



# LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMME

## Leonardo da Vinci

### Application form 2008

## TRANSFER OF INNOVATION

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### DESCRIPTION

#### **The Background**

As their contribution to the Lisbon Strategy, Ministers of education adopted common objectives for the improvement of education and training systems and a work program to achieve a number of objectives: "The Education & Training 2010 Program".

Teachers and trainers will play a decisive and strategic role in the implementation of the goals set up by the EU. This has also been materialized by the identification of 20 core indicators<sup>1</sup> for monitoring progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training, among which one specifically deals with professional development of teachers and trainers.

For several reasons the area of company trainers' competencies and qualifications hasn't drawn very much attention compared to teachers/trainers in the VET school context. Some have even labelled it the forgotten area within the VET.

This proposal focuses on the VET trainers and hence it should connect to other initiatives taken recently, the project "Trainers in Vocational Education and Training – key actors to make lifelong learning a reality in Europe."<sup>2</sup>

Recently (14.02.2008, Brussels), the European Ministers of Education have agreed on the European Quality Framework 'EQF' - a system for transparency of education levels. The EQF is meant to strengthen the mobility of the workforce between the European countries. One can imagine that a tool for describing general tasks, challenges and assistance for trainers might ease mutual understanding and mobility.

#### **The vision and the goals**

The goal of this project is to develop a web-based tool - 'TrainerGuide' -, a digital handbook and toolbox for the primary target group in-company trainers. This guide will be based on the successful results of a Danish model project (Danish Ministry of Education, 2006<sup>3</sup>), whose principles will be transferred to the partner countries' needs and conditions.

<sup>1</sup> EU Commission: A coherent framework of indicators and benchmarks for monitoring progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training. Brussels 21-02-07, see indicator 12: "Professional development of teachers and trainers".

<sup>2</sup> "Trainers in Vocational Education and Training - Key actors to make lifelong learning a reality in Europe" (EUROTRAINER); A study commissioned and funded by the European Union, 2007 (Project Lead ITB Bremen, Germany and Leiden University).

<http://www.itb.uni-bremen.de/eurotrainer+M52087573ab0.html>

<sup>3</sup> "Det er et spørgsmål om træning" ("It's a question of training"), Danish Ministry of Education / DEL, 2006-2007.



A European TrainerGuide (in English) will be developed, as an overarching version for national guides (in national languages). The European TrainerGuide will mirror the partner countries' strengths, needs and development fields. In this way, other countries may benefit from the European TrainerGuide, which will be filled with best practice examples, and they may find inspiration for an own national guide.

The partner countries will end up with national TrainerGuide versions each in their own language.

Denmark will also profit directly from the project, by improving the Danish TrænerGuide with the partner countries' best practice examples, tools and valorisation initiatives. In this way, we also expect to expand the application of the TrænerGuide to further sectors in Denmark, to adapt new practical training tools and to brand the Danish guide for training companies.

The long-term vision is to create a sustainable platform for an ongoing co-operation and co-ordination between the partner countries and other European countries. The European TrainerGuide may become a practical rotation point for this purpose.

### **The product(s): European platform 'TrainerGuide' and national versions**

As a starting point, the content of and the experience with the Danish TrænerGuide is used for inspiration. The modules of the Danish TrænerGuide cover the following fields:

1. Recruitment and employment of apprentices / trainees
2. Presentation of and introduction to the company / workplace
3. The vocational education(s)
4. The trainer's roles and training
5. The apprentice's competencies and learning processes
6. The apprentice's background
7. Co-operation and conflict management
8. Safety and working environment
9. Assessments and final (journeyman's) test

These modules will be discussed and revised with inspiration from each country by the experts in the project.

During the project, national project groups will collect and elaborate materials in their countries, naturally in the national languages. During trans-national meetings, these materials will be edited according to relevance of international interest and translated into English. In this way, a common English platform – a European TrainerGuide – will be elaborated, in co-operation between the national project-leaders and steered / coordinated by the Danish project group.

Parallel, the national materials will be used for national TrainerGuide versions, co-ordinated by the national project-leaders.

In Denmark, the issue of high quality in-company training should be explored much more. There is a need for further basic expertise/research, in areas such as the impact of good training on apprentices' well being, companies' efficiency of working processes and interaction with the companies' other quality systems, etc.

For free public access, only few training materials and methods exist. And finally, networks around high-quality training may exist, but they could easily become more co-ordinated and branch crossing.

Thus, the Danish project group expects to improve the Danish TrænerGuide and networks within this field, by integrating expertise from the partner countries' best practice, tools and valorisation initiatives. Denmark will aim towards expanding the application of the TrænerGuide to further sectors in Denmark, adapting new practical training tools and branding the Danish guide for training companies.

### **Primary and secondary target groups, users and stakeholders**

The primary target group of the product TrainerGuide is in-company trainers, in the sense of skilled workers having the responsibility of training apprentices/trainees. In most cases, training takes place as peer-to-peer training.

These trainers have workplace-integrated training tasks within the above-mentioned fields, which



are to be further specified by the partners during the project.

The target group is not clearly limited, since a 'trainer function' is not a profession. There might be training managers, masters or professional external trainers who will belong to this target group, depending on the specific European country's conditions.

The secondary target groups who will be able to draw advantage from the TrainerGuide in their co-operation with training companies are:

- VET teachers from vocational institutions, such as universities of applied sciences, vocational colleges etc.
- Professional trainers, such as consultants
- Educational key persons within professional bodies, such as employer organizations, branch associations, unions, ministries, interest associations, etc.

### **Partners**

The partner countries in this project are countries with a dual system for vocational education and training (VET), and countries whose VET systems have needs and goals that could be supported by a TrainerGuide: Denmark, Finland, Germany, Holland, Turkey and Slovenia.

The national project groups consist of stakeholders who will be specified in each country and can vary, e.g. social partners, ministries, training associations, school associations etc.

Both external international partners and national stakeholders have signed silent partnerships.

The quality of the partnership and its power for elaborating, implementing and valorising the results are further described in chapter 8.6.

**Work plan and indicators for activities** For a more specific work plan, see 9.

As internal indicators for the work's progress, there will be trans-national meetings. These meetings will be milestones for the elaboration, implementation and valorisation of the national and the European TrainerGuide(s) and development of the networks.

The external indicators will be clearly visible, since there after the project's ending will be national TrainerGuides in national languages for national usages, as well as a European guide in English. The quality criteria for these products will relate to the EU Commission indicators for monitoring performance and progress<sup>4</sup>.

The success of the national implementations will be measured through trial runs with the primary target group.

### **Match with European objectives**

The final product(s) of the project – the TrainerGuide(s) will support the in-company trainers in their training and continuing education activities of their apprentices / trainees as well as themselves. The TrainerGuide(s) as web-tools will ease the acquisition of knowledge, and key persons from the national VET systems will support the in-company trainers in the application of the knowledge. As experience with a corresponding web-tool in Denmark shows, the TrainerGuide will facilitate the trainers' personal development by its "eye-opening" effect for personal and organizational empowerment.

The TrainerGuide and its concept is a new initiative in Europe. The specific target group 'skilled workers as in-company trainers', has so far not received specific attention nor systematic support in its work-based training functions, though these trainers are key persons for the quality of in-company training.

According to the results of a preparatory partner meeting, the tasks and needs of these trainers are quite universal. By elaborating a European tool, these trainers may even see a chance for their own mobility, by qualifying their training functions.

The project will improve the quality and increase the volume of co-operation between institutions and organizations involved in VET: enterprises, social partners, vocational colleges, teacher training institutes and other relevant bodies. The co-operation part is integrated into the work plan.

During the project, there will be national as well as international trial runs with the TrainerGuide web-tools. This will facilitate innovative practice in VET, since the target group will practice new tools. The European partners involved all have developed specific strengths within their VET

---

<sup>4</sup> "Progress towards the Lisbon Objectives in Education and Training", 2007, SEC(2007) 1284, Brussels 02/10/2007, chap. 2.



system. These will be identified and the partner countries will have the opportunity to transfer relevant 'best practice' from one country to the other.

Since both the final product(s) and the project-internal communication will be web-based, there will be a natural ongoing development of ICT-based content, tools and pedagogies. The successful Danish system will be analyzed and adapted to the partner countries' conditions.

On the whole, the project will develop skills and competences of VET trainers, training managers, teachers and decision makers within qualification of in-company training.

## TYPE OF TRANSFER

### **Transfer from a sectoral perspective**

The Danish TrænerGuide started as a model FoU project (Danish Ministry of Education, 2006), out of a need from trade committees (social partners) within the sectors industry, gastronomy and transportation, in co-operation with the Danish Ministry of Education. Since its implementation, the construction sector has joined the implementation, but there is still a lack of expertise and valorisation within certain branches, such as the commercial and trade sector, the public sector and the social and health sector.

As an added value for Denmark, the Danish project group expects a transfer and spin-off from the partner countries' experience regarding these sectors.

Another Danish sector has shown to be very interested in the implementation of the Danish TrainerGuide: the VET school sector. Consultants from VET schools use the guide when acquiring new apprenticeship placements and when instructing companies in principles for in-company training. The guide seems to be a practical tool for increasing the communication and understanding between the two partners within the dual system: VET schools and companies. The partner countries expect to optimize this co-operation in their countries' by using the Danish model with their national TrainerGuides as links.

### **Transfer from a geographical perspective**

During this project there will be transfer of innovation from Denmark to the partner countries, as mentioned above: Transfer of a successful new system and communication model for an important, so far overseen target group. This system and Denmark's experience with the application will be transferred freely to the partners' systems.

Furthermore, there will be a general transfer of innovative tools, models and practice between the countries during the whole project. Since the construction of a common European TrainerGuide builds on collecting best practice and modern tools from all countries, mutual inspiration is unavoidable.

The preparatory meeting (7-8 Feb. 2008, Denmark) already indicates that there are valuable experiences to be shared and transferred. The basic questions and problems are very similar for the countries, and it seems to be obvious to use other countries' practical solutions, respectively to avoid their mistakes. Examples could be to transfer inspiration from the Finnish "skills demonstrations", the Dutch "quality check system", the German toolboxes for full-time trainers, the Danish consensus and co-operation principles, etc.

The countries that are more in a starting phase of qualifying training in their VET systems are actively and intensively searching for the experience, made through decades in some of the partner countries.



## **INNOVATIVE RESULTS OR CONTENT THE PROJECT IS BASED UPON**

### **Limit 30 lines**

#### **The need and the innovative idea**

As mentioned above, in-company trainers will play a decisive and strategic role in the implementation of the goals set up by the EU. For several reasons the area of in-company trainers' competences hasn't drawn very much attention compared to teachers in the VET school context. Some have even labelled it the forgotten area within the VET! Even though there are initiatives aimed towards professional trainers or full-time in-company trainers, there is a lack of offers for skilled workers; whose are responsible for taking care of and training apprentices/trainees *during* their work.

These trainers are often not highly educated, and their needs are simple practical tools, easily understandable descriptions of principles, links to professional assistance, an understanding of their role, etc. Often these workers don't have time or leave from their company, to take part in courses or longer lasting educations. Most of the European training companies are small and medium-sized, which makes these conditions even sharper. The needs of this target group can be partly met by simple IT-tools, accessible even during breaks, together with the apprentices, or in leisure time.

The TrainerGuide offers a freely accessible platform, and will possible even motivate for further education within training-of-trainers. As the implementation in Denmark shows, the TrainerGuide is experienced as a kind of "low-practical HR-tool", directly adapted by the target group.

#### **Added value**

The added value for the project partners is the internationalization of the guide. First of all, there is a demand in European fora. An English version would make thoughts and principles accessible for professional institutions / organizations within high-quality training of in-company training.

Secondly, the interaction of six countries, working on a common guide, will develop and improve the original version, since it will be revised with best practice from five countries' practice and expertise from advanced professional experts within this field.

The network that without any doubt will arise, will for that reason, provide a great potential for future exchange within the mentioned professional field.

Seen from a purely Danish perspective, validations from other nations' points of view and best practice will further develop the Danish TrænerGuide concept.

For the Danish stakeholders an additional value will be receiving support and advice in expanding to further sectors such as trade, social & health care, and more.

Finally, a sustainable professional international network will ease the way to new train-the-trainer initiatives, since it may become a common part of development activities to require targeted expertise from other countries.

The initial developer is part of the current partnership and will both share and gain advantage of the project's originally non-commercial idea: Sharing of best practice and simple tools, for the reason of increased quality within in-company training of the dual system.

This proposal will also link up to other initiatives taken recently, e.g. lot 1 and 2 in the project: "Trainers in Vocational Education and Training – key actors to make lifelong learning a reality in Europe."



## EUROPEAN ADDED VALUE

**Limit 50 lines (one A4 page)** Describe the benefits anticipated from the implementation of the proposal at an European level rather than at national or regional one.

The Commission Staff Paper: "Progress towards the Lisbon Objectives in Education and Training" identifies the issue concerning "Improving the quality of teachers and trainers" as one of thirteen concrete objectives in education and training systems in Europe.

Policy papers on education and training, e.g. the Maastricht Communiqué (2004), focus on some key competencies to support the achievement of this objective. These include among other things steps on how to make the profession of teacher/trainer more attractive, e.g. appealing to the best talents in the profession and retaining them; providing attractive working conditions and adequate career structures and development for potential candidates; preparing VET teachers/trainers for their changing roles in the knowledge-based society and transforming the education and training systems.

In the context of improving the skills of VET teachers/trainers, reality is that very little attention has been paid to trainers working in private or public enterprises- full time or part time - with training of apprentices or adult trainees. The situation for VET trainers in the majority of EU countries remains vague and largely under-researched. Some educational experts label this area as the forgotten field of VET.

Acknowledging that the world of company trainers is different from the world of VET school teachers, e.g. mainly private companies outside the domain of governmental regulated VET educational systems and in a context where training first and foremost is seen a means of increasing productivity, one can make the assumption that the needs of VET teachers (outlined above) in many respects also cover VET company trainers.

The Trainer Guide, used in a workplace context, can contribute to fulfilling some the EU policies concerning supporting VET trainers' professionalism. The pedagogical skills are underexposed, since they are normally seen as closely linked to teacher profession and classrooms. There is a clear change in the teachers/trainers role brought about by a stronger focus on learning, the apprentices' individual learning styles and by the greater flexibility of VET. The Trainer Guide provides different tools and supporting advice to deal with this new situation for VET trainers.

The Trainer Guide also provides a number of relevant links and tools to improve the communication and links between the trainers and educational institutes. Many research projects have highlighted that there is a need of improving the cooperation between the world of school and work. The Trainer Guide provides some contributions to deal with this situation, e.g. small and simple tuitions in how to plan and carry out on-the-job learning and skills demonstrations as well as theoretical and practical knowledge and skills in assessment, evaluation and quality control.



## QUALITY OF THE CONSORTIUM

The partner countries are Denmark, Germany, Finland, Slovenia, Turkey and Holland, with Denmark as both an active partner and as the international project leader and project coordinator.

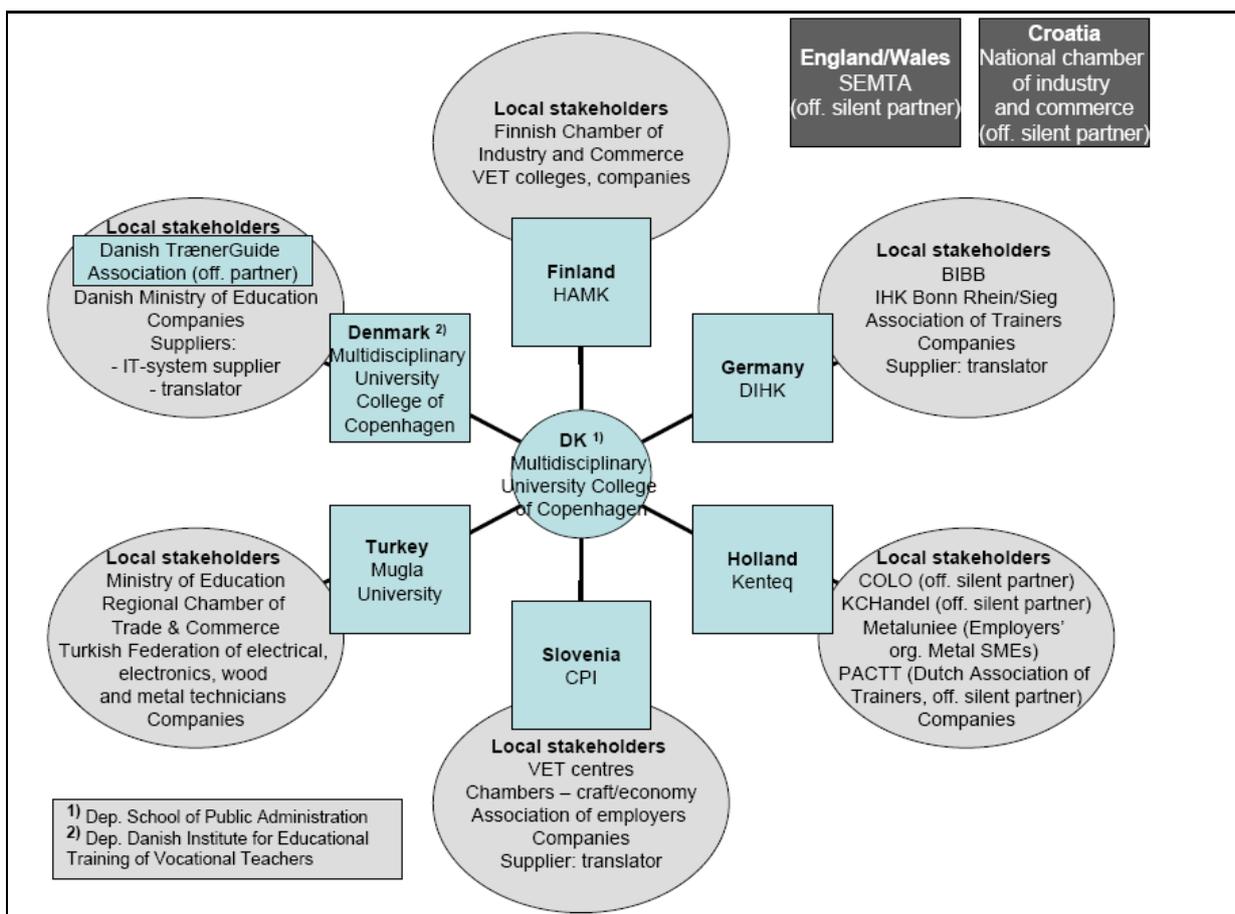
Each country will have a national project group, consisting of national project leaders and national stakeholders (see below).

The national project lead organizations all have key roles in their countries, relevant for each of their specific national constellations (see partner descriptions, 6.).

Each national project lead will delegate tasks to either relevant key persons in their own organization or to their stakeholders' organizations. In this way, the national project leaders will have strong coordinating roles.

Trans-national coordination is ensured with four strategic trans-national meetings, where decisions for the ongoing work will be made.

All partners will rather equally undertake the tasks, since each country has an own interest in creating a national TrainerGuide. However, Denmark has the role of the overall co-ordination and collecting all materials for a common European TrainerGuide. This should be possible, since Denmark already owns a national TrainerGuide and has experience in this field.





### **Communication and cooperation**

Communication and co-operation will be organised both centrally from Denmark and in each country.

The common central tool will be an Extranet-platform (respectively an external specific server) for storage of all project-internal documents and all production materials.

As a communication tool, IT-conference systems will be used, such as Skype or similar tools. The Danish project coordinator is very well experienced within all of these tools, in regional as well as in international communication. The national project leaders will get support within these methods for their national project co-ordinations.

During the last 15 years the Danish School of Public Administration has been involved in 281 international projects, and as project leader on the majority of these.

An inter-consortium-agreement will be entered between the involved partner countries (local project lead) in accordance to which any disputes or disagreements between any staffs involved in the project, on the implementation of the individual activities, or on terms and conditions as outlined in the contract must be reported directly to the project leader Mrs Lisa Brønnum, who will take appropriate action to solve the dispute.

The parties shall attempt to resolve any dispute amicably by mutual agreement.

### **Tasks within IT-support and translation will be allocated to suppliers:**

The IT-supplier will deliver a well-proved CMS-system for the described purpose. Besides that the supplier will have well-founded experience within e learning and will be able to support with online-seminars as well as ad hoc online support (in English).

The translators in each country should have knowledge of the specific pedagogical field and should be able to write for the final target group.

## **DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION PLAN**

### **Description**

#### **The implementation of the national TrainerGuides**

The partnership is designed to have representatives from advanced research in universities of applied sciences, as well as teacher/trainer training institutes, employer organizations, social partners and ministerial institutes.

Thus, the partnership consists of professional key players within the field of in-company training (see 8.6), and with powerful positions in each of their countries.

In each country, the national project lead supplements their own capacity with expertise from relevant national stakeholders and from practitioners in companies.

The national partners all have strong national networks for the valorisation of their products, the national TrainerGuides. These networks will be the most important channels for the dissemination of the national TrainerGuide ideas.

Last, but not least, the Danish partner has experience with the opportunities and impediments encountered, when implementing these kinds of new initiatives/tools.

#### **The exploitation of the TrainerGuide(s)**

The exploitation will be integrated into the project activities (see work packages WP3, WP4, WP6).

During the project, end-users will be involved in the development of the final product(s), the national and the European TrainerGuide(s). Parallel end-users (=trainers) will be test persons for trial runs of the guide(s).

If the trial runs show up with positive results, the national project leads have the power to initiate the integration of their national TrainerGuides into other training efforts. This could be consulting activities from chambers of commerce/craft/industry, seminars, certifications, publications, guidelines for co-operation for VET schools, etc.



### **The implementation of the European TrainerGuide**

Regarding the European TrainerGuide, the project organization will seek co-operation with international networks such as projects like Eurotrainer II, Ttnet, relevant projects steered by CEDEFOP and others. See also work packages WP4, WP5 and WP6. Furthermore, the strong national partners have international networks within each of their fields (research, employer issues, etc.).

### **Principles for dissemination**

The core thoughts behind the valorisation strategy for the teaching module will be:

- “Simple” products, convincing by themselves: European TrainerGuide with national versions
- High credibility and authenticity of the products by contribution of best practice from a wide range of partners, with free access
- Networking and lobby work

### **High credibility and authenticity**

VET trainers and other key actors will receive easy and free access. Even though there will be developed bearable financial concepts for implementing, disseminating and sustaining the TrainerGuides, the core idea is non-commercial.

We will facilitate national and international free exchange of best practice (cases), methods and tools. Danish experience shows that this core idea generates a high degree of credibility and motivates to further mutual exchange<sup>5</sup>.

We will work with authenticity by collecting real cases and materials from practice (companies, VET institutions, trade unions, etc). These are non-artificial materials, meant for practice. Danish experience show that users easily can recognize and therefore accept the materials.

Even though the project is based on in-company trainers’ need for development of social, pedagogical and organizational competencies, the project will basically not focus on problems, but on possibilities. The presentation of mostly best practice is meant to create interest, give tools and motivate the target groups.

### **Main activities**

On a European level, the dissemination of the results will be supported by the European Training-of-Trainers Network TTN<sup>6</sup>, existing in 20 European countries.

Several of the TrainerGuide partners are involved in the European-wide network project “Eurotrainer II” and will use this channel for presentation of results as well discussing visions for other countries. The project lead of “Eurotrainer II” has expressed their interest in an interaction with the TrainerGuide project.

Next to the existing Danish TrænerGuide, The project’s TrainerGuides will be produced in the partner languages German, Turkish, Dutch, Finnish, Slovenian as well as in English, and they are intended to be linked to from:

- The partner institutions’ websites.
- Public institutions websites (for example the national ministries of education).
- Relevant research institutions’ websites (for example the German ITB Bremen).
- Relevant national education portals (in Denmark for example [www.emu.dk](http://www.emu.dk), in Turkey the new national initiative about distribution of learning materials, etc.).

<sup>5</sup> The non-commercial idea relates to the open-source-principle within IT-technologies, having a high ethic level, such as Wikipedia, Linux and a wide range of application software.

<sup>6</sup> Example German TTN<sup>6</sup>: <http://www.bibb.de/de/wlk18054.htm>



Each VET country partner is committed, during and after the project, to arranging regional and/or nation-wide conferences for key representatives from the national VET systems: Training managers, education planners, head of VET departments for development, ministerial representatives as well as representatives from employer organizations and trade unions.

In the beginning of the project, a 'dummy' of the final European TrainerGuide is constructed, as a basis for the further work and for current involvement of new stakeholders.

It will be possible to subscribe to regular newsletters about the project.

Partial results during the project, such as special cases or methods within certain fields, might become published in or adapted to the partners' usual business fields. In this way, these materials may become "appetizers" for the final TrainerGuide, already during the project period.

## EXPECTED IMPACT

### General impact on end users and target groups

During the project, the planning of long-term implementation is integrated into the work plan (see WP4). At the time of writing, the following can be stated:

#### National TrainerGuides

The impact of the project's results will be dependent on the national implementations of the national TrainerGuides and their results. In case of positive results, the project partners' organizations have opportunities for integrating new tools into their range of training efforts, such as:

- Integration into curricula of the involved universities of applied sciences
- Development of workplace-based seminars, by chambers of commerce/craft/industry, respectively institutes for training-of-trainers
- Training VET teachers in usage of the national TrainerGuides as communication and co-operation tools

Recommendations for future implementation of further national TrainerGuide(s) or similar tools will be included in the final report.

#### European TrainerGuide

The results of the project as well as the final product – the European TrainerGuide – will be reported to related European projects and established networks:

- "Eurotrainer II" (project lead ITB Bremen, Germany).
- TTnet: Teacher and trainer training network, with national leads
- CEDEFOP activities and key actors within trainer-qualification

At the present time, connections to representatives from the above mentioned projects/networks are made and positive intents from key persons are received.

There are already at this time requests from countries, not directly joining the partnership, such as England/Wales, Croatia and Italy, with Croatia and England/Wales having signed an official silent partnership.

Due to their experiences and professional networks, consultants of the Multi-disciplinary University College of Copenhagen as well as the stakeholder German BIBB and the partners Slovenian CPI, will especially encourage the integration and further development of future tools, corresponding with the European TrainerGuide.

#### Exchange of expertise

One of the partners' motivation factors for joining this project is the exchange of advanced expertise (see preparatory meeting 7-8 February 2008, Copenhagen).

The long lasting effect of this practically oriented project organization is dependent on the progress of the project, which will be supported by monitoring and final evaluation. There will be focus on national gains for each of the partners.