

01 Summary

Research Report

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Integration**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report analyses the similarities and differences from all specific country research reports on developing and implementing an innovative didactic model for a new continuous professional development intervention in workplace learning, that have been implemented by DIDO project partner organizations.

The '**Introduction**' of this report presents the way the research was achieved by all project partners. Each partner performed a desk-based research and an empirical research.

In **Part A “Findings of the Desk Research in partner countries”** the VET systems in all project partners' countries are described.

These findings from desk research are structured as follows: the description of the place and role of the workplace learning; an overview of the legislative framework; the organization of the workplace learning; a presentation of the models in initial and continuing teacher training; the description of the accessing procedures for workers to workplace learning; different learning environments which are available in partners countries; types of learning content used for the workplace learning; features of the specific learning content design for learning at the workplace; presentation of the evaluation/assessment and recognition.

Part B “Findings of the Empirical Research in partner countries” presents the comparison of the data obtained from the questionnaires that were applied both to:
(a) teachers, trainers, mentors & counsellors and
(b) workers, low-skilled workers and workers in vulnerable employments.

Next part of this Summary Research Report presents the **highlights from each partner which should be included in the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) curriculum** that the DIDO partnership will develop for workplace teachers, trainers, mentors or counselors.

Finally, in the last part of Summary Research Report the **Conclusions and Recommendations** are presented. They will be used in the development of the next phases and outcomes, i.e. Learning Outcomes Matrix, Didactic Model Framework and CDP Curriculum.

INTRODUCTION

All the project partners performed the research by following the O1 Guidelines.

The research process included three distinct elements: a desk-based research exercise; an empirical research exercise with teachers, trainers, mentors and counsellors; an empirical research exercise with workers, low-skilled workers and workers in vulnerable employments.

Each partner performed the desk research by reviewing the literature in the field.

Empirical part of the research included questionnaires applied in two forms: one for teachers, trainers, mentors and counsellors and one for workers, low-skilled workers and workers in vulnerable employments. The respondents answered both on line using the available links and using printed questionnaires.

PART A: FINDINGS OF THE DESK RESEARCH IN PARTNER COUNTRIES

In **ROMANIA**, Initial Vocational Education and Training (IVET) is provided at both upper secondary and post-secondary levels. Professional education (initial VET) comprises upper secondary vocational education, the technological route of upper secondary school and post-secondary education.

General compulsory education includes primary education and lower secondary education. After completing lower secondary education, learners can continue their studies at upper secondary schools or professional schools. Admission to upper secondary education is based on each learner's portfolio, including graduating diploma and transcript, and on grades acquired in national evaluation exams taken at the end of the eighth grade.

Upper secondary school education includes three strands that lead to Baccalaureate (upper secondary leaving diploma) which represents a 3rd level qualification (ISCED3):

- a three-year theoretical route with two fields of study: sciences (mathematics and informatics or natural sciences) or humanities (social studies or philology);
- a three-year technological route with the following fields of study: technical (engineering, electro-techniques and electronics, mounting construction), services (trade, public catering), natural resources and environmental protection;
- a three-year vocational route with the following fields of study: military, theological, sports, arts and pedagogy.

In addition, there is a two-year vocational education route in professional schools that either leads to a professional qualification after two years of study (level 1) or three years of study (level 2). This strand also allows access to a third year in the technological route (qualification level 3). The most popular programmes are transport, engineering, and hospitality (hotels and restaurants).

Post-secondary education is included in professional and technical education and partially financed by the State. It provides an opportunity for advanced vocational training for graduates of secondary schools (with or without a Baccalaureate diploma). Most post-secondary schools prepare nurses and pharmacy technicians. These studies last for two years.

Adult vocational training is provided by legal entities (either private or public), including vocational training centres, or individuals certified as VET providers. Adult vocational training can also be provided through work-based courses/learning (WBL) organized by employers or through internships and specialisation programmes.

The Ministry of Education is the national authority for formal pre-university education (including IVET) and Higher Education and is responsible for developing and/or implementing policies related to provision of training and qualifications assessment.

The Ministry of Labour is the national authority for Continuing Vocational Education and Training (CVET) policies. Sectoral committees are the bodies responsible for definition and validation of standards and qualifications, and in collaboration with the Ministries of Labour and Education, for CVET policies. The National Authority for Qualifications (ANC) coordinates adult training. Social partners (employers and trade unions) have important responsibilities in continuous training at national and sectoral levels.

Adult vocational training is organized through training programmes aiming at initiation, qualification, re-qualification, improvement and specialisation.

Adult vocational training activities may be performed or undertaken via a number of alternative routes as listed below:

- courses organized by training providers,
- courses organized by employers inside their institutions,
- internships and specialization,
- other forms of training provided by law.

Another way for workplace learning is through non-formal training in CVET which means directly engaging in specific activities at work or self-training. Non-formal learning is a learning process integrated into different planned activities with learning objectives, which not explicitly follow a curriculum and can vary in duration. This type of learning depends on the intention of the learner and not automatically leads to certification of knowledge and skills.

VET programmes are organized for occupations included in the Romanian Classification of Occupations (*Clasificarea Ocupațiilor din Romania* - COR) and also for professional competences which are common for a set of occupations. VET providers that request to organise vocational training programmes for occupations for which there are no occupational or training standards may elaborate draft occupational or training standards that are submitted for approval to the ANC.

Individuals providing teaching and training activities within the system of continuing education and training for adults are classified within the Romanian System of Occupational Classification (*Clasificarea Ocupațiilor din Romania*) as “adult trainers” (*formatori de adulți*) as a specific specialization with its own procedure for certification. In most cases training courses for adult trainers are organized by private training providers which are certified for organizing such courses. Certificates (also known in Romanian as “diplomas”, although this is a colloquial denomination) are provided by the National Authority for Qualifications (*Autoritatea Națională pentru Calificări*, former National Adult Training Board - NATB/CNFPA). The Ministry of Education regularly organizes andragogy courses for its teachers so as to provide them with adult trainer specialization.

The National Plan for Vocational training is based on:

- the analysis of vacancies and the identification of the jobs in high demand,
- investigation of the county employment agency data base regarding the persons waiting for a job.

These programmes are organized by the centres subordinated to the National Agency for Employment (county centres of adult vocational training), by the 23 centres for vocational training of the county employment agencies (*judet*), and also by authorized providers (from the public or private sector).

According to the special law that regulates the institution of apprenticeship in Romania, namely the Apprenticeship Act of 2005 (Law no. 279/2005), apprenticeship is to be regarded as a special and distinct form of vocational training combining employment, in the form of a closed-end, determined duration contract, with vocational training, to be provided by the employer, both practical and theoretical.

According to the law and to its application norms, entitled to apprenticeship are individuals aged between 16-and 25 years of age, provided that they had no prior qualification in the trade for which they demand entering into an apprenticeship contract. The contract as such, cannot be longer than three years but, also not shorter than six months, in accordance with the qualification to be provided. Actually, the norms for the application of the law clearly state that the contract cannot actually exceed 24 months so as to be in full compliance with the provisions of the Labour Code for determined duration contracts.

Workplaces provide a strong learning environment in which to develop hard skills on modern equipment, and soft skills through real work experience of teamwork, communication and negotiation. Workplace training facilitates recruitment by allowing employers and potential employees to get to know each other, while trainees contribute to the output of the training firm.

Workplace learning opportunities are also a direct expression of employer needs, since employers will be keenest to offer those opportunities in areas of skills shortage. At the same time the benefits of workplace learning depend on its quality. In the absence of quality control, workplace training opportunities for young people can degenerate into a masked form of cheap labour, or involve very narrow and firm-specific skills.

Outside formal apprenticeships, where workplace training is the central element, postsecondary VET programmes make variable, but sometimes extensive use of workplace training as a component of programmes, often in the form of fixed “blocks” such as three-month internships. In some cases the requirement is mandatory.

Nevertheless there are specific guidelines for approaching the workplace learning. One of them is the so called “*the six-step approach to developing workplace learning*” and consists the following steps:

1. Preparing the ground for learning: defining the rights to workplace learning and identifying the existing provision for workplace learning;
2. Connecting to the trade union;
3. Entering into a dialogue with workers: survey questionnaire to investigate learning experience and need;
4. Turning workplace learning needs and experiences into trade union demands;

5. Entering into a dialogue with employers - Preparing a workplace learning agreement;
6. Reconnecting with workers.

In **AUSTRIA**, BEST carried out the desk-based research exercise in June and July 2016, with a focus on:

- Current national models in initial and continuing teacher training;
- Current status of workplace learning management, delivery and assessment in Austria;
- Identification of different learning environments available to Austrian learners;
- Types of learning content used and the specific learning content design features in Austria.

The dual education system in Austria with parallel on-the-job and vocational school training offers industry-specific and practice-oriented training.

The VET system is an alternative to traditional education paths and takes up a large part of secondary level II and higher. Initial vocational education and training (IVET) is mainly carried by VET-schools and by a strong apprenticeship-system. In Austria, in addition to the formal education from the ninth school year, both VET schools (i.e. BMS) and colleges (i.e. BHS) provide different programmes and paths at various levels. They include part-time vocational schools or schools and colleges with different focus (e.g. engineering, arts and crafts, business administration, tourism, social occupations, agriculture and forestry, nursery teaching, social pedagogy).

The importance of VET is demonstrated in the wide diversity of supply. A pronounced differentiation both in the school and in the dual system ensures that every young person's strengths and talents are developed in an optimal way.

Another key process is related to the teachers' training. Teachers in VET schools and colleges are legally bound to keep their skills and competences up to date. They are free to choose the form of knowledge acquisition. Teachers in part-time vocational schools are obliged to attend training events in the amount of at least 15 hours per year. There are two types of training:

- Training courses for updating technical, methodological and didactic skills
- Courses that lead to additional qualifications (e.g. in new teaching subjects such as quality or project management)

The following graph illustrates the VET teacher training scheme:

Function	Theoretical training	Practical experience
VET schools or colleges		
General education	University Diploma degree finishing with national teacher examination	One year teaching practice following the university studies
Subject-related theory	University Master degree in specialised field; additionally pedagogical preparation at Pedagogical Universities	Between two and four years of relevant occupational practice
Training in workshops, kitchens, EDV etc.	Upper secondary education with diploma plus pedagogical preparation at Pedagogical Universities	Two or three years of relevant occupational practice
Vocational school for apprentices		
General education theory and subject related instruction (including theory)	Upper secondary education with diploma and graduation at University colleges of teacher education (Bachelor degree, after three years of study)	At least three years of relevant work experience
Practical training	Diploma from occupation-related VET programme and Craftsman Master Exam and graduation at University colleges of teacher education (Bachelor degree, after three years of study)	at least three years of relevant occupational practice
Training in the company		
Trainer at workplace (<i>Ausbilder</i>)	Either attend a 40 hour course or pass an exam organised by the economic chambers to prove pedagogical skills and basic legal knowledge	The training company has to prove his ability for IVET due to the Vocational Training Act. Trainers are usually experienced skilled persons nominated by the employer

In **IRELAND** the main thrust of the research was on trying to ascertain the trends and approaches taken to workplace learning within an Irish educational context. This concentrated broadly on the experience of both learners in the workplace learning environment, and the teachers, tutors, mentors and others who are involved in the delivery of, or associated with the process of workplace training. Key areas examined included:

- An investigation of the national context and the role of workplace training from both the learner and provider viewpoint
- Ascertaining the variety of learning environments and approaches taken to the delivery of workplace training and the significance of that to the application of the learning in the workplace
- Exploring the impact, if any, which the relationship between learner and deliverer, has on the learning process
- Recognising and identifying the key issues arising as a result of the survey analysis

Sources for the desk based research included national reports from the FET strategy, SOLAS - the Further Education and Training Authority in Ireland, data and information from the Training Centre provision on Apprenticeships and Traineeships, as well as relevant briefing documents, Department of Education circulars and

reports, and various scholarly articles on Industrial and Commercial training in Ireland.

Further Education covers education and training which occurs after second level schooling but which it is not part of the third level system. There are number of providers of Further and Adult Education and Training and a wide variety of schools, organisations and institutions, are involved in the delivery of continuing education and training for young school leavers and adults.

SOLAS was established in 2013, following the commencement of the Further Education and Training Act 2013. SOLAS works with the 16 ETBs (Education and Training Boards) to support the development of appropriate further education and training programmes and curricula and the sourcing of further education and training interventions from the private, public and not for profit sector. The ETBs have responsibility for the delivery of primary, post primary and further education in line with their predecessor VECs (Vocational Education Committees).

Higher Education in Ireland is provided mainly by 7 Universities, 14 Institutes of Technology, and 7 Colleges of Education. In addition, a number of other third level institutions provide specialist education in such fields as art and design, medicine, business studies, rural development, theology, music and law. The Institutes of Technology provide a more pragmatic approach to Higher Educational attainment and incorporate a high proportion of accreditation as work experience or placement with relevant employers.

The FET sector in Ireland is characterised by diversity in terms of providers and learner groups. In excess of 200,000 people enrolled in DES (Dept. of Education and Science) funded FET in 2015. FET providers are regarded as providers of accredited provision up to and including NFQ Level 6 or equivalent. In addition to the accredited element, unaccredited provision also takes place, for example, within the community education programmes.

ETB schools are also providers of junior and senior cycle second level programmes. Education and Training Boards, which consist of the former VECs and FÁS training centres (including provision by private providers), account for the majority of accredited provision.

Career Traineeships combine directed off-the-job training (classroom-based learning) in an Education and Training Board centre or ETB approved training centre with on-the-job training (work-based learning) delivered in the host company.

Career Traineeships commence with a classroom-based learning phase where trainees attend a training centre, learning the skills and knowledge that will be further developed in the host company.

The legislative framework for workplace learning in Ireland is based on the Industrial Training Act of 1967. There is further documentation available from SOLAS on the Apprenticeship Code of Practice for Employers and Apprentices 2016 which clearly

outlines the responsibilities of both the employer and the apprentice. In 2013, the Further Education and Training Act was published.

The Quality and Qualifications Act of 2012 is also a key element under the provision of certification which is recognised both nationally and internally within the Framework of Qualifications. The FET Strategy 2014 also outlines the national approach, including workplace learning.

Different learning environments range from the following listed below, but are no means exclusive:

Direct classroom provision

Part-time programmes of learning, both one to one, and group settings

Online learning

Blended learning

Full time accredited programmes through the National Framework of Qualifications delivered through Youth reach programmes, PLC provision, VTOS programmes, NLN provision, various private contracted providers who are engaged through the ETB sector,

CPD on site such as 'Skills for Work'

In **ITALY**, all the organizations of the national educational system that can be traced to the VET (Vocational Education and Training) are presented as a sum of elements hardly due to an organic design, nor from the training model point of view, or the manner in where they define the links between vocational and referential training, nor from a pedagogical one, i.e. the way in which they are conceived and pursued the educational, cultural and professional aims.

The legislative framework clearly and explicitly aims to form an integrated system of adult education in which they cooperate and are involved:

- a. the world of education (school and university)
- b. the field of Vocational Training
- c. the field of non-formal education.

Responsibilities are shared among the different actors involved in planning and organising VET as follows:

- the Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR) sets the framework for VET in national school programmes (technical and vocational schools) for ITS and IFTS;
- the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies (MLPS) sets the framework for leFP, while the regions and autonomous provinces are in charge of planning, organisation and provision;
- regions and autonomous provinces are also in charge of planning, organisation and provision of ITS, IFTS, post leFP, post-higher education, and most of the apprenticeship-type schemes;
- goals of CVT under the public system are set by the Ministry of Labour, while CVT activities are managed by either regions and autonomous provinces or social partners;

- social partners play an important role in promoting company-level training plans (single or group of companies) to be financed by the regions or by the joint interprofessional funds;
- the social partners have a general advisory role in VET policy, from which VET provision is then defined; the social partners contribute to designing and organising active labour market policies (ISFOL, 2012, p. 15).

Teachers and trainers have very different profiles and tasks. A teacher's professional profile is much more clearly defined and regulated than that of a trainer as far as training, recruitment, duties and skills are concerned.

The minimum requirement to access the teaching profession is a five-year academic degree and completion of a one-year university course combined with traineeship in schools. The traineeship lasts 475 hours (75 of which are dedicated to teaching disabled students). The teaching activities cover content and methodological/didactic aspects and are performed under the supervision of a tutor. Special attention is given to languages and digital skills in compliance with EU recommendations. Teachers who wish to teach disabled people attend a specific course in formal education and have to pass a State exam to be admitted into State schools.

The Ministry of Education in cooperation with Indire organizes updating training courses for teachers. Among these is the national plan for e-schools which supports innovation in teaching methods by promoting the use of new technologies and the development of teachers' ICT skills.

Other plans financed by the ESF cover the understanding of evaluation tests and surveys, improving quality of teaching in math and science, and increasing the use of new technologies and distance learning

The Italian Government, the Regions and social partners agreed to allocate financial resources to promote training programmes for low-qualified workers and for those mostly affected by the economic downturn.

To this end, the following measures have been adopted: 1. collecting data on skills needs and professional profiles required in specific sectors at local level. 2. in 2012 Law 92 on the reform the Labour Market provided for the creation of an integrated information system on training and welfare policies for employment at local level; 3. broader adoption of concrete outcome-oriented learning methodologies; 4. incentives to adults, also through: a) agreements aimed at providing new employment opportunities for laid off workers, b) use of Joint Inter-Professional Funds to provide training opportunities for the unemployed; 5. launching of a quality assurance system at regional level.

The different learning environments.

VET at upper secondary level-Technical and vocational school programmes

In technical school programmes learners can acquire the knowledge, skills and competences to carry out technical and administrative tasks. In vocational school programmes, learners acquire specific theoretical and practical preparation enabling them to carry out qualified tasks in production fields of national interest.

Three- and four-year leFP programmes

The leFP programmes offer young people the opportunity to fulfil their right/duty to education and training. The training is designed and organized by the regions.

VET at post-secondary level-Post-secondary higher technical training

These programmes were reorganised in 2008 (DPCM 25.1.2008) and mainly aim at developing professional specialisations at post-secondary level to meet the requirements of the labour market in the public and private sectors. There are two different options:

- higher technical education and training programmes;
- programmes at the higher technical institutes.

Post-higher education VET

Those who have completed a university degree can access post-higher education courses offering a specialisation in a given field. These are organised by regions or the autonomous provinces and last between 400 and 600 hours (rarely two years), leading to a regional qualification that corresponds to specific occupation areas not listed in the national register of qualifications.

Apprenticeship-type schemes

Apprenticeship in Italy designates a work contract with a specific training purpose; it includes both on-the-job and classroom training. The apprenticeship contract, which is distinct from other work-based learning, must be drafted in a written form.

Adult education: Provincial Centres for Adult Education (CPIA)

Adult education is a set of programmes/courses or education and training activities aiming to update adult vocational skills or improve their literacy. Under the remit of the Ministry of Education (MIUR), it is provided by provincial centres for adult education (CPIA) that were recently restructured.

Continuing vocational training

Goals of continuing vocational training (CVT) are set by the MLPS, while CVT activities are managed by either regions and autonomous provinces or social partners. Social partners play an important role in promoting company-level training plans (single or group of companies) to be financed by the regions or by joint inter professional funds.

In the structure of the Italian education system and technical training and professional there are four major components:

- 1) *The component of technique Education,*
- 2) *The component of Professional Education*
- 3) *The component of the Vocational (Education and) training*
- 4) *The component of apprenticeship.*

There is no single body responsible for lifelong guidance and counselling but several institutions are involved. Education institutes have traditionally been responsible for guidance in line with the provisions of the MIUR. This is carried out in cooperation with training centres, local guidance agencies, higher education institutes and universities. In particular, at lower secondary level, schools offer vocational guidance to learners who want to attend VET programmes. The main public providers include: **Public employment services**, operating mainly at provincial level. These services are provided according to user-specific needs; **Work guidance centres** at municipal level offering information and second level guidance to individuals and/or groups to develop individual training and/or job search plans; **Information centres** at municipal

or provincial level providing free information to young people on VET (job offers, competitions, internships, apprenticeships, universities, scholarships, schools), current events (exhibitions, concerts, fairs and other) and volunteering; **The youth guarantee** is the programme that sees a strengthened role for guidance and counselling services as key to success, with stress on profiling. Each young person's individual needs are assessed to provide a personally tailored offer.

VET providers are accredited on the basis of quality standards as indicated by the new national accreditation system of training and guidance providers.

This system has triggered an important reform process in which human resources have been recognised as a key factor for improving the quality of the training system. ISFOL surveys conducted in recent years confirm that accredited training centres increasingly adopt organisation and management models oriented to meet performance requirements and fulfilling the needs of end users. Second generation accreditation models (in line with the 2008 model) have led to a higher focus on effectiveness and efficiency indicators compared to logistical infrastructure indicators.

In **SLOVENIA** after the obligatory nine-year elementary school 98% of the population between ages 15 and 19 participate in secondary education, although it is not mandatory. Secondary education is divided into technical and vocational education (secondary technical and professional, secondary vocational, vocational technical, and short-term vocational), and general secondary education (general and technical "gimnazijas").

Post-secondary vocational education forms a part of tertiary education. It is defined as short-term higher education, and the study programmes are extremely practice-oriented.

Higher education is divided into three levels. The first level includes vocational higher education study programmes and university study programmes, the second level includes Master's study programmes and the third level incorporates the Doctoral study programmes.

Adults acquire education in special educational programmes for adults or in programmes applicable for youth that are being carried out in public educational establishments for adults, public schools and private establishments for adult education.

Workplace learning in Slovenia is placed in secondary vocational and tertiary education. In secondary vocational education, it is called practical training with work (PUD) and is part of the formal/obligatory practical training. The educational programs determine the volume. PUD is carried out in companies under the guidance of trained mentors. School refers students to the PUD in accordance with the annual work plan and agreement with the employers based on collective or individual learning contract. Students engage in direct work process and practical training at work. Based on mentors' written opinion and evaluation of the students' report, the organizer of the PUD evaluates students' performance on a two-stage scale; *passed / not passed*.

The main objectives of the PUD are:

- Gaining practical experience and connecting education and work

- Upgrading of the school-acquired knowledge and the transfer of theoretical knowledge into practice directly in the working environment
- Training and development of specific skills and competencies of the profession
- Discover new learning situations and technological processes
- Discover new job resources, equipment, tools, materials, etc.
- Learning cooperation, teamwork, communication and customer service
- Developing responsibility for their own work, the quality required for the occupation and for compliance with the provisions of health and safety at work and environmental protection.

In tertiary education higher vocational education programs provide students with professional knowledge and skills to use scientific methods to solve challenging technical and business problems, develop the ability to communicate within and among professions, professional criticism and responsibility, initiative and independence in decision-making and management. An obligatory part of the curriculum is practical training in the workplace. Some university programs/studies such as pedagogy/andragogy etc. can also have obligatory practical training in the workplace, which is regulated by internal acts but not specified by law (Higher Education Act).

Number of acts covers practical training with work (only for secondary vocational and tertiary educational system):

- Vocational Education Act (articles 5, 21, 23 – 26, 31 – 45).
- Organization and Financing of Education Act.
- Labour Relations Act.
- Health Care and Health Insurance Act.
- Pension and Disability Insurance Act.
- Social Security Contributions Act.
- National Vocational Qualifications Act.
- Higher Education Act.

Once a person leaves the educational system, the workplace learning the legislative framework is covered by the Labour Relations Act (articles 6, 54, 62, 137, 141, 170, 171, 195 and 217), especially article 170:

(1) A worker has the right and duty to continuing education, development and training in accordance with the needs of the working process with the purpose of maintaining or improving the ability to perform work under a contract of employment, job retention and increase employability.

(2) The employer is obliged to provide education, training and education for workers if required by the needs of the work process or if it is through education, training, or training may prevent the termination of employment contracts because of incapacity or business reasons. In accordance with the needs of education, training and advanced training of employees an employer has the right to refer the worker to education or training; the worker is entitled to candidate.

(3) The duration and course of education and the rights of the parties during and after the education shall be determined by the education contract or collective agreement.

(4) If an employer refers a worker to education and training for the reasons mentioned in the second paragraph of this Article, the employer bears the costs of education and training.

In secondary vocational and technical schools, the organizer of work based learning is responsible for the organization and for all activities and support for the implementation of practical training and practical workplace training. Workplace learning outside the educational system (for employees) can be regulated by collective contracts (one for entire public sector, different collective contracts for different branches in private sector). For the private sector, it is not necessary to have a collective contract. In this case, the workplace learning is regulated entirely by company's internal acts, if existent.

The training for mentors who will be mentoring secondary and tertiary students of vocational schools for practical training with work with employers is carried out by different organizations (such as the Chamber of Craft of Slovenia). The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport announces a public call for the selection of operations for the training of trainers for practical job training and study programs leading to a qualification. The training is not free of charge.

Content of the training:

- developmental characteristics of adolescents
- personality development
- mental processes
- planning and implementation of the learning process
- methodology
- the importance of safety at work
- the education system in Slovenia
- the purpose of practical training with work
- our company wants to educate students. What are the procedures?
- the difference between the education on an individual or collective learning contract
- the difference between the practical lessons and practical training and work
- verification of training places
- practical training of students

In secondary and tertiary education system: every student in vocational education is obligated to get the practical training with work (PUD).

Traditional learning environments: the learning space is specialized, purposeful (classrooms, laboratories etc.), traditional curriculum, focused on teaching and assessing, time is fixed with learning programme, timetables, and knowledge standards.

Open learning environments: the space is flexible, open, non-purposeful; lessons focus on developing individual learning process, flexible, open curriculum, with the possibility of selecting items and partnerships outside the school; ICT access for learning, mentoring teachers and other experts, mutual, multi-directional learning;

time is an optional, open curriculum, flexibility in time: during the day, the week, individual learning programmes.

The main objectives of the PUD (secondary vocational education) are:

- Gaining practical experience
- Connecting education and work
- Upgrading of the school-acquired knowledge and the transfer of theoretical knowledge into practice directly in the working environment
- Training and development of specific skills and competencies of the profession
- Discover new learning situations and technological processes
- Discover new job resources, equipment, tools, materials, etc.
- Learning cooperation, teamwork, communication and customer service
- Developing responsibility for their own work, the quality required for the occupation and for compliance with the provisions of health and safety at work and environmental protection.

Training and development of employees includes:

- Introduction of new employees,
- Training for implementing working skills,
- Technical training,
- Mentoring, consulting and
- Development of the employees.

In Slovenia educational programs for vocational or technical qualifications education and obligatory are established on the basis of professional standards. The professional standard is a document that defines the content of vocational qualifications at a specific level and defines the necessary knowledge, skills and general and professional competences. Professional standard is adopted by the minister responsible for labor, on a proposal from the Scientific Council of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training (the competent Expert Council).

Workplace learning outcomes and learning content design outside the educational system (for employees) are regulated by collective contracts (one for the entire public sector, different collective contracts for different branches in private sector). If a private company does not have a collective contract, the workplace learning is regulated entirely by company's internal acts.

However, as noted before, in many organizations, even when the workplace learning should be regulated, it is not a structured process and is mostly verbal and non-formal or informal.

The vocational education and training (VET) system of **CYPRUS** is playing a significant role in dealing with the immediate adverse effects of the crisis on the labour market as well as in laying the foundations for future development. The major challenges of the education and training system, as outlined in the national reform programme, is to encourage further participation in lifelong learning and to increase participation in VET. Crucial milestones in this direction are the establishment of post-secondary institutes for technical and vocational education and training, which

will offer students an intermediate level of education between upper secondary and tertiary education, as well as the establishment of new modern apprenticeship, designed to constitute a viable, alternative form of training and development for young people. (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), 2012).

The structure of VET is being transformed by the introduction of a new modern apprenticeship, an alternative pathway for young people between 14 and 20, and the establishment of post-secondary institutes for technical and vocational education and training, which will offer students an intermediate level of education. The implementation of the new modern apprenticeship has begun and it will become fully operational by 2015.

Secondary technical and vocational education provides a broad range of initial training programmes in Cyprus. Its new curricula, expected to be developed by 2015, will enhance the attractiveness of VET and match specialisations with the current needs of the labour market. VET is an important part of and features prominently in the Cyprus lifelong learning strategy. Its main actions include the enhancement of lifelong guidance and counselling services, and the development of a national qualifications framework (NQF). (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), 2015).

The earliest level at which Vocational Education and Training (VET) is available, is the upper secondary level at the technical schools, including the evening technical schools. VET is also available through the apprenticeship system, which accepts students who leave formal education between grades eight and ten. Post-secondary VET is provided, as of the academic year 2012-13, at the post-secondary institutes of vocational education and training. VET at tertiary level is provided at four public institutes/colleges, which come under the jurisdiction of various ministries and at several private colleges. Furthermore, in Cyprus vocational training is extensively available for the employed, the unemployed, other groups at risk of exclusion from the labour market and adults in general through a mixture of public and private provision such as colleges, training institutions, consultancy firms and enterprises. (Korelli, 2014)

In Cyprus the decision to merge the post-secondary VET training centre and integrate it in tertiary education in 2011 has led to severe problems in VET provision. This was because the effective pathway from secondary level VET provision to a higher level was terminated. Thus although it is now considered that greater VET provision in a post-secondary level is crucial in the efforts to combat high unemployment, Cyprus is still trying to establish a new framework for VET provision. This is not just a problem within VET provision; part of the problem is the delay of Cyprus in establishing a national framework for qualifications. As a result the VET provision in Cyprus, especially in post-secondary level up and running under the auspices of the ministry of education, but it is lacking in capacity. The lack of supply of VET provision in post-secondary education thus placed an emphasis on educational attainment as an entry requirement, thus perhaps stopping those who have most to gain from the VET pathway. (Korelli, 2010)

Right now the gap in post-secondary VET is in part served by private institutions, at least in industries which have demand of labour. This has led to the Human Resource Development Authority (HDRA) creating an institutionalization and regulation of private centres, which can be considered a way forward for other countries. The system was developed by the HRDA and it addresses all training providers in Cyprus, i.e. Vocational Training Centres, Vocational Training Structures and Trainers of Vocational Training. Thus the HDRA in effect became a gate keeper of quality in VET provision in the private sector, allowing from a far greater expansion of post-secondary and cVET provision that would have been possible through the use of public funds.

The responsibilities for VET are split in two ministries: the Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC), mainly engaged in IVET and the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance (MLSI) mainly engaged in apprenticeships. The majority of the authority, responsibility and planning is in the hands of MoEC. Yet the responsibility for the majority of CVET is under the Human Resource Development Authority (HDRA), a government body that operates independently. The emphasis of HRDA is no to create actions that tackle unemployment at all levels, especially in providing experience to VET and higher education graduates. There is a range of public institutions offering VET courses that are under other ministries. The HDRA also supports private firm initiatives for VET. (Korelli, 2010)

The training programmes are implemented by public and private institutions and enterprises. To be approved they need to adhere to the criteria laid down by the HRDA (Human Recourse Development Authority). The HRDA ensures the quality of the programmes it subsidises by undertaking controls in the programme approval stage, the programme implementation stage and the payment of subsidy stage. An important development with regard to trainers is the introduction of a system for the assessment and certification of training providers. (Korelli, 2014)

The earliest level at which Vocational Education and Training (VET) is available, is the upper secondary level at the technical schools, including the evening technical schools. VET is also available through the apprenticeship system, which accepts students who leave formal education between grades eight and ten. Post-secondary VET is provided, as of the academic year 2012-13, at the post-secondary institutes of vocational education and training. VET at tertiary level is provided at four public institutes/colleges, which come under the jurisdiction of various ministries and at several private colleges.

The apprenticeship system has been a two-year initial VET programme providing practical and theoretical training to young people who had not successfully completed their secondary compulsory education and wished to be trained and employed in technical occupations. (Korelli, 2014).

VET at upper secondary level is provided at technical schools for students aged 15-18 and evening technical schools, as well as in the afternoon and evening classes of technical schools for adults. Secondary technical and vocational education, STVE provides a broad range of initial training programmes to gymnasium leavers and adults.

Moreover, before 2012, VET at post-secondary level had not been available in Cyprus. The MoEC in cooperation with the MLWSI and other stakeholders has established, within the context of the education reform, post-secondary institutes of vocational education and training, co-financed by the ESF, which offer further technical specialisation and started their operation in the academic year 2012-13. Students who attend these Institutes, especially those who wish to enter the labour market directly, have the opportunity to acquire or complete their technical and vocational education (ISCED 45, EQF level 5).

VET at tertiary level is provided by four public institutions of tertiary education, which come under the jurisdiction of various ministries and by 40 private institutions of tertiary education. In Cyprus there is public and private institutions of tertiary education. There are four public institutions of tertiary education (non-university level) offering programmes in forestry, culinary arts and other vocations. These institutions operate under a relevant ministry or organisation as follows:

- (a) the Higher Hotel Institute of Cyprus operates under the aegis of the MLWSI;
- (b) the Forestry College operates under the aegis of the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment
- (c) the Tourist Guides School (operates whenever there is a need) operates under the aegis of the Cyprus Tourist Organisation
- (d) the Cyprus Police Academy operates under the aegis of the Ministry of Justice and Public Order, MJPO.

Over and above these programmes, more than 10 private institutions of tertiary education offer academic programmes of studies based on validation or franchising agreements with more than 10 European universities and following the provisions of the competent Law of the Republic of Cyprus. The Law which was enacted in 1996 regulates the establishment and operation of all private institutions of tertiary education which must be registered with the MoEC.

Added to all these, there are also other forms of training refer to VET programmes which do not lead to a formal qualification but to professional development and updating of specific skills and competences and which are addressed to adults, the employed, the unemployed and other groups at risk of exclusion from the labour market.

The main bodies promoting training provision for the employed are the HRDA (Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus), the MoEC (Ministry of Education and Culture), the MLWSI (Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance)and other ministries and public institutions. Moreover, private institutions such as colleges, training institutions, consultancy firms and enterprises offer a variety of courses for adults, including many that are not subsidised by the HRDA.

Lastly but not least, the adult education centres of the MoEC offer a wide range of courses aimed at the holistic development of each adult's personality and the social, financial and cultural development of citizens and society. The adult education centres operate both in the urban and rural areas of the government-controlled area of Cyprus, run by the Department of Primary Education of the MoEC. (Korelli, 2014)

The Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC), mainly engaged in iVET and the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance (MLSI) mainly engaged in apprenticeships. The majority of the authority, responsibility and planning is in the hands of MoEC. Yet the responsibility for the majority of cVET is under the Human Resource Development Authority (HDRA), a government body that operates independently. The emphasis of HDRA is not to create actions that tackle unemployment at all levels, especially in providing experience to VET and higher education graduates. There is a range of public institutions offering VET courses that are under other ministries. The HDRA also supports private firm initiatives for cVET. (Korelli, 2010)

There has not been a clear distinction between teachers and trainers in VET in Cyprus. Usually the term “teacher” refers to educators at all levels of the formal educational system thus persons working mainly in the formal part of the VET system, whereas the term “trainer” refers to persons providing training in the well-established training system in Cyprus, thus persons working mainly in the non-formal part of the VET system.

Pre-service and in-service training of IVET teachers and trainers

Teachers in Upper Secondary Technical and Vocational Education

Training programmes and developmental activities for the in service training are the compulsory training of Deputy Headmasters and Headmasters of Technical and Vocational Education Schools, organised by the Pedagogical Institute, the optional continuing training and development programmes for teachers and last the special developmental activity (Change agent teams, which organised extensive in-service training workshops focused on student-centred teaching approaches to support the implementation of the new curricula in their own schools).

Teachers in public institutions of tertiary education

Only in the Police Academy, pre-service training is a requirement. The teachers in the Police Academy are police officers with work experience in the police force who are transferred from their post in order to teach. Police officers who want to teach must at least have the position of sergeant.

In-service, continuing training of IVET teachers in public institutions is common practice. It is voluntary in all public institutions and incentives to attend continuing training programmes have still to be introduced to increase participation. The majority of in-service training programmes attended by the teachers in the public institutions are related to the institutions’ areas of interest as well as to the teachers’ training needs.

Trainers in public and private training institutions and in enterprises

There is no pre-service training requirement for trainers in public and private training institutions and in enterprises but each training institution sets these on an individual basis. Pre-service training of IVET trainers is mandatory only in cases where they do not have any previous teaching experience.

In-service, continuing training for trainers is voluntary and therefore it is up to the training institutions and the enterprises and their trainers to invest in upgrading their

knowledge and skills. The HRDA implements and funds specialised training programmes for trainers.

Pre-service and in-service training of CVET teachers and trainers

The pre-service and in-service training requirements for CVET teachers and trainers are the same as those that apply for IVET teachers and trainers and have been described above. (Korelli, 2010)

To start with, participation of individuals in vocational education is the fact that the provision of secondary technical vocational education including evening technical education, the apprenticeship system and public tertiary vocational education are free of charge, while various lifelong learning programmes are offered for a small fee. Public funds administered mainly by the MoEC are the primary source for financing VET.

To start with, in Cyprus there are three main different learning environments. These three learning environments is the face to face learning, online (web-based learning) and internships. Face to face learning is mentioned in several points in the report above.

Monaliz (2012) suggests that E-Learning is defined as encompassing both learning through the use of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) and learning the necessary competences to make use of ICT in the knowledge society (Christodoulou, Germanakos, and Samaras, 2008). E-Learning in Cyprus can be classified into three main categories which are Computer-Based Training (CBT), Technology-Based Learning (TBL), and Web-Based Training (WBT). CBT is a form of education in which the learners learn by executing specific training programs on their computers. TBL constitutes learning via electronic technology including the Internet, intranets, audio/video conferencing, satellite broadcasts, chat rooms, and webcasts (Koller, 2001). On the other hand, WBT uses streaming media to create a dynamic learning environment via the Internet. It is an optimal way to deliver E-Learning content to a large group of people scattered around the world provided that there are high-speed Internet connections. In Cyprus, the E-Learners use several technology resources for their online course such as VLEs with features that support synchronous/asynchronous communications, web collaboration, content authoring/presentation, and personal productivity tools. (Monaliz, 2012)

Moreover, one of the recurring themes in any entry level job search is the lack of experience factor. In Cyprus internships are one of the most important and well known learning environments which can help trainees who seek job opportunities and job experience. Students planning to enter the permanent work force should complement their academic preparation with a range of other experiences, such as study abroad, community service, undergraduate research experiences, participation in sports and other student organizations, membership in pre-professional organizations, and internships. In Cyprus, mainly universities and jobs internship offer you the chance to learn by doing in a setting where you are supervised by a work-place professional, and have the opportunity to achieve your own learning goals, without the responsibilities of being a permanent employee. Internships are vital because offer you the opportunity to work with someone who can become a

mentor for you - not only in the internship, but throughout your career. (Monaliz, 2012)

Cyprus has no formalized process of the evaluation/assessment and recognition of KSC acquired through workplace learning. Each learner may acquire a certificate or a diploma for its work-based learning involvement, however this is only recognized as an extra experience, with no formal qualification attached to it.

The Swiss vocational and professional education and training system is divided into two parts: vocational education and training (VET, upper secondary level) and professional education (PET, tertiary level type B).

Swiss VET system is particularly known for its dual educational system. After nine years of compulsory schooling, young people may either directly join the labor market becoming apprentices (this is known as dual-track approach to learning, practically apprentices work in a firm while attending school programs leading to a vocational title), attend other vocational full time school or continue to study and attend a upper secondary general school that prepares for university study.

Dual-track approach to learning

Workplace learning is very important in Swiss education system and most VET programmes are of the dual-track variety (i.e. part-time classroom instruction at a VET school combined with a part-time apprenticeship at a host company). There are around 250 such VET programmes to choose from.

In **VET programmes** based on the dual-track approach learners attend courses at VET schools on a part-time basis and spend the remaining training time doing an apprenticeship in a host company. In such way VET programmes are organised in different training environments.

a) Work-based training

Work-based training take place in host companies doing an apprenticeship where learners are provided with the practical know-how, knowledge and skills needed for their chosen occupation. Learners also actively take part in the host company's production processes.

b) Classroom instruction

Classroom instruction is provided in VET schools. This consists of instruction in vocational subjects as well as subjects falling under the Language, Communication and Society (LCS) category. VET schools also offer a preparatory course for the Federal Vocational Baccalaureate Examination.

c) Industry courses

Industry courses are meant to complement classroom instruction at VET schools and work-based training at host companies by providing learners with essential practical skills.

Tertiary level **PET programmes** are intended to enable the transfer and the acquisition of tertiary-level competences needed to carry out the complex tasks and decision-making associated with a given profession. To access and enrol to PET programmes learners must hold a Federal VET Diploma, an higher education

qualification or an equivalent qualification. At the tertiary level, workplace learning and professional practice has to be intended as a part of the preparation required to gain a PET recognised qualification (Federal PET Diploma or Advanced Federal PET Diploma). PET qualification may be obtained through:

- a) A federal PET examination. Preparation for federal PET examinations takes place alongside one's usual working activities.
- b) PET college degree programmes. PET college degree programmes may be attended on either a full-time or part-time basis.

Furthermore workplace learning also happens in **CET (Continuous Education and Training) programmes** also defined as Job-related continuing education and training. There is a wide range of job-related CET courses in Switzerland. These courses are organized at different level and for different target groups.

The legal basis for each VET programme in Switzerland can be found in VET ordinances issued by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI). These are prepared through the joint efforts of the Confederation, the cantons and the corresponding professional organisations.

The legislative framework for VET and particularly the dual track approach (workplace learning for apprenticeship) are defined and ruled by the Swiss Federal Act on Vocational and Professional Education and Training (VPETA, annex A2) and the related Ordinance (VPETO). Other kind of workplace learning activities are defined by different federal laws such as: the Federal Act on Continuous training and lifelong learning. Other workplace learning activities are done in a non-formal or informal way and are not defined in any legislative framework.

Generally speaking vocational education and training (VET) is provided at upper-secondary level while Professional education and training (PET) is provided at tertiary B level.

Both VET and PET use clearly defined curricula and national qualification procedures. They are also characterised by a high degree of permeability. The Swiss VPET system offers a broad selection of available training options. Courses cater to different abilities and are geared to the needs of different age groups.

Vocational education and training (VET)

VET programmes cover a period of two, three or four years depending on the training field. In Switzerland VET programmes lead to recognised qualifications and pave the way for lifelong learning.

Three- or four-year VET programmes leading to a Federal VET Diploma provide learners with the skills needed to carry out a specific occupation and open access to tertiary-level B professional education and training (PET). On completion of a three-year or four-year VET programme, learners shall take a final examination to obtain the Federal VET Diploma.

Two-year VET programmes leading to a Federal VET Certificate allows young people with more practical skills to obtain a recognised qualification for a specific occupational profile. Graduates of the two-year VET programme may enrol directly in a three- or four-year VET programme leading to the Federal VET Diploma. On

completion of a two-year VET programme, learners shall take a final examination to obtain the Federal VET Certificate. Two-year VET programmes are designed to take the specific needs of learners into account.

Federal Vocational Baccalaureate (FVB). Further to a VET Certificate the optional FVB is available to learners who attend the FVB preparatory course, which consists of general education subjects. Generally speaking, FVB holders are entitled to enrol in any of Switzerland's universities of applied sciences (UAS) without having to take an entrance examination. FVB holders may also take the University Aptitude Test (UAT) to obtain the additional qualification needed to enrol in a cantonal university or either of Switzerland's two federal institutes of technology (ETH in Zurich or EPF in Lausanne).

Professional education and training (PET)

Professional education and training (PET) is designed to meet the needs of the labour market through a combination of solid practical skills and established theoretical expertise.

Federal PET Diploma Examination. This examination is intended for professionals with several years of professional experience who wish to improve their knowledge and skills and specialise in a given field as a follow-up to their VET programme. Successful candidates are awarded the Federal PET Diploma, which is generally a prerequisite for admittance to the Advanced Federal PET Diploma Examination.

Advanced Federal PET Diploma Examination. This examination is generally for professionals who have acquired a great deal of expertise in their field and/or who intend to hold a managerial position in a company.

PET college degree programmes. PET college degree programmes are intended for professionals holding the Federal VET Diploma or equivalent qualification who wish to improve their knowledge and skills and hold managerial positions.

Transitional options between lower- and upper-secondary level

After completing compulsory education (lower secondary school), pupils may complement their studies by attending practical work-related courses that prepare them for enrolment in an upper-secondary level VET programme. Transitional options last no more than one year and include such things as practical training and pre-apprenticeships.

Job-related continuing education and training (CET)

A wide range of job-related CET options (i.e. non-formal courses, seminars, etc.) are available at all training levels as part of lifelong learning.

VET for adults

Adults may take remedial courses to acquire a VET qualification. The Federal Vocational and Professional Education and Training Act leaves several avenues open in this regard.

The provision of VET is a mission shouldered by the Confederation, the cantons and Professional organisations (such as: social partner, trade associations, and other organisation and VET/PET providers).

The involvement of professional organisations in the process of VET policy making is particularly important in Switzerland and is stipulated by law.

Employers are also directly engaged in the provision of VET by offering apprenticeship places, contributing to the establishment and operation of industry courses and carrying out the part of the national examination process that is related to the workplace.

Swiss Confederation

Is in charge of the strategic management and development of the Swiss VET and PET system. Main tasks are:

- to assure the quality, the development and the innovation of the system
- to guarantee the Comparability and transparency of VET curricula throughout Switzerland
- to define and enact the national VET legal framework (VET ordinances, laws, policies)
- to recognise professional curricula, examinations, training programmes, qualifications (also foreign qualifications) and etcetera
- to found the VPET system (one-fourth of public sector expenditure for the VPET system are founded by the confederation)

This and other tasks are in general managed by:

- The *State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI)*.
- The Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (SFIVET).

Cantons

Swiss Confederation is composed by 26 cantons, every Canton as VPET office, which is responsible for implementing and supervising VET and PET at cantonal level. Cantons are generally responsible for education and training in Switzerland.

The main tasks of the Cantons are:

- To implement the Federal Vocational and Professional Education and Training system
- To supervise apprenticeships, VET schools and PET colleges.
- To provide offers which prepare young people for enrolment in VET and programmes providing occupational, educational and career guidance services.
- To issue permits authorising host companies to take on apprentices and/or trainees.
- To provide training to VET trainers in host companies.
- To promote apprenticeships opportunities.

Professional organisations

Professional organisation play an important role in defining the curricula and the apprenticeship opportunities, particularly:

- *Trade associations and industry organisations*, are responsible for the definition of the training content and the national qualification procedures. Furthermore they organise VET and PET courses for the different sectors.
- *Social partners and other relevant organisations and VPET providers*, are also involved and work together with trade association do develop the VPET curricula and contents
- companies, provide, where possible (Their involvement in VPET is voluntary), VET apprenticeships and PET traineeships to the young workers (and sometimes also to

adults) in order to give them the opportunity to get a VET qualification.

The main tasks of professional organization are:

- To Establish training content of VET programmes and PET college degree programmes
- To Establish national qualification procedures for VET programmes as well as for federal PET examinations
- To promote apprenticeship through the companies in order to create apprenticeship positions for the youngsters.
- To develop new training courses to answer the request of the companies and the emerging needs of the labour market.
- To organise training courses for the companies in order to foster continuous learning opportunities for workers.
- Managing VPET funds.

Training for VET/PET professionals

The education and training of vocational trainers in training companies, of teachers at VET schools and PET colleges, and of trainers in job-related continuing education and training, takes place at university institutions and other educational institutions (especially for vocational trainers in training companies and trainers in job-related continuing education). The education and training of VET/PET professionals is regulated by the Confederation within the framework of vocational and professional education and training. The programmes vary according to the level to be taught at and the teaching workload (part-time or full-time).

Modular Train The Trainers system: training for trainers working outside the VET federal framework (for example CET trainers, in-company trainers, adult workplace trainers, trainers working with low skilled people/workers, etcetera).

For trainers, coaches, instructors, etcetera working outside the VET federal framework the Swiss modular "Train the Trainers system" offer the possibility to get a PET qualification.

The train the trainer system is managed by the Swiss Federation for adult learning (SFAL, which is the national umbrella organisation for adult education and operates as a professional association and pressure group).

A particularity of the Swiss system is that Learning content are defined by professional organisation and employers have responsibility for determining the content of VET (through ordinances which describe the competencies to be taught in every programme, and training plans) and of national examinations. Professional organisation have the exclusive right to initiate the design of new ordinances, or update existing ones, and prepare training plans.

PART B: FINDINGS OF THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH IN PARTNER COUNTRIES

The empirical research included questionnaires applied to two main target groups of DIDO project, namely:

- (1) teachers, trainers, mentors and counselors;
- (2) workers, low-skilled workers and workers in vulnerable employments

We present below the findings from questionnaires' analysis from each group.

FINDINGS FROM EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON TEACHERS, TRAINERS, MENTORS AND COUNSELORS

The number of participants from this target group, in each partner country, is rendered in the table below:

	Romania	Austria	Ireland	Italy	Slovenia	Cyprus	Switzerland
No. of participants	37	35	28	49	20	35	Not provided

All groups were gender-mixed, most of the participants were women (Romania, Italy, Slovenia, Ireland). In Austria and Cyprus it was an almost equal gender distribution.

Regarding to the role of the participants, in Romania and Austria half of participants were trainers, in Ireland half of them were teachers and in Slovenia were mentors, in Cyprus almost 40% were doing other different jobs, and in Italy there was an almost equal distribution between teachers, trainers and other categories.

We highlight that 7 of the 35 participants in Austria and 4 from 28 in Ireland skipped some of the questions.

To the question about the strengths of workplace learning, the participants assessed „*being experiential*” as the most important strength (Romania, Austria, Ireland, Cyprus), closely followed by „*benefits for learners*” (Romania, Slovenia, Cyprus).

The participants also scored highly „*the positive effect that workplace learning has on the social environment of the workplace*” (Romania, Ireland), „*being context-bound*” (Slovenia, Austria), „*being a shared learning*” (Ireland, Cyprus), „*relationship between social environment of the workplace AND the experience & social world of the participants*” (Italy).

In relation to the weaknesses of the workplace learning, it is notable that the majority of respondents answered that “*The aim of workplace learning is too general and hardly serves as a comprehensive picture of the workplace situation*” is very important. The respondents from Austria, Slovenia and Cyprus found these aspects as absolutely essential.

"Impossibility to separate or transfer the competence from the context in which the performance is expected to occur" (Slovenia), *"Being temporary, being not an ongoing learning situation"* (Cyprus), *"Training being too specialized"* (Italy) and *"Training being too generic and not specific to the particular employment of the participant"* (Ireland) were scored between very important and absolutely essential. In Romania just a few of the respondents consider any of these weaknesses absolutely important.

When it is about the opportunities the workplace learning has, almost all of them were rated as very important or absolutely essential: *"Improved communication skills"*, (Austria, Italy, Romania), *"Allowing opportunities for professional self-improvement"* (Slovenia, Cyprus, Romania), *"Providing opportunities to improve/recover basic skills/competences"* (literacy, numeracy, ICT...) (Ireland, Romania), *"Learning about fellow workers in a different situation/environment"* (Austria). The aspect *"Providing opportunities for possible promotion"* was considered very import for Cyprus, while by respondents in Austria it was considered less important.

Participants from Romania and Italy considered *"Restricting the lessons learned exclusively to that kind of work"* as one of the very important threat that the workplace learning has, while Ireland and Cyprus considered *"Do not seek other training opportunities"* having a high importance. For Austria and Slovenia listed threats are not seen as an important factor in workplace learning.

In relation to the three categories of Learning Outcomes, in all countries *"Practical skills or competences"* got the highest score. Only the respondents from Romania and Italy rated also as very important the *"Self-regulative skills such as self-evaluation and management"*.

Among the problems encountered in delivering workplace learning, the respondents from Italy, Romania, Austria Slovenia, Ireland scored highly the *"fear the formal learning environment, based on their previous learning experience"*.

A clear preference for *learning by doing* was noted in the responses from Romania, Italy, Slovenia, Austria and Cyprus. *"Demonstration-based learning"* was scored highly by the respondents in Ireland. *"One-to-one learning approach"* and *"Benchlearning"* had the lowest percentage in Italy, Romania and Austria.

Regarding the technologic aspects of learning environments most of the participants stated that they are familiar with new technologies, most of them use this approach daily and weekly.

In relation to the interactions with their learners, both within and outside of the working environment, approximately 65% of the respondents showed that they agree with or accept this kind of interaction, but there is a general preference for keeping a professional distance and clear boundaries: Ireland – 100%, an average of 80% in Cyprus, Austria, Italy, Romania and almost 50% in Slovenia. The respondents declared that generally the limits and boundaries in this relationship were established

by themselves. This still doesn't compromise the perception of a satisfactory level of current relationship trainer-trainee, which has been positively indicated in almost all cases.

FINDINGS FROM EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON WORKERS, LOW-SKILLED WORKERS AND WORKERS IN VULNERABLE EMPLOYMENTS

The number of participants from this second target group, in each partner country, is rendered in the table below:

	Romania	Austria	Ireland	Italy	Slovenia	Cyprus	Switzerland
No. of participants	41	35	54	43	26	35	Not provided
Females	26	25	4	24	15	22	Not provided
Males	15	10	50	19	11	13	Not provided

Regarding the current employment contract most of the respondents stated that they have a permanent contract.

The large majority of them have secondary level qualification (in Romania, Italy, Slovenia, Ireland, Cyprus). In Austria 20% of the respondents have a secondary level qualification, and the majority (66%) has completed another kind of vocational/professional qualification.

In general all specified strengths were rated very high from the workers perspective, and the most important were *"ask advice and support from specialists"* for Austria, Cyprus, Romania, Slovenia, followed by *"increase my chances of being promoted/better paid"* (Cyprus, Italy, Ireland), *"very practical"* (Austria, Slovenia, Ireland), *"relevant to my current employment"* (Romania, Slovenia, Ireland).

As far as the importance of the weaknesses the workplace was concerned, respondents of Austria, Romania, Slovenia, Ireland considered absolutely essential the fact that workplace learning is *"based on the equipments and facilities of the company"*. Other significant problems were *"workplace learning is very focussed on my present work and does not allow me further opportunity to expand beyond my current role"* (Austria, Slovenia) and *"it has an obligatory feature (it is contract-based)"* (Cyprus, Romania). The aspect *"the workplace learning has a precise time frame"* was absolutely essential for the respondents in Austria, Slovenia, Italy, while for those in Cyprus and Romania it had the lowest importance.

The most important opportunity of the workplace learning mentioned by the respondents in all partner countries was *"Increased knowledge and skills"*. Other strong opportunities of workplace learning were *"Increased productivity"* (Romania, Slovenia, Italy), *"Allowing opportunities for self-improvement and to gain a qualification"* (Austria, Cyprus, Slovenia, Ireland).

Analyzing the importance of the threats that the workplace learning has, the thread *"Restricting the lessons learned exclusively to that kind of work"* was characterized as very important for the respondents from Cyprus, Romania, Slovenia, Italy, while

those from Austria and Ireland considered important the statement “*Feeling pressurised to participate by my employer*”.

The most preferred learning methods according to workers who answered the questionnaire were: “*Visual (special) learning style*” (Cyprus, Romania), “*Verbal learning style*” (Austria, Slovenia), “*Logical (mathematical) learning style*” (Austria, Slovenia), “*Physical (kinaesthetic) learning style*” (Ireland), “*Social (interpersonal) learning style*” (Italy).

Regarding the preferred learning techniques the majority of the respondents from Austria considered that their favorite is “*Learning by working/doing things on your own*”. Respondents from the other partner countries preferred “*Learning by asking for advice*”.

For all respondents the “*Workplace-based learning environment*” was the favorite one. The second most preferable learning environment was “*Technology based learning environment*” for Cyprus, Romania, Slovenia, Italy, Ireland in contrast with Austria, where this learning environment was less voted.

A great percentage of the workers respondents who participated in this research (around 80%) were satisfied with the settings of their current workplace learning environment.

The majority of the workers answered that their access to the workplace learning was easy, the rest answered ‘no’ and argued that the reasons for that were: “*legislation /legislative framework*” (Austria, Slovenia, Italy), “*Requirement of previous Knowledge and Skills*” (Austria, Cyprus), “*Workplace in remote area*” (Ireland).

The participation to the workplace learning proved to be easy and accessible for more than half of the respondents. Among the things which impede the participation are: “*Lack of personal appropriate Knowledge and Skills*” (Austria, Romania, Slovenia), “*Tasks with too high difficulty*” (Cyprus), “*Age*” (Ireland)

HIGHLIGHTS FROM EACH PARTNER ON WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE CPD CURRICULUM

ROMANIA:

- The advantages of workplace learning are considered very important or absolutely essential by the majority of the respondents, both in the case of educators and workers.
- In the case of workers the opportunities that workplace learning provide are absolutely essential. The workers prefer visual learning, kinesthetic learning, verbal learning and logical learning; moreover, the methods they prefer are asking for advice, learning by working, practice and teamwork, group discussion; learning alone, in an isolated environment, is not appreciated at all;

- The innovative methods/approaches are appreciated as absolutely essential by the educators;
- When it is about the environment, workplace and laboratories are preferred; technology and new technologies should be the base of workplace learning;
- Fortunately, Romanian workers admit that they had an easy access to information and learning; but there are some factors which impede it: workers' background and experience, inappropriate relationships, lack of knowledge and technological competences in the case of workers;
- Educators identified the following impediments: lack of abilities and knowledge in the case of workers, and learners fear of the formal learning environment;
- Social interaction and communication are absolutely essential, both for workers and educators;
- It is important to note that practical learning and teamwork are mostly preferred, as the workplace environment too;
- Educators suggest that workplace learning should also include information about working with difficult people, solutions for the daily problems, efficient communication solutions, and cultural, historical and general knowledge (as it can be observed in the case of the open responses).

SLOVENIA:

- Increasing awareness and understanding, involving context and situations, problems, risks and one's own organisation;
- Preliminary assessment of academic knowledge and skills, such as assessing formal knowledge and using knowledge sources;
- Improving judgement, including output and outcomes, priorities and levels of risk.

ITALY:

- Aspects related to relational sphere.
- Work group.
- Comparison with colleagues.
- Use of new technologies.

IRELAND:

- Traditional approaches to workplace learning appear to be of high importance to learners, which could be due to familiarity with the approach and possible fear of new approaches and methodologies. Therefore this approach which would be interspersed with more innovative and challenging methodologies would need to be carefully integrated into the CPD curriculum.
- As the majority of learners expressed a preference for a pragmatic approach to learning and also were particularly clear about the importance of social learning and interaction with peers, it is imperative that the curriculum would take cognisance of this. The inclusion of group activities and tasks should form a key part of the newly developed programme.
- Another key finding was that learners felt that traditional work-based learning was very generic and that it did not address specifics directly related to their work. It is important that the curriculum reflects, in as much as it is possible,

the specifics of their particular workplace, without being restrictive and narrow in approach.

- As many learners have already completed secondary level education, the base level for the curriculum needs to reflect that relative to the standard being set in the curriculum.
- For any healthy learning environment, a certain amount of challenge and conflict can occur during the learning process. The inclusion of conflict management skills and a certain element of counselling training would be important aspects to consider.
- The approach taken to the development of the curriculum will have to recognise the multiple learning styles preferred by learners, in order for them to be in a better position to be successful in their learning.

AUSTRIA:

- Workplace learning is widely accepted by both, educators and workers and participating results are very good;
- Access to workplace learning is often difficult, especially by those with migrant background, and information is rare;
- Diversity of supply is a first step to address target groups with multiple interests and working backgrounds;
- The legislation framework is often seen as an obstacle and discourage potential learners;
- Opportunities and strengths of workplace learning are far more likely to be acknowledged than weaknesses and threats;
- Through different learning styles, needs and environments an individual approach is necessary;
- Communication with learners is the key to improve things;
- Quality control is inevitable as the number of providers will raise;
- A straightforward and practical way for workplace learning to encounter unnecessary concerns;
- Classic/Traditional learning settings are not absolute reprehensible as many people rely on them through their previous experiences;
- The results of the empirical results show that learners actually like to learn or work alone while teacher tend to avoid this learning method;
- Learners see the requirements of skills and knowledge as an impending factor for participating in workplace learning. Teachers also see a tendency for failure in this particular aspect: *“How can we improve skills and knowledge in the first place to make participation possible and prosper?”*;

CYPRUS:

The most preferable learning environment for workers was the workplace learning environment and the technology based learning environment. So when conducting the CPD curriculum this should be highly taken in consideration.

Also another important fact to have in mind is that a big percentage of them extremely prefer the visual learning style above all styles with a second best choice of the social learning style.

Moreover another fact that should be taken into consideration is that trainers and mentors argued that the most important problem which they encounter in delivering workplace learning is that learners need too much time to acquire the expected Learning Outcomes. Somehow, this time has to be minimized.

In conclusion, it has to be highlighted that all trainers and mentors were familiar with new technologies and new technology based learning environments and actually using them. So technology based learning environment should be included in the DIDO curriculum.

SWITZERLAND

Data not provided.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The opportunities that workplace learning provide are absolutely essential in the case of workers and the innovative methods/approaches are appreciated as absolutely essential by the educators.

It is really important to take into account the workers' preferences in the case of learning methods, approaches and style. Visual, verbal and logical styles are appreciated and considered to be useful.

The importance of group and team based collaborative approaches emerge as being quite significant.

The empiric research illustrated that the respondents are pleased with the workplace learning environment. Some of them, on the other hand, noted the weaknesses of this aspect. The number of training sessions should increase, and, in the same time, the interest and implication should be stimulated (in the case of workers). Some of the respondents marked that workplace learning should not be limited to the tools and technologies used at the respective workplace.

The trainers as well as the workers noticed lack of transferability of competencies to different contexts, so it is recommended including the category of contextual and theoretical understanding in the CPD Curriculum. Another important aspect noticed by both target groups, in almost all performed researches, is the need for professional self-improvement (of the workers) or the Task Performance (including speed, fluency, and range of skills required and collaborative work – as seen from the trainers' point of view).

Workplace learning is widely perceived to be a positive mode of learning. For many of those being presently in the work force, the workplace learning mode is the favored one. Any curriculum development in this area can be assured of the positive attitude by the workforce.

It would be appropriate to structure the training courses that start from the actual workers' needs of training and from their expectations.

The major challenges of the education and training system are to encourage further participation in lifelong learning and to increase participation in VET.