



WP 5 – PUBLIC POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRAINING AND ACTIVE EMPLOYMENT

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This document was developed in the context of the project IBCVET - International Benchmarking on CVET (Continuing Vocational Education and Training).

IBCVET is a project funded by the program Erasmus+ that intends to improve CVET public policies at European, national and regional levels within the BLUE economy, in particular the shipbuilding and ship repair sector, and to enhance the opportunities for adult skills' development, employed and unemployed, especially those with low educational and professional levels of qualification.

The Project aims to deeply focus on the issues of CVET that have been highlighted both in the *Bruges Communiqué* and in the latest *Eurydice's report* on adult education. This can be achieved through cooperation and partnership between public authorities and CVET stakeholders from different countries and regions of the EU.

The IBCVET consortium mobilizes eight organizations from five different countries (Portugal, France, Spain, Malta and the United Kingdom): from Portugal, one National Authority for Qualification - ANQEP – the project coordinator; from Galicia, Spain, one business association – ACLUNAGA; two organizations related to industrial clusters from the Blue Economy AIN – from Portugal and BPN – from Brittany, France; two organizations specialized in training, project management, networking, partnership and EU politics - Magellan – from Portugal and Paragon – from Malta; one public employment agency, MEFP - from Brittany, France and one university, University of Strathclyde, from the United Kingdom.

Resulting from the communication and knowledge transfer within the Consortium, mainly the outputs of the WP2 (Report “*State of the Art*”) and WP4 (“*Action Plan – Take the Training to Businesses*”) this document has the objective to inform policy makers and decision makers at all levels, from regional to European, about key conclusions of the project and to produce a set of public policy recommendations.

The analysis undertaken within the IBCVET project, mainly based on the outputs of WP2 and WP4, allowed the formulation of the recommendations that can contribute to increase adult participation in CVET, an issue of maximum relevance to the goals set by the Europe 2020 Strategy.

The purpose of the policy recommendations is to stimulate further development of CVET and support for active employment.

In addressing today's Europe-wide challenges, the vocational education, training and skills gain a strategic importance.

CVET is of major importance for the development of the Blue Economy. CVET programmes have a key significance in adult learning, through work-based learning mechanisms or any other. CVET guidance, validation and quality reinforce this impact of CVET on lifelong learning. Through learning and guidance, CVET provides adults with tools for handling labour market uncertainty and flexibility, escaping unemployment and managing their careers and professional development. CVET thus proves an important factor of integration and inclusion, employability and employment, mobility and better allocation of labour, competitiveness and growth.

(Source: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/3070>)

The Project mainly intends to influence the authorities that handle CVET in the countries of the consortium. The purpose is twofold: the Project seeks to enhance the way CVET is seen while having a positive impact on CVET policies and schemes across the European Union by means of a wide circulation.

To pursue those goals, IBCVET involves companies to define the best options to regulate and certificate with official levels and profiles the training scenarios.

The census work carried out within the framework of the IBCVET project for the creation of the database which supports the IBCVET training platform has made it possible to highlight the trades in the sector which are accessible for the target public the least trained.

In the four European Regions in the project, state policies and legal provisions regarding lifelong training appeared in the second half of the 20th century. Among the 4 surveyed countries, Malta was the first to develop a State policy for continuing training. CVET policy changes have intensified for the last decade.

Considering the economic crisis and the new employment trends, numerous legal provisions and State schemes have been set up to promote CVET actions.

There have been several reforms in an attempt to standardize CVET schemes. In the 4 countries involved, the implemented changes are meant to achieve 2 objectives:

- granting the least qualified people access to CVET options;
- granting the unemployed access to training schemes.

Vocational training first allows the workers to develop their skills and gain qualifications. It also makes it possible for non-or low-qualified workers to upgrade their skills. Vocational training therefore appears as an apt solution to the challenges of employment and employability in the partnered countries. Thus, the Project concentrates its efforts on offering better opportunities for employed or non-employed adults to develop their skills, and especially for those with the lowest levels of education or training.

The quality and efficiency of CVET policies and schemes are essential if one wants the stakeholders to commit themselves. That is precisely why the Project includes all those who take part in defining, promoting and setting up CVET.

The policy recommendations in this document present the following structure:

- Identification of the **topic** concerned;
- **Context** – contextualization based on general knowledge, EU publications and the project outputs;
- **Explanation** – information mainly based on the international benchmarking in the 4 European Regions (“State of the Art” Report – WP2);
- **Recommendation** – one or more recommendations concerning each specific topic.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Note: The following policy recommendations are not prioritized

A) DIAGNOSIS OF THE SKILL NEEDS OF THE SECTOR

Context:

CVET is considered a crucial instrument to adult's education. Although there has been a development in the existing National Qualification Frameworks, which also serve continuing training, there is a need to go further to meet the specific needs and requirements of skills development. In the economy of the sea this issue is particularly relevant.

In shipbuilding and ship repair in particular, it seems to be relevant to deepen and improve vocational training programs because there is a lack of specific training modules for the naval sector (mainly in Spain and Portugal) and the insufficient quality and relevance of CVET to face changes in the world of work and the professions.

The shipbuilding and ship repair industry has to respond to the demands of the technological evolution of the Blue Economy. Therefore, training programs must encompass these needs.

Skills Forecasting and Anticipating Systems can help defining the education and training network, identifying the specific qualification needs and priority areas and jobs.

Main methods used at present in Europe vary from quantitative and semi-quantitative approaches such as econometric forecasting models (national level, sometimes allowing spatial disaggregation), surveys among employers, skills audits; to qualitative, such as case studies, focus groups, sector scouting and determining qualification requirements among trendsetting companies (see more in Cedefop, *Abicht and Freikamp, 2005*), and finally combined/holistic approaches, such as foresights, shared diagnosis, scenarios (including some proactive approaches to construction of the future – strategies, backcasting, etc.), observatories (sector, regional).

Other approaches used include sector studies, alumni surveys and monitors, specific branch/type of activity/occupation/field of qualification studies, studies on skill requirements for specific target groups (unemployed, disabled, low/non-qualified, ethnic minorities, foreign workers) and so on. (Cedefop, *Systems for anticipation of skill needs in the EU Member States*).

Explanation:

The IBCVET Base report “State of the Art” was based on an active process of participation and consultation with the businesses from the ship repair/shipbuilding industry and the training organizations from the four European regions.

A vast majority of the surveyed businesses in the ship repair/shipbuilding industry report insufficient CVET specific offer, especially in Portugal and Spain (almost 50% of the respondents).

Recommendation:

- **CREATE AND IMPLEMENT A SKILLS FORECASTING AND ANTICIPATING SYSTEM SPECIFIC TO THE SHIPBUILDING AND SHIP REPAIR SECTOR**

B) QUALITY ASSURANCE

Context:

Today, most EU Member States have quality standards for VET providers. They are mainly used as a condition for funding, accreditation and/or are required as part of legislation. However, further efforts for CVET, such as quality assurance approaches for CVET providers and measures that are ‘geared to the diverse reality of continuing VET and to the specific features of work-based learning’ (European Commission, 2014, p. 9) are needed.

Quality assurance measures include:

- (a) internal quality assurance approaches (Cedefop, 2014b);
- (b) external quality assurance mechanisms, where the existence and use of appropriate procedures is verified by external bodies.

Ideally, both complement each other: internal quality management needs to correspond to the requirements of national and/or other relevant accreditation schemes, for example, sectoral ones. Accreditation of VET providers or CVET programmes is a driving force for improving quality in VET (Cedefop, 2011h).

The importance of national/sectoral qualifications frameworks and their compatibility with the European qualifications framework are also often regarded as an important trigger for linking training to labour-market requirements.

Explanation:

Training programs not included in institutional tools such as the National Catalogues of Qualifications tend to grow, and it is essential to assess the quality of the training entities that offer these programs.

Recommendations:

- **ENSURE THE QUALITY OF THE TRAINING PROGRAMS THROUGH AN EFFECTIVE QUALITY RECOGNITION OF THE TRAINING PROVIDERS**

C) TRAINING PROVIDERS AND TRAINING PROGRAMS SPECIALIZATION

Context:

Specialized training, particularly in terms of technology and the handling of materials and tools, as well as training geared to the nature of jobs, are of great importance in shipbuilding and ship repair. CVET should also serve to generate knowledge transfer.

In this context, there is a need to ensure relevant training programs for the different professional jobs/occupations/positions:

- Operators, intermediate technicians, senior technicians and also for managers;
- Young graduated technicians (with an intermediate and superior level of education) without adequate skills after their initial education;
- Some key professions were flagged: plumbers, welders, pipe fitters, locksmiths, operators of machinery and equipment, operators working with new materials, electricians, fitter, crane operators, painters, scaffolders,...

Specialised maritime knowledge is and always will be an important enabler of the maritime sector.

In some areas (*e.g. technical drawing, welding techniques, repair and maintenance of equipment, locksmithing, use of various materials in shipbuilding*), the results of continuing training are strongly dependent on the quality of basic/ initial training of workers.

Taking needs into account, there is a lack of specialized training centers.

Explanation:

The provision of specific continuing training for the shipbuilding and ship repair sector is very scarce and most training programs on the market are not adapted and/or not referenced to the National Catalogues of Qualifications.

As the technologies are very innovative, it is necessary to equip the training centers and to update the training provided by the organizations to ensure the quality of trainings. For example, engineering knowledge of the new 3D software and welding techniques require the programming use (*e.g. configuration of welding robot ...*) and newly used materials impose specific trainings (*e.g. composite materials, bonding system ...*).

One of the outputs of the IBCVET project is the creation of a platform (ibcvet.paragonweb.eu). It's based on a database that includes the CVET opportunities in the shipbuilding industry. The partners involved have identified several training programs that are offered in Portugal, Malta, Galicia (Spain) and Brittany (France).

Recommendations:

- **PROMOTE THE SPECIALIZATION OF THE TRAINING IN THE AREA OF SHIPBUILDING AND SHIP REPAIR (TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL), ADAPTED TO WORK AND EMPLOYMENT CONTEXTS**
- **PROMOTE THE SPECIALIZATION OF THE TRAINING PROVIDERS**
- **UPDATE REGULARLY THE NATIONAL CATALOGUES OF QUALIFICATIONS, PROVIDING SPECIFIC TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR THE SHIPBUILDING AND SHIPREPAIR SECTOR**
- **CREATE A DATABASE OF SPECIALISED TRAINERS AND TRAINING PROVIDERS;**
- **ENHANCE THE IBCVET PLATFORM SUSTAINABILITY BY GIVING ACCESS TO TRAINEES, COMPANIES AND TRAINING PROVIDERS OF THE SECTOR.**

D) CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE CVET

Context:

The main objective of continuing training is to ensure the development of skills required by the job posts and professional contexts that are constantly evolving and changing. That way,

continuing training must be delivered in a professional / organizational / business context and by trainers with a specific knowledge of that context.

Continuing training is important to ensure compliance with legal, technical or technological requirements, which are essential to ensure the presence of companies in the markets. It is also critical to ensure the creation and sustainability of new products and services.

So, continuing training must be adapted to the professional contexts, the strategies and modes of operation of the enterprises, the nature of the activity and the characteristics of the workers.

Explanation:

Smaller companies face more difficulties in accessing continuing training. In addition, they have lower participation rates. Some of the reasons identified are the difficulties in managing working and training periods, difficulties in financing, and the scarcity of adapted training programs and prepared trainers.

According to the companies surveyed, the main reasons for not implementing CVET are the unavailability of the employees, the inadequacy of the training offer and the fact that they consider that the skills and knowledge of the employees answer the current needs of the company (mainly in France).

There are some mismatch issues concerning the amount of mandatory training hours. In Portugal, for example, the education and training modules have a duration of 25 or 50 hours, the working time is 8 hours/day or 40 hours/week and the mandatory amount of hours by law/year is 30 hours.

Recommendations:

- **ALIGN THE AMOUNT OF MANDATORY TRAINING HOURS WITH THE TRAINING UNITS/MODULES OFFERED;**
- **STANDARDISE THE AMOUNT OF MANDATORY TRAINING HOURS PER YEAR IN EUROPE;**
- **PROVIDE TRAINING ACTIONS WITH FLEXIBLE DURATION AND IN SCHEDULES ADAPTED TO THE ORGANIZATION OF THE COMPANY AND THE DAILY AND WEEKLY WORKING PERIOD;**

- **INCREASE IN COMPANIES THE AWARENESS OF THE ADDED VALUE OF THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE EMPLOYEES' NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN TERMS OF INITIAL AND CONTINUING TRAINING;**

E) TRAINING MODELS

Context:

Education and training can encourage creativity and innovation that can transform economies and societies. Innovation is complex but policies can encourage it.

Innovation in the labour market must reshape CVET, requiring CVET itself to become dynamic and innovative. Making CVET more innovative can increase people's potential to innovate and change the economy and the society. Further, CVET needs to innovate to be a relevant and attractive learning option, regarded by enterprises as an investment rather than a cost.

It's important to develop new and more effective training models as a result of the emergence of new jobs and, also, as a result of the entry of youngsters with qualifications in other areas that are not shipbuilding.

Explanation:

The training models proposed by most of the training entities in the four countries are traditional and not flexible in terms of training contents and training methodologies.

The use of new technologies in training can help solving time and management issues regarding training.

Continuing education gains relevance as an instrument to respond to technological and organizational changes in jobs and functions.

Recommendation:

- **SUPPORT INNOVATIVE TRAINING MODELS (e-learning; b-learning; creation of *serious games*;...)**

F) TUTORING

Context:

Less educated adults with lower levels of qualifications (formal qualifications) often have a high level of tacit / informal knowledge crucial to the performance of jobs with a strong component of technical skills. And they are, according to the companies, indispensable in some specific professional areas.

However, the difficulty of these workers in explaining themselves is an obstacle to the transmission of this knowledge to other workers. Continuing training for lower qualified workers should include structured components of basic training at the level of concepts, operations, work organization and communication. It is extremely relevant to develop internal tutoring allowing the transfer of knowledge and validation of the learning outcomes of the continuing education provided to the target audience.

Explanation:

There is an insufficiency of trainers with the knowledge and experience necessary to respond to skills development, in particular in technical and technological fields and working procedures. On the other hand, there are professionals with a lot of experience and tacit knowledge relevant to the companies. Nevertheless, most of them are not competent to impart knowledge to others. The difficulty of these workers in explaining themselves is an obstacle to the transmission of this knowledge to the other workers.

Recommendation:

- **DEVELOP INTERNAL TUTORING TO IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER**

G) ON-THE JOB TRAINING

Context:

On-the-job training as a form of work-based learning, contributes to upgrading skills that are particularly important for specific jobs or specific work environments, emphasizing a learning-by-doing approach. On-the-job training is an important, and often more flexible, form of employer-provided training.

Explanation:

The most relevant and / or innovative education and training practices from the point of view of the creation and development of skills, particularly among less qualified adults, which have been identified by the participating companies, have the following characteristics:

- tailored training to the characteristics of the target audience and working contexts;
- training with periods of immersion and learning of the professional context (understanding the context and the challenges of the work position, handling of equipment and materials, knowledge of the work team, ..);
- training carried out in the form of an Individual Training Workshop or training alternating work practice with simulation.

Recommendation:

- **PROMOTE ON-THE JOB TRAINING**
- **PROMOTE APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMMES ALLOWING UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE TO FIND A JOB IN THE NAVAL INDUSTRY**

H) FUNDING

Context:

The European agenda supports making CVET an instrument for the development and consistency of qualifications and professional profiles.

Financial incentives and funding mechanisms can help increase CVET access, participation and provision.

The mechanisms and funding strategies (e.g. national and European programs) are still poorly adapted to the reality and business contexts (a lot of administrative complexity, obstacles to the flexible organization of training ...).

The *Bruges Communiqué* sets the objective of establishing appropriate frameworks with the right mix of incentives, rights and obligations to support enterprise investment in training (*Council of the EU and European Commission, 2010*).

Ensuring a viable and transparent system for the funding of adult learning, based on shared responsibility with a high level of public commitment to the sector and support for those who cannot pay, balanced distribution of funds across the lifelong-learning continuum,

appropriate contribution to funding from all stakeholders and the exploration of innovative means for more effective and efficient financing is therefore a priority in the renewed European agenda for adult learning (*Council of the EU, 2011*).

Shared responsibility between public authorities, enterprises and individuals is important when investing in learning (*European Commission, 2012*).

Explanation:

There is data and information from evaluations and studies made in the four regions, some of them are made using EU funds (as it is the example of the guide *Lifelong Learning in SME*, an output of COPPELL, a project funded by *Lifelong Learning Programme*) that can be used to simplify procedures and set strategic guidelines for continuing training in small and medium-sized enterprises.

France and Spain have very similar subsidizing patterns: the French and Spanish businesses support training schemes through their contributions to a dedicated organization that subsequently subsidizes the employed workers' training.

In Portugal and Malta, the European Structural funds play a major role in the funding of CVET at national and regional levels.

The stakeholders value the empowerment of organizational leaders in accessing finance and training opportunities and the promotion of partnerships with education and training entities.

Costs remain one of the main obstacles to training, both for individuals and companies.

Recommendation:

- **IMPROVE FINANCIAL INCENTIVES AND FUNDING MECHANISMS**

I) MOBILITY

Context:

There are several good practices of continuing education in the shipbuilding and ship repair sector. There is the need to define the requirements for success in continuing training for less qualified adults and to incorporate these requirements in the training.

Predominantly, continuing training is carried out internally, organized by companies, with internal or external trainers, or organized and administered by a training organization at the company's request.

For most companies surveyed in this study, the existing CVET offer does not meet their needs and is not appropriate to the naval sector.

With globalization and trade liberalization, the availability of suitably qualified workers has become a determining factor in many foreign investment decisions. At the same time, labour has become more mobile internationally, and large numbers of people migrate to where jobs are available. These changes increase the demand for portable skills (for example, in intercultural communication and foreign languages) and skills in adapting and maintaining new technologies, in marketing, and in achieving quality assurance in compliance with international standards, especially among internationally trading industries.

Explanation:

Supporting labour market transition is a major challenge for continuing vocational education and training (CVET). Associated to this, the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training can facilitate the transfer, recognition and accumulation of assessed learning outcomes of individuals who are aiming to achieve a qualification. This may improve the general understanding of citizens' learning outcomes and their transparency, transnational mobility and portability across and, where appropriate, within Member States in a borderless lifelong learning area, and can also improve the mobility and portability of qualifications at national level between various sectors of the economy and within the labour market (European Parliament Recommendations).

Recommendation:

- **HARMONISE TRAINING PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT MOBILITY INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE REGIONS/COUNTRIES**

J) MARITIME INDUSTRY IMAGE

Context:

It's imperative to create a maritime and naval culture and, consequently, to work the perceptions and representations of the professions among the youngsters.

A major challenge is the promotion of access to training and the motivation of less qualified adults to attend training actions through communication and social valuation of the professions.

The regions-business-schools-training partnerships, as well as the clusters, have here a vast field of intervention opportunities.

Explanation:

The shipbuilding/repair industry mainly involves boiler works and mechanics. Therefore, it does not compare to the industries that are identified as high-tech, such as the nuclear or ICT sectors – information and communication technologies. The image of the ship-related industry is contrasted. Technically, the industry is poorly considered: higher technicians and engineers usually describe it unfavorably only because they do not know that it actually requires the production of excellently manufactured goods and services with a high added value. On the other hand, from a social and occupational perspective, the Industry is said to be very demanding for it is known to adapt to very irregular market cycles while meeting logistic requirements and quality standards.

Recommendation:

- **IMPROVE THE IMAGE OF THE MARITIME INDUSTRY**
- **PROMOTE THE NAVAL BUSINESS ASSOCIATED CAREERS**