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Author(s)	CTC
Contributors	All partners
Contact name	Olav Aarna
E-mail address	<a href="mailto:berti@ctcformazione.com">berti@ctcformazione.com</a>
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## **WP 2 – review of existing models**

### **Qualitative interviews**

#### **1. Context – work package overall goals**

WP2 – REVIEW OF EXISTING MODELS: desktop research, a quantitative survey and qualitative interviews will:

- provide an overview of train-the-trainer courses for VET trainers and guidance professionals in transversal skills and competencies in all the countries involved;
- identify existing training materials.

#### **2. Qualitative interviews**

Qualitative interviews with approximately 8-10 open questions will be conducted with 6 experts in VET and professional guidance. Interview findings will be analysed using thematic analysis so as to provide useful insights on the exact needs of entrepreneurs and how VET trainers and guidance professionals can help them meet the identified needs;

#### **3. Usability of results**

The result of the research will be used in work package three where the training models selected from desk research based on the qualitative outcomes of the surveys and interviews are further analysed.

#### **4. Timetable**

- Interview questions + guidelines for focus group may 28
- **Interview / focus report June 30**
- First concept July 21
- First comments to send before you leave on summer holiday, or august 15
- Final concept WP 2 September 1
- Peer review – last comments before September 15
- **Report on WP 2 final September 25**

#### **5. Guideline to carry out the focus group(s) or interviews**

During the discussion of the results of the questionnaires, the main points that need clarification where discussed. The difference between the outcomes of the questionnaires per country needs clarifications. Therefore the results of the questionnaire are prepared per country. Also the general outcomes need to be discussed, where noticeable the same competences have high scores in “importance”, “easy to learn”, “is present”, “easy to implement” as well as “urgent to develop”, which seems to be a contradiction.

Agreed was also that the focus group, where people with different expertise and experience can interact and discuss on the subject, would be the best method. Because we realize that grouping people is not always possible, interviews with those that cannot join the focus group are the second option.

For the development of the training model (wp 3) the criteria for the focus group(s) outcomes are:

1. Definition of competences (teamwork, languages, ...).
2. Relevance of transversal competences.
3. Implementation of transversal competences in classroom/workplace.
4. Training of trainers : structure, modality, ... .
5. Assessment of transversal competences.

The focus group(s) / interviews therefore should be based on the outcomes of the research (survey + desk research + interviews) so we will:

1. Exploit the expert knowledge on curricula design, training process takes place, behave of graduates in working place.
2. Insights for the model.
3. Negative results of transversal competences training.
4. Necessity and benefits concerning training and assessment on transversal competences.
5. Need for the trainers to receive support and complementary training for better implementation of competences/use at work.
6. Model: focus on interviews.
7. Our common vision: how we envisage the proper training/results on how it is implemented.
8. What kind of changes would you like to see.
9. Vision: 2020 pilot institutions (implementation of transversal competences).

***Composing the focus group***

To achieve the goals set above, it is agreed the group of six people should be composed of:

- 1 expert (curricula designers)
- 1 guidance professional
- 1 employer
- 2 vet trainers
- 1 vet school graduate

**6. Questions for the focus group**

The questions for the focus groups and / or interviews are discussed during a partner meeting. Please use annex 1 to report the results from the focus group(s) and the supplementary interviews. The main part of your report might be the conclusion at the very end of that table. In the table you will find the questions we agreed on:

1. What does it mean to be competent?
2. How did you acquire your transversal competences?
3. Does your organisation/company organises activities/seminars to develop transversal competences?
4. What does "lack of transversal competences" mean to you? / How do you identify the lack of transversal competences?
5. Which are according to you the most relevant TRANSVERSAL COMPETENCES for employability?
6. What would support the acquisition of competences?
7. What do you think about the existing training offer?
8. What should be changed in the training system of VET TRAINERS and Guidance professionals?

## Annex 1 – interview reporting form Estonia (June 18,2014)

<b>1. What does it mean to be competent?</b>				
Employer	School graduate	Guidance professional	VET trainers (2)	Expert (curricula design)
To be able to perform properly the tasks and functions on the workplace	To have necessary knowledge and skills for your occupation or vocation	To be able to apply personal competences (knowledge, skills and attitudes) according to the needs of context (everyday life or organizational environment)	To be able to behave properly in the occupation/vocation specific situations	To demonstrate necessary competences, incl. transversal competences in different situations. These competences should be explicitly described also in curricula
<b>Remarks on the discussion of this question</b>				
<p>During the competence based approach has been in the centre of all developments in the VET (both initial and continuous) sector. Therefore the understanding of the notion of “to be competent” is quite coherent. On one hand this means an ability to perform the tasks and functions needed in society or on the labour market, and on the other hand, necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes, etc.</p> <p>Transversal competences, incl. the EU key competences are also quite commonly known.</p>				
<b>2. How did you acquire your transversal competences?</b>				
Employer	School graduate	Guidance professional	VET trainers (2)	Expert (curricula design)
Personal example is fairly important!	Through learning process at school. Particularly via interaction with class mates.	Through different practical activities (in the family, at workplace, etc.). Personal example of parents/teachers/mentors is very important. Different transversal competences are	Personal example is crucial!  Some transversal competences can be acquired separately, mostly in combination	Personal example of a parent/teacher/mentor is extremely important!  Acquisition of key competences is integrated in all new VET curricula.

		acquired in combination and support each other		
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**Remarks on the discussion of this question**

The interviewees were unanimous about the importance of personal example of teachers and trainers in acquiring transversal competences. Transversal competences are specific social constructs. Therefore usually they are developed in combination and not separately.

**3. Does your organisation/company organizes activities/seminars to develop transversal competences?**

Employer	School graduate	Guidance professional	VET trainers (2)	Expert (curricula design)
Our organization (employers association of ICT sector) does not organize special seminars or other activities to develop transversal competences, because this seems to be non-efficient	Not in a structured way	Transversal competences are developed in combination with more job specific competences, e.g. assessment of personal traits	Team trainings are fairly popular. Developing school curricula and institutional strategies has proved to be an efficient tool for developing a combination of transversal competences (teamwork, problem solving, communication, etc.)	Our organization (developing national curricula for VET) organizes seminars for VET teachers and guidance professional on development of competence based curricula and competence based assessment, but doesn't arrange special activities for the employees to develop transversal competences

**Remarks on the discussion of this question**

Seminars or other activities aiming at developing specific transversal competences are not considered to be efficient in general. Therefore transversal competences are developed mostly in the (team-)work context – learning by doing.

<b>4. What does “lack of transversal competences” mean to you? / How do you identify the lack of transversal competences?</b>				
Employer	School graduate	Guidance professional	VET trainers (2)	Expert (curricula design)
For employers the lack of transversal competences means losses in many respects (resources, competitiveness, etc.). Inability to work in teams, to communicate properly, inadequate attitudes and values are unfortunately typical for many initial VET graduates. This becomes obvious fairly quickly	For me the lack of transversal competences means difficulties with my boss and my team mates. I didn't consider them to be of high importance	The lack of transversal competences is mostly identified in the context of a job interview or later on the workplace	On the school management level the lack of transversal competences is identified fairly quickly. At our VET school development interviews are conducted on a regular basis, preceded by self-analysis. Feedback from your team is also important	The lack of transversal competences mostly means inadequate behaviour at the workplace with difficulties in team working and relationships with colleagues, even inter-personal conflicts.
<b>Remarks on the discussion of this question</b>				
The lack of transversal competences mostly means difficulties both on an individual and organization level. This can be best identified using a combination of self-analysis and external assessment.				

<b>5. Which are according to you the most relevant TRANSVERSAL COMPETENCES for employability?</b>				
Employer	School graduate	Guidance professional	VET trainers (2)	Expert (curricula design)
Problem solving Initiative Team working	Team working Communication Time management	Working together Adoptability and flexibility Information management Listening to other people	Self-management Initiative and entrepreneurship Learning skill Creativity Cooperation Critical thinking	Learning skill Creativity Problem solving
<b>Remarks on the discussion of this question</b>				
Transversal competences for the employability are first acquired in a certain context and then transferred into different new contexts. For most of the interviewees the list of transversal competences used in TrainVet project seemed too long with many competences having overlapping meaning.				
<b>6. What would support the acquisition of competences?</b>				
Employer	School graduate	Guidance professional	VET trainers (2)	Expert (curricula design)
In-service training and looking for new challenges support the acquisition of competences	Readiness for lifelong learning	Appropriately designed learning tasks, teamwork, taking, self-analysis and self-reflection facilitate acquisition of (transversal) competences. Student centred approach to teaching and learning is extremely important	In-service trainings in teams are the most efficient way of supporting the acquisition of competences.  Organizational culture and values, and personal example are very important	Trainer's/teacher's personal example is crucial!
<b>Remarks on the discussion of this question</b>				

On the individual level readiness for lifelong learning, learning skills, curiosity, self-analysis and self-reflection are the most important factors influencing the acquisition of competences, incl. transversal competences. On the organization level well designed in-service training has proved to be the most efficient means for supporting the acquisition of competences.

**7. What do you think about the existing training offer?**

Employer	School graduate	Guidance professional	VET trainers (2)	Expert (curricula design)
The best VET teachers are the people with substantial work experience in the occupation or speciality. But even they need regular “refreshment” through internships in the companies.	It is difficult to say anything specific	Estonia needs also initial training of career guidance professionals besides wide range of in-service training courses offered. Unfortunately most of these courses are too much methodology centred.  VET teachers/trainers also need career guidance competence	Theoretical part of VET teachers’ initial training is fairly good, but needs to be better integrated with practical training. The best VET teachers are the people with substantial work experience in speciality. It is important to have an internship in a company once in 3 years.  Diversifying student body, incl. adult learners of different backgrounds needs careful assessment (incl. transversal competences) at the entry point to identify personal needs	There are three types of initial training for VET teachers: programme at bachelor’s level, programme at master’s level and induction year support programme (cf. desk research report). In addition a wide range of in-service training courses are offered, incl. those in the framework of the ESF sponsored programme “Development of the VET content” offered by our organization. Unfortunately the quality of the in-service training courses is fairly uneven

**Remarks on the discussion of this question**

The existing training offer for initial training of VET teachers mostly accommodates the needs of the country. A wide range of in-service training courses are offered, but their quality is fairly uneven.

There is perceived need for initial training of career guidance professionals.

**8. What should be changed in the training system of VET trainers and guidance professionals?**

Employer	School graduate	Guidance professional	VET trainers (2)	Expert (curricula design)
Better integration of speciality specific competences and transversal competences is needed. And again, VET teachers need regular internships in the companies	More and better organized work placements during the study programme would substantially improve the quality of studies	Connectivity of the study programmes (theoretical and practical aspects) needs to be improved.  Introduce peer analysis and assessment of competences for VET teachers and career guidance professionals	In the framework of the ESF sponsored programme "Development of VET content" career guidance centres have been established in each county of Estonia (15 all together).  Recognition of prior learning has to be implemented wider	A new concept for VET teacher training is under development at the Ministry of Education and Research

***Remarks on the discussion of this question***

The need for restructuring initial and in-service training of VET teachers/trainers and career guidance professionals is generally accepted. This will be supported by new competence based occupational standards (cf. desk research report).

**Overall conclusion**

Some common conclusions from the interviews with representatives of different stakeholders:

- the understanding of the notion of “to be competent” is quite coherent in Estonia;
- transversal competences, incl. the EU key competences are quite commonly known;
- the interviewees were unanimous about the importance of personal example of teachers and trainers in acquiring transversal competences, usually developed in combination and not separately;
- seminars and other activities aiming at developing transversal competences are not considered to be efficient in general, therefore they are developed mostly in the work context;
- the lack of transversal competences mostly means difficulties both on an individual and organization level and can be best identified using a combination of self-analysis and external assessment;
- transversal competences are first acquired in a certain context and then transferred into different new contexts;
- the list of transversal competences used in the TrainVet project is too long with many competences having overlapping meaning;
- on the individual level readiness for lifelong learning, learning skills, curiosity, self-analysis and self-reflection are the most important factors influencing the acquisition of competences, incl. transversal competences;
- on the organization level well designed in-service training has proved to be the most efficient means for supporting the acquisition of competences;
- the existing training offer for initial training of VET teachers mostly accommodates the needs of Estonia;
- a wide range of in-service training courses are offered, but their quality is fairly uneven;
- there is perceived need for initial training of career guidance professionals;
- the need for restructuring initial and in-service training of VET teachers/trainers and career guidance professionals is generally accepted and will be supported by new competence based occupational standards.