

Comprehensive policy frameworks for continuing VET: Reform of Continuing Vocational Education and Training Systems (Re-CVET)

STUDY VISIT IN LITHUANIA, 9 – 11 MAY 2017

Project Implementation period: 01 November 2015 – 31 October 2017

Venue: Qualifications and Vocational Education and Training Development Centre,
Vilnius, Lithuania

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Introduction

The Qualifications and Vocational Education and Training Development Centre (KPMPC) along with the rest of the partnership representatives from the Directorate of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Cyprus and from ENOROS Consulting Ltd, organized a study visit in Lithuania between the 9–11 May 2017, in parallel with the 4th Partnership meeting. The partners' representatives were invited to discuss with various stakeholders about the CVET systems in Cyprus and Lithuania as well as current undergoing reforms.

The partners have met with officials from the Ministry of Education and Science of Lithuania, representatives from the Employers' Confederation, Sectoral practical training centre of Vilnius auto-mechanics and business school, Vilnius Jerusalem labour market training centre, Klaipėda tourism school and Klaipėda vocational training centre of Ernestas Galvanauskas.

They discussed issues related to apprenticeship systems, employers and businesses participation in the creation of programs and curricula, teachers' selection, methods of tracking graduates, quality assurance, meeting market needs, policy reform challenges and planned changes in CVET systems in Lithuania and Cyprus.

The discussions were productive, while plans for future cooperation projects have been recorded.

Furthermore, the study trip continued in Klaipėda at Klaipėda Tourism School where the partners had the opportunity to meet with the administration of the school and the students and to discuss with them about their current programmes and practices, visit the premises and classrooms as well as taste delicious meals prepared by the students showcasing their talent and skills.

The Re-CVET project team finally visited the Klaipėda vocational training centre of Ernestas Galvanauskas, where they were presented with programmes provided by the Centre and their quality standards which was quite interesting as they offer programmes for the employability of visually impaired students as well as professional rehabilitation for disabled people and for those with special needs.

1. Participants and Organizations

- Mr. Tassos Menelaou (Ministry of Education and Culture Cyprus)
- Mr. Nikos Papaevripides (Ministry of Education and Culture Cyprus)
- Ms. Maria Thalia Christou (Enoros Consulting Ltd)
- Mrs. Gabrielė Gaubienė (Analyst of KPMPC)
- Ms. Lina Vaitkutė (Head of Unit of KPMPC)
- Mrs. Nijolė Daujotienė (Analyst of KPMPC)
- Ms Beatričė Leiputė & Mrs Jogilė Miežienė. (Policy analysts of Research and Higher Education Monitoring and Analysis Center - MOSTA)
- Dr. Saulius Zybartas (Director of Lifelong Learning Department of Ministry of Education and Science of Lithuania)
- Mr. Vaidotas Levickis (Deputy Director of Lithuanian Employers Confederation)
- Mrs. Elena Pelakauskienė (Director of Vilnius auto-mechanics and business school)
- Mr. Tadas Klevas (Head of practical training of Vilnius auto-mechanics and business school)
- Mrs. Jurgita Bražinskienė (Deputy Director of Vilnius Jerusalem labour market training centre)
- Mrs Edita Sinkevičė Project manager of Vilnius Jerusalem labour market training centre)
- Ms. Rasa Lūžytė (Project manager of Vilnius Jerusalem labour market training centre)
- Mr. Audrius Kurlavičius (Director of Klaipėda tourism school).
- Mrs. Inga Iždonaitė-Medžiūnienė (Head of Department of Continuous Training of Klaipėda vocational training centre of Ernestas Galvanauskas)
- Mrs. Dalia Martišauskienė (Director of Klaipėda vocational training centre of Ernestas Galvanauskas)
- Mr. Antanas Jurevičius (Deputy Director for Education of Klaipėda vocational training centre of Ernestas Galvanauskas)
- Mr. Aivaras Lajauskas (Specialist of Department of Continuous Training of Klaipėda vocational training centre of Ernestas Galvanauskas)
- Mrs. Palmira Jurgilienė (Head of Gymnasium Department of Klaipėda vocational training centre of Ernestas Galvanauskas)
- Mrs. Živilė Kaziukonienė (English teacher of Klaipėda vocational training centre of Ernestas Galvanauskas).

2. Programme of the Study Visit

Schedule	Issues to be addressed
Monday, 8 May 2017	
Arrival to Vilnius	
Tuesday, 9 May 2017	
9:00-13:30 Partners meeting in KPMPC, <i>Geležinio Vilko g. 12, Vilnius</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Discussion on Quality Code</i> • <i>Project issues</i>
14:00-17:00 Visit to the Ministry of Education and Science. Meeting with Ministry staff and national social partners involved in CVET policy, <i>A. Volano g. 2, Vilnius</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Presentation of Ministry activities</i> • <i>IVET and CVET policy priorities</i> • <i>Funding of IVET and CVET</i> • <i>Cooperation with social partners at different levels: national, sectoral and institutional</i>
Wednesday, 10 May 2017	
9:00-11:00 Visit to sectoral practical training centre of Vilnius automechanics and business school, <i>Mokyklos g. 21, Bukiškio k., Avižienių sen., Vilniaus r.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Presentation of institutions: programmes, staff, learners, training facilities</i> • <i>Cooperation with social partners</i> • <i>Presentation of quality management systems</i>
11:00-13:00 Visit to Vilnius Jerusalem labour market training centre, <i>Jeruzalės g. 53, Vilnius</i>	
13:00-17:00 Continuation of partners meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Project issues</i>
Thursday, 11 May 2017	
6:00-10:00 Departure to Klaipėda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Presentation of institutions: programmes, staff, learners, training facilities</i> • <i>Cooperation with social partners</i> • <i>Presentation of quality management systems</i>
10:00-12:00 Visit to Klaipėda tourism school, <i>Taikos pr. 69, 94122 Klaipėda</i>	
13:00-15:00 Visit to Klaipėda Ernestas Galvanauskas VET Centre, <i>Taikos pr. 67, Klaipėda</i>	
15:00-16:00 Mini tour in Klaipėda	
16:00 Return to Vilnius	
Friday, 12 May 2017	
Departure to Cyprus	

3. Questions regarding the Lithuanian Education System

1. General questions

- At what age and how do students select the field they wish to follow in Upper Secondary VET?
- Is CVET linked to the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)?
- Is there a mechanism for validation and quality check of non-formal learning?

2. Education and the labour market (employers, unions, etc)

- Is there cooperation between the above regarding:
 - The formulation of study programs according to specific labour market needs
 - The training in new technologies
 - The training or apprenticeship of students
- Is there a follow up system for graduates as regards to the development of their competences, satisfaction of employers, professional settlement?

3. Study Programs and Curricula

- Who are the stakeholders involved in forming and further developing study programs and curricula for IVET and CVET? Is there a direct relation between the two?
- Is there a path for further studies for CVET graduates to attend tertiary education? Incentives?
- Are there any Quality Mechanisms for the evaluation of the study programs and private CVET providers?

4. Financial

- Are there any IVET or CVET programs subsidized by the State?
- What is the average cost for a student attending a CVET program?

4. Study Visit Implementation

4.1. Tuesday, 9th May 2017

4.1.1. Research and Higher Education Monitoring and Analysis Center (MOSTA) – Higher Education Policy and Career analysis Unit – Graduate Tracking and Human Resources

Graduate Tracking and Human resources monitoring started in Lithuania in 2010.

Currently no new surveys are being prepared due to technical issues of finding students, difficulty in reaching the students and looking for other methods (focus groups, social research methods).

Professional Qualifications Map (PQM) 2015 – first data merged from education and labour market data in higher education and vocation graduates from EMIS, SSI, STI systems.

The PQM is used to map labour market demand for programmes revision, educational policy improvement, providing information to employers on career planning of students and is utilized as a tool for better communication between stakeholders.

NHRM created in 2016 – National Human Resources Mechanism System (table form the presentation) – no public results are available yet as it is still in a piloting phase. First results will be available at the end of Q1 2018. From 2018 – 2019 the system will run in itself. The 60 selected Indicators (i.e. how much students earn, their field of studies etc.) will be made in a digital database in the future to be filled in automatically from all Registers. Annual Status evaluation on human resources is expected to be provided every year. Registering in all the existing Registers is mandatory as it is linked with social benefits and financial, and this is the motive. However this system is not yet applied for CVET.

For the preparation of the aforementioned system a Common Coordination Committee was created with the involvement of representatives from the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Economy. In 2009 the new Government decided to create a group with stakeholders and mandated them to check the data and statistics and to merge them from the different Registers. There was the identified need to attract graduates to stay in Lithuania, while the public opinion and media/journalists pressed for change.

Long coordination between executors happened (2009 – 2017). Personal data problems were risen relating to privacy – thus the Law in Education was changed for safeguarding personal data for the new system.

Another initiative incorporates the element of forecasting (2017 – 2020): implementation of skilled labour supply analysis and monitoring system in Lithuania, project which is funded the ESF for all levels of education. The methodology is being currently prepared (types, levels etc). The estimation of human resources running the system is around 3-5 people.

Due to the fact that no such system exists in Cyprus, the representatives of the Cypriot partners believe that the presentation and explanation of the system should be included in the RE-CVET Quality Code Handbook and to be presented during the RE-CVET Business

Forum organized in Cyprus as a best practice in order to start discussions among the relevant policy makers in the country for consideration for future development.

4.1.2. Ministry for Education and Science of Lithuania –Director of Lifelong learning Department

Challenges:

- a. Statistics show demographical challenges – prognosis for 50% less people in 30 years time. This reflects to the structure of economy and regional sectors.
- b. Lack of labour force – through CEDEFOP studies a decrease of 20% has been predicted up to 2025.
- c. Replacement level of labour force with medium level qualifications until 2025 - approx. 400.000
- d. Low levels of competences related to productivity and technologies (PIAAC and PISA) – IT and problem solving technologies skills are lacking.
- e. Participation rate in adult education is very low compared to the Europe level (10.7%). Mentality needs to be changed, as well as civic education.

Changes proposed:

1. Reform of the structure of the programmes, the curricula, implementation processes, while modular courses were designed according to knowledge, skills and competences.
2. Changes in government organigram: Sectorial approach, thus institutions are going to be selected for each business sector and establish Competences centers, including international coordination (Coordination body will comprise of Business associations, training institutions, KPMPC, state representation).

17 sectors of economy – 17 Competences centers for coordination dealing with staff training to implementation of new innovation models. Pilot projects in first 3 sectors: engineering, construction, production of textiles
3. Standards approach and introduction of credits, in-service training programmes for teachers (technological, pedagogical, theoretical competences packages, apprenticeship type skills – introduce new elements from Universities).
4. Infrastructure improvement for the newly developed Competences centers according to all levels.

Percentage of students selecting VET: 1/3 – but in the future the idea is to develop new citation in the opposite way – 2/3 in VET and 1/3 to university training.

Population in IVET is decreasing while CVET is increasing, using the same economical resources and structure. Once the modular approach is finalized then it will not matter if its IVET or CVET, since participants will be trained in specific skills and competences. Rules should apply, same level of training, certification etc.

Who are the stakeholders involved in forming and further developing study programs and curricula for IVET and CVET? Is there a direct relation between the two?

Three Different levels in Lithuania:

- **School level:** Businesses participate in the Governance of the schools, thus feedback and recommendations are required to be given by them. Then the Schools themselves provide the recommendations to the Ministry.
- **Institutional level:** Sectoral committees discuss what kind of qualifications are needed, standards, programmes etc, in which business associations or big businesses participate in.
- **Ministerial level:** a VET Council exists for advising the Minister of Education formed by 5 Business Associations, 5 Trade Unions, and 5 representatives from State Institutions (Labour, Agricultural, Economy, etc) – policy recommendations are made at policy level.

3 steps: acquire the VET training, pass the accreditation exams by Business institutions and receive a certificate (professional accreditation) and then return to school to receive the Diploma.

Is there a path for further studies for CVET graduates to attend tertiary education?

Universities follow the acquirement of certification (autonomous). Prerequisite for entrance is to get a Matura, recognitions, exams etc.

Colleges can recognize CVET training modules if the continuation of the studies happens in the same branch. If the student decides to choose a different branch/sector then it is according to the College to decide entry requirements.

The training or apprenticeship of students (motivation for businesses)

Modeling / OECD motivation systems reports what works and what not.

Companies need training, bureaucratic issues, investments of quality assurance, supervision systems but not direct investments on behalf of the State.

Student basket financing system – How dropouts are handled?

Schools are hunting students due to the fact that if they do not acquire a minimum number of students they are going to be closed (funding is needed) and also due to the fact that population is reducing, schools have higher motivation to work with students and parents to stay in school. (Lithuania percentage of dropouts in VET: 6-8 %).

4.1.3. Lithuanian Employers Confederation

Relation of studies and businesses/employers and contribution in the system:

- Formal VET programmes (VET providers and companies draft programmes to be send to KPMPC according to needs and the further contribution of companies happens via Sectoral Committees) – Programmes are financed by the State. Duration of preparation until implementation: 2 – 12 months, to start a programme 25 individuals are needed. Duration of programmes according to Qualification and credits.
- Informal VET programmes (companies work directly with schools for designing new programmes), financed by companies.

The training or apprenticeship of students (motivation for businesses)

- Apprenticeship scheme is one other way to educate a person. There is no economic value to do the training in companies since Sectoral Competences Centers are of higher quality.
- Training for the personnel already working in the company is provided.
- If businesses are in the point that would like to expand, they need employees. Thus the best way to find human resources is to being actively involved in Schools (either through financing or networking, jobs).
- Practical placement in companies (student in even some case and sectors need to pay companies to go for 4 weeks of training).
- Problem of employers not knowing the skills of VET students, business associations perform tests for selection of students, no coordination among Schools and businesses, lack of knowledge of the person responsible directly for the student, planning of practical programme is lacking.
- Discrimination among schools (new and old schools) for employment.
- Taxes incentives – ESF (70%) – scheme of Ministry of Economy and Social Affairs unemployed and the company wants to employ them, its informal training, they unemployed chose the sector and the provider for training and the contact begging's and they offer them employment – the motivation is getting labour force and reducing employment.

Suggestions for CVET:

- Improvement of selected accreditors of business institutions: specialists should go for assessment of professional qualifications.
- Improvement of the social image of VET and CVET.
- Variety of accreditation institutions should exist and not a centralized mechanism. For Cyprus would be different due to size and current situation.

4.2. Wednesday, 10th May 2017

4.2.1. Sectoral practical training centre of Vilnius auto-mechanics and business school

Currently 800 students in car/auto mechanics are enrolled in the School which is the biggest one in the country.

Structure of courses:

Practical Centers are attended by final year students (3rd year students undergo only practical course). E-books are used for theoretical learning.

Each module takes 2-3 weeks, following practical time in companies for 2 weeks. 6 – 7 modules each year – September/June and after exams.

Model of courses structure: Matura classes (literacy, mathematics etc.), theoretical and practical/vocational education.

After 15 weeks they have exams – Assessors in exams for the certification (professional qualification) come from Chambers of Commerce or big Businesses.

The School provide hostels for students (cost of stay: 12eur), tutors and support them in the process.

How are teachers / trainers employed – how many students in each class?

Very difficult to find teachers – very advanced technological equipment

In order to find teachers who are up skilled, the School solution is to follow good students throughout their studies even in University and then propose them jobs for teaching. In most cases they chose to go to companies (mostly due to low salaries in educational sector).

Mathematics and Physics teachers are not easy to find as well.

First contract for 1 year, then decisions are made if they stay or not.

Groups of 25 – 28 and for practical exercises is around half (14 students) with one trainer.

Upskilling trainers:

Schools discuss with Companies for arranging trainings for teachers according to the equipment they get from them (every 2 years).

Private training courses which are paid by the School

Motive for employers to take in students:

If they invest in good quality practices then they get good workers. Some companies pay good candidates, in general no payment exists.

The projects partners were also showed the premises of Vilnius auto-mechanics and business school with its Sectoral practical training centre, the Director showed the infrastructural results which were financed by ESF projects (buildings, equipment, etc.).

4.2.2. Vilnius Jerusalem labour market training centre

A vocational training institution for adults was established in 1958, it has more than 80 employees. The stakeholders of this institution are Ministry of Education and Science and provide company JSC Arginta Group.

It provides training in around 190 training programmes (formal and informal). It has Quality Management System (ISO 9001) implemented in 2012.

It has 4 training departments: metal technologies, construction technologies, transport technologies and energy technologies

The representatives were shown the premises of Vilnius Jerusalem labour market training centre, talk to the teachers of various departments. Also, the director showed the innovative bus (regular city bus converted to a base promoting VET and their school). The bus is used during various events to promote VET and especially the programmes provided by Vilnius Jerusalem labour market training centre (the bus has interactive equipment inside).

- Fees for students: Average for one hour course (5 EURO). The fee is according if its theoretical or practical training – trainings could be group or/and individual trainings.
- Formal programmes lead to Diplomas
- Informal programmes lead to certificate by the School. The independent accreditation institution comes to the school in order to supervise the exam for the professional certification.
- Also international certification and accreditation for both the teachers (14 months training) and the Center exists with external experts from other countries.
- Groups start from 5 students, all year round.
- Apprenticeship programmes in construction: 70% theory and 30% in practice. Last year 100% in practice – depends on the specialization.
- The school has modern practical training bases which correspond to real working conditions. Around 70 % practical training is held in companies and in school's practical training bases.
- Flexibility in creating programmes: Although flexible, regulated programmes, examination systems under rules of Ministry of Education and Science.
- Around 4000 students are being trained every year, 5 Centers in Lithuania of labour centers providing trainings from 3 days to 2 years.
- Motivation for businesses: if they send students then they can get free of fees training programmes.
- Working groups to deal with methodologies, evaluations, programme etc.
- No funding is received by the State for programmes, staff, infrastructure etc.

4.3. Thursday, 11th May 2017

4.3.1. Klaipėda tourism school

The partners' representatives had a chance to visit the Klaipėda Tourism School, be offered a lunch prepared by the students and served by the students (bartenders and waiters) and also had a short tour in the premises.

In 2014 a new hotel, restaurant and trade sectorial practical training centre was opened with well-equipped workshops for cooks, pastry chefs, waiters, bartenders, and trade programmes' students as well as school library and classrooms.

Students find the placements themselves, while the majority of them have already found jobs before graduation. Currently the school has more than 600 students, 72 teachers and 35 other staff, while the level of dropouts is 15% due to various reasons i.e. huge emigration, starting their careers etc.

Companies and various businesses do not support financially the School as donors, but they support the formulation of programmes and ideas. Most of the teachers work at restaurants and companies in parallel, therefore good network of contacts has been established.

The most popular programmes and duration in school are: Cook (32 weeks); Pastry chef (32 weeks); Shop-assistant (22 weeks); Waiter (25 weeks); Business organizer (26 weeks); Accountant (20 weeks); Chambermaid (15 weeks).

The school covers its costs through offering lunch to the public, as well as selling the products made by students both to the student community and the public.

Education is free, while students who are up to 25 years old receive benefits when in education.

Furthermore, students in the tourism sector could get a Certificate based even on personal knowledge without attending the school, however this not promoted very broadly. As in most technical schools practical experience sums up the 70% of total education, while 30% remains theoretical.

Regarding accommodation costs are 11€, transport is free provided by the Municipality of Klaipėda, while the students can receive a scholarship from 13€ to 28€ annually.

4.3.2. Klaipėda vocational training centre of Ernestas Galvanauskas

The goal of this visit was for the RE-CVET project team to familiarize themselves with the Center provided vocational training, adult and non-formal education innovations and the introduced quality standards. Currently the school has around 300 students in CVET classes.

Continuous professional training is a permanent activity. The length of the continuous training is 4-36 weeks: formal continuous training is for the individuals willing to develop his / her present qualification or acquire new qualifications and non-formal professional training programs are for the individuals willing to develop their qualification and renew their knowledge and skills.

Individuals may study continuous vocational training programs at their own expense or having a consignment of Lithuanian labor exchange.

The training is free of charge if individuals have a consignment from the Lithuanian labor exchange.

A very important element as explained is the cooperation of the Center with various stakeholders and the social partners (i.e businesses, professional associations, educational institutions, municipalities etc). As regards to businesses the school has practical training agreements, appointed advisors and apprenticeship agreements. The programme is validated and accredited by external stakeholders and the certification process for students is also independent

Furthermore, the students provide services to the public such as beauty services, hairdressing, physiotherapy etc.

The school is also certified with EN ISO (2015) – 9001.

As regards to CVET programmes the school receives feedback either by phone or through individual meetings with stakeholders, this also happens for the apprenticeships.

As far as employment of trainers/teachers the school looks for the recommendations and certifications each candidate has, they are appointed by the Ministry of Education and Science and they also participate in trainings in order to improve their current skills. They also follow their students and offer them teaching positions once they complete their studies in higher education Institutions. Teachers are being evaluated twice a year first with self-assessments and SWOT analysis in addition to preparing along with the administration of the school a personalized qualification Development Outline indicating their needs for further training.

Advertisement of the CVET programmes offered happens through TV, newspaper, radio, Facebook etc.