



### Newsletter no 4



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#### Staff exchange in Pori and Bonn

In August and September project partners WinNova and BIBB hosted staff exchange events for partners from Slovenia, Bulgaria and Latvia. Both hosts have experience and knowledge in implementation of on-the-job training which they can share with others. Staff exchange was planned to transfer the Finnish and German expertise and knowhow for the development of new models in WBL to less experienced partner countries.

Staff exchange was a significant part of the knowledge transfer process from Finland and Germany to other countries supplementing the info days and partners meetings organized in Rauma and Bonn.

The agendas of the staff exchanges were designed to enable the participants to be active in all activities in the program and to use the entire period of time for learning activities, sharing of knowledge, experiences, views and good practice among hosts and the participants. The programs were a mix of theoretical sessions, meetings with knowledge holders and field visits.

#### Objectives and expectations of participants

Before staff-exchange visits each participant prepared individual study plans describing their expectations. Main topics of interests were:

- Regulatory framework of WBL in Finland and Germany – legislation, financing, responsible bodies;
- VET relevance to the labour market needs and forecasting of needs for future skills;
- Positioning of WBL in the VET system and implementation;
- Role and responsibilities of different stakeholders – chambers, employers’ organizations, sector associations, etc.;
- Cooperation between school and companies;
- Implementation of modular programs in WBL;
- Quality assurance and assessment of learning outcomes;
- Mentor and tutor training in WBL;
- Implementing individual approach in WBL;
- Success factors and problem issues in dual training;
- The role of VET institutions in adult education and lifelong learning;

# Photos from Staff Exchange in Pori



## Participants' Reflections on Staff Exchange in Pori

*Anita Līce – Latvian Employers Confederation (Latvia):*

- During the visit it was possible to understand in detail the Finnish VET system, to gain good impression not just about the system, but also about internal culture, relations, and responsibilities of involved people. The most important conclusion gained is that also school-based VET system can be successful, and that dual VET is not the only way forward to achieve VET system which would be of high quality and relevant to the labour market needs.
- More attention should be paid to the work of teachers because positive change in VET system is not possible without qualified, professional, motivated teachers who love their job.
- It was inspirational to learn how Winnova brings about improvements, innovation and positive changes in VET by implementing a number of projects.

*Špela Lenič – CPI (Slovenia):*

- Before the staff exchange I learned about the Finnish VET system from the literature. During exchange I had opportunity to ask questions about different topics and talk to different stakeholders (teachers, school management staff, employers, WBL mentors). That helped me to understand Finnish educational system in more detail.

*Tatjana Danilova – National Centre for Education (Latvia):*

- I found the discussions on the assessment of learning outcomes very valuable. We were provided with very good practical examples and had a vivid discussion on how vocational skills can be assessed. Information on VET programs for learners with special needs alongside with as specific teaching methods and involvement in WBL was very useful, too.

*Tatyana Gicheva – Chamber of Commerce and Industry - Dobrich (Bulgaria):*

- The main responsibility in providing WBL in Finland lies with the VET teachers who based on the individual capacities of the students decide on the most appropriate company for their on-the-job-training. Also students themselves can engaged in the process of finding the company for their on-the-job-training and propose it to the teacher. Teachers have to establish very good relationship with the companies to know what opportunities they can offer and where students can benefit most. The teacher is a key player in communication between a school, a student and a company.

*Mojca Cek – Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Slovenia)*

- Organization of work based learning practically is based on good, almost friendly relationships between a teacher and supervisor in the company. This is the main point; there are no regulations, no structured scheme and no payment.

## Photos from Staff Exchange in Bonn



## Participants' Reflections on Staff Exchange in Bonn

*Inta Annuškāne – National Centre for Education, Latvia:*

- I think that quality is very important in the workplace. The visit to company proved that holding young people/student for 2 or 3 years in one enterprise demands high quality in everything. The quality of apprenticeships and work placements are improved through better cooperation between VET schools and enterprises; skilled VET trainers guiding trainees before, during and after placements; considering students individual knowledge and skills; achieving of learning outcomes, finding the right balance between theory practice.

*Vesselina Stoyanova - Chamber of Commerce and Industry – Dobrich, Bulgaria:*

- The main actor within the German Dual system is the enterprise. The employers are promoting the places for apprentices in different ways – by using leaflets, advertisements in magazines and newspapers, web – platforms in German Chambers (of Commerce, of Crafts, etc.), the company's website, in VET Schools and Associations of refugees.
- A visit to German company implementing in-company training provided opportunity to see how the dual system is organized and works in reality, as well as understand the role of chambers in dual training.

*Andreja Sever - Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Slovenia*

- Monitoring the quality of apprenticeship implementation is within the scope of chambers. Chambers have to take care of upgrading standards and mentors' training in companies, prepare the adequate tasks for final examinations, which assess the competence of an apprentice to carry the process, not only a task. The Chambers are responsible for trainers register. Currently, there are about 650.000 registered trainers in Germany, which have accomplished exam/test at the Chamber or the trainer's (master's) test. Apart from the accomplished exam, trainers must have extended technical knowledge and skills in occupation they train trainees. Besides the registered trainers, there are also skilled workers in enterprises, which also work with trainees, but they (skilled workers) do not need to pass any special exams. Those skilled workers are working with trainees on daily basis, they are their 'role-models' and they help them to overcome their daily problems during their traineeship.

*Elka Babuleva, Regional Inspectorate of Education, Bulgaria*

- Apprenticeship is an attractive training path for young people in Germany. Employment prospects for students who have completed a dual vocational training program are very good. Nearly a quarter of those having an upper secondary qualification choose an apprenticeship although they could go to university. This shows that an apprenticeship is seen as an attractive pathway. Furthermore, it is not unusual in Germany that in the management level, there are persons coming from vocational education and training and not from higher education, especially in small and medium sized enterprises and in skilled crafts and trades.

