

FLASH REPORT

Event name

Annual Eastern Partnership Regional Forum on WBL in VET

Engaging small companies in work-based learning

22, 23 and 24 October 2019, Lviv, Ukraine

Main objective/s

- i. To examine how to involve companies, in particular SMEs, in WBL,
- ii. To share experiences and encourage policy dialogue between countries in the region;
- iii. To support policy makers and social partners to reflect on their own practices on WBL in VET;
- iv. To strengthen technical capabilities of stakeholders for planning and implementation of WBL.

Background

Work-based learning (WBL) is a key priority in VET policies of the European Union, its Member States and in many ETF partner countries (PCs). Improving work-based learning in VET is considered a key topic to address youth unemployment and employability, to better match VET with skills needs of companies and to improve overall relevance and attractiveness of VET.

the ETF supports the policy dialogue with countries in the region through the organisation of Annual Regional Forums for WBL in VET between 2018 and 2020. This year, the Regional Forum was organised by the ETF under Eastern Partnership Platform 4 and in Cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine.

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVENT

The Forum primarily targets policy makers and social partners from the Eastern Partnership region and Kazakhstan. The event was opened by the representative of the EC DG for European Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations and by the Deputy Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine.

Day 1 Reflection and sharing session on Engaging SMEs in work-based learning. Participants worked on how to increase involvement of companies in training. Practices from the EU member states and PCs were presented.
Day 2: Part 1- Capacity building session on Quality Assurance (QA) in WBL". Participants were exposed to the fundamentals of QA in WBL and learnt and reflected on how to apply or to improve the systems, mechanisms and tools for QA at both national and VET schools level in their countries.
Day 2: Part 2: Site visits. Participants have visited VET schools and SMEs. They discovered Ukrainian practices in implementation of WBL and in engagement of SMEs in WBL.
Day 3: Networking session: sharing new developments, knowledge and information in partner countries. Participants also discussed various frameworks to improve the implementation of WBL.

KEY OUTCOMES/CONCLUSIONS

- There is no European-wide model to export, but it is well known that WBL graduates are more successful in getting a job. Bringing work-based learning to VET offers tangible economic and social benefits
- Spreading work-based learning to small and medium-sized enterprises is among the current hot topics in vocational education and training reforms across the countries of the European neighbourhood.
- Small companies do not always have human resources departments or experience in training apprentices and often lack resources for sophisticated monitoring.
- Self-assessment tools for VET schools are important to motivate the schools.
- The level of development of WBL is different from one country to another in the EaP (legal framework or concept, cooperation mechanisms, implementation of pilot projects, internship or Dual or dual like, etc..). The main conclusion is all the PCs of EaP are working on the issue of WBL in order to improve, to enhance, to implement and to build **their** own model of WBL
- Sectoral organisations can play an important role in helping to engage SMEs in cooperation with VET schools and, in particular, in work-based learning.
- Support to SMEs should aim at alleviating their disadvantages as compared to large companies.
- Communication aspects in developing cooperation with SMEs are very important.

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