

This report presents the results of a Peer Learning Activity, which has been prepared by the independent expert named on the cover. The report is based on a peer learning activity where policymakers and practitioners from a number of countries exchanged ideas and experiences on an issue of shared policy interest. This report reflects the opinions of the participants and does not constitute an official European Commission or ENQA-VET position.

**Peer Learning Activity on  
Quality Assurance procedures for  
Work Based Learning**

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**Peer Learning Report  
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## Executive summary

The ENQA-VET peer learning activity on work based learning has been important in a wider European quality assurance context. It has supported the Copenhagen process in increasing the quality in VET and it has made European cooperation in the area of quality assurance in VET stronger.

The peer learning concept is central in making European cooperation in the area of quality assurance even stronger. Bringing 19 participants and experts from 16 countries together to view best practice in systems and processes in operation in Denmark and Sweden and to reflect back on the significance of these in their own professional contexts, is European cooperation at its best.

Work based learning refers to any formal VET learning that is based wholly or predominantly in a work setting.

National plans and structures exist for WBL and are covered by law in all Member States.

Apprenticeship training is in many Member States an integrated part of a “dual system”, combining training in workplaces with education and training at VET-colleges. Short and long term labour market training is also a major part of the work based learning activities in Europe. Many actors are involved in the implementation, with different roles of the students, VET-providers and enterprises in the Member States.

Enterprises and VET-providers are often linked by different types of partnerships and contracts and the social partners are often heavily involved in curricula development which together with the upgrading of the trainers and teachers are key aspects of the quality assurance of WBL.

A number of different mechanisms are in place in order to evaluate WBL, ranging from activities at provider level in enterprises to system level. The quality assurance procedures are mainly a matter for the enterprises and the knowledge and insight in the procedures are in general very limited.

The use of quality indicators differs between the Member States, and is in general very limited.

The feedback and procedures for change are organized very differently in the Member States. Participation in the feedback procedures also differ between the Member States both in relation to involvement, responsibility and methods. In general the feedback procedures are relatively unclear and not well described.

The roles of the key stakeholders differ between the Member States, but the cases show the importance of the social partners and especially the role of the enterprises. The documentation of the quality assurance procedures for work based learning in enterprises is in general very limited.

The motivation of enterprises to participate actively in the many forms of work based learning differs between the Member States. Financial support to the enterprises, taking responsibility for the next generation of workers, access to new workers and close contacts with providers are among the most used motivational tools.

Partnerships between enterprises and VET-providers are commonly used way to make the links closer between these two worlds, that together are responsible for the whole education.

In order to support the Copenhagen process by increasing the quality in VET and in order to strengthen European cooperation in the area of quality assurance in VET is it recommended:

At European policy level to

- Give more attention to WBL
- Make more research within quality assurance of WBL
- Develop quality indicators for WBL
- Develop mechanisms to predict future demand
- Motivate enterprises even further in relation to WBL
- Upgrade the skills of the trainers in the enterprises
- Use the Leonardo da Vinci programme to support European projects on WBL

At National policy level to

- Upgrade the documentation on WBL
- Involve WBL enterprises more in the national quality assurance work
- Develop national standards and quality criteria for WBL
- Develop benchmarking methods for WBL
- Develop new and more future oriented structures for advising on future trends and competences
- Use common quality assurance structures in both enterprises and VET-colleges

At enterprise level to

- Balance between student's educational needs and enterprises short term needs
- Upgrade the training of the trainers
- Create sectoral or cross-sectoral networks within quality assurance of WBL

At VET-college level to

- Contribute to the training of trainers in the enterprises
- Enhance the teachers knowledge about the daily work in the enterprises

## Introduction

### Policy background

Education and training are essential aspects of the European Union's Lisbon strategy for jobs, growth and social cohesion. The 2000 European Council called for the adaptation and modernisation of education and training systems within a lifelong perspective, and set a target for the EU to become the most dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world by 2010.

Vocational Education and Training (VET) is a key focus area within this European strategy, both due to the direct link to employment and social cohesion and due to the lifelong perspective, which VET have a long tradition for.

The quality of vocational education and training is a key priority area for the EU and its Member States as the follow-up of the Lisbon process states in the Education and Training 2010 work programme. The focus is here to reform and adapt the vocational education systems to meet the needs of the knowledge society.

The Copenhagen Declaration continued this process by the agreement of the European Ministers of Vocational Education and Training "to increase voluntary cooperation in vocational education and training, in order to promote mutual trust, transparency and recognition of competences and qualifications, and thereby establishing a basis for increasing mobility and facilitating access to lifelong learning".

The European Common Quality Assurance Framework (CQAF), developed at the European level as a common instrument for quality assurance has been used analytically in the collection and analysis of data from the participants.

Peer learning activities (PLA) are a central part of the ENQA-VET work programme. They provide an opportunity for participants to reflect collectively and individually on how their own professional practice can develop as a result of the opportunity of constructive engagement with other countries/institutions/organisations' experiences of addressing similar issues.

This peer learning activity on work based learning is clearly linked to the key priorities of the Copenhagen Declaration by "Promoting cooperation in quality assurance with particular focus on exchange of models and methods, as well as common criteria and principles for quality in vocational education and training".

Work based learning is a significant part of vocational education and training, when we talk about more formal VET and when we look at VET in a more lifelong learning perspective. Work based learning is grounded in the enterprises and so directly connected to the labour market. This connection to the labour market makes work based learning important for the general economic and social development in the European Union.

Traditionally quality assurance has, during the last decade, been a major activity and a major area for reforms mainly within the part of VET that takes place at the schools/VET-colleges, however our knowledge about quality assurance in work based learning (in enterprises) is relatively limited and fractioned.

The combination of the importance of work based learning and the lack of knowledge of the quality assurance procedures in work based learning makes this one of the key topics for the ENQA-VET work programme 2008 – 2009.

This peer learning activity on work based learning

- Supports the Copenhagen process in increasing the quality in VET

- Supports the European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009
- Strengthens European cooperation in the area of quality assurance in VET
- Supports Member States and participating countries to develop and reform their own systems
- Is an integrated part of the ENQA-VET work programme for 2008-2009

Work based learning is one of the key focus areas in the ENQA-VET work programme for 2008-2009. The work on work based learning will be continued after this peer learning activity with the ENQA-VET conference on "Work based learning – meeting the requirements of the labour market", which will be hosted by The Federal Ministry of Education and Research of Germany and held in Wiesbaden on 11-12 December 2008 and with a study on quality assurance systems in work based learning and assessment in European VET, that will be published in 2009. This peer learning activity is the first of these activities and will create the ground for the further work within work based learning.

### **The Peer Learning Activity**

This peer learning activity focused on the quality assurance aspects of work based learning. A questionnaire was designed to enable participants to reflect on the subject of the peer learning activity before the activity commences and was an essential part of the participants' preparation. The responses have been collated by the Expert, Mr Kim Faurschou, and have been used to inform the group of national processes and procedures in work based learning. The analysis of the questionnaire has also been used to facilitate further reflection during the peer learning activity.

Further information and a number of focused cases have been collected since and especially during the peer learning activity.

The peer learning activity provided participants with an opportunity to compare policy and implementation responses to issues with which they are in daily contact. It should also provide participants with a basis for contributing to discussion on policy reflection on quality assurance of Vocational Education and Training (VET) at a broader level with a view to increasing its attractiveness in a lifelong learning context.

This Peer Learning Report will be useful for disseminating results and capturing the importance of the peer learning activity in a wider European quality assurance context. The report will also be a part of the background materials for other ENQA-VET activities.

It is envisaged that the concrete outcomes of the PLAs will also impact on policy at a National and European level.

The peer learning activity went beyond an information gathering exercise and provided a forum for exchange of expertise and reflection. Through the network peer learning also contributed towards policy development and reform in the area of quality assurance of VET.

This Peer Learning Report is based on all the contributions from the hosts and participants – both from the questionnaires and from the discussions during the PLA. The responses to the questionnaires are available at the ENQA-VET website ([www.enqavet.eu](http://www.enqavet.eu)), in order to give the interested reader access to the more detailed contributions from the different Member States.

### **Structure of the report**

The report consists of two sections. The first describes the issues, provides analysis, conclusions and makes recommendations. This reflective section uses the EU policy as point of departure and looks at the results of the PLA on quality assurance in work based learning in a wider European quality assurance context.

This section is organised in three chapters; the first chapter gives a focused state of art of quality assurance procedures for work based learning, the second covers how this peer learning is supporting the Copenhagen process and the third focuses on how the peer learning contributes to strengthen European cooperation in the area of quality assurance in VET.

The second section gives a more comprehensive description of quality assurance in work based learning and present a range of cases from the participating Member States.

Each chapter starts with a brief overview of the area covered and includes the key conclusions of the topic. More detailed descriptions and analysis follows in the subsections, including a number of selected cases from the participating Member States.

It is our hope that both the participants and other persons and organisations interested in quality assurance of work based learning will build on the outcomes presented and especially on the conclusions and recommendations from this report.

## Section I. Contribution towards policy development

Reflections are based on two perspectives on the experiences from the peer learning activity on work based learning. The first perspective focused on the topic: quality assurance procedures for work based learning, and the use of the CQAF as the analytical model for structuring the experiences and conclusions. The second perspective is output, outcome and action oriented: how can the experiences be used at different levels ranging from VET-providers to EU policy-makers?

The more detailed description of the quality assurance procedures for work based learning are presented in the second section of the report, and will present a number of cases from Member States illustrating the different experiences from the many participants in the peer learning activity.

This first section starts with a very short general overview of quality assurance procedures for work based learning, followed up by an outline of the major challenges within the same field.

In order to make the reflections action oriented will the conclusions and recommendations are organised in four levels: EU-policy level, National policy level, Enterprise level, and VET college level.

### ***Chapter 1. Overview of current quality assurance procedures for work based learning***

The purpose of this chapter is to give a short and focused summary of the current quality assurance procedures for work based learning. It is structured according to the major steps/areas of the CQAF:

- Purpose and plan
- Implementation
- Assessment and evaluation
- Feedback and procedures for change
- Methodology

Finally are the more subjective and normative reflections on strengths, weaknesses and challenges summarised.

#### **Definitions**

Work based learning (WBL) is quality assured by a number of more or less common activities in the different Member States.

The definitions of WBL differ between the Member States and even between institutions and organisations within the different Member states.

Learning at work can be done in a number of ways:

- Apprenticeship
- Traineeship
- On-the-job training

The definitions of work based learning are very broad and the learners are in general grouped in

- Employed workers
- Unemployed workers
- Students



Work based learning refers to any formal VET learning that is based wholly or predominantly in a work setting.

## **Purpose and plan**

National plans and structures exist for WBL and are covered by law in all Member States. The many reforms in the educational systems and especially in VET are mainly focused on the school part of the VET and do not always have a specific focus on work based learning.

## **Implementation**

Apprenticeship training is in many Member States an integrated part of a “dual system”, combining training at workplaces with education and training at VET-colleges. Short and long term labour market training is also a major part of the work based learning activities in Europe. Many actors are involved in the implementation, with different roles for the students, VET-providers and enterprises in the Member States.

Enterprises and VET-providers are often linked by different types of partnerships and contracts and the social partners are often heavily involved in curricula development which together with the upgrading of the trainers and teachers are key aspects of the quality assurance of WBL.

Students' participation in quality assurance range from active participation in the learning and teaching to contributions by evaluations and assessments', to a very limited involvement.

## **Assessment and evaluation**

A number of different mechanisms are in place in order to evaluate WBL, ranging from activities at provider level, in enterprises at system level. The quality assurance procedures are mainly a matter for the enterprises and the knowledge and insight in the procedures are in general very limited.

The use of quality indicators differs between the Member States, and is in general very limited.

## **Feedback and procedures for change**

The feedback and procedures for change are organized very differently in the Member States. Responses from the participants in the feedback procedures differ between the Member States both in relation to involvement, responsibility and methods. In general the feedback procedures are relatively unclear and not well described.

## **Methodology**

The roles of the key stakeholders differ between the Member States, but the cases show the importance of the social partners and especially the role of the enterprises. The documentation of the quality assurance procedures for work based learning in enterprises is in general very limited.

The motivation of enterprises to participate actively in the many forms of work based learning differs between the Member States. Financial support to the enterprises, taking responsibility for the next generation of workers, access to new workers, close contacts to providers are among the most used motivational tools.

Partnerships between enterprises and VET-providers are one commonly used way to make the links closer between these two worlds, that together are responsible for the whole education.

## **Strengths and weaknesses**

The strengths and weaknesses of the current quality assurance procedures for work based learning give a good basis for the further developments within this area, and especially for the recommendation at the different levels.

### **Strengths**

The long tradition and the established structures for work based learning including the many different contracts and agreements of cooperation between VET-providers and WBL-enterprises are seen as major strengths in many Member States. The training of trainers, quality systems for VET-providers, quality net, the involvement of social partners in quality assurance, quality recommendations, and certified enterprises are all supporting the quality assurance of WBL. The creation of a win-win-win situation between the society, the enterprise and the student is in some countries a major strength of the existing procedures of quality assurance for WBL.

### **Weaknesses**

The different Member State practices of quality assurance of WBL have shown a number of areas for progress or more directly called weaknesses of the existing structures. This can be due to a lot of context factors like history, organisation of the labour market, organisation of the VET-colleges, the lack of cooperation between VET-colleges and enterprises, the roles of the social partners, the fear of challenging the enterprises.

The two major weaknesses mentioned are the lack of motivation of the enterprises to actively take part in WBL and the lack of knowledge, monitoring, documentation and indicators for quality assurance for WBL. There seems to be some kind of resistance against making requirements and clear demands for the activities of the enterprises. The current financial crisis is expected to make it even more difficult to motivate enterprises to be involved in WBL. It is even expected that the financial crisis can result in a reduction in project funding, and resources to VET-providers and enterprises.

## **Challenges**

Quality assurance procedures for work based learning faces a number of challenges.

The structural challenge can be summed-up to focus on the establishment of common structures like national qualification frameworks, to balance between economic targets and social inclusion, to develop structures that will improve the transparency of funding and to organise training of the trainers and mentors, mainly in the enterprises.

Making future curricula and estimating the demand for future competences and skills is another major challenge. The further development of sectoral and cross sectoral committees seems to be a challenge in many Member States.

The continuous renewal of all core curricula for all qualifications is another major challenge both for VET in general and for WBL in particular.

The challenge in relation to quality focuses mainly on securing a systemic approach to quality assurance overall, to improve quality assurance without increasing bureaucracy and on how to improve the transparency of quality information.

Measurement and documentation are key challenges for most Member States.

The development of indicators and to collect quality information from education providers in an efficient way have still a great potential for further development.

The current demographic and economic context creates a number of challenges. First of all is the reduction in the number of students a challenge in some Member States, and all Member States face a change in the lifelong learners with more immigrants or with immigrant background and “older” learners.

High drop-out rates is a common challenge, and many Member States concentrate on how to reduce the drop-out rates.

Secondly the current financial crisis is expected to reduce the resources to education in general and potentially to WBL in enterprises in particular.

## ***Chapter 2. Support the Copenhagen process in increasing the quality in VET***

The Copenhagen process is supported by the PLA by the focus on quality assurance of work based learning. This section of the report will present the conclusions from the PLA and show how these conclusions support the Copenhagen process.

The ENQA-VET activities within work based learning in 2008-2009 will give a more comprehensive overview of the key aspects of work based learning, in order to support the Lisbon strategy and to achieve the very ambitious objectives for 2010.

A strong quality assurance process to underpin work based learning (whether this is company training or training in partnership with a training partner, sector-based trade body or a local “chamber of commerce”) has the potential to contribute to the overall quality assurance of VET.

The development, implementation and monitoring of quality assurance procedures for work based learning is a major part of supporting the Copenhagen process in increasing the quality in Vocational Education and Training in Europe.

The CQAF has been used as the analytical framework for analysing the current level of the quality assurance procedures for WBL. These analysis shows, that a limited number of key quality criteria and quality activities can be isolated, and that these criteria have to be fulfilled in order to get a high degree of quality assurance in WBL.

### **Quality criteria**

The most important quality criteria are the motivation of the enterprises to take an active role in work based learning. A number of motivational tools are used and presented in the country reports, each one concludes that actively motivated, quality focused enterprises are a key precondition for quality assurance in WBL.

The enterprises have to be motivated to contribute actively to the development, implementation, and documentation of the quality delivered. The support to and control of the quality on WBL in enterprises must be at least at the same level as the support to and control of quality assurance in other kinds of VET.

The trainers and mentors in the enterprises represent another key quality criterion. The education and training of these internal trainers and mentors in the enterprises is needed in order to fulfil both the expectations from the educational system, from the students and from the enterprise.

Motivated enterprises and skilled trainers and mentors at the enterprises do not alone contribute to and secure quality in WBL. The cooperation between VET-colleges and enterprises is extremely important.

A part of the quality assurance of WBL depends of the VET-college teachers' knowledge of the current activities in the enterprises. This knowledge can be achieved by direct employment or at least job-placements in enterprises, in order to get both personal contacts between teachers and workers and trainers in the enterprises and by giving the teachers the chance to try work based learning themselves.

Employment is very often considered as the best indicator for quality of an educational system. The links between the existing mechanisms to predict future needs at the labour market and the educational structures to deliver the expected competences and skills is a major quality criterion. Work based learning have with its high involvement of enterprises an important role to play here. The major focus will be on how to quality assure the predictions of the need for competences and skills in the future. All the stakeholders and especially the social partner have to be involved in this process.

### ***Chapter 3. Strengthen European cooperation in the area of quality assurance in VET***

European cooperation in the area of quality assurance in VET is influenced and enhanced both directly by the peer learning activity it serves and by the follow-up activities on the peer learning activity. The main conclusions from both types of cooperation are presented below.

#### **The Peer Learning Activity on Work Based Learning**

The peer learning concept is central in ensuring European cooperation in the area of quality assurance even stronger. Bringing 19 participants and experts together to view best practice in systems and processes in operation in Denmark and Sweden and to reflect back on the significance of these in their own professional contexts, is European cooperation at its best.

This peer learning activity was hosted by two countries Denmark and Sweden and had participants from 16 countries and organisations.

The personal added-value from the PLA on work based learning has been significant, but personal added-value is not enough; even it is the basis for a broader added-value.

The added-value of the participation in terms of the professional context in which participants are working and the insights they have gained can be structured in a few areas.

At system level the main added-values for the participants focused on the fact that no countries have a special system for quality assurance for work based learning, and that the major trends are to focus more on results, output and outcome.

From a CQAF perspective the main added-values are the detailed and practical examples of how the CQAF works in a number of Member States. The cooperation between the many actors, the trust between the actors, the different ways of motivating enterprises and other stakeholders in quality assurance, the use of self regulation, and the empowerment of all actors are good examples of what the participants bring home with them, and what they will use nationally in order to enhance quality assurance even further.

Last but not least the PLA contributed to the general understanding of the quality assurance procedures for work based learning, both in the host countries, the other participating countries and in the participants own country.

The specific European added-value of the participation in the PLA and the insights that can be useful to a wider audience at European level focus on trainers and employers, political priorities, network, systems and the use of the CQAF.

The trainers in the enterprises are key persons in quality assuring of WBL, and the enterprises associations can play a major role in quality assurance.

Quality assurance of work based learning can be seen as a pre-condition for European mobility, and then as a tool to contribute to fulfil the overall policy objectives.

Creation of European projects within trainer profiles in WBL, the use of European indicators and the development of national institutional arrangements for implementation are all examples of topics to develop together in networks.

At system level it would appear that the major European added-values are the bottom-up planning process, decentralisation, flexibility, labour market relevance and trust to be the major contributions together with the inspiration from the dual systems combining education and VET-colleges and training at the work place.

Seen from a CQAF perspective is one of the major European added-values that most of the problems related to quality assurance of WBL are common for all the Member States. At the same time some cases indicate that the Member States very often had used different ways to solve these common problems, which make learning possible across the Member States.

Trust, decentralisation and empowerment of all actors (teachers/trainers, schools/enterprises, pupils/apprentices) are all key works in the further development of QA both at European level and at national level.

The use of the participation can be measured in terms of how the participation in the PLA enables the participants to make policy development and policy implementation in their Member States. The policy development is mainly focused on local discussion and on following the European evolution.

The local discussions in the participating Member States are supported by the peer learning activity. The participants now have a better overview of both European trends and national developments in a number of Member States. This enables them to contribute substantially to the level of national discussions and development with quality assurance procedures of work based learning.

## **European cooperation**

One key activity for European cooperation in the area of quality assurance in VET is to raise the level of knowledge about quality assurance procedures for work based learning. A number of questions have still to be answered, e.g.:

- Which quality assurance procedures exist?
- How do they function?
- How does quality assurance systems for assessing work based learning affect training providers (VET institutions) and company trainers at a local, national and European level?
- How do WBL and the part of the education at VET-colleges work together?
- What are the preconditions for the different quality assurance procedures?
- What are the output and outcome of the quality assurance procedures?

Research within this field will benefit from European cooperation and deliver an overview of both best practice and mistakes made, in order to support and facilitate reflection and upgrading the ground for decision making in the Member States.

Quality indicators for quality assurance of WBL are generally missing and will be an excellent area for European cooperation. This work can be linked to the proposed ten quality indicators from the proposed Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training. European cooperation within this area will support the mutual trust and transparency between Member States and thereby establishing a basis for increasing mobility and facilitating access to lifelong learning.

The quality indicators can then be used as benchmarks for the different actors in their work on quality development for WBL.

ENQA-VET membership includes mainly representatives from public and administrative VET-responsible organisations and from the social partners. A higher focus on WBL might require a certain level of representation from enterprises heavily involved in WBL.

Common projects on different aspects of quality assurance processes for WBL with participation from a number of European Member States will enhance European cooperation. The project can both be organised directly between the actors or by the use of already existing EU-programmes like The Lifelong Learning Programme (Leonardo da Vinci).

Cross sectoral networks with persons involved in quality assurance procedures for work based learning can contribute to European cooperation. This work is traditionally a part of the social partners' obligations, and very often only functioning within sectors. A broader and cross sectoral approach is needed in order to fully benefit from the many experiences that exist on quality assurance in WBL.

Students associations for VET students have very different traditions, working conditions and levels of activity in the different Member states. Cooperation between these organisations on both research but especially on more operational activities and assessments is another area for cooperation at European level. This will secure the students perspective on quality assurance and will be an important input to securing a multi-perspective view on quality.

### **Added value**

The future work within the many proposed areas of supporting the Copenhagen process in increasing the quality of VET and the activities that is expected to strengthen European cooperation in the area of quality assurance in VET will add value to the work on quality in WBL both at European and at National level.

The work will in general support the European processes as described above, but will also contribute with a number of more specific added values.

Further quality development is the major added value of this PLA on WBL.

The quality is expected to increase through the development of a more detailed framework for quality in VET, by using the adult students as a main part of the quality assurance strategy and by developing and using a common approach to quality assurance.

Measurement tools and mechanisms give another added value, through the development of commonly agreed benchmarks.

The participation of a broad group of actors is needed in order to deliver the expected added value. The participants of the social partners, the trainers in the enterprises, the VET-colleges and the students are considered as crucial for further quality development.

VET and especially WBL can make a major contribution to fulfil the European overall political objectives.

An upgraded WBL will lead to better practical value of the training results and better employability of the skilled workforce. With common quality assurance structures the mutual trust and possibilities for a more united European labour market will be enhanced.

Lifelong learning and work based learning provide structures that in principle raise the capacity for social inclusion through VET.

## ***Chapter 4. Recommendations***

A number of recommendations can be made in order to both support the Copenhagen process in increasing the quality of VET and in strengthen European cooperation in the area of quality assurance in VET.

Most of the recommendations will more or less directly support both objectives. As a result the recommendations be presented together in this chapter.

No priorities are made of the many recommendations, but it is expected that this will be a major part of the follow-up activities both at political and operational levels.

### **EU-policy level recommendations**

Quality assurance for work based learning needs to be upgraded and be given more attention, due to its importance in lifelong learning, economic development and in social cohesion at European level.

The quality assurance of work based learning have to be described, analysed and upgraded, in order to secure that the same level of quality assurance exists both at the school part and of the work based part of VET. More research and knowledge is needed, especially on the many work based learning activities outside apprenticeship.

More research on the role, impact, output and outcome of WBL, both for the students, the enterprises and the society.

Indicators for quality in work based learning have to be developed in order to introduce a common measurement and "language" of quality in work based learning.

Mechanisms to predict future demand for competences and skills have to be developed and there is a need for mechanisms to handle VET for local, regional, national and European demand.

The enterprises need to be motivated not only to take students but also to accept that they have to describe, implement, monitor and document their activities within quality assurance of work based learning. This is a common challenge, both nationally and for providers and enterprises.

Training of trainers in enterprises shall be upgraded, in order to secure a high quality in the work based learning these trainers are involved in. This work includes development of methodological materials for the training.

Work based learning actors can be invited to participate more actively in the ENQA-VET work and subgroups on quality assurance in WBL can be established.

The recommendation on the European Common Quality Assurance Framework for VET shall give extra focus to the quality assurance of WBL.

Let quality assurance of work based learning be a focus area in the Leonardo da Vinci-programme, and supports a number of projects within this area. Students perspectives on quality assurance can together with projects with VET-providers and enterprises be examples of potential LdV-projects.

### **National policy level recommendations**

Documentation of the quality assurance procedures in the enterprises in relation to work based learning need to be upgraded and to follow exactly the same structures as quality assurance in other kinds of VET.

Quality net with persons responsible for quality assurance procedures for WBL can be established across sectors or they can be included in the existing national quality network.

National standards or quality criteria can be developed in order to secure a minimum level of quality in WBL.

Development of benchmarking methods and bench-learning in order to support the work on quality assurance.

The quality systems and structures that work on the VET colleges can be expanded to the work based learning and the enterprises in order to have common quality assurance procedures and mechanisms for all VET.

The current structures with sectoral committees advising on about future trends and competences needed appears to have difficulties in covering major changes and especially changes across sections, and in the creation of new branches and sections. New and more future oriented structures have to be developed.

The structures with local social partner involvement in the decision of which competences are needed have to be challenged in a situation where local schools and enterprises need to focus on a much broader labour market either regional, national or European/international.

### **Enterprise level recommendations**

The risk of too much specialisation and too much focus on the needs of the enterprise that provides the work based learning have to be discussed and a more balanced solution between the students' educational needs and the enterprises needs has to be further developed and documented.

Training of trainers in the enterprises has to be upgraded in close cooperation with the VET colleges.

The enterprises can create sectoral or cross-sectoral network with persons responsible for quality assurance procedures for WBL.



### **VET college level recommendations**

Training of trainers in the enterprises has to be upgraded in close cooperation with the VET colleges.

Develop and offer training of the teachers at the VET-colleges in order to enhance their level of knowledge about the enterprises and about the daily work. Let the teachers use some of their time in enterprises, in order to get an up to date insight in the actual challenges and solutions in the enterprises. Peer to peer contacts is needed.

## Section II. Quality assurance in work based learning – cases

Participants from 16 countries and organisations took part in the peer learning activity in Copenhagen/Malmö 1-3 October 2008.

Two questionnaires had to be completed. The first giving a comprehensive and reflective outline of quality assurance procedures in work based learning in the participants country. The second focused on the reflections during and especially after the PLA, and how the peer learning activity contributes to policy development and to more operational activities.

The national cases have been analysed and structured. The most interesting cases will be presented in the following nine chapters, each with its own focus. The CQAF is used as the main analytical instrument and as the structure to present the cases within. The many cases will – even if they are varied and diffuse – contribute to the discussion on the quality assurance procedures for work based learning.

The structure of and the questions in the questionnaires were the same for all participants. The participants have in general presented experiences from a national point, but have in some cases decided to focus on a specific level or type of vocational education and training.

The cases shall not be seen as complete descriptions of national systems on quality assurance procedures in work based learning but more as selected examples of the current practice in the Member States.

The purpose of this PLA is to inspire and this section focus on the practical steps, which have been taken in order to plan, implement, assess, follow-up and support the quality assurance procedures for work based learning in VET.

The textboxes below present a number of examples from the current activities in the different participating countries. The sources (the country reports) give the interested reader the possibility to find the original text and to make her/his own conclusions.

### ***Chapter 5. Purpose and plan***

#### **Key conclusions**

- National plans and structures exists for WBL and are covered by law

#### National plans and structures

WBL is a part of all the vocational education and training systems in Europe. Most countries have national plans and structures for WBL, and these plans and structures are covered by one or several laws.

The number of laws regulating WBL differs between the Member States as the cases from Romania, Luxembourg and Portugal shows:

The legislation which implements the Work Based Learning is the following:

- Education Law 84/1995 (re-published);
- Government Decision 129/2000 for adults' training (re-published);
- Government Decision 76/2004 for the modification of Government Decision 129/2004;
- Methodological Norms 522/2003 for the implementation of Government Decision 129/2000;
- Order 4543/468/2004 of the ministry of labour and the ministry of education for the approval of

the evaluation and certification procedures in case of professional competencies obtained in other ways than formal;

- Order of the ministry of labour and the ministry of education 81/3329/2005 for the modification of the Order 4543/468/2004;

- Law 279/2005 for apprenticeship.

*Source: The Country report from Romania*

Actually: law of apprenticeship and law of secondary technical education and VET

New law for VET ( LLL perspective): vote estimated end 2008.

*Source: The Country report from Luxembourg*

Work based learning is a part of VET courses which confer dual certification (education and vocational). Therefore, there's not a unique law for work based learning, but this component is present in various forms of education and training courses, which are defined in the National Qualifications System (Decree-Law No. 396/2007 of December 31). For each education and training modality, there is a specific legislation, where the work based learning component is mentioned, as can be verified in the following table:

Education and Training modality	Legislação
Vocational courses	Decree-Law n° 4/98 of 8 January
Apprenticeship courses	Decree-Law n.º 205/96, of 25 October Portaria n.º 433/2002, of 27 July
Education and training courses (for young people)	Dispatch <a href="#">n° 453/2004, DR 175, Série II, de 2004-07-27</a>
Education and training courses (for adults)	Portaria n.º 817/2007 de 27 de Julho
Technological courses	Decree-Law n° 88/2006 of 23 May

In addition, work based learning is present in vocational training for the unemployed, with the aim to promote employability. In the field of vocational training for active employees the work based learning is developed "on job".

*Source: The Country report from Portugal*

In regional organised countries the national law states the more general rules and additionally regulations will exist at regional level, like the case from Italy shows:

Each Region has to set up a legislative framework for apprenticeship following the criteria fixed by the national law. The apprenticeship contracts are regulated mostly at national level, but the part which is relevant for the training is governed by the Regions. So, we have a general scheme for apprenticeship that refers to the national law and different regulations at Regional level.

The traineeship experiences are more focalised on the insertion of the young people in a real labour context where they can put on practice what have previously learned at school or in the VET course. A traineeship experience is organised on the base of an agreement between the school and

the enterprise that establishes the job activities the pupil will be involved on. A traineeship experience can last no more than six months.

The competence to state legislative framework on traineeships has been recently passed to the Regions; in the lack of a new scheme stated by the Regions, the previous national one maintains its effectiveness and the new ones that have been approved at local level don't innovate too much. In the traineeship experiences the training in the enterprises doesn't create a job relation employer-employee. It is a non-formalised, flexible collaboration between training centres or schools and the enterprises. The students involved in traineeship experiences are not employees and usually don't receive any salary

*Source: The Country report from Italy*

## Chapter 6. Implementation

### Key conclusions

- Apprenticeship training is in many Member States an integrated part of a “dual system”, combining training at workplaces with education and training at VET-colleges.
- The roles of the students, VET-providers and enterprises differ in the Member States
- Enterprises and VET-providers are often linked by different types of partnerships and contracts
- Curricula development and the upgrading of the trainers and teachers are key aspects of the quality assurance of WBL
- Student’s participation in quality assurance of WBL range from none to participation in evaluations and assessments.

The implementation activities are described in detail in the individual country reports, very often covering both the activities at system, provider, and enterprise and student level.

The cases from Austria, Luxembourg, Ireland and Sweden give examples of the different roles the actors play:

System: Apprenticeship training is part of the Austrian education system.

Enterprise: Enterprises are the main providers of apprenticeship training. They also provide practical courses for pupils in vocational schools.

School: In most curricula of vocational schools practical courses in enterprises during vacancies are compulsory.

*Source: The Country report from Austria*

System level: VET in a perspective of LLL

School level: WBL part of technical upper secondary education a) in general technical education WBL is implemented as traineeship b) in VET WBL is implemented as apprenticeship or as traineeship

Enterprise level: common responsibility of the social partners and the ministry for VET

*Source: The Country report from Luxembourg*

At school level the education provider, together with the social partners in the Management Board, are responsible for finding and allocating relevant WPL for every student. The student can also suggest an appropriate place for WPL - but it has to be approved by the provider.

All AVET educations have a management board where the enterprise (mostly different employers) have a majority. One of their main task is to assess the quality of the education - especially the quality of WPL.

The system level (NA) has no part in the practical implementation of WPL.

*Source: The Country report from Sweden*

Work based learning is organised in a number of ways.

1) Apprenticeship:

The most formal system is operated by FAS, the National Training Authority. It regulates the craft based apprenticeship.

## 2) Traineeship:

The FÁS National Traineeship programme is an occupational skills development programme which combines formal training with FÁS and workplace coaching with an employer. The training content and occupational standards for all traineeships are based on consultation with employers, trade union, regulatory bodies and interest groups.

## 3) Skillnets:

Skillnets ([www.skillnets.com](http://www.skillnets.com)) is an enterprise-led support body whose mission is to enhance the skills of people in employment in Irish industry to support competitiveness and employability. Skillnets is funded from the National Training Fund and its stakeholders include leading employer and employee representative bodies - IBEC, Chambers Ireland, CIF, SFA, ICTU. Networks of companies can apply for funding to either deliver training or source training for the network members.

## 4) Company based activity:

Private i.e. commercial education and training providers are offering certified training to companies and employees. Since 2005 the number of private providers that have registered with FETAC to offer certification has grown to 180 and they offer a range of solutions including work based learning.

## 5) Public partnerships:

There are a few examples of public sector providers i.e. those funded by government expanding their education and training delivery into the work place.

*Source: The Country report from Ireland*

The apprenticeship training is in many Member States an integrated part of a “dual system”, combining training at workplaces with education and training at VET-colleges.

The roles of the students, VET-providers and enterprises differ, as the cases from Finland and Italy shows:

VET providers are free to organise WBL as they prefer. Typically the reservations for WBL-places for students are made 1/2-1 year before the WBL-period (duration varies typically between 4-8 weeks) is scheduled to start for evaluated number of students. The reservations are confirmed and the students shared to the WBL-places about 1 month before the period (when it is sure that the student and his/hers studies is ready for the WBL period). There are VET providers who also have a curricula where there is 1-3 days per week WBL during the term, but this is not so common and usually these curricula are meant to students who are better motivated to studies taking place in the world of work. Before the start of the WBL period the students make their individual plans for the WBL-period and introduce themselves to their trainer in the working place.

*Source: The Country report from Finland*

In the apprenticeship contract the WBL is organised by the enterprises following the Individual plan designed at the engagement and attached to the apprenticeship contract. Sometimes, next to that general plan, there is a second one, more detailed, that is prepared every year.

Inside the enterprises the apprentices are supported in the training at least by an instructor, chosen by the firm along with the characteristics stated by law. This instructor has to be a qualified worker or with at least three year of experience in the job. He has to participate to trainers' training activities provided by the Regions. The training provided by the enterprise is registered and certified by the instructor and the apprentice.

*Source: The Country report from Italy*

The links between the enterprises and the VET-providers are very important for the quality assurance of the WBL. Enterprises and VET-providers are in many Member States (e.g. Romania, Denmark, Sweden, Portugal, and The Netherlands) linked by different types of partnerships and contracts:

Direct links between enterprises and vocational schools are informal. The social partners are playing a strong role in this context.

It is often the individual initiative of the trainers in enterprises or the teachers in VET schools to contact each other and talk about: coordination of teaching/training activities, learning targets, individual difficulties of apprentices.

In many cases the social partners organise meetings or platforms between enterprises and schools on sector or regional basis.

The Ministry of Education invites experts from social partners and enterprises in working groups when elaborating the curricula for VET schools.

*Source: The Country report from Austria.*

In apprenticeship: no direct link between schools and enterprises

In traineeship: contract school- enterprise-trainee; teachers (tutors) are responsible to follow up the trainee in enterprise

*Source: The Country report from Luxembourg.*

From enterprises the links are :

- 1) via FAS (The National Training Authority) for the apprenticeship and traineeships
- 2) via registered training providers for Skillnets, Private and public partnerships.

*Source: The Country report from Ireland.*

In initial education there are partnerships between schools and local companies.

In continuous education training providers must have contracts with companies for qualification development programs.

The Competencies Assessment Centers must have contracts with companies for work conditions and abilities tests.

*Source: The Country report from Romania.*

There is a direct link between the enterprise and the VET colleges. There are also links between the association of VET-colleges and the associations of Enterprises.

*Source: The Country report from the Netherlands.*

They exist both through the Management board and through regular contacts between the education provider and the participating enterprises.

*Source: The Country report from Sweden.*

Curricula development and the upgrading of the trainers and teachers are key aspects of the quality assurance of WBL as the case from Finland shows:

The Finnish National Board of Education provides the national core curricula defining the goals and core contents of studies. It is a norm which VET provider must obey.

The national core curricula are dealt with by tripartite expert bodies, National Education and Training Committees, operating under the auspices of the Ministry of Education for the planning and development of vocational education.

Typically the life cycle of core curricula in initial VET is about ten years. In addition to the tripartite experts taking part of the actually planning of curricula in the beginning the planning process all important social bodies are heard before the core curricula are finally accepted. Many of the partners have they own networks through which they survey future needs more widely. Based on these national core curricula, education providers draw up their own curricula. Education providers have their own tripartite expert bodies, consultative committees, which participate in the planning and development of education at the local level. The bodies are free to decide which part of the studies /goal are taking place in the world of work and how WBL is scheduled during the studies until the minimum of 20 credits is fulfilled.

In addition local curricula must be adopted by the administration body of VET provider. Usually the adopting body is a board or council consisting about ten most pronounced selected officials representing local communities, companies, trade unions, students, 3.th sectors etc which also take part in the annual processes of VET provider like strategic work, process plans of action, annual reports and budget. Usually VET providers have their own strategy and plan for WBL, too. Development of learning at work, education and training of trainers/instructors as well as the familiarization of teachers with working life has been significantly supported by various sources of funding.

In ESF programs during the years 2000-2006 almost 25 000 trainers in companies and 4500 teachers participated on-the-job-trainers -training programs of 1-2 credits funded by ESF. In addition familiarization of 2900 teachers with working life took place during the same period 2000-2006. The total amount of ESF programs of VET providers were 325.

The national goal for years 2003-2008 is that teachers have better possibilities to take part in the world of work. The goals set are 6000 teachers in 2004-2006 and since then at least 1000 teachers per year have about four-credit (1 credit is 40h) period in world of work. It is also a goal to create permanent education program of 15 credits to improve teachers' competences in issues of working life. The two credits' training program for trainers in companies is to be permanent system. The goals are 2000 trainers in 2003-2006 and 2000 trainers in 2007 and 2008.

Besides ESF financial resources available for VET providers have been annually granted by Ministry of Education or by Finnish National Board of Education for teachers' education and for developing learning environments as well as numerous LdV-projects and some other sources like companies and foundations. (Finland).

*Source: The Country report from Finland.*

The contacts between the enterprises and VET-providers are in some Member States (e.g. Austria) informal or as in Spain where the relation depends of the type of training, as the case shows:

In Demand training initiative, the enterprises look for their own VET-providers.

In Supply training initiative, VET-providers could look for enterprises in order to facilitate professional practices for the unemployed workers.

Training in Alternation with employment initiatives includes "Contract for Learning", in which the student is working with a formal contract in an enterprise and at the same time is learning.

*Source: The Country report from Spain*

The students' participation in quality assurance of WBL differs between the Member States ranging from none to participation in assessments and evaluations. The cases from Spain, Estonia,



Luxembourg, Ireland and Romania show the broad range for the student's participation in quality assurance of WBL:

When Supply training initiative includes professional practices in enterprises, students have a tutor and also a learning program with objectives. At the end of the action, students fill a questionnaire. In Demand training, all the participants fill a satisfaction questionnaire at the end of the training action.. (*Spain*).

They can graduate only by fulfilling the whole curriculum and making all the exams. As student is one part of the trilateral study-contract, it must follow that. There are not any specific tasks for students in assurance the quality of the training. (*Estonia*).

In apprenticeship assessment includes the skills acquired in WBL apprenticeship counselors have a control mediation role. (*Luxembourg*).

It is linked to learner participation in the review of programmes and services by training providers. FETAC can, in its monitoring role, look for feedback from learners. This is done via the provider. (*Ireland*).

In initial vocational education there are systems of internal and external evaluation of the process in which students are involved.

In continuous education the internal quality assurance is based on evaluation questionnaires (in which students are involved) and training reports.

The competencies assessment (non-formal achieved) is an open process consisting into a basic communication between assessor and student. (*Romania*.)

*Source: The Country reports from Spain, Estonia, Romania*

The students can be involved in quality assurance both as individuals and more indirectly by a VET-students association, as the case from The Netherlands shows:

The opinion of the students about Work Based Learning is a part of the quality assurance of the VET schools. The association of VET- students also do research on the opinion of students about the quality assurance of Work Based Learning (The Netherlands).

*Source: The Country report from The Netherlands.*

## Chapter 7. Assessment and evaluation

### Key conclusions

- A number of different mechanisms are in place in order to evaluate WBL, ranging from activities at provider level, in enterprises to system level
- The use of quality indicators differs between the Member States, and seem to be an area with a huge potential for further development

A number of different mechanisms are in place in order to evaluate WBL, ranging from activities at provider level, in enterprises to system level, as the cases from Denmark, Italy, Austria and Sweden:

On an individual level there are continuously statements / evaluations from the enterprises and schools. On system level the trade committees have their own systems and are responsible for QA in WBL. The IVET colleges must use described and transparent systems. (*Denmark*).

In the apprenticeship contract WBL is evaluated by the firm instructor who is responsible for the training. He supports the trainer and sometimes provides directly the training. Lacking of a national qualification system, the evaluation carried on at plant level is the most important; if the results is positive, at the end of the apprenticeship the apprentice will be engaged by the firm on a permanent base. Collected figures say that there is a high confirmation rate for apprentices who complete the training.

Also in the traineeship experiences the WBL is evaluated by the firm instructor that releases a certification for the trainee and for the subject who is responsible for the whole programme. This certification is considered in the final evaluation of the competences acquired in the whole programme. In many cases the firms use traineeship to pre-select new personnel. (*Italy*).

The Evaluation of Apprenticeship Training is mainly the task of the social partners. The Apprenticeship Offices in the regional economic chambers act as apprenticeship authorities. They examine in co-operation with the regional chambers of labour the suitability of training enterprises to provide apprenticeship training in subject-specific and staff-related respect. In the Federal Advisory Board on Apprenticeship the social partners on federal level submit expert opinions to the Ministry of Economics and Labor, e.g. on the restructuring of apprenticeship trades or the Vocational Training Act. (*Austria*.)

Evaluation occurs in a number of ways:

Agencies who fund training in the work place record the level of activity they have funded. For example FAS as the national training agency, Skillnets as a funding agency record the level of activity and have in built evaluation processes.

When it comes to training linked to certification then training providers evaluate their programmes and services and FETAC monitors training providers (*Ireland*).

Every education provider must evaluate their WPL. The NA puts special emphasis on this in our contacts with the education provider. The NA can - if indications are negative - use a webbased questionnaire targeted at students at a specific education in order to get an independent evaluation (independent of the education provider) of the WPL. (*Sweden*).

*Source: The Country report from Denmark, Italy, Austria and Sweden.*

The use of quality indicators differs between the Member States, and seems to be an area with a huge potential for further development, as the cases from Estonia and Romania shows:

It is obligation of the schools to evaluate it's performance. There's no indicators or mechanisms designed specially for WBL. There are used indicators like drop-out rate, employment after graduation, at the school level also student/employer satisfaction etc. Schools have to present their' first internal evaluation report at 2010 (many of them do it already now). (*Estonia*).

Even the mechanisms of quality assurance is designed the main problem of the evaluation are the quality indicators not defined and followed in case of continuous education or not used in decision making in case of initial vocational education. (*Romania*.)

*Source: The Country report from Estonia and Romania*

## **Chapter 8. Feedback and procedures for change**

### **Key conclusions**

- The feedback and procedures for change are organized very differently in the Member States
- The participants in the feedback procedures differ between the Member States both in relation to involvement, responsibility and methods

The feedback and procedures for change are organized very differently in the Member States as the cases from Denmark, Sweden and The Netherlands shows:

The trade committee are responsible for an IVET programme. They shall follow up on training, and ascertain whether it meets the quality requirements for the programme. There are great variation between the different trade committees. (*Denmark*).

At the education level. If negative feedback is not followed by appropriate change, education providers will have difficulties in recruiting relevant WPL positions and - in the long run - in recruiting students. (*Sweden*).

When this is linked to FETAC certification, we require providers to have procedures in place for the ongoing review of programmes and also for systematic longer term evaluation. In both actions we would expect to see feedback from learners to help identify good practice but also to identify areas for change. We expect all providers, both public and private, to be transparent in the dealings with learners, to be open about their policies and procedures and to take responsibility for the quality of programmes they offer.

Through the quality assurance agreement process that allows a provider to register with FETAC we expect providers to monitor their policies and procedures on a regular basis and to make improvements to their QA when and as it is needed. (*Ireland*)

The Inspection for Education does research at the VET schools, but not at the enterprises. The Associations of the enterprises, the KBB's have to guarantee the quality of the enterprises. (*The Netherlands*).

*Source: The Country report from, Denmark, Sweden, Ireland and The Netherlands.*

The case from Finland give an overview of the many actors and activities involved in the feed back process:

At the system level the life cycle of core curricula for certain qualification in initial VET is about ten years. The tripartite experts take part of the actually planning of curricula in the beginning the planning process and all important social bodies are heard before the core curricula are finally accepted as described earlier.

Special parts of core curricula dealing with the issues of education providing like parts for WBL or skills demonstration, student assessment etc concerning all qualification are renewed always when needed (legislation changes or new regulation are given by the Finnish national board of education etc.)

Legislation and norms of WBL are renewed when needed: for example in 2005 competence based tests (skill demonstrations) are taken into use also among young students. (It means that at different points during their training in initial VET, students demonstrate the skills they have learned in tests arranged as either practical work situations or as practical assignments. These skills demonstrations assess how well the student has achieved the competencies needed in the labour market. The tests are devised and implemented in cooperation with business and industry and other employers.) VET providers appoint special bodies to plan and set the skill demonstration.

For adult education there are national committees for every qualification developing and leading the competence based education system, evaluating the VET provider offering competence test, accepting the certificates of students etc.

At provider level the plans, strategies and the curricula (including WBL) are assessed and renewed more frequently - usually annually. Many players have their own role in the curricula process of VET provider: The staff, the cooperation groups with working places, the bodies which plan and set the skill demonstrations and competence tests and an administration body (usually this body is a board or council which also adopts the local curricula).

*Source: The Country report from Finland*

The participants in the feedback procedures differ between the Member States both in relation to involvement, responsibility and methods as the cases from Estonia, Portugal, Luxembourg and Ireland shows:

Students and their' parents are not examined for the feedback. Feedback from the enterprises engaged with apprenticeship is been positive (it is examined through feedback of the pilot projects). (*Estonia*).

The feedback from trainees is collected through questionnaires, satisfaction assessment, as well as informal contacts between students/trainees and tutors. (*Portugal*)

curricula's are elaborated by commissions composed of specialist designed by the social partners and teachers; these groups are also responsible for adaptations for the elaboration of new programs' common agreement of social partners and the ministry is required. (*Luxembourg*)

Learner feedback is gained via the evaluation of programmes and services by training providers. Parents are not generally involved  
Social partners can be involved but this tends to be linked to their involvement in the bodies that fund training activity leading to work based learning. For example both the unions and employer representative bodies are members of the board of FAS, the national training authority as well as of Skillnets. (*Ireland*).

*Source: The Country report from Estonia, Portugal, Luxembourg and Ireland*

## Chapter 9. Methodology

### Key conclusions

- The roles of the key stakeholders differ between the Member States, but the cases show the importance of the social partners
- The available information on WBL reflects in many Member States a very open and transparent policy for evaluation results and other relevant data
- Documentation is a key activity in most kinds of quality assurance and the work of the enterprises and workplaces is especially important
- A number of different resources are used in relation to quality assurance of WBL (e.g. financial, support to the enterprises)
- The funding of the resources is a challenge in WBL, where both the enterprises and the society have a special interest in high performance
- Motivation of the many different actors is a very important activity in WBL

The roles of the key stakeholders differ between the Member States, but the cases from Denmark, Sweden, Austria and The Netherlands show the importance of the social partners:

The social partners act as evaluator, administrator and advisor. (*Austria.*)

The trade committees are responsible for the curriculum of the IVET-programs and monitoring the development in employment, submitting recommendations concerning new needs or changes of the curriculum.

The Advisory Council for IVET represents the main stakeholders and gives advice to the ministry of education.

The vocational colleges are responsible for the education at the colleges

The government supervises the system as a whole (*Denmark*).

The education provider has the final responsibility.

The members of the Management board have the responsibility to help facilitate.

The students can suggest suitable WPL places (*Sweden*).

The students are trained by a teacher at the VET College and a trainer at the enterprise. (*The Netherlands*)

*Source: The Country report from Denmark, Sweden, Austria and The Netherlands*

The available information on WBL reflects in many Member States a very open and transparent policy for evaluation results and other relevant data, as the cases from Sweden, The Netherlands, Austria, Spain and Luxembourg shows:

Whatever the education provider provides. All inspection reports at the NA are also available at request. The NA is now working to make all quality data (inspection reports, result of student questionnaires, etc) easily available over the internet. (*Sweden*).

The Inspection for Education does research at the VET schools but not at the Enterprises. The Associations of the enterprises, the KBB's, have to guarantee the quality of the Enterprises (*The Netherlands*).

The Ministry of Labour and Immigration elaborates periodically a Continuous Training Survey. Information is also available in web sites of Employment Public Services. (*Spain*).

Statistics on apprenticeships and final exams and all regulations are available and accessible for all stakeholders. (*Austria*.)

Legislation, - guidance tools for students (employment offices and school counselling offices), - information tools for enterprises edited by chambers for employers, - information tools for apprentice edited by chambers for employees, - statistical information's (employment office and ministry of education). (*Luxembourg*)

*Source: The Country report from Sweden, The Netherlands, Austria, Spain and Luxembourg*

Documentation is a key activity in most kinds of quality assurance and the work of the enterprises and workplaces is especially important to get an overview of:

#### No documentation

They don't. (*Estonia*)

#### Enterprises

This is mainly up to the education provider and the enterprise. The NA demands some sort of documentation, but it is not (yet) regulated in detail. (*Sweden*).

#### Register

Normally there is a register where the instructor writes down the contents, place and date, and the results of the training provided to the apprentice in the enterprise. This register is signed by the apprentice too. At the end of the apprenticeship or whenever the contract is interrupted, the firm releases a certification of the competences acquired.

In traineeship usually there is only the final certification of the results of the training, signed by the firm instructor that is evaluated in the final assessment of the results of the whole programme. (*Italy*).

Traditionally the documentation is the output in the final exams (external Jury organised by the social partners). New since Summer 2008 are grants for enterprises who keep a written documentation of the training activities related to the training regulation and allow the apprentices an intermediate exam (3.000, - Euro). (*Austria*).

There are different ways that it is documented and it varies per school. But a lot of times there is an evaluation form of a portfolio where also the quality of the Work Based Learning is mentioned. (*The Netherlands*).

There are instruments that allow the work based learning monitoring and assessment, namely the activities planning, records of the tasks performed and their assessment and final reports. (*Portugal*).

#### Questionnaire

Participants in Demand Training fill a questionnaire to know their satisfaction with the training received. (*Spain*).

#### Series of documentation

Through individual procedures at the trade committees, employment rates and journeyman's certificate results. (*Denmark*).

In local curricula, part of the strategy, annual plans, periods are scheduled (dates and durations) already when the students start their two or three-year studies, guidelines are available in internet based learning environment or in special WBL folder, some providers use portfolios including individualised plans (goals, main tasks, assessments (teachers, workplaces representatives and students) in the records of studies/certification of individual student it is mentioned in which place the WBL period took place.

Contracts between working places must exist and more often VET providers have a special database for registering the working places, their contact persons, contract details etc.

It is also obligatory to save the evidence for student assessment of skill demonstrations/competence test (of adults) for a certain period. This because of the possible reclamations in students assessment

Nowadays it is very common that also degrees can be given through internet from the workplaces into the database of VET school. (*Finland*).

*Source: The Country reports*

A number of different resources are used in relation to quality assurance of WBL:

#### Financial

Financial resources from National Service for Employment, ESF and Autonomous Regions budgets. (*Spain*).

Regular per capita funding. (*Estonia*)

The "contract" between enterprises and the Swedish government when setting up AVET education programs in Sweden was that the state should pay for the school-based education and the enterprises for the periods of WPL. So there is no government money involved. However the NA doesn't audit how the education providers use their state funding (which is based on a fixed amount per student and year). (*Sweden*).

#### Support to enterprises

WBL is planned firstly in the Individual plan annexed to the apprenticeship contract. Normally it is projected by the enterprise but many Regions have set up a supporting service for the firms.

In the enterprise the training for apprentices and trainers is provided by the instructor who organizes it, eventually with the help of other workers of the enterprise. (*Italy*).

Methodical materials on the experience of pilot project should be collected in forth-coming year. (*Estonia*).

There are specific people responsible for the apprentices at the enterprises. (*Denmark*).

#### A complete system

Apprenticeship Offices, Federal Advisory Board on Apprenticeship, Department for Vocational Education and Training in the Ministry of Economics and Labour. (*Austria*).



All kind of resources are involved in organization of Work Based Learning:

- legislation
- methodologies
- partnerships with social partners
- occupational and training standards
- apprenticeship places and competencies assessment places
- curriculum
- regulations for training conditions
- trainers
- Evaluation committees (*Romania.*)

FAS operates on a number of levels i.e. it funds training, it offers training through its own centres, it procures training (outsourcing) and it takes responsibility for the apprenticeship which is the main craft/trade based process of work based learning. So it has multiple roles and operates at different levels.

Skillnets is solely a funding agency i.e. it does not deliver training itself.

Employers engage in work based learning through either direct provision themselves or they buy in the expertise

FETAC as a certification body deals with all of these bodies. (*Ireland.*)

*Source: The Country reports*

The funding of the resources is a challenge in WBL, where both the enterprises and the society have a special interest in high performance:

#### Support to the enterprises

The enterprise that has engaged the apprentice finances the WBL in the firm. The firms receive incentives by the State for the apprenticeship contracts that involve a reduction in the social insurance contributions that should be paid. (*Italy*)

The subsystem is financed with tax allowances and Government subsidies. (*Spain.*)

The resources are financed by State Budget and Communitarian Programs. (*Portugal*)

This institution who orders the training. 2004-2007 it was organised by Foundation Innove and funded mainly through Phare programme and European Social Fund. Now it is mainly funded through state order of study places for VET. (*Estonia.*)

#### Complete systems

The Apprenticeship Offices are financed by the Economic Chambers; the Federal Advisory Board on Apprenticeship is financed by the social partners, the Ministry of Economics and Labour by the government. (*Austria.*)

In case of the initial vocational education state is financing all activities

In continuous education work based learning is financed by companies, individuals and labour force directions in case of the unemployed persons

In case of non-formal competencies assessment they are financed by individuals and companies

some times (*Romania.*)

The enterprises finance the wages to the apprentices. During the school periods, the enterprise receives compensation from the Employers' Reimbursement Scheme. The state finances the expenditures to the VET colleges based on the taximeter system. (*Denmark*)

VET provider gets annual resources from the state (certain total amount (7000-8000 €) per student annually and this amount must cater all costs of VET provider including WBL. In addition extra resources have been available for developing projects of WBL e.g. for periods of teachers in working place granted on application (from ESF, FNBE, private foundation, social parties etc.). The students are not getting any salary during the periods and have therefore right to get same financial benefits as a student (daily allowances and other subsidizes like one free meal per day, housing and in some cases money for travelling, too). Anyway she/he is allowed to get salary, but it reduces the allowances, but free meal is obligatory for employer (the apprenticeship training is an exception).

In certain areas (like in social & health care services) VET providers pay compensations to workplaces or to the on-the-job-trainers therein for historical reasons. (*Finland*).

Ministry: school based learning, participation fees of the social partners in commissions, subsidies for enterprises and apprentice

enterprises: payment the salaries for the apprentice

In adult apprenticeship the government pays the difference between the salaries for apprentices and the official minimum salaries for adults. (*Luxembourg*).

*Source: The Country reports*

Motivation of the many different actors is a very important activity in WBL. The range of ways to motivate the actors is relatively broad:

#### Employment and employability

1. Around half of the AVET students are later employed by one of their WPL employers.

Employers see WPL as a good and cost-efficient way of recruiting new employees.

2. AVET students are generally older (more mature) and well educated. They can therefore often make productive contributions at the work place during their WPL. WPL is in practical terms often a win-win situation for the student and the employer. (*Sweden*).

The bigger motivation tool is the possibility for trainees/students to ascend from a student status to a working status in an organizational context. (*Portugal*)

In all 3 levels presented the main motivation tool is the request of the employers of practical abilities. (*Romania.*)

Attractive apprenticeships are a precondition for future recruiting of labour, taximeter pr. apprentice and skill competitions at national and international level. (*Denmark*).

WBL promotes the employment of students. The rate of employment is the most important indicator when determining the performance based financing for VET providers (44% weight in the assessment). (*Finland*).

### Competitions

The most prominent national stakeholders (under the leadership of the prime minister) committed to offer possibilities for WBL and skill demonstration for students when the later was implemented in 2005.

WBL and skills demonstration have both been as a special theme of the annual quality award of VET. The award is granted by the minister of education. The distribution of the good practises of the winners gives positive publicity and the awards are financially important to the winners, too. (*Finland*).

### Funding and grants

Quality related grants for training enterprises. (*Austria*).

According to the evaluation report the VET-students find WBL period very intriguing and according to the feedback they consider the WBL periods to be best parts of their studies! Teachers' few-months-periods in workplaces with full salary from VET school have increased their motivation. (*Finland*).

Among the VET providers means of motivation can vary a lot: WBL-development projects can maintain motivation, continuous education and meetings for on-the-job-trainers arranged by VET school, internet based communication platforms, possibility to get acquainted to future employees already when they are studying etc. (*Finland*).

Subsidies for enterprises and apprentice  
Salaries for the apprentice. (*Luxembourg*).

Money through a % of assistance to employers for training  
Increasingly the link to certification is a motivation e.g. employers and employees are seeking a formal qualification from FETAC. (*Ireland*).

*Source: The Country reports*

## Chapter 10. Trends

### Key conclusions

There are a number of common trends in WBL:

- Reforms
- Demand
- Partnerships with enterprises
- Political focus

The cases show a range of trends in WBL across the Member States:

#### Reforms

There is a big reform on apprenticeship which enlarge the target and the qualification that can be acquired to the titles of the Tertiary system. In the last year we have had a pilot project to combine apprenticeship with university programmes. This experimentation has involved mainly spacialization courses that occur after a university degree. The latest news is the enlargement of this experimentation to the Doctorate.

Another main project which is on going now and that will have a great impact even on WBL is the construction of the National Qualification framework which associated to the definition of a certification system. It means that the training that will be provided by schools will be assessed at the end according to the national certification system criteria: (*Italy*)

Reform of VET legislation: -> LLL approach, modular organization of VET, competence orientated curricula's, validation of formal, non formal and informal learning, lifelong guidance, pathways from VET to higher education. (*Luxembourg*).

#### Demand

Constantly about 40 percent of the 15- to 16 years old people are beginning an apprenticeship training. The success rate of the final exams is constantly about 84 percent. The dropout rate is very low, about 10 to maximum 15 percent. Problems with the number of available apprenticeships are decreasing: in september 2003 4,600 apprenticeships (places in enterprises) were statistically missing, in september 2007 the number of missing apprentices was 2,100. (*Austria*.)

At the moment we see a growing trend for AVET educations as such. The construction of WPL within AVET is a major factor for this growing trend. Still, the AVET sector in Sweden is small in comparison to the university sector. Both universities and upper secondary schools are under preasure to increase their WPL programs. In the future this might mean that AVET will get more "competiteition" from universities and upper secondary schools. (*Sweden*).

We are now officially in an economic recession so it is likely to have an effect and whatever trends there were for WBL will be affected by money, or lack of it from the government. (*Ireland*)

#### Partnerships with enterprises

In the development plan of Finnish education and science 2007-2012 it says that contacts between vocational education and training (VET) and the world of work will be improved also in the future. Linking the world of work to VET is important in terms of students' motivation, the quality of teaching and the relevance of competence to working life. A major challenge is to guarantee teachers' working life skills. (*Finland*).

To develop more partnerships with the local companies. (*Romania*).

National evaluation system for skill demonstrations will be stabilised. Also the objectives and assessment criteria of vocational skills demonstrations are determined in the national core curricula. The demonstrations are designed and implemented in co-operation with business and industry. Vocational skills demonstrations completed by students are included on a specific certificate of skills demonstrations enclosed with qualification certificates. (*Finland*).

Political focus

The major trends within WBL are right now how to create different pathways in the IVET system. The different pathways gives different possibilities to different apprentices trying to give all kinds of young people an education.

Right now the major focus in DK are on completion rates, reducing drop-out and transition to further education. (*Denmark*).

VET and WBL will play an important part in integrating all young persons in to society and world of work. (*Finland*).

*Source: The Country reports*

## Chapter 11. Strengths

### Key conclusions

- The existing structures for WBL are tradition based and pragmatic
- The training of trainers, quality systems for VET-providers, quality net, the involvement of social partners in quality assurance, quality recommendations, certified enterprises are all supporting the quality assurance of WBL
- The main strength is the agreement signed by the subject responsible for the whole programme and the firm, which contains the training programme for the WBL
- The strong incentives for the enterprises to participate in WBL

The main strengths of the current approaches to quality assurance and WBL in VET are dependent of the many and often very different national contexts. The overview of the mentioned strengths gives a platform to build the further development on:

#### Structures

The organisation of the WBL is simple, within existing VET-system, and doesn't cause extra costs. The rights and responsibility are put on the schools as they are "closer" to local needs and conditions. (*Estonia*).

It's a tradition based and very pragmatic approach that works. In the average the quality of the leavers of apprenticeship training (measured as employability and results in international competitions such as world skills) is very good. (*Austria*).

'There has been more support for work based learning and the Skillnets initiative in particular has been a new model for doing things. (*Ireland*).

#### Quality assurance

Training of trainers, quality systems for VET providers, quality nets, and European promotion of VET quality. (*Spain*).

A systemic and clear approach to QA involving social partners and on apprentices and teachers at a college level. (*Denmark*).

The quality recommendation and aspects of WBL in it have got positive feedback from different stakeholders. Quality awards have motivated the VET providers, National evaluation will have a follow-up surveys, skill demonstration & competence tests role in student assessment is increasing on the cost of traditional student assessment. (*Finland*).

A large number of companies developing work based learning are certified by the Quality System Certification (ISO) and / or accredited by the Accreditation System of training bodies, allowing them to have a set of mechanisms to ensure the quality of training. (*Portugal*)

#### Actors

I would say that in the apprenticeship the main strength is the focus on the enterprise and the collocation of the training inside a labour contract. In fact, the results say that the majority of the apprentices who finishes the apprenticeship are confirmed by the firms.

For what concerns traineeship the main strength is the agreement signed by the subject responsible for the whole programme and the firm, which contains the training programme for the WBL. (*Italy*).

The partnership approach which has a strong tradition and covers all levels of VET and is well defined by legislation. (*Luxembourg*).

It's a decentralized system with a strong focus on student assessment. The implementation is also based on the context of mutual benefits for students and employers. There are therefore strong positive incentives for the enterprises to participate in the program. (*Sweden*).

The opinions of all the stakeholders are measured. (*The Netherlands*).

*Source: The Country reports*

## Chapter 12. Weaknesses

### Key conclusions

- The preconditions for successful quality assurance of work based learning have not always been fulfilled both in enterprises and at VET-providers
- Some Member States need a national scheme for apprenticeships and a national qualification framework
- The lack of motivation of the enterprises to actively take part in WBL
- The lack of documentation and indicators for quality assurance at WBL in enterprises
- The monitoring of WBL
- The control of quality in WBL in the enterprises
- The lack of research and knowledge within WBL
- The current situation at the labour market (a pressure on most enterprises)
- General weak cooperation with the enterprises
- The reduction in project funding and resources to VET-providers and enterprises
- The lack cost-efficient methods to reach the different employers that receive WBL students, both as a short term "early warning system" and as a long-term input for system evaluation
- Monitoring of work based learning (during the training process)
- Impact assessment in the organisation structures of the enterprises (after the training process)

The preconditions for successful quality assurance of work based learning have not always been fulfilled both in enterprises and at VET-providers, as the cases below show.

#### Limited to medium degree

The preconditions don't make up successful quality assurance (yet). Formally these preconditions are fulfilled; actual situation is not so well known. Pilot projects showed that majority (77%) of graduates who went to qualification exam passed that (qualification exam is not available for all curricula). (*Estonia*)

To a medium extent: the process of quality assurance in the training enterprises is completely open to the enterprises. (*Austria*).

Preconditions are much more prepared to be successful to VET - providers. (*Romania*.)

Both VET providers and enterprises with apprentices are integrated in the national regulation and an overall homogeneous approach to QA. On a local level there room for individual ways of elaborating the QA system regarding sectors and colleges. All QA systems are based on self-evaluation and published follow up plans. (*Denmark*).

The systematic assessment and monitoring of work based learning allows the verification of the compliance of the pre defined learning goals and the activities performed in real work context.



*(Portugal).*

Preconditions for successful quality assurance of Work Based Learning are more fulfilled in VET providers than in enterprises. *(Spain).*

At a high level

In general - at a high level. *(Sweden).*

I think all stakeholders are quite committed to the present situation. *(Finland).*

*Source: The Country reports*

There are major differences in the requirements and in the control with the quality assurance in WBL, when we compares with the quality assurance of the activities that takes place at the VET-colleges.

A number of more specific weaknesses are mentioned by the Member States:

Structures

On the weaknesses side for apprenticeship we count the lack of a national scheme. We have different systems at regional level: some are doing very well, with a high attention to quality, but other Regions do not consider apprenticeship and WBL as a priority.

The lack of a national qualification framework is another weakness of the system because the training is not linked to a certain qualification recognizable in the same way nation widely and the results are not evaluated upon fixed criteria but only by the enterprise.

For traineeship the problem is often in the choosing of the enterprise. Very often you have a greater demand of training places in comparison with the available firms. And some enterprises are not really interested in training the pupils. *(Italy).*

More links needed to certification. At present there is a higher percentage of aid given from state agencies if training is linked to certification. However the checks needed to direct training towards certification tend to come AFTER the grant aid is given rather than before. So it is sometimes assumed that certification is possible when in fact it's not. For example there may be no awards available in a specific area or the time to develop them is too long to suit the needs of industry and finance agencies. *(Ireland).*

The business community not so much prepared to understand HRD as an investment not as a cost  
The centralized system of the public education

Some parallel developments between initial vocational education and continuous education

In-existence of recognition levels between initial vocational education and continuous education  
*(Romania.)*

Measurement

There are few if any widely/commonly used indicators at the national and provider level for WBL.  
*(Finland).*

In some cases the feedback from students and on-the-job-trainers is not handled with trainers at the working places, who gave it. *(Finland).*

The monitoring of work based learning and the reinforcement of the impact assessment of VET in the enterprises organisation. *(Portugal)*

Quality

Difficulties for control and supervision of VET in enterprises. (*Spain*).

The shortages of quality assurance - often the measures (state + schools) of WBL are not efficient. (*Estonia*).

It is very difficult to reform and modernise the traditional system of apprenticeship training. In the past few years because of the lack of enough apprenticeships it was necessary to tolerate quality problems to a certain extent.

In the last years we (the ministry, the social partners, the apprenticeship offices in the economic chambers) did not look too carefully whether the training enterprise are really suitable because we had a lack of places for apprentices. The results were then visible at the final exams. The topic of quality assurance was valued as important, but the discussion was delayed. (*Austria*).

There are dissimilarities and lack of transparency at an aggregated level. (*Denmark*).

The difficulty is that the research always gives a general description of the problems. But this can be very different in the various regions, levels of education and also in the different sectors of the economy. The discussion on quality assurance on a national level does not always match the daily practice at the school. (*The Netherlands*).

Knowledge

The shortage of practical training / WBL specific know-how (universities, dealing with teacher training, doesn't have any know-how on this field). (*Estonia*).

Actors

The higher levels of competition and lower financial margins for companies tend to make the focus on short term necessities and not on long term investments. This makes it harder for them to accept WPL that is not seen as day-to-day productive. In a tightening competitive situation it is more difficult to find places for WPL. (*Sweden*).

Input orientation, differences due to the sectors and the size of the enterprises (leak of resources in small enterprises). (*Luxembourg*).

The trained trainers change a lot and this forms a continuous challenge for VET providers. (*Finland*).

The most important way to approve the quality of the work based learning is that there should be more time for teachers of VET-colleges to visit the enterprises. But there are not enough budgets for this particular task. (*The Netherlands*).

*Source: The Country reports*

The overview of both the strengths and weaknesses creates an excellent "point-of-departure" for further activities within WBL and will below be supplemented by a number of more process oriented considerations: the difficulties the Member States have faced in relation to quality assurance of WBL.

Requirements to enterprises

In the apprenticeship there is very often a difficulty with the enterprises in introducing tools, criteria, and evaluation methods defined at the institutional level or for deciding the requirements

to be an instructor. (*Italy*)

Enterprises have not sufficient experience and full understanding of their role and responsibility regard to fulfilling the curriculum. (*Estonia*).

The main challenge is that the system of quality assurance must not deter the enterprises from the apprenticeship training. They are very irritable against bureaucracy and additional costs. The benefit for the enterprises must be very clear. (*Austria*).

Too little focus on development of new job areas and new IVET programs. Trades committees are to a greater extend not willing to share experiences. (*Denmark*).

Weak cooperation of the business community. Weak development of the Sectoral Committees. (*Romania*).

#### Funding and development process

The project resources have been decreased during the recent years and this can slow down the development and for example the education of trainers and teachers. Good practises have no distributed as efficiently as they could. (*Finland*).

Limited resources of the training providers. (*Romania*)

#### Motivation

Limited instruments for the motivation of the teachers, trainers and programs' evaluators (*Romania*.)

Training providers seeking to register with FETAC have varying levels of knowledge and expertise about certification. They tend to assume that registration will be a simple process like completing a form and do not like having to produce all the policies and procedures required by FETAC. Their understanding of the world of certification can range from no knowledge or interest to a lot of knowledge and interest. There is a gap in provision of support to training providers which needs to be addressed. FETAC isn't a support agency and currently only public providers (i.e. those funded by the Department of Education & Science) can avail of the support agency that's in place. So this is a big difficulty. We need to up skill the trainers! (*Ireland*).

#### Monitoring and assessment

From the NA point of view, we have good instruments for finding out the "really bad" cases. What we lack is a more finely tuned QA instrument that can help both us but mostly the education provider to improve WPL. We also lack cost-efficient methods to reach the different employers that receive WPL students, both as a short term "early warning system" and as a long-term input for system evaluation. (*Sweden*).

The main difficulties are found in the monitoring and assessment, at two different levels:

- Monitoring of work based learning (during the training process)
- Impact assessment in the organisation structures of the enterprises (after the training process)

(*Portugal*)

Source: *The Country reports*

## **Chapter 13. Contribution towards policy development**

### Key conclusions

- Better general insight in both the other participants and in you own QA systems
- No countries had a special system for quality assurance for work based learning
- The major trends are to focus more on results, output and outcome.
- The empowerment of all actors including enterprises and students is needed
- The use of self regulation supports QA
- The insights that can be useful to a wider audience at European level focus on trainers and employers, political priorities, network, systems and the use of the CQAF.
- Trust, decentralisation and empowerment of all actors (teachers/trainers, schools/enterprises, pupils/apprentices) are all key works in the further development of QA both at European level and at national level.
- The policy development in the participants Member States is mainly focused on local discussion and on following the European evolution.

The added-value of the participation in terms of the professional context in which they are working and the insights they have gained can be structured in a few areas as the cases shows:

#### General

The professional context in which I am working is dealing with continuous adults' education. All qualification programs have an important work-place learning component. All the previous mentioned added values represent added values for the system in which I am working. (*Romania*)

Better knowledge of the QA work in different EU countries. (*Denmark*)

More consciousness about own system and areas for improvement (*Norway*)

#### System

To know the essentials of the Danish apprenticeship system is also valuable in my professional context. Also valuable is the knowledge, which in the participating countries exists no special system of QA in WBL different from Austria. (*Austria*).

Clearer view to the situation and future steps in Swedish VET. Better understanding about differences between school-based VET-system and WBL-based VET-system. Concept that VET must develop toward top-skilled workers preparing for the labour market. (*Estonia*).

Quality assurance for the work-place learning as a condition in vocational education. (*Romania*)

Insight in the Swedish AVET. Insight in the effect the cultural differences have on the VET systems in the differnet EU countries. (*Denmark*)

The system of advanced vet in Sweden ( organisation and QA) (*Luxembourg*)

Simplicity, high computerisation, trust amongst the main players involved. (*Cyprus*).

#### Focus of results

To focus more on results (*Spain*).

#### CQAF

Deeper knowledge about implementation of CQAF –VET into national structures (system level and provider level) - especially concerning the WBL. (*Luxembourg*).

To try to incorporate into the various schemes that my organization (the Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus) offers to the enterprises, certain ideas / points that were learned during the peer activity. (*Cyprus*)

The involvement of the stakeholders in quality assurance for the work-place learning. (*Romania*).

Really the strong point of the PLA is the integration of the trainees in the companies. (*Spain*)

Development of QA in WBL is very important for the future. It is very important not to regulate too much in a top down manner. Key words are: self regulation, trust, empowerment of all actors (teachers/trainers, schools/enterprises, pupils/apprentices). (*Austria*)

The insight of how crucial planning, follow up and corrective actions is to maintain and assure quality of the practical training. (*Norway*)

The the issues of QA in workbased learning is a particularly difficult issue in most countries due to the sensitivity of companies with regard to monitoring and use of resources vs the need to keep them involved and motivated to take trainees and apprentices. (ETF)

#### Cooperation

The illustration of two systems and their efforts as well as providing a platform for network on QA in member states. (ETF)

Since there were more similarities between the Danish Vet system and AVET in Sweden, especially in how VET is organized on the local level, this gives inspiration for further contacts and learning. (*Sweden*)

*Source: The Evaluation reports*

The specific European added-value of the participation in the PLA and the insights that can be useful to a wider audience at European level can be structured as the cases shows:

#### Trainer

The role of the trainer at the working place (*Romania*)

#### Employers

The role of the employers associations which can be a guarantee of the quality assurance in the work-place learning. (*Romania*)

#### Political priorities

Quality assurance of work-place learning as a condition for European mobility. (*Romania*)

Common principles of quality assurance for work-place learning as a pre-condition in recognition of VET qualifications between different European systems. (*Romania*).

#### Network

A possible European project for the profile (skills and competencies) of the trainer (tutor, mentor) for the work-place learning. (*Romania*).

Awareness of possible harmonisation and common development where such development is necessary. (*Norway*).

Cross country information, networking and cooperation. (ETF)

Personal contacts are the best basis to the information exchange and better understanding of the VET in different countries. Understanding is the basis to the trust. PLA offers excellent opportunity to see the things at home from aside, with fresh look. (*Estonia*)

The insight that you can learn and get inspiration from other countries and systems, but you cannot copy what you learn, but have to transform it, so it will fit in with the culture and the systems you have in your own country. (*Denmark*)

In order to promote QA in WBL it is necessary to work out - an use - an EU wide set of indicators and develop the necessary institutional arrangements for their implementation - as in Denmark. (ETF)

#### System

The level of the dual system (*Spain*)

To learn about the dynamic AVET system in Sweden. A system it seems, with little bureaucracy and very well performing students. (*Denmark*).

Decentralization, flexibility, labour market relevance and trust. (*Sweden*) The value of a bottom-up planning process. (*Sweden*)

#### CQAF

The identification of strengths and weakness of QA in WBL and the conclusion that most of the problems are common to more member states. (*Luxembourg*)

The opportunity offered to various countries to get to know how other countries approach the subject of WBL and what quality criteria are used in order to maximize the benefit to all stakeholders involved. (*Cyprus*).

Development of QA in WBL is very important for the future. It is very important not to regulate too much in a top down manner. Key words are: self regulation, trust, empowerment of all actors (teachers/trainers, schools/enterprises, pupils/apprentices). (*Austria*)

Importance of quality planning and assurance of the practical part of the education. (*Norway*).

Trust- decentralisation and focus on outcome as instruments to improve quality. (*Luxembourg*)

The steps that need to be followed in the design of a training scheme based on WBL.

1. At the onset, one ought to consider the local prevailing social, economic and cultural conditions and the labour traditions existing in the country.
  2. Then, wherever possible, involve all the major stakeholders in the process of designing the overall framework of the system, in order to get general consensus right from the start.
  3. One subsequently, starts putting together the training criteria of the WBL activity, and
  4. The detailed analysis of the training process. At this stage the role of every professional body in the scheme is identified and documented.
  5. Then one identifies those elements that will be classed as the quality factors of the scheme.
  6. The scheme is finalised, documented and presented to all involved for last fine-tuning adjustments. *(Cyprus)*
- Source: The Evaluation reports*

The use of the participation can be measured in terms of how the participation in the PLA enables the participants to make policy development and policy implementation in their Member States. The policy development is mainly focused on local discussion and on following the European evolution, as the cases shows:

#### Local discussions

I'll report to my organization and disseminate the experience in some lectures. *(Spain)*

The Topic of QA in WBL will be a future task for me. The contribution of the PLA is motivation and stimulation for me to initiate discussions with social partners and ministries. *(Austria)*

Hopefully a development towards a better policy and system. *(Norway)*

Any policy development and implementation on WBA by the Human Resource Development Authority, which is a result of my participation to the PLA activity will have a national impact. *(Cyprus)*.

More likely there will not be special lectures/workshops to share the experience directly. Usually dissemination happens through discussions with colleagues and in official workgroups. *(Estonia)*

At this time - limited. *(Sweden)*

#### Follow the European evolution

The VET system in Romania passes a continuous reform (in initial and continuous education too) and the present level is dealing with the quality assurance as a whole; Under this circumstances the quality assurance of the work-place learning will represent an important step in the process; The whole concept must follow the European evolution in VET quality assurance. *(Romania)*.

*Source: The evaluation reports*

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**Annex 1. Programme for the Peer Learning Activity**

Day 1 – 1 October		
Time	Venue	Activity
09.00- 10:35		Departure from Copenhagen central railway station 09:03 – arrival in Hässleholm 10:35 (direct train) - Please note that an introductory working session will be held on the train
10:55- 11:00	Swedish Agency for Advanced Vocational Education Norra Stationsgatan 2B SE-281 48 Hässleholm	Welcome address by General Director Sonja Eriksson
11.00 –11:30	Swedish Agency for Advanced Vocational Education Norra Stationsgatan 2B SE-281 48 Hässleholm	What is AVET? What are the governing principles behind work base training in AVET? (more information on AVET on <a href="http://www.ky.se">www.ky.se</a> )
11:30- 12:15	Swedish Agency for Advanced Vocational Education Norra Stationsgatan 2B SE-281 48 Hässleholm	QA in WBT – practical example from provider and student point of view Provider: Hyper Island Education: Digital Media (extensive information in English available on <a href="http://www.hyperisland.se">www.hyperisland.se</a> )
12:15- 13:00	Swedish Agency for Advanced Vocational Education Norra Stationsgatan 2B SE-281 48 Hässleholm	QA in WBT – practical example from provider and student point of view Provider: The city of Malmö Education: Creative Service Leadership – for future tourism (some information in English available on <a href="http://www.malmo.se/leadership">www.malmo.se/leadership</a> )
13:00- 13:50	Restaurant	Lunch
14:00- 14:45	Swedish Agency for Advanced Vocational	The future of AVET in Sweden. Amelie von Zweigbergk, State Secretary,

	Education Norra Stationsgatan 2B SE-281 48 Hässleholm	Ministry of Education and Culture, Stockholm
14:45- 15:00	Depart	Transportation to Hässleholms Tekniska Skola
15:00- 17:00	Hässleholms tekniska skola Norra Stationsg. 2A 281 48 Hässleholm	QA in WBT – further practical example from provider, employer and student point of view Provider: Yrkeshögskolan Syd (the city of Hässleholm) Educations: Automation (Construction) (some information in Swedish available on <a href="http://www.yhsyd.com">www.yhsyd.com</a> )
17:15- 18:00	Swedish Agency for Advanced Vocational Education Norra Stationsgatan 2B SE-281 48 Hässleholm	Reflections and discussion
18:00- 19:00	Swedish Agency for Advanced Vocational Education Norra Stationsgatan 2B SE-281 48 Hässleholm	Dinner at the Agency
19:24 – 20:57	Swedish Agency for Advanced Vocational Education Norra Stationsgatan 2B SE-281 48 Hässleholm	Train back to Copenhagen (free time)
<b>Day 2- 2 October</b>		
<b>Time</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Activity</b>
9:00- 10:00	Ministry of Education Vester Voldgade 123 1553 Copenhagen V	Vocational education in Denmark and Sweden: Bo Söderberg, Danish Evaluation Institute
10:00-11:00	Ministry of Education Vester Voldgade 123	The Danish approach to QA Philip Pedersen, Ministry of Education

11:00-12:30	1553 Copenhagen V Ministry of Education Vester Voldgade 123 1553 Copenhagen V	Learning in Networks: Bench-marking and Bench-learning among VET colleges in Denmark
12:30- 13:30		Lunch
13:30- 14.30	Ministry of Education Vester Voldgade 123 1553 Copenhagen V	QA in work place training: example from the Building and Construction branch Torben Jano, Director, BYG
15:00 – 16.30	Copenhagen Hospitality College, Flæsketorvet 60, 1711 Copenhagen V	QA at a VET college: Copenhagen Hospitality College Marianne Juul Jensen, Director
16:30- 22.00	Copenhagen Hospitality College, Flæsketorvet 60, 1711 Copenhagen V	Producing Quality: preparing the dinner in teams under qualified guidance at Copenhagen Hospitality College. Erik Ingerslev and colleagues
19.00	Copenhagen Hospitality College, Flæsketorvet 60, 1711 Copenhagen V	Dinner
<b>Day 3- 3 October</b>		
9.00 - 9.30	Ministry of Education Vester Voldgade 123 1553 Copenhagen V	Issues and questions on the experiences the day before
9.30 - 10.15	Ministry of Education Vester Voldgade 123 1553 Copenhagen V	Presentations of Danish/Swedish cooperation in VET
10.30- 12.00	Ministry of Education Vester Voldgade 123 1553 Copenhagen V	Discussions in groups around QA issues regarding the following topics: The involvement of stakeholders, students and social partners in VET

12.15- 13.00	Ministry of Education Vester Voldgade 123 1553 Copenhagen V	The use of indicators Internal vs. external QA Moving towards assessing outcome and impact of VET  Conclusions
13:00	Hereford House Vester Voldgade 92, Copenhagen V	End and Lunch

***Annex 2. Participants in the Peer Learning Activity***

Alfred Freundlinger, Federal Economic Chamber, Austria  
George Stavrides, Human Resource Development Authority, Cyprus  
Philip Pedersen, Ministry of Education, Denmark  
Kalle Toom, Ministry of Education and Research, Estonia  
Soili Jaarinen, Finnish national board of education, Finland  
Roisin Sweeney, FETAC, Ireland  
Sandra D'Agostino, ISFOL, Italy  
Chantal Fandel, ministère de l'éducation nationale et de la formation professionnelle, Luxembourg.  
Per A Syrrist, NOKUT / Peterson Linerborard AS, Norway  
Heleen Beurskens, MBO Raad, The Netherlands  
Isilda Fernandes, Portugal  
Felicia Zarojanu, NATIONAL TRAINING BOARD FOR ADULTS' EDUCATION, Romania  
Staffan Bolin, The Swedish Agency for AVET, Sweden  
Fabian Zall, The Swedish Agency for AVET, Sweden  
Antonio Flores Senti, National Service for Employment (SPEE), Spain  
Darko Mali, Slovenia  
Karl-Axel Skjølstrup, ETF (European Training Foundation), Italy

Kim Faurschou, ENQA-VET Expert, FACO, Denmark  
Sean Feerick, ENQA-VET  
Alison Freeman, ENQA-VET