge, skills should be able to be applied in context, work context. Therefore, it is important to "learn" the knowledge already in the context of the application.
- *Professional situations/activities* usually requires not only professional knowledge and skills, but also personal and socio-cultural competences. Therefore, interdisciplinarity and comprehensiveness play an important role in learning. Learners learn how to apply not only specialist knowledge and skills, but also social skills (eg openness, socio-cultural background) and personal skills, such as resilience, in accordance with their individual abilities and depending on their socio-cultural.
- Learning orientation focuses on planning, organizing and supporting learning processes, teachers play different roles. These are, for example,

moderators, coaches, consultants, guides, navigators, facilitators, mentors, provide information and tools, ask questions, give advice, lead reflection processes, provide feedback, enable different learning stations and forms of learning such as group work, tandem learning, interactive learning, etc.

- In the sense of participant focus, learners recognize themselves what they already know and can apply, take responsibility for their learning process, learning progress, are able to recognize and solve problems, are able to support and contribute to shaping processes of reflection. Learners are active, they are interested in their own individual learning process, in their learning progress. Personal motivation to learn arises from the development of situational interest. ("I am interested in the subject, I know how to apply this knowledge, I have a sense of achievement, I receive positive feedback and therefore I am more motivated to learn even more"). Ideally, there are more and more phases of self-directed learning that are supported by appropriate learning progression.

The most important factor in the competency-based approach is the focus on learning outcomes that learners can and should achieve. To have competence means to be endowed with the ability to act, that is, to behave appropriately in certain situations, to cope with them and to act on one's own responsibility. In this context, they primarily include professional action skills, occupational skills and profession-relevant skills, which should enable learners to enter working life in an independent, autonomous and sustainable way.

Find May many information about products PROJECT ENTERPRISED
TO <https://enterprised.eu/256-2> .

5.8. QUATERINAR Methodology - Spain

Training needs analysis methodology (TNA).

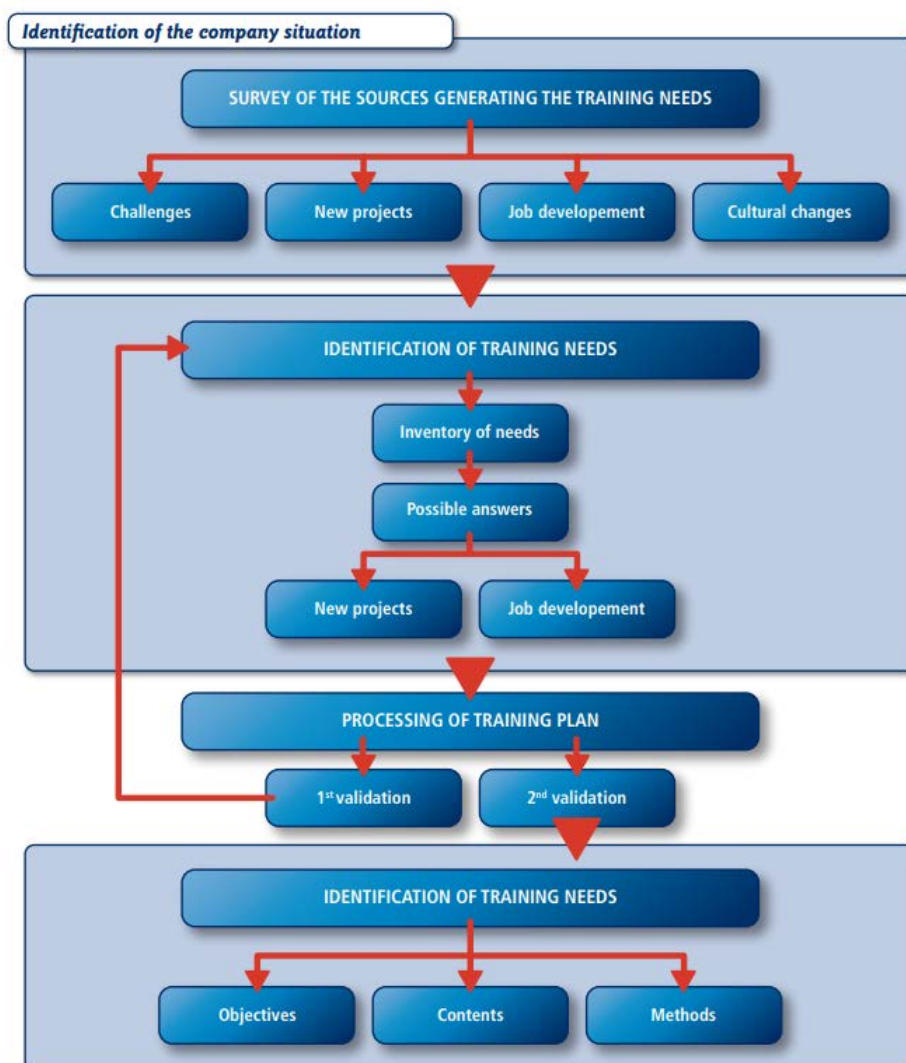
One for VET relevant training needs analysis methodology is commonly applied in Spain. This method is called the QUATERINARY methodology and is based on the concept of "Training Engineering". This TNA method applies the following procedures and principles:

- There are no vocational training needs "as such", they are always related to particular situations (problems to be dealt with, difficulties to be solved, projects to be developed, etc.) that lie in the background.
- *Indirect methods* of investigation must be applied; asking directly "what are your training needs?" leads to a lack of definition and overgeneralization by interviewees.
- It is more advisable to start from particular situations (problems, projects, the evolution of jobs...) that they face or are going to face and

we examine together with the interviewees the formation component of the situation. Only after this analysis will we be able to identify the professional training needs.

- We have 3 valuable sources from which to identify training needs:
 - 1) Common problems or defects found by the company.
 - 2) The projects (investment, organization, commercial development, technological innovation...) that will be carried out.
 - 3) The contents of "current places" and their anticipated evolution.

Within the quaternary methodology, the research of professional training needs should always be done within the particular and specific situations that happen within the company. The following graph shows the "Performance Chart in the Implementation of the Quaternary Methodology for Training Needs Assessment (TNA)".



(Source: Training Planner Manual, p. 35)

5.9. Meeting: How to establish relations WBL – Bulgaria/Austria

As part of the ENCOUNTER project (Improving cooperation and assistance between providers of vocational education and training -<https://encountervet.eu>), produced and implemented by INTEMPORE EOOD (Bulgaria) and BEST (Austria), "Guidelines on establishing effective workplace learning partnerships between VET schools and enterprises" were developed. The ENCOUNTER project arose from the efforts of partner organizations to boost workplace learning and youth employability by supporting VET schools and businesses to establish successful relationships. This is achieved by:

- Exploring effective mechanisms to support and improve the way VET providers engage with businesses to ensure their learners receive high quality practical training.
- Bringing positive changes in planning, human resource management and communication for a successful workplace learning experience.
- Developing an innovative approach for successful cooperation between VET and business, with a focus on the profile, role and necessary skills of the person enabling this collaboration.
- Equipping professionals involved in VET provision with non-pedagogical technical expertise to successfully initiate workplace learning partnerships between VET providers and businesses.

Guide: How to establish successful WBL relationships between VET schools and businesses

The guidelines cover both the IVET and CVET sectors and could be applied by anyone responsible for initiating WBL partnerships between education or training institutions and enterprise for the provision of practical training.

In Bulgaria, the tasks related to the initiation of WBL partnerships, in the initial VET context, are carried out by VET teachers and more specifically by teacher-methodologists. With the amendment of the VET Act in 2018, the role of the teacher-methodologist was introduced as the person responsible for connecting the school with suitable companies that would provide practical training to dual VET students. Teacher-methodologists are directly involved in establishing the foundations of practical training in the real work environment. This means that they engage in:

- analysis of potential companies
- the initial contact with the identified companies
- analysis of possible work placements
- negotiation of training conditions
- ensuring a transparent contracting process

In Austria, VET teachers do not have the same responsibilities regarding company analysis, networking, placement identification and contracting. These tasks are assigned to professionals from local structures (IVET Apprenticeship Offices) or the WBL Contact Person (so-called "Betriebskontakter" employed by VET providers. The role of the BK is rather



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identical to that of the VET teacher-methodologist in Bulgaria, as they are expected to explore training opportunities, establish contacts with companies, inspect potential jobs, analyze the relevance of the placement to the vocation, support contractual arrangements. , as well as to stimulate further employment of apprentices.

These guidelines are developed to help Bulgarian VET teacher-methodologists, Austrian Betriebskontakter and anyone involved in facilitating WBL to:

- ensuring a structured dialogue by building the foundations of a transparent and targeted relationship with the business sector, providing WBL opportunities for VET learners
- ensuring relevant and meaningful training conditions for VET learners through a comprehensive analysis of company and job requirements
- enable partners to act effectively, guaranteeing common rights and responsibilities by engaging in a clear and consistent contracting procedure

By following these guidelines, individuals responsible for initiating WBL partnerships will learn OR improve their knowledge, skills and competencies on how to:

- Analyze local companies and the job market
- Network and identify the right partner companies
- Initiate contact with potential partner companies and promote the benefits of hosting apprentices/VET students for practical training
- Analysis of the relevance of work experience
- Negotiate training terms and scope of partnership
- Organization of the contracting process between the VET provider, the VET apprentice/learner and the company

The guidelines support VET providers in their mission to ensure a functioning WBL system where education and training institutions collaborate effectively with business. Follow-up recommendations are developed on the basis of good practice examples from Bulgaria, Austria and beyond, as well as the experience of ENCOUNTER project partners in increasing high-quality and relevant VET.

Find May many information about the outcome PROJECT ENCOUNTER TO <https://encountervet.eu/project-results> .

5.10. *New spirit* manual and toolbox – Netherlands/Austria

Employees in most companies are usually characterized by great heterogeneity; in addition to various educational and professional biographies, personal interests, etc., the age of employees is a significant component. Young people and older people, with sometimes very different attitudes, know-how, (professional) experience and values, need to do their work as constructively and purposefully as possible. This often doesn't work so well. Intergenerational working and learning - where the synergies of younger and older employees can be used effectively - can give companies a "new spirit" and implicitly promote the continuous learning of all employees.

Intergenerational work and learning in the company

Nowadays it seems to be an old paradigm and a new paradigm in professional life. The new paradigm operates more from a "oneness consciousness", the idea of "source where all is one" and where we all live and work from. New generations connect to this idea more than older generations in organizations. Where older generations in organizations are more used to working "the old way". But it's not necessarily about being young and being older and more experienced. Employees of all generations these days are asking themselves questions like: Is what I'm doing useful and, more importantly, meaningful? Both for me and for the organization and for the world, all at the same time.

Gone are the days when only the CEO/manager decides what to do and where the company should go. To ensure that your organization makes the right decisions, you need a multidisciplinary group of employees, young and old, and with all kinds of roles in the organization. By entering together into a dialogue about what really matters, a common reality is created from and taking into account different perspectives. Younger employees have a different view of working together. They are more open and bring more dynamism to organizations. If the "youngster" or inner child of all employees is given space and listened to in the organization, you will get a new way of working.

The New Spirit Handbook and New Spirit Toolkit provide an approach to jointly address the challenges that are interconnected with a "New Spirit" in organizations and support business owners, managers (HR) etc. to go one step further and find new solutions. that will really serve the organization.

The toolkit contains different categories, designed to help you become more aware of what is really happening by focusing on relevant topics and symptoms in organizations. The tools can be implemented in different training settings. Some of them can be divided into several categories, some combined for a broader approach to a specific topic.

In the following, some methods/activities from the New Spirit Toolbox are presented that are particularly suitable for determining specific individual learning needs or how intergenerational learning and working can enhance those skills.

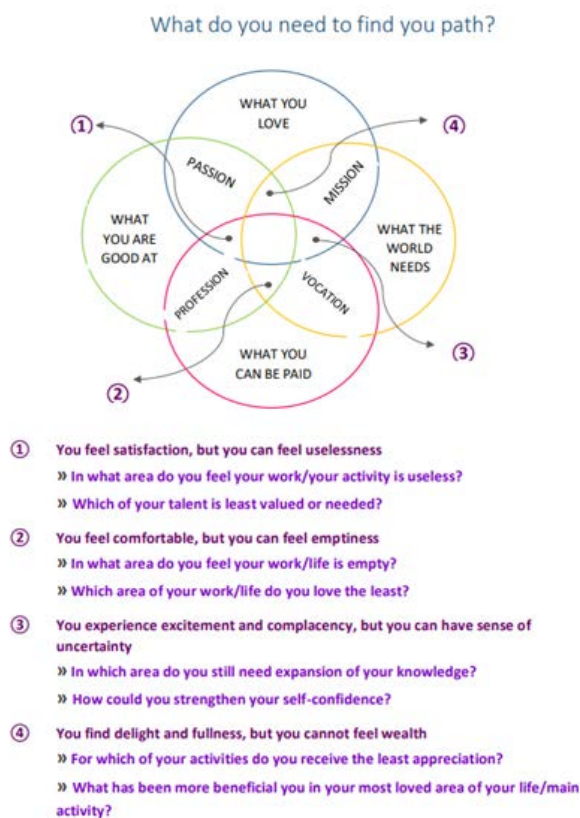
Activity: Exploring Your Way

(Duration: 80-90 minutes, for 8-12 participants)

In this activity, participants will focus on impairments or deficiencies in different areas of work or life. This tool is most effective in a team where staff trust and support each other.

Instructions:

Distribute the worksheets (see below) among the participants. Clarify the purpose of the tool from the start: We want to identify areas of deficits and be able to consciously work on them.



(Source: BEST: New Spirit Toolbox (Draft version, 2023), p. 42)

Participants should work on the questions on their own. Take about 15 minutes for this. In the second round, the participants sit in two rows facing each other, thus forming pairs for a conversation. Allow at least 10 minutes (5 minutes/person) for the pairs to talk. After discussing the first topics, ask one row to move to the left, the other

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(Source: BEST: New Spirit Toolbox, (Draft version, 2023), p. 47)

In this step, all participants must pass the completed and named worksheet to their neighbor on the right. Participants can fill in all skill lists with their own information (mostly soft skill lists will probably be filled in). Thus, all completed worksheets will move one step to the right until the original worksheets are returned to their original owners.

Then ask participants to review the completed worksheets and reflect on the following questions:

- What do you think of peer additions?
- Was there anything surprising? /
- Do you find something unrealistic?

Now organize a skills market. All participants can mention which of the desired skills they would like to learn from someone else and in what form. Certain colleagues can also be addressed directly. On the other hand, everyone can offer what skills they would like to pass on to others if needed. It would be desirable for everyone to at least make a deal with a colleague to learn/teach a skill.

Conclusion/Debriefing: Team leaders should take time to collect requests and provide time slots for common learning processes during work. Also set deadlines for when colleagues should conduct at least the first 1-2 sessions and by when this process should be completed.

5.11. VET digital logbook - Iceland

For several trades, the Island's Ministry of Education has allocated the global management of training contracts to a common education center portal hosted by the IDAN education center, which provides continuing education for several VET sectors, where contracts have been rationalized and modularized and s-issued guidelines for jobs.

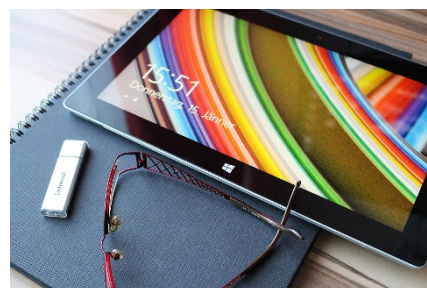
IDAN is a private not-for-profit provider of education and training supported by the national federation of employees and unions representing the industries they serve. IDAN offers a wide range of services to its members, ranging from courses, advice and validation of previous learning. They also provide various services for the ministry of education, science and culture and are involved in creating both national and international partnerships to embrace innovation and face new challenges in support of industry.

Still in production is a digital VET diary project in which the student concerned, as well as the trainer, records all the details of the teaching process and the knowledge, skills and competences acquired for the workplace.

The main aim of the project is to improve the quality of workplace learning by creating a communication platform for students, businesses, schools and other stakeholders. Logbook content is based on job descriptions and requirements

competence that occupational councils are currently updating. The updating process takes into account the rapid changes that have occurred in many professions due to technological advances.

The digital journal will contain the description of the skills and competency requirements that the learner must acquire upon completion of the learning. The system will work as a place for schools to help find jobs and for businesses to advertise their apprenticeships. The logbook will help both VET schools to plan routes of



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learning as well as giving learners a better overview of their learning. The logbook is also seen as a medium that increases the attractiveness of VET among the Icelandic learner population.

The digital diary system project started in the fall of 2019. Finally, the teacher or institution must certify each step of the teaching process and that specific competencies have been achieved. The Icelandic digital VET logbook project was gradually launched online in 2021, and in autumn 2021 it contains about 20 trades.

5.12. The transferability potential of good practices

The examples of good practice presented above, proven in different European countries, have proven to be effective tools for establishing and promoting VET and lifelong learning in a targeted manner. On the one hand, the measures and offers presented support people who adapt and expand their skills and competences to the respective (learning) needs and to the conditions and requirements of the company within the training (internal or external) within the company (especially in the course of work). learning based on -). On the other hand, jobseekers are supported and promoted within specific labor market policy measures in expanding (upstream) skills, which serve to increase the chances of employment in the near future and sustainable integration into work. market.

The presented best practices are also addressed to trainers (VET), company contacts/"Betriebskontakter" (BK), company owners as well as relevant stakeholders who want to activate and promote VET offers or lifelong learning in their institution/company: didactic/methodical approaches, possibilities to analyze training needs, learning platforms, etc. provides useful suggestions that serve the requirements of sustainable implementation of CPD and lifelong learning.

The potential of the respective best practices in terms of transferability to companies and relevant institutions and benefits for employees, jobseekers, trainers (VET) and stakeholders are specified below.

- **Successful model "Betriebskontakter (BK)" in Austria**

The contact company/"Betriebskontakter" (BK) model or offer can be implemented in all labor market policy training measures and projects to

could support job seekers in a targeted and sustainable manner in realizing their future career prospects. The support offered by BK is characterized by the processing of existing placement obstacles, the identification of the necessary continuous training requirements to be able to obtain a foothold in the desired occupational area, the support aimed at concretizing the necessary expansion measures. of skills as well as jobseekers, concrete application activities, including one-on-one application coaching.

- **On-the-job training - internships in Austria**

The various internship opportunities presented, which in Austria are mainly open to jobseekers/ students, are an appropriate and intentional means of enabling jobseekers (participating in a training measure in the field of labor market policy), interns, students to gain initial professional experience 'on the job', as well as to establish beneficial contacts in the industry or with potential employers. Trainees can check their ideas and expectations in their everyday working life as well as their personal fit for the profession/industry, get their first practical work experience and apply, reinforce and extend previously acquired theoretical knowledge and skills in their everyday life by day. Trainee employers can also satisfy themselves of the trainee's suitability for the vacancy and thus minimize the risk of employing a 'wrong' person in whom resources are invested as part of an induction programme. The different forms of internships and offers presented here create a win-win situation for all parties involved and should be implemented in all labor market (training) policy measures and companies.

- **Counseling and guidance projects - BBEs in Austria**

The BBE projects presented are aimed at job seekers who are to be supported in their early and sustainable integration into the labor market within these concrete support projects. Through the targeted identification of required IT skills (BBE IT Screening) with the subsequent improvement of skills through targeted training, people who need additional IT knowledge and skills for employment are effectively supported in their efforts to (re)integrate into the labor market. Upstream skills enhancement focuses on effective CPT, which opens up new career prospects. People participating in "Step2job" - mainly long-term unemployed, some of whom have massive placement obstacles - are individually supported and assisted on their way to working life through comprehensive case management in processing placement obstacles, developing and realizing new career prospects as well as targeted skills improvement in workshops. Both measures are a useful resource of labor market policy measures and interventions that can be implemented in all European countries.

- **Promotion of continuing vocational training measures in Austria** Financial subsidies and incentives are sometimes an important criterion to decide on CET or retraining. The grants offered in Austria, which address different target groups in different branches of education, are a great relief for

people following continuing education. Despite the continuing education/retraining, they do not face financial bottlenecks and at the same time have a good chance of being able to work in a better paying job after completing the continuing education/retraining. The establishment of various financial support schemes has proven to be an effective means of motivating people to follow CET/retraining in Austria. Such measures can certainly be implemented - in different forms - in all European countries to promote CPT and lifelong learning in a targeted manner.

- **AULA MENTOR – Spain**

Online learning offers like AULA MENTOR offer people interested in continuing education the opportunity to complete continuing education independent of time and place to acquire various skills for their daily personal and professional life. Online learning has gained in importance in recent years - also due to the Covid pandemic - and is a good and easy way for people interested in continuing education to continue their education. Learning platforms with various learning offers on different topics are, at least in Austria, meanwhile mostly a fixed component of labor market policy training projects as well as in the field of adult education, where different offers of distance learning or continuing education in different fields can be found.

- **ProfiTRAIN: European roadmap – Germany/Austria**

The innovative training concept for trainers and instructors in the VET sector developed in ProfiTRAIN provides potential VET trainers as well as companies wishing to provide internal training to their employees with tips and suggestions as well as relevant criteria that are important for conducting effective training. . The fact that VET trainers or instructors in companies have the necessary know-how as well as effective ways to transfer knowledge and transform it into everyday working life is of decisive importance to be able to promote the development of learners'/employees' skills in a targeted and sustainable way. The criteria presented in the training concept for the preparation and implementation of effective (internal) training in VET represent an action-oriented concept for all stakeholders (VET trainers, foremen,

- **Enterprised: Methodological framework for effective teaching – Iceland**

Knowledge of adult learning, or the requirements and conditions that must be met in order for effective and sustainable learning processes, as well as the subsequent transformation into everyday life and everyday life to be successful, is of crucial importance for the success of the processes of learning/ continuing education. Trainers and educators (VET) know that the selection of appropriate methodological approaches has a decisive influence on learning outcomes. The selected methods presented are suitable for a wide variety of learning processes with adults, taking into account the respective premises and previous experience and meeting the requirements of a learning process that is as active and competence-oriented as possible.

- **QUATERINAR Methodology – Spain**

In order to be able to offer and carry out continuous training (internal to the company) for employees/stakeholders in the most effective way possible, the analysis of current training needs

learning and the interests of employees/stakeholders is of decisive importance. The Training Needs Analysis (TNA) methodology presented - the CUATERNAIRE Methodology - shows an appropriate and proven approach to how the training needs survey can be carried out in companies. This methodical procedure is a useful tool for all interested parties and interested parties who would like to provide and conduct training (in-house) in their company, which can be implemented and used in all companies.

- **Dating: How to establish relations WBL - Bulgaria/Austria**
The developed guide "How to establish successful WBL relationships between VET schools and businesses" provides all stakeholders with useful tips and suggestions that positively influence successful cooperation and communication between all parties involved. The resulting synergies are beneficial for all parties involved: VET schools, companies/business partners, trainers and learners/employees, as well as the persons responsible for the cooperation. The guide presents target-oriented approaches and procedures that are particularly relevant to company contacts or persons responsible for cooperation and can be tested and implemented in all European countries.
- **New Spirit Manual and Toolbox - Netherlands/Austria** The methods presented in the "New Spirit Handbook and Toolbox" are valuable opportunities and resources to enable and promote intergenerational work and learning in the company. If intergenerational learning is practiced in the company, many beneficial synergies can result: The up-to-date know-how of the newly trained young employees and the many years of professional experience and routine of the older, long-standing employees can bring added value decisive in the common work or in the common learning process, from which all participants benefit. It is important to use these available resources in a targeted manner and to create the necessary framework conditions and premises in the company. Learning together and from each other, which can be promoted through appropriate methodical procedures in the company, usually has a positive effect on motivation and commitment, as well as on the self-confidence of all employees involved. The methods presented in the "New Spirit Handbook and Toolbox" offer valuable suggestions on how intergenerational work and learning can be implemented and promoted in the company.
- **VET digital logbook - Iceland**
Through the development of the VET Digital Dashboard, a communication platform for students, businesses, schools and other stakeholders was created, which positively and sustainably improved communication, information and knowledge sharing, and cooperation between all participants. Provision of relevant information, documentation of learning progress, possibility of exchange directly through the platform, etc. is a useful resource that comprehensively considers the demands of contemporary, practice- and action-oriented and innovative VET. The VET digital journal developed and tested in Iceland is certainly a viable resource that can modernize and make apprenticeships/training more attractive

professional in different professional fields and should also be used in other European countries.

6. Innovation in VET in Europe

Last but not least, current developments and innovations in CPT in Europe will be highlighted and explained. From the five priority areas of the new European Agenda for Adult Learning, themes and future tasks can be derived that should sustainably boost CPT and lifelong learning in the EU. To this end, the European Training Foundation (ETF) - together with the European Commission and other European partner countries - has set itself the goal of playing a significant role in the realization of these projects - for example by sharing EU best practices and learning

between equals. exchanges between policy makers and quality assurance in VET.

The establishment of "Centers of Professional Excellence (CoVEs)", "ENE - ETF Network for Excellence" and "ENESAT - ENE Self-Assessment Tool" are proving to be promising innovations that will have a significant influence on CPT and lifelong learning, and will sustainably advance their achievement.



The new European agenda for adult learning

Continuing education and training and adult learning enable people to learn and develop skills in a lifelong perspective to promote their well-being, employability and contribution to the economy and society. A resolution adopted by the Council of the European Union (EU) on 29 November 2021 on a new European agenda for adult learning highlights the need to significantly increase the participation of adults in formal, non-formal and informal learning. The New European Agenda for Adult Learning outlines a vision of how adult learning should develop in Europe by 2030 in the following five priority areas

- adult learning governance – with a strong focus on whole-of-government national strategies and stakeholder partnerships
- provision and use of lifelong learning opportunities with sustainable funding
- accessibility and flexibility – to adapt to the adult's needs
- quality, equity, inclusion and success in adult learning – emphasizing the professional development of adult education staff, mobility of both learners and staff, quality assurance and active support for disadvantaged groups
- green and digital transitions and related skills needs

European Training Foundation (ETF)

The European Training Foundation (ETF) promotes the continuity of lifelong learning and workplace learning at different levels of vocational education provision. While vocational education and training policy tends to focus on training young people, there is a growing awareness for improving access to adult skills development, reflected in EU adult learning policy. The ETF works closely with its partner countries, the European Commission and its networks in EU countries and facilitates the exchange of EU best practices and peer-to-peer learning exchanges between policy makers and promotes quality assurance mechanisms in line with the European assurance of quality in vocational education and training (EQAVET).

Learning at work in vocational education is a growing priority among ETF partner countries, such as in the European Union, to improve skills and employability and to enhance economic competitiveness and social inclusion. Work-based learning programs are relevant to all levels of education and training – initial, post-secondary and continuing education and training. They can be implemented in any sector, from industry to services and agriculture, and are particularly relevant in sectors facing rapid structural and technological change or where school infrastructure does not allow adequate practical training.

Workplace learning can be a win-win situation, providing benefits to all the major stakeholders involved – the learner, the employer and society. ETF supports employers, social partners and other relevant stakeholders to increase participation in the governance of the vocational education and training system to adjust training programs to meet the demands of 21st century labor markets. The ETF has also produced tools and manuals, including in the area of funding, to help policy makers and social partners develop and implement workplace learning.

FPC – Innovations in Europe

Centers of Vocational Excellence (CoVE)

Centers of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) play a significant role in fostering innovation and excellence in vocational education. Centers of Excellence in Vocational Education and Training are professional institutions recognized for excellence in the identification and delivery of relevant, high-quality specialist technical skills. By contributing to regional skills strategies, they promote employment and regional development. They work closely with employers, including small and medium-sized enterprises, to stimulate innovation, applied research, entrepreneurship and reskilling.

Centers of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) are:

- attractive to learners as they offer responsive, flexible, personalized learning pathways, state-of-the-art technology and a fast track to employment and higher education
- inspiration for teachers, trainers and managers as it provides models of advanced practice in teaching, teacher education, organizational development and leadership
- compelling for decision-makers because it shows how, through greater autonomy and cooperation, education and training providers can become a driving force for the continuous improvement of education and training systems.

ENE – ETF Network for Excellence

ENE aims to encourage the exchange of ideas, practices and experience between Centers of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) both nationally and internationally. ENE works on 10 themes:

- Lifelong learning and professional excellence
- Education-business cooperation (e.g. workplace learning, public-private partnerships)
- Pedagogy and professional development
- The entrepreneurial dimension of professional excellence
- Industry 4.0/5.0 and digitization
- Autonomy and institutional development (financing, leadership, governance)
- Going green – supporting sustainable goals
- Smart specialization – mobilizing innovation, ecosystems and SMEs
- Excellence in social inclusion and equity
- Career guidance and professional excellence

The development and sharing of excellence is supported by the ENE Self-Assessment Tool (ENESAT), which helps centers to align their own development with that of other network members. In addition, ENE works on development partnerships whereby groups of centers of excellence work together to improve in specific areas.

In partnership with Skillman.eu, ENE offers webinars on key issues for professional excellence. ETF launched the Community of Innovative Educators, an online platform addressing innovation in teaching and learning. ENE reflects the European Union's CoVE initiative. The ETF attaches particular importance to the contribution that such centers can make to the improvement of vocational education and training systems and also to their contribution to the internationalization of vocational education.

Join the network:

ENE members are committed to improving the functions, processes, organizational characteristics and relationships with partners that characterize CoVE. They are also engaged in national and international collaboration and in particular in sharing practices with other ENE members. The network is open to members from all countries and includes individual training providers, groups of providers and centers coordinating other providers. Policymakers (ministries, other national and regional stakeholders, etc.) from EU Member States and ETF partner countries are invited to get involved in the network's actions.

To join the network, send your request to: etf.network.for.excellence@etf.europa.eu . You will be invited to an introductory meeting with the ENE Secretariat and asked to complete a simple registration form.

ENESAT - ENE self-assessment tool

To better understand the needs and ambitions of its members, the ETF Network of Excellence (ENE) has developed the ENE Self-Assessment Tool (ENESAT), in EN, FR and RU.

The tool enables ENE members to establish a baseline for their own development against the performance and achievements of other Centers of Professional Excellence (CoE) in the network. CoVEs can set their priorities and actions based on their own objectives and backgrounds, but also taking into account what other CoVEs - at national and international level - have achieved. CoVEs can also use the tool to review their progress over time. The tool was designed by ETF with consideration of other professional excellence frameworks, self-assessment tools and research. The draft instrument was critically reviewed by the ETF and external experts and tested and revised by CoVEs from EU Member States and ETF partner countries.

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